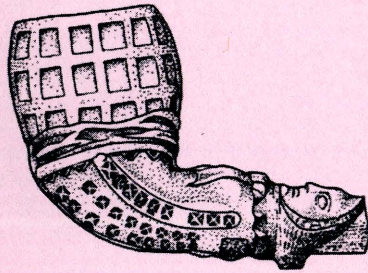


SOCIETY *for* CLAY PIPE RESEARCH



NEWSLETTER

70



Autumn/Winter 2006

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Clay Tobacco Pipes from Hallcroft Rd., Babworth, Nottinghamshire

by Susie White

Archive report prepared for the Archaeological Research and Consultancy at the University of Sheffield (ARCUS). Reproduced here with slight revisions with their kind permission.

Introduction

The clay tobacco pipes discussed in this report were recovered by a team from the Archaeological Research and Consultancy at the University of Sheffield (ARCUS) during the archaeological evaluation of a site in Hallcroft Road, Babworth, Nottinghamshire. The site code used for this work was 802b.

The excavations produced a total of 18 clay tobacco pipe fragments comprising four bowls and 14 plain stems from seven different stratified pipe-bearing contexts. There were also three unstratified pieces (two fragments in Bag 45 and one in Bag 47). No mouthpiece fragments were recovered.

The Bowls

Four bowl fragments were recovered from the excavation, one decorated and three plain. The decorated fragment was recovered from Context 38 and dates from c1800-1820 (Figure 1). Only one side of the bowl survives, that on the smoker's left. This depicts a standing Indian figure holding a spear in his right hand and supporting a shield that would have faced the smoker, with his left.

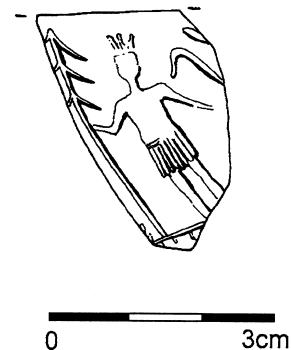


Figure 1: Fragment of a pipe bowl with an Indian supporter for a shield. Scale 1:1. (Drawn by the author).

Indians supporting a coat of arms is a particular decorative scheme that is found in parts of Lincolnshire and Yorkshire although the individual elements of the design do vary. On some examples the arms depicted are those of Lincoln (Mann 1977, 32, Figure No. 198), whilst on others it is the Prussian arms (White 2004, 271, Figure No. 53.3). Occasionally these bowls also have moulded lettering giving the name of the maker and/or the place of manufacture, for example William Bannister of Lincoln (Mann 1977, 31, Figure No. 194), George Spencer Watkinson of Market Rasen (Mann 1977, 33, Figure No. 200), and Thomas Westerdale of Hull (White 2004, 418, Figure No. 6).

The example from Hallcroft Road is only a fragment and the lower part of the bowl that would have borne any lettering is missing. It does appear, however, that originally it would have been marked as the top part of a scroll, which would have contained the lettering still survives. The arms that would have faced the smoker are also missing although but what little does survive most closely parallels examples that bear the Prussian Arms.

The three remaining bowl fragments are all plain and are very small. The first from Context 1 is a fragment from the bowl wall. As a result none of the more easily datable features such as a heel/spur, or rim survives. The thickness of the wall, however, and the fabric, would both suggest a late seventeenth to early eighteenth century date. The only heel fragment to be recovered comes from an unstratified deposit (Bag No. 45) and is part of a small heel with a stem bore of 7/6". The form of the heel and the nature of the fabric would suggest a date in the second half of the

seventeenth century, c1650-1700. The final bowl fragment, from Context 78, is a rather crudely finished spur and is most likely to date from c1810-1850.

The Stems

Plain stems are difficult to date accurately. The use of stem bore dating techniques is based on the assumption that the average stem bore used by pipemakers changed at a predictable rate over time. These methods, however, require samples of several hundred fragments in order to produce a reliable date. Dates for smaller groups of plain stems are therefore often given as broad date ranges. Stem dates should be used with caution since they are much more general and less reliable than the dates that can be determined from bowl fragments.

A total of 14 plain stems were recovered from the excavations in Hallcroft Road, the majority of which appear to date from the end of the eighteenth or nineteenth century. The single exception is a fragment from Context 1, which dates from the second half of the seventeenth century.

Conclusions

The excavations in Hallcroft Road produced a very small assemblage of clay tobacco pipe fragments covering a wide overall date range, with fragments dating from the mid-seventeenth century through to the first half of the nineteenth century. With such a small assemblage, comprising principally of plain sets, it is difficult to produce good dates for the excavated contexts. The decorated bowl fragment does, however, provide evidence for the use of pipes bearing this particular motif in Nottinghamshire.

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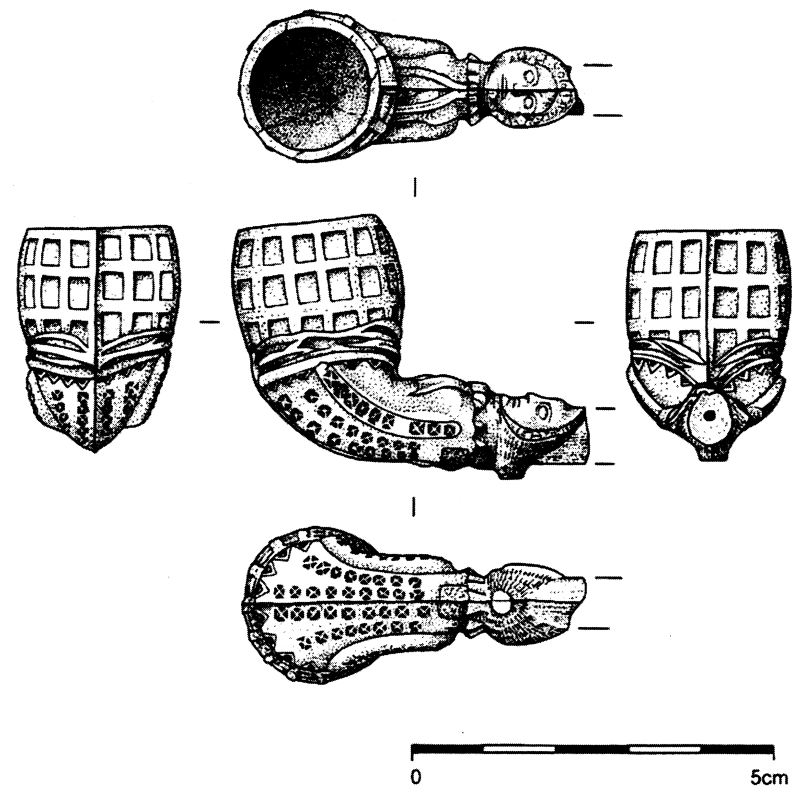
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A Risque Pipe from Southwark, London.

by Chris Jarrett

The clay pipe illustrated below comes from an excavation at 5-27 Long Lane, Southwark, London (site code LGK 99) undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology. Although this pipe was unstratified it was contemporary with the occupation of houses that were built after 1760 and lived in until they were demolished in 1914, when a distillery was built on site. The excavation uncovered masonry walls belonging to a house, but mostly what was revealed were the rubbish pits from the back gardens of houses fronting the street. Pottery and other finds from the rubbish pits and garden soils indicated a low socio-economic status, the housing being classed as slums by the late nineteenth century (Douglas 2000). The pipe can be classified as a spur- or heel-less Atkinson and Oswald (1969) type 30 bowl, dated 1850-1900/1910 and depicts a bonneted woman suggestively lifting her dress to reveal the supporting hoops. The bowl is not marked and the stem, which may have indicated the maker, is unfortunately missing.



SCPR 70: Contents

<i>Editorial</i> by Susie White.....	1
<i>A Pipe Fragment from Croatia</i> by John Wood.....	2
<i>Selby Clay Pipemakers: The Seventeenth Century</i> by C. M. Ann Baker	3
<i>Clay Tobacco Pipes from Hallcroft Rd., Babworth, Nottinghamshire</i> by Susie White.....	6
<i>A Risque Pipe from Southwark, London</i> by Chris Jarrett.....	9
<i>The Longstaff Family of Tobacco Pipemakers</i> by Peter Hammond.....	11
<i>A Marx Pipe from Douglas</i> by Peter Davey.....	14
<i>Short-stemmed Pewter Tobacco Pipes</i> by Felix van Tienhoven.....	17
<i>Clay Tobacco Pipes from Excavations at 7-8 Broad Street, Reading</i> by David Higgins	20
<i>Clay Tobacco Pipes from Excavations at 90-93 Broad Street, Reading</i> by David Higgins.....	23
<i>News from Pipe Aston</i> by Allan Peacey	36
<i>Clay Tobacco Pipes Collected by Mr. Gwyn Rees of Wrinstone Farm, nr. Wenvoe, Vale of Glamorgan</i> by Gill Evans	41
<i>'Squatter's Budgerees' Pipes Revisited</i> by Ron Dagnall	46
Review: <i>Clay Tobacco Pipes from Castle Cornet, Guernsey</i> (Nicky David, 2003) by Susie White	49
Review: <i>Clay Tobacco Pipes from Galway City</i> (Joe Norton, 2004) by Peter Davey.....	51
Review: <i>The Maltese Tobacco Scene: a Historical Survey</i> (Anthony Zarb-Dimech, 2005) by David Higgins.....	52

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