

Farringdon Charterhouse Square publication: clay tobacco pipes

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Introduction

A small collection of clay tobacco pipes was recovered from site XTE12, consisting of 22 bowls and 64 stem fragments from 13 contexts, none of which yielded more than three bowls. One bowl and two stem fragments were recorded on site XSF10. All pipes were recorded in line with current MOLA practice; the bowls were classified and dated according to the Chronology of London Bowl Types (Atkinson and Oswald 1969), with further refinement of 18th-century types according to Oswald's Simplified General Typology of 1975, indicated respectively by the prefixes AO and OS.

The clay pipes from XTE12

The earliest clay pipe identified on the site is a type AO8, which dates to c 1610–40 and comes from context [227] in OA7. In common with other types of this date, it has a small rounded bowl, and is also fully milled around the rim, with good burnishing visible. These mark it out as a product of reasonable quality, although it is not marked by its maker or decorated. There are only two other relatively early pipes, both datable to c 1640–60. The first of these is a type AO10 bowl found in context [270], also in OA7. This again has surface burnishing and milling, around $\frac{3}{4}$ of the bowl.

The largest number of pipes (14 bowls and 12 stems) was found in Open Area 7, which is dated at the latest to c 1700–70 by seven bowls of type AO25. This is the standard form made by London pipe makers – and across most of the country – during most of the 18th century. Standardization was made much easier by the widespread adoption of the gin press at the turn of the century, speeding up manufacture and enabling pipe makers to produce large quantities of more-or-less identical pipes for an ever-expanding market. The remaining pipes found in OA7 were made in the late 17th/beginning of the 18th century (three bowls of type AO15, dating to c 1660–80, and one of type AO21, dating to c 1680–1710). One of the pipes (incomplete, so unidentifiable – <8>) has the maker's mark ER moulded in relief on the sides of the heel; since the pipe cannot be dated closely it is not possible to link these initials with a known maker.

Early to mid 17th-century pipe bowls were recorded in OA11, from context [329], which is dated to c 1640–70 by a pipe of type AO11. The bowl is milled around $\frac{3}{4}$ of its rim, but is otherwise undecorated or marked. The remaining pipes all date between the end of the 17th and the mid 18th century. Pipes from OA8 were deposited c 1680–1710 (two type AO20 bowls), and examples from OA3 are dated at the latest to c 1740–70 by a pipe bowl of type AO26 with the initials IH moulded in relief on the sides of the spur (again, the maker remains unidentified). A type AO25 bowl from the same context ([221]) is marked with the moulded initials NA, while part of an incomplete bowl of unknown form has a moulded flower and crown on the sides of the heel. None of these pipes are decorated, although all of them appear to have been smoked.

The clay pipe from XSF10

Two clay pipe stem fragments and part of a bowl were recovered from context [68], in OA9. Although the stems are undatable, the bowl fragment most probably comes from a type AO25 pipe, dating to c 1700–70.

Bibliography

Atkinson, D R and Oswald, A, 1969 London clay tobacco pipes, *J British Archaeol Assoc* 32, 171–227

Oswald, A, 1975 *Clay pipes for the archaeologist*, BAR 14, Oxford