

## 6 Other Finds *by Fraser Hunter*

### 6.1 Iron objects (including numbered objects; [illus 4](#))

#### 6.1.1 Fittings and fastenings

**1** Sub-rectangular binding, tapering in plan to one side, section varying from flat rectangular to slightly plano-convex; one side dented. Timber clamp, perhaps used in carts (cf Newstead; [Curle 1911](#), pl LXV, 1–2, 4). L 132mm, W 85mm, H 34mm, T 4mm. Found with nail. Context 007 (upper fill of Well 008)

**2** Collar, subcircular, fragment missing; flat lentoid section. It lacks the stop ridge of a water pipe collar, and its morphology is wrong for a wheel hub rim; probably a clamp for fastening timbers, like (1). H 36mm, T 7–8.5mm, D 114mm. Context 015 (fill of Drain 016)

**3** Rectangular bar, slightly curved lengthways, ends squared, edges and corners rounded. No indication of fastening method – perhaps intended to slot into two substantial timbers, or perhaps unfinished. L 310mm, W 47mm, T 13mm. Context 015 (fill of Drain 016)

**4** Pivot? Rectangular-sectioned bar (22 × 10mm), one end slightly stepped down on one side before being drawn into a perpendicular rod (D 14mm) with expanded, flattened end. The corners of the other end are elongated into blunt points, apparently intact; one is longitudinal (L 8.5mm, W 6.5mm), the other (which may be a differential corrosion feature) slighter and perpendicular (L 3mm, W 5mm). No parallels have been found; the upturned end could function as a pivot with the bar slotted through a supporting frame, but this is speculative. L 142mm, H 46mm. Context 027 (= Context 017, upper fill of Ditch 031)

**5** Vessel handle fragment? Circular-section curved rod fragment, rather fine for a ring (with extrapolated D 100mm) and more likely a handle from a vessel. D 6mm, L 71mm. Context 039 (fill of medieval Pit 040)

**6** Looped peg. Rectangular-sectioned bar (21 × 7.5mm), tapering to a point, the upper end thickened (to 21mm) and slightly angled; the top corner is drawn into a sub-square rod (W 12–13mm), curved downwards to form a loop (internally 33 × 26mm). L 285mm. Similar examples from previous Cramond excavations were identified as tent pegs ([Holmes 2003](#), 117–18, nos 29–31), but they could equally be tethering pegs ([Schalles & Schreiter 1993](#), 275, nos 46–7; [Manning 1995](#); [Mould 2002](#), 86–7, no 66). The type is also known at Mumrills ([Macdonald & Curle 1929](#), fig 124, no 1). Context 028 (fill of Pit 032)

Not illustrated: Handle. Rather irregular rectangular-sectioned bar (20 × 9mm), tapering to a rounded bent tip at one end. The other end is flattened into a trapezoidal fastening plate (63 × 29 × 2.5mm), with two axial perforations (D 7–7.5mm); it is bent and broken, consistent with levering upwards to detach it. L 252mm. Markedly less corroded than the other ironwork, suggesting it is intrusive. Context 017 (upper fill of Ditch 031)

#### 6.1.2 Tools and weapons

**7** Chape for a dagger? Sub-circular flat object, hollow,

opening damaged but there are hints it was straight. Small surviving copper-alloy fragment at the mouth may come from a scabbard. Must be of two-part construction, although no technical details are visible as wood traces obscure the surface. 25 × 21 × 5mm. Context 017 (upper fill of Ditch 031)

#### 6.1.3 Unidentified

Not illustrated: Two flat sheet fragments with surviving straight edge. 25 × 23mm, 19 × 15mm, T c 3.5mm. Context 007 (upper fill of Pit 008)

Not illustrated: 11 flat sheet fragments, one with a turned edge, two bent through 90°. Probably from a fitting or mount, although insufficient diagnostic features survive for certainty. Context 015 (fill of Drain 016)

Not illustrated: Sheet fragment, no original edges, slightly curved, wood traces in corrosion on one side. 38 × 31 × 2.5mm. Context 017 (upper fill of Ditch 031)

#### 6.1.4 Nails

Thirteen typical square-headed nails were recovered from a range of contexts ([Table 2](#)), too few for detailed analysis. Five were intact, with lengths from 41 to 86mm; the head size of fragmentary ones (8.5–24mm) implies a wider length range was present. Of the nine reasonably intact nails, three were bent from removal while one was clenched. Two non-standard nails were also present.

**8** Horseshoe nail of ‘fiddle-key’ type, the tip bent back to hold it on the hoof (for Roman horseshoes see [Manning 1976](#), 31). L 47mm, head 13 × 10mm, shank 6mm. Context 019 (upper fill of medieval Pit 020)

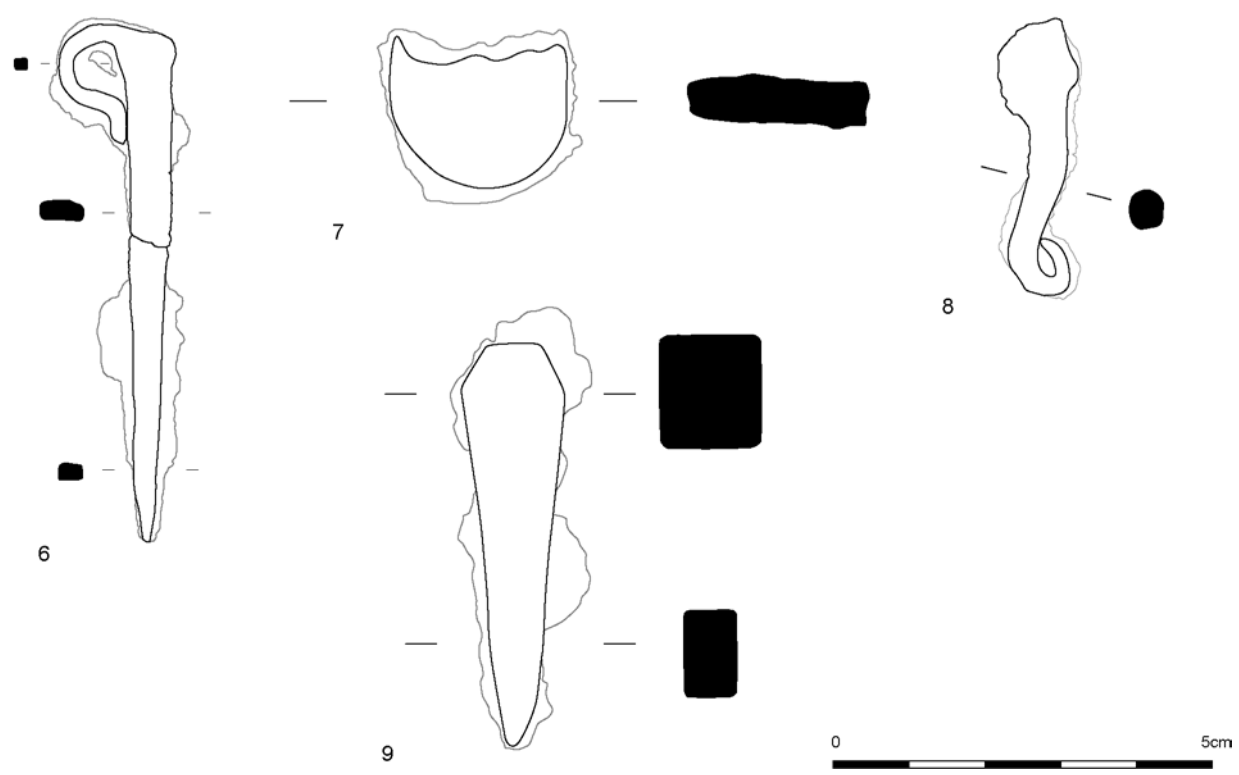
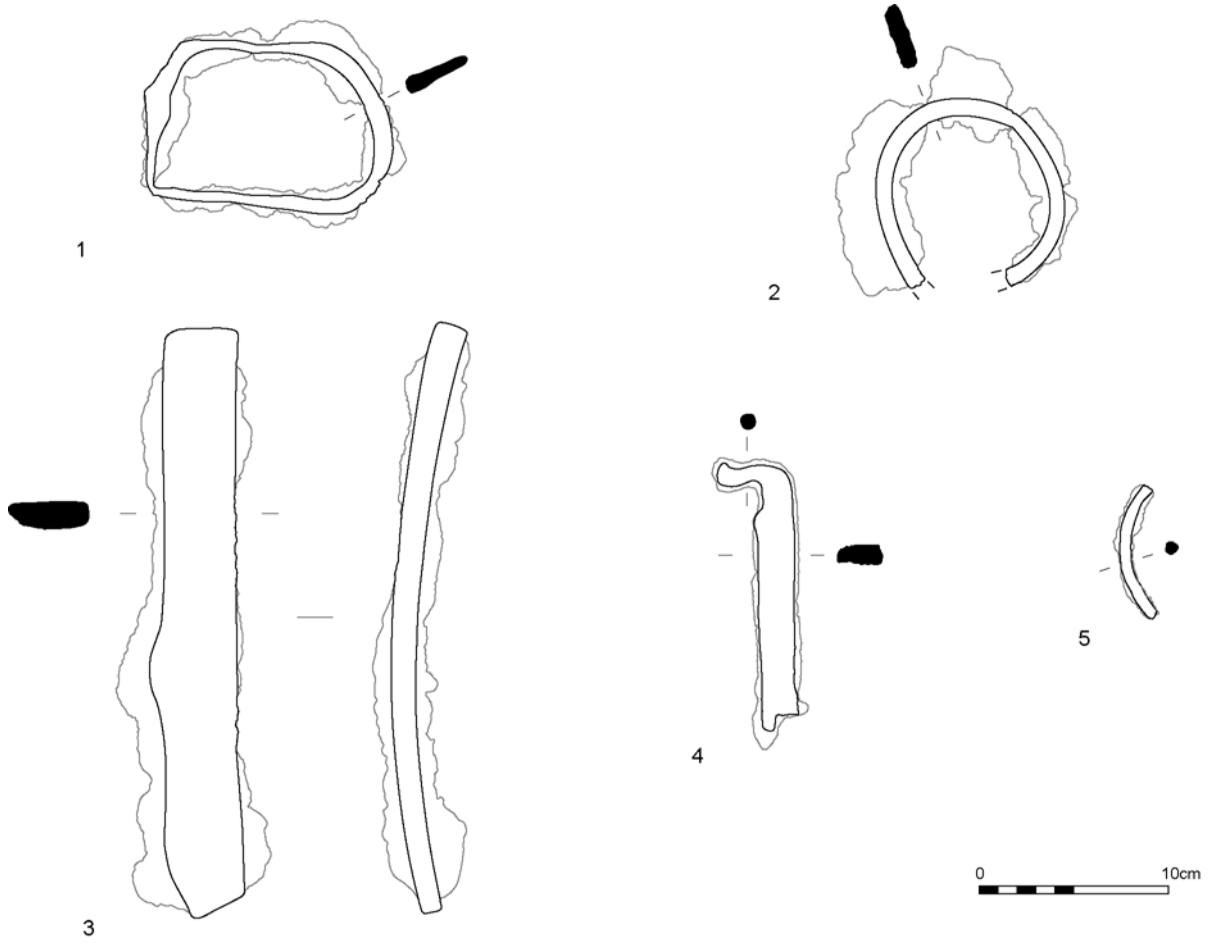
**9** Intact nail embedded in wood remains, with a decorative square head, the edges chamfered; a decorative stud as much as a functional nail. L 54mm, head 9mm, shank 6.5mm. Context 024 (fill of Pit 025)

#### 6.1.5 Hobnails and tacks

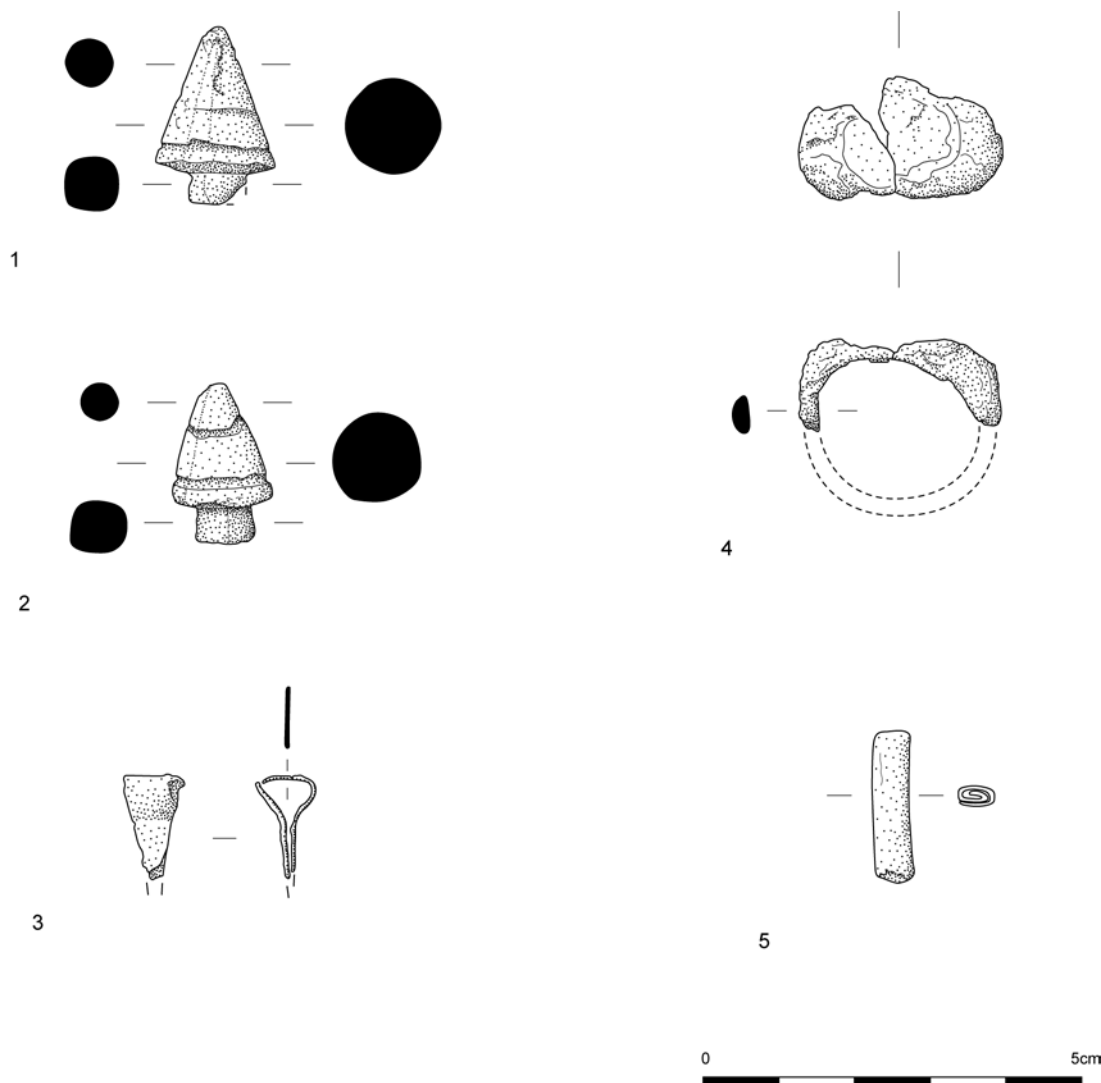
Ten hobnails were recovered from a range of contexts ([Table 2](#)). Most were domed, but one was conical. In context 007, the upper fill of the well, five hobnails embedded in fragments of iron-impregnated leather imply a shoe sole was deposited; others are corroded together at odd angles, and must have been separate. There was also a larger dome-headed tack.

### 6.2 Copper-alloy objects ([illus 5](#))

Alloy types were determined from surface X-ray fluorescence analysis by Laurianne Robinet.



*Illus 4 Iron objects*



*Illus 5 Bronze and lead objects*

**1** Conical helmet rivet, cast and hammer-finished, creating a faceted surface; crude decorative grooves at base and midpoint; the short attachment tang (L 4mm, D 7.5mm) is slightly damaged, suggesting it was lost in use. Heavily-leaded bronze. H 24mm, D 16mm. Context 015 (fill of Drain 016)

**2** Conical helmet rivet, as (1) but slightly better finished and undamaged. Heavily leaded bronze. Tang L 5mm, D 7.5mm. H 21mm, D 13mm. Context 017 (upper fill of Ditch 031)

A number of similar rivets, used to fasten brow-peaks and strengthening guards on late second- and third-century helmets (eg [Junkelmann 2000](#), 146, 158), have been found previously at Cramond ([Rae & Rae 1974](#), 194–5, nos 11–12; [Holmes 2003](#), 105). The late second- to early third-century context of (1) suits this date; (2) is from the upper fill of Antonine Ditch 031, but this infilling may be Commodan–Severan. The heavily leaded alloy would be ideal for casting.

**3** Unused rivet of ‘paper clip’ type, bent over but the arms not folded back. The alloy, a leaded gunmetal, is surprising for a sheet artefact (for which unleaded alloys are normal), suggesting a degree of expediency. Such rivets are known from the Iron Age to the medieval period, and

are of no help in dating this isolated feature. 13 × 8 × 7.5mm. Context 021 (upper fill of Cut 022)

**4** Finger ring; the flat hoop (mostly lost) expands smoothly into a broad oval bezel, intaglio missing. Henig type V, common in the second and third centuries ([Henig 1978](#), 35, 37; [Johns 1996](#), 48). Leaded bronze. Setting 16 × 12mm, bezel W 16mm (edges lost), external D 25mm, internal D 20mm, hoop T 2mm. Context 028 (fill of Ppit 032)

### 6.2.1 Other/unidentified

Not illustrated: Unidentified smear of leaded bronze. 6 × 5mm. Context 002 (topsoil)

Not illustrated: Crumpled and folded sheet fragment. Bronze. 18 × 13 × 10mm. Context 015 (fill of Drain 016)

Not illustrated: Unidentified smear, probably a sheet fragment. Low-zinc brass with some lead. 13 × 5mm. Context 018 (lower fill of Ditch 031)

### 6.3 Lead objects

**5** Small square-sectioned bar made from rolled sheet; function unclear. 20 × 5 × 4mm. Context 007 (upper fill of Well 008)

**Table 2 Cramond Kirk Hall small finds assemblage by feature and inferred function**

Feature	Context	Nails	Hobnails	Fixtures & fittings	Military	Ornament	Vessel	Unidentified/undiagnostic
<b>Antonine</b>								
(006) Ditch cut by defences	(005)	1						
(031) Defensive ditch	Upper fill (017) = (027)	1		Iron handle (intrusive?) Iron pivot(?)	Iron chape, bronze rivet			Sheet iron
	Lower fill (018)							Sheet bronze
<b>Severan</b>								
(008) Well	Upper fill (007)	7	7	Iron binding			glass	Sheet iron lead bar
	Lower fill (026)	1						Melted lead sheet
(013) Drain	Fill (015)	1	4	Iron collar Iron bar	Copper-alloy rivet			Sheet iron fragments, bronze sheet fragment
(020) Sump	Upper fill (019)	Horse shoe						
(032) Pit	Fill (028)			Iron peg		Bronze ring		
<b>Medieval</b>								
(040) Pit	Fill (039)						Iron handle(?)	
<b>Undated</b>								
	Layer 2	1						Bronze fragment
(022) Pit	Upper fill (021)			Alloy rivet				
(025) Pit	Fill (024)	1 + 1 decor						

Not illustrated: Flat amorphous melted sheet. The regularity of the pattern on one side suggests it formed against an organic surface, perhaps basketry. Because lead melts easily, this is likely to be accidental rather than evidence of lead-working. 63 × 30 × 9mm. Context 026 (lower fill of Pit 008)

#### 6.4 Glass

Not illustrated: Plain base sherd from a square glass bottle, one of the most common types (Price & Cottam 1998, 194–8). 56.5 × 36.5 × 7mm. Context 007 (upper fill of Well 008)

#### 6.5 Discussion

Table 2 divides the assemblage by context and function. It is dominated by everyday items such as

nails and fittings, with a little militaria (the helmet rivets and possible dagger chape) and a few other items (notably the finger ring). Some of the fittings imply the presence of substantial wooden constructions, perhaps carts. It is striking that the looped peg and helmet rivets, unusual or unique in a Scottish context, are paralleled from previous Cramond excavations. This arises at least in part from the date, the helmet rivets for instance being a post-Antonine type. Most of the finds come from the upper fills of Well 008, Ditch 031 or Drain 013, and represent material deposited when the area was being cleared. A similar phenomenon was noted in the industrial area to the south-east, where an extensive destruction deposit across the site contained many artefacts (Holmes 2003, 33).