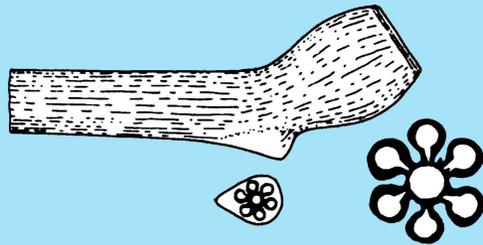


**Clay Tobacco Pipes From
Excavations At
Berry Pomeroy Castle,
Devon, 1980-1991**



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Appendix 4

CLAY TOBACCO PIPES

By DAVID HIGGINS

INTRODUCTION

This report considers the clay tobacco pipes recovered from Berry Pomeroy Castle between 1980 and 1991. During this period eight separate collections of material were made:-

| <i>Site Code</i> | <i>Bowl</i> | <i>Stem</i> | <i>Tips</i> | <i>Contexts</i> | <i>Comments</i> |
|------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------|--|
| BP 80A | 3 | 7 | 0 | 7 | All 17th or early 18th century. |
| BP 81B | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | |
| BP 81C | 10 | 25 | 0 | 14 | Includes some very early pipes. |
| 249 | 2 | 17 | 0 | 9 | No very early pipes. |
| BP86 3/4 | 8 | 31 | 0 | 1 | Including some very early pipes. |
| BP 89 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 | |
| BP 91 | 21 | 62 | 1 | 16 | Mainly 17th & 18th century; a few very early pipes. |
| BPC 91 | 9 | 22 | 1 | 10 | Quite a number of very early pipes. |
| Totals | 55 | 166 | 2 | 60 | |

The total number of fragments collected (223) is not very large, nor are there any sizeable groups. The largest group consists of the 39 pieces collected in 1986. Discounting these, the remaining 184 pieces came from 60 different contexts, an average of only three pieces per context. Such small numbers cannot convincingly be used to argue for the absolute date of the individual contexts although they do provide a useful *terminus ante quem* for the deposits in which they occur and, taken collectively, they provide a reasonably good dating framework within the site matrices.

The pipes as a whole also reveal patterns reflecting the site's evolution which would not be apparent from the individual contexts alone. The main phases of activity represented by the pipe deposition, for example, are between *c.* 1580–1610 and *c.* 1680–1720. These periods coincide with the remodelling of the northern range in about 1600 and the abandonment and demolition of the buildings a century later.

TREATMENT OF THE MATERIAL

An archive has been prepared containing details of all of the pipes recovered. Each of the fragments has been individually assessed, dated and recorded using a system which is being developed at the University of Liverpool. Based on this information separate context summary sheets have been compiled which give an overview of the number of fragments recovered and the overall date range for each context. This detailed information has been deposited as a part of the site archive.

For this report a representative selection of the bowl forms and the marked and decorated pieces has been illustrated (1–27). The pipes will first be considered collectively as an artefact group and secondly in terms of the information they provide about the site.

THE PIPES (Figs. 71–2)

The most striking feature about this group is the number of very early pipe bowls which are present. The earliest recognised styles of pipe date from *c.* 1580–1610 (Atkinson and Oswald 1969, 178). At this date tobacco was a luxury item and the habit of smoking was only just being disseminated through society. Early pipes are occasionally found all over the country but they are always rare, usually occurring as single examples and very few have ever been recovered from stratified archaeological contexts. This site has produced no less than 13 bowls or bowl fragments of this type, representing nearly 24% of all the bowl fragments recovered. The majority of these came from deposits which can be associated with the construction of the north range. This contains a timber with a felling date range of 1591–1601. Although the pipe bearing deposits are not directly sealed by the north range they clearly derive from associated works which must have taken place at about this time.

There are six complete, or substantially complete bowls dating from *c.* 1580–1610 (1–6), all of which are extremely well produced pipes. The bowl forms are well modelled and the pipes have been neatly produced and finished. Four of the bowls have been burnished (2, 3, 5, and 6) and one of them has been milled around the rim (3). This is an early example of the use of milling, the rims at this date more usually being finished with a slight lip or groove, as in 1, 2, 4 and 5. The rims themselves seem to have been trimmed horizontally or gently rounded and smoothed but not actually bottered, *i.e.*, finished using a specially shaped tool. This was twisted in the mouth of later pipes and leaves a distinctive profile to the rim.

The milled example (3) is also interesting in that striations are clearly visible running around the inside of the bowl. Later English pipes were formed in a press where a stopper was forced vertically into the bowl to mould the pipe. In the Netherlands a different system was used whereby the stopper was inserted by hand. It is possible that these striations represent the twisting action of a hand held stopper rather than the vertical action of a press mounted stopper. If this is the case it sheds interesting light on early production techniques in this country.

The bowls also reveal other insights into the early production process. It is notable, for example, that many of these early pipes have greyish cores to them, often clearly visible in the broken stem ends. This phenomenon is apparent in nine out of the 13 early bowl fragments (69%), and can be seen in a number of the stem fragments associated with these bowls as well. This suggests that the pipes were fired in a reducing atmosphere with oxidation only occurring in the final phase of the firing. The earliest known pipekiln remains date from the second quarter of the 17th century when muffle kilns were being used. The pipes from these do not have reduced grey cores and so it may well be that a different method of firing was being used in the late 16th century.

The stem bores of these early pipes are relatively small. Only 12 of them were measurable but, of these, seven had bores of 5/64", two were of 6/64", two were of 7/64" and one was of 9/64". In general terms stem bores decreased in size from about 8/64" or 9/64" in the early seventeenth century to 4/64" or 5/65" in the 19th century. The evidence from these bowls suggests that in the late 16th-century bores were generally smaller and that they increased in size in the early 17th century.

Five of the 13 early bowls have makers' marks stamped in them. These are all incuse and applied to the heel of the pipes. There are three eglantine marks (*e.g.* 5). The stamp detail (shown at three times life size) shows that the tail of one of the pellets and one of the

adjoining dividing bars have forked tails. This distinctive characteristic, together with differences in the exact shape and spacing of the design, shows that all three of these marks were made with the same die and, therefore, that they are all the products of a single manufacturer. It is also interesting to note that the orientation of these forked tails varies on each of the three pipes. The pellet with the forked tail appears at about 'eight o'clock', '10 o'clock' and 'two o'clock' as the mark would normally be read. This suggests that there was no particular orientation to the die; a 17th-century pipemaker's die from Chard in Somerset has a flattened handle so that it can easily be aligned (Taunton Museum, Accession No. 173/1989).

The eglantine mark commonly occurs in Devon, the largest concentration having been noted from Plymouth (Oswald 1969). Most of these examples, however, are slightly later in date and were made using different dies to the Berry Pomeroy examples. Just one exact die match has been found, also on an early form dating from *c.* 1580–1610. This is now in the Plymouth City Museum (Accession No. AR:78:31) and was found at Mount Gold in Plymouth (SX 490556). The occurrence of an exact parallel at Plymouth and the number of similar marks found there dating from the early seventeenth century strongly suggests that this was their place of manufacture. Plymouth with its New World connections would be an obvious place for early pipe manufacture to develop. These examples suggest that production had started there by the end of the 16th century and also allow one of the earliest pipe forms and marks to be attributed to a particular production centre.

The other early marked pipes have initial marks on them. The mark on 6 is damaged but would almost certainly have read IR, while 7 has the single letter S impressed on it. Both of these marks have long been known from London (e.g. Hilton Price 1900, Figs. 1 and 2) where they are likely to have originated. The IR mark is particularly common and has been recorded by Oswald from as far afield as London, Newcastle, Worcester, Ledbury, Ipswich, Stoney Stratford, Plymouth, Bristol, Doncaster and Marlborough (Oswald 1975, 34). Early London pipes were clearly widely distributed around the country and so their appearance in Devon is not out of place. The IR bowl form is much more upright than the example marked with an eglantine but until more is known about the early production centres it is not possible to say whether these differences are regional or simply because forms had not yet become standardised.

As well as the early bowl forms there are a number of stems which are likely to date from the late 16th century or early 17th century. One of the finest pieces from the site is a stem decorated with a pattern of impressed lozenge shaped marks (8). The stem is very finely burnished and the marks have been neatly impressed to make up two larger lozenges, the pattern being closed beneath the stem with a single stamp. A similar stamped pattern has been found on a pipe from London of *c.* 1580–1610 (Oswald 1975, Fig. 13.1) while a similar mark of the same date has been used to stamp the heel of a pipe found in Chester (Rutter and Davey, 1980, Fig. 30.4).

There is a most unusual stem fragment which has been made of a fine terracotta clay (9). The form and finish of this piece, which is also finely burnished, suggests an early date although it has not been possible to find any parallels for early pipes made of this type of clay. Another stem of interest (10) has a splash of olive green glaze on it. This has presumably dripped onto the pipe from glazed pottery being fired higher up in the kiln. This arrangement is clearly documented from Barnstaple in North Devon where a number of early 17th-century waste pipes with glaze splashes on them have been found, including one group which had been fused into a sagger by glaze which has dropped onto them. The shape of the splash on the Berry Pomeroy example suggests that the pipe was lying horizontally rather than standing vertically as was the case with the pipes from the Barnstaple sagger.

There is one stem which has been decorated with four bands of milling (11). This is unlikely to date from before the early 17th century since broad milled bands of this type

do not appear to have been used before then. Milled stem decoration of this type occurs occasionally all over the country.

Apart from production related features there are some pipes from this site which show signs of having been modified after being used and broken. The stem 12, which probably dates from the late 16th or early 17th century, has had one of its ends ground smooth. This may have been to reuse the pipe in a shortened form or simply the idle doodling of someone playing with a piece of broken pipestem. Slightly more puzzling are two pieces (contexts BPC91 542 and 587) which have had a shallow cone bored into the broken end by having had something sharp twisted into the stem bore. Both of these pieces date from *c.* 1580–1610; one is a plain piece of stem but the other is a bowl (5).

After the early 17th century, pipes are poorly represented on the site until the late 17th- or early 18th-century demolition deposits. The castle was occupied throughout the 17th century and the lack of pipes probably reflects the good management of the site with rubbish being taken away from the buildings for disposal. Despite this, a few fragments were recovered from the excavations and these are discussed below.

There are a number of fragments which date from between *c.* 1610 or 1620 and *c.* 1640 (14–16, 18). These vary considerably in form and finish, but are quite different to the earlier forms discussed above. In fact, there seems to be a very sharp break between the earliest forms and those which follow. The total lack of transitional types from anywhere in the country strongly suggests that these new forms were introduced alongside the earlier ones, rapidly replacing them rather than there being a gradual evolution from one style into another.

The pipe 14 is very poorly designed and produced in comparison with the earlier pipes. It is, however, typical of other early pipes from Devon, particularly those found in Barnstaple, and it may well have come from that centre. There is also a fragmentary bowl from context BP81C 30 of this type which appears to have part of an incuse mark impressed on the heel. This type of mark is likewise typical of the early Barnstaple types. The forms of 15, 16 and 18 are much better finished but are still likely to be local types. They may be compared with the range of forms present in a pit group from Plymouth dating from *c.* 1625–35 (Higgins 1992). As mentioned above, the eglantine mark 18 is particularly associated with Plymouth and this example is likely to have been made there.

There is a slightly later mark, dating from *c.* 1650–80, which consists of a rather crudely executed star or wheel mark. Again, this is likely to be a local product from somewhere in Devon, although it is hard to be sure as only the heel survives. There is only one complete example of a mid 17th-century local bowl form (19). The form of this contrasts with the much more compact, barrel shaped bowl of the only 17th-century spur pipe from the site (20). This dates from *c.* 1660–80 and is quite out of place in Devon where heel pipes dominated the 17th-century industry. It is likely to be an import from London or the south-east where this form is much more common.

At some point during the period *c.* 1680–1720 there is a sudden increase in pipe deposition again. Almost all of the pieces of this date were recovered from demolition deposits and they presumably derive from rubbish accumulation around the abandoned buildings or from the activities associated with the demolition and robbing of stone from them. Eighteen bowls dating from this period were recovered from the site and six of them, representing the typical forms present, have been illustrated (21–26). None of these later pipes is marked and all are typical of the types being produced and used in Devon at this period. Unfortunately, in the absence of marked pipes, or other well dated groups with which to compare these forms, it is not possible to refine the date at which these pipes are likely to have been deposited. There is one fragment of a pinched 'barley twist' stem which is likely to date from this period as well (13). This type of decoration was occasionally used all over the country but appears to have been slightly more common in Devon.

There is only one bowl which dates from after the demolition phase, and that is an early

19th-century fluted bowl (27). This is marked I or TG and was probably made by Thomas Granger of Exeter. A similar but rather less accomplished bowl by this maker has been illustrated by Oswald, Allan and Hunt (1984, Fig. 161.92).

DISCUSSION

As noted above, the pipes reflect two main events at the castle; the construction of the north range and the abandonment and demolition of the buildings nearly a century later.

The early pipes form an outstanding group providing an important body of information about the little known origins of smoking and pipemaking in this country. They appear to be primarily associated with midden deposits used as levelling and make-up layers. As such they are likely to represent domestic waste deriving from the existing household. The presence of so many early pipe fragments clearly shows that the habit of smoking had been taken up within this household and was being regularly practiced by the end of the 16th century. The westcountry ports were influential in developing early contacts with the New World and would have provided a means of obtaining tobacco at this early date. The earliest pipes seem to be rather more numerous in the south-west than in other parts of the country and it is quite likely that early smoking became more strongly established here as a result of these trading connections. The demand for tobacco and pipes from rich households such as this may well have been responsible for the early establishment of pipemakers in Devon. The eglantine marks from this site provide important evidence for an early pipemaking industry nearby, probably at Plymouth, while the stamped stem, with parallels from London, suggests that other pipes were imported.

The earliest pipes are all of good or high quality as would befit the status of the household and habit at that date. The 17th-century pipes are not of such high quality, the majority of them being typical local products. This accords with information from other parts of the country which suggests that pipes were not a highly valued status artefact but procured locally as required. Having said that, there is one pipe which is probably from the London area (20). This is an isolated example and likely to reflect an individual piece brought from a visit to the capital rather than any form of organised trade.

The pipes associated with the demolition are a little more problematic since they could either derive from the household or from demolition gangs working on the site. All that can be said of them is that they are of typical local types and of average quality.

CATALOGUE

Examples of all the different bowl forms, marked, decorated or unusual pipes from the site have been illustrated. Similar examples recovered which have not been illustrated are listed at the end of each entry.

1. BPC91 586 Very small and neatly formed bowl with a smooth glossy surface although it does not seem to have been burnished. There is a plain groove all around the rim. Stem bore 6/64". The bowl probably dates from *c.* 1580–1610 and was found in a dump of household kitchen waste, similar to or the same as 565.
2. BPC91 565 (SF 5) A finely burnished bowl of *c.* 1580–1610 with a stem bore of 5/64". A well designed and produced bowl with a slight lip at the rim. The bowl now appears a pinkish colour but this seems to be simply a surface staining which has occurred since the pipe was broken. Found in a dump of household kitchen waste, similar to or the same as 586.
3. BPC91 506 Fully milled bowl with a good burnish dating from *c.* 1580–1610. The rim has been cut off square to the body of the bowl. Inside the bowl are clear striations suggesting that it was formed with a hand held stopper used with a twisting motion. Stem bore 5/64". Found in levelling material revetted by wall 505.

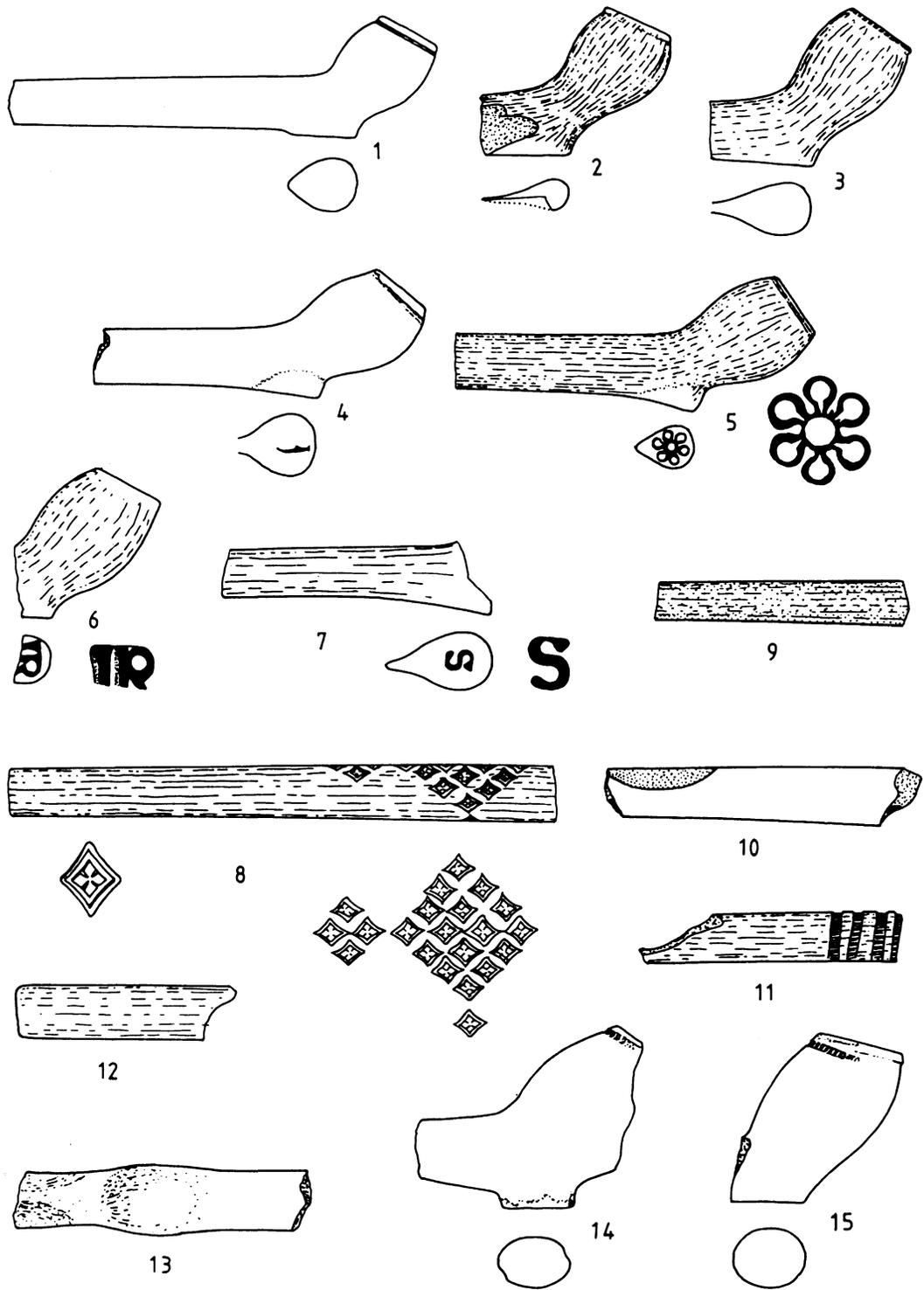


Fig. 71. Clay tobacco pipes. Scale 1:1.

4. BPC91 586 Well designed and produced pipe of *c.* 1580–1610. The bowl leans forward and has been neatly finished although it is not burnished. There is a slight lip or groove all around the rim. There is a deep fissure in the base where the clay has not been worked together properly. Stem bore 6/64". Found in a dump of household kitchen waste, similar to or the same as 565.
5. BPC91 587 Slender and well produced form of *c.* 1580–1610. This pipe has a fine burnish and a stem bore of 5/64". There is a groove all around the rim and an incuse eglantine mark impressed on the heel. Distinctive flaws in this die show that impressions from the same die occur on similar pipes from contexts BP81C 10 and BP81C 40. These pipes are also finely burnished and have stem bores of 5/64". The illustrated example was found in a dumped layer which was stratigraphically later than the kitchen waste layers BPC 91 565 / 586.
6. BPC91 587 Bowl of *c.* 1580–1610 with smoothed rim and average burnish. The stem bore is too broken to be measurable. There is a damaged incuse mark impressed on the heel which almost certainly read IR. Found in a dumped layer which was stratigraphically later than the kitchen waste layers BPC91 565 / 586.
7. BP81C 245 (SF188) Heel fragment from an early bowl, dating from *c.* 1580–1610. The stem has a good burnish and a bore of 7/64". The heel is stamped with an incuse letter S. Found in a demolition layer.
8. BPC91 563 Finely burnished stem with a bore of 8/64". The stem has been decorated with 21 impressions of a little lozenge shaped mark. The stem comes from a very high quality pipe and probably dates from *c.* 1600–20. It was found in levelling material revetted by walls 505 and 513.
9. BP86 3/4 This stem is finely burnished, has quite a strong stem taper and a stem bore of 7/64". These characteristics suggest that it is of early 17th-century date. What is unusual is that this piece has been formed of a fine terracotta clay. Red pipes were only ever occasionally produced during the nineteenth century and are extremely rare at other periods.
10. BP81C 212 Stem fragment from a demolition deposit. The stem is sharply tapered, has a small bore (5/64") and a slightly greyish core, all of which point to an early date for this piece. The only associated bowl from this context dates from *c.* 1580–1610 and there is no reason why this piece should not be of a similar date. The unusual thing about this stem is the fact that it has a splash of pale yellowish-green glaze on it. This has spread very thinly and must have been in a very fluid state in the kiln.
11. BP91 212 Stem fragment with a good burnish and a stem bore of 7/64". The stem probably dates from the early 17th century and is decorated with four fairly deeply impressed bands of milling. These have been individually applied and do not quite join at the bottom of the stem. This fragment was found in a claysilt and kitchen waste deposit associated with the reconstruction of the north range in about 1600.
12. BP91 58 Stem fragment, probably of the late 16th or early 17th century with a finely burnished surface (although now much abraded) and a stem bore of 7/64". After the stem became broken one end was ground smooth, at right angles to the long axis of the pipe. Found in a layer of slate fragments.
13. BP81C unstratified Stem fragment with a bore of 8/64" which has been pinched in alternate directions to form barley-twist decoration. This example is likely to date from *c.* 1670–1720.
14. BP86 3/4 Rather crudely designed bowl in a local style dating from *c.* 1620–40. Lumpy and uneven surface, milled and bottered rim, stem bore 8/64". Found during the clearance of the south rampart terrace. Similar bowls were recovered from contexts 249-65 (2 examples) and BP81C 30. The BP81C 30 example has the remains of an incuse impressed mark on the heel, which would probably have consisted of unbordered initials.
15. BP86 3/4 Quite a well formed and finished bowl of *c.* 1620–40. Rim is bottered and three-quarters milled. Stem bore 8/64". Found during the clearance of the south rampart terrace. A similar bowl was recovered from BP81 when a secondary loose stone filling was removed from the standing gatehouse masonry.
16. BP81C 231 Small and neatly formed heel fragment dating from *c.* 1610–40. Stem bore 7/64". This is the only example of this type of bowl from the site. Found in a layer.
17. BP86 3/4 Chunky heel fragment of *c.* 1650–80 marked with a simply formed star or wheel mark with seven arms. Stem bore 8/64". Found during the clearance of the south rampart terrace.
18. BPC91 519 Abraded heel fragment dating from *c.* 1620–40. The heel is stamped with a relief eglantine mark. This type of mark is commonly found at Plymouth (Oswald 1969). This example was found in a recent dumped layer overlying the demolition deposits.

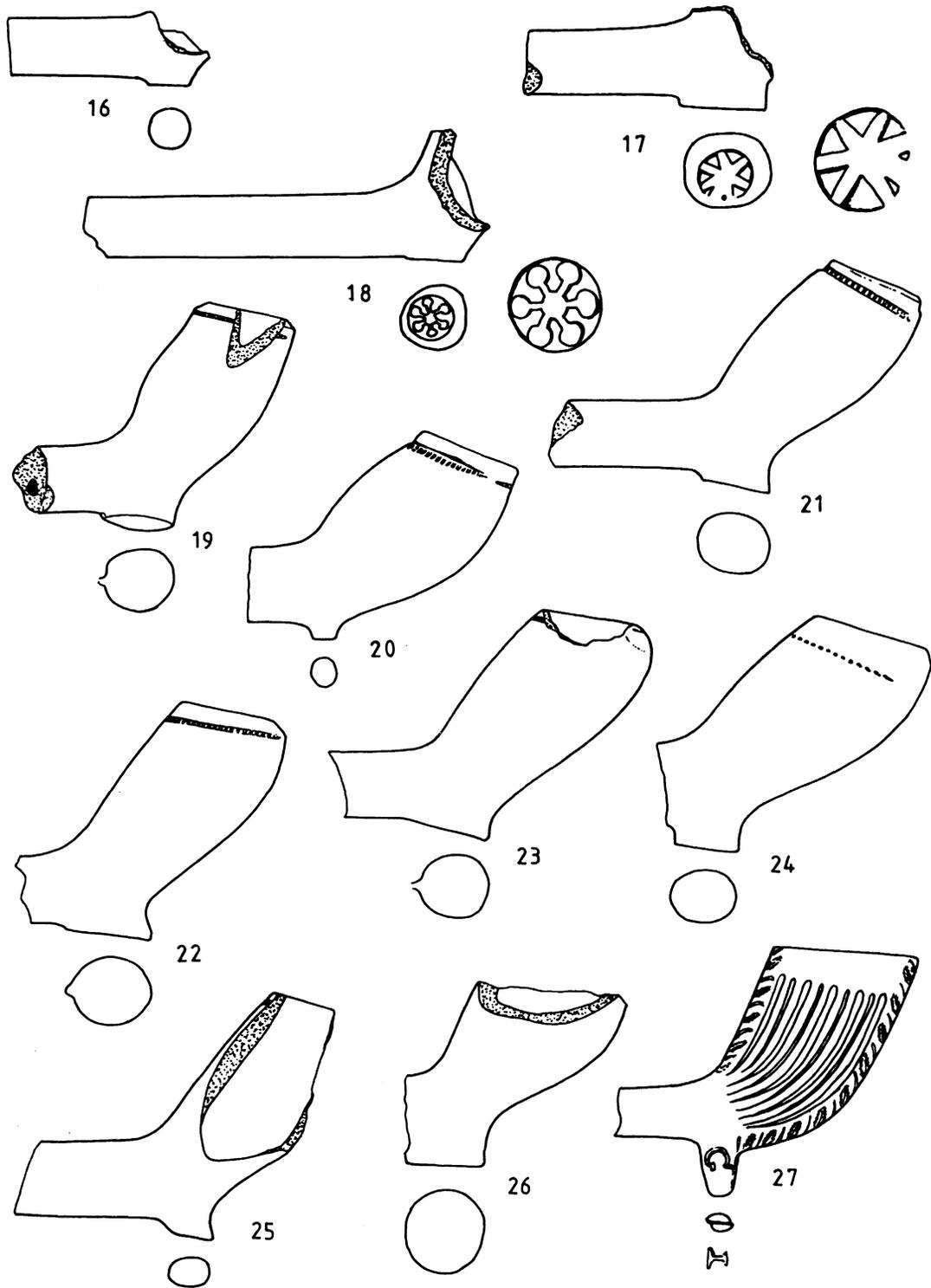


Fig. 72. Clay tobacco pipes. Scale 1:1.

19. BP80A 31 Slightly damaged heel bowl of *c.* 1640–70 from a demolition deposit. Rim bottered and three-quarters milled. A similar bowl was recovered from BP86 3/4.
20. BPC91 519 Very abraded spur bowl with fully milled rim, dating from *c.* 1660–80. The style of this bowl is quite different from the forms usually found in Devon at this period and it almost certainly represents an import from London or the south-east where this form was very common. Found in a recent dumped layer overlying the demolition deposits.
21. BP91 100 Bowl of *c.* 1680–1710, fully milled with a bottered and internally cut rim. Found in the fill of a post-medieval trench. Similar bowls were recovered from BP89B 8, BP91 55 and BP91 101 (2 examples).
22. BP81C 221 Fully milled and bottered heel bowl of *c.* 1680–1720 from demolition deposit. A similar bowl was recovered from BP91 55.
23. BP81C 223 Heel bowl dating from *c.* 1680–1720 with a damaged but milled and bottered rim. Found in a demolition deposit. Similar bowls were recovered from BP91 55 and BP91 107.
24. BP81B 2 Three joining bowl fragments (recently damaged) dating from *c.* 1680–1720 and found in a demolition deposit. The rim is three-quarters milled and has been both internally trimmed and bottered. A similar bowl was recovered from BP80 BH 17.
25. BP80A 15 Damaged bowl with a milled and internally trimmed rim, *c.* 1680–1720, from a demolition deposit. Although the small, forward kicking heel is a typical Devon form, for example, there are broadly similar examples in the Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter (Paul St; PS 449) and in South Molton Museum (accession 1312 i), this is the only example of this type from the site.
26. BP91 101 Truncated fragment of a heel bowl dating from *c.* 1680–1720. This is of an unusual form with a very narrow waist giving way to a bulbous, full-bodied bowl. Found in a demolition layer.
27. BP81C unstratified Bowl of *c.* 1800–40 decorated with alternate thick and thin flutes and with leaf decorated seams. The decoration and bowl form are not of very good quality, although this is typical of the products of this period. The spur is marked with the initials I or T G, probably for Thomas Granger of Exeter who is recorded in 1822 (Arnold and Allan 1980, 321).

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