

# Report of the Portable Antiquities Scheme 2006

By GEOFF EGAN

The Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) has been in operation since 1997. Its purpose is to encourage members of the public to report objects of archaeological interest, found outside formal programmes of fieldwork, for recording on a central database where they will be publicly available. The Scheme is funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council, and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. It operates with a staff of 36 Finds Liaison Officers (FLOs), some with assistants, six Specialist Finds Advisers, and central management and support staff. The year 2006 is the third in which it has operated throughout England and Wales.<sup>1</sup> The following report is a brief summary of some of the highlights among the post-medieval finds added to the database in 2006.

## A SELECTION OF FINDS RECORDED IN 2006

This year's report again demonstrates an expanding variety of objects within categories familiar from previous years. The range of precious- and base-metal dress hooks from the early 16th century continues to be a theme noted for several years, while from the other end of the period considered, 18th-century cameo gems and 19th-century military and livery buttons, the last for the staff of known prominent individuals, also make further appearances.

Several knives feature below — some with representational handles such as Jonah and the Whale, and others that are purely decorative. A fine seal from the period following the Reformation is symbolic of changes in the administration of the Church of England. Coins of particular interest include foreign issues, a few of them being current in England for a while, and there is a Civil War

siege piece from Newark. A cannon ball, also from that period of conflict, probably relates to a short-lived and unsuccessful rising in Surrey to restore the king in 1648. An unusual pewter vessel, possibly an adaptation, is one of several finds from London. Early toys, too, have been described during the period reported, including one in the form of a most unusual multiple vessel, apparently a kind of puzzle in its full-sized versions, and all the more unexpected in miniature form. Two 16th/17th-century cloth seals are significant enough to be singled out for attention: one is the first recorded in England from the city of Gouda in the Netherlands, the other a London Dyers Company issue. The latter comes from a known dyehouse beside the Thames in the City of London; it was found at the end of a trade route taken by the cloth to which it was attached in Suffolk. An early fire insurance mark of lead with the motif of a sun could be from one of two different insurance companies. Giving even further variety, a pipe tamper from Northamptonshire is in the form of an erotic encounter, an unusual instance of an early piece of pornography.

1. *Cornwall, Paul* (PAS database CORN-D3AF51: finder D. Edwards; FLO A. Tyacke). An early 16th-century silver *soldino*, issued by Doge Leonardo Lauredan (1501–21) in Venice, is one of four such coins that have been found recently in the parish of Paul. Venetian *soldini* arrived during the 15th century with the annual trading fleet and were used as halfpennies, which were in short supply (though the imports were closer in value to a farthing). The English government tried to suppress their use.

2. *Leicestershire, Melton* (PAS database LEIC-AE7A93: finder C. Bursnell; FLO W. Scott). A mid-16th-century copper-alloy seal matrix (Fig. 1)

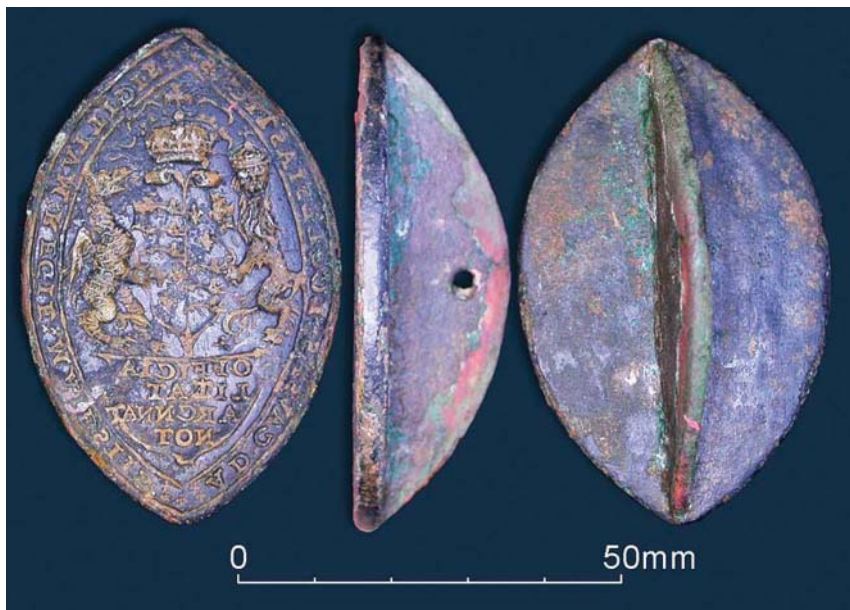


FIG. 1

No. 2: copper-alloy seal matrix from Leicestershire.

was kindly identified by John Cherry. Its form is lentoid, with a semi-circular plate on the back. It has an ornate royal crest with the arms of England, supported by a crowned lion and a dragon. The edge legend reads SIGILLVM:REGIE:MAIESTIE:AD:CAVSAS:ECCLESIASTICAS ('seal of his Majesty the King for church matters') continuing below the crest with OFFICIA/LITAT[.] / ARCNNAT/NOT' ('by authority of the office of the archdeaconry of Nottingham'). The seal was used under Edward VI for authenticating ecclesiastical documents by royal authority

following changes during the Reformation. John Cherry comments that the find belongs to a series of seals, of which a total of 17 are now known for different parts of the country.

3. *City of London* (PAS database LON-C7E3E5; finders A. Johanessen and S. Brooker; FLO F. Simpson). A pewter drinking cup from the Thames foreshore has an unusually simple handle (Fig. 2). There are two marks, one on the inside, the other outside on the base. The external mark can be read as 'IG'; the internal mark is not so clear but is



FIG. 2

No. 3: pewter drinking vessel from London.

probably a dagger with an initial on each side. The finders think that the vessel began as a beaker, made by the person indicated by the internal stamp, and that it was modified by 'IG', who added the handle; alternatively it is possible that the second mark is that of the owner. The context suggests that the find dates to between 1550 and 1650.

4. *Suffolk, Great Glemham* (PAS database SF-F677A2: finder P. Berry; FLO F. Minter). An

unusual 16th-century copper-alloy terminal for a knife handle has an oval head facing forward, wearing a flattish, bonnet-like head-dress (Fig. 3). The eyes are small, circular indentations, the triangular nose protrudes, and a horizontal line represents the mouth. The neck widens into an expanded base that is oval in cross-section, with a V-shaped groove and diagonal lines on the back. A central slot contains the corroded remains of the iron tang.

5. *Isle of Wight, near Brightstone* (PAS database IOW-C9F555: Treasure case 2006 T500: finder G. Leng; FLO F. Basford). This composite early 16th-century silver-gilt dress-hook<sup>2</sup> has a raised square central panel within a rebated border (Fig. 4). At the centre of the panel is heart-shaped recess. Around three edges are seven evenly spaced knobs, including one at each corner. The one at the top edge, at the junction between the separate hook and the plate, is a trefoil motif. The recurved wire hook is splayed where it is soldered to the back of the plate, and it tapers to a point. A separate transverse bar is also soldered on, allowing the accessory to be attached to a garment or strap. This find is broadly similar to a pair of silver-gilt dress-hooks from Parnham, Suffolk, although these are differently constructed.

6. *Gloucestershire, Minsterworth* (PAS database GLO-BAF1E7: finder R. Williams; FLO K. Adams). Three parts of a 16th-century cast copper-alloy sword-holder mount from a belt were found still joined to one another (Fig. 5). This known form<sup>3</sup> comprises a long, moulded plate with doubly engrailed ends, narrowing towards the middle, where there is a V-shaped central notch; there are three holes for attachment. Two loops on the lower edge each hold a shield-shaped hanger, similar in style to the part already described, and with a single hole for attachment, on which mounts on the scabbard would have been held. There is moulded foliate scrolling on all three recovered parts. The edges display some iron corrosion.

7. *Norfolk, Wacton* (PAS database NMS-877601: finder L. Laing). This incomplete, composite copper-alloy terminal from a 16th-century scale-tang knife is in the form of two heavily stylized addorsed animal-heads, which are attached to the iron tang (Fig. 6). The wooden scales are secured by two copper-alloy rivets with roves. Three copper-alloy pins form a decorative triangle between the rivets on one side.



FIG. 3

No. 4: copper-alloy knife handle from Suffolk.

The metal parts of knives are relatively common finds, but organic materials rarely survive in most soils, and corroded iron parts are usually impossible to identify or date. Although this particular implement is incomplete, the preservation of the different elements together makes it an especially interesting rural find.

8. *Northumberland, near Warkworth* (PAS database NCL-801996: finder W. Clines; FLO R. Collins). A 16th/17th-century lead cloth seal (Fig. 7) has an inscription on one side that reads 'HEPERSEE[R?K]', probably the name of a clothier or merchant. The other side reads 'GOV/DA', indicating that this seal is from Gouda in the Netherlands. It is the first example from the town to be recorded in Britain but an identical find from Deventer in the Netherlands has been dated to c. 1500.<sup>4</sup> The seal provides evidence for the important North Sea cloth trade that Northumberland contributed to, exporting wool and importing linens.

9. *East Sussex, East Dean and Friston* (PAS Database SUSS-D045F2: finder S. Ellis; FLO L. Andrews-Wilson). A pair of 17th/18th-century copper-alloy dividers (Fig. 8) consists of two cast arms which fit snugly together, joined by a hinge

mechanism. They have a globular, collared terminal above the hexagonal shaft housing the hinge. Below this the arms curve outwards, forming an oval void, and then re-join on their original line, each with a raised collar on the outer edge. The arms are semi-circular in section and taper to their integral points, which are intact. A similar pair has been found on a wreck off the Isles of Scilly dated to 1717.<sup>5</sup> These tools were regularly used by architects and builders on land, as well as to aid navigation.

10. *Humberside, Sutton upon Derwent* (PAS database SWYOR-6C64B4: finder J. Szulc; FLO A. Marshall). Cast copper-alloy miniature toy cauldrons dating from the late 16th or 17th centuries are becoming relatively common finds. This particular example is unusual because it comprises three circular vessels, joined together in a triangle, each with a handle lug but sharing just three feet (Fig. 9). It would have required an elaborate mould, which has apparently caused difficulty as some parts of the vessel walls have been cast so thinly that there are voids. It is not certain why this complicated item, presumably a plaything, was made, but is probably based on contemporary ceramic 'fuddling cups', which were joke pieces, designed to spill liquid on the drinker.<sup>6</sup>



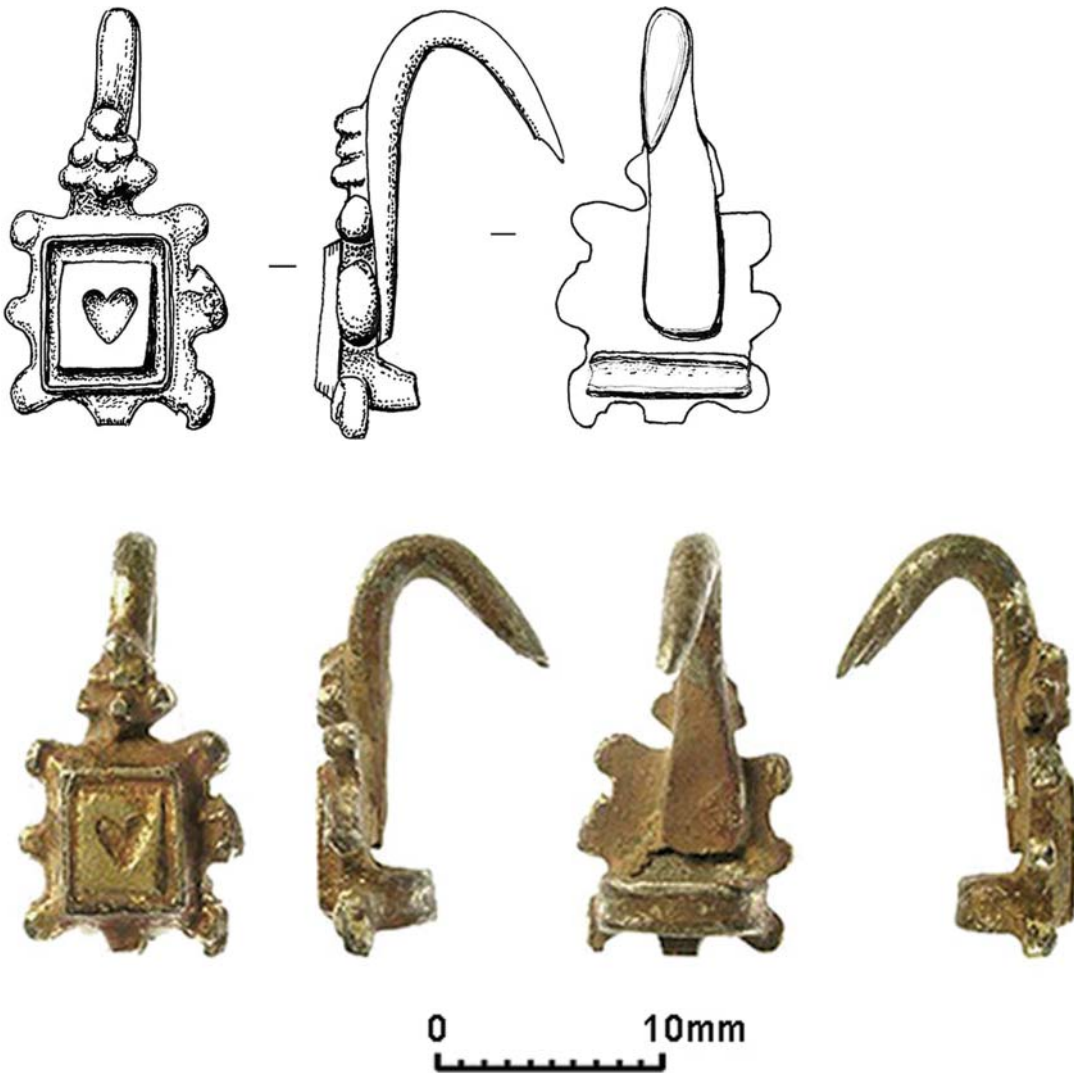


FIG. 4

No. 5: silver-gilt dress-hook from the Isle of Wight (drawn by F. Basford).

11. *Suffolk, Gedgrave* (PAS database SF-586A31: finder A. Calver; FLO F. Minter).

An early 17th-century cloth seal found in Suffolk was issued by the London Dyers Company (Fig. 10). Only one disc of the seal survives complete; stamped on it is what appears to be an American Indian figure with a bow and arrow, along with the initials 'TC'. Parallels for this design are known elsewhere. One was found near Trig

Lane on the Thames foreshore in the City of London, which is thought to be the location of a dyehouse where these particular seals would have been put on newly coloured cloths.<sup>7</sup> The rivet on the other face of the surviving disc has a partial stamp with the cording of a madder bag, which was the general symbol of the dyers. The dye used is likely to have been woad, for a blue cloth coloured in the capital before it was sent to Suffolk.



FIG. 5  
No. 6: copper-alloy sword-holder mount from Gloucestershire.



FIG. 6  
No. 7: copper-alloy knife terminal from Norfolk.



FIG. 7  
No. 8: lead cloth seal from Northumberland.



FIG. 8

No. 9: copper-alloy dividers from East Sussex.



FIG. 9

No. 10: copper-alloy miniature multiple cauldrons from Humberside.



FIG. 10

No. 11: lead cloth seal from Suffolk.

12. *Lincolnshire, Mareham Le Fen* (PAS database NLM-1A8F94: finder P. Mallett; FLO L. Staves). A silver nine pence piece is from the Civil War siege of Newark (Fig. 11). The diamond-shaped Charles I coin has a lozenge-shaped perforation at the top, suggesting reuse as a keepsake. On one face is a large crown between the letters 'C R' with 'IX' below and on the other face is 'OBS NEWARK 1645' ('Newark besieged') on three lines. These coins are quite unusual and were struck because insufficient ordinary change was available for commerce within the besieged town. The distinctive shape arose because pieces of flattish vessels of silver made available by the community under siege were cut up to produce these emergency issues, which do not respect the usual weight conventions of the regular coinage of the time.

13. *Surrey, Redhill* (PAS database SUR-563F66: finder C. Murray; FLO D. Williams). This mid-17th-century iron cannon ball, which was found in a garden, is in good condition and weighs just over one pound. It was probably fired by a falconet, a light-calibre cannon which had a range of about 1000 paces and was in use in the middle of the 17th century. This is the second of two cannon balls from the Redhill area and can justifiably linked to a short-lived rising in the summer of 1648 under the Earl of Holland which had the aim of restoring Charles I. The rising was 'wretchedly organised and quickly suppressed' and involved stationing outposts on Redhill Common to watch for Parliamentary troops approaching from Sevenoaks. These outposts were themselves routed by the advance from the north of three troops of horse led by Major Lewis Audeley. The findspot is about one kilometre from the common.



FIG. 11

No. 12: silver nine pence siege piece from Lincolnshire.

14. *Lincolnshire, Heckington* (PAS database LIN-79D1C5; finder D. Pantony; FLO A. Daubney). A mid-17th-century copper-alloy dress-hook clasp (Fig. 12) is in the form of the stylized head and torso of a facing man. He has abundant, wavy hair including a beard. A conventional scroll covers the upper part of his chest and flanks his sides. A (?)lion's head motif, perhaps intended for armour, covers his midriff; it terminates in a pair of smaller loops and a larger, oval one.

Although presumably used for a broadly similar purpose to those of the early 16th century (cf. no. 5 above), the clasps of this series are distanced by three or more generations from the more varied, earlier, ones. Three similar clasps are recorded on the Portable Antiquities Scheme database, and another which is almost identical to the present example (dated from its context to the mid-17th century) was excavated at Flowerdew Hundred in Virginia, USA.

15. *Kent, Cliffe and Cliff Woods* (PAS database KENT-9578D3 & KENT-958B28; finder P. Prenczek; FLO A. Richardson). The two component parts of a mid-17th-century copper-alloy dress clasp (Fig. 13) were found separately in the same field; the finder recognized that they were parts of the same accessory. They are moulded with matching foliate and scrolling designs and both have three holes for attachment. The hooked part is in better condition than that with the loop, which is heavily worn. Fasteners of this date are not common (cf. preceding item) and it is most unusual for both halves to be discovered.



FIG. 12

No. 14: copper-alloy dress clasp from Lincolnshire.



FIG. 13

No. 15: copper-alloy dress clasp from Kent.





FIG. 14

No. 16: copper-alloy knife handle form Lincolnshire.

16. *Lincolnshire, Fishtoft* (PAS database LIN-F16D33; finder D. Pantony; FLO A. Daubney). An unusual form of 17th-century moulded copper-alloy knife handle (Fig. 14) is in the form of Jonah rising from the mouth of the whale; his hands are

placed together in prayer, representing the story found in the first two chapters of the biblical Book of Jonah. The anatomical features of the ‘whale’ are remarkably consistent with much earlier representations on Roman 2nd- and 3rd-century artefacts which represent a mythical sea-creature having a slender head with a fin-like crest in the centre, and mammal-like ears.

The only other knife handle with this distinctive design traced from England was found at Tolleshunt Major, Essex (database ESS-C12B55) but three further examples are known from Germany (one is in the Bonn Museum, the second was discovered in Andernach and is now at Cologne; the third was found in Wesel).

17. *Wiltshire, Mildenhall* (PAS database WILT-9203F7; finder M. Gillett; FLO K. Hinds). A late 17th-century copper-alloy knife terminal represents a crowned lion sitting upright (Fig. 15). The object is broken where the animal’s legs should be and shows that the terminal is hollow. The forelegs (small in comparison with the rest of the body) rest upon the top of a pointed-oval shield with a caricature crowned head (the crown looks rather like a paper one), the forehead of which is bulbous, the nose very long, pointing slightly downwards, and the chin curved slightly upwards. Below this is a shield inscribed ‘RI’ (probably for Rex Iacobus — i.e. King James), with a crown above. Nicholas



FIG. 15

No. 17: copper-alloy knife handle from Wiltshire.



FIG. 16

No. 19: local North Devon pottery vessel from Devon.

Griffiths suggests that this object is a parody of a King's Beast. Usually carved in stone and placed along palace roof lines, King's Beasts sit upright holding a shield, normally the royal coat of arms. The design may be intended to celebrate the end of the unpopular James II's reign (December 1688), when William of Orange landed and deposed him. The style of the four-arched crown supports a late 17th-century date.



18. *Cornwall, Mylor* (PAS database CORN-35CC66: finder H. Manson; FLO A. Tyacke). A gold half *escudo* of John V of Portugal (1707–50) has the monarch's head and is dated 1730. This is presumably one of the many Portuguese gold coins brought into England during the 18th century to add to the high-value specie available.

19. *Devon, River Taw, Barnstaple* (PAS database DEV-A85854 *et al.*: finder M. Palmer; FLO D. Wootton). For some time the finder has been collecting late medieval and post-medieval pottery from a sandbank on the banks of the River Taw at Barnstaple (Fig. 16). Most of the finds are of local pottery of the 16th to 19th centuries. Some sherds are kiln waste but most appear simply to be domestic rubbish. A wide range of vessel types is represented, including chamber pots, tankards, porringers and cisterns. Many of the pots are almost whole (Fig. 16); several previously unknown forms have been recovered. A few imported vessels are also present, including a Spanish micaceous flanged bowl and a North Italian marbled ware costrel.

The site from which the ceramics were collected has become threatened by the construction of a bridge which would alter the flow of the river,



FIG. 17

No. 20: copper-alloy fob seal from Lancashire.



FIG. 18

No. 21: copper-alloy pipe tamper from Northampton.

causing the sandbank to be eroded and the pottery lost. A meeting organized by the FLO and Devon County Council's HER resulted in Wessex Archaeology being asked to investigate the site. During the 17th and 18th centuries North Devon pottery was exported in quantity from the river Taw to Wales, Ireland and North America, giving the finds an international interest.

20. *Lancashire, near Lancaster* (PAS database LANCUM-61E562: finder C. Poole; FLO D. Bruns). A complete 18th-century copper-alloy

fob seal-matrix was found together with its chain (Fig. 17). The back of the oval seal is domed, with a sturdy openwork frame decorated with grapes and leaves, and there is a central piercing to take the chain. The intaglio, which is pale purple, is probably made from glass. A metal foil was inserted between the intaglio and the frame to make the design stand out. At the centre is a bust of a man in late 18th-century style. Some gilding remains in the centre of the back and among the openwork. The matrix was either attached or repaired with an iron ring, which has corroded onto the suspension loop.

21. *Northamptonshire, Nether Heyford* (PAS database NARC-B2B1B7: finder D. Derby; FLO T. Brindle). An incomplete 18th-century copper-alloy anthropomorphic pipe tamper depicts an erotic scene (Fig. 18). Although the head of the female partner is missing, the representation of a standing couple engaged in sexual intercourse is clear enough. The base of this implement has been lost.

Bawdy scenes were important features of 18th-century popular art, literature, and material culture, and it is into this tradition that the tamper fits. A complete and closely datable parallel comes from the wreck of the *Colossus*, which sank in 1798.<sup>8</sup>

22. *Surrey, Sutton Park* (PAS database SUR-003EC1: finder M. Stonard; FLO D. Williams). A late 18th-century military button found near Woking (Fig. 19) belonged to a member of the Woking Volunteer Cavalry (spelled 'Wokeing' on the accessory), one of several short-lived units set up to counter the threat of Napoleonic invasion. This particular group was formed in 1798 and was disbanded in about 1802, before reforming under a different name. The Woking Cavalry consisted of



FIG. 19

No. 22: copper-alloy military button from Surrey.





FIG. 20

No. 23: copper-alloy livery buttons from Cornwall.

one troop (approximately 80 to 100 men) under the command of Captain T.W. Weston of Sutton Park, which is very close to the findspot.

23. *Cornwall, Illogan and Camborne* (PAS database CORN-D755C7: finder J. Stokes; FLO A. Tyacke). Two 19th-century livery buttons were discovered by the same finder (Fig. 20). The first, an incomplete, silver-coated copper-alloy button of two parts, has in relief the head of a unicorn under a coronet — the crest of the Basset family of Cornwall.<sup>9</sup> It would have been worn on the uniform of coachmen and the like. The Basset family lived at Tehidy, close to the findspot, until the 1890s.

The second button is similar in form and materials (CORN-D5FB20). This too is incomplete; it has the initials FB under four plumes, which also indicate the Basset family. This button was made in the time of Sir Francis Basset, Lord de Dunstanville (1757–1835). It has the maker's mark of Biddell of Drury Lane, London, dating its manufacture between the 1820s and 1835.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> See Egan 2005a; 2006.

<sup>2</sup> cf. Egan 2005a, 329–31, no. 1; Egan 2006, 304, nos 5–6 with references.

<sup>3</sup> cf. Gaimster 1988.

<sup>4</sup> Vermeulen *et al.* 2007, 85; another Gouda cloth seal assigned to the 16th century but with different stamps is also known: Hatz 1989, 240, 14.11.

<sup>5</sup> Morris 1984, 257, fig. 5.

<sup>6</sup> Forsyth & Egan 2005, 113–14; for fuddling cups see Brears 1974, 118–20.

<sup>7</sup> Egan forthcoming (Museum of London, TL74 site, acc. no. 773); cf. Egan 1995, 94, 187, fig. 36, no. 275; for the wider background see Egan 2005b, 48–9, fig. 3.

<sup>8</sup> Morris 1984, 333, fig. 9.

<sup>9</sup> Endean Ivall 1988; Pascoe 1979.

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#### ABBREVIATION

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