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Au Pacha, one of the first Parisian meerschaum pipe makers

Bruno Desbois and Ewout Korpershoek

English translation: Hazel de Neeve

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Manufacturing of meerschaum pipes began in Paris in the 19th century. The first companies to specialize in making tobacco pipes and cigar holders from meerschaum started out in the treen-making industry and moved into pipe manufacturing around 1850. Such was the case for treen maker Alfred Ferdinand Lenouvel, who established his Au Pacha tobacco and pipe shop around 1843. His operations evolved rapidly into a boutique pipe manufacturing business located on Place de la Bourse in Paris. After Lenouvel left the company in 1864, it had several other owners until around 1924. During that entire period, the company name and location were maintained and continued to gain recognition. The “Au Pacha” brand survived even longer, right up until the 1990s. During that entire period, a wide range of highly refined, mainly meerschaum cigar holders and tobacco pipes were manufactured under the name “Au Pacha”, leaving a lasting mark on what became a famous Parisian industry.

Introduction

Meerschaum is a fairly rare mineral found in just a few regions of the world. On the European continent, a major source is the area around the Turkish city of Eskişehir, between the cities of Istanbul and Ankara.

Meerschaum is a soft, clay-like material that is easily shaped. It is also heat-resistant; heating it only makes it stronger, although more fragile. As far as is known, meerschaum was first used to make pipes in the 17th century, in the region of Eskişehir. Its light weight and pleasant smoking characteristics and the relatively ease

with which it could be shaped were attractive features that led to its widespread adoption in pipe making.

Turkish pipes travelled to mainland Europe via the Balkan countries, but most, with their characteristic local shapes, did not immediately appeal to the taste of European smokers. This presented local manufacturers



Fig. 1. Meerschaum pipe and case. Pipe shaped like a poodle's head. Made by Au Pacha, C. Cheville, successeur, Paris, circa 1895.

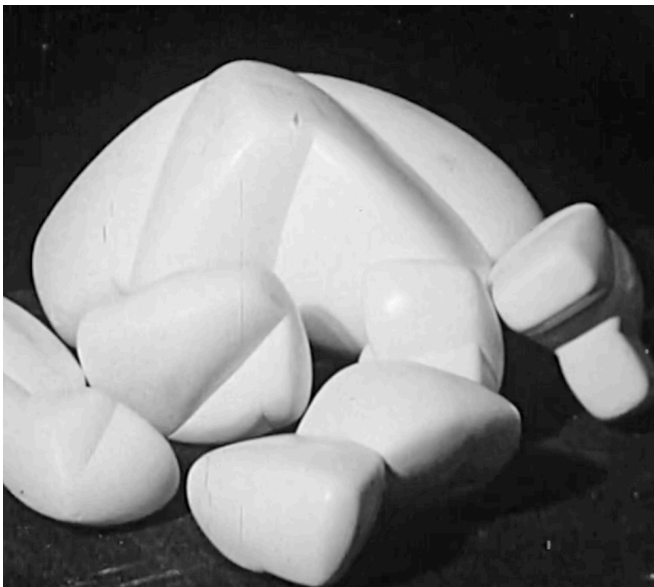


Fig. 2a-d. The main steps in the meerschaum pipe production process: (a) raw meerschaum blocks shaped into smaller pieces; (b) a turner behind his lathe; (c) a saw machine roughly shaping the blocks; and (d) a sculptor carefully shaping the meerschaum based on a specific design. (Pictures INA, Journal de Paris, 1966, film “Aux carrières d’écume”).

with the opportunity to import the raw material and begin carving their own pipes. The first known meerschaum pipe manufacturers outside of Turkey established themselves mainly in the Austro-Hungarian region and Germany. The cities of Budapest and Vienna quickly became the centres of European meerschaum pipe making.¹ As the majority of meerschaum pipes consisted of a bowl to which a separate stem and mouthpiece needed to be attached, a dedicated industry focused on the manufacturing of (luxurious) stems and mouthpieces, as well as other (mostly metal) decorative elements, soon developed. The materials most often used were wood, bone, horn, amber and, later, various types of rubber and early plastics.

As meerschaum pipes were much more labour-intensive to carve than clay pipes, the latter were significantly cheaper to produce. The popularity of meerschaum therefore remained limited to a more exclusive clientele

that was willing and able to pay the extra price for added smoking comfort and design.

In the 19th century, France was home to several clay pipe manufacturers that had developed a broad range of internationally popular products whose quality was largely built on the high-quality pipe clay found in the French-Belgian Ardennes region. The factories of these pipe makers were therefore concentrated in the Ardennes region; none had any manufacturing facilities in Paris. When the use of briar² became popular in the 19th century, the area around the town of Saint Claude, in the Jura region, became the manufacturing centre for pipes of that type.

The Parisian meerschaum industry

A report written on the occasion of the 1989 Paris Exposition states that meerschaum pipe production started in Paris around 1850³ and was introduced by

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Miroy frères, Gravilliers, 18.
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Fig. 3. Parisian address book with companies listed in the category tabletiers ("treen makers") in 1840.

Viennese and German pipe makers. The Paris industrial statistics for 1860 mention a total of 32 pipe makers⁴ who together employed a total of 286 workers. By 1889, that number had more than doubled to a total of 635.⁵

Although the first Parisian meerschaum pipe makers could have come from either Vienna or Germany, they had in common a background in the local treen-making industry, which produced especially small-sized products like tobacco and snuff boxes, games (chess, dominoes, etc.), (small) furniture and even jewellery.⁶ What those products had in common was that they were made individually and out of natural materials like wood, bone, horn, ivory and mother-of-pearl. A lathe was an important tool of the trade. Particularly in the 19th century, there were many treen-making businesses in the Les Halles district of Paris, each with its own specialty (fig. 3).⁷ Some specialized in woodworking and others in bone, leather or metal, for instance.

PIPES.

Beaumont, success. de Gambier, maison spéciale pour tous les articles concernant les débitans de tabac, pipes de terre, quincaillerie d'Allemagne et d'Orient, art. de Paris, expédie en province et à l'étranger, Arbre-Sec, 20.

Fig. 4. The "Pipes" category in 1840 contained just a single listing, for the company Beaumont, a wholesaler specialized in articles for shops selling tobacco, clay pipes and various other merchandise.

It was companies working in such applications that gradually began to focus on manufacturing pipe and smoking accessories. Amber and bone workers started making *tuyaux* (pipe stems) for porcelain and meerschaum pipe bowls imported mainly from Germany and Austria, and jewellery shops and metal workers saw



Fig. 5. Advertisement for the French company Lobrichon aîné of Paris, which shows the positioning of the French meerschaum pipe manufacturing: nicely shaped and elegant pipes instead of the classic bulky, heavy pipes from Austria/Hungary and Germany. Circa 1858–1862. (Bibliothèque Nationale de France, ENT DN-1 (VANGELEYN)-FT6).

opportunity in making the ferrules connecting the bowl and stem, pipe lids and other elements to serve as pipe parts or ornaments.

Between 1840 and 1850, such companies were also the first in Paris to start selling tobacco pipes, which were initially imported but soon also manufactured locally. The period was also one of growing popularity of the cigar. In 1840, Parisian address books included, for the first time, a dedicated business category for companies that sold and made (tobacco) pipes.⁸ The sole company mentioned in that year was the wholesaler Beaumont, which specialized in clay pipes and smoking accessories. All other pipe makers were listed under their respective treenware categories: treen makers (*tablettiers*), wood or bone turners (*tourneurs*) or metal turners (*quincaillerie*).⁹

In 1845, the “pipes” product group mentioned a total of 32 suppliers, 10 of which were wholesalers who sold tobacco pipes, cigar holders and smoking accessories. Eleven of those companies had a background in treenware. Three of the treen makers explicitly mentioned *pipes* as one

of their products. It was in 1850 that the first company presented itself as a *fab. (rique) de pipes*.¹⁰ By then, the total number of pipe suppliers had grown to 30.

The manufacturing of highly decorated meerschaum, amber and soon also briar offered new markets and opportunities for the many skilful 19th century Parisian craftsmen to monetize their turning, sculpting and design capabilities. In a product segment thus far dominated by traditional Austro-Hungarian and German pipes, with their heavy, bulky forms, the French manufacturers offered elegant, fashionable designs (fig. 5). The more affluent smokers appeared to appreciate the fashionable new pipes and had the means to pay higher prices. By around 1850, a new “Parisian” industry had taken shape, with the embracing of meerschaum, amber and briar as high-grade base materials. The meerschaum was mainly imported from Turkey, the amber from the Baltic states and the briar mostly from the Pyrenees, Corsica and Spain.



Fig. 6. The brand “Au Pacha, fabrique de Pipes d’Écume de Mer, Maison Lenouvel, Place de La Bourse 1 & 3”, as presented on letterhead in 1880.

Au Pacha, Maison Lenouvel (1843 – 1864)

According to the Paris business directory of 1843, Alfred Ferdinand Lenouvel was the owner of a tobacco shop at 28 Rue Notre-Dame-des-Victoires (fig. 7),¹¹ at the corner of Place de la Bourse, in Paris.

Alfred Lenouvel was born on February 14, 1814. In 1841, he married Louise Hortense Chibon, in Paris. Lenouvel had a woodworking background, but two years after his marriage his tobacco shop appeared to be his main source of income. As far as can be determined, he sold tobacco products and probably pipes.

In 1850, he still operated his tobacco shop in the same street, but the street address had changed to number 34 and he appeared to have extended his wares to a “large assortment of pipes, snuffboxes and all articles for smokers and snuff users”.¹² In the short listing, these activities were combined as “tobacco and treenware”, which would have included specialized smoking accessories like tobacco boxes and snuffboxes (fig. 8a-b).

This was also the first time that the name “Au Pacha” was mentioned in reference to his shop.¹³ The name shows the specific Oriental/Turkish reference that the French had for smoking and tobacco use, which was quite different from the Netherlands, for instance, where the main tobacco reference was American/Indian (“*moriaan*”), with an image or name referring to a North American native or slave. During the 19th and 20th centuries, the Au Pacha name was used for many,

Lenouvel, tabac, N. -D.-des-Victoires, 28.
Lenouvel, éliz. vins. Bergère. 13.

Fig. 7. The entry for Lenouvel’s tobacco shop at 28 Rue Notre-Dame-des-Victoires, in the *Annuaire général du commerce etc.*, 1843.

Lenouvel, grand assortiment de
pipes, tabatières et tous articles
à l’usage des fumeurs et priseurs
(au Pacha), Notre-Dame-des-
Victoires, 34.

Lenouvel, tabac et tabletterie, N.-D.-des-Vie-
toires. 34.

Fig. 8a-b. Lenouvel listing in the *Annuaire général du commerce etc.*, 1850.

mainly tobacco, shops in France.¹⁴ None were related to the Au Pacha, Maison Lenouvel that was established before 1850 in Paris.

It is not clear whether Lenouvel made his own smoking accessories, but he definitely had a workshop where he repaired pipes: in 1852, he applied for a patent on specific “improvements” he had developed for meerschaum but also other pipes.¹⁵ His patent application describes certain *perfectionnements aux pipes d’écume et autres* (refinements to meerschaum and other pipes), which were based on a detachable connector between the bowl’s stem and the mouth piece. He applied a threaded connection without the use of an internal screw or other attachment. In his application, he worded it as follows:

“(…) Nowadays several different methods are used to connect a pipe stem to the bowl with a tube. These connection methods all have somewhat significant disadvantages that my method does not have (...) That is why I request exclusive recognition for the use of a system connecting the stem and bowl via an integrated thread, for the period that the law allows. Instead of using a separate connecting tube I connect the stem and bowl directly via an integrated thread. (...)”

The patent application appears to be for a fairly common, not particularly unique solution, and would seem to have been filed more for marketing than for economic motives, which was not uncommon in the 19th century. In the eyes of many 19th-century French manufacturers, applying for a patent was more important from an advertising and image perspective than for product economic reasons.¹⁶

In 1852, Lenouvel began describing his activities as “refinements to meerschaum and other pipes” (fig. 11),¹⁷

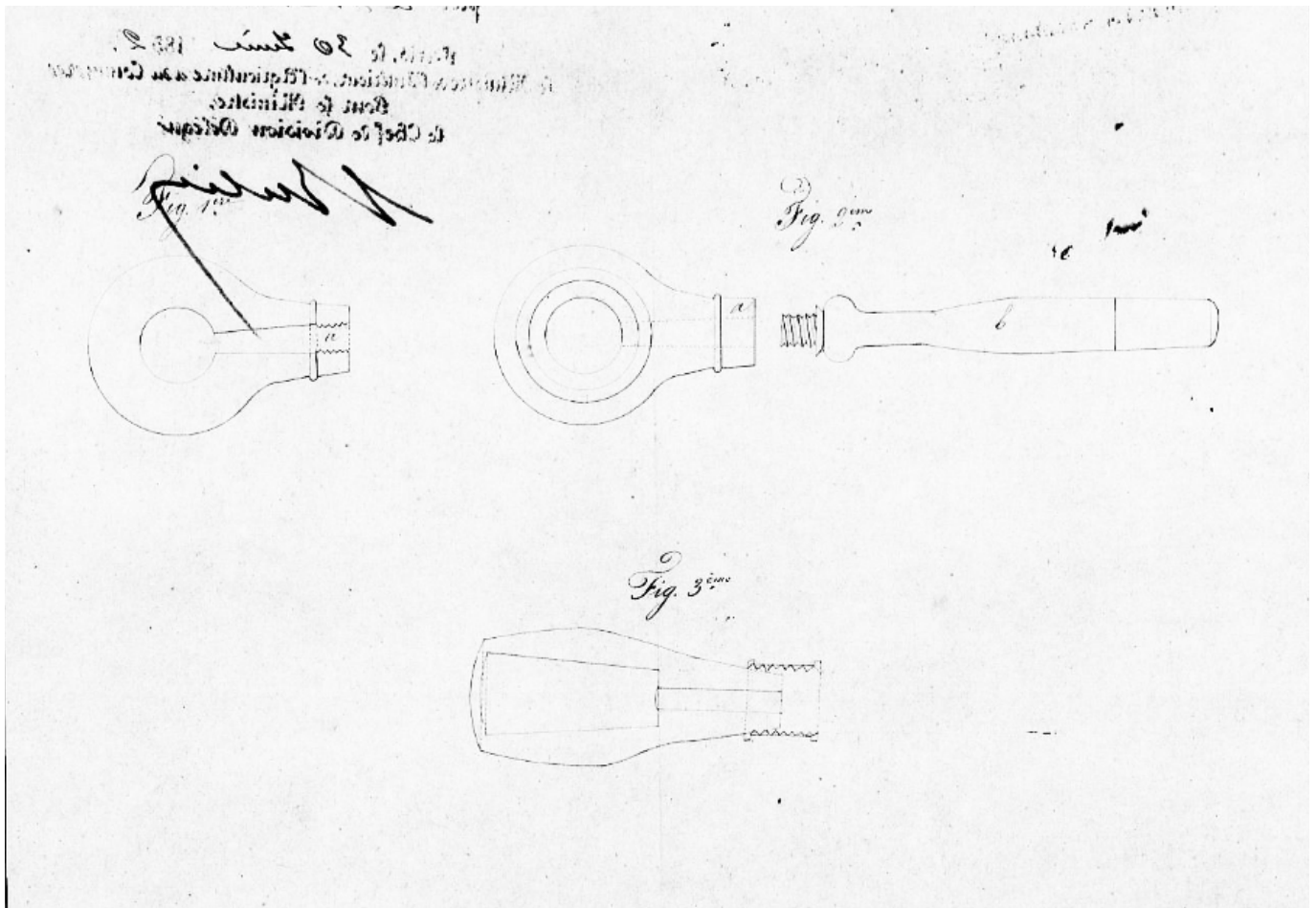


Fig. 9. Design drawing from the first patent filing, dated April 28, 1852.



Fig. 10. Stem and bowl of a pipe equipped with the integrated thread.

which was broader than the earlier mentions. It is not clear whether he also made his own pipes or if he only refined pipes that he bought and then resold.

In 1854, he explicitly added the word meerschaum to all of his listings: “tobacconist, assorted pipes, specializing in meerschaum, and all smoking accessories, tobacco boxes [...]”,¹⁸ while another short listing still mentioned *tableterie* (treenware).¹⁹

In later years, 1854 was advertised as the founding year of Au Pacha as a pipe manufacturer, and that is indeed likely the year that Lenouvel started making meerschaum pipes.²⁰

Sometime in late 1854 or 1855, Lenouvel moved his business to 3 Place de la Bourse, a location just around the corner from his shop on Rue Notre-Dames-des-

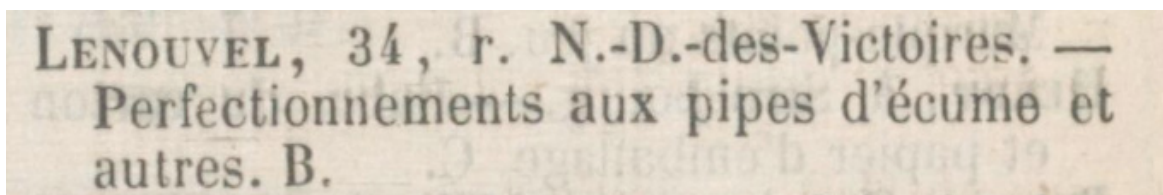


Fig. 11. Listing of Lenouvel in “La Fabrique, la ferme et l’atelier : revue populaire illustrée”, 1852. His main activity was described as “refinements to meerschaum and other pipes”.

Pathi (au Nabab), débit de tabac, grand assortiment de pipes d'écumé, de terre, de bois, tabatières, porte-cigares, articles à l'usage des fumeurs et priseurs, tableterie fine, Notre-Dame-des-Victoires, 34.*

Fig. 12. Listing of Au Nabab and its owner Pathi, January 1, 1855.

Victoires. The old address remained a tobacco shop, under a different name and owner; in 1855, the shop was named “Au Nabab” and someone by the name of Pathi was listed as the owner (fig. 12).²¹ The exact relationship between Pathi and Lenouvel is unclear but it appears that Lenouvel’s Au Pacha began focusing exclusively on the production and sales of tobacco pipes and cigar holders, while Au Nabab continued to serve as a tobacco shop. Au Nabab remained in business until at least 1897, less than 50 metres away from Au Pacha.²²

An Au Pacha advertisement from January 1856 (fig. 13)²³ contains the description “specializing in meerschaum, many new fantasy pipes, full range of smoking accessories”.

The 1855 edition of the “Le Panthéon de l’Industrie” magazine had an article about Au Pacha and Lenouvel written by the journalist Charles Coligny.²⁴ In the article, Lenouvel is described as an outstanding craftsman and the “father of the artistic pipe”:

“It is especially in recent times that the Kummer-pipe has seen the most welcome modification of the art. Mr. Lenouvel is the artist who has elevated the art of pipe making to the realm of dreams. Thanks to him, Germany no longer has the exclusive monopoly to manufacture luxury pipes, especially the Kummer pipe (...), which has become completely French in the able hands of Lenouvel, who has shed the heaviness of its Germanic shapes, the grotesque nature of its band and its exorbitant price, transforming all these vices into virtues by endowing grace, lightness and an elegant finish, a harmonious distinction that characterizes the work of our true artists. A smoker himself, Lenouvel fought energetically for 15 years against the manufacturing defects that blind routine clumsily allowed to persist.

The efforts of an ingenious, persistent industrialist such as he were thus bound to culminate in utter triumph. As a connoisseur, we dare to assert that his pipes alone combine the most delicate tastes, the smoothest sweetness and the most magical intoxication.

Lenouvel is the father of the artistic pipe. This truth is inscribed in all his masterpieces. The subjects he chooses to embellish, to adorn the form of his inventions,

PIPE
ET ARTICLES POUR FUMEUR.
AU PACHA, Lenouvel, spécialité d'écumé de mer, grande nouveauté en pipes de fantaisie, tient tout ce qui concerne les fumeurs, pl. Bourse 3.

Fig. 13. Advertisement for Au Pacha, 1856.

are always tasteful, distinguished, even learned. A mythological element here; there, an oriental scene; a nod to some legend from the Middle Ages; a Madonna, a Hercules, a dervish; an entire ensemble, a stunning tableau. The gigantic pipe so majestically displayed behind the stained-glass windows of his magnificent shop on Place de la Bourse is a true marvel, both for the richness of its material and the splendor of its form. The scene depicts the Abduction of the Sabines, indeed a worthy subject for a masterpiece.

All you lovers of art, all those of you who love the way that smoke eases your mind, pay a visit to Lenouvel’s brilliant exhibit. Above all, accept the pleasures that he offers you as the glorious creator of art rather than a greedy seller of wares. Go, and leave there with this famous and divine object that led one of our greatest caricaturists to remark that “only the pipe distinguishes man from other animals”.

[free translation of the article by Ch. Coligny in Le Panthéon de l’Industrie, 1855]

The article portrays Lenouvel as an artist who not only made unique new designs for meerschaum pipes, but who actually set the new, artistic (and French!) standard for meerschaum pipe making.

During this period, the most important centres for meerschaum pipe production were found in the Austro-Hungarian and German regions. The name “Kummer pipe” probably originated from that background, although that remains unclear to this day.²⁵ Given the above-mentioned context, the name appears to have been used for the classically shaped meerschaum pipes that generally emanated from those regions.

In any case, Alfred Ferdinand Lenouvel was presented as the artist who had reinvented the meerschaum pipe by doing away with its traditional heavy and bulky Austrian and German designs in favour of French elegance. A certain level of chauvinism cannot be denied, and whether Lenouvel was indeed “the first Parisian meerschaum manufacturer” is hard to determine. What is clear though, is that between 1850 and 1855, the Parisian meerschaum pipe industry was established, and various manufacturers claimed to have been the initiator.



Fig. 14. The Intervention of the Sabine Women, by French painter Jacques Louis David (1799). The original is part of the collection of the Louvre. (Photo Wikipedia)

Also remarkable in the article is the mention of the “gigantic” pipe on display in the shop. It was described as “richly decorated with a scene depicting the Abduction of the Sabines”, but unfortunately, no images or further details about the piece are known. In another article published a few years later, in 1858, however, there also was mention of a large pipe.²⁶ In the latter article, the decorations were described as based on David’s painting called “The Intervention of the Sabine Women” (fig. 14), which, in principle, would have been a different event following the earlier mentioned abduction. It is not clear whether there were two different pipes or whether one of the authors was less than accurate in his description.

According to an article in the 1862 edition of Montreal’s “Écho du cabinet de lecture paroissial”, a large pipe was still on display²⁷ and was for sale for the astronomical price of 2,000 francs. The pipe was said to be capable of holding 20 francs worth of tobacco.

In January 1857, Lenouvel used the description *fabrique* (factory) for the first time in the Paris directory:²⁸ “Factory for meerschaum pipes, amber stems and cigar holders, a large selection and new items for everything that could interest a pipe smoker”. Based on this

description, we can conclude that Lenouvel operated a tobacco pipe and cigar holder factory, likely with many workers.²⁹

During that same year, on May 22, Lenouvel applied for another patent. This time, his invention was described as a very specifically designed internal space in the body or stem of a cigar holder or pipe, to enable the collection of juices and fluids produced during smoking [fig. 15].³⁰ As indicated by the description in the patent filing, such fluids constituted one of the main discomforts of smoking.

In 1858, roughly a year after applying for that patent, Lenouvel applied for another patent,³¹ also aimed at reducing the discomfort associated with tobacco juices. The new filing described a reservoir mounted to the stem that would capture the juices during smoking. In the patent filing, Lenouvel described his modified pipe as a *pipe à pompe* (pump pipe).

“(.) The pump serves as a reservoir for the tobacco juices, which will therefore not enter the smoker’s mouth or stay behind in the bowl or stem. The pump consists of a small bucket that can be opened by means of a hinge

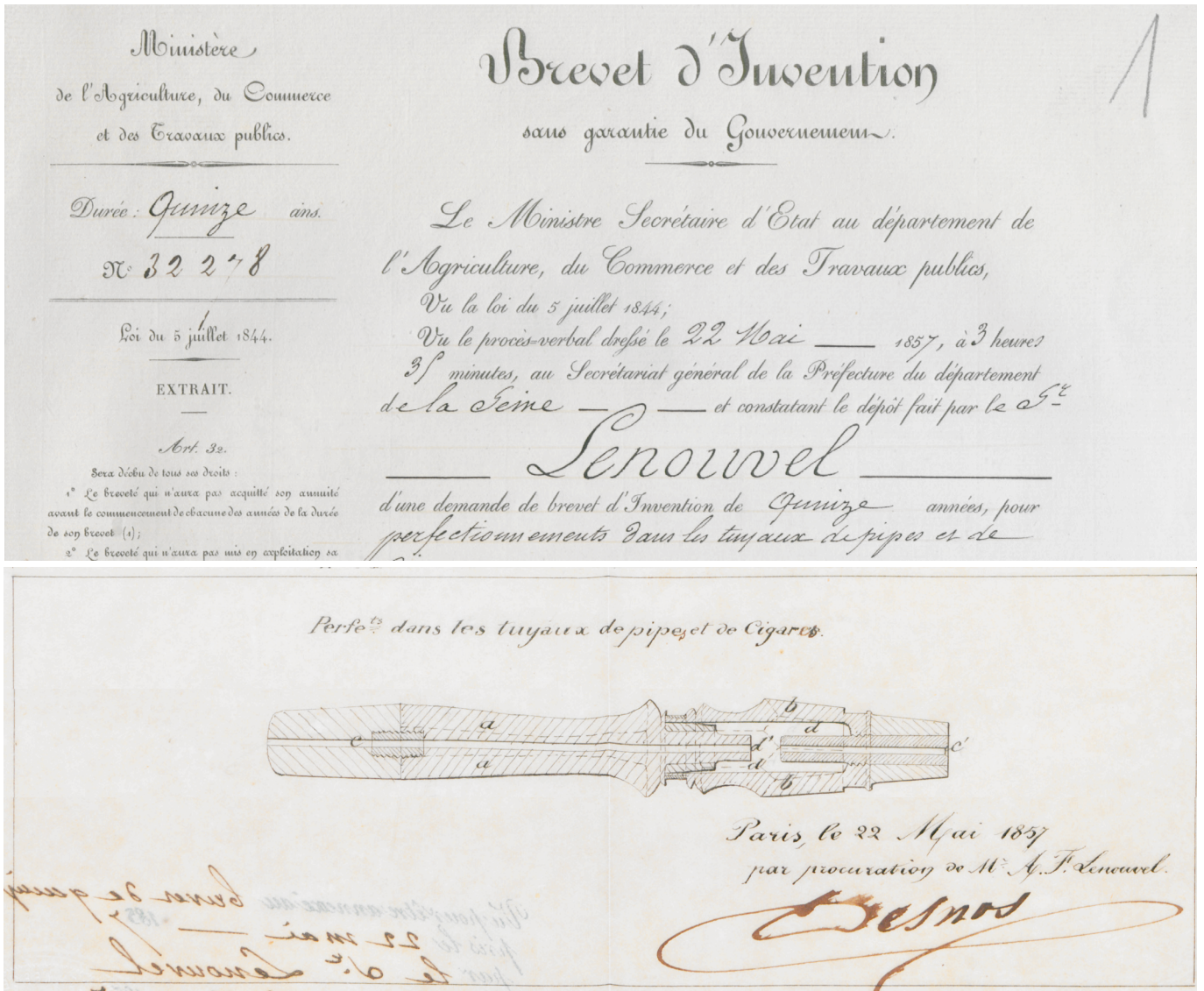


Fig. 15a-b. Header and design drawing of the patent filing No. 1BB32278 dated May 22, 1857. www.inpi.fr #32278 (22-05-1857).

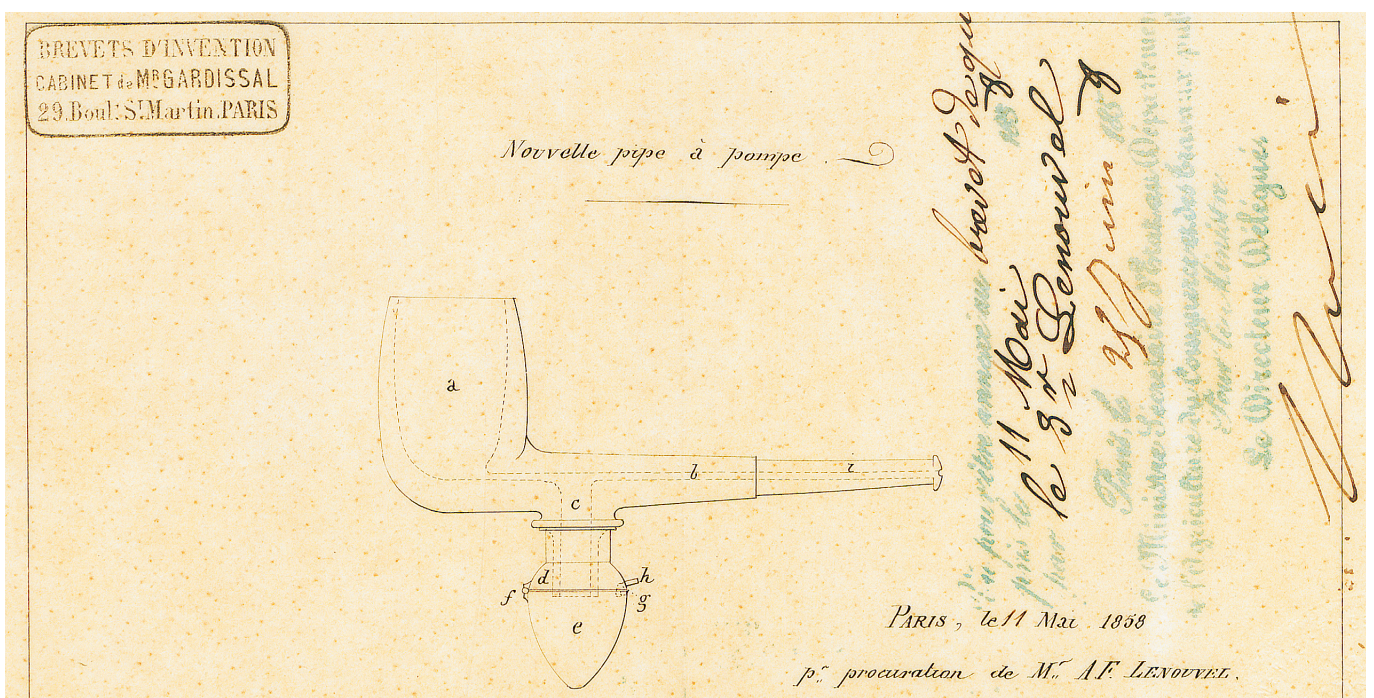


Fig. 16. Design drawing in patent filing No. 1BB036552, dated May 11, 1858. www.inpi.fr #32278 (22-05-1857).

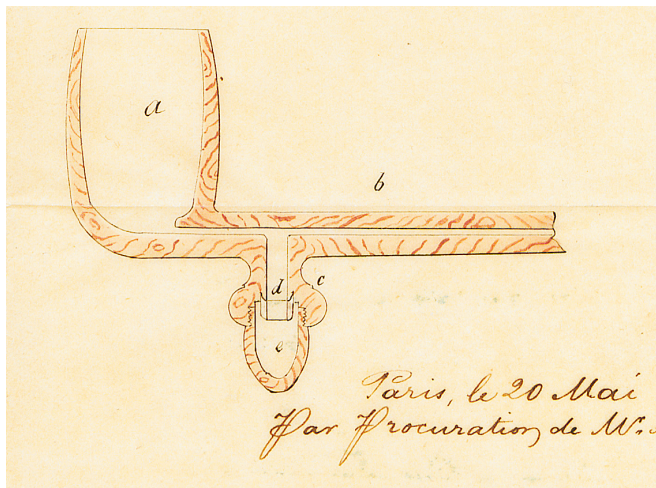


Figure 17a. Design drawing in the first refinement added to patent No. 1BB036552, dated May 21, 1858.

to remove the fluids. This pump can generally be fixed on all common and luxury pipes, whether of clay, wood, meerschaum or briar. (...)

Lenouvel wrote that known methods for “catching” the tobacco juices were used by several manufacturers but that his invention was unique because the reservoir was attached to the stem and easier to open, without the risk of tobacco juices getting onto the hinge mechanism or the outside of the pipe.

In the following weeks, Lenouvel issued two refinements to the patent. The first described the reservoir as a fixed part of the pipe (fig. 17a), and the second included a rubber ring that was added to the reservoir’s lid (fig. 17b).

Figures 19a and b show two versions of Au Pacha pipes with a special pump or reservoir, in both cases attached to the pipe via a separate, dedicated metal attachment between the bowl and the stem.³² The shape of the attached stem, made of bone, stands out. At the end away from the smoker the stem is wider and a metal lid or attachment is mounted. This specially shaped stem may include another juice-catching reservoir, as in Lenouvel’s second patent application. The same type of wide stem is also shown in a catalogue issued between 1864 and 1886 (fig. 46b).

Several years before Lenouvel issued his patent application for the pump pipe, another company, the clay pipe manufacturer Duméril, had filed a patent application for a *pipe-pompe*. That application was filed on October 1, 1852, and described an extra reservoir as part of the stem of a clay pipe. Duméril’s application also described, in detail, the manufacturing process and special tools required.³³

Lenouvel’s patent applications fit with the general

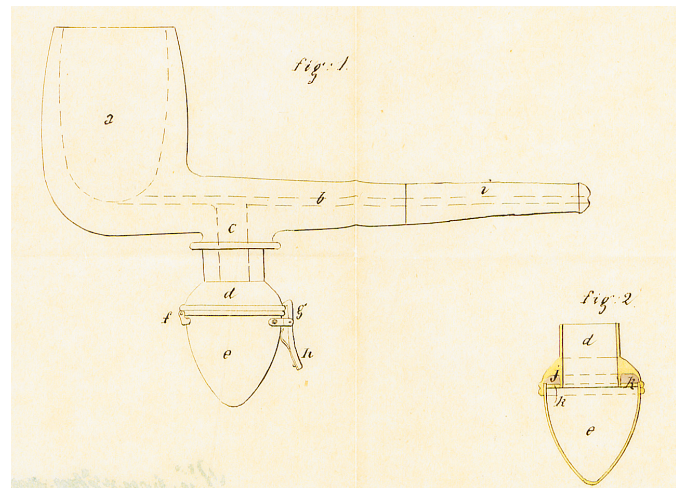


Figure 17b. Design drawing in the second refinement added to patent No. 1BB036552, dated June 8, 1858.

sentiment of the times, where manufacturers would focus more on filing patents for the purposes of attracting marketing and advertising attention than to protect (envisioned) economic value. The patents were issued without any detailed review of such things as the merits or principles described or prior designs.

In 1858, Lenouvel added the capacity to fit his pipes with custom carvings: crests or coats of arms, for instance, could be carved into several models of his pipes,³⁴ as the advertisement in figure 18 shows.

Lenouvel’s company demonstrated an interesting evolution. In 1843 (or possibly as early as 1840, as the article by Coligny suggests), Lenouvel operated a tobacco shop with most likely a workshop for treenware and pipe repairs and refinements, which by 1852 had developed into a tobacco pipe and cigar holder factory.

Figures 20 to 35 show different types and models of pipes all with the Au Pacha name (fig. 23) stamped in their cases. It can be assumed that these pipes were made by Lenouvel, although this cannot be stated with absolute certainty, as it was not uncommon for pipe makers to offer a wide assortment of pipes, some made by themselves and some acquired from others.

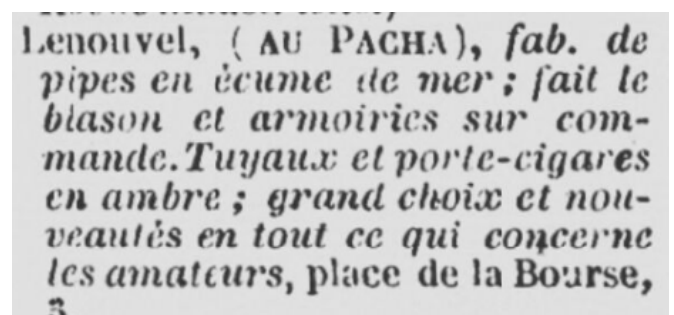


Fig. 18. Advertisement from 1858 offering custom-carved crests and coats of arms.



Fig. 19a-b. Two of Lenouvel's "pump-pipes" (patent No. 1BB36552) with the Au Pacha, Maison Lenouvel mark printed in the case. The pipe bowls are meerschaum (19a) and briar (19b), and the pump is part of a separate metal piece connecting bowl and stem. The separate stem has silver coloured ornaments and is in bone.

The Au Pacha assortment was fairly broad. Figures 20, 21, 24, 27, 28 and 32 show fairly modest but nicely finished meerschaum and amber pipes and cigar holders, while the pipes in figures 22, 25, 26, 29–31 and 33–35 are much more elaborate. Figures 24 and 25 show designs that are very similar to the traditional Austro-Hungarian and German meerschaum pipes.

Although meerschaum is most commonly white in colour, it is found in various colours and quality. Untreated, raw meerschaum can range in colour from white to yellowish and various shades of grey. Depending on the original colour, and to further enhance the image of the handmade pipe, the meerschaum could be subject to further treatment in the form of a bath of wax or stearin or a mix of both.³⁵ Over time, the nicotine and tobacco fluids released during smoking would deepen the colour of the meerschaum. Impregnating the pipe or only specific parts

with extra wax or stearin would influence the intensity of the colour: the parts of the pipe that were most saturated would remain white for a longer period, while the less saturated parts would become darker as the pipe was used. Different colours of wax, or oil, could be used to influence the colour of the pipe even more. Figures 26, 28, 29 and 33 show good examples of this.

The company also offered its customers the option of purchasing tobacco pipes and cigar holders with custom-carved coats of arms and monograms (fig. 21). It also applied specific silver ornaments, such as bowl lids or the ferrules used to connect the amber mouthpiece. The ferrule of figure 20b bears the text "Lenouvel breveté", which probably refers to the first patent that Lenouvel applied for, in 1852.



Fig. 20a-b. Plain pipe with a repair at the bowl shank. The silver ferrule connecting the stem bears the text “LENOUVEL BREVETÉ”, probably a reference to Lenouvel’s first patent of 1852.



Fig. 21a-b. Cigar holder with custom-carved monogram.



Fig. 22. Cigar holder with beautifully engraved image referring to the 1867 World’s Fair, where Desbois and Weber received the bronze medal.



Fig. 23. Au Pacha, Lenouvel mark inside the case.

Fig. 24. Classic “German/Austrian” design.

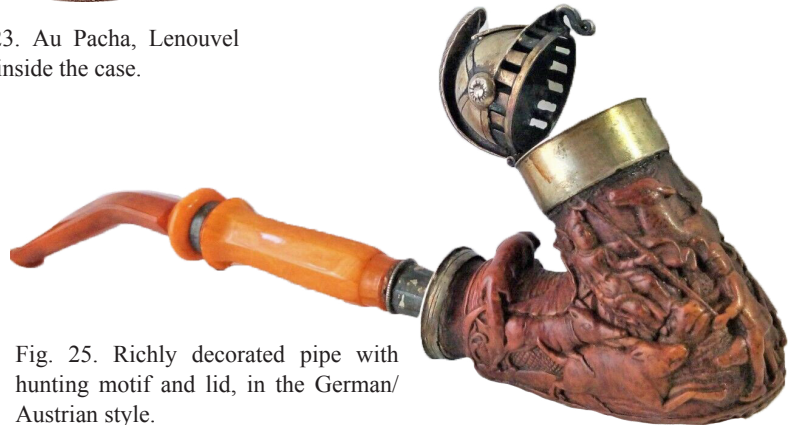


Fig. 25. Richly decorated pipe with hunting motif and lid, in the German/Austrian style.



Fig. 26. Pipe shaped like an acorn on a section of branch.



Fig. 27. Plain model with handsome two-part plug-in amber stem.

Fig. 28a-b. Pipe with “Royal Dragoons” coat of arms, an example of a custom-carved coat of arms.





Fig. 29a-b. A beautifully coloured and smoked pipe with a depiction of "Leda and the swan".



Fig. 30. Male face with moustache, beard and a so-called fez as headgear.



Fig. 31. Male face in the shape of a satyr.



Fig. 32. Bent pipe with silver lid and ferrule.



Fig. 33. Brown-coloured pipe with male face.



Fig. 34. Male face with moustache and beard.



Fig. 35. Male face with moustache, beard and hat.

Au Pacha, maison Lenouvel, successeurs Desbois & Weber (1864 – 1886)

In 1864, when Lenouvel reached the age of 50, he sold his business to two of his employees, Nicolas-Étienne Desbois and Gustave Auguste Conrad Henri Weber. The agreement to that effect was signed in the presence of the notary Alberic Bisson on June 26 of that year.³⁶

Nicolas-Étienne Desbois' title at the time was "chef d'atelier" (workshop foreman or manager) and Gustave Auguste Conrad Henri Weber was listed as a pipe maker. Weber was Lenouvel's nephew by marriage, having married the daughter of Lenouvel's brother-in-law. The company name was changed to "Au Pacha, Maison Lenouvel, Desbois & Weber, successeurs". The deed of establishment described the company's activities as "manufacturing and sale of pipes and treenware".

It is not clear whether Alfred Ferdinand Lenouvel remained active in the company. He died on November 8, 1888, in Marolles-en-Brie, at the age of 74.

Nicolas-Étienne Desbois was born on July 15, 1825, in Paley, Seine-et-Marne, a village with 393 inhabitants.³⁷ In 1841, at the age of 16, Nicolas-Étienne no longer lived with his parents,³⁸ and had moved to Paris to become a (wood)turner. In 1845, at the age of 20, he was called into military service but he was able to convince the army that, because of varicose veins in both legs, he was not fit to serve his term, which would have been seven years.

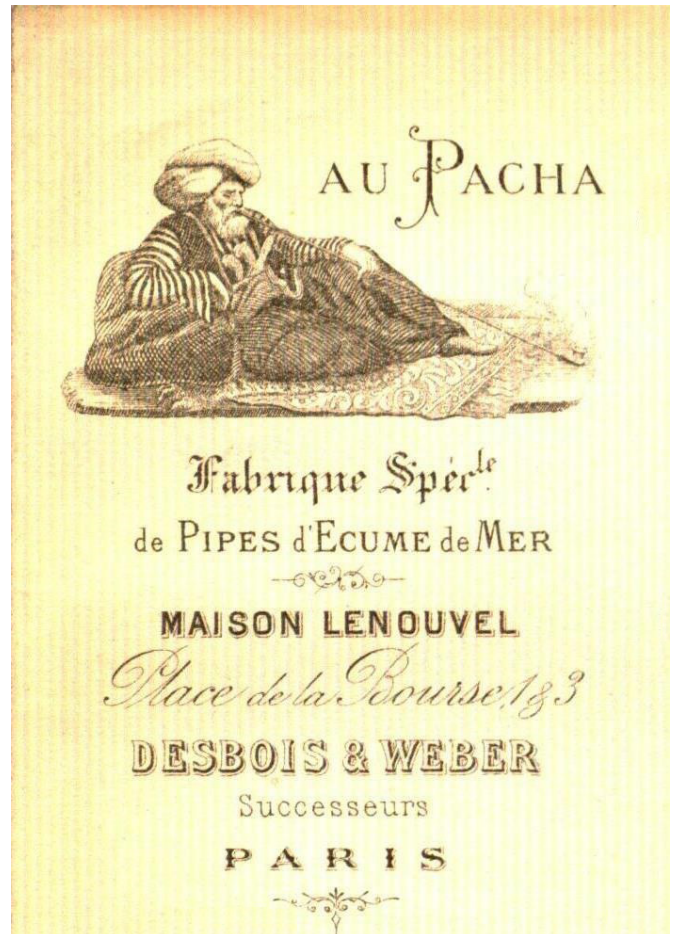


Fig. 36. Letterhead of Au Pacha, Maison Lenouvel, Desbois & Weber, successeurs, as used between 1864 and 1886.



Fig. 37. Nicolas-Étienne Desbois (1825–1887).



Fig. 38. Anna Maria Adelmayer (1826–1893), who married Nicolas-Étienne Desbois in 1849.

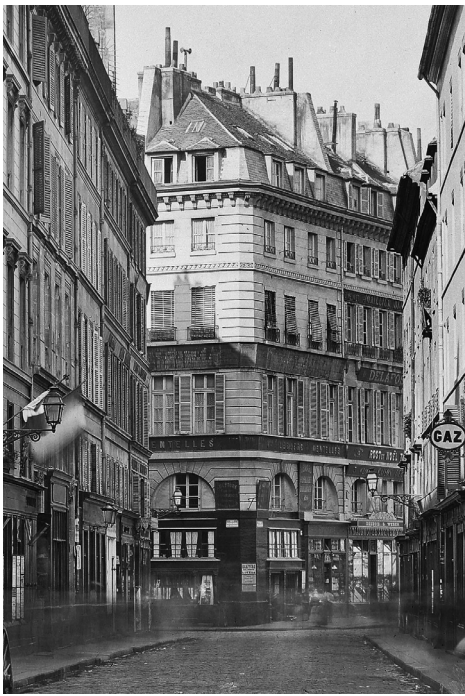


Fig. 39a-c. The workshop and storefront of Au Pacha, Desbois & Weber, as photographed from Rue Montmartre, looking towards Rue Notre-Dame-des-Victoires (No. 19) on the left and Place de la Bourse (No. 3) on the right. The photo was taken in 1868. The Desbois & Weber sign is clearly visible on the shop's facade.

Nicolas-Étienne was active in the treen-making business in Paris. Between 1846 and 1855, he worked as a mother-of-pearl turner in Ehrenbreitstein, a town on the east side of the Rhine River, close to the city of Koblenz. It was there that on August 26, 1849, he married Anna Maria Adelmayer (1826–1893), who was already five months pregnant with their first daughter, Louise Gertrude Françoise.

When Louise Gertrude had reached the age of 5, the family moved to Paris, together with Anna Maria's

21-year-old sister, Gertrude. On July 11, 1855, they moved into their new home at 19 Rue de Notre-Dame-des-Victoires. Nicolas-Étienne very likely started work immediately at Au Pacha as a pipe turner. By 1864, he was foreman, in which role he most likely coordinated the manufacturing and repair facilities in the workshop.

Gustave Auguste Conrad Henri Weber (1831–1894) had arrived in France from Germany in 1856, approximately one year after Desbois. He was born in Hannover (Germany), the son of the umbrella maker

Charles Auguste Weber. Umbrella-making was closely connected to the wood and bone working trades, and Gustave would have acquired his turning skills in his father's factory.

Exactly when Weber started working at Lenouvel is unclear, but it would have been during or before 1860, the year in which he married Héloïse Alix Chibon, Lenouvel's niece. Another marriage that took place in 1860 was that of Gertrude Adelmayer, Nicolas-Étienne's sister-in-law, who married Wilhelm (Guillaume) Frederic Lichtleuchter, also a pipe turner.

Under the management of Desbois and Weber, Au Pacha kept its focus on manufacturing tobacco pipes and cigar holders with the added option of custom-carved coats of arms and monograms. In 1867, Au Pacha was one of the five Parisian³⁹ meerschaum pipe manufacturers that exhibited at the World's Fair in Paris that year.⁴⁰ There were 10 different Austrian meerschaum pipe

manufacturers listed as exhibitors as well.

In a report about the exhibition, Desbois and Weber were described as one of five leading French manufacturers of luxury pipes that had an extraordinary presentation at the prestigious international event.

*"The former Maison Lenouvel, represented by the gentlemen Desbois and Weber and known for their shop on the Place de la Bourse, is exhibiting remarkable sculptures. Their connectors (rings that connect stem and bowl) are striking jewels that are in perfect harmony with the beautiful pieces of amber they are exhibiting."*⁴¹

Desbois and Weber, together with their colleagues from the company Six and Goetsch, were awarded a bronze medal for the products and presentation (fig. 40b-c).⁴² A beautifully carved cigar holder makes reference to their success during the exhibition (fig. 41a-c).

**AU PACHA. Maison LENOUEVEL,
DESBOIS et WEBER, Successeurs,
Place de la Bourse, 3.
Groupe III, classe 26, n° 61.**

Fabrique de pipes en écume de mer, qualités surfines. — Atelier spécial pour la Sculpture d'armoiries, initiales, portraits et fantaisie. — Pipes et porte-cigares en ambre, écume et racine de bruyère, pipes du Levant. — Grand assortiment de nouveautés pour fumeurs.



Fig. 40a. Catalogue entry for Au Pacha, Maison Lenouvel, Desbois and Weber, successeurs, for the 1867 World's Fair in Paris. Catalogue général, Livre 3.

Fig. 40b-c. The bronze medal awarded during the 1867 World's Fair.



Fig. 41a-c. Cigar holder in its case, with a reference to the bronze medal won during the 1867 World's Fair.



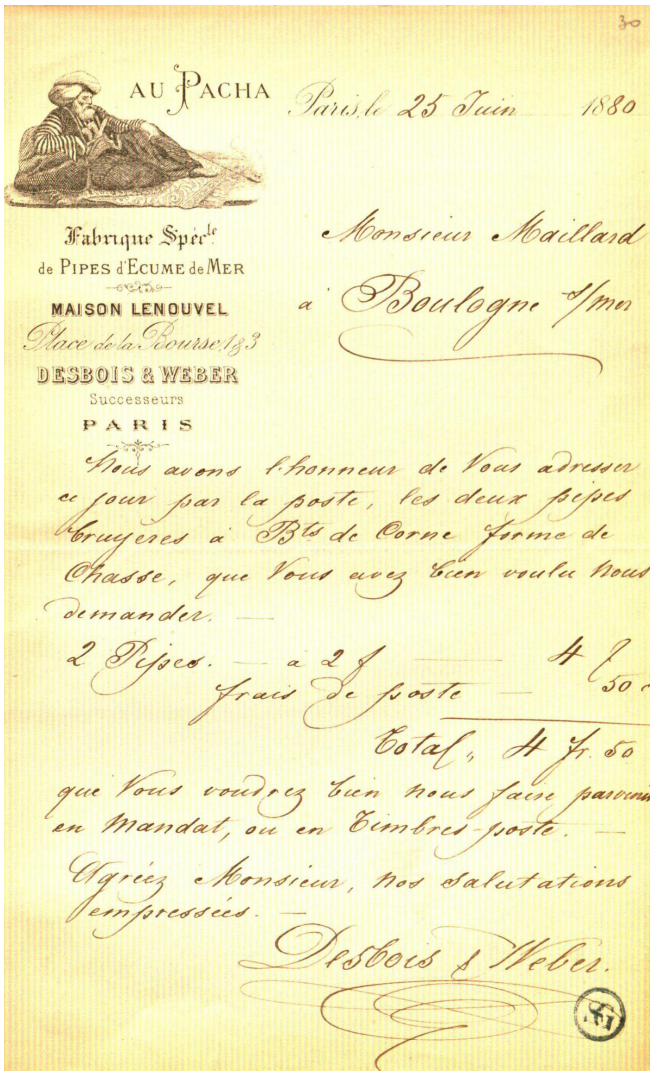


Fig. 42. Letter and invoice sent to the French writer and journalist Firmin Maillard, dated June 25, 1880. The invoice refers to two briar pipes at 2 francs each.

In July 1870, Napoléon III declared war on the German emperor. Although Weber had been living in France since 1856, he was of Prussian nationality (he obtained French nationality later, in 1877) and he therefore



Fig. 44. Envelope that contained correspondence between Desbois & Weber and the lawyer Paul Louis Marchegay, bearing the date December 21, 1885.

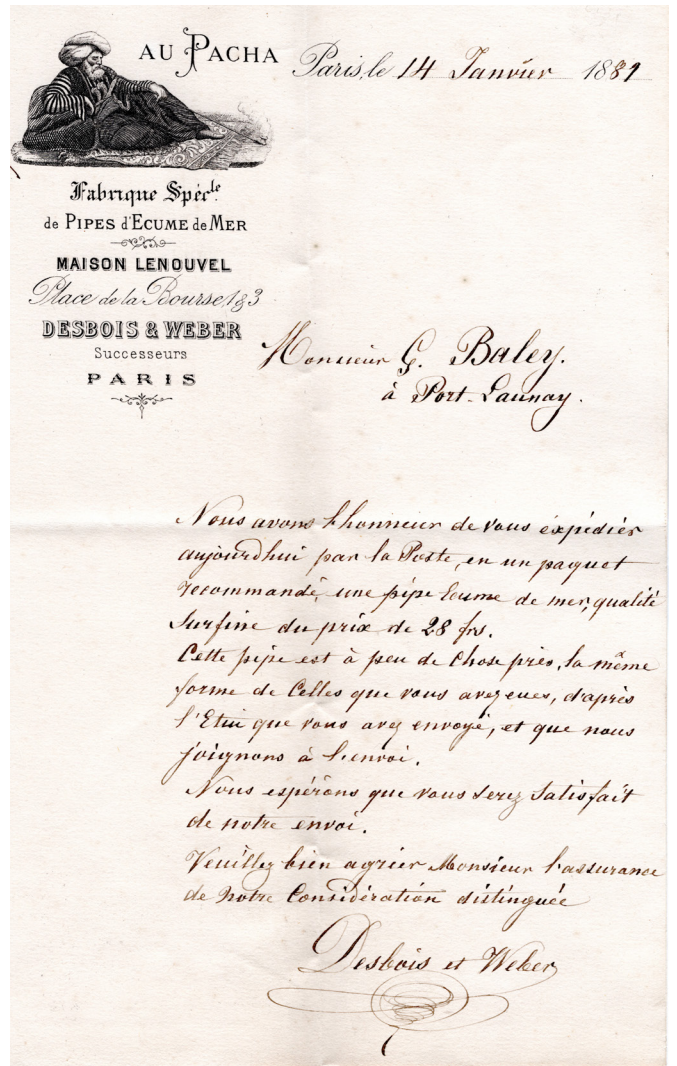


Fig. 43. Letter dated January 4, 1881, that accompanied the delivery of a meerschaum pipe of “surfine” quality, priced at 28 francs, to Guillaume Baley, mayor of Port-Launay in Finistère.

decided it would be better for him to leave France temporarily. He took refuge in Surrey, England, and returned to Paris via Brussels in 1871.

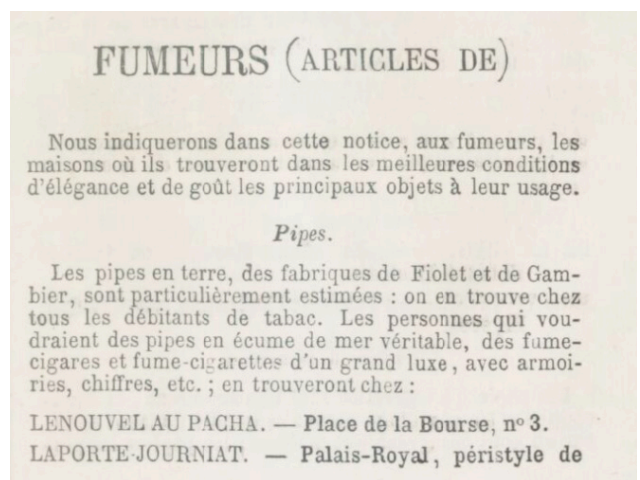


Fig. 45. Advertisement for Lenouvel Au Pacha in the “Almanac for the foreigner in Paris”, 1867, p. 111–112.

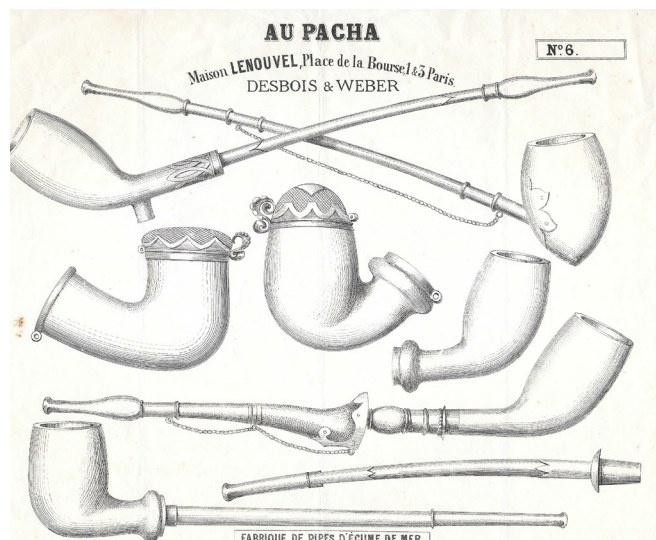
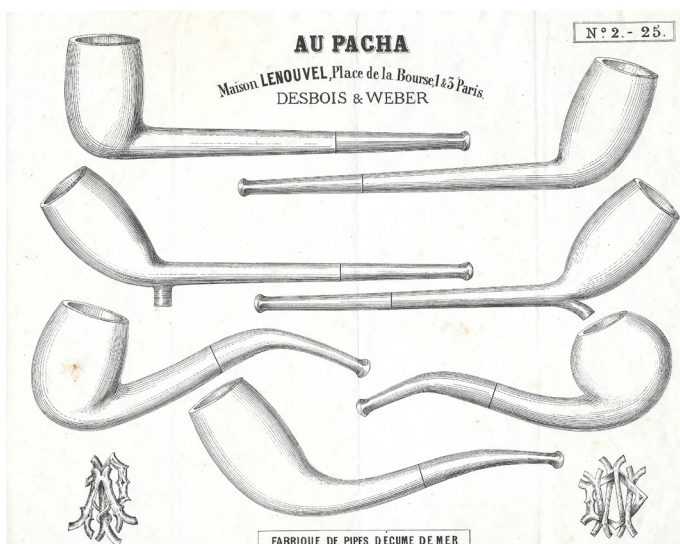


Fig. 46a-b. Two pages (pages 2 and 60) of a Desbois & Weber catalogue, originally 25 pages. Between 1864 and 1887.

The French armies were defeated at the battle of Sedan in September 1870. Napoléon III was captured and in Paris, republicans saw their opportunity to declare the third French Republic. The Germans besieged the city but, despite a long period of heavy attacks and shelling, failed to capture Paris.

In February 1871, a ceasefire was agreed and the German troops were allowed to enter the city temporarily for a short victory parade. A month later, the French communists and anarchists seized their opportunity to rebel against the temporary republican government and declared the “commune de Paris”, an independent government of the city. After a two-month period of anarchy and chaos, the French republican government gained back control of the city after fierce (street) fighting. Many rebels (*communards*) lost their lives and were executed. Nicolas-Étienne Desbois succeeded in keeping Au Pacha largely unharmed, even though heavy fighting took place on the Place de la Bourse on several occasions. As Desbois wrote in a letter to Weber in England, they had managed to hide and store the precious content of the shop’s windows, and the building had only suffered minor damage as a result of several explosions.⁴³

Once the war ended and the situation in Paris had stabilized, Weber returned, and Au Pacha continued its successful operations. In 1873, the company had sales of 300,000 francs (comparable to €1.8 million in 2023) and employed 20 people.⁴⁴ Sometime in 1873 or 1874 the shop and factory were extended to the neighbouring building, 1 Place de la Bourse.

Examples of some of Au Pacha’s customers were Firmin Maillard, a writer and journalist, Guillaume Baley, who was the mayor of Port Launay, and the lawyer Paul

Louis Marchegay. Correspondence with these customers shows that simple briar pipes sold for 2 francs each, while a top-quality (*surfine*) meerschaum pipe cost 28 francs (figs. 42-44).

Based on the known examples of nicely decorated meerschaum pipes that have the Desbois & Weber



Fig. 47. Small cigars or “tobacco plugs” could be inserted into a cigar holder or into an insert specifically designed to fit into the pipe bowl.



Fig. 48. Small, straight pipe.



Fig. 49. Bent pipe in the shape of a dog's head.



Fig. 50. Brown-coloured pipe with male face, beard and hat.

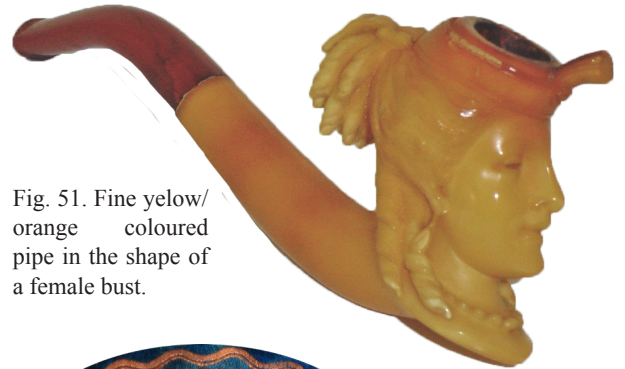


Fig. 51. Fine yellow/orange coloured pipe in the shape of a female bust.



Fig. 52. Au Pacha, Desbois & Weber, Succ mark on inside of case.

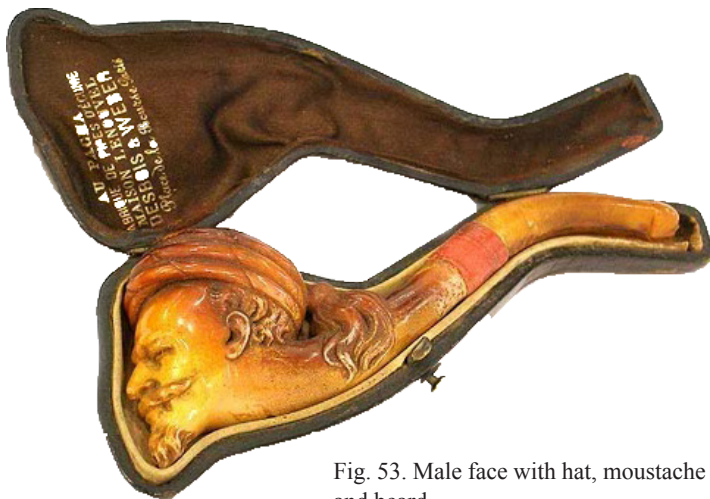


Fig. 53. Male face with hat, moustache and beard.



Fig. 54. Bird's claw with egg. A fine example of a partially treated pipe where the variations in colour provide an extra accent.

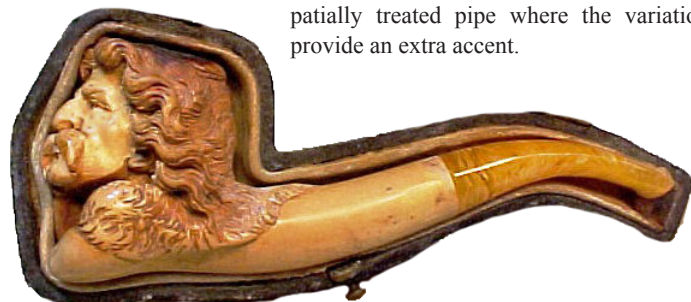


Fig. 55a-b. Male bust with arms.

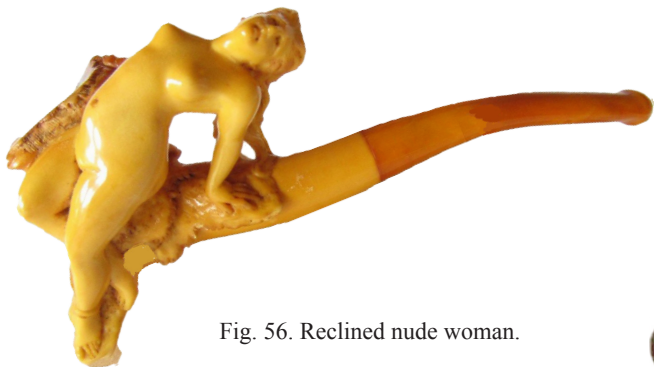


Fig. 56. Reclined nude woman.



Fig. 57. Angel or cherub with wine glass and grapes.

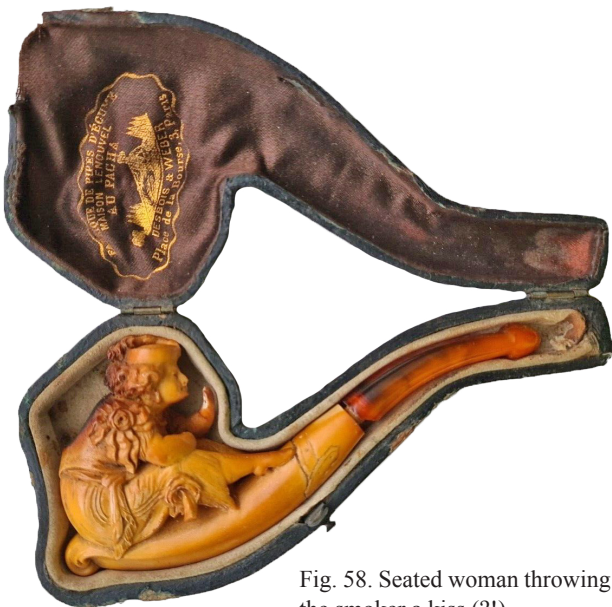


Fig. 58. Seated woman throwing the smoker a kiss (!).



Fig. 59. Straight pipe with a carved coat of arms on the front of the bowl.



Fig. 60. Figure of an African man wearing a hat.



Fig. 61. Man with beard and hat; the pipe has an extra stem and two different sizes of cigar insertion bowls.



Fig. 62. Elegant cigar holder with inlaid accents.



Fig. 63. Light brown/redish-coloured pipe in the shape of a dog's head.



Fig. 65. Cigar holder with carved monogram.

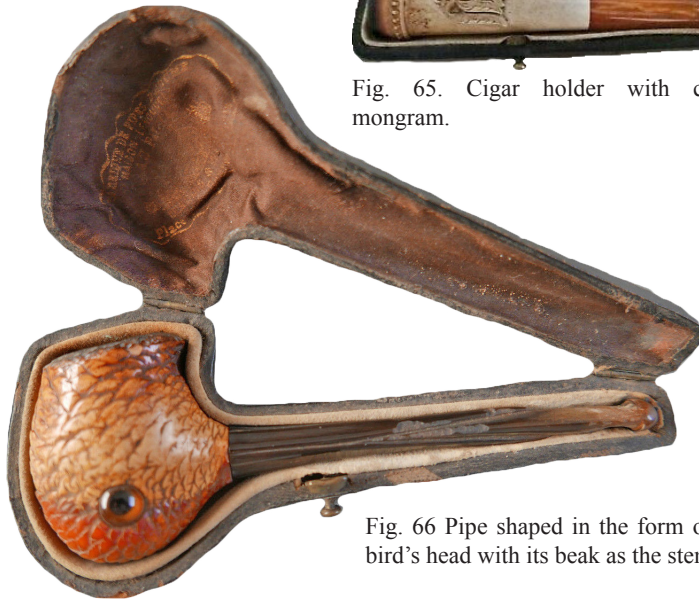


Fig. 66 Pipe shaped in the form of an inverted bird's head with its beak as the stem.



Fig. 68. Curved cigar holder.



Fig. 67a-c. Pipe bowl shaped like a boot with an insert shaped like a child.



Fig. 69. Cigar holder with reclining nude angel or cherub.

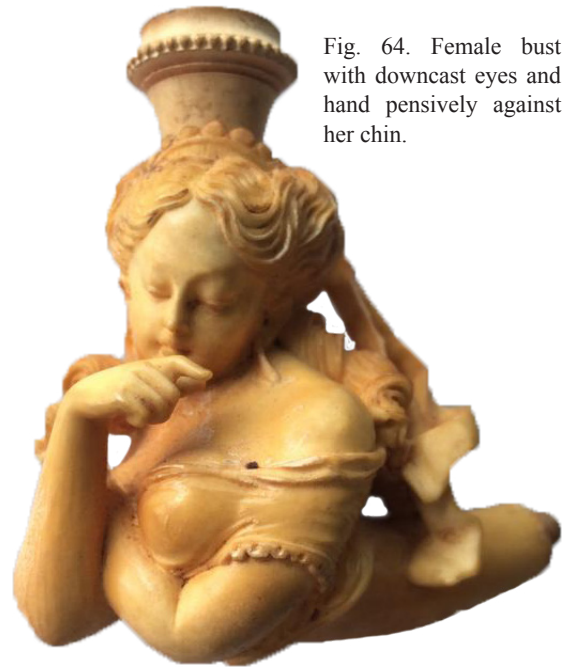


Fig. 64. Female bust with downcast eyes and hand pensively against her chin.



Fig. 70. Hunting scene with a boar being attacked by three dogs or wolves.



mark in their cases (fig. 52), the company continued to operate successfully under the new ownership. Of a catalogue from that period that appears to originally have had 25 pages, only two pages remain, showing only plain models. Figures 48–71 demonstrate clearly that Au Pacha's range of merchandise remained broad. As mentioned earlier, Desbois & Weber employed approximately 20 workers in 1873.

Pipes such as those shown in figures 61, 64 and 67 had a separate insert that could be placed in the pipe's bowl, with a specific diameter to fit a very small version of a cigar, that was available in many different sizes (fig. 47) and was designed to be placed in a specific insert. Without the insert, the pipe could be smoked as a "normal" tobacco pipe. Most such inserts had a plain conical form and were supplied in one or more sizes together with the pipe (fig. 61). Figure 67 shows a very creatively shaped insert in the form of a child, which fits into a pipe bowl shaped like a boot.

Figures 48–71 show a wide variety of pipes made by Au Pacha, Maison Lenouvel between approximately 1864 and 1886 under the management of Desbois & Weber.

When comparing to the variety of products from the earlier period (circa 1843–1864, fig. 20–35), a certain refinement of the overall assortment can be seen, especially when looking at the models in figures 56–58, 64 and 67, for instance. In addition, the use of specific accents (fig. 62 and 66) seems to have become more popular. The overall assortment is very wide and consists

of tobacco pipes and cigar holders in different shapes and forms, with a broad variety of nicely handcarved designs.

When Nicolas-Étienne Desbois was 38 years old, his son Léon was born in Paris, on August 26, 1863.⁴⁵ The witnesses were Jean-Louis Chibon, a notary clerk and the nephew of Lenouvel, and Frédéric Guillaume Lichtleuchter, Léon's uncle.

On October 2, 1886, when Léon Desbois was 23, he obtained 40 percent of his father's shares in the company. That same day, Léon, who was still in the military service, married Esther Buffeteau, daughter of the mayor of Ville-Saint-Jacques, a village in the French department of Seine-et-Marne, 72 km from Paris. Léon injected a portion of his wife's dowry, 30,000 francs, into the business and was registered as the third partner.

Nicolas-Étienne's health was likely not very good at the time, as he died a little less than a year later, on August 7, 1887, at the relatively young age of 62. He probably suffered from a lung disease as a result of his work as a (mother-of-pearl) turner, a fairly well-known phenomenon at that time. He left his remaining shares in the company to his wife and children.



Fig. 71. Female face and bust with richly decorated hat with flowers and ribbons. The pipe is coloured in different shades of yellow.

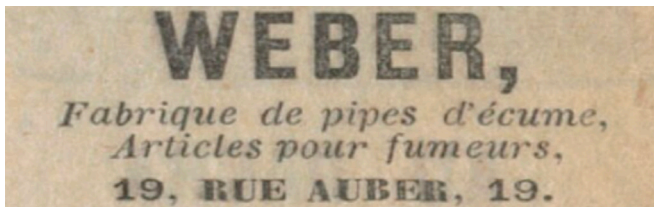


Fig. 72. Advertisement for the Weber meerschaum pipe factory on Rue Auber, as used between 1889 and 1893.

Weber (circa 1887 – 1894)

The death of Léon's father was also the moment that Gustave Weber decided to leave the company. He was 56 years old at the time. His departure does not seem to have resulted from any kind of dispute, as Gustave's son, Alfred Charles, would become the godfather of Léon's grandson, André, many years later (in 1920). Gustave Weber sold his shares to the Desbois heirs and started his own business at 19 Rue Auber.⁴⁶ In 1889, he was listed on that address as a manufacturer of meerschaum pipes (fig. 72). His son Alfred lived at the same address and was listed as a "painter-artist".

In 1894, Weber moved to 66 Rue de la Chaussée d'Antin, but only for a short period, as he died later that same year.⁴⁷ In 1910, another pipe factory was located at a neighbouring address, 17 Rue Auber. The name of this business was *Au Petit Pacha* (the "little" Pacha) (fig. 73). Although there is no clear relation between *Au Petit Pacha* and Weber, the coincidence is striking. In any case, the owner of the shop appears to have been inspired by the good name and reputation of *Au Pacha*.



Fig. 74. Advertisement for Au Pacha, maison Lenouvel, Desbois & Cheville, successeurs, as used in 1890.

Au Pacha – Succ. Desbois & Cheville (1887 – 1894)

After Nicolas-Étienne died and Weber left, Léon Desbois, his mother Anna Maria and his two sisters Louise and Hortense became the owners of the company. It soon became clear that Anna Maria and her daughters were not interested in running the company, which was officially dissolved on November 3, 1887. Léon found a new partner by the name of Claude Cheville, heir to a famous Parisian brush factory, Cheville-Loddé. Léon and Claude must already have known each other very well: just two months before they established their business together, Claude's brother (also named Léon and later to become a French consular officer in Bolivia



Fig. 73. Postcard from circa 1911 showing "Au Petit Pacha, Great Factory of Pipes" at 17 Rue Auber.



Fig. 75. Leon Desbois

(1904–1906) had become godfather to Paul Desbois, Léon's son. On November 16, 1887, Léon Desbois and Claude Cheville entered into an agreement to establish Desbois & Cheville, successeurs.⁴⁸

Au Pacha thus continued its operations. Both partners had plans to expand, and in 1888 they opened a branch at 12 Boulevard des Capucines. The new branch did not prove to be much of a success, however, and it closed a mere two years later (March 26, 1890). The cases of pipes sold from that location nevertheless bore the Boulevard des Capucines address (fig. 77).

In 1890, a newly printed sales catalogue displayed 141 different pipes (fig. 78). Nineteen were cigar holders, and many were of remarkable design and refinement.

The first six pages showed similar models at prices ranging from 25 to 50 francs. The difference in pricing was likely determined by the degree of treatment and finishing. The lowest-cost pipes in the catalogue were



Fig. 77. The text "Succursale. 12. Bd. des Capucines" printed in the case of a cigar holder made by Desbois & Cheville.



Fig. 76. Ester Buffeteau.

supplied without a stem and started at prices of 4 and 5 francs (page 12).

The most highly decorated pipes (pages 13 and 14) were priced on average between 55 and 100 francs, although some were cheaper, at 38 francs. The prices of the beautifully carved smaller cigar holders on page 15 ranged from 10 to 12 francs to a maximum of 100 francs, depending on the level of design detail. Several pages of the catalogue mentioned the option of adding custom-carved coats of arms or monograms for an extra charge starting at 10 francs. A made-to-order gilded carving would cost another 15 francs.

For a comparison of the price levels at that time to today's price levels, 100 francs then would equal approximately 600 euros today.⁴⁹ In comparison, the average price of a clay pipe in 1894 was around 6 francs.⁵⁰

The clientele of Au Pacha, Desbois & Cheville was from the highest classes in society, examples being the Countess Pierrette Noémie de Périer du Palais de Poncin and the Marquis de Compiègne.

The *Pipe Pacha* trademark was officially registered by Desbois & Cheville on April 4, 1892 (fig. 91).⁵¹ From that moment on, the name "Pacha" was not only connected to the factory and store but also to its products. Pipes

Fig. 78. (page 173-174). Desbois and Cheville catalogue, circa 1887–1894.

Pl. 0

RES
CC
PCH

PACHA
[1890]

FABRIQUE DE PIPES D'ECUME DE MER
et
RACINE DE BRUYERE
AU PACHA
Maison LENOVEL
Fondée en 1854
DESBOIS & CHEVILLE, Succ^{RS}
1 et 3, Place de la Bourse, PARIS

CATALOGUE des divers modèles de Pipes fabriquées dans nos ATELIERS
et dont la qualité aussi bien que la fabrication sont garanties irréprochables

MODE DE PAIEMENT
Joindre à la Commande le numéro de la Planchette et celui de la Pipe choisie
avec un Mandat-Poste de même valeur augmenté de 0 fr. 50 cent. comme frais d'envoi. — Au-dessus
de 25 francs, Expédition Franco.

LA MAISON N'A AUCUNE SUCCURSALE

NO 1111 GAREL & FILS, PARIS

Pl. 22

MAROQUINERIE

ETUIS CIGARETTES cuir Russe, à soufflets, de 2,50 à 6 francs — ETUIS CIGARES, de 6 francs à 9 francs.
ETUIS CIGARETTES à Cadres, de 5 francs à 18 francs — ETUIS CIGARES, de 15 francs à 25 francs.
ETUIS CIGARETTES PORTEFEUILLE, 26 francs — ETUIS CIGARES PORTEFEUILLE, 26 francs.

BLAGUES

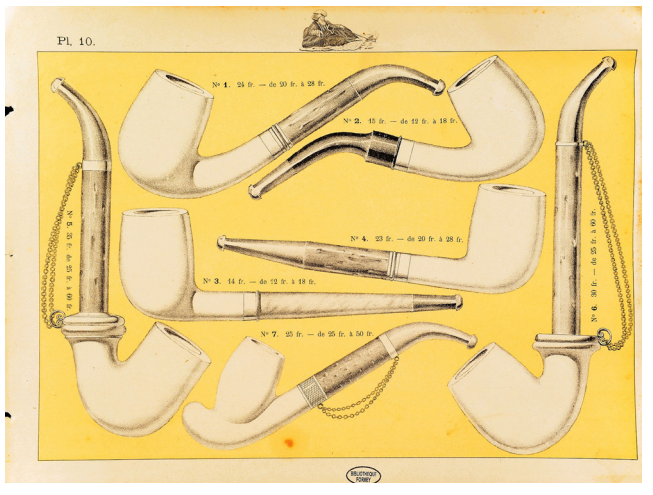
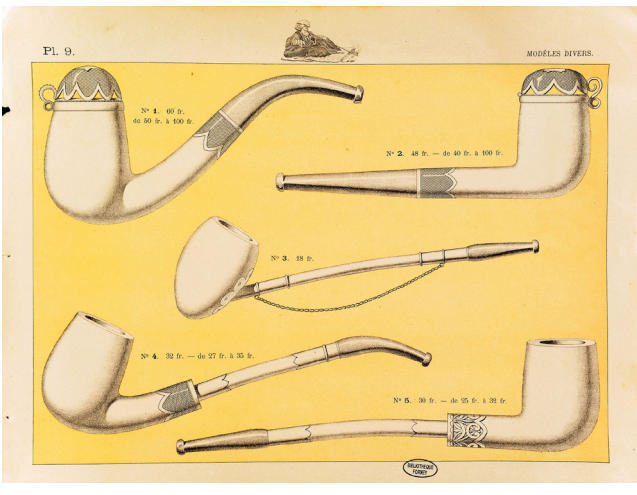
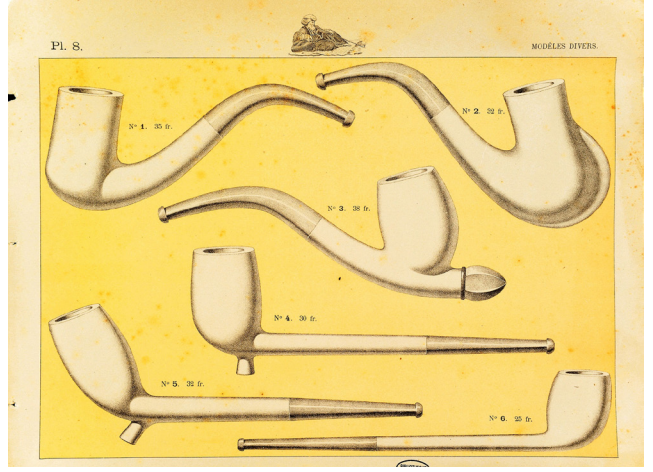
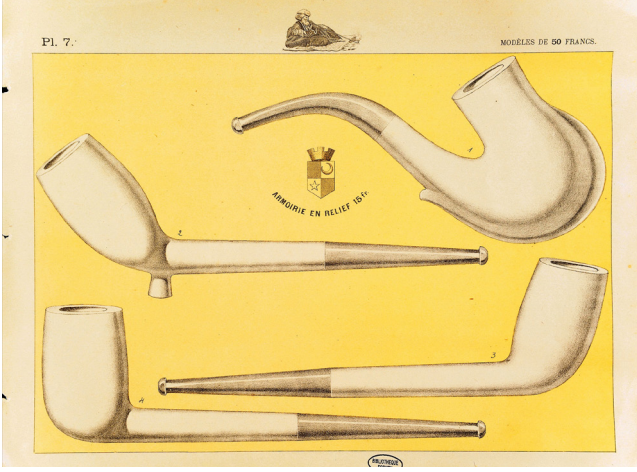
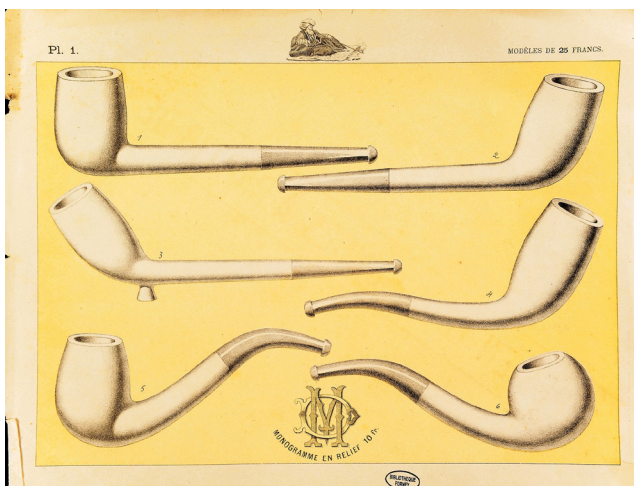
BLAGUES-BATEAUX, 6 francs et 8 francs — BLAGUES en cuir, genre Porte-Monnaie, de 2,50 à 7 francs.
BLAGUES HONORAIRES, 7 francs — BLAGUES caoutchouc (Marque Anglaise), de 2 francs à 2,50.
BLAGUES métal Maillechort, de 8 francs à 15 francs — BLAGUES soie Brodée, de 6 francs à 15 francs.

DIVERS

PORTE-ALLUMETTES en métal, de 2 francs à 7 francs — en argent, de 10 francs à 40 francs.
ETUIS A CIGARETTES en métal, de 5 francs à 20 francs — en argent, de 40 francs à 100 francs.
ETUIS A CIGARETTES en Ecaïlle, incrustations argent et or de 10 francs à 35 francs.
COUPE-CIGARES Ecaïlle 3,50 — Argent, de 10 francs à 15 francs — Or, 20 francs à 28 francs.
BRIQUETS A MOUCHE, 2,25 — 6 fr. — 7 francs — DEBOURRE-PIPES nickelés, 1,50 et 2 francs.
NARHILES, de 15 francs à 80 francs — SECHE-CIGARES bois des Iles, de 40 francs et 60 francs.

GRAND ASSORTIMENT DE PIPES TURQUES

Réparations en tous genres faites en 24 heures



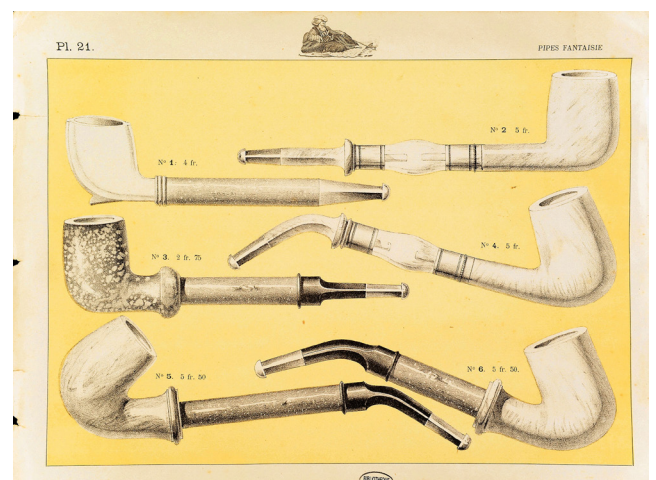
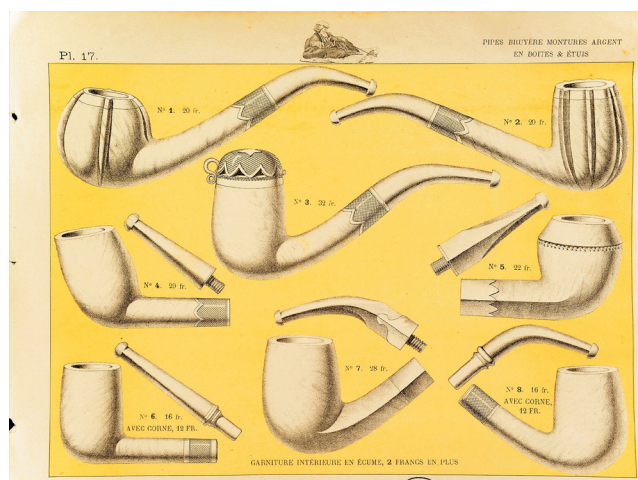
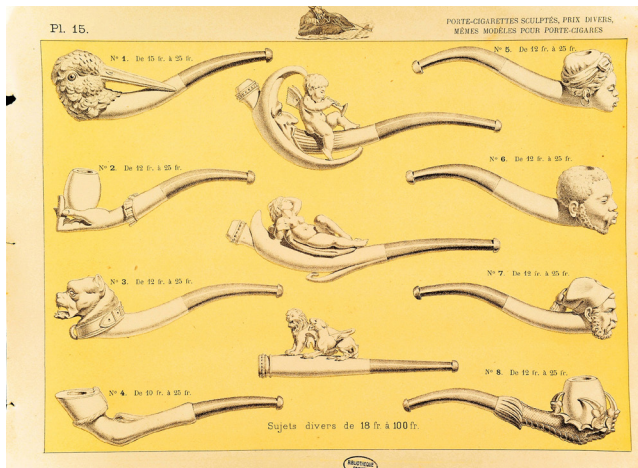
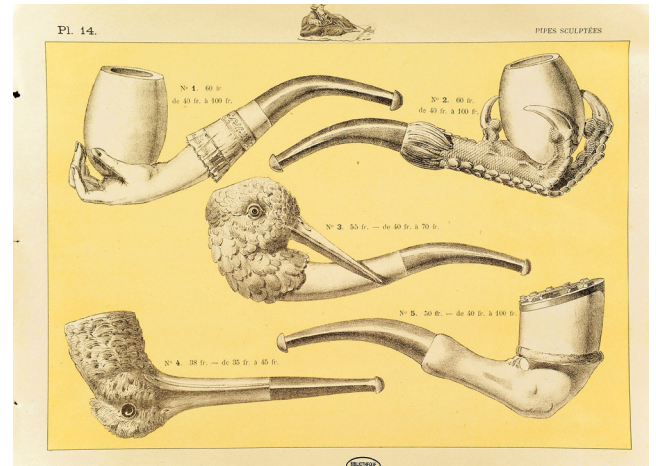
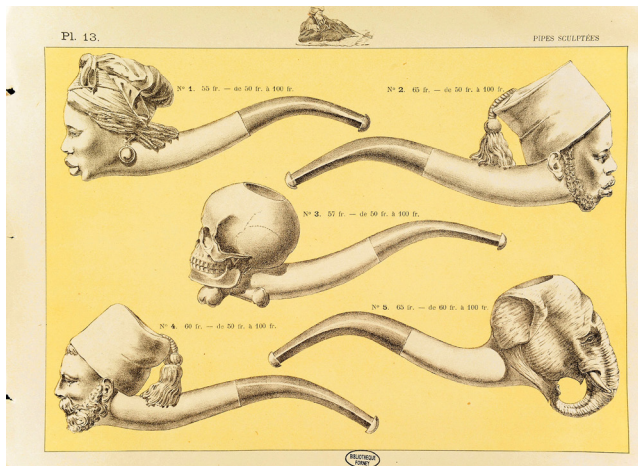
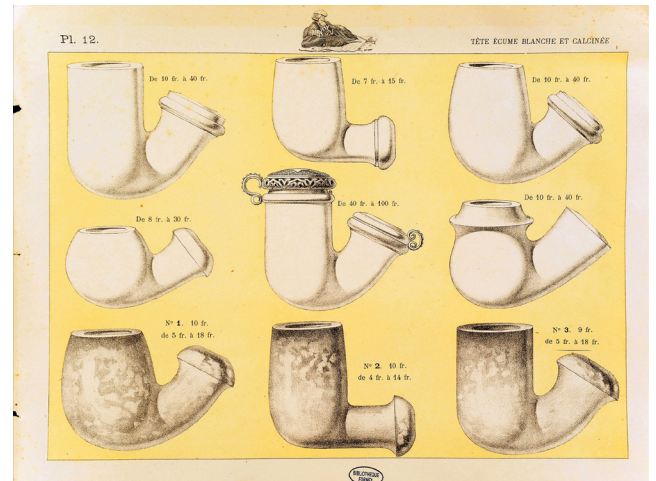
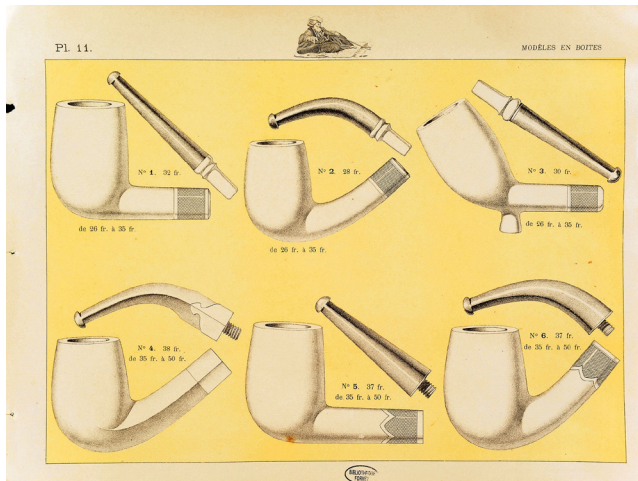




Fig. 81. Classic curved pipe.



Fig. 82. Cigar holder with an extremely refined depiction of an angel or cherub.



Fig. 84. Au Pacha, Desbois & Cheville mark inside cases.



Fig. 83. Pipe shaped like a hand holding the bowl.



Fig. 85. Plain cigar holder.



Fig. 87. Simple, elegant brown-coloured pipe.

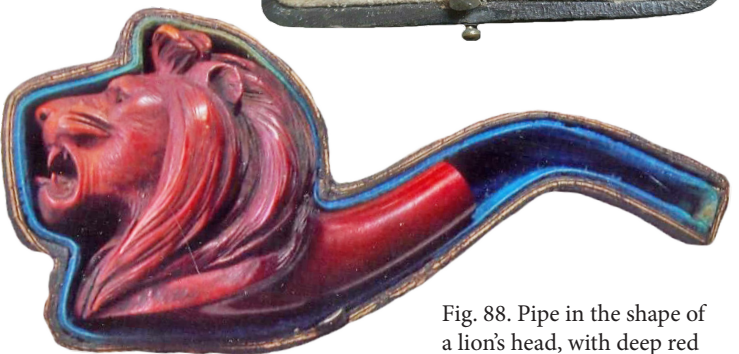


Fig. 88. Pipe in the shape of a lion's head, with deep red colouring.



Fig. 86. Plain cigar holder.



Fig. 89. Pipe in the shape of a devil's or satyr's head. The cap/top of the head is separately impregnated in such a way that it becomes discoloured from smoking.



Fig. 90. Classic oval pipe with a long thin meerschaum stem and amber mouthpiece.



Fig. 91. Poster advertising Au Pacha, C. Cheville, successeur, touting the recently registered “Pacha” pipe.



Fig. 92. Advertisement for Au Pacha, C. Cheville, successeur, 1896.

Au Pacha - Succ. Cheville (1895 - 1899)

Cheville continued the pipe manufacturing and sales business for another five years. Based on the known examples of tobacco pipes and cigar holders bearing the Cheville name, production continued apace. The number of known models implies a wide and varied assortment, with several highly remarkable models (fig. 93–105).



Fig. 93a-b. Highly detailed pipe in the form of a poodle’s head. Au Pacha, Cheville, circa 1894–1896.

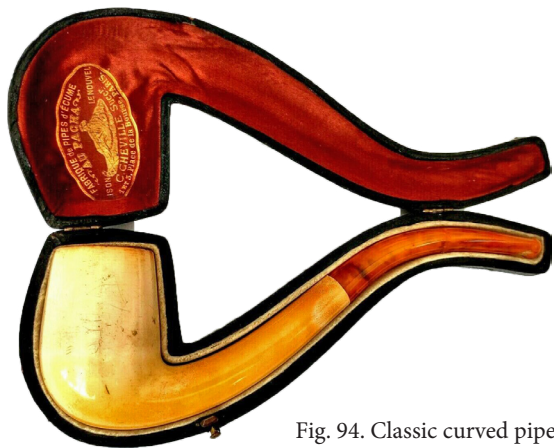


Fig. 94. Classic curved pipe.



Fig. 95. Pipe with face of an African man (or woman). The silver joint appears to be a repair.



Fig. 96. Briar bowl.



Fig. 97. Pipe with the face of an African woman with a hat.

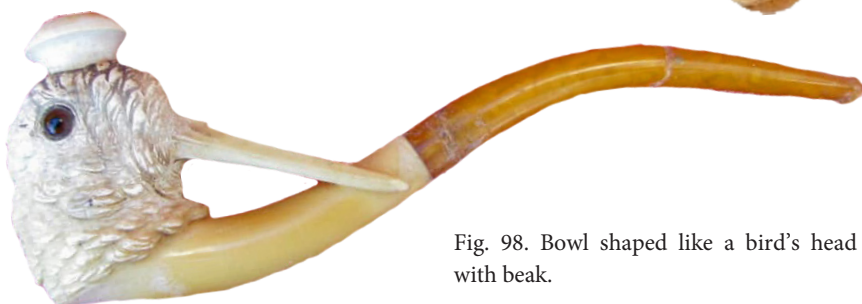


Fig. 98. Bowl shaped like a bird's head with beak.



Fig. 99. Pipe and mouthpiece in compact pocket pouch.



Fig. 100. Remarkable "egg"-shaped bowl. The (reed) stem is connected to the kettle and mouthpiece by means of two metal fasteners.



Fig. 101. Au Pacha, C. Cheville, succr. mark inside the pipe cases.



Fig. 102. Bowl shaped like a skull and crossbones.



Fig. 103. Two, different sized cigar holders with gilded monogram.



Fig. 104. Two, different sized amber cigar holders.



Fig. 105. Amber cigar holder.

Au Pacha – Sommer Frères successeurs (1899 – est. 1936)

On June 1, 1899, Cheville sold Au Pacha to a competitor, the prestigious company “Aux Carrières d’Écume”, another meerschaum pipe store and workshop, located in Passage des Princes and owned by the Sommer brothers.

That company had been established in 1855 by Jean Sommer, who was originally a horn turner. In 1856 and 1857, Sommer had a partner named Hamm.⁵² They advertised their activities in those years as “horn turners and wholesalers for tobacco stores”. After 1857, Sommer had several other partners, and in 1863 he opened his meerschaum pipe factory and store called “Aux Carrières d’Écume” in Passage des Princes.⁵³

When Sommer Frères acquired Au Pacha from Cheville, the company was already being run by Jean Sommer’s sons, who continued using the shop on Place de la Bourse between 1900 and 1925. The name “Au Pacha, Maison Lenouvel” was used during these years, with the addition “Sommer Frères, successeurs”. They advertised their “Aux Carrières d’Écume” shop and factory in Passage des Princes separately. This changed around 1932, when the shop on Place de la Bourse began carrying the name Sommer.⁵⁴

A catalogue by Au Pacha / Sommer from the period 1900–1930 (fig. 108a-c) displays an assortment that, compared to the previously mentioned Desbois & Cheville catalogue, seems more standardized, without the highly refined and detailed special designs made by the previous owners. The Sommer catalogue definitely



Fig. 106. Advertisement by J. Sommer, Sommer Frères, successeurs, in the *Annuaire Almanach du commerce*, 1899.

shows some nice, detailed designs, but very refined pipes like the ones Desbois and Cheville carried seem to no longer be part of the merchandise. It is also unclear whether the workshop at the Place de Bourse was still making pipes or whether all manufacturing had been moved to the Sommer workshop (fig. 107). The catalogue contains examples of both meerschaum and briar pipes.

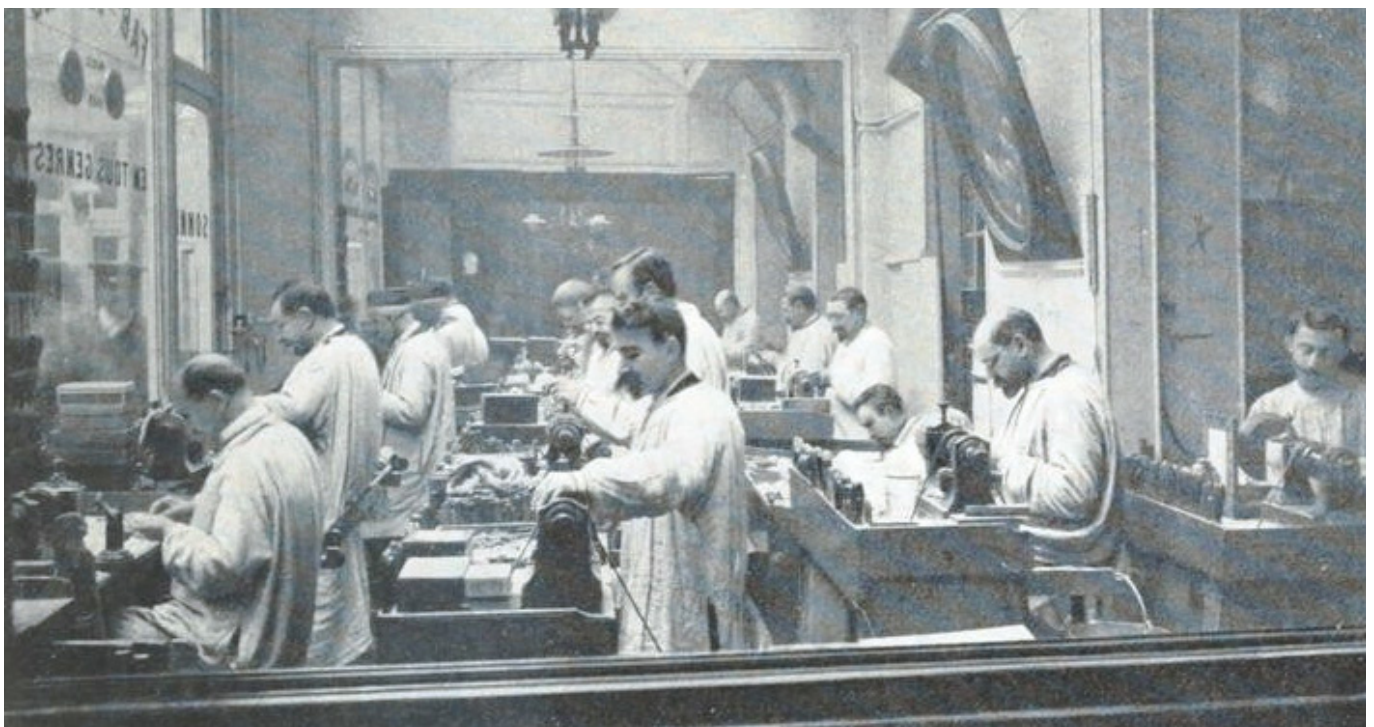


Fig. 107. Postcard of the Sommer Frères workshop in Passage des Princes, circa 1916.

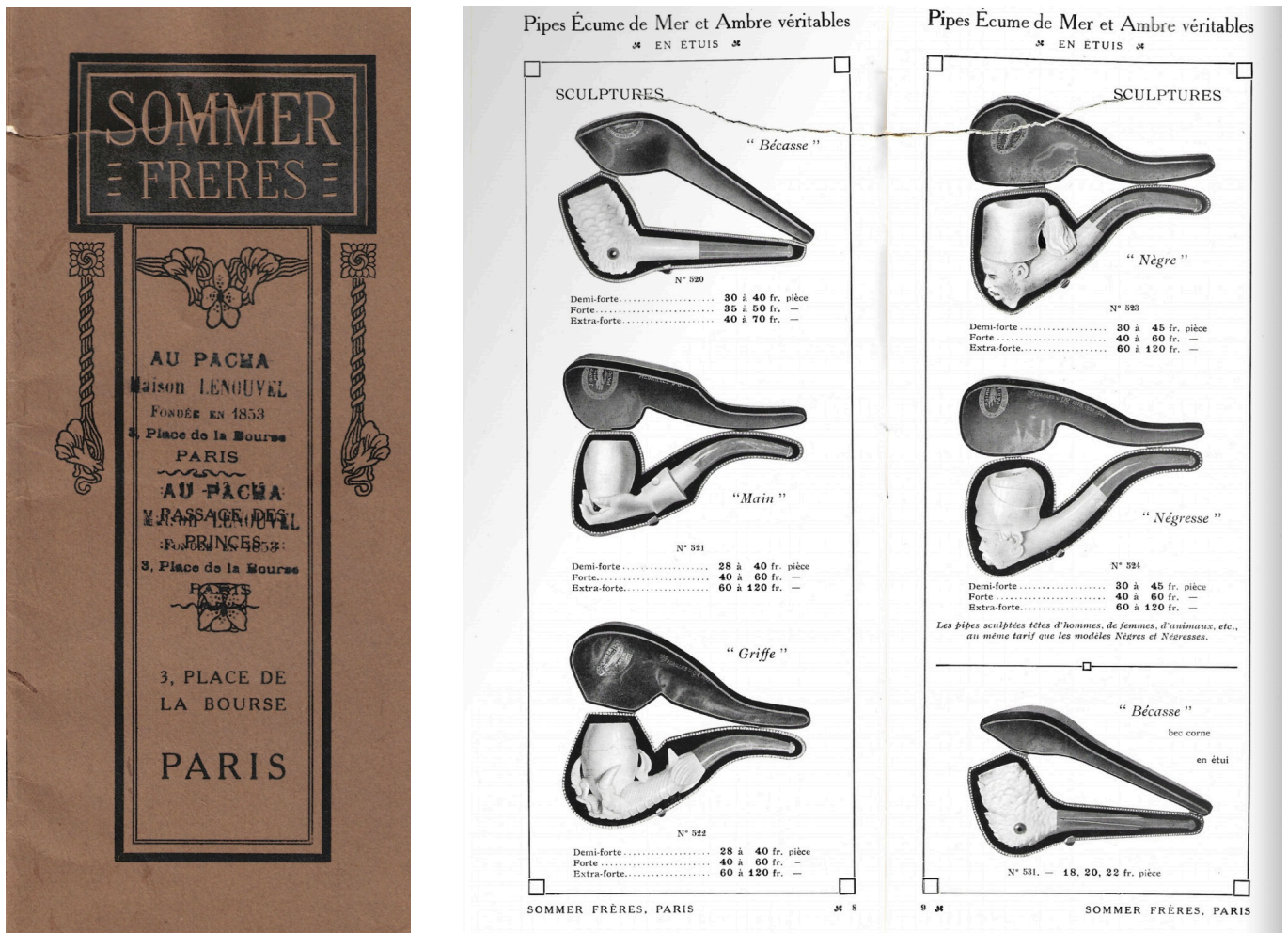


Fig. 108a-c. A Sommer Frères catalogue from 1900–1930. The name Au Pacha, Maison Lenouvel is explicitly mentioned on the cover and the first page.

An advertisement⁵⁵ from 1923 shows that the shop on the Place de la Bourse was still active and bore the names Lenouvel and Au Pacha. An interesting detail is that the advertisement makes specific mention of the fact that neither Sommer nor Au Pacha had any branches or subsidiaries in Paris or anywhere else. This likely stems from the fact that the name Au Pacha was used by several other shops and perhaps factories.

The shop on the Place de la Bourse closed sometime in 1924 or 1925. While the company Sommer was still using the names Lenouvel and Au Pacha in 1925 (fig. 109), it advertised using its original address in Passage des Prince. In 1931, the former Au Pacha locale on Place de la Bourse housed a candy store called *Les Friandises du Pacha* (the Pacha’s candies).

In 1936, the Sommer brothers sold their company to a Mr. Faivret. The name “Pacha” was still used as a model name for a certain model of pipes (fig. 116 and 118).

In 1966, the company was featured in a short film documentary⁵⁶ that provides a nice insight into the the pipe factory in Passage des Princes. The shop in Passage des Princes remained active until it closed sometime around 1990.



Fig. 109. Advertisement from 1925 showing that the original location of Au Pacha on the Place de la Bourse is no longer active.

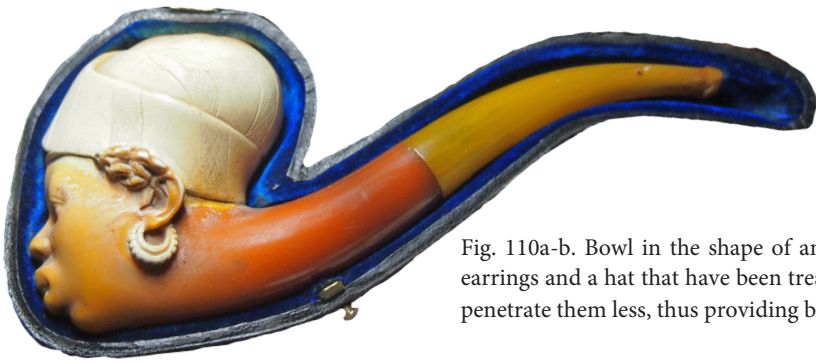


Fig. 110a-b. Bowl in the shape of an African woman's head with earrings and a hat that have been treated so that the tobacco juices penetrate them less, thus providing beautiful light accents.

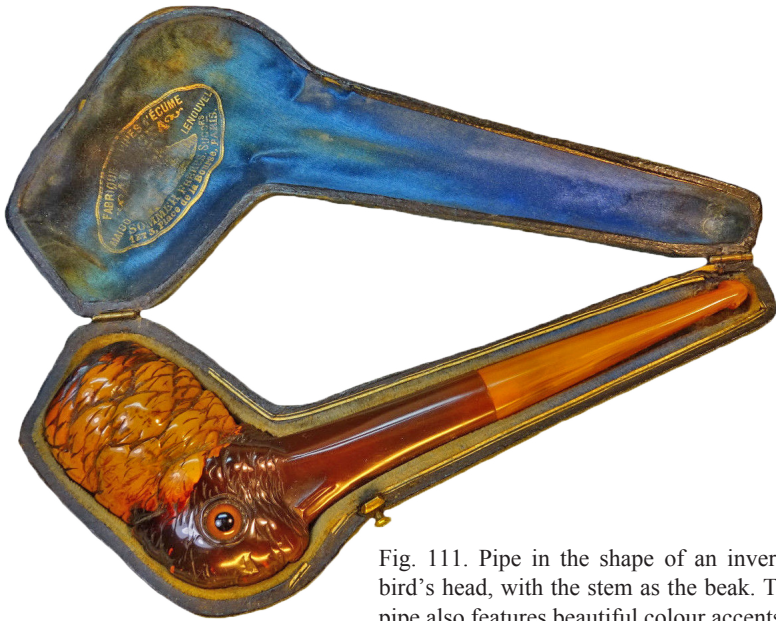


Fig. 111. Pipe in the shape of an inverted bird's head, with the stem as the beak. This pipe also features beautiful colour accents.



Fig. 112. Pipe with a detachable stem in a handy pocket pouch. The bowl is made of briar.

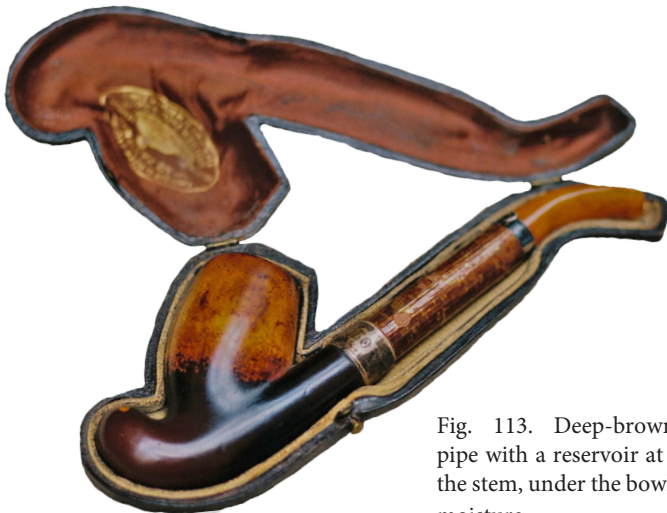


Fig. 113. Deep-brown-coloured pipe with a reservoir at the end of the stem, under the bowl, to collect moisture.



Fig. 114. Classic pipe model.



Fig. 115. Two different amber cigar holders.



Fig. 116. The trademarked "Pacha" pipe, by Sommer Fabr., Faivret, successeurs. Circa 1936–1950.

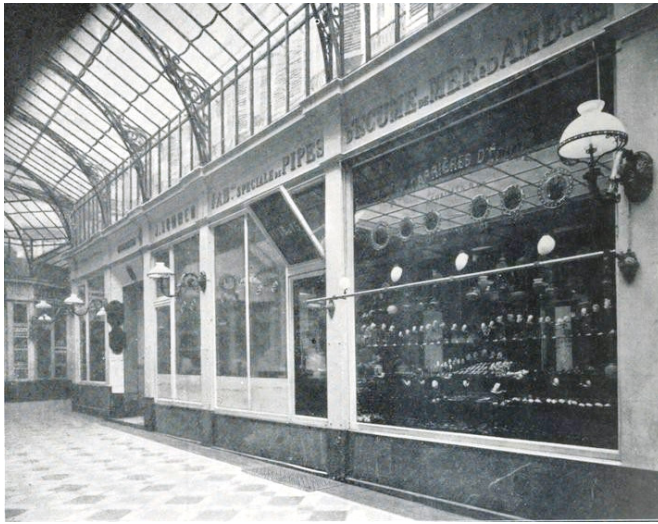


Fig. 117. Sommer shop storefront and display in Passage des Princes (circa 1960).

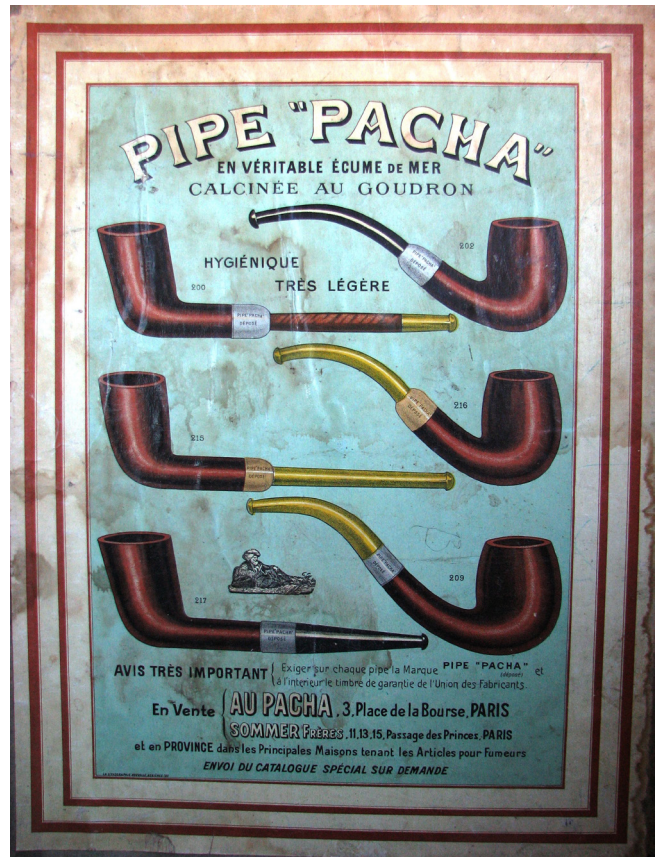


Fig. 118. Advertisement for Sommer (circa 1900-1930) with the "Pacha" pipe.

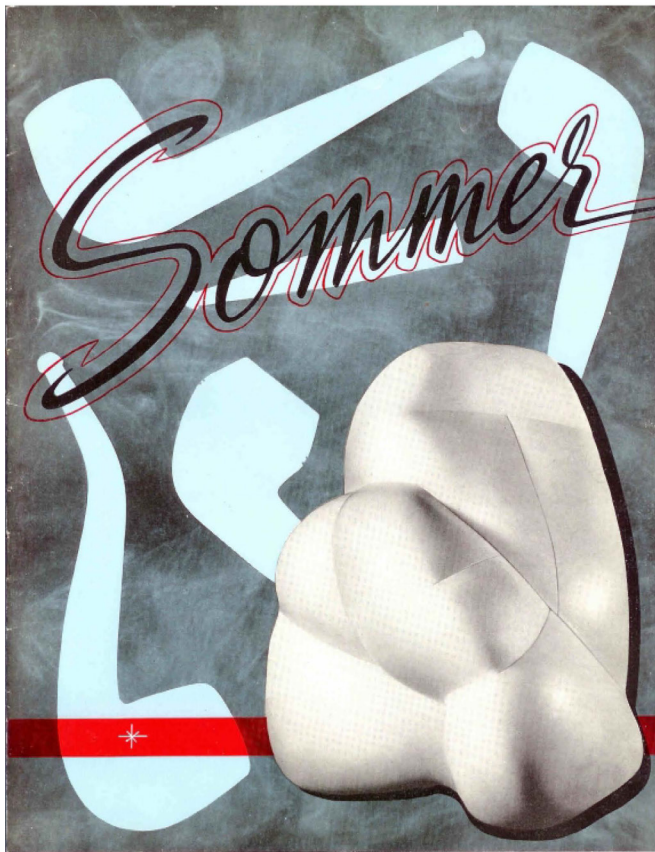


Fig. 119a-b. Front cover and a page of a Sommer catalogue, circa 1970.



Fig. 120. Photo of Place de La Bourse with Au Pacha to the left of centre. Circa 1916.

Conclusion

Without a doubt, Lenouvel was one of the first Parisian meerschaum pipe manufacturers and as such he played an important role during the establishment of the “Parisian meerschaum pipe manufacturing industry”. Whether he was indeed the first, as the 1855 article claims, cannot be determined, but it is clear that he was one of the early Parisian manufacturers making meerschaum pipes locally.

In several reports written on the occasion of the World’s Fairs of 1855 and 1867, the origins of the Parisian industry are attributed to companies like those owned by Donninger and Cardon, both of whom worked as wholesalers of pipes and smokers’ accessories and started their own meerschaum manufacturing around that time. Both Donninger and Cardon started as turners: Donninger was a wood and metal worker between 1840 and 1852, and in 1853 became a partner in the company Ganneval and Boudier, which started making meerschaum pipes that year. Cardon was a woodworker between 1845 and 1853 and partnered with a man named Sejournant in 1854 to begin making tobacco pipes. Those companies operated as wholesalers with their own production facilities, using many different materials.

The first Parisian meerschaum pipe manufacturers had a common background in the treen-making and turning industries. Among them was Au Pacha, which evolved into a highly specialized pipe manufacturing business

that built its fame and reputation with high quality pipes and cigar holders manufactured and sold at the shop on Place de la Bourse. The patents that Lenouvel (or other pipe manufacturers, for that matter) established seem not to have had a major impact on the industry and to have been intended more to enhance the shop’s image and name recognition. The shop, which must have been a beautiful public display, and the workshop were most likely the basis for its success.

That success was not only underscored and confirmed by the results of the 1867 World’s Fair, but especially by the fact that the last owner and original competitor, Sommer, continued using the names of both the company and its founder until almost 100 years (!) after the shop was established.

In a novel written in 1897,⁵⁷ one of the main characters describes his visit to a pipe shop that can only have been Au Pacha:

When he reached the street, he turned instinctively towards the Bourse. (...) He paused a little while to contemplate the tumult of the Bourse, the shouting crowd that was perhaps to make him richer again soon. Entering the nearest tobacco shop [this would have been the Au Nabab tobacco shop in Rue Notre-Dame-des-Victoires] he asked for special brand cigars and was shown several kinds. He sniffed them in expert fashion and, by squeezing them in the middle, made them crackle

against his ear. Finally, he bought a box at one franc a piece and added two packets of American cigarettes to his purchase.

But as he was leaving the shop, he caught sight of a nearby pipe merchant window also on Place de la Bourse [Au Pacha]. Supported by invisible props or laid in rich cases, with stems brutally straight or with serpentine curves, meerschaum and briar pipes mingled their tones of white and brown. Rings of gold and silver encircled amber cigar holders; all of them, in their velvet cases, had an air of fine jewels destined for princely lips. Cyprien gazed at them and shook his head. All at once, his eyes gleamed with a look of satisfaction. What if he were to buy one of those pipes, a nice, fat meerschaum like that of the Marquis, for his old comrade Schleifmann, of whom, their dispute notwithstanding, he was very fond! And he entered the shop.

His selection proved such a long, careful affair that it was past 12.45 by the clock of the Brasserie Klapproth by the time Mr. Raindal arrived.

“A little present for you, my dear Schleifmann!” he said.; [...] And a luxury pipe at that! The result of six months’ savings on cigarettes, my dear friend!”

The pipe depicted a mermaid, whose twisted double tail curled around the stem as far as the amber mouthpiece and whose seductive head had been hollowed out for the bowl. Schleifmann could not conceal his admiration.

“It is marvellous ... colossal, colossal!” he repeated, using the German expression that for him signified supreme enthusiasm... “I am going to smoke it right now... Waiter, matches!”

Noten:

1. Duco, 2009. In the German towns of Lemgo and Ruhla, meerschaum pipe manufacturing started around the middle of the 18th century; other important 18th century production centres were Vienna and Budapest.
2. Briar (*bruyère*) is the name of a round shaped protuberance or knoll which grows between the stem and roots of certain types of heather that are especially common in the Mediterranean region. Its hardness and heat resistance makes it ideal for the production of wooden smoking pipes. It takes approximately 25 years for a heather plant to develop such a briar knoll. (Wikipedia).
3. Picard, 1889, p. 867.
4. Duco, 2017.
5. Picard, 1889. Mentions a total of 600 men (!) and 35 children.
6. See also Guyot, 1991, p. 18 and 19.
7. The centre of the treenware industry was in the Les Halles area in Paris, where there was also a street named “Rue de tableterie”. (Wikipedia).
8. Annuaire 1840, p. 550.
9. Annuaire 1840, [in the categories] : ‘Quincaillerie’, ‘Tabletters’, ‘Tourneurs’.
10. Annuaire 1850, p. 236 and 731: Hubert Hass, ‘fab. de pipes’.
11. Annuaire 1843, p. 270.
12. Annuaire 1850, p. 731.
13. Guyot (1992) uses the name ‘A Pacha’ instead of ‘Au Pacha’.

14. Some of other 19th and 20th century tobacco and pipe shops with the name Au Pacha were found in Bordeaux (Armand Picoron), Dyon (Rue de la Liberté), Geneva (Rue de Mont Blanc), Lemans (Rue Dumas) and Toulouse (Rue de la Pomme). None were related to Au Pacha, Maison Lenouvel.
15. Catalogue de Brevets d’invention, pris du 1 Jan à 31 decembre 1852 (30-06-1852), p.265 : ‘Perfectionnements aux pipes d’écume et autres’. (www.gallica.bnf.fr. #13538)
16. Stam and Stam-de Nooyer, 2018, p. 63-64. Van Esveld, 2023, p. 117-127.
17. La Fabrique la ferme et l’atelier revue populaire illustrée, 1852.
18. Almanach-Bottin du commerce de Paris, des départemens de la France et des principales villes du monde, 1854, p. 895.
19. Annuaire 1854, p. 325.
20. Catalogue Desbois & Cheville: fondée en 1854. After Au Pacha was acquired by the company Sommer Frères in 1899, the new owners advertised 1853 as the founding year. (fig. 108a).
21. Annuaire 1855, p. 357.
22. Vandérem, 1897. Digital version at Project Gutenberg (gutenberg.org), see at the end of the article.
23. Almanach-Bottin du commerce de Paris, des départemens de la France et des principales villes du monde, 1856, p. 1117.
24. Panthéon de l’industrie : revue encyclopédique des manufactures, fabriques et usines, 1855. p. 29. (www.gallica.bnf.fr)
25. pipedia.org/wiki/Lost_in_Translation:_The_Linguistic_Hod gepodge_of_Mg4Si6O15(OH)2%C2%B76H2O
26. A. Vulliet, Quelques Merveilles de la nature et de l’art. Société des livres religieux. Toulouse, 1858.
27. L’Echo du Cabinet de lecture paroissial de Montréal, 1 octobre 1862, p. 456.
28. Annuaire 1857, p. 797.
29. One such worker was Nicolas-Etienne Desbois, hired by Lenouvel as a turner.
30. Brevet d’invention France, Institut National de la Propriété industrielle (INPI), cote 1BB32278, Année 1857. Catalogue de Brevets d’invention, pris du 1 Jan à 31 decembre 1857 (15-5-1857), p.133, *Perfectionnements dans des tuyaux de pipes et de cigares*. (www.gallica.bnf.fr. #32278)
31. Brevet d’invention France, Institut National de la Propriété industrielle (INPI), cote 1BB36552, Année 1858.
32. Other examples of similar pipes can be found in the Amsterdam Pipe Museum collection: two silver pipes (APM 23.235, APM 23.086), two meerschaum pipes (APM 17.659, APM 19.858) and one briar pipe (APM 24.660). The manufacturers of these pipes are unknown but show a striking resemblance to the Lenouvel patents.
33. Brevet d’invention France, Institut National de la Propriété industrielle (INPI), cote 1BB14893, Année 1852.
34. Annuaire-almanac, 1858. p. 778.
35. Duco, 2009.
36. Acte de Société, notaire Me. A. Bisson, notaire à Nogent-sur-Marne (Seine), 26 juin 1864.
37. His father was Étienne Nicolas Joseph Génie, 31 years old and “clog maker” by profession when Nicolas-Étienne was born. His mother was Marie Françoise Desruets, who was 26 years old when Nicolas-Étienne was born. Nicolas-Étienne received his first communion in Paley on May 6, 1838, at the church of Saint-Georges.
38. Lorrez-le-Bocage census of 1841. The Desbois family moved to the town of Lorrez-le-Bocage sometime between 1829 and 1836.
39. The other Parisian meerschaum pipe manufacturers that participated were Bondier, Donninger & Ulbrich, Louis Goetsch, Charles Six and J. Sommer.
40. Exposition universelle de 1867 à Paris : catalogue général (2e édition, revue et corrigée) / publié par la commission impériale, p. 363.
41. Louis Aucoc, Objets divers de maroquinerie, de tableterie et de vannerie. Paris, 1867. p. 31.
42. Exposition Universelle de Paris en 1867, Document et Rapports, Tome II, p. 171.
43. Letter from Nicolas-Étienne Desbois addressed to Gustave Weber, dated May 27, 1871. Private collection, Bruno Desbois.

44. Letter from Nicolas-Étienne Desbois addressed to the French government, dated September 20, 1873, in support of Gustave Weber's application for French nationality. Private collection, Bruno Desbois.
45. Thirteen years earlier, Léon's older sister Louise Gertrude Françoise was born.
46. *Annuaire-almanach* 1890, p. 1863.
47. Gustave Weber died on June 18, 1894, at the age of 63.
48. Archives of notary Boudeville in Villecerf. Acte de Société, November 16, 1887.
49. During the period 1890–1900, the value of 1 French franc equaled approximately 0.50 Dutch guilder. Compared to today's price levels that would be approximately 6 euros. (Source: www.cbs.nl/nl-nl/visualisaties/prijzen-toen-en-nu.)
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The catalogue of Desbois and Cheville and the catalogue of Sommer-Au Pacha are available digitally at www.tabakspijp.nl.

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