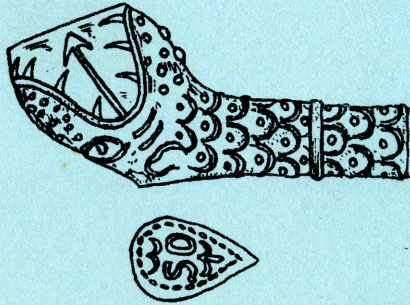


SOCIETY *for* CLAY PIPE RESEARCH



NEWSLETTER

52



Autumn/Winter 1997

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A GROUP OF CLAY TOBACCO PIPES FROM MARRICK, NORTH YORKSHIRE

David Higgins

Introduction

This note describes and discusses a group of nineteen pipe fragments which were found in rabbit scrapes around the footings of a ruined building near Marrick in North Yorkshire. The site lies below a sharp bend in the road at a place known as Reels Head (SE 062 987). The ruins consist of a rectangular stone built structure which is thought to have been part of an old lead mine. The ruins are known to have produced pipe bowls in the past and this group was collected during an orienteering expedition run from the outdoor centre at nearby Marrick Priory.

The Pipes

This group consists of nineteen pipe fragments made up of three bowl fragments and sixteen pieces of stem, one of which is stamped with a maker's mark. (The stem bores are in $\frac{1}{64}$ ths of an inch.) These are as follows:

Fig.17

- 1 Spur bowl of c.1680-1710. This is made of a well-fired fabric with a glossy surface although it has not been burnished. The bowl has a large, smooth form and has been neatly finished. The rim has been bottered (smoothed) and has a plain groove (not milled) around one quarter of its circumference. The spur has been flattened at its base but not trimmed. Stem bore $\frac{6}{64}$.
- 2 Fragment from a bowl of similar proportions and appearance to No.1.
- 3 Spur fragment from a pipe of c.1680-1720. This has a rather finer spur than No.1, the base of which has been trimmed. The bowl would have been of a good, full-bodied form. Stem bore $\frac{6}{64}$.

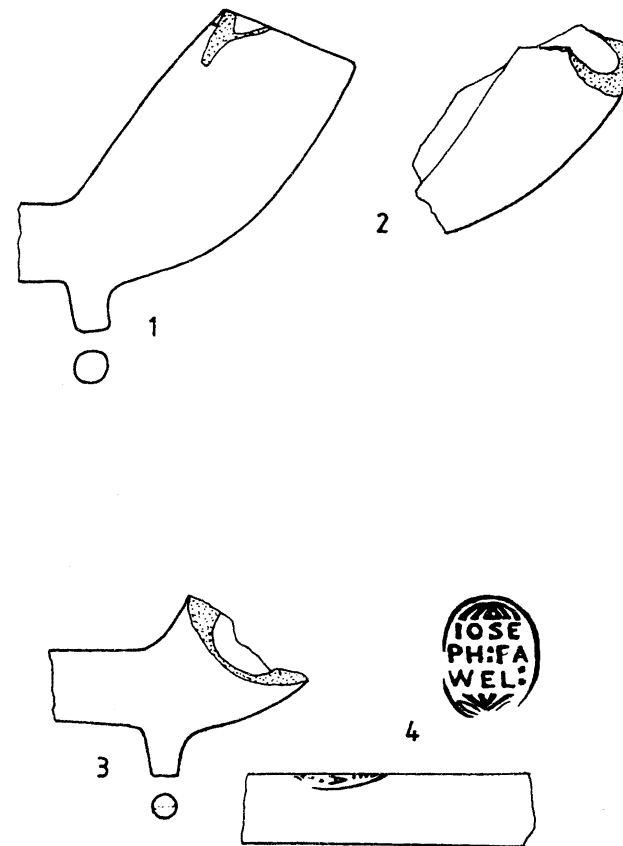


Fig. 17 Pipes from Marrick, Yorkshire

- 4 Stem fragment stamped with an incuse mark reading IOSE/PH:FA/WEL. This mark has been recorded by Edwards (1988, 36), and can be attributed to Joseph Fawell of Gateshead who baptised seven children between 1693 and his death in 1708. Stem bore 6/64.

Not illustrated. Fifteen plain pipe stem fragments. One of these has a very glossy surface and has probably been given a good burnish (stem bore 6/64). The others are all unburnished. Three of the unburnished pieces have stem bores of 5/64, ten have bores of 6/64 and one has a bore of 7/64.

Discussion

Although the nineteen fragments are all unstratified surface finds, they appear to be of a very similar date. The three bowl fragments and the stamped stem can all be dated to the late 17th or early 18th century and the plain stems also fit happily within this date range. Given that these pieces were found around a ruined building it would seem most likely that the structure also dates from this period. If the site had been used after c.1720 some later material might have been expected, even within a small group like this.

In addition to suggesting a date for the use of this site these pipes are of interest in themselves. Although Marrick is in North Yorkshire it is equidistant between two major pipemaking centres, namely York and Tyneside. These two centres developed very different traditions of bowl form and mark and these two traditions were perhaps most different during the late 17th and early 18th centuries. At York the bowls were almost exclusively heel types, typically of a chunky, squat form known as a 'Yorkshire bulbous'. These were sometimes stamped with a large circular initial mark on the heel (Lawrence 1979). In contrast, the Tyneside makers were producing much taller, more elegant forms, almost exclusively with spurs. These pipes were usually stamped with a full name mark on the stem (Edwards 1988).

The pipe fragments from Marrick clearly belong to the Tyneside tradition of pipemaking. All of the bowl fragments appear to be from fairly tall bowls with spurs. Whether or not these are actual Tyneside products they demonstrate a clear stylistic domination over the Yorkshire Bulbous

tradition at this site. In addition there is the Fawell stem mark which is certainly from Gateshead. Marrick is well over 40 miles, as the crow flies, from Gateshead and this mark provides an indication of the penetration into the surrounding hinterland which the Tyneside makers had achieved by the end of the 17th century. This is particularly important given the inland location of this site. Even if this pipe had been transported by coast as far as the Tees it would still have been carried some 30 miles overland to reach the site.

The Marrick group is only small and may not be representative of other sites in the area. There could, for example, have been specific trading links between the mine and Tyneside which are manifested by the pipes. This group does, however, highlight a number of questions which need to be addressed. Despite the work which has been done on major production centres such as York and Tyneside, there has been little work on the smaller towns and villages which, in other parts of the country, have been found to have produced pipes. As yet it is impossible to determine the nature and extent of the markets from the major centres, let alone the significance or influence of the smaller ones. Above all, there were fundamental differences between the Yorkshire and Tyneside pipemaking traditions. Did these styles overlap or were there sharply defined market boundaries? How did these differing styles influence makers in smaller centres? And how did these factors change over time? This group clearly stakes Marrick in the late 17th-century Tyneside camp. Only future research can provide a broader framework within which to set this site.

Acknowledgements

I am most grateful to Roger Steels of Lavendon who brought this group to my attention and allowed me to record the pipes, and to his son, Daniel Steels of Marrick, who found the pipes and provided me with information about the site.

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