

Antique Tackle Box

c1889 -1914



Antique Tackle Box c1889-1914

The c1889-1914 Tackle Box

This copper tackle box is 11 ½ inches wide, 6 inches high and 8 inches deep and weighs 10 pounds loaded. Its two levels are subdivided and contain stacked trays. Its lid is also compartmentalized, with hinged copper covers secured by twist locks

What is generally unknown about tackle boxes in this vintage is that they were often only carryalls used to move tackle from the angler's home to the camp or fishing resort. Once at the fishing location, anglers often selected only certain items to angle with based on water, weather and the targeted species; most often, the tackle box did not go into the boat.



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Two Stacking Removable Trays



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Contents of the c1889-1914 Tackle Box

Reels

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B.F. Meek Reel

This is a number 3 size reel (2 inch diameter) constructed of German silver c1889-90.

Estimating the Production Date for Post 1882 Meek Reels



Estimating production dates for Meek's serialized reels is possible because of the work of Steven K. Vernon and Frank M. Stewart III, in their 1992 book "Fishing Reel Makers of Kentucky." For "B.F. Meek, Louisville, KY" stamped reels it is known that: a No. 4 size reel, serial number 85 was made in 1883; a No. 3 size reel, serial number 260 was made in 1885; a No. 3 size reel serial number 477 was made in 1889; and a No. 4 size reel serial number 926 was made in 1896.



By the early 1890s, Meek's three sons had joined the business and during the mid-1890s the firm name, along with the makers mark, changed to "B. F. Meek & Sons."

In addition, it is known that about the time that the company was sold in 1898, serialized, handmade "B.F. Meek" and "B.F. Meek & Sons" serialized reels numbered close to 1,000. Based on the above the estimated date of this reel is c1889-1890.

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B.C. Milam Reel

This is a number 4 size reel (2 ¼-inch dia.) constructed of German silver c1886-87.

Estimating the Production Date for Milam Reels





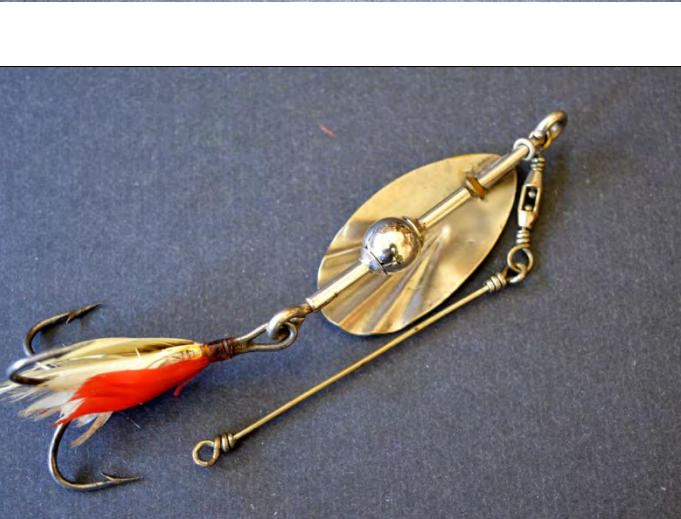
This reel has a stamp that reads "B.C. Milam, Frankfort, KY" in a straight line, a mark used from 1883 to 1896, so we know this particular reel was made during that period. Reels produced between 1896 and 1902 show "B.C. Milam" in a straight line with the phrase "The Frankfort Kentucky Reel" added in an arch above the name. By c1902, Milam's stamp changed again, this time to read "B.C. Milam & Son, Frankfort, KY." Thus, we know that reels with the latest stamp have a production date between 1902 and 1928. Milam also began serializing reels in 1883, starting with the number 5,000. Thanks to Vernon and Stewart's work, we know something about serial number dates. In 1886, S/N 5971 was used, as was another the same year, S/N 5208. Based on this I believe the production date of this reel is sometime between 1886 and 1887. In 1992 when Vernon and Stewart published their book, the lowest known S/N was 5171.

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Contents of the c1889-1914 Tackle Box

Lures, Tools and Accessories




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|  A photograph of a Henry Loftie Trolling Bait. It features a brass barrel-type removable swivel at the top, connected to a long, thin shaft. The shaft has a small red bead and a large, oval, fluted and checkered blade. The blade is attached to a hook at the bottom. | <p>Henry Loftie Trolling Bait</p> <p>Henry Loftie advertised this lure in Forest and Stream magazine on April 7, 1892; it uses a fluted and checkered blade. This photo shows a brass barrel-type removable swivel differing from the box swivel in Loftie's advertisement. Although box swivels are recognized as being quite early, barrel swivels do not always indicate a newer vintage lure. This lure's original feathers have been worn off.</p> |
|  A photograph of a Tortoise Type Blade Spinner. It has a nickel silver, oval blade with a pattern resembling a turtle shell. The blade is attached to a full-feathered shaft. The shaft has a groove and a hole for the blade at the nose, which is unique. The maker is unknown. | <p>Tortoise Type Blade Spinner</p> <p>The turtle shell type free-spinning nickel silver, oval blade and full-feathered shaft of this Trolling Bait is Buel-like. The blade pattern shows wear, and the back had been re-painted. There is a groove and a hole for the shaft at the nose of the blade, which is unique. The maker is unknown.</p> |
|  A photograph of an Mcharg #6 Trolling Bait. It features a reflective ball and long tube washers on the shaft. The shaft is attached to a hook at the bottom. The blade is a large, oval, reflective disc. | <p>Mcharg #6 Trolling Bait</p> <p>This 19th Century lure utilizes a reflective ball and long tube washers on the shaft. According to Arlan Carter (author of 19th Century Fishing Lures) and the collector from whom I obtained it, the blade may have been altered. (Note the nickel silver, high quality box swivel; it comes up again on the unknown lure on p.11, lure #3)</p> |

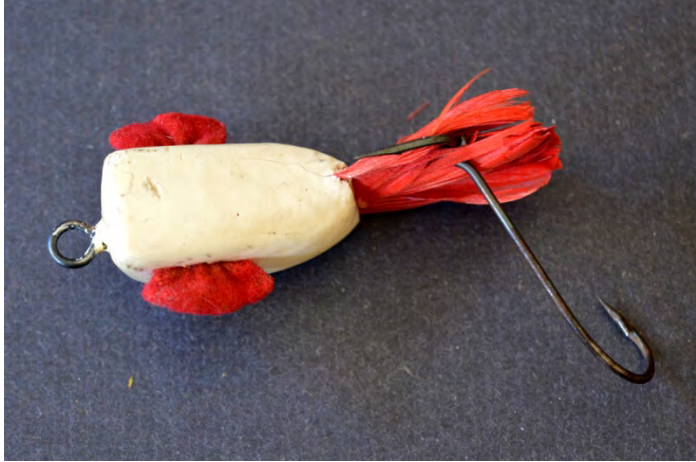


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|  A hand-painted pressed cork fishing lure shaped like a frog. It has a green back with red and yellow wavy patterns, a white belly, and a small black propeller at the rear. Two upward-curving weedless hooks are attached to the top. | <p>Pflueger Meadow Frog</p> <p>The sinking version of this c1900 lure employs a hand-painted pressed cork body with an external belly weight and 2 upward weedless hooks.</p> |
|  A yellow, bullet-shaped fishing lure with gold dots. It has a black band around the middle and a small red fin. Four treble hooks are attached to the sides. | <p>Mills Yellow Kid</p> <p>This lure may be identified in the Wm Mills & Son 1899 Catalogue. Named after a popular Cartoon Character of the 1890's, drawn by RF Outcalt, the Yellow Kid is a hollow body surface lure made of copper and painted yellow with gold dots. The lure head and propeller rotate independently of the body.</p> |
|  A fishing lure with a black and white spiral stripe pattern. It has a white head with large eyes, a silver propeller at the rear, and two side-mounted treble hooks. | <p>The Charmer Minnow</p> <p>Created by F. W. Breder and J. H. Loyd, it was produced by The Charmer Minnow Co. of Springfield, Missouri, and patented on Oct 11, 1910 (Patent # 972,748). It is often referred to as the "Barber Pole Bait" because of its spiral stripe. Found in 3 sizes, with or without eyes, and in an assortment of colors, it utilizes 2 side-mounted treble hooks with see-through hardware and a rotating rear body portion with treble hook.</p> |




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|  | <p>Joliet Spinner Newark, New Jersey</p> <p>Dudley Murphy and Rick Edmisten document this aluminum lure on page 245 of Fishing Lure Collectibles. Unlike their lure, that is marked "Pat. Appl'd for," this 4-inch lure is marked "Pat. 59.574," (non-USA). Murphy and Edmisten identified the bait via an address less 1902 advertisement. The holes in the twisted lure body allow attachment of three double removable hooks.</p> |
|  | <p>Floating Spinner</p> <p>First made by Shakespeare in 1910 and last produced in 1924, the entire head of this wood lure rotates by means of an attached propeller. 3 1/8 inches long, yellow with gold dots, it uses 2 side-mounted treble hooks with one trailing. Side hook fasteners are see-through plate type.</p> |
|  | <p>Vacuum Bait</p> <p>A triangular piece of cedar wood painted with bright colors. The side hooks were designed to rotate freely in a 360-degree circle, supposedly to prevent the fish from twisting itself off the hook. US Patent No. 935657 October 5, 1909 applies to the lure. Please see the article by William R. Eberly on the North Manchester Historical Society website, re: the Howe Vacuum Bait Company</p> |



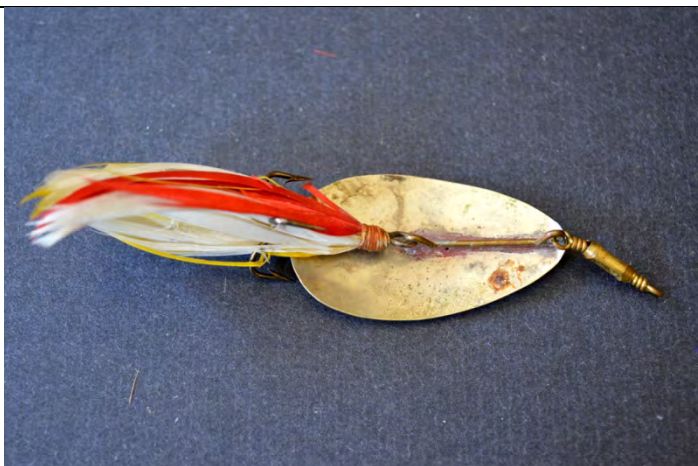
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|  A fishing lure with a white, cylindrical cork body. It has red felt wings on the sides and a red feather tail. A metal hook is attached to the front. | <p>Jamison No. 2 Convertible Coaxer</p> <p>Listed in the 1909 Wm Mills & Son Catalogue, this bait is made of cork and enameled white; it is heavy enough to cast well from a multiplying reel and will always float right side up. 1 1/4 inch long cork body, red felt wings, red feather tail.</p> |
|  A silver, cylindrical aluminum lure. It has a propeller on the side and a brass box swivel on the nose. There are two side-mounted treble hooks with trailing hooks. | <p>Phantom Float</p> <p>The head of this 3 1/8 inches long aluminum lure rotates by means of an attached propeller. "Pat Jan 12, 97" is stamped on the rear of one propeller blade. The bait employs a brass box swivel mounted on the nose and 2 side mounted treble hooks with 1 trailing. The side hook hangers appear to be wired through the body to form wire eyes on each side. Made by Livingston S. Hinckley.</p> |
|  A fishing lure with a silver, teardrop-shaped body. It has a red feather tail and a metal hook attached to the front. | <p>Unknown, Buel type</p> <p>This is an extremely high quality lure, possibly made by Mcharg. German Silver body 1 1/2 inches long with an overall length 3 1/2 inches. Excellent condition with a German Silver box swivel (hand finished/filed). Please compare the box swivel on the Mcharg #6 Trolling Bait above, identical except for size.</p> |




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|  | <p>Chippewa Bait, Pike Size</p> <p>A 4-inch lure, patented on November 1, 1910 (# 974,493) and on May 2, 1911 (# 990,984). Lure used a center spiral spinner having one side painted red and the other side chrome plated and stamped "PATD NOV 1 1910 in the center of the strip that spun when the lure was being retrieved to attract fish. Two removable double hooks & 1 trailing treble hook. The last advertisement known for the "Chippewa" was in 1915 by the C. J. Frost Company.</p> |
|  | <p>Chippewa Bait, Bass Size</p> <p>The same information noted for the Pike size above applies, except that this is a 3-inch lure with a single removable double hook.</p> |
|  | <p>Fluted Trolling Spoons</p> <p>The spoons, size 4 ½ and 4 ¾, are marked "G.M. Skinner, Clayton, N.Y. Pat U.S. & Canada 1874." Gardiner Skinner lived and manufactured lures in Gananoque, Ontario, until 1879 when he relocated to Clayton, NY. Many of these exist and they appear to have been popular.</p> |

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|  Two arrowhead spinners are shown against a dark background. The top spinner has a small, light-colored feather tassel. The bottom spinner has a larger, multi-colored feather tassel with red, white, and yellow feathers. | <p>Arrowhead Spinners</p> <p>Manufactured by J.T. Buel, this is the form of the lure illustrated in his original Apr. 6, 1852, patent, #8,853. These particular lures are newer versions; please see the enlarged photo immediately following for the marking on these.</p> |
|  A close-up of a brass spoon with a hook hanger. The spoon has a stamped marking that reads "J.T. BUEL WHITEHALL N.Y.". | <p>J.T. Buel Spoons and Spinners</p> <p>Over the years, Buel used a number of different trademarks on his products. The earliest are marked with a patent date. Next came the "T" logo where the name "J.T. Buel" is stamped horizontally and underneath it is a perpendicular "Whitehall NY" stamp. The last stamp is illustrated here; these date from c1900.</p> |
|  A J.T. Buel spoon with a hook hanger. The spoon is made of brass and has a multi-colored feather tassel attached to the hook hanger. The tassel has red, white, and yellow feathers. | <p>J.T. Buel Spoon</p> <p>Spoons are made in various configurations. This particular one does not revolve around a center shaft; rather the hook hanger is soldered directly onto the spoon. c1900.</p> |

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|  A close-up photograph of a brass fly spoon. The spoon has a teardrop shape with a box swivel at the top and a treble hook at the bottom. The face of the spoon is stamped with a "T" design and the text "J. T. BUEL" and "PATENTED APRIL 6, 1852". | <p>J. T. Buel No 2 Fly Spoon, c1890</p> <p>Overall length without box swivel 4 ¼-inches, spoon blade Length 2-inches, width 1 1/8-inches</p> <p>The maker's mark on the face of the spoon is stamped with a "T" design but the April 6, 1852, patent date is not included indicating a more recent production period (post c1890). The fly's feathers are missing from this example.</p> |
|  A photograph of a spinner bait. It features a fish-shaped nickel silver blade with a central shaft. The blade is stamped with "PAT APPL'D FOR". The bait has a treble hook at the nose and a single hook at the tail. The body is painted with a red and white pattern. | <p>Unknown Spinner Bait</p> <p>This lure employs a nickel silver, free spinning fish shaped blade measuring 2 inches long; 5 inches overall. Attached at the nose and tail, the blade pivots around a central shaft via a loop at each end. Body is stamped on one side PAT APPL'D FOR. The manufacture date is unknown. It is the author's conjecture that the vintage of this lure is somewhere between 1890 and 1915.</p> |
|  A photograph of a Heddon No. 100 Underwater Minnow. It is a slim, tapered lure with a yellow and orange body. It has a treble hook at the nose and a single hook at the tail. The body is stamped with "Heddon Dowagiac". | <p>Heddon No. 100 Underwater Minnow</p> <p>The particular example shows Cup and Screw Hook Hardware (prior to 1915) with the propellers, stamped "Heddon Dowagiac", indicating a vintage of post 1912. However, it has the early "curved" hand painted double-gill marks and a slim tapered body style, 3" long. This lure's estimated vintage is 1913-1914.</p> |

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J. B. McHarg No 5 American Spinner, c1890

Overall length 4 ¾-inches, blade length 1 5/8-inch, width 7/8-inch

Although J. B. McHarg produced and sold very high quality lures, he also made some lures of lesser quality for distribution by the tackle trade houses. This model is plated brass, undecorated, and marked only with an August 10, 1886 McHarg patent date.



Expert Minnow (three hook model) Mfg. F.C. Woods, Alliance, Ohio

3-inch green wood lure body
4 ½- inch overall length




This lure features through-body twisted wire hook hangers & line tie connection, yellow glass eyes and tube-type bow tie propellers used immediately prior to 1904 when they were superseded. Along with the propellers, the removable treble hooks, patented on 12/23/1903, date the lure to 1903.



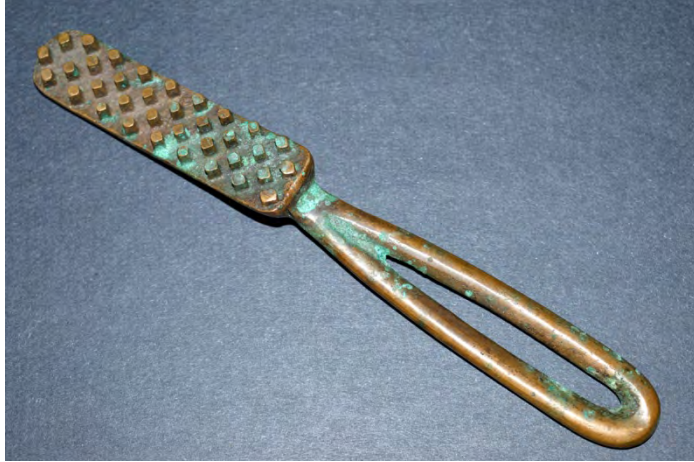
Snelled Hooks and Small Spoon

Gut and wire snelled hook packs and a GM Skinner Casting Spoon on card referencing First Prize at the 1893 Chicago World's Fair.

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|  | <p>Brass Tin with various sizes of Box Swivels</p> <p>The underside of the tin is marked McGill's Fasteners, 100 Varieties, Manufacturers of Brass Goods...Pat'd Apr 20, 1875, Jan 8, 1878, Oct 2, 1883". Box swivels used early on for angling can help date an item. Be advised however that in 2017, they are being manufactured in 21st century China and some are sold as "new, old stock" on eBay.</p> |
|  | <p>Floats /Bobbers</p> <p>Old egg and barrel shaped wooden floats. James Henshall believed that floats should never be used if they could be dispensed with because they are detrimental to casting; they should only be employed if it is deemed necessary to keep the bait off the bottom.</p> |
|  | <p>Climax Extra Strong Brass Fish Stringer</p> <p>I appreciate finely made, old fish stringers and this one is nice. I found one specific reference and illustration in The George Worthington Co. Fishing Catalog for 1923.</p> |

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Copper Fish Scaler

Somewhat rare and unmarked. Karl T. White illustrates two seemingly identical scalers in the Tool and Miscellaneous section of Vol. Three of his work, Fishing Tackle, Antiques and Collectibles. White does not date the item.



Combination Pike Gag & Scissors



Six inches long and made by J. Rogers & Sons, Sheffield, England, this is a truly unique and very old angling accessory; a fine scissors that can keep the largest pike's mouth safely open in order to extract the hook. Before American tackle manufacturers' ramped up production, many mid-19th century angling products were of English origin.






Fishing Reel Seat

Made by J. Brower, Lexington, Kentucky, this seat is marked with a patent date of Oct 4, 87 in three different places; the date also appears under each sliding reel foot holder. The Milam and Meek reels above were photographed while attached to this seat.

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|  | <p>Folding Knife</p> <p>F. Herder Abr. Sohn (F. Herder, Abraham's Son) with Spade Logo; large, early German Pocket Knife, 1885 vintage (some experts say earlier). The knife appears unused.</p> <p>The thumbnail photo shows the Spade Logo.</p> |
|  | <p>18 X Magnifier</p> <p>Date on outside part of male snap fastener is Feb 17, 1903; actual patent date is Mar 3, 1914. The male snap part is a very early bird cage design. C1903-1914</p> |
|  | <p>Sunglasses</p> <p>Stored in a wooden case, these glasses utilize a C type bridge, oval lenses and a riding bow temple; they date from the late 19th century.</p> |

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|  | <p>Brass Slide Locking Tweezers</p> <p>A pair of tweezers is a handy angling tool with many uses. The maker and vintage are unknown, but the style and patina indicate significant age.</p> |
|  | <p>Fish (Scale) Balance</p> <p>A scale is a nice-to-have angler's implement in any sport anglers tackle box. This one, made by Chatillon and marked with a patent date of Dec 10, 1867, is a gift from an English friend during his visit to America.</p> |
|  | <p>Pliers</p> <p>Patent date of Jul 30, 1867 is stamped on both inside handles. Patent 67,370 was issued to W.X. Stevens of Waterford, New York, for having invented a new and improved instrument combining Pliers and Shears.</p> |