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Editors' Foreword

Trowel has at last reached its tenth volume, a milestone in the life of what is a unique publication in Ireland. This milestone marks a number of changes in the style and direction which Trowel has been taking. Trowel is first and foremost a vehicle for student publication. The expansion in size of the journal, we hope, will further this goal. The development of the journal has allowed for a diverse range of contributions, including a 'Reflections' section, and new and interesting types of articles. The 'Reflections' section is a new concept for Trowel, it provides an inclusive forum for thoughts, discussions and personal experiences of archaeology, including views from other walks of life, encouraging us to think about things in new and interesting ways.

Unfortunately, Trowel X has been a long time coming, in a way this has allowed for the re-invention of the journal but we hope that it will not be repeated for Trowel XI. We hope that Trowel will flourish, continuing to serve its traditional purpose, as well as taking on new and even more diverse roles.

The publication of Trowel would not have been possible without the generous help of many people. The editors would like to extend our thanks to the School of Archaeology UCD for providing facilities and support, particularly to Dr. Aidan O'Sullivan. We would also like to express our sincerest thanks to the contributors, to our sponsors and to all those who provided advice and encouragement throughout our tenure.

The Editors

Niall Kenny and Brian Dolan

August 2005

Identifying Burials of the Irish Iron Age and Transitional Periods c. 800BC-AD600

Tiernan McGarry*

Although the Irish Iron Age was the latest of the prehistoric periods, it has often been viewed as a relatively 'Dark Age' when compared to the Bronze Age (and, in many respects, even the Neolithic). The absence of native pottery and the extreme scarcity of settlements and burials have long been viewed as essential characteristics of the Irish Iron Age and its 'invisible people' (Raftery, B. 1994, 112-46), and it appeared that we might indeed have to remain over-reliant upon Early Medieval literature and folklore for a retrospective 'window' on the period (Jackson 1964).

The amount of burials of known Irish Iron Age date has, however, increased considerably during the past two decades and they have the potential to tell us much about human circumstances, beliefs and behaviour during that period. Where they were situated in the landscape may, amongst other things, indicate human perceptions of, and reactions to, tradition, territoriality, kinship, politics, economic pragmatism, and proximity to supernatural forces. Objects deliberately or inadvertently accompanying the deceased may reveal aspects of personal and communal identity, stylistic or artistic preference, status, occupation, leisure pursuits, militarism, and perhaps suggest belief in an afterlife. They may also tell us something about the local economy, crafts, and regional and long-distance migration, contacts and trade. Our interpretation of beliefs and rituals might be improved (or complicated) by other factors such as burial posture and orientation, the degrees of completeness and articulation of inhumed remains, the processes used to transform a body into a cremated deposit, the construction methods and morphology of the burial place or monument, and the spatial relationships between burials in the same landscape. Inter-visibility between settlements and burial places, and degrees of accessibility to monuments, might also hint at contemporary perceptions of the role of the dead in the world of the living.

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Scientific analyses carried out on human bone rarely positively identify the actual cause of death but they can determine, amongst other things, the sex of the deceased, whether they had given birth, age at time of death, stature, dietary deficiencies, diseases, wounds and occupational injuries, while substances absorbed during a person's lifetime can also leave behind a regional 'signature' that can reveal where they lived during long periods. Some abnormalities can be hereditary and can therefore help to suggest blood relationships between individuals buried in the same cemetery, and more extensive DNA studies in the future may use ancient bone to trace prehistoric population origins and movements (Mallory & O Donnabháin 1998).

The above are just some of the ways in which burials can behave like 'time capsules' that preserve information and contribute to our knowledge and understanding of the Irish Iron Age. There are differing opinions on when this 'Iron Age' began and ended in Ireland, and discussion of the period is replete with many other issues of definition (see Raftery, B. 1994, 26-37; Raftery, B. 1995b; Edwards 1990, 1-5), but as this project is also intended to capture evidence for burial practices during the transitional periods overlapping with the end of the Bronze Age and the start of the Early Middle Ages, a date range of about 800BC to 600AD has been provisionally selected. The initial task is to identify burials that occurred, beyond reasonable doubt, within this time-frame. This is not, however, as straightforward as it is for most other periods, and the purpose of this paper is to outline and briefly discuss some of the methodological issues (as they stand now) under headings generally applicable to most periods.¹

Burial posture and orientation of inhumations

The manner in which inhumation burials lie in their graves may, in some cases, suggest an approximate date. Where this is possible, however, it is seldom unambiguously diagnostic of an Iron Age date but rather tends to identify burials that are either unlikely to belong to the period, or those that could be from a lengthy Iron Age-Early Medieval transitional period. For example, an extended W-E burial with legs and feet very close together and with arms tight to the body probably indicates that the body was wrapped in

1. Please be aware that some generalisations are used because restricted space does not permit the many exceptions to be dealt with satisfactorily

a shroud according to the Christian fashion of the seventh century AD or later (O'Brien 2003, 67).

Although crouched or flexed burials, and those orientated with heads at the N, S, or E are normally considered pre-Christian (or non-Christian), excavations at Early Medieval cemeteries have produced exceptions that might be explained by Christians being buried otherwise than extended because of rigor mortis, or even prone or headless (O'Brien 1999b 5-7, 54) because they were strangers, outcasts or battle victims. However, as Christians and pagans appear to have been buried in the same secular cemeteries until about the eighth century when the church began to legislate on the matter (*ibid*, 53) it is possible that some of these unusual burials are of pagans, and perhaps even pre-historic ones. Indeed, the cemetery at Ballymacaward, County Donegal (O'Brien 1999a), which scientific dating has shown to have been used during the Bronze Age and Early Iron Age for cremations, and during the Late Iron Age and Early Medieval periods for extended inhumations, should remind us of the real possibility that the remains of perceived ancestors lie at the lowest levels of some cemeteries of apparently Early Christian character.

Many extended inhumations of varying orientation found other than in cemeteries generally adhering to W-E orientation may well be Iron Age in date (O'Brien 2003, 65-6) but such a diagnosis has rarely been conclusive in the absence of associated scientific or artefact dating. It also remains possible that some 'long cist' extended burials belong to the last few centuries BC (Raftery, B. 1981, 193-4; Raftery, J. 1941) although the alternative dating evidence that has recently materialised does appear to favour the emergence of extended slab-lined cists towards the end of the Iron Age, in the fifth century AD (O'Brien 2003, 66-7; & forthcoming).

The emergence of W-E extended burial in Ireland, as at Ninch, County Meath (Fig 1), is also generally assigned to the fifth century because there are at present only a mere handful whose radiocarbon ranges stretch into the fourth (O'Brien 2003, 65-9). The apparently delayed appearance of this rite compared to Britain where it had become the norm for extended burials in the fourth century (*ibid*), and its rapid progression towards dominance thereafter, raises some important, and somewhat related,



Figure 1. Mound (behind electricity pole) at Ninch, County Meath which produced Late Iron Age W-E extended inhumation burials accompanied by flint artefacts (Sweetman 1983). Photo: T McGarry.

questions. Secondly, was W-E burial really a sudden fifth-century revolution that resulted from intense contact with Britain, and/or Christianity arriving and then spreading like wildfire, or was it present earlier and therefore just one burial rite development that just happened to be later popularised and standardised by Christianity?

Unfortunately, although it remains quite possible that earlier W-E burials have already been excavated but assigned to the Christian period instead, the amount of securely dated burials of the third-fourth centuries is currently too low to allow us to address the matters of British influences, and burial development versus revolution, with any real confidence. It might also be the case that some of those few burials we are aware of could even be, as rea-

soned for the second-century W-E extended inhumations at Bray (Lewis 1837), the remains of ephemeral minority or immigrant practices (Raftery 1994, 209).

It would appear at present that burial posture and orientation are not always sufficient, without other independent dating evidence, to differentiate beyond reasonable doubt between burials of the Iron Age and Early Medieval periods, and they can contribute even less to discriminating between the similarly crouched, flexed and disarticulated inhumations that occurred during both the Bronze Age and Iron Age.

Stratigraphy

Relationships between burials and other features can sometimes provide a *Terminus Post Quem* (TPQ) or *Terminus Ante Quem* (TAQ), but it is uncommon to get a combination of both that points clearly to an Iron Age date for a burial. Instead, we more often get either a TPQ or a TAQ, or a combination that remains chronologically inconclusive. For example, several burials in a level pre-dating the construction of a rath with a souterrain at Madden's Hill, County Meath, did not conform to Christian W-E orientation and could therefore belong to the Iron Age (Rynne 1974) but dating evidence for the construction of the rath was lacking and they are, perhaps, as likely to be Early Medieval.

Even when we do know the date of the other stratigraphic features, determining an Iron Age date for a burial can be particularly problematic. Let us take as an example a pit cremation or extended inhumation lying above a burial that is known to be Bronze Age in date and below one known to be Early Medieval. Such a burial might well be Iron Age but the similarities between unaccompanied Bronze Age pit cremation burials and those of the Early Iron Age, and between Late Iron Age and Early Medieval inhumations would presently, in the absence of other diagnostic evidence, most probably result in it being assigned to either the earlier or later period. This would be because similar burials elsewhere have been assigned in massively higher numbers to those periods than they have to the Iron Age - so it would be the 'safe' or 'prudent' thing to do.

The stratigraphic relationship of a burial to another burial, artefact, or radio-

carbon sample of known Iron Age date is, of course, a different matter because the alternative evidence has already established the use of the site during the period and now the excavator would no longer be imprudent in estimating an Iron Age date for an associated burial.

An interesting example of stratigraphic dating for an Iron Age burial is the human clavicle found amidst the cairn material deposited over the destroyed 40-metre structure at Navan Fort which had the felling date of its central post dated by dendrochronology to 95-4 BC (Lynn 2003, 60-1, 114). Whether a single bone constitutes a 'burial' is, of course, debatable but we should clarify that the key objective of this project is to trace what happened to the corporal remains of the dead - whether buried, excarnated, abandoned, eaten, cremated, pounded to dust, placed in water or surface tombs, or kept as ancestral relics or mementos.

Artefacts

Prior to the advent of absolute dating techniques, and apart from some very distinctive burial monuments such as passage tombs, 'grave goods' were probably the commonest and most reliable means of dating a burial to a particular prehistoric period (and often still are, see 'Radiocarbon' below). While in some cases, inscriptions such as on the Roman coins (presumably for paying the Stygian ferryman, Charon) with the burials discovered at Bray in the nineteenth century (Lewis 1837) can provide a most probable period, the analysis of artefact typology is the most common dating technique. Many thousands of burials in Ireland and Europe have been conclusively assigned to particular periods on the basis of artefact style, decoration, morphology, stages of technological development, or because of particular raw materials used during defined periods. Elaborately furnished burials from the Hallstatt and La Tène Iron Age periods, such as those of Vix in France and of Yorkshire in England (James 1993, 22-4, 100-102; Stead 1965; 1991), have been found throughout the lands of Celtic Europe but, almost inexplicably, have not been found in the most reputedly 'Celtic' country of all, Ireland, where grave goods, when present, are considerably more modest.

As Waddell's study of Irish Bronze Age burials (1990) has shown, pottery is quite common with burials of that period. Two of its key attributes are that its form and decoration can be very distinctive during particular periods and that it survives well in most burial contexts. Unfortunately, it can not assist us in identifying Iron Age burials because native pottery all but disappears during the Iron Age (Raftery, B. 1995) and this writer is not aware of a single instance where imported pottery has been useful instead. One recently-excavated, but as yet unpublished, Iron Age burial has produced a fragment of coarseware from the same context but, because of its small size and the fact that we do not have an Iron Age type to compare it to, we cannot be fully confident that it was broadly contemporary rather than older stray or ploughzone material incorporated into the fill.

Other imports or influences from places where the distinctive material culture of the period has been recovered in greater quantities have, however, been more useful. Objects of likely Romano-British origin have, for example, been found with a cremation at Stoneyford, County Kilkenny (Clibborn 1852; Bourke 1989) and with inhumations on Lambay Island (Macalister 1929; Rynne 1976). A pre-Roman date is very probable for the bronze bowl used to hold a cremation discovered at Fore, County Westmeath (Kelly 2002, 127, 137) with close similarities to another from Spettisbury Rings, Dorset (James & Rigby 1997, 41), and also for the tinned and enamelled cylindrical bronze box from Ballydavis, County Laois, (Keeley 1995, 51-2) which has parallels with one from a female chariot burial at Wetwang Slack, Yorkshire (James 1993, 100-102).

The box from Wetwang Slack has aspects of La Tène style ornamentation but remarkably few objects of that or Roman type have been recovered from burials of the Irish Iron Age, and this is all the more regrettable because, unlike commoner Irish grave goods such as glass and bone beads, they often lend themselves to quite close typological dating. In a small number of cases, as O'Brien (1990, 38; 2003, 63-5) has shown, it is nevertheless possible to date some cremation burials to the Iron Age on the basis of close typological similarities between associated (and in the main, exotic) glass beads and those from scientifically-dated inhumation burials.

Apart from the most obvious conclusion that Irish Iron Age people almost

always disposed of their dead in a manner no longer detectable, another reason for the dearth of diagnostic Roman and La Tène grave goods might be that they are also rare finds outside of burial contexts - objects of La Tène style or decoration are uncommon enough to be viewed as being indicative of high status (Raftery, B. 1995b, 5-6), and the quantity of Roman style objects from Ireland is minuscule when compared to Britain. It could also be true that Iron Age mourners did not normally deliberately furnish burials with grave goods or bury the deceased in everyday clothing that might have been fastened or decorated with durable objects. In this regard it is worth noting that they would not have been that different from their predecessors and successors for many cremations assigned to the Bronze Age (particularly those in simple pits), and inhumations of the Early Medieval period, have been found unaccompanied by diagnostic portable artefacts. Examples of diagnostic La Tène style finds that have actually been recovered from Irish burials include an iron fibula from a cremation at Kiltierney, County Fermanagh (Foley 1988), and the heat-warped bone plaque from Cush, County Limerick (Ó Ríordáin 1940, 154) with clear similarities to one with La Tène spiral decoration from Lough Crew, County Meath (Raftery, B. 1994, 166).

Every dating technique has weaknesses and artefact typology is no exception because the possibility, however remote, remains that an artefact could have been a family heirloom and therefore considerably older than the burial it accompanied.

Materials

Although objects of bone, glass, flint, stone, wood, jet, and bronze have been found in, or associated with, Iron Age burial contexts, such materials were also used during earlier and later periods and cannot therefore, on their own, help us to identify burials from the period. Iron artefacts, however, by their very nature should almost always post-date the Irish Bronze Age. An Iron object will not generally survive well in Irish soils, and it is often difficult to establish its original form or purpose, but determining that it was worked, rather than natural ore, is often sufficient. Iron could, of course, be Medieval but its presence accompanying cremation burials, which appear to have all but ceased before the seventh century AD, should place any such burial beyond reasonable doubt within the LBA-Iron Age transition or, more

likely, the Iron Age proper.

Relationship to settlements

An unaccompanied burial found beneath the floor of a house at Çatal Höyük, in a cemetery just beyond the limits of a Roman settlement such as Verulamium, or one in a pit at Danebury, would, sensibly, often be dated by association. However, very few settlement sites have been assigned to the Irish Iron Age and this writer is not yet aware of any burials that have been convincingly dated solely by association with one. Indeed, at present, it appears more likely that we may identify settlements by searching in the vicinity of Iron Age burials than vice versa.

Morphology of burial monuments

It is quite possible that ringbarrows, of one kind or another, were the earliest (Raftery, B. 1994, 189) and one of the most commonly constructed surface burial monuments during the Iron Age, but further research will be necessary to confirm this. What we can say for certain is that they were only one of a very wide variety of burial places or monuments used, and most of these had their typological origins in earlier periods - which, without excavation and alternative dating evidence, makes estimating the period of construction extremely difficult.

A good example of this problem is the site of Rathdooney Beg, County Sligo (Fig 2), where a bowl barrow created during the Neolithic was replicated nearby on a smaller scale during the Early Iron Age and used as a burial place (Mount 1999). Similarly, several Bronze Age ringbarrows, for example at Kilmahuddrick, County Dublin (Doyle 2001), appear to have become foci for secondary cremation burials during the Iron Age. Such replication of earlier practices complicates our search, but it also suggests an empathy which may help to explain why some Iron Age burials were inserted into Neolithic passage tombs at Carrowmore, County Sligo (Burenhult 1980; 1984).

We have already discussed the difficulties involved in attempting to differentiate Iron Age inhumation burials from those of earlier and later periods. Blurring distinctions from the other direction, Bishop Tírechán writing in the seventh century (De Paor 1996, 165), and perhaps projecting



Figure 2. Rathdooney Beg Neolithic barrow in background. In the foreground is a replica barrow built during the Early Iron Age. Photo: T McGarry

his own experiences back to the time of Patrick, suggests that some Christian converts of that time still created new ferta burial monuments in the fashion of pre-historic 'pagan' ring-ditches, and both he and Muirchú also mention incidents when Patrick could not, from appearance alone, tell pagan and Christian graves apart (O'Brien 1999b, 54).

Irish Iron Age burials have been found in bogs, pits, ringditches, ringbarrows, earthen mounds, cairns, passage tombs, shell middens, cists and other sub-rectangular graves of various types, and burials can either be isolated or grouped together in cemeteries. There does not yet appear to be a field burial monument that is diagnostically Iron Age in form.

Dendrochronology

Unfortunately, Irish prehistoric graves rarely contain samples of wood suitable for this process. The only instance known to the writer where this technique has been useful in dating a burial to the Iron Age is the human bone discovered amidst the cairn material at Navan Fort (above).

Radiocarbon

One of the credible reasons why we have not been able to identify more burials from the period with confidence is because of a Catch 22 that has prevailed up until now: we did not have enough securely-dated Iron Age burials to work with and consequently did not have sufficient data to use to identify peculiar characteristics or patterns, in behaviour and associated artefacts, that would help to assign others to the period (this might also be a factor hindering the discovery of elusive Iron Age settlements).

Radiocarbon dating could be the light at the end of this tunnel. The surge in development-led archaeological excavations in the past 20 years has coincided with technological improvements that have increased the accuracy of radiocarbon determinations and reduced the cost of the process. There are now a considerable number of burials that have been scientifically dated to the period (e.g. O'Brien 2003, 69-70; Raftery, B. 1994, 229-30) and many others await publication. Hopefully, we will soon reach a critical mass of scientifically-dated Iron Age burials that will allow us to identify those crucial patterns and peculiarities and thereafter proceed to assign other previously undated, or incorrectly dated, burials within the period (or at least determine that they are as likely to be Iron Age as they are Bronze Age or Early Medieval).

Unfortunately, radiocarbon dating has several weaknesses that must be taken into account. The first concerns the availability and suitability of particular sample substances. For example, relatively large amounts of unburnt bone have been required to produce a conventional radiocarbon result (Greene 1995, 114-23) and, as this has not always been available (or desirable for practical or ethical reasons), the number of burials dated by radiocarbon has been lower than it would otherwise have been. It is also the case that, until recently, the dating of cremated bone was considered an impossibility (Lanting & Brindley 1998) and associated charcoal, with its

potential for chronological ambiguity due to an 'old wood effect' (Renfrew & Bahn 2000, 137-45), has normally been the substance dated. Accelerator Mass Spectrometry (AMS) has, thankfully, drastically reduced the quantity of unburnt human bone (or other relatively short-lived organic matter) required, and further scientific advances have also been made that now allow cremated bone rather than charcoal to be processed (Lanting, J.N. & Brindley, A. 1998), but we must nevertheless remain cautious when working with determinations produced by the latter from older excavations.

The second major weakness is that the calibration curve contains many sections where calibration is very imprecise (see Fig 3).

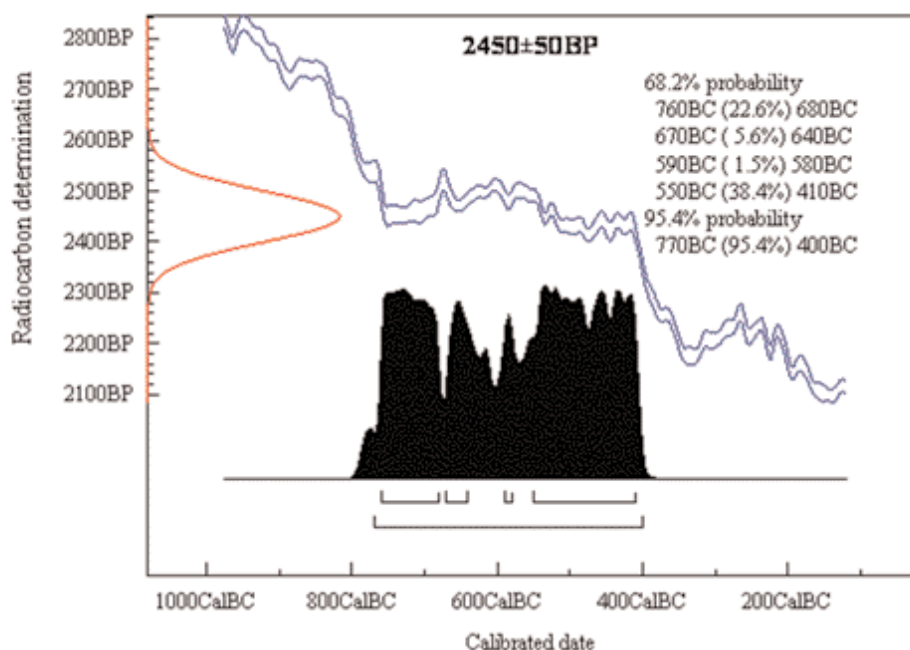


Figure 3. The radiocarbon calibration curve resembles a 'plateau' c. 800-400BC. As a consequence of this, a determination falling during this period cannot normally be refined further with an acceptable degree of probability.

Graph Source: OxCal v.3.9. Reproduced with the kind permission of Dr Bronk Ramsey. (Bronk Ramsey C 1995, 2001).

Although this is an extreme example, calibration imprecision during other periods of the Iron Age still leaves us in a situation whereby a radiocarbon result will normally only provide a date (at 95% probability) to within a few centuries of the death of the organic sample source. This can still be extremely valuable for determining an Iron Age date for a burial but it makes the identification of trends or developments during the period difficult. Occasionally, such as in the case of the bronze bowl from Fore dated typologically to the second century BC (Kelly 2002, 137, 150), and where the cremated bone it contained was subsequently radiocarbon-dated to 2110 ± 40 BP (Lanting & Brindley 1998, 6) or 350-30BC at 2 sigma (OxCal 3.9), the typological or art-historical analysis of an associated artefact can provide tighter date ranges.

The final important relevant weakness of radiocarbon dating derives from human nature rather than scientific limitations - the decision whether and, if so, what to sample. In an ideal world, sampling and processing results would be even more common than it has become or, failing that, every archaeologist would be as obsessed with trying to resolve the conundrum of Iron Age burials. In reality, however, tight excavation budgets dictate that a limited number of samples are processed and potential Iron Age burials might be passed over because the decision-maker believes they already know that an unaccompanied pit cremation is very likely to be Bronze Age or an unaccompanied extended W-E inhumation is Christian.

Conclusion

At present, most of the mortuary practices associated with known Iron Age burials seem somewhat eclectic and do not clearly distinguish them from earlier or later periods. Instead, it would appear that similar variations of both cremation and inhumation were practiced during both the Bronze Age and the Iron Age and, likewise, Late Iron Age inhumations can be difficult to differentiate from those of the Early Medieval period. Indeed, were it not for radiocarbon dating the cremation burial at Kilmahuddrick would almost certainly have been assigned to the Bronze Age, and in the absence of Roman coins of Trajan (AD 97-117) and Hadrian (AD 117-138), the extended inhumations at Bray would most probably have been considered Early Medieval. As similar cases appear to be becoming the norm rather than the exception for recently identified Iron Age burials, it is hoped that

radiocarbon sample decision-makers will become increasingly aware of the possibility of Iron Age dates for many burials that, at face value, appear earlier or later. The potential for radiocarbon dating, and development-led excavations, to increase our understanding of circumstances, behaviour, and degrees of exotic influence during the Iron Age is immense to say the least.

We are in a very privileged position compared to our predecessors in that absolute dating and other techniques allow us to chronologically order and examine ancient material remains in a manner unthinkable even a few decades ago. Most of them would, perhaps, be greatly disappointed in us if we allowed their, then reasonable, emphatic views on the absence or presence of particular behaviour or artefacts during some archaeological period to become self-fulfilling prophecies because they deter or blind us from recognising new or alternative evidence that might present itself today.

None of this suggests that there are thousands of Iron Age burials just waiting to be recognised for what they are, only that we should allow for the possibility that there might be.

I would like to acknowledge generous and patient assistance received from my supervisor Professor Barry Raftery, Dr Rob Sands, and Dr Elizabeth O'Brien, funding from the Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences, and support from the Humanities Institute of Ireland. As not all expert advice has been reflected here, all errors and omissions are my own.

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PhD Thesis

Burials of the Irish Iron Age and Transitional Periods c. 800BC-AD600.

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An Experimental Approach to Irish Latchets

Sharon A. Greene*

Introduction - the latchet form

Latchets have a very distinct form, which seems most likely to have developed from the earlier ring-headed pins of the Iron Age (Greene 2000, 28). The body of the artefact consists of two primary parts i.e. the disc-head and the stem. In some cases the terminal of the stem is decorated or expanded and a further expansion may occur in the middle of the stem also (Fig 1). A further occasional feature is the presence of corkscrew-like bronze coils on the stem. It is unclear whether all latchets originally had these as they have been lost prior to discovery, however, even where there are no expansions on the stem the curvature of the stem is close enough to prevent them slipping off easily. Such bronze coils have been found independently, for example in the excavations at Clogher, Co Tyrone (R. Warner pers. comm.) and Garranes (Ó Ríordáin 1942, 100) and they are also present on some larger penannular brooches such as that from near Castledermot, Co Kildare (Youngs 1989, 32).

Planning the reproduction

In order to better understand how these artefacts were made, a reproduction of a latchet was carried out. An experienced maker of bronze reproduction artefacts, Andrew Mason of Weyland Reproductions in Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, England, was involved from the start, including in the choice latchet type to be reproduced. Before the work could begin, the existing artefacts were examined for any clues that they could give regarding their construction. The first feature to be noted was the evidence for hammering on the reverse of some of the disc-heads. This is clearly visible on an unprovenanced Type A(i) (NMI ref: X.-) and the so-called 'Dublin Museum latchet' (NMI ref: W.492). The impressions left on these examples were made by a tool with an oblong striking surface, perhaps a small hammer similar to that found at the Garryduff ringfort, co Cork (O'Kelly 1964, 64-5). It is also worth noting however, that there is no such evidence on a number of other latchets. The most important question being asked by this

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experiment was regarding the relationship between the disc-head and the stem. On none of the extant examples is there any sign of a join or seam where these two elements meet suggesting, to the inexperienced eye, that there is no such seam. The presence of a join would mean that this was a vulnerable point in the structure, but no example is broken here. The Kiondroghad latchet, the only example from outside Ireland, appears to have had its stem removed at this point with a pincers or some similar tool (Greene forthcoming) and the 'Dublin Museum' latchet's stem is broken a few millimetres below the meeting point (Henry 1965, Plate 13). The lack of a visible join suggested that the entire artefact was hammered out from a single bar of bronze. This was deemed unlikely by the bronzesmith carrying out the reproduction. There were a number of methods of joining used by early medieval metalworkers, including riveting, soldering, cements and mechanical joins such as folding. Riveting was the preferred method for most major joins and a wide range of solders were used but generally only to hold together minor components such as filigree on foils (Craddock 1989, 171). It is clear that rivets were not used to join the latchet stem to the disc, suggesting that a particularly robust solder must have been employed.

The decision to reproduce a plain, Type D latchet was made for two reasons. Firstly, all Type D latchets are undecorated. Any attempt to reproduce decorative elements was deemed unnecessary as the primary reason for this experiment was to understand how the basic latchet form was reached. It would also have added significantly to the expense of the project. Secondly, this type was chosen for its convenient size (i.e. not too small and fiddly) and because it has most of the features of the latchet form i.e. disc-head, S-stem, expanded terminal and loose bronze coils. The mid-stem expansion is the only absent feature.

Producing the latchet

From the start, the possibility that the artefact was made from a single piece of bronze was deemed unlikely because of the difference in metal amount required for the rounded stem and large flat disc head. The reproduction was thus carried out in five steps:

1. Making the disc-head.

A square sheet of bronze 2 inches square and 4mm thick was selected as the basis of the disc. It was annealed (heated to a dull red heat), quenched with

water and hammered until the metal began to harden (Fig 2). This process was repeated ten times. A circle was then scribed on the metal and the excess bronze chiselled away (Fig 3). The circular blank was then ground and filed until smooth.

2. Making the loose bronze coils.

The loose bronze coils were made of two narrow bronze rods, which were hammered to the correct length and then turned into spring form by twisting them around a mandrill (Fig 4).

3. Making the stem.

The S-stem was beaten out of a length of bronze rod until it reached the correct length, thickness and section shape (Fig 5). The stem was then bent into its distinctive S-shape and the two coils put in place.

4. Attaching the stem and disc head.

The stem and disc were then attached by means of a technique known as 'spoon technology', i.e. the same method by which a spoon is attached to its handle (Figs 6, 7, 8). The end of the stem was flattened slightly and soldered to the disc. It was then hammered to blend the joint to the disc.

5. Making the terminal expansion.

The terminal expansion of the stem was created by beating until it formed a flat C-shaped curve with a squared ending (Fig 9). It was then polished.

Time

The preparation of the disc, including annealing, hammering, grinding and polishing took a total of ten hours (eight to create the circular blank and two to grind and polish it). The shaping of the bronze coils took five hours. The completion of the stem took three hours. It is suggested that casting the blanks (i.e. the metal bars from which the stem and coils and the square sheet for the disc were made) from ingots of bronze and the use of hand tools only and of a primitive forge would add a further two days to the process. This suggests a total of up to five days for one metalworker to produce one Type D latchet.

Observations on the result

In form and dimension, the reproduction latchet matches most closely the Type D latchet taken from the River Shannon in 1849 and currently held in the collections of the British Museum (Youngs 1989, 43). There are two

points in which it differs from the extant Type D latchets. Firstly, some hammer impressions are still visible on the reverse of both the disc-head and the expanded terminal of the reproduction. Secondly, there is a noticeable difference in the area where the disc and stem meet. In the reproduction the join of the disc and stem is clearly visible. On the front it is a simple seam, however on the reverse one is left with a squat version of the 'rat tail' visible on the reverse of early spoons. It is possible however, that further working may have helped this seam to 'disappear'.

The creation of this reproduction allowed experimentation into how these cumbersome looking artefacts may have functioned in their probable role as dress fasteners. It is thought that the simpler Type A(i) examples with no stem expansions worked much like other dress pins of this period, using the loose bronze coils as security devices (Greene 2001, 14; Whitfield 2004, 92). Those with terminal expansions obviously required a different method of attachment. The coils on the reproduction latchet were used to attach it to a shawl made on a vertical loom to great effect, simply by winding the coils carefully through the cloth (Fig 10). It was very secure and wearing it proved it to be less cumbersome than expected.

Conclusions

This experimental approach has given some new insights into a curious artefact type. Firstly it has gone some way to help us understand the manufacturing process that went into their production, though there still seems to be a small question mark over how the disc and stem were attached. Even for the undecorated Type D, the time involved is quite considerable. The addition of decorative recesses and enamel would have added further to the time and skills required. It has already been suggested that, given the rarity of latchets in comparison to contemporary dress fasteners like penannular brooches and the unusual and specific form they take, that latchets may have been an indicator of some specific role or attribute of the wearer in early medieval society (Greene 1998, 84). If the work that went into making such an object is any indication of its contemporary value, this experiment suggests a not inconsiderable value was attached to latchets.

The other important aspect of this reproduction was that it allowed experimentation with methods by which it could have filled the role of dress

fastener. Eighteenth century antiquarians argued that they were musical instrument (Vallancey 1783, 45; Ledwich 1790, 244) and it wasn't until the mid-nineteenth century that they were interpreted as “latchet-fasteners” or “spectacle brooches” by Wilde (1861, 566). It has now been shown that they were capable of effective use as a dress fastener.

Acknowledgements

Sincere thanks to 'Blue' (Andrew Mason) for his careful attention to detail in carrying out this experiment and for sharing his valuable experience and insight. Much of this article is based on the report he produced along with the latchet. I would also like to thank Richard Warner of the Ulster Museum for bringing the bronze coil from Clogher to my attention and my MA supervisor Dorothy Kelly for encouraging me to investigate this aspect of latchets.

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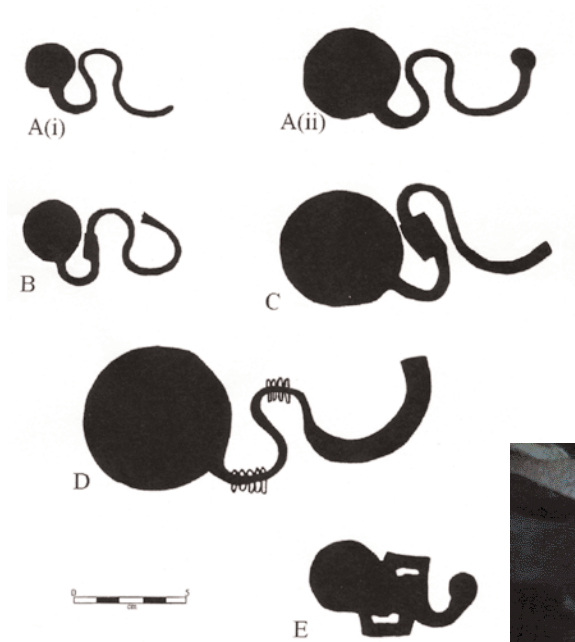


Figure 1

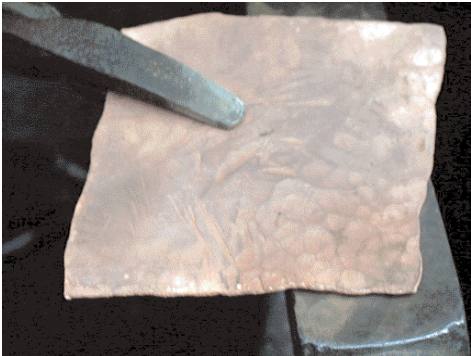


Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7



Figure 8



Figure 9



Figure 10

The Use of Domestic Space in Early Medieval Roundhouses: An Experimental Archaeological Approach

Tríona Nicholl*

Introduction

Houses and the domestic spaces they contain were the nucleus of Irish early medieval secular settlements. Working with reconstructed roundhouses at the Irish National Heritage Park, Co. Wexford since 2001 has highlighted a number of gaps in our understanding of how their interior domestic space could be used. The activities which can be carried out in any house are essentially limited and controlled by the physical capabilities of the structure itself in terms of interior visibility. Using a multi-disciplinary approach this study sought to establish the extent to which the chosen style of roundhouse architecture dictated how the domestic space within could be utilised.

The use of domestic space in early medieval roundhouses

In order to explore these issues, this study focused on three main areas of investigation:

- Exploration of the spread of light within roundhouse interiors.
- Analysis of the impact fire and the light, heat and smoke it generates will have upon visibility within the structure.
- Study of the preservative effect smoke and heat will have upon the superstructure.

Location of the project within the current state of research

Early medieval houses and dwellings have been studied extensively from the initial excavation reports of S.P. Ó'Riordáin (1941) through to Murray (1979), Lynn (1986; 1994) and Bradley's (2002) later syntheses of the archaeological material with the early historical documentary evidence. However, most studies tend to focus on architectural and typological

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development rather than attempting any analysis of the how the structures functioned and why (Stout 2000).

The study of early medieval documentary sources helps to people these archaeological landscapes through the various legal, narrative and hagiographical texts (Kelly 1988; de Paor 1996). However it is when both archaeology and history are used together that the greatest insight into the dynamics of the architecture can be made (Murray 1979; Lynn 1986; 1994).

Experimental archaeological research can help further those insights. Used in conjunction with archaeological and historical evidence, it can answer practical questions concerning the use of technology and architecture (Coles 1973; Hurcombe 2005). Despite the success of this approach and the available research ground at the Heritage Park, experimental archaeology has had very limited application within the field of Irish archaeological research. This study therefore sought to unite the archaeological and historical evidence while also acting as an advocacy of the informative benefits of experimental approaches.

Methodology

The experimental archaeological work was carried out at the Irish National Heritage Park where there are two reconstructed early medieval settlements containing four roundhouses - one drystone, and three post and wattle roundhouses one of which is daubed. One of the post and wattle houses has been allowed to deteriorate naturally in order to analyse its rate and points of collapse.

Measurement of light levels

A light survey was conducted in the three intact roundhouses over a twenty-four hour period using a lux meter which measures natural daylight. Each house was divided into 8 equal segments radiating out from the hearth in the centre, marked at 1m intervals. Two sets of readings were taken at these intervals, one 30cm above floor level and another at 1m above.

The other elements involved in the study such as the effect of fires and smoke on visibility and the preservative effect of the smoke were conducted through photographic survey and analysis of the structural materials of the

reconstructions, focusing on the collapsed roundhouse. These results were then synthesised with the evidence from archaeology and early medieval history which had previously been collated.

It seems important to state that the results presented below do not claim to be the definitive account of how people utilised domestic space in early medieval Ireland. Rather this study attempted to engage with the structures themselves, to explore and attempt to understand their physical characteristics.

Towards an understanding of the use of domestic space

The issue of visibility is central to understanding how these spaces could be exploited. The survey outlined above helped formulate an understanding of how light moves and changes within these structures, giving us an insight into how they can be used.

Increased visibility at floor level

The first striking result was the fact that the level of visibility in each of the houses was much greater at floor level than at standing or modern sitting height. This is largely due to the low height of the door and walls which will only allow for limited diffusion of daylight in the upper levels of the structure. Another interesting element noted was that during the day, firelight will have a negligible impact on the level of available light within the interior.

The effect different building materials have on visibility

- **Post and wattle:** Despite its orientation due west, this house had the best level of overall visibility due to the fact that light can constantly filter through the wall material giving a consistently effective working environment.
- **Wattle and daub:** Oriented due east the daub on the walls resulted in this house being more limited in terms of the spread of illumination meaning you would have to constantly shift positions to follow the best light.
- **Drystone:** This had the poorest result, partly due to its orientation at north-north-east and also due to the thickness of its walls. Drystone roundhouses have an average wall thickness of 1m which means that the amount of light entering the doorway is funnelled into a narrower beam resulting in areas of darkness either side of the door.

Treatment of the door

Whether the door to the house is kept open or not during the day will have a huge impact on levels of visibility. Early medieval historical sources seem unclear on the subject. Some contemporary legal documents seem to suggest it was kept shut, others that it was left open. However they all present a strong awareness of the demarcation between private and public space (MacNeill 1923, 292).

Night time within an early medieval roundhouse

As the levels of daylight diminish the interior of the house undergoes a dramatic visual transformation. The fire in the centre now becomes the chief light source, creating a draw toward the hearth as the areas around the walls and the roof overhead melt into shadow. A knock on effect of this is that colours and shadows can alter the appearance of the houses' contents. Wall hangings, clothing and other coloured items such as metallic and glazed objects can be observed taking on different hues in the firelight creating a dynamic shift in how the interior can be perceived.

Fire and the creation of a smoke ceiling

When a fire is lit, the smoke rises into the space beneath the rafters to form a smoke ceiling roughly five feet above the floor. From there, it gradually percolates out through the hollow reeds of the thatch. The smoke ceiling essentially reduces visibility when standing up and forces you to sit down when doing any practical work. When this is coupled with the readings from the light survey, it seems the most logical use of space from a practical (and respiratory!) point of view is to sit on low stools or the floor itself, beneath the smoke from the fire and capitalising on the highest light levels.

Preservative effect of smoke upon the structure of post and wattle houses

Fire and smoke also have a number of structural benefits as outlined in the summary of the post and wattle houses collapse:

- Lack of fire within the structure and of percolation of smoke through the reeds of the thatch led it to become waterlogged and increasingly heavy.
- Due to lack of internal warmth, the wall posts became damp and eventually rotted through. (Fig 1)
- Although the wattle wall material remained intact, the weight of the waterlogged roof became too much for the posts and they snapped at ground

level, essentially causing the house to “sit down”. (Fig 2)

In contrast, the other post and wattle house which was constructed at the same time has regularly had fires lit within it and remains in far better condition.

Conclusions

The purpose of this study was not to define every possible activity that could be undertaken within a roundhouse. Rather it set out to discover the ways in which roundhouse design affects the way their interiors can be used. The discussions briefly outlined above have outlined the various architectural elements and factors which will have an effect upon the use of the interior. Ultimately, they demonstrate a style of architecture which was eminently suitable to its environment and which provided a practical, versatile and highly usable domestic space.

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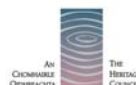
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Animal-human relations in the Mesolithic of Ireland

Declan Kelly*

Introduction

Traditional studies of the Mesolithic have often focused on the role of animals in affecting human settlement and changes in material culture. Like climatic change, changes in the faunal record are often understood as providing explanations for changes in the archaeological record. Thus animals in the Mesolithic are studied in explanatory, functionalist terms. In recent years there has been a move away from such functionalist interpretations of the past, such as in the field of landscape archaeology. This theoretical shift has only recently begun to influence how we archaeologists approach faunal remains in the archaeological record. Anthropological studies have for example highlighted the diverse ways in which groups around the world view animals (e.g. Willis 1994). This realisation has permeated archaeological discussions in northwestern Europe (e.g. Bevan 2003) although, as yet, has had little impact on the way we view the Irish archaeological record. In this paper I intend to take an approach which integrates these developments by attempting to examine the ways in which Mesolithic communities in Ireland may have understood animals, not as units of consumption or as providers of raw materials, but as social beings with their own cultural importance.

The first section will examine the evidence for complex relationships in the early Mesolithic of Ireland while the second section will continue the discussion in the context of the later Irish Mesolithic. The third section will attempt to look at the role of animals in the creation of material culture and as a result what this may have meant for how they were perceived. The fourth section will examine the question of red deer in Ireland and how this may have involved a shift in the perception of animals, related to broader themes such as the transition to agriculture. The paper will then of course conclude with a brief summary of the major points raised throughout the course of the discussion.

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The Early Mesolithic

Terrestrial animals

The Early Mesolithic of Ireland lasted from c.8,000 BC to c.7,000 BC and is characterised by a narrow blade, microlithic technology (Costa et al 2005). Microliths are presumed to have been inserted into composite tools used for hunting (e.g. see Woodman 1981, 94). In Britain this technology is generally thought to have been aimed at the making of projectiles for the killing of large game animals such as auroch, roe deer and red deer. However, in Ireland there were no such large mammals present, except the brown bear. The red deer, long thought to be present in Ireland is now understood to have not been present before the middle Neolithic (Woodman et al 1997, 152-154). It would appear therefore from sites such as Mount Sandel (Woodman 1985) and Lough Boora (Ryan 1984) that wild pig was the primary terrestrial mammal hunted.

In Britain we see evidence for complex relationships between humans and deer. The oft cited site of Starr Carr is the classic example of this with the presence of red deer frontlets thought to perhaps represent some sort of shamanistic ritual or an attempt to communicate with animal spirits to ensure success in hunting (e.g. see Clarke 1971, and also see Conneller 2003). It would appear that this relationship is essentially built on dependence, which as Brody notes is essential to the hunters' perspective of the animal world:

“Dependence means, on the one hand, that hunters must kill animals in order to live. On the other hand, should animals go away or evade the hunter, people will starve. Dependence entails vulnerability. The relationship between the hunter and the hunted, therefore, has a certain equality. Ultimately, no one can be superior to that upon which he depends. This truth is expressed in the theory of life which underlies hunters' ideas about and attitudes towards animals, and yields what materialistic westerners consider to be a spiritual dimension to knowledge.”

Hugh Brody (1987, 73)

As wild pig seems to have been the replacement of deer in early Mesolithic Ireland it is perhaps not too great a leap to suggest some form of complex relationship. It is likely that the way this animal was perceived, and as a result how it was thought about in relation to the human world, was related not merely to its economic importance but the behaviour of the animal. It is

possible to suggest that the changing behaviour of wild pig structured how they were hunted and therefore understood. Thus the perception of the animal may have changed according to when it was hunted. For example, at Mount Sandel over half of the pig bones are from juveniles, indicating that hunting took place during the winter. This was when rutting took place and the animal became solitary and more aggressive (Woodman 1985, 74). Hunting pig at this time of the year would have been a dangerous task with significant danger to any hunters. It is possible to suggest that due to the danger involved in hunting these animals that the right to hunt it was restricted and based on experience and age. Hunting the wild boar was a much more dangerous task than fishing or trapping hares. Individuals may have been placed socially by what hunts they were allowed to join. It may be possible to suggest further that different animals acted as symbols for different qualities that defined the hunter. For example, eating pig would have reminded people of the skill and risk involved in its' kill. These qualities may have been associated with the animals' hunter. Thus prestige and social standing would have been the reward of the hunter, and the right to join such a hunt may have been earned through initiation rights and other rituals. All of this is of course, highly speculative. However, the presence of so many juveniles at Mount Sandel would seem to suggest that some effort was made to minimise the danger by hunting the younger, weaker animals.

A dog's life

It is uncertain whether the dog was present in Ireland in the Mesolithic but a possible wolf or dog bone was discovered at Mount Sandel (Waddell 2000, 12). Although this evidence on its own is tenuous we may suggest that as the only domesticated animal that was perhaps present in early Mesolithic Ireland the dog is likely to have had a special place in how hunter-gatherers perceived the animal world. For example at Skateholm 1 and 2 a number of dogs were buried, some with human beings, perhaps their owners (Tilley 1996, 35; Schulting 1998, 213), while a roughly contemporaneous burial of a Tundra wolf was also found in a Neolithic cemetery in Siberia (Bazaliiskiy & Savelyev 2003). In both cases these burials have been interpreted as the burial of beloved pets, perhaps related to their importance in the hunt (Pollard 2000, 126). As the only domesticated animal in the Mesolithic, Tilley (1996, 35) has suggested that the dog was accorded human or semi-human status, a suggestion given further weight by the presence of

grave goods normally associated with human burials in all of the above cases. Dogs may have been entwined in social relations which, as Schulting (1998, 214) has pointed out is not unknown in the ethnographic record. In the American Northwest coast the Bella Coola allowed the hereditary title of chief to pass to their deceased chiefs' dog. O'Sullivan (2002, 10) has thus suggested that ancestral beings are often thought to reside in dogs.

Although no dog burials are known from Ireland we should not link this to how they were viewed as the number of human remains so far discovered is low, representing a maximum total of 8 individuals. Therefore it may be the case that the absence of any dog burials is a result of dogs being afforded a similar burial practice to that given to humans, one which leaves little archaeological trace, such as the cremations at hermitage (Collins & Coyne 2003; 2005).

Indeed, on the whole, animal remains on Irish Mesolithic sites are generally only present in small quantities. Although the acidic nature of the soils in the northeast is likely to have altered the picture in excavations there, it is that in other regions animal bones usually only occur in small numbers. Furthermore the bones that are present are restricted in range. For example there is an absence of skulls on sites. Although this of course may reflect how animals were butchered it may indicate that certain animal bones were accorded special treatment, such as deposition in places away from the site, a practice which of course may not be easily archaeologically visible. The Iñupiat of the Arctic Slope believe that whales only allow themselves to be killed if, after a kill, the remains of the whale are treated properly (Bodgenhorn 1995), while the Khanty of Western Siberia show a similar practice in the deposition of bear skulls in pools in the forest (Jordan 2003).

The Later Mesolithic

The later Mesolithic dates from c.6,500 to c.4,000 BC and is characterised by a heavier broad blade, macrolithic technology. It is not entirely clear what this technology was designed for, but the evidence would seem to indicate that it was geared towards the production of heavy tools, perhaps used for wood-working (Costa et al 2005, 20; Woodman & Andersen 1990, 385; also see Movius 1940, 75; 1942, 172, 208; 1953, 76). As a result it has been suggested that the implements of this industry were aimed at producing

organic technologies used in food procurement, such as wooden fish traps (Woodman 1977, 193; Woodman & Andersen 1990, 387), like the two examples recently uncovered at North Wall Quay, Dublin (McQuade: 2005). Another possible fish trap was found at Newferry site 3 (Woodman: 1977, 161; 1978, 135) while another example of possible Mesolithic date was discovered at Toome (Smith & Liversage 1960, 346; also see Woodman 1978, 184; 2003, 12). Indeed the general occurrence of finds of Bann flakes along rivers for example is often thought to reflect this preoccupation with fishing (e.g. Movius 1953, 106-107). However I would argue that we should not be too quick to assume that this was the case. Bann flakes, like most stone tools were portable and therefore mobile, and as a result likely to have been moved around the landscape. The presence of microliths at Mount Sandel for example are presumed to have been used in hunting activities in the surrounding landscape rather than necessarily on site or associated with the Bann River below the site. Therefore, I would argue that the presence of a later Mesolithic implement near a river does not indicate in itself, use at that river, but rather its final resting place in what was probably a series of movements.

Indeed the suggestion of Bann flakes as knives (see Woodman 1977, 188) might suggest the possibility of their use in butchering and processing of terrestrial animals, suggesting that movement through the landscape was more complicated than thought previously. A Bann flake from Bann at Culbane, Co. Derry for example was found with a moss handle (Raftery 1944, 156), while at Scurlockstown, Co. Westmeath a bann flake with a wooden handle was found (Little Forthcoming). These two cases may represent knives. At Navan, Co. Armagh the discovery of a Bann flake far from any major river suggests that occupation of the landscape was more widespread than thought (Woodman 1991, 72). Furthermore the coastal-riverine focus of settlement has also been long cited as indicating a Mesolithic concern with hunting. However as Schulting and Richards (2000, 58) have noted, we should be careful not to assume economy based on site location, as often coastal settlements have equally important terrestrial components in the diet.

Indeed the hunting of terrestrial animals was still very much an important activity in the later Mesolithic. At Ferriter's Cove, Co. Kerry pig bones

account for 82% of the mammalian remains (Woodman et al 1999, 89). The evidence indicates that these were probably hunted during the summer months, when pigs come together in groups of up to twenty individuals. This behavioural change from pigs in the winter as noted at Mount Sandel would have necessitated a change in the hunting strategy. Instead of hunting alone individual hunters would have had to contend with a large group of pigs. Therefore it is possible that different hunting techniques were employed. Fires may have been lit to cause pigs to flee into traps for example, a strategy known today from many different groups such as the Ik mountain people (Turnbull 1972), and one which Simmons (1996) believes may have been used in Britain as indicated by pollen diagrams from places such as Dartmoor and the North Yorkshire Moors. Indeed the indications of forest clearance noted on Valencia Island (Mitchell 1989, 94), and at Newferry (Smith & Collins 1971, 17) and Newlands Cross (Preece et al 1986, 506) may be a more a result of a specific hunting technique rather than the result of clearance aimed at promoting grazing for game animals as suggested in Britain (Mellars 1976; Simmons 1996). Therefore the arguments relating to forest clearances, which implicitly assume that hunter-gatherers were pre-adapted to, or moving towards agriculture (see Cooney 1987-1988, 7), might be seen as mistaking an expression of a hunter-gatherer way of life for an expression of a need for an agricultural one.

In any event a significant amount of time would have been invested in hunting the pig, while coordination would have been essential. Individual hunters may have come to the fore in these hunts through the application of leadership qualities and other such skills. The wild pig may have been therefore viewed as an animal important to the fabric of social life.

Fear & Loathing in the Mesolithic

Today, our secure position over the animal kingdom has inherently shaped how we perceive animals in the past. We assume a straight forward relationship between hunter and prey, with humans easily succeeding over animals. It should, I argue, be remembered that the technological innovations that allowed Mesolithic people to hunt did not in themselves remove humans from the dangers of the prehistoric animal world. Due to the close interaction of Mesolithic people with the animal world it should perhaps, be borne in mind that humans may have often fell victim to animals

pursued in the hunt, or come upon by surprise. Humans were by no means undisputed masters of the animal world. Their position in the animal hierarchy may have changed in relation to the type of animal being hunted, as well as the time of year which may have affected the animals' behaviour. Brown bears were more dangerous than wild pig example, while wild pig become more dangerous during the winter as already mentioned.

Although the hunting of brown bear in Mesolithic Ireland cannot conclusively be proven, the possible presence of bear remains at Sutton (see Woodman 2000, 299) and Dalkey Island (Liversage 1968) may suggest that this animal was occasionally hunted, although Woodman (1978b, 136) has suggested that it may have been rather peripheral to the hunting economy. As shown from attacks on humans in North America however, brown bears can easily kill humans if they feel threatened. A miscarried attempt at a kill may have often been costly to hunters. Furthermore this animal may have often been encountered on fishing trips along rivers and lakes. Caution and knowledge of bears' habits would have been required to limit the dangers of an encounter. Wild boars were also undoubtedly extremely dangerous to Mesolithic hunters as they still are today. These animals when provoked can inflict serious physical wounds, while during the winter, as already mentioned they become territorial and aggressive. These realities are rarely thought about when we engage with the Mesolithic. We implicitly assume a straightforward relationship in our narratives with hunter-gatherers easily killing their prey. I would suggest that Mesolithic people may have dealt with these realities by including animals in their wider cultural beliefs and ideologies.

It is likely that the threats posed by certain animals affected human behaviour on a variety of levels. It would have encouraged communal co-operation in the hunt to limit the potential of being overcome by such animals. Also the potential danger of a failure in hunting equipment would have been a consideration in the procurement of raw materials and the production of the weapons used in hunting, a point put forward by Myers (1989a & b).

Riverine Fish

As already mentioned the range of fauna was much more restricted than in

Britain. Thus the upland-lowland model of movement based on the interception of red deer put forward by Mellars (1976) did not apply to Ireland. Instead groups seem to have moved to the rivers every summer to catch salmon and eel as they moved downstream to the sea. At Newferry for example, Movius (1936, 29) interpreted the presence of 30 hearths as a result of smoking and drying salmon and eel, while Woodman's excavations revealed further evidence for salmon fishing. Woodman (1978, 162) has noted that Mesolithic sites are often found at key points along river systems such as at points where the river narrows or at entrances and exits to lakes such as the system of lakes through which the River Inny passes through (see Mitchell 1972). This would have facilitated the capture of fish with the aid of weirs and traps at certain choke points.

This annual and predictable movement to certain riverine locations in the landscape would have been central to inter-group communication. Indeed, sites along several river systems and lakes show signs of extensive reoccupation. Thus the movements of the fish would have facilitated social interaction. Social life would have been tied to the annual movement of these fish. Groups would have come together for the summer months to fish, exchange news, gifts and partners. Seasonal congregations of dispersed small family groups to riverine settlement locations during the summer are known from several modern hunter-gatherer groups today, most notably the Khanty of western Siberia (see Jordan 2003a, 132; 2003b). Movements such as these may help to explain the presence of single artefacts away from their source, such as chert artefacts at Mount Sandel (Woodman 1981, 100; 1985, 167) and flint artefacts at Lough Derravaragh (Mitchell 1972, 170). Indeed a Bann flake from near Monasterevin has been suggested as being from the Tardee area of Co. Antrim (Rynne 1983-1984, 329) which is over 200km away. Again, instead of an extensive trade network of raw materials, perhaps movements of single artefacts can be explained by movements of individuals between social groups.

It is possible that Mesolithic communities would have recognised the fundamental importance of these migratory fish to their lives and would have thus held them in a high social regard. The capture, cooking, eating and disposal of these fish may have been, as a result, surrounded by restrictions and taboos concerned with respectful treatment of the animal to ensure their continued supply.

Coastal fish and Sea mammals

As can be seen from Table 1, a wide range of coastal fish and sea mammals were exploited. Unlike terrestrial mammals, the range of coastal animals was not as restricted and may have led to more parallels with Britain in terms of lifeways. The middens at Dalkey, Sutton and Rockmarshall are all situated at distinct points in the landscape. What is of interest however, is the deliberate placement of fish bones in defined places. This is not only repeated at Ferriter's cove but is also known from Scotland. Although the accumulation of shell mounds has been linked to ideas of territoriality, statements of ownership and the place of the ancestors (see Cummings 2000), the fish remains themselves are rarely considered except to see what they can tell us about seasonality and resource exploitation (e.g. Mellars 1987).

I would argue that although the creation of these mounds does indicate the playing out of ideas about 'persistent places' (see Pollard 2000) they may also represent the playing out of ideas about proper treatment of animal and fish remains, while the deposition of human remains at these sites, such as at Rockmarshall (Mitchell 1949, 17), may indicate the existence of a blurred relationship between humans and animals as noted among several groups today (Brody 2001, 289). The practice of cremation for example has been suggested as an attempt to extinguish individual identity. It may therefore be the case that the mixing of animal and human bones at a defined location in the landscape was an attempt to mix animal and human identities together, expressing the dependence of humans on the animal world. As both animals and humans were treated similarly in how they were treated after death, it is not too much of a leap to suggest that they were treated similarly in life. Thus human-animal identities may have been permeable, with animals being understood as possessing human qualities and humans being understood as not unlike their animal counterparts. In Scotland there is a pattern of depositing remains of the body's extremities such as hands and feet, and this pattern is repeated for beings from the animal world, again highlighting the blurred relationships between the two. On Oronsay a grey seal's rear flipper was discovered with a pair of human hands lying on top (Mellars 1987, 267; also see Finlayson 1998, 52). The resemblance of the skeletal structure of the flipper and the hand was undoubtedly important and the reason behind their deposition together. It indicates that human identity was one very much linked to the coastal animal world and one is reminded of how some hunter-

gatherer groups, such as the Inuit of the Canadian Arctic for example, believe that in the past humans could transform into animals, and vice-versa (D'Anglure 1999, 178-9). Indeed origin stories as noted by Guenther (1994, 42) consist of two main parts: the ancestral mythical past where the animal-human distinction was nullified and the present world created by disasters which split humans from the animal world.

It is interesting that the species of fish found at Ferriter's cove indicates fishing both near the shore and further out into the sea. Thus different levels of seamanship and fishing skills were required (see Warren 2000). Out from the shoreline, knowledge of the coastline was required as was knowledge of the currents and the movements of different species of fish. Thus like the hunting of terrestrial animals different sorts of skills were required for the exploitation of different fish species. The more skill required to fish for a certain species the more likely that it was to be of a higher social value while myths may have evolved to account for the importance of some fish over others.

What is perhaps most striking however is the discovery of dolphin, seal and whale bones in Mesolithic contexts. These mammals would have provided a valuable source of protein for Mesolithic coastal communities. Seals, as Woodman et al (1999, 90) note, are dispersed at sea during the summer. The remains of the grey-seal at Dalkey Island indicate that these animals were killed when they came onto the island to pup, perhaps during the winter. There is as yet no evidence to suggest the hunting of dolphins or whales, but their remains at Dalkey and Sutton and at the earlier site of Cushendun in Co. Antrim (Movius 1953, 169) indicate that use may have been made of beached whales. The psychological effect of a beached whale is likely to have been profound (see Mithen 2001, 631) as it still is today. Groups in the vicinity of a beaching may have gathered to see the sight of such a large animal which was quite literally from a different world. What exactly such animals may have meant to hunter-gatherers in Ireland it is hard to say due to the paucity in our evidence. It may be suggested that beached whales may have been seen as gifts from the sea for example. Perhaps the main point to realise however is that, at some rare points, encounters with mammals from the deep sea were possible. We can hypothesise that the placement of the remains of such creatures may indicate the playing out of ideas about

respectful treatment to ensure future supplies, as noted in a number of different groups around the world today. Past this rather general statement it is unwise to venture further.



Figure 1: Bone points from the River Bann (after Whelan 1953, Plate 3)

The role of animals in material culture

As already mentioned, our interpretative scope with regards to animals in Ireland has been very limited. Essentially we understand animals as providers of food. We have failed to recognise that animals are providers of much more than just food, and are often essential to providing the appropriate raw materials for material culture. For example animal bones

appear to have been used in the manufacture of certain items such as points and needles. At Rockmarshall, two such bone points or needles were found, one made from the fibula of a dog, the other from a fish bone (Mitchell 1947, 172), while at Moynagh Lough another bone point, broken at both ends was found. One end tends towards a spatula while the other end was probably pointed, leading Bradley to suggest its' function as a skin-dressing tool, with the spatula end used to flatten and smoothen the seams between skins (Bradley 1999, 6; 2001, 302). Similar examples were found in zone 5 at Newferry site 3 (Woodman 1977, 174). Around 130 bone points, such as those in Fig 1, were also recovered from the lower Bann at the Cutts and Loughan Island (Whelan 1952, 4), some of which at least may be Mesolithic in date (Woodman 1978a, 356).

Shifting perceptions?: The introduction of Red Deer

One of the questions which has, as yet, received no attention in the context of Ireland, is how the introduction of domesticates altered how indigenous hunter-gatherer communities perceived the animal world. It is likely that how perceptions changed was intrinsically linked to the nature of the introduction.

In the later Mesolithic of western Scotland there appears to have been a move towards controlling certain elements of the natural world, with the burning of vegetation which is thought to have been carried out to encourage areas of grazing for deer (see Mellars 1976, and Simmons 1996). Thus an effort was being made to tame, and concordantly, to control deer. As already mentioned, red deer does not seem to have arrived into Ireland until the end of the Neolithic. However this picture may be largely a modern construction brought about by the limited number of excavations. From Table 1 it is clear that the later Mesolithic sites have revealed little in the way of terrestrial fauna. Instead it is the earlier sites of Lough Boora and Mount Sandel that have revealed most of the evidence for terrestrial mammals. Thus, it is possible that deer may have been present in Ireland by the later Mesolithic and it is our research biases which have obscured this possibility.

Although red deer are known to be quite capable swimmers often swimming to the island of Jura from the Scottish mainland for example, it is unlikely that they swam to Ireland. This is reinforced when we take into account the need for a viable breeding population. Therefore if deer was present in the

later Mesolithic of Ireland, it is possible that the species may have been introduced into the country, as suggested by Green & Zvelebil (1990, 86; for further discussion of red deer in Ireland see Woodman et al 1997). These developments would surely have re-orientated the cosmological perceptions of hunter-gatherers as humans began to realise the potential for controlling animal behaviour towards human needs. Thus the shift from perceiving animals as social beings to perceiving animals as units of commodity may have occurred within the later Mesolithic rather than at its end. It is likely that such a shift would have facilitated the adoption of domestic animals and agriculture as evidenced by the presence of cattle bones at Ferriter's Cove (Woodman et al 1999).

Conclusion

It is hoped that this paper has in some way highlighted some of the complex ways in which animals were understood in the Mesolithic. We should bear in mind that the nature of the evidence that we are left with is inherently biased towards non-organic remains. Thus we are left with the stone tools used to hunt and process animals rather than the remains of the animals themselves. Perhaps then it is not surprising that the way in which we think about animals in the past is basically a hunter versus prey one- it is one guided and shaped by the biases in our evidence. The need for including a more socially grounded interpretation of animals in our narratives is a challenge for future studies on the Mesolithic. From the evidence presented here it is hoped that we will begin to recognise that humans in the Mesolithic often had complex relationships with animals, which, like relationships with humans, were not static but evolving, shifting and changing.

The need for similar studies to be undertaken in other archaeological periods is a valid one, particularly when we take into consideration the wealth of information brought to light as a result of contract excavations. Indeed some important questions may be answered from such studies. When did the human view of animals change? When did humans begin to see animals as commodities under human control rather than as powerful spiritual forces? Is it linked to the development of animal husbandry, pastoralism or cultivation? It is unlikely that the answer is as straightforward as we often assume. Different levels of agriculture were adopted at different times; to assume that humans immediately elevated themselves to masters over the animal world everywhere that agriculture spread is a gross over

simplification and one that needs to be challenged.

From the discussion presented above however it is hoped that we can begin to question our functionally driven perception of animals in the Mesolithic and begin to understand the complex, socially meaningful way that people of the period perceived the animals that surrounded them.

Site	Birds	Coastal Fish	Riverine Fish	Sea Mammals	Terrestrial Mammals
Cushendun (Co. Antrim)		Conger eel			Wild Boar
Mt. Sandel (Co. Derry)	Red-throated Diver Mallard Teal/Garganey Wigeon Goshawk Golden/White-tailed eagle Red Grouse Snipe/Woodcock Rock-dove Wood-Pigeon Song thrush	Bass Flounder	Salmon Trout eel		Wild Boar Mountain Hare Dog
Lough Boora (Co. Offaly)	Pigeon Ducks		Salmonids		Wild Boar Hare?
Dalkey Island (Co. Dublin)	White-tailed Sea Eagle Goshawk Razorbill/guillemont Puffin Blackbird Mullet	Wrasse Cod Tope Conger eel		Whale Grey-Seal Dolphin	Dog? Wild Pig?
Sutton (Co. Dublin)	Unspecified	Unspecified			Hare Dog?
Rockmarshall (Co. Louth)				Whale Dolphin Crustaceans	
Newferry (Co. Antrim)			Salmon eel		
Curran Point (Co. Antrim)				Whale	
Ringeill Quay	Unspecified				
Ferriter's Cove (Co. Kerry)	Southern Guillemt Herring Gull Gannet	Whiting,Cod Haddock Ling Saithe Wrasse Family Tope, Ray (Thornback?) Gurnards Family Conger eel Scud Herring Mullet Family	Salmon eel		Wild Boar Hare

Table 1: General range of animals known from Mesolithic sites

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The Stave Churches of Norway - Architectural Relics of a Forgotten Time

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During the Early Middle Ages in Norway, at the dawn of Christianity, there emerged a building tradition of wooden churches, whose architecture display a mixture of the old, Pagan styles with the new Christian. These churches, once believed to have reached somewhere between 800-1200 in number, were called “stave churches” (The Norwegian Stave Church, 1). The extraordinary architecture of these churches was a result of the boat construction and home building in Viking times, during which the tradition of combining art with wood working developed. Although several types of stave churches exist, their common features are corner posts and a timber skeleton with wall planks standing on sills, known as stave walls (Norwegian Stave Churches, 2). These walls gave the churches their name. There are sadly no more than 25-30 remaining in the country today. Due to their rapid decline over the years, a great deal of conservation has been carried out to ensure their continuous existence.

The earliest stave churches were built with walls of upright posts and planks. However, the posts were embedded directly in the ground, and while this solution worked temporarily, the bases of the posts would eventually rot away. The remainder of these first churches are therefore only rows of post holes and decayed remains of wood found through archaeological excavation (The stave churches of Norway, 1). By the 12th century, as Christianity grew, so did the need for more solid constructions. The problem was solved by laying down sills, upon which the planks and staves rested and so raising the walls above ground level (Ibid). The efficiency of this method is shown in the fact that these 12th century churches still stand today, most of them still at their original location. Some, however, such as the churches of Gol, Garmo, Haltalen, Hylestad, Vang, Aal and Fantoft, were moved from where they originally stood for various reasons. The church at Vang was sold to King Wilhelm of Prussia in the 1840s, and re-erected in the Polish territory of Karpacz G_rny. Garmo, Gol and Haltalen stave churches have all been

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re-erected at outdoor cultural museums in various parts of Norway, while the remaining parts of Hylestad and Aal are preserved at the Museum of Antiquities in Oslo (Norwegian Stave Churches, 3-16). This leaves us with the church at Fantoft, a building whose dramatic history has made it one of the most famous and frequently visited cultural heritage sites in Norway.

On June 6, 1992, the Bergen Fire Dept received a concerned phone call from a man claiming he had seen a fire in the woods surrounding Fantoft stave church, a well-known tourist attraction in the second largest Norwegian city (I Grevens Tid, 1). When the firemen arrived, however, they found to their dismay that it was not the surrounding area that was burning, but the church itself, completely engulfed in flames. The tar and terpentine that the church builders would have used on the wood to ensure its preservation, was now the greatest cause of its uncontrollable fire, and the heat was so intense it rendered the Fire Dept completely helpless. They could do nothing but watch the church be eaten up by the flames. On the sixth week-day, on the sixth day of the sixth month, Fantoft stave church was burnt to the ground, deliberately set on fire by men who claimed to be Satanists. The remains of what seems to have been a sacrificed hare were also found on the site. It is ironic that this particular kind building was chosen for such a malignant act, as some stave churches would have originally been built on top of pagan temples. The pagan influence in their architecture is also quite apparent.

Fantoft stave church was built, and originally stood, at Fortun in Sogn County, but was purchased privately by Consul F. Gade in the late 19th century. On his orders it was pulled down, transported to and re-erected at Gade's estate at Fantoft near Bergen, Co.Hordaland, where it was "painstakingly restored" (Norwegian Stave Churches, 4). The church remained in private ownership, and after the fire in 1992, the current owners paid for it to be rebuilt as a true carbon-copy of the original. Only wooden nails were used to fasten the planks and staves, and tar was once again used to preserve the wood. The church is still used for weddings and certain services, and continues to be a highly popular tourist attraction, perhaps more so now than ever before.

Although the story of Fantoft stave church is both fascinating and attention

grabbing, it is not the only stave church having somewhat of an interesting history that is worth mentioning. Undredal stave church, although mentioned for the first time in 1321, has the year 1147 carved inside, and during restoration in 1962 a great discovery was made. Paintings of mythical animals and symbolic signs were found under at least three coats of paint (Norwegian Stave Churches, 9). Not only does this tell us that Undredal is one of the oldest preserved churches in Norway, but it is also hard proof of the Viking connection that these buildings had to have had when first erected. The strong link these churches have with their locality can also be seen at Høre stave church. This particular building produced remains of an earlier construction found underneath the one existing today, and a little bit of local history has been preserved in the form of a runic inscription on the pulpit: "This summer when the brothers Elling and Audun cut the trees for this church, Erling Jarl was killed at the battle of Nidaros" (Ibid).

After the fire at Fantoft, emotions were stirred which, albeit on a much smaller scale, were closely akin to the feelings growing in New York, where people were eager to rebuild the twin towers after the attacks on September 11. Some wanted the towers to be built as exact carbon copies of the first ones, as a way of showing the people in charge of the terrorist acts that they had not won, that Good would prevail over Evil. At Fantoft, this astonishing piece of medieval architecture had been obliterated by someone who claimed to do the work of the Devil, and by building a true copy of the original church, this sentiment of defying Evil was clearly present. While its origin is non-local, its link to the local surroundings is without question. The immediate community would have had a strong connection with the building, as it would have been in their vicinity longer than anyone living in 1992 could remember. On a more personal note, people from Bergen are fiercely proud of anything in Bergen, even though it might not have originated there. This quality alone would have stirred enough emotions to give the go-ahead for such an enormous task.

Norwegian stave churches have been described as "wooden relics" and "architectural masterpieces" (The Norwegian Stave Church, 1), and those surviving have done so for nearly 900 years. Their connection with the land on which they were built and the history of their surrounding landscape, as

well as their intrinsic architectural, aesthetic and anthropological value, ensures their place as part of Norwegian cultural heritage in their own right. Unfortunately, due to the constant traffic of both tourists and local residents, these churches are becoming increasingly worn down and are slowly disappearing. To stand next to a stave church, to smell the old wood and the tar, and to actually see the carvings on the doors, that is when one first truly appreciates the skill and dedication that must have been present in order to create such a monument. And that is also when one realises that the need for continuous conservation work on these architectural masterpieces is paramount.

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Archaeology's Aristocracy: An Interview with Lord Colin Renfrew

Niall Kenny and Brian Dolan*

So who is the real Lord Renfrew? Many of you will have come across 'Renfrew, C.' in your first year bibliographies, perhaps even shelled out some of your hard earned beverage money on a copy of 'Theories, Methods and Practices'. In this piece we hope to bring you a little of the archaeologist behind the name, and the man (or Lord) behind the archaeologist.

We first came across the memorable character that is Colin Renfrew in City Hall in the centre of Glasgow. A spectacular banqueting hall and a fitting setting in which to carouse with one of the ascendancy. The reason for our being there was of course archaeological. We were all gathered for the annual conference of the Theoretical Archaeological Group (TAG) which Lord Renfrew had helped set up in the eighties. He is amicable, witty, charming, sharp and a gentleman of the old school. This chance meeting in a banquetting hall led to him acquiring a privileged place on the UCD contingent's team at the end of conference table quiz. At the end of the night, after a couple of bowls of loud mouth soup, we plucked up the courage to ask for an email address, the hardest step in any relationship. To cut a long story short we ended up, four months later, conducting a lengthy interrogation across the phone lines for which Cambridge University kindly footed the bill. Using Trowel as our medium, we feel we owe it to the world to pass on some of the deeper truths discovered during this tense, intellectually exhausting and powerful experience. Therefore in the hope that you will find some deeper meaning we ask you to read on...

Renfrew was expecting the usual barrage of chronologically arranged biographical and archaeological queries so we hit him with a humdinger straight out of left field (Baseball Speak)! We asked him rather seriously if the House of Lords celebrate Christmas with a shindig and if so what are the chances of us DJ'ing at the next one? After the laughter died down he splurged out his answer:

"I'm sure there'd be many merits in that, but there are several ways to answer

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that question, the one very important thing is that for very deep historical reasons music is not allowed at parties in the premises of the Palace of Westminster, so if you were to DJ by appointment to the lord chancellor you wouldn't find yourself working very hard at it." He continued... "There is a kind of system of Christmas parties, the Lord Chancellor sometimes gives office drinks around Christmas but I wouldn't say they always go with a swing!"

Moving on to slightly more serious issues we indulged in a barrage of chronologically arranged biographical and archaeological queries! We asked him to give us a few details about his inspirations and early experiences of archaeology:

"I was interested in archaeology before the war years. As a very small boy, my father took us about on his bicycle looking at English parish churches. I was interested in old and ancient things and when I was a school boy I was interested to go on an excavation which my Latin Master arranged for me."

We pointed out, using the data gathered during our extensive research (frantic google-ing five minutes before the interview), that he had attended the ancient school of St Alban's:

"Yes that's right; the school was located in the gateway to St. Alban's Cathedral which was founded in 948 A.D. so one would go once or twice a week for school prayers in the old cathedral."

Despite this early interest, the young and future Lord chose not to study archaeology in university.

"It didn't seem appropriate to study archaeology in college at that time, I began doing natural sciences at university, and then I switched to archaeology."

Did you go to university straight after school? "In those days there was national service, I did 2 years in the Royal Air Force, which brought me to Germany for some time. Before going into the RAF and after it, I spent time in Paris learning French."

Before you get too excited! He wasn't dog-fighting with the Red Baron over the white cliffs of Dover, defending his beloved motherland from annihilation; he was in charge of a scratch radio! After leaving the RAF Lord Renfrew attended St. John's College Cambridge (1958 to 1962). His

favourite extra-curricular activity was debating, a passion which did not prevent him from getting married and completing his PhD in 1965, probably an extremely hectic year. Following his achievement of the title Doctor, the future Lord began lecturing in Sheffield the same year. By 1968 he had contested and lost a by-election for the Conservative Party: "A good few of my friends from debating were involved in politics and my friend Leon Brittan convinced me to run in the Brightside constituency by-election in Sheffield. It turned out that rather to my surprise I was selected to fight. It turned out that they (the Conservatives) hadn't had a very good candidate for some years. The seat was a very safe labour seat."

So you were kind of up against the grain? "Yes it was up against the grain, it was a seat which had a labour majority of about 19,000. It was a very intense campaign, which happens in a by-election. People were very polite and so on; when one was speaking one did not get tomatoes thrown at one, or anything like that. I didn't have any deep background in politics, so the press didn't take me apart, they came to listen, and it was all quite fair actually. The election was quite a close thing; we reduced the labour majority from 19,000 to 5,000, and so we had them worried for a while! It was a very interesting experience!

You didn't have any catchy slogans or spin doctoring of any kind? "I don't think we had any terrific spin doctoring of any kind, but the great thing was that because it was a by-election it was not like a general election where there was things going on in every constituency, so there was not great news coverage. In a by-election you have representatives from all the national newspapers, so to my punishment I found myself having to give a press conference every morning at 9 am. So there was coverage in all the national press, it was quite a busy time!"

So after losing that by-election you turned back to archaeology, you were at a cross roads in your life. Would you have continued with the politics if you had won, leaving archaeology as a hobby or an interest? "It would have put me in an interesting situation, in the House of Commons! If I won, it would have had to have been a massive swing away from Labour towards Conservatives, it was not a safe seat. I was offered the chance to run in a safer seat, but I choose to stay in archaeology."

Clearly his destiny had been set and it lay in the past and not the present. Renfrew went on to become professor at Southampton University at the age of 35, an achievement he modestly played down:

“It was quite young for a professor but it wasn't without exception because I followed Barry Cunliffe. He was the first professor in Southampton and he was made professor some years earlier I think I'm right in saying he was about twenty-five.

In 1981, to the delight (and subsequent disappointment!) of his children he was appointed the Disney professor of archaeology in Cambridge, no Mickey Mouse job. And to those of you who smirk, we have one message, we did too. We wondered when he introduced himself as the Disney professor to non-archaeologists; did they often poke fun at him?

“They sometimes raise an eyebrow, my immediate predecessor Glyn Daniel, when he became Disney Professor, he was invited to give some lectures in Harvard and he called his series of lectures “archaeology in Disneyland”, so he certainly took the point. When I was Disney professor, I'm now retired, I used to try and subdue the smile that might begin to appear on someone's lips by pointing out to them that the Disney chair was founded by John Disney in the year 1851 and that usually sort of pulled them together a bit.”

You retired in 2004? “That's right last September. In Cambridge as in most UK universities, there is a very firm retirement age- 67 and you're out, and that was me out.

It obviously hasn't slowed you down at all? (He laughed) “Well I'm kept going, fortunately the managing committee of the McDonald Institute invited me to stay on as a Fellow as it were, so I'm not paid, but then I have a pension so its not the end of the world! Also, I've got a number of projects which I'm involved in, so that's keeping me quite busy.”

All this talk of retirement made us ponder over Renfrew's legacy, his achievements. Not only had he been the linchpin of Allied peace-time post WWII operations within Germany, he also managed to excavate a few sites and write a few (hundred!) papers and the odd monograph. But what did he consider to be his biggest achievements?

“I'm not sure what to go on about big achievements, but I've enjoyed being involved in the development of archaeology, in particular theoretical archaeology. And so I very much enjoyed being involved in archaeology as it

changed and developed over the years, and I think its continuing to change and develop. I think somewhere like the Theoretical Archaeology Group, where you and I met, is a very good enterprise where one can have ones finger on the pulse of those changes.”

Drum roll...and the big question! We've had processualism, we've had post-processualism, when do you think we'll have post-post-processualism? “I've always been, as you know, a bit sceptical of the 'so called' post-processual era. In my view it was the so called post-processualists who decided that the processual era was over. As far as I'm concerned, processual archaeology is alive and well and living in a lot of places and so called post-processual or interpretive archaeology has done a lot of things, but I think it's sometimes a shade arrogant to proclaim something with which you are not in agreement, dead. And I think there's a bit of life in that old horse of processual archaeology yet.”

Now that we had covered his life before retirement we speculated what his life has been like post-retirement! Does he vegetate in front of the television in his lords' robes, watching Countdown, Sex and the City, Desperate Housewives, Big Brother and of course Neighbours, while pigging out on a tub of triple chocolate fudge ice-cream and a bag of Murray Mints obeying the most important rule - 'One must never hurry a Murray'!

“When I'm at home I don't have special pyjamas because I'm a member of the House of Lords, although as you know, just a couple of weeks ago there was an all night sitting of the House of Lords where a pair of pyjamas might have come in handy. And as you know, although it's perfectly true that for the introductory ceremony you have to wear a robe, and if you need to attend the state opening of parliament, you have to wear a red robe with ermine collar and so on. Normally peers of the realm just dress in a suit or something and that's all there is to it.”

Did you have a retirement party when you finished up? “I had a terrific party; the department here in Cambridge at the McDonald Institute gave me a really magnificent dinner to which a lot of old friends came. And then I was absolutely flabbergasted when they produced a festschrift, and as you know a festschrift is a volume which has been specially printed and published by a lot of friends and colleagues who have written articles. This turned out to be a three volume festschrift, so it was really a pretty good deal.”

The sharper readers out there may have deduced by now that Colin Renfrew is in fact different from the rest of us, privileged you might say, or even simply better. He is a Lord. To many in Ireland, the concept of 'Lordship' is a mysterious and distant phenomenon. Though Ireland may hold on to its own archaic traditions and practices such as emigration, boozing, leprechaun farming and bog-trotting, lords are all but extinct. With this in mind, we attempted to tease out the lesser known intricacies involved in being an endangered species:

"It's not so different I suspect from being a member of the upper house in Ireland, I remember once George Eogan very kindly taking me to lunch in the buildings of the Senate in Dublin and though I think the Senate has rather smaller numbers than the House of Lords I would have thought its not all that different really, except of course one significant difference - at the moment if you're a member of the House of Lords you're a member for life, now whether that's a good thing or a bad thing that's the way it is!"

You're Lord Renfrew of Kaimsthorn, where is Kaimsthorn? Where you able to pick where you would be lord of? "Well when I was invited to become a peer they say you've got to go see Garter King of Arms to see about your title, so I went to see Garter King of Arms. The principle is, you've got to be Lord Renfrew of somewhere or other so you have to choose somewhere and get it approved by Garter King of Arms"

"I wondered where to choose and I thought well shall I maybe choose Quanterness, which was the place that I had excavated in Orkney. Lord Renfrew of Quanterness sounded okay but then I remembered that there was an owner of Quanterness farm- Scottie Marcus, who'd allowed me to dig at Quanterness, but I thought that he wouldn't be at all pleased if my title sort of descended and there was suddenly a Lord Renfrew of Quanterness, he might think that a bit cheeky. So I remembered that there was a place near Paisley where my ancestors had lived which is now the equivalent of a deserted medieval village. It no longer is a place where people live, called Kaimsthorn. So I thought that would be nice and my father had a house called Kaimsthorn for that reason, so I said let's try make it Lord Renfrew of Kaimsthorn. So Garter King of Arms had to consult the Scottish herald who is Lyon King of Arms and after a bit of palaver they agreed that that would be ok, so certainly I'm not treading on anybody's toes by calling it Lord Renfrew of Kaimsthorn."

So has there been a Lord Renfrew before? “Well it turns out Baron Renfrew is one of the auxiliary or subsidiary titles of the Prince of Wales, and it turns out that King Edward VII, when he wanted to travel incognito, he was far too grand to be just Mister Windsor or something, so he used to call himself Lord Renfrew. He used to probably sign in to all kinds of dubious hotels as Lord Renfrew, visibly accompanied (laughs at this). So it's probably just as well to distinguish myself from that by being Lord Renfrew of Kaimsthorpe.” (Well we now know what alias to use the next time we check in to a 'dubious' hotel, fight in a bare-knuckle boxing match, open a new Chartbusters account or embark on a career in the murky underworld of paid assassination!!)

How do you go about becoming a lord, is there any chance we could become lords? “Well, for a start it is restricted to UK citizens, but you could always change your nationality and hope. I had this letter in the post, the letter was from the Prime Minister and he said that he was thinking of making a recommendation to the Queen if I would agree to be a working peer in the Conservative interest.”

Stereotypically and throughout history lords have not been happy with their lot, and have surrounded themselves with the paraphernalia of lordship. We set out to discover was this true of Lord Renfrew of Kaimsthorpe:

Do you have a castle? “Sorry a what?” A castle... “Oh a castle! Well it would be a good thing to have a castle but I'm afraid I don't have a castle, but as you know there is that very fine thing; an Englishman's home is his castle and my house, like my father's house, is called Kaimsthorpe, so that will have to do.”

Do you have a sword, a trusty steed and a squire? (Laughs heartily) “No I have none of those things I do have a coat of arms if that's any use, and that happened before I went into the House of Lords because I knew quite well one of the heralds, and he said shouldn't you have a coat of arms, and so I had to pay a couple of hundred pounds, I forget just how much and he helped to draw up a proper coat of arms.”

Did the queen make you a lord? Did she put the sword on your shoulders? “Eh, it doesn't work like that, it's slightly disappointing. Your quite right that if you're made a knight which I'm not, if you're sir something or other, the ceremony involves the Queen doing the honours as it were, and

I think it is still done with a sword sometimes, but the ceremony for the Lords is done by written summons. So you don't get to meet the Queen on that occasion, you just are present on the appropriate occasion and the clerk reads out in the House of Lords the writ of summons and then you have to bow to the lord chancellor and that's it really."

Apart from that have you ever met a queen or a royal in any sort of formal scenario? "I've met Queen Elizabeth, the Queen of England, when she came to open the new library in Jesus College Cambridge while I was Master, on the occasion of the quincentenary in 1996. On a different wavelength, I know personally the Queen of Denmark because she was an undergraduate student at Cambridge at the same time I was, and she's a very nice lady, we kept in touch and she's now an honorary fellow of my wife's college."

Terribly interested in the whole Lord lark, we delved further into the lifestyle of our interviewee, dealing with the murky and contentious topic of 'Booze', we pressed on:

What do lords drink? -We remember that you had a G & T at TAG? "That's right, not all lords drink the same thing, but if you go into what's called the Bishops Bar, which is the bar in the House of Lords which is exclusively for lords you'll find that a G & T goes down very well there."

I'd say many a night you've propped up the bar there? "Absolutely! That's right. Of course some of the debates go on for a long time and you have to stay on in order to vote, so sometimes there is need for a little liquid refreshment!"

Are you saying that certain laws and certain rules in England are passed on the basis of a liquid lunch? (Laughs heartily) "it's not so much just a liquid lunch, but it's sometimes a liquid lunch followed by tea followed by a liquid supper, so you need some sustenance to keep going!"

We thought the British Empire was built on tea? "Well tea is a good foundation, sometimes the odd *chota peg* is needed to keep you going."

Considering the 'liquid refreshment' often required during the long working day of a Lord and the various rules and orthodoxies that Lords must follow in the House, we wondered had Lord Renfrew ever over-stepped them

accidentally or put his metaphorical foot in it?

“There are plenty of ways of putting your foot in it, in minor and more serious ways. In the House of Lords if your speaking in a debate you always have to address the house as 'my Lords', and if someone has been speaking you have to refer him not as 'Fred' or not as 'that idiot', but you have to say 'noble Lord'. If he is a Q.C. you have to address him as 'a noble and learned Lord', or if he is somebody who has been a General or Field Marshall you have to refer to him as 'the noble and gallant Lord'. If he's a bishop you have to say 'the noble and right reverend Prelate'. So you can easily make a few slips in amongst all that, as you can imagine.”

In an attempt to further uncover the personality of our interviewee we threw a number of random human interest questions at the subject, let see how he fared:

If you could go back in time and meet any historical figure or visit any period of history/ prehistory who or when would it be and why? “I don't have a terrifically interesting answer there, obviously it would be interesting to go back to very early times, it would be great to meet Shakespeare and see what he was really like, probably a more interesting answer for an archaeologist would be to meet Adam shortly after the creation.”

Who is your favourite James Bond or do you have one? (Laughs) I think the early ones were the best, weren't they? 'From Russia with Love' was good, that was probably one of the best.”

Have you a favourite Bond girl? “They're all very attractive, but in the end they're all much the same, I wouldn't mind trading one in for any other.”

What is the last film you saw in the cinema or on TV? “That's a good question (he stalled)... eh, the last time I was in the cinema... I'd have to cast my mind back (he stalled further, perhaps he was engaging the dark recesses of his brain, you know the files that contain the information from the 1920s) ... I've certainly been doing my best to keep up with the Harry Potter films.” Really? “Yes so I've kept up with those which I've been entertained by, there must be a more high brow answer, but let me give you that answer which is the true answer to start with.”

Do you have a favourite band, composer/ artist or tune? “I much enjoy what one might call 'classical music'! In a rather obvious way I greatly admire

Mozart, for instance. But while I have been in Paris recently, I went to a few shows, which were a tribute to Edith Piaf. Hardly an up to date figure, because she died 40 years ago. She was a great girl in her day, so let us drink a toast to Edith Piaf!!!"

Your not drinking as we speak are you? (We all laugh) "Not at the moment but I might feel in need of a refreshment after this gruelling interview though!"

So no Bruce Springsteen? "Well I admire Bruce Springsteen, certainly oh yes! and I enjoy contemporary pop music, I don't think I'm up with the very latest, although I admire rap, I'm not an exponent of rap. I couldn't sit down and give you a good rap version of something!" (Well thank God for small mercies!)

Well clearly our well-researched, high end, top notch, intricate and long planned out personality test failed miserably. It is very doubtful that the CIA will be hiring us for future profiling work.

Just as the lengthy telephone interview (thanks again Cambridge University!) was forced to conclude due to time constraints, so must this article due to the shortage of tropical rainforest and thus the high cost of paper. Hopefully this interview has not been a complete waste of the readers' time or said trees. It must be said that we thoroughly enjoyed talking to Lord Renfrew and we hope he will continue to answer calls from Ireland despite it all. Hopefully he will continue to enjoy his retirement, listening to Edith and lounging about in his lords robes, we wish him the very best of luck.

Student Attitudes to Archaeology: A UCD Student Survey

Niall Kenny*

Archaeology as an industry, academic and commercial profession has witnessed much change and transformation over the last number of years. Employment in the archaeology profession has increased enormously in recent years, mainly as a result of the economic boom of the 1990s resulting in the large-scale infrastructural developments of the NDP, the boom in the construction industry in the private sector, and much urban renewal. The demand in employment is influenced greatly by the rate of the implementation of the NDP. The main area of employment is in the contracting and consulting sector of the profession, which accounts for over three-quarters of all archaeologists; these include the excavation directors, project managers, researchers and excavators and so on. The academic sector accounts for 9%, the public sector 11% and the museum sector 3% of the archaeological profession (CHL July 2002, 3). Archaeology in the past twenty years has shifted from an academic, public sector profession, to a private sector profession dominated by consulting and contracting archaeologists.

CHL Consulting Co. Ltd (2002 October & July) has carried out extensive reports and studies on the archaeological profession², profiling the actual profession and studying the future employment demands for archaeologists. It was noted by CHL (2002 July) that such studies failed to consider or analyse properly the prospective role third level students of archaeology had in the future of the profession. It is hoped that this small survey of a student base of one college department (UCD), shall shed at least a glimmer of light on this overlooked aspect.

² CHL Consulting Co. Ltd (October) (2002) Profile of the Archaeological Profession and Education resources in Ireland. A report to The Heritage Council and the Institute of Archaeologists of Ireland.

CHL Consulting Co. Ltd (July) (2002). The Future Demand for Archaeologists in Ireland. A report to The Heritage Council and the Institute of Archaeologists of Ireland.

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The survey was conducted in the second semester of the academic year 2004-2005. First, second and third year (UCD) undergraduate classes were all asked to participate in the questionnaire. The same four questions were put to the three different years, and the results are outlined directly below. What follows is a brief discussion of some of the interesting trends that can be identified in the results.

First Year Student Survey

Question		Yes	No	Unsure
Q1	Do you envisage a career or any employment future in the various archaeology sectors?	52%	47%	1%
Q2	Do you plan to go on and do further study in archaeology after you complete your undergraduate degree?	38%	57%	3%
Q3	Is archaeology your first choice subject?	34%	66%	0%
Q4	Have you ever worked on a commercial archaeology site	4%	96%	0%

Second Year Student Survey

Question		Yes	No	Unsure
Q1	Do you envisage a career or any employment future in the various archaeology sectors?	69%	28%	3%
Q2	Do you plan to go on and do further study in archaeology after you complete your undergraduate degree?	60%	31%	9%
Q3	Is archaeology your first choice subject?	62%	38%	0%
Q4	Have you ever worked on a commercial archaeology site	9%	91%	0%

Third Year Student Survey

Question		Yes	No	Unsure
Q1	Do you envisage a career or any employment future in the various archaeology sectors?	54%	44%	2%
Q2	Do you plan to go on and do further study in archaeology after you complete your undergraduate degree?	44%	56%	0%
Q3	Is archaeology your first choice subject?	54%	46%	0%
Q4	Have you ever worked on a commercial archaeology site	12%	88%	0%

As an arts subject, archaeology receives much interest in first year, both as a first choice subject but often as a third choice (minor) subject. It is upon entering second year that many students opt to drop or keep on archaeology. It is interesting, in first year, that while only 34% initially picked archaeology as their first choice subject, 52% envisaged a further career in the profession. Over half (52%) of the first years surveyed were interested in a career in archaeology while 47% were not interested, and 1% were uncertain. 57% were not interested in carrying out future study in the profession after they finished their undergraduate degree. So there seems to be a high attrition rate in the first year class; with roughly half of them being not interested in entering in the various sectors of the profession.

The most interesting trends are evident in the results for the second and third years. If one decides to keep archaeology on after first year then they must do so for both the second and third years of their degree. So it is interesting that 69% of the second years surveyed were interested in having a career in archaeology, while in third year only 54% of students surveyed were interested in a career in archaeology (Fig 1). It is also notable that in second year 60% of those surveyed wished to carry out further study in archaeology after they finished their undergraduate degree, but in third year only 44% of those surveyed wished to go on and carry out further study in archaeology (Fig 2). 62% of the second years surveyed viewed archaeology as their first choice subject while 54% of the third years viewed archaeology as their first choice subject (Fig 3). So between choosing to keep on archaeology in second year and one year later, it seems more students loose interest in the profession (it would be interesting to survey the same second years, towards the end of the next academic year). It is quite possible that between second year and third year the student outlook does not tend to change and that the results are indicative of separate attitudes of two different years, one more interested and enthusiastic than the other. Only future annual studies will solve this. However, it is evident that 4% of the first years surveyed, 9% of the second years surveyed and 12% of the third years surveyed had worked on a commercial archaeological site. Thus it is evident that interest in the commercial sector increases between years, especially between second and third years as the numbers in the classes are quite similar, but the numbers are still surprisingly low throughout.

The second and third year classes, smaller in number, choose to keep on archaeology. Thus the interest in the subject obviously tends to be higher, as is indicated in the results. However, between second and third year, this interest seems to wane somewhat, despite the fact that more people enter into employment (summer) in the commercial sector. This higher percentage of students entering into the commercial sector most likely represents those students highly interested in the subject and profession.

In terms of the students' role in the future profession of archaeology, it is evident that in third year more become interested in and involved in the commercial sector. The fact that 54% of third years plan to go on to further employment in the industry, and 44% plan to go on to do further study is interesting. These figures are important. Generally speaking half of the third years plan to study and work in future, in the profession. We know from the CHL reports that the employment turn over, in the commercial sector is high, and the attrition rate for young archaeologists is particularly high. So it is likely that many of these third years will not stay long in the commercial profession, and it is likely that some of them wishing to go on to further studies in archaeology, may not get into their desired courses and colleges. So the actual number of students in UCD that will enter into the profession whether it is through academia or into the commercial sector, is likely to be proportionally small compared to the number of students who chose to study archaeology in first year, and compared to the number of those who choose to keep on archaeology in second year and third year.

Much can be gleaned from the above results; this discussion serves only to highlight the general and dominant trends from the survey. It is hoped that this survey will shed some light on the role of the undergraduate student of archaeology in the future profession. However, an annual nationwide survey of all undergraduate students of archaeology would perhaps be much more holistic and conclusive; this may be undertaken and achieved through inter-departmental collaboration and co-operation.

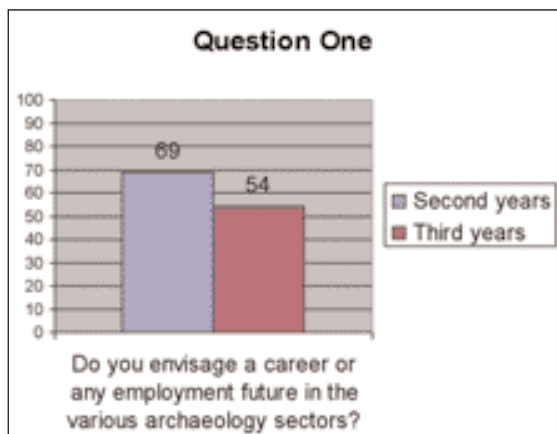


Figure 1

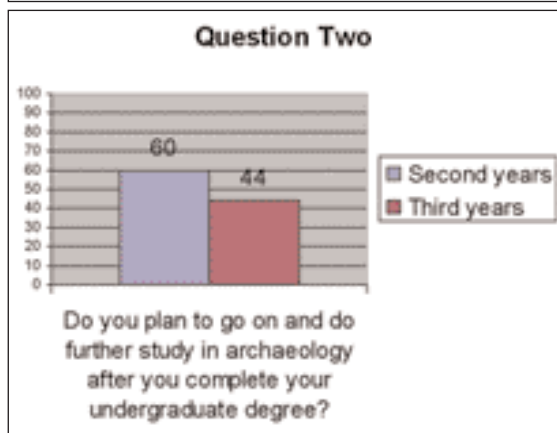


Figure 2

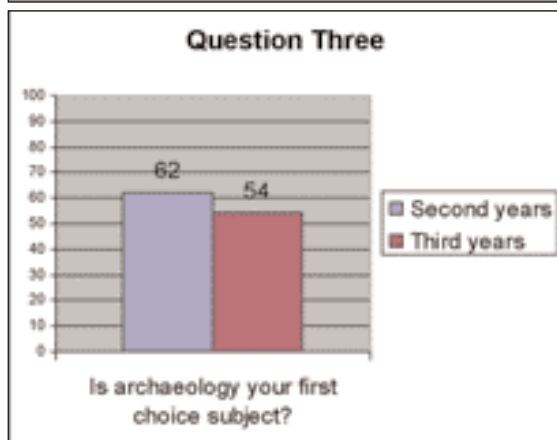


Figure 3

The Classical Museum [K216]

Dr Christina Haywood*

The Classical Museum is in many ways an exceptional museum. It was the creation of the Jesuit Professor of Greek at University College Dublin, the Rev. Henry Browne, a classicist who was fascinated by the new horizons which the archaeological discoveries in the Mediterranean had opened in his day, and who embarked on a pioneering educational crusade: to introduce material culture into the teaching of Classics. In a brief but super-energetic 10 years period (1910-1920) he assembled a 2000- strong collection of antiquities and a 3000-strong collection of coins which he actively used to teach the “realities” of the ancient Greek and Roman worlds to his students. It is quite remarkable that the museum physically survived all these years and in spite of the little shown for the collection in certain periods of the history of the College, until it was given a new lease of life when the Arts Block (now John Henry Newman Building) was built on the Belfield campus in 1970 and it was then given a designated home: Room K 216. But do not be deceived by its banal door number: the Classical Museum is no ordinary room within the School of Classics. Brightly lit and newly refurbished, it is packed full with Mediterranean antiquities, both inside and outside display cases. Some are as old as 5000 years, others as “young” as 1500 years!

Time has not decreased the museum's significance and potential; on the contrary, it has increased it. The museum has its rightful place in the history of the University and the cultural history of Ireland, but it is hardly a “resting place” for the objects within. The role that material culture, which, with the exception of archaeology, was largely ignored by subjects for which written sources exist, has now been acknowledged, while archaeology itself has developed exciting new ways of looking at artefacts. And with the wider-ranging opportunities that the new modularized system offers, many more students - besides students of Greek and Roman Civilization - will benefit from the museum and its collection.

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Artefacts from the collection acquire contextual meaning by being incorporated into the teaching of the courses in Greek and Roman Archaeology, History of Art and History which are run from the School of Classics. Thematic museum exhibitions prepared by groups of students encourage the further study and contextual analysis of artefacts, as well as giving students a foundation training in the presentation and mounting of museum displays. The museum collection can provide avenues for students to follow in their essays or research. Almost every object has a cultural biography, having had different meanings in different contexts until its present place in the museum. All these can be explored as can the often quite colourful stories to do with the archaeologists, the excavators and the excavations that brought them to light.

The museum is also a place of course where objects, displays and exhibitions can be viewed out of curiosity, or for their recreational value. We do not underestimate this role, and the numbers of visitors walking through our doors persuades us to keep them open as much as possible. The Classical Museum is open during term time on Tuesdays and Fridays 10 am - 1 pm, and Thursdays 2.30 - 5 pm (or whenever the door is open). The exhibition *Portraying the Women in Classical Antiquity* prepared and mounted by students will be on view until 15 December 2005.

Dr Christina Haywood
Curator of the Classical Museum
School of Classics
University College Dublin

Book Review Section

A review of Nash, G and Chippindale, C (eds.) (2002) *European Landscapes of Rock-Art*. Routledge. London and New York.

Blaze O'Connor*

This volume presents an interesting and eclectic collection of rock art research projects by specialists from a broad variety of backgrounds. The case studies investigate petroglyphs in England, Scotland and Ireland, carved boulders and menhirs in alpine Italy, Levantine paintings in eastern Spain, pictographs in western Sweden, and painted and carved rock art in central and northern Scandinavia. Perhaps a little surprisingly, given the overall emphasis on prehistoric rock art, Red Army graffiti in the Reichstag, Berlin, is also added to the mix. An equally diverse range of 'landscape' approaches to rock art is encompassed. These include descriptive regional summaries (e.g., Beckensall), detailed discussions of symbolism and meaning (e.g., Fossati, Frachetti and Chippindale), and focused studies which test theoretical interpretations using rigorous field strategies (e.g., Purcell).

The collection as a whole is a timely response to the relatively recent increase in interest in rock art research as a valid sub-discipline within academic archaeology, and in the relevance of landscape approaches to rock art. These approaches acknowledge the unique nature of this aesthetic phenomenon as connected in a very intimate way to 'locales' in the cultural and natural landscape. 'Landscape', that most ambiguous of terms, has arguably become the fashionable buzzword in recent archaeological literature. In their introductory chapter Nash and Chippindale emphasise the importance of interaction between people, landscape and rock art, and the human experience of 'place' as fundamental to our understanding of these sites. Landscape research often draws upon multiple lines of enquiry, incorporating a range of evidence in order to better establish a more meaningful context for archaeological sites. Thus the relationship between

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rock art and settlement evidence, monuments, and other archaeological material as well as topographic and other 'natural' features and characteristics are all valid subjects in attempting to paint a broader and richer picture of the context within which rock art was created. Frequently, rock art research seeks to identify why particular places were selected for embellishment with carved and painted motifs, in order to understand the potential ways people experienced and interpreted the landscape in the past.

Chapters which present rock art within its wider context include Purcell's sensitive and detailed study of the landscape setting of rock art in south-west Ireland, Baker's socio-political explanation of the production of graffiti during times of intense conflict, Ramqvist's and Sognnes's distributional studies of motif types and styles across ecological zones, and Diaz-Andreu's interesting study of sacred landscapes and identity in post-Palaeolithic Iberia. However, some of the chapters pay only cursory consideration to the archaeological and landscape context of the sites, particularly compared to previous landscape-oriented studies (Bradley 1997, Chippindale and Taçon 1998).

Others are conducted from quite a different perspective, focusing primarily on symbolism (e.g., Fossati, Frachetti and Chippindale). In some instances the reliance on direct visual interpretations of meaning lacks sufficient evidence in support of the theories presented - particularly in the case of the 'topographical maps' supposedly depicted in areas of alpine Italy (Fossati). Nash and Chippindale do however discuss the problems associated with symbolism and meaning, contrasting the use of 'informed methods' (direct ethnography and ethnographic analogy) versus 'formal methods' (contextual, experiential and other landscape approaches). The idea of landscape is introduced by Fossati, Nash and, to an extent, Sognnes, as the subject of rock art imagery, suggesting that the motifs may express a literal or metaphorical map or means of understanding real or conceptual environments. The issue of the interpretation of imagery still represents a major challenge in rock art research, and there is a danger of a dichotomy forming between strictly interpretive approaches to symbolism and meaning, and landscape-oriented studies which ignore the rich information offered by the motifs. Chapters by Purcell, Ramqvist and Sognnes represent

attempts to cross this divide, by integrating experiential or distributional studies with motif analysis.

For rock art research to successfully mature and play an active role in broader archaeological debate in general, and in landscape archaeology in particular, it is crucial that the lessons learnt through studies of other archaeological site types are taken into consideration and built upon. Some of the chapters presented here suggest that the combination of rock art and landscape research is potentially a highly fruitful one. However, research following the standards set by landscape approaches to other site types is still relatively rare, and disappointingly simplistic interpretations are still commonly found in rock art literature. Ramqvist's explanation of rock art distribution in Fenno-Scandinavia, for instance, directly equates distributional patterning and motif style with different 'tribal entities' without considering the problematic issues underlying this theory. Further studies are needed which question and explore the basis of our interpretations of the role of rock art, as are interpretive frameworks which allow research to move beyond elaborate systems of symbolic decipherment and back to the heart of the matter - understanding past societies.

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A review of *Illaunloughan: An Early Medieval Monastery in County Kerry* by Jenny White Marshall and Claire Walsh with G.D. Rourke, E.V. Murray & F. McCormick. Published by Wordwell Ltd, Bray (2005).

Sharon A. Greene *

The tiny island of Illaunloughan is situated in the channel that runs between Valencia Island and the Iveragh Peninsula and is the site of the early medieval remains of an oratory, shrine and stone huts. The site was first noted by the Ordnance Survey in the 1840s but was not the subject of detailed research until the mid-twentieth century, since when the shrine and oratory in particular have been discussed by such scholars as Françoise Henry and Peter Harbison. In 1992 a programme of research excavations began under the direction of Claire Walsh and ended with the 1995 season, by which stage approximately 70 per cent of the 0.1 hectare island had been investigated. This important book reports on the results of these excavations and much more besides.

Marshall & Walsh have inverted the traditional excavation report in that the overview of the research results comprise the first part of the publication, followed by the more detailed stratigraphic report and finds catalogue. Thus interpretation is brought to the fore in more than one sense. All evidence for use of the island from the initial monastic phase to its abandonment and intermittent reuse in the later medieval and more recent times are included and a number of important issues raised by the excavation results are discussed in great detail.

The first important observation about the site is that it was not built as a hermitage as some have believed, but actually began its life (probably in the mid-seventh century) as a small monastery for up to twelve men. The development of the site and the identification of two phases of construction dating from the seventh/eighth century and eighth/ninth century respectively are outlined and backed up by radiocarbon dates. Rourke & Marshall also discuss the drystone oratory in the context of other examples in the western region (chapter 7) explaining the evolutionary progression of the corbelled structures and their distribution in the wider ecclesiastical and secular landscape of the region.

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The possible symbolism and inspiration behind the construction of the slab shrine and the deposition of scallop shells and white quartz stones are discussed in chapter 6. The deposition of the shells and quartz appear to indicate pilgrimage activity on the site as early as the eighth century, making it the earliest archaeological evidence for such activity in Ireland. This also means that the symbolic use of the scallop shell at Illaunloughan pre-dates its more famous association with pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela in Spain by up to four centuries.

Excellent preservation on the site allowed for the most extensive investigation of an early medieval monastic midden in Ireland to date, the results of which are clearly explained by Murray & McCormick using comparative data from other excavations and documentary sources. This study includes discussions on the contemporary environment and the monastic diet. The presence of the remains of very young animals has been interpreted as possible evidence for a marginal environment, where the number of animals born on a farm was more than the land could cope with resulting in the slaughter of young animals - a pattern seen elsewhere in the north-west Atlantic. This appears to be further supported by the predominance of oats at a time when barley and, in particular, wheat were the more popular cereals. Considering the tiny size of the island, the animals and cereals must have been brought from the mainland and the possibility is suggested that it may have been supplied either by a 'mother house' or as a tribute from the secular community. The earlier phase of occupation on the island included a small garden plot in front of the huts using imported 'plaggan' soils. This would have been used for growing vegetables and in combination with the exploitation of marine and bird life would have allowed for a certain degree of self-sufficiency.

Also associated with the first phase of activity was evidence for decorative metalworking. Clay moulds, crucible fragments, part of a tuyère and a bone trial piece were associated with Hut C. A ringed pin and an annular brooch-pin head were also found on the site. This industrial evidence is compared with that found on other excavated sites of the period, however the way in which this industrial work fitted into the life and economy of the small monastery is under explored.

Burial patterns are discussed in chapter 5 and the full skeletal report by Laureen Buckley, as well as the other specialist reports are available either

on the Wordwell website or on CD by request from the publishers. The primary burials on the site (it was also used as a cillín or ceallúnach in the nineteenth and earlier twentieth centuries) are all male - as might be expected for a monastic site - and the unexpected presence of three juveniles appears to provide the first plausible archaeological evidence for fosterage to the church as recorded in texts from this period. The final section of the book details the reconstruction work carried out on the island remains by the National Monuments Service. The conservation and presentation of National Monuments to the public is an important aspect of these sites that is rarely discussed in this kind of context.

Overall, the excavations on Illaunloughan and this resulting, beautifully presented and well illustrated book provide an up-to-date and comprehensive analysis of the numerous aspects of an early medieval monastic site that will be used as an important point of comparison and reference for those involved in early medieval research in Ireland for years to come. The accessible style in which it is written makes it essential reading for all students of this era.

A Review of Carlestone Jones' *The Burren and the Aran Islands: Exploring the Archaeology*

By Emily Kane*

The book is an archaeological volume looking at the Burren and the Aran Islands and trying to understand the history of the region. It is comprehensive and extremely well laid out, which makes it easy for both the archaeologist and the layman to understand it and enjoy the archaeology of the west coast of Ireland. Its methodological approach does not make the text heavy to read but instead presents a stunning representation of the archaeology of Ireland. The layout hints of an academic volume with its structured and chronological order. However, once you delve further in, you find an impressive and outstanding array of photographs, diagrams and drawings that leave you wanting more, and which also inspires you to visit the area and explore it for yourself with the aid of the book. The book begins

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with a burst of enthusiasm from Jones, which enhances the interest of the reader. He tries to bring archaeology into a modern context in order to make it more appealing without losing sight that the period that separates us from them defines archaeology.

Although this book is aimed at the lay archaeologist, it presents new archaeological data of the Burren's and the Aran Islands' archaeology collected from different professional and academic archaeologists that help to advance an understanding of how to approach the discipline. This new information, which Jones tries to remain impartial about with the goal of providing it to the reader, can apply to the whole of Irish archaeology. This book is superb in the way it tries to encourage the reader to become the amateur archaeologist if they are not already one. Its structure and design, which allows for the occasional 'dipping in' without losing the understanding and context of the book is practical for people who wish to see the sites with the book accompanying them. The detail of each site explained in this book is specific, brief but excellent. It includes details of its grid reference, the accessibility of the site and whether it possesses a signpost for easy discovery. This is also an invaluable way to encourage people to get out into the countryside and to see what it has to offer.

The archaeological sites that Jones uses in this book are the best examples of their kind, but he does inform the reader that there are many other similar sites that could be explored and be equally as interesting. He provides a context of the landscape, as it was when these different monuments were constructed and how it has not remained static over the centuries. He also presents a history of archaeology in the area from its birth to the present, and then showcases new work and information. The standard of photographs, which are of sites, finds and archaeologists at work with descriptions to match promotes the book to be read from cover to cover and to also dip in when it's wanted.

The book is pragmatic and methodological in the way it describes sites. Firstly, it identifies the site in question. It then goes on to point out where it is located, which is followed with a theory being provided as to what it did. This approach is concise, if brief but definitely to the point. It does attempt to approach it critically, which is important in not losing sight of true

archaeology. What is so interesting about this book is that it provides an insight into how archaeologists work because of the high quality photographs and descriptive passages. The importance of each site is discussed as well as a brief history of the period, which is essential in capturing the environment of the time. With its site index, site symbols, maps, glossary and the extensive bibliography it holds, this book is easily approachable, as it invites the reader to continue their interest in archaeology by researching further.

This book is very broad and wide scoping, as a lot of work went into the making of it. The numerous sites visited and recorded highlight the love of archaeology that this writer has. It also shows how much he wishes to share this with others, and how he tries to encourage people to visit these sites, whether they are archaeologists or not. The book uses the most illustrious and exciting finds of the Burren region and the Aran Islands that it can be found as his examples, which certainly was his intention as it is not an academic book. It is accessible, well planned and practical. The illustrations dominate the book at the expense of the literature but this is not a fault of the book. It achieves what it tries to do. It places everything in context with each other and it inspires the archaeologist and amateur alike to do some exploring of their own in the Burren area and the Aran Islands. It is basically two books in one, dividing the Burren from the Aran Islands. Within this, it is divided up separately, which means that some of the book might never be read if it was not necessary. This accessibility makes the book truly worth exploring even for the least interested amateur archaeologist.

Reflections

This section is a collection of contributions from a diverse range of people from many walks of life. 'Reflections' provides a forum for these people to voice and share their experiences, thoughts and opinions on archaeology and the study of the past, with each other, but most importantly with you the reader. Enjoy!

'Odin's World' - A talk given at Silkeborg, July 2005

It is a great honour and a great pleasure to have been invited back to Silkeborg to open this exhibition of material connected with Odin and Thor and the vision of Ragnarok. The last time I was here, in 1996 I took the precaution of bringing an Irish piper with me. The spell of the music, I thought, would charm my Danish audience and make them tolerant of my inadequacies as a commentator on the archaeology of their native country. But to-day I must proceed on my own initiative, so I hope you will understand if I begin not in the realm of archaeology, but instead where I feel most at home, in the realm of poetry.

Not that the two realms are all that opposed to each other. In fact, over thirty years ago I wrote an essay where I began by comparing the activity of poetry to an archaeological dig. Like the archaeologist, the poet can only work when he or she senses that there's something hidden just out of reach, something just waiting to be discovered. There has to be an element of intuition involved before there can be any real excitement in the exercise. In each case, the search for results is to a large extent its own reward, and in the end each is content with whatever turns up, provided it is authentic. For the archaeologist, coming upon the buried shard can be as thrilling as coming upon the buried city, just as for the poet, the gift of a perfect three line lyric can be as gratifying and immortal as the achievement of a three part epic. Physical size, commercial value, importance in the eyes of the world, these considerations are not the primary ones.

In the current exhibition, for example, there are several items measuring not much more than a couple centimetres, but their significance is far greater than their dimensions would suggest. In other words, the power that emanated from a little amulet shaped like Thor's hammer didn't come from

the material object, but from the system of devotion and belief which it symbolized. A myth, after all, is a way of gaining access to the infinite. In its first state, before it becomes literature, myth is a means that human beings use to situate themselves in the universe and to steer themselves through it. So, when a warrior of the north held or wore Thor's hammer, he became for the time being all the warriors of the north, he was utter and eternal warrior, archetype warrior, just as the Christian making the sign of the cross in the face of a Viking raider was archetypal and eternal pilgrim soul, striving against evil, staying true to his Lord on the road to salvation.

It is worth emphasising therefore that the treasures which the organizers have gathered here at Silkeborg are not just exotic inventions made to delight the eye. These objects, often enigmatic in their symbolism, are trace elements of a vanished order, manifestations of the otherness of the Nordic world-picture. Because of the workmanship that has gone into them, and the definition and finish which they consequently possess, we cannot help but contemplate them as artwork. But this is artwork with a difference. It was not made, after all, for exhibition and sale in a gallery, but for a sign that the world of human beings and the world of divine beings were related.

The objects on exhibition are therefore religious in the original sense of the word, since they were first and foremost ligatures, made to bind the natural understanding of men and women to the supernatural patterns that ordered reality for them. If that reality appears to us nowadays as notably violent and merciless, we have to remember that the history of our own times gives us no grounds for feeling superior. What the exhibition prompts, rather, is a recollection of words that Shakespeare once put into the mouth of another royal person from Denmark. "What a piece of work is man," said Prince Hamlet, when he reflected upon the doings and achievements of our species, and we might be tempted to repeat the words as we view these various images that conjure up a distant and dangerous world. But to-day, alas, we repeat these words not with Hamlet's renaissance confidence and humanist trust, but with a great and bitter irony instead.

So I would go further with my comparison of the poetic and the archaeological realms, and say of these exhibits what the English critic Christopher Ricks once said of poems, namely, that they are not necessarily "the truth" but that there is truth in them. And the same could be said of the

system of belief which lies behind the exhibits, the myths and mythical figures of the Nordic world that have been incised on stone and cast in metal by the goldsmiths and silversmiths and stone-cutters of the Viking age. If the stories of Odin and Thor and Ragnarok are not the truth, there is nevertheless truth in them. Or to put it another way, the myths are true not because they give factual information, but because they have been effective, because they once had an effect on human behaviour.

Warriors in a heroic society, for example, were lodged with their chief and bound to do battle for him, and this truth is effectively present in the conception of Odin's hall of Valhalla, where the fighting and the revelling, the ecstasy of combat and the ecstasy of drink, are to be enjoyed forever and are never injurious. Then too, the actual conduct required of those warriors once they entered battle was represented effectively in the images of strength associated with Thor, the swinging of his hammer, the buckling on of his girdle of strength, the donning of his iron gloves. And the truth that death in battle is at once both certain and arbitrary was equally effectively represented in the figures of the Valkyries, the choosers of the slain, those three weird sisters who are said to have spoken their prophecies during the battle of Clontarf. (The words are recorded Njal's Saga):

All is sinister now to see,
A cloud of blood moves over the sky
The air is red with the blood of men
As the battle women chant their song.

The saga writer imagines these sinister figures at their loom during that 11th century battle, but there is a truth in this ancient scenario for our own times also, a time when the figure of the berserk, that ecstatic fighter inspired by Odin, has reappeared in the form of the modern suicide bomber; a time when the shock and awe of violent raiding and eventual invasion is something we have watched and are still watching happen in Iraq; but the myth in which we are likely to find most truth for our times is that of Ragnarok. As the icecaps melt and the seas rise, as the fire of the sun burns more fiercely through gaps in the ozone layer, as the corporate giants of the military/industrial superpower ride roughshod over the mustering forces of the environmental movement, it is impossible not to find in these images of a threatened earth and a damaged heaven a parallel with the drastic signs

and omens that the northern peoples once believed would precede the final apocalyptic war between the monsters and the gods.

As our ocean levels continue to rise, our general sense of dread must surely have something in common with the general sense of dread that a dark age audience would have felt when they heard the end of the poem of Voluspa, at that point when the world-serpent stirs on the ocean floor and the waters rise to overwhelm the earth. All kinds of dangers then break loose, some of which are depicted on the panels of the Gosforth Cross, also on display in the exhibition. There we see the giant Loki breaking his bonds. A figure with a horn, presumably summoning warriors to battle. A figure holding open a monster's jaws with his hand and foot, precisely as Vidar was said to have done when he slew the wolf that had swallowed Odin. The content of this fantasmagoria may belong to another age, it may even have been inspired by memories of volcanic eruption of melting ice and burning lava, but however we choose to explain it, the sense of omen and anxiety from which it springs is utterly contemporary.

And yet the Voluspa concludes with a vision of renewal, of the return of the sons of the great gods; the return too of Balder from the dead, and the arrival out of the world tree of two living creatures who will repeople the regenerated earth with men and women. Here again, of course, we are not dealing with factual information about what will happen after a planetary disaster. Instead we are being presented with an imaginative vision, a vision born out of the protest that the human spirit will always make on behalf of life, but born also from the fighting spirit that was cultivated by the warriors of the north. That protest and that spirit appealed greatly to the English poet Ted Hughes, and in a poem called 'Thistles' he celebrated this indomitable northern resilience and connected it with that most common, spiky, and resistant of northern plants. So: 'Thistles', by Ted Hughes:

*Against the rubber tongues of cows and the hoeing hands of men
Thistles spike the summer air
Or crackle open under a blue-black pressure.*

*Every one a revengeful burst
Of resurrection, a grasped fistful*

*Of splintered weapons and Icelandic frost thrust up
From the underground stain of a decayed Viking. They are like pale hair and the
gutturals of dialects. Every one manages a plume of blood.*

*Then they grow grey, like men.
Mown down, it is a feud. Their sons appear,
Stiff with weapons, fighting back over the same ground.*

There are few, if any weapons, in the current exhibition. Here, the sons of the north do not appear to us in battle gear. Instead, we are given a glimpse of them, sometimes in their solemn moments, contemplating their ritual insignia, sometimes in more domestic circumstances, handling the plainest of objects. But once upon a time, all of these objects functioned as keys that opened doors into the inner life of a whole society, into those hiding places where the common human capacity for judgement and courage and decision and suffering is ultimately lodged. And that is why this exhibition is to be celebrated.

What we have on display is evidence of a people fighting their way over the same human ground that we ourselves must fight over, and fighting not with their weapons but with their symbols. So I can think of no better way to end my address and open the exhibition than to quote these famous words about persistence and change and renewal by the poet T. S. Eliot 'See', Eliot writes, in his poem 'Little Gidding':

*See, now they vanish,
The faces and places, with the self, which, as it could loved them,
To become renewed, transfigured, in another pattern.*

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Seamus Heaney'. The script is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'Seamus' and the last name 'Heaney' clearly distinguishable.

Seamus Heaney

‘A Memoir of Knowth’

In his book "Knowth and the passage tombs of Ireland" George Eogan describes dramatically the events of the 11th July 1967 at Knowth.

"At last I was convinced that the entrance had been found and with Quentin Dresser to the fore we soon set out on our hands and knees to investigate. It proved to be a thrilling if also a rather worrying experience. About 10 metres from the entrance we had to crawl under an orthostat that had partly fallen inward. Next it was necessary to wriggle through a pool of muddy water on the floor beneath a couple of leaning orthostats."

I know exactly how that first exploration team must have felt because shortly afterwards at the kind invitation of Professor Eogan himself I had the unique honour of making that very same crawl along that incredible passage and experiencing the same growing excitement and anticipation.

As one stood, however, in that great chamber with its corbelled roof, its carved stones and stone basin, trying to take it all in, there was no room for any feelings other than awe and wonder and a deep admiration for those ancestors of ours who built this incredible edifice to honour their dead five millennia ago.

Nor can any words even begin to describe that very special feeling of being among the first people to stand there for the first time in 5,000 years.

C. J. H.

Charles J. Haughey

A Youthful Archaeology

My name is Aisling Healy. I am 11 years old. I go to school in Baconstown N.S. Co. Meath.

I am investigating what my school would be like in 1000 years time.

My team and I had spotted a hill quite near the road and we started to investigate it. We found some sort of a box. It was a time capsule. I opened it up to see what was inside. There was old coins and pens and pencils, a calendar and a whistle. There were old pictures of children at school. This must be what stood here years and years ago. A school.

The rest of my team found some old bits of metal, legs of tables and chairs. Bits of a scissors and something that looked like a car or a bus. We also found bits of leather which could have been some part of a chair or schoolbag. Something that looked like a ball or a hurling ball was found to. There were some parts of the wall left of the school. Two wheels were found from a car or bus. Further down in the ground there was a schoolbus. A big tree stood where the school would have been and there was where we had found the time capsule. Carved into the tree was, 'Baby infants and High-infants'.

A time capsule, pen and pencils, a calender, coins, pictures, metal legs, scissors, cars, buses, leather schoolbag, football, remains of the school a bus and carvings on a very old tree.

All that found in a days work!!

Aisling Healy.

St. Michan's and the Archaeology of Ireland

Archaeology has been described as 'the study of past societies through the material remains left by those societies and the evidence of their environment'.

This put me in mind of a line we often hear 'if the walls could talk' and of a writer many, many years ago, describing a historic building in Dublin,

"There, through rain and shine, for well nigh eight centuries, has it stood square and strong, amid all the changes and chances of time and tide. Could some magic art bestow on that old grey tower the gift of speech, what tales (stranger indeed than fiction) might it not tell us? What pictures set before our mental vision, what memories recall for us of days long dead !"

The historic building referred to is well known to me - St Michan's Church. Originally founded in 1095 Saint Michan's Church was, I believe, until 1686, the only church on the north side of Dublin City. Here you can pay your respects to Dublin's mummified dead! The church is famous for its collection of mummified bodies stored in the vaults. It seems the limestone in the ground keeps the air dry and helps preserve crusaders, leaders of the 1798 Rebellion and the ordinary people of Dublin alike. Surely a haven for archaeologists.

Ireland is endowed with a rich archaeological heritage with over 120,000 recorded sites and monuments across the island. I believe the archaeological heritage is a resource which can be used to gain knowledge and understanding of the past and is therefore of great cultural and scientific importance. Take Dublin City for instance, results of excavations carried out in High Street, Wood Quay and the Temple Bar area give us a good idea of how Dublin in the Viking Age would have been.

In recent years, increased development has necessitated archaeological excavations at a rate and intensity never witnessed before. However, this development contributes to increasing our store of knowledge of archaeological heritage and past societies. For instance, the unexpected discovery of a previously unrecorded archaeological site at Woodstown in Waterford discovered during the course of archaeological investigations in advance of the construction of the Waterford City By-Pass. This site, now a National Monument because of its archaeological and historical significance, is a multi-period site with extensive Viking occupation. Consideration is now being given to how best the site can be managed to yield this valuable information.

I believe that it is very important that the results of all the excavations being carried out around the country are recorded and shared with the public. I'm delighted that the Departments of Education and Environment, Heritage

and Local Government are collaborating in an Archaeology in the classroom project for primary schools. I hope that in a few short years this will lead to many more young people studying archaeology.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Bertie Ahern' in a cursive, flowing style.

Bertie Ahern
An Taoiseach

Historians looking at Archaeology: a Personal Memoir

I write as a medieval historian whose archaeological training was entirely in the field, as a worker and an occasional site director in England during the 1960s. My main archaeological mentor was Philip Rahtz, who was later to become Professor of Archaeology at the University of York. At one stage he taught medieval archaeology to students of history at the University of Birmingham. There the Department of History had its own archaeological site in the Cotswold Hills - a deserted medieval village called Upton where every summer volunteers would dig by day, dine and carouse by evening, and sleep in tents by night. The initiative for this arrangement came from an historian, the late Rodney Hilton.

These inconsequential details are mentioned here only to make the point that, for roughly half a century, some historians have had opportunities to learn about archaeological methodologies and techniques, in order to enable them to increase their knowledge of the medieval past and to reinterpret old problems in the light of new archaeological evidence. Only a minority of professional historians have moved in this direction, even though most of them are at least vaguely aware of the potential that archaeology has for the medieval and even the post-medieval periods. I like to think of myself as one of this enlightened minority; certainly I have endeavoured to make use of archaeological material in Irish, British and continental contexts.

We now live in an environment of interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approaches to scholarship. The evolution of these approaches has been one

of the enriching experiences of my lifetime. An essential component is reciprocity: if historians are meant to learn from archaeology, are not archaeologists meant to learn from history? Traditionally, of course, medieval archaeologists have exploited the written record for facts and especially for precise dates. Here there are dangers. Historical documents are not always easy to interpret and it is relatively common for mistakes to be made. Even more dangerous is the tendency to ignore, or at least to minimise, the potential of the written sources. A recent case in point was Carrickmines Castle, whose historical significance appears to have been seriously misunderstood and therefore misrepresented by those who were responsible for the initial impact survey.

One practical difficulty arises from the fact that most medieval records in Western Europe were written in Latin, and Latinity has declined catastrophically both in Ireland and in Britain. For the proper evaluation of any medieval site, it ought to become the norm for archaeologists to employ historians who can read and interpret correctly the primary sources, whenever they themselves are not qualified to do so. It goes without saying that only qualified people should be entrusted to excavate archaeological sites; the same principle applies to pre-excavation and post-excavation examinations of the written record. If history is not adequate without archaeology, the reverse is equally true.

Howard Clarke

(Associate Professor of Medieval Socio-Economic History, UCD.)

Finding a heartbeat

When I was a postgraduate student studying the geology of Slieve Bloom all of thirty years ago I was fascinated by the silent sentinels from so many phases of the human past that anchored the present to memories of prehistoric cultures all over the hills. And I tried to read their meaning, to reach the people whose muscles and heartbeat put them there. The most tantalizing of these monuments from the past was a standing stone known as the Fiddler's Rock that stands beside the Glenafelly stream in the foothills a few miles out of Kinnitty. It was bound to be especially intriguing to a geologist, because it's made of quartzite and how did a huge block of quartzite come to be here? You can see it's not a glacial erratic, it's too

angular, and it seems too hard to belong to the kind of Old Red Sandstone you get in Slieve Bloom. It seems to be aligned with certain other monuments, but that might be coincidence, and in any case the stone still remains cold and silent. There are no whispers here that might bring to life the men and women who, for whatever reason, placed it here. There are no footprints to follow, no echoes of distant singing carried in the wind. And then, two years ago, one dark Sunday afternoon in the heart of winter, a week before Christmas, I went for a run in Glenafelly, up along the forest track that runs NE up one side, curving round the head of the glen, and back SW down the other side. And on that dark day, late in the afternoon as I came over the shoulder beyond which the Cumber valley opened up I was stopped in my tracks, awestruck at the great beam of sunlight that streamed through the glacial spillway of the Cumber Gap, across the Fiddler's Rock, whose long shadow pointed like a dark finger at Knocknaman, and all the way down the valley south of it.

And the sight lifted the darkness out of the heart of winter with bright assurance of the sun's imminent turning and the sure return of spring. And if it struck my cynical 21st century spirit like this, what must it have been for the Bronze Age Kinnitty folk who placed it so carefully here to mark their bond with earth and sky.

And now I feel I hear them, I feel a heartbeat. However far I stand outside their world and the intimacy they had with their land.

I could never be intimate to this place in the way those who set this stone in the earth were intimate to it. Their direct experience hardly extended beyond the seen horizon that was the edge of their little world. But they knew this world in the way the animal knows its niche. They knew every bush and every stone, every slope and shadow, the variation of its soils and what grew in them: as know it they must because upon this knowledge their very lives depended, and their future. And yet it was a winged intimacy that extended far beyond a little earth-bound world circumscribed by the horizon, reaching as it did through imagination and intellect to frame this valley against the movement of the great lights of the sky and the seasons they controlled, and raising their great stone to anchor that precious all-determining relationship.

The monuments and artefacts archaeologists study are nothing of

themselves. They were made and used by people with all the concerns of mind and heart, body and soul that we, in our different ways, also have. But just as the colour fades from the iridescent wings of the most beautiful of butterflies when they are pinned in a cabinet when their life has faded, all that remains for us is the cold stone or waterlogged timber. They may refuse to speak of their makers; however we try to persuade them with our archaeological techniques.

Finding the heartbeat behind the stone, behind all that remains, is what archaeology is really all about.

John Feehan (UCD)

(Lecturer, Department of Environmental Resource Management, Faculty of Agri-food and the Environment, UCD.)

Archaeology, Classics and History

I was born in the town of Usk, South Wales, in a 16th century house, built partly out of stones robbed from a 12th century castle, on the site of a 1st century Roman settlement. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that I took an interest in the distant past from a very early age. I was fascinated by the history that was around me and beneath my feet, particularly when a major archaeological excavation of a Roman legionary fort started literally at the bottom of my parents' garden. One of my earliest school projects was all about that excavation and the Roman occupation of South Wales. In order to understand the significance of these remains I had to read about the Romans, which drew me into studying Classical texts by such famous Latin historians as Julius Caesar and Tacitus.

It was only when I went to university that I discovered that for many people there are boundaries between academic subjects which should never be crossed. Scholars who specialised in the study of Thucydides or Tacitus would focus on the intricacies of the Greek or Latin language, but pay little attention to the wider historical issues. Even those who thought of themselves as Greek or Roman historians would often ignore the results of archaeological investigations.

Fortunately these boundaries are being eroded. Examples of the integration

of archaeology, classics and history can be seen in many universities. One of the great advantages of studying Greek and Roman civilization is the opportunity to work with a wide range of archaeological, artistic and textual evidence. Courses in Classical Civilization regularly combine literature, philosophy, history, art and archaeology to enable students to obtain the fullest possible understanding and appreciation of the ancient world.

In my own teaching, research and publication I always attempt to deploy all the relevant types of evidence. It is good that both academic and commercial publishers are increasingly enthusiastic about the use of colour illustrations. In books on the Greeks and Romans pictures of archaeological remains and artefacts feature prominently, not just as decorative illustrations, but as part of the evidence from which information is drawn and the culture and history of the Classical world are reconstructed and explored.

At UCD we are very fortunate in having a Classical Museum. Visitors can see for themselves in the special exhibition entitled *Portraying the Women in Classical Antiquity*, how the work of archaeologists, classicists and historians combines to shed light on the fascinating world of Greek and Roman Civilization.

Dr. Philip de Souza

Dr Philip de Souza is Lecturer in Classics at UCD. He is a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society and a member of the Nautical Archaeology Society. His recent books include *Piracy in the Graeco-Roman World* (1999), *Seafaring and Civilization: Maritime Perspectives on World History* (2001), *The Peloponnesian War* (2002) and *The Greeks at War from Athens to Alexander* (2004). He is currently editing an illustrated book on *Warfare in the Ancient World*, to be published by Thames and Hudson.



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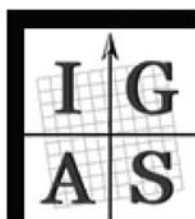


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BACKGROUND

The National Roads Authority has responsibility for building a safe and efficient network of national roads. Road building will continue to have a serious impact on the archaeological resource.

A Code of Practice was agreed between the NRA and the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands in 2000.

- 3 Archaeologists have been appointed to the NRA, Dublin
- 22 Project/Assistant Archaeologists have been appointed to National Road Design Offices nationwide.

- Project Archaeologists are part of the design team
- They oversee the archaeological aspect of road building

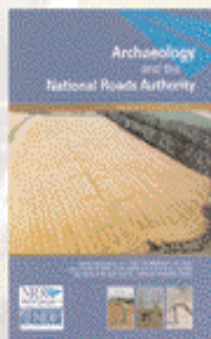


NRA ARCHAEOLOGICAL POLICY

- Avoidance of Recorded sites, where possible
- Advance testing of entire road schemes using
 - Geophysical survey
 - Extensive large scale test trenching
- Development of research strategies for schemes
- Excavation when impacting on archaeological sites
- Post excavation
- Publication

ACTIVITIES

- Guidelines on archaeology and the planning stages of road schemes
- Wetland archaeology



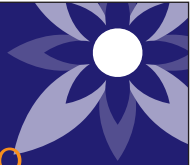
- Annual public seminar on archaeological discoveries on road schemes
- Local seminars on archaeological discoveries on road schemes
- Sponsorship of archaeological seminars, conferences, publications
- Participation in conferences, publications

For further information www.nra.ie/archaeology



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