

## IROQUOIS EFFIGY RATTLE PIPES

**Mima Kapches**

### *ABSTRACT*

A small number of ceramic Iroquois effigy pipes have been discovered to have enclosed cavities containing grit inclusions that cause the pipes to rattle when shaken. This paper is a brief research note describing the examples in the Royal Ontario Museum and University of Toronto collections. The techniques of production and the cultural and chronological character of the pipes are discussed. It is suggested that other researchers may discover additional examples by shaking their pipes.

### *INTRODUCTION*

During an examination of ceramic effigy smoking pipes in the collections of the Royal Ontario Museum, it was noted that several examples also served as rattles. Ultimately six specimens were discovered in the R.O.M. collections, and one in the collections of the University of Toronto. Since effigy pipe rattles have not heretofore been reported for Ontario, it was thought that a brief research note might be a useful initial record of these unusual specimens. The pipes are described, the cultural and chronological position of the examples reviewed, and the technique of production discussed. Rather than being a comprehensive study, the purpose of this paper is to acquaint Iroquoian researchers with these unique artifacts in case they may wish in future to include in their routine examination of effigy pipes another analytical procedure: the shake.

### *DESCRIPTION OF THE SAMPLE*

Five complete and one incomplete (No. 7) ceramic effigy pipe rattles were discovered in the R.O.M. collections. The data from these are presented in Table 1.

The smoking pipes from 13 Iroquoian sites in the University of Toronto collections were examined. None of the specimens in the documented collections, effigy or non-effigy, were found to be equipped with rattles. Only one example was detected (No. 6 in Table 1). It is unprovenanced and is included in this study as an example of the variety of effigy rattles.

Pipes Nos. 1, 2, 3, and 6 are examples of what Mathews describes as human faces with animal ears (1978: 148). Only one of the pipes in this study, No. 1 (Fig. 1), was described by Mathews: "It seems to have the face of a human and the ears of an animal and a large pointed projection emanates from the back of the head" (1978: 124). She did not note that this specimen was also a rattle. The other pipes in the R.O.M. sample were not available for Mathews' analysis. Examples 2 and 3 (Fig. 1) also have projections at the back of the head. Example 6 (Fig. 1) does not have an exaggerated dorsal projection. The Janus-effigy (No. 4, Fig. 1) also has minor ear-like projections above the face. Noble does not illustrate similar examples in his study (1979). He does mention pipes with a "bifurcated brim," and these examples may represent this type (1979: 71). The animal effigy (No. 5, Fig. 1) is ascribed to a bear (Noble 1979: Fig. 2). The broken rattle fragment is a pinch-face effigy (Fig. 1, Nos. 7 and 8).

TABLE 1  
DATA ON EFFIGY RATTLE PIPES

Effigy Type	Find Location (Ontario)	Collection and Catalogue Number*
1. Human	York Co., Vaughan Twp. (Woodbridge)	R.O.M. 15210
2. Human	Unknown	R.O.M.
3. Human	Victoria Co., Fenelon Twp.	R.O.M. 908.10.1
4. Human Janus	Victoria Co., Bexley Twp.	R.O.M. 18841
5. Animal (Bear)	Brant Co., Brantford Twp.	R.O.M. 6743?
6. Human	Unknown	U. of T. ANT 115
7. Human	Unknown	R.O.M. C101?

\*R.O.M. = Royal Ontario Museum U. of T. = University of Toronto

#### CULTURE AND CHRONOLOGY

The find locations for 4 of the specimens are known. Three human examples from York County and Victoria County are considered within the Huron continuum. The animal effigy from Brant County is thought to be part of the Neutral continuum. The chronological position of bear effigies ranges from after A.D. 1450 to the historic period (Noble 1979). Mathews argues that human-face pipes with animal ears are precontact Huron. Similar examples are also known from the Petun area and there is one example from a Seneca site. The example she illustrates from the Richmond Mills site (1978: 91) is the same type as those from Ontario. The Richmond Mills site is dated circa A.D. 1500-1550 (Mathews 1978, Englebrecht 1974). Janus-face effigies have a limited temporal range from about A.D. 1475 to A.D. 1550. The example in this study is from a protohistoric context (Noble 1979: 79). Boyle (1901: 20) described this triple janus pipe but apparently did not notice that it was also a rattle. The pinch-face varieties are common in the historic period (Noble 1979). In general, in the late prehistoric, protohistoric and historic periods, there was a florescence of effigy pipes.

Comparative examples of rattle pipes are not common. One reference exists to a bear effigy pipe "whose head was hollow and contained a small pebble which rattled when the pipe was shaken" (Houghton 1921: 418). This specimen was from the Seneca Factory Hollow site which is dated circa A.D. 1590-1615 (Englebrecht 1974: 55). This also confirms a later chronological position for these type pipes.

The non-secular use of effigy pipes and interpretations concerning the pipes are well documented in the literature (Mathews 1978, 1979; Noble 1979). Pipe smoking was employed by medicine men as a ritualistic method of contacting the spirits, and symbolized supernatural powers. Rattles also had a similar function (Tooker 1964). Therefore, the combination of these two symbols of power would enhance the magical potential of the item and consequently the practitioner's powers. Due to the difficulty of producing these pipes, they are not common and for this reason as well their symbolic power was increased.

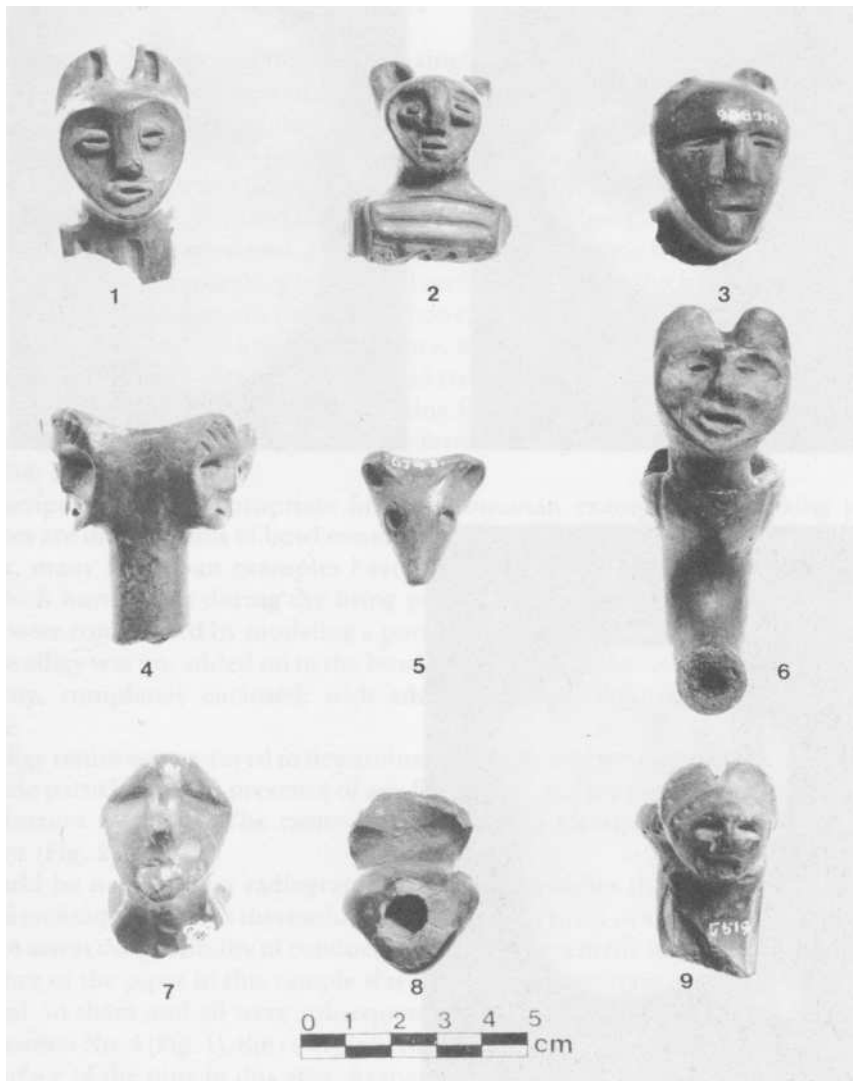


Fig. 1. Ceramic effigy pipes, specimen numbers indicated.

#### PRODUCTION

The method of producing rattle pipes was sophisticated and warrants certain detailed discussion on the technology. Descriptions on the manufacture of smoking pipes for the Ontario Iroquois are limited. The usual accounts are by Boucher (1896) and Sagard (1939). These state that men made the pipes but details on the production techniques are not included.

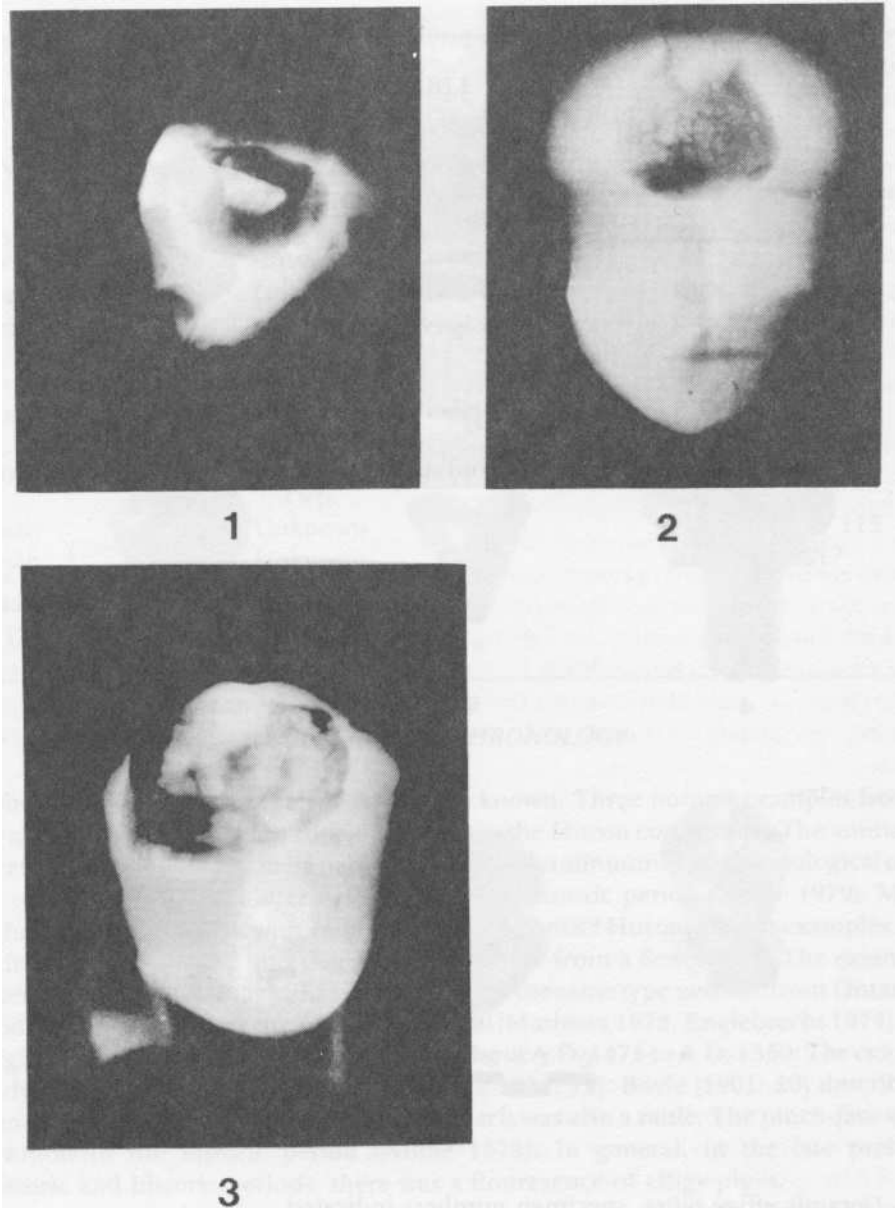


Fig. 2. X-ray views of pipes: 1: Pipe No. 5; 2: Pipe No. 3; 3: Pipe No. 1.

Rogers (1936) described the method of production of pipes followed by the Southern Diegueno:

The body of the pipe was made from a single piece of clay by rolling it between the palms of the hands. The resulting cylindrical form, which was an inch or more in thickness, was then bent into a gentle arch while still plastic. At this stage the bore was formed by pushing a pointed twig, of the same curvature, into the stem end. It was thrust through to a point where the bottom of the bowl was to be constructed, and left in the clay. The next step was to gouge out the bowl....After this the pipe was tapered off to the stem end, and received its final shaping by scraping....the pipe was...sundried, preparatory to the final surface-finishing, which was accomplished by rubbing with a smooth pebble or a bone. The operation was sometimes carried far enough to produce a polished surface, a technique which was never applied to pottery. Pipes were often painted a solid red, or decorated with incised hatchings. They were carefully fired in an oxidizing flame over coals. Most of the twig was burned out during the firing, then the residue was pushed out with another twig. (1936: 20)

This description seems appropriate for the Iroquoian examples of smoking pipes. The differences are in the details of bowl construction and the variation in bore manufacture. For the latter, many Iroquoian examples have impressions in the bores of twisted grasses and string which burned out during the firing process.

Bowls were constructed by modeling a portion of the initial rolled mass of clay forming the pipe. The effigy was not added on to the bowl but was part of the same clay mass. The creation of a cavity, completely enclosed, with added particles required a different production sequence.

The effigy rattles were x-rayed to determine the position of the cavity in the effigy, the nature of the rattle particle and the presence of any features on the pipe which were representative of the production sequence. The cavity in the effigies is clearly visible on the x-rays of the specimens (Fig. 2).

It should be noted that a radiograph of the pipes nullifies their potential for additional analytical techniques such as thermoluminescence. Thus prior to x-raying similar artifacts, it is advised to assess the possibility of conducting such analyses in the future. It was argued that the significance of the pipes in this sample was such that other archeometric tests would not be conducted on them and all were subsequently x-rayed.

In specimen No. 5 (Fig. 1), the cavity is between the ears (Fig. 2, No. 1). There is no alteration of the surface of the pipe in this area. At the neck the pipe has broken and the cavity can be seen. The rattle element is a particle of grit. At the break point, a small fissure is apparent. This may have extended into the cavity interior, thus allowing the escape of air during the firing process.

The particle of grit is visible in this specimen (Fig. 2, No. 1), and in the other examples grit particles can also be observed as irregular outlines in the x-rays. All rattle elements are apparently grit particles and several are included in some examples.

The cavity in specimen No. 1 (Fig. 1) is in the upper portion of the effigy (Fig. 2, No. 3). Several particles are present in the cavity. An area of dark density occurs in the top part of the cavity. It has the appearance of a plug of clay. The cavity in specimen No. 3 (Fig. 1) is similarly situated in the top part of the effigy (Fig. 2, No. 2). This also has a visible plug of clay between the ears. Effigy pipe No. 2 (Fig. 1) does not have a visible plug of clay on the front view (Fig. 3, No. 1). A second x-ray of the front of this specimen shows at least 4 grit particles in the cavity (Fig. 3, No. 2).

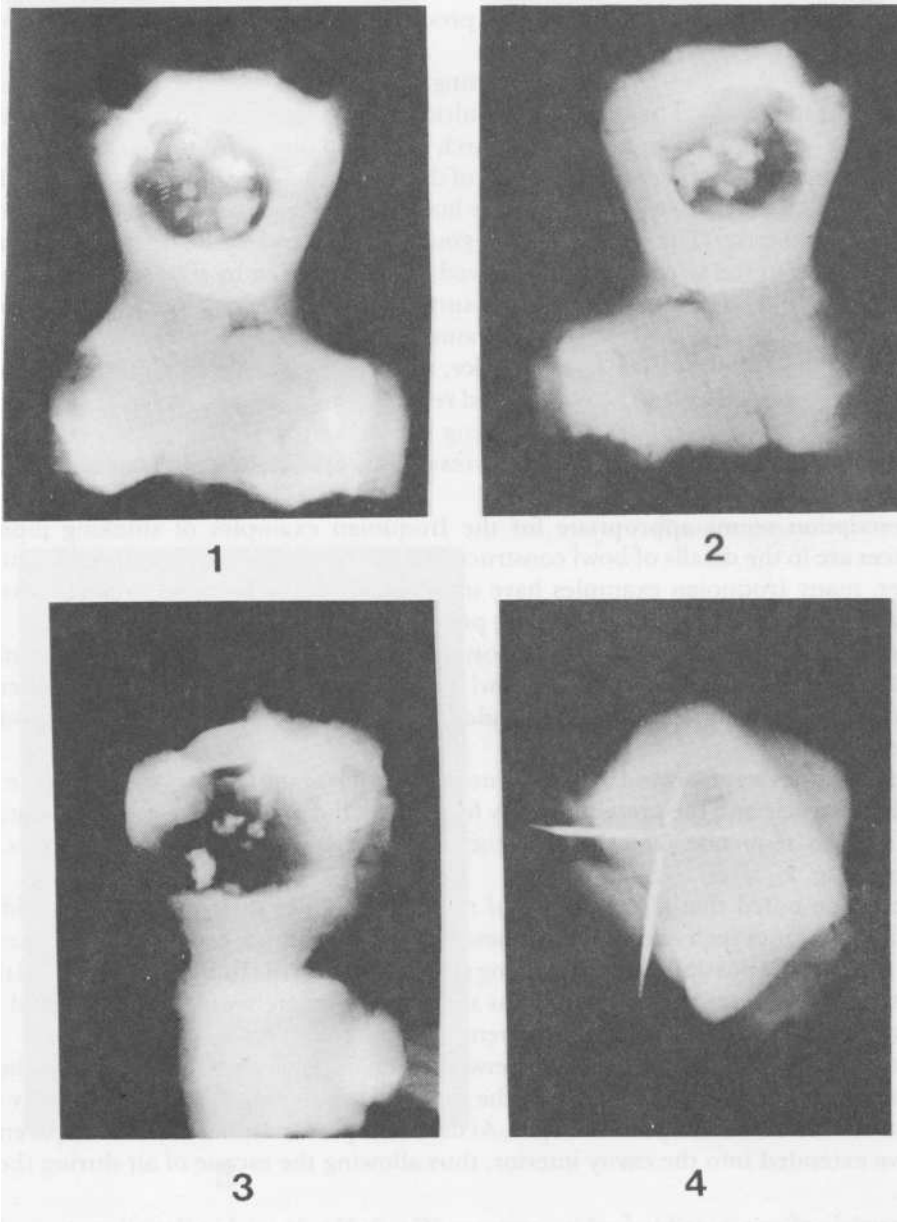


Fig. 3. Various x-ray views of Pipe No. 2.

However, a side view of pipe No. 2 indicates a plug of clay to the posterior (Fig. 3, No. 3). This would explain the lower and more central position of the cavity in the effigy head compared to Nos. 1 and 3. This example has 2 holes on the posterior surface which penetrate to the cavity. These holes were not visible on the x-rays until metal wires were placed in the holes and the specimen rephotographed. This illustrates (Fig. 3, No. 4) the position of the holes from the top of the specimen and further shows the change in density of the interior of the rattle to the back of the effigy.

Example 6 (Fig. 1) is an effigy head which was attached to the body of a pipe. This junction can be seen clearly in the x-rays (Fig. 4, Nos. 1 and 2). The texture of the clay of the head is different from that of the body. The effigy is not properly associated with the body. The cavity in this example is large and is in the centre of the effigy. There is a plug of clay visible on the right side as seen from the rear (Fig. 4, No. 2). A side view (Fig. 4, No 1) of this head is interesting since it illustrates the manner in which the cavity was gouged out. Clearly visible are irregular edges demonstrating that the central portion was hollowed out with some instrument, like a stick, the grit placed in this cavity, and the plug added to seal the cavity.

Only one of the heads on the triple face janus No. 4 has a rattle (Fig. 4, No. 3). The position was difficult to locate since the radiograph had interference from the other features on the pipe.

Specimen No. 7 in the R.O.M. collections, possibly a pinch-face effigy, had a hollow cavity exposed in the centre of the head (Fig. 1, Nos. 7 and 8) which was apparently hollowed out from the top. The clay was reamed out in a circular motion with a stick leaving the sides of the cavity fairly smooth. The pipe was fired and subsequently the top of the effigy was broken and the cavity exposed. The area surrounding the cavity was ground smooth. There does not appear to have been an explosion of the pipe during firing since there are no appropriate indications on the surface. It appears as if the plug was not sealed sufficiently so that it loosened and fell out after the firing process.

One example of an effigy pipe (Fig. 1, No. 9) of a type similar to those with rattles was x-rayed to determine if perhaps this specimen was a rattle failure. No interior cavity was revealed in the x-ray which is included as Fig. 4, No. 4 to illustrate the appearance of a pipe without a cavity.

#### DISCUSSION

The data from the x-rays of the pipes allows statements about the production of the rattles. First, the pipe was constructed, probably in a manner similar to that described by Rogers (1936), with the effigy face modeled as part of the bowl rather than added on since the x-rays reveal no demarcations or difference in clay between the effigy and the bowl (excepting pipe No. 6 in this sample). Whether or not the effigy was modeled after the rattle was prepared is not known. Certainly some cosmetic modification had to be conducted after the rattle was prepared in order to cover the change in the surface. The rattle was prepared by gouging out a hollow cavity in the effigy. Three points of access were used: the top of the head, the back of the head and the side of the head. None of the pipes in this sample had the face area removed to ream out the cavity. Grit particles were placed in the hollowed-out cavity which was then closed with a clay plug and the area smoothed over. In one example, 2 holes remained to the central cavity. No other holes were clearly visible on the remaining examples. These holes served two purposes: first, to allow pressure to escape during firing and, second, to increase the resonation of the rattle. The pipe, once fired, was ready for use.

The stylistic similarity of the pipes, human faces with ears and bear effigies, suggests that these particular representations with rattles are not random. Only additional research on the rattle pipes will confirm this hypothesis. Of interest is the presence of rattle pipes on Seneca sites

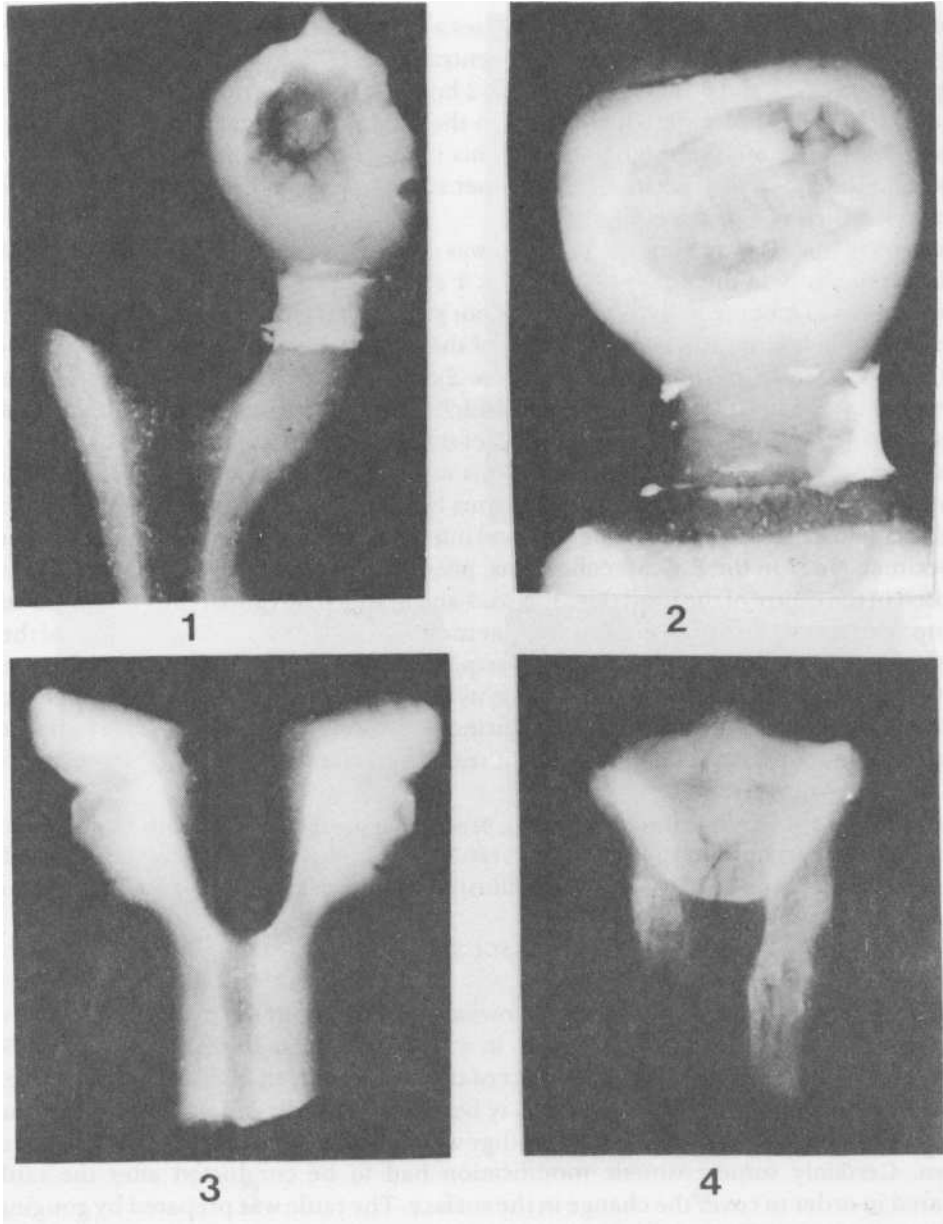


Fig. 4. X-ray views of pipes: 1 and 2: Pipe No. 6; 3: Pipe No. 4; 4: Pipe No. 9.



and the similar eared-human effigy varieties although their rattle potential is unknown at the moment. This leads to suppositions concerning protohistoric and historic contact between southern Ontario and the Seneca. The nature of the contact, which is not unexpected, would seem to be in the ceremonial realm because of the non-secular use of pipes. Noble (1979) postulated contact of medicine men from Ontario with those in New York state. These pipes would support a hypothesis of either movement of shamans or their ritualistic objects.

It is a matter of speculation whether or not a production specialist would have made pipes for distribution among several individuals or whether medicine men would construct their own pipes. The stylistic similarity of pipes argues either for a single individual producing them or a symbolic idea embodied in the effigy which was shared, and therefore represented, by several artisans over a period of time. The latter argument is supported by Noble (1979) and Mathews (1978). At the moment, the known limited occurrence and distribution of rattle pipes and their stylistic similarity argues for a restricted period of production and a select audience for distribution.

#### SUMMARY

The objective of this paper is to alert Iroquoianists to an additional facet of ceramic effigy pipes. Human-face pipes with animal ears and bear effigy pipes from a protohistoric to historic context, circa A.D. 1550 to A.D. 1615, may also be rattles. The known examples are from southern Ontario Huron and Neutral sites, and Seneca sites of this time period. A search through the collections of the Royal Ontario Museum and the University of Toronto revealed only 7 examples of effigy rattle pipes. It is apparent that these pipes are relatively rare. Additional effigy varieties may be discovered to contain rattles and the chronological and cultural association of effigy rattles will probably alter with new data.

The production of these pipes was investigated with the assistance of radiographs. It was discovered that the effigy head was hollowed out, grit particles inserted, and the cavity covered over with a plug of clay. An air hole seems to have been provided on some specimens to allow the release of pressure during the firing process.

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Department of New World Archaeology  
The Royal Ontario Museum Toronto,  
Ontario M5S 2C6