XI
Museum Note 1996
Roman Military and Domestic Artefacts from Great Chesters

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INTRODUCTION

THE site of the Roman fort at Great Chesters, identified as Esica in the *Ravenna Cosmography* and Aesica in the *Notitia Dignitatum*, has been known to the modern world since the 17th century.[1] However, other than the excavations of the strong room of the *principia* by one Dr. Lingard, no formal excavation is known to have been carried out until 1894 when the south gate, south wall, south-west angle tower, a barrack block and part of the *principia* were uncovered.[2] Further work was carried out by the Northumberland Excavation Committee in 1895 and 1897, mostly on the west defences, although some trenches were cut in the *retentura* and across the extra-mural bath-house and *vicus* buildings. The bath-house was further investigated in 1908 and the fort defences were re-examined in 1925 and 1939.[3] The excavations of 1951 and 1952 concentrated on the defences and on the Vallum causeway to the south.[4] Work since the 50s has been in the nature of consolidation and backfilling rather than in uncovering new areas of the fort (fig. 1).

The reports of the excavations concentrated on discussing the nature of the buildings and the relationship of the fort with the Curtain Wall and Vallum; little attention was paid to the finds. One obvious exception to this was the cache of jewellery found in the west guard chamber of the south gate, commonly known as the Aesica Hoard. Since it was uncovered in September 1894 the Hoard has dominated the public's interest in Great Chesters and the various elements in the Hoard have been published on a regular basis, most recently and fully by Dorothy Charlesworth in 1978.[5] Less well known is the interesting collection of artefacts of copper alloy, bone, jet and glass which was also found in the excavations and presented to the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne over the years. Few of these items have ever been published despite their quality. This paper is aimed at drawing attention to these less famous artefacts.

COPPER ALLOY OBJECTS

1. Incomplete wheel brooch. The ring is flat with raised edges and central rib creating two concentric fields which may have held enamel although no traces survive. Around the outer edge four lugs survive of a possible twelve. The inner edge has six small projections which may have held a central hub in position. On the back the catchplate has a single oblique turnover hidden behind one of the outer lugs whilst the two-plate hinge is hidden behind the opposing lug; both catchplate and hinge plates are cast in one with the ring. The pin is missing.
   Wheel brooches have been found throughout Roman Britain and have been interpreted as representing both Jupiter Taranis and the Mother Goddesses: Green 1976, 18; Jessop 1979. See Snape 1993, Type 14.7. In the military zone wheel brooches are also known from Turret 35A, Corbridge and Housesteads.
   Outer D:40 mm, Inner D:22 mm, L of catchplate:8 mm, W of ring:7 mm. Acc. No. 1956.150.18.A. Publ: Snape 1993, A378.

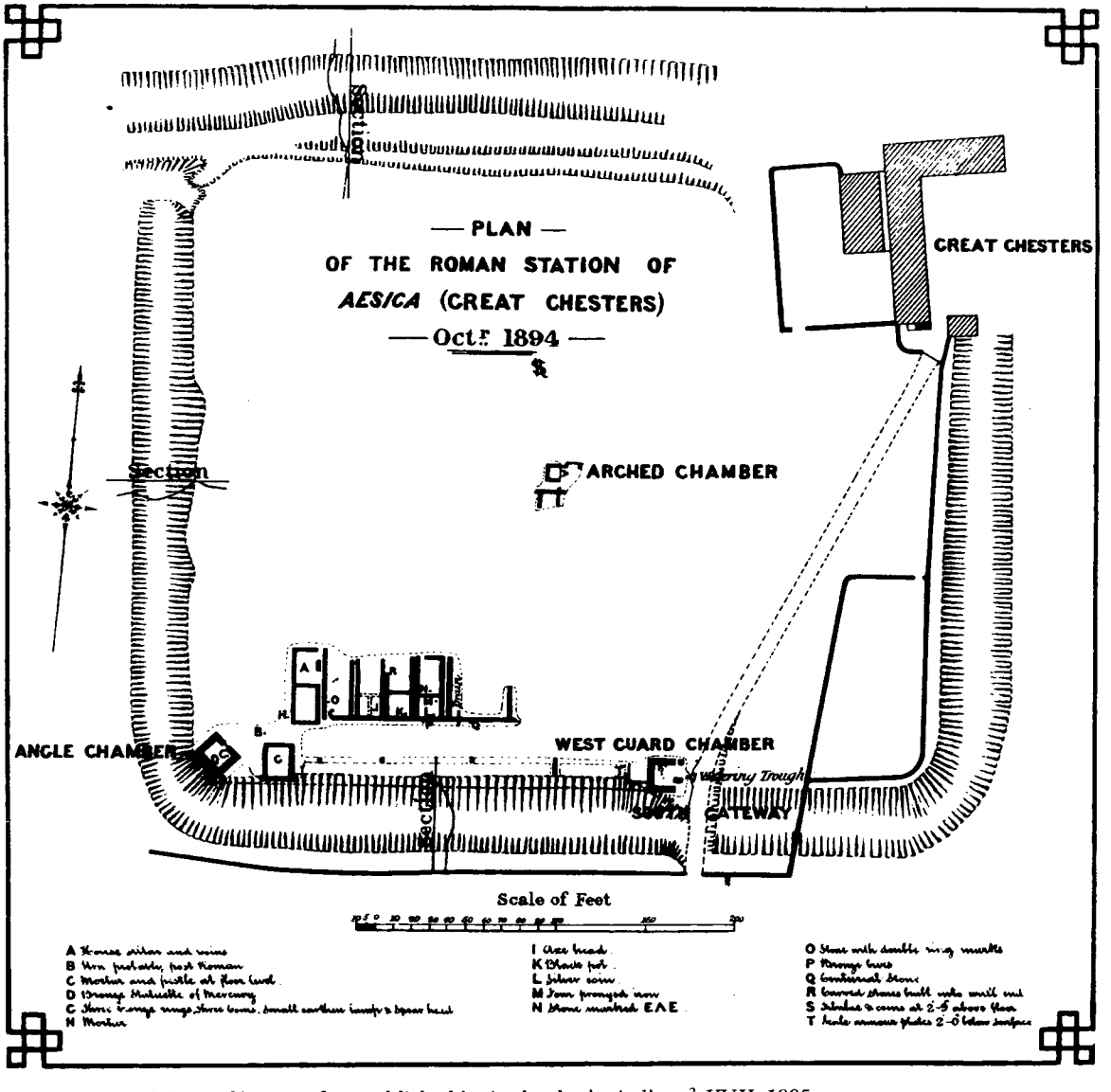

Fig. 1 Plan of Great Chesters, first published in Archaelogia Aeliana[2] *XVII, 1895.*

2. Circular plate brooch with traces of adhesive—probably lead/tin solder—indicating that a repoussé plate may have been attached to the face. The back has a strip catchplate with a simple turnover cast in one with the plate as are the two hinge plates. A fragment of the pin survives *in situ*, held in position by an iron hinge pin. Disc brooches with applied repoussé sheets are widely distributed in Britain and can be dated to the 2nd century A.D. The applied sheet may have had a triskele

motif although some brooches of this type have an *ad locutio* motif similar to that on Hadrianic coins (Goodchild 1941, 1–8). Examples of plate brooches with applied repoussé discs include those from South Shields, Coventina's Well and Corbridge: see Snape 1993, Type 11.1.
D:34 mm, T of plate:0·5 mm, L of catchplate:8 mm. Acc. No. 1956.150.18.A. Publ: Snape 1993, A377.

3. "Dolphin brooch" with a short tubular head with ridged ends. The six-coil spring is held in the open tube by an iron pin. A short curl holds the spring cord in place. The humped bow tapers to a very narrow double disc foot and is decorated by a central groove flanked by a herringbone motif. The catchplate is cast as a triangular trough which still contains a fragment of pin. There are signs of fire damage around the head.
This form of brooch was dated by Collingwood and Richmond (1969, Group H, 295) to the mid 1st to mid 2nd century A.D. and may have been a product of the Welsh Marches. See Snape 1993, Type 2.2.
L:47 mm, W across head:17 mm, L of catchplate:16 mm, D of foot:4 mm. Acc. No. 1956.150.18.A. Publ: Snape 1993, A368.
4. Incomplete knee brooch. The head has had two short, rectangular arms but is badly damaged, apparently by fire. The convex bow narrows sharply to a short ledge at the waist. The lower bow is triangular in section and also narrows sharply before splaying to a short plain foot: the result is a shallow S-profile. The catchplate projects behind the foot for some distance but has a very narrow turnover. The pin is missing. There are traces of silvering or tinning on the bow.
The knee brooch is one of the most common brooches found in military contexts in the mid 2nd century but this slightly modified S-profile form can be found as late as the 4th century A.D. See Snape 1993, Type 5.3, catchplate type i.
L:29 mm, W of bow:10 mm, W of foot:8 mm, L of catchplate:8 mm. Acc. No. 1956.150.18.A. Publ: Snape 1993, A374.
5. Fragment of a trumpet brooch. The small splayed head has a single incised marginal line but is too damaged for it to be certain if a headloop was present. The short, oval-sectioned upper bow expands to a wide waist with stylized acanthus moulding between two rib-and-groove motifs. The waist decoration simplifies at the back. Neither the pin nor the spring mechanism survives and only part of the semi-oval-sectioned lower bow.
Trumpet brooches are common finds in the military zone but they may vary considerably in form and decoration. This example falls within Collingwood and Richmond's Type Rii (1969) and Snape's Type 4.1 (1993).
Surviving L:35 mm, W across head:11 mm, Max.W of bow:7 mm. Acc. No.1956.150.18A.Publ: Snape 1993,A370.
6. Upper part of a crossbow brooch with a polygonal-sectioned bow which ends in a socket indicating that the brooch was manufactured in two pieces. The arms are flat with a circular hole drilled either side of the bow and end in hollow onion-shaped terminals. The head knob is rivetted into position at the top of the bow rather than on the edge of the crosspiece. The pin is missing but has been hinged: a fragment of a thin copper alloy wire hinge pin survives *in situ*.
Snape's discussion of this type (1993, Type 8.8) refers to two examples from South Shields, which were made in two halves, and others from Corbridge, Shoreden Brae and Carlisle which have a separate head knob. This brooch would appear to fall into Keller's 1971, Type 4A with a possible dating of *c.* 350–80. See Clarke 1979, 257–263 for a discussion as to likely manufacturing centres and customers.
Surviving L:40 mm, W across arms:47 mm, W of bow:6 mm. Acc. No. 1956.150.18.A. Publ: Snape 1993, A376.
7. Penannular brooch with circular-sectioned

shank and milled knobbed terminals. The simple curved pin has been flattened at one end and curled around the shank with a single incised line decorating the shank.
This falls within Fowler's Type A2, described by her as being "common on sites connected in some way with auxiliaries of the army" (1960, 174). Type A2 has a wide distribution but is particularly found in the military zone with examples from Corbridge, Chesters, South Shields and Vindolanda: see Snape 1993, Type 16.1. The date range lies between the 1st and 4th centuries A.D.
Int.D:25 mm, T of shank:2·5 mm, L of pin:33·5 mm. Acc. No. 1956.150.18.A.
Publ: Snape 1993, A380.

8. Bracelet of lozenge section with interlocking terminals, only one of which now survives.
See Allason-Jones and Miket 1984, Type 9.
Int.D:93 × 80 mm, T:2 mm. Acc. No. 1956. 150.18.A.

9. Broken, annular bracelet of circular section with incised bands tightly packed all around the hoop.
Int.D:83 × 72 mm, T:3 mm. Acc. No. 1956. 150.18.A.

10. Incomplete bracelet of circular-sectioned drawn wire with sliding knot terminals, only one of which survives.
Allason-Jones and Miket 1984, Type 8.
Int.D:85 × 67 mm, T:2 mm. Acc. No. 1956. 150.18.A.

11. Fragment of a small finger ring with a fine, oval-sectioned hoop which expands to a rib across the shoulder. A wide groove separates the shoulder from the oval centreplate which is filled with white(?) champlevé enamel with a reserved metal dot.
Int.D:15 mm (approx.), centreplate: 8 × 7 mm. Acc. No. 1956.150.19A. Not illustrated.

12. Fragmentary, thick, roughly made annular ring of strip section with a groove along both edges. Possibly a finger ring.
Int.D:21 mm, W:2 mm, T:10 mm. Acc. No.1956. 150.19.A. Not illustrated.

13. Pin with circular-sectioned tapering shank, a ridged neck and facetted cube head. The intention appears to have been to decorate the head with a single drilled hole in each facet but some of the holes are off-centre and one facet has three holes. One hole shows traces of a residue which may suggest that they contained a contrasting infill which is now missing.
Although facetted head pins are common finds on Roman sites whether in bone, metal or jet, it is rare to find examples with the additional drilled dot decoration until sub- or post-Roman times: see Waterman 1959, 78, (fig. 11), and Egan and Pritchard 1991, 302.
L:109 mm, Max.T:6 mm. Acc. No. 1956. 150.18.A.

14. Fragment of a cast ring-headed pin. The head has been made up of a series of hemispherical beads only two of which survive. The shank is circular in section and tapering.
Stevenson (1955, fig. B4) discusses a number of examples from Covesea, some of which have beading all around the ring head whilst others have beading confined to the lower arc; the former type can be dated from examples from Traprain Law to 3rd–4th century A.D.. whilst the second type may be typologically earlier.
L:54 mm. Acc. No. 1956.150.18.A.

15. Very corroded rod of circular section. One end is broken whilst the other has a series of sloped ribs and a barrel-shaped neck but only a fragment of the head survives. Pin?
Cf. Allason-Jones and Miket 1984, nos. 3.526, 531.
L:80 mm, T:3·5 mm. Acc. No.1956.150. 18.A.

16. Rod of oval section which tapers to both rounded ends, one of which has incised lines and a saltire cross on one face. Medical instrument?
L:81 mm, Max.T:4 mm. Acc. No. 1956. 150.18.A.

17. Rod of oval section, broken at both ends.
L:107 mm, W:8 mm, T:4 mm. Acc. No. 1956.64.A.

18. Fragmentary colander with a flat handle with projecting lugs at the waist and a splayed, rounded end. Holes have been drilled in lines which radiate from the centre and are linked by a continuous line of holes 23 mm below the distorted, everted rim.
This form is of Italian origin but may have been made in one of the north-west provinces from the late 1st century A.D. The majority of examples have been found in 2nd–3rd century contexts. For similar strainers see Whitfield: Smith 1969, 179, and for other British examples: Eggers 1966; for examples from the Netherlands see den Boesterd 1956.
Ext.D of rim:174 mm (approx.), L of handle:153 mm, T of handle:1·5 mm, Max.W of handle:51 mm. Acc. No. 1956. 28.A. Publ: Eggers 1966, Abb. 10, no. 59c; Smith 1969, 179n.
19. Fragmentary colander similar to No. 18 above with an everted rim and a flat handle with projecting lugs at the waist and a splayed, rounded end. The holes have been drilled in radiating lines, culminating in a series of horizontal lines. A band of white metalling can be seen across the underside of the handle at what would have been the weakest part and may suggest an attempt to strengthen the pan.
Ext.D of rim:171 mm, L of handle: 158 mm, Max.W of handle:49 mm, T of handle:2 mm. Acc. No. 1956.14.A. Publ: Eggers 1966, Abb. 10, no. 59d; Smith 1969, 179n.
20. Pan with straight sides, an everted rim with a down-turned edge and a sagging base. The handle is flat with projecting lugs at the waist and a rounded end. There is no trace of decoration or a maker's mark.
Although this object is badly damaged it may be possible to compare it with an example from Nijmegen (den Boesterd 1956, no. 58). According to Willers (1907) the type was made in Capua in the late 2nd/3rd century but Ekholm (1934) has suggested that the form was copied by metalworkers in Gaul and the Rhineland in the 3rd century.
Ext.D. of rim:186 mm, H of walls:74 mm, L of handle:176 mm, T of handle:3 mm. Acc. No. 1956.29. Publ: Eggers 1966, Abb. 10, no. 59e; *PSAN*[2] VI (1893–4), 243, no. ix; *AA*[2] XVII (1895), xxxi; "some brass pans" may refer to the colanders Nos 18 and 19 above.
21. Narrow, concave base of a pan with shallow groove and turning rings.
Possibly of 1st century South Italian manufacture but may be a product of Gaul or the Rhineland.
D:85 mm. Acc. No. 1956.29.
22. Vessel escutcheon. The heavy plate is curved and is of simplified vine-leaf shape but lacks any decorative markings other than a moulded chevron from which the rod handle springs.
Total H:80 mm, Max.W:48 mm, T of rod:10 mm. Acc. No. 1956.64.A.
23. Heavily moulded handle broken at a bifurcated or ringed end. The other end tapers onto the back of an incomplete disc.
Mirror handle from a fine hand mirror of the type manufactured from the late 1st century. See Nijmegen: Lloyd-Morgan 1981, 37, 55.
L:94 mm, Max.T:9 mm. Acc. No. 1956. 64.A.
24. Cylindrical ferrule with a baluster-moulded end. The surface is sparingly decorated with horizontal ribs and incised lines. The bulbous end is filled with a lead/tin alloy and a small circular rivet hole pierces the wall 8 mm from the rim.
A simpler version is known from Corbridge: Bishop and Dore 1989, fig. 79, no. 70.
L:73 mm, D of rim:29 mm. Acc. No. 1956. 150.17. Publ: *PSAN*[2] VI (1893–4), xi.
25. Hollow cover for a furniture foot or cart fitting hammered from a single bronze sheet. Incised lines decorate the rim and the curve of the base.
H:42 mm, T:1 mm, D of base: 48 mm. Acc. No. 1956.150.17.A.

26. Circular-sectioned rod which tapers to a disced end with a countersunk dimple. There are widely spaced notches along one face of the distorted shank, which is broken across a pierced end.
This may be part of a simple steelyard comparable with an example from Colchester: Crummy 1983, 99–100, no. 2508.
L:160 mm, Max.T:5 mm. Acc. No. 1956. 64.A.
27. Small handle of rectangular section which tapers at both ends to curled circular-sectioned hooks, only one of which survives complete with a simple leaf-shaped escutcheon.
The escutcheon indicates that this handle came from a piece of furniture or a vessel rather than a helmet.
W across handle:47 mm, Max.W:4 mm, Max.T:3·5 mm, L of escutcheon:22 mm. Acc. No. 1956.64.A.
28. Fragment of a distorted handle of circular section with double grooves arranged in regularly spaced bands. The surviving terminal forms a simple hook.
L:103 mm, T:6 mm. Acc. No. 1956.64.A.
29. Slide key of Manning's Type 2 (1985, 93). The short, rectangular-sectioned handle has a circular looped terminal and two incised lines across the end. The shank is narrower than the handle with two grooves across one face. The rectangular bit is divided into three teeth, set very close together, each decorated with an oblique groove.
This is one of the commonest forms of key to be found in Roman Britain and has a long history. See Manning 1985, 93 for parallels.
L:54 mm, Max.W of handle:14 mm, Max.T of handle:6 mm, bit:23 × 12 × 7·5 mm. Acc. No. 1956.150.2.A.
30. Lever-lock key with a short rectangular-sectioned handle which terminates in a broken circular loop. The hollow, oval-sectioned shank is narrower than the handle. The flat, rectangular bit has a slit on both edges to fit the arrangement of wards on the associated lock.
See Manning 1985 for parallels in iron and discussion of the type.
L:71 mm, Max.W of handle:6 mm, Max.T of handle:12·5 mm, bit:29 × 24 mm. Acc. No. 1956.150.2.A.
31. Rectangular-sectioned shank pierced by a small circular hole at one end and with a large, baluster-moulded terminal at the other.
Such terminals are common finds on Roman sites and mostly come from furniture.
Total L:71 mm, W of shank:8·5 mm, T of shank:5 mm, hole:2 mm, Max.T of terminal:16 mm. Acc. No. 1956.64.A.
32. Distorted strip of elliptical section which expands to a flat rectangular plate decorated by a central groove flanked by plain, ribbed and incised bands. One end is curled. The strip is distorted and its original purpose is obscure.
Total L:225 mm (approx.) W of shank:4·5 mm, W of plate:9 mm. Acc. No. 1956. 64.A.
33. Long oval ring of rectangular section folded in half to form a double loop.
L:37 mm, T:2 mm, W:2·5 mm. Acc. No. 1956.64.A.
34. Large barrel-shaped collar or bead with a facetted surface.
L:39 mm, Max.W:15 mm. Acc. No. 1956. 64.A.
35. Four small collars or beads with solid convex walls.
Int.D:8 mm, 8 mm, 7 mm, 8 mm, Ext.D:13 mm, 14 mm, 14 mm, 14 mm, T:7 mm, 8 mm, 6 mm, 8 mm. Acc. No. 1956. 64.A.
36. Oval terret with oval-sectioned tapering shank decorated with three-rectangular bosses, the face of each being divided by a reserved metal saltire cross to create four triangular zones for red enamel. The simple bar is flanked by splayed and grooved collars.
This terret has been attributed by Morna MacGregor to her class of "platform decorated" terrets (1976, 45–6) which she con-

sidered to be an "Icenian invention" but with "a more northerly adoption". The suggested date range is from the mid 1st to mid 2nd century A.D.
In MacGregor's catalogue entry for this piece she suggests that there is some doubt as to whether this piece was found at Great Chesters or Benwell. The Museum records, however, indicate no such confusion.
Inner D:41 × 32 mm, Max.W:15 mm, Max.T:25 mm. Acc. No. 1956.150.17.A.
Publ: MacGregor 1976, no. 70.

37. One hundred and eighty armour scales, each with a straight top, parallel sides and a pointed end. Each has six circular holes arranged in two rows of three. The two outer columns of holes are used to link each scale to its neighbour using a small strand of wire. The central column of holes is empty on all the examples. The scales are linked in rows, none are attached to an upper or lower scale.
The small size of these scales might indicate that they came from a neck guard although Robinson suggested that scales of similar size and shape from Corbridge might have formed part of a *lorica squamata* worn as part of cavalry sports equipment (Robinson 1975, 154, pl. 439).
L:11 mm, W:6·5 mm, holes:1 mm. Acc. No. 1956.150.A. Publ: *AA*[2] XVII (1895), xxviii: found in rampart building immediately to the west of the West guard chamber of the South Gate; *PSAN*[2] VI (1893–4), 243, no. vii; 244, no. 3; 245; *AA*[2] XXIV (1903) 22.

38. Rectangular belt plate with a hollow, cushion-moulded border enclosing a complex openwork design of circles and crimped lozenges arranged in alternate rows. At both ends a central projecting motif is flanked by a pierced disc, two of which are missing, which in the absence of the more common shanks must have taken rivets to attach the plate to the belt rather than link it to the next plate as is the case for the more elaborate plates of similar size from South Shields (Allason-Jones and Miket 1984, nos. 3.10–11).
Rectangular openwork belt plates were common in the late 2nd and 3rd centuries A.D. although the openwork motifs vary considerably. This example is of high quality and would appear to be of 3rd century date.
L:64 mm, W:30·5 mm, Total T:5 mm. Acc. No. 1956.150.22.

39. Rectangular belt plate with a peltate projection flanked by projecting loops at one end. At the other end a curved, transverse bar projects across the flat, plain terminal. A small circular hole has been cut through the centre of the terminal. The central void is filled by an openwork design of circles and crimped lozenges arranged in alternate rows and contained in a wide cushion-moulded border which is hollow at the back. There is a small casting flaw at one edge of the frame.
Although the terminals are different the close similarity of the openwork motif suggests that this came from the same belt as No. 38 above.
L:76 mm, W:31 mm, T:4 mm. Acc. No. 1956. 150.22.

40. Incomplete rectangular belt plate with a flat plain frame. One end retains fragments of a peltate terminal with a disc-headed shank projecting from the back, whilst the other has two small dome-headed copper alloy rivets through its corners. The rough way these have been positioned may suggest that they were a secondary method of attachment. The central void is filled with an elegant running tendril and leaf design.
This is a fine example of a late 2nd–early 3rd century belt plate.
L:55m, W:31 mm, T:1 mm. Acc. No. 1956. 150.22.

41. Narrow rectangular belt plate with a plain frame and decoratively cut terminals each pierced by a central circular rivet hole, one of which contains a copper alloy rivet whilst the other holds an iron rivet. The central void is filled with a delicate openwork design of collared lozenges.
This can be compared with similar belt plates from London (Allason-Jones forth-

coming) and the German *Limes* (Oldenstein 1976, Taf. 62, nos. 795–7).
L:51 mm, W:19·5 mm, T:1.25 mm. Acc. No. 1956.150.22.A.

42. Incomplete rectangular belt plate with one surviving projecting trilobate terminal. A central rivet pierces the top bar of the plain frame. The central void has been filled with a swirling design reminiscent of the modern Paisley pattern.
Surviving L:44 mm, W:24 mm, T:1·5 mm. Acc. No. 1956.150.22.A.

43. Complete openwork oval plate with a splayed projection from the top and an open pelta projecting from the opposing edge. The body of the plate is filled with an openwork design based on the pelta motif. Two small shanks project from the back.
This can be paralleled with a similar plate from Zugmantel (Oldenstein 1976, Taf. 33, no. 252) and a bridle mount from Volubilis (Boube-Picot 1980, pl. 27).
L:45 mm, W:32 mm, T:1 mm. Acc. No. 1956.150.22.

44. Openwork plate with a central bar from which four scrolls project, one of which is pierced by a circular hole. Two of the scrolls meet a second bar which is pierced by a circular hole at a central expansion.
See a belt plate from Zugmantel of 3rd century date: Oldenstein 1976, Taf. 33, no. 248.
L:35 mm, W:23 mm, T:1 mm, holes:2 and 1·5 mm. Acc. No. 1956.150.22.

45. Incomplete openwork plate of rectangular shape but without a frame. The design is loosely based on a leaf motif. A single shank projects from the back.
L:36 mm, W:24 mm, T:1 mm. Acc. No. 1956. 150.22.

46. Group of copper alloy fittings which have all fused together. The group consists of two pendants, both of a waisted shield shape ending in a forward thrusting disced terminal and with a central circular hole; a lentoid stud with a convex face and two disc-headed shanks at the back; and five small studs with domed heads, each decorated with deeply incised radiating grooves, and disc-headed shanks.
The lentoid stud can be paralleled at Zugmantel and Saalburg (Oldenstein 1976, Taf. 58) while the smaller studs have a wide distribution: see Corbridge: Bishop and Dore 1989, fig. 87, no. 207; Burzbach: Oldenstein 1976, Taf. 46, no. 484; Volubilis: Boube-Picot 1980, fig. 24, no. 210.
   a) Pendant 1: L:51 mm, W:28 mm, hole:3 mm.
   b) Pendant 2: Surviving L:36 mm, W:26 mm, hole:3 mm.
   c) Lentoid stud: L:32 mm, W:11 mm, L of shanks:5 mm.
   d) Studs: D of heads:12 mm, L of shanks:6 mm, D of roves:7 mm.

   Acc. No. 1956.150.7.A.

47. Peltate scabbard chape with openwork pelta decoration.
This is a common 3rd century form: see Allason-Jones and Miket 1984, no. 3.401 for parallels.
H:40 mm, W:47 mm, Int.T:7 mm. Acc. No. 1956.150.17.A.

48. Small triangular chape with a single triangular opening at the back. The front has a circular opening in the lower section with two openings of roughly pelta shape above. In the centre there is a small drilled hole with two stamped dot and ring motifs. The top is decoratively cut.
A similar chape from Housesteads Milecastle has red enamel surviving in the dot-and-ring motifs: MacGregor 1976, no. 169.
L:31 mm, Max.W:30·5 mm, Int. T:12 mm. Acc. No. 1956.150.17.A. Publ. MacGregor 1976, no. 167.

49. Buckle with a D-shaped loop and a splayed hinge plate. Despite the decorative curls which project into the loop the buckle has been roughly made and has an irregular section.
L:33m, W of loop:24 mm, T:1·5 mm. Acc. No. 1956.150.22.

50. Incomplete hinge plate with a triangular opening in the centre. Three circular rivet

holes survive, one in what appears to be a decorative curl at the end of the plate. The hinge has consisted of five interlocking loops, three on the hinge plate and two on the corresponding plate.
Despite its size, this would appear to be a *lorica segmentata* hinge of the late (or "Newstead") variety. Examples from Carlisle (Caruana 1993, fig. 1) and Carnuntum (von Groller 1900, Taf. XIX, figs 57–9) were found still attached to their iron back-plates. The date range for this type falls between the mid 2nd century A.D. and the first quarter of the 3rd century (M. C. Bishop, pers. comm.).
L:52 mm, Max.W:63 mm, T:0·5 mm. Acc. No. 1956.150.7.A.

51. Part of a hinge: a rectangular plate with two bars projecting at right angles.
W:47 mm, Max.L:20 mm. Acc. No. 1956. 64.A.
52. Rectangular-sectioned annular ring with a fragmentary loop wrapped around the shank. Escutcheon ring?
Int.D:18 mm, Ext.D:22 mm, T:3 mm, L of loop:16 mm (approx.). Acc. No. 1956.64.A.
53. Fourteen annular rings:
   a) Oval section, Int.D:15 mm, W:6 mm, T:3·5 mm.
   b) Oval section, Int.D:31 mm, W:13 mm, T:5 mm.
   c) Oval section, Int.D:29 mm, L:11 mm, T:6 mm.
   d) Circular section, Int.D:20 mm, W:4 mm, T:4 mm.
   e) Oval section, Int.D:31 mm, W:13 mm, T:5·5 mm
   f) Oval section, Int.D:32 mm, W:13 mm, T:5 mm.
   g) Circular section, Int.D:15 mm, W:8 mm, T:4 mm.
   h) Rectangular section, Int.D:15 mm, W:7 mm, T:3·5 mm.
   i) Circular section, Int.D:32 mm, W:17 mm, T:9 m
   j) Semi-oval section, Int.D:17 mm, W:5 mm, T:3·5 mm
   k) Irregular section, Int.D:17 mm, W:6 mm, T:3·5 mm.
   l) Irregular section, Int.D:38 × 30 mm, W:11 mm, T:6 mm.
   m) Oval section, Int.D:38 mm, W:11 mm, T:6 mm.
   n) Rectangular section, Int.D:15 mm, W:1 mm, T:3 mm.

Acc. No. 1956.64.A.

IRON OBJECTS

1. Circular-sectioned rod tapering to a point at one end. The other end is splayed and flattened. Very corroded.
This may be a stylus of Manning's (1985) Type 1.
L:115 mm, Surviving W across head:7 mm. Acc. No. 1956.150.24.A. Not illustrated.
2. Tapering, circular-sectioned rod. Although the point is free of corrosion and clearly defined the head is not, although there is an indication of splaying which might suggest a stylus.
L:91 mm, Max.W:6 mm. Acc. No. 1956. 150.24.A. Not illustrated.

LEAD OBJECT

1. Large piece of lead waste.
L:72 mm. Acc. No. 1956.150.18.A.

BONE AND ANTLER OBJECTS

1. Bone spoon in two fragments with a circular-sectioned shank. The shallow oval bowl is dished along its length and is pierced by a central circular hole, around which the cancellous tissue has been left unpolished.
This object, although lacking its decorated end, is clearly one of a series of similar items known from South Shields (Allason-Jones and Miket 1984, nos 2.95–6), and the Yorkshire Caves: Settle Caves: Smith 1848, pl. XXX.1; Dowkerbottom Caves:

British Museum Acc. No. 57.11–13.24–35. Although called "spoons" the perforated bowls, often with unpolished cancellous tissue, would make their use as spoons improbable. Possibly they were intended as toys, a suggestion supported by the naive quality of the surviving decorated terminals.
L:81 mm, W of bowl: 25 mm, L of bowl: 29 mm, hole:3·5 mm, T of shank:6 mm. Acc. No. 1956.63.A. Referred to in Allason-Jones and Miket 1984, no. 2.95.

2. Bone ball with a small circular hole drilled into the face. Possibly a pin head.
Cf. Segontium: Casey et al. 1993, no. 465, which has a separate antler shank; and Broch of Burrian: MacGregor 1985, 71, no. 111, for which a metal shank has been suggested.
D:29 mm, H:26 mm, hole:3 mm. Acc. No. 1956.63.A.

3. Pig's incisor with no indication of a perforation or carving.
The use of pigs' teeth as amulets has been traced back to the late Roman period (MacGregor 1985, 109) although boars' tusks were more commonly used than incisors, see below.
L:50 mm. Acc. No. 1956.150.4.A.

4. Five boars' tusks unperforated and untrimmed with no trace of copper alloy or silver sheaths.
MacGregor (1985, 109) suggests that boars' tusk amulets were particularly favoured by 4th century German mercenaries who wore them in pairs suspended by copper alloy or silver sheaths. Boon has drawn attention to the relationship between boars' tusks and Diana, goddess of hunting and the moon (1975, 62–4), but commented on the lack of such amulets from the Hadrian's Wall area. However, several are now known from fort sites in the military zone, in particular Coventina's Well which also produced a group of five tusks (Allason-Jones and McKay 1985, nos. 118–22).
L:81 mm, 75 mm, 72 mm, 51 mm, 45 mm. Acc. No. 1956.150.4.A.

5. Trimmed tine of red deer antler with two circular holes cut through at the end.
L:54 mm, D:21 mm, holes:5·5 mm, 6·5 mm. Acc. No. 1956.150.4.A.

6. Tine of red deer antler sawn at the end but otherwise untrimmed.
L:110 mm. Acc. No. 1956.150.4.A.

7. Shallow scabbard runner which expands to both ends. The convex face has a shallow central trough which follows the outer shape. Both ends are rounded at the back but cut flat at the front. The back is flat with a wide recessed area filed to shape and flanked by two transverse circular holes.
This scabbard runner can be paralleled in Britain at South Shields (Allason-Jones and Miket 1984, no. 2.34) and London (Allason-Jones forthcoming), whilst examples on the German *Limes* can be found at Neiderbieber and Worms (Oldenstein 1976, Taf. 15, no. 65). It is possible that this form may be earlier than the backed scabbard runners discussed by Chapman (1976) but appears to be equally rare. See also MacGregor 1985, fig. 86.
L:87 mm, Max.W:19·5 mm, Max.T:7 mm, hole:2 mm, W of recessed area:26 mm. Acc. No. 1956.63.A. Publ: *AA*[2] XVII (1895), xxxi.

8. Incomplete rod of circular section with a slanted disc head.
While similar objects made in copper alloy have been identified as *ligulae*, bone examples are considerably rarer. A possible parallel may be seen at Chichester (Down 1978, no. 219), with other examples at Stonea, Staines and Lincoln (R. Jackson, pers. comm.).
L:38 mm, W of head:5·5 mm. Acc. No. 1956.150.18.A.

9. Needle with a tapering oval-sectioned shank, pointed head and oval hole. The point has been cut at a slant and may have been re-sharpened.
For a general discussion of bone needles see MacGregor 1985, 192–3.
L:54 mm, T:3·5 mm. Acc. No. 1956. 150.18.A.

10. Fragment of a pin with a tapering, circular-sectioned shank and heavily carved neck with baluster moulding and incised cross-hatching. The head is missing.
    Surviving L:50 mm, T:6 mm. Acc. No. 1956.150.18.A.
11. Polished pin with a tapering, circular-sectioned shank. The neck has bands of lightly incised cross-hatching, the lower band having the cross-hatching confined to triangles. The head is narrower than the shank and has snapped at the top.
    L:68 mm, Max.T:4 mm. Acc. No. 1956. 150.18.A.
12. Roughly shaped pin with a bellied shank. The onion-shaped head sits on a ridged neck.
    L:70 mm, T:6 mm. Acc. No. 1956.150.18.A.
13. Incomplete pin with a bellied, circular-sectioned shank and globular head.
    L:54 mm, T of head:7 mm. Acc. No. 1956. 150.18.A.
14. Thick pin with a roughly circular tapering shank which becomes square-sectioned at the neck. The cuboid head is narrower than the top of the shank. The point is rounded.
    L:82 mm, Max.T:6 mm. Acc. No. 1956. 150.18.A.
15. Roughly shaped pin with a rounded head.
    L:78 mm, Max.T:4 mm. Acc. No. 1956. 150.18.A.
16. Thick pin with a circular-sectioned tapering shank and a rounded head. The point is missing.
    L:70 mm, T:6 mm. Acc. No. 1956.150.18.A.
17. Roughly cut pin of tapering oval section. The shank curves slightly and the head is flat. The point has been cut to an angle.
    L:81 mm, Max.T:6·5 mm. Acc. No. 1956. 150.18.A.
18. Roughly trimmed pin of oval section with a rounded head and an oblique point.
    L:78 mm, T:4 mm. Acc. No. 1956.150.18.A.
19. Fragment of a circular-sectioned pin or needle with an oblique point.
    L:63 mm, T:4 mm. Acc. No. 1956.150.18.A.

JET AND SHALE OBJECTS

1. Fragment of a tubular handle with four incised grooves around the end. The surface has a well-executed "quilted" motif with a dot-and-ring design.
   Cf. Bonn: Hagen 1937.
   Surviving L:27 mm, Surviving D:11 mm, W of tang socket:3 mm. Acc. No. 1956.63.
2. Fragment of semi-oval-sectioned finger ring.
   Int.D:19 mm, W:3 mm, T:3 mm. Acc. No. 1956.63.A.
3. Disc bead with an undercut edge and a domed face which is decorated with a central dot-and double ring motif. The back has a lightly scratched motif. Two holes are pierced laterally.
   This bead type is common in jet and shale in the north of England. See Allason-Jones and Miket 1984, nos 7.55–67; Allason-Jones and Jones 1994, no. 8.
   D:21 mm, T:6 mm, holes:3 mm. Acc. No. 1956.63.A.
4. Slightly tapered tubular bead of jet with incised bands.
   Cf. South Shields: Allason-Jones and Miket 1984, nos. 7.12–22.
   L:23 mm, T:3–3·5 mm, hole:1·5 mm. Acc. No. 1956.63.A.
5. Fragment of a bracelet of semi-oval section.
   Cf. South Shields: Allason-Jones and Miket 1984, nos. 7.126–139; Allason-Jones and Jones 1994, no. 5.
   Int.D:unknown, W:6 mm, T:7·5 mm. Acc. No. 1956.63.

FAIENCE OBJECTS

1. Four melon beads all with red clay interiors:
   a) Pale turquoise surface. L:22 mm, D:27 mm, hole:12 mm.
   b) Pale blue surface. L:17 mm, D:20 mm, hole:8 mm.
   c) Turquoise surface. L:11 mm, D:15 mm, hole:6 mm.

d) Pale grey surface. L:13 mm, D:15 mm, hole:6 mm.
Acc. No. 1956.63.A.

GLASS OBJECTS

1. Tubular bead of translucent turquoise glass.
The earliest examples of this form in Britain come from a 1st century burial at Santon Down, Suffolk, and from Maiden Castle, Dorset (Guido 1978, 95) but they are more commonly found in late Roman contexts.
L:13 mm, D:5 mm, hole:0·75 mm. Acc. No. 1956.63. Publ: Guido 1978, 210.
2. Globular bead of translucent cobalt blue glass.
D:7 mm, L:6·5 mm, hole:1·5 mm. Acc. No. 1956.63.A. Publ: Guido 1978, 170.
3. Globular bead of translucent cobalt blue glass.
D:6 mm, L:6 mm, hole:1 mm. Acc. No. 1956.63.A. Publ: Guido 1978, 170.
4. Globular bead of translucent grey-blue glass.
D:6 mm, L:6 mm, hole:1 mm. Acc. No. 1956.63.A.
5. Rectangular-section tubular bead of opaque turquoise glass.
3rd–4th century type: see Guido 1978, 76.
L:20 mm, T:4·5 mm, hole:1·5 mm. Acc. No. 1956.63.A. Publ: Guido 1978, 214.
6. Rectangular-sectioned tubular bead of opaque cobalt blue glass.
Type common after 2nd century A.D.
L:22 mm, T:4 mm, hole:1·5 mm. Acc. No. 1956.63.A. Publ: Guido 1978, 214.
7. Barrel bead of opaque cobalt blue glass with a red and white chevron band across the centre.
Guido has suggested that this bead type was imported from North Africa or the Eastern Mediterranean and that British examples are of 3rd–4th century date (1978, 98).
L:9 mm, D:4 mm, hole:1 mm. Acc. No. 1956.63.A. Publ: Guido 1978, 223.
8. Tubular bead of hexagonal section made from translucent green glass.
This form, which aped emerald crystals, had a long period of popularity but appears to have been particularly fashionable in the late Roman period: Guido 1978, 96.
L:11 mm, W:10·5 mm, T:3·5 mm, hole: 1·5 mm. Acc. No. 1956.63.A.
9. Segmented bead of opaque turquoise glass.
The type was popular from the 2nd century A.D. to beyond the Roman period. See Guido 1978, 92–3.
L:11 mm, D:4·5 mm, hole:1·5 mm. Acc. No. 1956.63.A. Publ: Guido 1978, 202.
10. Annular bead of pale blue "natural" glass.
D:16 mm, L:7 mm, hole:5 mm. Acc. No. 1956.63.A. Publ: Guido 1978, 144.
11. Annular bead of pale blue "natural" glass.
D:15 mm, L:5–7 mm, hole:5 mm. Acc. No. 1956.63.A. Publ: Guido 1978, 144.
12. Melon bead of bright blue translucent glass.
Guido has indicated that most British melon beads come from Flavian and Antonine contexts with the type reappearing in post-Roman times (1978, 100).
L:27 mm, D:29 mm, hole:10 mm. Acc. No. 1956.63.A. Publ: Guido 1978, 229.

DISCUSSION

This group of material cannot be regarded as a coherent collection as it does not represent the entirety of metalwork, or even small finds, from the site. Some material is now housed at Chesters Museum and some has clearly been lost in the intervening years. There is, therefore, little point in discussing the reasons for certain materials or artefact types not being present. However, there are several aspects of the collection which are worthy of comment.

Firstly, the material is by no means purely military. Although there are inherent difficulties in assigning individual artefacts to specifically male or female use[6] the bone hair pins, glass necklace beads and jet/shale artefacts do

point with some degree of confidence to the presence of women on the site, as has been noticed on the other Wall forts.

There is also a high proportion of the objects which reveal Celtic influence, for example the ring-headed pin (copper alloy No. 14), the terret (copper alloy No. 36) and one of the chapes (copper alloy No. 48). Although Celtic artistic motifs are common on the material assemblages of Wall forts, they tend to be more obvious on sites with auxiliary units from traditionally Celtic areas. Great Chesters was mostly occupied by cohors I Asturum and/or cohors II Asturum from northwest Spain. The Celtic elements may be evidence for the occupation by cohors VI Nerviorum from Gallia Belgica or the Raetian cohort thought to have been at Great Chesters in the reign of Marcus Aurelius, but may simply reflect Great Chesters' proximity to the north-south route through the valley of the Haltwhistle Burn which would have been used by troops from many of the northwest provinces as well as by the local civilian population.

As might be expected on a military site, it is the military artefacts which are of greatest interest, but in this case the quality is particularly outstanding. The plates for decorating leather (Nos 38–45) are of remarkably fine workmanship; similar plates are common finds in the military zones of the northwest provinces[7] but these examples are extraordinary in their execution and design. It should be noted, however, that with the exceptions of Nos 38 and 39, which may come from the same belt, there are no sets; even Nos 38 and 39, if a pair, do not form the complete set which might be expected for such a belt.[8] Casting flaws on some of the objects and the obvious incompleteness or distortion of others, coupled with the presumed findspots in the rampart buildings to the west of the south gate, may suggest that, impressive though some of these items are, they may have formed part of a hoard of scrap. This suggestion may be supported by the fused group of pendants and studs (copper alloy No. 46). Recent work on the copper alloy material from the area of Hadrian's Wall has indicated that scrap metal was being recycled for the manufacture of small articles, notably openwork *trompetenmuster* mounts, under semi-official control.[9]

Most of the excavations on Hadrian's Wall have produced artefacts with a wide date range, some of 1st century date being antiques when they arrived on the Wall, others of 4th century date indicating the late, if limited, occupation of the frontier. At Great Chesters the surviving objects are mostly of 2nd to 3rd century date with few, such as the brooches Nos 4 and 6, having a possible date in the 1st or 4th centuries.

In 1984, when the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne published *The Catalogue of Small Finds from South Shields Roman Fort* as its second monograph, very few of the smaller artefacts from the northern frontier had been published and the image of the finds from the Wall area tended to be dominated by the Aesica Hoard. In 1996 a considerable proportion of the material is now published or in the process of publication with the result that the other finds from Great Chesters can now be seen in their context.

FOOTNOTES

[1] Rivet and Smith 1979, 242.
[2] Gibson 1903; *AA*[2] XVII (1895), xxii-xxxi.
[3] Hull 1926.
[4] Birley 1961, 191.
[5] Charlesworth 1978.
[6] Allason-Jones 1995.
[7] See Oldenstein 1976; Allason-Jones and Miket 1984, for examples.
[8] Cf. Allason-Jones and Miket 1984, no. 3.10.
[9] Allason-Jones and Dungworth forthcoming.

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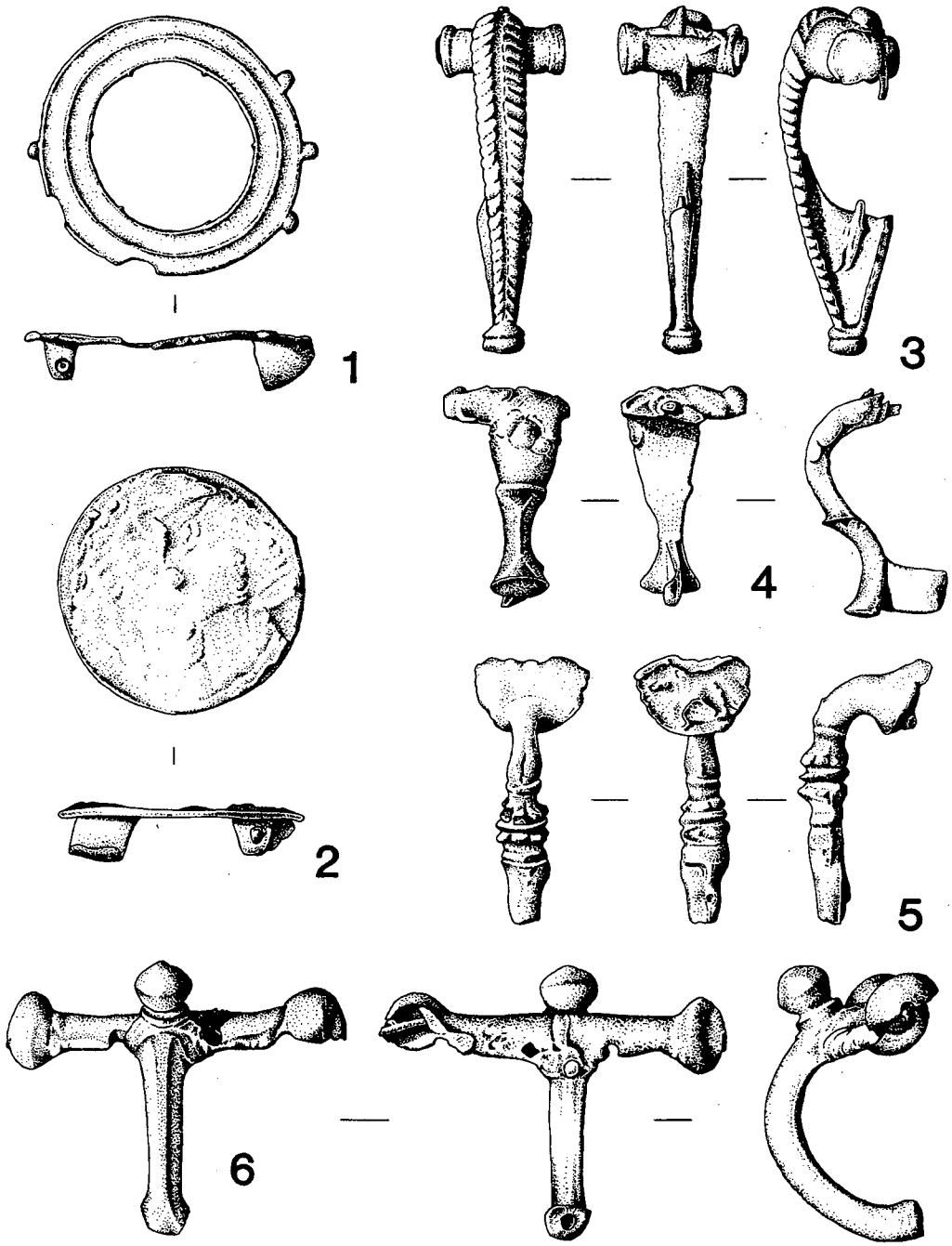

Fig. 2 Copper alloy brooches from Great Chesters. 1:1 Drawn by E. Lazenby.

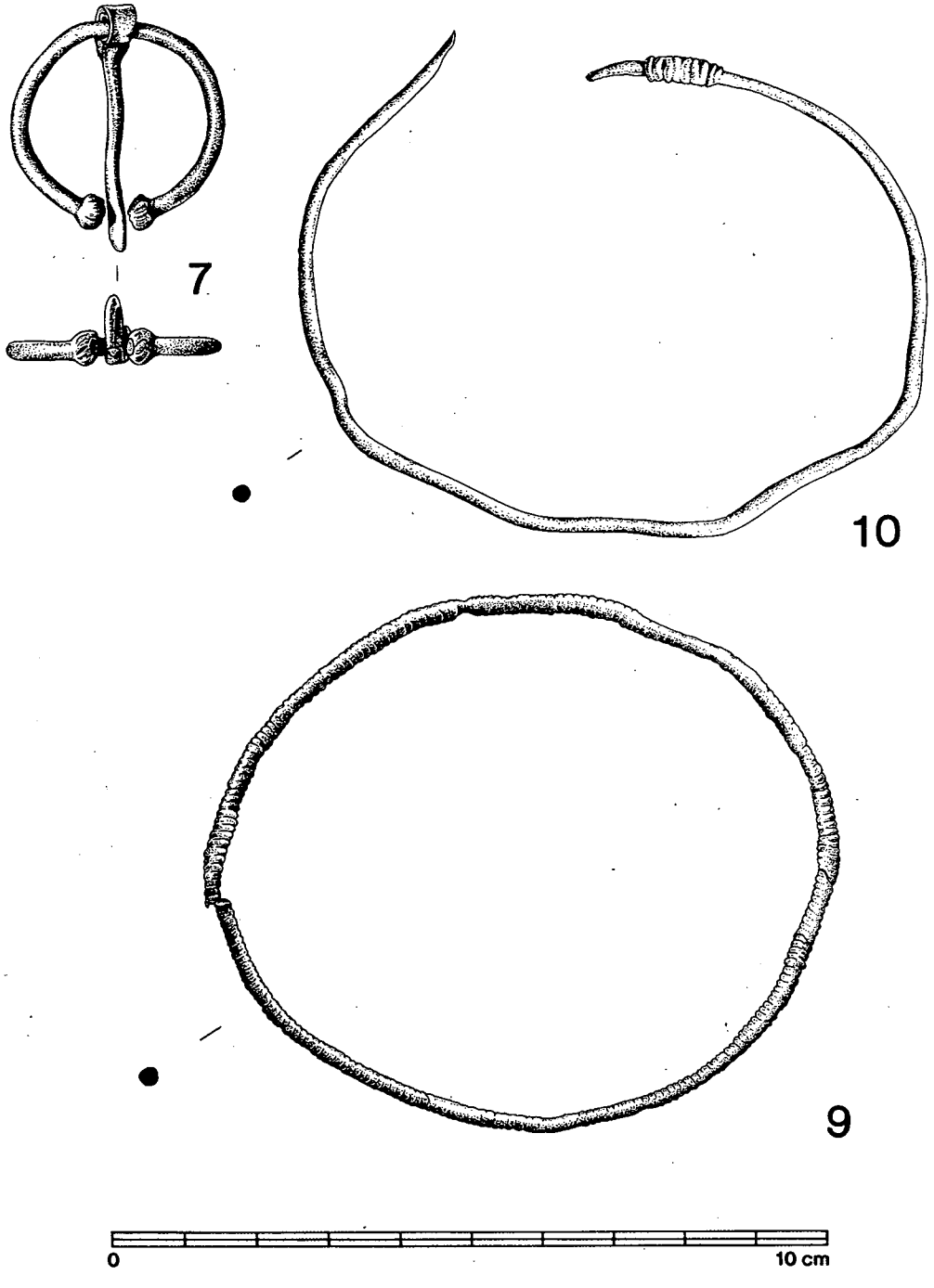

Fig. 3 Copper alloy brooch and bracelet from Great Chesters. 1:1 Drawn by E. Lazenby.

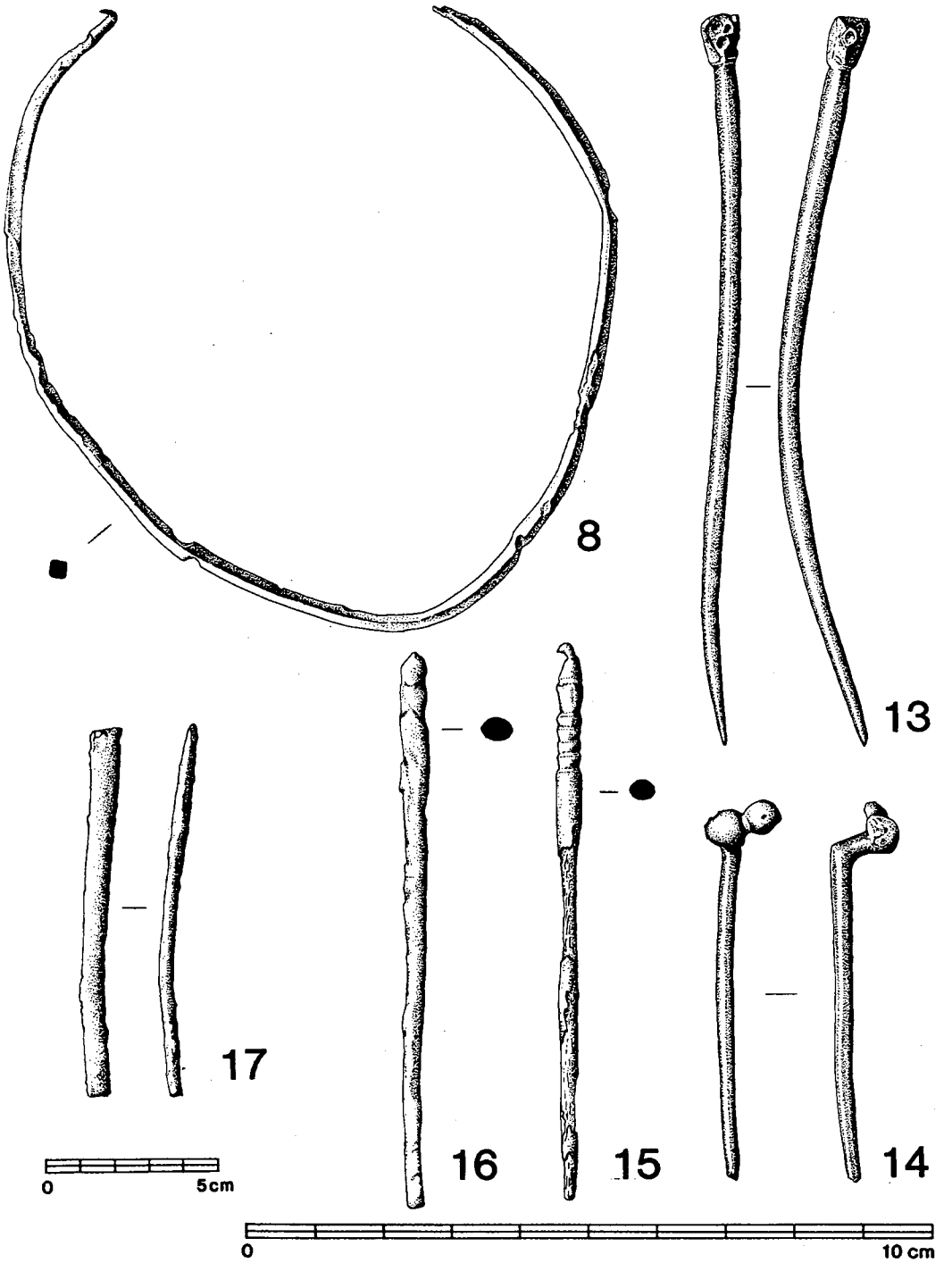

Fig. 4 Copper alloy bracelet and pins from Great Chesters. 1:1 Drawn by E. Lazenby.

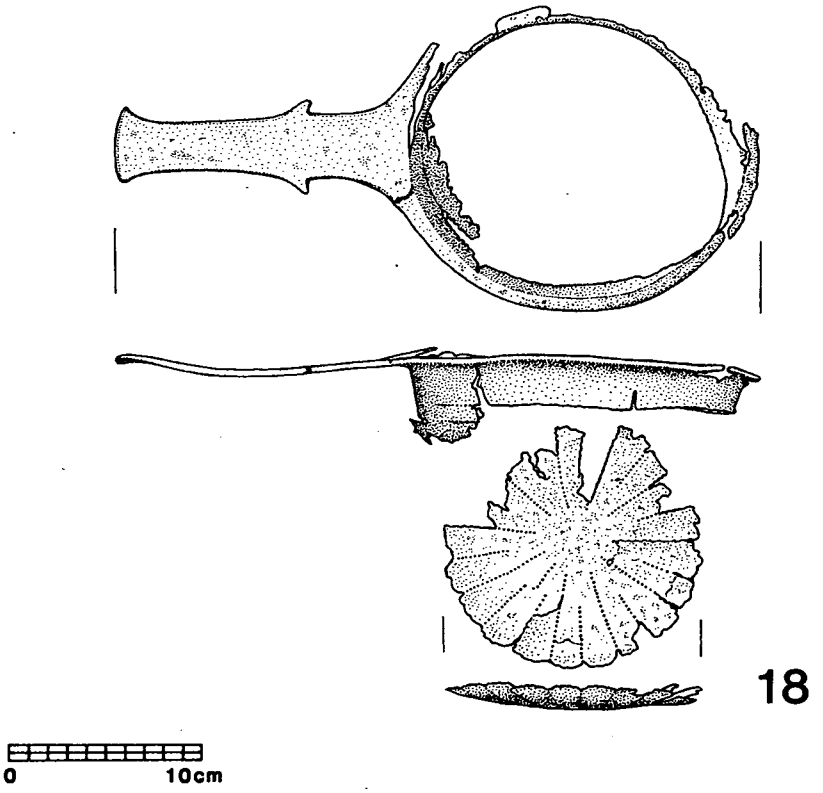

Fig. 5 Colander from Great Chesters. 1:2 Drawn by Sandra Rowntree.

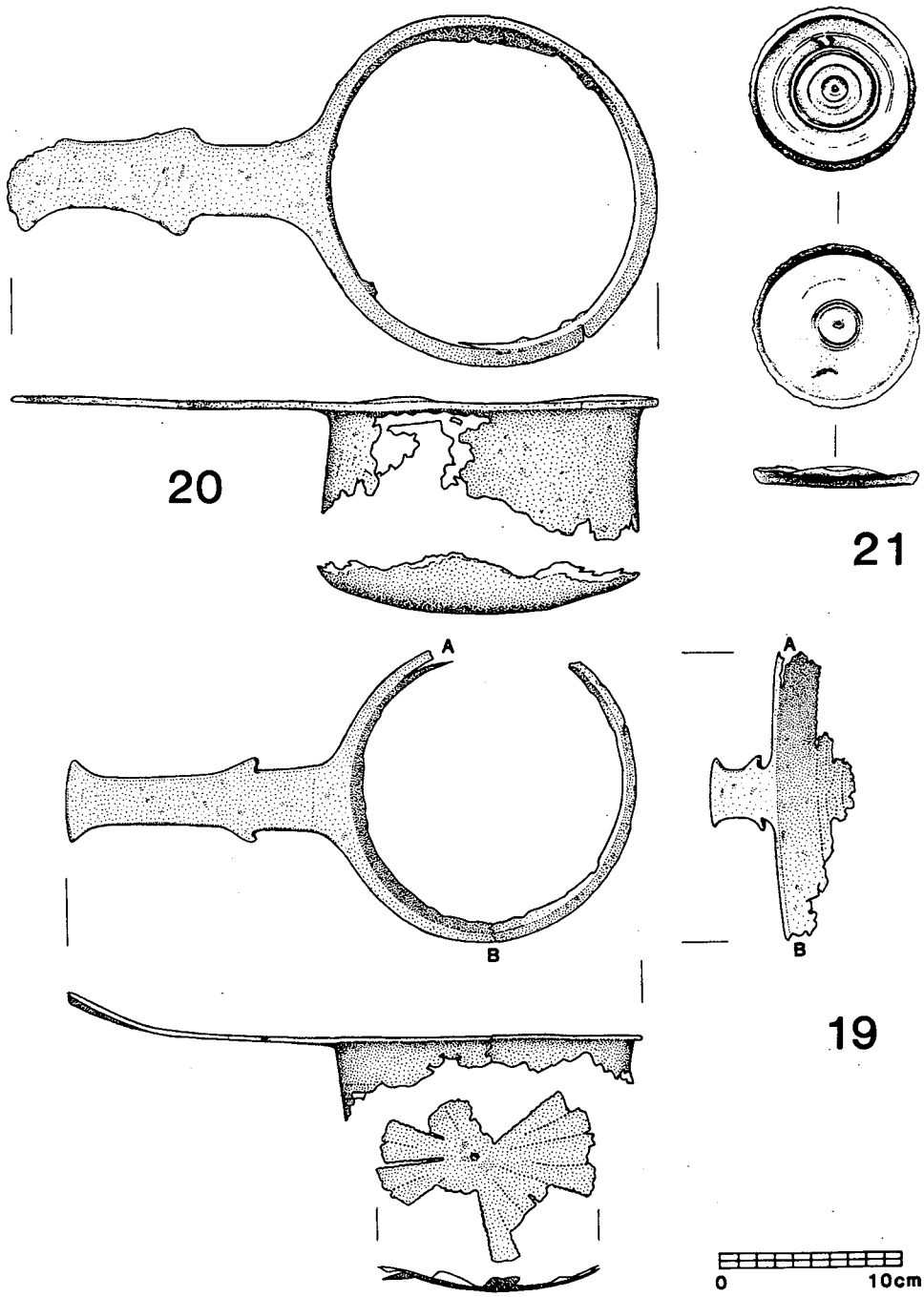

Fig. 6 Colander and pans from Great Chesters. 1:1 Drawn by E. Lazenby.

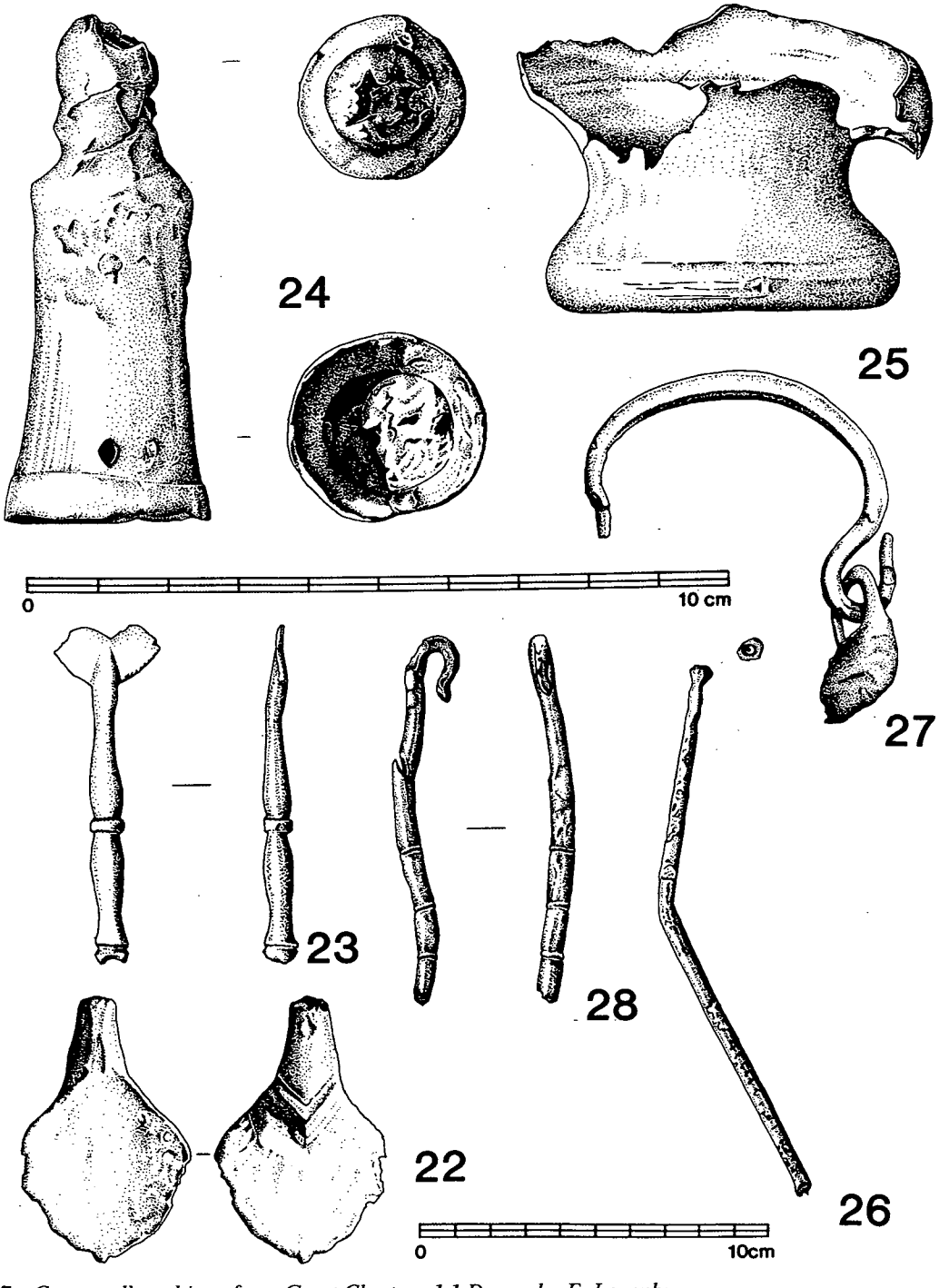

Fig. 7 Copper alloy objects from Great Chesters. 1:1 Drawn by E. Lazenby.

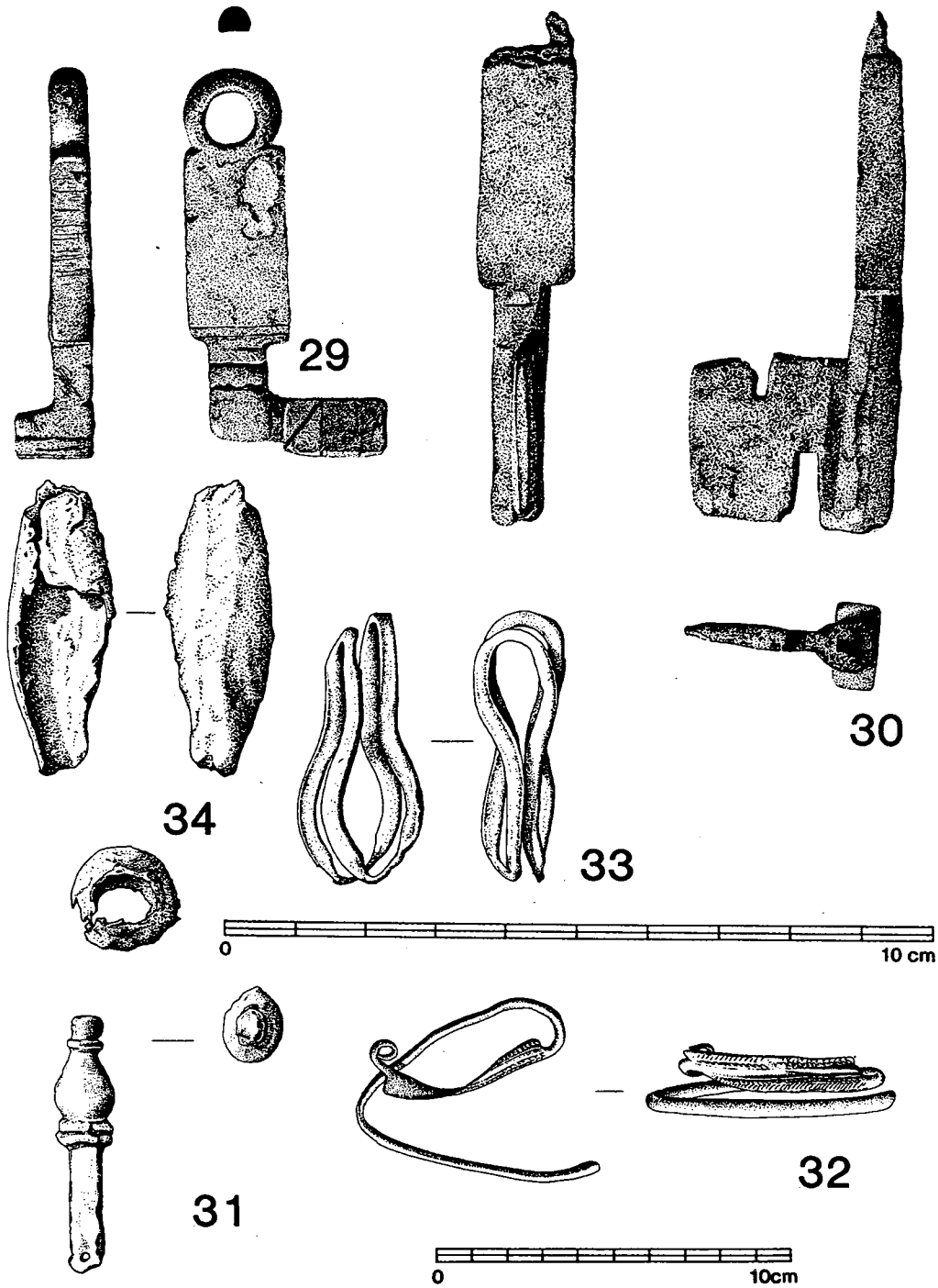

Fig. 8 Copper alloy objects from Great Chesters. 1:1 Drawn by M. Finch and E. Lazenby.

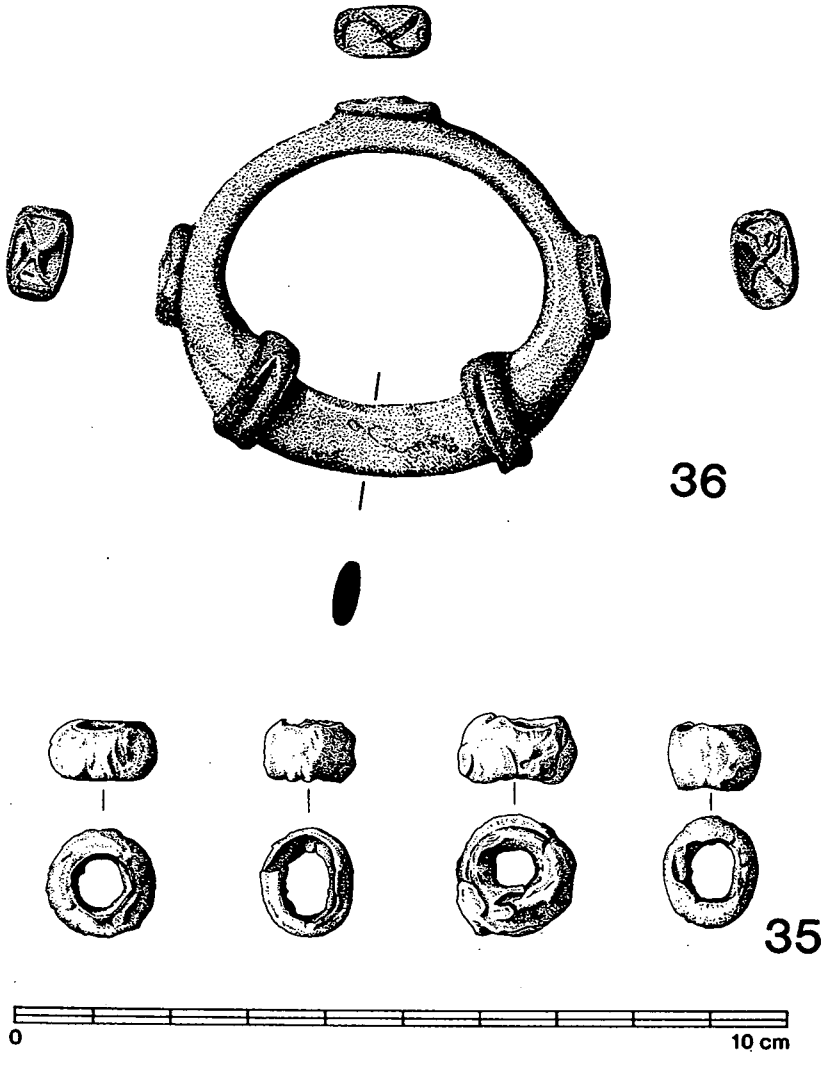

Fig. 9 Copper alloy objects from Great Chesters. 1:1 Drawn by M. Finch and E. Lazenby.

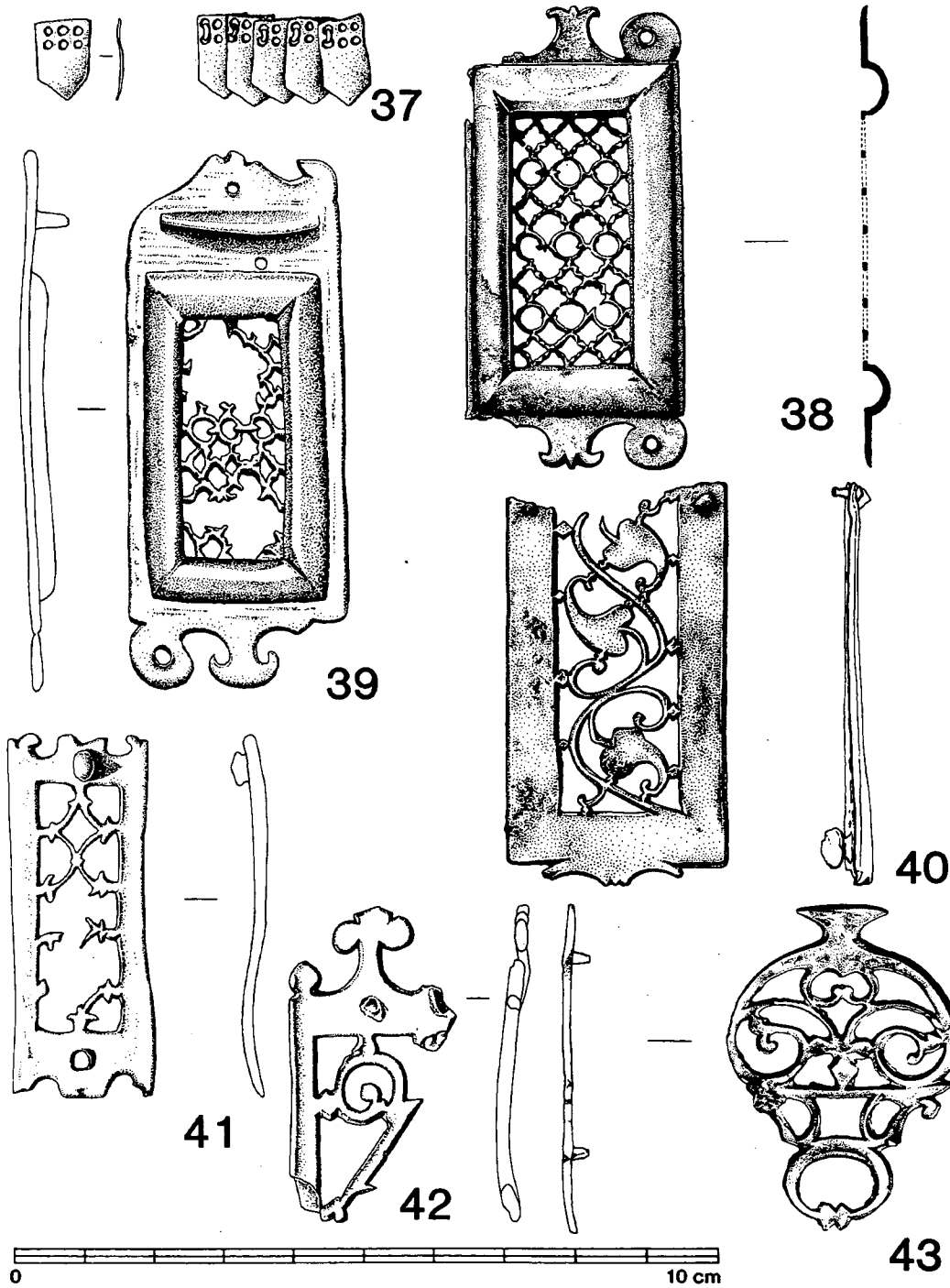

Fig. 10 Copper alloy objects from Great Chesters. 1:1 Drawn by E. Lazenby.

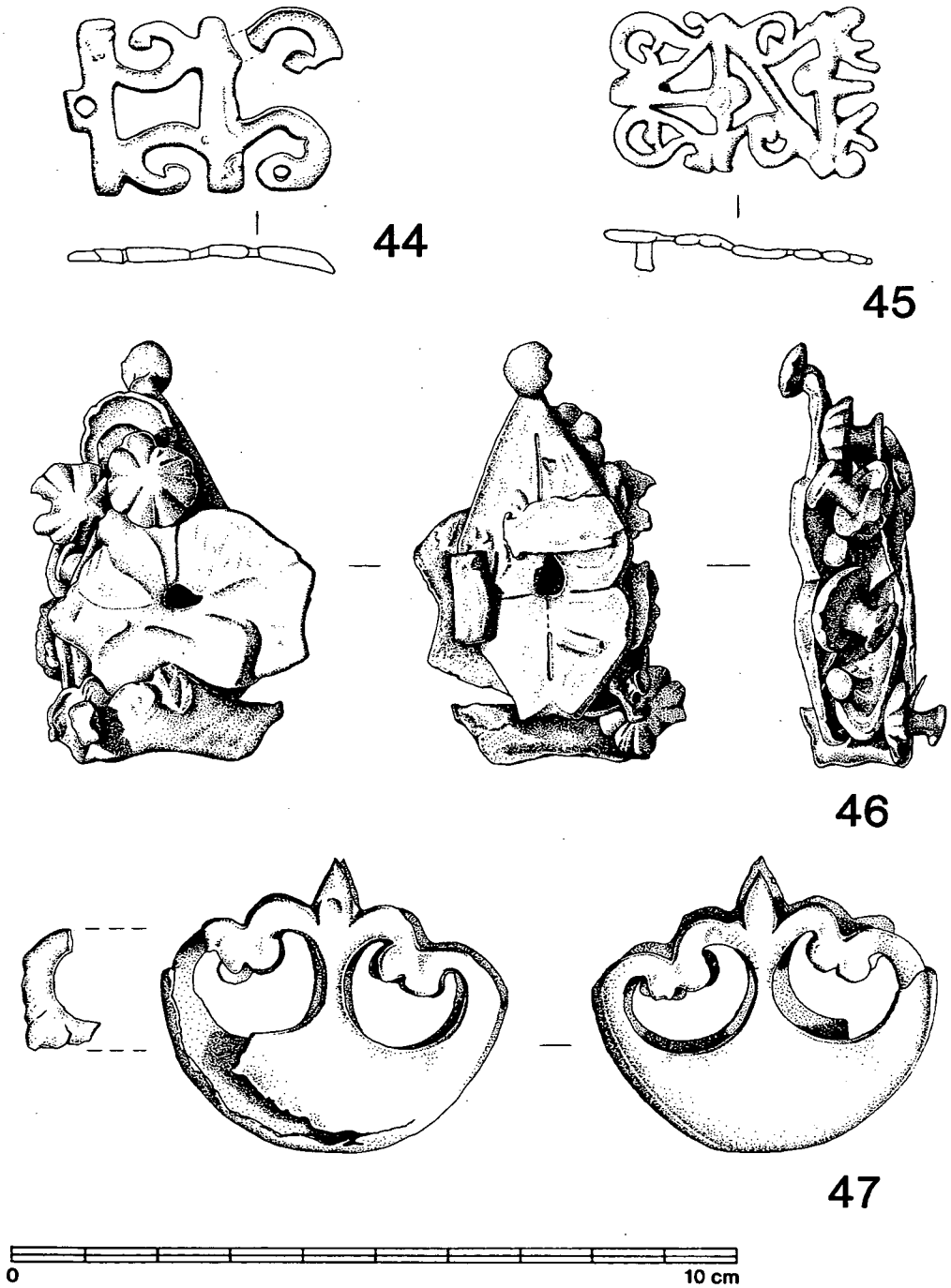

Fig. 11 Copper alloy objects from Great Chesters. 1:1 Drawn by E. Lazenby.

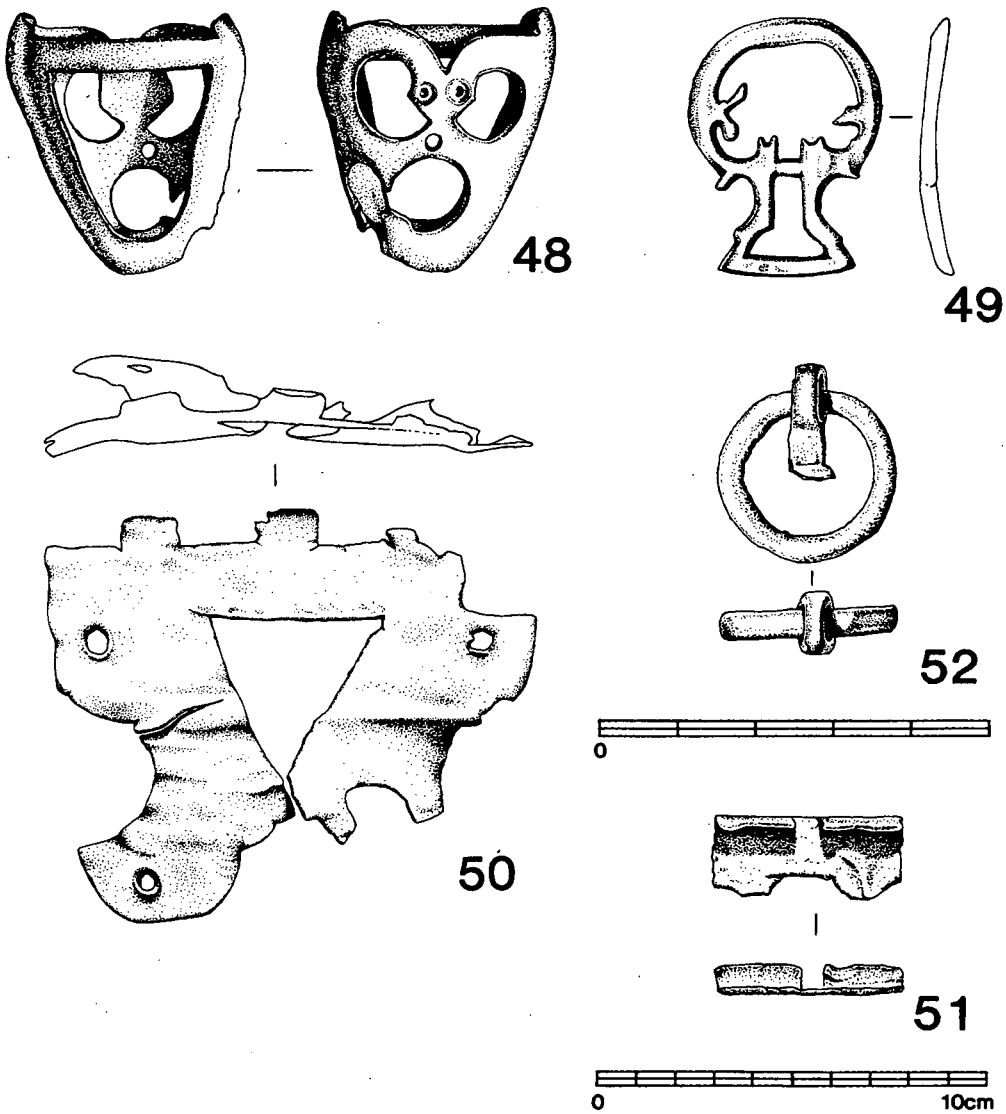

Fig. 12 Copper alloy objects from Great Chesters. 1:1 Drawn by E. Lazenby.

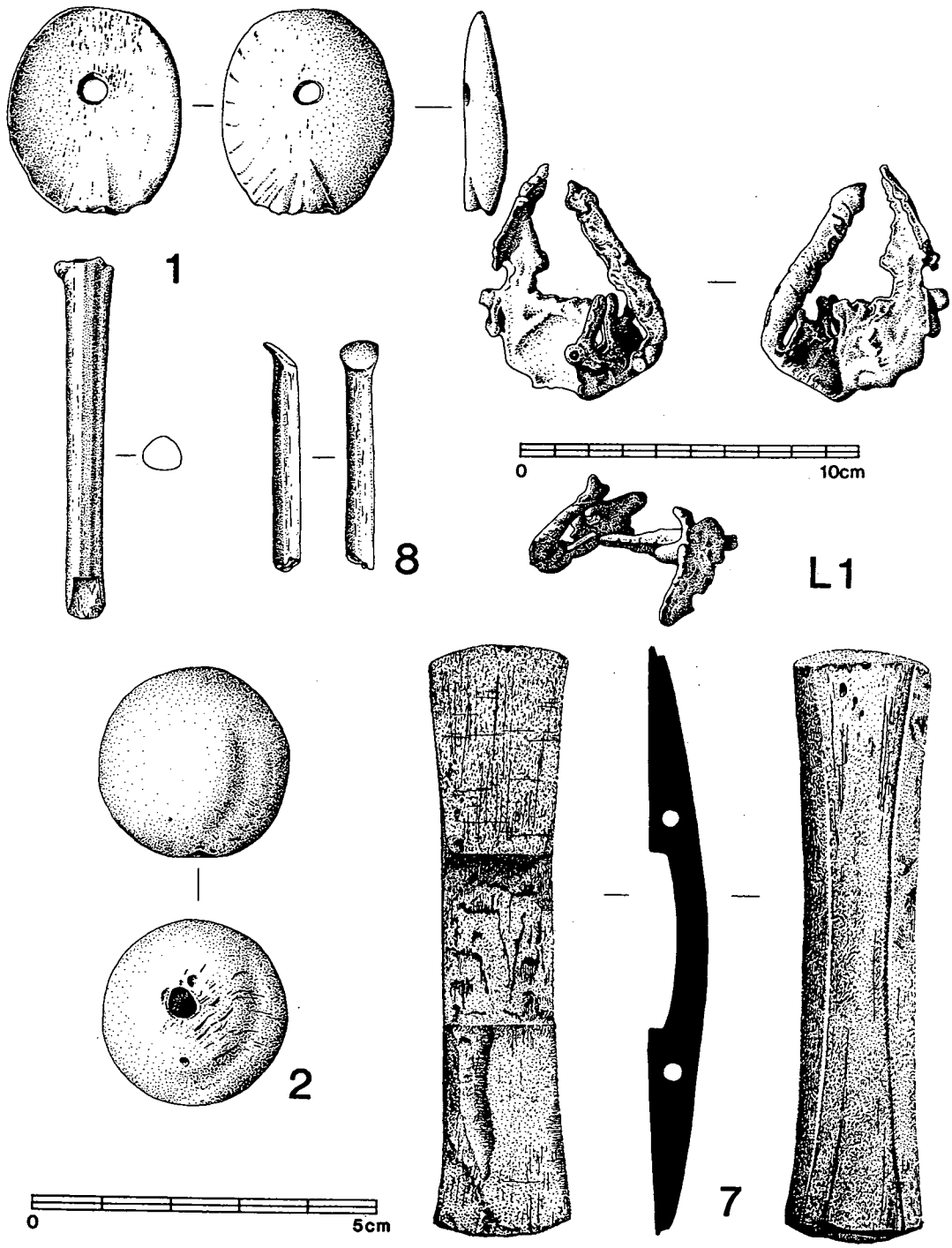

Fig. 13 Lead object (L) and bone objects from Great Chesters. 1:1 Drawn by E. Lazenby and M. Finch.

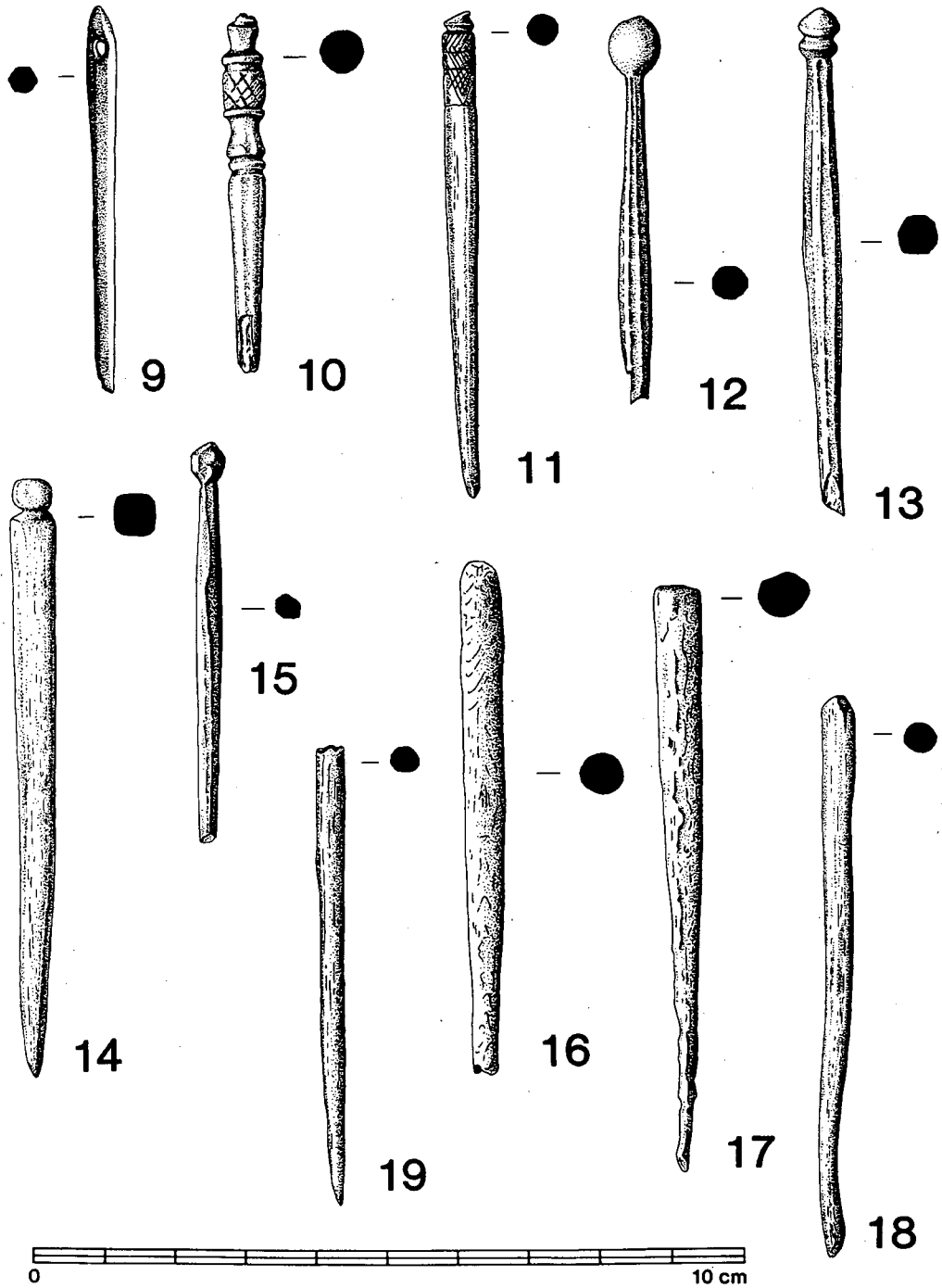

Fig. 14 Bone pins from Great Chesters. 1:1 Drawn by E. Lazenby.

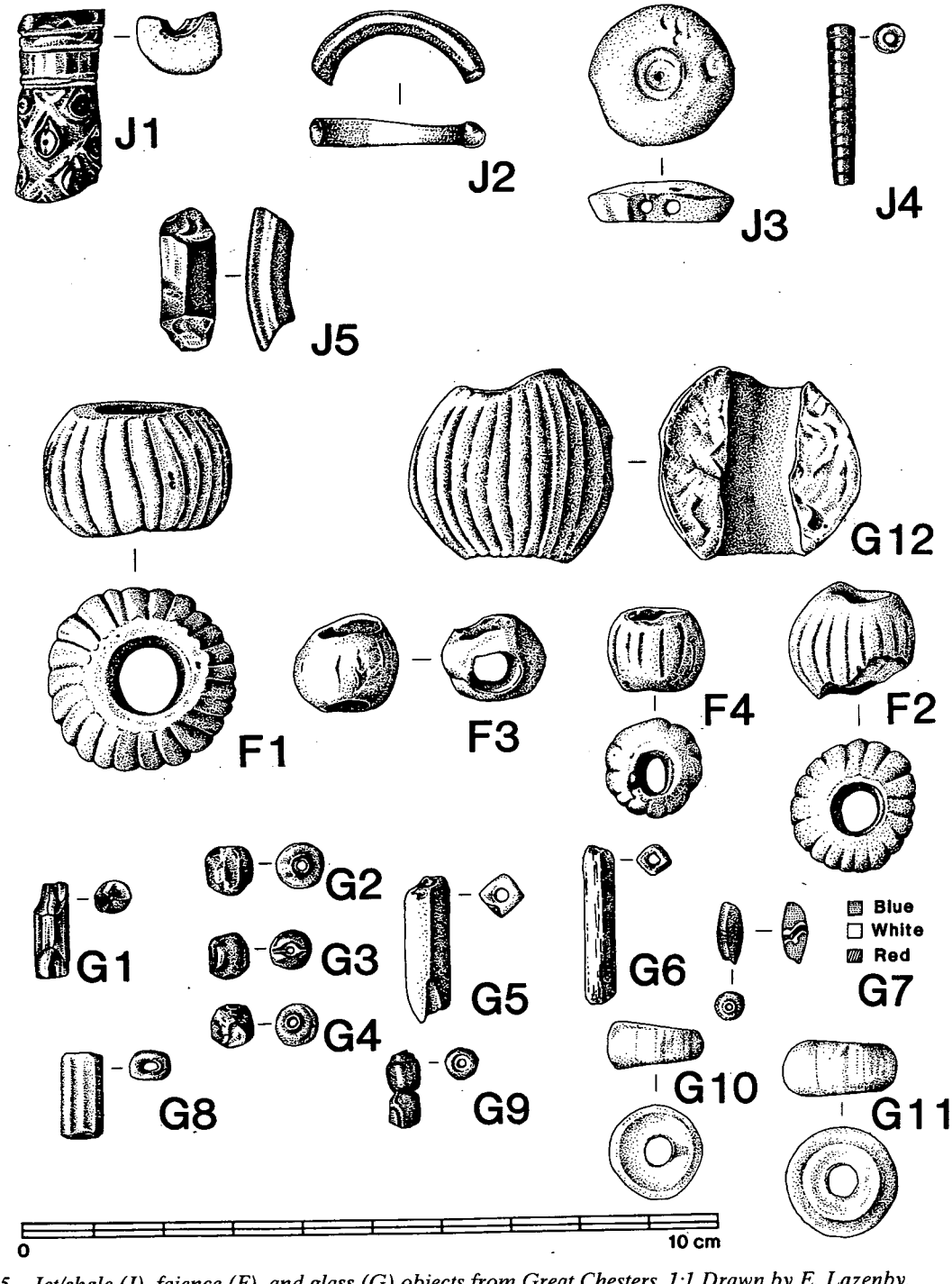

Fig. 15 Jet/shale (J), faience (F), and glass (G) objects from Great Chesters. 1:1 Drawn by E. Lazenby.