

A Tale of Two Whites: Tobacco Pipe Exports from Scotland in the Early Nineteenth Century

Dennis Gallagher

This paper considers the export of pipes from Scotland before the post 1850 expansion of the Glasgow export factories. In the late eighteenth century Glasgow's merchants had grown rich on the import of tobacco and sugar from plantations in North America and the West Indies. European goods sent to the plantations, many owned by Scots, included pipes, some for the owner and some for the slaves. While Glasgow was developing the transatlantic trade, Edinburgh started exporting to the expanding colonies in Australia. The Edinburgh pipe manufacturer Thomas White developed strong connections with Australian tobacconists and his products are common excavation finds. Between them, William White in Glasgow and Thomas White in Edinburgh divided the pipe market for the English-speaking world.

Tobacco pipe exports from Glasgow in the early nineteenth century

The development of Glasgow in the second half of the eighteenth century was largely due in due to the wealth generated by the merchants involved in the trade with North America and the West Indies in tobacco and sugar and, up to the abolition of the slave trade in 1807, slaves. Ships sailed from the ports of Greenock and Port Glasgow as Glasgow itself was inaccessible to sea-going vessels at that date. These merchants have been described as 'a small, tightly-knit group ... linked by partnership connections, often strengthened by marriage alliance and kinship loyalties' (Devine 1975, 171; Devine 1978). In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries exports relied on the wide connections established by these merchant families, many of whom owned the overseas properties that were the destinations of the exports. The imports of tobacco declined after the outbreak of the American Revolutionary War in 1775 being replaced partly by imports of sugar, rum and molasses from the West Indies (Slaven 1975, 26). The export trade in pipes was closely related to this trans-Atlantic trade.

The pipemaking industry in Scotland had declined during the eighteenth century, primarily because of the almost universal fashion for snuff in that country (Gallagher 2015). Despite this lack of demand among Scots, a number of pipemakers are known from parish records to have been working in Glasgow in the later eighteenth century (Gallagher 1987a, 55). While there may have been small enclaves of pipe smokers, it is likely that the production of these pipemakers was mainly for the export market. This trade was mainly to North America and the West Indies. Quantities were small, for example, in 1748 a total of 669 gross of pipes were shipped from the Clyde (Gallagher

1987a, 44). John Gibson in his 1777 *History of Glasgow* has a list of imports and exports for 1771. The exports include 364 gross pipes, of which 309 gross went to Virginia, 55 gross to Kristiansand, Norway (Gibson 1777, 225, 228 and 234). A late eighteenth-century history of Jamaica records imports of tobacco pipes from Scotland (Long 1774, 505).

More detail is available for the early years of the nineteenth century as lists of exported goods were published in the *Clyde Commercial Advertiser* and this provides valuable information on the destination of pipes (Quail 1986). Details for 1807 show that these were divided between Ireland, which may be regarded as an extension of the coastal trade, and the transatlantic trade (Fig. 1). Two vessels sailed to the Dutch colony of Demerara, now Guyana, where there was a large Scottish presence. The Irish consignments were dispatched to places ranging from the cities of Dublin, Belfast and Londonderry to small harbours such as Letterkenny and Killala (Fig. 2).

Date	Destination	Detail
7 February 1807	Londonderry	7 boxes
28 March 1807	Belfast	18 boxes
2 May 1807	Demerara	120 gross
18 July 1807	Dublin	153 gross
4 August 1807	Honduras	182 gross
1 September 1807	Londonderry	14 boxes
9 September 1807	Londonderry	282 gross
12 September 1807	Letterkenny	10 gross
23 September 1807	Halifax	200 gross
8 October 1807	Londonderry	200 gross
1 December 1807	Demerara	4 gross

Figure 1: Transatlantic tobacco pipe exports from the River Clyde, 1807.

The transatlantic trade was partly to North America ports such as Quebec and Montreal. The United States was notable absent as from 1812 it was allied with the French. Many pipes were shipped to the West Indies, many destined for areas where Scottish merchant houses owned plantations. In 1808 there were five shipments of pipes to Demerara (Fig. 3). Some quantities were very small and may have been intended for a particular plantation owner. Many of these owners were Scots and lived in luxury whilst being notorious for their treatment of the slaves. The pipes arrived along with all the requirements for a civilised European life-style, including fine furniture, but the pipes were not just for the plantation owners. While the shipping lists normally list just 'pipes', at times there are 'Negro pipes', short poor quality pipes for the negro slaves on the plantations. These short pipes are recorded in other

Date	destination	details
19 March 1808	Belfast	4 boxes
30 April 1808	Limerick	14 boxes
6 May 1808	Londonderry	14 boxes
15 June 1808	Londonderry	30 boxes
22 June 1808	Killala	129 gross
27 June 1808	Dublin	7 boxes
30 June 1808	Ballycastle	10 boxes
15 September 1808	Londonderry	228 gross
24 September 1808	Belfast	200 gross
15 October 1808	Belfast	296 gross
8 November 1808	Londonderry	200 gross
19 November 1808	Londonderry	60 gross
8 December 1808	Larne	424 gross

Figure 2: Tobacco pipe exports from the River Clyde to Ireland, 1808.

Date	destination	details
20 February 1808	Jamaica	8½ gross
18 March 1808	Pictou (Ontario)	88 gross
29 March 1808	Honduras	120 gross
30 April 1808	Limerick	14 boxes
1 June 1808	Quebec	456 gross
20 July 1808	Demerara	4 gross
6 August 1808	New Providence	100 gross
1 October 1808	Grenada	150 gross
18 October 1808	Berbice (Guyana)	16 gross
19 October 1808	Demerara	400 gross negro pipes
22 October 1808	Demerara	100 gross
31 October 1808	Demerara	120 gross
3 December 1808	Jamaica	77 gross
3 December 1808	Jamaica	40 gross
14 December 1808	Demerara	22 gross
31 December 1808	Gibraltar/ Malta	5 gross

Figure 3: Transatlantic exports from the River Clyde, 1808..

pipe-making centres, such as Chester where ‘pipes of a peculiar sort, called hog-pipes, being shorter than those in common use, were made for the Guinea trade’, that is, the slave trade (Lyson and Lyson 1810, 608). An account of a voyage from Liverpool to Demerara in 1788 related how the slaves, on arrival at the plantation, were provided with food, pipes and tobacco ‘and every other requisite to give them confidence in their new situation’ (Bolingbroke 1809, 65). The small size of some shipments of pipes from Glasgow suggests that they may have been ordered for a particular plantation. Also evidence from excavations in the Bahamas where only small numbers of pipes were found suggests that on some plantations only favoured slaves were allowed to smoke (Farnsworth 1996, 14-5).

Cargoes sent from the Clyde to Demerara (Guyana) by the John Campbell partnership included 12 gross pipes on 2 November 1809 and the 17 gross Negro pipes on 24 March 1810 (Quail 1986, 31 and 35). John Campbell was the head of one of the various Glasgow merchant houses that acquired plantations in Guyana in last decade of the eighteenth century (Mullen 2015).

Later in the nineteenth century, Glasgow pipe manufacturers were supplying a huge export market and the city was considered ‘the great pipe emporium of the pipe trade’ (*Glasgow Herald* 7 September 1872) but in the beginning decades their merchants seemed to display a hesitation at exploiting new markets. No ships are recorded as having sailed from the Clyde to Australia before 1827 and only four went in the period 1827-1829 (Nix 2005, 25). This is in contrast with the trade from Leith.

Exports from Edinburgh

Thomas White of Edinburgh

Pipe manufacture in early nineteenth-century Edinburgh was dominated by Thomas White whose factory of Thomas White was in a central location in Big Jacks Close, 223 Canongate, Edinburgh. It was purchased in 1817 by William White, pipe manufacturer and confectioner in Glasgow but appears to have been managed by Thomas White. It first appears in the annual Post Office directories for Edinburgh in 1823-24 when it is listed under Thomas White’s name. In 1827 William White withdrew his interest in the business and two years later Thomas White bought the premises (Gallagher 1987b, 26; *The London Gazette* 12 February 1839, 271). It seems to have been managed by Thomas White; it first appears Thomas White of Edinburgh developed an export trade to North America and to Australasia. This export trade is documented in newspaper reports detailing shipments from Leith, the port of Edinburgh. A valuable source is the *Leith Commercial List* which published details of goods shipped from that port (Fig. 4). Pipes were sent as part cargoes that included a huge variety of other items ranging from food and clothing to steam engines, all needed to enable the settlers to sustain a western-style way of life remote from the centres of production.

Shipments to from Leith to North America and Australasia

North America The *Leith Commercial List* published details of goods shipped from there. Many boats were engaged in coastal traffic. Thomas White sent regular shipments of pipes to Dundee and Aberdeen. Ships with pipes also sailed to North America, the West Indies and Australia. The entries for these usually name only the merchant responsible for the entire shipment but a few entries specifically mention pipes by Thomas White indicating that the pipes were exported directly by the pipemaker and not through an intermediate. In 1825 Thomas White sent at least two shipments of pipes from Leith to Quebec and Montreal on board the brig *Margaret*, in April and August (Fig. 4). The first consignment was of 46 boxes of pipes, six casks of whiting and 4,000 bricks,

Date	destination	details
22 March 1825	Halifax	120 boxes
5 April 1825	Quebec and Montreal	46 boxes by T White
14 April 1835	Quebec and Montreal	66 boxes
21 April	Gibraltar	10 boxes
18 September	Madeira, Hobart, Sydney	25 boxes
22 December	Jamaica	15 boxes
3 July 1840	Quebec	44 boxes
24 July	Sydney	37 boxes
4 August	Quebec	76 boxes
11 December	Grenada	Amount unknown
12 January 1844	Antiqua	
6 February	Demerara	
5 April	Nassua	

Figure 4: Selected transatlantic exports of tobacco pipes from Leith, 1835-44.

and the latter was 25 boxes of pipes (*Leith Commercial List*, 5 April and 26 August 1825; *The Scotsman* 27 August 1825). A further 54 boxes and three casks of pipes were exported to Quebec and Montreal by Thomas White in 1826 (*The Scotsman* 15 April 1826).

Australasia Ships bearing export goods were eagerly received in Australia. Their arrival was announced in local newspapers as was the sale of the goods that they brought. The first ship from Leith to Australia sailed in 1820. The success of this voyage led to the formation, in 1822, of the Australian Company of Edinburgh and Leith which created with the intention of establishing regular trade between Scotland and Australia. Agents were established and warehouses built in Hobart and Sydney (Nix 2011). Between the years 1820 and 1824 another ten ships sailed from Leith. The variety of goods carried in these vessels was vast. When the company's ship, *Greenock*, arrived in Sydney in 1824 its cargo ranged from pipes and whisky to piano-fortes and cast-iron boilers (Nix 2002, *Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser* 12 February 1824). Most vessels carried pottery and five carried tobacco pipes. Some were exported by the Edinburgh tobacconist, William Paterson, and the Leith merchant, John Broadfoot, exported a further 200 gross in October 1824 that were valued at 11/2d each (Nix 2005, 26, 32 and 36).

Pipes and tobacco-related goods arrived from a wide variety of sources but advertisements in Australian newspapers show that Scottish pipes were popular, no doubt among the large population of expatriate Scots. Most advertisements for pipes do not name the maker but some do claim to have pipes by Thomas White of Edinburgh, who was renowned for the quality of his products. For example, the Australian Company's ship, the *Portland*, arrived in Hobart in 1825 with a cargo that included 'long and short pipes tobacco pipes' as well as Edinburgh bottled ale (*Colonial Times and Tasmanian Advertiser*, 18 August 1826). *The Sydney*

Herald on 4 January 1835 advertised 'English or Scotch Tobacco Pipes, by the gross or by the case'. In 1842 *The San Pareille* sailed from Leith bound for Port Adelaide and Sydney with a mixed cargo that included 19 boxes of pipes by T White & Co arriving in Adelaide in August (*Caledonian Mercury* 14 February 1842; *Sydney General Trade List* 13 August 1842; *New South Wales Examiner* 10 August 1842). The voyage could be hazardous as the same ship arrived in Adelaide in May 1845 after six months at sea, having been long detained by gales (*South Australian Register* 28 May 1845).

On 11 March 1844 *The Australian* newspaper, based in Sydney, advertised:

To Publican's, Tobacconists etc
100 Boxes Whites Edinburgh Tobacco Pipes, in 10 and 13 gross boxes. Said to be superior to any other Scotch pipe.

Tobacconists were major distributors of pipes and some ordered pipes marked with their own name rather than that of the pipemaker. These included William Aldis and Hugh Dixon (Stuart and Gojak 1999, 45). William Aldis (c1804-1872) had been convicted of theft in London and transported as a convict to New South Wales in 1827. He became a well-respected figure in Sydney society, buying a tobacconist business in 1837 when he could advertise for sale 'pipes of all descriptions' (*The Australian* 4 July 1837). On sale at store of George Small in Sydney 'White's Edinburgh tobacco pipes branded 'Aldis' (*The Maitland Mercury & Hunter River General Advertiser* 7 Dec 1844). The following year Aldis was advertising 'WHITE'S celebrated EDINBURGH, in cases of ten and twelve gross' as well as the only lot of 'NEW ZEALAND (or Negro) PIPES in the colony' (*Sydney Morning Herald* 20 November 1845, 1).

Hugh Dixon (1810-1880) had served his apprenticeship as a tobacconist in Edinburgh, moving to Sydney in 1839 where he opened a shop in George Street. He is said to have promptly ordered 400 gross of pipes from Scotland (Richardson 1972). Cigars were also branded with the name of Dixon (*Sydney Monitor* 15 April 1840). Dixon's, 540 George Street, Sydney, offered 'WHITE'S Ship and Anchor Pipes, in 12 gross cases' (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 10 July 1845). In 1859 part of the cargo of the *Victor* offered for sale included:

White's Edinburgh tobacco pipes, in three gross cases
Best quality Burns cutty, Cooeys, and Yarra

The *Nelson* arrived at Adelaide from Leith with six boxes of tobacco pipes and '10 hampers short tobacco pipes', then sailing on to Sydney. The six boxes were shipped for the tobacconist, Hugh Dixon (*South Australian* 17 September 1847; *Sydney Chronicle* 4 November 1847).

Scottish pipes from excavations

Scottish pipes are a prominent find in nineteenth-century

artefact assemblages in Australia. The cargo of the *Tigress*, which sank in 1848, carried 50 boxes of pipes. When it was excavated all the identifiable pipes were Thomas White products. Two designs were the commonest, an Irish harp/thistle and a three-masted ship and anchor. The latter may be similar to 'WHITE'S Ship and Anchor Pipes' advertised by Dixon in *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 10 July 1845. Other examples of the three-masted ship were recovered from excavations at Port Arthur (Jack 1986, 131, Fig. 3f) and Little Lon, Melbourne (Denis Gojak, pers. comm., Fig. 5).



Figure 5: Thomas White anchor pipe from excavations at Little Lon, Melbourne (photo: Denis Gojak).

Other pipes by exported by Thomas White were designed to appeal to the growing sense of Australian identity. The Australian black swan was distinctive of Western Australia and was taken as a symbol of its nascent nationalism. Finds from Cumberland Street/Gloucester Street sites include a bowl decorated with a swan marked 'William White Edinr' facing the smoker (Wilson 1996, 71 and fig 5.21.1e). These include the Squatter's Budgerie pipe, examples by Thomas White (Wilson 1996, 68).

Pipes exported to Australia and marked not with the manufacturer's name but with that of an Australian tobacconist name are frequent finds. For example, stems marked DIXSON/ SYDNEY are known from the Cadman's Cottage site on the Sydney waterfront (Gojak 1995, 18). Four stems marked Dixon, a single Aldis stems were recovered from the Hyde Park Barracks in Sydney (Davies, Crook and Murray 2013, 50) and further Aldis pipes from Little Lon, Melbourne (Denis Gojak pers. comm., Fig. 6). Understandably, there is little artefactual evidence of this trade in Scotland. Recently, however, a stem marked ALDIS was excavated in Abbey Strand, Edinburgh (Fig. 7). This was found with a number of Thomas White pipes and would be made by him to be marketed by the Sydney tobacconist, William Aldis.

Thomas White gained an early foothold in the Australian market in the 1820s through the activities of the Australian Company of Edinburgh and Leith. Bowls with a mould-imparted TW in an oval facing the smoker are very common in Scotland. The mark is thought to have originated with White and was much copied in the later



Figure 6: Aldis stems from excavations at Little Lon, Melbourne (photo: Denis Gojak).



Figure 7: Aldis stems from excavations at Abbey Strand, Holyrood, Edinburgh (photo: author).

nineteenth century (Gallagher 1989). The apparent rarity of them in Australian contexts suggests that they were not considered export pipes. One pipe with a TW stamp was retrieved from the wreck of the *Tigress* but this may have been a personal possession of the crew rather than an export item (Gojak and Stuart 1999, 43).

The decline of Thomas White & Co

Thomas White died in 1847 and his son, also named Thomas, died in 1851. Thereafter the firm seems to have declined leaving the export market open to the expanding the Glasgow factories. The factory in Big Jacks Close was sold in 1864 and the business continued in smaller premises until it was finally declared bankrupt in 1870. In 1874 the Melbourne auction house of Grieg and Murray advertised the sale a newly-arrived shipment of '396 boxes White's Edinburgh tobacco pipes' in two and three gross boxes in an assortment that included Baskets, Ben Nevis, Rifles and Eagle Claws (*The Age* 19 September 1874). If this were really products of White's factory then they must have been one of the firm's last shipments.

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