



EBENEZER CHURCH: CLAY TOBACCO PIPE MANUFACTURER OF PENTONVILLE, LONDON

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SUMMARY

During the Victorian period, clay pipes became increasingly decorative with many mid to late 19th-century makers producing pipes with elaborately shaped bowls. Some makers even went to the trouble of registering their designs to prevent other makers from copying them — such was the degree of competition at that time. One London clay pipe maker who produced a wide range of decorative styles, marking many with his name, was Ebenezer Church of North Street in Pentonville. This paper describes Church and his products, and places him in context within the London pipe making industry at that time. The paper is supplemented by ephemera that have survived within the family.

INTRODUCTION

Ebenezer Church was born on 13 August 1829, the son of Ebenezer and Selina Church of Beckenham, Kent.¹ The 1851 census lists the family at 41 Wickham Road in Beckenham, both Ebenezer senior and junior being described as carpenters, aged 51 and 21 respectively. Ebenezer senior in fact ran a thriving building business, later specialising as a monumental mason and undertaker.²

During the 1850s Ebenezer junior became acquainted with Sarah Ford, the daughter of pipe maker John Ford of 28 North Street, Pentonville (Kings Cross), and the couple married in 1856. It is possible that they met through the non-conformist chapels that the

families are known to have attended. It was through his marriage into the Ford family that Ebenezer Church was introduced to the craft of clay pipe making, and in turn took over the workshop in North Street.

THE NORTH STREET WORKSHOP

Clay pipe making workshops frequently passed through several generations of pipe makers, and the premises that are the subject of this paper are no exception. According to the later advertising literature issued by Ebenezer Church, the workshop in North Street, Pentonville, was established in 1810. The premises variously used for pipe making were 12 and 13 North Street (west side) and 27 and 28 North Street (east side), the street itself being situated to the north of Pentonville Road and today known as Northdown Street. The Land Tax assessments³ in fact show that George Benson, pipe maker, was occupying premises in North Street by 1808, and he is listed in *Holden's Directory* at this address in 1809. The assessments also reveal that during 1809 Benson was replaced by John Hedges, who continued to occupy premises at 13 North Street, Pentonville until at least 1823. Benson and Hedges (no relation to the later cigarette manufacturers of the same name) seem to have been associated with each other prior to their respective moves to North Street, for Benson is listed in Directories at 50 Grays Inn Lane between 1785 and 1802, while Hedges was

in Grays Inn Lane between at least 1805 and 1811.⁴ By 1825 the assessments for North Street show that Hedges had been replaced by John Clamtree, who came from a family of pipe makers in Marylebone. The Hedges and Clamtree families continued to maintain their association with the St Pancras district of London following their respective departures from North Street.

Both the Land Tax assessments and the Directories indicate that John Ford took over the North Street workshop during 1826, and following his subsequent marriage, his eldest daughter Sarah was born there on 12 September 1835.⁵ The 1841 census lists a journeyman pipe maker and two apprentices residing with them at 28 North Street, while another pipe making family was residing next door at No. 7. The property deeds confirm that John Ford purchased the premises within North Street at auction during 1844, having leased them previously.⁶

John Ford, who was born on 20 November 1802, was a member of a well-known and long established family of pipe makers in Stepney, being the eldest son of John Ford, pipe maker (1780–1834), and his wife Hannah (1777–1832) of White Horse Street (the family can be traced within the pipe making trade back into the 17th century). John and Hannah had three other sons who also became pipe makers: Jesse Ford (1809–1868), Thomas Ford (1810–1875), and Samuel Ford (1819–1895). Jesse and Thomas set up in partnership at 36 White Horse Street following the decease of their father in 1834, while Samuel later operated a pipe manufactory in Romford before becoming a grocer in Plaistow during the 1860s.⁷

The 1851 census reveals that at that time John Ford was a tobacco pipe maker employing seven men. A former apprentice, James Nichols (who, incidentally, had witnessed one of the indentures of purchase in 1844), was residing with the family at 28 North Street, along with two more apprentices, and a general servant, while next door at No. 27 were two more families of pipe makers. Compared with other contemporary workshops John Ford was employing a reasonably large number of workers. Clay pipe making was normally a small scale domestic trade, with a maximum of around three or four apprentices and/or

journeymen per workshop. Typically, among the master pipe makers at that time were Charles Crop of Hoxton, Thomas Taylor of Shoreditch, and George Wheeler of Holborn, who were each employing two men. The only London pipe makers of a comparable scale to John Ford in 1851 seem to have been James Webb of Soho (six men), William George Walker of Dalston (seven men and one apprentice), and William Britter of Lambeth (eight men). However brothers Jesse Ford of Stepney and Samuel Ford, then of Romford, were certainly on a par with John, for the former was employing six men and the latter eight men and seven trimmers (*ie* normally females who trimmed the excess seams from the newly moulded pipes).

By the early to mid-1850s John Ford's eldest daughter Sarah was in her teens, and this must be the period when she and Ebenezer Church, then in his early twenties, formed a romantic attachment. Some valentine notes between them still survive within the family. They married at St James in Clerkenwell on 21 March 1856, Ebenezer Church then being described as a joiner of 13 North Street. The witnesses included John Ford and his sister-in-law Rebeckah Ford (wife of Jesse Ford, pipe maker). Surviving *carte de visites* photographs show Ebenezer and Sarah Church when newly married, including one of Sarah holding eldest son Ebenezer John, born on 7 May 1859.

The 1861 census shows that Ebenezer Church was still listed as a joiner, then aged 31, with wife Sarah and two children. They were residing with John Ford at 28 North Street, who was still employing seven people within his pipe workshop (five men and two boys). Two of his employees, James Jeffryes and former apprentice Joseph Outram, were living next door at 27 North Street. By this time John Ford was also making pipes for export — being listed as such in the Directories between 1857 and 1865.

EBENEZER CHURCH AND THE NORTH STREET WORKSHOP

During the mid-1860s John Ford retired from pipe making and moved to nearby Leake Street (situated to the south of Kings Cross Road opposite North Street), where he traded as a corn dealer.⁸ Meanwhile



Fig 1. Daguerreotype photograph of Ebenezer and Sarah Church taken around the time of their marriage in 1856



Fig 3. Carte de visite photograph of Sarah Church early 1860s

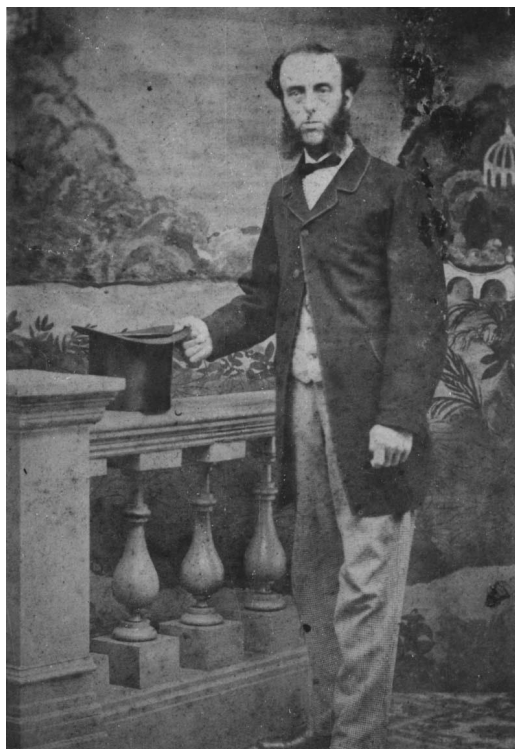


Fig 2. Carte de visite photograph of Ebenezer Church early 1860s



Fig 4. Carte de visite photograph of Sarah Church holding baby Ebenezer John c.1860/61



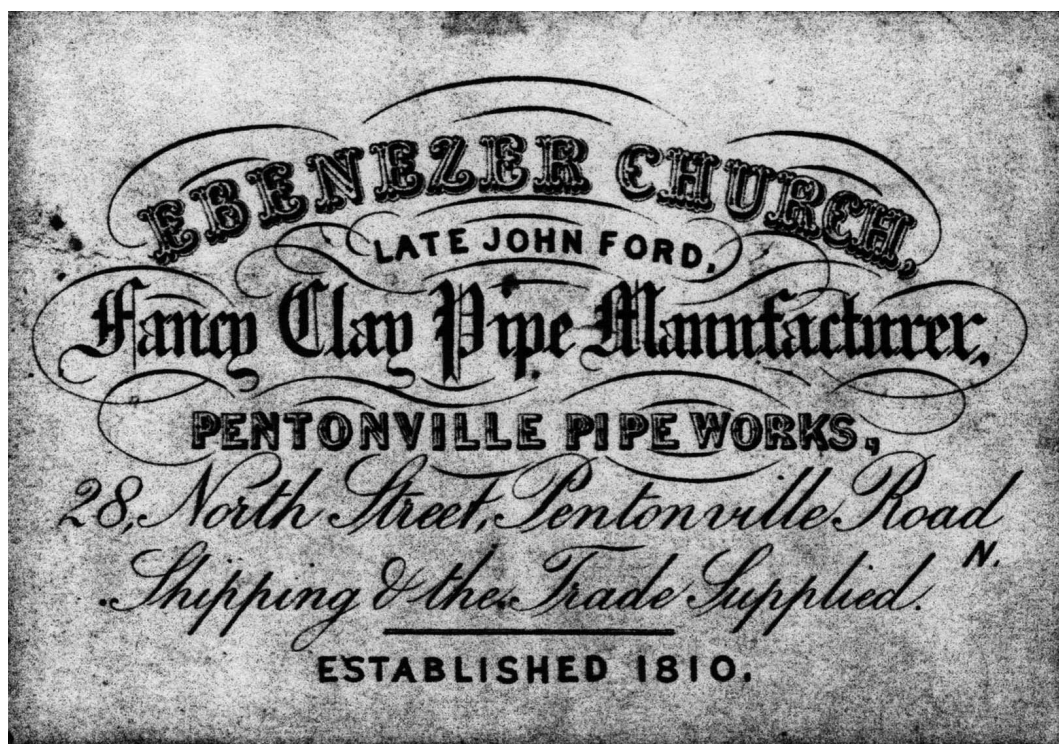


Fig 5. Trade card of Ebenezer Church, late 1860s/ early 1870s

Ebenezer Church took over the pipe making workshop. He is first listed in the Directories as a tobacco pipe maker in 1866,⁹ while an indenture dated 1867 formally assigned the North Street premises over from Ford to Church.¹⁰ Ford died intestate at Leake Street on 6 July 1872 at the age of 69 years.¹¹ A surviving trade card by Church that states 'Late John Ford' is likely to have been issued during this period.

By 1871 Ebenezer Church was employing ten men, including former apprentice Joseph Outram and his family, along with Robert Jackson from Wandsworth and Thomas Apps from Maidstone, all of whom were living next door at 27 North Street, while at 12 and 13 North Street were Henry Jones, Thomas Williams, and James Keens.

At the time of the 1881 census, though the number of employees is not stated, Ebenezer Church must have been employing at least nine people, judging by the pipe makers residing in the immediate vicinity. Three of them were his sons, the eldest son Ebenezer John Church then being described as fore-

man. Ebenezer and Sarah had a total of 17 children, born between the years 1856 and 1880.

Pipes made by Ebenezer Church

A considerable range of pipes made in the Church workshop can be readily identified for they are typically marked 'CHURCH – LONDON' as an incuse mould-imparted mark along the stem of the pipe, or with 'CHURCH' stamped upon the back of the bowl, *ie* the part of the bowl facing the smoker. However some of the pipes made soon after Church took over the workshop were marked 'CHURCH LATE FORD',¹² while others are marked 'CHURCH – KINGS CROSS' (sometimes in relief writing along the pipe stem rather than incuse). Figs 16 and 17 show a selection of surviving pipes made in the Church workshop.

It was during the early 1870s that Ebenezer Church registered the first of 26 designs for clay pipes, the first being during March 1873.¹³ Registering a design provided three years protection, rendering any copies fraudulent;



the fact that Church was enterprising enough to go to the trouble of protecting some of his pipe designs demonstrates that there was some stiff competition within the trade. Most of his registered pipes were in fact delicate plain styles, some of unusual shape and/or with unusually placed spurs (the projecting piece beneath the bowl). Some also had animals depicted along their bowls and/or stems. A number of the design representat-

ions (*ie* the original drawings submitted at the time of registration) bore the titles given to the pipes, though some of these had been partially or totally obscured by the Board of Trade at the time of registration. Even so it has been possible to identify some of the titles of the pipes by matching the designs with a surviving Pattern Sheet, discussed below, so where possible their known names have been provided (Table 1).

Table 1. Registrations during the 1870s–1880s

Date	Number	Description	Fig ref
8 March 1873	Design no. 271114	Plain pipe with forward leaning bowl which widens at the top. Forward-leaning spur. 'London University'	8
26 March 1873	Design no. 271554	Plain pipe identical to 271114 but with normal spur. 'Little Fellow'	8
8 October 1873	Design no. 276890	Plain pipe with unusual spur consisting of two projections – one at the base of the bowl and the other parallel to the stem from the base of the bowl as with the 'Oxford' and 'Cambridge' pipes	8
8 October 1873	Design no. 276891	Plain pipe with double-projecting spur as in 276890 but with a more upright bowl	
10 January 1874	Design no. 279651	Plain pipe with double-projecting spur as in 276890 and 276891, the bowl widening towards the top and with an upward stem. Likely to be another of the University clay series.	
	Design no. 279652	Spurless plain pipe with forward-leaning bowl.	
13 June 1876	Design no. 301229	Plain pipe with sloping bowl with rats depicted along the stem, as shown below. 'Colonial Rat'	9
	Design no. 301230	Plain pipe with upright bowl with rats depicted running up it.	
	Design no. 301231	Plain pipe with upright bowl with rats depicted along both the stem and running up the bowl. 'British Rat'	10
30 September 1876	Design no. 303978	Plain pipe with forward sloping spur. 'The Araba'	11
15 November 1876	Design no. 305217	Bowl in shape of a bull's head with horns at the front and with an upward stem. 'Loving Ox'	
19 June 1877	Design no. 311049	Detachable spiked bowl with forward-leaning spur and with leaf decoration on end of clay stem part. 'Danube Bramble' or 'Bramble Bowl'. See the following discussion on the <i>Church v. Hensher</i> court case.	12
	Design no. 311050	Detachable plain bowl with decorated curved spur and with leaf decoration on end of clay stem part. 'Turko Russo'	12
6 April 1878	Design no. 320247	Detachable plain bowl with forward-leaning spur, and with leaf decoration on end of clay stem part. 'Little Duchess'	8
	Design no. 320248	Plain pipe with one rat depicted beneath bowl and another on the stem. 'Australian Rat'	8
	Design no. 320249	Spiked bowl and stem with forward-leaning spur. 'Little Danube'	8
20 December 1878	Design no. 330574	Pear-shaped bowl with two leaves at base. 'Belgian Pear'	13
27 March 1879	Design no. 333776	Bowl apparently shaped as a donkey's head, plain at top, as shown below. 'I & U Pipe'	9

17 September 1879	Design no. 339908	Detachable thorn bowl. 'Zulu Bog Thorn'. Similar to 311049 but with fluting on the end of the stem part instead of leaves.	9
5 February 1881	Design no. 366655	Plain forward-leaning bowl with thorn stem. 'XVII Century No. 1'	10
	Design no. 366656	Plain upright bowl with thorn stem, the spur placed unusually forward. 'XVII Century No. 2'	10
25 February 1882	Design no. 377562	Plain pipe with slightly twisted stem. Original title deleted in design representation and cannot be read.	
12 January 1884	Rd. No. 223	Detachable thorn bowl with four spur-like projections at end of stem part facing the mouthpiece.	
11 August 1885	Rd. No. 31279	Detachable plain bowl with a few thorns and four spur-like projections at end of stem part facing the mouthpiece. Similar to Rd. No. 223 but with fewer thorns.	
	Rd. No. 31280	Briar type bowl that widens half way up and then tapers inwards again, and with four spur-like projections at end of stem part facing the mouthpiece. 'Chancellor'. Apparently still in production in 1890. ¹⁴	
2 June 1886	Rd. No. 50173	Detachable type bowl with very long forward-leaning spur, and with a leaf type decoration in middle of stem where it widens (representing the detachable style end of stem).	

The means of identifying registered products at that time was by a *diamond registration mark*, whereby a series of letters and numbers are used to identify the date of registration. Hence most of the registered pipes made within Church's workshop have this type of mark stamped upon them. This system continued in use until 1884, when *Registered Numbers* began to be used, and hence the few later ones he registered are of the latter type. Ebenezer Church submitted his final registered design in June 1886 — only a month before he died. The designs he registered are listed here by their date of registration to make the distinction between the diamond registrations and Registered Numbers less problematic.

In early October 1877 Ebenezer Church took pipe maker William Hensher to court, for copying his 'Danube Bramble' design (registered on 19 June of that year). Church had discovered that Hensher was producing copies of his pipes and in September visited Hensher's workshop in Mount Street, Bethnal Green and purchased three dozen. William Hensher's wife Ann had served him and confirmed that her husband had made them. The court ruled that Hensher's pipes were not sufficiently different to warrant originality, and he was fined £5 plus costs, in default of which he was to be jailed.¹⁵ There is only one other known case where a pipe maker was taken to court over the infringement of a registered design, this case

concerning London makers Charles Crop and Harry William Baker in 1888.¹⁶

It was also in 1877 that Ebenezer Church advertised (Fig 6) in a monthly trade journal called *The Tobacco Trade Review*, stating he was a 'Designer and Manufacturer of High-Class Tobacco Pipes'.

A circular issued by Church in 1878 proudly announced some of his patterns. Headed 'E. CHURCH – Designer in Tobacco Pipes' he proudly proclaimed that he was: 'Inventor of the celebrated University Pipes, the British, Foreign and Colonial Rats, the unique Palestine Clays, the Lowing Ox, the Danube Bramble, the Turko-Russo, Duchess of Middlesex & c.' He also very usefully added: 'A Specimen Sheet of Patterns may be seen on the Platforms (either side) of all Metropolitan Railway Stations, from Portland Road to Aldgate.'

One of these advertising posters has recently come to light (Fig 7). Entitled 'CHURCH'S PATTERN SHEET OF TOBACCO PIPES', it comprises 64 illustrations of his pipes, most of which are reproduced in detail within Figs 8–13 (though one of the named pipes, entitled the 'Little Palestine', is shown twice, with different engravings). This Pattern Sheet, which seems to have been pasted up from a series of pages of pipe designs (including some placed sideways to make them fit), appears to have been issued sometime after mid-1879.

Both the circular and the Pattern Sheet

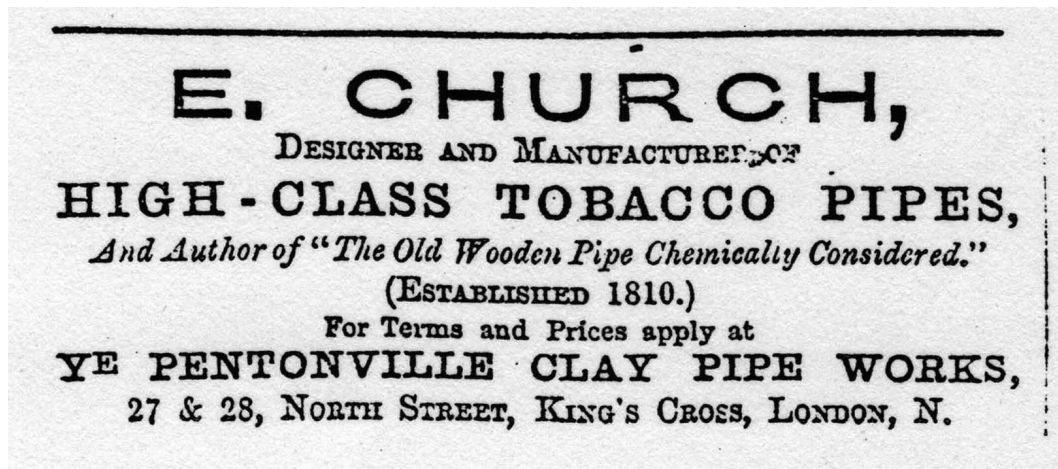


Fig 6. Advertisement published within *The Tobacco Trade Review*, 10 November 1877

also refer to the above court case, stating that:

The excellence of our goods has induced some unscrupulous tradesmen to imitate our patterns – vide ‘The Times’ October 5th 1877, for the report of a case where a person was fined £5 and £2 4s costs for fraudulently imitating one of our registered designs. Every genuine pipe has the mark ‘CHURCH’ thereon.

The fact that the pipe patterns upon the poster are named is extremely useful in attributing contemporary names to styles of clay

pipes. A surviving Price List (Fig 14), dated May 1879, provides even more detail regarding Church’s products. By analysing both the Pattern Sheet and Price List we can build up an accurate picture of Church’s products. Surviving ephemera of this nature from the trade of clay pipe making is extremely rare, and this lack of documentation from actual pipe makers can make detailed research problematic.

Most of the designs shown on the Pattern Sheet poster are also named within the Price List. Table 2 summarises these. The only pipes on the poster that are *not* included

Table 2. Summary of named pipe designs issued by Ebenezer Church

Name of design	Pattern number	Registered	1879 pattern sheet	1879 price list
[Danube] Bramble bowl		Yes	Yes	Yes
[Danube] Bramble pipe		Yes	Yes	Yes
Abyssinian	160			Yes
Aleppo [cigar holder]			Yes	Yes
Anxious Jockey			Yes	Yes
Araba		Yes	Yes	Yes
Armadillo	205			Yes
Athenian			Yes	Yes
Australian rat [cigar holder]		Yes	Yes	Yes
Basket	115			Yes
Basket	219			Yes
Belgian Pear	99	Yes	Yes	Yes
Belgium Straw	49		Yes	Yes
Belgium Straw (or Fish Tail)				Yes
Bengal Pipe			Yes	Yes

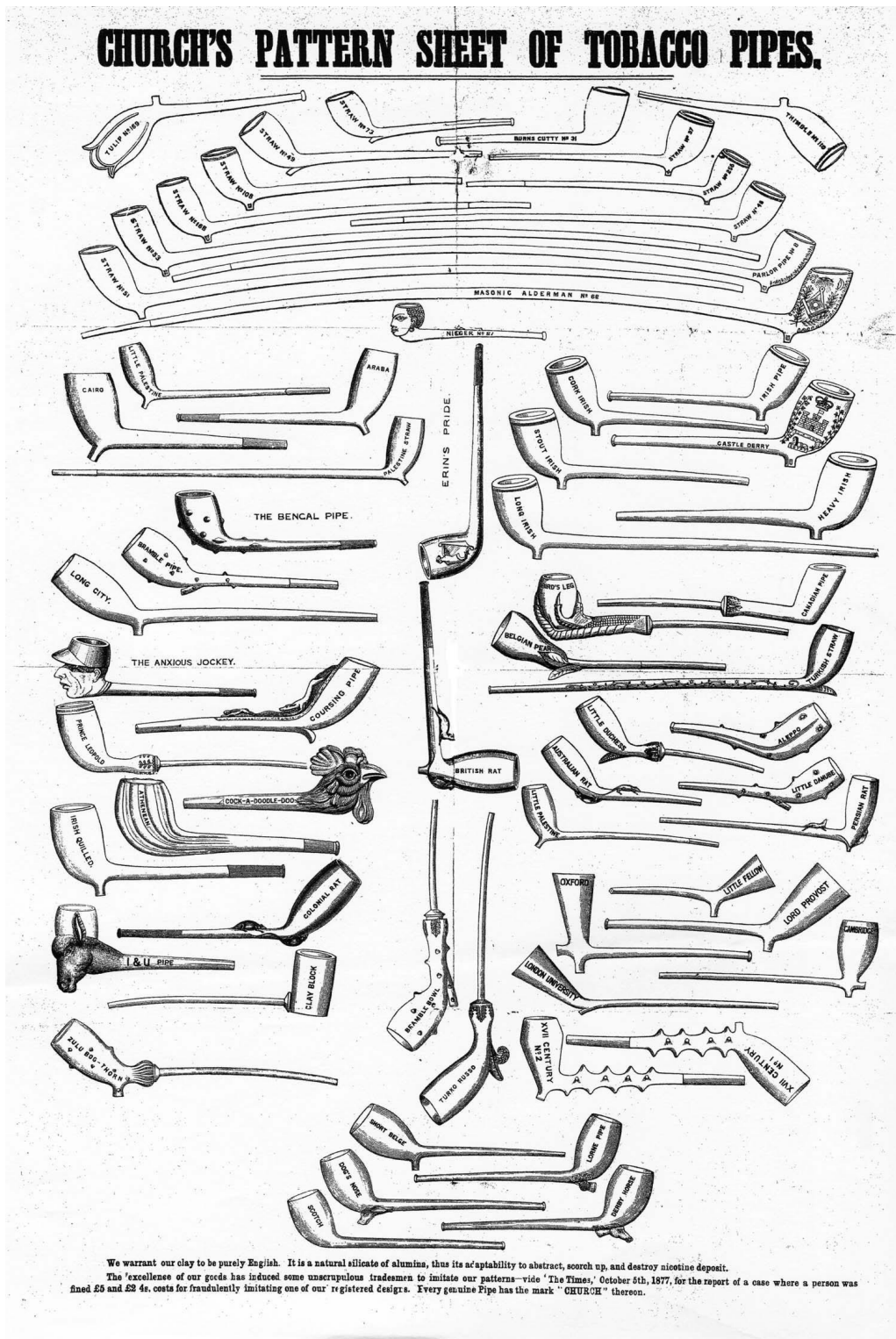


Fig 7. Church's Pattern Sheet (much reduced in size)



Name of design	Pattern number	Registered	1879 pattern sheet	1879 price list
Billiard Straw, flat point	57		Yes	Yes
Bird's Leg			Yes	Yes
Branch				Yes
Branch Belge	59			Yes
British Rat		Yes	Yes	
Broseley Straw, 15 inches	53		Yes	Yes
Broseley Straw, 15 inches	114			Yes
Broseley Straw, 8 inches	168		Yes	Yes
Broseley Straw, round point	108		Yes	Yes
Burns Cutty, best	31		Yes	Yes
Burns Cutty, common	176			Yes
Cairo			Yes	Yes
Cam Le Grand				Yes
Cambridge			Yes	Yes
Canadian Pipe			Yes	Yes
Castle Derry			Yes	Yes
Castle Derry	243			Yes
Claw	153			Yes
Clay Block			Yes	Yes
Cluster of Grapes	165			Yes
Cock a Doodle Do [cockerel]			Yes	
Colonial Rat		Yes	Yes	
Cork Irish			Yes	Yes
Cork Irish [with heel]	109			Yes
Cork Irish, without heel	64			Yes
Coursing Pipe			Yes	Yes
Cow	90			Yes
Crane and Pine	170			Yes
Death's Head [skull]	111			Yes
Derby Horse	178		Yes	Yes
Dog's Nose	161		Yes	Yes
Duchess of Middlesex				Yes
Dutch Straw	256		Yes	Yes
Dutch Straw, 10 inches	48		Yes	Yes
Elephant	227			Yes
Erin's Pride			Yes	Yes
Farmer's Pest, British				Yes
Farmer's Pest, Colonial				Yes
Fox and Grapes	185			Yes
Gladstone Straw	73		Yes	Yes
Globe	71			Yes
Grapes and Vine	156			Yes
Heavy Irish			Yes	Yes
Heavy Irish	200			Yes
Helmet	94			Yes
Hotel Straw, 15 inches	51		Yes	Yes
I & U Pipe		Yes	Yes	Yes
Irish Quilled			Yes	
Irish Pipe			Yes	Yes
Irish Pipe	58			Yes
Lily	220			Yes

Name of design	Pattern number	Registered	1879 pattern sheet	1879 price list
Little Danube [cigar holder]		Yes	Yes	Yes
Little Duchess [cigar holder]		Yes	Yes	Yes
Little Fellow [cigar holder]			Yes	Yes
Little Palestine [cigar holder]			Yes	Yes
London University			Yes	Yes
Long City			Yes	Yes
Long Irish	18		Yes	Yes
Long Palestine				Yes
Lord Provost			Yes	Yes
Lowing Ox		Yes		Yes
Major Cutty, best	107			Yes
Marquis of Lorne	183		Yes	Yes
Masonic Alderman, 18 inches	69		Yes	Yes
Milo Scotch	65			Yes
Mosaic Head	163			Yes
Naked Leg	189			Yes
Nigger (Little Nigger)	87		Yes	Yes
Nigger's Head [Negro]	79			Yes
Owl	194			Yes
Oxford			Yes	Yes
Palestine Straw			Yes	Yes
Parlor Pipe, 15 inches	8		Yes	Yes
Pear – see Belgium Pear				
Persian Rat [cigar holder]			Yes	Yes
Prince Leopold			Yes	Yes
Punch's Head	186			Yes
Rustic	184			Yes
Rustic	172			Yes
Scotch (Cutty)	117		Yes	Yes
Shepherdess	85			Yes
Short Belge	36		Yes	Yes
Squatter	63			Yes
Stout Irish	174		Yes	Yes
Straight Rustic	52			Yes
Superior Irish				Yes
Thimble	110		Yes	Yes
Thorn Pipe	47			Yes
Tourist				Yes
Tulip	50			Yes
Tulip (Belge)	169		Yes	Yes
Turkish Straw			Yes	Yes
Turko Russo		Yes	Yes	Yes
Wild Horse of the Prairie				Yes
XVII Century No. 1		Yes	Yes	Yes
XVII Century No. 2		Yes	Yes	
Zulu Bog Thorn		Yes	Yes	

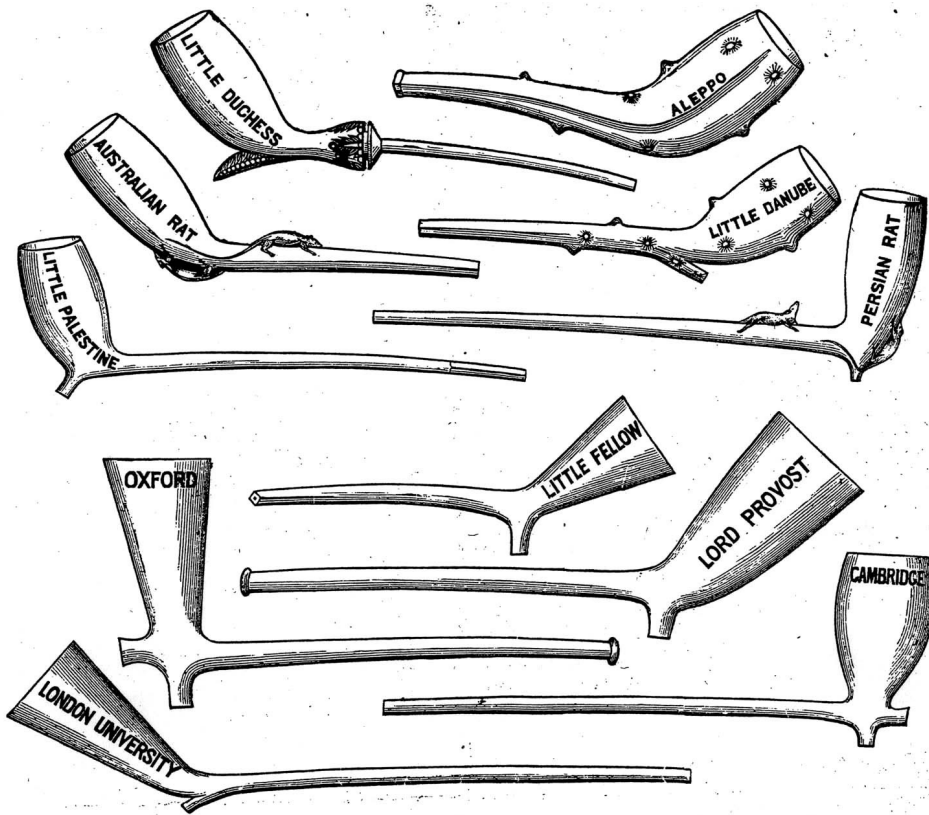


Fig 8. Details of some of the pipes shown on Church's Pattern Sheet

within the 1879 Price List are the 'British Rat', 'Colonial Rat', 'Cock a Doodle Doo', 'I & U Pipe', 'XVII Century' Nos 1 and 2, and the 'Zulu Bog Thorn'. Conversely, it is also notable that six of his registered designs submitted prior to the date of the poster do not appear on it — namely Design Nos 276890 (forward-leaning plain bowl with two projections at base), 279651 (same as the previous but with an upward stem), 279652 (plain spurless pipe), 301229 and 310230 (both with rats running up the bowl), and 305217 (likely to be the one titled 'Loving Ox'). The last is surprising as it is an elaborate pipe and therefore suitable for advertising purposes.

It is notable that many pipes were provided with thematic names, such as place names connected with the colonial British Empire, animals and birds, Irish styles (to cater for the Irish market, especially within Britain), Broseley styles (named after the famous pipe

making region in Shropshire), and various Universities — the latter amongst Church's 'Specialite Clays'. The most expensive of these, at 2 shillings per dozen or 24 shillings per gross, were the plated and bone mounted examples. Other expensive pipes, at up to 20 shillings per gross, were the 'Superior Clay Bowls' — detachable clay bowls with moveable separate stems made of goose bone. These included his 'Danube Bramble' model and the pipe named the 'Duchess of Middlesex'. The latter may be a larger version of the 'Little Duchess' advertised within the Pattern Sheet.

It seems that at least some of the drawings for the Pattern Sheet must have been compiled by June 1876 since the engravings used for the design representations of the pipes registered from this date are identical. Church then continued to use the same engravings for his future registrations, the last ones to be registered from those depicted

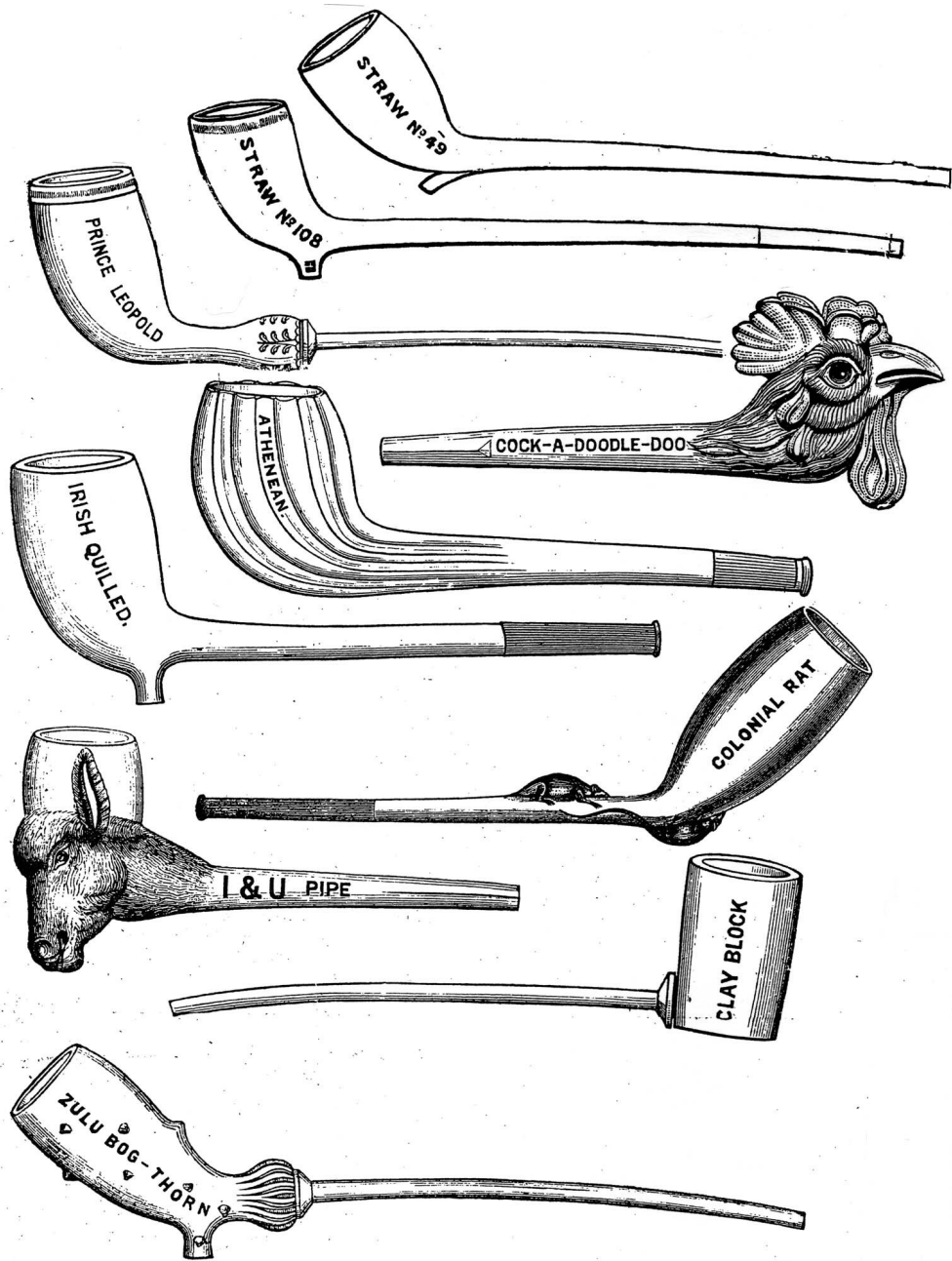


Fig 9. Details of some of the pipes shown on Church's Pattern Sheet

on the Pattern Sheet being the two XVII Century thorn pipes registered in February 1881. The fact that the registered designs issued from March 1879 onwards (*ie* the 'I & U Pipe') are not included within the

Price List suggests that they were marketed following its publication in May of that year, adding credence to the suggestion that the Pattern Sheet may be slightly later in date. However there is no reason why Church

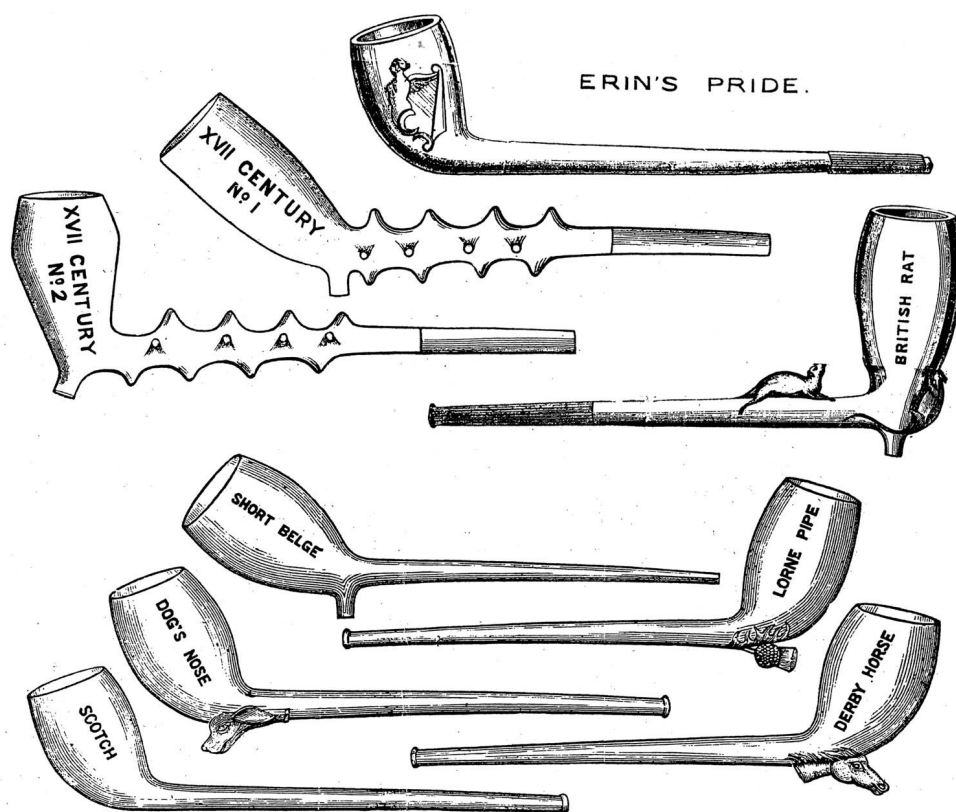


Fig 10. Details of some of the pipes shown on Church's Pattern Sheet

could not have registered some of his designs after its publication. Not surprisingly, the later registrations from February 1882 through to June 1886, including the 'Chancellor', do not appear within the Pattern Sheet, though the same engraver was clearly used for the design representations.

The Price List also itemises his 'Cigar Holders'. These pipes had smaller bowls (allowing a cigar or cigarette to be inserted) and were aimed at the female market. Most of the above classes of pipes were sold by the dozen or gross whereas his cheaper 'Unpolished Clays', 'Fancy Clays', 'Bent Clays', and 'Irish Clays' were sold by the gross only. Many patterns are identified, and the model or catalogue numbers are also shown for 60 of them. These reveal that by May 1879 Church had issued at least 256 named patterns, though, interestingly, no pattern names or numbers appear on any surviving examples

of his pipes. These include the 'Elephant', the 'Crane and Pine', the 'Naked Leg', and the 'Cluster of Grapes'. In the Price List these are numbered 227, 170, 189, and 165 respectively, but the actual pipes only bear the incuse writing CHURCH and LONDON along their stems with no other identifying marks. Some of the differences between the patterns are very subtle. Examples are his plain 'University' clays registered between March 1873 and January 1874, and the various rat pipes registered in June 1876 and April 1878. The longer stemmed 'Straw Pipes', named the 'Parlor' [*sic*] (No. 8), the 'Hotel' (No. 51), and the 'Broseley' (No. 53) — all 15 inches long — only differ by virtue of the decoration (or lack of) on the spurs and, in the case of the 'Parlor' pipe, some seam decoration. Hence without the combination of the evidence from the surviving Pattern Sheet, the Price List, and the representations

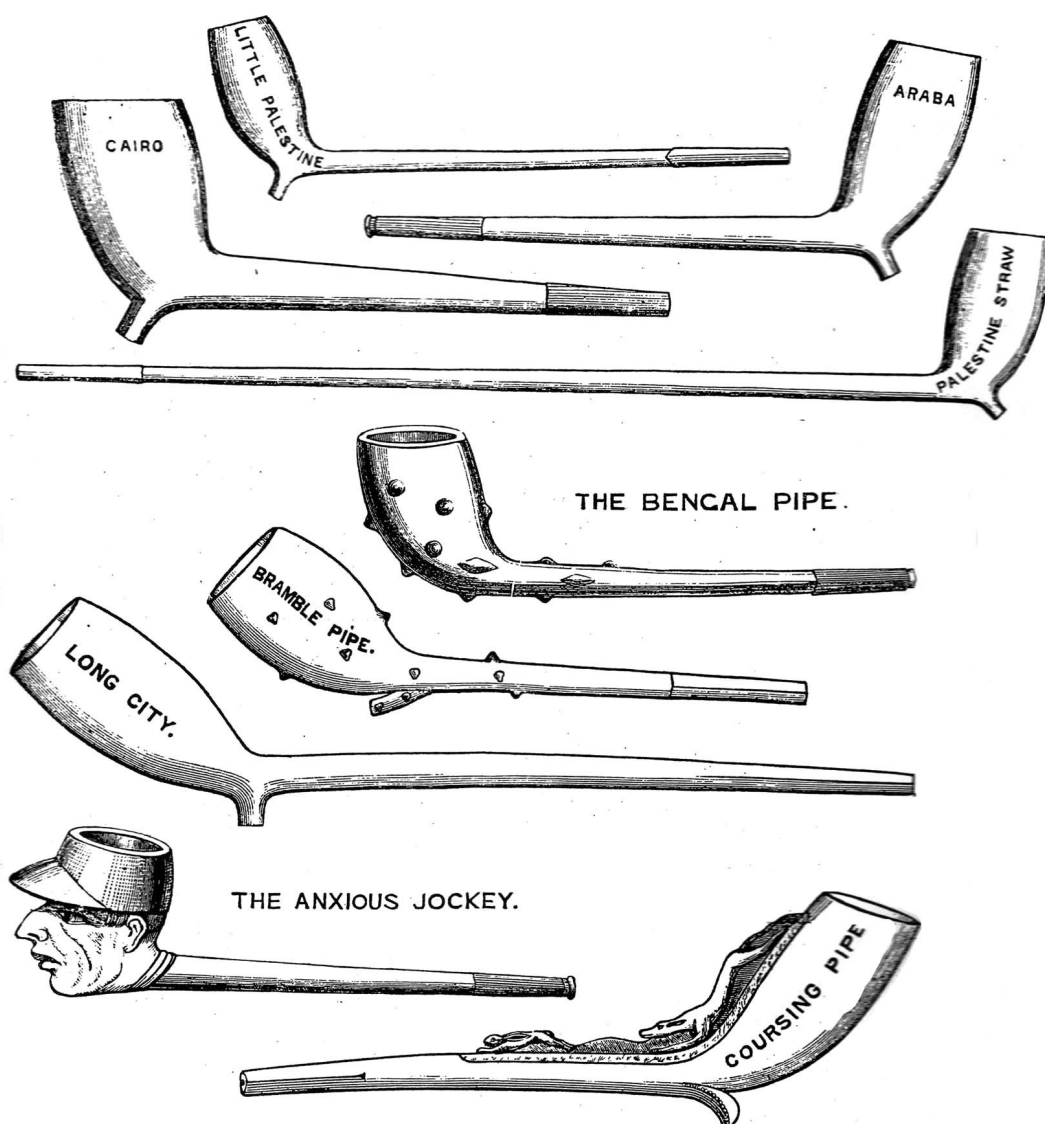


Fig 11. Details of some of the pipes shown on Church's Pattern Sheet

submitted for his registered designs, it would have been impossible to identify the majority of the titles Ebenezer Church provided for his pipes.

The market for clay pipes was such that many makers produced similar styles of clay pipes to each other, even to the point of infringing copyrights as already cited in the example of the 'Danube Bramble'. Interestingly, the 'Coursing Pipe' made by

Church depicting a greyhound chasing a rabbit (as shown in Fig 11) is very similar to a design registered by Manchester pipe maker Thomas Holland in October 1877, while the unregistered 'Anxious Jockey' pipe (also shown in Fig 11) was also produced by a number of other pipe makers, including the Manchester firms of Joseph Holland & Sons (No. 193) and Edward Pollock (No. 60), along with the Macclesfield firm of Turpin

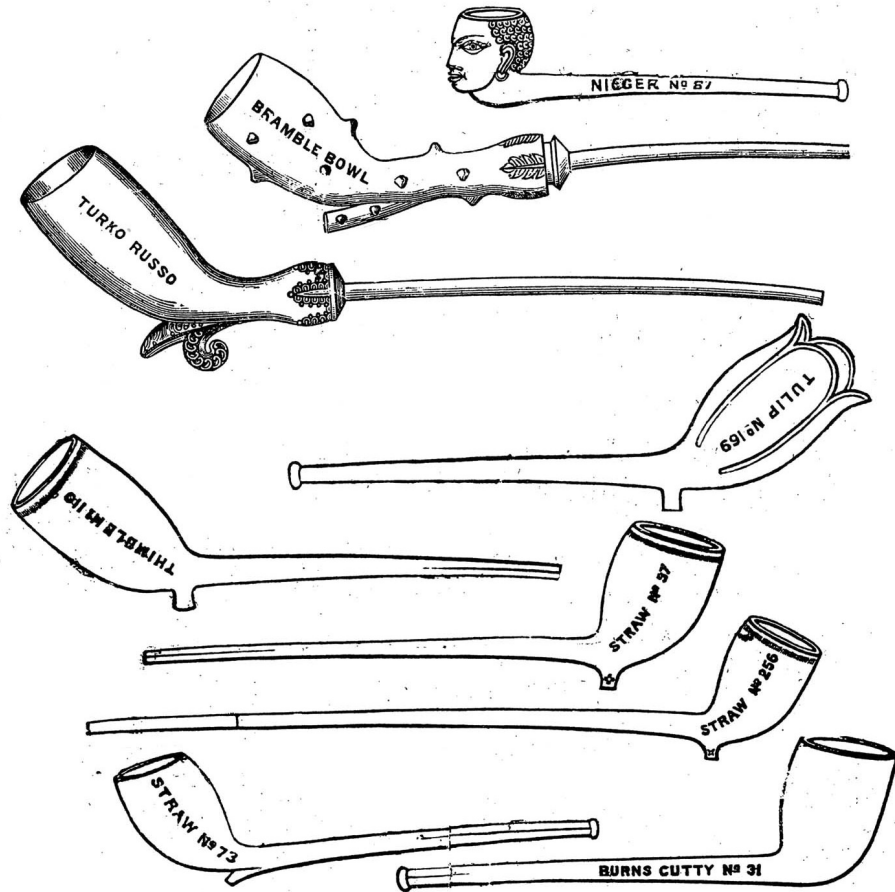


Fig 12. Details of some of the pipes shown on Church's Pattern Sheet

& Sons (No. 106). Church's concept for the perpendicular double-spurred pipes as with his 'Oxford' and 'Cambridge' University clays was replicated by Plumstead pipe maker Henry Dudman during the 1880s, though his example had a bowl decorated with a parachutist or balloonist on either side rather than being plain. Church must have been proud of his 'University Clays' for he was again advertising these within *The Tobacco Trade Review* during 1882. The 'Milo Scotch' pipe made by Church is named after the prominent tobacconists called Milo based in The Strand, while many makers produced the Broseley, Dutch, and Irish styles — such was their reputation as good sellers. It is also worth noting that Church provided the

option of supplying pipes in 'Toughened Clays' that were 'specially prepared to withstand the grip of the teeth' (clays soon wore down at the mouthpiece with constant use).

A surviving box label further confirms that the pipes were sold by the gross, and also that, like his father-in-law John Ford and other members of the Ford family in Stepney, he was producing pipes for export (Fig 15). This is again apparent from the many colonial names given for his pipes. His literature also reveals that he called his manufactory 'The Pentonville Pipe Works'.

Some of the surviving pipes made by Church bear diamond-registration marks in accordance with the designs he registered; however there are cases of pipes bearing the

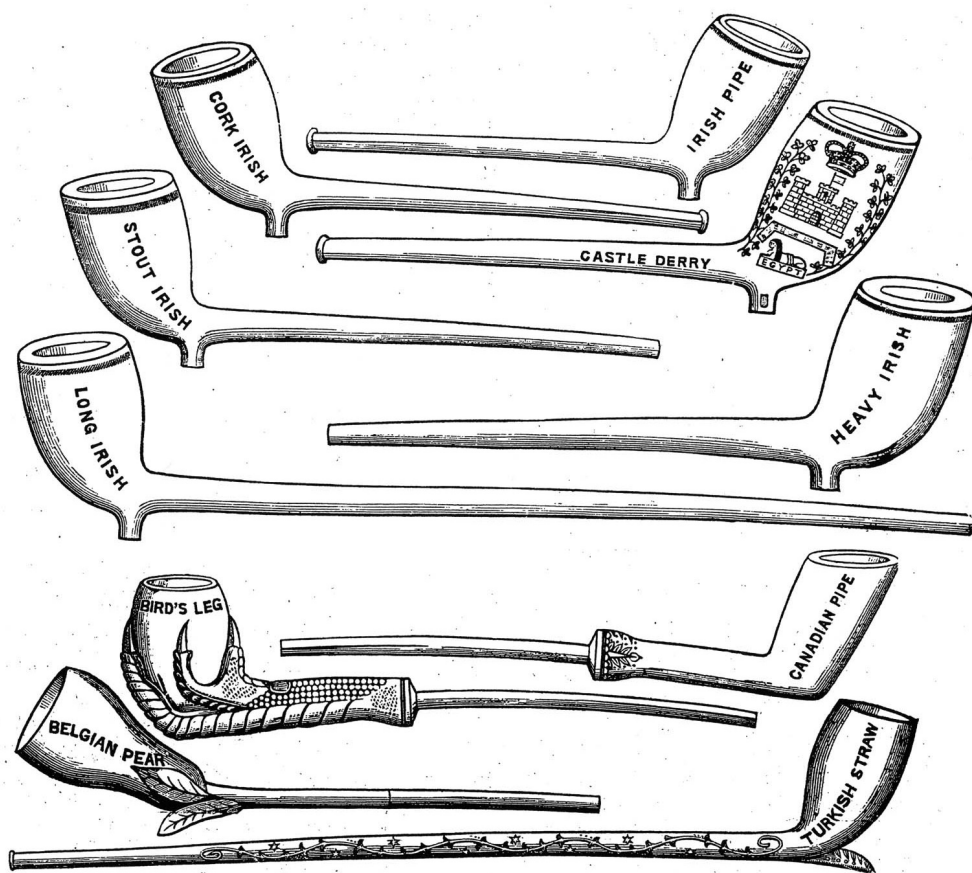


Fig 13. Details of some of the pipes shown on Church's Pattern Sheet

incorrect mark, merely reflecting that the various stamps for these must have become inadvertently muddled. An example of the donkey head, for example, registered on 27 March 1879 is known that is incorrectly marked with the diamond registration bearing the date of 10 January 1874 (two plain pipes were in fact registered on this date).¹⁷ Surviving pipes with bowls shaped as heads of horses, elephants and birds are also known, along with a range of bird's claw designs, some of which are shown in Figs 16–17.

Perhaps rather surprisingly only two of these more elaborate 'Fancy Clays' or 'Bent Clays' were registered. These were the 'Loving Ox' of 1876 and the above mentioned donkey head of 1879 which Church named the 'I & U Pipe' (the significance of this wording is not

known unless it simply means 'I and You'). The reason for this lack of registration of the more elaborate styles is possibly because a number of other pipe makers, such as Thomas Holland of Manchester and Charles Crop of London, were already producing elaborately shaped pipes by this period.

Deaths of Ebenezer and Sarah Church

On 1 December 1882, just over four months since his own father had died at the age of 83 years, Ebenezer made his last will. A photograph taken around this time shows how much he had aged (Fig 18). According to one of his granddaughters this was due in part to the anxiety caused when his sister-in-law 'forged her husband's signature and disposed of a large portion of the [family's]

PRICE LIST.

E. CHURCH,

Ye Pentonville Workes, 27 & 28, North Street, King's Cross, N.

TERMS—CASH ON DELIVERY IN LONDON.

Country Customers are respectfully informed that their Orders can only be replied to by Invoice. The Goods cannot be sent away from the Works until a Remittance has been received for the amount. P.O.O. to be made payable to Ebenezer Church, Head Office, London. Cheques to be crossed "National Bank."

CORRECTED TO MAY 1879.

<i>Specialite Clays.</i>		Per Doz.	Per Gross	<i>Unpolished Clays.</i>		In boxes containing one gross each.
London University, extra finished and quilled		0 10	10 0	Assorted patterns, 12 varieties (A)	-	3 6
do. do. polished only		0 6	6 0	do. do. do. (B)	-	3 0
Orford University, extra finished and quilled		0 10	10 0	do. do. do. (C)	-	2 6
do. do. polished only		0 6	6 0	do. do. 6 varieties (D)	-	1 8
Cambridge University, extra finished and quilled		0 10	10 0	Straw Pipes do. (E)	-	2 6
do. do. polished only		0 6	6 0	Irish Clays do. (F)	-	3 0
Lord Provost, extra finished and quilled		0 10	10 0	Superior Small Pipes, 4 varieties (G)	-	2 6
do. do. polished only		0 6	6 0	Belgian Straws (or fish tails)	-	No. 49 3 0
Belgian Pear, extra finished and quilled		1 0	12 0	Broseley do. round point	-	No. 108 2 6
do. do. polished only		0 6	6 0	do. do. best quality	-	3 0
Danube Bramble, extra finished and quilled		1 0	12 0	Billiard do. flat point	-	No. 57 2 6
do. do. polished only		0 6	6 0	Gladstone do. - - - -	-	No. 73 2 6
The Tourist, scoured and quilled		0 10	10 0	Dutch do. - - - -	-	No. 256 2 6
Superior Irish Clays, scoured and quilled		0 10	10 0	Dutch do. - - - -	-	No. 48 2 9
do. do. smaller size		0 7	7 0	Broseley do. 10 in. long	-	No. 168 2 9
Wild Horse of the Prairie, plated rims		1 2	14 0	do. do. 8 "	-	No. 53 3 9
Cam-le-Grand, plated and bone mounted		2 0	24 0	do. do. 15 "	-	No. 114 3 3
do. do. scoured and rubber tipped		1 0	12 0	do. do. 15 "	-	No. 51 3 3
Long City Clays, plated and bone mounted		2 0	24 0	Parlor Pipes 15 "	-	No. 8 2 10
Farmer's Pest (British) plated and bone mounted		2 0	24 0	Masonic Alderman 18 "	-	No. 69 5 6
do. do. plated and goose quilled		1 8	20 0	Thorn Pipes - - - -	-	No. 47 1 8
do. do. quill mounted only		1 0	12 0	Tulips - - - -	-	No. 50 1 8
do. do. (Colonial) plated and bone mounted		2 0	24 0	Helmets - - - -	-	No. 94 1 8
do. do. plated and goose quilled		1 8	20 0	Baskets - - - -	-	No. 115 1 8
do. do. quill mounted only		1 0	12 0	Scotch Cutty - - - -	-	No. 117 1 8
Specialite Clays in nearly every variety, scoured or polished and polished goose bone quill mounted		1 0	12 0	Grapes and Vine - - - -	-	No. 156 1 8
Long Palestine Straws, the Araba, Erin's Pride and the Bengal Pipe, plated rims		1 2	14 0	Rustics - - - -	-	No. 184 1 8
Palestine Straws, or Turkish do., polished only		0 6	6 0	The Lily - - - -	-	No. 220 1 8
do. do. packed in separate boxes, each containing 1 doz.		0 7	6 6			
Little Fellows, polished only		0 6	6 0	<i>Fancy Clays.</i>		
The Cairo ditto		6 0	6 0	Burns Cutty, common	-	No. 176 4 10
The Araba ditto		6 0	6 0	do. do. best	-	No. 31 2 0
The Anxious Jockey ditto		6 0	6 0	Major Cutty, best	-	No. 107 2 0
The Athenian ditto		6 0	6 0	Shepherdess ditto	-	No. 85 2 4
Erin's Pride ditto		6 0	6 0	Short Belge	-	No. 36 2 6
The Bengal Pipe ditto		6 0	6 0	Branch ditto	-	No. 59 2 6
Coursing Pipe ditto		6 0	6 0	Thimbles	-	No. 110 2 6
Canadian Pipe ditto		6 0	6 0	Dog's Nose	-	No. 161 2 6
Bird's Legs ditto		0 6	6 0	Milo Scotch	-	No. 65 2 6
The Lowing Ox ditto		0 7	7 0	Fox and Grapes	-	No. 185 3 0
Toughened Clays, specially prepared to withstand the grip of the teeth		0 6	6 0	Armadillo	-	No. 205 3 0
				Derby Horse	-	No. 178 3 0
<i>Superior Clay Bowls (moveable stems)</i>				Marquis of Lorne	-	No. 183 3 0
The Danube Bramble, goose bone stem		1 3	15 0	Little Nigger	-	No. 87 3 0
best do. long bones		1 8	20 0	Funch's Head	-	No. 186 3 0
Clay Blocks, best long bones		1 8	20 0	Straight Rustic	-	No. 62 3 0
Duchess of Middlesex, large size goose bone stems		1 3	15 0	Tulip Belge	-	No. 169 3 0
do. do. middle size do. do.		1 3	15 0			
do. do. small do. do.		1 3	15 0	<i>Bent Clays. Carved or Plain.</i>		
Prince Leopold, goose		1 3	15 0	Abyssinians	-	No. 160 3 6
Turko-Russo do.		1 3	15 0	Naked Leg	-	No. 189 3 6
Bird's Legs do.		1 3	15 0	Crane and Pine	-	No. 170 3 6
Canadian Pipes do.		1 3	15 0	Cluster of Grapes	-	No. 165 3 6
Any of the above if with best long bones and extra finish 1s. 8d. per doz. 20s. gross. If mounted with plated rims 8s. per gross extra.				Mosaic Heads	-	No. 163 3 6
Superior Leather Cases		from 9/-	to 12 0	Pears	-	No. 99 3 6
<i>Cigar-holders.</i>				Claws	-	No. 153 3 6
Aleppo polished and plated rims		1 1	13 0	Owls	-	No. 194 3 6
Australian Rat do.		1 1	13 0	Cows	-	No. 90 3 6
Persian do. do.		1 1	13 0	Rustics	-	No. 172 3 6
Little Danube do.		1 1	13 0	Death's Heads	-	No. 111 3 6
do. Palestine do.		1 1	13 0	Nigger's Heads	-	No. 79 3 6
do. Duchess. with goose-bone stem		1 3	15 0	Globes	-	No. 71 3 6
do. do. if with plated rims extra		0 7	7 0	Squatters	-	No. 63 3 6
The above six patterns packed in separate 1/2-do. boxes, 7d. each		1 2	13 6	Baskets	-	No. 219 3 6
Any of the above Cigar-holders, if without goose-bones or plated rims, polished only		0 6	6 0	Elephants	-	No. 227 3 6

If smaller quantities than one gross of Unpolished Pipes or one doz. of Specialite Clays are required, an extra charge per doz. will be made, except A, B, C, D, E, F and G mixture on List, which are kept already packed in stock and are specially for the London trade.

Fig. 14. Price List issued by Ebenezer Church May 1879

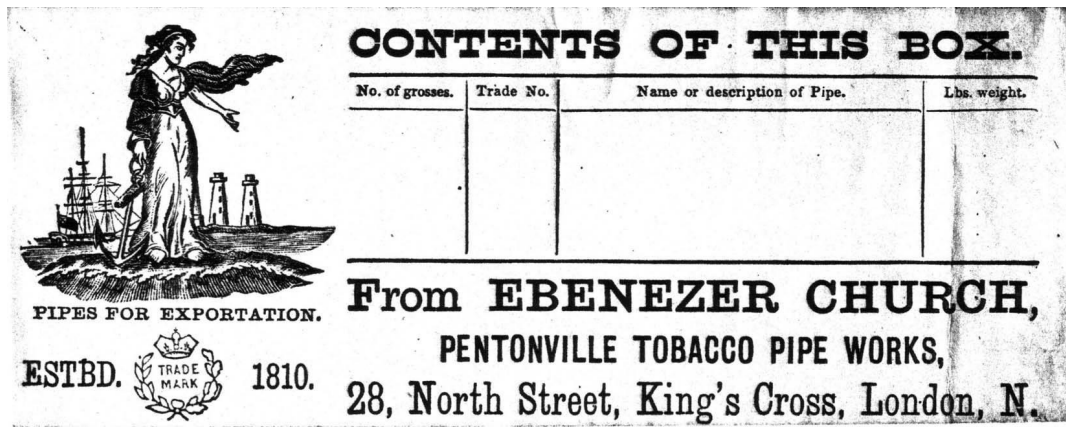


Fig 15. Box label used by Ebenezer Church



Fig 16. Examples of surviving clay pipes made by Ebenezer Church (Peter Hammond collection)



Fig 17. Examples of surviving clay pipes made by Ebenezer Church (Peter Hammond collection)

money' from the bank account shared by Ebenezer and his brother.¹⁸

Ebenezer Church died less than four years later on 8 July 1886 at the relatively young age of 56 years, being buried at Abney Park Cemetery in Stoke Newington. Six days after his death Sarah Church issued a letter (Fig 19) informing customers of the news of her husband's demise, and announcing that she was to continue the business, in accordance with the wishes of her late husband. She is listed as a pipe manufacturer at 27 and 28 North Street until 1890 and thereafter at 23 and 25 North Street — when the street numbering changed to odds and evens. Old maps show that the street comprised substantial terraced houses, some of which are still standing, though the site of the pipe making workshop has long been demolished.¹⁹

The 1891 census describes Sarah, then aged 55, as a pipe manufacturer, with ten of her children in residence, plus a servant. Only

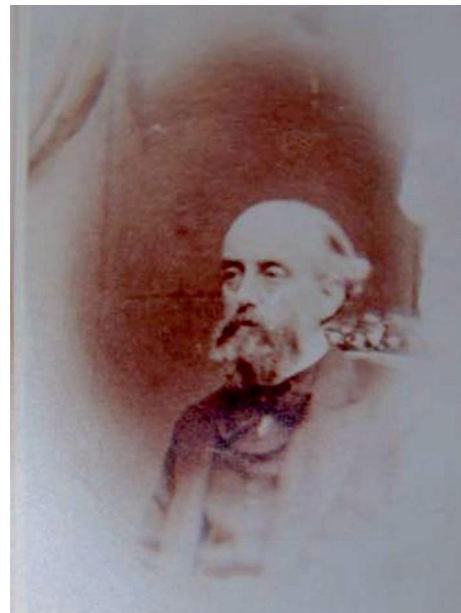


Fig 18. Ebenezer Church in his 50s

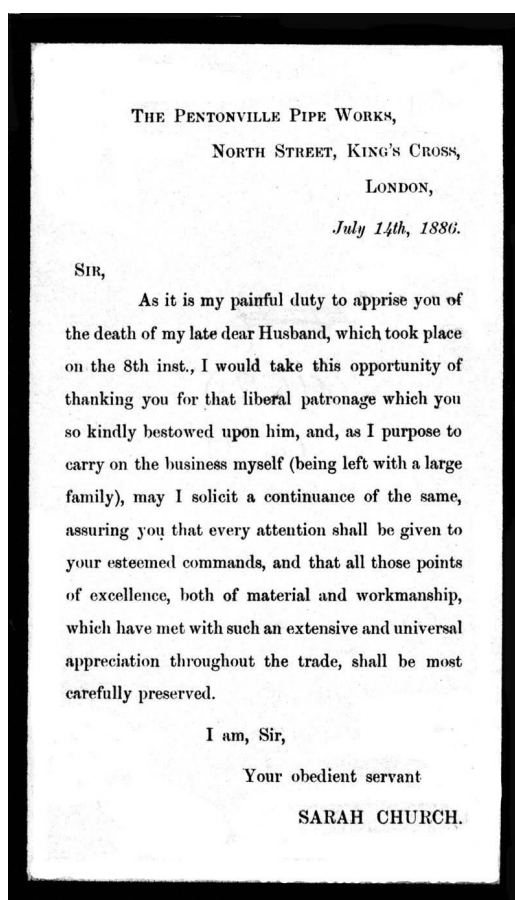


Fig 19. Letter issued by Sarah Church after her husband's death, July 1886

eldest son Ebenezer John Church, then 31, was involved in the business at the time, being described as a pipe manufacturer manager, while a number of employees were residing very nearby. He actually registered a couple of further designs of pipes along with two patents for pipes with a spiral bore. These are again listed in date order (Table 3).²⁰

Table 3. Registrations during the 1890s

Date	Number	Description
3 June 1890	Rd. No. 150285	Bowl of pipe supported by small claw or paw. No spur.
22 September 1890	Patent No. 14,920 of 1890	For 'a spiral bore clay tobacco pipe or stem' which 'consists of making clay pipes with a helical or spiral bore. The bore is made by twisting or screwing a helical bore through the stem'.
4 October 1890	Patent No. 15,714 of 1890	For 'a spiral plug tobacco pipe or stem'. Specification not completed.

Sarah Church continued to manufacture pipes with her son until her death at the age of 57 years on 13 July 1893. She was also buried in Abney Park Cemetery, which was London's main non-conformist burial ground at the time. Unfortunately no gravestone survives.²¹ Within a year the manufactory at 23 North Street was put up for sale.

Auction of the pipe manufactory

A fascinating piece of ephemera that survives within the Church family is a poster concerning the auction of the workshop and its contents on 7 June 1894 (Fig 20).²² This poster is very detailed; it lists the paraphernalia of a pipe maker, including moulds, benches, ginheads,²³ screws,²⁴ seggers (otherwise known as sagggers),²⁵ vices,²⁶ a covered van, cob and harness, and a 1,000 gross of tobacco pipes. Very usefully there is a complete inventory of the entire contents of the workshop, which itemises a total of 260 pipe moulds and plungers,²⁷ tallying well with the total number of patterns known to have been in production in 1879. Furthermore there were thirteen pipe making machines and benches, demonstrating the maximum number of hands that could have been employed within the workshop at any one time, and the precise figure of 1,072 gross of pipes, which equals 154,368 individual examples. As a further 3,456 pipes were contained within the 'seggers' this provides a grand total of at least 157,824 pipes. In addition there were ten boxes of china clay, 5 cwt of prepared pipe clay, an 'old chaff-cutting machine',²⁸ 50 gross of goose-bone corks,²⁹ an office writing-table and even a clock. There was also a total of 164 'seggers' and 309 boards.³⁰

Undoubtedly the pipe making apparatus and moulds would have been purchased by other pipe makers (a couple of the moulds even being known to survive today³¹), while



Fig 20. Auction notice for Church's clay pipe manufactory, 1894



Fig 21. Ebenezer John Church

wholesalers and tobacconists would have purchased the actual pipes. It is not known why the contents of the workshop were sold, but clearly the business had been wound down and there were perhaps also debts to clear.

Despite this, Ebenezer John Church (Fig 21) continued to manufacture pipes but moved his workshop elsewhere, being listed in Directories at nearby 23 White Lion Street (between Penton Street and Islington High Street) from 1903 to 1913. He resided at 7 Holford Square off Holford Street (to the south of Pentonville Road), where he was described in both the 1901 and 1911 censuses as a 'Clay Tobacco Pipe Manufacturer' [employer], with his wife Georgina and two sons. He was also similarly described when he registered two gas fire gadgets in February 1902 (Rd. Nos 387175 and 387176).³²

The final years of the Church pipe-making business

It is interesting that the 1901 census revealed no trace of any pipe makers at all within either

North Street or White Lion Street. However Ebenezer John Church (1859–1931) must have at least continued to retain ownership of 25 North Street (renamed Northdown Street in 1906) as he was living there again in the 1920s. In fact it would seem that he continued to make pipes until at least the mid to late 1920s. His younger brother John Wycliffe Church (1871–1953) also became involved in the pipe making business, being listed as a 'commercial traveller' when he married in 1900 and again in 1914.³³ At the time of the 1911 census, when he was living at 11 Boxworth Grove in Islington, he is confirmed as a 'clay pipe manufacturer'. His eldest daughter Doris (1901–1975) stated in a letter to her sister Ellen in 1974:³⁴

Dad and uncle Eb were in partnership at White Lion Street. They had I think two kilns there. Auntie George [this would be Ebenezer's wife Georgina] worked there with uncle, and Dad had a horse and van and sold the pipes from that. When I was a little girl, Dad used to bring home lots

of pipes, he had out boards oblong [in] shape, hammered large nails into them and my mother and grandmother used to varnish the pipes, put them over the nails, then they were put in the oven to dry off, after which they were sold. Dad used to sell quite a lot of them to public houses.

John Wycliffe — who never smoked or drank — wrote in his last letter to a friend just before he died that he sold pipes to as many as 70 public houses a day and also to police stations, but it was not known when this ceased.³⁵ His daughter Doris also said that the horses were stabled in White Lion Street. Another of his daughters, Edith (born 1909), remembered a large room ‘where men and women were sitting at long tables modelling fancy pipe heads — faces and chickens she thinks’.³⁶

Meanwhile younger daughter Ellen Joan Church (1917–1999) wrote:

I can remember visiting Uncle Eden as a child at North Street. He was extremely clever and would mould the clay into heads of notable people while we watched. He was a great collector of pipes, many of which he and my father found in the Caledonian market, and had over 5000 different types in his collection.³⁷

The latter collection was described in more detail in a newspaper article written by Ebenezer John Church, dated around September 1928 (newspaper not identified), entitled ‘My Pipe Rack of Celebrities’.³⁸ Oral tradition within the family stated that this collection was ultimately donated to a museum³⁹ but this has not been verified.

Ebenezer John Church died on 9 May 1931 at the age of 73 years, and, like his parents, was buried at Abney Park Cemetery. His address was given as 25 Northdown Street, Kings Cross both when he died and also when he had made his will in August 1922.

CONCLUSION

Pipe making was associated with North Street for around 120 years, passing through a whole succession of makers, including three generations of the Ford and Church families.

Their legacy is a multitude of surviving pipes, which will continue to surface in the archaeological record, and the fortunate survival of some unique ephemera. The latter provides a valuable insight into the study of the clay tobacco pipe making industry, including the names of the pipe styles and their prices, and the precise inventory of the contents of the workshop when it was sold.

The Church workshop in Pentonville was undoubtedly of a comparatively large scale and output when compared with the majority of other pipe making workshops in London, which explains why their pipes are commonly found not just in London but also further afield, including abroad. Furthermore, the fact that Ebenezer Church specifically manufactured some of his pipes for export, as well as officially registering some of his pipe designs, issuing circulars, and advertising his patterns on the London Underground, is testimony to his business acumen and his determination to be a forerunner in the trade.

The only contemporary London firm of clay pipe makers that grew to a larger scale than Church was that of Charles Crop & Sons, originally of Bethnal Green and Hoxton, and later of Homerton, where they built a substantial three-storey factory during the early 1880s. They were also the only other London firm to outnumber Church with their submissions for registered pipe designs.⁴⁰ Outside London it was only in cities such as Manchester, Newcastle, and Glasgow that other large scale pipe manufactories operated within the same period, and also at the famous pipe making centre of Broseley in Shropshire.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly, I would like to thank the many museums and private collectors who have continued to allow me to draw and record pipes from within their collections over the years, especially in the case of the Church pipes David Atkinson, Richard Le Cheminant, Patrick Craze, Martin Davidson, Malcolm Driscoll, Malcolm Green, David Higgins, Richard Otterbeck, Dave Rogers, Geoff Stratton, Colin Tatman, the Museum of London, and the National Pipe Archive held at the University of Liverpool (which now holds the Green and Tatman collections). I would

also like to acknowledge the various archive repositories where I have carried out research, principally the London Metropolitan Archives, the National Archives, the Guildhall Library, and the Bishopsgate Institute, as well as the custodians of Abney Park Cemetery for their assistance in locating the exact grave plot where the Church family were buried.

I would also like to thank Ken Page, a great grandson of Ebenezer Church, for additional information and photographs, and Mick Matthews for kindly allowing me to publish a copy of the Pattern Sheet in his possession. Finally, special thanks go to the late Miss Ellen J Church, granddaughter of Ebenezer Church, with whom I corresponded between 1985 and 1987, and who gave me permission to publish material surviving within her family, which has proved to be the 'icing on the cake' as far as I am concerned. I am just sorry that she did not live to see the finished result.

NOTES

- ¹ E J Church, *in lit* 20 November 1985.
- ² E J Church, *in lit* 9 November 1985.
- ³ London Metropolitan Archives [LMA]: Land Tax assessments, North Street (upper division).
- ⁴ D Wright 'London tobacco pipe makers in the Guildhall Library Trade Directories 1736–1811' in R & P Jackson (eds) *Clay Pipe Research* 2 (1991), 11–24.
- ⁵ E J Church, *in lit* 20 November 1985.
- ⁶ E J Church, *in lit* 9 November 1985 and LMA: Middlesex Deeds Registry 1844 1/716, 2/405, 8/432.
- ⁷ Own research. See also I C Walker 'Ford family of pipemakers' *The London Archaeologist* (Winter 1968), 47–8 and I C Walker *Aspects of the Clay Tobacco Pipe Making Industry from the Point of View of the Manufacturing Techniques and of the Changing Patterns of Trade and Smoking, and with Particular Reference to the Industry in Bristol* PhD thesis, University of Bath (1973), 376–81.
- ⁸ LMA: Middlesex Deeds Registry 1864 23/444, indenture of mortgage.
- ⁹ Post Office Directory.
- ¹⁰ LMA: Middlesex Deeds Registry 1867 12/910-912; indentures of lease; copies also in possession of E J Church, *in lit* 9 November 1985.
- ¹¹ E J Church, *in lit* 13 December 1985.
- ¹² Colin Tatman, *in lit* 5 October 1985 (example found in River Thames, London: Tatman collection now at National Pipe Archive held within the University of Liverpool); Amy Hill, *in lit* 10 March 2000 (example found in St Kitts, USA); Patrick Craze collection.
- ¹³ P J Hammond *Registered and Patented Clay Tobacco Pipes* (privately published, 1988; revised and reprinted from P Davey (ed) *The Archaeology of the Clay Tobacco Pipe Vol IX*, British Archaeological Reports 146(i) (1985), 29–156). A further revised and photographically enhanced edition is now in preparation.
- ¹⁴ Within my collection I have a claw bowl of the design Rd.No. 150285 but stamped 'Rd.No. 31280', indicating that this pipe was probably still in production at that time for the later design to be accidentally stamped with the wrong number.
- ¹⁵ *The Times*, 5 October 1877. Also cited by I C Walker in 'Churchwarden clay tobacco pipes and the Southorn pipemaking family of Broseley, Shropshire' *Post Medieval Archaeology* 10 (1976), 145 and in Hammond *op cit* (note 13), 14–15.
- ¹⁶ Charles Crop v. Harry William Baker, *Tobacco Trade Review*, 1 December 1888, concerning the infringement of the Buffalo Bill pipe (Rd. No. 81616) made by Crop. Baker was prevented from continuing to sell his imitations. See also Hammond *op cit* (note 13), 15–16.
- ¹⁷ As note 14.
- ¹⁸ As note 11.
- ¹⁹ According to Iain C Walker the site of 23 and 25 Northdown Street was pulled down c.1934. See note 7, 1973 thesis, 379.
- ²⁰ See note 14.
- ²¹ Exact plot checked in person on visit 21 July 2006.
- ²² The original measures 65 x 50cm, and is in pieces and very tattered. It has been photographed, tidied up and reconstructed for the purposes of this paper.
- ²³ Ginheads were the wooden handles for pressing down the metal stoppers or plungers to hollow out the bowls while the pipe mould was within the vice.
- ²⁴ Screws were for the vices in which the moulds were placed.
- ²⁵ Seggers or saggeres were the fireclay pots in which the pipes were stacked for firing.
- ²⁶ Vices were necessary for clamping the moulds tight while the gin handles were pressed down.
- ²⁷ See note 23.
- ²⁸ For providing the chaff or sawdust for packing the pipes.
- ²⁹ For fitting the goose-bone stems into the pipes.
- ³⁰ Boards were for laying out the pipes for drying prior to finishing and/or firing.
- ³¹ One of bearded man pipe in St Albans Museum (likely to have been used by the Kiff family of pipe makers there) and one half of a bird's head pipe mould that was sold in

the W D & H O Wills collection of pipes and tobacciana in May 2002, now in the D A Higgins collection.

³² See note 13.

³³ E J Church, *in lit* 28 October 1985.

³⁴ E J Church, *in lit* 13 November 1987.

³⁵ E J Church, *in lit* 9 November 1985 and 13 November 1987.

³⁶ E J Church, *in lit* 13 November 1987.

³⁷ E J Church, *in lit* 28 October 1985.

³⁸ Copy in possession of P J Hammond.

³⁹ Ken Page, *in lit* 2 May 2007.

⁴⁰ A detailed publication on the firm of Charles Crop & Sons is in preparation (2010).