

Assessment of the Clay Tobacco Pipes and a Bone Object from Collingham Community Project, South Collingham, Nottinghamshire (COLN07)

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A collection of clay tobacco pipes and a bone needle were recovered from a post-medieval pit and an overlying dumped deposit containing post-medieval pottery and covering the majority of the excavated trench, overlying and sealing medieval pits.

Description

Bone

A bone needle probably formed from a fibula, 141mm long with an oval hole 5 by 7mm, at one end. The needle tapers to a point and the pointed end shows considerable polish from use. Examples from the City of London occur in 10th to 12th-century deposits (Pritchard 1991) but those examples were generally smaller, 86 to 121mm long. A group of 11th to 12th century examples from Gloucester (Heighway et al. 1979) were longer and clearly used together, perhaps for netting, which would be consistent with the riverside position of South Collingham. Context 117 (dumped deposit sealing pits).

Clay Tobacco Pipes

Two collections of clay tobacco pipes were recovered, from context 116 (the fill of pit 114) and context 117 (the dumped deposit). In the main, the pipes from both are very similar and form a single assemblage of later 17th-century date. No examples which need date later were present.

The general character of the bowls suggests that they were Lincoln products. In particular, the rouletted line found around the top of the bowl rim is always set fairly low on the bowl in comparison to those from elsewhere, and, in addition, the rouletting on the line is shallow and often cannot be seen except in a glancing light.

Four pipes with spurred bowls are of a type dated in Lincoln to the mid 17th century (Mann 1977 Nos.53, 59 to 63). These also had slightly wider bore diameters to the remaining pipes, as did 6 stem fragments.

The remaining bowls were of heeled types dated in Lincoln to the last third of the 17th century (Mann 1977, Nos 122, 123). Two pipes were incomplete and could not therefore be precisely matched with the Lincoln corpus but were consistent with a similar date (with the possibility that the date range extended into the early 18th century). These incomplete examples had splayed, oval, heels.

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Five of the bowls show sign of use, in the form of sooting on the inside of the bowl, and one of the pipes has unidentified red staining on the exterior of the bowl and the stem which probably took place after breakage.

Table 1

Description	Fragments	Weight (Gm)
1650-1680; MANN 1977, 53	1	11
1650-1680; MANN 1977, 59	1	11
1650-1680; MANN 1977, 59-63	1	10
1650-1680; MANN 1977, 61	1	19
1670-1700; MANN 1977, 122	5	52
1670-1700; MANN 1977, 123	1	12
17-18TH CENTURY BORE	15	65
17TH CENTURY BORE	6	17
17TH-18TH CENTURY STYLE	2	6
Grand Total	33	203

Assessment

It is most likely that the bone needle is of 10th to 12th-century date and was disturbed from an earlier pit on the site. It may well have been associated with a riverside activity such as making or mending nets.

The clay pipes probably all originated in a single deposit, such as Pit 114, and are consistent with deposition over a short period of time in the mid to late 17th century. The different in bore diameters between the spurred and heeled pipes either indicates that the two types are consecutive or that the two types were produced by different makers.

Retention

All of the finds should be retained.

Storage

The bone needle is probably stable but advice should be obtained about long-term storage and stability from a qualified archaeological conservator.

Further work

No further work is recommended on the clay tobacco pipes but the bone needle should be illustrated and photographed.

Bibliography

- Heighway, C. M., Garrod, A. P., and Vince, A. G. (1979) "Excavations at 1 Westgate Street, Gloucester, 1975." *Medieval Archaeol*, XXIII, 159-213
- Pritchard, F. A. (1991) "Small Finds." in A. G. Vince, ed., *Aspects of Saxo-Norman London: 2, Finds and Environmental Evidence*, London Middlesex Archaeol Soc Spec Pap 12 London Middlesex Archaeol Soc, London, 120-278

Appendix 1

Context	class	Description	Cname	Form	Part	Nosh	NoV	Weight	Condition	Use
116	PIPECLAY	17TH-18TH CENTURY STYLE	PIPECLAY	CLAYPIPE	SPLAYED HEEL	1	1	4		
116	PIPECLAY	17TH CENTURY BORE	PIPECLAY	CLAYPIPE	STEM	1	1	4		
116	POTTERY	1670-1700; MANN 1977, 122	PIPECLAY	CLAYPIPE	BOWL, HEEL, STEM	1	1	14		
116	PIPECLAY	1670-1700; MANN 1977, 122	PIPECLAY	CLAYPIPE	BOWL, HEEL, STEM	1	1	10		
116	PIPECLAY	1670-1700; MANN 1977, 122	PIPECLAY	CLAYPIPE	BOWL, HEEL, STEM	1	1	10		SOOTED
116	POTTERY	1670-1700; MANN 1977, 123	PIPECLAY	CLAYPIPE	BOWL, HEEL, STEM	1	1	12	STAINED RED	SOOTED
116	POTTERY	1650-1680; MANN 1977, 61	PIPECLAY	CLAYPIPE	BOWL, SPUR, STEM	1	1	19		
116	PIPECLAY	1650-1680; MANN 1977, 59	PIPECLAY	CLAYPIPE	BOWL, SPUR	1	1	11		SOOTED
116	PIPECLAY	17-18TH CENTURY BORE	PIPECLAY	CLAYPIPE	STEM	14	14	63		
117	BONE	OVAL HOLE 5 BY 7; 12 ACROSS TOP TAPERING TO ROUNDED POINT	BONE	NEEDLE	WHOLE	1	1	5	SHINY WITH USE	
117	PIPECLAY	17TH CENTURY BORE	PIPECLAY	CLAYPIPE	STEM	5	5	13		
117	PIPECLAY	17TH-18TH CENTURY STYLE	PIPECLAY	CLAYPIPE	SPLAYED HEEL	1	1	2		
117	PIPECLAY	1650-1680; MANN 1977, 59-63	PIPECLAY	CLAYPIPE	PART BOW, SPUR, STEM	1	1	10		
117	PIPECLAY	1670-1700; MANN 1977, 122	PIPECLAY	CLAYPIPE	PART BOWL, HEEL, STEM	1	1	8		SOOTED
117	PIPECLAY	1670-1700; MANN 1977, 122	PIPECLAY	CLAYPIPE	BOWL, HEEL, STEM	1	1	10		SOOTED
117	PIPECLAY	1650-80; MANN 1977, 53	PIPECLAY	CLAYPIPE	BOWL, HEEL, STEM	1	1	11		
117	PIPECLAY	17-18TH CENTURY BORE	PIPECLAY	CLAYPIPE	STEM	1	1	2		

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