Brad Logan, Editor  

feels obliged to hunt for things that could be done better or to find places to criticize, and it is not hard to fulfill that obligation. Here are a few problems—all of them minor.

In the pronunciation guide on p. xvii we are told that the Skiri letter c is equivalent to English “patch” or “cents”. In fact, the c in “patch” has no sound of its own, and the c in “cents” is not what is meant—it is the ts of “cents” that should be targeted. The facts are made clear elsewhere in the introduction, but a naïve user who looks no further than the pronunciation guide is going to be confused at this point. A similar lapse occurs in the list of phonological rules on p. 21. The unnumbered rule just above Rule 5 is impossible to interpret. It may be an attempt to summarize some of the following rules, but if so, that purpose is not at all clear.

Sometimes interesting information is missing. Under ‘nose’ on p. 224, for example, we learn that ‘where one’s nose is’ includes the element – tawi following the noun root for ‘nose’. Curious as to what that might be, I searched in the Skiri section for tawi and found it twice on p. 511, both times referring to a slope or incline. It seems quite logical to use the verb ‘slope’ with ‘nose’, but why is the etymology for both of these entries glossed ‘be suspended upright’? There is a hint under English ‘upright’, where we find a root wi among others, but the connection is mysterious.

In a work of this much detail prepared over a long period of time, one is naturally going to find some inconsistencies. You sometimes find things strictly by accident. For example, there are two nice entries for ‘pluck’ on p. 239, cross referenced from ‘feather, pluck’ on p. 150. The entry for ‘ball’ on pp. 74-75, however, gives no hint that one will also find related words in the entries ‘form into a ball’ and ‘formed into a ball’ on p. 158 (and those are the only entries using the English word ‘form’). Why make ‘feather, pluck’ a headword but not ‘ball, form’? I would not think of looking up ‘form’ to learn how to say ‘make a ball’. An additional example of weird omission: there is an entry for ‘dollar, half’ but none for ‘dollar’ or any other division (names of coins are listed, however). The entry for ‘money’ provides some ideas.

One could continue to nit-pick about such details forever. One reason this work has taken over 40 years to prepare is that a dictionary is never finished. What we have is a very professional and extensive record of the vocabulary of an extraordinary but essentially extinct language, a monument to speaker dedication and linguistic perseverance. Parks, and Pratt posthumously, are to be congratulated for a job well done.


Reviewed by Jeffrey J. Richner, Midwest Archaeological Center, National Park Service, Lincoln, Nebraska

The publication of Michael A. “Smoke” Pfeiffer’s 1982 Master’s thesis from the University of Idaho volume by Pfeiffer marks the reactivation of the Historic Clay Tobacco Pipe Studies series edited by J. Byron Sudbury, one of two in the series reviewed here. The preface of the Pfeiffer volume, with brief narratives from the author and series editor Sudbury, documents that the work is presented in its original form, without updates to references or identifications. The author made minor corrections in figure descriptions, spelling in the text, and formatting of the page layout after the original figures and text were scanned by J. Byron Sudbury and John M. Sudbury. Despite the passage of 24 years between the original writing and recent reprinting, the volume remains a very useful overview of clay tobacco pipes from a variety of sites on the northern Plains and Pacific Northwest.

The report consists of 15 chapters, all but two of which provide descriptions of clay tobacco pipes from numerous archaeological sites. The Introduction defines the primary problem, which the author considers to be a lack of adequate re-
porting on tobacco pipes in previous archaeological literature. Pfeiffer points to the utility of tobacco pipes in archaeology due to their common occurrence, short-lived use measured in days rather than years, rapid stylistic and technological change, dating potential, and regional/national variation. The collections range in age from about 1800 through 1890, with each site treated in a similar manner. Each assemblage is described along with descriptions and illustrations of each identified decorative type. Illustrations are primarily line drawings and the specimens are depicted at actual size. In the Historical Setting section of the Introduction, Pfeiffer provides an articulate overview and history of the fur trade of the large project area to provide context for understanding the arrival of tobacco pipes at the sites under consideration. Emphasis is placed upon the period from 1810 into the 1830s, although brief consideration is given to the 1840s and 1860s eras as well.

Chapters 2–14 form the body of the report, with many of the chapters focusing upon a single archaeological site. In a few chapters, multiple sites from a single geographic area are considered. Chapter 2 can be considered to be typical of the structure of these 13 chapters. There, Pfeiffer considers the tobacco pipes from Kanaka Village/Fort Vancouver Barracks (45-CL-300), Washington. He begins by placing the site in geographic, temporal, and cultural perspective followed by an overview of the tobacco pipe assemblage under consideration. He effectively utilizes Hudson’s Bay Company records to document British suppliers of pipes and tobacco for the period from 1825–1875 in narrative and tabular form. He identifies country of origin for many of the pipes in the assemblage, with specific makers listed where possible. The remainder of the chapter consists of 75 type descriptions, nearly all of which are accompanied by actual size, line-drawing illustrations. His approach to descriptions and illustrations creates a consistent framework through the report that allows other archaeologists to compare specimens from their sites to Pfeiffer’s published examples. The chapters vary slightly in content. For example, the Kanaka Village chapter does not include counts of types or total numbers of specimens, perhaps due to the complex and long history of excavations there and the large sample of pipes considered. Various counts and tables are utilized to summarize the assemblages in several of the other chapters.

The remaining data chapters include: Belleview Farm (45-SJ-295), Fort Okanogan (45-OK-64), Spokane House (45-SP-5) and Fort Colville (45-ST-97), Three sites (45-AS-81B, 10-BO-100, and 10-AA-96) on the Snake River Drainage, the town of Lillooet (no site number), Belleview Trading Post (25SY26) (name corrected to Fontenelle Trading Post in the report’s Preface), Desoto Townsite (25-WN-16), five sites (25-DU-2, 25-SY-14, 25-BU-1, 25-LC-33, and 25-GD-21) in Nebraska, Fort Robinson (25-DW-51), the Steamboat Bertrand (no site number), Fort Manuel (39-CO-5), and Fort Union Trading Post (no site number given, but is 32-WI-17). Each presentation parallels the basic format used in Chapter 2, with the complexity and depth of discussion and description varying according to sample sizes and site content.

The results of the project are detailed in Chapter 15, Conclusions. Pfeiffer divides this by the two basic geographical subsets of the sites considered in Chapters 2 through 14, the Pacific Northwest and northern Plains. In each presentation, he addresses materials, countries of origin, organization of specific types, and ethnicity. He documents the common occurrence of tobacco pipes in the sites, shows how they reflect rapid technological and stylistic change and suggests that they indicate social, ethnic, and political affiliations. The report concludes with a very useful Index, which is usually lacking in material culture reports of this type, an About the Author narrative that adds a nice personal touch to the report, and a list of Pfeiffer’s publications.

This publication of Pfeiffer’s Master’s thesis in a reformatted version will prove useful for archaeologists working with nineteenth-century tobacco pipe collections despite the passage of 24 years between the two versions of the report. While some identifications, especially of country of manufacture and type names, have understandably changed over the intervening years, the report holds up remarkably well. My only criticism is that the scanning process used to create the current version of the report was very unkind to the original report’s photographic illustrations.
While the line drawings are replicated well and are clear and sharp, the photographic figures, especially numbers 33 through 40 and 43, are of poor quality and are of very limited utility either for illustrating the objects or for potential comparison with examples from other sites. That minor problem does not detract appreciably from the report, which is a welcome addition to the growing published baseline of nineteenth-century tobacco pipe studies. It serves as a good renewal after a too-long hiatus of the Historic Clay Tobacco Pipe Studies series. Archaeologists working with nineteenth-century tobacco pipe assemblages will find this report to be a useful addition to their libraries.

The Sudbury monograph, the second in the series, is a highly detailed and lavishly illustrated volume that documents 11,777 clay tobacco pipe fragments recovered from multiple fieldwork efforts at Fort Union Trading Post National Historic Site in western North Dakota. It is also available in a paper version with black and white illustrations. The Fort, located on the north bank of the Yellowstone River, was occupied from 1829-1867 under various company affiliations. Although portions of the site’s large tobacco pipe collection have previously been analyzed and reported, especially those from 1968-1972 excavations, the current study provides a complete synthesis of the clay tobacco pipe fragments from the 1968-1972 and 1986-1988 field efforts. The latter fieldwork included large-scale block excavations in advance of reconstruction of some of the fort’s structures. The analytical project that resulted in this report was supported through the National Park Service’s Challenge Cost Share Program. By any reasonable measure, the National Park Service has gained far more than it expended in assisting Sudbury to complete this project.

The volume is divided into several sections. These are not chapters in the sense of being fully separate components each starting on a fresh page, but are instead internal primary headings within a single paper. The Summary lays the groundwork for Sudbury’s major findings, which include the identification of the diverse places of manufacture of the pipes. Sudbury has documented specimens from England, Germany, Holland, France, Italy, Scotland, and multiple locations in the United States within the large assemblage. Germany and England account for 80 percent of the identified fragments. In this section, the reader is briefly introduced to the author’s use of photography to document the collection, although one does not learn until later the large scale of that effort. The Introduction provides a brief overview of the history of tobacco pipe studies in the western United States, focusing upon studies specific to Fort Union.

Rather than repeating information about the history of Fort Union, the author uses a one-paragraph Site History section to point to a previous study of Fort Union tobacco pipes as a useful source for those interested in the history of the Fort. The Project Goals and Study Limitations section documents an important limitation of the lot cataloging approach used for the 1986-1988 collections, which, unlike the earlier collections, did not include individual ink labeling of each specimen. Accordingly, Sudbury was unable to handle and sort the entire collection at once, but instead worked with one provenience bag at a time. His goals were to photo-document the collection using side lighting, to illustrate both typical and unusual ball clay and reed stem specimens, to determine manufacturing source and age of the pipes, and to identify the research potential of the collection. Those goals were met and surpassed. Beyond these basic goals, Sudbury also recognized that his study resulted in nine wide-ranging side benefits, both general (e.g., the development of a visual survey of American pipe makers’ products) and specific (e.g., an overview of presidential pipes).

In the Materials and Methods section, the author provides precise details on photographic techniques, analytical methods, development of databases and all other aspects of the study. The photographic approach applied to the assemblage stands as a model for material culture studies in general, both from the highly detailed description and discussion of methods and equipment utilized to the stunning clarity of the published examples. About 25,000 images were taken during the project, clearly indicating not only the scope of the effort, but Sudbury’s admirable attention to detail.

The next 90+ pages of the report constitute
the Data section. The primary division for this section is the material used to manufacture the pipes, although subsections summarizing the type specimens from a previous study of Fort Union ball clay pipes and ethnographic information pertinent to Fort Union are also included. Ball clay, reed-stem, porcelain, Meerschaum, and vulcanite pipe fragments are carefully documented by decorative technique and, where possible, by place of manufacture and age. Given the size and diversity of the collection, the thorough type and variety descriptions, and numerous, crystal clear images, most archaeologists working at sites of comparable age, regardless of location within the United States, will undoubtedly find examples that they can match to their own collections. For example, I recognized numerous ball clay decorative types in Politics of the Fur Trade that I have recovered from early and middle nineteenth-century commercial and domestic sites in northeastern Ohio.

The project’s findings are provided in the Discussion section. Here, Sudbury synthesizes information on place of manufacture and age of the Fort Union pipes, focusing upon American-made, English (Bristol), and German examples. An interesting section is devoted to identifying Bristol, England versus Grossalmerode, Germany pipes. The author then points toward unresolved identification issues and provides a detailed comparison of the Fort Union examples with specimens reported from 32 roughly contemporary sites. A tentative timeline for the appearance of the decorative pipe types at Fort Union is then presented. Although it was beyond the scope of the project, this seriation might have been better supported by reference to the stratigraphic occurrence of the pipes, at least for the 1986–1988 collections that derived from a Harris Matrix excavation strategy. The Discussion section concludes with recommendations for 10 potential future primary studies and nine possible secondary studies. Each of those recommendations could frame a future, very useful research effort. The results of the project are then summarized in a Conclusions section. There, Sudbury declares that the report “is intended to serve as a benchmark in future 19th-century clay tobacco pipe studies.” The report is that, and more.

The volume concludes with the inclusion of six appendices of diverse subject matter. These range from a Powerpoint presentation about the project coauthored by William J. Hunt, Jr., who directed the National Park Service’s 1986–1988 excavations at Fort Union, to a broad synthesis of United States pipe production and a translation of an article on German anthropomorphic pipes from sites in the United States. These appendices are wide ranging and form an important component of the report.

Sudbury’s monograph is a welcome addition to knowledge about nineteenth-century tobacco pipes and both synthesizes existing information and presents extensive new data on pipe identification, place of manufacture, and age. Although there is no single contribution that stands out in this meticulously researched and written volume, I found the sections on German pipe production and the enormous imports of those specimens to the United States in the middle nineteenth century to be particularly interesting. Sudbury’s comparisons of Bristol, England and Grossalmerode, Germany examples are also intriguing. I recommend Politics of the Fur Trade: Clay Tobacco Pipes at Fort Union Trading Post (32W117) to any researcher interested in clay tobacco pipes and to all archaeologists who have recovered, or who expect to recover, nineteenth-century clay tobacco pipes in archaeological context. Fort Union’s geographic location and function as a bison-trade fur post are not limiting factors in the applicability of Sudbury’s report. Pipes from numerous European and United States manufacturers have been identified in the large assemblage, and these same pipes can be expected to occur in wide geographic and temporal contexts in the U.S. and elsewhere. Sudbury has met and exceeded his goal of providing a report to serve as a benchmark for future studies of nineteenth-century tobacco pipes and I look forward to reading the results of his continuing research.