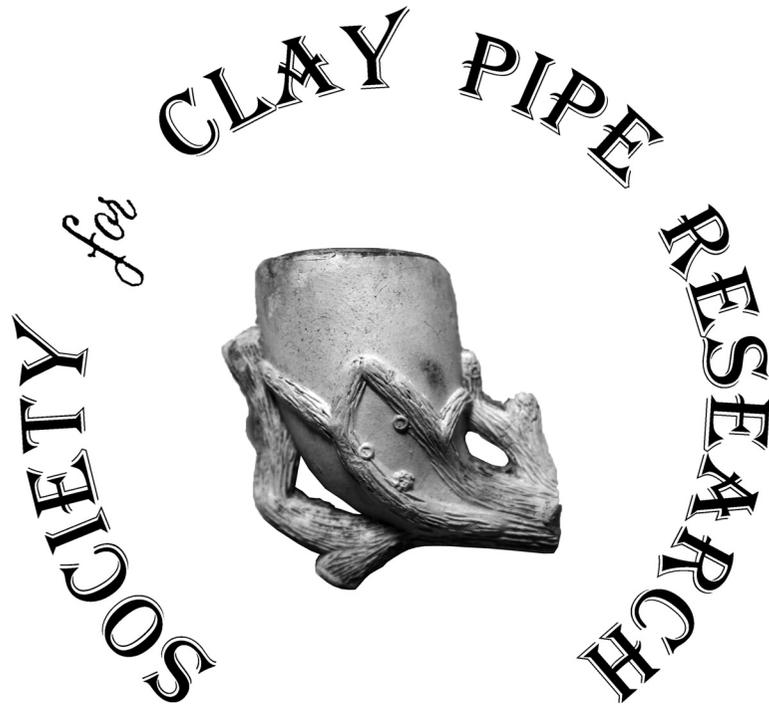


SOCIETY FOR CLAY PIPE RESEARCH



NEWSLETTER

78



Autumn/Winter 2010

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he decided he would open one of his own and my grandmother Rosina was from a showground family so they opened up their own Wild West show'.

Bill and his wife Rosina had ten children, five sons and five daughters, all of whom went on to play some role in the show. Indeed, after their father's death, many of them went on to form shows of their own including the Colorados, and the Texans.

The clay pipe shooting star in Figure 1 is Bill's granddaughter Florence; her parents, Richard and Laura (née Birch) opened as the Colorados and were largely based in Yorkshire. Following in her mother's footsteps, some of Florence's earlier performances were as a snake charmer, but she later went on to take on the 'Annie Oakley' or 'Clamity Jane' roll in the shows. I wonder if those are Yorkshire pipes that she is shooting at?

For anyone interested in the Shufflebottoms, or indeed other Fairground families, you should check out The National Fairground Archive at <http://www.nfa.dept.shef.ac.uk/>.



Clay Tobacco Pipes from the Williamson Tunnels, Liverpool (SJ 363 901)

by David Higgins

Introduction

This paper describes and discusses a group of 63 clay tobacco pipe fragments discovered during recent clearance works in the Williamson Tunnels at Edge Hill in Liverpool. The tunnels were excavated by Joseph Williamson, the following details of whom have been extracted from two books by Stonehouse (1863 and 1869).

Joseph Williamson was born in Warrington on 10 March 1769 and came to Liverpool to work for Mr Tate, a tobacco merchant in Wolstenholme Square. He went on to marry Tate's daughter and became an extremely prosperous, if somewhat eccentric, merchant. During the early nineteenth century Williamson lived at Mason Street, Edge Hill, where he started excavating an extensive complex of underground passages and chambers into the underlying sandstone. Some of these chambers may well have been used as quarries for building stone but Williamson does not appear to have been extracting the stone commercially. Indeed, many of the chambers have been specially created by roofing over deep excavations using carefully constructed brick or stone vaults, sometimes at two or more levels. A number of the houses on Mason Street have passages or chambers underneath them and the gardens often overlie the supporting vaults. The general consensus at the time appears to have been that there was no real purpose for these

excavations, which can best be regarded as 'follies', excavated to satisfy Williamson's fascination with underground spaces. Williamson died in May, 1841.

It is not clear what state the tunnels were in during Williamson's lifetime since he appears to have been secretive about the excavations and rarely let visitors in. Stonehouse (1863) refers to the tunnels in their 'newly wrought state' in the mid-1830s, but other sources suggest that they may have been started as early as c1806-1808 (Bridson, *pers com*, 11.3.04). Given the effort and expense of constructing them, it would seem odd if Williamson allowed them to be substantially filled during his lifetime. Stonehouse (1869) records that several only partially successful attempts were made to explore the tunnels in 1844 but that the stench in them was frightful. This was, no doubt, due to the fact that several chutes had been made from the houses and gardens above, down which sewerage and garden waste was discharged into the caverns. In some chambers foul water accumulated to a depth of fifteen feet (*The Porcupine*, 31 August 1867) and a woman drowned one night in a deep well (Stonehouse 1869).

By the middle of the 1860s the stench emanating from the caverns and their dangerous condition was a cause of great public concern and there were calls to fill them up (*The Porcupine*, 31 August 1867 and 23 November 1867). In 1863 Stonehouse referred to the tunnels having been 'gradually filled up and very much altered' over the past few years and, in 1869, he refers to some areas having already been filled up for at least 30 years. *The Porcupine* of 23 November 1867 notes that 'week after week tons of refuse are being added to the accumulating stock in the galleries and caverns' while in 1869 Stonehouse talks of the 'mysterious tunnels being closed or removed, and the subterranean wonders of the place no longer accessible'.

From these accounts it seems that the tunnels were probably started during the early 1800s and that they were substantially complete by the mid-1830s. Houses and gardens were constructed over them, many by Williamson himself, and rubbish chutes added to discharge waste into the caverns beneath. Following Williamson's death in 1841 there appears to have been rapid infilling of some areas and a general abandonment of the works, which became dumping areas for domestic and other waste. Sewerage appears to have continued to be discharged into the caverns, despite the sewerage of Mason Street in about 1846 or 1847 (Stonehouse 1869). By the late 1860s most areas were already inaccessible and the public outcry at the state and smell of the remaining sections most likely ensured that the tunnels were generally filled and sealed by about 1870.

The Recent Excavations

Over the past few years there has been a concerted effort to re-excavate some of the tunnel complex and to open up sections for visitors. Some of the largest caverns were accessed from a stable yard (formerly an orchard) on Smithdown Lane, which runs parallel to Mason Street, and it is in this area that most work has been done. A visitor

centre has now been built in the stable yard and two large chambers opened to the public, the 'double tunnel', and the 'corner tunnel'. It was during the re-excavation of these areas that the majority of the pipes have been recovered. No record was kept of the exact locations or layers within which the pipes and other finds were made. This is unfortunate, since otherwise they could have been used to help establish a chronology for not only the different elements within the tunnels, but also for the history of their abandonment and infilling. In particular, a lot of domestic waste was associated with rubbish chutes from the large houses on Mason Street and these groups could probably have been related back to individual households. In general terms, however, most of the pipes were apparently discovered during the removal of fills from the large chamber at the eastern end of the 'corner tunnel'. This chamber lay beneath a narrow plot fronting onto Mason Street and in an area where two or more rubbish chutes had been constructed. The pipes were associated with very large quantities of glass, pottery and other domestic waste.

The Pipes

The pipes from the tunnel excavations were examined on 11 March 2004, at which date 63 pieces were present. The group comprised one complete 'cutty' pipe, 20 substantially complete bowls, 3 fragmentary bowls, 34 stems, 4 mouthpieces and 1 fragment of a porcelain pipe. All of the substantially complete bowls plus all the marked, decorated or otherwise diagnostic fragments were drawn and these illustrations have been included in the accompanying catalogue (Figs. 1-27).

The first point to note is the presence of an early bowl dating from c1680-1720 (Fig. 1). This is a useful find, since there are very few known pipes of this date from Liverpool, and it adds to the range of documented forms. Its presence in the tunnels, however, raises the question of how it got there. Bridson (*pers com*, 11.3.04) has suggested that there may have been earlier stone quarries on the site that these were adapted and roofed over by Williamson. If this were the case, then the stratigraphic location of this piece may have provided important supporting evidence. The other alternative is that it was simply dumped into the tunnels as a residual piece in the nineteenth century fills. There are one or two of the stem fragments that could also be of seventeenth or eighteenth century date, but the overwhelming majority of the pipes discovered are of nineteenth century date.

The nineteenth century pipes form an interesting group since they should primarily date between the early nineteenth century, when the tunnels were started, and around 1870, by which date they were effectively sealed. Within this period the site's history can be divided into two main phases; up to 1841 when Williamson died, and after 1841 when the tunnels were abandoned and being infilled. Pipes from the earlier phase are poorly represented amongst the assemblage. From c1810-1840 the Liverpool pipemakers were predominantly making rather narrow, upright bowls. These bowl forms almost all had

leaf decorated seams in addition to which they often had enclosed flutes at the base of the bowl with 'panel decoration' above. Panel decorated bowls are entirely absent from this assemblage and there is only one example of an early nineteenth century bowl with leaf decorated seams (Fig. 5). There are three rather tall, plain bowls (Figs. 2-4) that could also date from this period, although these forms sometimes continued later as well. The total absence of panel decorated bowls and the small number of other potentially early nineteenth century fragments suggests that very little rubbish was accumulating in the tunnels during Williamson's lifetime. Having said that, many of the chambers still retain their lower fills and the apparent lack of early material may be partly due to few of the original floor areas having been uncovered.

The majority of the pipe forms recovered (Figs. 6-27) seem likely to date from c1840-1870 and to represent material dumped into the tunnels after Williamson's death. The only exception is the acorn bowl, Figure 23, which is of a later nineteenth or early twentieth century style and must have been introduced to the tunnels at a later date. The pipe fragments in the c1840-70 group represent a mixture of short stemmed 'cutty' pipes and the longer 'churchwardens'. Short-stemmed pipes only became popular from the mid-nineteenth century onwards but they seem to form the dominant type amongst this group. All five of the mouthpieces recovered probably came from this type of pipe. There were four examples with a 'nipple' end, for example, Figures 19 and 24, and one with a wide, flattened and rounded mouthpiece (Fig. 12). None of these mouthpieces shows any sign of a tip-finish or coating.

The bowl styles are generally rather plain with only a few decorated pieces, including fluted designs (Figs. 7 and 16), a ship and anchor design (Fig. 11) and a Liver bird (Fig. 15). The Liver bird was a distinctive local motif that must have been made by many manufacturers in the area, although none with a maker's mark has yet been found. A similar example was recovered from an early 1860s dump at the Big Lea Green excavations, near St Helens, as was an example of a fluted design like Figure 16. There is also an unusually large bowl with simple and rather crudely executed leaf decorated seams (Fig. 22). Although none of the pipes has a Liverpool mark on it, this is not particularly unusual, since most of the locally produced pipes were unmarked at this time. The presumption is that all of these pipes were made in or near Liverpool unless they have a manufacturer's mark to show that they were imported from elsewhere. Three of the pipes have style or pattern names on them; 'Dublin' (Fig. 17), 'Garibaldi Pipe' (Fig. 18) and 'Baltic Yachter' (Fig. 20).

Six of the fragments do, however, have makers' marks on them and these are of some interest. The most local example is a bowl with a moulded mark reading 'BIRCH / RAINFORD' running up the bowl. This is a particularly unusual form of marking but two similar examples are known from Ormskirk both marked 'I.BIRCH / RAINFORD'. It is possible that the Williamson Tunnels example would have been the same, but that the

first part of the name has not moulded clearly. Unfortunately, there were many makers called Birch in Rainford, making this particular J. Birch hard to date or identify. The best lead is provided by the fact that a similar bowl marked 'WHITTAKER / RAINFORD' is known. The Whittaker example is a little narrower in profile and has the name around the rim, but the decorated seams are identical and the two moulds are likely to have been made by the same mould maker. The Whittaker example was probably made by either James (apprenticed in 1831, still an employee in 1841 and died 1849, age 33) or his younger brother Samuel (apprenticed 1835, free c1842, recorded as a pipe manufacturer in 1851 but as an agricultural labourer in 1861; Dagnall 1989 & 1990). Either way, the Whittaker brothers are only likely to have been making pipes with their own name on around 1842-1860, thus providing likely date for the similar example produced by Birch. It is interesting to note that James Whittaker was apprenticed to James Birch of Pasture Lane, Rainford. Perhaps this is the Birch who made the marked pipe from the Williamson Tunnels and who provided the inspiration for the Whittakers to copy.

There are two marked pipes from Scotland, one each for the firms of W. White (Fig. 21) and D. McDougall (Fig. 26), both from Glasgow. McDougall's operated from 1846-1967 and White's from 1806-1955 (Anon 1987). These were probably the two largest Scottish firms and their products were widely exported. Their pipes are frequently found around the Irish Sea and occur in good numbers around Liverpool. McDougall's even had a warehouse in the city from about 1878-1884, as well as having agents based there at other times. The presence of a McDougall pipe, which must date from later than 1846, clearly shows that this piece came from one of the post-Williamson fills. From further afield is a pipe stamped 'WOLF & BAKER / LONDON', which was either made by or for Wolf and Baker of Sambrook Street, near Basinghall Street in London. This piece probably dates from the 1850s since Wolf and Baker are known to have registered the design for a 'pipe socket' in February 1856.

There are also two French pipes, one from the well known firm of Fiolet from St Omer (Fig. 24) and another that is just stamped 'Paris / F C' (Fig. 25). The second example has a burnished stem and would have been made by Francis Cretal of Rennes, who sometimes used a Paris mark on his pipes. This piece probably dates from the 1850s. Both of the French products are likely to have been good quality pipes, most likely costing a little more than their locally produced counterparts. These pipes may well have been associated with the large houses on Mason Street, reflecting both their status and the quality of the goods that they consumed. The final imported piece, although not marked, is part of a porcelain pipe, almost certainly produced in central Europe (Fig. 27). The surviving fragment is plain but the bowl would probably have been decorated with coloured painting or transfer prints originally.

Conclusion

The pipes recovered from the Williamson Tunnels are important in providing a good

provenanced group from Liverpool. Although some 350 pipemakers have been documented from the city, there has been little study of their actual products. This group not only provides an example of an early bowl form but also a good group of nineteenth century pipes. Some of these may date from the time when Williamson was actually constructing the tunnels, but the majority fit well with the documented date of c1840-70 for their abandonment and infilling. During this period a mixture of long-stemmed and cutty pipes was in use with the bowls forms demonstrating a mixture of styles and decorative motifs. Most of the pipes are unmarked and presumed to be local but imports from Rainford, Glasgow, London, France and Central Europe show the diversity of pipes that were being imported to and used in Liverpool at this time. Some of the more expensive and exotic imports may well reflect the better quality households that occupied Mason Street during this period. It is hoped that future work will recover stratified groups that can be dated and interpreted with more precision, contributing not only to the history of the tunnels but also reflecting the social status and lifestyle of the residents who lived over them.

Acknowledgements

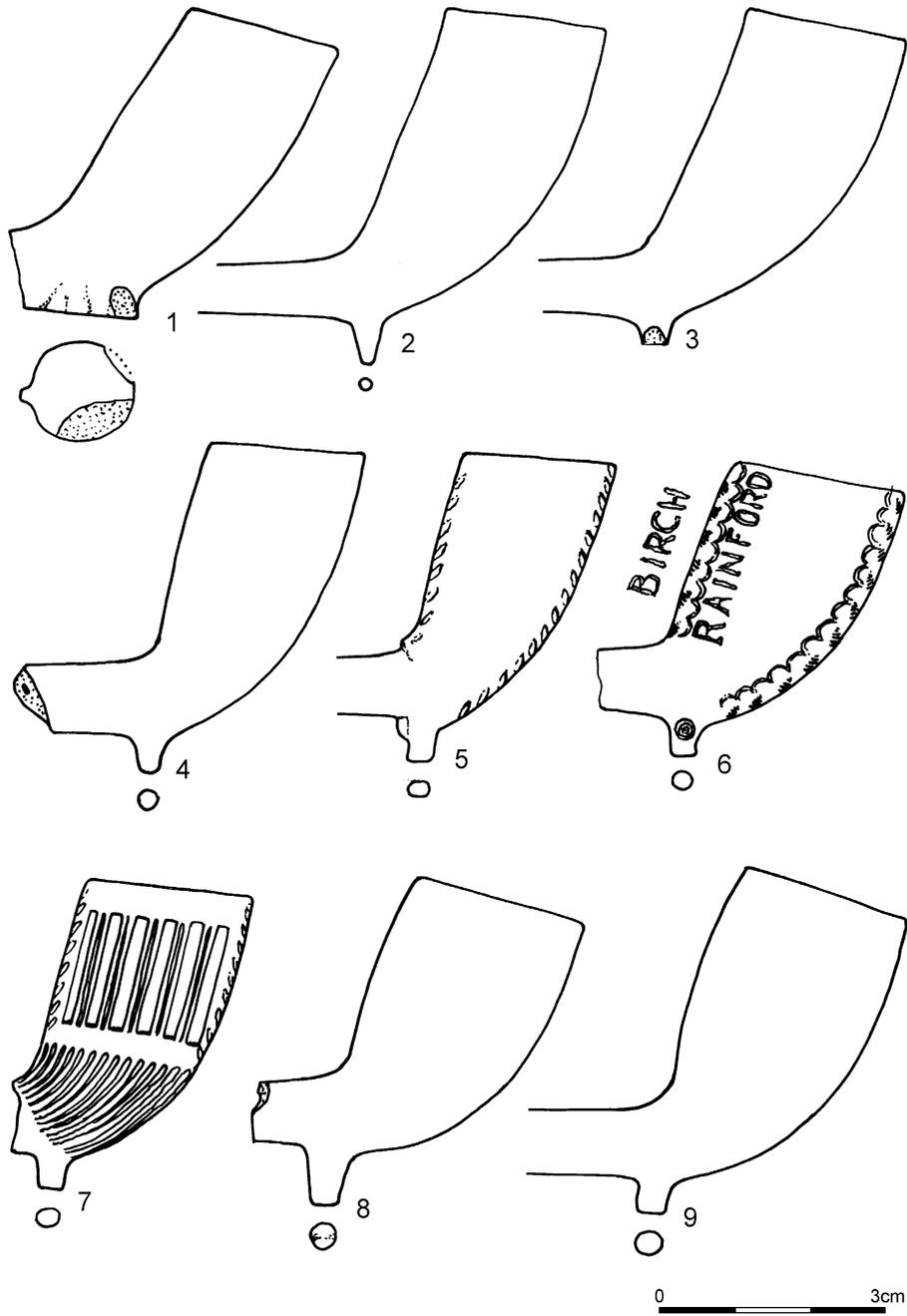
I am particularly grateful to Dave Bridson at the Williamson Tunnels Heritage Centre for allowing access to the collection for study and for providing background information on Williamson; to Dr Susie White for preparing the original pencil drawings of the pipes from which the finished versions have been inked and to Peter Hammond for his help in identifying the Wolf & Baker and Francis Cretal marks.

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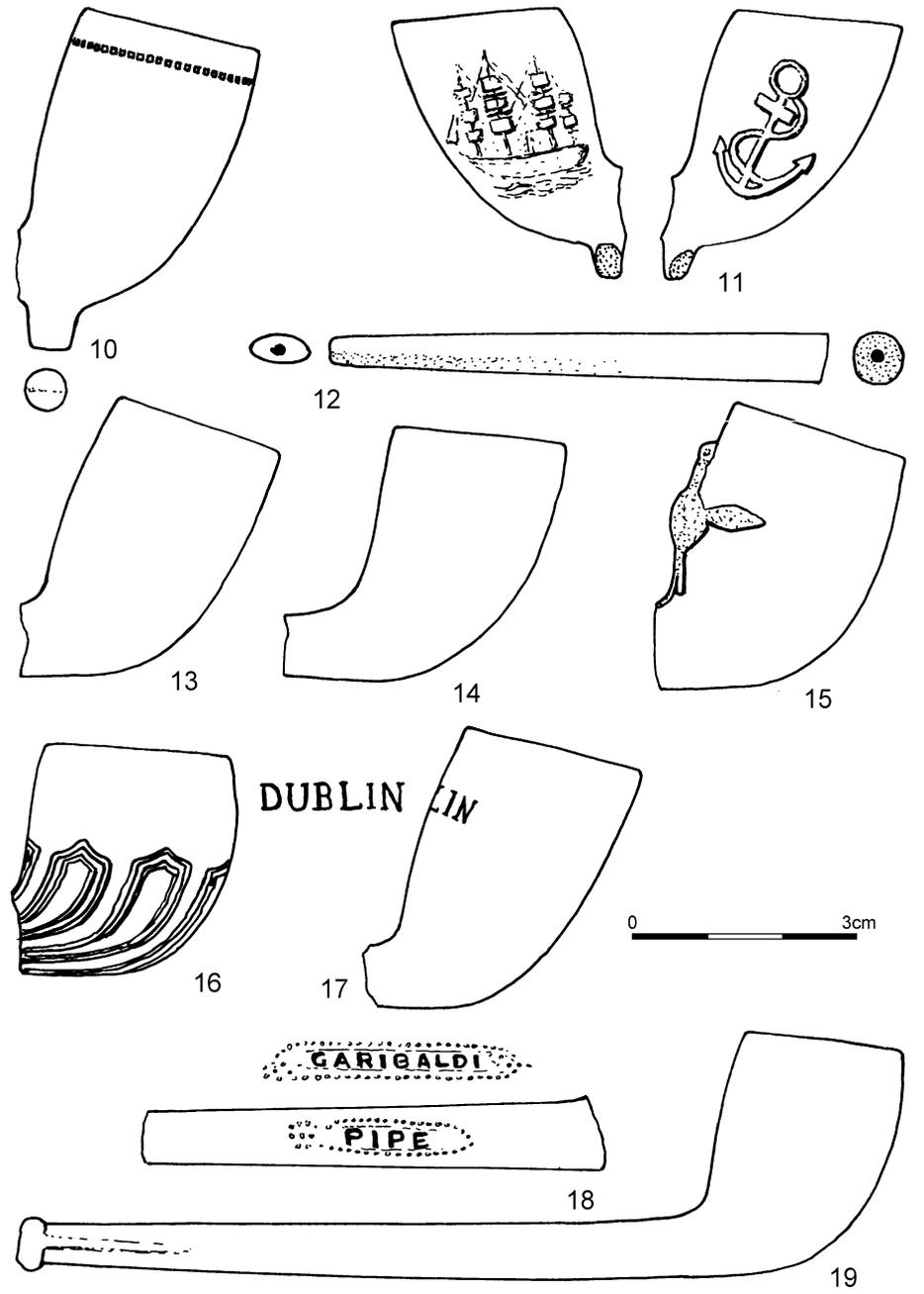
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Catalogue of Illustrations

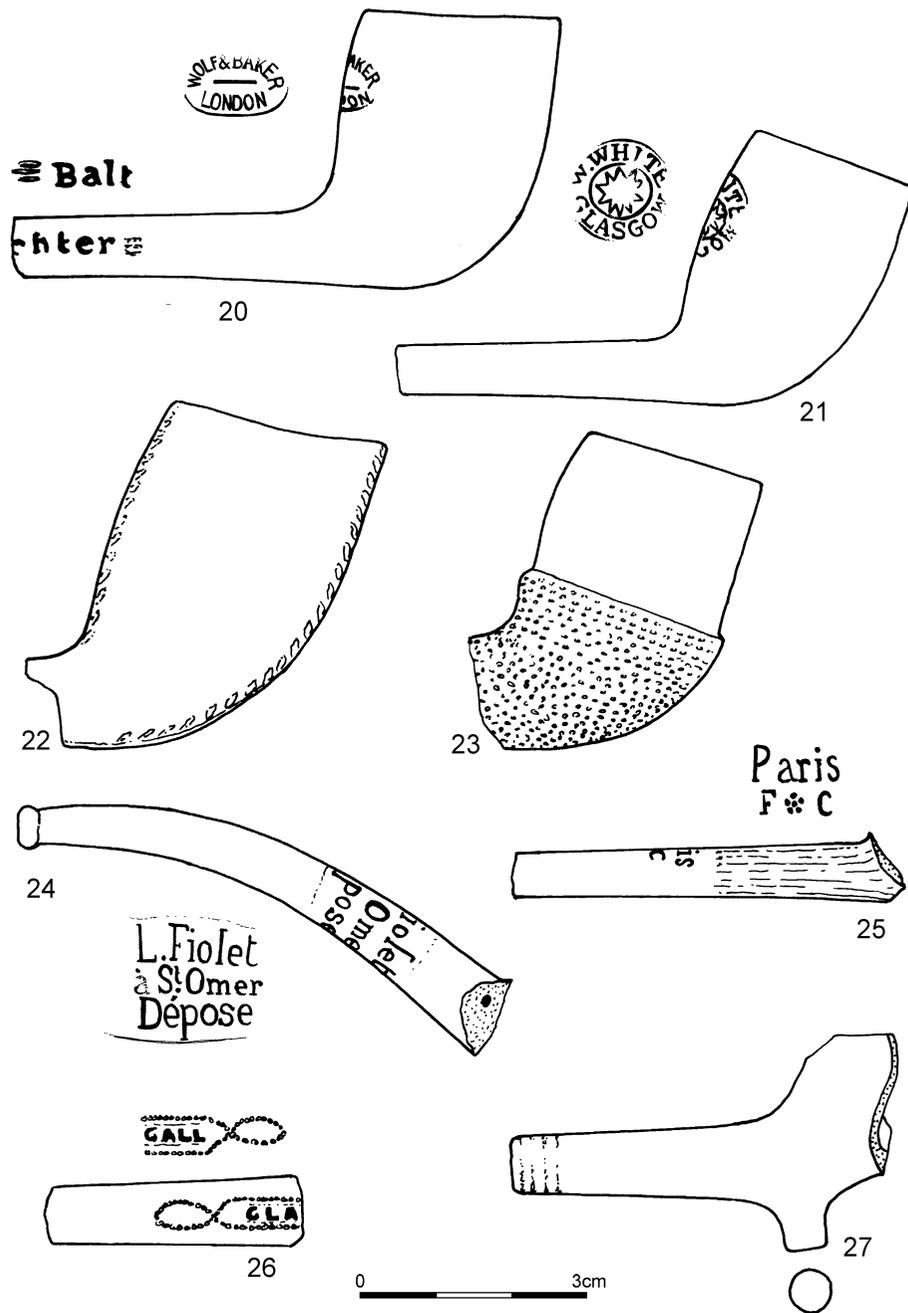
All of the marked, decorated or more complete bowls recovered from the Williamson Tunnels have been illustrated. The illustrations are shown at life size.



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- 1 Transitional bowl of c1680-1720 with a large found heel on the sides of which are slight striations, reminiscent of the ridges found on Chester pipes at this date. Rim is cut and wiped but not milled. Stem bore 6/64'.
- 2 Plain spur form of c1810-1850, very similar to Fig 3 below. Probably from a long-stemmed pipe. Stem bore 4/64'.
- 3 Plain spur form of c1810-1850, very similar to Fig 2 above. Probably from a long-stemmed pipe. Stem bore 4/64'.
- 4 Plain spur form of c1810-1850. Probably from a long-stemmed pipe. Stem bore 4/64'.
- 5 Spur bowl with leaf decorated seams, c1810-1840. Probably from a long-stemmed pipe. Stem bore 4/64'.
- 6 Spur bowl of c1840-1860 with the makers' name 'BIRCH / RAINFORD' (almost certainly J. Birch) moulded in relief on the bowl. Probably from a long-stemmed pipe. See text above for discussion. Stem bore 4/64'.
- 7 Spur bowl with leaf decorated seams and fluted decoration, c1840-1870. Probably from a long-stemmed pipe. Stem bore 4/64'.
- 8 Plain spur form of c1840-1870. Probably from a long-stemmed pipe. Stem bore 5/64'.
- 9 Plain spur form of c1840-1870. Probably from a long-stemmed pipe. Stem bore 4/64'.
- 10 Thick-walled bowl in an 'Irish' style with a full band of hand-applied milling at the rim, c1840-1870. Could have had either long or short stem. Stem bore 4/64'.
- 11 Spur bowl of c1840-1870 decorated with a ship and anchor design. Stem bore 4/64'.
- 12 Mouthpiece fragment of c1840-1870, probably from a short-stemmed pipe. The stem becomes wide and oval in section with a simple rounded tip. Stem bore 4/64'.
- 13 Plain spurless bowl of c1850-1870, probably from a short-stemmed pipe. Stem bore 4/64'.
- 14 Plain spurless bowl of c1850-1870, probably from a short-stemmed pipe. Stem bore 4/64'.
- 15 Spurless bowl of c1840-1850, decorated with a Liver bird facing the smoker.
- 16 Spurless bowl of c1850-1870 with fluted decoration, probably from a short-stemmed pipe. Stem bore 4/64'.
- 17 Spurless bowl of c1850-1870, with the incuse stamped mark 'DUBLIN' facing the smoker. This indicated the style of the pipe, not its place of manufacture. Probably from a short-stemmed pipe. Stem bore 4/64'.
- 18 Stem with the incuse moulded mark 'GARIBALDI / PIPE' within a relief moulded border. This was a pattern name for the style of short-stemmed pipe, which dates from c1850-1870. Stem bore 4/64'.
- 19 Complete cutty pipe with a nipple mouthpiece, c1850-1870. Stem bore probably 5/64'.
- 20 Spurless bowl of c1850-1870 with the pattern name for this short-stemmed pipe,

‘Baltic Yachter’, incuse moulded on the stem between relief moulded dashes. The maker’s name, ‘WOLF & BAKER / LONDON’ is incuse stamped on the bowl (National Catalogue Die No 1763). Wolf and Baker of Sambrook Street, near Basinghall Street in London registered the design for a ‘pipe socket’ in February 1856. They may have been tobacconists who had this pipe made for them rather than actual pipe manufacturers themselves.

- 21 Spurless pipe with the incuse stamp ‘W. WHITE / GLASGOW’ on the bowl (National Catalogue Die No 1764). This firm operated from 1806-1955 but this piece probably dates from c1850-1870.
- 22 Unusually large and heavily built bowl of c1840-1870 with leaf decorated seams. Stem bore just over 4/64’.
- 23 Bowl modelled in the form of an acorn from a short-stemmed pipe, most likely c1880-1920 or later. Stem bore 6/64’.
- 24 Short, curved stem made by the French firm of Fiolet in St Omer, who operated from the late eighteenth century until the 1920s. This piece probably dates from c1850-1870. Stem marked with an incuse stamp. Stem bore 5/64’.
- 25 Part of a short pipe of c1850-1870 with the incuse stamped mark ‘Paris / F * C’ across the stem. This mark can be attributed to Francis Cretal of Rennes, who sometimes used a Paris mark on his pipes. Stem bore just over 4/64’.
- 26 Stem fragment with part of a McDougall mark from Glasgow incuse moulded within a relief border. This firm operated from 1846-1967 but this piece probably dates from c1850-1870. Stem bore 4/64’.
- 27 Part of a central European porcelain pipe, most likely of c1840-1870, with a glazed surface. No decoration survives but there is a trace of blue on the socket suggesting that it was probably painted originally.



Review: ‘Ebenezer Church: Clay Tobacco Pipe Manufacturer of Pentonville, London’

Transactions of the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society, **60**, 2009, 225-248, by Peter J. Hammond.

This comprehensive account of an important London pipe-maker is greatly to be welcomed. Peter Hammond has combined a detailed study of both public and private documentary sources with an extensive knowledge of the pipes produced by the firm including those in his own collection. The result is one of the best accounts of a single London maker ever written.

Ebenezer Church came from a family of carpenters but in 1856 his marriage to Sarah Ford brought him into a well-established pipe-making business. In 1861 he is still listed

as a joiner, but by 1866 is referred to as a pipe-maker, taking over the business formally in 1867. In addition to 26 pipe designs registered in the 1870s and 1880s, two important documents, a Pattern Sheet and a Price List, both produced during 1879*, allow a detailed account of his products to be presented. Six details from the Pattern Sheet are presented together with a very reduced version of the whole thing. These drawings give a clear overview of the range and quality of his pipes. Two colour photographs of 16 Church products in the Hammond Collection add considerably to the reader’s appreciation of this, though the identification of specific surviving pipes on the Pattern Sheet is left to him.

After Ebenezer’s death in 1886 his wife Sarah actively continued the business until her own death in 1893 (she actually registered three new designs in 1890), after which the business was sold in 1894. The Auction poster is wonderfully detailed and provides a virtually complete account of what was involved in a pipe-making business. Despite the sale Ebenezer’s son, Ebenezer John, continued to work as a pipe-maker until the 1920s at another site in Pentonville.

Two negative points. First, the order in which the material is presented is quite confusing. The information about pipes made by Church is inserted into the middle of the account of the history of the family and workshops. At the centre of this section is a concordance of all the named pipe designs issued by him. This list, at least would have been much better placed as an appendix, so that the account of history of the factory and its products could flow more coherently.

Secondly, there is not enough information about all of the sources presented. From the acknowledgements it is clear that the key Pattern Sheet is in private hands, but the whereabouts of many of the other published figures, described variously as ‘surviving’ or ‘recently come to light’, is unclear. Where are the four photographs of the family from the 1850s and 60s (Figs. 1 to 4), the ‘surviving Price List dated May 1879’ (Fig. 14), the box label used by Ebenezer Church (Fig. 15) or the circular letter issued by Sarah Church in 1886 following her husband’s death (Fig. 19)?

Despite these relatively minor grumbles the whole article is a splendid synthesis of information from many sources and a triumph for the author’s perseverance and detailed knowledge of the nineteenth-century industry in London. The publication of his parallel work on the more important figure of Charles Crop is anxiously awaited.

Peter Davey
Close Corvalley
9 January 2011

[*Editor’s Note: See p10 above for a suggested re-dating of the pattern sheet to 1881]

Contributions to the Newsletter

Articles and other items for inclusion can be accepted either

- on an IBM compatible floppy disk or CD - preferably in Word.
- as handwritten text, which must be clearly written - please print names.
- as an email/email attachment, but please either ensure that object drawings/photographs are sent as separate files, i.e., not embedded in the text, and that they have a scale with them to ensure they are sized correctly for publication. If your drawings/photographs do not have a scale with them, please send originals or hard copies as well by post.
- with Harvard referencing, i.e., no footnotes or endnotes.

Illustrations and tables

- illustrations must be in ink, not pencil, or provided as digital scans of at least 600dpi resolution.
- can be either portrait or landscape to fit within a frame size of 11 x 18cm but please allow room for a caption.
- tables should be compiled with an A5 format in mind.

Photographs - please include a scale with any objects photographed.

- should be good quality colour or black and white but bear in mind that they will be reproduced in black and white and so good contrast is essential.
- digital images can be sent by email or on a CD, as a .TIF or .JPG images. Make sure that the files are at least 600dpi resolution so as to allow sharp reproduction.

Please state clearly if you require original artwork or photographs to be returned and provide a stamped addressed envelope.

Enquiries

The following members are willing to help with general enquiries (including those from non-members) about pipes and pipemakers (please enclose an SAE for written correspondence):

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Peter Hammond, 17 Lady Bay Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham, NG2 5BJ.
Email: claypipepeter@aol.com (nineteenth-century pipes and pipemakers).

Susie White, 3 Clarendon Road, Wallasey, Merseyside, CH44 8EH.
Email: susie_white@talktalk.net (pipes and pipemakers from Yorkshire and enquires relating to the National Pipe Archive).

National Pipe Archive: The National Pipe Archive (<http://www.pipearchive.co.uk/>) is currently housed at the University of Liverpool and is available to researchers by prior appointment with the Curator, Susie White (details above).

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