

Three sites in Reigate: 12--14 London Road, 20--22 and 74--76 High Street

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The clay tobacco pipes and hair curler, by D A Higgins

INTRODUCTION

The 1992 excavations in London Road, Reigate (RLR 92) produced one hair curler and 245 fragments of clay tobacco pipe comprising 70 bowl, 172 stem and three mouthpiece fragments.

CONTEXT GROUPS

Most of the context groups contain a reasonable number of diagnostic fragments but, unfortunately, none of these seem to represent tightly dated groups. In addition, most of the groups contain fairly narrow, cylindrical stems with small bores. These are of a type produced from the later 18th century onwards and, as such, they can only provide a general indication of date. A summary of the evidence for each context, including the number of bowl (B), stem (S) and mouthpiece (M) fragments recovered, is given in phase (Ph) and then context (Cxt) order below. Some of the context numbers given are for cuts rather than fills, so as to be consistent with the rest of the site report:

Ph	Cxt	B	S	M	Date range	Comments
1	31	4	5		C17th–c1820	
2b	12		1		C18th or early C19th	
2c	33		4		C18th	
2c	50		2		Late C17th or C18th	
4	+	8	1	1	C17th–C20th	
4	5	16	31		C17th–c1900	Most pieces are C18th or C19th—end date could be c1880
4	5/30	5	22		C17th–c1880	Mixed fragments
3	8	7	28		C17th–C19th	Mainly C18th material
4	30	7	13		c1660–c1800	Some stems could be C19th; latest bowl fragment c1770
4	40	3	9		c1760–1880	End date could be mid-C19th
4	?40	5	12	1	C18th–c1920	Includes late C19th–early C20th forms
4	44	1	11	1	C17th–C19th	Mainly late C18th or early C19th material
4	60	1	3		C17th–C19th	Could end in late C18th
4	62	13	30		C17th–c1800	Odd late C17th pieces, but mainly a good C18th group Latest stems of late C18th or early C19th type. Bowls end c1790
Total		70	172	3 = 245		

MARKED PIPES

A total of 27 pipes with relief moulded marks on the sides of the heel or spur were recovered. These range in date from c1700–c1900 and reflect the various sources from which pipes were being sent to Reigate. The marks recovered are listed below:

Mark	No	Date	Form/Dec	Context(s)	Fig
IC or IG	1	1700–70	Plain	62	
RC	4	1840–1900	Plain with moulded milling	3 in 5; 1 in ?40	
RC	1	1810–80	Open flutes	5	
RC	3	1810–80	Open flutes plus leaf dec seams	2 in 5; 1 in 40	6
WC	1	1700–70	Plain	5	
LG	1	1700–31	Plain	5	
?L/	1	1700–70	Plain	31; probably an LG pipe	

WH	1	1820–60	Leaf dec seams	5	5
PS	2	1710–49	Plain	62	
Mark	No	Date	Form/Dec	Context(s)	Fig
GT Crowned	1	1700–70	Plain	62	
GT	1	1730–70	Plain	8	2
GT	1	1770–1820	Open flutes; alternate 1 thick/ 2 thin	+	
GT	1	1770–1820	Enclosed flutes	31	3
Hearts and dots	1	1760–90	Plain	62	4
Hearts	6	1760–90	Plain	1 in 8; 1 in 41; 4 in 62	
Shields	1	1850–1900	Plain	?40	9

Although there are some new marks for Reigate amongst this list, the majority of the pipes were being supplied from well-known sources (Higgins 1981; 1983; 1985). During the first half of the 18th century the products of Laurence Geale (LG) and Philip Street (PS) of Guildford are the most common marked products found. During the second half of the 18th century the George Thorntons of Dorking (GT) supplied pipes while in the 19th century it was the various Robert Corneys of Croydon (RC; Drewett 1974). Of particular interest are the later 18th century pipes marked with hearts. These occur in almost every excavated deposit of this date from Reigate and almost certainly represent an as yet unidentified maker from the town.

Most of the pipes recovered are typical of those that would be expected from this part of Surrey. There are, however, some pieces that provide new or additional information about the forms and styles of decoration in use. Three pieces in particular are worthy of comment. The first is a standard bowl form of c1660–80 from context 30 (fig 13, no 1), which is notable because of its extremely glossy surface. A finely polished finish was usually achieved by burnishing the surface. Burnishing added to the cost of producing a pipe and was rarely used in Surrey. In this instance, however, there are no burnishing lines visible and the glossy surface extends to areas such as the base of the heel, which would not have been burnished. This piece has either been made from an unusual type of clay with a very glossy fabric or it has been buffed or polished in some other way.

The second is a fluted RC bowl of c1810–80 with leaf decorated seams from context 40 (fig 13, no 6). Although this pattern is well known from Reigate, the example from context 40 is notable because it has 193mm of stem surviving. Even so, the stem taper is still very slight over this distance suggesting that the pipe was considerably longer when intact. The surviving stem is also sufficient to show a slight stem curve. From this example it can be demonstrated that this bowl form occurred on a long-stemmed pipe with a gently curved stem.

The final piece of note is a complete pipe of c1880–1920 decorated with a cricket bat, ball and stumps (fig 13, no 11). This allows the complete form of this design to be seen. An almost identical complete pipe has been recovered from Glyn House pond in Ewell. Detailed comparison of the decoration shows that the two pipes were produced in different moulds. Although the makers of these pipes are not known, the occurrence of two almost identical versions suggests that the design was sufficiently popular to have warranted production by different local manufacturers. As with most pipes, these would have been mass-produced items that were rapidly finished, as can be seen from the slightly warped stem of the cricket pipe when viewed from underneath.

INTERNAL BOWL CROSSES

Internal bowl crosses were noted on five of the 18th century pipes. In each case this consists of a roughly upright cross (+) which has been moulded in relief on the internal base of the bowl. The crosses occurred on the WC pipe from context 5; on the crowned GT pipe from context 62; on the

plain GT pipe from context 8 (fig 13, no 2); and on two of the bowls marked with plain hearts from context 62.

HAIR CURLER

Half of a medium sized 18th century hair curler was recovered from context 5. This is made of pipe-clay and is of a good, symmetrical form. The end is stamped with an incuse maker's mark; WB with a crown above and a dot below. This maker has not yet been identified but his products are widely distributed across England and he may well have been based in London.

ILLUSTRATIONS (fig 13)

- 1 Complete bowl of *c*1660–80 from context 30 with an extremely glossy surface. There are no burnishing lines visible and the polish includes areas such as the rim and heel base that would not have been burnished anyway, suggesting that either this is an unusually glossy fabric or that it has been polished or buffed in some other way. The rim is fully milled and the stem bore is 7/64in.
- 2 Bowl of *c*1720–70 from context 8 with the moulded initials GT for George Thornton of Dorking. The bowl has 83mm of surviving stem, which is quite thin, being only 7–8mm in diameter at its broken end. The rim is cut and there is a relief moulded internal bowl cross. The thin stem and relatively small stem bore (4/64in) suggest that this is a late example of this style of pipe.
- 3 Bowl of *c*1760–1800 from context 31. The bowl has fluted decoration and the relief moulded initials GT for George Thornton of Dorking. Stem bore 4/64in.
- 4 Fragmentary bowl of *c*1750–90 from context 61 with relief moulded hearts and dots on each side of the heel. This mark is particularly common in Reigate and almost certainly represents an as yet unknown maker from the town. Stem bore 5/64in.
- 5 Bowl fragment of *c*1800–50 from context 5. This piece has large but fairly crudely executed leaves on the seams and the small, faintly moulded maker's initials WH on the spur. Stem bore 4/64in.
- 6 Complete bowl and joining stem fragment from context 41. The fluted bowl dates from of *c*1810–80 and has leaf-decorated seams and the maker's initials RC on the spur, for one of the Robert Corney's of Croydon. This pattern is well known from Reigate, but this example has 193mm of stem surviving, showing that this was a long 'churchwarden' style of pipe with a gently curved stem.
- 7 Fragment from context 5 dating from *c*1820–50 with traces of foliage decoration on the stem and flutes on the bowl. Stem bore 4/64in.
- 8 Unstratified (+) bowl of *c*1870–1920 with a 'button' heel and moulded milling at the rim. Stem bore 4/64in.
- 9 Fragment of a very delicate pipe of *c*1870–1920 from context ?41. This has very thin walls to the bowl and a fine stem with an exceptionally small bore of just over 2/64in. There is a symbol mark consisting of a diagonally hatched shield on each side of the heel.
- 10 Bowl of *c*1870–1920 from context ?41 with a wide cylindrical rest, shown in plan in the drawing. Stem bore 4/64in.
- 11 Complete pipe with a cricket bat, ball and stumps on each side of the bowl. The design is a mirror image on the other side, i.e., the bat on each side slopes towards the smoker. Unstratified find (+) of *c*1870–1920 with a stem bore of 4/64in.
- 12 Hair curler made of pipe clay and with an incuse stamp comprising the crowned initials WB on the surviving end (detail at twice life size). The hair curler is of a good symmetrical form and neatly finished. The WB maker has not been identified, but he was one of the principal hair

curler manufacturers and exported his products all over the country. He was most likely based in London and operating during the mid–late 18th century.

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