



DAACS Cataloging Manual: Buckles

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DAACS Cataloging Manuals document how artifacts, contexts, features, objects and images are cataloged into the DAACS database. They provide information not only about artifact identification but also about how each database field is used and how data should be entered into that field.

The DAACS database was developed by Jillian Galle and Fraser Neiman, in collaboration with members of the [DAACS Steering Committee](#). Jillian Galle and DAACS Staff, Leslie Cooper, Lynsey Bates, Lindsay Bloch, Elizabeth Bollwerk, Jesse Sawyer, and Beatrix Arendt, led the development of cataloging protocols. In addition to DAACS staff and steering committee members, Monticello current and former Archaeology Department staff, Fraser Neiman, Jennifer Aultman, Sara Bon-Harper, Derek Wheeler, Donald Gaylord, Karen Smith, and Nick Bon-Harper also contributed to the development of cataloging protocols. Jennifer Aultman and Kate Grillo produced the initial versions of these DAACS manuals in 2003. The manuals have been substantially revised by DAACS staff in the intervening years.

This manual was substantially revised for the introduction of the Bronze, Silver, and Gold cataloging tiers in 2022, and in preparation for the new website launch in 2024. These revisions were made by Galle, Bloch, Bollwerk, and by DAACS analysts Iris Puryear, Allison Mueller, and Cate Garcia.

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1. THE DAACS DATABASE

The DAACS database was designed by Galle and Neiman in 2001, with direct input from the DAACS Steering Committee and collaborating institutions. The large relational database is programmed in PostgreSQL and comprises over 200 related tables. This structure instantiates the protocols and standards outlined in the DAACS manuals. The database is linked to a Ruby-on-Rails web-based interface, which allows DAACS Research Consortium (DRC) members to access the database through a web browser with a login from anywhere with an internet connection. For a detailed summary of the DAACS database and history of DAACS, please see [Galle, Bollwerk, and Neiman 2019](#).

In 2018, a major grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities' Digital Humanities Division provided funds to develop a tiered cataloging interface that would allow DRC users to engage with the database on a variety of levels while retaining the data standards and integrity built into the original system. This new interface, with its Bronze, Silver, and Gold tiers, went live in March 2022. This project was a collaboration between DAACS, The University of Virginia's [Institute for Advanced Technology in the Humanities](#), and [Convoy](#).

2. ABOUT THE BUCKLE MODULE

The **Buckle Module** captures detailed information about buckles and buckle fragments by providing a variety of specialized data fields, many of which focus on the diagnostic attributes of individual buckle parts. Because of the specificity of the data fields offered by the Buckle Module, *not* all artifacts that might be generally classified as "fasteners" are cataloged into the Buckle Module interface. DAACS defines artifacts identified as "buckles" largely by the *original* presence of a hook, pin, and tongue. Objects such as suspender hooks and braces, corset fasteners (i.e., "Slot-and-Stud" closures), hook-and-eye fasteners, and generalized strap adjusters, should instead be cataloged in the General Artifacts Module. While these artifacts may serve a similar function to buckles, they lack the key diagnostic elements (i.e., hooks, pins, and tongues) that the Buckle Module is designed to capture. For these other artifact types, please see the General Artifacts Cataloguing Manual for detailed cataloging protocols.*

3. ABOUT THE BUCKLE MANUAL

This **Buckle Manual** is divided into two main sections. The first provides details on the fields recorded for the DAACS Gold, Silver and Bronze interfaces and the protocols specific to each cataloging tier. The second section explains what information is recorded in each field and describes how this attribute data is identified or measured.

**Note:* Some “general artifact fasteners” may be difficult to identify at the fragment level. If you only have a partial frame, for example, it may be impossible to distinguish a suspender brace from an ordinary clothing buckle. In these cases, ambiguous artifacts should be cataloged into the Buckle Module according to the protocols outlined below.

2.1 COMPARISON OF BUCKLE ATTRIBUTES RECORDED FOR BRONZE, SILVER, AND GOLD CATALOGING LEVELS

<i>Bronze</i>	<i>Silver</i>	<i>Gold</i>
Artifact Count	Artifact Count	Artifact Count
Buckle Type	Buckle Type	Buckle Type
Material	Material	Material
Manufacturing Technique	Manufacturing Technique	Manufacturing Technique
Decoration? (Y/N)	Decoration? (Y/N)	Decoration? (Y/N)
Object Weight	Object Weight	Object Weight
Notes	Notes	Notes
Image	Image	Image
Object	Object	Object
	Buckle Part	Buckle Part
	Buckle Part: Material	Buckle Part: Material
	Buckle Part: Manufacturing Technique	Buckle Part: Manufacturing Technique
		Buckle Part: Shape
		Buckle Part: Element Type
		Buckle Part: Length
		Buckle Part: Width
		Pin, Center Point Measure

		Marks
	Buckle Frame Plating	Buckle Frame Plating
	Decorative Technique	Decorative Technique
	Decorative Motif	Decorative Motif
		Burned?
	Post-Manufacturing Modification?	Post-Manufacturing Modification?
	Conservation?	Conservation?

2.2 LOCATION OF ATTRIBUTES ON THE BUCKLE MODULE INTERFACE

Field Location in DAACS Buckle Module	Bronze	Silver	Gold
Main Tab	Artifact Count	Artifact Count	Artifact Count
		Completeness	Completeness
	Buckle Type	Buckle Type	Buckle Type
			Mended?
	Decoration? (Y/N)	Decoration? (Y/N)	Decoration? (Y/N)
	Object Weight	Object Weight	Object Weight
	Notes	Notes	Notes
		Post-Manufacturing Modification?	
		Conservation?	
	Material		

	Manufacturing Technique		
<i>Buckle Form</i>		Buckle Part	Buckle Part
		Buckle Part: Material	Buckle Part: Material
		Buckle Part: Manufacturing Technique	Buckle Part: Manufacturing Technique
			Buckle Part: Shape
			Buckle Part: Element Type
			Buckle Part: Length
			Buckle Part: Width
			Pin, Center Point Measure
<i>Decoration</i>			Marks
		Buckle Frame Plating	Buckle Frame Plating
		Decorative Technique	Decorative Technique
		Decorative Motif	Decorative Motif
<i>Condition</i>			Burned?

			Post-Manufacturing Modification?
			Conservation?
Images	Link to Image	Link to Image	Link to Image
Objects	Link to Object	Link to Object	Link to Object

3. BRONZE LEVEL CATALOGING PROTOCOLS

3.1 BRONZE OVERVIEW

Bronze Level cataloging is the fastest, most efficient form of cataloging in the DAACS database. It allows users to batch artifacts using only a small number of diagnostic attributes. The result is the ability to catalog more artifacts at a faster pace. However, think carefully about the analytical tradeoffs. If you catalog at the Bronze level, you will not record potentially important pieces of information, such as completeness, decoration type, and attribute data for individual buckle parts (i.e., frame, hook, pin, tongue). The choice of cataloging level should reflect the research goals, as well as time and/or budgetary considerations, specific to a given project.

The fields recorded at the Bronze level are:

- Artifact Count
- Buckle Type
- Material
- Manufacturing Technique
- Decoration? (Y/N)
- Object Weight
- Notes
- Links to Images
- Links to Objects

We begin by introducing Bronze level batching protocols and offering suggestions for cataloging efficiency. Details on identifying specific buckle types and protocols for recording individual attributes can be found in Section 6.

3.2 BRONZE BATCHING PROTOCOLS

Batch all buckle fragments and complete buckles that share the following diagnostic attributes:

- Buckle Type
- Material*
- Manufacturing Technique*
- Decoration? (Y/N)

Record total count of the batch under Artifact Count. Both whole buckles *and* buckle fragments can be batched together at the Bronze level, regardless of completeness.

The only measurement taken is Object Weight, which records the total weight of the batch in grams.

**Note:* At the Bronze level, the Material and Manufacturing Technique fields record the *primary* material type and its associated manufacturing technique. In practice, this may represent the most extant or well-preserved of multiple material types, rather than the main material that would have comprised the original, intact buckle.

3.3 BRONZE CATALOGING RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend the following steps for sorting fragments prior to cataloging. This sorting process will expedite cataloging.

1. Sort fragments by “Buckle Type”.
2. Sort Buckle Type groups into smaller groups by primary “Material”.
3. Sort each buckle type/material group into smaller divisions based on “Manufacturing Technique”.
4. Finally, separate out any fragments with decoration from your respective groups. Sorting is by presence/absence of decoration only.
5. Note that at the end of this process you could have a “batch” of multiple fragments, and/or a “batch” of only one fragment. A batch of one is still considered a batch and should be recorded using the same prescribed guidelines.
6. Remember that all attributes must match within a group of fragments to catalog as a batch.

Note: We strongly recommend *against* putting extraneous information that is not captured by existing Bronze level data fields into the Notes field. While it may be tempting to record decorative genre or detailed measurements in this section, this is not the purpose of the open text field. Using the Notes field in this way makes it difficult to extract consistent data and effectively negates one of the key benefits of cataloging

at the Bronze level by reducing cataloger efficiency. If a higher level of data collection is desired, please consider upgrading your cataloging level to “Silver” or “Gold.”

4. SILVER LEVEL CATALOGING PROTOCOLS

4.1 SILVER OVERVIEW

The main benefit of cataloging at the Silver level is the ability to record more diagnostic attribute data than is available at the Bronze level. This includes completeness and decoration type, as well as material and manufacturing information for individual buckle parts (i.e., frame, pin, hook, tongue). It also allows catalogers to work at a faster pace by removing the Gold level requirement to record detailed form, shape, and measurement data in the Buckle Form tab. However, think carefully about the analytical tradeoffs. If you catalog at the Silver level, you will not capture potentially important pieces of information, such as formal attributes and measurements for individual buckle parts that may be temporally diagnostic. On the other hand, batching is not possible at the Silver level (unlike Bronze), and cataloging each fragment individually may be time consuming. The choice of cataloging level should reflect the research goals, as well as time and/or budgetary considerations, specific to a given project.

The fields recorded at the Silver Level are:

- Artifact Count
- Completeness
- Buckle Type
- Decoration? (Y/N)
- Post-Manufacturing Modification?
- Conservation?
- Object Weight
- Notes
- Buckle Part
- Buckle Part: Material
- Buckle Part: Manufacturing Technique
- Buckle Frame Plating
- Decorative Technique
- Decorative Motif
- Links to Images
- Links to Objects

We begin by introducing Silver level batching protocols and offering suggestions for cataloging efficiency. Details on identifying specific buckle types and protocols for recording individual attributes can be found in Section 6.

4.2 SILVER BATCHING PROTOCOLS

At the Silver level, all fragments and complete buckles should be cataloged individually.

Do not batch.

4.3 SILVER CATALOGING RECOMMENDATIONS

Remember to catalog each buckle or buckle fragment individually. Artifact count should always be 1 at the Silver Level.

Whenever possible, identify a specific Buckle Type (e.g., knee, shoe), or assign artifact to a generalized Buckle Type category (i.e., Unid: Clothing, Unid: Harness/Utilitarian).

Record material and manufacturing information about individual buckle parts in the Buckle Form table. See Section 6.2 for specific protocols.

Separate out examples with decoration and/or marks and record this information under the Decoration tab. Only record plating and decoration if applicable.

Note: We strongly recommend *against* putting extraneous information that is not captured by existing Silver level data fields into the Notes field. While it may be tempting to record marks or detailed measurements in this section, this is not the purpose of the open text field. Using the Notes field in this way makes it difficult to extract consistent data and effectively negates one of the key benefits of cataloging at the Silver level by reducing cataloger efficiency. If a higher level of data collection is desired, please consider upgrading your cataloging level to “Gold.”

5. GOLD LEVEL CATALOGING PROTOCOLS

5.1 GOLD OVERVIEW

The main benefit of cataloging at the Gold level is the ability to record a large number of individualized measurements and the maximum amount of attribute data for every artifact. Cataloging at the Gold level also allows you to capture formal characteristics and measurements for individual buckle parts (i.e., frame, hook, tongue, pin), which may be temporally diagnostic. However, think carefully about the analytical tradeoffs. Batching is not possible at the Gold level, and identifying and recording measurements for individual buckle parts can be time consuming and requires a high level of cataloger expertise. The choice of cataloging level should reflect the research goals, as well as time and/or budgetary considerations specific to a given project.

Please note that Gold Level standards represent the original Buckle attribute fields that have been part of DAACS since 2001. These original fields were chosen by DAACS staff and material culture scholars. Silver and Bronze Levels are “watered down” versions of the original DAACS Buckle module.

The fields recorded at the Gold level are:

- Artifact Count
- Completeness
- Buckle Type
- Mended?
- Decoration? (Y/N)
- Object Weight
- Notes
- Buckle Part
- Buckle Part: Material
- Buckle Part: Manufacturing Technique
- Buckle Part: Shape
- Buckle Part: Element Type
- Buckle Part: Length
- Buckle Part: Width
- Pin, Center Point Measure
- Marks
- Buckle Frame Plating
- Decorative Technique
- Decorative Motif
- Burned?
- Post-Manufacturing Modification?
- Conservation?
- Links to Images
- Links to Objects

We begin by introducing Gold level batching protocols and offering suggestions for cataloging efficiency. Details on identifying specific buckle types and protocols for recording individual attributes can be found in Section 6.

5.2 GOLD BATCHING PROTOCOLS

At the Gold level, all fragments and complete buckles should be cataloged individually.

Do not batch.

5.3 GOLD CATALOGING RECOMMENDATIONS

Remember to catalog each buckle or buckle fragment individually. Artifact count should be 1.

Whenever possible, identify a specific Buckle Type (e.g., knee, shoe), or assign artifact to a generalized type category (i.e., Unid: Clothing, Unid: Harness/Utilitarian).

Record detailed attribute information for individual buckle parts in the Buckle Form table. All complete measurements should be taken. See Section 6.2 for specific protocols.

Separate out examples with decoration and/or marks, and record this information under the Decoration tab. Only record plating and decoration if applicable.

6. DAACS FIELD DEFINITIONS AND PROTOCOLS FOR BUCKLES

6.1 MAIN BUCKLE TABLE

6.1.1 ARTIFACT COUNT

Numeric

Do *not* batch buckles at the Silver and Gold cataloging levels. For Bronze level protocols, follow batching rules described in sections 3.2 and 3.3 above.

6.1.2 COMPLETENESS

Controlled Vocabulary

Choose either “Complete” or “Incomplete.” Artifacts identified as “Complete” should have all buckle parts, i.e., an intact frame, hook, pin, and tongue.

6.1.3 BUCKLE TYPE

Controlled Vocabulary

Whenever possible, buckles and buckle fragments should be identified to a specific Buckle Type (e.g., knee, shoe), or assigned to a generalized Buckle Type category (i.e., Unid: Clothing, Unid: Harness/Utilitarian). To aid in identification, use the diagnostic information provided in Appendix 1 below, as well as additional resources listed in the bibliography. Buckle Type is closely related to the specific configuration of hook, pin, and tongue (i.e., the chape) on a given buckle. As a result, fragmentary examples that lack these diagnostic features often cannot be identified to a specific Buckle Type.

Choose from the following list of buckle types:

- “Baldric/Sash”

- “Knee”
- “Shoe”
- “Spur”
- “Stock”
- “Unid: Clothing”
- “Unidentifiable”
- “Unid: Harness/Utilitarian”

Note: Researchers often use the term “chape” to refer to the combination of buckle pin, hook, and tongue, not a specific Buckle Type. DAACS does not use the term “chape,” except as a descriptor. Pins, hooks, and tongues should be cataloged as individual elements in the Buckle Form table. See Section 6.2 for more detailed cataloging information.

6.1.4 MENDED?

Controlled Vocabulary

Choose “Yes” or “No.” The default is “No.” Disregard the “N/A” option. If mended, list the associated Artifact IDs in the Notes field.

6.1.5 DECORATION?

Controlled Vocabulary

Presence or absence of decoration (Y/N).

6.1.6 OBJECT WEIGHT

Numeric

Weight of individual artifact (or artifacts, if cataloging at the Bronze level and batching multiple artifacts) measured in grams, to the nearest tenth.

6.2 BUCKLE FORM TAB

The Buckle Form tab is comprised of data fields that are part of a related table used to capture the various elements, or parts, of a buckle. In DAACS Silver and Gold, the Buckle Form tab should always be filled out, no matter how incomplete a buckle you may have. The Buckle Form table consists of the following fields:

- Buckle Part
- Material
- Manufacturing Technique
- Shape
- Element Type
- Length (mm)
- Width (mm)
- Pin, Center Point Measure (mm)

Select “Add Buckle Form” to create a separate line for each of the buckle parts identified in the figure below. With the possible exception of the pin (see section 6.2.3), only add buckle parts when extant. Enter information for each buckle part according to the guidelines outlined in the following sections.

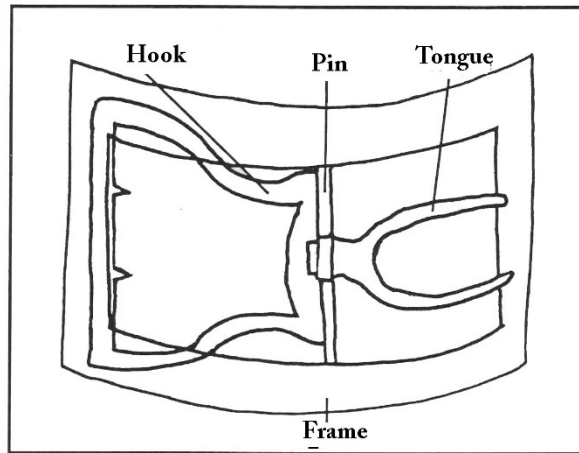


Figure 1: Buckle Parts. Drawing source: White 2002.
Note: This image is of a shoe buckle. Individual parts may vary slightly on other buckle types.

Since many of the selections made in the Buckle Form fields are interrelated and dependent on the buckle part being described, it is most logical to describe the function of the Buckle Form table on the basis of individual buckle parts.

6.2.1 BUCKLE FORM: FRAMES

Frames are the buckle parts most often recovered on archaeological sites. Enter a frame into the Buckle Form table, even if you cannot determine its shape or record measurements.

Complete the following **controlled vocabulary** fields by selecting the most appropriate options from the list of authority terms provided below:

Buckle Part: “Frame.”

Material: “Copper Alloy,” “Gold,” “Iron,” “Pewter,” “Silver,” “Steel,” “Unidentifiable.”

Note: Many buckle frames were made from a material known as “pinchbeck.” This is an alloy made from four parts copper to one part zinc. Pinchbeck frames should be cataloged into DAACS as “Copper Alloy.”

Manu Tech: “Cast,” “Drawn/Wire,” “Stamped,” “Wrought/Forged,”

“Unidentifiable.”

Shape: “Circle,” “CircOval, unid,” “D-Shape,” “Oval,” “Square/Rectangle,” “Trapezoid,” “Angular, unid,” “Unidentifiable” (see Fig. 2).

Note: Use “Angular, unid” or “CircOval, unid” if you cannot determine exact frame shape at the fragment level but are able to broadly identify the form as either square/rectangular/trapezoidal, or circular/oval.

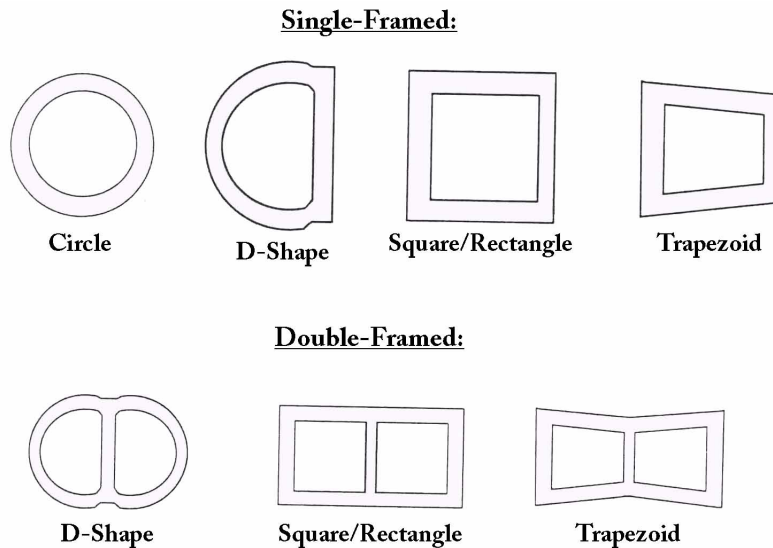


Figure 2: Frames shapes (Not Pictured: Oval)
Image adapted from White 2002.

Element Type: “Single Framed” or “Double Framed” (see Fig. 2).

Using calipers or a measuring tape, take all complete measurements on the buckle frame and enter this information into the following numeric fields:

Length/Width (mm): Any complete measurement should be taken. Thus, the frame length could be recorded even if the frame width is incomplete.

Pin, Center Point Measure (mm): DAACS measures the distance from where the pin intersects the frame (the pin terminal) to the outside edge of the buckle. The area of measurement is indicated by the bracketed image below.

Note: You can still take these measurements even when the pin itself is missing, as long as you have a pin terminal and at least one outside edge of the frame intact. Leave this area blank there is no pin terminal or if the buckle has a Type 5 pin terminal (where the pin serves as one side of the frame).



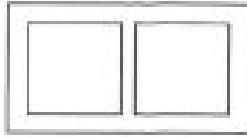


Figure 3: Example of Pin,
Center Point Measurement.

6.2.2 BUCKLE FORM: HOOKS

The hook, often referred to as the roll, is a moveable part attached to the pin. It serves to secure the buckle to its associated strap or clothing piece. Hook shapes are often used to identify specific buckle types. For example, the above buckle type descriptions often refer to specific “chape forms” – in DAACS, this generally refers to the hook shape.

Complete the following controlled vocabulary fields by selecting the most appropriate options from the list of authority terms provided below:

Part: “Hook.”

Material: “Copper Alloy,” “Gold,” “Iron,” “Pewter,” “Silver,” “Steel,”
“Unidentifiable.”

Manu Tech: “Cast,” “Drawn/Wire,” “Wrought/Forged,” “Stamped,”
“Unidentifiable.”

Shape: “Anchor,” “Stud,” “Loop,” “Unidentifiable.”

Note: While the hook shapes below are pictured with single or multi-pronged tongues, identification of hook shape is not dependent on tongue form. E.g., the hook shape on a knee buckle should still be identified as “Anchor” shaped even though it may be paired with a double or triple-pronged tongue.

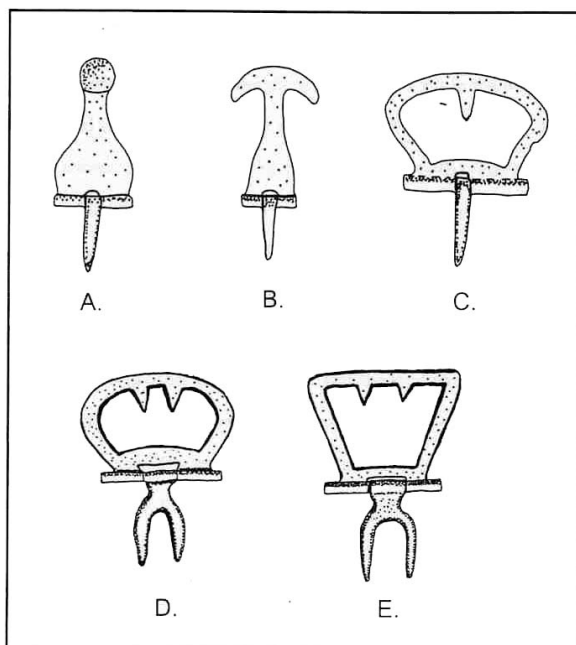


Fig. 4: Shoe Buckle Hook/Chapes shapes. Drawing source: White 2005. *Note:* The hooks/chapes pictured above are all from shoe buckles. Hook shapes on other buckle types may differ slightly.

Element Type: "Not Applicable."

Using calipers or a measuring tape, take all complete measurements on the buckle hook and enter this information into the following numeric fields:

Length/Width (mm): Any complete measurement should be taken. Thus, the hook width could be recorded even if the hook length is incomplete.

6.2.3 BUCKLE FORM: PINS

The pin anchors the hook and tongue to the rest of the buckle frame. The pin can either be cast as part of the frame or manufactured as a separate component and subsequently attached to the frame. The center part of a double-framed buckle should always be cataloged as a pin. On some examples, one side of the frame effectively functions as the pin (see Type 5 Pin Terminal). Include the pin in the Buckle Form table **even if the pin is missing**, as one can often determine the pin terminal type for a missing pin. This is the only buckle part for which this protocol applies.

Note: The pin and the tongue are occasionally cast together as one piece. In this case, enter the appropriate data separately under Pin and Tongue, but indicate in the Notes that they have been cast as one piece.

Complete the following controlled vocabulary fields by selecting the most appropriate options from the list of authority terms provided below:

Part: "Pin."

Material: "Copper Alloy," "Gold," "Iron," "Pewter," "Silver," "Steel," "Missing," "Unidentifiable."

Manu Tech: "Cast," "Drawn/Wire," "Stamped," "Wrought/Forged," or "Unidentifiable."

Shape: "Type 1," "2," "3," "4," "5" or "6 Pin Terminal" (see below).

Pin Shapes/Terminal Types

Type 1 Pin Terminal

The ends of the pin are inserted into holes located on the sides of the frame. The pinholes are drilled into a protruding lobe that is the same width as the side of the frame (White, 2002, p. 189). Often occurs on shoe buckles.

Figure 5. Drawing source: White 2005.

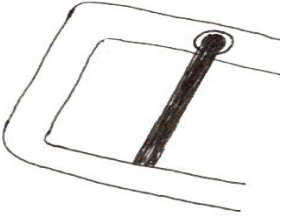





Type 2 Pin Terminal

The ends of the pin are inserted into holes located on the sides of the frame. For this type, the protruding lobe into which the pinholes are drilled is only a thin piece of metal flush with the outside edge of the frame (White, 2002, p.189). Often associated with shoe buckles.

Figure 6. Drawing source: White 2005.



<p>Type 3 Pin Terminal The ends of the pin are inserted into holes drilled into the sides of the frame. Unlike Types 1 and 2, there is no associated protrusion or lobe at the midsection of the frame.</p> <p>Figure 7. Image source: ?????</p>	
<p>Type 4 Pin Terminal The pin is cast as part of the frame. Occurs on double-framed buckles.</p> <p>Figure 8. Image source: House for Families, Mount Vernon Plantation. DAACS Image ID: 1836491.</p>	
<p>Type 5 Pin Terminal One side of the frame effectively functions as the pin. In this capacity, this side of the frame also serves as the axis around which the tongue rotates. On single-framed buckles (usually square/rectangular or D-shaped). Primarily seen on utilitarian/harness buckles.</p> <p>Figure 9. Image source: Building O, Monticello Plantation. DAACS Artifact ID:1000-530AA-NOS—00523; Image ID: 3237628.</p>	
<p>Type 6 Pin Terminal The pin is welded onto the frame. Pictured here is a copper alloy frame with an iron pin welded onto its backside.</p> <p>Figure 10. Image source: Stewart Castle Village, Jamaica. DAACS Artifact ID: 1210-003D-DRS—00119.</p>	

Element Type: This field records the location of the pin terminals on the buckle frame and captures the relationship of the pin to the frame. Enter “Long Axis” if the pin terminals are located on the long sides of the buckle (i.e. the pin spans the width of the frame). Enter “Short Axis” if the pin terminals are located on the short sides of the buckle (i.e. the pin spans the length of the frame). Enter

“Equidistant” when the pin terminals are located at the midpoint on a *square* or *round* **frame**. If you cannot determine the location of the pin terminals on the frame, enter “Unidentifiable.” Note that even if a pin is missing, you might be able to tell the pin’s orientation from the location of pin terminals (if extant) on the frame.

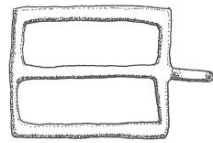


Figure 11: Example of Element Type (Pin): Short Axis.

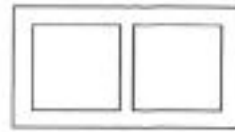


Figure 12: Example of Element Type (Pin): Long Axis.

Using calipers or a measuring tape, take all complete measurements on the buckle pin and enter this information into the following **numeric** fields:

Length/Width (mm): As mentioned above, you can take pin length measurements as long as you have both pin terminals (or a complete pin). Of course, the pin must be present to take width measurements.

Pin, Center Point Measure (mm): DAACS measures the distance from where the pin intersects the frame (the pin terminals) to the outside edge of the buckle frame. See Figure 3.


Note: You can still take these measurements even when the pin itself is missing, as long as you have a pin terminal and at least one outside edge of the frame intact. Leave this field blank if there is no pin terminal or if the buckle has a Type 5 pin terminal (where the pin serves as one side of the frame).

The following is an example of how to catalog a buckle with a missing pin:

Buckle Part	Material	Manufacturing Technique	Shape	Element Type	Length	Width
Pin	Missing	Unidentifiable	Type 1 Pin Terminal	Equidistant	20	
Frame	Iron	Wrought/Forged	Square	Single Framed	20	20

6.2.4 BUCKLE FORM: TONGUES

The tongue is the spiked prong that secures a loose strap end to the buckle. Earlier buckles had single-pronged tongues, while most examples dating to the 18th century or later have multi-pronged tongues. Occasionally one sees nicks cut into the frame where the tongue prongs lie (these do not need to be noted in DAACS).

Complete the following  controlled vocabulary fields by selecting the most appropriate options from the list of authority terms provided below:


Part: "Tongue."

Material: "Copper Alloy," "Gold," "Iron," "Pewter," "Silver," "Steel," "Unidentifiable."

Manu Tech: "Cast," "Drawn/Wire," "Stamped," "Wrought/Forged."

Shape: "Straight."

Element Type: "Single Prong," "Double Prong," "Triple-Pronged," "Four Prong."

Using calipers or a measuring tape, take all complete measurements on the buckle tongue and enter this information into the following  numeric fields:

Length/Width (mm): Any complete measurement should be taken. Thus, the tongue width could be recorded even if the tongue length is incomplete.

6.3 BUCKLE DECORATION TAB

Buckle Decoration fields should be filled out for any type of decorative technique seen on the buckle. We recommend imaging buckles with decoration or other notable attributes.

6.3.1 MARKS?

Open Text

The default for this field is "None." If there is a text mark, enter the exact lettering that appears on the buckle into this field. If the mark has iconography in addition to or instead of text, describe this in the Notes field.

6.3.2 BUCKLE FRAME PLATING

Controlled Vocabulary

The default for this field is "None." If a buckle is plated, choose "Gilt," "Silver," or "Tin." You do *not* need to add gilding to the Decorative Technique and Decorative Motif fields below (unlike for buttons). If the buckle is plated but you cannot determine the plating material, choose "Unidentifiable."

6.3.3 DECORATIVE TECHNIQUE TABLE*

*The following two fields, “Decorative Technique” and “Decorative Motif”, are linked in a related table that allows a cataloger to record multiple decorative techniques and motifs on a buckle. For example, you can record decorative motifs for a buckle that might be cast, engraved, with Jewels.

Controlled Vocabulary

Choose from the following list of decorative techniques:


- “Cast/Molded”
- “Enameled”
- “Engraved”
- “Jewel/Inlay”
- “Stamped”

If multiple decorative techniques are present, enter a separate line for each.

Note: Stamped decoration is more common in the first half of the 18th century. Beginning in the second half of the 18th century, decorative elements were more often cast with the frame.

6.3.4 DECORATIVE MOTIF

Controlled Vocabulary

g the drop-down list, select the appropriate decorative motif:

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| • “Beaded” | • “Openwork” |
| • “Fan/Shell” | • “Ornamental Grooves” |
| • “Foliate” | • “Ribbed” |
| • “Geometric” | • “Scrolls” |
| • “Lettering” | • “Solid Color Enamel” |
| • “Military Emblem” | • “Unidentifiable” |
| • “Notched and Grooved” | |

If multiple decorative motifs are present, enter a separate line for each. Where necessary, a more detailed description can be included in the Notes field.

6.4 CONDITION TAB

6.4.1 BURNED?

Controlled Vocabulary

Enter “Yes” or “No.” The default is “No.” Ignore the “N/A” option.

6.4.2 POST-MANUFACTURING MODIFICATION

Controlled Vocabulary

Post-Manufacturing Modification is a field seen across all artifact categories. Use this field when an artifact appears to have been physically modified in order to change its original function.

Choose “Yes” or “No.” The default is “No.” Ignore the “N/A” option. If “Yes,” catalog the object as it would normally be cataloged in its original form. Enter “Yes” under Post-Manufacturing Modification, and describe in the notes how the object has been modified.

6.4.3 CONSERVATION

Open Text

The default for this text field is “No Conservation.” If a buckle has been conserved, type “Yes” into this field and describe the conservation in the Notes field.

6.5 IMAGE

Please see Image Manual. This manual provides instructions for capturing, uploading, and entering images into the database.

6.6 OBJECT

Please see Object Manual for instructions on Object entry into the database.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Cofield, S. R. (2014). *A Guide to Spurs of Maryland and Delaware ca. 1635-1820*. Northeast Historical Archaeology.

Cofield, S.R. (2022). "Handout on Buckles, Buttons, and Clothing Fasteners." Personal handout distributed for teaching workshop on material culture organized for DAACS Summer Institute, 2022.

Cofield, S.R. (2022). "Brief Visual Guide to Equestrian Artifacts of the 17th and 18th Centuries." Personal handout distributed for teaching workshop on material culture organized for DAACS Summer Institute, 2022.

Cofield, S.R. 2016 Appendix I: Houston-LeCompt Personal Adornment. In "Archaeological Data Recovery at the Houston-LeCompt Site (7NC-F-139;N-14517), New Castle County, Delaware," by Kerri S. Barile, Emily Calhoun, Mike Klein, Danae Peckler, Kerry S. González, D. Brad Hatch, and Michele C. Salvato. Report prepared for the Delaware Department of Transportation.

Noël Hume, I. (1969). *A Guide to Artifacts of Colonial America*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, Incorporated.

White, C. L. (2005). *American Artifacts of Personal Adornment, 1680-1820: A Guide to Identification and Interpretation*. United States: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

White, Carolyn L. (2002). *Constructing Identities: Personal Adornment from Portsmouth, New Hampshire, 1680-1820*. Ph.D. dissertation. Boston University. "Identification Guide for Clothing Fasteners," pp. 185-241.

IMAGE SOURCES

Note: This list excludes images compiled from the DAACS database. These artifact images are accessible at daacs.org and are searchable via the artifact and/or image ID listed in the caption.

Figure 2: Buckle Parts. White 2002, Fig. 6.2, p. 188.

Figure 2: Frames shapes. Image adapted from White 2005, Fig. 3.4, p. 34.

Figure 3: Example of Pin, Center Point Measurement. Image adapted from White 2005, Fig. 3.4, p. 34.

Figure 4: Hook shapes. White 2005, Fig. 3.8, p. 43.

Figure 5: Type 1 Pin Terminal. White 2005, Fig. 3.5, p. 34.

Figure 6: Type 2 Pin Terminal. White 2005, Fig. 3.5, p. 34.

Figure 7: Type 3 Pin Terminal.

Figure 11: Example of Element Type (Pin): Short Axis. Image adapted from White 2005, Fig. 3.18, p. 49.

Figure 12: Example of Element Type (Pin): Long Axis. Image adapted from White 2005, Fig. 3.4, p.34.

Figure 13: Sword belt buckle with cast suspension loop. White 2005, Fig. 3.18, p.49.

Figure 16: Knee buckle chape. White 2005, Fig. 3.11, p. 45.

Figure 17: Knee buckle with silver frame, iron chape. Collections, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. <https://emuseum.history.org/objects/4386/knee-buckle>

Figure 18: Knee buckle with ovoid frame. Rivers Cofield 2016, Figure 12, p. 27.

Figure 22: Spur buckle. White 2005, Fig. 3.17, p. 49.

Figure 23: Spur buckle hooks (A, B), and frame (C). Rivers-Cofield 2011, Fig. 3, p. 46.

Figure 24: Stock buckle. White 2005, Fig. 3.13, p. 47.

Figure 26: Stock buckle. Collections, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.
<https://emuseum.history.org/objects/67146/stock-buckle?ctx=51d67dd8448e860ef0eb67db2917306946a82d34&idx=37>

APPENDIX 1: BUCKLE TYPE DESCRIPTIONS

This section is based largely on the following sources:

Cofield, Sara Rivers (2014). *A Guide to Spurs of Maryland and Delaware ca. 1635-1820*. Northeast Historical Archaeology.

Cofield, Sara Rivers (2022). "Handout on Buckles, Buttons, and Clothing Fasteners." Handout distributed for teaching workshop on material culture during DAACS Summer Institute, 2022.

White, Carolyn L. (2005). *American Artifacts of Personal Adornment, 1680-1820: A Guide to Identification and Interpretation*. United States: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

A. BALDRIC/SASH

The category of Baldric/Sash encompasses a variety of buckles that were worn on shoulder and/or belt straps and that were designed to hold a sword or firearm. The most common type measures a few inches in length and has an elongated double-frame that is typically rectangular, oblong or figure-8 in shape. On these examples, the pin is cast in one piece with the frame and is oriented lengthwise, with terminals located on the short axes. A simple, usually single-pronged tongue hinges on the pin, and a suspension loop is sometimes cast together with frame and pin (White 2005). A variety of other shapes and forms have also been documented. Baldric/sash buckles associated with military contexts are generally larger and somewhat convex and may be cast or stamped with regimental emblems (Noel Hume 1969). Two-piece Civil War era belt/sash buckles are a well-known example of this type (Fig. 15).

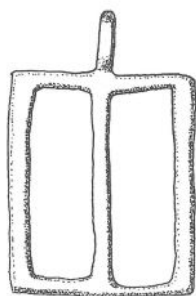


Figure 13: Sword belt buckle with cast suspension loop. Drawing source: White 2005.



Figure 14: Baldric/Sash buckle with cast military emblem. Drax Hall, Barbados. DAACS Artifact ID: 1224-K10.2-DRS—00001; Image ID: 9315.

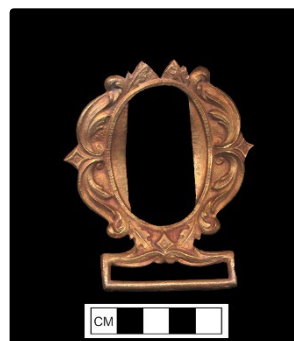


Figure 15: Sword belt buckle with Civil War era cast wreath decoration. 44PG65, Flowerdew Hundred Plantation. DAACS Artifact ID: 1058-189M_01-NRD—00007; Image ID: 2847235.

Diagnostic Attributes: Baldric/Sash buckles are difficult to identify in the archaeological record because many share formal characteristics with other buckle types, especially light harness/utilitarian style buckles. As a result, most examples will lack diagnostic attributes for positive identification. Key diagnostics include an extant suspension loop for a sword or firearm hanger (Fig. 13), or the presence of decoration indicating a military function (Fig. 14, 15). Specific site context and provenience may be relevant in some cases, such as the occurrence of related artifact types (e.g., other sword belt fittings) within the same context.

B. KNEE

Knee buckles were popular throughout most of the 18th century and were used to secure men's breeches in place at the knee and to hold up the stockings. They are generally much smaller than shoe buckles and are flat rather than convexly shaped. On knee buckles, the pin extends across the long axis of the frame and the pin terminals are situated on the short axes. In rare instances, knee buckles with pins oriented along the short axis have been documented (Cofield, pers. Communication). Knee buckles are often rectangular or oval and have a distinctive, anchor-shaped chape. Knee buckles were often made in the same patterns as shoe buckles (White 2005)..

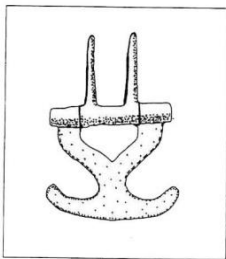


Figure 16: Knee buckle chape. Drawing source: White 2005.



Figure 17: Knee buckle with silver frame, iron chape. Image source: Collections, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.



Figure 18: Knee buckle with ovoid frame. Image source: Rivers Cofield 2016.

Diagnostic Attributes: The most diagnostic feature of the knee buckle is the unique form of the pin, hook, and tongue (i.e., the chape) (Fig. 16). The hook is characteristically wide and anchor-shaped, and often has a half-heart shape cut out of the plate near the juncture between hook and pin. Knee buckle chapes have two or three-pronged tongues, which distinguishes them from similar anchor-style chapes found on early shoe buckles (these have single-tined tongues) (White, 2005). Size and pin orientation are also used to identify knee buckles, although it should be noted that the average size of all buckle forms evolved over time, and that other buckle types apart from knee buckles have pin terminals on the short axes.

C. SHOE

Shoe buckles are one of the most common types of buckles found on 18th century archaeological sites in America. Shoe buckles are relatively rare in 17th century contexts, and

the form became increasingly less prevalent beginning in the 19th century with the advent of shoelaces (White 2005). They are usually rectangular or sub-rectangular and curved to fit the top of the foot, although they can be seen in a variety of shapes and sizes. The pin terminals are located on the long axes, so that the pin spans the width of the frame. A wide range of decorative techniques, including stamping, casting, and engraving, were used to embellish shoe buckles. The style of the chape, as well as the size and shape of the frame, may be temporally diagnostic as these attributes changed as fashion trends shifted over time (see White 2005: 39-43).



Figure 19: Shoe buckle frame and loop chape. South Grove, Mount Vernon Plantation. DAACS Image ID: 1795554.



Figure 20: Shoe buckle frame. South Grove, Mount Vernon Plantation. DAACS Image ID: 1795576.



Figure 21: Loop chape with "cooking pot" hook. South Grove, Mount Vernon Plantation. DAACS Image ID: 1795574.

Diagnostic Attributes: Artifacts identified as shoe buckles should have a slightly convex shape (Fig. 19, 20), a finished back, and evidence for pin terminals situated on the long axes (Rivers Cofield 2022). For most of the 18th century, the specific form of the hook, tongue, and pin on shoe buckles is also considered diagnostic. This style is often referred to as the "loop chape" and consists of a "cooking pot" shaped hook with one or two spikes arranged between typically rounded (sometimes angular) corners (Fig. 21), and a single or double-pronged tongue. Note that 17th and early 18th century shoe buckle styles were more variable, and the "stud" and "anchor" shaped hooks associated with them (Fig. 4) also appear on other buckle forms. Similarly, catalogers should keep in mind that the earliest shoe buckle frames were relatively small (around 40 mm in length) and are easily confused with other buckle types.

D. SPUR

Spur buckles are usually small in size and have double-looped, trapezoidal frames, although rectangular, "butterfly," and D-shaped forms also occur. Spur buckles are sometimes decorated with elaborate rosette or floral patterns, and often have hook attachments for spurs.

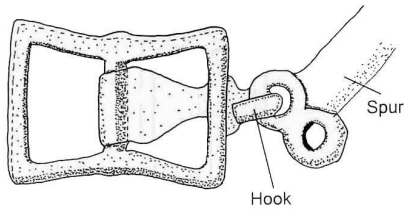


Figure 22: Spur buckle. Drawing source: White 2005.

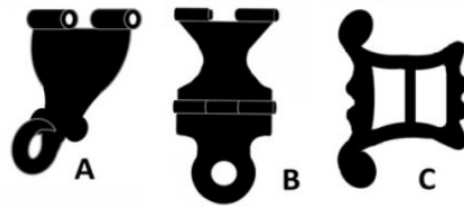


Figure 23: Spur buckle hooks (A, B), and frame (C). Image source: Rivers Cofield 2011.

Diagnostic Attributes: Aside from the general characteristics described above, most artifacts identified as spur buckles should exhibit one of the following diagnostic chape forms. The earliest spur buckle chapes feature a hook with a distinctive looped termination that linked directly to a terminal at the end of the spur “arm” (Fig. 22, 23A). From the latter half of the 17th century onward, some spur manufacturers replaced this “loop” with a wide rivet hole that attached to a stationary stud located on the spur terminal. On these examples, the stud hole was often punched through an adjoining plate of metal that hinged to the buckle hook (Fig. 23B). The “butterfly” shaped frame characteristic of 17th century spur buckles is also considered diagnostic (Fig. 23C) (Rivers Cofield 2011).

E. STOCK

The stock was a cloth that wrapped around a gentleman’s neck and buckled or tied at the back. Stock buckles were made from a variety of materials including silver and copper or tin alloys. They could be elaborately decorated, often with metal plating and designs set with gems or pastes (Fig. 26). The frame is usually rectangular or oblong in shape, and the pin is oriented lengthwise with terminals located on the shorter sides of the frame (Fig. 24). Stock buckle chapes have three to four studs (sometimes referred to as “buttons”) arranged on the long axis of the hook, which were designed to fit into matching holes on the stock (White 2005).

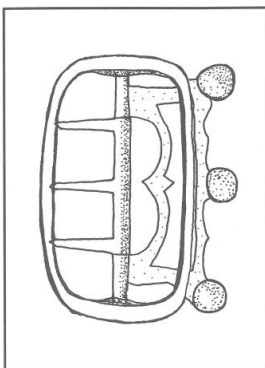


Figure 24: Stock buckle. Drawing source: White 2005.



Figure 25: Cu alloy stock buckle hook with four studs. Trents Enslaved Laborer Settlement, Barbados. DAACS Artifact ID: 1238-067.3-DRS—00027; Image ID: 2519223.

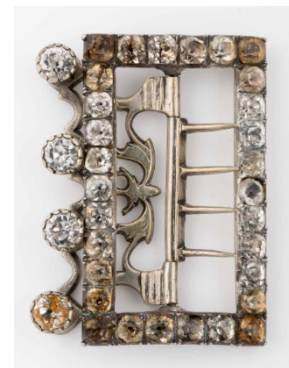


Figure 26: Silver stock buckle with inset paste decoration. Image source: Collections, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.

Diagnostic Attributes: Stock buckles are chiefly distinguished by their characteristic studded hook, which is unique to the form (Fig. 25). They are very similar to knee buckles in size and pin orientation, although stock buckle frames are typically more elongated in shape. Stock buckles also have a three or four-pronged tongue, whereas knee buckle tongues generally only have two to three prongs.

Note: Although less common, leather stocks were also produced, chiefly for military contexts. Buckles associated with leather stocks resemble iron plates with rivet holes or a clasp hook for fastening. Leather stock buckles have yet to be identified on any site in DAACS (as of June 2024).

F. UNIDENTIFIABLE

Use “Unidentifiable” for buckles that cannot be identified with a specific buckle type or classified as either “Unid: Harness/Utilitarian” or “Unid: Clothing.”

G. UNID: HARNESS/UTILITARIAN

The term “Unid: Harness/Utilitarian” was created for buckles that can be identified as harness or utilitarian buckles, but for which further identification is not possible. Harness buckles for horses and vehicles were manufactured in a wide range of materials, including iron, pewter, and copper alloy. Iron harness/tack buckles (Fig. 28) typically have square frames and feature Type 5 pin terminals (i.e. one side of the frame functions as the pin). Copper alloy harness buckles are often cast in one piece, may be single or double-framed, and are either flat or slightly bent in shape to accommodate heavy straps (Rivers Cofield, 2022). Buckles cataloged as “Unid: Harness/Utilitarian” are usually larger and sturdier than most clothing buckles, and are generally undecorated. The backs of most harness/utilitarian buckles are plain and unfinished, with no evidence for filing or other finish work.

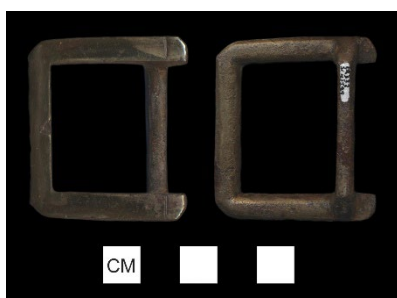


Figure 27: Copper alloy harness/utilitarian buckle with iron pin. Garden Wall, Monticello Plantation. DAACS Image ID: 3237065.



Figure 28: Wrought iron harness/utilitarian buckle. Building O, Monticello Plantation. DAACS Artifact ID: 1000-530AA-NOS—00523; Image ID: 3237628.

H. UNID: CLOTHING

The term “Unid: Clothing” has been created for buckles that can be identified as clothing buckles, but which lack the diagnostic attributes to assign a more specific buckle type. Knee and

stock buckles, for example, share many formal characteristics and are often difficult to distinguish at the fragment level. This category also subsumes a group of more specific buckle types, including hat, belt, boot/garter, sleeve, and some cinch buckles. While well documented in contemporary art and literature, these buckles often have variable and ambiguous attributes and are difficult to identify in archaeological contexts. If you are completely sure that you have, for example, a hat buckle, Buckle Type should be “Unid: Clothing,” but describe the artifact as a hat buckle in the notes.



Figure 29: Silver clothing buckle hook, tongue. West Cabin, Hermitage Plantation. DAACS Artifact ID: 1412-98-01-008-DRS—00201; Image ID: 1981258.

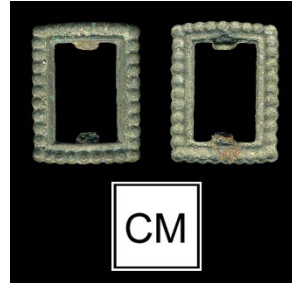


Figure 30: Cu alloy clothing buckle frame. Fatio, St. Augustine. DAACS Artifact ID: 5007-87-43-135-DRS—00006; Image ID: 319582.