

<u>Page 47 - The Bagpipe in Cape Breton: From a Conversation with Barry Shears,</u> Piper

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have been at the time of this competition. He probably would have learned to play the pipes when he was 10 or 11. So we're look? ing at 1906. And I think that Professor Archie Beaton died around the First World War time. So he would have heard, certain? ly would have heard him play. And might have even been instructed by him. See, I'm the wrong person to start this research. It should have been started probably 30 or 40 years ago, when a lot of these pipers were still alive. I've managed to go through the fiddlers' re? pertoire and pick up tunes that I'm sure were pipe tunes. I have a reel from Donald Angus Beaton, and it's written with 10 notes in it. And in the Highland bagpipe we only have 9 notes. So what I did, I just moved this high D, which we can't play on the bagpipe, into an A, to bring it into scale with the bagpipes. And I got a great lit? tle tune, a great little two-part reel, a stepdance tune for the bagpipe. And in conversation with Kinnon Beaton, Donald Angus's son, he said, "Oh, my fa? ther did that all the time. He'd get a pipe tune, and he'd sort of change a couple of the notes up, to sort of in? crease the range." To make it a little more appealing on the violin. Because you have such a broad range on the violin. (You feel if you're alert to what may have been a potential change, to include a 10th note, you may find buried in a lot of fid? dle tunes a pipe tune that was its source.) Exactly. Even now, fiddlers play quite a few tunes. Some of the old tradi? tional tunes that I've gathered from In? verness County, nobody's even sure if they were pipe tunes or fiddle tunes. I haven't really had to change that much to play them guite comfortably on the bagpipe. Jo? seph MacDonald's book on piping, published in 1796, he mentions, "The tunes in this Dan Rory MacDougall, a traditional march First portion as played on the violin by Dan Rory MacDougall (photo at left), piper and fiddler; and second portion as found in the Capt. Angus J. MacNeil manuscript. Pipe embellishments are by Barry Shears.