17. TALES OF EVERYDAY CLUTTER

Under the heading of "small finds" are the little things of various materials that reflect the daily humdrum of life and may recall intimate moments otherwise forgotten.

Personal adornment, clothing, money, and toys belong to a category of "small finds" outside the broad artifact classes that traditionally are deemed significant enough to deserve whole chapters in archæological reports. In spite of their relative insignificance, small finds often provide insights into life on the site. For example, five beads might conceal much deeper meaning.

MAGICAL BLUE BEADS

Blue glass beads, or other blue objects, have a long history of association with magic and supersition, both among Native American and African-American communities. In South Carolina, for example, blue paint on a house is supposed to ward off ghosts.

During the earliest settlement in Virginia, blue beads may have saved the colony. The Native "emperor" Powhatan was said to be especially fond of blue glass beads, which he exchanged for enough corn to sustain the colony (Noël Hume 1994: 194). Archæological collections in the Chesapeake reveal that blue and blue-and-white beads were the most popular on Native American sites during the seventeenth century (Stine, Cabak and Groover 1996:57).

Preferences for blue were found in many cultures, far removed from one another. When Lewis and Clark reached the Columbia River, they discovered that blue beads were the most highly valued by the local native people (Noël Hume 1969:54)

Blue beads are supposed to be proof against the "evil eye" in African and Middle Eastern societies. This superstition has been cited to explain the presence of blue beads on African-American slave sites (Fountain 1995:71).

Faceted blue beads similar to those found on this site were found in a slave cabin of circa 1834-1865 on Cumberland Island, Georgia, where they appear to have been prized objects (Ascher and Fairbanks 1971:9). Blue has been the dominant color of beads found on slave sites excavated in the South since that time (Fountain 1995:71).

Recent researchers have discerned a presumed ethnic preference for blue beads on African-American sites, while conceding that blue beads were the most available (Stine, Cabak and Groover 1996).

Other colors were favored on other central Delaware sites. Beads at the nearby John Powell plantation (*c*.1691-*c*.1716) included amber wire-wound glass beads from feature H11 (the house), and one small blue glass bead that was found in the well (Grettler, Miller, Doms, Seidel, Coleman and Custer 1995:99).

Among the other ornaments were a glass faceted jewel (Figure 87k) and sophisticated enamelled pieces (Figure 87 l, m). The discoidal quartz bead from Feature 34 (Figure 87f) is not easily attributed culturally.

THE RUSTY IRON COLLECTION

Among the artifacts recovered at Bloomsbury were many nondescript lumps of rusty iron, quickly dubbed the "rust collection," that included nails, strap iron, and objects best described as "lumps" of iron. More accurately, they were lumps of ferrous material, with very little actual metallic iron surviving. Most were so fragile that any attempt

to clean them would effectively destroy any remains inside. The lumps that did not attract magnets were deemed bereft of surviving iron, and were discarded.

Most were ambiguously identified in they would not attract a magnet. Yet they potentially contained valuable evidence.

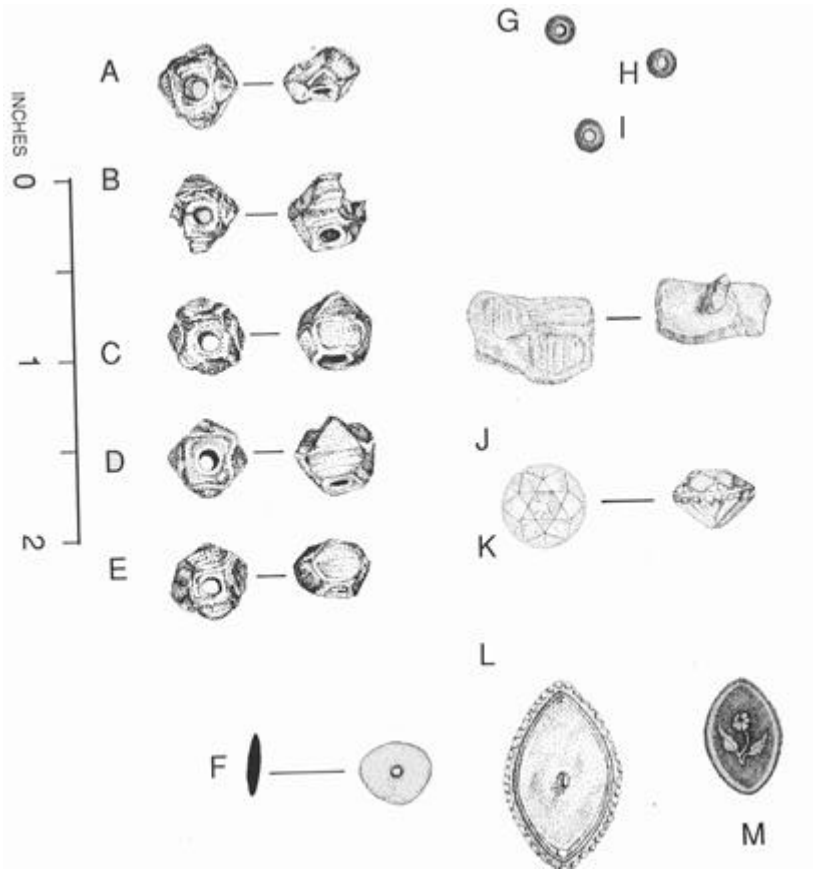
As a first step, the collection was bagged and sewed to thirteen cardboard panels. Now the various objects could be identified and retrieved. Each bag was given a number (Plate 52. page 227).

The cards were then taken to Dover Animal Hospital, to be x-rayed by Dr. Chris Coon. The resulting plates provide a permanent record, as well as insights into the contents of the ferrous lumps.

Most of the 596 rusty objects were 430 nails, but there were several other, more revealing, discoveries among the lumps. These other finds included a spinning wheel spindle, gun parts, and tool fragments. Some could be identified, using the remains and the excavationregister as "objects" or some such vague label. Some were so rusted that x-ray plates. Sometimes physical cleaning of the objects resulted in their destruction, but it was possible to recover their appearance by drawing.

Figure 87
Personal Adornment

The five blue glass beads (A–E) were found in the rectangular configuration shown in figure65, page 190 and in the west well. The ground quartz discoidal bead (F) came from basin-like feature 34 (42g). Black glass beads (G–I) were found in the flotation sample from feature 39 (64g), an irregular basin feature with a mean ceramic date of 1791. The heavily corroded pewter ornament, possibly a button (J) was a surface find (70c). The faceted glass jewel (K) was found in the east well, as was the enamelled metal ornament (L). The smaller enamelled ornament with a flower motif (M) was a surface find.



NAILS

Nails were especially interesting here because Bloomsbury was occupied just at the beginning of a major change in nail technology. Between the first occupation and demolition of the Bloomsbury property, nailmaking was transformed from a hand craft into a factory industry with heavy machinery. The materials and techniques of nail manufacture changed rapidly, so that nails may be a sensitive dating tool for buildings or sites of the period (Edwards and Wells 1993).

Machine-made nails (tacks, actually) were first manufactured in 1775, in Rhode Island. By 1795, several nail-cutting machines had been introduced, and wrought nails were going out of style in favor of the cheaper cut ones. One of the pioneering nail factories waswas in Kent County, at the mouth of Tidbury Branch (Fontana and Greenleaf 1962: 45; Heite and Heite 1989b).

Uses of nails were governed by rules, dictated by custom and by the different materials in a structure. Modern codes dictate the size and type of nail to be used. Therefore, it should be possible to analyse a building on the basis of the nails recovered from its site. To a certain extent, this may be possible in dealing with earlier structures; a log house will not require framing nails, for example, and a tile roof will not contain shingling nails. There have been a few attempts to extrapolate from the nails found at sites (Fontana and Greenleaf 1962: 61-64).

The best preserved nails from Bloomsbury were found in the wells (Figure 97), but the majority were plowzone finds. When recovered, plowzone nails resembled nothing so much as amorphous lumps of bog ore, encrusted with sandy concretion. Upon x-ray analysis, however, enough survived that the investigator was able to differentiate between wrought and cut nails with a relatively high degree of certainty. Only one cut nail was definitely identified, but some of the broken nails probably are actually cut.

Plate 52
Rusty iron artifacts bagged and attached to cardboard sheets, awaiting x-ray

While nail sizes have changed gradually over the years, there is general consensus concerning traditional sizes. In Delaware, nails are sold by penny size, abbreviated "d" at hardware stores, but in Canada and in some parts of the U. S., the newer measurements in inches or centimeters have prevailed. The lengths as measured by the various systems, roughly, compare as follows (Adams, Smith, Barton, Riordan and Poyser 1981:352) :

Traditional	Millimeters	Inches
2d	25	1
3d	32	$1\frac{1}{4}$
4d	38	$1\frac{1}{2}$
4.5d	42	$1\frac{5}{8}$
5d	45	$1\frac{3}{4}$
6d	51	2
7d	57	$2\frac{1}{4}$
8d	64	$2\frac{1}{2}$
9d	70	$2\frac{3}{4}$
10d	76	3
12d	83	$3\frac{1}{4}$
16d	89	$3\frac{1}{2}$
20d	102	4

Measurable nails from the rusty iron group were distributed as follows:

2d.....37	4d..... 62
6d.....41	8d..... 23
10d.....5	20d..... 2

The small nails probably were used in trim or shingles attached to a house that was built virtually without nails. Clapboards and plaster would have required a large number of small nails. The near absence of large nails probably reflects log construction that was the commonest type in the area during this period.

For the sake of comparison, the following nail array was reported from Johnny Ward's Ranch (Fontana and Greenleaf 1962: 63), a nineteenth-century Arizona site:

6d..... 113	7d..... 16
8d..... 54	9d..... 27
10d..... 92	12d..... 16
16d..... 9	20d..... 4
40d..... 4	

Since the Ward house was adobe walled, nails would have been needed in the framing and wall structure, much as they were at the presumed Bloomsbury site log house or houses.

At both Bloomsbury and the Ward site, the quantities of sizes described a rather even distribution curve that probably reflects the builder's nail-choice intentions. As Fontana had suggested, nail-size tabulation should reflect building practice and types of construction.

Unfortunately, few sites have been analysed for nail-content during the ensuing 35 years. In the few cases where nail analysis has been attempted, it has not been published in the scholarly journals. Some agencies, notably St. Mary's City in Maryland, register nail finds in a way that may be compatible with the Fontana and Greenleaf report.

Machine and wrought nails were found together in the 1811-1830 Astor Fort Okanogan, in Washington State. The authors observed that machine-made nails were slow to arrive in the far west (Grabert 1968: 20). Nail size distribution was:

wrought	*cut*	*centimeters*	*size*
47	15	2 - 4	2d-4d
31	5	4 - 4.5	4d - 5d
71	9	5.5 - 6.5	8d
26	24	6.5 - 8	9d - 12d
28	0	8 - 9	12d-16d
1	2	12+	20d +

The late-nineteenth-century townsite of Silcott, Washington, contained both wire and cut nails, which were reported from four sites, all framed buildings (Adams, Gaw, and Leonhardy 1975: 142, 166, 198, 219). The nails were tabulated:

length in millimeters	*Bill Wilson Store*		*Trapper Wilson House*		*Weiss Ranch Dump*		*Ferry Tender Site*	
	cut	*wire*	*cut*	*wire*	*cut*	*wire*	*cut*	*wire*
15-20	1	8	0	2	0	0	0	3
20-25 (1")	0	10	0	6	0	0	0	3
25-30	1	231	0	108	0	0	0	75
30-35	3	77	0	87	0	0	0	35
35-40	12	115	2	64	1	0	0	92
40-45	5	115	0	89	1	0	0	6
45-50 (2")	11	338	0	61	4	5	0	289
50-55	10	606	2	77	0	0	0	138
55-60	12	50	0	14	0	0	0	152
60-65	12	355	3	116	1	2	0	156
65-70	6	77	0	37	1	2	0	176
70-75 (3")	8	83	0	42	0	0	0	37
75-80	15	119	0	43	0	0	0	118
80-85	3	78	4	8	0	0	1	108
85-90	1	17	0	4	0	0	0	235
90-95	1	13	0	9	0	0	0	66
95-100 (4")	4	63	0	2	0	0	0	164
100-105	0	183	0	41	2	2	1	94
105-110	0	22	0	9	0	0	0	95
110-115	0	6	0	2	0	0	0	171
115-120	1	3	0	1	0	0	0	121
120-125 (5")	0	1	2	1	0	0	0	1
125-130	1	6	0	1	0	0	0	4

These distributions reflect an increased popularity of longer nails, probaby reflecting the abundance of steel with the resultant cheapening of nails. This cheapness, in turn, made it possible to use nails where pegs and log notches previously had held together the body of the house.

At the late-nineteenth-century Bay Springs mill in rural Mississippi (Adams, Smith, Barton, Riordan and Poyser 1981) Resource Analysts, Inc., attempted to sort and interpret

common cut nails from several sites:

site:	*1103a mill*	*1103b mill*	*1103d mill*	*1105 store*	*1109 barracks*
tack	784	96	2141	73	453
2d	13	0	0	1	23
3d	108	2	2	1	6
4d	221	0	831	17	35
4.5d	0	4	0	0	0
5d	155	0	154	0	19
6d	208	12	713	3	93
7d	50	12	136	4	42
8d	217	12	664	6	21
9d	148	6	125	6	18
10d	152	152	1303	11	37
12d	48	19	328	0	9
16d	1	2	58	0	1
20d	0	0	15	2	0

Bay Springs sites being newer, nails were predictably more abundant. Since most of the Bay Springs construction was post-Civil War, the relative abundance of larger nails (10d and above) may reflect a change from pegged braced frames to nailed balloon framing.

The Bloomsbury nails were decidedly smaller, indicating that the main structure of the house was fastened without nails. A low count of nails appropriate to shingling may reflect a clapboard roof, or a pegged, rather than nailed, shingle roof.

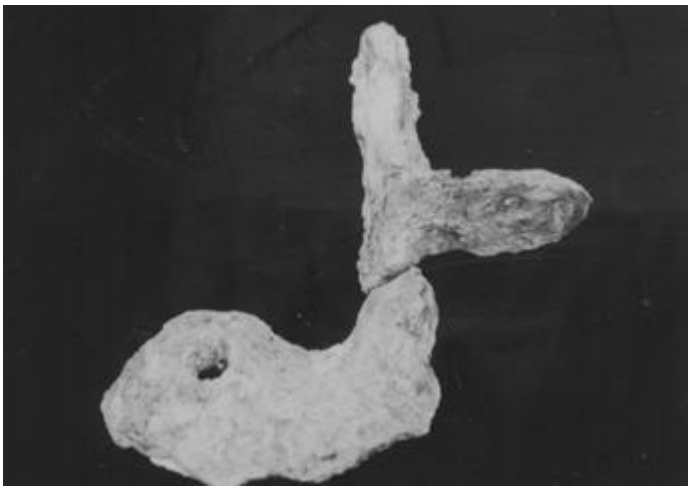


Plate 53
Gun Fragment

The bottom of this flintlock hammer was found in the surface material. The top part was found in the east well, 180g. See figure 92 for a drawing that illustrates the two parts separately.

BUTTONS

Buttons have not always been considered useful implements. Originally they were purely decorative, and the decorative aspect remains important. Because they were objects of fashion, buttons are highly changeable objects. The button collection from Bloomsbury consists largely of surface collected artifacts, but the site's isolation suggests that most were lost during the period of occupation.

Stanley South began the task of classifying archæologically recovered buttons with a paper delivered in 1963, and a poster issued with the paper, upon which subsequent typologies have been based (South 1964). A chart of 32 broad types based on South's research is the standard framework to this day (Noël Hume 1969:91).

Bloomsbury site produced buttons that fall primarily into South's types 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11. They are shown in Figure 88 (overleaf), grouped roughly by South's sequence. These types belong to the middle years of the eighteenth century, and were categorized by South using an assemblage dated 1726-1776 (Noël Hume 1969: 90).

BUCKLES

During the period when the site was occupied, buckles were used on clothing, shoes, and harness, as well as luggage and parts of wagons. The various types of buckle each adhered to their own styles, which may lead to identification.

Buckles often were made of several different materials, which might lead to their destruction. A brass buckle frame typically would have iron pins and tongues, paste decorations, and tin plating. Iron parts would rust, leaving the brass frame to be discovered, with little if any of its decoration in place (Figure 90).

Figure 88

Buttons from Bloomsbury, illustrated on the facing page

Approximate attributions to South types are given as possible, but variations are recognized.

Row 1: “plated” brass type 9 (182g), brass type 9 (174a), tinned brass type 9 with well-soldered eye (174c)

Row 2: brass type 9 with well-soldered eye(174c), brass type 9 with well soldered eye (56c), tin-plated brass type 9 (182h), brass with well soldered eye (78c), very thin “plated” brass type 9 (55b)

Row 3: “gilt” stamped type 9 (64e), tinned brass type 9 with stamped face design (182ab), very thin brass type 9 (55c), brass type 9 with traces of gilding on reverse (129d), heavily worn and bent disk the size of a halfpenny (136c), “plated” with no eye (56b), brass type 9 (180v)

Row 4: decorated type 10 brass (180i), brass type 9 (176a), brass decorated with well-soldered eye (64d), fragment probably from a brass disk button (136c)

Row 5: brass type 7 (180b), plated eye missing type 10 (180e), pewter with eye cast in place (63a), brass type 7 (204b) well-made brass type 7(182i), plated brass type 8 (141a), brass type 7 spun back with eye cast in place (145)

Row 6: pewter type 8 with eye cast in place in boss (70b), white metal type 7 with eye cast in boss (41b), type 8 tin-plated brass (201a), plated brass type 8 cast with eye in boss (70c), cast white metal type 7 (41b), brass with stamped floral pattern type 7 (55b), pewter type 7 with eye cast in boss (174c)

Row 7: brass type 7 (180b), brass type 7 spun back with eye cast in place (174a), brass type 8(11), plated type 8 (56a), plated brass type 4 with beaded edge pattern (129a), plated similar to types 7 and 8 but without spun black or mould seam (175a)

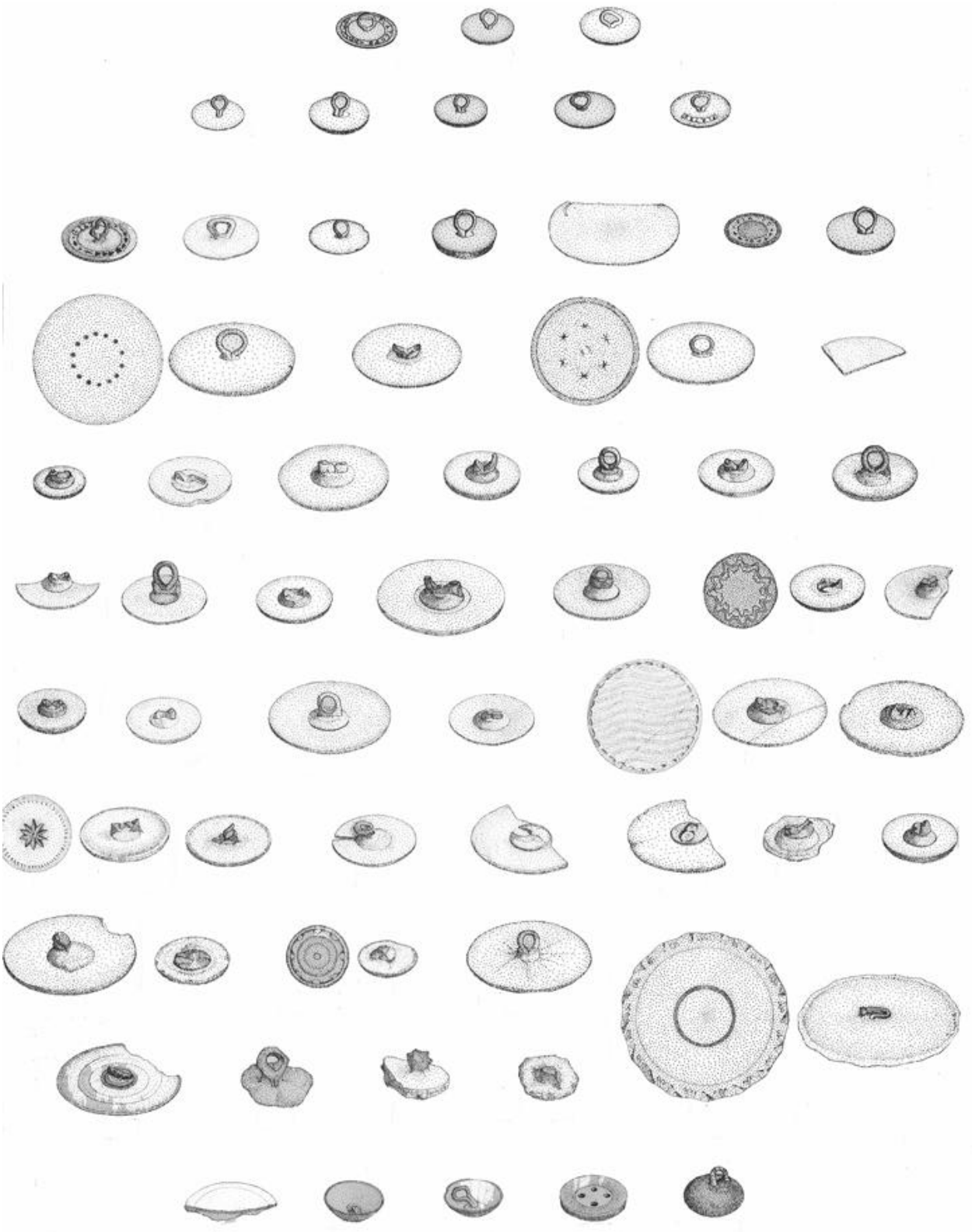
Row 8: tinned brass disk button with stamped design (182ab), convex brass tin-plated type 8 (204c), brass type 8 with eye cast in boss (179e), brass type 8 (64f), broken pewter type 8 with foot of eye in boss (141b), pewter type 7 with spun back and foot of eye set in boss (82a), plated type 8 with eye cast in boss (13c)

Row 9: tinned domed brass button with well soldered eye (182ab), tin-plated brass type 8 (212b), white metal with engraved floral design on face (180k), similar to South type 7, cast-in eye (182o), tin plated type 9 with decoration (141b)

Row 10: domed brass type 8 (55b), badly battered pewter type 11 (209b), badly battered pewter fragment (179d), corroded pewter button or stud (71b)

Row 11: (1), brass domed button with eye missing (182a), domed type 9 with well-soldered eye (129a), synthetic material with four holes (182i), black glass with iron eye (47i)

Illustrations by Aaron Livingston Jones



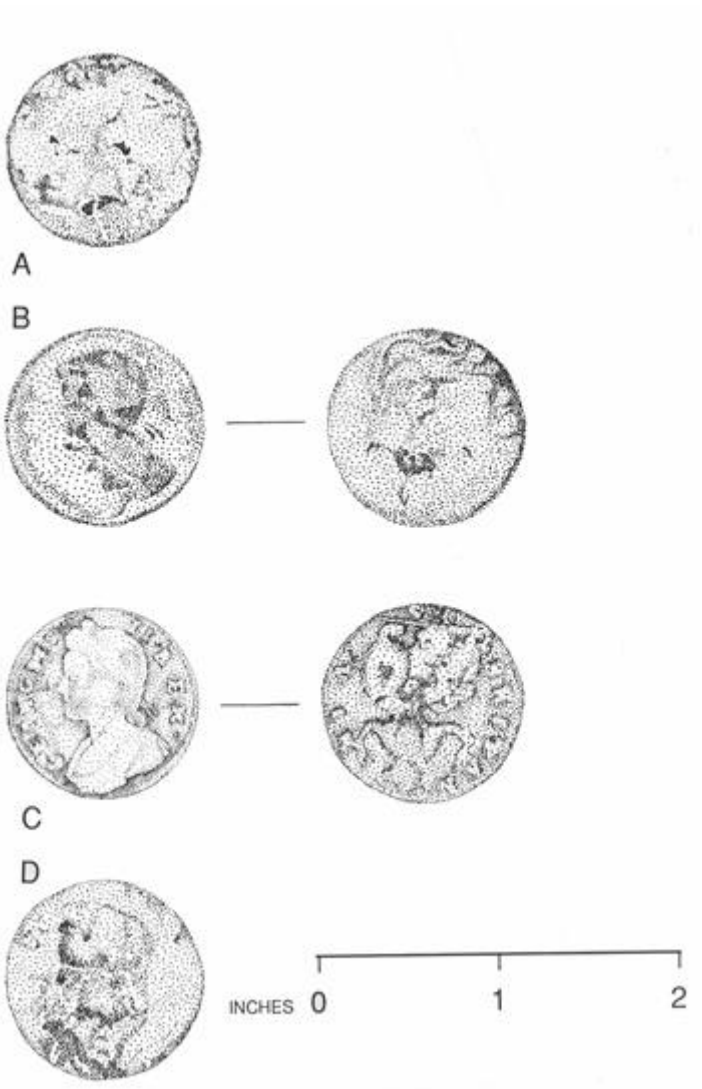


Figure 89
Legal tender

These four English halfpennies all were circulating before they were lost at Bloomsbury, even though only one of them is still reasonably legible. Coins were scarce, and mere illegibility was no reason to refuse a copper, since most people would not be able to read the inscriptions anyway. The upper two coins were found in the east well, and the lower two were found in the surface of square 1130J, within the house itself. All appear to be George II coins, but only two retain any semblance of the King's profile and the inscriptions. The east well was dug about sixty years after the probable issue date of the coins, during which time the upper two coins probably circulated regularly.

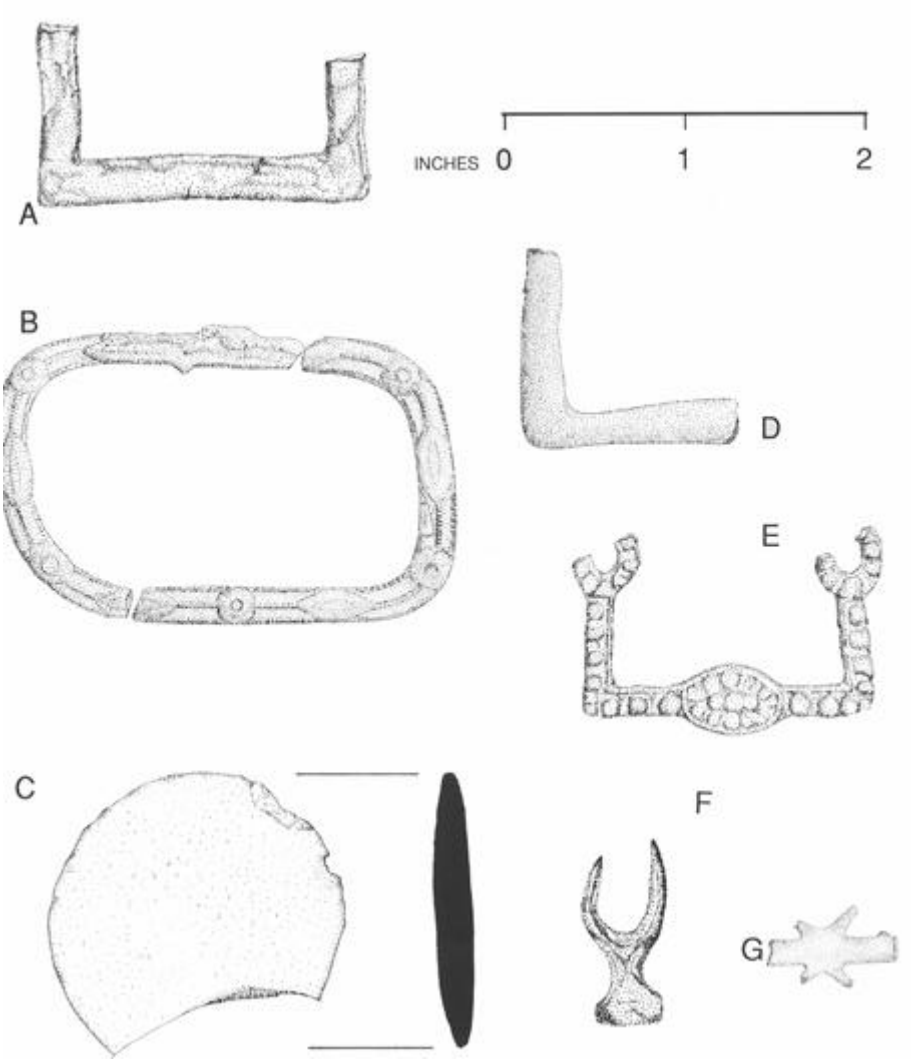


Figure 90

Buckles and one lens

Most of the buckles were surface finds, but B was found in the west well fill.

In the process of rusting, iron parts might expand and cause the brass frame to crack.

The four buckles from Bloomsbury reflect the full range of elaboration. Plain examples (Figure 90 a and d) might have been harness or shoe, but the two elaborate buckles (b and e) certainly were from shoes. All were surface finds except b, which was from two different backfill deposits of the west well. The tongue, F, was also from the surface. An unidentified object, G, appears to be part of an openwork buckle frame (Noël Hume, editor 1973: 25-53).

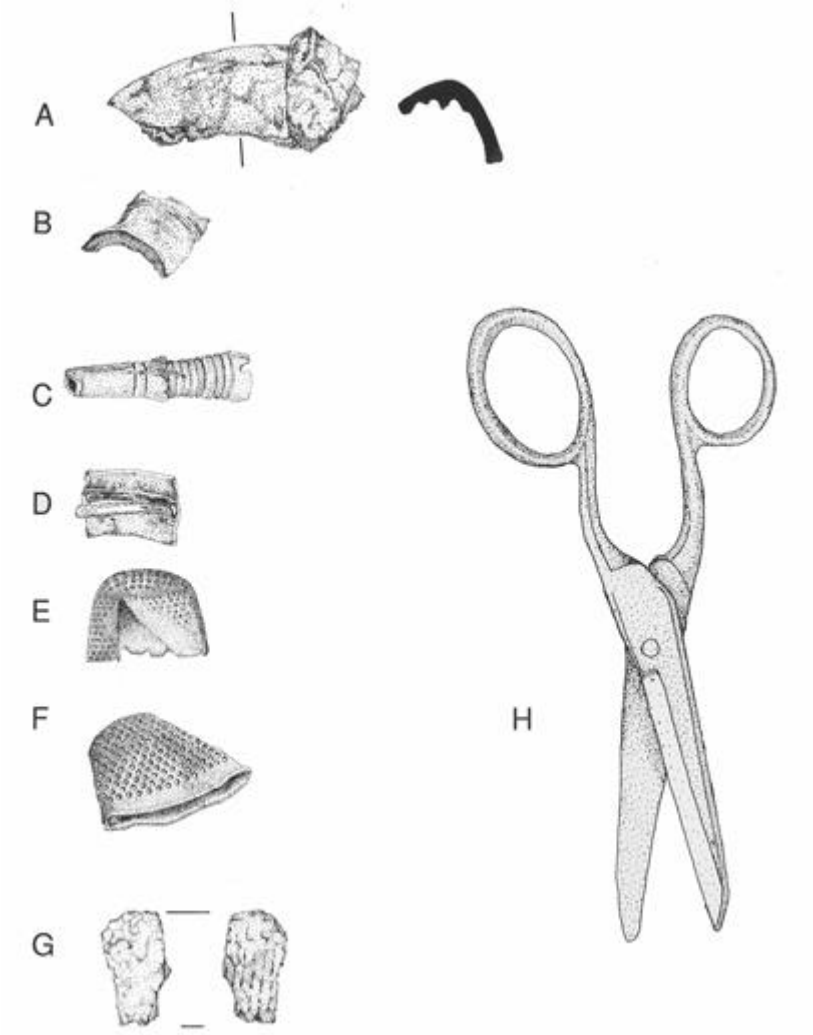
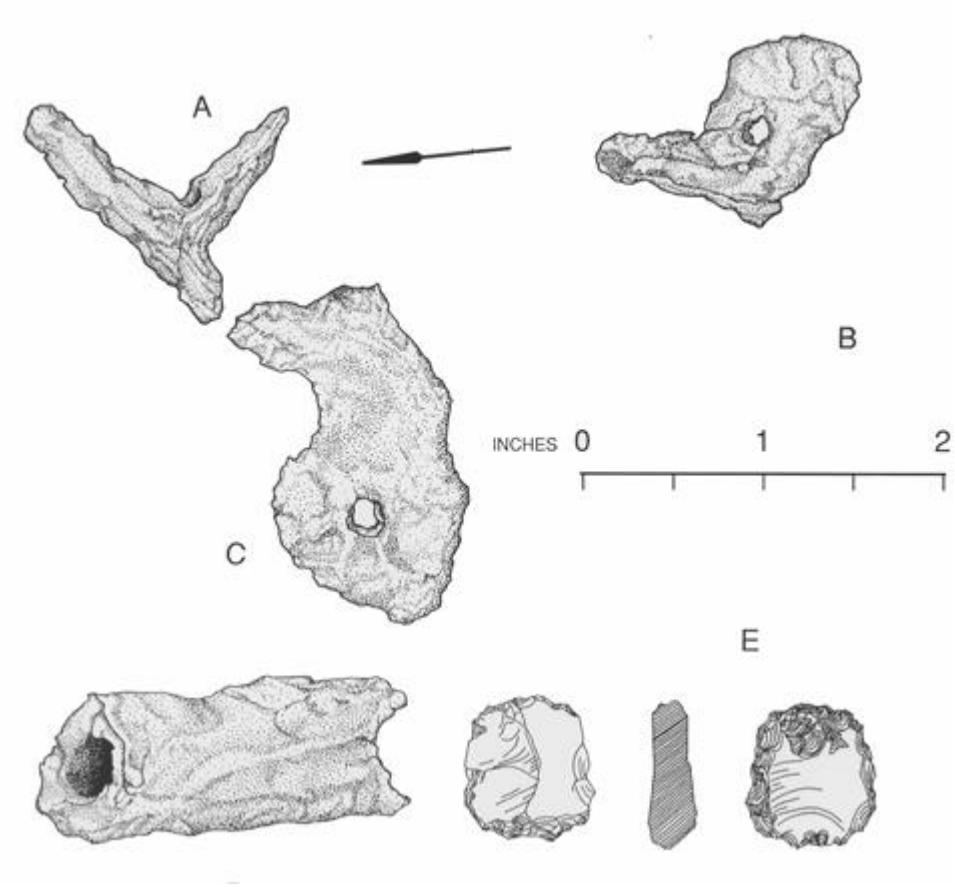


Figure 91

Sewing and household activities

A. and B. parts of a brass spigot, from the surface, 70c and 182i; C. bone or ivory tubular object, possibly part of a syringe (Noel Hume 1966:63), from a surface unit, 63; D. scrap of brass, 180h, the east well; E. thimble, possibly intentionally torn; F. thimble from the presumed pump shaft, 137g; G. pewter ornament, possibly a button, 175d; H. Scissors from the east well, 180ab. All are shown full size except the scissors, which are printed half size.



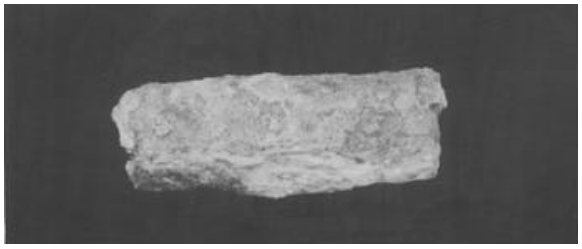


Figure 92

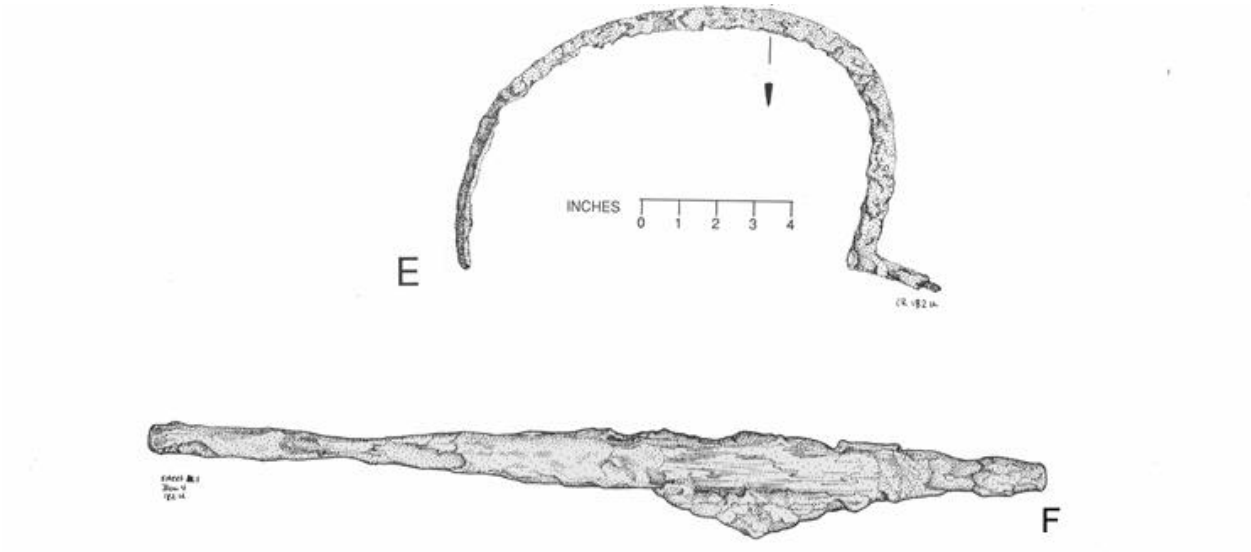
Gun parts

Parts of at least one firearm were found among the rusty iron on the surface. These consisted of a hexagonal barrel segment, with a bore of about .40 calibre, and a flintlock hammer was found in two pieces. The upper part of the hammer is shown in top perspective view as well to illustrate the screw hole The gunflint was found in the slump over the western well, 182i, the same deposit as the barrel fragment; it appears to be locally made of a grey flint. The photo of the barrel fragment shows a different aspect.

Figure 93

Gun parts, a spindle, and a sickle

The top row are lead shot found on the surface. The first two are well preserved, with sprue scars intact, while the third is heavily weathered and deformed. The brass ram rod pipe also was found on the surface. The nearly complete sickle was found in the bottom of the west well. Its cross-section, as shown, is thicker than usual. The spindle shaft at the bottom (full size) is probably from a flax wheel. Flax was a popular crop in central Delaware during the eighteenth century.



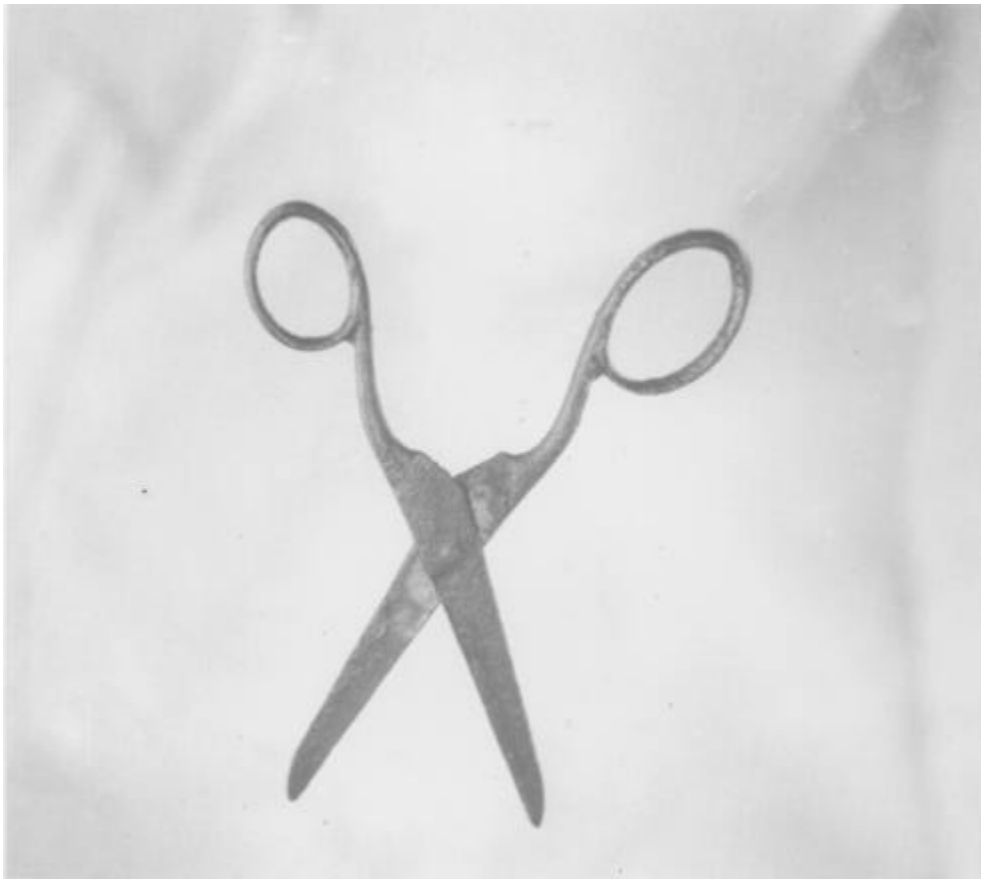


Plate 54

Scissors

This pair of eighteenth-century scissors was quickly cleaned and restored to usable condition soon after it was removed from the well.

COCK OR SPIGOT

A smashed brass spigot (Figure 91a, b) was found among the surface materials. Such spigots were essential to the use of liquids stored in kegs or barrels. Sometimes the handles were shaped like roosters' heads, a play on the term "cock," which in turn is said to have been derived from the resemblance of such spigots to the bird. The term remains current among plumbers today, referring to such spigots as the "hose cock" or spigot on the side of a house.

A nearly identical, but intact, brass spigot was found at Wetherburn's Tavern in Williamsburg, Virginia (Noël Hume 1969b:28).

A slightly more elaborate example, exhibiting the "cock's comb" feature of its handle, was found at the Browning site in Virginia (Buchanan and Owen 1981: 148).

The presence of a spigot indicates that liquids in barrel-size quantities were used. Typically beverages were purchased in cask and then decanted into bottles for the end user, which explains why the Wetherburn spigot should be expected in a tavern. At Bloomsbury, where only a handful of bottles were found, a spigot is difficult to explain in terms of decanting beverages. Unless it came to the site as scrap metal, the spigot could have been used for dispensing water.

SCISSORS

The scissors were still in working order. After a quick dip in a solvent-based rust inhibitor (WD-40), the scissors from the bottom of the east well were ready to use. Several complete, valuable and useable tools were found in the east well fill, indicating that the occasion for its abandonment was unusual. A family moving away would have preserved usable goods, but workmen clearing a site are likely to throw everything away.In addition to the scissors, usable tools included a pair of needles connected by a thread, in the manner of a shoemaker's needles. The tin cups may have been intact when they were discarded, too.

A round profile of the haft (the parts between the eye and the joint) is considered an eighteenth century characteristic (Noël Hume 1969: 267). Relatively broad blades and off-centered eyes are considered early characteristics, found on a seventeenth-century specimen from Pemaquid, Maine (Bradley and Camp 1994:111).

This pair resembles later eighteenth-century examples, however, with its more graceful shape. The nearest excavated local parallel was found at the Grant Tenancy site, in New Castle County (Taylor, Thompson, Snyder and Gardner 1987: 84), a property occupied during the first half of the nineteenth century. A near parallel example was recovered from a late nineteenth-century site in Texas City, Washington (Carley and Sappington 1984: 120).

LENS

A glass disk appears to be a lens, but modern opticians were unable to identify the shape as the corrective lens of a pair of spectacles (Figure 90c). In gross appearance, the lens seems to be part of a pair of rimless glasses. Because the lens was in the plowzone, it is heavily abraded and has no context.

The breaks in the perimeter appear to match fittings on a rimless eyeglass lens, but the artifact remains a mystery.

TOOLS FOR MAKING A LIVING

Although faunal evidence indicates that hunting was not high on the site occupants' food-procurement agenda, firearms were present on the site. All the gun parts and shot illustrated here were found in the plowzone, but they are consistent with the period of the property.

The gun barrel fragment (Figure 92) is from a weapon about .40 calibre, with a hexagonal barrel. A piece of similar length and calibre, of very early date, was found in the Post Office well at Williamsburg (Noël Hume, editor, 1973:4).

The gunflint (Figure 92e) is an apparently American product that has been heavily used. The hammer, found in two pieces, was revealed by x-ray to have a square hole.

More closely related to livelihood were a sickle and the spindle from a wool spinning wheel. Aside from these items, artifacts relating to rural income-production were relatively rare on the site. Maybe such tools were considered too valuable to discard, or were kept somewhere else on the property. Because the site contained no obvious barn remains, the latter interpretation may be more plausible. Rural homesteads without significant agricultural appurtenances are unusual in the archæological literature. Only one half of a horseshoe, for example, was found, and there are no bits or other harness parts typically found around a farm's work area.

The spinning-wheel spindle shaft (Figure 93f) recovered from its rusty envelope appears to be from a spinning wheel, possibly a large "walking wool wheel." Part of the shaft is square, to lodge firmly in a bored hole through a wooden spindle, while the rest is round for ease of use with yarn. Such spindles were used on spinning wheels and on the earliest machine spinners. In this case, it probably is a remnant of the home industry (Adams, Smith, Barton, Riordan and Poyser 1981:158).

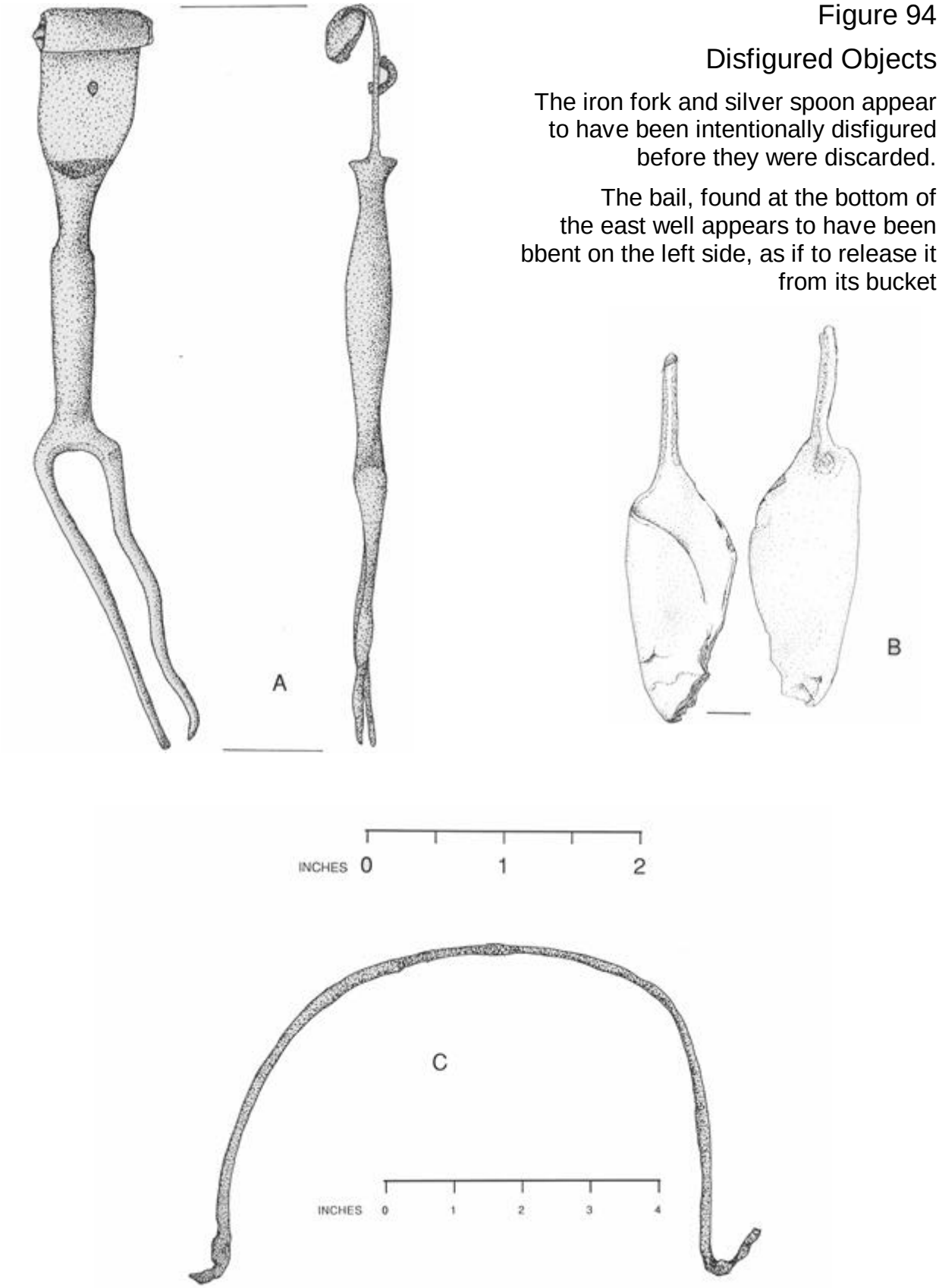


Figure 94

Disfigured Objects

The iron fork and silver spoon appear to have been intentionally disfigured before they were discarded.

The bail, found at the bottom of the east well appears to have been bbent on the left side, as if to release it from its bucket

Farm laborers, working with their employers' tools and livestock, should leave behind a small but recognizable quantity of farm and horse implements. Even though tenant sites have been investigated, investigators have not always drawn the distinction between a mere laborer and a person who rents and operates a farm on his own account.

DOMESTIC AND PERSONAL

Eating, washing, and other intimate activities are best illustrated from the bottom of the east well, probably representing the last occupation of the site when Thomas Consealor was tenant.

Some objects in this deposit appear to have been disfigured before they were discarded. The fork and spoon in figure 94, for example, could not have been dismantled and bent as shown without intentional purpose.

A similar two-tined fork was found at the site of Marlborough, Virginia (Watkins 1968:159), in a context before 1750. Noël Hume (1969:182) illustrates another fork of this style, dated to the middle eighteenth century.

As if in contrast, a knife in the west well, the parts of which are shown on figure 96, was discarded intact except for a broken blade. A very similar knife of mid-eighteenth-century date was reported from Pemaquid, Maine, broken at the same point along the blade (Bradley and Camp 1994: 183). The artifacts in Figure 95 also are from the same 180ab deposit, and therefore date to the early nineteenth century.

Knives and forks evolved during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as eating practices changed. Forks became popular for ordinary citizens near the end of the seventeenth century, and knives changed to conform to a more specialized purpose.

Before forks, the knife was the main table utensil, with a sharp point that made it basically a one-tined fork as well as a cutting utensil. When the fork was introduced, knives became broader, reflecting their changed roles as cutting and lifting tools. The assymetrical "pistol grip" handle design yielded during the eighteenth century to the squarer, more symmetrical, style of the example in Figure 94. Forks followed the same trend, although a pistol grip on a fork is, or should be, mere decoration (Bradley and Camp 1993:178-181).

Bone-handled knives and forks from Bloomsbury all featured flat "scaled" handles, with flat tangs, onto which two-part grips or "scales" had been riveted. Earlier English tableware, by contrast, tended to feature tapered "rat-tail" tangs driven into bored solid handles (Noël Hume 1966b:58). At the second Lightfoot trash pit excavation in Virginia, Kelso (1967:61) found only knives with rat-tail tangs.

On French-Canadian sites, both rat-tail and scaled grips were known from earliest settlements, but the rat-tail grip was the dominant form during the seventeenth century (Faulkner and Faulkner 1987: 240). From the John Powell plantation near Cheswold, a much earlier site, there was a fork with a similar decorative shape, but with a rat-tail tang (Grettler, Miller, Doms, Seidel, Coleman and Custer 1995:98).

At the William Strickland site (c.1726-c.1764), which immediately predated Bloomsbury, a total of 21 knives, forks, and spoons were recovered. These utensils included a knife with a narrow blade, typical of the earlier styles, and pistol-grip scaled handles. There were also scaled utensils with symmetrical butts (Catts, Custer, Jamison, Scholl and Iplenski 1995: 65).

At a British site dating from the 1670s to the middle eighteenth century, symmetrical scaled handles were found in contexts of *circa* 1675 and *circa* 1700-1720. The other handles on the site, with rat-tail tangs, exhibited a range of decoration and shape (Thompson, Grew and Schofield 1984: 104). Although many site reports include cutlery, this potentially sensitive interpretive tool has never been exploited to its full potential by archæologists.

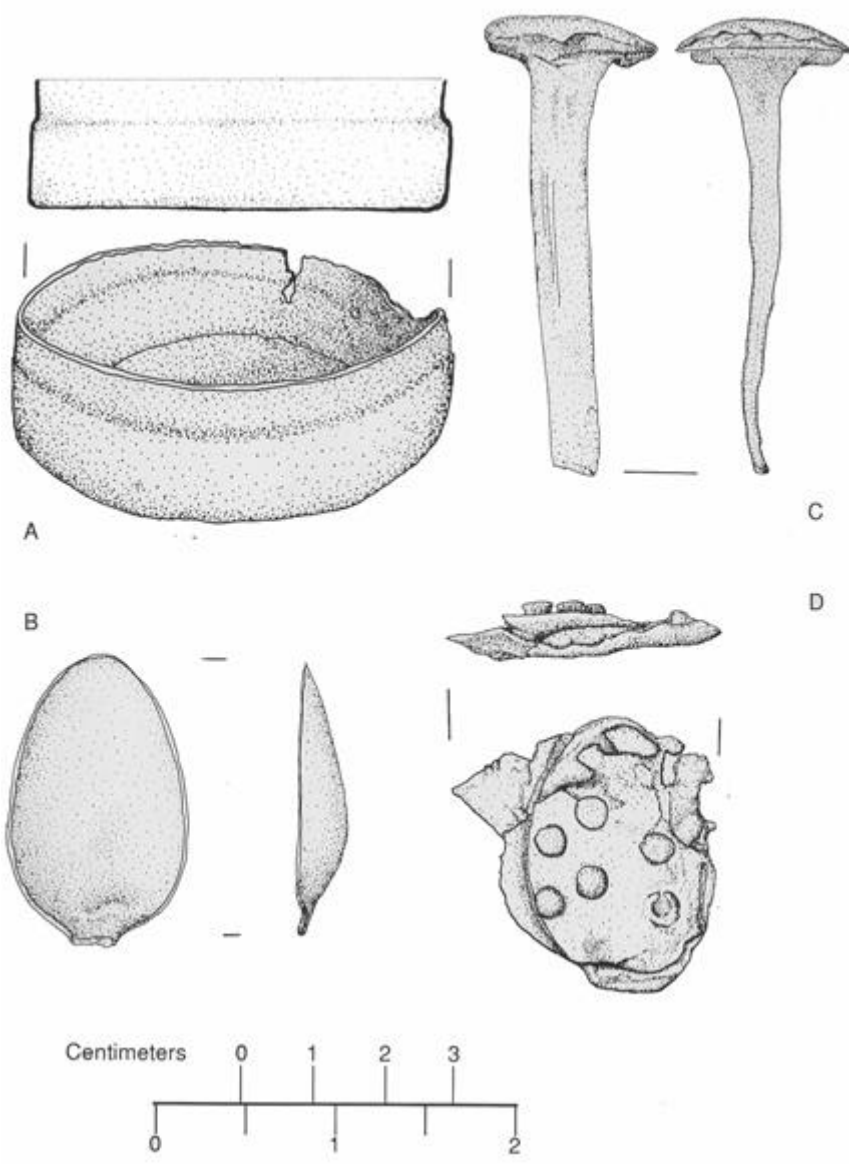


Figure 95

Items from the bottom of the east well

These articles are from the bottom of the east well, 180ab. A. The snuff box is similar to an example from the French and Indian War Fort Ligonier (Grimm1970:167). B. The spoon bowl appears to have been intentionally broken. C. Large-headed spikes like the one found here were often employed as rivets to bind wooden members, such as planks on a boat; a washer would be placed over the point before it was peened. D. The lead bale seal is unmarked.

The fork, the bail, the scissors, tin cups (Figure 94), a clay pipe bowl (Figure 81h), were among the deposit in 180ab, the wet bottom of the east well. Also in that deposit were many pieces of leather and two curved needles connected by thread (Figure 117d), that may indicate that Consealor was involved with leatherwork. Earlier Loatman connections with leatherworking are documented, but thirty or forty years before the east well was filled.

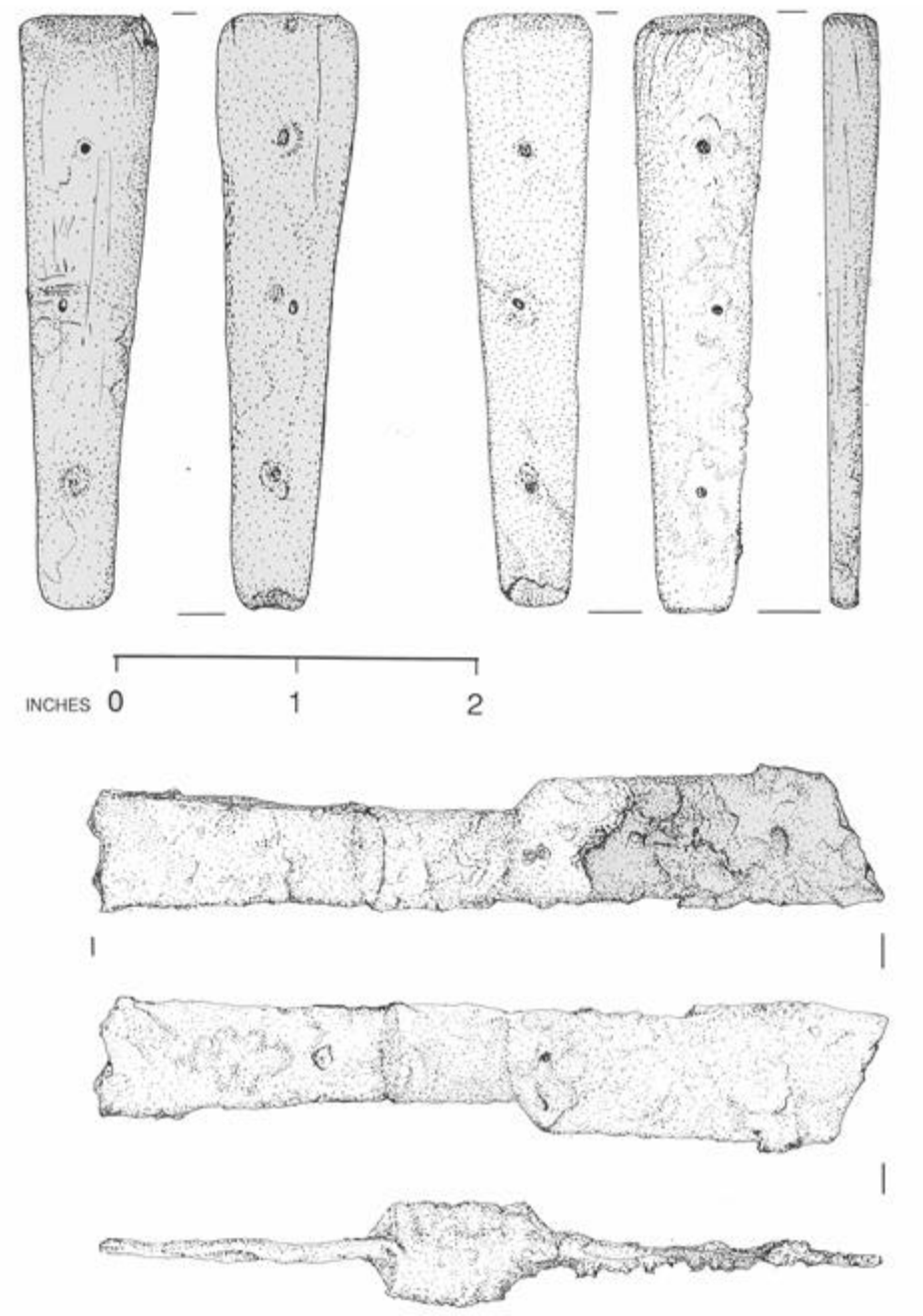


Figure 96

A bone-handled knife

This knife was found in the west well, 182ad. The bone handle had come loose when the iron rivets rusted and the rusting tang expanded.

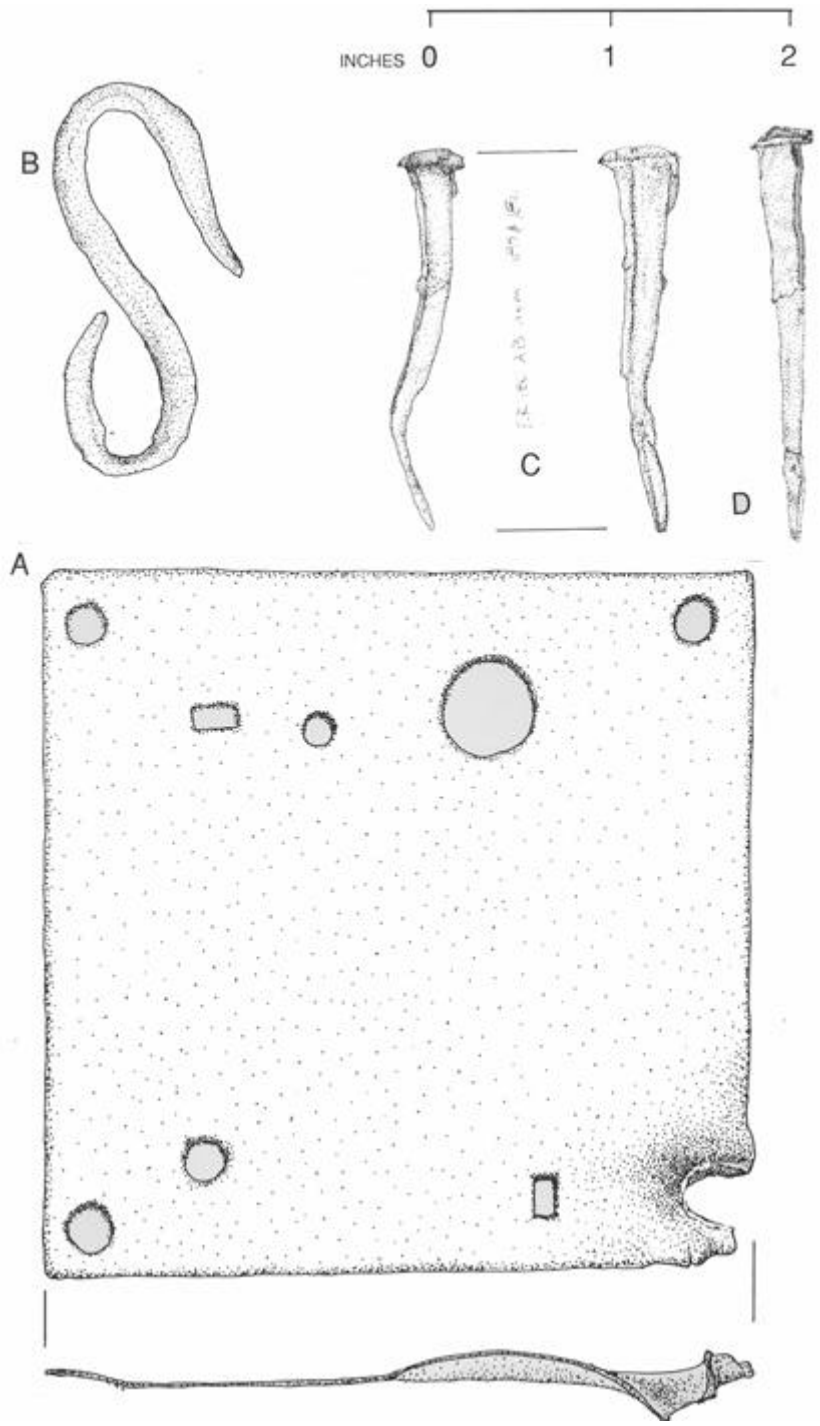


Figure 97

Hardware from the east well

The S-hook probably was used to suspend the cook pot. It is shown half size. The nails are typical of the wrought nails from the site, and may actually be from the well structure. The lock plate probably is from a cabinet rather than a door. It has been wrenched off.

The tin-plated snuff box parallels older specimens from Fort Ligonier, a frontier site in Pennslvania from the French and Indian War (Grimm 1970:167). A spoon bowl is still another broken item without additional disfigurement. The lead bale seal, item D, may have been salvaged for its metal content. The unusual spike, item C, may have been a wagon part, possibly secured as a rivet by peening over a washer at its point after it was driven through boards.

Lighting is absent. There are no recognizable remains of candlesticks or lamps of any kind in the entire assemblage.

Artifacts associated with sanitation and personal hygiene included two or three red earthenware chamberpots, one of which is illustrated in Figure 80, and possibly the tin basin described in chapter 19.Two objects of uncertain purpose are shown in Figure 98. The most numerous "mystery objects" were short pieces of twig, which apparently had been cut to lengths of less than two inches. They were found at the bottom of the east well. It has been suggested that these twigs may be leftovers from dyeing or some other extraction process.

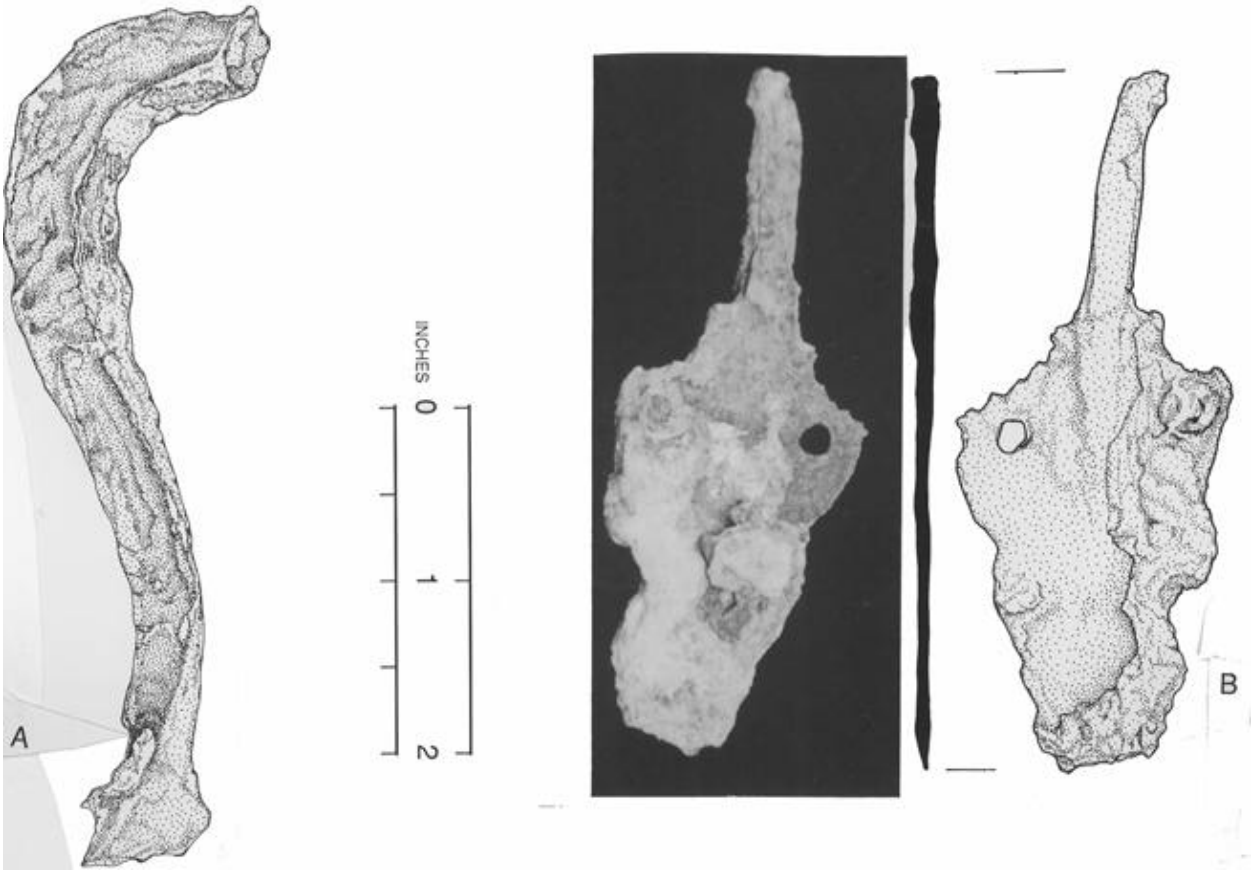


Figure 98

Hardware of unknown purpse

The wrought-iron bar-shaped object appears to be a door latch handle, but a rather substantial example, or maybe it is the tang of a heavy tool. The broken left end is flattened, but the rest of the object has a square profile. The other object apparently was attached to leather, and may be part of horse furniture. The flat part, at left, was drilled and copper-alloy grommets or rivets were passed through the holes. The tang end has been bent.