5. Objects of Scythian Type

5a. Introduction

We have briefly reviewed in the introduction to this volume the presence of the Scythians in the Caucasus and the Ancient Near East. Their association with the Caucasus comes about through the fact that a number of the Scythian royal tombs are situated around the Kuban River on the north side of the Caucasus, notably those at Kelermes and Kostromskaya (see Fig. 40). Their presence in this region perhaps goes back to the 8th century BC. Then, it is generally accepted that in the 7th century BC the Scythians mounted their incursions into the Ancient Near East through the Caucasus. To what extent they established permanent settlements in the Caucasus, or can be identified in the archaeological record, is to some extent still disputed, but local archaeologists believe that their presence can be attested through the occurrence of their distinctive weapons, their horse harness and objects decorated in the Scythian animal style.

It is because of their association with the Caucasus that we have decided to include in this catalogue Scythian and Scythian-related material. There is no suggestion that all, or indeed any, of the items listed below come from the Caucasus, only that they have some Scythian connection. This is felt to be of interest in the present context because the British Museum receives many enquirers about its holdings of ‘Scythian’ material. Objects that have been identified as Scythian include 9 pieces from the Oxus Treasure, 2 axes, 13 items of horse harness, some pieces of decorative goldwork allegedly from Ziwiye in Iran, and 8 gold plaques that are thought to derive from a Scythian burial-mound at Kul-Oba in the Crimea. It should also be noted that not included in the catalogue are other items of Scythian interest, such as representations of Scythians on Greek vases, of which there are nearly 40 in the British Museum (Vos 1963: 135–6).

5b. The Oxus Treasure

There are a few objects of Scythian type in the Oxus Treasure. This hoard of gold and silver objects, now in the British Museum, was recovered between about 1877 and 1880 from the area of Takht-i Kuwad on the north bank of the River Oxus, in ancient Bactria (modern Tajikistan) (Dalton 1964; Curtis 1997). It consists of about 180 items (excluding coins), mostly dating from the 5th–4th centuries BC during which time Bactria was part of the Achaemenid Persian empire. The collection includes gold votive plaques, a model gold chariot, gold and silver statuettes and figurines, a gold scabbard, gold and silver vessels, bracelets, gold roundels, gold signet rings and seals. Many of these

Figure 40 The Royal Scythian tombs (from The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin XXXII/5, 1973-74, p.11; reproduced with kind permission of the Metropolitan Museum of Art).
items are Achaemenid in style, but there are some other influences. Some of these pieces have Greek connections, and others look as if they are local Bactrian products. Lastly, evidence of Scythian art can be seen in some of the objects, which is scarcely surprising in view of the north-easterly location of the find-spot of the Treasure.

**Bracelets**

169–170. **ANE 124047-8/1897-12-31, 144–5 (Pl. 15, Fig. 41)**

Pair of solid cast gold bracelets with terminals in the form of monstrous animal heads with triangular-shaped eyes. Dalton suggests that the creatures are lion-griffins with horns and wings. The animals have long tails which interlock at the back of the hoop.

*Diam. of each 7.9 cm, Wt. 140.5 g (BM 124047) and 138.8 g (BM 124048).*


These bracelets may be compared with a torque from Kazinskoye in the Kuban district (Borovka 1928: pl. 36A) which has similarly decorated terminals and animals with long snake-like bodies. Borovka (ibid.: 68–69) suggests that the animals should be identified as bears because of their long snouts. Dalton suggests (1964: 38–39) that these bracelets belong to ‘the Scythic art of the Jaxartes’, which he connects with western Siberia, but this is not supported by the Kazinskoye parallel.

**Finger-ring**

171. **ANE 124012/1897-12-31, 111 (Pl. 15, Fig. 41)**

Gold finger-ring with large circular bezel decorated in relief with a coiled figure of a lion whose legs ornament the shoulders of the ring. On the bezel there are cavities for inlays which are now missing.

*Diam. of bezel 2.65 cm, Wt. 11.0 g.*

Dalton 1964: no. 111, fig. 60 on p. 39, pl. XX; Pope 1938: pl. 122G; Minns 1913: 255, fig. 175; Borovka 1928: pl. 55E; Barnett 1968: pl. VII/1; Tait 1976: no. 109f, col. pl. 9; Zeymal 1979: no. 119; Mitchell 1989: no. 3.

The twisting and distorting of animals into impossible circular shapes, as in the case of this lion, is a feature that is often encountered in Scythian art. As examples, we may note a bronze plaque with coiled-up wolf from the Kulakovsky Barrow in the Crimea (Piotrovsky et al. 1987b: pl. 61); a bronze ornament showing two curled and interconnecting animals from Seven Brothers (Artamonov 1969: pl. 156); and the famous coiled gold panther and the buckling showing a lion attacking a horse, both from Peter the Great’s Siberian Collection (Talbot Rice 1957: pls. 2, 20). Both Dalton (1964: 30) and Borovka (1928: 58) point to other finger-rings in Scythian contexts.

**Lion-griffin**

172. **ANE 123924/1897-12-31, 23 (Pl. 16, Fig. 42)**

Gold plaque with cut-out shape in the form of a couchant lion-griffin. The monster has a lion’s head, the horns and body of an ibex, long, pricked ears, wings, and a tail that ends in the shape of a leaf. There are circular cavities for inlay on the flank and shoulder of the beast, and there are small gold balls in the ears and at the end of the horns. The plaque is embossed and chased with the exception of the lion’s head which is cast in the round. At the back of the plaque there are two long prongs for attachment. The purpose of this plaque is unclear, but perhaps it was attached through the prongs to a wooden or bitumen background. In the view of Barnett (1968: 44), ‘from the two horizontal pins at its back it is to be identified as a woman’s hair ornament, or that of a turban.’

*L. 6.15 cm, Wt. 44.3 g.*

Dalton 1964: no. 23, fig. 46 on p. 11, pl. 1; Archaeologia 58, p. 102; Minns 1913: 256, fig. 176; Barnett 1968: pl. VIII/3; Artamonov 1973: fig. 7; Tait 1976: no. 109d, col. pl. 9; Zeymal 1979: no. 23; Philby 1981: pl. on p. 120; Wilson 1984: pl. 28; Barnett 1986: pl. 11, illustration 10; Mitchell 1989: no. 11; Collon 1995: fig. 150; Curtis 2000: fig. 73.

Dalton contrasted the pose of this beast, with legs tucked beneath it, with that often assumed by stags in Scythian art, for example the gold plaque in the form of a stag from Kostromskaya and the representations of stags on an embossed gold sheet from Kelermes (Artamonov 1969: pls. 21, 62). This comparison remains valid and provides a possible link with Scythian art, but other features of this composite creature are more difficult to locate. Its place of origin was possibly somewhere in the Scythian world, but the inspiration for this piece remains elusive.

**Bird’s head**

173. **ANE 123940/1897-12-31, 39 (Pl. 16, Fig. 41)**

Gold cut-out plaque in the shape of a bird’s head attached to what Dalton (1964: 16) interpreted as a coiled serpent. At the back of the plaque are five loops for attachment. This plaque was evidently attached to cloth or leather, and is probably either a dress ornament or a harness ornament.

Alternatively, Moorey suggests that it may have decorated the top of a gorytus (bow-case) (Moorey 1985: 27).

*L. 3.35 cm, Wt. 3.9 g.*


Plaques for fixing to clothes, textiles and horse harness are well-known from Scythian contexts (e.g. Rostovtzeff 1922: figs. 21–22; Artamonov 1969: fig. 35; see also nos. 195–202 below). Stylised bird’s heads with round bulging eyes and hooked beaks are a characteristic feature of Scythian art. Plaques in the form of bird’s heads with fasteners on the back may be noted from Nymphaeum (Artamonov 1969: pl. 92; Minns 1913: fig. 115), from Seven Brothers (Artamonov 1969: pl. 115), and from the Dniepr district (Borovka 1928: pl. 8B). Stylised bird’s heads can also be seen on the decorated gold strips allegedly from Ziwiye (no. 194).

**Roundels**

174. **ANE 124049/1897-12-31, 146 (Pl. 16, Fig. 41)**

Gold disc, probably a bridle fitting. At the back is a hollow projection with four openings at right-angles to each other to accommodate crossed-over straps, similar to nos. 184–5, 187.

*Diam. 2.4 cm, Wt. 6.5 g.*

Dalton 1964: no. 146, fig. 69 on p. 39; Zeymal 1979: no. 146.
Figure 41 Scale 1:1. Drawings of nos. 171 and 174 from Dalton 1964: fig. 60 on p. 30 and fig. 69 on p. 39.
Bridle fittings of this kind, in bone, bronze and gold, are attested across a wide area, but principally in south Russia and eastern Europe (Medvedskaya 1983). In the Near East, there are bone examples from Karmir Blur in Urartu (Hauptmann 1983: fig. 5/9) and bronze examples from Tepe Gigyan and Tepe Sialk in Iran (Medvedskaya 1983: fig. 3/20, 22, 24). The projection at the back with criss-cross holes is to be compared with similar arrangements on the harness attachments nos. 184–185, 187. Although such bridle fittings certainly occur in Scythian contexts, their chronological and geographical distribution is much broader than the Scythian world. The present example probably dates from the 5th–4th century bc.

175. ANE 123944/1897-12-31, 43 (Pl. 16, Fig. 42)
Hemispherical gold disc with embossed decoration showing two boars and two ibex heads. There is a loop for attachment at the back.
Diam. 4.3 cm, Wt. 23.3 g.
Dalton 1964: no. 43, fig. 50 p. 17; Zeymal 1979: no. 43.

The animal decoration and the circular scheme of the composition are both indicative of Scythian influence. Boars are often shown in Scythian art, occurring for example on the gold pectoral from the Tolstaya Mogila (Piotrovsky et al. 1987b: pls. 118–119) and on the gold-covered axe handle from Kelermes (ibid.: pls. 37–40), in the latter case in a recumbent position. Ibexes are also shown on the Kelermes axe handle.

176. ANE 123941/1897-12-31, 40 (Pl. 16, Fig. 42)
Gold disc with embossed decoration showing a lion’s head en face. Around the disc is a cable pattern border. At the back is a loop fastener for attachment. Probably a harness ornament.
Diam. 4.5 cm, Wt. 10.2 g.

Dalton cites parallels to this lion’s head from the Altai and from south Russia, implying Scythian influence. Plaques showing animal’s heads en face certainly occur in Scythian contexts, for example from the Seven Brothers kurgans (e.g. Piotrovsky et al. 1987b: pls. 80–81), but there does not seem to be a close parallel to this lion’s head. Nevertheless, the style is apparently more Scythian than Near Eastern. There are some similarities with the lion masks on the gold sheet attributed to the nomadic world of the Scythian period. They have tubular sockets (in bimetallic objects made of bronze and occasionally of silver) with rivet-holes at the bottom for attachment to a wooden handle. Their long blades, particularly of iron, have sharp ends (which is why they are often called pick-axes), suggesting a military rather than a domestic usage. There is often a bird’s or animal’s head (sometimes two) at the junction of blade and socket, generally showing the head of a bird of prey with a large beak. Sometimes the tops of the sockets are decorated with zoomorphic motifs. These socketed axes with long blades are generally strictly functional, even an axe-head in the Metropolitan Museum of Art with silver socket (Bunker, Chatwin, Farkas 1970: no. 34), although this could have belonged to a local chief. There is no reason to suggest another purpose for this object, such as a ceremonial or divine function. The comparison with the richly decorated gold covered axe from Kelermes (see e.g. Artamonov 1969: figs. 9–11) made by Farkas (Bunker et al. 1970: 58) on the basis of the use of silver seems to be rather far-fetched.
5. Objects of Scythian Type

Figure 42 Scale 1:1. Drawing of no. 172 from Dalton 1964: fig. 46 on p. 11.
The origin of socketed axes with long blades has been discussed by many scholars, most of whom have indicated the Ural metallurgical centre for their initial production. All-bronze axes are known from the Ananino culture in the Volga-Kama river basin (Kuzminykh 1983: 253, pl. LVI/1–6, 11–17) and southern Siberia (the Altai mountains) (Gryaznov 1980: 22, fig. 11/6; Kiselev 1951: 241, pl. XXIV/1–5; Chlenova 1967: 257, pl. 7). Bimetallic axe-heads with iron blades are also well represented in the Ananino culture (Kuzminykh 1983: 253, pl. LVI/1–10), but although the Ural metallurgical complex was certainly the centre of their production, socketed bimetallic axes were widely distributed throughout the Scythian world, from the Carpathian Basin to the Altai Mountains. They also occur in the northern Caucasus and the Pontic steppes, where they are associated with the Scythians (e.g. Krupnov 1960: 458, pl. XXXVI/1–2; Melyukova 1989: pl. 101B/9–15). The Lugovoe necropolis has produced many iron axe-heads of this type, dated to the 6th–5th century BC (Munchaev 1963: figs. 9/2, 13/9, 19/10, 20/3–4, 26/12, 27/3, 29/9).

In contrast to bimetallic axes which are rare in the northern Caucasus and in the Pontic steppes, all-bronze and all-iron axes were well-known in these areas, particularly in the late Koban culture. However, they do not have long tubular sockets, they have wider blades and they may be accurately described as pick-axes, reflecting their probable use as working tools (Krupnov 1960: 458, pl. XXXVI/1–2; Melyukova 1989: pl. 101B/9–15). The Lugovoe necropolis has produced many iron axe-heads of this type, dated to the 6th–5th century BC (Munchaev 1963: figs. 9/2, 13/9, 19/10, 20/3–4, 26/12, 27/3, 29/9).

Actual finds of Scythian style axes in the Near East include an iron axe with bronze tubular socket from a warrior’s grave at Imirler Köyü in northern Turkey (Hauptmann 1983: 268, pl. 56/1), and a bronze axe similar to no. 179 which was found at Persepolis. It has a ram’s head beneath the blade on the front of the socket, and was found on the floor of the Throne Hall portico (Schmidt 1957: pls. 78/1, 79/1). This is particularly interesting because such axes are also shown on reliefs at Persepolis. They can be seen on
the Apadana reliefs being carried by members of Delegation XVII (Schmidt 1953: pl. 43A) who are thought to be Scythians or Chorasmians (Roaf 1974: 119–20; 1983: 55). It has also been noted by Herzfeld (1968: 363; Walser 1966: 93) that throne-bearer no. 22, apparently a Scythian, on the south jamb of the eastern doorway of the Tripylon is armed with such an axe (Schmidt 1953: pl. 8o). These depictions at Persepolis serve to underline the association of these axes with nomadic tribes of Central Asia, and it was probably from this area that an example reached Persepolis. It is also relevant to recall here that Herodotus tells us that the Scythians (Amyrgian Scythians who were called Saca) in the army of Xerxes carried bows and daggers and axes called ‘sagaris’ (VII, 64).

Some bronze axe-adzes from Luristan in western Iran also bear a superficial resemblance to the axes discussed here. They have centrally-placed tubular sockets cast in one piece with the two parts of the blade, but with a loop instead of a bird’s beak under the junction of blade and socket. Excavated examples come from the cemeteries of War Kabud and Chamzhi-Mü mish (Vanden Berghe 1968a: pl. 29a; 1987: fig. 20). Both cemeteries belong to the Iron III period, c. 800/750–600 bc. Unprovenanced examples are also reported from Luristan (Moorey 1971: no. 37, fig. 11, pl. 4). Although the similarities between these Luristan axe-adzes and the other axes are obvious, the relationship between the two groups is far from clear. What does seem certain, however, is that the Persepolis axe and others like it derive from northern rather than Luristan prototypes.

The bronze and iron axehead no. 178 and the all-iron axehead no. 179 should both be linked with the Scythian world. While the bronze and iron axehead belongs to a well-known group, the iron axehead is more unusual. It has been made of very pure iron and is a copy of the bronze axeheads of the same type. Because of the exceptional state of preservation it is possible to see that every detail normally cast in bronze has been reproduced in iron, even an animal’s head, which has been carved in the iron.

**Horse harness attachments**

i. **Boar’s tusks**

180. AOE 1999-12-1, 17 (Pl. 17, Fig. 44)

Bronze/copper alloy harness attachment in the form of a boar’s tusk. It is square in section throughout, and tapers to a point. At the other end, which is hollow, it is pierced on all four sides with interconnecting holes. The end is closed.

Ht. 3.33 cm., W. 3.0 cm., 1.58 x 1.53 cm. at base, Wt. 32.4 g.

This object was unregistered until recently, but it has on it a small yellow label containing the inscription ‘N.H 41’. This shows that it was on exhibition at the British Museum in the 19th or early 20th century, but provides no further information about its provenance. All that may be deduced is that it was a relatively early acquisition, and most probably comes from a site in Mesopotamia. If it had been purchased, it would almost certainly have been registered.

181. AOE 1990-10-27, 1 (Pl. 17, Fig. 44)

Copper alloy harness attachment in the form of a boar’s tusk. As no. 180 above, but open at the end.

Ht. 3.43 cm., W. 2.4 cm., 1.58 x 1.56 cm. at base, Wt. 24.0 g.

Surface XRF analysis: alloy of copper, tin, lead and antimony. See Appendix.

Purchased in 1990 from Julia Schottlander, Tetragon, London, together with nos. 182 and 184.

182. AOE 1990-10-27, 2 (Pl. 17, Fig. 44)

A bronze harness attachment in the form of a boar’s tusk as nos. 180–1, but with incised decoration representing the head and beak of an eagle or bird of prey. The curved boar’s tusk is represented as the eagle’s beak. The attachment is open at the pierced end.

Ht. 3.1 cm., W. 3.3 cm., 1.75 x 1.56 cm. at base, Wt. 22.6 g.

Surface XRF analysis: bronze. See Appendix.


It is known from the Persepolis reliefs that bridle ornaments in the shape of boar’s tusks were mounted on horse’s headstalls in sets of four and were used to hold the straps together (e.g. Ghirshman 1964: pl. 231). They occur both on horses belonging to the Persians and on horses being led by tributaries. Actual examples in stone and in bone as well as three pierced boar’s tusks were found at Persepolis (Schmidt 1957: 100, pl. 79/3–5; Herzfeld 1941: 271), and there are examples in stone from Susa (Amiet 1998). These bridle attachments are generally thought to have developed from bone attachments that are associated with the nomadic people of the steppes. Ghirshman (1977) has argued that they should be associated with Iranian tribes such as the Cimmerians and the Scythians, and points to an example in white stone from a so-called Cimmerian level at Gordion (Ghirshman 1977: 27).

In the Caucasian area, bronze attachments are known from Scythian (?) levels at Karmir Blur (Piotrovsky 1950: 94–5, figs. 61–2) and from a necropolis in the Kabarda region, north-west Caucasus. Here they occurred with a collection of objects attributed to the Cimmerians (Terenozhkin 1976: 126, fig. 75/5). There are also gold bridle ornaments of this shape from Sairkhe in Georgia, attributed to the 5th century bc (Tsetskhladze 1993–4: 17, fig. 1 on p. 47). Excavated examples from elsewhere include a perforated boar’s tusk from Babylon (Koldewey 1914: 270, fig. 194) and a bronze attachment from Sardis (Waldbaum 1983b: 40–1, pl. 6/86). Amongst the unprovenanced pieces are a bone specimen that Ghirshman claimed was from Ziwiye (Ghirshman 1977: 29, fig. 3) and a bronze example that he purchased from a Luristan tribesman (Ghirshman 1977: 27–28, fig. 1–2). There are two bronze examples in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Muscarella 1988: nos. 328–9, with more references).

These three attachments are all characterised by being pierced with interconnecting holes at right-angles to each other. They are in the shape of boar’s tusks, but one of them (no. 182) has lightly incised decoration replicating a bird’s head. It thus anticipates the attachment no. 183 which is more obviously in the shape of a bird’s head.

In view of the origin of the form, and considering their wide distribution in the Achaemenid period, harness attachments of this kind are sometimes described as Scytho-Achaemenid, even though some of the examples might pre-date the Achaemenid period. Nevertheless, it is most probable that nos. 180–2 date from the 5th–4th century bc, and that they derive from greater Iran.
Figure 44 Scale 1:1
ii. Bird's head

183. A.E. 1994-10-4, (Pl. 17, Fig. 44)

Bronze/copper alloy bridle ornament of same general type as nos. 180–2 above, but in the shape of a bird's head. At the base it is circular and hollow, with holes on four sides, and open at the end.

Ht. 2.3 cm., W. 2.3 cm., Wt. 14.5g.

This ornament is linked to no. 182 in that both depict bird's heads, but while no. 182 is still in the shape of a boar's tusk with some incised details added, no. 183 is in the shape of a bird's head. From Kelermes there are similar bird-headed attachments in bone (Borovka 1928: pl. 32F–H; Talbot Rice 1957: pl. 48) and attachments in the form of stylised bird's heads in gilt-bronze (Artamonov 1969: fig. 13; Piotrovsky et al. 1987b: pls. 4–5). All are dated to the 7th–6th centuries bc.

Bone examples from the Urartian site of Karmir Blur (Rolle 1977: fig. 7) are probably of similar date. There are also bronze examples from Sardis in western Anatolia (Waldbaum 1983b: pl. 6/85) and Norşuntepe in eastern Anatolia (Hauptmann 1983: fig. 4/8a–b), and unprovenanced examples in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Muscarella 1988: nos. 504–5, with more references) and in other collections (e.g. Waldbaum 1983b: pl. 6; Hauptmann 1983: pl. 56/6–11). Muscarella suggests that the date-range for these bird-headed attachments should be mid-7th to 6th century bc (Muscarella 1988: 383), but in view of their close similarity to the boar's tusk fittings it would be surprising if the type did not continue into the 5th–4th century bc.

iii. Ibexes

184. A.E. 1990-10-27,3 (Pl. 18, Fig. 45)

Copper alloy plaque in low relief showing a recumbent goat or ibex facing right. Around the neck, slightly raised and marked by vertically incised lines, is a band of fur or a rope or halter. A hollow 'junction box' pierced by four holes at right-angles to each other is mounted on the flat back.

Ht. 3.17 cm., W. 3.4 cm., max. Depth (including 'junction box') 1.37 cm., Wt. 32.6g.

Surface XRF analysis: alloy of copper, tin, lead and antimony. See Appendix.

185. GR 1888-5-12,12 (Pl. 18, Fig. 45)

Bronze/copper alloy plaque very similar to no. 184 above, with 'junction box' at back.

Ht. 3.14 cm., W. 3.18 cm., max. Depth (including 'junction box') 1.55 cm., Wt. 23.5g.
Purchased from Rev. Greville J. Chester in 1888; said to have been acquired in the Troad.

Published Hogarth 1890: 177, fig. 33; Waldbaum 1983a: 69, pl. 18/5–6; listed Amandry 1965a: 153, no. 10.

186. A.E. 132120/1956-10-15,5 (Pl. 18, Fig. 45)

Bronze plaque in low relief showing a recumbent goat or ibex facing right with head turned back over its shoulder. At the base of the neck there are faint indications of incised decoration showing a band or strap. Two loop fasteners are mounted on the back, which is flat.

Ht. 2.34 cm., W. 3.35 cm., max. Depth (including loop fasteners) 1.76 cm., Wt. 33.5g.

Surface XRF analysis: leaded bronze. See Appendix.
Purchased in 1956 from Mrs Margarete Burg, London. No information about provenance.

Published Barnett 1962–3: 99, pl. 1a; Waldbaum 1983a: 68–9, pl. 17/7–8; listed Amandry 1965a: 153, no. 8 bis.

The 'junction boxes' on the backs of plaques nos. 184–5, with four holes at right-angles to accommodate two crossed-over straps, shows that these two objects, and the similar plaque no. 186 which has two loop fasteners on the back, must all be bridle attachments.

Amandry has shown that the motif and style of the recumbent goats on these plaques are closely connected with Scythian art, although he does not claim they are Scythian products (1965a: passim and pl. XXV). A comparable bronze plaque from Sardis is unfinished (Waldbaum 1983a: pl. 17/1–2; Waldbaum 1983b: 41pl. 6, no. 87). There is also an ivory plaque in this style, together with 'junction box' at the back, from the archaic Artemasion at Ephesus (Hogarth 1908: 163, 176, pls. XXI/5, XXIII/2) and there are a number of unprovenanced examples in bronze (Amandry 1965a: 153, pl. XXIX; Waldbaum 1983a: pls. 17/5–6, 18/1–2, 7–8; Moorey 1971: pl. 27, no. 142 bis). The unfinished state of the Sardis example has led Waldbaum to conclude that it, and all the other pieces in this group, are native Lydian products of the early 6th century bc, but this remains unproven. A date in the 5th century bc would seem equally likely, in which case the plaques would be of Achaemenid date and could have been produced in any one of a number of centres. A gold disc in the Oxus Treasure (no. 174), which is unlikely to be earlier than the 5th century bc, has a 'junction box' similar to nos. 184–5 (Dalton 1964: 39, fig. 69).

iv. Boar

187. GR 1891-5-13, 2 (Pl. 18, Fig. 45)

Bronze/copper alloy plaque showing recumbent boar in low relief facing left. On the back, which is flat, is a hollow 'junction box' pierced by four lateral holes.

Ht. 2.25 cm., W. 4.1 cm., Depth (including 'junction box') 1.7 cm., Wt. 43.0g.
Purchased from Messrs. Rollin and Feuardent in 1891.

Published Walters 1899: no. 2876; Hogarth 1908: 177, fig. 33; Hansen 1962: 29, fig. 2/3; Amandry 1965a: 153, no. 7, pl. XXIX/8.

A very similar plaque, although larger and with two loops rather than a 'junction box' at the back, was found at Sardis (Hansen 1962: 29; Waldbaum 1983a: pl. 17/3–4; Waldbaum 1983b: 41–2, pl. 7, no. 88). It was recovered from a Late Byzantine context, but it is obviously much earlier. Through the fittings on the back, with both the 'junction box' and the two loops being attested, and through general stylistic considerations, these boars are obviously harness attachments and are related to the ibexes described above. Here again, there is undoubtedly Scythian influence.

Amandry (1965a: 153, pl. XXIX) has collected together a number of other examples, but they are all unprovenanced. Like the Sardis ibex, Waldbaum (1983b: 41) sees the Sardis boar as a Lydian product of the early 6th century bc.

However, a date in the 5th century bc is perhaps to be preferred. Lydia remains a possible centre of production, but
Figure 45 Scale 1:1
the case remains unproven. In any case, it is likely that both the boar no. 187 and the ibex plaques nos. 184–6 were produced at the same time and possibly in the same area.

v. Horse protome
188. ANE 1995-2-23, 2 (Pl. 18, Fig. 46)
Bronze/copper alloy attachment in the form of a horse protome with a projection at the back pierced vertically and horizontally in cross-cross fashion. The horse's legs are folded beneath its chest and it has a carefully coiffured top-knot.
Ht. 5.2 cm., L. 4.5 cm., W. 1.8 cm., Wt. 43.0 g.
Purchased in 1995 from Julia Schottlander, Tetragon, London.
The projection with cross-cross holes on the back of the protome is reminiscent of the 'junction boxes' at the back of the two ibex plaques (nos. 184–5) and the boar plaque (no. 187) suggesting that this object was also mounted on horse harness. Like the above examples, it should probably be considered as a Scytho-Achaemenid bridle attachment. The pose of the horse, with front legs tucked beneath it, is reminiscent of the bull capitals at Persepolis and Susa, and the topknot and clipped mane are typical of horses on the Persepolis reliefs. Although the musculature on the shoulders is unusual, this object could be an Achaemenid product of the 5th–4th century BC. ^10

Other bridle attachments featuring horses are of a different type to no. 188, having four holes at the base and terminating in a horse's head at the top. They are thus of the same general shape as the bird-headed attachments. Hauptmann cites an example of a harness attachment in the shape of a horse's head from Popovka in south Russia (Hauptmann 1983: 266) and there are unprovenanced examples in the Schimmel Collection (Muscarella 1974: no. 157, made of silver) and in other collections (Hauptmann 1983: 266, fig. 6/3–4). The Schimmel piece is Achaemenid in style as is no. 188, and it is dated by Muscarella to the 5th–4th century BC. Closely related to these horse's heads are attachments in the form of other animals, such as a boar's head in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Muscarella 1988: 330, with references).

Horse cheekpieces
189. ANE 134365/1964-4-11.4 (Pl. 18, Fig. 47)
Bronze cheekpiece in form of a curved rod with three loops on top and an ibex/mouflon head at one end and a stylised animal's hoof at the other.
Overall L. 13.9 cm., Wt. 65.8 g.
Surface XRF analysis: bronze. See Appendix.
Purchased in 1964 from Mr E. Ohly, the Berkeley Galleries, London, together with nos. 190–192.
Refer to in Barnett and Curtis 1974: 121.
190. ANE 134364/1964-4-11.3 (Pl. 18, Fig. 47)
Another, as no. 189 and possibly a pair with it, but the head of the ibex/mouflon in worse condition.
Overall L. 13.02 cm., Wt. 66.2 g.
Surface XRF analysis: alloy of copper, tin and antimony. See Appendix.
Purchased in 1964 from Mr E. Ohly, together with nos. 189, 191–2.
Refer to in Barnett and Curtis 1974: 121.
191. ANE 134362/1964-4-11.1 (Pl. 18, Fig. 47)
Bronze bar-shaped cheekpiece with three oval-shaped holes or 'eyes' in the centre, a stylised horse's head and mane at one end and bead-and-reel mouldings terminating in a phallic shape at the other. There are remains of iron staining around two of the holes.
Overall L. 15.2 cm., Wt. 69.8 g.
Surface XRF analysis: bronze with traces of iron around holes. See Appendix.
Purchased in 1964 from Mr E. Ohly, together with nos. 189–90, 192.
Refer to in Barnett and Curtis 1974: 121.
Bronze cheekpiece in the form of a flat strip of metal with three circular holes in the centre and a stylised animal’s head at one end.

Overall L. 17.6 cm., Wt. 71.3g.


Cheekpieces decorated with animal heads occur in both bone and bronze. Bone cheekpieces are more common than the bronze examples, and as a group are more homogeneous. The great majority of them occur in the Pontic and north Caucasian steppes amongst material associated with the Scythians of the 7th–5th century BC, showing an animal’s head at one end, often a horse, ram, eagle or ram with eagle’s beak, and a hoof at the other. The three holes for attachment to the rest of the harness are placed in the centre of the tubular cheekpiece. These objects have been found on many sites and are a distinctive element of Scythian horse harness (e.g. Melyukova 1980: pl. 39/2, 9, 11, 19–22, 24, pl. 35/7, 9; Potratz 1963: figs. 22, 24–28). Although the majority of these bone cheekpieces have been found to the north and east of the Black Sea, one of them has been excavated at Hasanlu (Period III?) in Iran (Dyson 1964b: 372, fig. 3), showing the spread of Scythian horse-harness elements onto the Iranian Plateau in the same way as in Central Europe, where Scythian influence is clearly visible.

Bronze cheekpieces are much more problematic. They are often unprovenanced and are attributed with little evidence to particular regions and cultures on stylistic grounds. Because of their animal style they are often connected with the nomadic horsemen of the Eurasian steppes and the Iranian plateau. Unlike their bone counterparts, the bronze cheekpieces differ greatly from each other, except where they sometimes occur in pairs. This may indicate that bronze cheekpieces were produced by local metal smiths in very small quantities, and even the two parts of a pair are sometimes cast in separate moulds.

The four British Museum pieces fall into two groups, which should be discussed separately.

The two pieces 189–90, which although cast in different moulds are probably a pair, represent a well known type of cheekpiece with three loops placed in a row, near the centre of the bar, more commonly on its outer rather than (as here) inner curve. This type is characteristic of both pre-Scythian (Cimmerian) and Scythian cheekpieces known from the Pontic and Caucasian steppes and Central Europe. The majority of them terminate in a boss and only some end in an animal’s head. All the known examples of bronze cheek pieces decorated with a single animal’s head (which is typical for the bone Scythian cheek pieces) come from the Caucasian Mountains and the Pontic steppes. A pair of cheekpieces terminating in a horse’s head was found in tomb 14 at Stavropol, Klin Yar III, which belongs to the Koban culture of the 7th century BC (Tokyo 1991: 46, no. 5) and another comes from Khutor Shumeyki (Romny region, Ukraine) (Potratz 1966: 216, fig. 95). Another pair with three loops on the inside edge, but with straight bars, is known from Galat in the northern Caucasus (Krupnov 1960: 436, pl. XIV/5, 6). They are decorated with eagle’s heads. Very similar pieces with eagle’s heads occur in the Pontic steppes in the regions of Romny, Smela and Kharkov (Potratz 1966: 215, fig. 94a–c; lessen 1953: 53, fig. 3/9). Another fragment of this type is attributed to Ziwiye in western Iran (Potratz 1966: 215, fig. 94d), but this is an unreliable provenance. All these objects as well as cheekpieces of similar shape, but without animal’s heads, are classified by Potratz as type IV, of which all occurred in the Pontic and Hungarian steppes and the Caucasus Mountains (Potratz 1966: 212–218). lessen (1953: 53, fig. 3; 84, fig. 22) dates parallel objects to the 8th–7th centuries BC. There is also a pair of cheekpieces from the Koban necropolis (of which one is still connected to the bit) with three loops and terminals decorated with horse’s heads also dated to the 8th–7th century BC (Iessen 1953: 95, fig. 26). A pair of undecorated Urartian cheekpieces with straight bars, inscribed with the name of Mena (c. 810–786 BC), clearly shows that cheek pieces with three loops were already in use as early as the late 9th–early 8th century BC (Ozgen 1984: 143, fig. 25). The only examples found in a different region are two cheekpieces still connected to a bit and decorated with ram’s head terminals, found in the Heraion on Samos (Jantzen 1972: pl. 61/B 951). For Muscarella (1988: 265) this bit is surely Iranian or Caucasian in origin. The closest bronze objects of this type are attributed to Urartu. A pair of cheek pieces in the former Adam Collection (Moorey 1974: 87, fig. 52) have similarly formed bars and loops with a schematic head on one terminal and a hoof on the other. Similar cheekpieces and bits but made of iron are one of the most characteristic elements of the central European Vekerzug culture of the 7th–5th century BC, which was under very strong Scythian influence (Chochorowski 1985: 114–119, fig. 40; Bukowski 1977: 377, pl. XXV/5). There are also cheekpieces with animal heads attributed to Luristan, but they clearly form a different type of their own, probably representing a separate cultural zone, although they are similarly dated (e.g. Potratz 1966: 137, fig. 59 a–b; Amiet 1976: figs. 102–103).

All the parallels mentioned above clearly show that the British Museum cheek pieces nos. 189–90 belong to the Scythian world. It is very likely that they were produced in the Caucasian or Pontic regions in the late 8th or 7th century BC, but as they are unprovenanced it is difficult to point to the precise place from which they could have derived. This area should be extended to include the Iranian Plateau and even Anatolia, which was also penetrated by the Cimmerians and the Scythians.

The British Museum cheek pieces nos. 191–2 with openings in the centre of the bar and an animal’s head on one terminal belong to a distinctive group which is unfortunately not very well represented amongst the excavated material. The closest parallels come from the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford. The Metropolitan Museum objects are attributed to northern Iran of the late 8th–7th centuries BC (Muscarella 1988: 264–265, nos. 353a–b) and the Oxford examples to north-west Iran (‘Amlash’) of the late 9th–early 8th centuries BC, when according to Moorey this type was introduced into western Iran from the Caucasus and south Russia (Moorey 1971: 126, no. 131, pl. 23/131). All these cheekpieces are decorated with schematic horse’s
heads and manes on the curved terminal and have straight bars at the other end. The openings are either oval (Metropolitan Museum) or rounded (Ashmolean Museum), both shapes being represented on the British Museum pieces.

A pair of cheekpieces with schematic animal heads was actually excavated at Hasanlu (de Schauensee and Dyson 1983: 68, fig. 14), dating from Period IV (9th–8th century BC). From Hasanlu there are also plain cheekpieces of this type, lacking the animal heads but otherwise close in shape to our no. 192 (Muscarella 1988: no. 94, with references; de Schauensee and Dyson 1983: figs. 9a–b, 13). Pairs of similar undecorated cheekpieces occurred also in Nercopol B at Tepe Sialk (Potratz 1966: 126–127, fig. 53 a–b), as well as in tomb 3 at Tepe Giyan (Contenau and Ghirshman 1935: pl. V/6 – pl. 8/3/11). All these undecorated cheekpieces from Iran have three rounded openings within a flattened bar and one curved or crescentic terminal. The terminals are plain or end in a knob. Similar bronze cheekpieces are also known from the Pontic steppes (e.g. from Kanevskiy Uyezd - lessen 1953: 53, fig. 3/11), although they are much less common there than cheekpieces with tubular openings. Pontic cheekpieces with short tubular openings with knobs (Iessen 1953: 53, fig. 3/5–7; 87, fig. 24; 60, fig. 5; Potratz 1966: 127, fig. 53 c–e) can be dated to the 8th–7th centuries BC. Because the Iranian objects are similar in shape to the Pontic cheekpieces with tubular holes, but are easier to cast being in the form of flat bars, it is possible to suggest that they were produced locally under strong steppe influence. There is no parallel to the ribbed terminal of the cheekpiece no. 192, which could be a local, perhaps Iranian feature. It is likely that the cheekpieces nos. 191–2 were produced in north or north-western Iran or in the Caucasus Mountains under influence from the Pontic steppes and should be dated to the 8th–7th century BC.

5d. Miscellaneous Items

**Fragment of gold belt**

193. ANE 132825/1960-5-14.1 (PL 19)

Fragment of sheet gold belt with embossed and chased decoration. There is a row of holes in a narrow border along the top which is separated from the belt by an embossed rib. The whole surface of the belt is covered with a network pattern and in the compartments thus created are alternating rows of recumbent stags and ibexes. The animals are facing right except those at the extreme left which are facing in the opposite direction. Between the animals there are lion’s heads represented en face.

Ht. 8.6 cm., L. 15.6 cm., Wt. 116.5g.

The following has been extracted from a report produced by the Research Laboratory, British Museum, dated 21st April 1960:

The decoration was bossed up from the back, after the outline had been chased in from the front with the metal supported on a material having the consistency of hard pitch. Numerous flat pieces in the metal have no single orientation. Thus suggests that the original flat sheet contained inclusions and that it was hand-worked, not rolled. Variations in the thickness of the sheet (0.85 mm as maximum and 0.5 mm as minimum) also suggest that the sheet was hammered out and not rolled. The sheet is much thicker than is technically necessary for this type of relief, bearing in mind that it was designed to be fixed to a support. The greater thickness would make it possible to form the high relief more quickly. The metal has been left unannealed, as is usual. This has resulted in numerous areas of strained metal where it has been folded and subsequently straightened.

The regularly-spaced perforations were punched and then opened up with a conical point. Almost all the perforations are surrounded by a thin enriched extrusion of metal which, in the case of holes which have not been bruised, still protrudes as a sharp edge. This suggests that the plaque was never mounted by any method which required the use of these holes.

The specific gravity (approximately 16.9) suggests that the metal contains about 73% gold, the balance being probably silver.

There is a row of fractures down the centre of the fragment associated with a well-marked fold-line. There are also parallel cuts visible on the back which were made since the decoration was executed, and are clearly associated with the separating of this piece of the plaque from the remainder. The edges of the fragment are now rather tattered but were clearly torn, not cut.

Purchased in 1960 from Dr. E. Borowski, Basel, Switzerland; allegedly from Ziviye in north-west Iran.


A number of fragments of decorated gold sheet which appear to be from the same belt are scattered around the world. The largest number of pieces, said to be 23 pieces joining together, is in the Archaeological Museum in Tehran (Ghirshman 1964: 110, 424, fig. 143; Jettmar 1967: pl. 46; Artamonov 1973: fig. 289), but there are also fragments in other museums including the University Museum in Philadelphia (Sept Mille Ans: no. 510, pl. XL/1; Phillips 1965: pl. 48) and the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Wilkinson 1955: fig. on p. 219). In addition, there are pieces in private collections (Ghirshman 1950: fig. 8; Sotheby’s sale catalogue New York 12–13 December 1991, no. 169).

The British Museum piece and associated fragments appear to belong to a belt of sheet gold that is almost 16cm wide and of unknown length. The top and bottom edges are perforated with holes, presumably to fix the gold sheet to a backing of leather or thick cloth. Such belts, generally of bronze and with embossed and chased decoration, are well attested in the Ancient Near East, particularly in Urartu where they date from the 8th–7th centuries BC (Kellner 1991; Curtis 1996). Many of these Urartian belts are unprovenanced, but there are some examples from known archaeological sites, including Kayalidere and Alintepe in Turkey, Karmir Blur in Armenia and Tli in southern Ossetia. On some of these Urartian belts the surface is covered with a network pattern that is similar to that on our gold fragment (Piotrovsky 1966: figs. 85–6; Kellner 1991: nos. 206–233 (Girlandendekor); Curtis 1996: fig. 4). Such network patterns are created by shapes that are clearly floral in origin and come ultimately from ‘sacred trees’ (cf Kantor 1960: 8, fig. 4). They also occur on Urartian seals and sealings (e.g. Klein 1977: 47, Fig. 37). The network design on our gold belt fragment, then, can be paralleled in Urartian art. It has been claimed that the lion masks at the network intersections are also Urartian in style (Barnett 1962: 85; 1962–63: 99; Culican 1965: 39), but if so they do not appear to occur on Urartian belts. On the other hand, the style of the animals, particularly the stags, is widely recognised as being Scythian (Barnett 1962: 85; Ghirshman 1964: 110; Culican 1965: 39; Phillips 1965: 60; Muscarella 1977b: 207). These recumbent
stags are very distinctive, with their legs folded beneath them and with the antlers resting on the back and extending for its entire length. Such stags are typically Scythian, as seen for example in the gold plaques from the barrows at Kul-Oba in the Crimea and Kostromskaya in the north Caucasus region (Artamonov 1969; pls. 62–4, 264–5; Piotrovsky et al. 1987b: pls. 16, 213; Phillips 1965; figs. 44, 71). There are representations of similar stags on the embossed gold handle of a battle-axe from Kelermes, together with other animals including ibexes that are similar to those on the gold belt fragment (Piotrovsky op. cit.: pls. 38–40).

The alleged provenance of this fragment of gold belt, namely Ziwiye in Iranian Kurdistan, poses particular problems. In the late 19th century a rich collection of objects in a bronze coffin of Assyrian type is supposed to have been found by local villagers at Ziwiye (Godard 1950; Ghirshman 1979). Whatever the truth of this story, it is known that there have been extensive dealer excavations at Ziwiye and that there are many objects on the art market that are allegedly from Ziwiye. All that can be said is that the ‘Ziwiye’ provenance must be viewed with great caution (Muscarella 1977b). It is worth remarking, however, that the style of the bronze coffin supposed to have been found at Ziwiye would date from the late 8th century BC (Curtis 1983), as would some of the objects allegedly found in it.

However, the Scythian material with which the motifs on this gold belt are compared is generally dated later than this. The earliest Scythian material, such as some of the finds from Kelermes, is generally dated to the second half of the 7th century BC (e.g. Piotrovsky et al. 1987b: passim), and the bulk of the finds from the Scythian kurgans are 6th–4th centuries BC. If the gold belt and the gold strips no. 194 below really do come from Ziwiye, and if they really come from a late 8th century BC context, then they would be the earliest examples of Scythian art. But this is speculative, and in view of the uncertainty regarding the alleged find at Ziwiye, the problem cannot be pursued further here. All we can say is that the gold belt fragment no. 193, of unproven provenance, contains undoubted Scythian elements. The significance of their juxtaposition with motifs that appear to be Urartian is at present unclear.

Decorated gold strips

194. ANE 134383-4/1964-6-16,1-2 (Pl. 19)

Two non-joining strips of gold sheet with embossed and chased decoration showing lion-like animals arranged in antithetical pairs, each of the beasts separated by a raised circle probably intended to hold an inlay. The beasts have triangular ears and large eyes, and their legs and tails end in spiral shapes. Along the top and bottom edges of the strips there are birds’ heads placed back to back. The birds have long, curled beaks. The eyes and ears of the lion-like beasts, and the eyes of the eagles, are inlaid with blue faience (?). The purpose of these strips is unclear; one possibility is that they might have decorated a scabbard.

| Ls. 19.4, 10.1 cm., W. 3.1–3.2 cm., Wts. 48.7g., 24.3g. | Examine in the Research Laboratory, British Museum (report dated 11/6/1964): |

The decoration has been formed by tooling from both sides of the metal. Although the elements of decoration are similar in form, they differ individually in details of shape and size and, therefore, cannot be seen to have been shaped even in outline by means of a die. The small cells for enamel were formed in the sheet of gold, but the large cells were first recessed to a depth of about 0.4 mm and then edged with a cloison made from a narrow strip of gold about 1.2 mm wide and 0.2–0.3 mm thick. This strip was held in place by a number of blobs of gold solder (three to six in number), one of them applied at the butt joint in the cloison. Some of the blobs of solder are not in the correct place, the particles of solder having apparently moved during the soldering operation. Light centre marks in all cells, except no. 3, may have served for marking out the circular cells. The small cells are slightly conical in shape. This implies that they were either filled with enamel or with an inlay fixed by adhesive. Of the 84 small cells, 19 contain residues of what was clearly under-fired enamel. The residues contain air bubbles and have lost their original surface. In colour they are pale-green-blue... Examination by X-ray diffraction of a microscopic fragment of enamel taken from a small circular cell and spectrographic analysis of a smaller fragment found loose but attached firmly to a particle of gold, revealed that the enamel was not a lead glass and that its colour was caused by the presence of copper. The poor (quality of the) enamelling is consistent with an early stage in the development of the technique. Application of the touchstone test indicates that the gold is an alloy that contains more silver than is present in modern 22 carat gold. It contains flaws produced during the process of tooling. The surface of the gold also includes particles of soil of irregular shape and the imprints of others... Comparatively poor metallurgical technique is indicated by the presence of flaws in the gold caused at the time of tooling, by imprecise soldering of the cloisons and by poorly fired enamel. (For the use of ‘enamel’ as an inlay see Higgins 1961: 23-28, and Born 1984).

Purchased in 1964 from K. Rabenou of New York; allegedly from Ziwiye in north-west Iran. In 1961, these fragments were said by Ghirshman (Sept Mille Ans: 84) to be in the possession of Miss Dolorès Selikowitz of New York. Published Sept Mille Ans: no. 500A, pl. XLI; Ghirshman 1964: fig. 147; Amandry 1965b: fig. 8; ; Artamonov 1973: fig. 290; Barnett and Curtis 1973: 125, pl. LII; Rawson 1977: pl. 4; Curtis 2000: fig. 27.

Fragments of similar gold strip, apparently deriving from the same object, are in other collections including the National Museum in Tehran (Ghirshman 1979: pl. I/7) and the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Phillips 1965: fig. 40). Like the British Museum pieces they are said to come from Ziwiye in Iranian Kurdistan. We have discussed above under no. 193 the difficulties surrounding this provenance, and we have indicated that no reliability can be attached to it. Like no. 193, these fragments of gold strip show clear evidence of Scythian influence.

The pose and appearance of the crouching animals is undoubtedly Scythian. Particularly distinctive is the way that the legs and long tails extend in circular shapes. Similar beasts are shown along the edges of a large gold sheet featuring recumbent stags and on a silver mirror, both from Kelermes in the Kuban district (Artamonov 1969: pls. 21, 29, 31; Piotrovsky et al. 1987b: pls. 23, 50). These animals are also represented on cut-out gold plaques from a barrow at Ulsky in the Kuban (Piotrovsky op. cit.: pl. 17; Phillips 1965: pl. 73). These beasts are usually identified as panthers.

The addorsed birds’ heads along the edges of the strips, with their prominent circular eyes and large curled beaks, are also typically Scythian. They may be compared with bronze bridle attachments in the form of birds’ heads that have been found in burial mounds at Seven Brothers in the Kuban and Nymphaeum in the Crimea (Artamonov 1969: pls. 92, 115; Piotrovsky op cit.: pls. 91, 95).
5e. Gold plaques from Kul-Oba

Although there is no material in the British Museum that is known with certainty to come from a Scythian kurgan, Marshall has attributed seven gold plaques to the great tumulus at Kul-Oba near Kerch in the Crimea (1911: nos. 2104–2106). This tumulus was first discovered in 1830, and contained the bodies of a wealthy man and woman, and another man thought to be a servant (Williams and Ogden 1994: 136). The burial is thought to date from c. 375–350 BC (Higgins 1961: 211). Amongst the magnificent and well-known jewellery from this tomb are the torque with terminals showing Scythians on horseback and the pair of gold bracelets with sphinx protomes (Williams and Ogden 1994: nos. 81, 83; Artamonov 1969: pls. 200–202, 205; Piotrovsky et al. 1987b: pls. 126–7, 182). These objects and much else from the tomb are now in the Hermitage in St Petersburg, but many small items from the tomb are thought to have been dispersed and are now in various collections. On the floor of the tomb were many gold plaques and buttons that would originally have been sewn onto clothes and perhaps to textiles that hung on the walls. It is because of their similarity to the published examples that Marshall attributes the plaques in the British Museum to Kul-Oba (1911: xxvii). They were acquired in two groups. Two of the plaques were obtained from the Campanari Collection in 1846, with an alleged provenance of Vulci in Italy which Marshall dismisses, and five were bought from F. Champness in 1909.

Outstanding among them is the plaque showing two Scythian archers back-to-back. Two of the others show winged griffins, two show a naked male figure, one shows a lion, and one a hare. As with so much else from the Scythian burial-mounds, the workmanship and inspiration of these plaques is probably Greek, but they were owned or commissioned by Scythians. The openwork plaque with the archers is of particular interest in that it is a contemporary depiction of Scythian warriors. Details of their costume including trousers, short cross-over jackets and leather boots are clearly shown.

195. GR 1909-6-17, 2 (Pl. 20)
Cut-out gold plaque with embossed design showing two Scythian archers standing back-to-back. The archers have their hair tied in a bun at the back and they carry small composite bows. They wear decorated trousers, short jackets edged with braid or fur, and boots. The plaque is pierced with 6 holes around the edge for sewing onto clothing.

Ht. 3.1 cm., W. 3.53 cm., Wt. 1.45 g.
Purchased from F. Champness in 1909.
Published Marshall 1911: no. 2106d, pl. XL (with comparanda).
For a similar plaque from Kul-Oba in the Hermitage, see Artamonov 1969: pl. 224; Piotrovsky et al. 1987b: pl. 197.

196. GR 1909-6-17, 1 (Pl. 20)
Cut-out gold plaque with embossed design showing a seated winged griffin facing to the right. The plaque is pierced with 5 holes around the edge for sewing onto clothing.

Ht. 3.7 cm., W. 3.2 cm., Wt. 1.85 g.
Purchased from F. Champness in 1909.
Published Marshall 1911: no. 2106a, pl. XL.
For a similar plaque from Kul-Oba in the Hermitage, see Artamonov 1969: pl. 225.

197. GR 1846-6-29, 9 (Pl. 20)
Gold plaque with embossed design apparently showing a bird of prey with large curved beak holding a fish in its claws and pecking at it. Pierced with 4 holes at the corners for sewing onto clothing.

Ht. 2.85 cm., W. 3.5 cm., Wt. 2.65 g.
Purchased from the Campanari Collection in 1846, said to be from Vulci, Italy.
Published Marshall 1911: no. 2104, pl. XL.
For a similar plaque from Kul-Oba in the Hermitage, see Artamonov 1969: pl. 231. The same motif of a bird pecking at a fish can be seen on a silver rhyton from Elizavetovskaya in the Rostov region (Artamonov 1969: pl. 321).

198. GR 1909-6-17, 4 (Pl. 20)
Gold plaque with embossed design showing a couchant lion with head resting on its forepaws and turned to the front. Below the lion is a band of bead-and-reel moulding. The plaque is pierced with 4 holes for sewing onto clothing.

Ht. 1.7 cm., W. 3.1 cm., Wt. 1.3 g.
Purchased from F. Champness in 1909.
Published Marshall 1911: no. 2106c, pl. XL.
For a similar plaque from Kul-Oba in the Hermitage, see Artamonov 1969: pl. 248.

199. GR 1909-6-17, 3 (Pl. 20)
Rectangular gold plaque with embossed design showing a hare running to the left within a beaded border. The plaque is pierced with 6 holes around the edge for sewing onto clothing.

Ht. 1.6 cm., W. 2.2 cm., Wt. 0.85 g.
Purchased from F. Champness in 1909.
Published Marshall 1911: no. 2106b, pl. XL.

200. GR 1846-6-29, 10 (Pl. 20)
Oval gold plaque with embossed design showing a naked male figure running to the left. Pierced with 4 holes around the edge for sewing onto clothing.

Ht. 2.97 cm., W. 2.05 cm., Wt. 1.0 g.
Purchased from the Campanari Collection in 1846, said to be from Vulci, Italy.
Published Marshall 1911: no. 2105, pl. XL.
For plaques similar to nos. 200 and 201 below from Kul-Oba in the Hermitage, see Artamonov 1969: pl. 220.

201. GR 1909-6-17, 5 (Pl. 20)
Oval gold plaque with embossed design similar to no. 200 above showing a naked male figure running to the left. In this case the figure holds objects with Marshall suggests are fruits in his hands. Pierced with 4 holes around the edge for sewing onto clothing. A fifth hole beneath the figure’s legs is probably accidental or modern.

Ht. 2.5 cm., W. 2.0 cm., Wt. 0.95 g.
Purchased from F. Champness in 1909.
Published Marshall 1911: no. 2106, pl. XL.