President Pipes: Origin and Distribution

Abstract

Anthropomorphic terra cotta tobacco pipe fragments have been found in historical archaeological sites across the United States. This paper will discuss the subset of these known widely as “President Pipes”. This is actually a misnomer since some of these pipes are dedicated to presidential contenders. Several new points of origin for these pipes manufacture have been discovered. In addition to the anthropomorphic clay pipes, there are also anthropomorphic Meerschaum pipes and non anthropomorphic president and presidential contender commemorative pipes. A brief overview of the distribution of “President Pipes” and a summary of the relevant literature are presented.

Introduction

Short stemmed clay pipes in earth colors with various kinds of detachable stems have been referred to as stub stemmed, reed stemmed, terra cotta, Shaker, and “stummelpfeifen”. An intriguing subcategory of this group is the anthropomorphic, figural, or “face” pipe. Anthropomorphic clay tobacco pipe production began in America in the 18th Century. The subcategory of U.S. president pipes is intriguing due to their political nature, the fact that they are meant to represent specific people, and until recently, the question of where they were produced. These pipes have been recovered from archaeological sites across the country, ranging from small fragments to intact pipes. For decades, the source of a particular group of these pipes has been widely speculated upon since they had not been recovered from any of the known U.S. pipe factory sites or waster dumps. Although they are widely referred to as “President Pipes”, it seems that they should more correctly be referred to as “Campaign Pipes”. However, this nomenclature is not entirely suitable since some of these pipes, particularly for President Washington, are commemorative in nature. This paper will consist of a chronological review of the pertinent literature, the German origin of some pipes, and illustrate examples of some President pipes.

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Some references to the known distribution of these pipes in the archaeological literature will be added. However, scouring the archaeological literature for one or two (frequently non-illustrated) fragments per report is far beyond the scope of this paper.

**Background and Chronological Review of the Pertinent Literature**

The first article to mention more than one or two examples of President pipes was Calver’s article on Historical Clay Pipes (1931). Calver depicts six white ball clay pipes with integral stems: the Buchanan rebus\(^6\) pipe (found in excavations in Central Park New York), full bust pipes of Lincoln, General Grant, Grover Cleveland, Benjamin Harrison and one with patriotic emblems on both sides said to be a memento of Lincoln’s first campaign. He mentions that Barney Spring made pipes of the Buchanan type in 1856. However, Calver doubted that Spring made this specimen. He also details some of Spring’s manufacturing history and locations. Calver does not illustrate any specimens of detachable stem tobacco pipes.

One of the earliest articles specifically on President pipes included a letter of inquiry by Bernard Fontana concerning clay pipe bowls from archaeological sites in southern Arizona (Painter and Fontana 1968). The four pipes he was seeking information on were a small center section of face, a nearly whole green glazed Washington pipe, an orange glazed Fillmore (he mentions an identical specimen from Ft. Vancouver, Washington), and a light orange Fr. Pierce stem. Painter attributed their most likely manufacture to the Akron Smoking Pipe Co. of Akron, Ohio.

In another article from 1968, Peter Shurke discusses Presidential Campaign pipes in his collection (Shurke 1968). The collection includes a white ball clay pipe with a likeness of Benjamin Harrison on the right side of the bowl with Eagle, shield & arrows on the left. He also illustrates a white ball clay Lincoln Emancipation pipe with a green laurel wreath and a black child holding onto a black chain reclining against the back of his head above the stem. His Taft Pipe is made by Gambier of Paris and has a mold number of 1684. Shurke’s other presidential pipes are included in the “Presidential Pipes of Other Materials” section.

In a single page article, Painter summarizes his information on President Pipes, mostly from information from Alan P. Owens of Norfolk, Virginia (Painter 1969:47). He lists the following pipes and probable makers:
- Henry Clay – origin unknown;
- William Henry Harrison – made in 1888 by Charles Kurth of Brooklyn, N.Y.;
- Franklin Pierce – made in 1850s maker unknown;
- Millard Fillmore – pipe made in Pennsylvania, maker unknown;
- James Buchanan – made in 1856 by Barney Spring of Rochester, N.Y.;
- Abraham Lincoln pipe – made in 1860 by Barney Spring;

\(^6\) A rebus is a message (sometimes a riddle) consisting of pictures representing syllables and words.
Andrew Johnson – pipe made in 1864 –unknown possibly by Barney Spring;  
Ulysses S. Grant – made in 1868 by Barney Spring of Rochester and Boston;  
Peter Cooper –made in 1880 by A. Peyrau (NYC) [ran for office in 1876];  
Grover Cleveland – pipe made in 1892 by Charles Kurth;  
Williams Jennings Bryan – dated 1908 maker and origin unknown.

Painter mentions a set of “President” pipes made in the 1890s for the Smithsonian Institution from molds that Spring had used in preceding years. The specific type of Ulysses Grant pipe made is not discussed. It could have been a white ball clay pipe or one of the full head detachable stem styles.

Another article illustrates eight clay President pipes (Cousley 1972). White ball clay pipes with integral stem include Buchanan (with rebus for name), William McKinley, Benjamin Harrison (full head but stem broken off), and Grover Cleveland (anthropomorphic and face on the right side types). Pipes with detachable stems include the hexagonal Henry Clay, a brown Zachary Taylor, and a Millard Fillmore with obvious mold seam down the center of the face.

The article by Thomas is the first to specifically show the full bust head of a “philosopher” style and refer to it as a General Grant pipe. The style looks much more like the John Taber produced pipes than the known German examples. He mentions that it appears to match those illustrated in the Watkins book *Early New England Potters and Their Wares*. While the Taber pipes have no names appearing on them (Thomas 1973)

“yet another is described as having ‘General Grant’ impressed on its stem.
This example according to an article which appeared in *American Country Antiques* was the workmanship of one Barney Spring of Rochester, N.Y., and later of Boston. A set of Presidential bowls was produced and given to the Smithsonian in the 1890’s from the original molds and dies Spring had used years before.”

Thomas also illustrates the French firm Gambier’s William Taft and William Jennings Bryan pipes, the white ball clay Buchanan “Rebus” Pipe, the white ball clay Lincoln pipe with an embossed bust on the front of the pipe, and the full head pipes of George Washington, Henry Clay, Zachary Taylor, Millard Fillmore, and Franklin Pierce (Thomas 1973).

In 1979, the ambitious task of documenting what was known about USA clay tobacco pipe production resulted in an illustrated survey and review article titled *Historic Clay Tobacco Pipemakers in the United States of America* (Sudbury 1979). This landmark study reported 19th Century President pipes made in Maine, New Hampshire, New York, Texas, and Virginia, but also recognized that President pipes and other anthropomorphic pipes of the same age and quality (Sudbury 1979: Plate 30) had been recovered in mid-19th century archaeological contexts whose place of manufacture was unknown.
Sullivan’s short section on Political Pipes illustrates four political pipes, two wall-mount match holders and mentions several other political pipes (Sullivan 1980). The most unusual is from the 1880 campaign of Winfield Hancock. It is a clay pipe with a mustard color glaze with an open hand and a rooster above the stem and the junction of the stem and bowl. He also mentions the French made bust pipes from the 1900, 1904, and 1908 campaigns of William McKinley, William Jennings Bryan, Theodore Roosevelt, and William Howard Taft, all of which are marked “Gambier A Paris”. He refers to the mold numbers as sequence numbers. Effigy pipes of both Roosevelts are depicted. Sullivan mentions that he knows of at least four bust designs for Teddy in clay, meerschaum, and briar, with and without his Rough Rider hat.

The definitive work on the John Taber and John Taber, Jr., clay tobacco pipe makers was published by S. Paul Jung, Jr. in 1996. John Taber Sr. probably made pipes in Alfred, Maine, from about 1840 to 1845 and in Wells, Maine, from about 1845 to 1860. John Taber Jr. was first listed as a tobacco pipe maker in 1850 in Rochester, New York. By 1851-53 he began manufacturing in Wolfeboro in four different locations: Endicott Street-Wolfeboro, Beaver Brook – East Alton, The Taber Mill on Mink Brook – South Wolfeboro, and at The Pipe Shop on Mink Brook – South Wolfeboro. At least 115 mold styles are known from these four locations and show a progression over time. Only a single bowl and bowl base with shank fragment are shown (Plate 4, No.13) from the Endicott location dating from 1853 to 1864. Jung refers to these as U.S. Grant pipes. He illustrates many more fragments from the later Beaver Brook (1864-1866) and Pipe Mill (1866-1882) locations. On page 24 he mentions that the U.S. Grant design duplicates a style made at Uslar and Grossalmerode, Germany, but that the pipes made by Taber are smaller.

O’Connor illustrates four clay pipes, two meerschaum pipes, and a silver pipe (1997). He described one of the pipes as “This finely carved likeness of Woodrow Wilson is catalogued as being made of clay or chalk, but is more likely a meerschaum.” The pipe appears very similar in size and execution to the 1896 William Jennings Bryan also illustrated. He shows a tall ornate, short stemmed, clay pipe with a six sided bowl and a likeness of Henry Clay on the front panel. He attributes that to the period of Clay’s candidacy but the style is of a very much later time frame, probably the 1890s. His last illustrated clay pipe is “A brown and gold painted ceramic pipe with a bamboo stem shows a proud Ulysses S. Grant, who served as president from 1869 to 1877.” The pipe in the photocopied article has a shiny appearance as if it were glazed. It looks very similar to Uslar and Grossalmerode made pipes.

Gartley was the first to document the German manufacturing source for numerous President Pipes and other anthropomorphic pipes in the printed tobacco pipe literature (Gartley 2003). The other styles were referred to as Philosopher, Queen Victoria, Queen Louisa, Turk, Sphinx, and Hercules. One of the philosopher varieties may actually be a President Grant but there is no name on the pipe. In German, these are referred to as “Stummelpfeifen” or stub pipes. The two main manufacturing centers discussed are Uslar, in Lower Saxony, and Grossalmerode, in Hesse. These
locations are 40 kilometers apart. Much of this material as it relates to President Pipes is presented in this current paper. Gartley also discusses American archaeological finds of long stemmed white clay pipes manufactured in Grossalmerode.

Gartley’s interest in anthropomorphic pipes developed after participating in excavations in New Orleans, Louisiana, where several examples of this type of pipe were recovered. The sites tested were the Orange Street Cistern, dated 1845-1860, and the Annunciation St. Privy, dated 1850-1860; both sites are located in the “Irish Channel” area of the city (Gartley and Carskadden 1987).

In 2003, Sudbury updated his initial 1979 USA pipemaker survey with a 251 slide Power Point presentation which included illustrations of 31 president pipes, including 19th Century specimens recovered from the Germany factories (Sudbury 2003a, 2003b). The http://claypipes.com web site includes a Grossalmerode-manufactured German face pipe in the masthead; this anthropomorphic pipe is not one of those under discussion in this paper but it does illustrate the classic green glaze in use in the 1850s (Sudbury 2002).

Bell’s article is a short discussion of about 60 “face” pipes known to him (Bell 2004). Bell presents eight figures; the first seven show two different examples each of George Washington, Zachary Taylor, Millard Fillmore, Franklin Pierce, Lewis Cass, Henry Clay and Ulysses S. Grant. The last photo is a display case containing 66 clay anthropomorphic or effigy pipes (less than half are in the “President Pipes” category). Although the Grant pipes have no name stamped on them, Bell identifies them as Ulysses Grant pipes.

“Laura Watkins excavated a reddish-orange Grant pipe on the site of the John Taber Pottery which was in production from 1863-1872. President Grant won two terms, defeating Horatio Seymore in 1868 and Horrace Greeley in 1872. This pipe appears to have been made and distributed from 1865 to 1870. There are at least three known molds of this pipe.”(Bell 2004).

**President or Campaign Pipes made in Other Materials**

Pipes commemorating Presidents have been made from other materials besides clay. A wooden effigy briar full bust relief of Teddy Roosevelt in his Rough Riders cap is illustrated by Shurke (1968). The maker’s mark on this pipe is W.D.C (William Demuth & Company). The same article also shows a set of wooden “japanned” pipes issued during the campaign of 1876 with hand painted portraits. One pipe has the likenesses of Rutherford B. Hayes and his running mate William A. Wheeler. The other has the portraits of Samuel J. Tilden and his running mate Thomas A. Hendrick. Cousley (1972) shows a carved French briar in the likeness of John F. Kennedy and a Lincoln bust meerschaum along with a mailing card with a miniature corncob entitled “Little Mac”. These tiny pipes were circulated during the brief boom for General Douglas MacArthur in 1952. Sullivan’s short section on Political Pipes
illustrates a Franklin Roosevelt briar pipe, which comes in both large and small bowls, which are marked “Bruyere/Supérieure/Made in France (Sullivan 1980). Sullivan also has photographs of wall mount iron matchboxes from the 1872 campaign of Horace Greeley (in Quaker hat) and Ulysses Grant (with military cap). Rapaport’s article discusses a rare collection of Meerschaum pipes sculpted in the likeness of twenty-nine presidents from George Washington to Herbert Hoover (Rapaport 1994). The pipes were sculpted in Germany and the collection now resides in a private collection in Chicago. O’Connor’s 1997 article includes a silver pipe smoked by Andrew Jackson, a meerschaum pipe in the likeness of Teddy Roosevelt, and a meerschaum pipe smoked by Ulysses Grant. Meerschaum pipes became very popular in the mid-1850s and helped to contribute to the demise of the clay pipe.

**Origin of the German President Pipes**

German anthropomorphic reed-stem tobacco pipes, “stummelpfeifen”, literally “stub pipes”, of the mid 19th century are frequently found in archaeological excavations in the United States. They were specifically made for export to America and the German pipemakers believed they were for use by slaves living on cotton plantations; hence they were sometimes called “Sklavenpfeifen” (slave pipes) and “Negerpfeifen” (Negro pipes) (Anonymous n.d.b, Stephan 1995). But as will be seen in the discussion below, this notion is not supported by available archaeological evidence. Among the varieties of stummelpfeifen are portrayals of American presidents or other American political figures. This has led some American archaeologists to suggest that they are presidential campaign promotional items (c.f. Cresthull 1969:52). The general feeling among many American archaeologists has been that they were produced in the United States. (c.f. Sudbury 1979: Plate 30; Hudson et al. 1974:66, Figure 19) However, in Germany, the German origins of these pipes and their export to the United States are well known and well documented (Anonymous n.d.b, Seeliger 1993, Stephan 1995). Two towns in Germany about 40 km apart, Uslar in Lower Saxony and Grossalmerode in Hesse, are known to have been centers for the production of these pipes. President pipes produced at these German manufacturing sites include George Washington, Henry Clay, Zachary Taylor, Lewis Cass, Millard Fillmore, Franklin Pierce, and “Philosopher” (a.k.a. U.S. Grant). (Stephan 1995, Gartley 2003, Sudbury 2003.)

**Pipe Production in Uslar**

The Uslar municipal museum provided historical information about the pipe industry in Uslar (Anonymous n.d.b). The following summary is based on this information and Seeliger (1993). The manufacture of clay pipes in Uslar began in 1767 with the arrival of an experienced pipemaker from Neuweid. The first products were long-stemmed white clay pipes, with the production of this style continuing through the 19th century. Many of these pipes were modeled after the widely distributed pipes made at that
time in Holland. Exports from Uslar to the USA and even to Holland began around the end of the 18th century. Peter W. Meseke, the son of the Uslar pipemaker August Meseke, settled in the USA in 1836, and remained for about 20 years. While in the states, Meseke dealt in imported pipes from Uslar. During that period much of the pipe production in Uslar was specifically destined for the American market; in 1845 there were 4.5 million pipe bowls exported to the USA, principally to the southern states. The export trade peaked at 11 million pieces in 1866. The Stummelpfeifen portrayed American presidents in three-dimensions, for example George Washington and Franklin Pierce (Figure 1), or other likenesses, for example Henry Clay, Lewis Cass and “Turks”). They were glazed in various colors and made for smoking with a wooden stem. According to the information from the museum, the decline of the American business was triggered on one hand by the turmoil of the American Civil War, and on the other hand by the emergence of American pipe production. Moreover, the source of local pipe clay was exhausted, so that in the final years of the pipe business at Uslar the required clay had to be shipped from Grossalmerode. The last factory discontinued production in 1918.

**Figure 1:** Uslar Museum catalog listing of Pierce pipes found at the Meseke pipe factory in Uslar. Photo Courtesy of Dirk Rackwitz.

**Pipe Production in Grossalmerode**

Archaeological finds place the beginning of white clay pipe production in Grossalmerode at around 1650. In approximately 1830 the production of “Stummelpfeifen” for export to the USA began. A son of the pipemaker Heinrich Goebel spent some time in America dealing in pipes from Grossalmerode. In 1845, Grossalmerode exported 13,412 hundredweights of pipes to America. Stephan calculates that this would amount to a minimum of 13.5 million pipes (Stephan 1993:66). Data for seven producers in the period 1864-1866 shows that 95% of their products were sold in the wholesale trade to America. During the 1860’s, changes in the political situation in the USA were responsible for a major decrease in demand for German pipes and as a result, most pipemakers in Grossalmerode were out of business by 1872 with one working until 1915 (Seeliger 1993).
Persons Represented on “Stummelpfeifen” Found in Uslar and Grossalmerode

The German anthropomorphic pipes have a white, tan or reddish earthenware body and can be either unglazed or glazed. The glazed pipes are found in one of several colors; red, red-brown, red-orange, orange, black, yellow, green, beige or brown. The possible use of pipe molds from the same supplier in both locations, and the documented use in Uslar of clay from Grossalmerode, presents problems in differentiating pipes made in the two locations. Stephan suggests that the green-glazed pipes were primarily made in Uslar (Stephan 1995:186). The identifying names are those used by Stephan or found on manufacturer’s price lists.

Figure 2: Pipes from the 1845-1860 New Orleans, Louisiana cistern.  
A. Red glazed marked “WASHINGTON”.  
B. Red unglazed Victoria.  
C. Red glazed Taylor pipe marked in Script, “Rough and Ready”.

Figure 3: Pipes from the 1850-1860 New Orleans cistern.  
A. Red glazed, unmarked Washington type.  
B. Unglazed, white, marked “HENRY CLAY”.  
C. Red glazed, marked “PRES(IDENT) (FILL)MORE”.

President Pipes: Origin and Distribution  
Pfeiffer, Gartley, and Sudbury (2007)
American Copies of German “Stummelpfeifen”

Some American pipe factories produced imitations of the imported German products. However, the American copies are quite crude compared to the originals.

Three unglazed pipes (Sudbury 1979:202, Plate 30) found at the Matthew Duncan pottery, which operated from 1856 to 1880 in Bastrop County, Texas, are rough copies of the German Zachary Taylor pipes. They exhibit all the design elements but not the fine details of the German pipes, suggesting that they were made in molds cast from a German original. Molds of original objects are known to result in “an inferior, weak and relatively undetailed facsimile of the original” (Anonymous n.d.c).

An unmarked, unglazed “philosopher” pipe with a tan body and a red slip was found in an 1850’s privy in Baltimore, Maryland (Stilts, 2002, personal comm.). A gray glazed philosopher pipe with the same design features as the above was found in the Columbia River Gorge, Washington site, which was occupied from the 1820s to the 1880s (Minor, Rick et al 1979: Table 10-19, Fig 10-18 a-f; Pfeiffer 1989:Catalog 1-4,6-9). These specimens are very similar to those illustrated by Stephan (Stephan 1995:Figs. 220, 221, 223, 228, Plates 11 and 12.), but they lack the fine details of the hair and beard of the German examples (Fig. 4). The John Taber pottery made these somewhat inferior copies of the German philosopher pipes in East Alton, New Hampshire (Sudbury 1979:170, 171, Plate 4-15) during the 1864-1872 period.

Two hundred examples of “Queen Victoria” pipes were found at the Old Sacramento site in California. They were found in the previously mentioned building that burned in November 1852. The woman portrayed on the pipes had the curly hair and double bead necklaces of the German Victoria pipe, however the pipes had a yellow-brown glaze over a white clay body and were coarsely formed. It appears that no attempt was made to eliminate the mold lines. An obvious variance from the German pipes is that the angle between the shank and bowl is 90 degrees on the American pipes, whereas the angle on the German specimens is approximately 45 degrees. Crude Queen Louisa and Hercules pipes in the Doug Diez collection have the same body, glaze and stem angle as the above “Queen Victoria” pipes and are most likely products of the same maker. The source of these pipes is not known but the 90 degree angle between the bowl and shank suggests an American source.

Beginning in about 1850, factories in Point Pleasant, Ohio produced great numbers of pipes until the late 19th century (Sudbury 1979). These were widely distributed and are commonly found today; some styles occur on the same sites that have also yielded president pipes. The known products of these factories were stoneware reed-stem pipes. In fact, one type of pipe made in Point Pleasant, a Turk pipe, may have been inspired by the Turk pipes from Uslar and Grossalmerode (Stephan 1995:166). Again the angle between the stem and bowl is 90°, compared to the 45° angle on the German specimens.
Summary of German Manufacture of President Pipes

According to Seeliger, (1993:165), for Grossalmerode as well as Uslar, the most important ports where pipes entered North America were Baltimore, New York and New Orleans. Stephan (1995:166) states that most of the pipes from Grossalmerode were shipped to New York, in addition to Baltimore and some other ports in the South. From these major ports the pipes would have readily been dispersed across America and that is confirmed in the archaeological discoveries. This distribution is consistent with the accounts from Uslar and Grossalmerode. However, the notion that slaves primarily used these pipes has not been confirmed in the reports examined by the authors. It is difficult to believe that slaveholders would have been purchasing imported pipes specifically for their slaves. In fact, only two of the pipes discussed so far were found on plantation sites. However, a search of available reports of archaeological excavations of southern plantations has turned up an additional example. A badly damaged green-glazed pipe similar to the German pipes bears an image of an unidentifiable person. This pipe was among 2000 white clay pipes found at the Dog River Plantation site in Alabama (Waselkov 2002). This plantation was abandoned by the end of the American Civil War (1865).

Pipes representing two presidents, Taylor and Fillmore, should also be included in the pipe variety listings for Uslar and Grossalmerode. The Taylor pipe most likely dates to his term as president (1849-50), and would represent the earliest known of the presidential series of pipes. Henry Clay may be the earliest in the series. The German-produced presidential series apparently ends with Franklin Pierce. If as reported, pipes were being exported to the US by the millions up to and including 1866, it is interesting that there are no known German reed stem pipes depicting James Buchanan (president 1857-1861) or Abraham Lincoln (president 1861-1865).

Contemporary German documents dating to about the end of the American Civil War show that the pipemakers of Grossalmerode were concerned with the decrease in sales to America. One apparent reason for the drop was that American tariffs had been substantially raised during the war, making German pipes more expensive. The higher tariffs encouraged increased production in the US and new factories had been established here (Stephan 1995:135). Among Grossalmerode’s American competitors in the mid-nineteenth century would have been the pipe factory at Point Pleasant, Ohio, the John Taber potteries in Maine and in New Hampshire, the extensive pipe production center in Akron, Ohio, and possibly the pipe industry of Pamplin, Virginia, which all produced large quantities of reed-stem pipes. During the period ca. 1847-1890 the Merrill pottery in Akron, Ohio also made reed-stem pipes. In 1847 the Merrill’s of Akron, Ohio, had invented and patented pipe making machinery; the Merrills reported that they produced 280,000 pipes in 1850 (Sudbury 1979:184). A stoneware anthropomorphic pipe, variously suggested to represent Thomas Jefferson or Jefferson Davis, has also been reported (Sudbury 1979: Plate 57). An apparently Civil War vintage stub stem anthropomorphic brass pipe mold of this same basic style has been reported (Sudbury 1979:Plate 64) and has recently been used to product “counterfeit” pipes for sale (Figure 4). This mold and the
“Jefferson” pipe are the same basic form as the Lincoln pipe illustrated in Figure 16. The pipe in Figure 4 may represent the image of Robert E. Lee.

![Figure 4](image)

**Figure 4:** Contemporary pipes produced from the mold illustrated by Sudbury (1979:Pl. 64).
- A. White clay specimen.
- B. Stoneware version, including additional post-molding tooling.

**Known Examples of Clay President Pipes**

**George Washington: 1789-1797 [Pipe actually produced mid-19th century]**

Washington clay tobacco pipes are thought to be primarily commemorative in nature since none are known to date from either his presidential campaigns or period in office. Washington wears a crown with an encircling band of V’s. The shank is sometimes marked “WASHINGTON” in capital letters on the left side (Stephan 1995:Figs. 223, 224, 228 and Plate 12).

A red-brown glazed George Washington pipe, marked “WASHINGTON” was found in the 1845-1860 level Orange Street cistern (Figure 2a). It appears to be identical to the Washington pipes confirmed to be from Grossalmerode (Stephan 1995:Figs. 223, 224, 228, Plate 12). An unmarked Washington red glazed pipe with a different image came from the Annunciation Street privy (Figure 3a). Stephan does not illustrate a similar pipe and if not for an example in the Doug Diez collection marked “WASHINGTON”, it would be a
Figure 5: George Washington pipes recovered in the USA.
A. Red glazed over red clay, unmarked.
B. White clay, unglazed; marked “WASH…” on the left stem.

stretch to call this a Washington pipe. A bowl fragment bearing the typical crown of the Washington pipes was found at the Desoto, Nebraska Townsite Site (25-WN-16) dated to 1855-1875 (Pfeiffer 1982:189, Fig. 29j, 2006:88). A fragment of a probable Washington pipe with an orange body and a clear glaze was found in excavations at the Hudson’s Bay Company’s Bellevue Farm, San Juan Island, Washington which was occupied from 1853 to about 1870 (Pfeiffer 1983:161, 165, 168, Figs. 1e and 2e). A green-glazed marked example was reported from a site in Arizona dated to the second half of the 19th century (Painter and Fontana 1968:161, 162).

Henry Clay: Lost three Presidential elections (1824 as Democratic Republican; 1832 as a National Republican; 1844 as a Whig)

Henry Clay was a prominent American politician in the 1803-1852 period. A laurel wreath encircles his head and the shank is marked in capital letters, “HENRY” on the left side and “CLAY” on the right side (Stephan 1995:Fig. 225).

Among the three pipes found in the 1850-1860 Annunciation Street privy, located in the same city block as the previously discussed New Orleans cistern, was a white clay pipe marked “HENRY on the left side of the shank and “CLAY” on the right side of the shank (Figure 3b). This pipe is similar to the Henry Clay pipes illustrated from Grossalmerode (Stephan Figure 145) and may be a Grossalmerode product. There is also the tall clay pipe with a six sided bowl often referred to as a German “Coffeehouse” style (Figures 7, 8) (O’Connor 1997:58). This would have had a long stem and mouthpiece.
The Henry Clay and other earlier styles of this pipe, usually with no country of origin making, are marked “WARRANTED TO COLOR” on the shank or above the head. Meerschaum pipes started becoming popular and widely distributed in the mid-1850s and they are valued more as they begin to color from smoking. This may have been an attempt to collate the wonderful smoking qualities of meerschaum with the more humble clay. Most known examples of this style with a known country of origin are marked “Austria” and may have been made post 1891 McKinley Tariff Act.

*Figure 6:* Henry Clay stub stemmed pipes, manufactured in Germany and found in the USA. Specimen C was found in an Illinois privy. [Scale of these photographs varies.]
Figure 7: Henry Clay Pipe in “Coffeehouse Style” pipe, marked “HENRY CLAY” above bust.

Figure 8: Henry Clay Pipe, stem cork still present.
A. Left side.
B. “WARRANTED TO COLOR” on right shank.
Zachary Taylor: 1849-1850

Taylor is depicted wearing a laurel wreath similar to those worn by some of the other political figures in this series of pipes. Zachary Taylor, who was President 1849-50, was nicknamed “Old Rough and Ready”. These pipes were usually, but not always, marked. When marked, the legend “Rough and Ready” appears on the left side of the shank in either script or block letters. Stephan does not identify Taylor pipes as products of Grossalmerode. However he illustrates but doesn’t comment upon an apparently unmarked pipe that seems to be identical to an unmarked Taylor pipe found in Pennsylvania (Stephan 1995: Plate 224).

Figure 9: Zachary Taylor (“Rough and Ready”) Pipes.
A. Ball clay specimen, “Rough and Ready” on left side of stem (NYC).
   The ca. 1850 German mold for this pipe is illustrated by Stephan (1995:133).
B. Red glaze on red clay, unmarked.
C. Grey clay, unglazed, unmarked.
D. Grey clay, glazed, unmarked.
A red-brown glazed pipe from the Orange Street cistern in New Orleans, is marked in script on the left side of the shank with the legend “Rough and Ready” (Figure 2). Wilson (1971:Fig. 36C) illustrates a marked green glazed Rough and Ready pipe from Fort Sanders, Wyoming. The marked shank of a red-brown “Rough and Ready” pipe was found during the excavations at the James Langworthy site in Dubuque, Iowa. The house was occupied from the 1830’s to 1974 and the context of the pipe was not dated with any precision (Perry n.d.:5). A red glazed pipe marked “ROUGH AND READY” in upper case block letters was found at Fort Johnson South Carolina (Steen 2002:736). A similar pipe of unknown provenience is shown in Fig. 9.

An unglazed unmarked Zachary Taylor pipe was excavated from a privy dating to the 1850’s in State College, Pennsylvania (Stilts, 2002, personnel comm.).

**Lewis Cass: Lost 1848 election to Taylor**

(US Secretary of State 1848, 1857-1860). A laurel wreath encircles his head and the shank is marked in capital letters “LOUIS” on the left and “CASS” on the right (Stephan 1995:Figs. 224, 225, 228 and Plate 12). A green-glazed pipe marked “LEWIS CASS” was found at Fort Sanders, Wyoming (Wilson 1971:49, Fig. 36E). Another marked “LEWIS CASS” pipe is reported from Bexar County, Texas (Hudson et al 1974:66, Figure 19). A pipe marked “LEWIS CASS” was found in a Harrison, Ohio privy dating from 1860-1880 (Anonymous n.d.a). These all appear to be identical to the documented German Cass pipes.

![Figure 10: Lewis Cass pipes made in Germany.](image)

- A, B. Red clay, glazed.
- C, D. White clay, unglazed.
- A. C. Marked CASS on the stem.
- B. D. Marked LEWIS on the stem.
Millard Fillmore: 1850-1853

**Figure 11:** Millard Fillmore pipes.
A. Red glaze over red clay.
B. White clay, unglazed.

Fillmore is shown wearing a laurel wreath similar to those shown on the Henry Clay and Lewis Cass pipes. All examples seen are marked “PRESIDENT” on the left side of the shank and “FILLMORE” on the right). Although this type of pipe is assuredly a product of Uslar or Grossalmerode, Fillmore is not listed among the presidents on pipes recorded as made in Uslar and Grossalmerode. However the pipes have the same style, paste and superior quality as the other German presidential pipes. Specimens of this pipe were observed in the collections of German workers who had excavated at the manufacturing sites (Sudbury, personal observation).

Franklin Pierce: 1853-1857

**Figure 12:** Unglazed white pipe marked “FRANK PIERCE”, identical to pipes found at the Meseke Factory in Uslar. Unknown provenience, John Stilts collection.
Figure 13 [above]: Green-glazed pipe marked “FR PIERCE”, with a band of stars around the shank, identical to pipes found in Grossalmerode. Unknown provenience, John Stilts collection.

Examples from Grossalmerode are marked in capital letters, “FR. PIERCE” on the left side of the shank and “PRESIDENT” on the right side, and a band of stars encircles the shank near the base of the bowl (Stephan 1995:Figs. 225, 227 and Plate 12). (Seeliger 1993:146) illustrates a similar pipe from Uslar but it is marked “FRANK PIERCE” on the left side of the shank and “PRESIDENT” on the right side. It also lacks the band of stars found on the Grossalmerode examples.

Figure 14: Franklin Pierce pipes
A. Glazed, red clay.
B. White clay, unglazed.
C. Glazed, red clay.

A clear-glazed pipe with a slip on a tan body, marked “FR. PIERCE” on the left side of the shank and “PRESIDENT” on the right side of the shank was found in excavations at the Hudson’s Bay Company’s Bellevue Farm, San Juan
President Pipes: Origin and Distribution

Island, Washington (Pfeiffer 1983:161, 165, 168, Figs. 1e and 2e). An unglazed orange pipe with the above markings is reported from an 1850-1900 site in Arizona (Painter and Fontana 1976:161,162). These pipes have a band of stars encircling the front end of the shank, (see Fig.2) and match in every detail the Pierce pipes illustrated by Stephan (1995; Figs. 224-227). Wilson illustrates another variety of Pierce pipe from Fort Sanders, Wyoming, which was occupied from 1866-1882. (1971: 48, Fig. 36A). This red-bodied clear-glazed pipe is described as having the name “FRANKLIN PIERCE” on the left side of the shank and “PRESIDENT” on the right, with the letters “C.P.” below “PRESIDENT”. This pipe lacks a band of stars and this variant is not evident in the Pierce pipes illustrated by Stephan (1995).

James Buchanan: 1857-1861

He was elected five times to the House of Representatives; then, after an interlude as Minister to Russia, served for a decade in the Senate. He became Polk’s Secretary of State and Pierce’s Minister to Great Britain. Service abroad helped to bring him the Democratic nomination in 1856 because it had exempted him from involvement in bitter domestic controversies. (White House 2006)

![Figure 15: Buchanan rebus pipe (manufacturer uncertain).](image)

This is a white ball clay pipe with integral stem. The bowl has an embossed rebus consisting of a buck on the right side and a cannon on the left side. Painter’s informant, Alan P. Owens (1969), attributes the manufacture to
Barney Spring of Rochester, N.Y. Owens also attributes other pipes, now known to be made by others, to that manufacturer.

Abraham Lincoln 1861-1865

Lincoln was assassinated shortly into his second term. These pipes may be commemorative in nature and not from a political campaign. Makers are unknown.

The broken stoneware pipe on the left includes the classical laurel wreath motif similar to those on the Henry Clay, Zachary Taylor, Lewis Cass, and Millard Fillmore pipes. [Note stylistic similarities to the modern pipe in Figure 4, and the mold reported previously (Sudbury 1979: Plate 64)].

Ulysses S. Grant: 1869-1877

The German catalogs refer to this style as the “Philosopher” pipe. The German manufactured pipes have the best appearance and are most clearly molded. A fragment of this style from the earlier Taber location at Endicott Street, from 1853 to 1864, dates before the period of Grant’s popularity in the North. Ulysses Grant was widely known from his Civil War military campaigns

Figure 16: Lincoln Pipes
A. Stoneware Lincoln pipe; probable USA manufacture.
B. White Clay Lincoln pipe, probable European manufacture.
**Figure 17:** German manufactured Grant pipes found in the USA.
A. Red glazed, red clay.
B, C. Unglazed.

**Figure 18:** Taber pipes in the likeness of President U.S. Grant.
A. Taber Endicott Street, Wolfeboro 1853-1864.
B, C. Taber Beaver Brook, East Alton 1864-1866.
D-G. Taber Pipe Mill, South Wolfeboro 1866-1882.
as early as 1864. The Taber pipes were made at the Beaver Brook location, in East Alton, from 1864-1866. The American copies of the German “philosopher” pipe, as well as the original German import, may have been marketed as a “Ulysses Grant” pipe.

One definite U.S. Grant clay pipe is shown in O’Connor (1997:60). “A brown and gold painted ceramic pipe with a bamboo stem shows a proud Ulysses S. Grant, who served as president from 1869 to 1877.” The pipe in the photocopied article has a shiny appearance as if it were glazed. It looks very similar to Uslar and Grossalmerode made pipes. The German made “philosopher” pipes have often been called a “U.S. Grant” pipe in America by antiquarians and some pipe collectors. The American copies of the German “philosopher” pipe are referred to “Grant” pipes by Paul Jung. Most of the Taber pipes appear to date from his time of popularity during the civil war to his presidency.

Benjamin Harrison: 1889-1893

![Benjamin Harrison pipe (both sides illustrated).](image)

**Figure 19:** Benjamin Harrison pipe (both sides illustrated).

A. Bust; stem reads: “PROTECTION FOR”.
B. Eagle with shield and arrows; stem reads “AMERICAN LABOR”.

---

22
Benjamin was the Grandson of President William Henry Harrison. In the 1880's he served in the United States Senate where he championed Indians, homesteaders, and Civil War veterans. In the Presidential election, Harrison received 100,000 fewer popular votes than Cleveland, but carried the Electoral College 233 to 168. He was defeated in the 1892 election by Grover Cleveland.

A white ball clay stemmed pipe is illustrated in Shurke (1968:52). He also mentions a similar pipe with the likeness of Grover Cleveland from the 1888 campaign.

William McKinley: 1897-1901

![McKinley pipes](image)

**Figure 20:** McKinley pipes, probable American-made. All four specimens have the name imprinted on the forehead (see B).

- A. Red/pink clay.
- B. D. White clay.
- C. Orange clay.
McKinley’s term is most noted for the 100 day Spanish-American War in which the U.S. destroyed the Spanish fleet in Santiago Harbor, and annexed Guam, the Philippines, and Puerto Rico. In 1900, McKinley campaigned against Bryan. While Bryan inveighed against imperialism, McKinley quietly stood for "the full dinner pail." His second term, which had begun auspiciously, came to a tragic end in September 1901. He was standing in a receiving line at the Buffalo Pan-American Exposition when a deranged anarchist shot him twice. He died eight days later. (White House 2006)

In addition to the four colors illustrated, there is an obvious difference in the height of the head. There must have been at least two different molds from this manufacturer. A full bust pipe was made by Gambier of Paris.

William Jennings Bryan:
(Lost to McKinley in 1896 & 1900 and again to Taft in 1908)

Figure 21: Bryan pipe made by “GAMBIER A PARIS”. Mold Number 1683

Sullivan (1980:153) mentions a series of four highly detailed bust figural pipes by Gambier of Paris for the elections of 1900, 1904 and 1908. They depict William McKinley, William Jennings Bryan, Theodore Roosevelt and William Howard Taft. Since the Gambier mold number for Bryan is 1683 and that of Taft is 1684, these two pipes may date from the 1908 Campaign.
Theodore Roosevelt: 1901-1909

With the assassination of President McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt became the youngest United States President at age 42. Although only elected to a single term, he could have run for another full term. However, Roosevelt considered that his almost eight years was enough and retired. He made another run for the presidency in 1912.

William H. Taft: 1909-1913

William Taft was the hand picked successor to Theodore Roosevelt. Taft alienated many liberal Republicans who later formed the Progressive Party. The Republicans re-nominated Taft in 1912. Roosevelt then bolted the party to lead the Progressives. Having a split party guaranteed the election of Woodrow Wilson.
Figure 23: TAFT pipe made by “GAMBIER A PARIS”. Mold Number 1684.


Figure 24: This porcelain-like pipe appears to be a caricature pipe rather than a campaign, victory or commemorative vein since it emphasizes the jowls and nose. Maker unknown.
Richard Nixon was elected by a painfully divided nation with turbulence in the cities and war overseas. In 1972 he was re-elected over democratic candidate George McGovern by one of the widest margins on record. Within a few months, his administration was embroiled in the “Watergate” scandal. He resigned from office in August 1974.

Questions for Future Research

One of the more interesting phenomena noticed during the research for this paper has been the nomenclature for the German “philosopher” or the American “U.S. Grant” anthropomorphic pipes. Were the American “Grant” pipes first copied from the German “philosopher” pipes and then had the “U.S. Grant” attributed to them at a later date? Were the German “philosopher” pipes ever marketed in America as “Grant” pipes? Were they ever manufactured in Germany as “Grant” pipes? Is the “Grant” pipe in “O’Connor (1997:60) actually produced in the Uslar / Grossalmerode area? How many clay tobacco pipe representations of American presidents remain to be documented? How many of the white ball clay pipes from James Buchanan thru Theodore Roosevelt were made by Barney Spring? His production is insufficiently documented. The four illustrated examples of William McKinley pipes demonstrate at least two molds. These are different from any of the other styles so who made these pipes? In the days of the telegraph and newspapers as the primary means of information, were these pipes really passed out as we would pass out campaign buttons or were they given to specific supporters? Why are some major German export pipe styles never mentioned in the German literature?

Conclusions

The category of “President Pipes” might better be referred to as “Political Pipes” since some, like the German produced George Washington, are commemorative in nature, some are caricatures or novelties, and some represent the campaigns of the contenders as well as the winners. The German production appears to be concentrated from 1844 (Henry Clay’s last attempt) thru 1852 (Franklin Pierce’s first election). The production of “philosopher” copies or U.S. Grant pipes by John Taber is from the early 1850s thru the early 1880s. White ball clay pipes with an integral stem have been made from the time of Benjamin Harrison thru Theodore Roosevelt but their manufacturing source and history is not well documented. Gambier of Paris made full bust pipes for the elections of 1900, 1904 and 1908. They depict William McKinley, William Jennings Bryan, Theodore Roosevelt and William Howard Taft. The phenomenon of Political Pipes appears to be centered in the time period of the mid-1840s thru the first decade of the 1900s.
Acknowledgements

We thank Doug Diez for photographs of pipes in his collection, Dirk Rackwitz of Stadtverwaltung Uslar for supplying information about the pipe industry in Uslar, John Stilts for supplying pictures of pipes in his collection, and Jeff Carskadden of the Muskingum Valley Archaeological Survey for his comments and suggestions. S. Paul Jung, Jr. supplied the photographs in Figure 18. Ben Rapaport and Gene Umberger graciously supplied background material and references.

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Watkins, Lura Woodside

White House

Wilson, Rex L.
### Appendix A

**President Pipes and Presidential Candidates**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Dates of Office</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>George Washington</td>
<td>Federalist</td>
<td>1789-1797</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Adams</td>
<td>Federalist</td>
<td>1797-1801</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Jefferson</td>
<td>Democratic Republican</td>
<td>1801-1809</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Madison</td>
<td>Democratic Republican</td>
<td>1809-1817</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Monroe</td>
<td>Democratic Republican</td>
<td>1817-1825</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Quincy Adams</td>
<td>Democratic Republican</td>
<td>1825-1829</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrew Jackson</td>
<td>Democrat</td>
<td>1829-1837</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin Van Buren</td>
<td>Democrat</td>
<td>1837-1841</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Henry Harrison</td>
<td>Whig</td>
<td>1841</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Tyler</td>
<td>Whig</td>
<td>1841-1845</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James K. Polk</td>
<td>Democrat</td>
<td>1845-1849</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry Clay</td>
<td>Whig</td>
<td>Lost three Presidential elections</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zachary Taylor</td>
<td>Whig</td>
<td>Lost 1848 election to Taylor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lewis Cass</td>
<td>Democrat</td>
<td>1850-1853</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Millard Fillmore</td>
<td>Whig</td>
<td>1853-1857</td>
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<tr>
<td>Franklin Pierce</td>
<td>Democrat</td>
<td>1857-1861</td>
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<tr>
<td>James Buchanan</td>
<td>Democrat</td>
<td>1861-1865</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abraham Lincoln</td>
<td>Republican</td>
<td>1865-1869</td>
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<tr>
<td>Andrew Johnson</td>
<td>Union</td>
<td>1869-1877</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ulysses S. Grant</td>
<td>Republican</td>
<td>1876, Greenback Party. (Painter, 1969:47)</td>
</tr>
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<td>Peter Cooper</td>
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<td>Rutherford B. Hayes</td>
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<td>1881</td>
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<td>Chester Arthur</td>
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<td>1885-1889</td>
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<td>Benjamin Harrison</td>
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<td>1893-1897</td>
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<td>Grover Cleveland</td>
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<td>1897-1901</td>
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<td>William McKinley</td>
<td>Republican</td>
<td>1896-1901</td>
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<tr>
<td>William Jennings Bryan</td>
<td>Republican</td>
<td>Lost to McKinley in 1896 and to Taft in 1903</td>
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<td>Theodore Roosevelt</td>
<td>Republican</td>
<td>1901-1909</td>
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<td>William H. Taft</td>
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<td>1909-1913</td>
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<td>Woodrow Wilson</td>
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<td>1913-1921</td>
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<td>Warren G. Harding</td>
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<td>1921-1923</td>
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<tr>
<td>Calvin Coolidge</td>
<td>Republican</td>
<td>1923-1929</td>
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<tr>
<td>Herbert Hoover</td>
<td>Republican</td>
<td>1929-1933</td>
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<tr>
<td>Franklin D. Roosevelt</td>
<td>Democrat</td>
<td>1933-1945</td>
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<tr>
<td>Harry S. Truman</td>
<td>Democrat</td>
<td>1945-1953</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dwight D. Eisenhower</td>
<td>Republican</td>
<td>1953-1961</td>
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<tr>
<td>John F. Kennedy</td>
<td>Democrat</td>
<td>1961-1963</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lyndon B. Johnson</td>
<td>Democrat</td>
<td>1963-1969</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gerald Ford</td>
<td>Republican</td>
<td>1974-1977</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ronald Reagan</td>
<td>Republican</td>
<td>1981-1989</td>
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<tr>
<td>George H. W. Bush</td>
<td>Republican</td>
<td>1989-1993</td>
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<tr>
<td>William Clinton</td>
<td>Democrat</td>
<td>1993-2001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George W. Bush</td>
<td>Republican</td>
<td>2001-2009</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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7 Highlighted individuals have pipes illustrated in this article.
8 1824 as Democratic Republican; 1832 as a National Republican; 1844 as a Whig.
9 White ball clay stemmed pipe
10 White ball clay stemmed pipe (a similar pipe was made in the likeness of Grover Cleveland).