

Ken Barnes On Upshall
Pipes Magazine Posts

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/#post-35478267>

- [Nov 12, 2015](#)

Hi, I am a new member from England, and I want to say how sad I was to hear that James Upshall may be starting to fade. When I was 16 years old (44 years ago) I started a holiday job at F.Charatan & Son's factory in the east end of London. At that time, my father was appointed by Herman Lane to manage the company. I was saving up some money to buy my first car and getting £7 per week for working in the cellar packing orders(with a great guy called Jeff who taught me this job). Another part of the job was to 'wheel' the sacks of briar to the lift and take them upstairs to the cutting department. This is where it all started. I did work in the factory sanding pipes and also worked in the Charatan Pipe shop in Jermyn Street. For the next few years I worked for Charatan's German distributor in Heidelberg and worked in a pipe store in Munich. In 1977, after the Dunhill buy out, I started The Tilshead Pipe Company with Barry Jones, taught by Reuben Charatan in the 1950s, and who in my opinion was the greatest craftsman at Charatan's and truly the best all-rounder when it came to pipe making. Barry would display breath-taking skill at each stage of the pipe making process and he was certainly the best finisher of pipes I have come across. Barry taught me cutting on the saw and for many years I worked next to him. Barry would be on the turning lathe and I would be cutting on the circular saw (under his wing initially). During the period of 1977-1989 I was cutting briar in the factory and also in charge of the sales.

I sold my shares in the Company in 1989 partly due to pressure from my ex-wife who gave me an ultimatum as I seemed to be spending much more time at work than I was at home. Barry was an amazing teacher of his craft and I feel sad that none of the people Barry had trained up over the years are able to continue the tradition.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-3#post-35483670>

Hi Guys,

Wow, so many recall buttons being pressed. First of all, I would like to say that I thought Barry was a far superior cutter of plateau. My idea at the time was that if I was involved in the cutting and the sales I could better coordinate what the pipe-smokers wanted at that time. Barry was so skilled at both cutting and turning in fact, all the processes. He could take any piece of briar and 'turn' it into something truly amazing. Unfortunately, it was not financially viable for Barry to complete each process on his own. He did so for that De la Concha special order and on a few other occasions. There are pipe-makers who do so, such as Ingo Garbe who works through each process himself-from cutting the block to wrapping the pipe. A production of 300 pipes a year has a drawback from the point of view of developing a prestigious name worldwide.

As far as dating Upshall pipes is concerned, we started production on the 7th of November 1978 (thanks Pete! it's all coming back to me now) and we had ordered a stamp from Bonzer (who made stamps for Dunhill, Charatan, Barling etc for many, many years) which was simply '78'. We made approximately 300 pipes that year (November & December) all stamped '78' including the Tilshead seconds. I remember selling the first Tilshead Pipes ever to a shop called Walter Thurgood in London Wall. They bought all I had (one gross). So, if you ever come across a JU or Tilshead with '78' on the shank, these were made by the two of us (much more input from Barry though!)

I will write more when I have re-read this thread and possibly made some notes on queries and points of discussion.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-3#post-35484209>

- [Nov 25, 2015](#)

I need some help as to when I left the company- I thought it was around 1989? I have never seen this red finish that is graded an "A". The "S" grade was the Upshall quality which was finished in this colour just below the "P" grade light walnut finish. The qualities that we were producing when I left were XX, X, E, G, B, P, S, some carved pieces, a process introduced to Upshall by P. Siegel, Tilshead natural and Tilshead dark Tan.

Ken

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-4#post-35485323>

- [Nov 28, 2015](#)

Thanks guys, The small colour photo is more recent and meant to be my I.D. photo instead of a blank in my members box. The other two must have been taken over 32 years ago.

"Ah, but I was so much older then and I'm younger than that now" Bob Dylan

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-4#post-35487471>

- [Dec 3, 2015](#)

Regarding the qualities of James Upshall Pipes, between 1978 and 1988 the grades were XX, X, E, G, B, P, S (red). I cannot recall 'A' or a Dark Tan Upshall nor can I remember other markings

relating to size although I do remember Barry bringing up the subject on occasions. I wanted the grade (price) not to reflect the size, rather to reflect on how clean the pipe was, the grain, the shape, correlation (proportion) and balance. On reflection, it may have been more beneficial to incorporate sizes as a way of kicking up the price...who knows? I remember at Charatan's shop (in Jermyn Street) receiving a Charatan Supreme (for a new mouthpiece repair) from an American visitor at the time I was 17 years old and wild about straight grains such as this. After studying it for a while I noticed it had a 'S' on the shank next to the word Supreme. I asked my father what it meant and he then realised that this stamp was added after the pipes left the factory and were being inspected by Herman in New York. I think my father suggested to Lane that they could stamp these at the factory if he wanted! I then recall the Charatan markings '100' '200' '300' on some straight grains. These markings were added by Lane when he 're-graded' (re-selected) some of them in New York.

On another tangent, I did place some vintage Charatan Catalogues/brochures on ebay the other day (not yet on the U.S. site) and the bidder was Jamesupshallpipeco. I then looked at the items this bidder was selling and I noticed some of the James Upshall Tilshead Pipes were Tilshead Pipes (seconds) with JU engraved on the mouthpieces, and expensive. I was saddened by this and I think it is regrettable that someone could 'tarnish' their product for the sake of making a bit more money. This does spell the end of this product in my opinion. I do not think this is naivety on my part but the innocence of a purist.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-4#post-35487726>

- [Dec 4, 2015](#)

"Tilshead pipes have had the JU on the mouthpiece since the late 1990's, so I don't really see how this be deemed to "tarnish the product". And as for the price, it strikes me as reasonable for the quality - yes there may be a flaw or pits, but never any fills."

Please accept my apologies for that, you can tell how far removed from James Upshall I have been since I left the company in 1988! I am constantly learning every day.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-5#post-35487809>

- [Dec 4, 2015](#)

Otto Braun my briar supplier who, incidentally supplied Alfred Dunhill with his briar pre-world war 11 and after and also Charatan, always said to me "Ken, the ABC of this business is to keep your quality as high as you can otherwise it will kill the business. That, coupled with my father's saying "quality, quality and more quality (with a little more quantity) is what is needed.

Hey Ho!

A saying by Nichiren Daishonin (around 1265) "not to advance is to retreat"

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-5#post-35488186>

- [Dec 5, 2015](#)

I dealt exclusively with Otto when I was running James Upshall, except on one occasion when I purchased a few dozen blocks of plateau from Stan Haney (after he stopped making pipes for Ashby Hall)

We had many talks about his adventures before the war and after. Firstly, when he was taken prisoner by the Americans, he was one of Rommel's interpreters (as he spoke so many languages) in Morocco and, on being taken prisoner, the Americans asked him what his trade was to which he replied 'smoking pipes'. Because of this, they sent him to the Winston Salem factory and he told me that he was asked (told!) to paint/limewash the inside of it. He told me it was so big i.e. miles of walls to paint! One of the most memorable stories he told me was towards the final years of the war he was living in Switzerland with his wife. All the briar sawmills were at a sandstill and he had no money. One of his customers before the war was Alfred Dunhill and Otto knew that Dunhills had run out of briar at this time and the demand for pipes was huge (mostly from the troops). Otto told me that he and his wife WALKED from Switzerland to London and he went to see Alfred and explained that he could supply him with briar but he had no money to open up the sawmills. At this point Alfred gave him (if I remember correctly) £25,000 as an advance to start up operations again. This was a huge amount of money in 1944!

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-5#post-35489916>

- [Dec 8, 2015](#)

The challenges I faced when cutting the plateau blocks was... as I cut into the briar to present it as clean and to find the grain (and cut away the nucleus of the root)i.e what looks like branch wood but is at the core and to 'tilt it when required so the grain became more perpendicular, as the block reduced in size,invariably the grain became tighter and more prominent. Sometimes, when Barry turned the tobacco hole (scooped it out), the grain on the inside of the bowl was tighter and more beautiful than the outside. Pete mentioned something Barry had told him, which I did not know about until four weeks ago, about the difference between Barry as a cutter and my cutting 'style'. Barry's words were "Ken cuts what he sees, I cut what I know." I think Barry was referring to the art of cutting that he had learnt was keep it as large as possible (cut the block to position the grain so that, when it is turned on a lathe, the grain will 'reveal'

itself. I agree with this from a general perspective of 'big is beautiful' or easy to sell (in the Charatan US market) and let the turner reveal the grain rather than the cutter. I cut what I saw and when I saw the grain intensify as I cut it, that's what I wanted! I wanted the grain to intensify! However, the drawback is that sometimes when this type of cut-block is turned the grain starts to disappear as the shape is formed. Barry was the better cutter/turner because he could either cut in order to reveal the grain when HE turned it or visa-versa. Did any of that make any sense to anyone else?

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-5#post-35490721>

- [Dec 10, 2015](#)

Actually, I have never hand-turned a pipe on a lathe in my life. I did try it once and, after a few minutes, I remember feeling really uncomfortable with this. I think that this was partly due to a memory of a guy at Charatan's (I can't remember his name), who lost an eye when the chisel flew up into it. I did, however, turn bowls on the copy-frazing machines at Charatan for a while (making series models). When I was in Arta, which is a village at the foothills of the Pindou Mountains in Greece and also the name of the sawmill company producing the best briar (by far), I remember watching Costa, who was the most experienced digger, digging up a root for ME to cut on one of their 18" saws. Otto said that I was the only Englishman to have sat in front of this very large exposed saw and cut the wet and slippery burl into a plateau block. Apparently, when Alfred Dunhill visited this same sawmill for the first time, one of the cutters asked him if he would like to have a go. Apparently, he went white and declined the offer. Later, this block was sent to me wrapped specially in a bag of briar and it did become a huge JU pipe, I think it was the biggest James Upshall ever made, although lacking in grain as I recall. I brought it to the RTDA convention in Chicago that year and Pete bought it. I think it was a 'B' grade - it was MASSIVE. I wish I had the photos that Otto had taken of me that day but alas... Lots of emotions just writing this. I wonder what became of this pipe?

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-5#post-35490866>

- [Dec 10, 2015](#)

Here is a photo I found just now, what do you reckon? Not for the faint hearted! Hope I pasted it correctly.



<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-5#post-35491350>



<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-5#post-35491641>

- [Dec 11, 2015](#)

I trained at the Charatan factory for one year as a sander (shaping the bowls after they were 'trimmed' on the saw using a coarse sand paper 60 grit, a 120 grit (medium) and a 400 grit (fine). This is where a necessary skill takes place. I sat next to and was trained by Joan Nicholson who sanded all the freehands coming out of Charatans. She was truly the finest paperer that I have come across. I am sure that Barry, Dan and Stan would all agree with this statement. Stan however did, on occasions sit at the sanding-wheel in front of me 'to paper his own'. I think that he thought he may be a superior paperer than Joan, or he may have been a little over protective about the 'Jewels' he had just turned or he was just helping out as Joan may have had too much work 'coming through'. Sanding is the make or break stage of the pipe-making business and my father knew that, so he wanted me to get trained up with Joan as my mentor. This process is normally carried out by women as they seem to be more patient. Before sandpaper was invented, Frederick Charatan used shark skin. An old shark's skin for the coarse grit and younger for finer grits (i.e. the younger the shark the finer the grit). For the record, that was my speciality before I started cutting. Barry meanwhile was an amazing sand-paperer, so patient, so skilled and could transform a piece of **** into something amazing.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-6#post-35491682>

- [Dec 11, 2015](#)

I would not be able to say the quantities/yields from recent productions, although 30 years ago we were making approximately 45 pipes per day. Of these 45 finished pipes, we would have 'scrapped' 8 or so (and at the earliest stage possible) as we did not want to take one 'all the way through' production only to scrap it at the end. Say 20 or so would have been Tilsheads roughly 50% Natural and 50% dark, say 6 'S' grades 14 'P' grades, 3 'B' grades, 1 or 2 'G' grades. On another day, we may have 1 or 2 Bs, 1 G and an E or an X. Something like that anyway. There would be times when we were 'on a run'. The area where they were digging briar was far away from any footpaths, so the briar was not subjected to its branches being broken off for the inhabitants' firewood as they passed by. This 'branch-breaking' causes stress to the Xylem tissues/'veins' (as Pete explained earlier) and causes distortions, stress cracks in the burl etc. 'On a run' it has been known to yield 2 or 3 XX, 2 X, 4 Es, 5Gs, 5 Bs, 6 Ps and 2 S grades a day.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-6#post-35491774>

- [Dec 11, 2015](#)

Might I also add that 'on a run' i.e. when the briar is a treat to work with and the grain was to die for, the briar needed to be growing in an ideal place where the drainage was 'perfect', the nutrients from which it fed itself, rotting leaves and such like were all present in the optimum

quantities, as well as the soil make-up AND free from 'disturbances' from passers-by (as mentioned above).

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/visiting-the-james-upshall-factory-last-week.50497/#post-35541114>

- [Apr 16, 2016](#)

Two days ago I decided to go to the James Upshall Factory as I was in the area. On the way there, I was feeling excited and a bit wierd as I have not been there for 28 years. I seemed to know every bend in the road as though it was yesterday. I arrived there and the first thing I felt was the absolute silence as I got out of my car. The air used to be filled with the whining noise of the saw, the extractor fan and the rumble of the turning lathe. Absolute silence and I thought of how grateful the neighbours may feel now that the noise was finally over. The factory was in need of painting but the James Upshall sign was still there up on the wall. I peered into one of the windows, and there was 'my saw bench', the same one I used all those years ago and on the window sill were the very same briar shape pattern cut-outs that Barry had made all those years ago for me and in the same cardboard box. some of the shapes still had my writing on them!!! The turning lathe next to the saw had not been used for some time and the flat-belt had been removed from the pully. Next to the lathe was a stack of possibly six bags of plateau briar (from Greece, about 600 blocks). I thought that was strange and, looking through another window I saw the racks (that Barry and I had built) with more plateau blocks laid out. I also saw the old Sasieni fitting lathe was still there with the same composite chuck jaws I had got made for it! That lathe must be now at least 80 years old. Why didn't I take any photos of my experience there? I don't know, it was like the twilight zone and I was so mesmerised by the experience. Then a thought came to me and a feeling of excitement rushed through my body. Why not buy the factory and start making Upshalls with hand-cut mouthpieces and in the stylised shapes that I would love to see today, or at least finish these few hundred blocks of plateau? This was just a pipe dream.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-old-england-grade.34444/page-3#post-35600528>

I'm in awe, you're a fountain of knowledge, but who are you?

Pete (I hope that he does not mind me 'blowing his anonymity') was our passionate U.S. distributor of pipes in the 1980s. Apart from me and Barry, I don't know another person who was so passionate and involved with James Upshall pipes. The other day he recalled the times when we actually slept on the floor at the factory after discussing possibilities of improving the quality still further, shapes that sell well and so forth into the early hours, only to resume discussions in the morning before production started again. Pete was responsible for truly establishing the name James Upshall in the USA. He also acquired some of his knowledge from Barry Jones and possibly from me as well. What satisfaction and fun I had working so hard with this man!

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-old-england-grade.34444/page-3#post-35602074>

- [Sep 27, 2016](#)

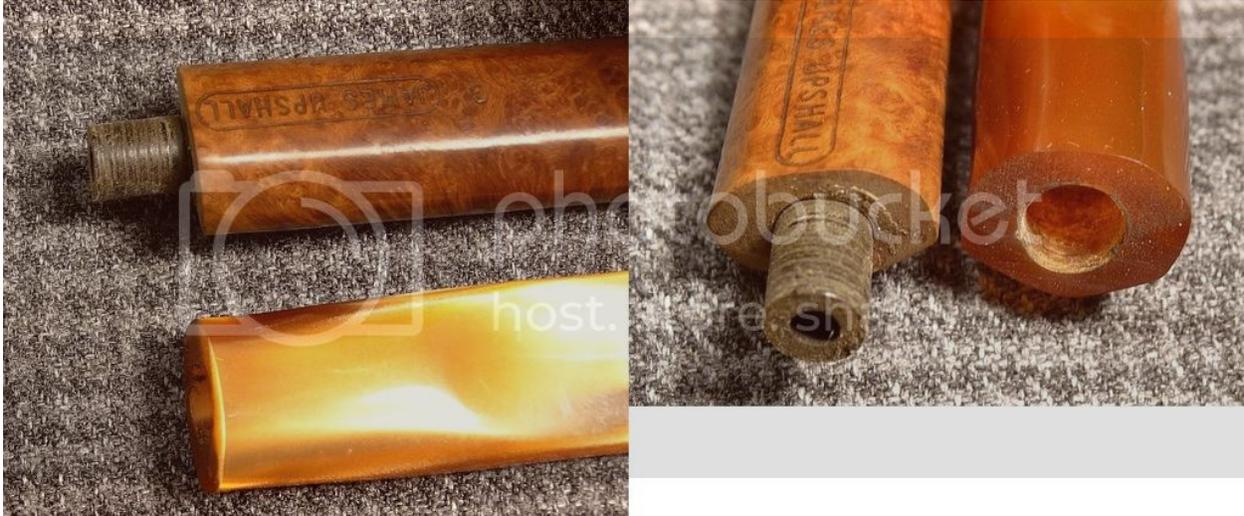
Yes, there were a few Upshalls that Desmond Sautter wanted his initials on. These are upshalls from the early eighties I think (poss 1982-3). We only did a limited edition of these pipes for him. I think it was at the time when Sautter was selling more James Upshall pipes in his 3 shops (Mount Street, Picadilly and Russel Square) than we were selling in the entire USA. This was before Pete Siegel arrived in the factory!! remember the Billiard in the above photo.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-7#post-35626802>

- [Nov 21, 2016](#)

I'm posting some photo's of an outstanding James Upshall pipe that a friend of mine owns. I believe this Upshall may be from the "original" period (1978 - 1988) as the shank is stamped with a "G", and have briefly discussed it with Ken Barnes via private message. I also told him that I'd be posting photo's of this pipe for him to examine, and groan as I did, when he see's what appears to me to be.....the fingerprints of an amateur. The work in question is the shank, tenon and stem. The stem fit's poorly into the shank, and both are cut at a slight angle. Then there's the question of the tenon/stem. I have seen this type of tenon/stem before, where the tenon is pressed into the shank and the stem is countersunk to fit over the tenon, but it's fairly uncommon. You can also see where the stem has been sanded in an attempt to match the angle of the shank.





<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-7#post-35626894>

- [Nov 21, 2016](#)

reply to seadog. Wow, what happened? I am very open-minded when it comes to replacing a different mouthpiece on an Upshall. I am sure that many collectors would agree with me when I say that Charatan produced the better bowls and Dunhill produced a far better mouthpiece. Unfortunately for me, by the time I was doing my apprenticeship at Charatan in the mid seventies, the fitting and fraizing of all Charatan pipes were done at the Grosvenor Pipe Factory in Georgiana Street, Camden Town, London NW1. This is where all the bowls were fitted irrespective of the quality. This factory 'housed' all the Ben Wade machinery when it was moved from Leeds. I did work at Georgiana Street for a month or so under the supervision of John Marshall I seem to remember. Hand cuts were quite a rare item at Charatan, reserved only for the Coronation, Achievement, Royal Achievement & Summa Cum Laude grades. I have seen some Upshalls where Collectors wanted a really beautiful handcut fitted to a lovely James Upshall bowl. I know that georged has fitted a beautiful hand cut on a high grade Upshall for a collector as has Jess Chonowitsch and I say 'my dream has come true and I didn't need to do anything to make it happen' -that's what I always wanted, but it wasn't to be. This one, is slightly different. My heart goes out to the person who attempted to fit a new mouthpiece on this beautiful 'G' grade. I am wondering whether he thought 'lets give this classic English pipe some pizzazz'? I don't think he intended to slope the face of the shank-did he? I am wondering how many sleepless nights he had prior to the customer coming back to pick up his pipe. I think georged would be able to shed more light on this dilemma. Incidentally, this James Upshall 'G' grade is from 1981-1982 and was shaped and turned by Barry Jones and with a stamped rather than engraved James Upshall on the shank as well as a stamped letter 'G'.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-7#post-35626920>

- [Nov 21, 2016](#)

I would really like georged to comment on this piece. I do know that the original length of the shank was longer, possibly by as much as an inch or longer still. By the way seadog, my name is Ken!

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/intersting-james-upshall-freehand.54881/#post-35632573>

- [Dec 5, 2016](#)

Oh, what a great shape! A real CHUPS (Charatan Upshall)! Made by Barry Jones (who can mistake that?). This piece was made after my time at Tilshead (after 1989). The original theme to James Upshall that we all agreed on was 'The Tradition Continues' and this was to reflect that the tradition of English freehands cut from plateau continues. I would suggest that the quality of this one was similar to the 'S' grade i.e. a small flaw (unfilled) on the bowl somewhere. I think the point of this line could well have been based on 'The tradition continues' i.e. when Barry cut a Charatanesque style he would put it in this line (depending on the quality of the briar of course).

I think it is soooooo much like the Charatans that Barry was making in the late 1950- 1960s.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-8#post-35637066>

- [Dec 19, 2016](#)

Just wanted to give you an update on that James Upshall pipe that I had been discussing with KenB. I did receive it a week ago Saturday in a box of pipes for restoration I received from my friend. I traded restoration work in return for the pipe, which I do a lot.

Anyway, I did message KenB about the stem and tenon set up on this pipe not being original. The tenon is pressed/glued into the shank and the stem is countersunk to fit over the shank, and Ken verified what I had already figured, not original. The stem does fit snug onto the tenon, so for now I'll leave it as is. Then I got to looking at the angle that both the shank and stem were cut at and figured I would at least give it a shot at straightening this mess out. If for no other reason then I knew I couldn't make it any worse than the hacked and amateur mess it was now. So using sandpaper (400 grit wet/dry) and a pen file on the shank, being ever so slow and careful. And for the stem, I figured a flat surface and 320 grit sandpaper would do it. The stem was the easy part, but I spent about 6 hours doing the shank. I managed to get both "effectively" straight but I'm still left with a small gap (1 or 2mm) between the shank and stem. I realize that unlike George, or any other pipe repair professional, I don't have the proper tools to actually make it perfect. But that wasn't my intention, instead it was only my intent to hopefully erase the unbelievable hack job that had been done to this Masterpiece of a pipe. It's

obvious to me that some people don't deserve to own anything nice. The pipe was otherwise remarkably clean and looked barely smoked, so the only other thing I did was to sand off the original finish and restained it with Fiebings Light Brown.

I've included some photo's, and I'm in full agreement with Ken who said that this Upshall needs to be given to George, and have him drill out the cheap plastic tennon that's glued into the shank and have a proper vulcanite stem cut for the pipe. Unfortunately, with Christmas fast approaching, and the accociated expenses, it will have to wait until after the first of the year. As I'm retired, and not independently wealthy. The main reason I bought this Upshall was to save it, and keep it from falling into the hands of another amateur hack, or into the hands of someone looking to score a high-end pipe for cheap and treating it as a pocket pipe or work pipe. To me, this pipe represents the last vestiges of the Charatan Pipe Company, and I will treat it as such. And it smokes??...just like a Charatan.....cool, dry and smooth as silk.

I have it, it's not going anywhere, and will be properly fixed in due time.

Before.....



After.....





<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-8#post-35637117>

- [Dec 19, 2016](#)

seadog: well, it looks a lot better and I don't know if I mentioned it before, but I think the stamping dates it to about 1982 - before we started using an engraving machine. It has all the style of a Charatan/Upshall (Charup)

I am sure that georged would give it his best with regards to the fitting and a lovely new handcut vulcanite.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-8#post-35637131>

- [Dec 19, 2016](#)

No worries dime! I truly appreciate the patience that was shown to me when I first attempted to load a photo on this thread..... "what a palaver on the Costa Brava".

This is a really fine pipe. I think it was made in the 1980s as it has the simple engraving on it with no FH or size numbers. I have just had a long telephone chat with Barry which we do occasionally and he says that he never made boxes like this when he owned the company. It could be a 'Moty production' though.

The shape is typical of the era when we were making freehand 'horn' or 'hunter' types. I see it is unsmoked, are you contemplating filling it?

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-8#post-35637190>

- [Dec 19, 2016](#)



THE SIX SUPER HIGH-GRADE PIPES THAT TOOK KEN'S BREATH AWAY.

these 6 pipes belong to a friend of mine who smokes them all regularly. So inspiring to see them in such good condition after many years. I think one thing he does is rotating them and let them cool right down - leave them for a long period before filling them with another bowlful.

Incidentally, this picture includes XXs, Xs and a Charatan Supreme. Mind blowing eh?

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-8#post-35641857>

- [Jan 2, 2017](#)

Hello Pipes Magazine people! I have been studying this thread with great interest, as it isn't often that such first-hand expertise shows up! I hope that perhaps someone here can help me to learn more about a James Upshall Tilshead that recently became mine.

I am relatively new to pipe smoking, but I must say there aren't many activities which are so simply and conveniently enjoyable and relaxing. For me, it all started when I was enjoying a cigar with a neighbor of mine who worked for many years at one of our local tobacconist shops. The topic of pipes and pipe tobacco came up, and by the end of my cigar, he had retrieved this lovely Tilshead and just gave it to me to try out and enjoy.

I've read what little I can find on the net regarding JU, and pored over pictures of other Tilsheads and Upshall pipes, but I have yet to find a picture of another one with the same shape. For your reference, it appears to be a bent billiard, but it has an unusual 'bump out' and flat bottom on the briar that I haven't seen elsewhere. The pipe itself is 6.5" long, and the briar is 5cm tall. Manufacturer markings are minimal, with 'Tilshead England' engraved on the left side of the shank, and 'Made by Hand' engraved on the right. There are no other markings to speak of. The pipe appears to have been used very minimally.

That said, I suppose my questions are as follows:

1. Would any of you care to take a stab at how old this piece might be, based on the information and pictures?
2. Can anyone elaborate more on the interesting and unique variation on the billiard shape that this pipe presents?
3. Do you think that the current stem is the original?
4. Can anyone more knowledgeable than me identify what type of grain pattern is represented?
5. What finish would you call this?
6. Is there anything that I can/should do to improve the shine and lustre of the briar?

I will truly appreciate any and all feedback and answers. Receiving this gift has opened a world to me that I think I will enjoy for many years to come.

Thanks!















<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-9#post-35641893>

- [Jan 2, 2017](#)

Oh, what a beautiful, beautiful Tilshead Natural. This pipe really inspires me as one of the true classical free-hands that we were making in the late 70s early eighties. This pipe was turned and shaped by Barry Jones, the craftsman and this has a real late 60s early 70s Charatan freehand style about it, that Barry used to make from the late 1950s. Even though it is a James Upshall 'second' it really hits the fact home to me that Barry would treat each pipe as though it was the most expensive he ever produced. He would spend the same amount of his time and skill on 'seconds' as he would on the highest quality - possibly more time. This pipe was left absolutely natural - no stain has been applied to it and the only difference between this and an Upshall is the very small flaws that we left 'plain to see'. In this occasion I can see one of the small flaws on the shank. Many manufacturers would drill these out and fill them with a mastic filler which, after time would turn a different colour or sometimes fall out. We never filled any pipe. I could write a book about this pipe. You will never find another one like it.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-9#post-35642105>

- [Jan 3, 2017](#)

Wow, Ken, thank you so much for the first hand knowledge of my Tilshead's creation! Your insight has increased my appreciation of the object and added a great deal of personal value. I will treasure it!

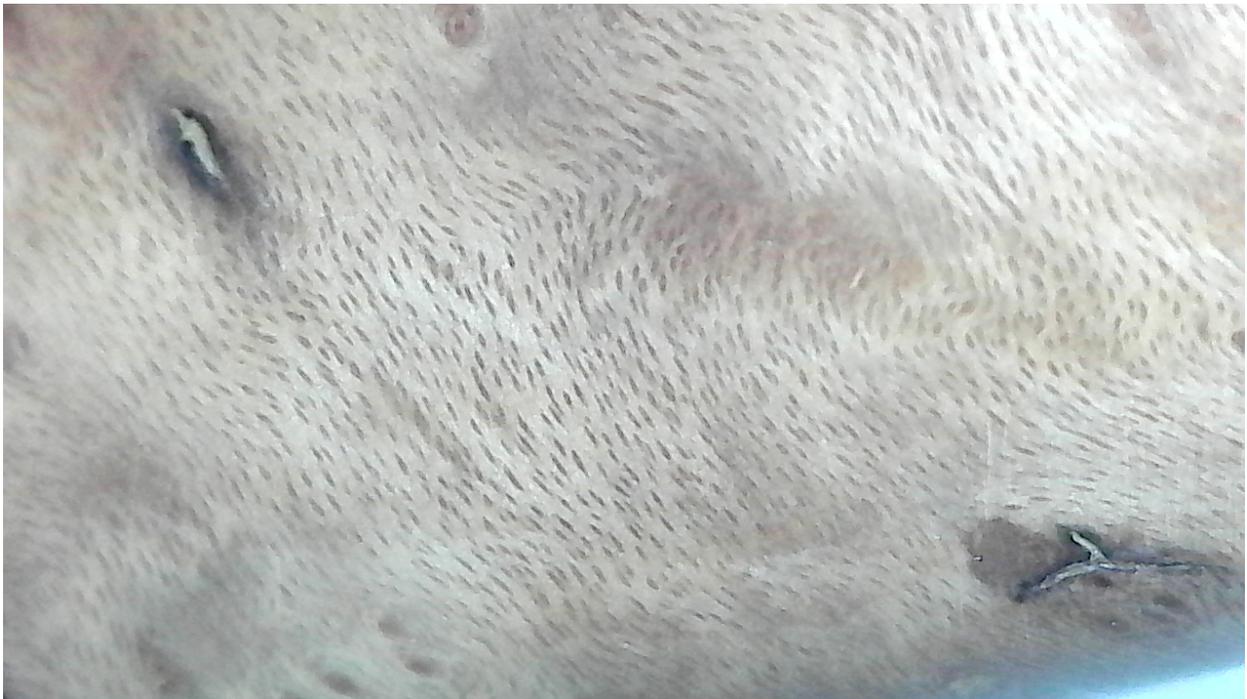
As suggested by ssjones, I am including additional pictures of the stampings. Upon very close examination, I also noticed that the "Made by Hand" stamp appears to be a double-strike. For fun, I took a pic that includes the only two imperfections I could locate. They are both within about a centimeter of each other, conveniently located on the underside of the shank, close to the end.

As far as my questions are concerned, from your reply, I'm reading that the pipe was made in the early years, but I'd love to hear your best shot at a more precise date if the pictures are helpful. I understand that it is a freehand, and so the shape is unique, and that it is an unstained natural finish (which I really love), and so my concern that it didn't have the same shininess that I see elsewhere is needless!

That just leaves my curiosity regarding whether this stem appears to be one that would have been used originally, and what this grain would be considered.

Thanks again for your reply! I already feel very welcome here.





<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-9#post-35642191>

- [Jan 3, 2017](#)

As this Tilshead Natural is not stained in any way, you can wipe the bowl with something like pure alcohol (or near enough) which will clean the surface dirt from the bowl and mouthpiece and then apply some natural non- silicone beeswax on a J-cloth and polish the pipe. It will give you more of an idea of what it looked like when it was new. As far as the date of this pipe is concerned, I would suggest somewhere around 1981. The stamp marks on the shank suggest this, but more importantly is the 'marriage' between the bowl and the mouthpiece. As all these pipes are hand-turned, at that time we used to leave the shanks as long as possible (from the saw) and when it came to fitting the bowl with a mouthpiece we were quite limited at that time on mouthpiece selection. These mouthpieces were supplied to us by New York Hamburger Gummi Waren and at that time we had a limited selection of thick saddle mouthpieces. i.e. we had no saddles an inch shorter than this one, which, in my opinion would be a better marriage. Later on in 1982, we were able to access more variations of shorter saddles from Jeantet.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/really-a-upshaw-xx-pipe.55480/#post-35645605>

- [Jan 12, 2017](#)

Yes, this Upshall is marked XX due to the length of shank. This was after my time with James Upshall and I don't think it is a very helpful stamp to put on a sandblasted pipe. XL EXL or something like that would have been more helpful. It could be that it was the quickest way to mark the shank extra extra long, as the XX stamp die is sitting there with all the other stamp dies.

walt24

Now I own a unsmoked boxed XX

I would love to see a photo of your James Upshall XX grade. This was James Upshall's highest grade and very rare in my opinion.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/really-a-upshaw-xx-pipe.55480/#post-35645787>

- [Jan 12, 2017](#)

I am very aware of the suspicions floating around some time back that Moty was buying old beaters and refurbishing them to sell as NOS or whatever.

I am quite saddened by that as I heard this too and to think he had one of the best craftsman around and apparently some really good quality plateaux (which was sold as a job lot some four months ago) and chose to strip and refinish cheap pipes. Why? I really do not understand the logic.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-9#post-35695479>

- [May 27, 2017](#)

Did JU ever carve "Gold" graded (9 mm filter) pipes ?

I am not sure what you mean when you say "Gold" graded pipes. If you mean 'did we ever have a quality called 'gold', the answer is no, not between 1978-1989 anyway'. We did use to stamp the JU on the mouthpiece in gold on the highest grades I think it was on the 'E', 'X' and 'XX'. It would be interesting to have a link relating to one of these gold-graded pipes.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-9#post-35695509>

- [May 27, 2017](#)

Thanks orlandofurioso for the links. I learn everyday. The only country for which we made 9mm filter was Germany. Our importers at the time were H. Seiffert of Kassel, who were a very professional organisation and imported one name from each pipe-making country, i.e. Peterson of Ireland, Swendbourg and Tao from Denmark, Savinelli from Italy and Upshall from England. Making 6 and 9mm filter pipes was a major hassle for us and possibly other pipe-makers and the bowls had to be selected at a very early stage in the production. Also the 9mm would force us to make shanks thicker than we would like to and this in turn would influence/affect the mindset or culture of the style of the Upshall generally -absolute nightmare! The Poker looks like it was made in the 1990s and I reckon Detlef Seiffert saw a 'G' grade Upshall with the gold stamped JU on the mouthpiece and thought 'Gold', and asked Barry to call the 'G' Grades Gold. That is the grade the Poker would have been looking at the fairly poor photos. The second one (also for the German market) the 'prince/apple' has got to be the poorest looking light coloured Upshall I have ever seen. Extremely poor graining and very poor shaping - I am quite amazed it went for 30 + euros - awful looking piece. My gut feeling is this was made later and when the briar was mediocre. Do you see how thick the shank is to incorporate a 9mm filter and, as a consequence, in my opinion, has 'killed' the shape. Grain-wise this Upshall is as bald as a badger's backside.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-10#post-35695543>

- [May 27, 2017](#)

Ken, I'd be curious what you'd have to say (if anything) about mine. Would love to know what you think of it / any details you may know. A P grade bent billiard... not the best photos.





Stamped FH next to the Upshall logo:





<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-10#post-35695580>

- [May 27, 2017](#)

Are the first two photos of the same pipe as the second two photos?

The first photo shows a 'P' grade with a natural tobacco chamber which I have never seen before. Before 1989 we would carbonise/blacken the chambers of 'P' grades as a matter of course as sometimes there might be a sand spot or two in the chamber. This one has a lovely grain, classic shape, beautiful bend on the mouthpiece and un-smoked!!! I would say that it was

made in the early 1990s?

The second two photos seem to show a different finish on the pipe and with an odd black spot (I don't think that it is a flaw) on the shank-just under the James Upshall logo stamp. I am mildly confused

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-10#post-35695588>

- [May 27, 2017](#)

Yes, it's the same pipe, I took the last two photos out on the porch just today. I actually don't know what the black spot is, looking at the pipe now it's not there.

The first photos were when I had just received it, and yes, the bowl was natural. I bought it new from a pipe shop here that was actually more of a news stand whose owner was an avid pipe smoker and had some real beauties over the years. After he sold they mostly got picked over, but this Upshall remained.

The second set of photos was taken after it had been well smoked. I can say it's certainly not as red as it looks in that photo so the lighting likely played a role as well.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-10#post-35695595>

- [May 27, 2017](#)

That explains it. Wow, it has turned a beautiful colour. The briar looks like it was from the Arta Company, Arta, Greece. It was a very porous, soft briar and started naturally white (on the saw) and turned like butter on the lathe and it did go a beautiful golden-like colour when smoked. Does it smoke well?

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-10#post-35696133>

- [May 29, 2017](#)

The stamp is real and I seem to remember that this was the first stamp that we used (in 1978) before the one which had the name en-circled. I think this Skater was made, by Barry, between 1990-2000+. I can see why he used this stamp because with a carved piece like this if he had engraved the name it would have showed up as natural briar. (you can see how he needed to engrave the 6FH (as we had no stamps for numbers and FH) and which he then blended the colour or at least tried to lose the natural contrast.

By using a stamp, he has merely 'squeezed' the briar rather than cutting into it thereby preserving the colour of the smooth part of the pipe. Less work, less hassle!

It would be nice to see the whole pipe - I am sure it has been fitted with a saddle mouthpiece?

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-10#post-35696538>

- [May 30, 2017](#)

Posted this Upshall a month or so ago. Didn't get many comments. Maybe some of the experts can weigh in with a little more history. Bought this for the price of a corn cob. Thought it would make a good restoration project. I haven't seen such a large piece of briar that has no defects, fills, pits, etc.. Unfortunately, the tenon has been broken off and there is a crack in the shaft. I think it is worth the effort to repair. Any information about when and who might have made it would be appreciated. Thanks Hoppes















<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-10#post-35696613>

- [May 30, 2017](#)

Barry Jones fashioned this pipe and I may well have cut the briar into the block ready for turning. I think that this is quite a late first era piece from around 1988. That is Barry's shank-work. I think that the tenon would be quite easy to remove as the crack will 'give it more space' although this needs to be done by someone who has successfully removed many of these before. This pipe bowl is ready to blow out or crack as it is extremely over-carbonised. In an ideal world, if a customer had brought this pipe into the workshop for repair I would have suggested that he send it to Les Wood at L&J Silverware for a beautiful and befitting barley twist silver band to cover and protect the crack and I am hopeful that there is a high-grade silversmith / mounter in your vicinity.

Nice large pipe which needs a good home and some TLC.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-10#post-35699655>

- [Jun 11, 2017](#)

“has James Upshall pipes ever used lucite for stems as a regular material?”

No, we were never 'tempted' to use Plexiglass/Lucite. We were always trying to improve our existing mouthpieces and the quality and didn't go for the 'softer option'.

On hindsight, I wish I had had the courage at the time to cut the production down and to hand-cut mouthpieces for all the Upshalls we made and quadruple the price of them.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-10#post-35699667>

- [Jun 11, 2017](#)

I remember Mr Shah or a member of his family. When they opened their shop in Oxford Street in about 1988, I went to see him and he said that he wanted to buy every pipe that we had i.e. our entire stock. I told him that there were quite a few but he was unperturbed. So the next week I brought around about 2,300 pipes (nearly two hundred dozen-try getting that in your car!) mostly dead stock Tilsheads and odd looking/poorly grained Upshalls that we had in stock for years. it was a 'risk' but I had heard from Dunhills that they had did the same with them and paid. I asked for a cheque for the lot not believing that he would but he gave me 3 cheques one to cash there and then one for the following month and one to cash after 60 days. They all went through ok and our stock room suddenly got more spacious.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-11#post-35701393>

- [Jun 16, 2017](#)

I decided to make a pest of myself and post some pics of this pipe from another of my threads here, as this seems to be where all the information on Upshall and Tilshead seems to be. Hopefully someone will be able to shed some light on this little Tilshead. It's very small at about 5" length with about a group 2 size bowl. At first I thought that the drilling on the bowl chamber was a mistake, but when I look at the pipes profile, it looks like it was deliberate because if the chamber were moved forward and centered, it would put the chamber bottom too close to the outside of the bowl. I've also noticed that the rough nomenclature is because it looks to have been engraved rather than stamped. I have no idea of the story behind this little pipe, but I hope someone does.









<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-11#post-35701417>

- [Jun 16, 2017](#)

I love this little pipe - nice grain on the 'front' side too.

It is definitely hand-made eh?

I think that the bowl was a little over-worked on the sand-papering. I can see that Barry Jones formed the curve of the mouthpiece - it's a beautiful curve, his style, like a thumb print.

This pipe was made after 1989 because when I worked at Tilshead (until 1989) we did not use to engrave the Tilshead Pipes.

I hope it smokes well.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-11#post-35708304>

- [Jul 7, 2017](#)

How accurate can we date a pipe with the J.U. (so two full stops) stem logo ?

I do not think I have seen the mouthpiece logo with full stops. In the 1970s-1989 the stamp (and the engraving template was JU - I would like to see a photo of one with stops if possible.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-11#post-35708307>

- [Jul 7, 2017](#)

Firstly, I cannot see a grade letter on the shank are you sure it is a G grade? This is one from the early days possibly 1980-1981 ish. I had forgotten that the first stamp die we used had a dot in between the J and the U.

This has been hand stamped both on the shank and mouthpiece. I am confused as I cannot see the grade to the left of the James Upshall. If it is a G grade, it is a real bargain win at that price.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-11#post-35708326>

- [Jul 7, 2017](#)

I love the shape, the gliding mouthpiece and the grain and I am sure it is from 1981 but I am still baffled as to the grade. We never stamped a pipes grade on the upper side of the shank and never near the fitting. It certainly looks like a 'c' stamp (which we did not have) and I am thinking this is a sample piece which we sent to our new Italian agent in 1981 called Mario Lubinski and that this sample was to show the finish that we could provide him. I think that there may be a small flaw at the bottom of the shank which indicates that it was a sample. Also I think that it was in an 'S' finish originally (red finish) although I could be wrong. It is still a lovely piece nonetheless. Very interesting!

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-11#post-35709536>

- [Jul 10, 2017](#)

I've seen a number of comments stating that no pipe bearing the name James Upshall would ever have a fill. Does that ban on fills that extend to Tilshead, which doesn't actually bear the name James Upshall (despite some have the JU stamp on the stem)? I bought a Tilshead bent, which has not yet arrived, that looks in the photos to have a number of small fills. Another contributor to this thread mentioned that his Tilshead had a small fill.

Here's a link to the pipe I purchased on eBay

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-11#post-35709577>

- [Jul 10, 2017](#)

Towards the end of Barry's time at Upshall working for Moti, he was told to strip, re-work and finish certain bowls and pipes that were put in front of him and to stamp them up as Tilsheads or He told me this the other day when I met up with him. Such a sad thing to hear - heart-breaking. One of the finest pipe-makers in England subjected to 're working' some cheap pipes or bowls with fills in is something that is totally against all he strived for during his fifty five years as a craftsman.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-11#post-35709710>

- [Jul 10, 2017](#)

“Thanks very much for the reply, Ken. Well, this is the very first time I'm hoping for a pipe with sand pits!! If these are fills, they're not even very nice ones. The color is too light. We'll find out tomorrow. The pipe is waiting for me at my office.

Can you state without equivocation, Ken, that no fills would have been used on a Tilshead -- at least during your tenure?

The story about Barry is truly sad. How demoralizing that must have felt for him.”

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-12#post-35709741>

- [Jul 10, 2017](#)

I have never seen a pipe being filled with mastic/putty let alone knowing how to do it, so no, no Tilshead or Upshall or Charatan was ever filled and I am 100% sure that none were ever filled during Barry's tenure of the company. There have been a couple of people who claimed that Tilsheads had been filled in the early 1980s. The fact was a small flaw which was slightly open had taken in some of the pumice we used for very fine finishing and then this flaw 'took in' some composition wax - the next stage of finishing, which seemed to look like a fill.

Barry still does not understand the logic of what he was told to do as he said that, at this time in question, the shelves were full of high quality plateau briar and he had a load of rods to make mouthpieces from, so why?

I suppose if I could buy some poor quality pipes at \$6 a dozen and strip off the stamp marks, re-stain, re-finish and stamp these Upshalls, and sell them for \$480 a dozen the profit margin may seem massive but the cost, in my opinion is supremely massive. I know that for someone who

had spent all their time developing a name of quality, their values may be completely different to someone who buys a name and tries to 'effectively exploit' the name and the market place.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/interesting-upshall-needing-military-stem.56777/#post-35673076>

- [Mar 24, 2017](#)

Hi All;

I always find it interesting when a particular manufacturer, like Barling, GBD, Sasieni etc and in this case James Upshall make a pipe with a military mount.

Especially so because you don't usually see them all the time -- or perhaps don't know that some were made but not shown in their catalogues. [ps---just saw that Upshall DID show in their little square catalogue a Military mount with a silver spigot arrangement]

At any rate, here are pics of this Upshall I just received. Its a large bowl group 6, straight Apple, and I'm thinking of fitting it with the traditional stick bit ala Loewe or Dunhill.

Anybody here know of a good source for me to explore?

Thanks in advance





<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/interesting-upshall-needing-military-stem.56777/#post-35711266>

- [Jul 15, 2017](#)

I love that P grade bowl - a true original 1981-82. We never stamped or engraved the J.U on spigots as there was nowhere to put the stamp. I think we used to put the A for Astley on his pipes (on the top of the mouthpiece - possibly not).

I also love a simple push-in taper mouthpiece too, rather than a silver spigotted one. They are incredibly difficult to make and basically you need to find a specialist who only does silver mounts for briar pipes and then it maybe difficult to do. I remember Les Wood's engine-turning machine, which has got to have weighed over two tons and that it only cut the different patterns (Barley etc) onto the silver. I think that Les had different 'templates' for each foreseeable size, taper, length of taper etc. Very specialised and he was taught by the best. Bill Taylor told me once that Les was the top silver and goldsmith that Dunhill had at the pipe factory.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-12#post-35711210>

- [Jul 15, 2017](#)

You did well. Great shape.

Here is another example of an early piece with J.U on the side of stem.

[BTW Ken, thanks for your reply ie: lucite stems on Upshall pipes]





<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-12#post-35711270>

- [Jul 15, 2017](#)

This 'pot-shaped Lovat' is a very early piece. This one is from 1979- early1980. There are various reasons why I know this and I think that this is the earliest J.U I have seen since working there in the 1980s.

This was made when Barry and I were possibly the only ones making pipes at Upshall- before Barry started training other people to work with us.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-12#post-35711422>

- [Jul 16, 2017](#)

Well, I just became a serious James Upshall collector. I just won a lot of two dozen unsmoked James Upshall pipes in a display case. The photo from the auction house isn't very good, but based on the age of the case I have to believe these are from perhaps the 1980s. This came

from a fantastic collection of tobacciana items of mostly very high quality. According to the auctioneer, there are 8 P grade, 9 B grade, 1 E grade, and 6 G grade, 18 of which have silver bands or spigots. I suspect the display case will ultimately be left behind in Australia due to shipping costs, but I'd like to have it if it's not outrageously expensive. Minus the case, I might decide to sell some of these to get my investment down a bit. When it arrives, I'll take better photos to share. I'd be REALLY interested to know the period they're from, Ken. Did Les Wood do all the silver work for James Upshall throughout its history?



<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-12#post-35711428>

- [Jul 16, 2017](#)

WOW! They look like they are all from the original era- early 1980s. This is, in my opinion, a valuable 'clutch' of un-smoked Upshalls.

I am not so fond of the clips in this case as they can have a tendency to scratch the shanks of the pipes. The spigot mouthpiece that has fallen to the bottom of the case is hopefully a bent one which it seems to be and belongs to the bent pipe five down on the left column and the straight one which is in this bent pipe belongs to the forward canted 'Shannon' which currently has no mouthpiece.

The thing that also fascinates me is that we did not have an Australian importer/distributor so I think that, originally, these could well have been bought in London from say Sautter's of Mount Street, Mayfair.

Superb acquisition!

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-13#post-35722051>

- [Aug 13, 2017](#)

One more try;

This is a nice fat pot bent billiard







<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-13#post-35722221>

- [Aug 13, 2017](#)

Nice grained 'P' grade. I think this is quite an early piece made in the 1990s. The FH for 'freehand' was something that Barry started after 1989.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/deciphering-james-upshall-tilshead-shank-markings.60116/#post-35730769>

- [Sep 11, 2017](#)

Close to 30 years ago, I acquired a pipe made at the James Upshall pipe works. The pipe is a straight/saddle stemmed pot, with a 2" diameter bowl X 1/3/4" high...OAL about 6-3/8" Wall thickness at the widest diameter about 1/2" tapering internally towards the top rim which is 3/8" thick at the top of the 1" diam smoke hole...which is flat across the rim. It's a nice pipe, but I hardly smoked it over the years, and the pipe lived in my drawer until recently. I decided to start smoking it again after all these years. It's much too heavy to clench, so for me, it's a living-

room pipe. The pipe actually looks heavy/chunky and a bit larger than usual pots. On a scale of 1-10 I'd give it a 5. Not my favorite pipe, but I don't exactly hate it either. I could live with it. The left side of the straight shank has a "James Upshall" logo stamped inside an elongated oval border, a "white JU inside a white circular emblem/mark on the Vulcanite stem and next to the shank logo, are the letters "DS EXL". Stamped into the other side of the shank..."TILSHEAD England, Made By Hand". The pipe has fairly nice wood with some areas around the bowl showing straight grain, no flaws, no sand pits, no blemishes.

Can you J. UPSHALL lovers decipher the shank designations/stampings? What do the coded letters signify, quality-wise? Why the "Tilshead" designation if it has a James Upshall logo stamped on the shank. I read that Tilshead was considered a "second" the Upshall grading standards. I remember paying close to \$200.00 bucks for this pipe back in the late-'80s early-90s. I no longer have the original paperwork/receipts.

I'm a pipe user, and not a pipe trader/collector. I am not squeamish or reluctant to re-work any pipe to conform to my likings. So, I did just that. I decided after all this time, to revamp this old pot. It was easy. I held the straight stem over a lit candle, to heat/soften the stem and gave it a very slight bend (1/16th bend)... and then I sanded the top, outboard edges of the flat bowl rim and rounded off way the too severe, sharp corners of flat top/rim. Now the pipe looks much better, to me. It no longer looks like a briar toilet bowl with the seat up. A good sanding with for the rounded over rim edges, with 400/600/1000/1500 grit paper did the trick. The old TILSHEAD has a smooth-as-a-baby's-ass feel to the wood now, and the freshly bent stem is slightly more confrontational. If the pipe looked like it does now, 30 years ago, it would have been a well-smoked hunk of briar. Now, the pipe has come out of retirement. Smoke rings will once again rise from the revamped bowl....as intended.

Frank

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/deciphering-james-upshall-tilshead-shank-markings.60116/#post-35730781>

- [Sep 11, 2017](#)

I commented an hour or so ago, but I'm on a hotel ISP and apparently it didn't post. We have a thread here with some info on James Upshall and the DS designation:

<http://pipesmagazine.com/forums/topic/is-upshall-going-out-of-buisness>

The DS is for a James Upshall made for a shop, so that explains the odd stamping.

"DS=Desmond Sautter - a high end tobacconists in Mayfair. Its not a grade of pipe - simply a stamping for pipes sold in his shop

That makes sense, but if so, this pipe would have no grade stamp? (I've never seen an ungraded, smooth James Upshall)"

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/deciphering-james-upshall-tilshead-shank-markings.60116/#post-35730919>

- [Sep 12, 2017](#)

Hi sumusfumus, as ssjones said the DS is for Desmond Sautter, Mount Street, Mayfair. Desmond was a shop that really sold James Upshall in a big way and one day he asked me whether we could put his initials on the James Upshalls that he sold. I said that I will check with Barry, my partner at the time and yes we stamped this on all the Upshalls he sold. This one in question was from the 1990s because I left the firm in 1989 and up to this time we did not specify different sizes when it came to grading and pricing. So ExL (Extra Large) was done after 1989.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/upshall-without-stamping.60104/#post-35731201>

- [Sep 13, 2017](#)







<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/upshall-without-stamping.60104/#post-35731360>

- [Sep 13, 2017](#)

What a beautiful P grade and from 1984-1989. I would love to see the whole pipe.

Yes Jensen, the reverse stamps have been missed - human error and very rare might I add. This is the first Upshall I have ever seen with no 'Tilthead England' 'Made by Hand' stamps.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/upshall-without-stamping.60104/#post-35731482>

- [Sep 14, 2017](#)

Beautiful grain! I know that many people consider very fine grain/Angel hair grain the best but my most favourite grain is this type. It strongly reminds me of the early 1970s Charatan Supreme grain. Gorgeous!

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/upshall-sizing-query.60011/#post-35729124>

- [Sep 6, 2017](#)

On Sunday last I won an auction for what was described as a "1990's full bent freehand size 6 grade P" pipe. What caught my eye was the diamond shank, I've never seen a pipe quite like it. It's an apple I think.

Well it arrived this morning and upon opening I got quite a shock...the thing is bloody huge! I compared it to my other size 6 (a semi bent Rhodesian) and there are huge differences. Below are the figures for both:

Semi bent Rhodesian

Inner bowl diameter = 18.45mm

Inner bowl depth = 37.30mm

Overall height = 50.95mm

Stummel weight = 61.09g

Full bent apple

Inner bowl diameter = 22.71mm

Inner bowl depth = 43.98mm

Overall height = 58.96mm

Stummel weight = 69.15g

As can be seen, there are significant differences in the two supposedly same sized pipes. One thing however, the semi bent Rhodesian is stamped with a '6' whereas the full bent is only stamped 'P' followed by James Upshall followed by FH, there is no size number which leads me to believe Karen (the seller) took a wild stab at the size. It is more like an extra large pipe to my eye. I swear you could knock someone out with it!

So how did Upshall go about sizing their pipes? I've looked at the sizing and grading pages but found nothing useful.

I will likely keep it as it's so unusual (to me) and has some gorgeous straight grain to the sides and shank with bird's eye to the front of the bowl but shall stick to 3/4 tobacco fills. I'm smoking it now with some FVF and it smokes great...I just wish it was smaller :|

Regards,

Jay.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/upshall-sizing-query.60011/#post-35732153>

- [Sep 16, 2017](#)

Hi Jay.

Charatan and Dunhill always had their machine-turned catalogue shapes in sizes and the larger the pipe the higher the price. When Barry and I started James Upshall (The Tilshead Pipe Co. Ltd), in 1978, Barry still wanted to put James Upshall pipes into sizes and price them accordingly. As we manufactured only handmade pipes - no catalogue shapes, I thought, with my purist hat on, that handmade pipes are handmade and to keep it more simple with regards to pricing them, grouping them at the selection stage and stamping them and so on, it was more practical if I sold the Extra large ones at one price to the U.S. (who wanted them BIG in

those days), the medium ones to Germany, Italy, Switzerland, Holland etc and the smaller ones to Japan and so forth.

My experiences tell me that larger pipes, in general, do not always show the best grain whereas medium ones are cut more and the grain seems to get tighter the further I cut into the plateau blocks.

Obviously there are rare pieces that are extra large and have super grain and if the tobacco holes are left natural, the grain on the inside of the bowl can be even more striking.

When I left the company in 1989, Barry introduced his preference of sizing each piece. This, at the time, may have given him some flexibility on pricing the pipes higher, which is always important if the company is to survive.

I hope this helps.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/upshall-sizing-query.60011/#post-35732155>

- [Sep 16, 2017](#)

....the Bulldog and Rhodesian shapes always seemed to be placed in a larger size because they were cut from larger blocks on machine-turned catalogue shapes due to their width (size of block was R 2 3/4) if my memory serves me well - which cost more - as there were less blocks in a bag for this size.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-13#post-35769330>

- [Jan 6, 2018](#)

http://pipesmagazine.com/wp-content/blogs.dir/1/files/album/17733/20180106_190440-600x450.jpg

This is a picture taken now. I do not know if the grades A, S, P were for the color or the beauty of the briar grain. This is without indication of the grade. I am sorry that the JU mark has a little discolouration, unfortunately it was very oxidized. (Sorry for the bad photo, but I'm not very good at managing the light)



<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-13#post-35769337>

- [Jan 6, 2018](#)

Hello Fabio and welcome to the forum.

This Upshall reminds me of the styles we were making in 1980-81.

I think the James Upshall is stamped on this one rather than engraved and the same for the JU on the mouthpiece.

I do not know why it has no quality stamp/grade. This may have been one of some samples that we sent to Mario Lubinski in 1980 (who later became our distributor for Italy), samples to show the different finishes we could make.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-13#post-35769342>

- [Jan 6, 2018](#)

http://pipesmagazine.com/wp-content/blogs.dir/1/files/album/17733/20180106_193214-600x450.jpg

Thanks for the welcome, I am very happy to read who has experienced the time of Charatan's "geniuses".

What is the exact difference between printing and engraving the mark on the stem?

The history of samples in Lubinski is very interesting. I bought this Upshall without grade with the grade B, on this photo, in a shop here in Turin, both new. Now I'm waiting for another Upshall even without grade.



<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-13#post-35769344>

- [Jan 6, 2018](#)

In 1983/84 we bought an engraving machine that 'cut' the name into the shank and likewise the JU into the mouthpiece, so this is one way of dating the pipes. All the pipes that we made were

stamped (or engraved) with a quality stamp-for the least expensive Upshall it was S, then P, B, G, E, X, and the highest grade and very rare XX.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-14#post-35771927>

- [Jan 13, 2018](#)

Here it is:



<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-14#post-35771923>

- [Jan 13, 2018](#)

My new James Upshall (ungraded) unsmoked.

.

That is a lovely early one and with nice grain. Were you able to find out where these ungraded Upshalls came from?

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-14#post-35773626>

- [Jan 19, 2018](#)









Another vintage Upshall P added to my pipes. I do not like to buy pipes already smoked, but this was smoked only once (or in any case very very little) and it was at an affordable price, so I decided to take it for the affection I have towards this brand. The shape is very similar to a red Upshall ungraded that I posted above, the ring grain looks very nice on the left side, while the flame is lost a little on the front. The briar is still perfect, without black points or micro-cracks, as the old Upshall wanted. The marks on the shank and on the stem seem to be printed, so as Ken says, I believe it was before 1983. The "James Upshall" trademark is printed with a slight imprecision on the right side.

I'm thrilled to have added this piece of history, really exciting.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-14#post-35773799>

- [Jan 19, 2018](#)

Yes Fabio, a really nice P grade from pre 1983 era.

The "James Upshall" trademark is printed with a slight imprecision on the right side

The slight imprecision is one of the indicators that it was hand pressed-stamped in the original way.

There is such an art to hand stamping. This one was done by hand rather than stamped on a machine (still not engraved). I think we got the machine in 1982, which was more accurate with little or no imprecision! I think I bought the old stamping machine in 1982 from the Sasieni factory. Then we switched to engraving but we still used the stamping machine for the reverse side of Upshalls i.e. Tilshead England Made by Hand, Astley Pipes and other 'own brand' pieces.

Here is a photo of an old photo of me at a younger age stamping a pipe in 1984. Some 34 years ago! In the back ground you can see the new engraving machine that we bought.



<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-14#post-35774070>

- [Jan 20, 2018](#)

Thank you for your kind words Fabio. I am writing a 'Pipe-makers Log' which is more of a diary, as and when I recall things that I have experienced along the way.

I have also started to make a few pipes again, not many just a few pieces for fun and I am enjoying the challenge and believe me it is a challenge!

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-14#post-35774080>

- [Jan 20, 2018](#)

“Pictures! Pictures!”

I am going to the workshop on Monday and spending a couple of days there. Pictures will be possibly Wednesday, though not finished pipes, 'merely' turned and fitted with rod vulcanite-roughly shaped and filed.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-14#post-35778498>

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/there-must-be-charatan-dna-in-this-pipe.62357/#post-35777416>

- [Jan 31, 2018](#)

I picked this up on e bay and am fairly confident there is a Charatan connection. the stem fits but i didn't want to force it. its Orific.













<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/there-must-be-charatan-dna-in-this-pipe.62357/#post-35777471>

- [Jan 31, 2018](#)

This one confused me too when I saw it on ebay. It does look like a Barry Jones one whether from Charatan or Upshall.

I did notice the 'Made by Hand' stamp on the reverse of the shank looks very similar if not identical to the Upshall one.

Is the front partSt Andrews stamped or engraved?

I love the shape and, of course, the grain!

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/there-must-be-charatan-dna-in-this-pipe.62357/#post-35777598>

- [Jan 31, 2018](#)

“The curious thing is why an orific bit?”

I think that the mouthpiece here is originally from another pipe as the curve would be a little more pronounced for this shape.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/there-must-be-charatan-dna-in-this-pipe.62357/#post-35778253>

- [Feb 2, 2018](#)

This is a photo of the 'MADE BY HAND' used at James Upshall. I think it does look quite similar although I am no stamp specialist.



<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/there-must-be-charatan-dna-in-this-pipe.62357/#post-35778257>

- [Feb 2, 2018](#)

If the 'Old Course...' is engraved, it could well be made by Upshall. I will ask Barry about this one when I next speak with him on the 'phone. Lovely shape and lovely grain!

- [Feb 3, 2018](#)

Hi all, thanks to everyone and especially Ken for this terrific thread. I have been a fan of Upshall pipes for nearly 20 years and thought I'd share a favorite from my collection. I bought it unsmoked about 16 years ago and the seller told me it came from a batch of 100 pipes for a pipe shop in Paris. Apparently it is number 6 of 100.

Best,

Ted

<http://pipesmagazine.com/wp-content/blogs.dir/1/files/album/10985/8c830337-ba67-4242-a785-8f5b84fda396-449x600.jpg>

<http://pipesmagazine.com/wp-content/blogs.dir/1/files/album/10985/c31520b4-fe97-4602-8e84-2e86053e5d6c-449x600.jpg>

<http://pipesmagazine.com/wp-content/blogs.dir/1/files/album/10985/da6d34cb-5d23-4d3b-9976-d99fa6b9ed14-450x600.jpg>

<http://pipesmagazine.com/wp-content/blogs.dir/1/files/album/10985/26bf945b-f314-4e02-84da-bd2ca08764fa-449x600.jpg>

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-15#post-35778501>

- [Feb 3, 2018](#)

Those are beautiful Ted! It's great to see some long-time James Upshall collectors join this thread.

Perhaps Ken can shed some light on this one, stamped "Connoisseur" and numbered. I can't find any reference to this stamp.





<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-15#post-35778528>

- [Feb 3, 2018](#)

Hi Ted, thank you for your kind words.

What a lovely canted Billiard! - I really like this shape and with some really fine grain too.

This pipe was definitely made by Barry Jones and it looks like he personally took this pipe through each stage. It has some really great lines.

I am not familiar with this limited edition which indicates that it is post 1989.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-15#post-35778575>

- [Feb 3, 2018](#)



I am currently courting this Upshall P, it is from a friend but it is too big for he. I do not like buying smoked pipes, but if the inside of the bowl will be without burns under the crust, I think

I will buy it. Unfortunately, the JU logo on the stem is now deleted. I believe there is not even a chance to reprint it.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-15#post-35778932>

- [Feb 4, 2018](#)

What a lovely Charatan Executive Fabioptrn. This is the first Charatan that I have seen fitted with a Cumberland mouthpiece!!!

The James Upshall P grade looks like a very early one - nice shape & nice grain.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-15#post-35782555>

- [Feb 16, 2018](#)







Here is my new Upshall, a grade P.

Unfortunately, the JU mold on the stem is now deleted (and I do not think anyone has the stamps to do it again). On the shank the word "James Upshall" is slightly worn.

I took a friend's pipe for a few euros, it's a little smoked and the inside of the bowl has no burns.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-15#post-35782574>

- [Feb 16, 2018](#)

“Here is my new Upshall, a grade P”

This is, in my opinion, a very early piece - I would say 1979 - 1980. I think the stamp mark has been 'pressed into the shank by hand'. This was before we got the stamping machine from Sasieni in 1980-81. The machine would press them with more pressure, making the stamp deeper.

The finish looks good and the pipe well-looked after. Nice pipe!

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-15#post-35809612>

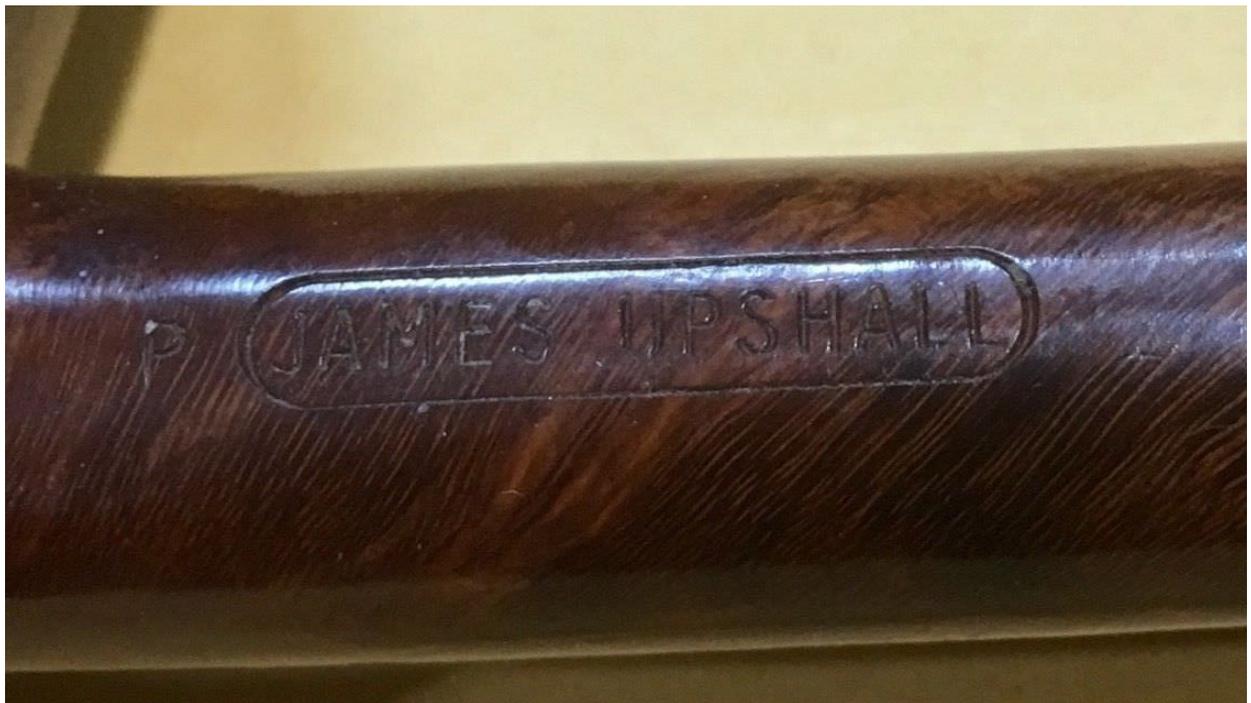
- [Apr 28, 2018](#)

Hi There;

Here is my latest James Upshall, with a unique shape.

In fact, I had seen this pipe before on eBay, and did not bid....glad someone put it f/s again!
Now it's in my herd.





<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-15#post-35809614>

- [Apr 28, 2018](#)

one more pic, from above!

I think it has a very art deco look with those interesting bowl rings which relate to bulldogs in a funny way.



<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-16#post-35809626>

- [Apr 28, 2018](#)

What a very, very unusual Upshall. I think that this is the only 'double beaded' pipe that we made up until 1989.

I think that, whilst the James Upshall name has been engraved on the shank, it looks like the JU logo on the mouthpiece has been hand-pressed with the JU stamp - is that correct? If so, it

dates the pipe to around late 1982. When we started engraving the shanks, we did not think to try engraving the logo too - that came 6 months or so later.

Yes, it has been well-loved. The lightish walnut stain has darkened over the past 35 years.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-16#post-35809973>

- [Apr 29, 2018](#)

Actually, Ken, I've taken a closer look at the JU logo on this pipe. This logo I now think is engraved, too, NOT stamped. I'm afraid the dating should be adjusted? The lighting in the photo probably made it look softer vs the sharpness of engraving.

Under a printer's loupe, I can see a crisper cut to the letters, whereas on another pipe, the JU letters appear softer and have rounder corners----and are larger too. I wonder, are the engraved JUs smaller overall vs the stamped older examples we see every so often?

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-16#post-35815444>

- [May 18, 2018](#)

Upshall started making 'carved' pipes ie not smooth in 1987. Our US agents had such a demand for these that we started doing them. I think it was Ser Jacopo that showed us the tools they used.

Barry told me that the sandblasted pipes were done by Bill Taylor (Ashton). Apparently Bill offered to do them and then took so long completing the orders that it was not really effective.

The JU logo in red was something Barry came up with after 1989. As all the logos are coloured in using  ola wax, he simply took another colour out of the box I suppose - sometimes these ideas came from a particular distributor in this case possibly Italy.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/briar-quality-in-dunhill.63857/#post-35811946>

- [May 6, 2018](#)

Hi psperrytops.

Historically, We (James Upshall) bought plateaux briar from the Arta Company, Arta, Greece and Achaiki, Patras, Greece. The sizes that we bought were Extra Extra quality Large plateaux, Extra Extra PLSLL (Large Large PLS) PLSL (Large PLS). PLS which is the smallest plateaux normally

went to Stanwell, Preben Holm and other Danish makers. Dunhill bought ebauchon blocks from the same saw mills which are smaller size blocks and normally cross-grain. For large Extra Extra Plateaux a bag would contain 9 dozen blocks. For approximately the same price, a bag of ebauchon blocks could contain 24 dozen - 50 dozen blocks in a bag. Dunhill used these ebauchon blocks for machine turning their catalogue shapes whilst we used the most expensive blocks for hand-turning. I know that in the 1970-1980s Dunhill would also source AB bowls (clean bowls or bowls with small sandspots) from some French manufacturers and others.

Today I buy finest quality plateaux blocks from two sources in Italy and Achaiki in Patras has also offered to supply me with plateaux. I live in the U.K. I hope this helps.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/briar-quality-in-dunhill.63857/#post-35812061>

- [May 7, 2018](#)

“Are briar blocks sold at auction, by contract, or wholesale at set prices? Is briar only available the places you mentioned, or is it the labor force that is lacking at other locations? Harvesting briar seems like incredibly heavy work.”

Hi mso489

blocks come at a more or less standard price. There are some batches that are ok and some that are beautiful. Extra Extra (that's the quality) Large Plateaux costs between \$40 -80 per block. I usually buy the biggest blocks, not to make big pipes, to have 'enough room' to find the grain and bring it out.

In the 1980s I remember contacting a saw mill in Corte, Corsica asking if they could supply me with top quality briar and they replied that the saw mill was closed down although they could open it again if I wanted to buy some briar.

The whole process is, to my mind, exhausting. I once tried to dig out a burl of briar in the foothills of Arta. I was pretty fit in those days and boy was it exhausting! Once the burls arrive at the saw mill, a lot more work is required to produce one block of high grade plateaux briar. The other day, a briar cutter sent me a breakdown of the yield he gets at his saw mill, which I found fascinating.

"we cut more or less from 90,000 to 120,000 kg a year of fresh briar and only 30% will be blocks for pipes (70% wood for fire); of these 30% of blocks yielded, 70% will be ebouchons for factory production (small blocks for making catalogue shapes – 'series turning') and 30% plateaux in 3 grading: the 30% plateaux yield is: TOP level I super 10%; II grade good 30%; III grade for sandblast 60%.

If I consider only the top level plateaux (10% of the total plateaux) 90% are for brandy (apple) and Dublin shapes and free-style and perhaps only 10% for billiards and if the shank is long only

a few blocks a year for a Canadian. On the low grade you have more possibility to find a Canadian and a billiard shape but the quality of the wood is not as nice as the first grade."

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/briar-quality-in-dunhill.63857/page-3#post-35813264>

- [May 11, 2018](#)

"I am definitely going to explore Upshall when it comes to my next purchase, and I see from their website that they are just becoming available in the US"

Hi psperrytops. I started James Upshall in 1978 with craftsman Barry Jones (from Charatan). They first became available in the U.S. in 1979. Regrettably the factory closed down some years ago.

Today, I spent the day with Barry Jones at the factory, looking for more stuff I can save before it gets 'binned'.

We had a great day today and I brought eight of my new pipes along for his inspection. He thought that they were 1st class! I told him that I had the best teacher ever - a really top flight craftsman who had such amazing patience with me in the very early days at Charatan (1974-1975) and the next phase of our journey at James Upshall. We have had lots of laughs today and, on leaving, I felt quite sad that the factory looked so run down and... it's the end of an era.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-16#post-35922512>

- [Mar 12, 2019](#)

just to update a couple of recent acquisitions

a P grade apple? unsmoked stamped size 4



a P grade bent billiard size 5



and an S grade unsmoked



<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-16#post-35922516>

- [Mar 12, 2019](#)

What a lovely 'P' grade Apple shape and with some fine grain. This one was made after 1989 as a size no. was only added after I had left the firm. The 'S' grade looks much earlier. If the leather bag came with this one (nice soft lambskin!), the date of this pipe would be around 1984. Great acquisitions!

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-16#post-35922567>

- [Mar 12, 2019](#)

thanks for you input Ken, the seller of the S grade is not a pipe person (he lists mainly lighters) but stated he thought pre 1990. I have been lucky to find them unsmoked. It has no size marking

I also have this on marked P grade EX it has cleaned up well, only tar on the rim no scorching and like all of them smokes wonderfully



<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-16#post-35923366>

- [Mar 14, 2019](#)

I wonder if you remember Diana from the Up Down Tobacco Shop in Chicago?

Hello hauntedmyst.

Yes I do remember Diana. She had as much passion for pipes as I do - such fond memories.

I have taken a photo of a photo of Diana when she was visiting the Tilshead Pipe Co / Upshall in 1984.

In this photo I am showing her how I cut plateau briar on the saw.



<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/a-james-upshall-bent-acclaim-fh.69354/#post-35933314>

- [Apr 9, 2019](#)

Now here is a pipe I adore. It has a cavernous bowl capable of giving you over 2.5 hours of enjoyment. I know very little of this series, all I found was a passing reference in connection to the Empire series. The stain looks different from what I have seen in other Upshall Barks. The stem itself is like nothing I've seen on an Upshall. Maybe they are more common than I think.

The pipe feels remarkably balanced and light in my hand.
Does anyone know more about these beauties? Ken Barnes tells me this was for sure made after he left.











<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/a-james-upshall-bent-acclaim-fh.69354/#post-35933325>

- [Apr 9, 2019](#)

Very interesting. Is the mouthpiece vulcanite brindle or acrylic? The saddle part of the mouthpiece looks quite sharp (rather than curved) which is how Reuben (affectionately called 'Ruby' by Barry) Charatan used to make the saddle hand-cuts way back in the 1950s - early 1960s. Interesting name for a series of pipes. I will mention it to Barry the next time I speak with him. Pete Siegel, our U.S. importer may be able to shed some light on this line too. Nice Pipe!

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<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-17#post-35957468>

- [Jul 2, 2019](#)

My first James Upshall. Based on my research, it is likely from the 1979-1981 era, although I am no expert and would welcome any correction to that estimated timeline. Some before and after pictures





After:







Big thank you to Ric at Briarville Pipe repair for the restoration work!

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-17#post-35958429>

- [Jul 5, 2019](#)

would welcome any correction to that estimated timeline.

Hello jojoc and welcome to the forum. What a gorgeous shape, lovely grain and beautifully restored.

Yes, I think your dating is 'spot on' - I reckon 1980, when we started to get some fine briar from the Arta Company, Arta in Greece. I hope you enjoy it!

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-17#post-35963874>

- [Jul 22, 2019](#)

While I have a number of British pipes (Sasieni, Charatan, Loewe, BBB...) in my collection, I do not have an Upshall. I have been reading this thread and other info on the web to get a feel for these pipes.

I found one today at a reasonable price that appealed to me. I'm guessing it was made sometime in the 1980's. It shows a little wear, but that doesn't concern me that much... I show a little wear since the 80's too.





<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-17#post-35964005>

- [Jul 22, 2019](#)

Hello craig61a

I like this pipe. As mentioned previously, I think this pipe was made between 1982 - 1989 although I would think it is more like 1982-83. In those days, we made a few 'thin-shanked' Billiards and here is a fine example. The tobacco chamber seems to have been 'knifed' but I think this can be easily rectified - otherwise it looks in really good condition. I think this pipe was either sold in London or Holland. This may sound controversial but I would very lightly wipe some pure alcohol over the bowl, shank and stem and the colour of this walnut stain will lighten up to reveal its original finish and bring the grain out. Then I would polish it with some Carnauba wax or similar and a soft cloth to seal it. Very nice!!!

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-17#post-35964106>

- [Jul 23, 2019](#)

Thank you for your input. Incidentally, 82, 83 were the years I was stationed in England. I was at RAF Lakenheath, and a brief temporary duty at RAF Sculthorpe up near The Wash.

I usually wash or wipe down my estates when they first arrive. Depending on how dingy they are, I will use Murphy's Oil Soap and a brass bristle brush, lacquer thinner, or just grain alcohol. This particular piece is indeed in quite good condition, so a minimalist approach will suffice. I may or may not do anything with top. I'll wait until it arrives to see how I will proceed.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-17#post-35964113>

- [Jul 23, 2019](#)

Those were the days! Every time a person shows an Upshall pipe from 1978-89 I go right down memory lane!

I don't know anything about 'Oil soap', brass bristle brush or lacquer thinner (we never applied any lacquer to our pipes). I would not do anything with the top, what I meant was to keep the internal part of the tobacco chamber nicely rounded so it carbonises evenly.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-18#post-35967072>

- [Aug 1, 2019](#)

Hello, Ken!

Inspired by your posts and stories in this thread I got me a James Upshall grade G. Think you could tell me anything about it?











<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-18#post-35967146>

- [Aug 1, 2019](#)

Yes, I agree with ssjones, these G grades are rare. This pipe looks lovely and has some fine grain too. I think it was made in the 1980s after 1983. The engraving machine that we used did not allow us to engrave the James Upshall on the 'top side' of the shank on this pipe so it was engraved on the underside.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-18#post-35967981>

- [Aug 4, 2019](#)

The second arrived today. Except for a small flyspeck at the front top part of the bowl, I see no flaws.

That is beautiful! Tilsheads are odd birds. They are seconds but usually show better than many "first" from other pipes. I was just looking at mine today and can't figure out why it wasn't an Upshall.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-18#post-35967996>

- [Aug 5, 2019](#)

"I was just looking at mine today and can't figure out why it wasn't an Upshall."

If it is a Tilshead Natural finish, a small unfilled flaw will be there, which could also be in the tobacco chamber (which were left natural). If the Tilshead was in a plum/red finish, the tobacco chamber would have been 'carbonized' and the flaw would not be seen. There is a flaw there somewhere - happy hunting!

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-18#post-35987519>

- [Oct 1, 2019](#)

Hello Mr. Barnes and fellow Upshall fans! Just purchased an estate Upshall from eBay, a nice XL bent. However, the stamping "DS" is new to me, can anyone help me identify what the letters stand for? Plus, I would like to know if the lack of the "FH" stamp always indicates that the pipe was made when Mr. Barnes was still working in JU.

Thanks in advance!

Attachments



-

20191001_180001.png

1 MB · Views: 4



20191001_180016.png

1,002.5 KB · Views: 5



20191001_180030.png

656.5 KB · Views: 5



20191001_180041.png

1,006.9 KB · Views: 7



20191001_180056.png

608.3 KB · Views: 6

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-18#post-35987595>

- [Oct 1, 2019](#)

I believe the pipe is post Ken Barnes era. The sizing stamp started after he left.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-18#post-35987979>

- [Oct 2, 2019](#)

Thanks jojoc,

indeed, this pipe was made and sold after I left the firm.

Desmond Sautter may have had an agreement with Barry that he would sell Upshalls with the 'grade DS' - selected by Desmond himself. This pipe was probably earmarked as a 'B grade' natural finish and probably sold for more than a B grade in the Mayfair shop.

I reckon this pipe was made in the early part of the 1990s. Nice piece!

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-18#post-35988122>

- [Oct 2, 2019](#)
-
- [Add bookmark](#)
- [#360](#)

Hey Ken,

I wonder if you remember making this one? I only have ever seen two like this, both of which I bought. I sold the other one which was a Dublin



<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-19#post-35988172>

- [Oct 2, 2019](#)

I vaguely remember Barry making a few in this style. It would be nice to see the front side!

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-19#post-35988889>

- [Oct 3, 2019](#)
-
- [Add bookmark](#)
- [#362](#)

This is the left side which also shows most of the front.



<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-19#post-35988892>

- [Oct 3, 2019](#)

This was the other pipe



<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-19#post-35989050>

- [Oct 4, 2019](#)

Oh, thanks for the memory recall! Yes, I do remember these, I think we may have made four or five in total. Barry did all the work on these and I particularly like the shape of this Billiard and the finish on the bowl work. I must say that you keep your pipes in excellent condition. Thanks for sharing these pictures.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-19#post-35991947>

- [Oct 9, 2019](#)

One more stroll down memory lane. To be honest, I bought this one because it was the last one in the case.



<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-19#post-35992501>

- [Oct 11, 2019](#)

Lovely pipe hauntedmyst. This looks like an early 1980s 'P' grade. The rough top on this one indicates that it is a really fine piece of briar even if the grain is not in the highest quality straight grain bracket. At about this time we moved the JU stamp from the side of the mouthpiece to the top side.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-19#post-35992889>

- [Oct 11, 2019](#)

Here is my newest Upshall, it appears to be a very early bulldog. Hand stamped nomenclature, no grading and no stamp on the stem.



<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-19#post-35992894>

- [Oct 11, 2019](#)

Here's a picture of the JU stamp



<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-19#post-35993440>

- [Oct 13, 2019](#)
-
- [Add bookmark](#)
- [#374](#)

bron340

this is, in my opinion, a very early bulldog. It has been hand stamped and I am not sure if this one was made (and sold) before we received the grade letter stamps from the stamp die maker (January 1979) I wouldn't be surprised if this one was made in November/December 1978 - one of the very first? I do know that the beading tool used here was quite primitive and later on, Barry made a more sophisticated beading tool which gave a crisper slightly angled bead - see below. The mouthpiece may not be the original as there is no hand-pressed JU and the colour of the shank at the fit looks slightly lighter which could indicate that it has been replaced.



<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-19#post-35992566>

- [Oct 11, 2019](#)

My two James Upshall Pipes, both P grades, a super long (7.34) Canadian with a silver band. The other is a monstrous billiard (6.5", chamber 2" by .81")with a small crack in the shank I picked up for super cheap on ebay.



<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-19#post-35995264>

- [Oct 16, 2019](#)

alaskanpiper: thanks for sharing photos of these two pipes. In 1983 or 1984 the demand for long shank pipes was very strong and I decided to buy some MFF 4-5 (Marseille Forte Forte 4-5 cms wide). These blocks came from the Arta Company in the small village of Arta in the foothills of the Pindu mountains in Greece. This sawmill produced the best briar I have cut (comparable to Manno Briar, Tuscany). These blocks came with cross grain but were beautiful to cut and turn - lovely texture.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-19#post-35995473>

- [Oct 16, 2019](#)

[alaskanpiper said:](#)

“So is that likely when that Canadian was produced? Do you happen to know anything about the large billiard I posted as well?”

Yes, the large billiard has also been cut from this same MFF 4-5 briar wood and made around the same time 1984?

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-20#post-35996585>

- [Oct 19, 2019](#)
- [Add bookmark](#)
- [#382](#)

Here are my two, P grade James Upshall pipes. I am hopeful these are both from the Ken Barnes era. The silver band was made by Les Wood.



- [Oct 19, 2019](#)

Here are my two, P grade James Upshall pipes. I am hopeful these are both from the Ken Barnes era. The silver band was made by Les Wood.



<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-20#post-35998604>

- [Oct 23, 2019](#)

[donjiles said:](#)

“Here are my two, P grade James Upshall pipes. I am hopeful these are both from the Ken Barnes era. The silver band was made by Les Wood”

Two lovely pipes!!! Yes, they are from the mid 1980s I think. The shaping of these two are, in my opinion, really fine and with some great grain. They both look like pipes cut from briar from the Arta Company. Thanks for sharing these.

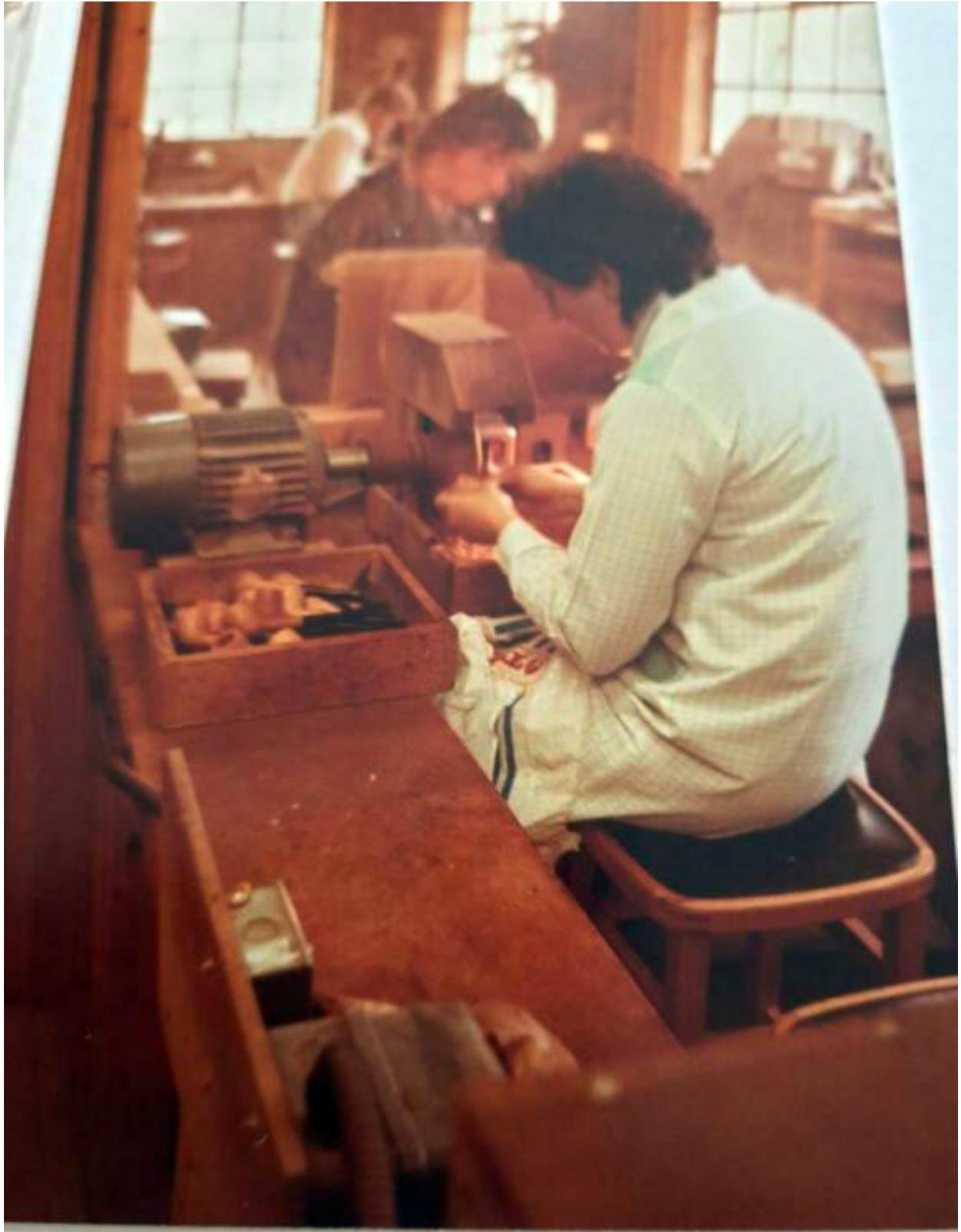
<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/historic-james-upshall-photos.78327/#post-36167777>

- [Jul 24, 2020](#)

-
- [Add bookmark](#)
- [#1](#)

A gentleman posted these on Facebook.
I thought Ken would like to see them.





<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/historic-james-upshall-photos.78327/#post-36168248>

- [Jul 25, 2020](#)

Thank you very much for posting these photos. Wow, I have not seen these pics before - they do bring back some happy memories. Yes it is 1983! I would be interested to know who took these photos?

In the foreground is Violet pumicing the pipes in the finishing shop. The next guy is David who is frazing the pipes and in the background is Steve who is hand-drilling the bowls before fitting. I have another one here of Steve drilling the pipes.



<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/bought-my-first-charatan-estate-pipe.78853/page-2#post-36187279>

- [Aug 29, 2020](#)

[donjiles said:](#)

"I recently acquired a lovely Tilshead, square shanked cutty with amazing grain, following the shape so masterfully.

The pipe appears to be very lightly stained but I noticed that the Tilshead England stamp and

the Made By Hand stamps were also filled in with white Crayon. Was that common practice on very lightly stained pipes?

Thank you Sir.”

No, I have never seen it. I think I tried it on one Tilshead once - cannot remember now. Are the 'stamps' engraved or stamped by hand (pressed into the wood)?

I have seen some early French and English pipes from the 1920s which had the stamps filled in with white or gold wax I think Oppenheimer used to do it. It certainly would be interesting to see a photo of this Tilshead pipe.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/dicey-looking-tilshead-pipe-and-i-wasnt-even-drunk-when-i-bought-it.79397/#post-36204003>

- [Sep 27, 2020](#)

I have one other Tilshead pipe that is rather small for one of these pipes, but a wonderful smoker. When I saw this I had a hard time understanding how it could come from the boys at Upshall pipes. It has a LOT of flaws, and also has a replacement stem, that was very poorly done. Well I always like the underdog, and pipes that have an interesting history, plus it was very cheap. (about 1/4 of the usual price for one of these pipes)

Anyway, I decided to give it a little love and fixed the stem up, cleaned up the briar and gave it a little brighter stain. The stampings were very weak, and I have no idea if this stem is even close to the original. Still a dicey looking pipe, but I was wanting to give the poor thing another go at life. I would like to hear what you all think about it. (and yes Ken, I'm talking to you too)



fullsizeoutput_29a5.jpeg





<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/dicey-looking-tilshead-pipe-and-i-wasnt-even-drunk-when-i-bought-it.79397/#post-36204576>

- [Sep 28, 2020](#)

[agnosticpipe](#) said:

of

I do not know what to say. First of all and for the record, this pipe was made after I sold my shares and left the company in 1989 as the 'stampings' are actually engraved which we did not do under my watch! Basically, Tilshead pipes were the pipes which we rejected having a James Upshall stamp/quality. When I worked there we made no sandblasted pipes whatsoever. In fact, I have never made a sandblasted pipe. We did start to carve a few Upshalls in the mid 1980s (1986 I think) due to very strong pressure coming from the U.S. So, rather than calling them rejects, we put them in a line called Tilshead. We never filled any of the pipes we made and the Tilsheads were either finished in a natural or a plum red.

I have seen worse machine-made rejects at the Charatan factory being selected for sandblasting (third or fourth quality, **not** Charatan quality) and some of these never actually survived the sandblasting and were then scrapped. The weird part is that this kind of bowl with flaws like this would have been scrapped on the saw or else on the lathe and never been finished in the first place as it would have cost more to make the pipe than to scrap it and do untold damage to our image.

I can only imagine that the guy that bought the company got Barry to finish some bowls that he bought from somewhere and put them out as Tilsheads. At that time, Barry was probably so disheartened by what had happened to the factory and just did as he was told.

At first I thought a dog or someone's pet weasel had got hold of it but there are no teeth marks on the other side of the bowl. In the second photo, the white spots are as a result of someone

re-painting the room where it was - with a roller. These will clean off quite easily. The worst part of the pipe for me is the bend on the mouthpiece. This is definitely not Barry's work. On reflection, I now think that the owner came to the factory one day with some half-finished fitted pipes he had bought from somewhere and asked (told) June White to finish these pipes, engrave them with Tilshead Made By Hand, final-polish them and wrap them up. She must have cringed too!

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/dicey-looking-tilshead-pipe-and-i-wasnt-even-drunk-when-i-bought-it.79397/#post-36205149>

- [Sep 29, 2020](#)

[agnosticpipe](#) said:

My error, I now see the pipe in question was stamped with the stamping press.

I am saddened by the plummet in quality of the company before it closed. Just to maintain the quality was a full-time job for me and just a little complacency could have seriously damaged the name. For me, this is more like blatant disregard for a name with a 'don't care' policy added for good measure.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/interesting-completed-ebay-auctions-british-pipes.60196/page-45#post-36221361>

- [Oct 24, 2020](#)
-
- [Add bookmark](#)
- [#892](#)

Unsmoked X FH in the wild...



A107ECC5-DD81-48B3-8F80-8E46DD128D8











<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/interesting-completed-ebay-auctions-british-pipes.60196/page-45#post-36222066>

- [Oct 25, 2020](#)

This is a lovely James Upshall X grade craig61a. It was made just after I left the company as it is engraved FH which indicates it was made after 1989.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-21#post-36225385>

- [Oct 30, 2020](#)

Here is a better version from an actual scanner. Jacques P. Cole was the editor of Pipe Line and 3 consultants listed as D.D. Merton, C.R. McConnell, and J.W. Sanderson so I wondered if one of them actually did the interview.

Young Pipemakers

The Objectives of 'JAMES UPSHALL'.

An interview with Kennedy George Upshall Barnes of the Tilshead Pipe Co.

PIPE LINE. 'The name UPSHALL is obviously an old family name, where does it come from?'

KENNEDY BARNES: 'James Archimedes Upshall was my Great Grandfather, an ardent pipesmoker who loved quality and perfection.'

P.L. 'Tell us, with UPSHALL pipes, what sort of standard you are aiming at.'

K.B. 'Well, as you know, James Upshall has a limited production which is determined by the supply of Extra quality Plateau Briar. So the quality of each pipe has to be as high as good pipes were sixty years ago.'

P.L. 'You find this quality in "plateaux"?'

K.B. 'Oh yes, we only buy naturally dried plateaux from Greece, which is the best.'

P.L. 'You said "naturally dried". You would not have them kiln dried?'

K.B. 'No! This invites the risk of splitting and shrinkage. Natural seasoning ensures that we have the right briar for James Upshall pipes.'

P.L. 'It affects the weight too, does it not?'

K.B. 'Of course, the weight indicates the porosity of briar - which must "breathe" - and the full rich grain indicates its age.'

P.L. 'For the sake of our readers, tell us other advantages of plateaux.'

K.B. 'Plateaux are cut from the outer part of the briar burl, in "slices", the bark on the outside so that the grain runs towards the centre. If you use the plateau "sideways" you get bird's eye ... very rare to be able to do so ... but a very close Straight Grain will show a fine bird's eye on the bottom of the bowl.'

P.L. 'There is a point to clarify: Upshall pipes are "hand turned", but many smokers seem to think that no type of machine is needed, but only rasps and chisels. ...'

K.B. 'Of course you can turn a pipe on a special sanding belt, but to get a Classic English shape, we use a flat belt lathe. The briar, which is very hard is clamped and that insures a turning speed enabling the Turner to obtain - using freely handled tools - the right shape of both bowl and shank. The final shaping has of course to be a fully "hand operation".'

P.L. 'We know that you like "turning" yourself. ...'

K.B. 'Yes, I specialise in the cutting of the rough plateau blocks, but I love difficult shapes! Also Canadians and Lovats.'

P.L. 'Not always easy. ...'

K.B. 'Right, but we aim to cut straight grains, which infrequently happens! I can also tell you when a particular pipe was made and by whom. I can recognise work by Barry Jone, my Craftsman or by my young turners, David or Michael. Our full time job is to keep the shapes fresh and inspiring, without losing the fine traditional shapes Englar, is renowned for.'

P.L. 'What can smokers get out of James Upshall?'

K.B. 'Every smoker should strive for something better and choosing a James Upshall should be as pleasurable as smoking it.'

P.L. 'Do you ever have any problems, say with smokers?'

K.B. 'Not really, although one must admit to encountering the odd piece of "rogue" briar! Rare, I am glad to say, but that can account for a too hot or bad taste. On the other hand this can be caused by the tobacco used or may come from the vulcanite mouthpiece. We will of course change the mouthpiece and if this does not satisfy the smoker, we will give him a new pipe.'

P.L. 'Have you had many cases?'

K.B. 'No, but I want to make a very special point: all our pipes are guaranteed and if there is the mildest degree of dissatisfaction, the smoker only has to return the pipe to his retailer and tell him his problems. We shall deal with these to the smoker's satisfaction without argument, wherever he may be.'

P.L. 'This sounds good policy. May you prosper.'

- [Oct 29, 2020](#)

[snagstangl said:](#)

"From the British magazine/pamphlet "PIPE LINE" 1983 No 46 pg 12 . Interview of, under the Young Pipemakers

heading, Kennedy George Upshall Barnes of the Tilshead Pipe Co!

[View attachment 48815"](#)

I will try to get a good scan of it tomorrow not just this phone pic.

My word! This is weird. I think I remember this 'interview' was made in Solihull at the AITS show. In this year, I kept explaining that my ancestor's name was James Archimedes Upshall.

My mother, at the time, read one of these articles and asked what are you saying here? Your Great grandfather's name was James Archelaus Upshall - so I need to correct this now! He was an amazing cabinet maker who made some really beautiful stuff.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-21#post-36225427>

- [Oct 30, 2020](#)

[snagstangl said:](#)

Here is a better version from an actual scanner. Jacques P. Cole was the editor of Pipe Line and 3 consultants listed as D.D. Merton, C.R. McConnell, and J.W. Sanderson so I wondered if one of them actually did the interview.

Well, it was not Mick or Ken McConnell and it wasn't Derek Merton because he never really spoke to me as I think he was an extremely busy man and quite important too! So it must have been J.W. Sanderson who I am not familiar with.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-21#post-36225505>

- [Oct 30, 2020](#)

Here's another one just refreshed Tilshead. Do I correctly understand that this pipe was made before 1984?









<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-21#post-36225821>

- [Oct 30, 2020](#)

[vlodko said:](#)

Here's another one just refreshed Tilshead. Do I correctly understand that this pipe was made before 1984?

[View attachment 49042](#)[View attachment 49043](#)[View attachment 49044](#)[View attachment 49045](#)

This is a lovely Tilshead bent and made in the 1980s. I do know that sometime after I left the Tilshead Pipe Co in 1989 Barry started to engrave the Tilshead pipes. Gorgeous curve to the mouthpiece - definitely an early one.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-21#post-36229625>

- [Nov 5, 2020](#)

This is one of my favorite Tilsheads I've ever come across. Don't see freehands often.



<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-21#post-36229759>

- [Nov 5, 2020](#)

[PipeCat said:](#)

This is one of my favorite Tilsheads I've ever come across. Don't see freehands often. [View attachment 49929](#)

I think that this is a lovely piece, and created by Barry in the 1980s. It does look familiar and I am sure that I have picked this one up a few times to admire it. The mouthpiece may be a replacement - but really well executed.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-21#post-36229963>

- [Nov 6, 2020](#)

Found this on Ebay sometime back. Sullivan Powell was a tobacco-pipe store in London years ago. I saw the engraving "Made by Hand" which looked suspiciously like an Upshall/Tilshead pipe. Paid more for the postage than the pipe! Ken Barnes has commented that Upshall did indeed make house pipes for Sullivan Powell and this was a good example. Cleaned up pretty well. Hoppes

Before





After





<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-21#post-36230367>

- [Nov 6, 2020](#)

You have brought this one back really well! Yes, the briar used to make this piece was from the Arta Company, Arta, Greece. We bought some MFF 4-5 cross grain blocks (extra long ebauchon blocks) from this saw mill in order to fill a huge demand for the Canadian shape at the time. This one needed to be 'cut back' due to a flaw on the shank. I loved going to Sullivan Powell in The Burlington Arcade as the manager there, Harry Horowitz was as passionate about pipes as I was. He used to sell lots of Upshalls too & high grade straight grains. We had some great times talking with customers and I always walked out of there with a big order!

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-21#post-36230579>

- [Nov 7, 2020](#)

Here is one of mine. It has James Upshall in an oval and a P one one side and Tilshead, next line England, next line Made By Hand.















<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/james-upshall-pipes-a-discussion.46520/page-21#post-36230724>

- [Nov 7, 2020](#)

I like this 'P' grade. The date of this one is after 1981 (I think) and before 1983. The stamp marks have been 'stamped' rather than engraved but not stamped by hand because the pressure is too consistent in my opinion. I bought the stamping machine we used from Sasieni in 1981 I think. In 1983 or maybe early 1984, our USA agents (Pete Siegel) had the idea of using a pantograph machine to engrave the Upshall name and logo which we started doing then. At the time, he and his brother had a pipe-store in Long Island and they used this type of engraving machine to engrave Zippo lighters etc for gifts. Pete had the idea of trying it out on a basket pipe which he did and it works so well that nowadays quite a few pipe-makers use this method.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/interesting-completed-ebay-auctions-british-pipes.60196/page-49#post-36254895>

- [Dec 12, 2020](#)

Hello Ken,

Did you carve this beauty :



<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/interesting-completed-ebay-auctions-british-pipes.60196/page-49#post-36254944>

- [Dec 12, 2020](#)

Lovely E grade Upshall. I may have cut the block and Barry turned and finished it. I love the curve on the stem - graceful and flowing.

<https://pipesmagazine.com/forums/threads/interesting-completed-ebay-auctions-british-pipes.60196/page-49#post-36255403>

- [Dec 13, 2020](#)

[Kottan said:](#)

But how do you know, that it is an E grade?

I can't see this marking in the pictures.

Click to expand...

The grain looked like an E or X grade and then I saw it was an E grade in the 1st photo on the left of the James Upshall engraved name on the shank.