

## Section 49

### Religious beliefs; unknown and uncertain

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Cross-references to Digital Supplement in red  
Cross-references to Printed Synthesis in brown

#### Category 14 Religious beliefs

There was a limited number of objects associated with religious beliefs, totalling four, discussed below. Other items are discussed above: three possible rosary beads [8.04, 8.07, 48.01/424-426]; two coffins and a stoup [39.05, 39.06]; two papal bull seals [44.04/309-310] are discussed under the written communications section, and a possible service bell [46.06/353] is discussed under animal transportation.

#### Ampulla 8.07=49.01/540

Ampullae were one form of pilgrim souvenir and were designed to contain a dose of holy water dispensed at many medieval shrines. They were generally flask shaped with a narrow, flattish section and were provided with a pair of handles so that they could be suspended by a cord or chain around a wearer's neck. The flasks or phials were decorated, most commonly with a shell or flower design on one face, and a variety of motifs, such as shields, crowns, crescents, or letters, on the opposite. Although attempts have been made to ascribe certain motifs to individual shrines, this has not been particularly successful (Spencer 1971, 64). Ampullae came into use in the last quarter of the 12th century. With the introduction of pilgrim's badges in the early 14th century, ampullae became more standardised and less elaborate than previously, and small enough to be worn on a hat (Spencer 1990a, 57-8). Although not easy to date individually, most excavated lead or lead-alloy ampulla are presumed to fall within the late medieval period, 1350-1530 (Spencer 1990a, 58).

49.01/540

Sf 262 T13 C32 [P6.2 S31]

Lead-alloy ampulla, worn and flattened with knife cuts on one face. Flask-shaped with remains of two handles. Obverse, quatrefoil with detailed leaves, reverse cross surmounted with heart or crown? motif with an I? on either side. Lth 57mm

#### Scourge 8.07=49.01/541

The punishment of scourging was meted out to monks and minor clerks who had broken monastic rules or fallen into theological error. Although scourges are depicted in some medieval paintings and sculptures, actual examples are rarely found. A scourge was found at Rievaulx Abbey (Dunning 1965, pl xxii a) although more complete, is similar in form to [49.01/541], being made of plaited bronze wire in the trichinopoly (French knitting) technique.

8.07=49.01/541

Sf 1039 T6 C38 [P6.2 S19D]

Scourge, incomplete and in three pieces. Copper-alloy wire plaited in trichinopoly technique. Lth (end to end) 466mm

### Crucifix plaque 8.07=49.01/542

An enamelled and mercury gilded copper plaque bearing the legend IHS, Jesus Saviour of men, was found [8.07=49.01/542]. The reverse of this plaque retains traces of mineralised wood suggesting that it originally formed part of a crucifix (M Campbell, pers comm). A similar, although larger plaque incorporating the additional legend XPS, is found on a Limoges enamelled and gem studded crucifix from Buchy, France dating to the late 12th century (Rupin 1890, 286 and pl t xxv).

Although a fitful enamelling tradition existed in England in the late 12th and 13th centuries, the enamelling industry at Limoges dominated (Campbell 1987, 164). In light of the Priory's connections with Fontevrault Abbey and the find of the Limoges candlestick [50.08/180], it is suggested that plaque [49.01/542] may also have originated from the Limoges workshops and be of a similar date to the Buchy Crucifix.

8.07=49.01/542

Sf 718 T13 C309 [P5.5-5.6 S17A]

Crucifix plaque of almost pure copper, enamelled and mercury gilded. The obverse has legend IHS, enamel white and tin-opacified. Reverse retains traces of mineralised wood. Two rivet holes. Lth 42.5mm

### Chalice 8.07=49.01/543

The use of pewter chalices in the celebration of the mass was banned at the Council of Westminster in 1175 but they continued to be used for this purpose into the early/middle 13th century as witnessed by the orders of the Archbishop of Canterbury (1229-31) and the Bishop of London (1245-59) reiterating the ban on their use (Tweddle 1986, 209; Oman 1990, 790). Thereafter, the use of these chalices was confined to giving communion to the sick and burying in the coffin of a priest. In the later medieval period it is unclear how strictly the practice of burying a chalice with a priest was followed. The Rites of Durham, written at the end of the 16th century but perhaps obtaining to practices of the early/middle 16th century, specify that a monk should be buried with a chalice of wax, whilst a prior or bishop might have 'a little chalice of silver, other metell or wax' (Oman 1990, 790).

[8.07=49.01/543] is a possible miniature chalice, excavated parallels, dating between the 13th and 14th centuries, being significantly larger (cf Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle 1990, fig 231-3; Bruce-Mitford 1976, pl 5). Although [49.01/543] was a topsoil find in the cemetery, it is tentatively suggested that it might originally have been buried with one of the priors of La Grava.

8.07=49.01/543

Sf 1693 T13 C1 [P6.2-7]

Miniature lead alloy chalice? incomplete and flattened. Hollow stem, bowl has series of hatched lines near the rim and a second, more random series of incised lines below. Ht 40mm, wth 53mm

## Category 16 Unknown and uncertain

This sub-section is divided into two parts: objects of a wide range of uses, and unidentified objects.

### 1 Objects with a wide range of uses

Finds in this category include objects which can be assigned to several of the preceding categories, their specific use only ascertainable if found in association with diagnostic objects. Typological dating is not normally possible.

#### Rings 49.02/544-549

The 25 iron rings [49.02/544-546] identified varied both in shape, oval and rounded, and size (17mm-96mm). These rings have a variety of possible uses; the smallest may have been used as chain links, the medium range could have been harness rings or buckles, while the single larger example may have formed a ring handle from a door or similar furnishing. Over three-quarters of the rings came from phase 6.1 and later, single examples occurring in phases 5.2, 5.3, and 5.6. Examples were found in both service and domestic quarters (S16, S19, S41, and S63) and byres (S38), with slight concentrations in associated or destruction deposits of S63 (five examples) and S16 (three examples).

The majority of the cast non-ferrous rings recovered, fifteen in number, had an external diameter between 20-26mm, usually with a rounded rectangular section [49.02/547-549]. Similar rings have been found on a number of medieval sites and are identified as either harness or curtain rings (A Goodall 1984, fig 194.225-7; Oakley and Webster 1979, fig 113.111-2). Hinton (1990d, 1095) notes that an increasing number of rings for hanging curtains and other textiles may be expected in 15th century and later contexts since furniture with such fittings is known from illustrations. Single examples occurred in phases 5.4 to 5.6; the remainder were from phase 6.1 and later. All of the rings that could be allocated to structures came from domestic and service buildings.

#### 49.02/544

Sf 1454 T7 C502 [P7 S16D]

Circular iron ring of rectangular section. Dia 23.6mm

#### 49.02/545

Sf 234 T13 C70/2 [P6.2-7 S63A/64A]

Oval iron ring of square section with lead strip wrapped round. Lth 47.2mm, wdth 44.8mm

#### 49.02/546

Sf 940 T1 C8 [P6.2-7 S63D]

Oval iron ring of D-shaped section. Lth 39.5mm, wdth 33mm

#### 49.02/547

Sf 904 T1 C11 [P6.2-7 S63D]

Circular copper-alloy ring of rounded-rectangular section. Dia 22.8mm

#### 49.02/548

Sf 1400 T6 C30 [P6.1 S19D]

Circular copper-alloy ring of lozenge section. Dia 26.5mm

#### 49.02/549

Sf 1802 T23 C6 [P6.2-7 S23A]

Penannular lead ring, formed of bent rod, rounded section. Dia 23.5mm

### Chains and chain links 49.02/550-554

Chains had a variety of uses, smaller copper-alloy examples possibly forming part of costume or for the suspension of scale pans [49.02/550], while their larger iron counterparts may have been used in harness or in or around buildings; supporting cauldrons over the fire, tethering animals, or holding doors and gates [49.02/551-554]. Portions of seven chains were recovered, in addition to eleven single links, comprised of a variety of link forms; S-shaped, figure-of-eight, straight sided and hooked. [49.02/553] was found in S50, and may have been associated with the well.

#### 49.02/550

Sf 1303 T7 C591 [P6.2 S16]

Portion of a small chain consisting of three S-shaped links of circular-sectioned copper-alloy wire. Lth 17mm

#### 49.02/551

Sf 2544 T30 C724 [unph]

Iron, rectangular-shaped link with end looped over. Lth 45.7mm

#### 49.02/552

Sf 1004 T7 C525 [P7 S16D]

Portion of iron chain, two links surviving, one S-shaped, the other with circular terminal and hooked end. Lth about 54mm

#### 49.02/553

Sf 2183 T30 C46/05 [P5.5 S50]

Portion of iron chain consisting of swivel hook and ring and nine straight-sided oval links. Traces of tin plating were detected on swivel hook

#### 49.02/554

Sf 1410 T16 L2 [P7 S35A]

Portions of two iron rectangular links alternating with two iron links formed of looped sheet. Lth 170mm

### Swivels 49.02/555-557

Swivels were attached to the ends of chains and straps to enable freedom of movement. Their uses were various including on purses, limb shackles, harness, ploughs, carts, and supporting cauldrons. Thirteen examples were found including paired rings, and a ring and hook [49.02/555-557]. These were found in deposits of phase 5.6 onwards. Eight swivels were found in association with structures, three of which came from S63.

#### 49.02/555

Sf 732 T13 C196 [P6.1 S63]

Copper-alloy swivel consisting of D-shaped swivel ring decorated with three bands of three grooves, and smaller ring with integral swivel. Lth 27mm

#### 49.02/556

Sf 2069 T30 C1 [P6.2-7]

Iron swivel, pair of independent swivel rings linked by clenched rivet. Lth 67mm

#### 49.02/557

Sf 565 T13 C120 [P6.2 S63D]

Iron swivel ring with swivel hook *in situ*. Lth 166mm

## Wires

Seventeen fragments of circular-sectioned copper-alloy wire, ranging in diameter from 0.4mm to 1.8mm, were recovered. These may have been waste pieces from the manufacture of pins, Type 3 lace tags and assorted clothes fasteners as seven examples were found in association with, or from the same context as, pins and

Type 3 lace tags. Other possible uses include the manufacture of wire brushes, finger rings, or plaited wire rope. All the wires came from deposits of phase 6.1 and later. Half the wires that could be allocated to structures were concentrated in the environs of **S16**.

Sixty-six fragments of circular-sectioned iron wire, ranging in diameter from 1.2mm to 3.8mm, were also found. Iron wire could serve a multitude of purposes including clothing fasteners, fencing, and chain links. None of the fragments can be ascribed to a specific purpose. Deposits of phase 6.1 to Period 7 yielded 94% of the wire. Of the fragments that could be related to buildings, concentrations were noted in destruction and associated deposits of **S16** (39%) and **S63** (41%). A complete listing of both non-ferrous and ferrous wire is included in the archive, none are illustrated here.

### Wire rings **49.02/558-559**

Forty rings, normally penannular, of rounded iron wire, and one of silver, were found [**49.02/558-559**]. The wires range in diameter from 1.5mm to 3.2mm, ring diameters from 10mm to 24mm. The rings may have served as chain links, perhaps for personal costume, or strap distributors on spurs. A number of the rings were found together, supporting the suggestion of chain links. All the examples were from phase 6.1 and later. Concentrations of these wire rings were found either associated with, or in the destruction deposits of **S63** and **S16**.

**49.02/558**

Sf 293/02 T13 C115 [P6.2 **S63D**]

Penannular ring of circular-sectioned iron wire. Dia about 20mm

**49.02/559**

Sf 1437 us

Penannular ring of circular-sectioned silver wire. Dia 18.9mm

## Collars, ferrules, and binding strips

### Collars and ferrules **49.03/560-565**

Collars were used to strengthen an object at its weak point, for example a join between a wooden handle and an iron head. Two forms of collar were identified, tapering tubes (eleven examples) [**49.03/560-561**] and cylindrical rings (ten examples) [**49.03/562-563**]. These were most commonly of iron, their size suggestive of use on implements such as spades, rakes, and pitchforks. A smaller number made from non-ferrous metal was found, their size indicating use on items such as knives and awls. Ferrules (three examples) were used to protect the ends of objects, either acting as terminals [**49.03/564**], for examples on goads and weapons, or capping [**49.03/565**]

**49.03/560**

Sf 2048 T30 C1 [P6.2-7]

Tapering, cylindrical iron collar, both ends damaged. Lth 89.5mm

**49.03/561**

Sf 347 T13 C134 [P6.2 S63A]

Tapering, cylindrical lead collar with two rectangular slots cut into lower portion of collar. Incomplete iron tang *in situ*. Collar Lth 14.6mm

**49.03/562**

Sf 2118 T30 C53 [P5.3-6.1 S43A]

Cylindrical ring collar of copper-alloy sheet, pinched in at midpoint. Lth 17.1mm

**49.03/563**

Sf 335 T13 F113 [P6.2 S63D]

Cylindrical ring collar of copper-alloy sheet, riveted together. Lth 11.5mm

**49.03/564**

Sf 1947 T23 C235 [P5.5 S19A]

Tapering, iron socketed ferrule, tip broken. Lth 45.4mm

**49.03/565**

Sf 980 T7 C525 [P7 S16D]

Iron capping ferrule, ovoid plate with central, raised ring and upright arms. Lth 43.4mm

#### Binding strips **49.03/566-567**

Fourteen portions of strips of convex, V-shaped, or rectangular section were tentatively identified as bindings of some form but were too fragmentary to determine the objects they formed part of. They occurred in deposits of phase 5.4 onwards. A full listing is included in the archive, only two are illustrated [**49.03/566-567**].

**49.03/566**

Sf 1883 T23 C133 [P5.2-6.1 S23A]

Copper-alloy binding strip, ends broken, five perforations, edges decorated with diagonal incised lines. Lth 113mm

**49.03/567**

Sf 2236 T30 C111/01 [P6.1 S43D]

Curving, convex copper-alloy binding strip, two perforations, one retaining copper-alloy rivet. Lth about 39mm

## 2 Unidentified or unique objects

In any large collection there are inevitably some objects which are either unique or unidentifiable or too fragmentary for identification to be possible. The fragmentary objects, in the form of strips, sheets, and rods, are not included here but are listed in the archive. Objects of uncertain function are catalogued below and include, where possible, any suggested uses. Objects of modern date, for example cast iron, from topsoil deposits are not included here but can be found in the archive.

### Unidentified

#### Pierced shells 49.03/568-572

Amongst the shell assemblage 40 pierced oyster shells were identified, each with a single perforation. The perforations appear to have been purposefully made and varied in shape, including square, rectangular, and rounded holes [49.03/568-572]. Both upper (67.5%) and lower (32.5%) valves were present. Although shells, usually scallop, are known to have been worn as pilgrim badges, these normally have two perforations drilled through the top of the shell (cf Spencer 1990b, 801). One possible explanation of this assemblage is that the cut-outs from the shells were used to form inlays or small appliques such as the mother-of-pearl example from Hull (cf Watkin 1987b, fig 127.399). However, the majority were found with quantities of unworked shell and the possibility that these perforations relate to the preparation or consumption of oysters cannot be discounted. Examples were recovered from deposits spanning phase 5.2 to Period 7, 52.5% from phase 6.1. Only seven examples came from phases preceding 6.1. A single concentration, 35% of the shells, was found in destruction deposits of S27, immediately adjacent to service building S28.

49.03/568

Sf 801 T13 C248 [P5.3 S29A]

Lower valve of oyster shell with rectangular perforation (8.2mm by 9.2mm)

49.03/569

Sf 965 T1 C8 [P6.2-7.0 S63D]

Upper valve of oyster shell with rectangular perforation (8.4mm by 9mm)

49.03/570

Sf 2817 T13 C219 [unph]

Upper valve of oyster shell with slot-like perforation (25mm by 4mm)

49.03/571

Sf 2825 T13 C891 [P5.2 S20/29]

Upper valve of oyster shell with slot-like perforation (18mm by 5mm)

49.03/572

Sf 2833/01 T30 C123 [P6.1 S50A/30A]

Upper valve of oyster shell with circular perforation (5.6mm dia)

#### Tubular sheaths 49.04/573-575

Ten narrow, tapering sheaths of copper-alloy sheet were found, the edges abutting at the wider end and overlapping as the sheath narrows. Two forms of

ends were apparent, either possessing a flap which was folded up to form a flat closure [49.04/573] or pinched in [49.04/574-575]. The majority of widths vary between 5.2mm and 10mm, only one being noticeably thinner with a width of 4.2mm. Complete lengths ranged between about 55mm and 86mm.

The function of these sheaths is uncertain. In some respects they resemble large, somewhat crudely made Type 1 lace tags. However, the more complete examples lack any sign of rivet holes which would have secured the tags to the thong or ribbon. Alternatively these sheaths could have held bundles of bristle or hair or have served as penholders for the safekeeping of quills. The narrowest of these sheaths [49.04/575] could have served as a pen, similar to that found on the River Thames foreshore (Ramsay 1987, cat no 424). Similar sheaths were found in London from contexts dating between c 1230 and c 1400, where it was noted that they became less common after the middle of the 14th century (Egan and Pritchard 1991, 286-90). The earliest occurrence at La Grava was in phase 5.2; five of the eight phased examples from phases 5.2 to 5.6. The three examples recovered from later phases were in destruction and topsoil deposits and are likely to be residual. There appeared to be no pattern to the deposition of these sheaths although two were found within S27.

49.04/573

Sf 1302 T7 C508 [P7 S16D/65D]

Copper-alloy tubular sheath with flat, flap closure, tapering slightly towards end. Lth 55.5mm

49.04/574

Sf 2053 T30 C1 [P6.2-7]

Copper-alloy tubular sheath, tapering and with pinched in end. Lth 86mm

49.04/575

Sf 2161 T30 F19 [P5.6 S33D]

Copper-alloy tubular sheath, narrow and with pinched in end. Lth 75.7mm

#### Mandrels 49.04/576-577

Three tapering rectangular-sectioned bars, resembling punches or chisels, were identified [49.04/576-577]. Each of these has a rectangular perforation at the point where the bar tapers. One example [49.04/576] retains a split pin *in situ*.

Goodall (1980a, 17) has tentatively identified two similar, but larger, objects as hand mandrels. Mandrels were used in the forging of small rings and collars and for binding iron. In use these objects rested on the face or edge of an anvil. The examples cited by Goodall came from sites occupied between the late 13th century and the 17th century. The examples tentatively identified from La Grava were from phase 6.1 (two) and Period 7 (one).

49.04/576

Sf 696 T13 F225 [P6.1 S27A]

Iron ?hand mandrel, tapering, rectangular-sectioned bar with flat head, perforated near tapered end. Split pin *in situ*. Lth 93mm

49.04/577

Sf 652 T13 C328 [P6.1-7 S16A]

Iron ?hand mandrel, tapering rectangular-sectioned bar with burred head, perforated near tapered end. Lth 81mm

## Unique objects

49.04/578

Sf 1295 T7 C1530 [P6.1 S65]

Cast, curving, rectangular-sectioned lead strip, both ends missing. Cast decoration in relief; obverse, paired circular bosses alternating with larger centrally placed boss; reverse, paired zigzag lines alternating with circular boss. Lth c 68mm. Portion of ?window decoration or frame from a large pilgrims' badge? A very similar pattern of double-chevrons and bosses (or zig-zag lines and annulets) can be seen on a late 15th-16th century pilgrim's badge from Winchester (Spencer 1990b, 803 and fig. 234 no. 2483) and another badge from London (Spencer 1998, no. 138a).

49.04/579; 9.09

Sf 2060 T30 C1 [P6.2-7]

Rectangular, translucent cobalt-blue glass panel with etched design of collared greyhound standing, foliage and two trefoils at base. Plain rectangular copper-alloy binding (tinned/silvered) with twisted wire band encircling. Glass panel lth 33.4mm; total lth 40mm. ?Mount/inset of late 13th/14th century, northern European manufacture, originally gilded/enamelled (J Cherry, pers comm)

49.04/580

Sf 1828 T23 C16 [P6.1-6.2 S19A]

Double-pronged point from a snapped-off end of a bovine nasal bone. Lth 75mm. Possible shellfish fork (cf MacGregor 1985, 175-6)

49.04/581

Sf 2792 T13 C656/58 [P5.1 S15A]

Upper portion of antler tine, both ends broken. Tine perforated at wider end and thickness deliberately narrowed, surrounding surface polished. Lth 96.6mm. ?Antler cheek piece (cf Cunliffe and Poole 1991, 366 and fig 7.36) or ?thatching /basketry implement (cf Roes 1960, 68-72)

49.04/582

Sf 2635 T30 C487 [P5.4 S43]

Iron ?handle formed from rolled sheet, mid-section decorated with incised lattice pattern retaining traces of tinning. Lth 111mm

49.04/583

Sf 1299 T7 C558 [P6.1 S65]

Portion of iron ?fire grate; curved, rectangular-sectioned base formed by folding sheet in four, the fourth fold extending to form raised grate with four rectangular perforations. Ht 36.6mm, Lth 80.6mm

49.04/584

Sf 1656 T20A C8 [P5.6-6.2]

Solid circular iron knob (?damaged pommel) with broken rectangular-sectioned stem. Dia 32.5mm, lth 43.6mm

49.04/585

Sf 767 T13 C520 [P5.3 S29]

Tapering, rectangular-shaped piece of carboniferous limestone, one end broken. Source; Somerset, South Wales, or Belgium. Lth 60mm. ?Decorative inlay, for example on fireplace, or ?floor mosaic

49.04/586

Sf 1047 T7 C538 [P7 S16D]

Iron ?hub-ring of small spoked wheel, six perforations evenly spaced on flat ring, remains of ?spoke corroded to ring. Beginnings of an extension on outer edge of ring. Dia 34mm.

49.04/587

Sf 455 T13 C131 [P6.2 S63D]

Sub-rectangular iron plate, upper edge scalloped forming three lobes with single perforation in each lobe. Lth 125.8mm

49.04/588

Sf 1840 T23 C53 [P5.6 S23A]

Iron rod, angled at mid-point, one end splayed, opposite end tapered, presently hooked, tip missing. Rectangular section. Ht about 42.7mm, lth 79mm

49.04/589

Sf 867 T13 C1044 [P5.4 S53A]

Sub-rectangular copper-alloy plate with eight crudely-made perforations of square or rectangular shape. Five iron nails, with domed heads, *in situ*. Patch ?lth 60.2mm