

3.21 O'Mealy Timeline

Ronan Browne

1745

Birth of Thomas Mealy

1760s - 1780s

O'Mealy/Farrar James Kenna set built, perhaps for Thomas Mealy or perhaps for someone else and later purchased by the Mealys.

1784

John Mealy born

1823

Laurence Mealy born

1872

Isabella Mealy drowned 15th Aug. 1872 (aged 12) [Pipes in the lake on the same day]

Robert Mealy died of gastroenteritis 18th Sept 1872 (aged 5 months)

1873

R.L. born 22 Oct. 1873

1874

Louisa Annie Mealy died in a trap accident 14th Oct. 1874 (aged 16)

1897

Richard living in Boyle, entered *Feis Ceoil*

1899

Ad in *Irisleabhar na Gaedhilge* 11 February 1899 stating that he had settled in 23 Dyke Parade, Cork

March 1899 inaugural meeting of the Cork Pipers' Club

R.L. recently playing in the Assembly Rooms, Cork. Fáinne an Lae, 20 May 1899.

1900

Assembly Rooms, Cork, "Mr. Mealy's selection on pipes much appreciated". *An Claidheamh Soluis*, 7 April 1900.

The Dublin Pipers' Club undertook to meet expenses of two "Melia Brothers, Ballinacarriga, Westmeath" to travel to the upcoming Leinster Feis.

1900/1

Newspaper clipping saying "O'Mealey ... has recently come to Belfast"

1902

1901/02 Eamonn Ceannt complains about "...ridiculous costume..." worn by O'Mealy (from Belfast) at Munster Feis

1902 – Mealey, Richard, musician, 5 Edinburgh St. Belfast

1903

Death of Larry Mealy

1903-1907 – O'Mealey, R., musician, 5 Edinburgh St. Belfast

Belfast Linenhall Harp Exhibition 1903

–with pipes section comprising what I think was to become the McPeake Mealy set plus the Mule Shinbone Chanter and a Kennedy and an Egan (Gildas?) set.

1904

Feis na nGleann

Taken from a report in the *Ballymena Weekly Telegraph*, 9 July 1904.

At a meeting held in Cushendall on the 28th February 1904 it was decided to hold a Feis. Miss Johnston was elected to the organising committee. Francis Joseph Bigger was elected Treasurer. The Glens of Antrim Feis was first held on Thursday, the 30th June 1904, in Cushendall. There were an amazing 102 competitions – literary, reciting, speech-making, story-telling in Irish, vocal and instrumental ('fidil' and pipe) music, dancing, spinning, knitting, weaving, crocheting, dress-

making, ironwork, wood-carving, basket-making, decorative work and designing, toy-making, boat and model boat building and so forth.

The ‘Prince of Irish Pipers’, Richard Lewis O’Mealy of Belfast, and Herbert Hughes were the adjudicators of the singing and music category.

Neil McCurdy, who comes from Rathlin, won on war pipes, and his prize was a fine set of Mr O’Mealy’s Uilleann Pipes. On McCurdy obtaining his prize a great shout went up from the crowd of the Raghery men – men of the sea, and with splendid lungs.

At the concert in the evening, the performers included Mr Owen Lloyd, Dublin (harpist) and Mr. O’Mealy, Belfast (piper).

1905

O’Mealy printed his own stationary with newspaper clippings

Flyer for Strabane concert to be held on 27 February 1905

1906

Evening Party at Dublin Castle

O’Mealy was part of the surprise entertainment at a musical and dramatic evening to mark the end of the Castle season. The evening was organised by Lord and Lady Aberdeen.

Co. Antrim, Glenarm branch of the Gaelic League, St Patrick's night, marches on the pipes by Prof. O'Mealy, dances by Feis na nGleann prize winners. *An Claidheamh Soluis*, 7 April 1906.

F. J. Bigger and Herbert Hughes invited Belfast Gaels to Bealtaine Céilidh on May Eve, Owen Lloyd and R.L. O'Mealy supplied music. [Hughes was a collector and arranger of traditional songs and tunes; Lloyd played the harp.] *An Claidheamh Soluis*, 12 May 1906.

South Down, conference of teachers and school managers on teaching of Irish in schools: “*An Máilleach*” came from Belfast with his pipes. *An Claidheamh Soluis*, 1 December 1906.

1908

1908-1916 – O’Mealey, R., musician, 17 Edinburgh St. Belfast (was no. 5)

1910

Ferguson's Centenary Celebrations in Belfast

[Centenary of birth of Sir Samuel Ferguson]

Pilgrimage to Donegore, co. Antrim;

Memorial service in parish church;

F.J. Bigger, tribute from lectern;

Extract from evening lecture, Wellington Hall, Belfast, delivered by A.P. Graves.

The Irish Pipes

‘...the union pipes, on the other hand, which probably owed their origin like the *fidil* or the *geige*, to the beginning of the sixteenth century, were gradually growing from the pipes, with two-scale chanters, to the more elaborate instrument in four scales that Mor. O’Maille [sic] played that evening.’

Irish Times, 11 March 1910

Folk Song in County Tyrone by Charlotte Milligan Fox (Vol.III, Jan.- June, 1910)

Charlotte Milligan Fox was Hon. Secretary and on the Publication Committee of the *Journal of the Irish Folk Song Society, London.*

“...Spending the spring in Ireland, I met up with Mr. Henry Morris, who was visiting the mountainous district on the border of Tyrone, where he came upon a pair of splendid traditional singers, Eamon and Anne Tracey, resident some nine or ten miles from Omagh.

Eamon told us that he had visited Ballinascreen once to sing at a Gaelic concert. He sang three traditional songs on that occasion, and had the pleasure of hearing Mr. R. L. O’Mealy, of Belfast, playing on the Irish pipes. This was a great treat...”

1917

1916 was last listing in PRONI; 1917 - no entry for O’Mealy - not back till 1926

1920

Richard’s 1st wife Nellie died July 1920. Richard stopped playing in public for number of years

1924

2RN Radio Appearance

The Irish Times, 30 September 1924, p. 6.

Dublin (2RN)

'8.45 – R.L O'Mealy (Belfast), pipes. [Selection?] will include– "The Shady Lane" (single ... for the Uillian Pipes by R.L. O'Mealy), "[Wheels?] of the World" (double jig), "The Maid of [?]" (Leinster Love Song), "The Cork [Hornpipe?]"

1926

1926-1930 - O'Mealy, Richard, Artist. 109 Rugby Avenue (previously 17 & 5 Edinburgh Street)

1926

Radio Appearance

Irish Times, Friday, 31 December 1926 [spellings as in source]

Radio Programmes

Belfast (2BE) 435 Metres

... 7.0–Forecast and News ... Local News. The Ulster Male Choir; conductor, John Vine. The Ulster Amateur Flute Band; conductor, William, Blyth. Victoria Gordon (contralto), R.L. O'Mealy (Irish piper), Pauline Barker (solo harp), Reginald Dobson (solo violincello). 7.30– R.L. O'Mealy: "Irish Jig." "The Copper Lass,", "Erin is my Home," "Billy Byrne of Ballymanus." "The Donegall Reel." "O'Mealy Hornpipe." ... 8.30– R.L. O'Mealy. Irish song tunes, lamentations, jigs, reels, and hornpipes, incuding "The Flogging Reel" and "The Mother's Lamentation."

1927

Radio Appearance

Irish Times, Saturday, 1 January 1927.

Radio Programmes

Dublin (2RN)

9.0 – R.L. O'Mealy (Belfast), pipes. Selection will include "Miss Multitude" (reel) (arr. for Uillian Irish Pipes by R.L. O'Mealy), "Billy Byrne of Ballymanus" (Marsh), "The Rose of the Valley", (Leinster Song Tune), "The Honeysuckle" (hornpipe).

1928

Radio Appearance

Irish Times, Thursday, 2 February 1928.

Radio Programmes

Belfast (2BE)

7.45—An Irish Programme, Jeannie Erskine and Anna McClure Warnock (comedy sketches), James Marshall (violincello), R.L O'Mealy (uillean pipes), Station Orchestra.

Radio Appearance

Irish Times, Saturday, 17 March 1928.

Radio Programmes

Belfast (2 BE)

9.35 – St. Patrick's Day Programme. Pearl McConkey (soprano); Mrs. Rooney of Belfast; Mat Mulcaghey, "the Oul' Besom Man from County Tyrone." Jimmy O'Dea, Irish entertainer; R.L O'Mealy, Uilleann Pipes; Ulster Amateur Flute Band. Station Orchestra.

1929

Radio Appearance

Irish Times, Tuesday, 6 August 1929.

Radio Programmes

Belfast (2 BE)

9.35 – Irish Variety – Denis O'Neill (Irish Comedian), R.L. O'Mealy (Uilleann pipes), Ethel Lewis (folk songs), David Wilson (light ballads); Jeannie Erskine in "Mrs. McCleery of County Down," by Clara Crozier; the Argyle Temperance Flute Band; Compere: Mat Mulcaghey – "The Oul' Besom Man from County Tyrone."

Radio Appearance

Irish Times, Monday, 23 December 1929

Radio Programmes

Belfast (2 BE)

7.45 – Christmas Eve in Ballytoughey ... (?) Mat Mulcaghey et al. ... R. L. O'Mealy

1931

1931 to 1947 O'Mealy, Richard, Musician. 45 Rugby Avenue (previously no. 109)

Feis na nGleann:

The *Ballymena Weekly Telegraph*, July 1931:

In order, however, that it might be more central it was decided that Ballymena should be the venue this year. The Feis, which occupies three days, includes language and literary competitions, native dancing, vocal and instrumental Irish music, Uilleann pipes, flute and fiddle competitions.

The judge of the Uilleann pipe competition was Mr.R.L.O'Mealy, Belfast.

1939/40

Richard wrote to Joe Kilmurray that he would like to come home to Templecross area

1942

Andy Conroy met O'Mealy through Br. Gildas who was taking lessons from him according to Andy

1947

March 14th 1947 - Death of Richard Lewis O'Mealy