

1.01 An early set of Irish pipes, circa 1780.

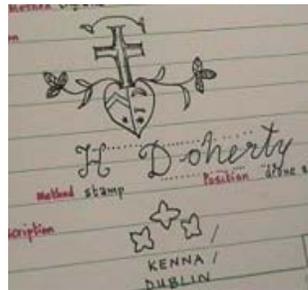
Ken McLeod. Drawings by Wilbert Garvin.

Introduction.

The set has one regulator with four keys which is obviously original but which is fixed in such a way as might suggest an addition. I do not believe that this is the case and would propose that it is contemporary. It is most probable that a maker of such quality understood the need to separate the regulator double reed from the drone single reeds. However he had not considered enlarging the size of the stock and adding an internal tube to separate the regulator reed as later makers did and as we still do today. I therefore suggest that this helps to place the set quite early in the development of the Union pipes.



The maker had not marked the work but turnings and mounts are exquisite and very similar to an early set at Morpeth, which is attributed to Kenna. The style of the pipes of the Morpeth set tells us that they are not Timothy Kenna but may be the elder Kenna, James. The main stock of the Morpeth set is stamped Kenna Dublin and is similar in size to those in use today. It has the normal internal tube to take the regulator, so this part would appear to be by the younger Kenna, Timothy. It is not thought that James Kenna ever worked in Dublin but it is known that Timothy moved there in 1812.¹ The Morpeth stock does not have the usual Timothy Kenna 'logo' of a small stylised shamrock, shown



far left. The Morpeth Museum index card showing the stamp and the markings of a one-time owner on the stock, is shown near left. Perhaps this is the Doherty family crest? If so this is interesting as the set attributed to John Egan and supposedly made for Lord Edward Fitzgerald in the National Museum, Dublin has the Egan family crest on its stock.²

If the Jamie Allan Pastoral set at Morpeth³ is in fact the one presented by the Duchess of Northumberland as suggested, then, as she had bought the set in Edinburgh and died in

¹ Seán Donnelly's forthcoming '100 Years of Pipemaking 1770-1870: New Light on the Kennas and Coynes'

² Per Seán Donnelly.

1776,⁴ we could conclude that a single regulator with four keys was being manufactured by 1775, at least for the Pastoral pipes in Scotland. However, as far as I am aware, there is no provenance on the Allan set.

The Jamie Allan set at Morpeth is shown below.



The 'Allan' set appears to me to possibly be the work of Hugh Robertson who is listed in an Edinburgh directory of 1775 as having an address at Castle Hill.⁵ The Allan set – like the pair of sets recently acquired by John Hughes and myself, have the regulator double reed operating in the hollow stock alongside the single drone reeds. These Robertson sets are therefore potentially earlier than the set we are dealing with in this article, if not in terms of age, certainly in terms of development.

and double reeds together in the stock.

Robertson Pastoral set showing single



By the 1790s the regulator was being fitted into either an isolating tube within the main stock as we know today, or in the case of the recently discovered William Kennedy set, a solid stock. As Kennedy's earlier work utilised the hollow stock, I would propose that he only changed to a solid stock because of the weight of the bass regulator on that particular set. By 1793 two regulator (tenor and baritone) 'Pastoral' sets were being made

³ See jallan.bmp for a picture of these pipes. Copyright Morpeth Chantry Bagpipe Museum.

⁴ Keith Sanger in his article 'Border Lines' in *Common Stock* Vol 10 No 2. Dec 1995.

⁵ William H. Grattan Flood in *The Story of the Bagpipe* London 1911.

– re: a hall-marked silver set listed in the Edinburgh University Collection of Historic Musical Instruments.⁶

The Morpeth eight-key regulator (shown below) does not appear to me to be of Kenna manufacture at all, and so I assume it may have replaced a missing original – very probably with less keys. The question of the Morpeth stock stamp is intriguing - a mystery to be solved in terms of the maker's mark. I believe however, that the stock is indeed the work of Timothy Kenna with perhaps an earlier mark than we are most familiar with. The name, character style and size are similar to his later mark. (See page 1.01.1)

The Morpeth 'Kenna' regulator.



James Kenna stated in 1770 that he had been supplying gentlemen with Irish bagpipes (and German Flutes) in the provinces of Munster and Connaught for several years before setting up business near Mullingar.⁷

We have scant knowledge of the earlier makers in Ireland and the only four names we can place with reasonable certainty before 1790 are James Kenna, Michael Doogan, 'John' Egan⁸ and William Kennedy. This set certainly is a very rare and excellent example of early Irish, Union or Organ pipes and would not appear to me to be

the work of either Kennedy or Egan. A possible maker of this set is certainly James Kenna but this remains speculative.

Description.

The set is the best quality of boxwood species with brass ferrules, brass keys and both ivory and bone mounts. The workmanship is exquisite in every respect and the condition quite astounding for their age. The chanter has one solitary key – a high D.

The bass and baritone drones both have hollowed out chambers before the exit hole. This exit hole being smaller than the drone bore preceding the end chamber in the case of the bass, but it is the same size as the final bore before the little chamber on the baritone. This size of chambering was and still is common on Highland and many other early European bagpipes. The two small drones have straight to exit secondary tuning slides. The second longer small drone plays a fifth. There is no way of switching them off. A writer in 1808 seems to credit the drone switch to William Kennedy who started making pipes in 1783.⁹

There are no sudden steps in the drone bores. Where primary piece meets tuning slide the bore is tapered to the new wider bore, be it rather abruptly, over about 3 or 4 mm in fact. No drone slide can completely close the cavity within so there would always be a

⁶ There is an excellent web-site at Edinburgh University historic instrument collection and their catalogue is available for sale.

⁷ Seán Donnelly in his forth-coming article '100 Years of Piping, More Light on the Kennas and Coynes.'

⁸ The name John may not be correct.

⁹ *Belfast Monthly Magazine* Vol. 1, Sept – Oct 1808.

chamber even with the slide fully closed. This may be deliberate but it varies greatly between each drone and so may have been considered by the maker as irrelevant.

The drone primaries and the double bend are all fitted permanently into the stock plug, which in turn fits into the hollow stock. There is no main stock cup, the main stock being tied directly into the bag. There is a similar arrangement on the Pastoral pipes made by Hugh Robertson mentioned previously and also with the John Egan sets except that in both these cases the drone primaries are not fixed permanently into the stock plug. We can therefore feel safe to assume that the 'stock-plug' arrangement was a common practise with pipe-makers across the British Isles in the second half of the 18th century and possibly earlier. However the fact that the set under discussion also has the regulator reed separated from the drone reeds which the Hugh Robertson and John Egan pipes do not, helps to place this set more advanced in terms of development, if not indeed in time. They could be as late as 1790 in which case their design was getting a bit out of date and possibly as early as 1770 when they would have been perhaps too highly advanced for their time. I therefore offer c1780 as a tentative date for their manufacture.

The regulator has four keys, F#, G, A and B. It is interesting to note that the keys have a little 45° chamfer on the top edges centred on the pin holes. We have noticed this on William Kennedy sets and also on an Oboe made by Richard Milhouse c1780 which is in the writer's possession. The purpose of this, if any, is at present a mystery. They are both shown below, pipes left and oboe right. There would not seem to be any mechanical reason for this and it is therefore more than likely, simply a fashion of the period.



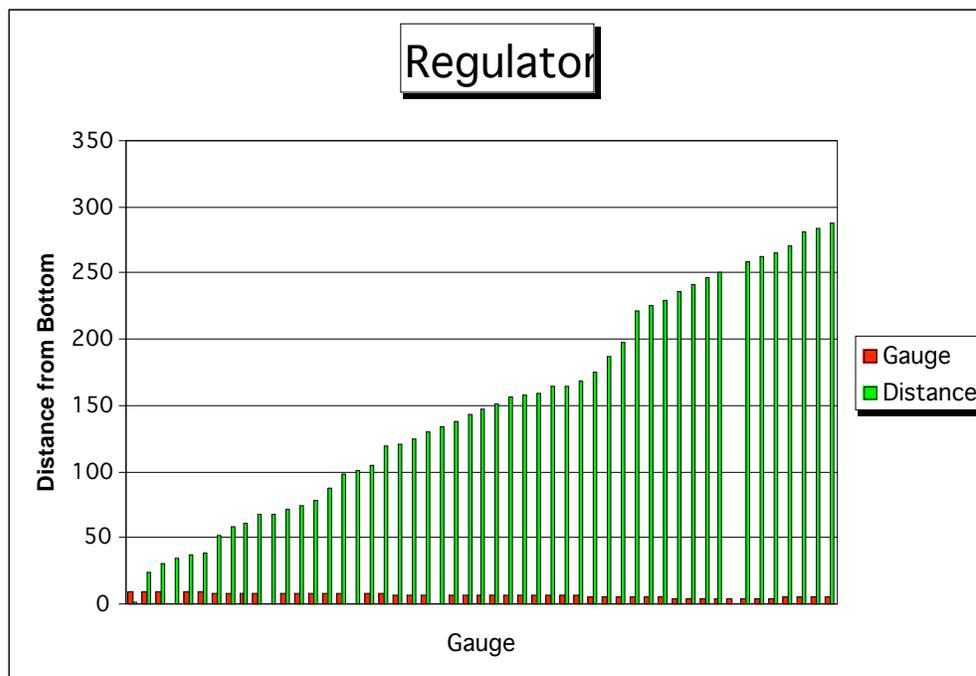
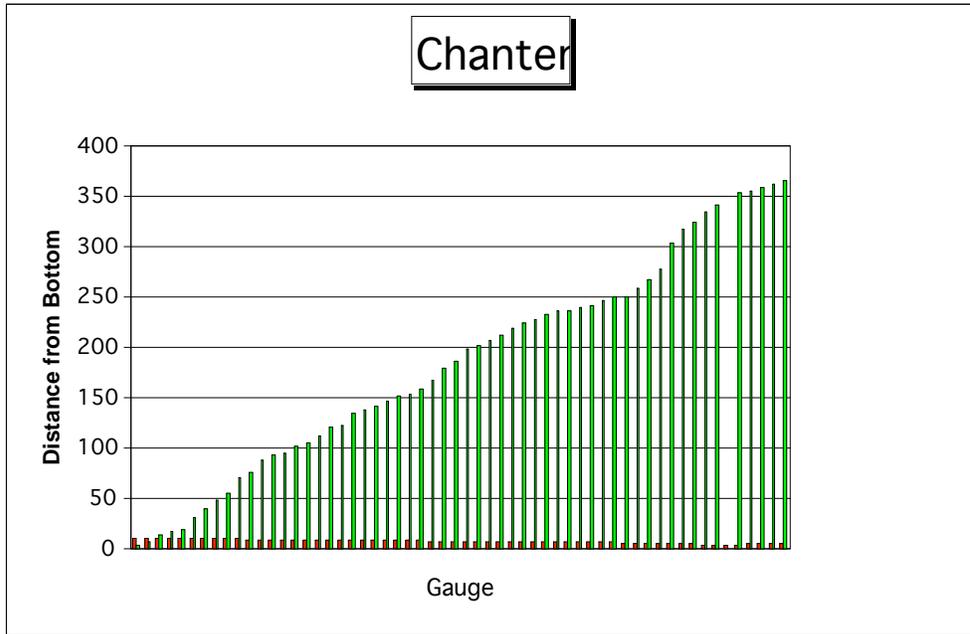
The regulator seems to follow the same style of bore and internal tuning as the chanter but is wider in the throat. The end ivory mount was never drilled so a tuning pin was not fitted by this maker at that time.

The ferrules are tapered so slightly as I believe to be irrelevant. The interesting thing about the brass is that the thickness is anything but consistent over the whole set, varying from 0.6 to 1.6 mm. This may lead one to think that these makers forged and rolled sheet pieces from small bits of ingot or scrap. It is very soft and there is little sign of oxide anywhere on the set. No damage is apparent anywhere with the exception of a cracked ivory ring at the regulator wind outlet socket on the main stock.

Something else had been fitted on the stock, later removed and the holes filled in. It could only have been a second regulator. Unfortunately there is no way of knowing when this might have been either added or removed. The key springs seem to be original. The regulator keys have notches on the sides to show their sequence for fitting. The later Kenna, Timothy, also did this as did Maurice and John Coyne, Denis Harrington and Michael Egan – all of the major early 19th century master makers in fact. This must have been standard practice. The note holes are undercut all around inside the bore and the bores are tuned in the same way bores were tuned by all of the old masters. Three or four tuned areas are apparent in both bores obviously carried out after the main reaming. The average angle of the chanter bore is 0.58 degrees and the regulator is 0.56 degrees, when

taken as an averaged pure cone. The chanter and regulator bore profiles are shown on the next page.

The measurement accuracy is fairly good although I will not make any guarantees. I would however state that to copy these precisely should make an instrument as close to the original in appearance and tuning as is reasonably possible. Because of movements through time in old bores it is certain that they are not as the maker left them. I would estimate that my measurement tolerance should be around plus or minus 0.25mm. The instrument plays well and in tune with a good E, bottom D and easy blown octave, in fact much better than most modern concert pitch pipes that I have ever heard.



Early set of pipes c 1780 possibly J. Kenna Mullingar.

Chanter Internal Measurements. (Metric).

Measured from the bottom.

GUAGE	DISTANCE	GUAGE	DISTANCE
10.8	0	7.2	202
10.6	3	7.1	207
10.5	7	7	211.5
10.4	14	6.8	218.
10.3	17	6.7	224
10.2	19	6.6	228
10.1	31	6.5	232
9.95	40	6.4	234
9.8	48.75	6.3	236
9.69	56	6.3	239
9.55	70.5	6.2	242
9.48	76	6.15	246
9.35	88	6.1	249.5
9.25	93	6	250
9.19	95.5	5.9	258
9.1	101	5.7	268
9	105.5	5.5	278
8.9	112	4.9	304
8.78	121	4.8	317
8.72	123	4.4	324
8.5	134	4	335
8.4	138	3.9	342
8.3	142	3.8	THROAT
8.15	146	4	353.5
8.06	152	4.5	356
8	153	5	358.5
7.94	159	5.5	362.5
7.75	167.5	6	365
7.57	178.5		
7.4	187		
7.3	199		

Early set of pipes c 1780 possibly J. Kenna Mullingar.**Regulator Internal Measurements. (Metric).**

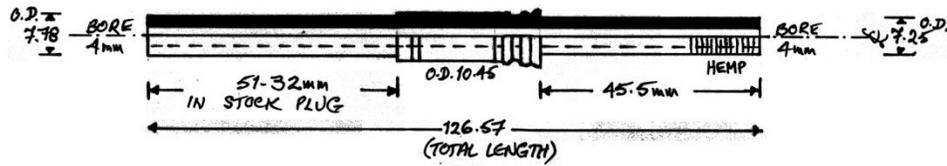
Measured from the bottom.

GUAGE	DISTANCE	GAUGE	DISTANCE
9.1	1	6.33	158
9	24	6.3	159
8.9	30	6.2	165
8.78	37	6.15	165
8.72	38	6.1	168.5
8.5	52	5.95	175.5
8.4	58	5.72	187.5
8.3	61.5	5.5	197.5
8.15	67.5	4.89	222
8.06	72	4.72	225
8	74.5	4.68	230
7.94	78	4.57	236
7.75	87	4.4	241
7.57	97.5	4.3	247
7.4	104.5	4.2	251
7.3	119	4	THROAT
7.2	120.5	4.25	259
7.1	124	4.35	263
7	130.5	4.6	265.5
6.8	138	4.83	270
6.7	143	5.2	281
6.6	147	5.5	284
6.5	151	5.6	288
6.4	156		

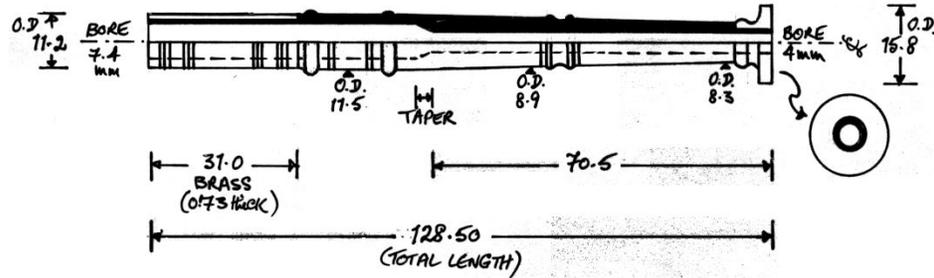
The drawings follow. Note that full size versions, along with many pictures are given

**SMALL DRONE (D)
BUTT PIECE**

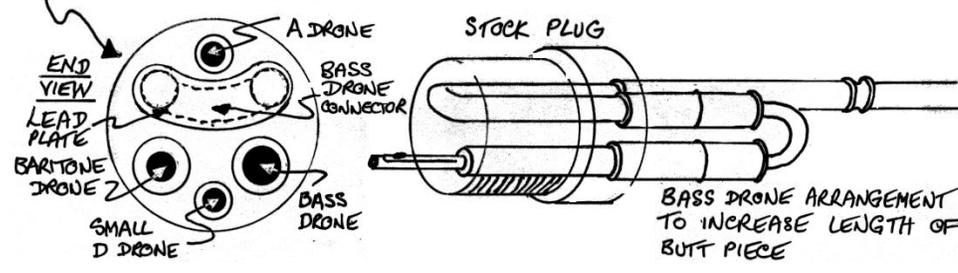
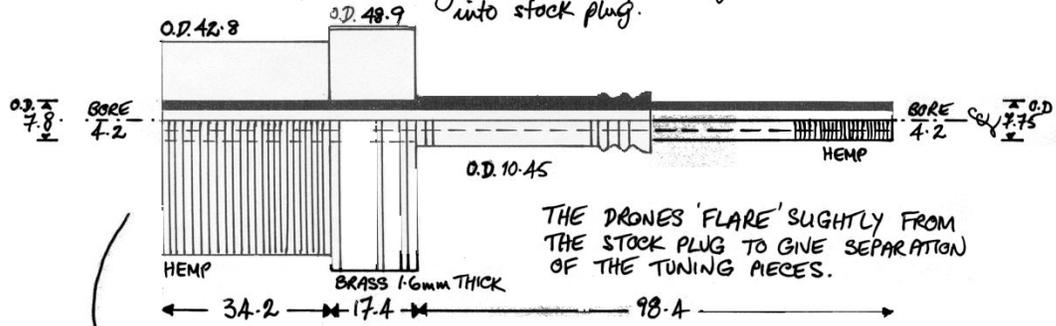
BOXWOOD, BRASS, IVORY

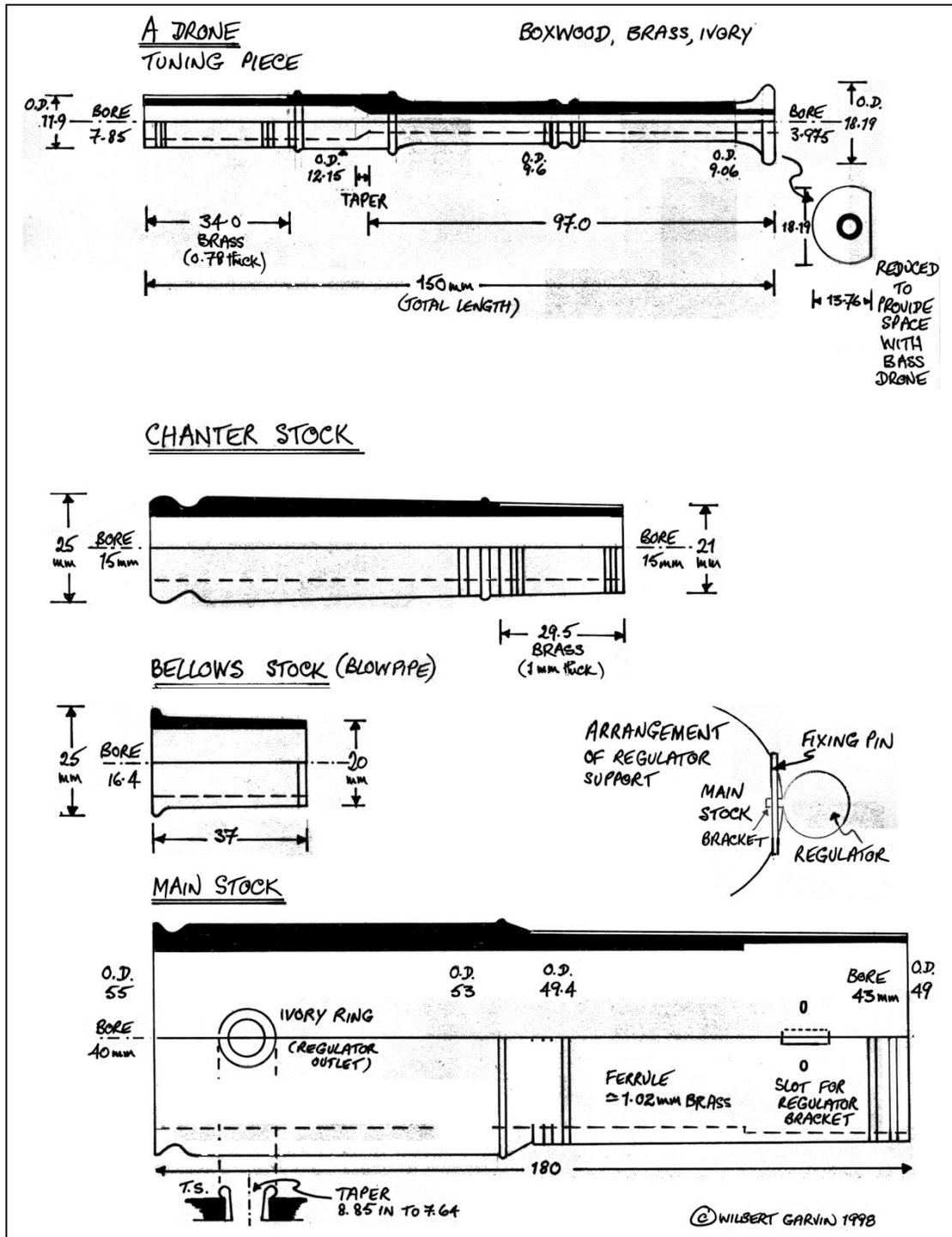


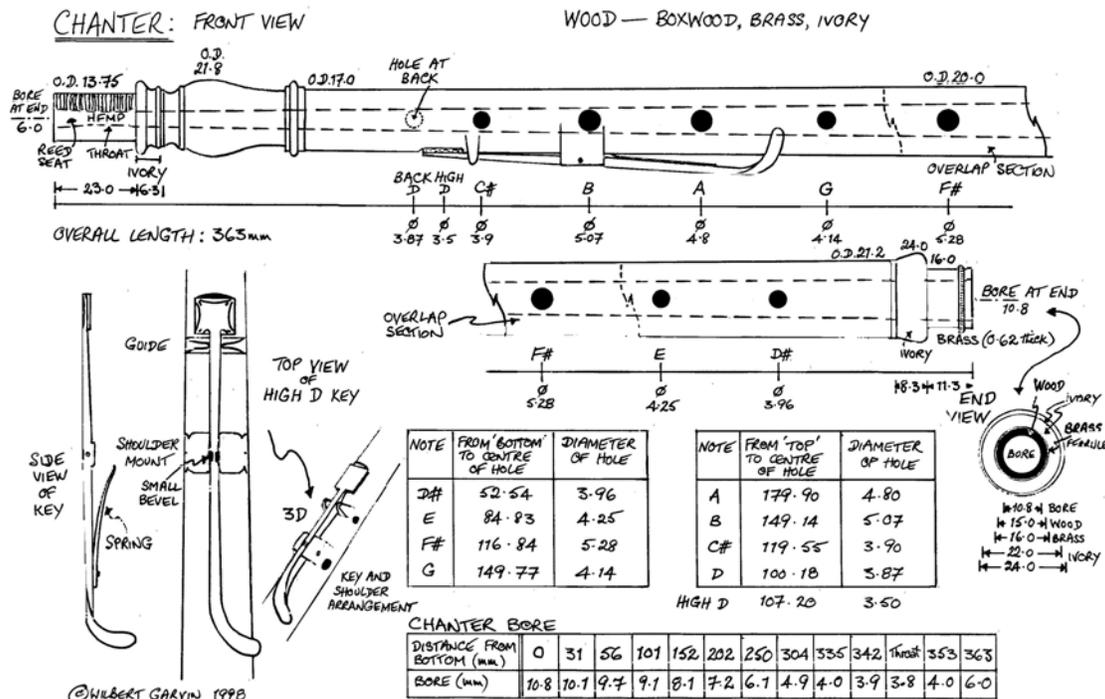
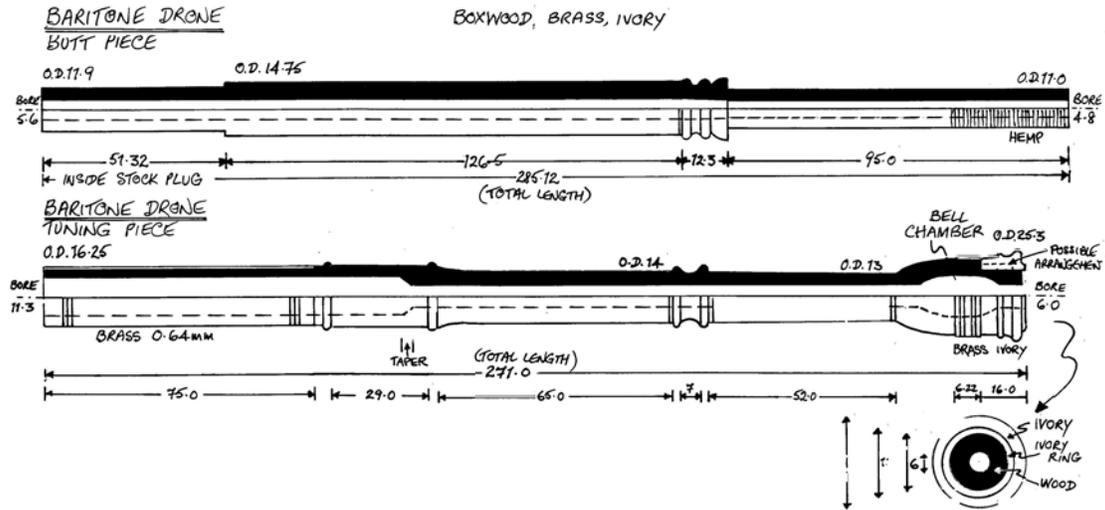
**SMALL DRONE (D)
TUNING PIECE**



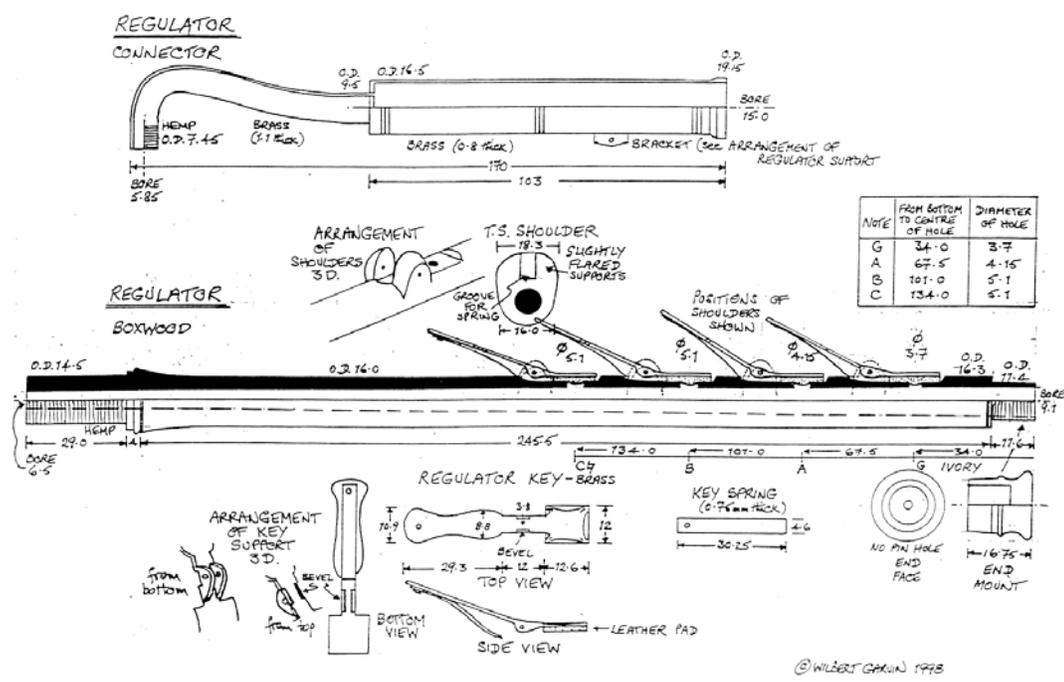
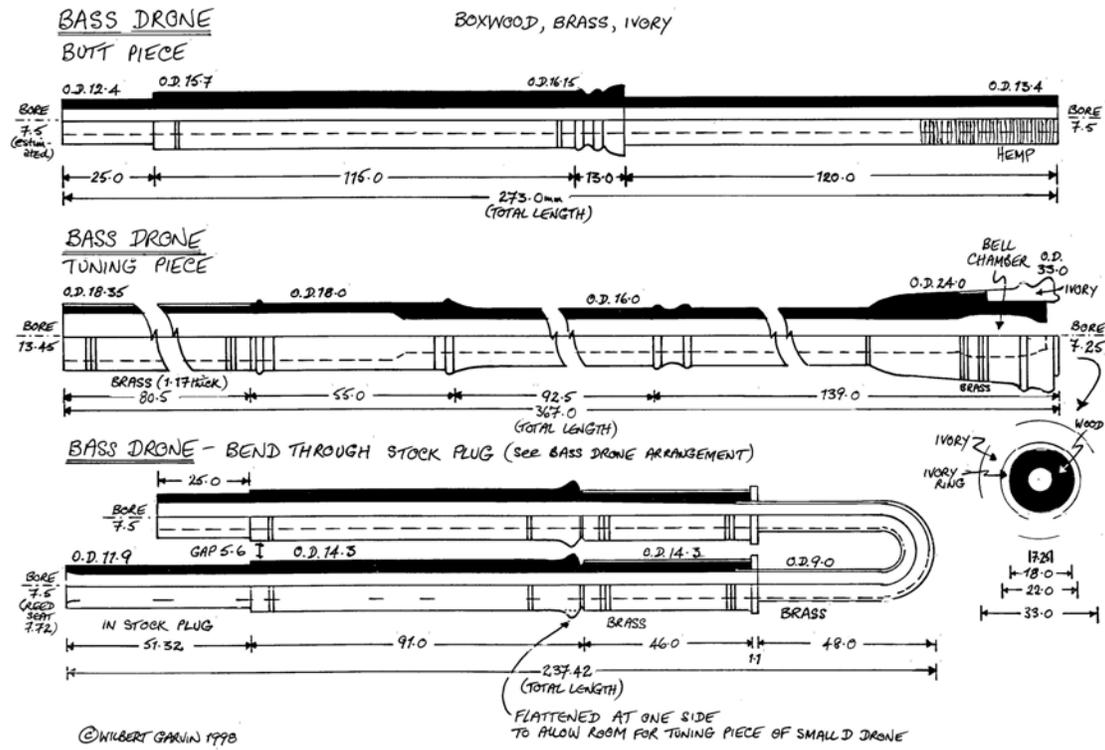
STOCK PLUG with BUTT PIECE OF A DRONE SHOWN INSERTED - all butt pieces of drones, including double bend of bass, glued into stock plug.





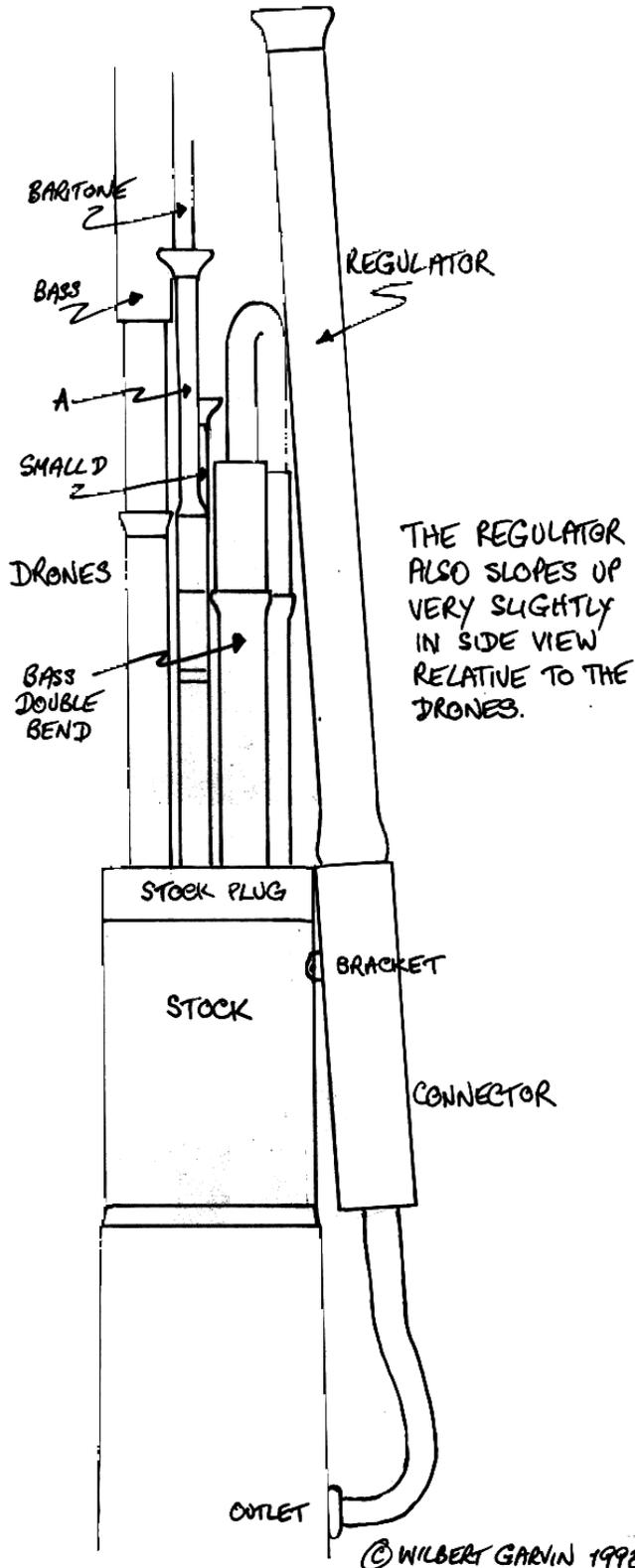


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POSITION OF REGULATOR.

TOP VIEW



Associated files in directory 1.01

jkenna.xls	The bore plots (Excel file).
jkenna1 to 7.jpg	The mechanical drawings.
jk01 to 44.jpg	A series of photographs of the pipes.
kenkey.jpg	A key showing chamfer.
oboekey.jpg	Milhouse oboe key c 1780 showing chamfer.
jallan.tif	A picture of the Jamie Allan set at Morpeth.
jallan01.tif	Smaller version of above.
robertson01.tif	Pastoral set by Hugh Robertson, Edinburgh, c 1775.
morpethkenna01.tif	Detail of the regulator on the Morpeth Kenna set.
morpethkenna02.tif	Stamp detail on index card.
jkennaset.tif	Overall view of the set.
kennamark.tif	Timothy Kenna's stamp.

Acknowledgements.

Seán Donnelly for information on James and Timothy Kenna, Morpeth Chantry Bagpipe Museum for permission to publish the pictures.

End.