

# North Devon Clay Tobacco Pipes from Land at Yelland near Barnstaple

By Heather Coleman

The following typology was derived from clay pipes believed to have been recovered from land in the vicinity of Yelland which is on the south side of the River Taw estuary approximately 6.5km west of Barnstaple in North Devon. During 2021 the author was invited by North Devon Archaeology Society (NDAS) to detail a large collection of clay pipes that had been recovered from land at Penhill Point (Coleman and Preece 2023) which is just 3km to the east of Yelland. Given the proximity of these two locations and the recent detailing of the Penhill group the author decided to create this extra typology as a valuable additional resource – this Yelland report should therefore ideally be read in conjunction with the Penhill one for a more complete typology of bowl forms from the two areas.

The Penhill pipe collection was material gathered from ploughed farmland, handed over to an NDAS member in 2021. Following this the society gathered additional material during field walking from the same known location then the group was detailed - see the 2023 report for full information (1). The Yelland group appeared for sale on an internet auction website also in 2021 and was bought in its entirety by a clay pipe researcher who kept them stored until knowledge of the Penhill group came to his attention. The author was able to acquire the group from him and form this additional typology.

When the Yelland group originally appeared for auction enquiries with the seller about the origin of this material were made, however the only information that was willingly given was that it was gathered from ploughed farmland in the vicinity of Yelland and that some of the material had also come from the estuary nearby. It is unfortunately not possible therefore to say now which plots of land it was found on or who originally collected it.

The condition of the material was very similar to that of the Penhill finds confirming that it was from ploughed soil of that general area. The estuary finds were easy to distinguish because of their appearance and this has been noted in the description on each one. The group did not include any pottery fragments, just a large number of broken bowls (several hundred) and pipe stems but in this group a number of wig curlers were found which have been detailed. It is possible that the Yelland group was the result of selective collecting of just clay pipes or any pottery found was separated out. As with the Penhill group no burnishing was noted on the bowls because the surfaces were again too weathered to tell.

It is possible that these pipe finds are derived from old practices of waste management at the time of their date. It is known from the archaeological evidence found scattered all over the UK landscape that waste from cities, towns and villages was often spread on land right up until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century after which landfill sites became the more common. The waste contained animal and human manure and ashes from fires which improved the soil of arable land and this waste would also contain other material such as broken clay pipes, broken pottery and glass, bones, seafood shells, metal items and anything else thrown away. It may be that farmers carted produce into Barnstaple then returned with a cargo of manure/waste to spread on the land or that the pipes were from more local use from the village or from nearby domestic or other occupation along that stretch of the estuary. Old taverns and coaching houses might have produced waste with more of an abundance of broken pipes in with the manure and ashes.

The Yelland group contains a good range of typical products relating to the Barnstaple area dating mainly from c.1600 to c.1770. Few products dating after this period were noted; this might be because the farmland changed hands or waste practices changed at that time. Later 18<sup>th</sup> century pipes are lacking in both the Penhill and Yelland groups but it is known that production of pipe making in North Devon was operating at Merton which is 12 miles to the south of Barnstaple. Here at the kiln site of the Pardon family production is known throughout the whole of the 18<sup>th</sup> century (2).

It is important to note that as well as the typology covered by this Yelland report there are others not drawn because these forms were already documented in the Penhill Point Collection. From the Penhill report the following numbers were also found at Yelland: 7, 16, 18, 23, 27, 29, 32, 40, 45, 52, 54, 56, 65, 74, 99, 100, 106, 107, 117, 120, 124, 135, 141, 142, 143, 144, 146, 151.

From Yelland numbers 2,3,5,6,7 are very similar and may include pieces made from the same mould. Being early 17<sup>th</sup> century forms it was decided to draw each one because of the slightly differing maker's mark as well as the manner of trimming and milling.

Pipes dating from the early to mid 17<sup>th</sup> century sometimes carry the marks I or IR, both with a barred initial I. These initials often crop up in North Devon but have been documented elsewhere in Plymouth (3) and also Launceston Castle (4).

A number of makers marks are present in incuse and relief including already locally known symbols used on pipes such as spokes and sun rays. The typology of TG marks on early to mid 17<sup>th</sup> century pipes known from Penhill is expanded with additional TG marks from Yelland 17 and 20. TG marks are thought to be Thamsyn Garland of Barnstaple and perhaps another later producer which are fully discussed in the Penhill report (1).

Several bowl forms c. 1700-1750 with BARVM marks were recovered from Penhill Point and a number of additional examples from Yelland give a more expanded typology. The BARVM marks are thought to be by an unknown Barnstaple maker or group of makers using that mark (6). One later example from Yelland, 91, carries the wording BARUM within a decorated frame on the side of the bowl similar to Merton designs, so this suggests that pipes continued to be made in Barnstaple after c.1750.

## Catalogue

1. Bowl, c. 1590-1610, rim chipped away. Smoked and partly burnt outside. Estuary find. Stem bore 7/64".
2. Bowl, c. 1610-1625, rim chipped away and milled where visible. Stem bore 6/64".
3. Bowl, c. 1610-1625, rim bottered and fully milled. Unidentified maker's incuse mark with barred I. Smoked. Stem bore 7/64".
4. Partial Bowl, c. 1615-1630, rim bottered and milled on remaining side. Unidentified maker's incuse mark I R with barred I. Stem bore 6/64".
5. Bowl, c. 1610-1625, rim chipped away, milled where visible. Unidentified maker's incuse mark with barred I. Stem bore 7/64".
6. Bowl, c. 1610-1625, rim chipped away, bottered and milled where visible. Unidentified maker's incuse mark with barred I. Stem bore 8/64".
7. Partial Bowl, c. 1610-1625, rim trimmed, smoothed inside, partly milled. Surface partly burnt outside. Stem bore 7/64".

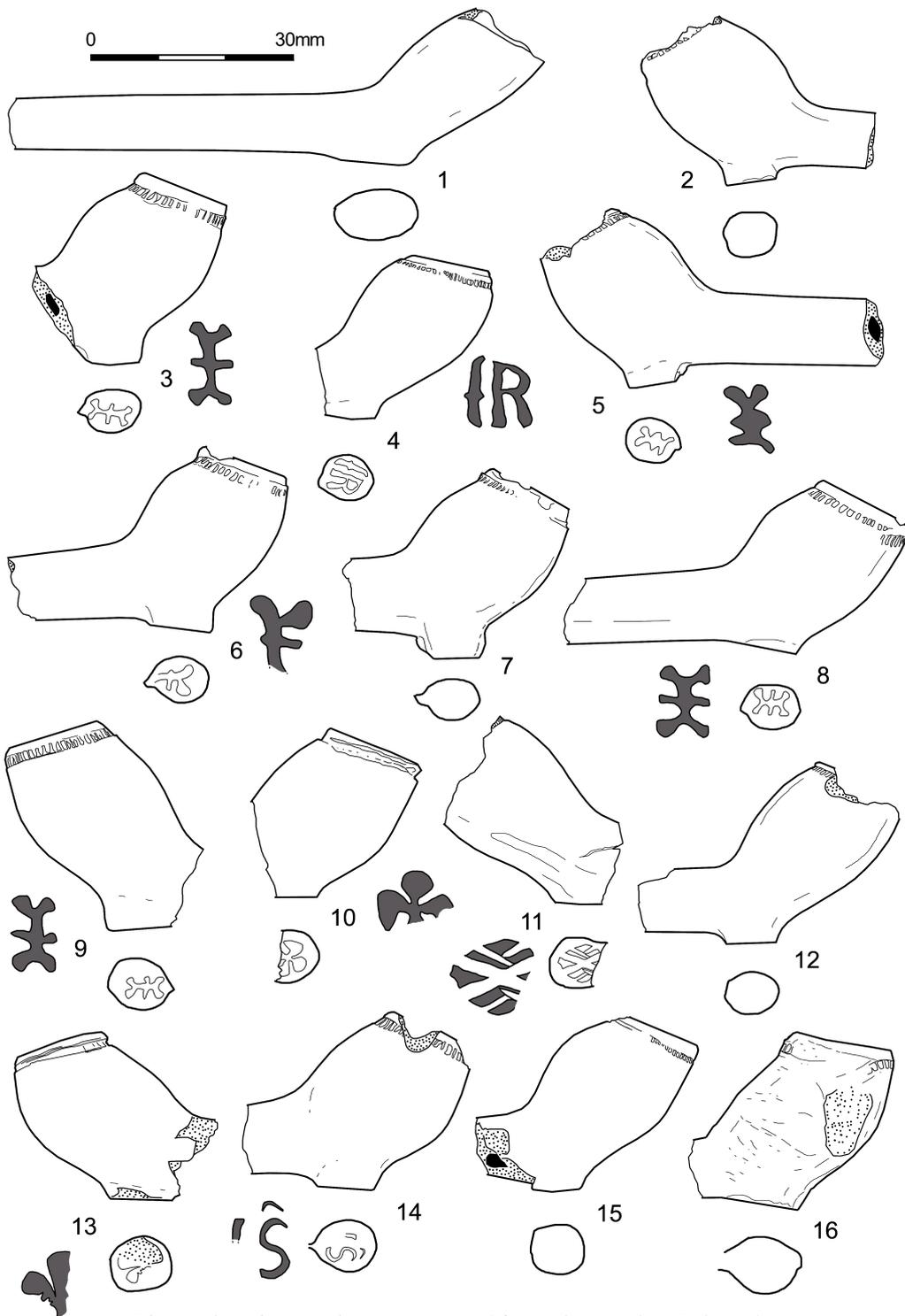


Fig 1. Clay pipe typology: nos 1-16. (drawn by Heather Coleman).

8. Bowl, c. 1615-1630, rim bottered and fully milled. Unidentified maker's incuse mark with barred I. Smoked and partly burnt outside. Stem bore  $6/64''$ .

9. Bowl, c. 1630-1640, rim bottered and fully milled. Unidentified maker's incuse mark with barred I. Smoked. Stem bore  $5/64''$ .

10. Bowl, c. 1610-1625, rim trimmed, smoothed inside and  $3/4$  milled with a line. Unidentified maker's incuse mark, could be a smeared fleur de lis or a three-leaf and stalk design similar to 13, 22. Smoked. Stem bore  $7/64''$ .

11. Partial Bowl, c. 1620-1635, rim chipped away, milled where visible. Uneven smoothing of mould seam at front. Unidentified maker's incuse mark with crossing lines. Small smoking chamber. Stem bore  $5/64$ ".

12. Bowl, c. 1630-1645, rim chipped away, trimmed, smoothed inside, milled where visible. This bowl is unusual in that the surface has an even terracotta colour all over including inside the smoking chamber and the bore, broken surfaces reveal a grey coloured clay underneath. This could be the result of the pipe being overfired under certain conditions or perhaps an attempt to create a red coloured pipe by dipping in a fine slip though again the firing conditions likely caused the grey colour. Stem bore  $6/64$ ".

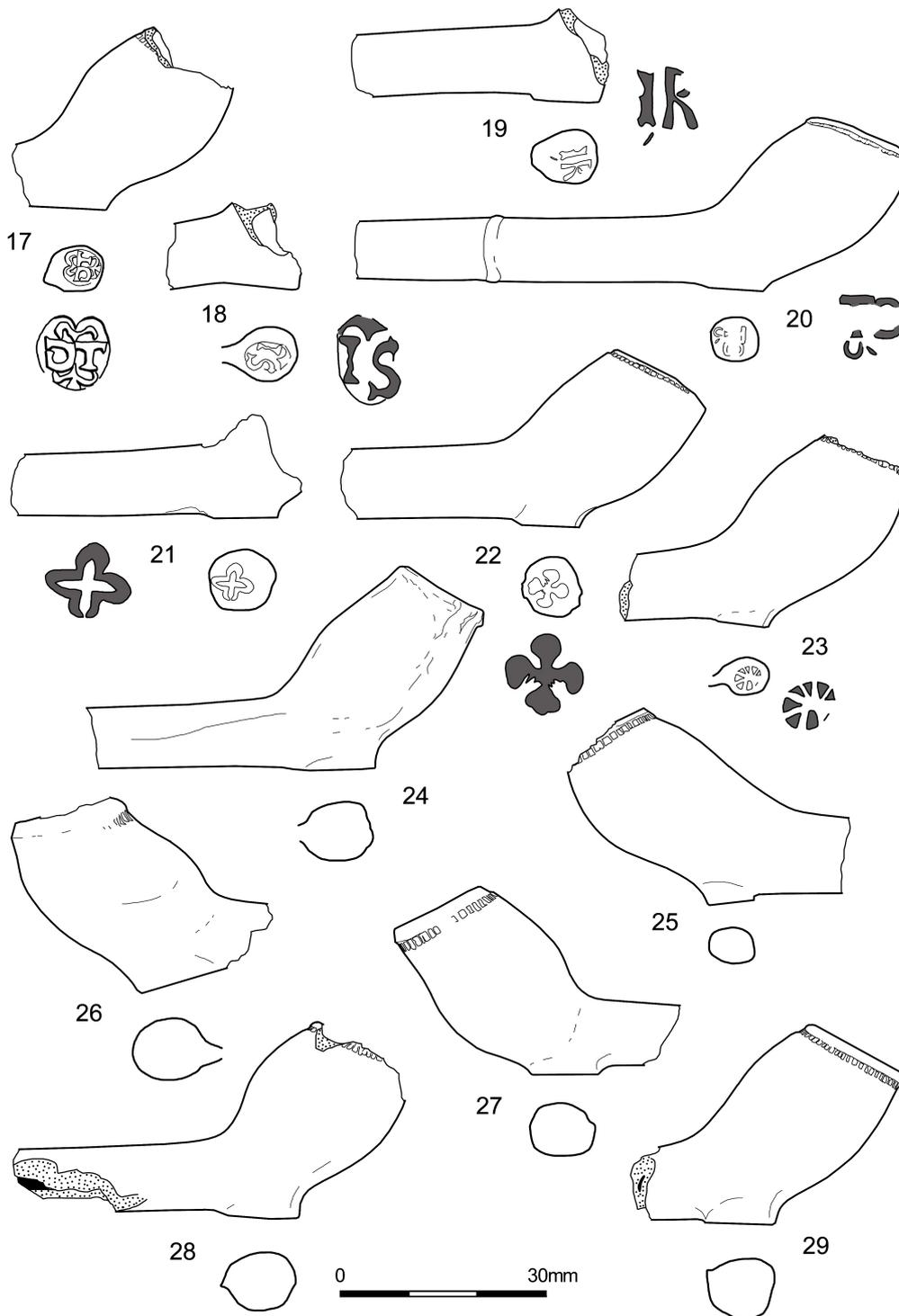


Fig 2. Clay pipe typology: nos 17-29. (drawn by Heather Coleman).

13. Partial Bowl, c. 1610-1625, rim bottered and fully milled where visible with a line having faint pattern. Unidentified maker's incuse mark, could be a smeared fleur de lis or a three-leaf and stalk design similar to 10, 22. Smoked. Stem bore 6/64".
14. Bowl, c. 1610-1625, rim chipped away, bottered and fully milled where visible. Unidentified maker's incuse mark with initials I S likely similar to example 18. Stem bore 5/64".
15. Bowl, c. 1625-1635, rim chipped away, smoothed, bottered on outside surface only, milled where visible. Stem bore 5/64".
16. Bowl, c. 1620-1635, rim smoothed, bottered on outside surface only, milled front and back. The bowl surface is uneven and lumpy with a slightly overfired brittle look and rounded portions that have split away. Stem bore 6/64".
17. Bowl, c. 1630-1645, rim chipped away, rear edge smoothed and bottered, milled where visible. Maker's relief mark T G which is back to front with fleur de lis and set into a heart shaped outer frame. Possibly a product of Tamsin Garland of Barnstaple. Stem bore 6/64".
18. Stem fragment, c. 1635-1645. Unidentified maker's incuse mark with initials I S and a double tipped leaf set into an oval outer frame. Stem bore 5/64".
19. Stem fragment, c. 1630-1645. Unidentified maker's incuse mark I R with the initial I barred. Smoked. Stem bore 6/64".
20. Bowl, c. 1630-1640, rim bottered and fully milled with faint pattern. Maker's incuse mark likely T G possibly Tamsin Garland of Barnstaple. The stem is of interest because during manufacture it broke and was repaired causing an uneven raised portion where the two parts were rejoined with wet clay. Some burning on outer surface. Estuary find. Stem bore 8/64".
21. Stem fragment, c. 1630-1645. Unidentified maker's incuse mark of an equal-armed cross with a petal-like shape around it. Stem bore 6/64".
22. Bowl, c. 1630-1645, rim chipped away, milling on visible portion is close to the edge. Unidentified maker's incuse mark, could be a smeared fleur de lis or a three-leaf and stalk design. See also examples 10. and 13 (and 7. Penhill). Stem bore 6/64".
23. Bowl, c. 1630-1650, rim chipped away on narrow top edge, smoothed inside and fully milled close to the edge. Small smoking chamber. Unidentified maker's incuse mark of 8 triangles arranged in a circle. Smoked. Stem bore 6/64".
24. Bowl, c. 1635-1650, rim trimmed with smoothing inside and partly outside. No milling. The bowl surface is uneven and lumpy with bad moulding on the left side. Stem bore 6/64".
25. Bowl, c. 1640-1655, rim bottered and milled where visible but chipped away. The bowl rear lacks any curve blending into a thick oval stem. Stem bore 6/64".
26. Bowl, c. 1640-1655, rim lightly bottered and milled at front and back. There are bulges on both sides of the bowl around the middle portion. Stem bore 7/64".
27. Bowl, c. 1635-1650, rim bottered and 3/4 milled. Smoked. Stem bore 6/64".
28. Bowl, c. 1635-1650, rim chipped away, milled where visible. Stem bore 6/64".
29. Bowl, c. 1640-1655, rim bottered and fully milled. Stem bore 6/64".
30. Bowl, c. 1640-1655, rim bottered and milled where visible but chipped away. Smoked. Stem bore 6/64".

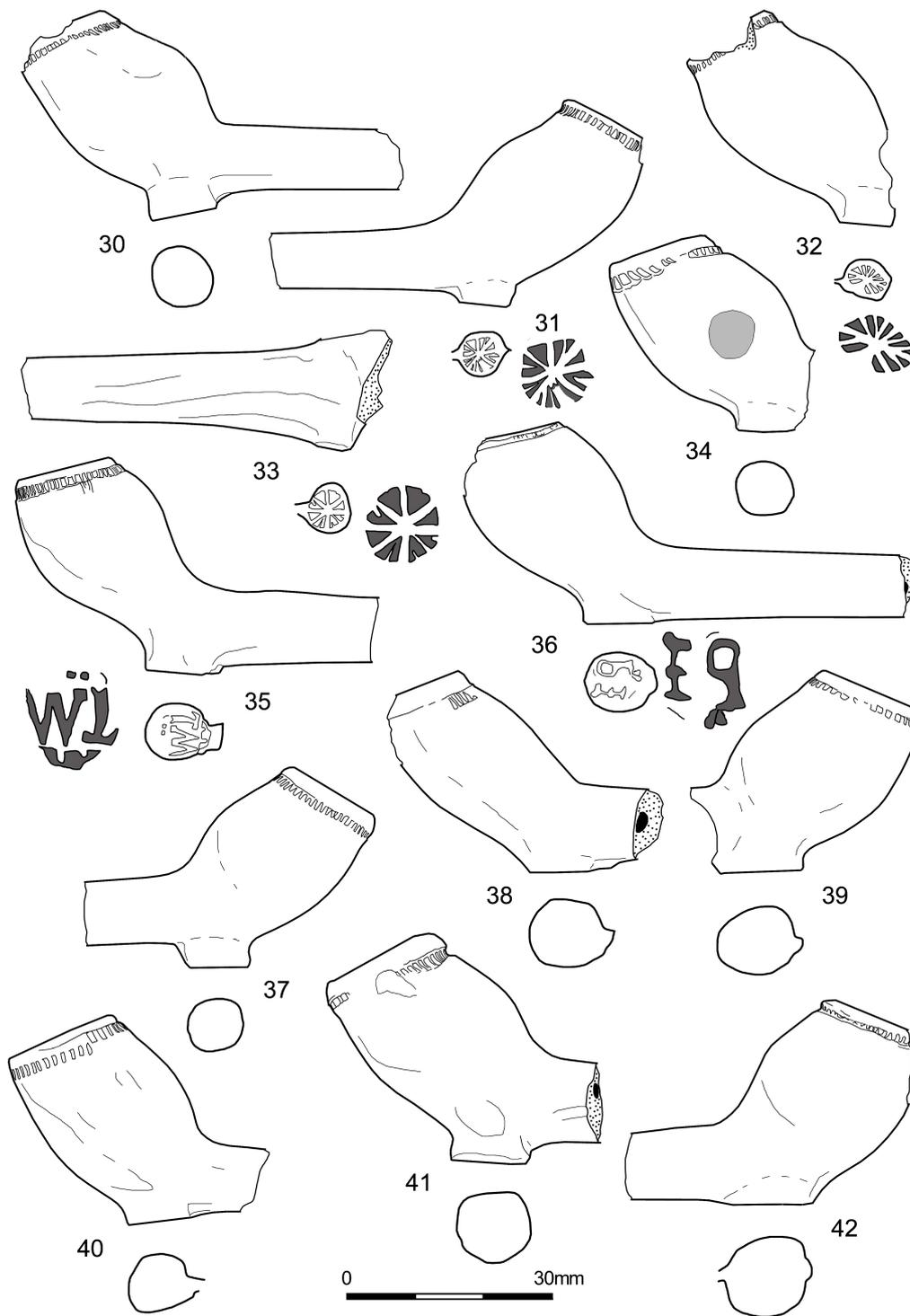


Fig 3. Clay pipe typology: nos 30-42. (drawn by Heather Coleman).

31. Bowl, c. 1640-1655, rim bottered and milled where visible but chipped away. Unidentified maker's incuse mark made up of small triangles and V shapes in a circle. Stem bore  $6/64''$ .

32. Bowl, c. 1640-1655, rim smoothed on top edge but chipped away, fully milled. Unidentified maker's incuse mark of small triangles arranged in an oval. Smoked. Stem bore unknown.

33. Stem fragment, c. 1635-1655. Unidentified maker's incuse mark made up of 8 small triangles and V shapes in a circle. Surface irregular. Stem bore  $6/64''$ , but does not go right through.

34. Bowl, c. 1640-1655, rim bottered and fully milled with larger pattern. The bowl has a single drip of dark green glaze adhered to the left side which is likely derived from other glazed items in the kiln. Stem bore 6/64".
35. Bowl, c. 1640-1655, rim smoothed, bottered on outside only, fully milled. The bowl is narrow above the heel. Unidentified maker's incuse mark initials WL with a partly visible notched frame. Stem bore 6/64".
36. Bowl, c. 1640-1655, rim chipped away, milled close to the edge on visible portion. Unidentified maker's incuse mark with a barred I initial and a back to front P. Small smoking chamber. Smoked. Stem bore 6/64".
37. Bowl, c. 1640-1650, rim bottered and fully milled. Some burning on outer surface. Stem bore 5/64".
38. Partial Bowl, c. 1640-1655, rim chipped away, trimmed with some smoothing inside and outside, milled at back. Slender bowl shape. Stem bore 6/64".
39. Bowl, c. 1640-1655, rim bottered and fully milled. Stem bore 8/64".
40. Bowl, c. 1635-1650, rim bottered and fully milled. The bowl surface is irregular and also dented by tools on the left side. Stem bore 5/64".
41. Bowl, c. 1640-1660, rim trimmed with some smoothing inside and outside, milled at front and back. Surface irregular, bulging at the sides, several dents caused by tools. Larger smoking chamber. Stem bore 6/64".
42. Bowl, c. 1640-1655, rim bottered, milled on visible portion but chipped away. The bowl is very bulbous with a small distorted smoking chamber and a large heel area underneath. Stem bore 6/64".
43. Bowl, c. 1635-1655, rim smoothed, bottered on outside surface only, milled at back and front. The side of the heel juts out at the base. Stem bore 8/64".
44. Bowl, c. 1640-1660, rim bottered and fully milled. Stem bore 4/64".
45. Bowl, c. 1640-1650, rim smoothed on top edge, fully milled. There are noticeable bulges on both sides of the bowl around the middle portion, occurring on a number of bowls of this general date. Stem bore 6/64".
46. Bowl, c. 1640-1650, rim trimmed and partly smoothed inside, 3/4 milled. This is a form often found in the Exeter area and has been recovered by the author at the locations of Pinhoe, Stoke Hill and Topsham (5). The rim is usually slightly squashed so that the plan is more oval than round – wider at the sides. Stem bore 6/64".
47. Bowl, c. 1640-1660, rim bottered and fully milled. Some burning on outer surface. Stem bore 6/64".
48. Bowl, c. 1640-1660, rim chipped away, milling visible at rear. Has an over fired grey appearance and rough material bonded to the underside of the stem. This could potentially be a kiln waster or a pipe that ended up highly heated perhaps in a blacksmith forge. Stem bore 6/64".
49. Bowl, c. 1640-1665, rim bottered and fully milled. Stem bore 5/64".
50. Bowl, c. 1640-1665, rim bottered, milled at front and back. The mould was badly aligned and the bowl has excessive smoothing of the front and back seams and a small smoking chamber to compensate for this. Stem bore 6/64".
51. Bowl, c. 1645-1670, rim smoothed, bottered on outside surface only, milled at front and back. Smoked. Stem bore 7/64".

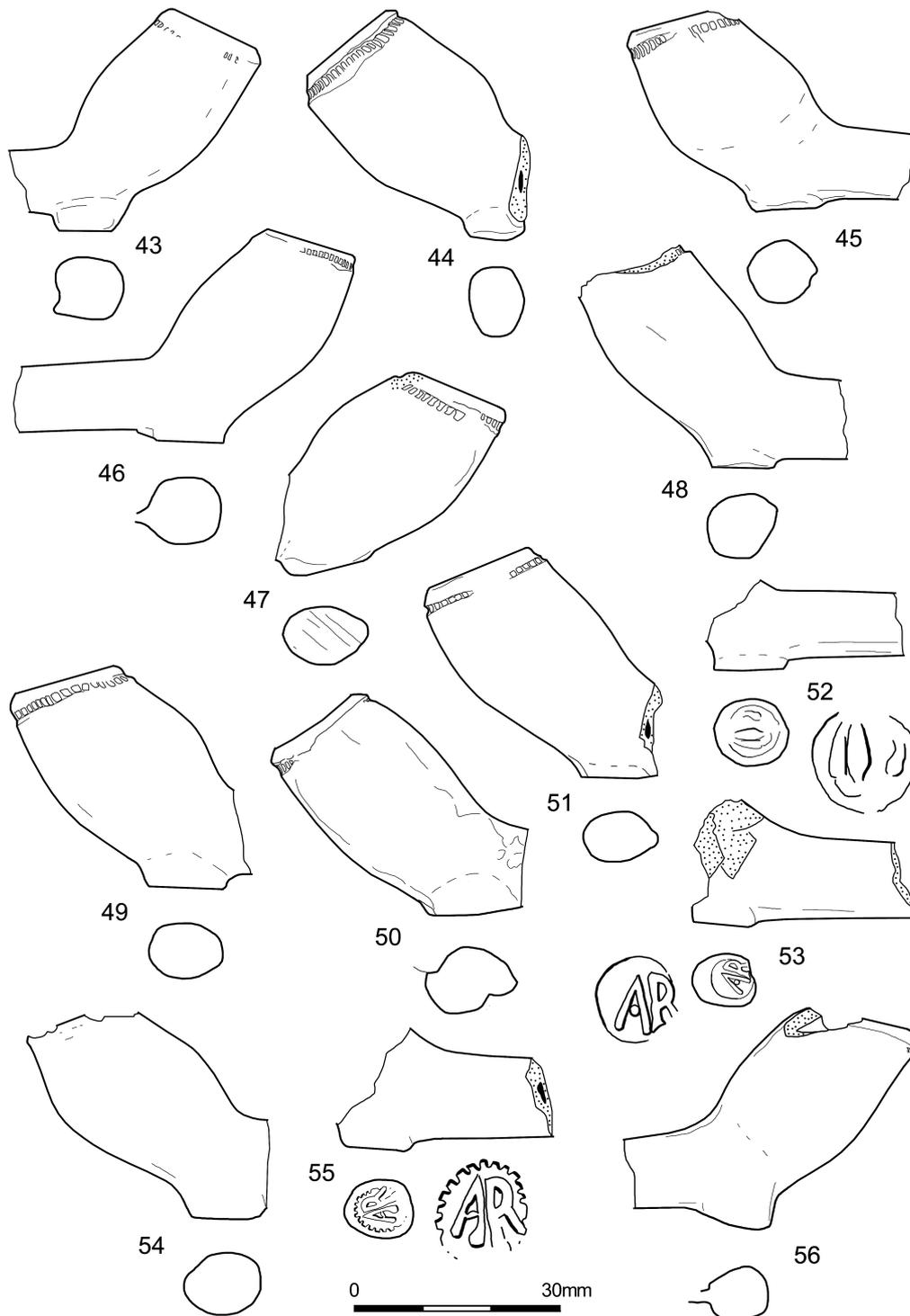


Fig 4. Clay pipe typology: nos 43-56. (drawn by Heather Coleman).

52. Stem fragment, c. 1640-1660. Unidentified maker's relief mark of indiscernible design. Smoked. Stem bore 6/64".
53. Stem fragment, c. 1645-1670. Unidentified maker's relief mark with initials AR inside a circular frame - the bar on the A is a dot. Oval stem. Smoked. Stem bore 5/64".
54. Bowl, c. 1655-1670, rim chipped away, unlikely milled. Stem bore 6/64".
55. Stem fragment, c. 1655-1675. Unidentified maker's relief mark with initials AR in a notched frame. Similar to example 53. Oval Stem. Stem bore 6/64".

56. Bowl, c. 1655-1675, rim smoothed, bottered on outside surface only, milled at front but chipped away. Irregular surface and a slightly misaligned oval stem. Stem bore 6/64".
57. Bowl, c. 1655-1670, rim bottered and 3/4 milled. Stem bore 7/64".
58. Bowl, c. 1665-1680, rim trimmed, smoothed on outside surface only, half milled on right side. Smoked. Stem bore 5/64".
59. Bowl, c. 1670-1685, rim smoothed, bottered on outside surface only, internal trimming at rear. Milled at front and back. Stem bore 7/64".

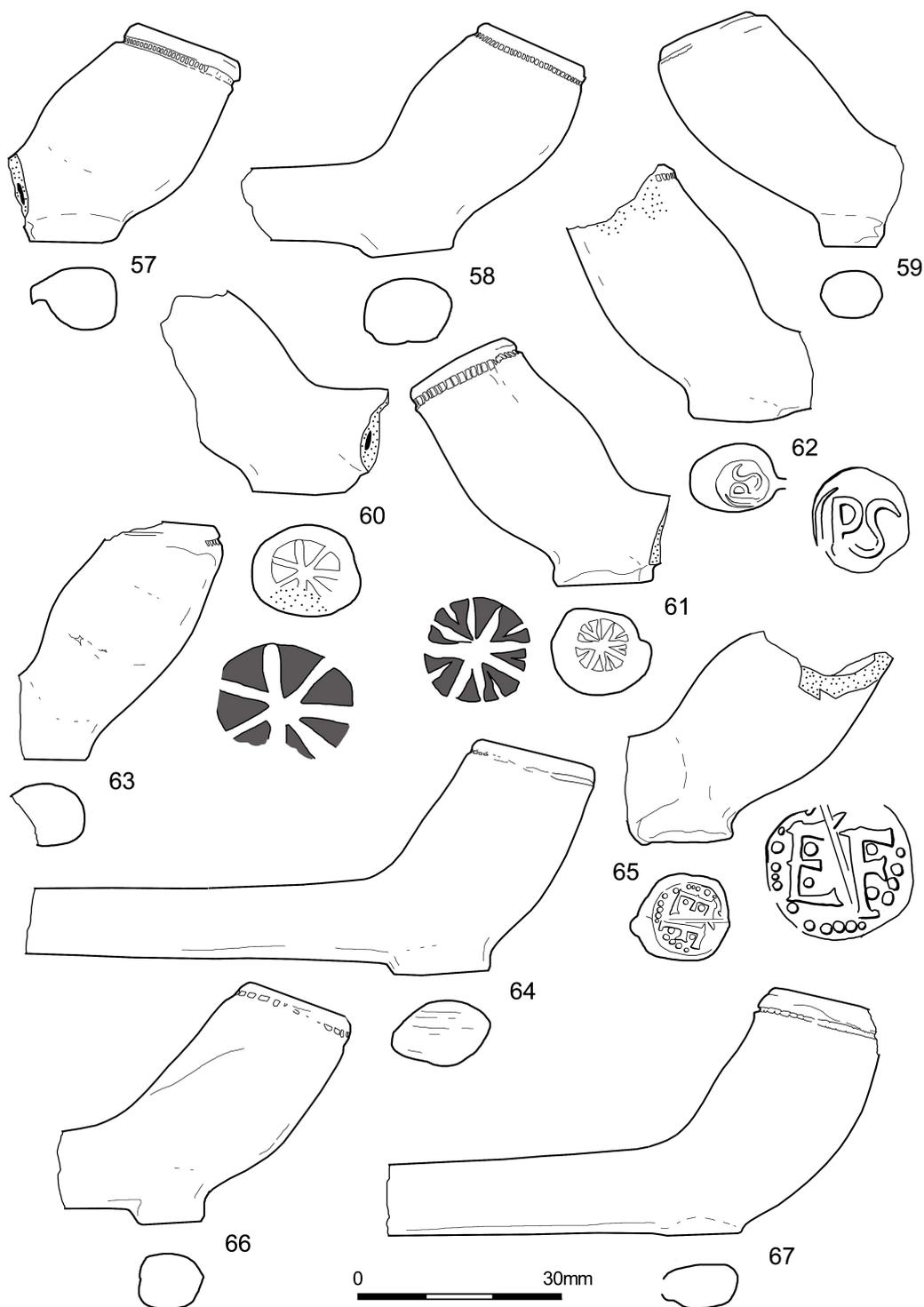


Fig 5. Clay pipe typology: nos 57-67. (drawn by Heather Coleman).

60. Partial Bowl, c. 1670-1685. Large heel with unidentified maker's incuse mark of 7 triangles arranged in a circle. Stem bore 6/64".
61. Bowl, c. 1660-1685, rim smoothed, bottered on outside surface only, internal trimming at rear. 3/4 milled. Large heel with unidentified maker's incuse mark of triangles and V's arranged in a circle. The heel has a pronounced lip on the left edge. Stem bore 6/64".
62. Bowl, c. 1670-1690, rim chipped away, milling visible at rear. Unidentified maker's relief mark with initials PS in a circular frame. Stem bore 7/64".
63. Bowl, c. 1665-1675, rim bottered, partly chipped away, milled front and back. Stem bore 8/64".
64. Bowl, c. 1665-1685, rim trimmed, bottered on outside surface only. Rim chipped away, milling on 3/4 visible edge. Oval stem. Smoked. Estuary find. Stem bore 6/64".
65. Bowl, c. 1670-1690, rim chipped away. Large deep heel with mould flaws. Unidentified maker's relief mark with initials EF and an arrangement of dots. Smoked. Stem bore 7/64".
66. Bowl, c. 1670-1685, rim bottered and 3/4 milled. Oval stem. Stem bore 6/64".
67. Bowl, c. 1670-1685, rim smoothed, bottered on outside surface only. Rim chipped away, milling on 3/4 visible edge. Oval stem. Stem bore 6/64".
68. Bowl, c. 1675-1710, rim smoothed, bottered on outside surface only. Milled front and back. Thick walls. Stem bore 7/64".
69. Bowl, c. 1680-1710, rim bottered but chipped away, milled where visible. Smoked. Stem bore 6/64".
70. Bowl, c. 1680-1710, rim trimmed, lightly bottered on outside surface only. Milled front and back with a narrow line having fine teeth. Stem bore 6/64".
71. Bowl, c. 1690-1730, rim lightly bottered, milled at front and back. Incuse marks of 8 small triangles arranged in a circle are stamped – 4 on the back of the bowl and one on the front. Smoked. Stem bore unknown.
72. Partial Bowl, c. 1720-1760. Has a shape without a heel similar to some Bristol export products of that time. Stem oval. Stem bore 4/64".
73. Bowl, c. 1710-1750, rim trimmed and 3/4 milled, partly chipped away. Unidentified maker's relief mark with initials IWB or IBW in a notched frame. Smoked. Stem bore 4/64".
74. Stem fragment, c. 1690-1740. Unidentified maker's relief mark with likely initials IWB or IBW in a notched frame. Stem bore 4/64".
75. Stem fragment, c. 1680-1750. Has an elaborate barley twist pattern which appears to have been executed by hand rather than moulded. Milling has been applied. Stem bore 5/64".
76. Bowl, c. 1710-1750, rim trimmed. Unidentified maker's relief mark with initials RWB in a notched frame. See also example 73. Stem bore unknown.
77. Bowl, c. 1710-1750, rim trimmed, 3/4 milled but chipped away. Unidentified maker's relief mark with initials BA I:H in a notched frame. Estuary find. Stem bore 5/64".
78. Stem fragment, c. 1730-1770, with bands of milling applied. Stem bore 6/64".
79. Stem fragment, c. 1730-1770, with bands of milling applied. Surface very smooth, possible lightly burnished. Stem bore 7/64".
80. Bowl, c. 1700-1750, rim trimmed, chipped away with visible milling at front. Large heel with maker's incuse mark BARVM which refers to the place Barnstaple. Stem bore 6/64".

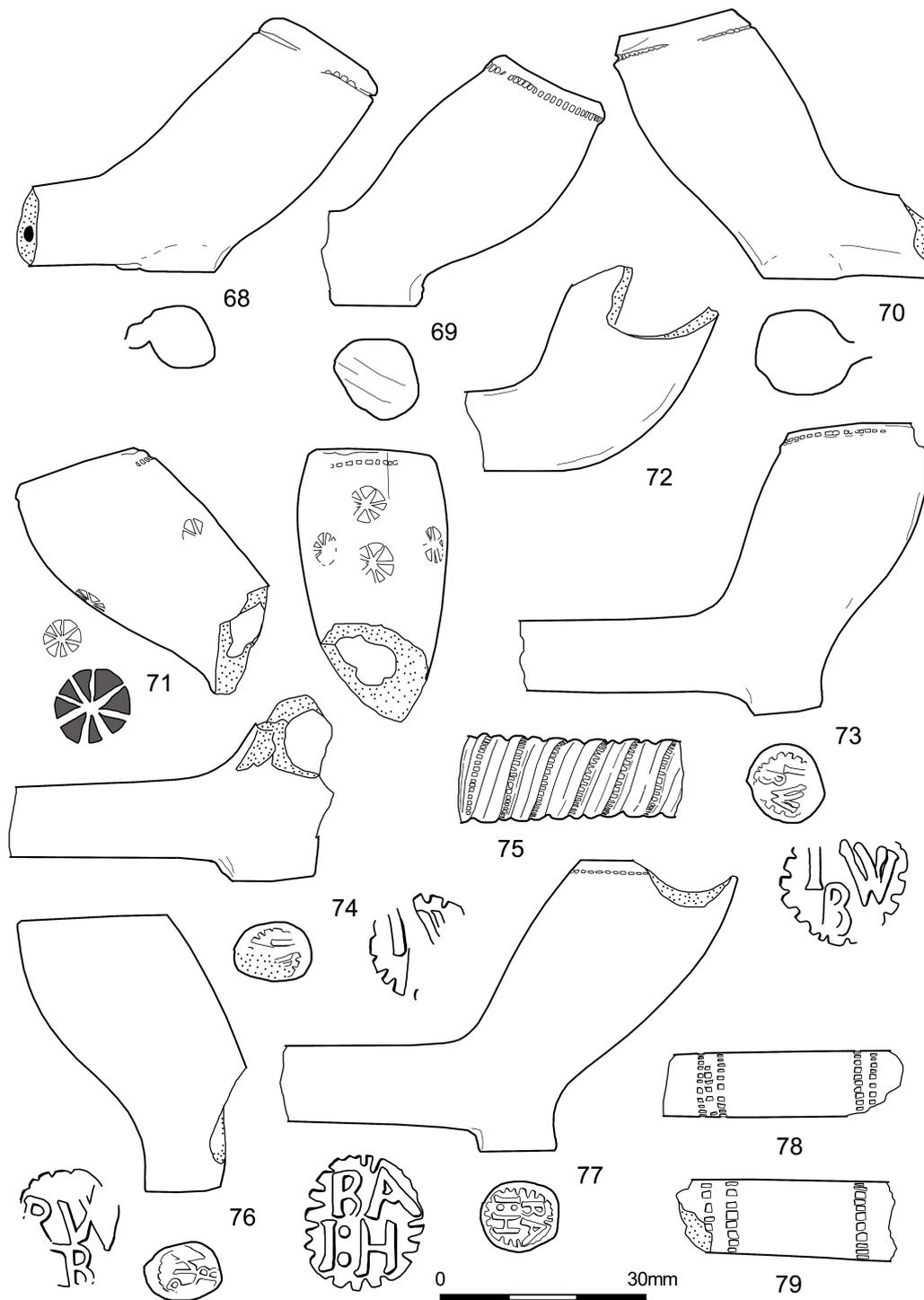


Fig 6. Clay pipe typology: nos 68-79. (drawn by Heather Coleman).

- 81. Bowl, c. 1700-1750, rim trimmed and 3/4 milled. Thin walls. Smoked. Stem bore 5/64".
- 82. Bowl, c. 1690-1740, rim trimmed and fully milled. Maker's incuse mark BARVM which refers to the place Barnstaple. Estuary find. Stem bore 5/64".
- 83. Bowl, c. 1700-1750, rim trimmed. Smoked. Stem bore 5/64".
- 84. Bowl, c. 1730-1770, rim trimmed. Heel narrow at sides where it joins the bowl. Smoked. Stem bore 5/64".
- 85. Bowl, c. 1730-1770, rim trimmed. Stem bore 5/64".

86. Stem Fragment, c. 1710-1770. Pattern added to the stem in two directions with a jagged tool, the application is rough and deep into the clay. Stem bore  $\frac{4}{64}$ ".

87. Bowl, c. 1700-1750, rim trimmed and  $\frac{3}{4}$  milled with very fine teeth. Incuse maker's mark BARVM which refers to the place Barnstaple. Estuary find. Stem bore  $\frac{5}{64}$ ".

88. Bowl, c. 1730-1770, rim trimmed. Smoked. Stem bore  $\frac{5}{64}$ ".

89. Partial Bowl, c. 1740-1780, rim trimmed. Slightly over fired. Oval stem. Stem bore  $\frac{3}{64}$ ".

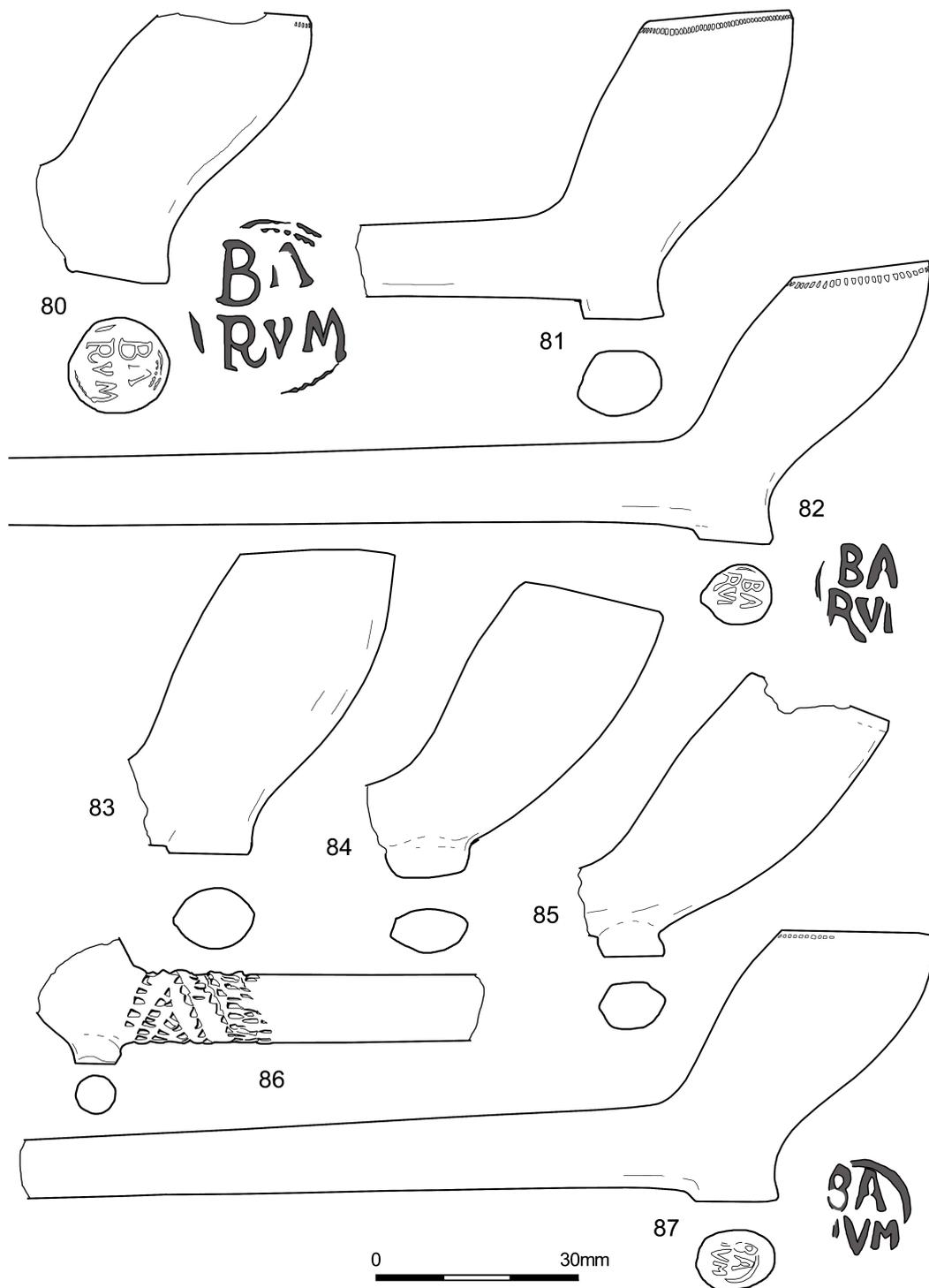


Fig 7. Clay pipe typology: nos 80-87. (drawn by Heather Coleman).

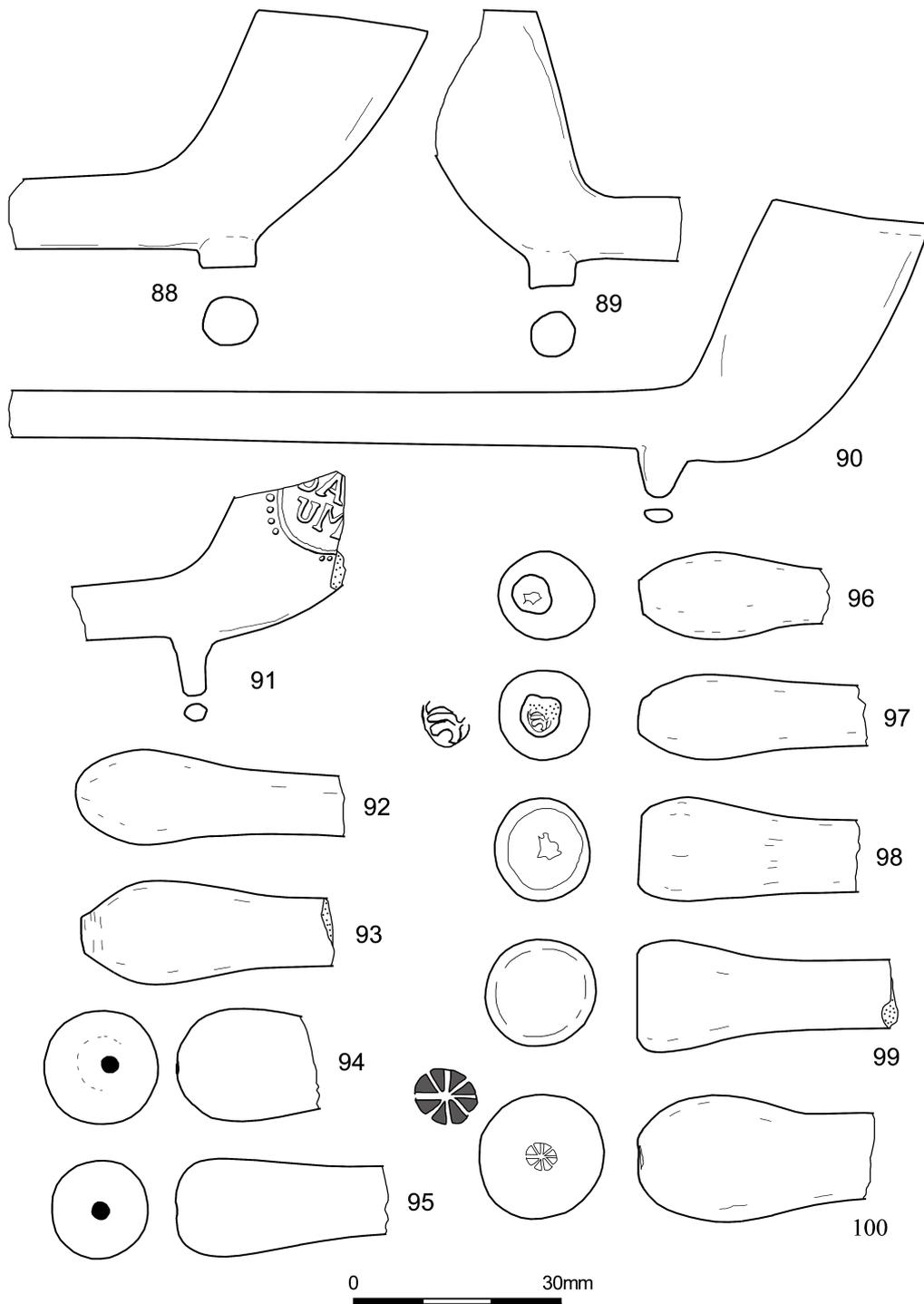


Fig 8. Clay pipe typology: nos 88-100.(drawn by Heather Coleman).

90. Bowl, c. 1750-1800, rim trimmed. Spur type. Estuary find. Smoked. Stem bore  $\frac{4}{64}$ ".

91. Partial Bowl, c. 1740-1770. Spur type with a maker's relief mark, partial lettering likely reading BARUM which refers to the place Barnstaple. The lettering appears inside a circular frame with dots. Stem bore  $\frac{4}{64}$ ".

92. to 100. inclusive. Wig Curlers, c. 1690-1780. The broken pieces reveal several profiles, some appearing to have possibly been turned on a jig with pin marks in the ends. Several have trimmed ends. Number 97 has a maker's mark in relief but the design is too chipped to identify. Number 100 is large with a maker's incuse stamp made up of 8 small triangles

arranged in a circle as seen on several of the clay pipes listed above. Other groups of wig curlers recorded from Devon are detailed from Launceston Castle (4) and from the kiln site of the Pardon family at Merton (2).

### **References:**

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