

(25 Feb 2011, Slightly revised 21/11/11 - postscript 17/7/13)

## **Scan assessment of the clay tobacco pipes from Crossrail, Bond Street Station (XSC10)**

by John Cotter

### ***Introduction and methodology***

The excavation produced a total of 133 pieces of clay pipe weighing 747 g. from 28 contexts. These have been spot-dated and given a basic catalogue. The catalogue records, per context, the quantity of stem, bowl and mouth fragments, the overall sherd count, weight, and comments on condition and any makers' marks or decoration present. The comments field has been expanded in this instance to include additional information on parallels and any other observations worthy of note. The pipe assemblage (like most of the pottery) spans the 18th and first half of the 19th century.

### ***Postscript (July 2013)***

Subsequent to this assessment a further 12 pieces of clay pipe were produced by Watching Briefs - bringing the site total to 145 pieces. This additional material will be reported on in the grey literature reports. Any significant items however may be considered for academic journal publication and any intrinsically interesting items will appear in the popular publication.

### ***Summary of the assemblage***

In total there are 23 pieces of pipe bowl, 3 pieces of mouth and 107 stem pieces. The pipes are mostly in a fresh condition with nine complete or nearly complete bowls present and also many fairly long stem pieces. The longest piece of stem noted is 190mm. long (3130, two joining), with others of 150 mm. (3001) and 125 mm. (3101). The relative freshness of the assemblage suggests burial, possibly in rubbish pits, fairly soon after breakage and disposal. Most pipes, however fresh, are stained to varying degrees with a brown cassy deposit typical of cess pits. The maximum number of pipe fragments from any context is 24 (Context 3001).

Most of the pipe bowls can be reasonably closely paralleled with those published in Oswald's simplified national typology (Oswald 1975, fig. 3G-4G) and with other assemblages from London (Atkinson and Oswald 1969). There are no definite examples of early or mid 17th-century pipe bowls present and the earliest bowls present, which date their contexts, are three bowls of c 1680-1710 (3076 and 3156). One of these is worn and possibly residual (3156). The other two (3076) are bowl bases lacking their rims but appear to be of c 1680-1710 type. One of these however has an early example of the maker's initials ('NM') on either side of the heel, which might suggest a date after c 1700. A provisional attempt has been made to identify the several maker's marks present on the heels of a few pipe bowls in this assemblage - their presence a reflection of the mainly 18th-19th century dating of the assemblage. Full details of these identifications are given in the attached catalogue.

A few pieces are highly decorated including, unusually, two separate stem pieces which probably both date to the first half of the 18th century. One of these has milled bands in the Dutch style (3076) and the other, though relatively short, has a very decorative classical or baroque style of rouletting with ovolos and palmette friezes (3003). The latter should be properly researched and published. Two pipe bowls of c 1760-1800 are also highly decorated. One of these (3001) is decorated with the star and garter emblem of the Order of the Garter (a reference to a local pub name perhaps?). The other (3018) is decorated with a crowned thistle emblem. One plain pipe bowl, with makers' initials dates to c 1820-1840 (3001) and another burnt bowl (encased in cinders) is of about this date too (3068). The most unusual item in the assemblage is a fragment from the corner of a dark reddish-brown brick of 17th- or 18th-century date with a 70 mm. length of pipe stem firmly embedded in the fabric (and causing it to eventually split). The pipe stem itself probably dates to the late 17th or 18th century but, like the brick, is not closely datable. This was probably the result of an accident or carelessness in the brickyard and, while not unique, is still an object of some intrinsic interest.

Broadly speaking, the pipes are what one might have expected from a London assemblage of the 18th-19th centuries. The bowl types suggest a possible dating emphasis of c 1750-1840.

**Bibliography**

Atkinson, D. and Oswald, A. 1969 'London clay tobacco pipes', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association* XXXII, 171-227.

Oswald, A, 1975 *Clay Pipes for the Archaeologist*, BAR 14