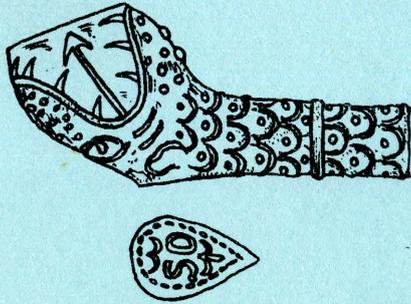


SOCIETY *for* CLAY PIPE RESEARCH



NEWSLETTER

52



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BELFAST CLAY TOBACCO PIPEMAKERS, 1819-1946

David Higgins and Susie White

During the course of the 20th century, and particularly over the last fifty years, there has been an enormous increase in the range and quality of information which has been collected about pipes and pipemaking. While there is now a well established overview of the subject it is perhaps surprising how many regionally or nationally important production centres remain poorly documented and studied. One such centre which seems to have been little studied is Belfast. As recently as 1975 Oswald was only able to list one maker for Belfast, and just 24 for the whole of Ireland (Oswald 1975, 206).

In September 1995 an opportunity arose to study the trade directories in the Ulster Museum, Belfast. These dated from 1858 onwards and provided a wealth of information about the scale and location of the local pipemaking industry, including the names of some 20-30 previously unrecorded makers. To these could be added the small number of other published references which were known. There were as follows:

John CUNNINGHAM Freeman (1993, 18) notes a reference to John Cunningham appearing before the Belfast Police Court in 1866. John Cunningham is not listed in the 1863 Directory, but appears from 1868 onwards.

James HAMILTON Oswald (1975, 206) records James Hamilton in a directory of 1819.

T.S. McKEE Hammond (1986, 27) records a pipe, presumably of later 19th or early 20th-century date, marked T S McKee, Belfast.

ULSTER PIPE WORKS (UPW) Brannon (1991) mentions the Ulster Pipe Works, or 'UPW', which was listed in a 1907 directory and which appears to have been associated with the Hamilton family of Winetavern Street. Hammond (1986) has some marked pipes from this firm.

These references have been added to the details extracted from the various Belfast trade directories in the Ulster Museum. The directories available for study were for the following years: 1858, 1863, 1868, 1877, 1880, 1887, 1890, 1892, 1894, 1895, 1896, 1909, 1920, 1921, 1925, 1928, 1930, 1935, 1937, 1939, 1941, 1944, 1945, 1946 and 1948.

The names and details extracted from the directories and other sources have been amalgamated to provide a list of Belfast pipemakers between 1819 and 1946. It should be noted, however, that this list is unlikely to be definitive since there are a number of chronological gaps in the sources consulted. The most significant gap is that of nearly forty years between Oswald's reference of 1819 and the first directory in the Ulster Museum of 1858. Likewise, the available directories provided erratic coverage from the 1850s until the 1890s and then there was only one directory for the period from 1896 to 1920. The last Belfast pipemaker appears to have been M. Connor, who was the only maker listed between 1941 and 1946 but who was not listed in the 1948 directory. No directories after 1948 were searched.

In compiling the list all the references to the same maker have, so far as is possible, been grouped together. This in itself was not an easy task because of inconsistencies in the way different directories listed the makers' names. It was clear, for example, that three different members of the Hamilton family, James, Jane and John, were all operating independent pipeworks in 1895 since they were all listed in the directory for that year. But in 1892, just three years earlier, there was just one J. Hamilton listed, which could have been any one of these three individuals. Similarly, in 1887, a J. Hamilton and a Mrs Hamilton were listed. Wherever possible the addresses have been used to resolve the identity of the different makers although separate entries have been given where doubt remains. Likewise, two entries have been given where it appears that different individuals are represented, for example, the James Hamilton who was listed in 1819 cannot have been the same James Hamilton who was still working in 1909.

A similar problem arose over the name Connor or O'Connor. In a number of cases the address made it clear that the same person was being listed by alternative names in different directories. In other cases there was no linking address, and so the entries have been listed separately in case they represent different individuals. Finally, the following list

ignores any slight variation in occupation terminology given in the directories. For example, in the 1890 directory C. McDowell is given the title 'Clay Pipe Manufacturer' which sounds rather grander than the 1892 directory entry in which his occupation is simply listed as 'Clay Pipe Maker'.

Given the above constraints the following list of Belfast makers has been compiled. The first column gives the overall date range during which each maker is listed; the second column gives their full name, so far as it is known, and the third column the address where they were working. Where the same maker appears to have changed premises the various addresses are given followed by the dates during which they are recorded in brackets.

List of Belfast pipemakers, 1819-1946, in alphabetical order

Dates	Name	Address
1858-63	Black, D.	30 John Street
1868	Black, Rose	11 Frederick Lane
1877-1909	Connor, J.	136 Cromac Street (1877-92 & 1895-96) 136 Cromac Street & 11 & 13 Raphael Street (1894 & 1909)
1930-46	Connor, M.	28 Trinity Street (see also M. O'Connor)
1863	Connor, Owen	110 Cromac Street (see also Owen O'Connor)
1909	Cunningham, E.	12 Garfield Street
1866-87	Cunningham, John	23 Winetavern Street (1868) 142 North Street (1877-87)
1887	Doherty, E	33 Winetavern Street
1819	Hamilton, James	Belfast
1877-1909	Hamilton, James	25 Winetavern Street (1877) 14 Winetavern Street (1880) 16 Winetavern Street (1887-92) 12 Winetavern Street (1894-6) 16 Winetavern Street & 19 Samuel Street (1909)
1894-96	Hamilton, Jane	8 Winetavern Street
1894-1930	Hamilton, John	13 Linden Street (1894-96) 43 Winetavern Street (1909) 43 Winetavern Street & 9 & 11 Bathurst Court (1920-1930)
1877-87	Hamilton, Mrs	41 & 43 Winetavern Street
1858-63	Hamilton, Tho	41 Winetavern Street
1880	Hart, E.	74 & 76 Union Street
1920-35	Kavanagh, J.	17 Coates' Street
1925-39	Mackle, Joseph,	
	McCreedy & Co	87 North Queen Street
1909	Maginnis, M.	83 Market Street

1890-94	McDowell, Chas	37 Carrick Hill (1890) 37 & 39 Carrick Hill (1892-4)
1868	McEvoy, Rose A	142 North Street
No dates	McKee, T.S.	Belfast
1892-94	O'Connor, M.	45 Alton Street (see also M. Connor)
1920-28	O'Connor, M.	28 Trinity Street (see also M. Connor)
1858	O'Connor, Owen	100 Cromac Street (see also Owen Connor)
1868	Ryan, A.	35 & 37 John Street
1868	Templetown, J	2 & 4 Coates' Street
1907	Ulster Pipe Works	Winetavern Street
1877	Webb, James	116 Peter's Hill

This list suggests that Belfast must have had a reasonable pipemaking industry throughout the second half of the 19th century and for most of the first half of the 20th. Although the numbers of makers listed in individual directories varies, the market generally appears to have been fairly stable and to have been able to support around five manufacturers up until c. 1910. Each of these businesses is likely to have employed quite a number of workers and so the total numbers engaged in the trade would have been quite respectable. Even after the First World War there were still three manufacturers listed and this number rose again to four between 1924 and 1928. During the 1930s and 1940s, however, there was a gradual decline from three to two and finally to one maker, who was last listed in 1946.

For much of this period the Hamiltons appear to have been the dominant family of Belfast pipemakers with five or six of their number being listed as independent makers between 1819 and 1930. They were apparently also associated with the Ulster Pipe Works, which was operating in 1907 (Brannon 1991, 161). The directories also reveal some useful information about the location of the trade within Belfast. If the information extracted is listed by address rather than by name it is possible to see the distribution pattern and relationships of the pipe workshops:

Belfast pipemakers, 1819-1946, in address order (please note that this is not a full list since it excludes makers whose address is not known).

Dates	Name	Address
1892-94	O'Connor, M.	45 Alton Street
1920-30	Hamilton, John	9 & 11 Bathurst Court (see also 43 Winetavern Street)
1890-94	McDowell, Chas	37 Carrick Hill (1890) 37 & 39 Carrick Hill (1892-4)
1868	Templetown, J.	2 & 4 Coates' Street
1920-35	Kavanagh, J.	17 Coates' Street
1858	O'Connor, Owen	100 Cromac Street
1863	Connor, Owen	110 Cromac Street
1877-1909	Connor, J.	136 Cromac Street (see also 11 & 13 Raphael Street)
1868	Black, Rose	11 Frederick Lane
1909	Cunningham, E.	12 Garfield Street
1858-63	Black, D.	30 John Street
1868	Ryan, A.	35 & 37 John Street
1894-96	Hamilton, John	13 Linden Street
1909	Maginnis, M.	83 Market Street
1868	McEvoy, Rose A.	142 North Street
1877-87	Cunningham, John	142 North Street
1925-39	Mackle, Joseph, McCreedy & Co	87 North Queen Street
1877	Webb, James	116 Peter's Hill
1894-1909	Connor, J.	11 & 13 Raphael Street (see also 136 Cromac Street)
1909	Hamilton, James	19 Samuel Street
1920-28	O'Connor, M.	28 Trinity Street
1930-46	Connor, M.	28 Trinity Street
1880	Hart, E.	74 & 76 Union Street
1907	Ulster Pipe Works	Winetavern Street
1894-96	Hamilton, Jane	8 Winetavern Street
1894-96	Hamilton, James	12 Winetavern Street
1880	Hamilton, J.	14 Winetavern Street
1887-1909	Hamilton, J.	16 Winetavern Street
1868	Cunningham, John	23 Winetavern Street
1877	Hamilton, James	25 Winetavern Street
1887	Doherty, E.	33 Winetavern Street
1858-63	Hamilton, Tho	41 Winetavern Street
1877-87	Hamilton, Mrs	41 & 43 Winetavern Street
1909-30	Hamilton, John	43 Winetavern Street (see also 9 & 11 Bathurst Court)

From this list two main points can be made. First, there is very little evidence of the Belfast makers having taken over one another's workshops as often seems to have been the case elsewhere. John Cunningham does appear to have taken over Rose McEvoy's premises at 142 North Street but this is something of an exception. Even the Hamiltons, who appear to

have worked from most addresses in Winetavern Street, rarely appear to have taken over each other's workshops. It is only Mrs Hamilton, presumably the widow of Thomas, and John, presumably their son, who share two common addresses at different dates. This diversity of addresses has its own implications. First, the working areas and kilns required to produce pipes appear to have been so easily replicated that they did not have any great influence on the location of the manufactories. This suggests that most of these pipe works could have been set up within the ordinary buildings to be found in Belfast at the time, ie, that special architecture was not required. Second, the fact that individual sites were often only occupied by a single manufacturer and for a limited time offers the potential to recover well dated and closely attributable waste groups from these sites.

The second main point is that although pipemaking was clearly taking place in a variety of different streets, it was in Winetavern Street that the majority of this activity seems to have been concentrated. Not only this, but it was the Hamilton family who seem to have dominated the trade in this street. No address is given for the 1819 reference, but between 1858 and 1930 members of the Hamilton family were working at no less than seven different addresses in Winetavern Street. Given this association with the trade it is hardly surprising that Winetavern Street was known locally as Pipe Lane (Brannon 1991, 161).

Very little appears to be known about the products of the Belfast makers although a group of late 19th and early 20th-century pipes has been recovered from a site in Winetavern Street (Brannon 1991). This includes some kiln waste as well as over two dozen different patterns of pipe. These range from plain and decorated forms to examples marked Citizen, Northern, Ulster, Cavehill, Home Rule, Gladstone, Ulster Pipe Works and UPW. Brannon illustrates a few of these forms in his 1991 note.

From this brief survey of the directory evidence it is clear that Belfast had a well established and fairly stable pipemaking industry from at least 1858 until the 1930s. During the 1930s a decline set in which led to the final demise of the industry in about 1946. The makers' list has not only identified the principal Belfast manufacturers but also doubled the total number of Irish makers documented in 1975. It has also established the areas in which the Belfast makers operated and shown that their

production sites offer the potential to recover well dated and attributable pipe groups. It is hoped that further work will not only refine this list of makers but also identify and attribute some of their products.

Acknowledgements

We are most grateful to Robert Heslip at the Ulster Museum for his help in extracting and copying the directory entries and to Nick Brannon at the Environment Service in Belfast for providing details of the excavated finds from Winetavern Street.

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CROYDON

St John Simpson (Dept of Western Asiatic Antiquities, British Museum, London, WC1B 3DG) writes: I visited Croydon (Surrey) to see some objects in the collections of the Croydon Natural History & Scientific Society. If readers are not already aware, they may be interested to hear of the existence of a number of clay pipes found locally, including an unpublished group from rescue excavations in the town on the site of what was thought to be a pipe factory at Mint Walk. Other 18th- and 19th-century pipes in their collections have been published. Most of these were made by the local Corney family who remained as pipemakers from 1720 to 1895 (Ken Pearman, 'Tobacco clay-pipe manufacturers in Croydon (3). The Corney family', *Croydon Nat. Hist. & Sci. Soc., Arch. Section*, pp.2-3). Two of the other pipemaking families were the Enshaws of Woodside (latter half of the 19th century) and the Henshers of Broad Green (1803-50).

A 7-BOWLED PIPE FROM THE WEST MIDLANDS

Phillip Woollard

In the magazine *The Black Countryman* (Spring 1970, vol.3, no.2, pp.43-5), is a short article on 'The "Fiffle" pipe'. The subject is a 7-bowled clay tobacco pipe which hung on the bar-room door of the Fiddlers Arms Inn, on the Straits Road, Gornal Wood, West Midlands. Each bowl has the initials RAOB (Royal Ancient Order of Buffaloes) on it.

The writer, Mr S.A. Williams, says that unsuspecting smokers were asked for a 'bowl of baccy' and when they proffered their pouch this 7-bowled pipe was produced and all the bowls filled to the loss and discomfiture of the stranger and the amusement of the customers. He also states that competitions were held to see who could keep all the bowls alight at the same time.

The pipe appears to be similar to that illustrated in *SCPR* 38, p.4, owned by Trevor Barton. Unfortunately Mr Williams has since died and there is doubt as to the whereabouts of this pipe.

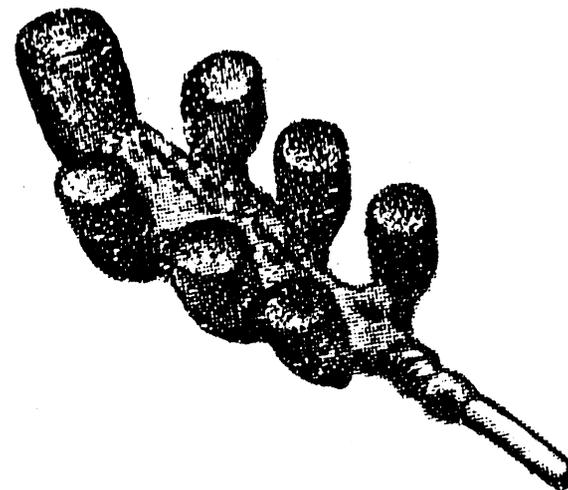


Fig.21 7-bowled pipe from Gornal Wood (reproduced by Phillip Woollard from *The Black Countryman*)