

3.13 The O'Mealy Box

Wilbert Garvin

Many years ago Seán Reid gave me a black box for safe-keeping. It was square-shaped and relatively narrow, with a sliding top.



It contained an assortment of drawings, patterns and notes of R.L. O'Mealy. At the 2007 reopening of the refurbished NPU headquarters I passed on this box, plus three of R.L's hand tools to NPU since I accepted that now was the time when they would be safe and could be used for display purposes in conjunction with the lathe and reamers that had been donated by Ken McLeod and myself a number of years ago.



O'Mealy Box contents

The contents of the box gives an insight into the workings of O'Mealy. Much of his work involved restoring pipes and he identified the pipes that he was working on by the name of the owner. Some of these I know about, but many of them are unknown to me. They could be the starting point to finding out more about these players and where their pipes are now.

Boyce's chanter - hole positions

Boyd's chanter - unnamed big bass regulator

Bunting¹ - regulator

Congdon's - key jaws - Taylor style

Congdon's - bass regulator - detailed drawing

Congdon's middle regulator - hole positions and diameters - 2 drawings

Congdon's bellows outlet - pattern for leather

Congdon's bass drone - details of measurements

Connery's chanter - hole positions, measurements etc. + reed cap

Coyle's regulator - details

Coyle's bass regulator - 2 drawings

Cramsie - middle regulator

Delap² - bag measurements

Delap - regulator

George Farrar's bellows³ - clapper pattern - dated 11 April 1929

George (presumably Farrar) - bag pattern

Gildas' middle regulator⁴ - for pipes with 17" chanter - details

Gildas' middle regulator - 17 & 7/8"

Gildas' bass regulator

Gildas' small regulator - 13&1/8" - holes positions, measurements etc.

Details of Br. Gildas' chanter

¹ This is Frank Bunting Senior – see Paddy Maxwell entry in article “**3.14 O'Mealy Pupils**” written by Frank Junior who now has possession of his father's Mealy pipes.

² See Miles Delap entry in article “3.14.3 O'Mealy Pupils”

³ George Farrar was married to R.L.'s sister Letitia

⁴ Brother Gildas, was a De La Salle Brother whose real name was Patrick O'Shea. He was a native Irish speaker from Kerry. He was a well known figure in the piping world, was a friend of R. L. and a regular visitor to his house in Belfast.

Haugh's ordinary bass (Taylor)

Hollywood's top-piece for chanter

Hollywood's bag - details on Postcard

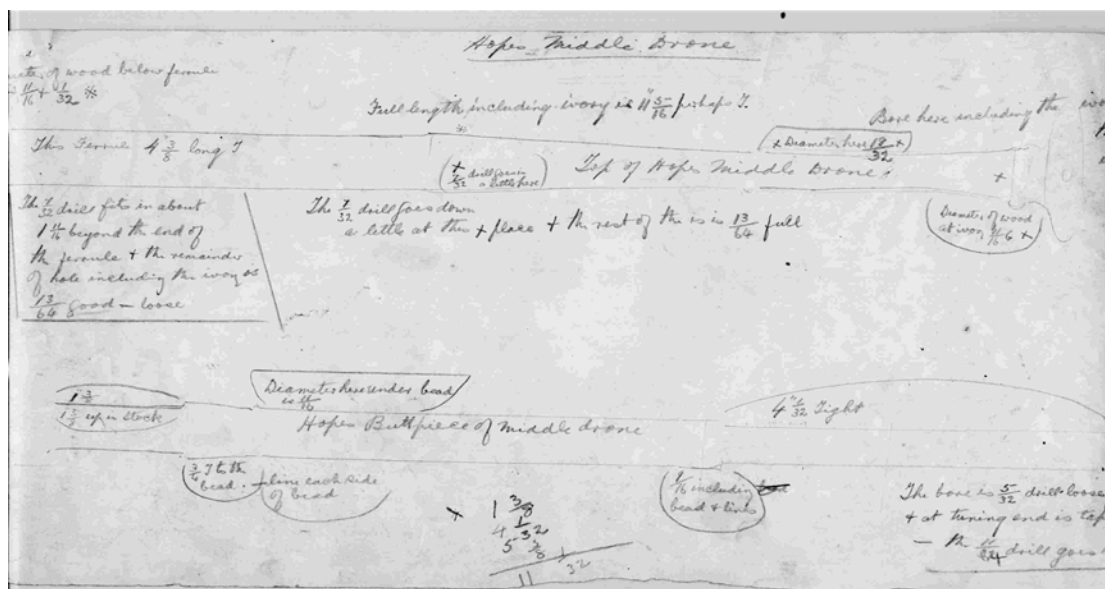
Hope's (William Hope) tenor drone - butt-piece and tuning piece

Hope's middle drone - butt-piece and tuning piece

Hope's bass drone - tuning piece

Hope's middle regulator

Note on Hope's regulator



Miss Johnston's (Netta Jane Johnston - Carnlough) leather pattern for outlet from bellows (on paper dated 1925)

Miss Johnston's bag - pattern

McCleary's bag - measurements V.T.B.C.? - 2 drawings

McKay - (fiddle-maker, Carnlough) - bag pattern

McKay's bellows pattern

Maher's bass regulator - details

Maher's bass regulator showing length of keys

Bag pattern - Ned's bag

Neill's big drone - butt piece and tuning piece - 2 drawings

Neill's bass regulator

Neill's middle regulator - key details (2)

Neill's big bass regulator - details (2 sides of paper)

Neill's big bass - details of holes - another of Neill's large bass

Neill's middle regulator

Neill's big drone - butt-piece - hole drillings (in notebook)

- O'Mangon's top-piece (chanter)
- O'Mangon's bag - pattern
- O'Mangon's chanter - details (in notebook)

- O'Neill's American regulator

- Own stuck bag - 1976

- Peter's pipes - details of drones and regulators

- Rowsome chanter - details of hole positions

- Ryan - bellows leather pattern
- Ryan's middle regulator - 2 drawings
- Ryan's middle regulator - hole positions (2 off)
- Ryan's big drone
- Ryan's big drone - butt piece

- Savage's buttpiece of big drone

- Scanlon's chanter - details (in notebook)

- Taylor's bass - ordinary
- Taylor's bass regulator

- Tootal's chanter - details - including top-piece
- Tootal's bass regulator
- Tootal's big bass regulator - hole positions
- Tootal's big bass regulator - details
- Tootal's ordinary bass regulator
- Tootal's middle regulator - hole positions
- Tootal's boxwood bass regulator
- Tootal's ordinary boxwood bass - hole positions, sizes
- Tootal's tenor drone - butt-piece
- Tootal's middle drone - butt-piece
- Tootal's bag - pattern

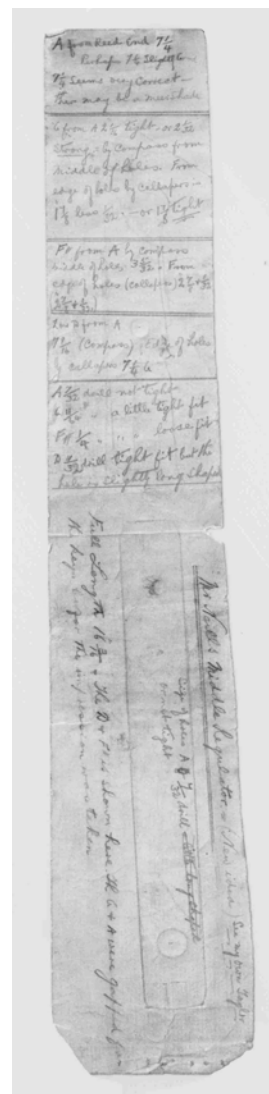
- Ward's E regulator

- Big bass - key patterns (Taylor style)

- Pattern for own bellows (outlet) dated Sept.1940)

- Another 3 patterns for bellows outlet - no names

- Bag pattern - Kenna pipes (before and after sewing)



Pattern for arm pad on bellows - unlabelled

Pattern for bellows leather - unmarked

Note on own pipes

3 Bag patterns - unlabelled

2 bellows leather patterns - unlabelled

bellows leather pattern labelled Father's?

Envelope (Taxes) containing regulator key patterns (Taylor style) for Hewitt's middle regulator; Neill's ordinary bass; Neill's bass; Coyle's A bass; Tootal's bass G (2); plus 4 unlabelled.

Template for drillings in butt-piece of bass drone (wrapped up by me to avoid damage).

O'Mealy Notebook

Notebook containing assorted measurements plus names of tunes and the notes of the first bar - however not in O'Mealy's handwriting!

Unpublished Airs:

McParson's Farewell
 The Little Devil's Waltz
 The Lad that I love
 The Lord of Mayo
 My Love among the Roses
 Carolan's Farewell
 Farewell Inverness
 Killycrankey
 I long to see Old Ireland free
 Miss Gregg
 Over the Bridge
 The Bush in Bloom
 Take Her out and Air Her
 Miss Multitude
 Blackberry Blossom
 Castle Kelly
 Flatcaps Jane
 The Wind that shakes the Barley
 Miss Monaghan
 Drousy Maggie



Lagan Slashers
His of Slainstown (?)
New Found Out
Jenny Pickin' Cockles
Follow us down to Carlow

Hornpipes:

The Liverpool hornpipe
Flowers of Edinburgh
The Cork Hornpipe
The Sailor's hornpipe
The Dublin Breakdown

Reels:

The Stoney Steps
The Flogging Reel
The Scholar
The Bush in Bloom
Bonnie Kate
My Love among the Roses
The Bright Star of Munster
The Morning Star
The Heathery Breeze
What the Devil ails You
Miss McLeod's reel
The Shannon Breeze
The Dublin Lasses
The Green Fields
The Fairy Dance
Over the Bridge to Bessie

Unlabelled regulator drawings - Taylor style - possibly O'Mealy's own copy of Taylor.

Old(!) faded measurements etc. - small pages from a notebook perhaps

Letter -from Brother John (Johnny Mealy) plus reply from R. L.

Letter to Mr McCullagh 13 June 1912 (on back letter to Capt.O'Neill June 1912 - proof?)

Letter from D.McCullough 28 Feb.1912

Letter from D.McCullough 8 March 1912 - reply on back dated 11 March 1912
Letter from John Southwell, Newry 1926.

Letter from Brother Gildas, Downpatrick, 1933.

Letter from Br. Gildas dated 11 Jan 1933 (photocopy)

Wilbert Garvin

Inch St.
Downpatrick
11th Jan. 33

Dear Mr. O'Mealy,
I enclose the notice of
Bantry Bay, just as I attempt to play it.
When fixing the lower end of the
big regulator, perhaps it would be better
to shorten the wood a little (cut a little off)
so that the ivory would go further up on
it and the ~~the~~ brass circle would not look
so broad.

I hope you will succeed in your experiment
on the stock.

With every best wish to yourself and
Mrs O'Mealy.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
Brother Gildas.

I am sending this
letter to be posted
in Belfast
owing to stress &
fear of delay.

7 Queen St
Newry
4th May 1926

Dear Mr O Mealey,

Received your
letter regarding the Ustean
Pipes material & make
I would prefer the
ebony or Dark Rose
wood with the full
& Complete set of
Regulators.

You state in your
letter that it is a long

Thanking you in
anticipation
Best Wishes

Yours Sincerely
John Southwell

time since you played
at a Concert in Newry.
I'm sorry to say that
all the Concerts that
were held recently ~~were~~
of the modern & cheap
variety, with practically
little or no consideration
given to our Native Songs
or Music

Let me know about
the price of Instrument
I am writing about