

NEWSLETTER

26



April 1990

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#### **SCPR CONFERENCE 1990**

The Conference will be held at Liverpool from 22 - 23  
September. Full details are given in the enclosed leaflet.  
Please return the booking form to Ron Dagnall as soon as  
possible.

#### **CLAY PIPE BIBLIOGRAPHY**

To all those members who have ordered a copy of the  
*Bibliography of clay pipe studies*, please accept my  
apologies if you haven't received it yet. There have been  
difficulties in obtaining further supplies which are now  
being rectified, and I expect to fulfil your orders during  
May. Thank you for your patience - and, of course, copies  
of the Bibliography (at £3.78 to members) will be  
available for those who haven't ordered theirs yet - hurry  
while stocks last!

**Susanne Atkin**

## THE TURKISH CLAY SMOKING PIPES OF MYTILENE

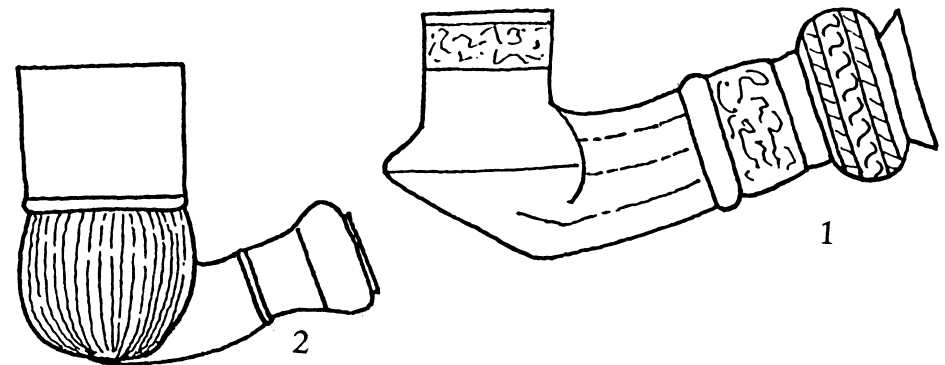
Tobacco-smoking was first introduced into the Ottoman Empire very early in the 17th century, some 150 years after the northeastern Aegean island of Lesbos and its capital, Mytilene, had passed under the control of the Turks. Unlike the western tobacco pipe that was fashioned from clay in a single piece, including bowl, stem, and mouthpiece, the *lüle* typical of the eastern Mediterranean was designed to receive a separate long, wooden stem fitted with an amber mouthpiece, an arrangement that made the pipe cooler to smoke. This ceramic bowl was composed itself of three basic parts: the vertical chimney and lower bowl, the angled shaft, and the socketed nozzle into which the hollow stem was inserted. The fabric, size, shape, and decoration of these three elements were frequently altered, creating combinations of surprising beauty and delicacy: the earliest varieties, of greyish-white clay and quite small (in keeping with the high price of imported tobacco early in its history), gradually evolved into the larger, more heavily decorated reddish-brown styles popular from the late 1700s until the early part of this century, when the *lüle* was finally replaced by the more practical western-European briar pipe.

The unusually large collection of pipes that we have found during our six years of excavations on the acropolis at Mytilene - more than 1800 fragments, of which almost 1300 are complete enough to have been inventoried - covers all of this period up to the middle of the 19th century, with remarkable numbers of early forms that have seldom if ever appeared elsewhere.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, of the sixty-four distinct types of our clay smoking pipes identified so far, fewer than half have parallels in the previously published collections from Turkey, Greece, and Bulgaria.<sup>2</sup> While it is unfortunate that our pipes were found in a much disturbed surface level with no obvious stratigraphy

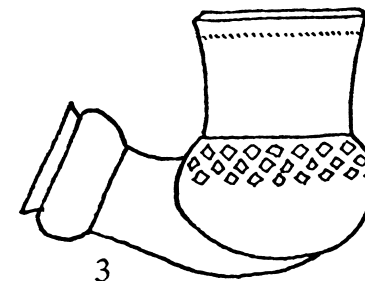
and in chronologically confused contexts<sup>3</sup>, the very size and diversity of the collection make it an important addition to the study of an artifact hitherto neglected for its lack of antiquity. What is more, we have a small and perhaps unique sample of hashish pipes, whose design is quite different from that of the tobacco pipe.

The oldest pipes from Mytilene, small and of greyish-white clay, belong to a series dating from the 17th to the early 18th century and, though they number over 350 in all, have surprisingly few parallels from other sites. Of these, the earliest style (Fig. 1) shows a thick, slightly flaring chimney above a compressed bowl that is joined by a sharply angled keel to a long, faceted shaft with a prominent, stepped nozzle; around the chimney or shaft many of the eleven pipes have a band of classical Turkish written in fine, slightly raised Arabic script.

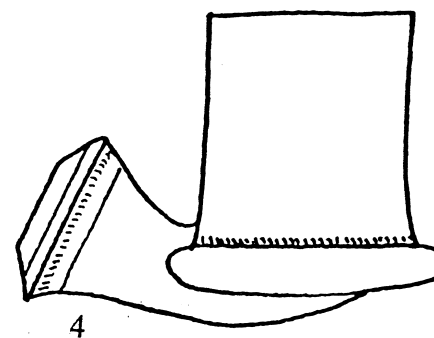
The most common pipe of this early series - in this case ninety-three examples from early in the 18th century (Fig. 2) - has a white or light-grey burnished surface (some few are dusky-red), a tall, vertical chimney that is generally undecorated, a sack-like bowl with simple combing or an impressed lattice decoration, a much shallower keel, and an undecorated oval nozzle.



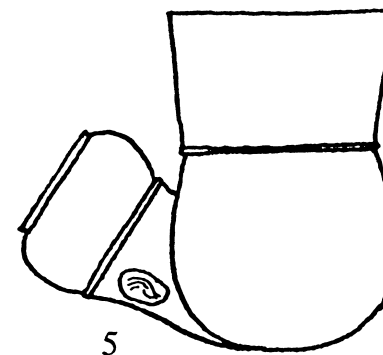
uniform type from the late 17th to the 18th century - we have twenty-three almost identical examples of these (Fig. 3) - is an attractive small and heavy pipe with a light-grey finish, a short, slightly flared, undecorated chimney above a compressed bowl with an impressed lozenge decoration on its shoulder, and a short shank terminating in a rounded nozzle.



The 281 reddish-brown pipes fashioned from red clay that make up the second major series from Mytilene all come from the 18th century. Though often of similar design, they are usually larger than their predecessors and smaller than their later relatives in Series 3, in keeping with what we suppose to be the ever-decreasing cost of tobacco.<sup>4</sup> It is within this varied group that that we find the first few examples of two trends that will later become common elements of *lüle* design: first, the development of small disc-based pipes (Fig. 4), with tall, vertical chimneys above extremely compressed bowls (indeed, in some examples the chimney actually serves as the bowl); and second, the use of a seal pressed into the clay to indicate the pipe's maker or place of origin.



From the late 1700s, and throughout the next century, we find the larger reddish-brown pipes of Series 3, their bowls (rounded or compressed to a disc) surmounted by plain chimneys that are either vertical or flared enough to make the pipe resemble a modern Turkish *çay* glass. The majority of our 400-odd examples are stamped, some with Arabic signs, others with stylized symbols.

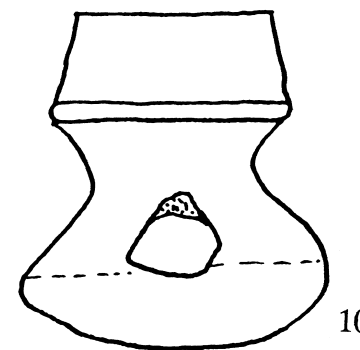
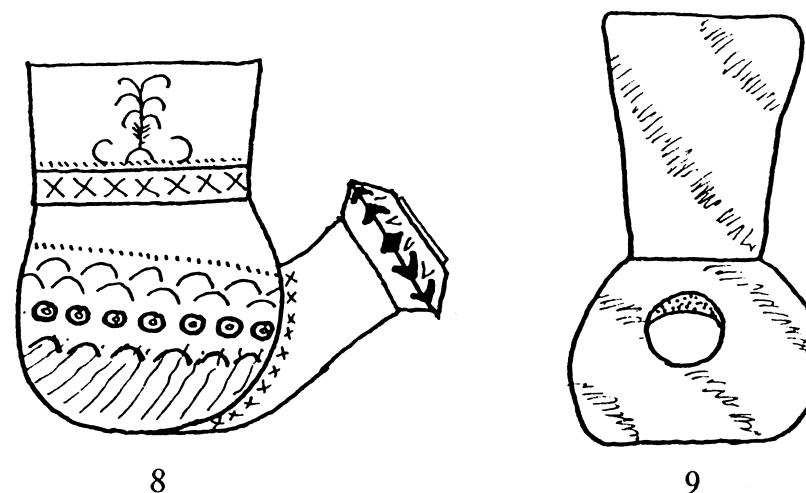
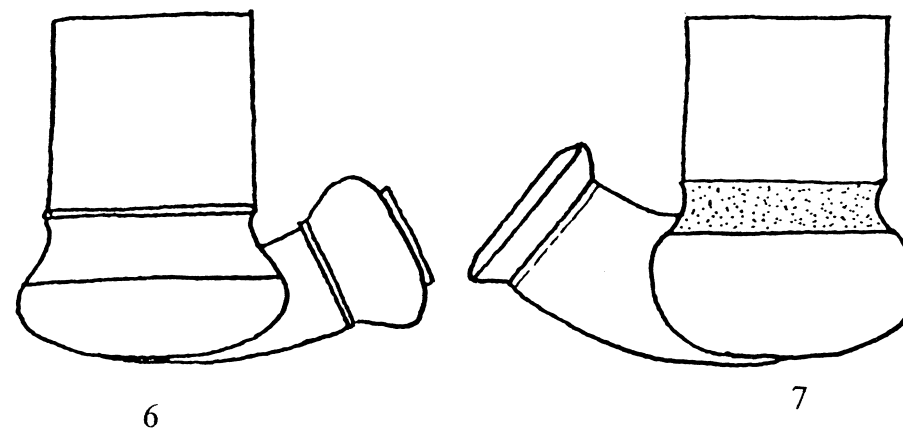


A single common and very uniform category of large bowls within this series (Fig. 5) accounts for almost 10% of all the pipes found so far at Mytilene. Its hourglass-shaped body is undecorated except for thin moulding or shallow indentation dividing the flaring chimney from a rounded bowl of roughly the same height; its slight keel is always highlighted by a series of rouletted lines forming a V-design on the bottom of the bowl; and its short shaft ends with a swelling oval nozzle. Of this type, about two-

thirds - 74 pipes in all - bear a stamp on the right side or bottom of the shaft: either an Arabic seal or a stylized bird, alone or in conjunction with a circle of raised dots. The fabric and colour, size, and seals of this style are duplicated in another set of pipes of different shape (Fig. 6): both sets date to the second half of the 18th century and undoubtedly come from the same workshop, until now traditionally located in the Bulgarian city of Varna where twenty-six examples have been found, a previously unparalleled quantity that suggested local workmanship. To date, the acropolis of Mytilene has given up five times this number.

Within this series of large pipes there are two other categories that deserve comment. Among the most delicately fashioned and highly burnished examples is a set of thirty red pipes that were probably imported from Istanbul in the 18th century (Fig. 7): their finely moulded vertical chimney is separated from the bowl by a concave waistband that, in three examples, is still filled with gold leaf. These are masterpieces of the pipemaker's art, and should be contrasted with a pair of very odd pipes (Fig. 8), clumsily formed and excessively decorated, quite clearly by the same maker - surely an apprentice - who covered his product from rim to nozzle with an overwhelming variety of awkwardly carved, impressed, and incised designs that must have given him practice with every tool in his kit: palm trees, crosses, crescents, wedges, circles, combing, and rouletting.

Even coarser are the hashish pipes, forty-four crudely formed bits of reddish clay that were only roughly finished (Figs. 9-10). A slightly flaring chimney is separated from the rounded bowl by a built-in grate of three holes on which the hashish was burned; the open stem-socket (not surprisingly of a diameter typical of early tobacco pipes) was simply poked through the shoulder of the bowl; and the flat base is often so uneven that the pipe cannot stand upright without support. Most examples are decorated,



but only with the simplest of elements, either painted diagonal bands or a lustrous sheen that was perhaps intended to resemble a metallic surface. Several of these hashish pipes were found in context with tobacco pipes provisionally dated to the late 17th century, but since most have come from mixed and historically inconclusive deposits it has been impossible for us to posit even the most tentatively chronological evolution of styles.

A full catalogue of the Turkish clay smoking pipes from Mytilene is in preparation, though the quantity of material - perhaps 1600 inventoried items before work on the acropolis comes to an end - will certainly delay publication for some time. In the meantime, I refer SCPR members interested in these artifacts to my more detailed analysis of the varied types in the Mytilene collection, in a forthcoming volume of *British Archaeological Reports* [International Series] devoted to Aegean archaeology.

#### Footnotes

1. Annual reports of our excavation - under the directorship of Dr. Hector Williams and the auspices of the Canadian Archaeological Institute at Athens, and financed largely by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada - can be found in *Classical Views/Echos du Monde Classique*, 29 (1985) and following.
2. See particularly the pipes from the Dumbarton Oaks excavation at Saraçhane, Istanbul, in J.W. Hayes, "Turkish clay pipes: A provisional typology," in *BAR* (Int. Ser.) 92 (1980), 3-10; R. Robinson, "Clay tobacco pipes from the Kerameikos," *Ath. Mitt.* 98 (1983), 265-285, and plates 52-56; eadem, "Tobacco pipes of Corinth and of the Athenian Agora," *Hesperia* 54 (1985), 149-201, and plates 33-64. The accounts of the Bulgarian pipes from Sofia, Varna, and Veliko Tirnova are difficult of access and have only brief summaries in English, French, or German.

3. The acropolis was in constant and active use until well after the Turkish retreat from Mytilene in 1912. The dates of the various styles of pipe from Mytilene are tentative at best: they have been derived almost exclusively from a comparison with the previously published examples from Istanbul, Athens, and Corinth.
4. The socket diameters of pipes in Series 1 and 2, for example, average about 8mm while those of Series 3 are usually more than 11mm.

John W. Humphrey

#### JOHN WATTS OF LONDON - TOBACCO PIPEMAKER IN THE WEST COUNTRY

During recent years information has been coming to light regarding the activities of John Watts of London in the Bath area; details have now been found that throw much more light upon him and warrant this article.

The first reference to him is on 28 June 1736 when he is described as 'of the City of London Tobacco Pipe maker' when it was agreed that a lease was to be granted to him of a tenement in Bath<sup>1</sup>; the lease itself was made on 30 June 1736:

*'Between the Mayor aldermen and Citizens of the City of Bath in the County of Somersett of the one part and John Watts of the Parish of St. Mary White Chappel in the County of Middx Tobacco pipe maker of other part'*<sup>2</sup>.

John surrendered a previous lease of 3 January 1703/4 which had been granted to Ann Watts the elder of Bath spinster and paid £20 for a new ninety-nine year lease on the same property, which consisted of a messuage or tenement and backside adjoining adjacent to the east side of the north transept of Bath Abbey. The lives on the deed were those of John himself, Richard Collins of Bath, draper, and James Collins of Walcot, yeoman.

A document has now come to light which is quoted in full below<sup>3</sup>:

*'Somerset To witt. The Examination of John Watts now residing in the Out parish of Saint Cuthbert in Wells in the said County taken upon Oath ... this 14th day of Aprill 1744 who saith that he was born in the parish of St. Olives Southwick in the County of Surrey as he has been informed and believes and there lived till he was putt an apprentice and saith that when he was abt. Thirteen yeares old he was putt an apprentice in the said parish of St. Olives to one Robert Knight a Tobacco pipe maker and as such served him for abt. six yeares when his master and mistress dyed and then he was assign'd over to one Joseph Brice a person of the same Trade then living in the parish of St. James Clarkenwell in the County of Middlesex with whome this Examinant served the Remr. of his time and further saith That he soon afterwds marry'd and then went & Settled & kept Trade going in the parish of St. Mary White Chappel in the sd. County of Middlesex for one and Twenty years and upwds and paid all rates and taxes as an Inhabitant thereof and further saith That he then removed from St. Mary White Chappell to the City of Exeter and there rentd a*

*small house in the parish of Allhollows on the Wall in the sd. City of Exeter and there lived for one yeare & Three Quarters and payd to the Church & poor rates of the sd. parish of Allhollows on the Wall, wch is the last place the Examt. lived in Except where he now resides.*

*John Watts'*

As yet no more information has been found to say how much longer John stayed in Wells; it is possible that he was removed back to London, or that he remained in Wells under the financial support of one of the London parishes. The details in his settlement examination are very useful as they give new information not only about him but also two other London makers, Robert Knight and Joseph Brice. Knight and Brice are both listed as journeymen in the 1696 Oath of Allegiance<sup>4</sup>; they almost certainly must have become masters in order to teach the trade, and so combining this with the information in the examination the following table of dates for John Watts up to this point can be suggested:

c1700: Born  
c1713: Apprenticed to Robert Knight, St. Olaves, Southwark  
c1719: Turned over to Joseph Brice  
c1720: Completed apprenticeship  
c1720: Married  
c1720-1741/2: Living and working in St. Mary Whitechapel  
1731, 1 June: Took as apprentice Thomas son of Thomas Turner of Stepney for a consideration of £3. 10s., paying the tax on the same day<sup>5,4</sup>  
1736, 30 June: Took lease of property in Bath  
c1742-1744: All Hallows on the Wall, Exeter  
1744, 14 April: Wells, Somerset.

His birth c1700 is corroborated by an entry in the International Genealogical Index (I.G.I.) for the baptism of a John son of John and Mary Watts at St. Olave, Silver Street, on 16 February 1700 (it has not yet been checked whether this refers to 1699/1700 or 1700/1701). The I.G.I. also records the baptisms of the following children of a John and Sarah Watts at St. Mary Whitechapel, Stepney: Mary on 20 November 1720; John on 25 June 1723; Sarah on 8 November 1724 and William on 6 March 1728. There was a Robert son of John and Hannah baptised there on 6 August 1732.

John's long-term activities after his stay in Wells are uncertain, but his involvement in the property in Bath continued. On 3 July 1758 a new lease was granted to William Gullidge for three lives including John Watts of Twerton, near Bath, yeoman<sup>6</sup>. On 1 October 1759 the property was again released to a Richard Gullidge for three lives including John Watts of Twerton, yeoman<sup>7</sup>. The parish registers of Twerton record the burial of a John Watts of Twerton Mill on 22 January 1791; so far no information has been found regarding John's presence in Twerton<sup>8</sup>. No marked pipes attributable to him have yet been found either in Bath or anywhere else in Somerset.

#### References

1. Bath Record Office (BRO), council minutes.
2. BRO: Thurman lease No. 1699.
3. Somerset Record Office, D/P/w.st.c. 13/3/16, No. 115.
4. Oswald, A. (1975) *Clay pipes for the archaeologist*, BAR 14.
5. Public Record Office, IRI/12, p.165.
6. BRO, Thurman lease No. 2124.
7. BRO, Thurman lease No. 2165.
8. M.C. Chapman, personal communication.

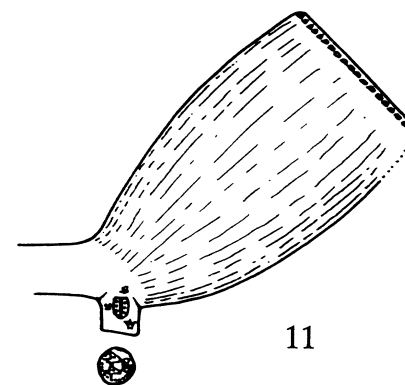
#### A BATTLEFIELD MEMENTO FROM WATERLOO

One unusual piece amongst the collections at Warrington Museum is the bowl of a pipe with a note pasted inside reading, '*From the field of Waterloo, Oct 4 1837*' (Fig. 11). The bowl is not very weathered and has clear traces of its last fill of tobacco inside. It is, presumably, a memento brought back from a visit to the site of the battle in Belgium. The pipe is of a typical Dutch form and has the arms of Gouda moulded on either side of the heel. Over the arms on the left hand side is a small 'S' indicating that it is a 'slegete' or common grade of pipe. On the right hand side are three small symbols, probably the mould maker's marks. The top two are blurred but the lower one appears to be a small fleur-de-lys or crown. On the base of the heel is stamped the crowned 44. This mark was registered in Gouda in 1727 and used from at least 1811-42/48 by Jan Visser<sup>1</sup>. The pipe is typologically of early 19th century date but whether it was really lost during the battle of 1815 or subsequently dropped by a local farmer it is impossible to say.

#### Reference

1. Duco, D.H. (1978) *Goudse Pijpen*, Amsterdam, 82.

David Higgins

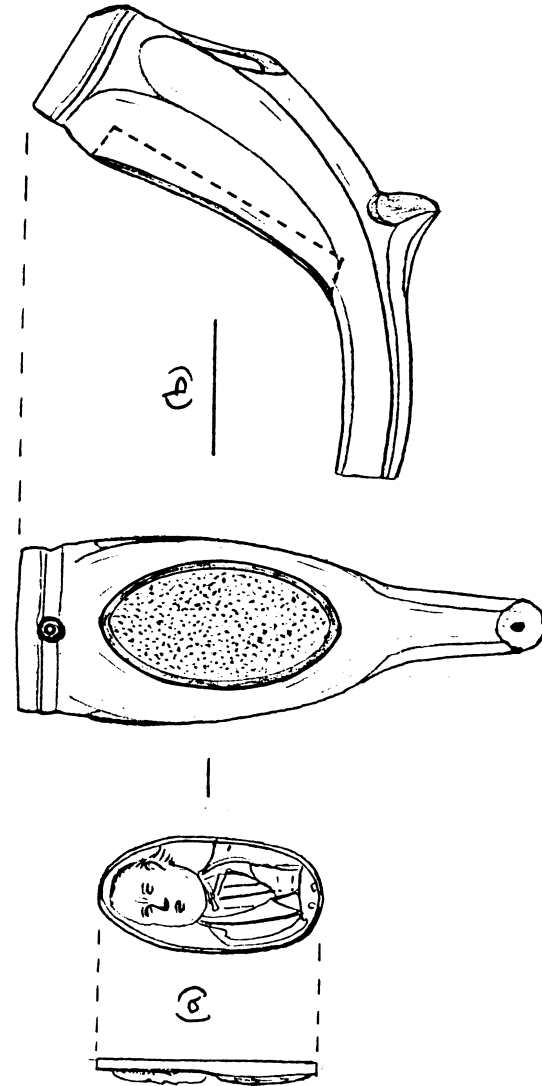




### 'DO IT YOURSELF' PIPE

Has anyone seen anything like this before? (Fig. 12). This very puzzling pipe was bought recently amongst others that had been found in the London area. It consists of a fluted bowl (b) with a deep oval depression on the back, into which you fitted a separate pipe clay bust (a) - presumably of whoever you chose. The bust that was found with this particular bowl shows a middle aged man, perhaps a politician. How he was actually stuck onto the bowl remains a mystery, but the stippled background within the depression may have aided the bonding of, for example, animal glue. There is a hole through the top of the bowl above where the bust would have fitted, and this may have had some connection with a fastening device. Due to the room taken up by the depression, the interior back wall of the bowl is rather deep and straight, reducing the tobacco holding capacity of the pipe. I do not have any idea of the origins of the pipe except to say that it appears to be English (or probably Dutch) and unlikely to be French. If anyone has seen a similar pipe or can throw any more light on a possible maker I would be pleased to hear from them.

**Peter Hammond**



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## LEICESTER, CHEAPSIDE

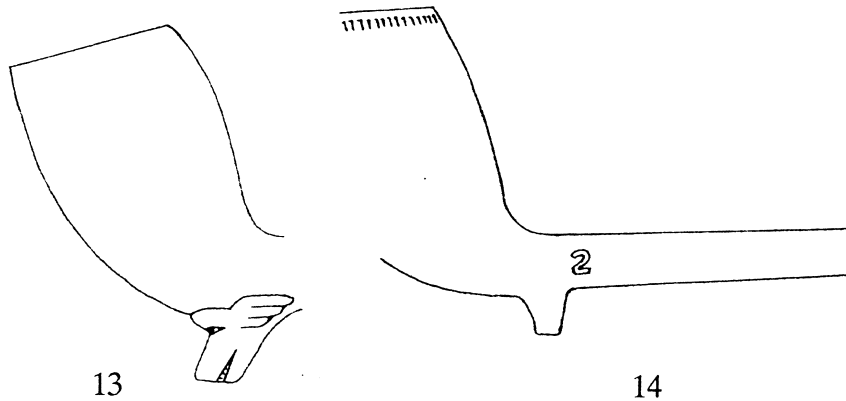
Ian Glen of Oadby, Leicestershire has forwarded the following note:

*'In the spring of 1982 alterations were carried out at number 10 Cheapside which had been the premises of a retail tobacconist for about 80 years.*

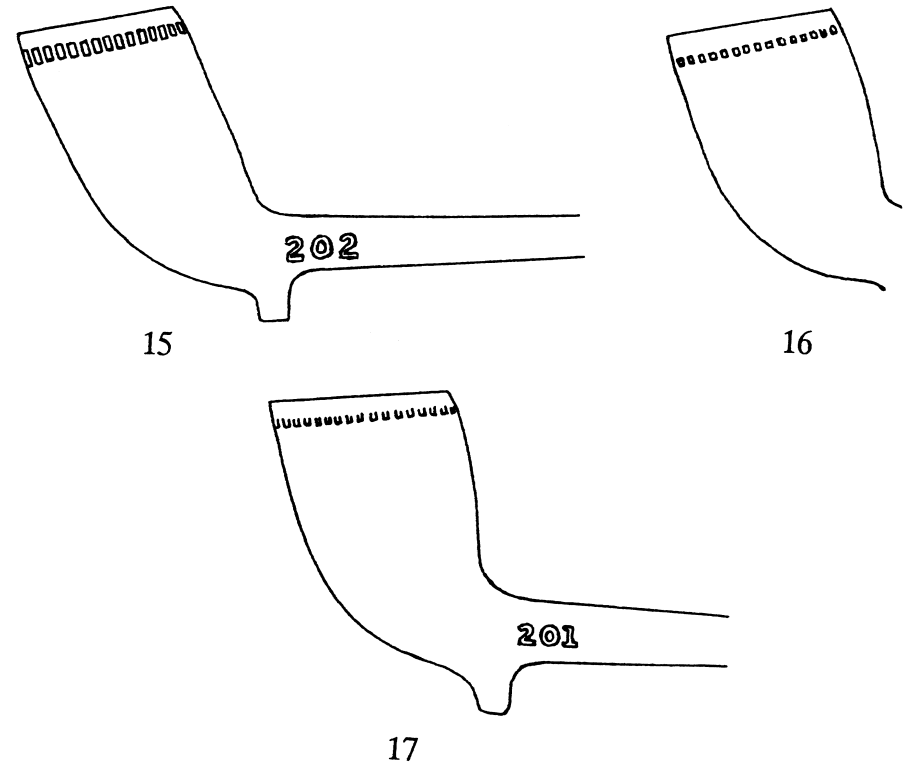
*The collection of pipes illustrated (Figs. 13-17) was found amongst debris in the shop. Most were recovered from a staircase between the ground floor and basement which had been bricked up and covered over with floor boards.'*

The pipes are all late nineteenth century in date. A spot check in Wright's Leicestershire and Rutland Directory 1894 showed the premises listed as a tobacconists operated by Thomas Blackman.

Nigel Melton



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## JOSEPH JAMES PIDGEON, PIPEMAKER

I have been given information from a direct descendant regarding something of the history of Joseph James Pidgeon of Great Yarmouth, pipemaker, during the 19th century. He was baptised at Great Yarmouth on 13 November 1801, the son of William and Elizabeth Pidgeon (formerly Davey, née Allington); he and his twin brother William were orphaned at the age of five in 1806.

On 25 October 1823 Joseph married a local girl, Elizabeth Cook Shepherd, at St. Nicholas church, Great Yarmouth; the registers describe him as being 'of St. Giles, London' so it is possible that after the death of his parents he moved

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there to be looked after by relatives and subsequently served an apprenticeship with a London maker. Between 1824 and 1845 Joseph and Elizabeth had ten children; when one of these, Joseph, married Charlotte Burman in 1863 Joseph James the father was described as a ginger beer manufacturer.

In 1818 a Joseph Pidgeon, perhaps a relative at such an early date, is listed as a pipemaker in the polls at Norwich, while between 1831 and 1847 he is registered in the Great Yarmouth polls<sup>1</sup>. Joseph James Pidgeon died on 18 December 1879 and his death certificate describes him as a pipemaker. The death certificate of his widow Elizabeth also describes him as such.

Any further information on the Pidgeon family, especially regarding any connections in London or elsewhere, would be gratefully received via this newsletter<sup>2</sup>.

#### References

1. Oswald, A (1975) *Clay pipes for the archaeologist*, BAR 14.
2. J.W.G. Pidgeon, personal communication.

Marek Lewcun

#### PIPEMAKERS IN PIGOT & CO'S 1830 DIRECTORY

A copy of Pigot and Company's National Commercial Directory recently came into my possession and it seemed worth listing the pipemakers recorded as I noticed that their entries in the Directory are not necessarily mentioned in other publications on pipemakers. The Directory covers Bedfordshire, Berkshire, Cambridgeshire, Cornwall, Devon, Dorset,

Gloucestershire, Hampshire, Herefordshire,  
Huntingdonshire, Monmouthshire, Norfolk,  
Northamptonshire, Oxfordshire, Somerset, Suffolk,  
Wiltshire and the whole of South Wales.

#### BEDFORDSHIRE

##### Bedford

Brown, Charles, St. Peter's Green  
Lane, Elizabeth, Silver Street

#### BERKSHIRE

##### Reading

Moon, John, 36 Silver Street  
Norris, John, 26 Church Street

##### Eton

Norwood, Maria, King's Stable Street

#### CAMBRIDGESHIRE

##### Cambridge

Balls, William, George Street, Barnwell  
Moule, Thomas, George Street, Barnwell  
Saul, John William, Sidney Street

##### Ely

Lupson, Michael, Broad Street  
Sibley, Robert, Broad Street

##### Wisbech

Nicholls, William & Son, New Chapel Road

#### CORNWALL

##### Truro

Randall, Samuel, Pyder Street

#### DEVON

##### Exeter

Chapple, John, Second Back Lane  
Heath, Joseph, Black Boy Road  
Reynolds, Robert, Cheeke Lane

**Plymouth**  
Rowe, John, Tin Street

**Devonport**  
Hoar, John, 100 Pembroke Street

**Stonehouse**  
Pearce, James, 9 Union Ope

**DORSET**  
**Poole**  
Dowdell, William, East Street

**Weymouth**  
Holland, Jane, Chapel Hay  
Rix, John, Francis Street, Chapel Hay

**GLOUCESTERSHIRE**  
**Bristol**  
Allen, Isaac, Pipe Lane, Great Gardens  
Blatchley, Edward, Ann Street  
Bryant, Joseph, 87 Redcliff Street  
Eve, Charles, 72 Redcliff Street  
Fisher, Thomas, 70 Temple Street  
George, David, St. Philips Plain  
George, James, Ann Street  
George, James, George Street  
George, Thomas, Ann Street  
Pratt, William, New Street  
Ring, Richard Frank, Ohio Manufactory, Temple Back  
Roberts, Arthur, George Street  
Roberts, Thomas, George Street  
Thomas, Edward, Little George Street  
White, Joseph (snr.), Redcross Street  
Williams, Ann, Lamb Street  
Williams, Peter, Ann Street  
Willis, William, Ann Street

**Wickwar**  
Ford, George

**HAMPSHIRE**  
**Emsworth**  
Taplin, Joseph

**Newport (Isle of Wight)**  
Jones, John, Orchard Street

**Southampton**  
Frost, Thomas, Spring Gardens

**HUNTINGDONSHIRE**  
**St. Ives**  
Mumby, James, Back Street

**MONMOUTHSHIRE**  
**Monmouth**  
Bundy, James, Monnow Street

**NORFOLK**  
**Lynn Regis [Kings Lynn]**  
Flanders, Robert, St. Ann Street  
Sharp, William, Norfolk Street

**Norwich**  
Brown, George, Pipe Maker's Yard, St. Gregory's  
Browne, Joseph, Wellington Court, St. Stephen's  
Clements, James, Ber Street  
Fitt, Robert, Ber Street  
Hensall, William, St. James's  
Lincoln, John, Common Pump Street

**Yarmouth**  
Page, Thomas, St. John's Head, South Row  
Taylor, James, Black Swan Row

**NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**  
**Northampton**  
Street, Francis, Dychurch Lane

**Peterborough**

Brown, William, Fen Gate  
Walker, Mary, Boon Gate

**SOMERSET****Bath**

Clarke, James, 10 Bridewell Lane  
Laffar, John, 84 Avon Street

**Taunton**

Pratt, John & Isaac, East Reach

**SUFFOLK****Bury St. Edmunds**

Reffell, Samuel, High Baxter Street

**Ipswich**

Leathers, William, Curriers' Arms Lane

**WILTSHIRE****Salisbury**

Morgan, John, Hog Lane

**SOUTH WALES****Cardiff**

Pardoe, William Henry, St. Mary's

**Carmarthen**

Bush, James, Priory Street

**Swansea**

Bevington, John, Strand

The entries in this Directory may not be totally reliable. For example, the Joseph Bryant listed as a pipemaker at

87 Redcliff Street, Bristol, was certainly not a pipemaker. The contemporary Bristol directories published by Mathews show that he was indeed trading from 87 Redcliff Street but as a *'Hairdresser, Foreign and English Perfumery warehouse'*!

**Reg Jackson**

**CUBBLE MANUFACTURE**

The following item appeared in *'The Queen Bee'* (a magazine containing *'interesting articles calculated to blend instruction with amusement'*) for 19 June 1821:

*'Pipe-making'*

*A Gentleman once went into a pipe-maker's shop at Edinburgh, with an intention to see the method of making Pipes. When he got in he found only a boy in the shop, so, without making more ado, he thus addressed him:- "Weel, my callant, I'll gie ye sixpence an ye'll shew us how ye make your pipes." The lad replied, "I canna mak a peep, sur; I can only mak a cubble." "A cubble, what's that, my hinney?" "It's a short peep," replied the boy; "sic as aud women smuke oot on." "Why, I'll gie ye sixpence an ye'll show us how ye mak that." "Why, gie us ye'r sixpence furst," was the reply. The gentleman gave the boy sixpence, when he took a long pipe and broke a piece off it, saying, "There, now, sur, this is the way I mak cubbles."*

**Colin Tatman**

## AN AUSTRALIAN PIPE

During the period of Transportation to the penal settlements of Australia (1788 - 1868) a young Irish convict by the name of John Donohoe achieved some notoriety after absconding and leading a gang of bushrangers. He was eventually caught up with near Campbelltown outside Sydney and in September 1830 was shot by a Trooper.

The deeds and death of 'Bold Jack Donohoe' were the subject of a popular ballad and *'At the other end of the scale, there was the sidney shopkeeper who within a week or two of Bold Jack's death produced a line of clay pipes in the form of his head, complete with bullet-hole in the temple. They were snapped up as devotional effigies - ceramic ballads, as it were.'*

Considering the voyage time from England these must have been locally made products. Do they survive?

### Reference

Hughes, Robert (1987) *The Fatal Shore*, Guild Publishing, London.

**Ron Dagnall**

## THE OFFER PIPE FACTORY, BEDMINSTER, BRISTOL, AND THEIR 'PAPER' KILNS

Richard Offer was born in Bristol c1831. On 14 May 1849 he married Ann, daughter of the Bristol pipemaker Thomas Edgar, at St. John's Church, Bedminster. By 1858 he was living in George's Barton, East Street, Bedminster. In the 1861 census he was recorded as a tobacco pipe manufacturer employing 2 men and 5 women. He was still working at the same address in 1871 but had died by 1888. It is possible that the business was then carried on by Charles Tovey who was a pipemaker at 143 East Street and 1-3 Norfolk Place, Bedminster from 1889 - 1891<sup>1</sup>.

The Bristol historian Ronald Cleeve has kindly provide me with the following description of Offer's pipe factory. He noted the information down during a conversation with a Mrs. E. Canning (née Offer) who was presumably the Emily Offer born in Bedminster c1870 according to the 1871 census<sup>1</sup>. I reproduce Mr. Cleeve's notes in full:

'To obtain this information I was eventually directed to a sweet old lady named Mrs. E. Canning, who was formerly a Miss Offer and who worked in her father's little factory. To my surprise she was my younger brother's wife's grandmother.

The factory was in George's Barton, a name given to all or perhaps part of the little alley called Norfolk Place - which runs at the side of the Queen's Head Hotel and leads from East Street to St. John's Road near the bend by the church. Coming from East Street this little factory was on the left.

The clay was brought by boat to a bigger pipe factory called Ring's [Richard Charles Ring & Co., Temple Backs] who employed 50 or 60

pipemakers. Ring's delivered the clay to Offer's in the form of 8 inch cubes. These cubes were broken up and soaked in water in big iron pans for two days. It was then dug out with a shovel and placed on an iron table where it was beaten with a big iron bar until it was free from lumps and of even texture. It was then rolled into lumps called *nips*.

The pipemakers used to fetch their nips from the clay rooms. Returning to their bench they would split the nip in two and then roll the clay into a tapered roll (the bowl and the stem were made all in one piece). When a dozen rolls were prepared a wire was threaded through it to make the hole in the stem. (Care had to be taken not to let the wire enter the part which was to become the bowl). Then with the wires still threaded in them they were transferred to pipe moulds. To make the hollow of the bowl, a *stopper* was pushed down into the open end of the pipe mould. The surplus clay was thus squeezed up past the top of the mould giving an irregular edge to the bowl. This surplus was called *fillet*. The stopper was removed and then the wire was pushed up to enter the bowl. The wire was then withdrawn and the moulds opened. The fillet was removed with a very sharp knife.

The pipes were then stood on grooved boards to dry until a certain hardness or *temper* was reached. After that the *seam* was scraped off the top and bottom of the stem. (The seam was the mark formed where the halves of the mould joined). The longer pipes with curved stems were dried to harden them - preferably in the sun, or otherwise in an oven.

They were next transferred to the kiln. The bowls were put in sockets round the base of of

the kiln and the stems were kept in shape by means of a central dome of fire-clay whose sides were suitably curved. This central dome was formed by rubbing the clay into paper by the base of the palm of the hand. This method adopted by Offer's was probably unique as sheets of newspaper were laid on a table and the stiff paste of clay rubbed in. When the kiln was lit the pipes had to be protected from the smoke. Larger firms used saggars as they do in the china industry. With many such sheets a huge dome was constructed over the pipes and the fire then lit and baked hard. The dome was then like a monstrous inverted basin about 10 feet across.

There were four sizes of pipe - in this order: Churchwarden, tavern, dutch, short. Mr. Offer used to make the churchwarden ones himself and many of them were sent to London. For making the ordinary ones - from rolling to *ready for the kiln* workers received 4½d. for a gross. A first class worker could earn up to 24 shillings a week. The factory closed in 1891'.

The most interesting aspect of this description of the pipe factory is their use of 'paper and clay' kilns. I have not heard of this technique being used in the manufacture of pipes and I would be interested to know if any reader has come across parallels elsewhere. I would be surprised if it was unique to the Offer factory.

However, the idea of a paper and clay covering to the kiln is not as strange as it seems. A description of such a kiln being used to fire pottery has recently appeared in the *Ceramic Review*<sup>2</sup>. In that case a dome was built over the stacked pots using '*single sheets of magazine paper, painted with slip ... It is important to build up a minimum of 10 layers of paper ... A flap is then cut in the top of the paper igloo to act as a flue ...*'. The article goes on to say that: '*anyone who has tried to burn a telephone directory will understand the resilience of paper. It is carbonised, but not*

consumed. The ash and slip form a fragile crust fluffing up like puff pastry, to give an effective insulating layer. I believe glossy paper has a high clay content, which may recommend its use and explain its ability to maintain its shape throughout the firing. Eventually, however, the paper shell will usually collapse inwards, protecting the work from rapid cooling. This final stage is typically 3 - 5 hours.

The kilns firing time and temperature, will depend on the volume of [fuel] used. 900 C is normal, but 1260 C plus is feasible ...'.

#### References

1. Price, R. and Jackson, R. & P. (1979) *Bristol clay pipe makers - a revised and enlarged edition*. Privately published.
2. Blackie, S. (1989) 'A paper kiln', *Ceramic Review* 115, 32-34.

Reg Jackson

#### KILN WASTE FROM BURNLEY

Mr. J.S. Bourne, curator of the Towneley Hall Art Gallery and Museum in Burnley, has informed me that they have recently obtained some pipes from a local kiln site. The pipes were recovered in October, 1989, during the construction of a car park behind the 'Bull and Butcher' pub on the Manchester Road (OS 830305). This was the site of a pipe works until about 1895. In 1881 it was run by James Heyes who was employing James Lyon, born in Blackburn<sup>1</sup>. Most of the pipes were recovered from a trench running north-south about 100' behind the pub.

The majority of them are plain although there are some decorated forms:- a skull and crossbones, a hand and heart and an anchor and sailing ship. This is the first kiln group to have been recovered from Burnley and gives an indication of types of pipe produced there during the second half of the nineteenth century.

#### Reference

1. Spencer, K. (1983) 'Bursting of the clay pipe bubble', *Burnley Express and News*, June 24.

David Higgins

#### CLAY PIPE AUCTIONS

In SCPR 24 I reported on the closure of the House of Pipes in Bramber, West Sussex. It was apparently the intention at that time for the 40,000 item collection from the House of Pipes to be exhibited in a Yorkshire country house.

However, I was sorry to learn that the collection is being split up and is being offered for sale at auction by Messrs. Phillips at their Solihull, West Midlands auction rooms. The first of four sales took place on 13 March this year when advertising display items, books, tobacco jars and boxes, tampers and seals, cigarette and cigar cases, European pipes, briars and wooden pipes, meerschaum pipes, German procelain pipes, Chinese water pipes, ethnographic pipes, etc all went under the hammer.

The second sale, including the collection of clays, pottery, porcelain and glass pipes, was due to take place on 15 May 1990 but I understand that the sale has been postponed. It is possible that Phillips will transfer this and future auctions to their London branch.



Phillips issued the following press release prior to the first sale:

### Sale of World Renowned Smoking Collection 'The House of Pipes'

A world renowned collection relating to smoking, worth some £200,000, will be sold by Phillips in a series of four sales this year.

Embracing many thousands of items, the collection spans 1,500 years and over 130 countries and includes such fascinating lots as King Farouk's cigarettes and a pipe owned by Stanley Baldwin.

The collection, from The House of Pipes in Bramber, Sussex, will be sold by Phillips saleroom in Knowle, near Solihull, on March 13, May 15, September 18 and November 6.

Each sale will include a varied selection, of pipes - Meerschaum, clay, china, glass, wood etc, tobacco jars and boxes, spittoons, pipe racks, shop fittings, advertising and many other items.

Victoria Jones, who is organising the sale for Phillips, the world's third largest fine art auctioneers, said: "The collection contains absolutely everything to do with smoking, from decorative matchbox holders, cigarette and cigar cases, shop display fittings and vending machines to a 6 foot advertising clay model of a gentleman smoker."

Another auction of pipes, this time from the Shillitoe Collection, took place at Phillips' London auction rooms on 8 March. The catalogue lists approximately 250 clay pipes including some 'excavated' examples. Two of the pipe illustrations in the catalogue are reproduced here: Fig. 18 is described as 'an amusing French clay pipe modelled as an English soldier thumbing his nose at a caricature of the Duke of Wellington, 8 cm. high' and Fig. 19 'a painted clay pipe modelled as a caricature of a Scottish judge, 10 cm. high'.

Reg Jackson



18



19

POINTS ARISING ...

J. Trevor Barton writes:

I have been reading with great interest the correspondence regarding Far Eastern pipes by Nigel Melton in **SCPR 23** and John Woods in **SCPR 24**, all the more so as I have 20 such bowls in my collection, many of these having been elaborately remounted as complete pipes decorated with filigree silver and some of the bowls encased in brass.

As regards the origin, I refer to Alfred Dunhill's *Pipe Book* 1924 edition where there are some illustrations shown on page 113 and the accompanying text reads: '*From the Shan States in Eastern Burma come the mysterious Nyoungwe pipes so called because their pottery bowls are dug up near the town of that name and are not fashioned by the people who smoke them. The records of Nyoungwe go back to the fifteenth century, but who were the people who actually made these bowls in the past is not known. They are greatly prized being used as touchstones for testing gold, and they are often remounted very elaborately by their finders. Their characteristic shape, and their conventional pinnate ornament with three or more lobes embracing the bowl are shown in the examples in Fig. 96 [Fig. 20]. The ornament is considered to be the conventionalized representation of the wings of a bird ... The people of the Shan States still make pottery bowls of the same shape and general character as the Nyoungwe pipes with elaborate representations (often Grottesque) of animal and human figures designed so as to embrace the cup shaped bowl.*'

I enclose a copy of a drawing which I have showing a Burmese pipe bowl (Fig. 21) collected by William Bragge c1860 and also a photograph of a pipe in my own collection (Fig. 22). This is a large pipe bowl from Shan States encased in silver with a peacock embossed on the base of the bowl.

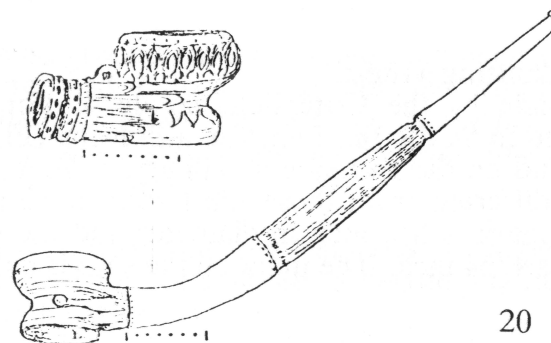
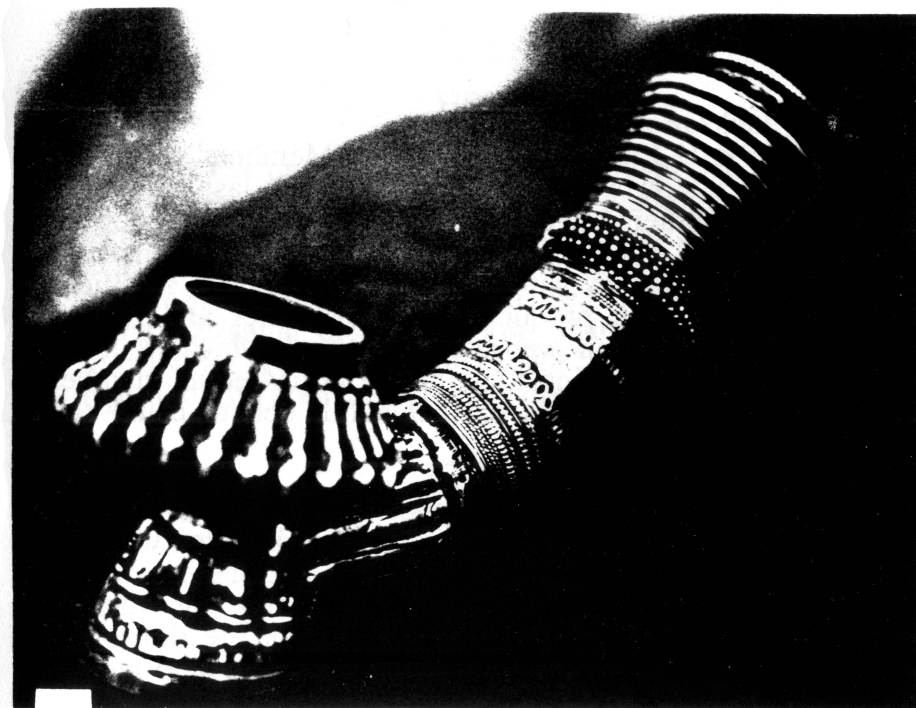
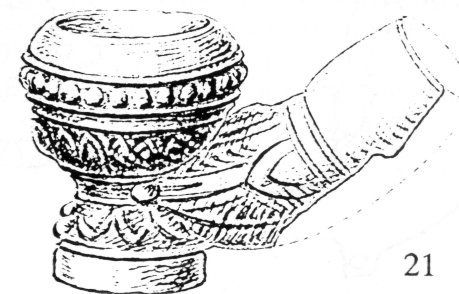
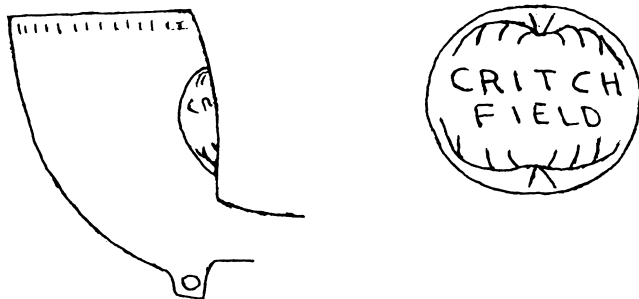


FIG. 96.—Nyoungwe Pipes.



**Trevor Chatting** writes:

Pipes made by the Critchfield family of London were illustrated in SCPR 16. I enclose a drawing (Fig. 23) of a pipe found on the riverside at Tilbury. The mark on the bowl is different from those illustrated previously. The circular mark is 5/8 inch in diameter and the stem bore measures 4/64 inch. The mark on the spur is indistinct.



23

**Reg Jackson** writes:

In SCPR 25 I wrote 'A Message to Members' concerning the discussion which took place at our last conference about whether a committee should be formed for our Society and its organisation put on a more formal basis. I explained that my wife and I already spent a significant amount of time producing the Newsletter and that we could not take on any additional work which would be entailed in organising a committee. I invited all members to express their views so that a full debate could take place.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those members who have taken the trouble to write or telephone. Of those replies received not one has been in favour of forming a committee and no one has put themselves forward to undertake any of the duties that would be involved in its organisation. It is clear to me that

there is no ground-swell of opinion in favour of forming a committee and, indeed, those members who have replied have made it plain that they do not want any further debate at this stage or any more space taken up in the Newsletter on this subject.

To comply with this request, and to arrive at some conclusion, I do not propose to devote any more time or space to this issue.

The Society is its members and without your continued support it could not survive. The fact that so many of you have retained your membership and contribute articles is perhaps the greatest indication of how you feel about the Society. After all, I would like to think that many of us have found new friends through the Society and that there is a common bond between us of a shared interest and enthusiasm for clay pipes.

### HELP!

**Anthony Lee** of 21 Westfield Close, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 9JW, would like to know who made pipes with the initials LA on the heel (Fig. 24 - not to scale). Two pipes bearing this mark have been found in Warminster. They are from the same mould and have both been marked using the same die. The bowl style is bulbous with a narrow rim and an unusually small heel. The form is not typical of the area but probably dates about 1680-1700.



24

Nick Magnum of PO Box 5, Ilfracombe, North Devon EX34 8BP, would like to know who made the pipe illustrated (Fig. 25) which shows a scantily clad girl reclining along the top of the stem. Sorry about the quality of the photograph!



#### NEW MEMBERS

Mrs. Hilary Brook, 91a Wellhouse Lane, Mirfield, West Yorkshire WF14 0NS.

Family pipe makers in Birstall, West Yorkshire.

John W. Humphrey, Associate Dean (Development & Research), Faculty of Humanities, The University of Calgary, 2500 University Drive NW, Calgary, Alberta, Canada T2N 1N4.

Stephen Johnson, 61 Riverside Road, Newark, Nottinghamshire NG24 4RL.

Mr. K. Wardley, Archaeology & Heritage Management Section, Tower House, Town Quay, Southampton SO1 1LX.

Pipes from urban archaeological sites.

#### CHANGES OF ADDRESS

G. Addams, PO Box MA 219, Somerset 9, Bermuda.

Dr. Ed Jarzembowski, Bishopstone Manor South, Bishopstone, East Sussex BN25 2UD.

Bert van der Lingen, Gerbera Straat 15, 2431 XM Noorden, Holland.

Dale Mark, 906-1868 Main West, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada L8S 1J1.

Colin Tatman, 29 Tivoli Road, West Norwood, London SE27 0ED.

