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Having already looked at some buckle types of the 17th century we again start in that period but with buckles that are technically of a different form of construction. These are distinguished from all other types by having a double-loop frame (as Types IIIA-IIID) but with the frame drilled to take a separate pin or spindle. These I have classified as Type V. They were generally made to be removable and so the previously common 'sandwich' type buckle-plate used for attachment to straps and belts is replaced by a chape that attaches the buckle by a stud, a hook, or a spike. When used for the shoe these buckles were attached across the instep by two straps called latches. The buckle was attached to one latch by the chape. The second latch was then pulled through the buckle frame to the required tension for securing the shoe and then fastened by the spike of the tongue. See fig.9: six for the terms used to describe the parts of these buckles. Strictly speaking the chape constitutes all the moving parts within the buckle frame but the term is used here to describe the type of fastening employed to attach the buckle to the shoe. Although shoe buckles had been used in previous times, by the late 1500's they had been replaced by rosettes and ribbon ties and these continued in use through most of the 17thc. However it is clear that by 1660 buckles were again being used for fastening shoes, at least by the upper classes, and that they were of this removable type:

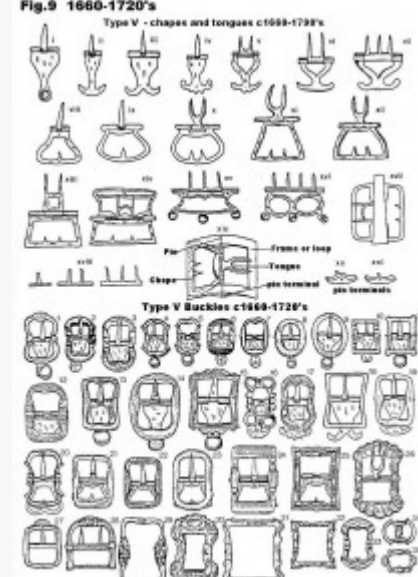
'This day I began to put on buckles to my shoes' - the diary of **Samuel Pepys** – entry for January 22nd, 1660.

CHAPE TYPES – 1660 to 1790

All are copper-alloy unless otherwise stated. All numbers refer to fig.9

STUD CHAPE - (no. i) Date range 1660-1720

This is the most commonly found of the early methods of attachment. The buckle was attached to a shoe by the stud through a 'buttonhole' slit in the latchet. There is some evidence that this type of chape was first applied to 'one-piece' buckles and therefore the chape would have to be folded over the bar rather than having slots through which the spindle was threaded.¹ Figure 8; numbers 27-29 from the previous article are likely to be buckles with this type of sandwich chape that have lost their studs. The next stage appears to be the introduction of the separate steel spindle and fig.9:5 has the older style sandwich chape with this feature. The frame of the buckle is not however drilled right through and this is a good indicator of an early buckle of this type. Sometime toward the end of the 17thc comes the method employed henceforth – the buckle frame with cast chape drilled right through for the insertion of the steel pin or spindle. A very few copper-alloy spindles are also known. Stud chapes are invariably of copper-alloy with a single spiked tongue and they sometimes carry makers' mark or initials. The stud is often missing on excavated examples suggesting that it was of insufficient construction to cope with the strain imposed on it and this may have encouraged other more substantial methods of attachment to be employed.



ANCHOR CHAPE - (no's ii-vii)

This type of chape in which the curved ends are slotted through a slit in the latchet is also used on early Type V buckles. Examples with the single spiked tongue (no's ii-iv) were used for shoes up to the 1720's but after this time they are only used occasionally and by the 1750's they have disappeared altogether from the trade catalogues. This type of chape was also used throughout the 18th century for the attachment of knee-buckles. These knee-buckles normally have double and triple-spiked tongues (no's v-vii) and can be distinguished if found without the tongue by the greater distance between the two slots on the chape through which the spindle passes. Another aid to the identification of knee-buckles is that the spindle generally spans the length of the buckle frame rather than the width.

LOOP CHAPE WITH SINGLE SPIKE - (no's viii-ix)

This type was in use by the 1690's, the spike on the loop replacing the stud or anchor method of attaching the buckle to the shoe. This chape type and the following type with double spike on it are probably both used exclusively for shoe buckles. Most shoe buckles up to the 1720's are used with the single tongue irrespective of the chape type.

LOOP CHAPE WITH DOUBLE SPIKE - (no's x-xiii)

These are in use from the 1720's using the 'pitchfork' tongue (numbers x-xii) and also from the 1770's the large double-spike tongue sawn from sheet steel (number xiii). This chape and pitchfork tongue are used almost exclusively for shoes

from the 1720's – 1770's but after this time due to the ever increasing size of shoe buckles it has to compete with other types offering more security of fixture. Due to the all-steel construction most excavated examples will be in poor condition.

DOUBLE LOOP CHAPE - (no.xiv)

Used from the 1770's onwards these all-steel construction chapes were introduced to maintain security and support for the very large buckles that were then coming into vogue. In this type the tongue rests on the second loop of the chape instead of on the buckle frame.

MULTI-STUD CHAPE - (no's xv-xvi)

These are used from the 1720's – 1790's to fasten the stock at the neck. They consist of a three or four-stud chape with a three or four-spiked tongue. The stock was a close fitting wide neckband of linen or cambric secured at the back of the neck by a tie or buckle.

SPRING CHAPE - (no.xvii)

Illustrated is the first of these – William Eley's patent no.1427 of 1784. As with the double loop chape they were devised for more efficient security of buckles that in some cases had reached four inches in length. In this patent the buckle spindle was covered by a steel box hinged at one end of the frame and with a press-stud for closure at the other. With this arrangement the buckle frame could be raised out of the way whilst attaching and fastening the shoe, then closed and secured by the press-stud. They are marked 'Eley's Patent with a serial number. Other types soon followed as Eley licensed his patents to other chape makers. Men's buckles have a black leather insert to cover the chapes of this type.

CAST TUBE AND TONGUE - (no.xviii)

These buckles consist of a drilled frame and separate spindle as all the other Type V buckles but have no chape and cannot therefore be removed. The spindle holds a cast tube with spiked tongue, the number of spikes varying from one to three. These may have been used for garters and decorative examples for cravats.

SPINDLE TERMINALS - (no's xx-xxi)

Terminal type xx is used throughout the 18th century. Terminal type xxi is used from c1770 onwards.

BUCKLE CATALOGUE 1660's – 1720's

Shoe buckles throughout this period are small compared to later examples but they gradually increase up to the 1720's attaining a maximum size of approximately 2x1 inches. With this increase in size the shoe buckle develops a curve to fit the shape of the foot and thus later shoe buckles are easier to identify. It would be as well to remember that shoe buckles in use by the 1660's for the upper classes were not universally used by the lower classes until at least the 1680's. All buckles in fig.9 are copper-alloy except no's 30-33 which are white metal.

BUCKLES WITH STUD CHAPES - (no's 1-15)

These were used for shoes and for fastening the breeches knee-band below the knee and because of the small size of early shoe buckles they are difficult to differentiate. Buckles with a pronounced curve as number 15 are definitely shoe buckles.

BUCKLES WITH ANCHOR CHAPES - (no's 16-19)

Again used for knee and shoe throughout this period. Number 16 with openwork frame is a particularly early example.

BUCKLES WITH SINGLE-SPIKE LOOP CHAPE - (no's 20-25)

Known examples with this chape date from the 1690's and continue until at least the 1720's. The slightly larger, squarer forms (no's 24-25) are early 18th century.

BUCKLES WITH CAST TUBE AND TONGUE - (no's 27-28)

Without a chape these are unlikely to have been used for shoes. Some may have been used at the knee, for garters or with the cravat. Number 28 is stylistically of an early date in this period.

BUCKLES THAT HAVE LOST THEIR CHAPES - (no's 26 and 29-35)

Because of the use of iron or steel for the spindle, many buckles of Type V that are recovered will have lost their moving parts and the buckle frame is then the only clue to dating. Most buckles of this period used non-ferrous chapes and these may be recovered separately. The position is however reversed after the 1720's when the vast majority of chapes are made of steel and corrode badly in the ground. Of those illustrated, numbers 26 and 30 are particularly early and the squarer forms (numbers 31-32) date from the turn of the century.

NOTES

1. John Webb - *Buckles Identified* - page 30 and fig.112.

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