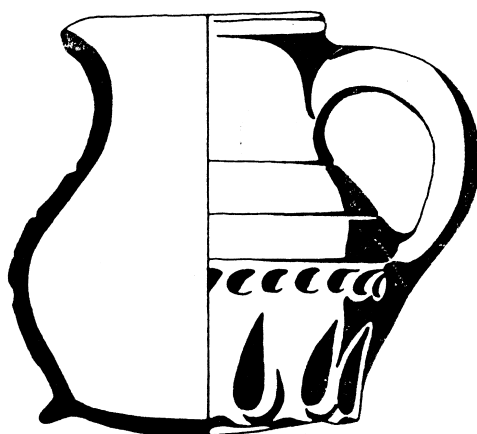


# MEDIEVAL AND LATER POTTERY IN WALES

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## CLAY TOBACCO PIPES FROM BROOKHILL, BUCKLEY

by

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The pipes discussed here come from a 17th-18th century pottery kiln site at Brookhill in Buckley, Clwyd. The site has been excavated almost single-handedly by Mr J. Bentley over the last seven or eight years and all the pipes available early in 1982 have been included. Much of this material has been described in Mr Bentley's excavation reports (deposited in the Clwyd Record Office, Hawarden) as well as in other papers - the most recent being by Bentley, Davey and Harrison (1979, reprinted 1980). This study has questioned several details of the 1979 paper, while a fuller examination of the pipes has revealed much more information about the late 17th-early 18th century production.

By far the most important group of pipes from this site are those made by Thomas Heys. Previous research has shown that the pipes stamped TH or THO/MAS/HEYS almost certainly belong to Thomas Heys I (1676-1720) who would presumably have been working c.1695-1720. He is from a well-known pipemaking family in Buckley, who may have been working near this site. In order to study his pipes those from the site were initially mixed regardless of context and all the more or less complete bowls or marked pieces selected for comparison. In all 42 pipes stamped TH or THO/MAS/HEYS were present.

These stamped pipes can be divided into six dies (A-F) as has been done by Bentley, Davey and Harrison. Unless some pipes are now absent I disagree with three of their descriptions. They give one type (C) as having only one reversed S while in fact it has two, and another, (F) as having an elongated E joined to the M, which it does not. Thirdly they describe type E as having Y written as V, which is, if anything, a better description of type F.

The stamps seem to fall into three groups of two, perhaps suggesting that they were obtained in pairs or that two moulds were in use at any one time. The first pair (A, B) are both initial marks, and although one is round with ligatured initials and the other square

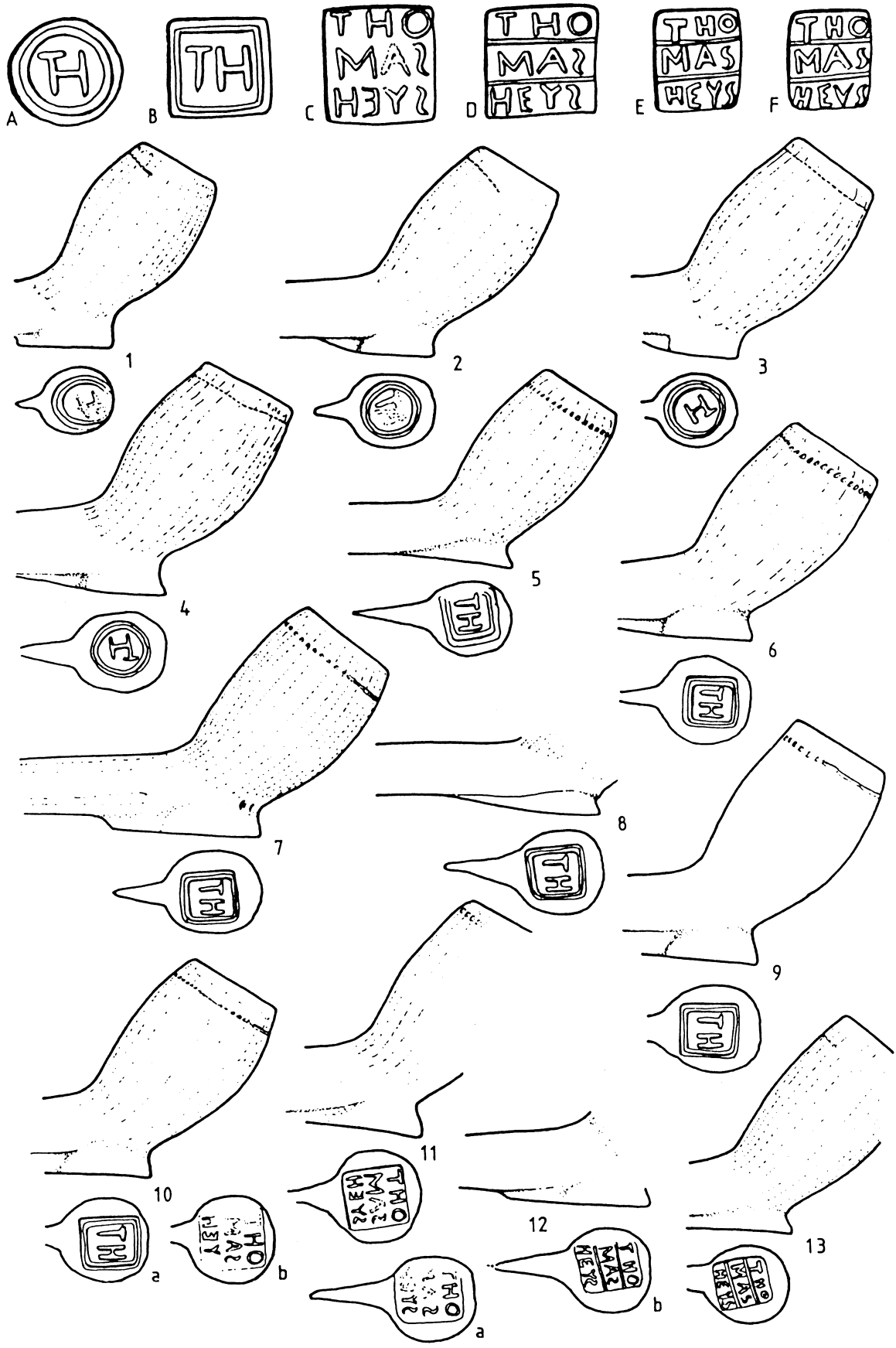


Fig. 1 Brookhill, Buckley: clay tobacco pipes - stamps (scale 2:1) and pipes nos. 1-13 (scale 1:1).

they are stylistically similar. Both are about the same size with a simple border and plain, sans serif letters. The next pair (C, D) are both larger with rather thin lettering, the letter S being reversed in both examples as is the letter E in type C.

The final pair (E, F) are both smaller with more compact lettering. The main difference between them is the much smaller O in type E. Although the letters S have now been formed correctly they are identical in form with those in types C and D. All the stamps have sans serif lettering and the consistent style of the Ts and Hs - especially in types A-D - suggests the same hand cut all six dies. If they were cut on three different occasions it is particularly interesting to note the slight but distinctive differences between A and B, C and D, where the change of shape or use of dividing lines makes otherwise similar stamps easily identifiable. If two (or more) makers, or an apprentice, were working in the Heys workshop at any one time they could use essentially the same Heys mark, but one which would identify their work to the master craftsman.

The pipes were then sorted into mould types by carefully identifying small mould-imparted flaws. The first thing established was that Heys consistently stamped all his pipes, since no unmarked examples from his moulds were found. The most surprising fact, however, was that as many as 23 moulds could be identified from his 42 marked pipes. This number of moulds is much higher than that recorded in contemporary inventories and suggests that there was a much greater turnover of moulds than has previously been recognised. It cannot be that the stock was changed in response to new styles, since all but one of the mould types are copies of the Broseley type 5 bowl (Atkinson 1975). He could not have used that number of moulds at any one time and so it follows that they were periodically replaced.

The other fact to emerge was that the stamp-types were often associated with specific bowl-types - the eight type A stamps for example appear only on mould-types 1 to 4. Only in two cases (moulds 10 and 12) do two different stamps occur on the same bowl-type. The former example is particularly useful since it confirms that the TH stamps belong to Heys when both appear on this mould (10a and b). Since each mould-

type seems to have been used with only one stamp-type it may be that the workshop had two or three pipemaking chests where one mould and stamp would be used.

If there is a progression in the mould-and stamp-types used, then this author favours the sequence A-F in which the stamps have been described. The moulds 1-3 for example have rather upright heels with a clear division between the circular base and the rather short tail. The 'later' types tend to have much less definition in this area and a longer tail. Other differences can be observed between the types - for example, in the milling. The stamp A pipes (1-4) all have very fine, close milling, which becomes much larger and coarser in stamps B and C, while type F tends to have a fine but widely spaced milling tool used on it. Also the milling on the (?early) stamp A pipes is less complete than on the other examples.

The bowls, and sometimes the stems, are usually burnished on these pipes. The burnishing varies between individual examples but is generally of a reasonable standard. On four of the mould-types (3, 9, 15, 22) some or all of the examples were not burnished. Number 22 is the only bowl not of the Broseley type 5 form, and perhaps represents the start of the movement away from Broseley styles with their typically burnished bowls. Of the other examples it is interesting that pipes without burnishing occur only on certain mould-types. Mould 15 is one of the smaller types produced and so may well have had a shorter stem and been a cheaper product. It could be that several styles or divisions existed within these pipes which we cannot see without examples of completed stems.

All of the Heyes pipes seem to be made from a 'local' fabric. The exact nature of 'local fabrics' of course varies from place to place, and as yet little work has been done to determine how far they may have been traded for pipe-making. Few areas had clays such as this, which were suitable for pipes. Usually examination with a x10 hand lens is sufficient to identify the inclusions and uneven texture which make a 'local' fabric, as opposed to the fine, white, almost inclusion-free ball clays from the west country. By the mid-18th century almost all areas had changed to these superior west country clays. Thin section analysis of the clays used in Buckley (Davidson

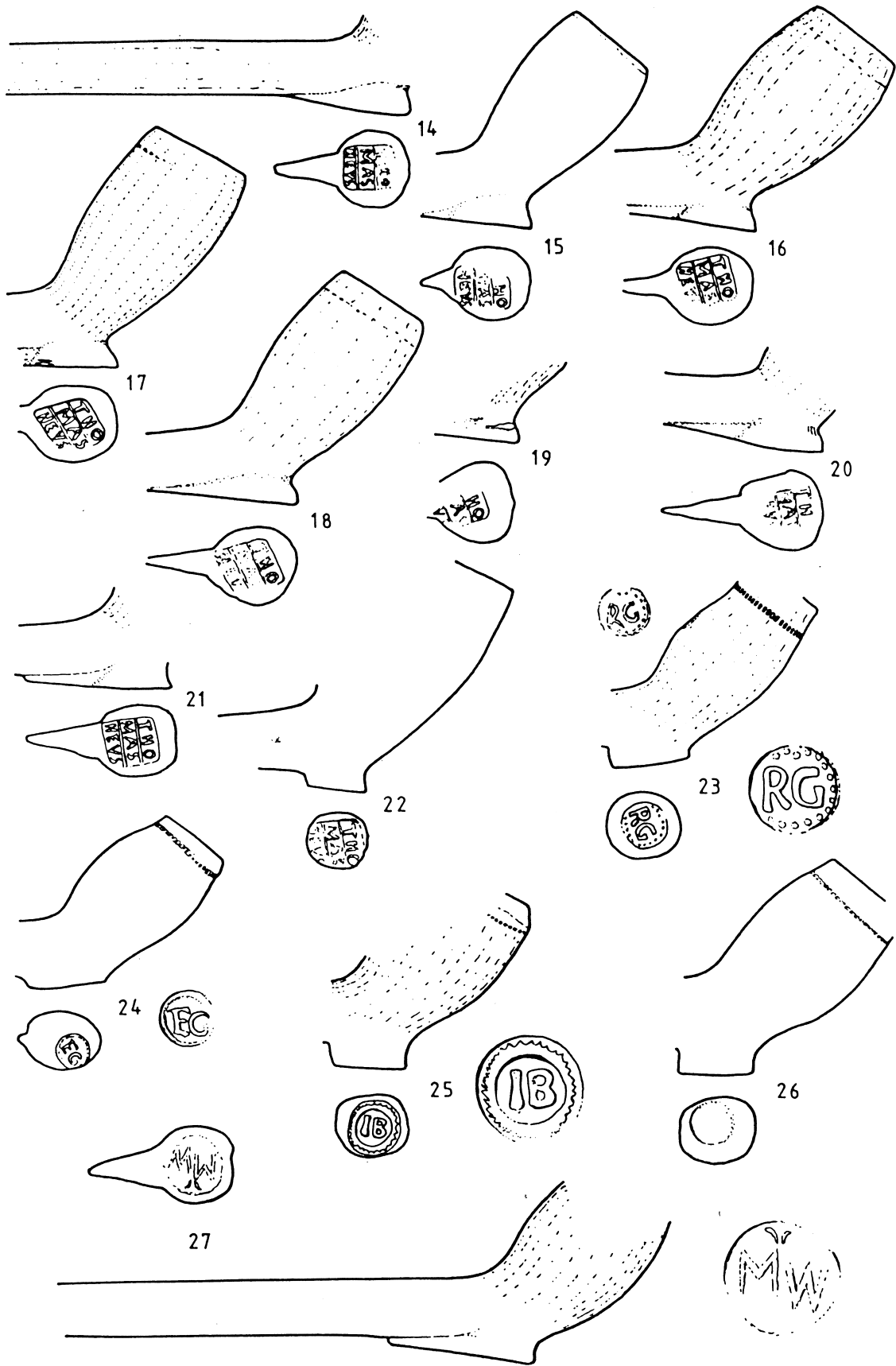


Fig. 2 Brookhill, Buckley: clay tobacco pipes nos. 14-27. Scale 1:1.

and Davey 1982) shows that a distinctive local clay, probably from the underlying coal measures, was used by Heys. Most of the other stamped type 5 pipes are made of a local fabric, although after c.1720 its use in this area rapidly declines.

Eight or nine other stamps were represented from Brookhill (23-31), but each occurs only as a single example. The earliest example (24) is a small circular mark with the letters EG in a faint border. The G is rather smaller and squashed into the E. The bowl is made of a fine fabric, certainly not the local Buckley type, and may well represent early use of imported clay. Four types of EG stamp are illustrated by Rutter and Davey (1980, 112), but it is not possible to be sure if this is one of them. If anything it is the EG4 stamp. They consider these mainly to be used by a Chester maker of c.1640-60.

Another mark which has been found near Chester at Guilden Sutton is RG (23). This example (Rutter and Davey 1980, 127), also has the same stamp impressed twice on the bowl, as does an example from Nantwich, so it was clearly a consistent feature of this maker's product (c.1650-70). The fabric is much finer than the Buckley types and thin section analysis has found parallels for the fabric in Chester (Davidson and Davey 1982, 335), where it may well have been made. In contrast with these two marks the rest of the stamped pipes are made of 'local' fabrics and show that after c.1670-80 pipes were no longer regularly coming from Chester.

At least two examples of the ubiquitous IB initials occur (25, 28). The first type (25) is probably the same stamp recorded by Rutter and Davey (1980, 107) from Chester, since both examples show a small protrusion under the I. They give it as a Rainford type of c.1660-80. The second type (28b) is on one of the Broseley style bowls but was probably made in or around Buckley. The stamp is blurred but almost certainly reads IB. A slightly smaller totally illegible stamp occurs on a very similar bowl (28a).

The other stamps (27, 29, 30, 31) all appear to be unmatched at present, but being of 'local' fabrics they were probably made locally

rather than at centres like Chester. The bowls all copy Broseley forms as do the stamps - particularly 29 and 30, which are typical of that area. Number 30 has five fingers on the hand, not four as illustrated by Bentley, Davey & Harrison. Number 31 is an interesting example, since the example from Brookhill (31a) is unmarked, but can be shown to be from the same mould as a marked example from the Pinfold site nearby (31b). This suggests that RD did not mark all his products - and shows how matching moulds can give an almost complete profile for a fragmentary marked heel. One other bowl was unmarked (26) but it is badly abraded so that the stamp is illegible. It is worth including, however, since it shows a rather different bowl form in the local fabric.

The final marked pipes from the early 18th century have moulded initials on the spur (32-4). These are different from the stamped pipes, since they are made of imported clay. Bentley, Davey and Harrison give these marks as TH and suggest they belong to Heys. The reading of TH is, however, extremely dubious. These three examples are all poorly moulded and arranged differently, but if anything reads TB (or BT). They clearly belong to the period when local makers were adopting Chester-based forms and imported clay (discussed below), but seems to belong to another pipe-making family. Better examples should resolve exactly what the initials are.

While the marked pipes were being examined, the plain pipes were being dealt with in a similar way, and drawings illustrating the development of spur (35-46) and heel (47-58) pipes found on the site have been included. It is interesting to note that in both types burnishing appears on pipes of c.1660 - just before the introduction of the Broseley form - and thus that it is an independent development. In addition, it disappears not so much at a specific date, but with the introduction of imported clays and new forms during the early 18th century.

The early spur pipes of c.1640-60 (35-8) are very similar to examples from Chester. All are probably made of local fabrics but represent standard types made in and around that centre. After c.1660 slightly



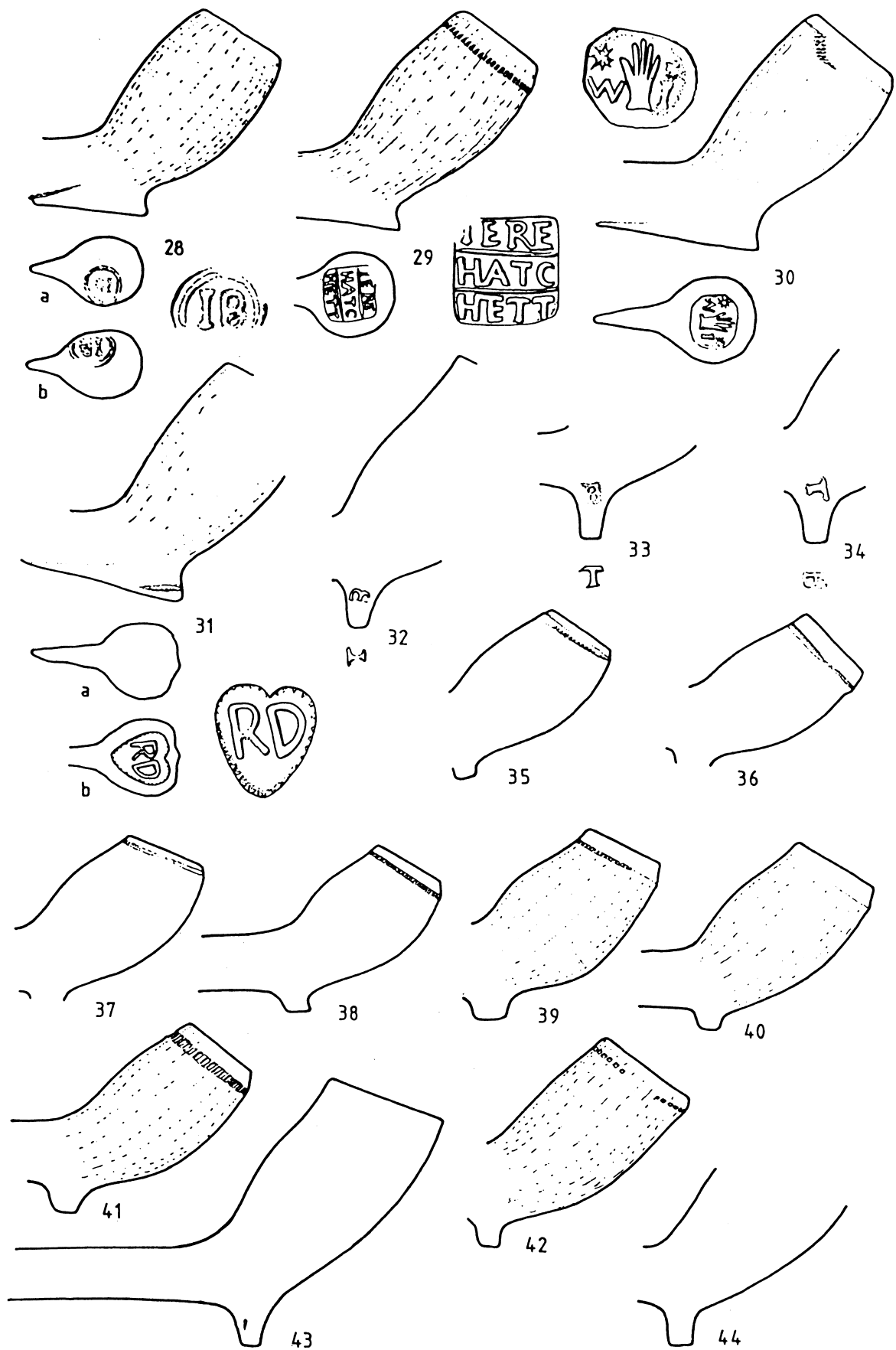


Fig. 3 Brookhill, Buckley: clay tobacco pipes nos. 28-44. Scale 1:1.

different forms appear (e.g. 39, 42), suggesting well-established local traditions, and burnishing becomes standard on the bowls. Spur types are rare during the popularity of the Broseley type 5 bowls in the later 17th century, but reappear again in the early 18th century. These new pipes are strongly under Chester influence both in form and in the adoption of imported clays. Type 43, with eight examples, is clearly a local product, yet all are now being made from imported clay. A few examples (e.g. 45) still retain a distinctly provincial character, but many are classic Chester styles (e.g. 46) and were probably made there.

The heel pipes follow a very similar development, with early forms from c.1640 being the same as those found in Chester (47-50). Once again burnishing appears c.1600 on some rather more local forms (e.g. 51) before the Broseley type 5s appear. Although south Cheshire pipes had been under Broseley influence for about 20 years, there was not this wholesale takeover of a specific form. At least seven different makers in the Buckley area were making these type 5 bowls, and Heys was making them to the exclusion of almost anything else. In addition the makers are using specifically Broseley styles of mark. Broseley bowls were never popular in Chester, and so for a period the influences on Buckley were clearly toward Shropshire. This may have been due to workers in the brick, pot, pipe, tile and coal industries being able to find work in both areas - an hypothesis which could be tested either through an examination of the potting styles of Shropshire or of documentary sources which might disclose movement of craftsmen.

These close links then are demonstrated by the pipes, both marked and plain, from c.1680-1720. As with the spur pipes, new forms appear early in the 18th century (55-57), which are now distinctly Chester. The new Broseley spur forms are totally absent. Although imported clay had been used at Chester for some time, it appears to be a new feature of locally-made pipes, perhaps stimulated by new Chester styles. Type 58 is based on these new forms, yet six different examples were found at Brookhill. It seems therefore to have been a popular type, probably made locally.

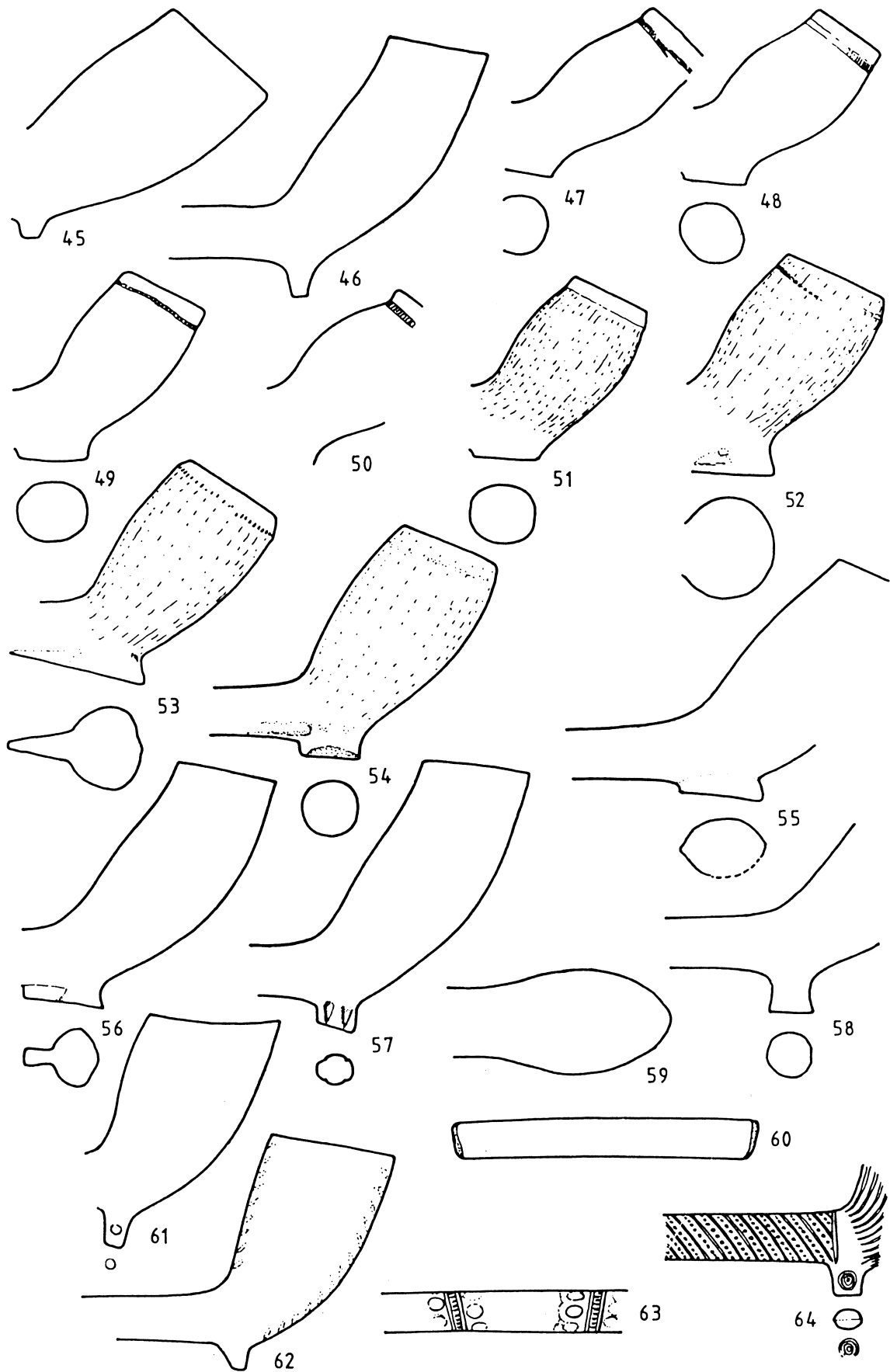


Fig. 4 Brookhill, Buckley: clay tobacco pipes nos. 45-64. Scale 1:1.

Another link with Chester is demonstrated by one roll-stamp-decorated stem (63). This design has not been found in Chester, but is early in type, and probably dates to 1690-1715. Also from the site, and of around this date, is part of a wig curler (59). It, too, is of imported clay and was probably made in Chester. A 'home-made' example of the same thing has been made by grinding smooth the broken ends of a piece of pipe stem (60). A second example (BrH 1900 0000) has one end which has possibly been rounded.

After c.1720 there is a break in the pipe sequence until a 19th-century reoccupation of the site. Material of this date consists mainly of rather poorly made bowls with crude leaf decoration (e.g. 62), followed by the typical late 19th-century decorative motifs. These include wood and flute designs, and an Irish style with the incuse unbordered mark THE/ /MAN, probably THE WORKMAN. Only two makers' marks occur, both late 19th century. One is an incused bowl stamp reading POSNERS PIPE LONDON, and the other a leaf-decorated bowl with relief spur mark WB (William Boynton, Chester, fl. 1870-1916) - both are illustrated by Bentley, Davey & Harrison.

Finally, having considered what the pipes tell us about themselves they must be considered in relation to the site. Unfortunately many are unstratified and even where context numbers are given it is often difficult to interpret them. It may be possible to get a fuller picture by working through the detailed site notes, but that has not been possible for this study. By using the markings on the pipes the following groups and date ranges have been suggested:

Contexts 1 & 2	- 19th century	Work floor	- <u>c.</u> 1690-1720
Context 3	- early 18th century	Trodden floor	- <u>c.</u> 1640-70
Context 4	- <u>c.</u> 1695-1720	Wall debris	- <u>c.</u> 1700-19th century
Context 5	- <u>c.</u> 1670-1720	Culvert	- 19th century
Context 6	- <u>c.</u> 1695-1720	Upper cinder	- 19th century
Context 7	- <u>c.</u> 1695-1720		
Context 9	- 1650-70		

Kiln base 1	- 1640-60
Kiln base 3	- 1650-80
Kiln base 4	- 1695-1720
Kiln base 5	- 1640-70
Kiln base 6	- 1640-1720
Kiln base 12	- 1670-90

This shows that with one or two exceptions all the areas have been at least disturbed during the early 18th century. The deposits clearly date to c.1640-1720 in all, but only odd pockets (e.g. kiln 1, trodden floor, etc.) survive from earlier phases. The Heys pipes are said to have been produced near the site, in which case their greater numbers are less important. Otherwise the pipes show steady activity on the site from the 1640s with a peak in the final years 1700-20.

### Summary

Detailed study of the pipes has produced information on three levels: about the Heys workshop, the Brookhill pottery site and the evolution of styles and influences in north Wales. Initially pipes came from Chester. Local production (employing burnishing) was established by the 1660s, but later direct Broseley influence resulted in virtually a single style from c.1690-1710. In the early 18th century Chester forms suddenly reappear, and imported clays come into use. In the Heys workshop, it is suggested, stamps were obtained in pairs for two workbenches. Large numbers of moulds with probably short lives were used with specific stamps. A local fabric was used to produce the pipes, which may have varied in length and quality. Burnishing is found on most examples.

Milling: where complete, the amount of milling round the rim is given to the nearest quarter ranging from 0 for unmilled to 4 for fully milled.

Burnish: so long as the bowl sides survive in good enough condition for examination they are described as B when burnished (however poorly) or 0 when not.

THOMAS HEYS PIPES

Mould/ illustration no.	Stamp type	Context	Milling	Burnishing
1	A	Br	1	B
2	A	Br 6	2	B
	A	Br 2450 900 6	2	B
3	A	Br surface U6	-	0
	A	Br	-	B
	A	Br area B 2900 1200	-	0
	A	Br	-	-
4	A	Br surface	3	B
5	B	Br	3	B
6	B	Br	4	B
	B	Br	-	B
7	B	Br	3	B
	B	Br 2425.600	3	B
	B	Br 2650.300	-	B
	B	Br	-	-
8	B	BrC 3100.4	-	B
	B	Br	-	B
	B	Br	-	-
9	B	Br wall U4	4	0
10	B	Br	3	B
	C	Br 2500 1000 7	-	B
11	C	Br	-	B
12	C	Br 2400 700 5	-	B
	D	Br	-	B
13	E	Br 2650 800 4	-	B
14	E	Br	-	B
	E	Br 2550 795 6	-	B
15	F	Br 2400 700 5	0	0
	F	Br ...850 6	70	0

Fabric: is given as local (L) for coarse fabrics with rugged fracture and large inclusions and imported (I) when the fabric is much finer and generally whiter. This is of course purely visual examination with only two distinctions, and well sorted local clays may have been entered as imported or vice versa.

UNMARKED PIPES

Illustration	Context	Milling	Burnish	Fabric
35	BrC U6	4	0	?L
36	BrC U5	?2	0	L
37	BrC trodden floor	4	0	L
38	BrC trodden floor	4	0	L
39	BrC U3	2	B	L
40	BrC	0	B	L
41	Br	3	B	?L
42	BrC U12	3	B	L
43	Br 2500 950 4	0	0	I
	Br 2475 700 5	0	0	I
	Br wall debris	0	0	I
	Br 2550 300 4-5	0	0	I
	Br 2650 1100	0	0	I
	Br culvert fill	0	0	I
	Br	0	0	I
	Br	0	0	I
44	Br SW wall	-	0	I
45	Br 4-5 2700- 2900 500-900 above culvert	0	0	I
46	Br 2500 9754	0	0	I
47	BrC U1	3	0	?L
48	Br	4	0	?L
49	Br 3800 3000 9	4	0	L
50	BrC U1	-	0	L
51	BrC U6	0	B	L
52	Br 2550 950 6" deep	3	B	L
53	Br	3	B	L
54	Br ?5	0	B	L
55	Br 2650 1050 U	0	0	I
56	Br 2500 975 6	0	0	I
57	Br 2400 800 4	0	0	I

[Note that minor corrections were made to this table on 29 October 2018 so that it is not identical to the 1983 published version]

16	F	Br	4	B
17	F	Br 3000 950 4	3	B
18	F	Br	4	?B
	F	Br	-	B
19	F	Br	-	B
20	F	Br 2675 800 3	-	B
21	F	Br work floor	-	B
22	F	Br 2900 1050.5	-	0
	F	Br	-	0
-	B	Br	-	-
-	D	BrC 3200 400	-	-
-	F	Br	-	?0
*	F	BrC 3800 2950.7	-	B

\*This pipe is almost certainly from another mould, similar to, but more full bodied than, 18. It was inadvertently not illustrated.

## OTHER MARKED PIPES

Illustration	Mark	Context	Milling	Burnish	Fabric
23	RG x 2	Br U1	-	?B	I
24	EG	Br U1	4	0	?I
25	IB	Br	-	B	L
26	-	Br 3000 1400 5	?4	-	L
27	MW	Br C work floor debris	-	B	L
28a	-	Br	0	B	L
b	?IB	Br C 7500 1900	0	0	L
29	IERE/ HATC/ HETT	Br	4	B	L
30	WI	Br	-	B	L
31a	-	Br	3	B	L
b	RD	PL 15/1	-	B	L
32	?T ?B	Br 2400 825 5	0	0	I
33	T ?B	Br	0	0	I
34	?B T	Br	0	0	I

58	Br 2500 975 4	-	0	I
59	Br 2500 600 4	-	-	I
60	Br	-	-	I
61	Br 3000, 1000 on gas pipe	0	0	I
62	Br upper cinder	0	0	I
63	Br	-	-	I
64	Br	-	-	I

## UNMARKED PIPES SIMILAR TO THOSE ILLUSTRATED

Similar to illustration	Context	Milling	Burnish	Fabric	Notes
32-4	Br 3	-	0	I	Part of mark survives - can't be mould identified.
38	Br C U12	-	0	L	
41	Br	4	B	L	
43	Br 2550 300 4-5	0	0	I	
46	Br 2400 650 4	-	0	I	
46	Br 2500 1000 6	0	0	I	
53	Br 5	-	B	L	
53	Br 1800 750.6	-	?0	L	
54	PL 1 12/2	0	?B	L	May be same mould as 54.
58	Br 2500 970 6	-	0	I	All five of same style but probably all from different moulds.
	BrC 3500 4000	-	0	I	
	Br 2725 830 4	-	0	I	
	Br U2 wall debris	-	0	I	
	Br 2450 400 4	-	0	I	

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