Objects of the Past in the Past

Investigating the significance of earlier artefacts in later contexts

Edited by
Matthew G. Knight, Dot Boughton
and Rachel E. Wilkinson

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Cover image: The Hammer of St Martin (image courtesy of Museum Catharijneconvent, Utrecht / Ruben de Heer)

Back cover image: Impression of a medieval silver signet ring, incorporating a Roman carnelian intaglio, from the Evesham Abbey Gardens hoard (Cuming 1876: 116)

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Chapter 1
Objects of the Past in the Past

Matthew G. Knight, Dot Boughton and Rachel E. Wilkinson

Introduction: The Hammer of St Martin

In the St Catharine's Convent Museum (Museum Catharijneconvent) in Utrecht, Netherlands, there is a polished stone axehead set within a silver-plated wooden haft, known as the Hammer of St Martin (Figure 1.1). This object is said to have been used by St Martin of Tours to strike down the devil and destroy idols. This is encapsulated in a Latin inscription on the silver plating, which can be translated to: 'Idols were knocked down by the axe of St Martin. Do not believe that they, who so easily fall down, are gods' (de Kruijf 2014). This inscription draws on accounts of the saint by Sulpicius Severus from AD 420 (Severus 1894). However, this object represents more than a saintly relic. The stone axehead dates to the Late Bronze Age in the Netherlands (*c.* 1000–800 BC), whilst the haft into which it is set is stylistic of the 13th or 14th century AD (i.e. the medieval period) suggesting an approximate date for the final mounting of the axehead. Chronologically, then, the production of the axehead and its haft are separated by over 2000 years!

Furthermore, this composite artefact has been in circulation and/or curated for several hundred years having first been recorded in the inventory list of Utrecht's Dome Church in 1504 (de Kruijf 2014: 181). The listing suggests that, prior to its accession into the Dome Church, the 'hammer' had been carried by a traveller who offered laymen the opportunity to venerate relics (de Kruijf 2014: 181). Details of the

Figure 1.1: The Hammer of St Martin (image courtesy of Museum Catharijneconvent, Utrecht / Ruben de Heer)

Hammer's whereabouts after 1504 become scarce, though Museum Catharijneconvent (2018) records that it may have been preserved in the old presbytery of St Gertrudis church in 1876; it seems likely that it was kept in a religious institution in the intervening centuries. By 1928, it was in the (now former) museum attached to St Catharine's cathedral.

This artefact thus has a rich and complex history, involving the rediscovery of an already ancient object (the Bronze Age axehead); the hafting and reappropriation of this object in a medieval context, including the attribution of religious significance derived from a hagiography; and the curation and preservation into the present day. With such a long intricate history of different uses, attributed meanings and other aspects to disentangle, how should archaeologists and historians approach an object like this?

The rather remarkable case of the Hammer of St Martin highlights a significant phenomenon that was a regular occurrence throughout (pre-)history and across the world: that is the rediscovery and retention of already old artefacts in later periods. Recently, increasing recognition of anachronistic artefacts and a better understanding of object biographies has resulted in a growing number of case studies spanning the Bronze Age to the later medieval period (e.g. Caple 2010; Crawford 2007; Eckardt and Williams 2003; Ferris 2012: 77–93; Hingley 2009; Sherlock 2016; Swift 2012; Woodward 2002). Such studies have explored a range of theoretical approaches to the data, including the roles of these objects in relation to memory; their reuse and functionality; and the relationships between the artefacts, their owners and the contexts in which they were deposited. Ultimately, the question underpinning these studies, and indeed the present volume, is: *how did people in the past perceive their pasts?*

This question is by no means a new or original preoccupation. Understanding the 'past in the past' as a concept has been the focus of innumerable archaeological studies over recent decades and is perhaps best known as the title of a seminal collection of papers on the reuse of ancient monuments in a special edition of *World Archaeology* (Bradley and Williams 1998). However, whilst there have been several papers, volumes and essays dealing with this topic in relation to landscapes and monuments (e.g. Bradley 2002; Bradley and Williams 1998; Chadwick and Gibson 2013; Hingley 1996; Semple 2013; Yoffee 2007), there has yet to be a collation of work in relation to artefacts of the past in the past specifically. Nor is there a framework for approaching anachronistic objects when they are encountered (though see Caple 2010: 307–310). Period-specific studies (e.g. Eckardt and Williams 2003; Dowd 2018; Hingley 2009; Ferris 2012: 77–93) have tackled important aspects of older artefacts in later contexts, but there is limited understanding of how reactions to past objects across different time periods might be comparable or aid the interpretation of future objects discovered through archaeological investigation. Moreover, terminology remains fraught, with objects of the past often classified using a myriad of terms, posing interpretive problems (see below). Our increased recognition of anachronistic objects from a variety of contexts and their contribution to understanding aspects of preceding societies' perspectives on the past means that such an overview is required before attempting insights. Often archaeologists are approaching individual, isolated case studies making interpretation challenging, but cross-period frameworks of investigations can foster and enhance identification of objects of the past in the past and lead to fruitful, broader academic discussions.

The aim of this introduction and this volume overall is thus to begin to address some of these issues by, for the first time, bringing together case studies of older objects in later contexts ranging from the Bronze Age through to the 18th century AD primarily in Britain but also in Ireland and north-west Europe more widely. Here we will explore fundamental questions surrounding anachronistic objects, as well as summarising key interpretations about their changing associations and meanings. It is inevitable that interpretation of these objects is context- and period-specific, but, as we will show, there are similarities in the treatment of anachronistic objects across time that suggest different societies may have utilised old objects in similar ways and for similar agendas. We should naturally be wary of applying wholesale

interpretations uncritically and it is important that a balance is sought between applying ideas from the framework developed in this introduction and the nuances of each individual case study. A first step is nonetheless reviewing the key trends. The review of relevant literature presented here is not, and was never intended to be, exhaustive, and the main focus is on case studies from Britain and north-west Europe. However, this brief overview and associated discussion emphasises the potential this topic has for future research and expansion. This is further enhanced by the nine papers comprised within this volume.

How did earlier objects make their way into later archaeological contexts?

When an anachronistic object is encountered in a later context, a fundamental question needs to be answered: how did it get there? Assuming that the archaeological context is secure, there are two answers to this question. Either:

1. objects continued in sustained circulation over long periods of time, be that in active use or as retained curated artefacts; or
2. objects represent instances of 'archaeology' discovered in the past.

Taking the first proposition, it seems obvious to state that some objects would continue in circulation beyond their expected span. Evans and Millett argue that because some artefacts will inevitably have longer use-lives than expected, distinguishing between 'so-called heirlooms and rubbish-survivals' is unnecessary (1992: 225). This, however, ignores any potential significance that objects may acquire through their extended use-lives (e.g. as heirlooms or tokens of belief systems). This has been frequently recognised archaeologically through the appreciation and construction of object biographies and the complexities of the contexts in which objects are found (e.g. Gilchrist 2013; Lillios 1999; Woodward 2002). Objects may thus be retained, curated and valued for their symbolic, rather than their functional, properties. Alternatively, objects in extended circulation may be adapted, recycled or reused in new ways over time to fit within contemporary practices; for example the long life-histories of Iron Age metalwork (Chittock this volume; Garrow and Gosden 2012: 130ff.), the reuse of Roman bracelets as Anglo-Saxon rings (Swift 2012), or the conversion of Bronze Age bracelets into razors (Jennings 2014). The use, or reuse, of already old objects should not be taken to automatically indicate a knowledge of an object's history though; objects in continued circulation can acquire new meanings and be transformed and redefined in new contexts, which is not necessarily dependent on understanding an object's past.

An alternative explanation for the presence of older objects in later contexts is that they were rediscovered as residual or archaeological material at a later date. Past studies of residuality have tended to focus on formation processes (Schiffer 1976) or how residual material may be quantified (Evans and Millett 1992; Lucas 2008). The amount of residual material encountered will rely on two aspects: activity in the past and activity in the present. Thus, Evans and Millett (1992) demonstrated that the amount of Roman residual material encountered in medieval and post-medieval layers in Bath was related to the amount of Roman material on site originally, as well as medieval and post-medieval construction activities bringing Roman material to the surface.

In this volume, however, we are more concerned with interactions with the past and how people may have used and engaged with residual material. In discussing archaeological discoveries of the past in the past, we might consider here the practices of revisiting earlier tombs or grave-robbing, both of which may have been undertaken for specific social reasons.[1] Williams (1998: 97) draws attention to Anglo-Saxon graves that cut into older sites and monuments and suggests that interactions with ancient material culture that was encountered was part of a way of constructing relationships between

[1] The authors are grateful to Howard Williams for raising this point.

the past and the present. Similarly, Eckardt and Williams (2003: 144) highlight the potential importance of opening and reopening early medieval graves to recover bones and relics that may have been part of a social method for reconfiguring histories and memories.

Of course, there would undoubtedly have been many reactions to already old material, which requires us to comprehend two further questions:

- were residual objects recognised as old? and
- were they considered to be significant?

Approaching these issues becomes increasingly convoluted because, except in very rare cases, such as the Hammer of St Martin, these objects are recovered in the present from archaeological contexts, meaning that any rediscovered objects must have been redeposited again. Palaeolithic stone axes found at the Roman site at Ivy Chimneys, Witham, Essex, for instance, implies that these millennia-old artefacts were excavated and redeposited by Roman communities, only to be excavated again by archaeologists in the 20th century AD (Turner and Wymer 1987). In situations such as this, it is likely that older objects were recognised by Roman communities as something alien to the known repertoire of material culture (cf. Eckardt and Williams 2003: 141–142).

In assessing older objects in later contexts, we must thus establish their initial period or date of production to determine exactly how old they may have been and whether it is more feasible that these objects represent archaeological discoveries in the past or objects in extended circulation. This is easier to identify with Iron Age repairs on Iron Age metalwork or prehistoric axeheads on Roman sites but becomes more difficult with objects that could plausibly have had an extended circulation, such as third- and fourth-centuryRomano-British material deposited in fifth- and sixth-century Anglo-Saxon graves. In this latter situation, the surrounding context becomes particularly important. Many early Anglo-Saxon graves and cemeteries were constructed near Romano-British cemeteries and settlements, thus increasing the chance of encountering residual material; rediscovery is thus perhaps more likely than the extended circulation of objects (Eckardt and Williams 2003; Williams 1998). It goes without saying that this can only be approached on a case-by-case basis and requires careful source criticism (see for instance Bradley 1986; Leeming this volume; Lewis this volume), but the assessment of how exactly older objects ended up in later contexts is crucial for then considering the appropriate terminology for these artefacts.

What's in a name?

The range of terms applied to older objects in later contexts is varied and includes:

- heirlooms (Costello and Williams this volume; Gilchrist 2013; Lillios 1999; Woodward 2002);
- ancestor artefacts and venerable artefacts (Caple 2010);
- out-of-time objects (Davies this volume; Knight forthcoming; this volume; see also Hingley 2009 for objects 'out of their time');
- antiques (Chittock this volume; Geake 1997: 111; Gilchrist 2008; Lewis this volume; Sherlock 2016);
- relics (Henig 2008; Woodward 2002); and
- mementos (Jennings 2014; Overholtzer and Stoner 2011).

These terms require careful and critical consideration when used due to the loaded connotations some terms may have. To refer to an 'heirloom' object, for instance, inherently implies a possible genealogical link materialised through an object passed down within a kinship. 'Relic' meanwhile has a dual definition, referring both generally to an object of age, and in a religious sphere to an object associated with a saint. Similarly, the dualistic nature of the term 'antique' is highlighted by the title

of Mark Lewis' paper (this volume), implying both the age of an object and the value that might be bestowed upon it. The importance of defining and distinguishing terms is particularly highlighted by Woodward (2002) in applying both 'heirloom' and 'relic' to certain beaker ceramics and amber beads in Early Bronze Age Britain.

Caple similarly defines distinguishing features, grouping all older artefacts under the term 'ancestor artefacts' and separating 'heirlooms' ('objects with a known history') from 'venerable artefacts' ('artefacts from a more distant past') (2010: 307). This reiterates the importance of understanding the process by which an older object has made its way into a later context. This nomenclature remains problematic, however, as it assumes all objects of the past which have an extended circulation functioned as heirlooms. Furthermore, the label 'ancestor artefact' diminishes any significance the term 'ancestor' may have.[2]

It is not the intention here to dictate what such older objects should be called—and indeed we have not stipulated particular terminology for our contributors to follow—though we would argue that terms be more carefully defined and applied, especially when such terminology has dual meanings or functional implications. That this issue requires careful consideration is highlighted by the fact that multiple contributors independently raised this issue when tackling their case studies (see particularly Chittock this volume; Costello and Williams this volume).

Interpreting objects of the past

> History of the knowledge of the past is suffused with paradox. While some individuals enquired rigorously into the origins of object and monuments, most of their contemporaries preferred to see these same objects as the product of the magical powers of mysterious beings, or of strange natural phenomena.
>
> Schnapp 1997: 34

When objects pre-dating their context are encountered in the archaeological record, a variety of interpretations have been posited. Table 1.1 presents some of the most common explanations.

It should of course be clear that the categories are not exclusive of each other. An anachronistic object utilised as an amulet is likely to also achieve a status as an heirloom (cf. Gilchrist 2008: 139–144; 2013). Likewise, reappropriating an object means it usually gains a dual meaning. Older objects were likely

Table 1.1: A summary of interpretations applied to objects of the past

Interpretation	Description	Example references
Objects of memory and heirlooms	Objects that evoke or embody links with a known past, sometimes linked to a lineage or kinship	Crawford 2007; Gilchrist 2013; Lillios 1999; Woodward 2002
Objects for securing identity	Objects for establishing or propagating cultural identities	Eckardt and Williams 2003; Effros 2003; MacGregor 1998
Magical objects and amulets	Objects assigned magical or supernatural powers	Cheape 2008; Gilchrist 2008; Leeming 2015
Objects of mythology	Objects used to create or legitimise a mythical past	Haug 2001; Knight and Cowie forthcoming
Reappropriated, reused and recycled objects	Objects acquired, manipulated and/or utilised for their materialistic and functional qualities	Jennings 2014; Swift 2012; White 1988

[2] For a critique of the (over-)use of the term 'ancestor', see Whitley 2002.

used for a combination of reasons and the same types of objects need not have been used for the same purpose in each contemporary society. White (1988; 1990) highlights that Roman objects in Anglo-Saxon graves did not indicate a continuation of Romano-British populations living in Anglo-Saxon England as has been historically considered, but instead Roman objects were reappropriated, reused and re-contextualised alongside Anglo-Saxon beliefs and ideas. Thus, Roman brooches were recognised as brooches and reused as such, whilst Roman coins, which served limited economic function in Anglo-Saxon society, were pierced and kept as pendants, or kept intact as amulets (Geake 1997: 111; White 1988: 23–25, 101). Furthermore, as Schnapp's quote implies, multiple interpretations may be applicable for the same object (see also Eckardt and Williams 2003) or indeed the same object may mean different things to different people. This is exemplified nicely by a Middle Bronze Age palstave from Devon found in the 19th century AD which was worn as an amulet as a cure for skin afflictions (Way 1869: 345),[3] though antiquarians would have recognised the same object as something ancient to be stored in archaeological collections. Literature on folklore is littered with similar examples (Cheape 2008; Dowd 2018; Goodrum 2002). Here we will summarise interpretations applied to these objects through a variety of case studies from a range of different periods to emphasise the diversity of ways older objects can be understood.

Objects of memory and heirlooms

The quality of many materials and objects to endure throughout and beyond a typical human lifespan means that objects might embody or evoke certain memories (Haug 2001; Kwint 1999; Rowlands 1993). Moreover, objects do not merely represent memories, but can be used to construct, or de-construct, ideas about the past, present and future (Gilchrist 2013; Jones 2003; 2007; Olivier 2011; Thomas 1996: 80). The known (or unknown) biography of an object, its materiality, and the cultural context in which it is situated can all affect how an object might be utilised as a mnemonic (Crawford 2007; Gilchrist 2013; Haug 2001; Renfrew 2004). In thinking about objects of the past in the past it is therefore important to recognise that their links with a remembered past and abilities to evoke memories would have played an important social role.

For instance, a Bronze Age shield deposited in a boundary ditch of a Middle–Late Bronze Age enclosure in Somerset may have been up to 200 years old when deposited in a ditch and stabbed three times before being buried (Coles *et al.* 1999: 37; Knight forthcoming; Needham *et al.* 2012). Elsewhere one of us (MGK) has posited that this object may represent an object linked with a kinship or set of orally propagated ideas that were no longer relevant and thus the destruction and deposition of the shield was a physical forgetting of an object which embodied ideas and memories (Knight forthcoming; cf. Küchler 1987).

When dealing with older objects in Anglo-Saxon graves, one can be reasonably certain we are dealing with a period in which concepts of recent and distant pasts were engaged with and were actively remembered, as evidenced through interactions with older monuments and material culture (Semple 2013; Williams 1998; 2006). Nonetheless, multiple interpretations emerge. Sherlock (2016) suggests that Iron Age and Roman objects were included in Anglo-Saxon cemeteries as a way to legitimise the formation of Anglo-Saxon kingdoms in the 7th century AD, whilst other assessments have proposed that such objects were reappropriated for their functionality (White 1988) or indeed their *lack* of a known past (Eckardt and Williams 2003). Eckardt and Williams (2003: 164–165) suggest that these objects were likely rediscovered and may have been culturally alien in the Anglo-Saxon present; consequently, they were utilised as tools to construct and transform the identity and memory of the deceased. Clearly there are multiple ways in which objects of the past may have been utilised for different purposes depending on whether or not those objects are considered to embody memories. Whilst some objects evoked

[3] Fascinatingly, the original account of this object describes 'the efficacy of the object being held in great esteem, so much so, that it was sent for by sufferers from distant places in the West' (Way 1869: 345).

remembered pasts and thus were utilised for wider agendas, others probably embodied no specific memories; this may relate to whether objects were retained in circulation or were rediscovered. It is naturally difficult to determine whether an object may have had a remembered past or operated as a mnemonic device.

One of the most common interpretations when an already old object is encountered in a later context is as an 'heirloom' object (Caple 2010; Gilchrist 2013; Hingley 2009; Lillios 1999; Woodward 2002; see also various papers in this volume, particularly those by Chittock, and Costello and Williams). Although the terminology can be problematic, when applied critically as a term ascribing function 'heirloom' is undoubtedly useful. This is especially true because these objects have the power to evoke and sustain memories, and by their very physicality connect people with their known pasts (Lillios 1999; Rowlands 1993). Based on ethnographic study, Katina Lillios (1999: 241) defines heirlooms as portable objects, inherited by kin and maintained in circulation for several generations. Archaeologically, such objects might be recognised by their materiality (e.g. if an object is made of an atypical raw material) or their age in relation to their context (Lillios 1999: 252). Roberta Gilchrist (2013), in particular, draws on the materiality of objects as a key element of what might have given late medieval objects heirloom status, as well as the biography of an object that may have inalienably linked the object to a person, event or place. The biographical aspect adds an interesting element, because whilst one might expect grand or unusual objects to become heirlooms, seemingly mundane objects might also become heirlooms under the right circumstances (Gilchrist 2013).

Similar suggestions have been argued for objects from graves and contexts in the prehistoric and early historic periods (Chittock this volume; Eckardt and Williams 2003; McLaren 2016; Woodward 2002). Wear and repair on Romano-British brooches and buckles found in Anglo-Saxon graves suggest extended use, which has been linked to a possible heirloom status (Eckardt 2004: 44; White 1988: 59–61); the same has been posited for worn and fragmented jet and amber beads and pottery sherds deposited in Early Bronze Age graves (Frieman 2012: 344; McLaren 2016; Woodward 2000: 58–60; 2002). Detailed study of object biographies, such as evidence of use, wear, fragmentation and modification, provides support in each case for the potential curation and importance of objects. Heirloom objects in graves are often then interpreted as a materialisation of the identity or identities of the interred individual(s) and the physical manifestation of relationships, as well as a method for claiming the past (Brück and Fontijn 2013: 206–207). Invariably, one must be careful with inferring all curated objects are heirlooms, a point particularly stressed by Eckardt and Williams (2003) who argued that it was the *unknown* rather than the known history and biography of some rediscovered objects that may have encouraged their deposition within a grave context. As we shall see though, the memories objects might embody are intrinsic to many of the other interpretations that can be applied to objects of the past in the past.

Objects for securing identity

The past is frequently utilised to create, secure and transform senses of individual and collective identities. Objects of the past and the histories they evoke have frequently been interpreted through this sphere (see for instance Eckardt and Williams 2003; Costello and Williams this volume). Although these objects might be utilised in the construction of memory of an individual, it does not necessarily rely on a remembered history of the object. Here, we will focus briefly on the use of rediscovered objects to construct, establish and reinforce identities in the present. These objects are often from a distant past, though their recognised ages are significant. This is particularly evident in more recent periods where artefacts have been collected for museums and personal collections.

Early medieval material culture discovered during the mid–late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century industrialisation period in France became intrinsically linked with establishing a nationalist

identity (Effros 2003). This coincided with the establishment of organisations and museums that were preoccupied with collecting the archaeological past and incorporating it into a 'nationalistic ideology' (Effros 2003: 258ff.): an effect of the French Revolution. Artefacts thus became a method for constructing the identity of France and a sense of national heritage, just as the Romans collected objects of the past to ensure their political power in the present and secure their cultural identity (Greenhalgh 1989: 241ff.; Haug 2001; Lewis this volume). This emphasis on a collective national identity was part of a wider trend that occurred in other parts of Europe at the same time.

However, early medieval artefacts collected in France did not solely serve to establish a collective identity. American collectors acquired these objects for their aesthetics and the status they might convey; therefore, the nationalistic and historical significance of the medieval artefacts was diminished or lost. Instead, these objects conveyed the status and identity of their owners (Effros 2003). Clearly, knowledge of the specific histories and biographies of objects of the past is not necessary for them to be utilised for agendas relating to identity; rather simply knowing that an object is of age can be important.

One might consider here Bronze Age objects found in Iron Age contexts, which may have been collected for their age and used to construct and transform identities of the individuals or communities that collected them (Davies this volume; Hingley 2009: 150). The collection and deposition of objects in prehistoric multi-period hoards in specific locations may have been part of asserting the identities of those undertaking the practice and living in the landscapes (Boughton this volume; Hingley 2009: 150). The incorporation of the past alongside the present offered a means for a group to reconfigure its identity (Knight forthcoming). Likewise, the re-inscription of fourth- and fifth-century standing stones in Wales with Christian iconography in the 7th and 8th centuries transformed the stones into more appropriate cultural emblems (Longden 2003). By doing this, communities reshaped their collective memory, which helped strengthen their overall sense of identity and connection with a place (Longden 2003; see also Olivier 2004).

Finally, although here we have largely divorced the discussion in this section from the concept of memory, it is important to recognise that in many cases identity was intrinsically linked with the memory of the period of the past from which the object derived. Indeed, as Jones (2007: 50) suggested: 'through the practice of remembrance using artefacts people are produced and identities are formed'.

Magical objects and amulets

In her seminal article on magic in later medieval burials, Roberta Gilchrist (2008: 139ff.) noted 'antique' items as one of her four categories of magical objects found in graves. Their magical potency derives from their age and is inferred from the general association of Roman and early medieval objects with religious contexts, such as cemeteries and tombs. Likewise, Palaeolithic and Neolithic stone axeheads excavated from Roman contexts, often on temple sites, has led authors to suggest these ancient objects were perceived as magical and powerful when encountered in the Roman period (Adkins and Adkins 1985; Eckardt 2004: 44; Merrifield 1987: 9ff.; Turner and Wymer 1987). Their supernatural efficacy prompted their collection, curation and deposition (Ferris 2012: 86). This remained true throughout the historical periods, when fossils and prehistoric relics were accumulated and transformed into new objects as talismans or amulets (Cheape 2008: 109, 114f.; Dowd 2018).

Readers will no doubt be familiar with the supposed magical properties surrounding prehistoric stone axeheads and arrowheads, which have survived in folklore from at least the Roman period (Edmonds 2012: 147–148; Goodrum 2002; 2008). Ancient writers regarded stone axeheads as thunderbolts (or *cerauniae*) and collected them for their magical properties (Merrifield 1987: 10), a notion that continued in a variety of ways through to at least the 19th century in many parts of the world (Dowd 2018; Evans

1897: 56–64; Goodrum 2002). For example, Merrifield suggests that a Neolithic axehead recovered during excavations of an Anglo-Saxon building at Westminster in London was 'installed as a protective talisman' (1987: 12–13); writing in the 19th century, Evans (1897: 57) notes that in Sweden stone axes still served as protection against lightning strikes. Similarly Dowd highlights numerous stone and metal objects linked with fairy folklore in Ireland incorporated into or placed within buildings 'protecting the house from lightning, but also acting more generally as a charm to attract good fortune, repel ill health and misfortune, or avert fairy mischief and evil' (2018: 462).

The perceived magical nature of many ancient objects led to their incorporation as amulets in the post-medieval period, which sparked the collection and curation of them in museum collections. Late Bronze Age amber beads in the collection of National Museums Scotland were considered cures for blindness and eye afflictions (Figure 1.2), whilst prehistoric spindle whorls were believed to help treat snake bites earning them the name 'adder stones' (Cheape 2008: 115; Ross and Sheridan 2013: 28–29). A Neolithic jadeite axe found in the 19th century was pierced at each end and mounted in silver and tied over the loins of a Scottish officer seeking protection against kidney disease (Sheridan *et al.* 2011: 418–419, fig.8); this object now resides in the British Museum (Acc. No. 1884,0601.1). The mounting of prehistoric objects in precious metals to be worn indicates the extended reappropriation and supernatural properties associated with ancient objects (Figure 1.3).

Figure 1.2: Two Late Bronze Age amber beads used as charms against blindness by the Macdonalds of Glencoe, Scotland, in the 19th century (NMS Acc. Nos H.NO 4-5). © National Museums Scotland.

Protective and healing properties of older objects as amulets extends back into at least the early medieval period. Gilchrist emphasises the ages of heirlooms as bestowing a 'spiritual power that made the equivalent of amulets or relics, sacred objects with quasi-magical properties of healing and protection' (2013: 172). The apotropaic value of older objects has also been considered for Roman objects deposited in Anglo-Saxon graves, especially where care or modification can be demonstrated (Eckardt and Williams 2003; Geake 1997: 99f.; White 1988: 101). Finally, the material qualities, age and otherness of heirlooms, fossils and jet and amber ornaments in Early Bronze Age burials may have meant they possessed supernatural qualities for the communities that deposited them (Brück and Jones 2018; Leeming 2015; McLaren 2016; Sheridan and Davis 2002; Woodward 2002). Of course, one may understandably be wary of assigning magical or amuletic functions to anachronistic objects in prehistory, or indeed in any historical society for which we do not fully understand the belief systems in place. However, when set within the wider phenomenon throughout time, it becomes clear that these objects repeatedly became entangled with superstitions and supernatural beliefs of the society in which they were found.

Figure 1.3: A prehistoric flint arrowhead mounted in a gold pendant to be worn as an amulet (NMS Acc. No. H.NO 75). © National Museums Scotland.

Objects of mythology

Objects of the past often play a role in creating and propagating mythologies. Usually such objects are attributed mythologies to cement or legitimise concepts of the past or to presence the past in the present to secure an ideology (Haug 2001). Furthermore, myths frequently relate to objects of a past that is no longer remembered; consequently, several authors have distinguished between genealogical or 'remembered' pasts and more distant mythical pasts, which could be manipulated for a variety of purposes (Caple 2010; Ferris 2012: 83ff.; Haug 2001). This has been particularly evidenced through the Roman interest in antique objects and fossils and the past in general (Eckardt 2004: 42; Ferris 2012: 87; Haug 2001; Henig 2008; Lewis this volume). As Ferris notes of the Roman fascination with fossils:

> These fossils were interpreted and presented as being 'of the past' but not of the real past; they allowed viewers to reconcile the ancient myths with contemporary life and to grapple with the concept of a physical, pre-political chronology
>
> Ferris 2012: 87

A particularly famous instance of the collection of mythical objects is Emperor Augustus' collection of 'giants' bones, which were collected as part of Augustus' interest with the past and used to generate mythologies (Haug 2001: 118; Lewis this volume). Although these large bones obviously would not have belonged to giants, these fossils, as well as many other objects, were essential to the mythical past Augustus wanted to propagate.

This remains true through time. A paper scroll found in the socket of a Bronze Age spearhead attributes the artefact to the Chisholme clan from the Scottish Borders and states that the spearhead was carried into the Battle of Flodden in AD 1513, some two thousand years after its probable production (Knight and Cowie forthcoming). An investigation into the background of the Chisholme family found that this note was written during the 18th or 19th century around the time that the Chisholme family lineage was in decline; therefore, the scroll inside the spearhead may have been an attempt to physically preserve a genealogical mythology (Knight and Cowie forthcoming).

Antique objects may even be associated with mythologies at a national level. In nineteenth-century France, Effros suggests that the discovery of Merovingian monuments and artefacts led to a romanticising of this particular period and objects of antiquity became essential for propagating various mythologies (Effros 2003: 255ff.).

In many of these instances, the symbolic nature of the object becomes the driving factor for its curation, rather than the age and original purpose of the object. The spearhead supposedly taken into Flodden, for instance, has more mythical value as a family object taken into a significant battle than it does as an ancient object. Its age and sense of otherness may have once influenced the decision to attach a mythology to it, but it is now significant for the mythology in its own right. Of course, there are many ways in which myths might be created and propagated and obviously this does not apply purely to older objects, though their role in this practice should not be overlooked.

Reappropriated, reused and recycled objects

In a sense, any interaction with an already old object is a reappropriation of some kind. This catch-all term is applied here to include objects which have been utilised for their functional or material aspects, rather than any specific efficacy they might convey. Ultimately it allows for a more cautious interpretation of older objects as it would be wrong to assume that all objects of age were regarded as magical or served as links with the past. In some cases, the material properties or the functionality of objects becomes more important than the age of material, as is evidenced by the reuse of Roman building material (Greenhalgh 1989: 155ff.), the recycling of Roman bracelets into rings (Swift 2012), or the use of Roman coins as weights in the Anglo-Saxon period (Eckardt and Williams 2003: 153).

Reused objects should first be separated into two categories:

1. objects reused for their original function; and
2. objects transformed through reuse.

Identifying instances of the first category is inevitably difficult for several reasons. Firstly, this begins from the standpoint that we, as archaeologists, accurately understand the original and the later reuse of the object. Secondly, we need to be aware that later societies suitably recognise the form and function of an older object so that it might be understood and incorporated into their contemporary socio-cultural repertoire. This is easy enough for objects that continued in circulation over an extended period but is more difficult when objects are rediscovered in much later eras. Chittock's discussion of the curation and repair of Iron Age equipment obviously represents artefacts that continued to function within the socio-cultural sphere of the period (Chittock this volume). Likewise, Romano-British brooches and other equipment conformed to the known material culture of early medieval Britain and thus when encountered may have been reappropriated and reused as originally intended (White 1988: 23–25, 161–162; 1990). Even when dealing with a more distant past, certain object forms are suitably recognisable throughout time that they may continue to be utilised for their intended function, such as Bronze

Age blades re-hafted and reused as weapons in the 18th century (Bell this volume). In each case, the recognised form, rather than the age of the object, may have been the important factor for its use.

Alternatively, objects may be reused for some other purpose and thus might be manipulated, modified or recycled and their overall function is transformed. For the purposes of this category, we want to primarily focus on the practical functionality of the reused and recycled objects, rather than the symbolic meaning that might be assigned or accrued through the transformative process.

Ellen Swift's (2012) study of the conversion of Roman bracelets into rings is particularly informative in this aspect. She notes 179 examples from across England and Wales with many dating to the late Roman period. Some bracelets may have been cut down and transformed into new ornaments as a result of diminishing supply and access to new material in the 4th century AD (Swift 2012: 190–192). Furthermore, many objects were probably produced from scrapping and melting down other objects (Swift 2012: 186–190; see also Dungworth 1997: 906–907). Swift suggests that the original form, meaning and function of the bracelet may have been recalled by some users, but over time these meanings were lost, transformed or became no longer relevant. The same has been argued for razors in the later Bronze Age in Switzerland, which were cut and reshaped from decorated arm and leg rings (Jennings 2014). In this latter example, Jennings suggested that due to an *increase* in metal supply, the recycling and reuse of older metal objects diminished, but when objects were modified it was part of individualised practices rather than wider socio-cultural approaches to material culture.

The reappropriation and reuse of older or ancient objects is thus commonly linked to the incorporation of these artefacts into contemporary practices. This incorporation does not necessarily have to be strictly practical though. A particularly striking example is a deliberately bent Early Bronze Age halberd that may have been associated with a Viking grave at Bride Street, Dublin, that also included bent and damaged Viking weapons (Harrison 2010). As this example represents the only deliberately deformed halberd from Ireland, Harrison suggests that it may have been damaged in the Viking period as part of the practice of manipulating Viking weapons in the burial rite (2010: 145–148). This artefact was thus rediscovered and reappropriated some 3000 years after its production and physically modified and transformed to fit within Viking-Age ideologies.

In some cases, no modifications are made to the older objects themselves, but they are incorporated into new objects with new ideas attached. The Hammer of St Martin is a good example where the Bronze Age axehead was not actually altered, but rather set within a new haft. The same is true of the Neolithic objects set in silver in the post-medieval periods and Roman intaglios set within medieval seals. Roman gems and intaglios in particular were reused in a range of different material culture in the early second millennium AD, including rings, brooches, pendants, and Christian objects such as crosses, reliquaries and book covers (Greenhalgh 1989: 230–231; Henig 2008). In the 12th century, they were increasingly reappropriated and incorporated into seals, having been selected for their 'size, variety, colour and properties of material' (Henig 2008: 25). Although their age may have conveyed a link with the past, and indeed objects such as gemstones were traded widely on the antiques market, the stones were selected for their aesthetics and transformed from objects of the past into objects of the present by setting them with contemporary material culture and ideologies (Greenhalgh 1989: 230–231; Henig 2008).

Within the cases presented so far one might also infer attachments between the objects and people relating to the known or accrued biographies of the objects. The very deposition of many of these objects, however, indicates that they were incorporated into contemporary practices (e.g. prehistoric stone axeheads at Roman temples), but it was also appropriate to remove these objects from circulation. In some situations, the objects may have been reappropriated, reused and over time lost any accrued meaning (cf. Swift 2012: 194). Moreover, we must be aware that in some cases, the age of some material

culture was simply not important. Greenhalgh (1989: 155ff.) notes for instance the reuse of Roman marble in the construction of new buildings in the Middle Ages, as well as the easily recyclable nature of mosaic glass – the material qualities and their appropriateness for reuse thus outweighed any potential significance they may have had as indicators of the past in their unaltered forms.

Summary

There is no one way to interpret objects of the past in the past. The five interpretations presented here are quite clearly not exclusive of each other, and the associated case studies emphasise how different approaches may overlap. However, by disentangling some of the key interpretations, it becomes possible to observe how societies across time have had similar reactions to objects of their pasts, which was influenced by the biographies of the objects in question, as well as the perceived age of the objects, their materiality, and the socio-cultural context in which they were encountered, be that as rediscovered objects or as objects with an extended circulation. That we should not be restrictive in our interpretations of objects of the past in the past is emphasised by several authors (e.g. Andrews this volume; Eckardt and Williams 2003; Swift 2012), and this in part will be dictated by our wider understanding of how societies in the past conceptualised their pasts as derived from written sources and interactions with the inhabited landscape. Ultimately, by studying this phenomenon across time and understanding the variety of ways that different societies approached already old objects, we can begin to approach this topic from a fresh perspective.

The papers in this volume

The variety of ways that objects of the past in the past might be tackled has been emphasised already. When we put out the call for papers for a session entitled: 'The Past in the Past: Investigating the Significance of the Deposition of Earlier Objects in Later Contexts' at the 2017 Theoretical Archaeological Group conference in Cardiff, our main aim was to bring together scholars covering a range of different time periods so that we might assess the phenomenon of finding and interpreting older objects in later contexts holistically and challenge the different ways of thinking about this topic. We were pleased to attract speakers ranging from museum professionals to commercial archaeologists, covering the Bronze Age to the end of the medieval period, and many of those that spoke were able to contribute to the present volume. In seeking to expand our remit and the variety of case studies, we also invited authors working on this topic who did not speak at TAG. The resulting volume thus comprises nine papers now chronologically spanning the Bronze Age to the 18th century, all with a focus on British and Irish case studies.

The volume opens with three papers on multi-period hoards in prehistory. Knight's contribution presents 11 Bronze Age case studies where older metal objects have been found associated with typologically later objects in northern England, Scotland and Wales and suggests that some of the places in which these objects were found may have been significant to prehistoric societies. Furthermore, by exercising source criticism and allowing flexibility in commonly held typo-chronologies, multi-period hoards have the potential to illustrate temporal depth in the archaeological record, with some objects having been in circulation for a long period of time and accruing significant object biographies.

The subsequent paper by Boughton furthers some of the ideas put forward by Knight but in the context of Earliest Iron Age multi-period hoards in the Wessex region. Beginning with the Salisbury hoard, Boughton's paper focuses on the biographies of objects found in these hoards and their significance to the communities that were interacting with them. The collection and deposition of these objects indicates places that were revisited and engaged with over long temporal spans. Boughton concludes that actions involving already ancient objects served as a method for interacting with the past in the present, with a view to securing and reinforcing communal identities for the future.

Davies' paper follows neatly, comparing the mixed-period hoards of Iron Age southern Britain with those of the Bronze Age. Although they might initially seem similar in character, a comparison of the artefacts that comprise these hoards indicates that they reflect a difference in social attitudes towards already ancient objects. Drawing on ethnography and other historical contexts, Davies suggests that the greater number of 'out-of-time' objects in Iron Age hoards, as well as their cultural origins and associated materiality, indicates that Iron Age societies viewed these objects as otherworldly and outside their known cultural repertoire, which warranted their collection and circulation when encountered.

Chittock's paper focuses on the extended lives of objects, where old objects may continue in circulation beyond the lifespan of an individual. Chittock presents a detailed case study of Middle–Late Iron Age objects in East Yorkshire, focusing on the intricate biographies that sword scabbards, chariot fittings and other equipment convey through the evidence of their use, wear and repair. In particular, Chittock raises questions about how such objects should be categorised and proposes that whilst traditionally these artefacts have been classed as 'heirlooms', 'relics' and 'mementoes', the term 'antique' should also be considered for objects that indicate value from their age.

Antiques also form the focus of Mark Lewis' paper through an assessment of already old material found in antiquity at the Roman fort of Caerleon. Through an array of different case study objects, each anachronistic to the contexts in which they were found, Lewis illustrates the Roman appreciation for the utility of already old objects through their reuse, as well as the collection of curios, which may suggest more religiously-driven practices. By analysing the site assemblage as a whole, Lewis aptly demonstrates the multiple interpretations available when already old objects are encountered.

Similarly, Costello and Williams stress the need for careful appreciation of heirloom objects in early medieval graves and how these objects relate to burial assemblages overall. By undertaking an analysis of heirloom brooches from graves at Mill Hill and Saltwood Tunnel, both Kent, the authors show that the inclusion of heirloom objects evoked connections with the past, as well as other aspects of life in the present, and helped establish the identity of the deceased. The role of these objects in early medieval practices of remembrance should not be understated.

Andrews' paper on already old or ancient coins and antique gems accumulated in medieval coin hoards explores the variety of functions these objects may have had in medieval society. By bringing together a range of examples from across Europe and throughout a period of 400 years, this paper emphasises the diversity of interpretations that can be applied to objects of the past in the past, ranging from functionality reappropriation of coinage to the incorporation of gems into religious and supernatural belief systems. These objects fit within and alongside the cultural understanding of the later medieval period.

The final two chapters by Leeming and Bell teach us the importance of thorough source criticism when encountering objects of the past in the past. Leeming's exploration of two fossils in the British Museum collections probably from the Tudor palace at Greenwich is particularly thorough in delving through the possible interpretations one might apply to older objects in later contexts, especially those for which the context is not secure. His paper serves as a reminder that we should be especially meticulous in our analyses of such objects and wary of jumping to any unmerited conclusions.

Likewise, following a reassessment of the use-wear seen on Bronze Age weapons in Ireland, David Bell suggests that much of it indicates modern, rather than ancient, damage, contrary to recent interpretations of the same material. Modifications made to Bronze Age weapons, as well as various historical records, demonstrate that these objects were reused by Irish insurgents during the 17th and

18th centuries, most notably in the Irish Rebellion 1798. The reappropriation of objects in this case study also emphasises that already old objects sometimes possess a functionality in contemporary context that is not derived from their age.

These nine papers challenge us to engage with what these objects of the past in the past meant to the people encountering them, while also illustrating the temporal breadth of the phenomenon. The original TAG session was intended to stimulate how we think about the past in the past as expressed through engagements with already old artefacts; we hope that this resulting volume fulfils that same goal.

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Chapter 2

Doubtful associations? Assessing Bronze Age 'multi-period' hoards from northern England, Scotland and Wales

Matthew G. Knight

The deposition of earlier Bronze Age objects in Late Bronze Age contexts has been recently recognised and recorded for southern England, but the phenomenon is not confined to that region. This paper expands the corpus of such hoards by including a further 11 case studies from northern England, Scotland and Wales. Some associations represent heavily-used or worn material that had been in extended circulation. Other associations contribute to better understanding the prolonged typologies of certain objects and the importance of certain places in the Bronze Age landscape. Overall, this paper suggests we should consider the possibility that some multi-period hoards are genuine, rather than doubtful, associations.

Keywords: *Bronze Age, deposition, hoards, metalwork, out-of-time*

Introduction

Bronze Age metalwork hoards containing artefacts dating to multiple periods (i.e. 'multi-period hoards') have frequently been noted in past surveys but such associations are generally considered doubtful (e.g. Coles 1962: 134; Davis 2012: 52; Rowlands 1976: 70). A recent survey of hoards from southern England identified 41 certain or possible multi-period hoards (Knight forthcoming) and during research for that survey, it became apparent that this phenomenon was not confined to southern England. In this paper, I identify a further 11 multi-period hoards from Scotland, northern England[1] and Wales, and provide an analysis of these 'out-of-time' objects and their contexts. This offers the opportunity to enhance our understanding of Bronze Age metalwork typologies as well as the contexts and associations of multi-period hoards; the paper concludes with a comparison of multi-period hoards from northern England, Scotland and Wales with those from southern England.

Objects of the past in prehistory

It is now widely recognised that prehistoric societies engaged with aspects of their own pasts (e.g. Bradley 2002; Chadwick and Gibson 2013; Jones 2007; Lillios and Tsamis 2010). The enduring nature of material culture, including both monuments and portable artefacts, allows us to interrogate how the past may have been understood by past communities. This has often been investigated through studies of monuments and landscapes that were repeatedly revisited over long periods of time (e.g. Bradley 2002; Gosden and Lock 1998) and there is an increasing appreciation that objects too may have been in circulation or use for extended durations (Davies forthcoming; McLaren 2017; Woodward 2002), or were otherwise rediscovered and reappropriated in later periods (Ferris 2012: 77–93; Hingley 2009; Knight forthcoming). Woodward has convincingly argued that various grave goods in Beaker and Early Bronze Age burials, including beaker pottery, amber beads and other ornaments, show signs of use, wear and curation that mean they may be considered heirlooms passed down over multiple generations (Woodward 2000: 58–60; 2002; Woodward and Hunter 2015: 472ff.). As heirlooms, such objects may have had a mnemonic function, evoking remembrance and establishing links with the past (Lillios 1999; Woodward 2002). By contrast, the various Bronze Age implements found in Iron Age features at the

[1] Northern England is defined here as the present English counties north of the River Humber (Lancashire, Greater Manchester, East, West, North and South Yorkshire, Cumbria, Northumberland, Co. Durham and Tyne and Wear).

hillforts at Breiddin (Powys) and Cadbury Castle (Somerset) are more likely to represent rediscovered deposits that were incorporated into later features given the evidence for multiple re-occupations of these sites (Hingley 2009: 163; Knight forthcoming). In such situations, the re-deposition of the object in certain locations is significant: such depositions may have served to respect (and invisibly mark) ancestral links with the land or commemorate certain locations (Hingley 2009; Knight forthcoming). A Middle Bronze Age palstave was modified with silver adhesions added to the object before it was wrapped in cloth and buried in a Late Iron Age tumulus at Lexden, Colchester (Essex), suggesting this object had been re-appropriated and manipulated a thousand years after its initial production (Foster 1986: 78–80; Hingley 2009: 150, 163). It was buried alongside numerous other 'rich' grave goods, including copper alloy anthropomorphic and zoomorphic figurines, a silver Augustus medallion, and pieces of furniture (Foster 1986: 53ff.); the treasured status of the palstave is evidenced by its inclusion alongside other high-status objects. In the Roman period, there is evidence that Neolithic and Bronze Age objects were found, collected and deposited in significant locations, such as temples, perhaps as votive offerings (Adkins and Adkins 1985; Ferris 2012: 77–93). From the above examples, it is clear that old objects in prehistory might be considered in terms of links with the immediate past, such as in the case of heirlooms, or a more distant 'ancestral' past, as with rediscovered objects (cf. Caple 2010). These objects may thus have the potential to evoke memories or a sense of time (Rowlands 1993), or alternatively a sense of the mythical and mysterious (Ferris 2012: 84ff.).

Given the temporal depth of many landscapes and sites, representing repeated episodes of occupation, interaction and engagement with a wide variety of spaces and places (Gosden and Lock 1998; Ingold 1993), it is inevitable that residual material should be encountered, and it is not suggested here that all old or ancient objects in prehistory should be seen as significant. However, it is the critical appraisal of the treatment of this material and the nature of its redeposition that allows us to infer significance. In other words, interpretations of already old objects in prehistory rely on understanding and appraisal of: firstly, their context referring both to the immediate context (e.g. a pit, a ditch, a burial), and the wider setting (e.g. the overall site or broader landscape); and secondly their condition, pre-depositional treatment and overall potential history of an object (cf. Knight forthcoming). These are crucial aspects to consider when investigating multi-period hoards.

Recognising 'out-of-time' objects in hoards

In his study of Bronze Age metalwork found in Iron Age contexts, Hingley referred to already old objects as 'out of their time' (2009: 143), abbreviated here to 'out-of-time' objects (following Knight forthcoming). This terminology avoids the loaded implications that more functional attributions such as 'heirloom' might imply and allows a neutral starting point (see Knight *et al.* this volume). The methodology for recognising out-of-time objects in later hoards has been largely maintained here following my original study of southern England to enable comparison between the two studies. This approach relies on the known relative typologies of Bronze Age metal objects, with 'out-of-time' objects primarily defined as:

> any object identified in a context that is two or more metalworking phases later than the expected relative typological sequence
>
> Knight forthcoming

Established Bronze Age metalwork typo-chronologies have been developed for many of the main objects types, including axeheads (Needham 2018; Schmidt and Burgess 1981), spearheads (Davis 2012; 2015), and dirks, rapiers and swords (Burgess and Gerloff 1981; Colquhoun and Burgess 1988). Now increasingly underpinned by absolute dating techniques (e.g. Needham 2015), it is possible for these artefact types (and others) to be assigned a relative date with some precision. This overall methodology allowed potential case studies to be identified that could then be further interrogated for authenticity.

The importance of source criticism in this process cannot be overstated (cf. Bradley 1986), with objects studied first-hand where possible and original documentation consulted. A scale of likelihood, comprising Certain, Probable or Possible, was utilised based on:

> the security of the context and association, influenced by the accuracy of the records kept at the time of discovery; the known object history post-recovery; and the likelihood that incomplete objects definitely represent an older artefact
>
> Knight forthcoming

This method allowed 45 possible or certain case studies to be recognised and analysed from southern England, 41 of which were considered to be multi-period hoards. Sources consulted included museum catalogues, published corpora, excavation reports and online databases to ensure as many possible instances were recognised. This overall process has been followed here for the regions of northern England, Scotland and Wales, resulting in the identification of multi-period hoards. Key catalogues and corpora from the relevant areas included volumes of the Prähistoriche Bronzefunde (e.g. Davis 2012; 2015; Schmidt and Burgess 1981); Burgess' (1968) survey of metalwork from northern Britain; Coles' (1962; 1966; 1971) papers cataloguing Scottish Bronze Age metalwork; museum records at the National Museum of Scotland; and unpublished treasure reports at Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales.

However, the identification process has been adapted here to incorporate some multi-period associations that may have only been one metalworking phase apart or may represent the extended use of older objects. This approach provided a better understanding of typo-chronological aspects and the nature of the association, as well as recognising objects with a prolonged circulation, as will be discussed later in the paper. An advantage of this extended survey is that we can also begin to identify broader trends in object associations. In turn, this might strengthen the possibility that some 'doubtful' associations are in fact genuine.

The case studies

Two certain instances, two probable, and seven possible multi-period hoards were identified during this study (Table 2.1). Multi-period hoards that were deemed too uncertain were largely excluded here, though one example from Greyfriars Church (Dumfries and Galloway), has been noted at the end of the appendix. All multi-period hoards presented here comprise only one or two out-of-time objects alongside a variety of later objects. The out-of-time objects are represented mostly by axeheads, spearheads and dirks or rapiers; other artefact types do occur but they are the exception (Figure 2.1). Most date to the Middle Bronze Age, having been found alongside Late Bronze Age objects, predominantly socketed axeheads. A notable exception is the possible association from Islay which contains an Early Bronze Age halberd alongside Middle and Late Bronze Age objects, typologically spanning the whole Bronze Age. Details of the case studies are presented in the appendix, but aspects of the depositional contexts and condition of the objects are presented here.

Distribution and deposition

The associations were recovered from a variety of areas across Scotland, Wales and northern England (Figure 2.2). However, as many of the finds derive from nineteenth-century discoveries, details of the exact findspots are scarce. The findspots from Duddingston Loch (Midlothian), Corsbie Moss (Scottish Borders), Wester Galcantray (Highland), Penllyn (Vale of Glamorgan), and Mawr Community (Swansea) can be located, whilst approximate locations can be posited for the Fell Lane (Cumbria), Smalley Bight (West Yorkshire), Callander (Stirling) and Four Mile Bridge (Anglesey) hoards. The remaining findspot locations can only be estimated. Nonetheless the findspot information available allows us to comprehend certain features of depositional location for each association.

Table 2.1: A summary of the multi-period hoards from northern England, Scotland and Wales. Key: E/M/LBA = Early/Middle/Late Bronze Age. IC = Insecure Context referring to lack of discovery detail; UA = Uncertain Association referring to dubious recovery circumstances.

Site	Out-of-Time Object(s)	Relative date of OoT object(s)	Associated objects	Likely date of deposition	Context	Likelihood	Key References
(1) Kincardine, Abernethy, Highland	Gr.IV dirk	MBA *c.* 1275–1150 BC	2 socketed axeheads, Types Highfield & Gillespie	LBA *c.* 1150–800 BC	Found together under a granite boulder.	Certain	O'Connor and Cowie 1995: 355–357
(2) Mawr Community, Swansea	Gr.IV rapier frag	MBA *c.* 1275–1150 BC	2 axehead fragments & 2 casting jets	LBA *c.* 1150–1020 BC	Found while metal-detecting.	Certain	Knight and Gwilt 2017
(3) Callander, Stirling	Gr.III rapier Gr.IV rapier Type 7C side-looped spearhead	MBA *c.* 1400–1150 BC	Socketed axehead, Type Portree	LBA *c.* 1150–1020 BC	Found together in the Callander area between 1790 and 1820. No further details.	Probable (UA)	Burgess 1968: 22, 38–39; Davis 2012: 114, No. 693; Museum Records; Schmidt and Burgess 1981: 186, No. 1064
(4) Duddingston Loch, Midlothian	Rapier fragment	MBA *c.* 1400–1150 BC	c.44 objects incl. broken swords, spearheads and a vessel ring handle	LBA *c.* 920–800 BC	Found while dredging Duddingston Loch in 1778.	Probable (UA)	Callander 1923: 360–364
(5) Corsbie Moss, Scottish Borders	Type 3A side-looped spearhead	MBA *c.* 1500–1400 BC	Type Wilburton sword & sword chape (destroyed)	LBA *c.* 1150–1020 BC	Found at around the same time during drainage operations in a peat bog.	Possible (UA)	Davis 2012: 47, No 77; Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland 1921: 17
(6) Fell Lane, Penrith, Cumbria	Type 6E side-looped spearhead	MBA *c.* 1500-1275 BC	Socketed axehead, Type Yorkshire	LBA *c.* 1020–800 BC	Apparently found together while building a house 1883–1893. The socketed axe is now missing.	Possible (UA)	Bronze Age Card Index; Burgess 1968: 19; Clough 1969: 14
(7) Four Mile Bridge, Anglesey, Gwynedd	Type 9A basal-looped spearhead	MBA *c.* 1400–1150 BC	Type 11A pegged spearhead	LBA *c.* 1150–1020 BC	Found three metres apart on two separate occasions.	Possible (UA)	Lynch 1991: 236
(8) Islay, Argyll and Bute	Halberd Palstave-adze Type 6B side-looped spearhead	EBA *c.* 2300–2150 BC MBA *c.* 1500–1275 BC	2 socketed axeheads, 1 Type Meldreth	LBA *c.* 1020–800 BC	Reportedly a hoard. No further details.	Possible (UA; IC)	Coles 1962: 134; Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland 1882: 409

(9) Penllyn, Vale of Glamorgan	Knife or rapier frag	Poss. MBA	2 palstave butt fragments, spearhead frag & plate frag	M–LBA *c.* 1275–1020 BC	Found in the same field while metal-detecting in December 2013 and January 2014.	Possible	Gwilt *et al.* 2015
(10) Smalley Bight, Stanley Ferry, West Yorkshire	2 axeheads (short-flanged axehead and palstave)	MBA *c.* 1400–1150 BC	8 socketed axeheads, Types Everthorpe and Yorkshire	LBA *c.* 920–800 BC)	Hoard of axeheads recovered during dredging operations from River Calder.	Possible	Schmidt and Burgess 1981: 136; Varley 1977; Walker 1939: 15
(11) Wester Galcantray, Highland	Type Lissett short-flanged axehead	MBA *c.* 1400–1275 BC	2 socketed axeheads, 1 Type Portree	LBA *c.* 1000–800 BC	Supposedly found together in a garden. See details in appendix.	Possible (UA; IC)	Clark *et al.* 2017: 27, 36, 51; Walker 1972: 117–118.

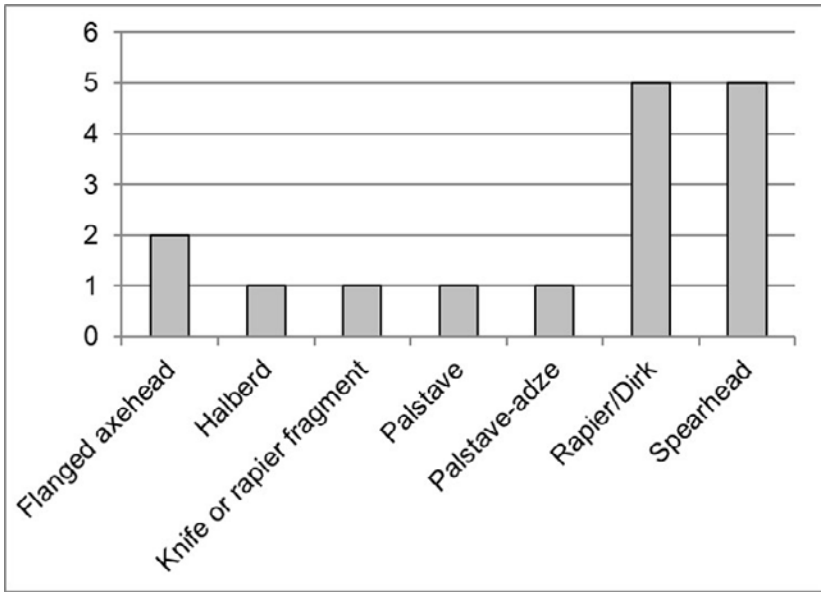

Figure 2.1: Frequency of different out-of-time object types found in Late Bronze Age multi-period hoards from northern England, Scotland and Wales.

The Four Mile Bridge spearheads, for instance, were found near the coast of Holy Island, Anglesey. The Mawr Community hoard, meanwhile, was found overlooking a river valley (Knight and Gwilt 2017), whilst the Wester Galcantray association was recovered from low-lying ground in the Nairn river valley and the Callander hoard likely came from the River Teith valley. Although the exact find location of the Kincardine hoard cannot be identified, it is worth highlighting its deposition under a boulder, close to the River Spey on the northern edge of the Cairngorms, specifically Creag Mheadhonach. The link with multiple natural features was likely significant.

Three of the multi-period hoards are from wetland locations: the three objects from Corsbie Moss were recovered from a peat bog; the Duddingston Loch assemblage was recovered from a loch at the base of Arthur's Seat, the peak of an extinct volcano system, in Edinburgh; and the Smalley Bight hoard was dredged from the gravel beds of the River Calder. The association of finds with rivers, bogs and lakes is well-known in prehistory (Bradley 1998; 2000: 47–63) and the significance of certain places is explored further below.

The condition of the objects

In as many cases as possible, the completeness and condition of the out-of-time and associated objects was assessed, with evidence of use-wear and pre- and post-depositional damage recorded. Although this varies, overall most hoards either contained complete or fragmentary out-of-time objects—that is either the objects were

undamaged or were represented only by fragments (i.e. where less than 25% of the object survives). The hoards from Penllyn, Mawr Community and Duddingston Loch, for instance, all contained fragments of rapiers alongside other broken and fragmentary later metalwork. Likewise, the two rapiers in the Callander hoard are broken, though about 50% of these objects survives, alongside a complete socketed axehead and spearhead (Figure 2.3). The objects in the Islay hoard show varying degrees of damage, some of which was probably deliberate, but are all largely complete. The earliest object in this association (a halberd) is also one of the most complete. Much of the Fell Lane spearhead survives with a worn blade and broken side-loops, alongside a complete but worn socketed axehead. Similarly, the dirk from Kincardine (Figure 2.4), the earlier axeheads from Smalley Bight, and the spearheads from Corsbie Moss and Four Mile Bridge are both complete alongside other complete objects.

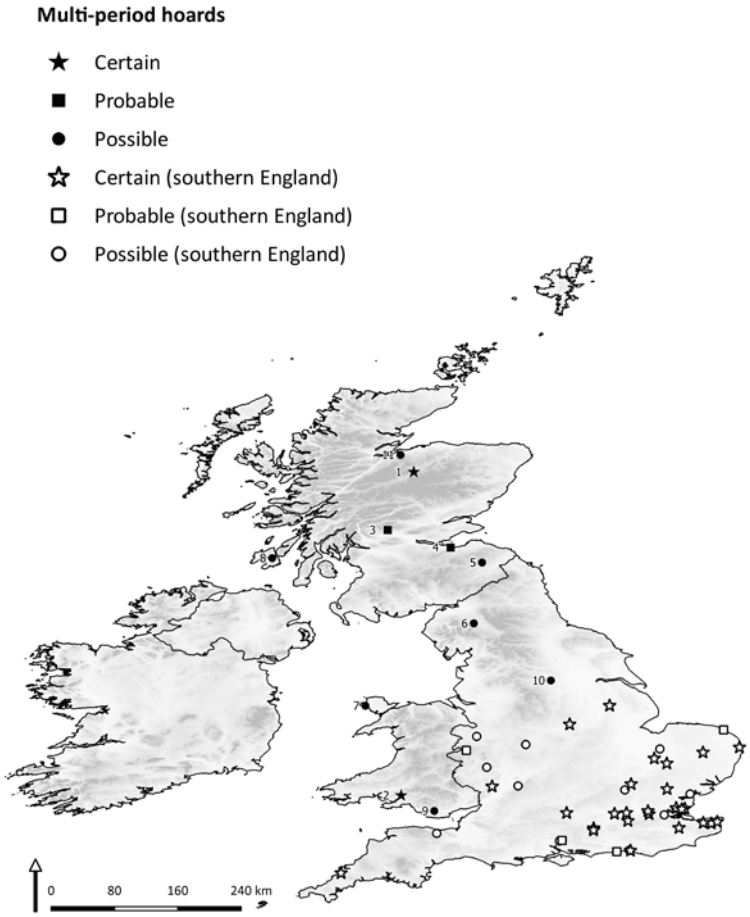

Figure 2.2: A map of Britain and Ireland showing the distribution of the case studies described in this paper (numbers correlate with Table 2.1 and the appendix). Case studies are plotted according to the likelihood of truly representing an out-of-time deposition. The locations of multi-period hoards from southern England are also plotted for comparison (information from Knight forthcoming).

The Corsbie Moss spearhead and sword were cleaned post-recovery making the interpretation of use-wear problematic, but both appear to have been prepared for use; in the case of the sword this is reinforced by the presence of a chape (lost after recovery), implying deposition in a scabbard (Figure 2.5). Hilt marks are preserved in the patina of the Callander rapiers, suggesting they were hilted at the time of deposition, while chips and nicks along the blades could be linked to their use; the socketed axehead in the same hoard also shows some signs of use-wear. The socketed axeheads in the Kincardine hoard bear evidence of working and sharpening and would certainly have been functional prior to deposition, whilst the earlier dirk in the same hoard is very worn, which could be use-related (O'Connor and Cowie 1995: 355ff.). The Fell Lane spearhead and the older of the two Four Mile Bridge spearheads were seemingly subjected to extensive resharpening and wear over a long period of time (British Museum Card Index; Lynch 1991: 236), apparently having had a long use-life. From the available illustrations and images, it is not possible to determine the extent of use-wear present on the Middle Bronze Age axeheads from Smalley Bight, but at least two of the Late Bronze Age socketed axeheads show signs of sharpening striations, hammering and blunting of the cutting edge, suggesting this was also a hoard of used objects from different periods or accumulated over time.

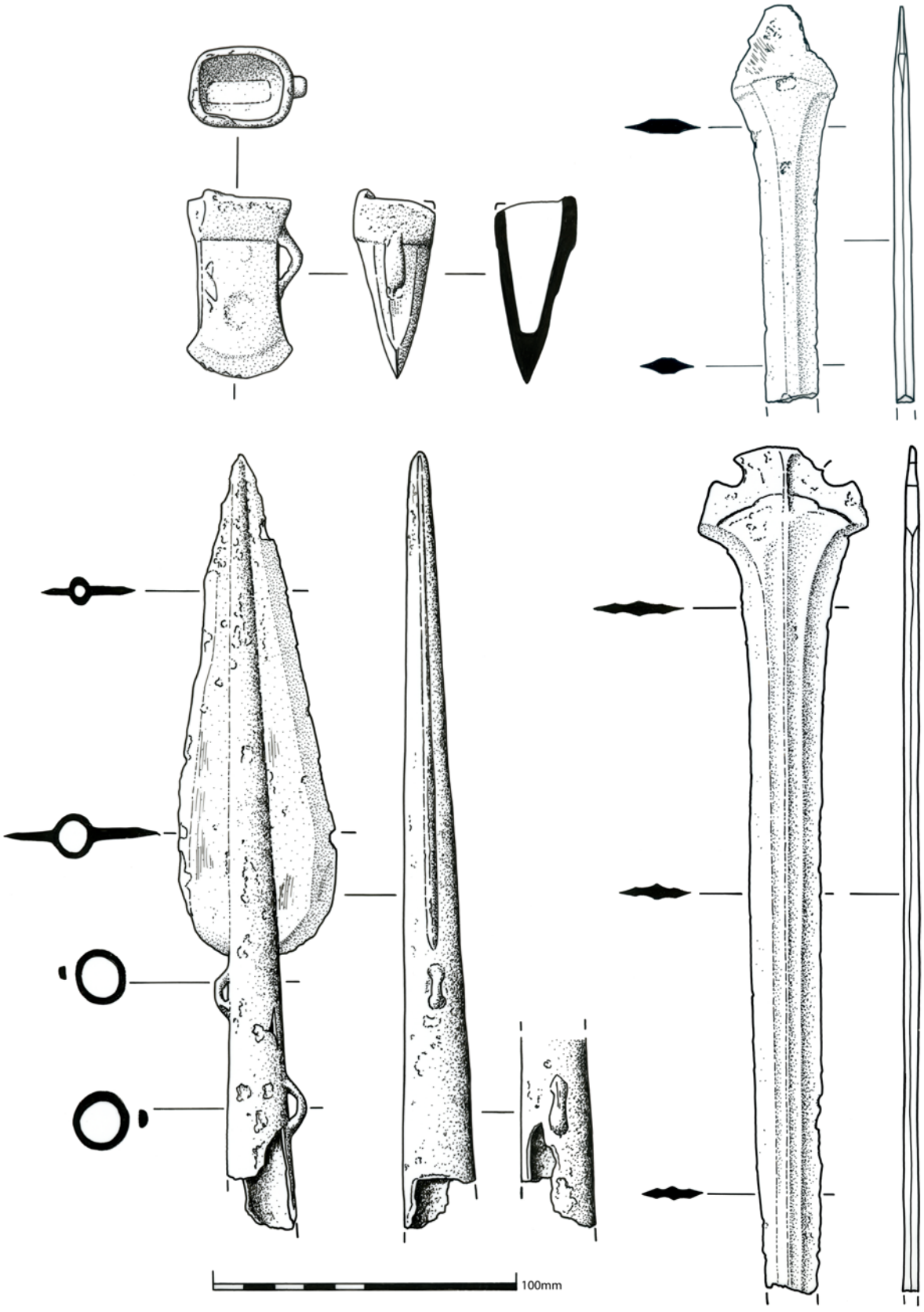

Figure 2.3: The Callander hoard. Illustration: Alan Braby © National Museums Scotland

Figure 2.4: The Kincardine hoard. Photo: M. Knight, courtesy of the Highland Folk Museum

The rapier fragments from Mawr Community and Duddingston Loch are too incomplete and worn to definitively identify indicators of preparation or use. In both cases, the rapiers broke in antiquity and were deposited alongside other broken and worn-out material (Figure 2.6). Some swords and spearheads in the Duddingston Loch assemblage show evidence of use-related damage, as well as evidence of deliberate burning, bending and breaking prior to deposition. By contrast, the halberd from Islay is possibly unfinished, but has bowed and torn edges and a bent tip; it was deposited alongside other damaged objects, including a spearhead and two socketed axeheads. Although this damage is complicated by post-depositional actions such as cleaning, when the hoard was first reported it was recorded that all the objects were 'much injured' (Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland 1882: 409) and it seems that at least some of the damage was deliberately inflicted prior to deposition.

The multi-period hoards presented here thus represent complex accumulations of objects, treated in a variety of ways and incorporated into a variety of depositional practices. Having recognised this, we can now consider several key aspects that enhance the interpretation of these deposits.

Figure 2.5: The Corsbie Moss spearhead and sword. Photo: M. Knight © National Museums Scotland

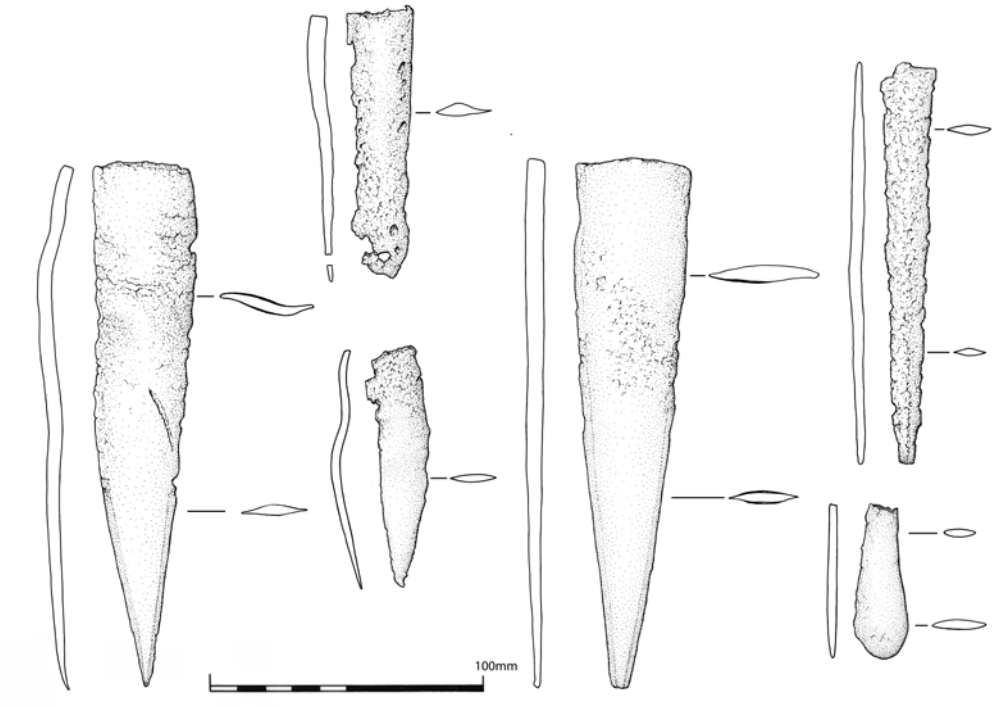

Figure 2.6: A selection of worn and fragmentary blades from Duddingston Loch. The Middle Bronze Age rapier is illustrated bottom right. Illustration: Marion O'Neil © National Museums Scotland

Multi-period hoards as typological aids

Hansen (2016: 194–197) has recently emphasised the importance of recognising the temporal depths of European Bronze Age hoards. He stresses the possibility that metalwork deposits were accumulated over long periods of time and that interpreting the deposition of hoards as a single action in a moment of time is not necessarily accurate (cf. Needham 2007). The Piller hoard (Austria), for instance, contains objects spanning 300 years, as indicated by the relative typologies and the use-wear seen on some objects (Hansen 2016: 195). Obviously, this has bearing on relying on the typology of objects as a method for dating the deposition of hoards and is emphasised by the fact that authors have tended to doubt multi-period associations or regard typological anomalies in hoards as 'scrap' (e.g. Britton 1963: 270; Eogan 1983: 188–189, No. 17; Grinsell 1970: 32). This should not be taken as a call to revise typologies (cf. Hingley 2009: 148f.), but rather as a need for caution when considering multi-period hoards. As Hansen puts it:

> the [traditional] dating of hoards stands tendentiously in a circuitous argument around the duration of certain types of bronzes, which in turn is determined by the time of the hoard's emplacement as defined by these types
>
> Hansen 2016: 196–197

Whilst for some hoards there can be little argument that such anomalous objects occur from a distinctly earlier chronological period, this becomes less certain where hoards contain objects that have a long duration of production or circulation. For instance, there are multiple Ewart Park phase hoards (920–800 BC) that contain objects from the preceding Wilburton to Blackmoor phases (*c.* 1150–920 BC). Could these hoards assist us in identifying objects that are late Wilburton–Blackmoor/early Ewart Park developments? This question is particularly highlighted by a recent hoard from Llancarfan, Vale of Glamorgan, Wales. In this hoard a fragment of a St Nazaire sword dating to the Blackmoor phase (*c.* 1020–920 BC) was associated with material more typical of the succeeding Ewart Park phase, potentially indicating that the fragment may have been quite old when deposited (Gwilt 2006). In this case, however, there has been debate about whether this typologically earlier sword fragment may in fact be used to date the hoard to the earlier metalworking phase and refine our dating of objects conventionally placed in a later metalworking phase (Brandherm and Moskal del-Hoyo 2014: 21–22, footnote 45; Gwilt 2006). The possibility that some multi-period hoards might in fact assist with our understanding of typologies is rarely considered explicitly though.

Indeed, some multi-period hoards have been discounted as a result of typological anomalies that are less common. The Callander hoard, comprising two rapiers, a spearhead and a socketed axehead, has previously been considered a doubtful association of objects, due to the lack of additional contextual information and the long typo-chronological span of the objects (*c.* 300 years) (Coles 1962: 34, 134; though see O'Connor and Cowie 1995: 362, note 5). However, all four objects have a consistent patina and were specifically claimed to have been found together, whilst other finds acquired from Callander at the same time were noted as single finds (see Appendix; Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland 1958: 463). The two rapiers in the hoard date to the Middle Bronze Age (*c.* 1400–1150 BC), whilst the socketed axehead is a type that was produced and used throughout the Late Bronze Age (*c.* 1150–800 BC) (Burgess and Gerloff 1981; Schmidt and Burgess 1981: 186–187). Axeheads like the Callander example have been found in metalwork hoards dating to *c.* 1150–1020 BC, and indeed Schmidt and Burgess suggest that the Callander hoard could be a genuine association, representing the origins of this type of axehead around 1150 BC (1981: 186–187). Moreover, the Kincardine hoard also includes earlier forms of socketed axeheads alongside a typologically late dirk, which O'Connor and Cowie (1995: 361) use as evidence for the extended use of dirks and rapiers, as well as the earlier production of certain socketed axeheads (Figure 2.7; see also Needham 2017: Appendix 1). This strengthens the likelihood

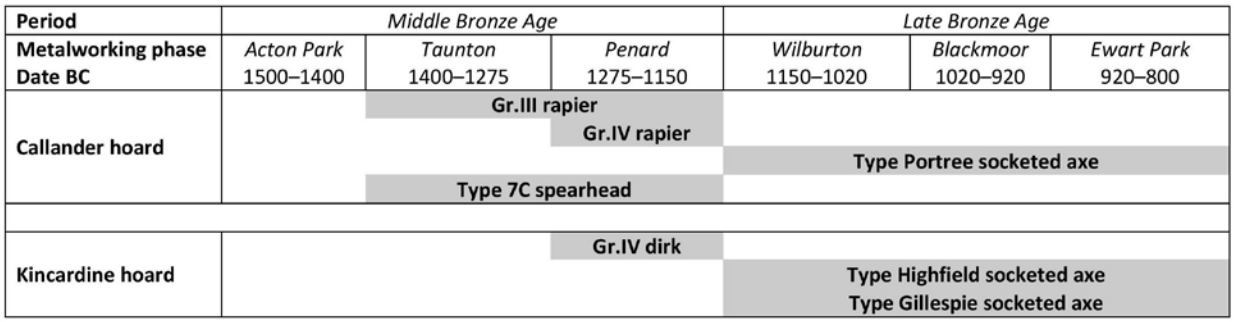

Figure 2.7: The expected typological durations of the objects in the Kincardine and Callander hoards (following information in Burgess and Gerloff 1981; Davis 2012; Schmidt and Burgess 1981)

Table 2.2: A list of multi-period hoards from Britain containing dirks and rapiers

Site	**No of rapiers/ dirks**	**Associated objects**
Brading Road, Brighton, East Sussex	1	1 Late-type palstave
Callander, Stirling	2	1 MBA spearhead and 2 LBA socketed axeheads
Duddingston Loch, Midlothian	1 fragment	Blackmoor/Ewart hoard of 44 objects
Gorleston-on-Sea, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk	2 fragments	1 MBA palstave fragment & Ewart Park hoard of 122 objects
Kincardine, Abernethy, Highland	1	2 socketed axeheads
Lanherne, St. Mawgan, Cornwall	1	1 MBA palstave and LBA hoard of unknown number of objects, mostly socketed axeheads
Mawr Community, Swansea	1 fragment	2 axehead fragment and 2 casting jets

that Callander does indeed represent a genuine association and it is possible that the Kincardine and Callander hoards represent associations of old styles of objects with new forms deposited around 1150–1100 BC.

Across Britain, there are seven instances of dirks or rapiers in Late Bronze Age contexts (Table 2.2). Whilst some of these must inevitably be considered residual fragments (e.g. Duddingston Loch and Mawr Community), others represent situations like Callander. In particular, the fragmentary Middle Bronze Age rapier found with a Late Bronze Age palstave at Brading Road, East Sussex (Curwen 1954: 216f., No. 17) probably represents the extended circulation of the rapier into the Late Bronze Age.

To reiterate, this is not a call to redefine established typologies for certain object types, but rather I wish to emphasise that some multi-period hoards might in fact open the possibility for identifying early and late developments in specific object forms, as well as allowing the opportunity to recognise some objects that were in circulation for longer than typical and the reasons for this. Indeed, Needham (2017: 151) suggests that the reason the Callander and Kincardine hoards contain anachronistic objects may be linked with a reduced supply of materials and thus the functional need to keep older objects for longer. This is further likely when we consider that there is limited evidence for the widespread development and adoption of swords in Scotland in the earlier part of the Late Bronze Age; Coles (1966: 114) and Burgess (1968: 23) have both argued that dirks and rapiers may in fact have a prolonged tradition in Scotland compared with southern Britain. It is usual to automatically dismiss collections of objects like Callander based on preconceived notions of typological chronologies, but with a consistent condition of objects and an appreciation of flexibility within these chronologies, we can enhance how we might

interpret some multi-period associations and their implications for the social structures that were in place. Of course, this typological flexibility means that Callander and Kincardine actually represent contemporary associations and are not in the truest sense 'multi-period'.

Out-of-time but not out of place

We know that some locations held significance to Bronze Age communities for depositing objects. Depositional practices have been linked with certain landscapes and functioning as a socio-political action for managing the inhabited world (e.g. Bradley 1998; 2017; Fontijn 2002; Levy 2010; Needham 1988; 2007). I have previously suggested that the deposition of multi-period hoards in high locations and in or near watery locations may have been part of a method for communities to structure the landscape and establish or legitimise claims to a place (Knight forthcoming). The multi-period hoards presented in this paper follow a similar pattern. Depositions in rivers and river valleys, bogs, lakes, and islands all fit within expected Bronze Age practices.

Concentrations of metalwork depositions along river valleys in Britain have been noted in south-east Wales (Gwilt 2004: 121f.), the Thames (York 2002), south-east England (Yates and Bradley 2010a), the eastern England Fenland (Yates and Bradley 2010b), and north-east England (Poyer 2015). The multi-period hoards from Mawr Community (Swansea), Wester Galcantray (Highland), Penllyn (Vale of Glamorgan), Smalley Bight (West Yorkshire), and possibly Callander (Stirling) are thus located in areas one would expect to find hoards and conform to expected depositional practices. Moreover, older objects were being incorporated into contemporary ideologies. Depositions in these locations may have been part of the process for legitimising place, as is often seen in Middle–Late Bronze Age settlements with deposits in liminal locations including doorways and boundary ditches (Brück 2006: 298f.). The inclusion of already old objects in hoards may have assisted in legitimising place as symbols of ancestral claims to the land (cf. Hingley 2009; Knight forthcoming).

The same could be argued for the Kincardine dirk and socketed axeheads. The deliberate deposition under a boulder on or near the slopes of the Cairngorms mountain range near a river suggests a place to which significance could have been attributed. Indeed, the depositional location marked by a boulder raises the possibility that this site could potentially be revisited and later objects may have been added. It thus follows that it is important to recognise that hoards and associations may not have been static occasions of deposition, rather they represent accumulations over time (cf. Hansen 2016; Needham 2007: 280–281; see below). This explanation has been proffered for the Corsbie Moss association; whilst some authors have accepted it as genuine (Colquhoun and Burgess 1988: 53)—and indeed the original account suggests the objects were found together or at least at the same time—Davis argued this actually represents a revisited area of deposition (2012: 52). This may be supported by the recovery of an Earliest Iron Age socketed axehead over a decade later from the same area. Meanwhile, all the axeheads in the Smalley Bight hoard reportedly came up at the same time, but as it was dredged from the River Calder, it has tended not to be considered a genuine association (Schmidt and Burgess 1981: 136). This scepticism may result from dredging activity elsewhere that has produced numerous objects from several periods, and from well-known locations that were revisited for depositional activities, such as bogs and rivers. Nonetheless, the multi-period accumulations infer the long-lived importance of places to the societies depositing metalwork, no doubt part of a wider set of beliefs and practices. Places of deposition and the objects deposited may have been remembered and repeatedly or intermittently revisited resulting in the multi-period associations we find today.

The earlier rapier in the Duddingston Loch assemblage appears to have less to do with establishing claims to land and more to do with the accumulation of objects over time and ongoing contemporary practices in a significant landscape. This hoard has recently been interpreted as part of a wider practice

of sacrificing of weapons in watery locations (Mörtz 2018); therefore, the role of the out-of-time object could be linked to the function of the rapier as a weapon. The antiquated rapier in the Duddingston Loch assemblage was no doubt recognised as a weapon of a bygone era, typologically dating to the Middle Bronze Age (*c.* 1275–1150 BC), and the multiple styles of weapons spanning the Late Bronze Age (*c.* 1150–800 BC) suggest an accumulation of weapons over an extended period prior to deposition. This need not necessarily have been a conscious process of active collecting, but it is likely each object had been in circulation for variable amounts of time and these were not all the result of a single production event. Thus, each object had its own biography and was individually significant, as well as being significant as part of the overall assemblage. A note of caution must be applied, however, as the collection of metalwork from Duddingston Loch was dispersed upon recovery with some pieces thought to have been given to King George III, and only an unknown proportion of the original collection now survives (Cowie and O'Connor 2007: 319). The seemingly complete condition of some of the objects recorded in drawings, but now mostly lost, led Cowie and O'Connor (2007: 319) to suggest that what may be represented by the assemblage are multiple episodes of deposition in the loch. Nonetheless, the deposition of deliberately destroyed metalwork in Duddingston Loch at the base of Arthur's Seat is significant, especially as two complete Late Bronze Age swords were deposited on the slopes of Arthur's Seat itself (Coles 1962: 116). Moreover, at Grosvenor Crescent, about two and a half miles away, a hoard comprising fourteen or fifteen swords, a socketed axe, a ring, a mount and a pin was excavated in 1869, whilst a sword and chape were recovered at Gogarburn, also in Edinburgh (Coles 1962: 118f.). This suggests the Edinburgh landscape may have been an area in which it was significant to deposit martial equipment in a variety of ways and if the out-of-time rapier represents a genuine association it was incorporated into these later practices.

Objects past with objects present

The possibly extended circulation of the Duddingston rapier raises important questions about how we might recognise the length of time an object was in use and, by extension, the nature of the relationship between the object and its owner(s). In the multi-period hoards, such insights can be gained by analysing the condition of some of the out-of-time objects, and inferring aspects of the potential biographies of those objects.

The worn nature of the Fell Lane and Four Mile Bridge spearheads emphasises that these were utilitarian objects that were used and reused over long periods of time. By the time of deposition, a substantial portion of each blade had worn away through use and resharpening, and, in the case of the Fell Lane spearhead, the loops had broken. Other Middle Bronze Age spearheads are known to have received similarly extensive use-lives, such as an example from Merton, Oxfordshire (O'Connor 1979; see also Davis 2012: Pl.36), and at Shrubsoles, Kent, surviving haft remains indicate a Middle Bronze Age spearhead may have been repeatedly re-hafted over several hundred years prior to burial (Taylor 2003: 42–43). If these spearheads were used over long periods of time, for whatever purpose(s), they were likely cared for and curated; in this sense they may have become inalienable objects (Weiner 1992), intrinsically linked with an owner or community, and passed down over time as a treasured object. The eventual deposition of the Fell Lane and Four Mile Bridge spearheads alongside later objects and in revisited landscapes may thus reflect the end of each spearhead's perceived usefulness or mnemonic role.

It is further interesting that the objects associated with each spearhead seem to also have had an extended period of use before deposition. Both the later Four Mile Bridge spearhead and Fell Lane socketed axehead are worn. The same is true of the Kincardine dirk and socketed axeheads. Likewise, in the groups of fragmentary objects from Duddingston Loch and Mawr Community, the out-of-time objects are in a worn-out and broken condition that matches the other objects with which they were

deposited. All of the objects in the Islay hoard show some signs of deliberate damage, including plastic deformation (bending and crushing), breaking, and edge damage, suggesting that if this does represent a genuine hoard, the Early, Middle and Late Bronze Age artefacts were all decommissioned, perhaps as part of one event. Where there is no obvious differentiation in the treatment of older objects or later objects, this may infer that, although older, the out-of-time objects warranted no alternative treatment and had been incorporated into contemporary customs and practices. Certainly, in the cases of spearheads and axeheads, the function of these objects probably would have been recognised and even if they were known to be objects with a past, there was no need to treat them differently. This was not always the case though. The hoard from Callander contains a mix of complete later objects and broken out-of-time objects; elsewhere at Yattendon (Berkshire), Shoebury (Essex), and Stoke Ferry (Norfolk), the out-of-time objects were the most complete, suggesting a level of care that was not afforded to typologically later implements which were deliberately broken before deposition (Hawkes 1954: GB.8; Knight forthcoming). Inevitably, that we have been able to recover these hoards archaeologically, means all the objects were eventually deposited and removed from circulation, indicating either that their significance was no longer recognised or that their removal was important for another social strategy.

Comparisons with out-of-time objects and multi-period hoards from southern England

Finally, it is appropriate to directly compare this survey with the previous survey of out-of-time objects from southern England. Forty-five certain, probable, and possible instances of earlier bronze objects found in later Bronze Age contexts were identified predominantly composed of multi-period hoards, but also four from settlement contexts (Knight forthcoming). The present survey thus brings the overall total of sites for Britain up to 56.[2] The most immediate observation is the contrast in numbers of associations involved (see Figure 2.2). Almost four times as many instances of multi-period hoards and out-of-time objects were identifiable in southern England. This is in part skewed by the larger number of hoards from southern England, and particularly those of the carp's tongue complex in south-east England, which have a greater number of older worn-out objects than the rest of the country (Knight forthcoming). In almost all cases the multi-period hoards comprise only one or two out-of-time objects, and only two periods of time (Davies this volume).

Across Britain overall there is a concentration of Bronze Age multi-period hoards in river valleys, which reflects trends in depositional practices generally. None of the hoards from southern England were recovered from lakes or bogs, whereas in Scotland there is at least one from each (Duddingston Loch and Corsbie Moss respectively).[3] In southern England, two out-of-time depositions were identified in structured deposits on the Late Bronze Age settlements at Shrubsoles Hill and Iwade, both Kent (Knight forthcoming). The latter is known to have been an island during the Bronze Age and it was posited that the proximity of these two deposits may have been linked to commonly held ideas within an area. With the possible hoard from Four Mile Bridge we might also speculate about the importance of a multi-period deposit on an island.[4] Islands may have been significant places in the Bronze Age (Bradley 2000) and the accumulation of old and new material may have been part of the process of revisiting certain places and areas over time.

A similarity across Britain is the predominance of Middle Bronze Age objects alongside Late Bronze Age material. As has been posited in this paper, some of these could represent extensions of the traditional typological span, but this is less clear for those in southern England. The predominance of Middle

[2] It is important to recognise though that no attempt has been made in the present paper to identify occupation sites with out-of-time objects from northern England, Scotland and Wales, though such sites exist in these regions. One example is a possible Middle Bronze Age gold fragment found in a Late Bronze Age pit at Llanmaes (Vale of Glamorgan, Wales) (Gwilt *et al.* 2016: 302).
[3] Admittedly, this observation in part simply reflects the geography of each region.
[4] To this we might also add the Islay hoard, though we must accept that given the size of the island coupled with the lack of details surrounding its recovery, the objects may have come from any number of topographical locations.

Bronze Age artefacts as out-of-time objects no doubt reflects the increased production and deposition of metal objects during that period, increasing the chances that material would either circulate for longer periods or have a higher chance of rediscovery. In the present study, only the Islay hoard contained an Early Bronze Age object, though this association cannot be considered certain. It may be strengthened, however, by the Stoke Ferry hoard, Norfolk, which contained an Early Bronze Age copper halberd alongside broken Late Bronze Age swords and spearheads (Hawkes 1954: GB.8; Lawson 2018: 37–38). If this is a legitimate association, the Stoke Ferry halberd likely represents a rediscovered object and may have been recognised for its age; the Islay halberd could be a similar situation.

In southern England it was possible to pick out certain instances where the deposition of out-of-time objects may have been linked to memory creation or, alternatively, forgetting. The destruction and deposition of the Milsoms Corner shield, Somerset, for instance, was linked to ending the 'life' of the object and the associations it held with the local community through its age (Knight forthcoming). In northern England, Scotland and Wales such instances could not be conclusively identified and thus the theme of memory has not been explored in this paper. However, it is possible to argue that certain objects, such as the rapier fragments from Mawr Community and Duddingston Loch or the spearheads from Four Mile Bridge and Fell Lane, may represent the retention of some objects over long periods, even to the point that they cease to be functional (e.g. the edge is so worn it can no longer be resharpened). I hesitate to refer to them as heirlooms, as their condition does not suggest the care and veneration expected of heirloom objects (cf. Lillios 1999). However, that such things may have been important to Late Bronze Age communities can be derived from the Earliest Iron Age hoard from Poolewe, where a Late Bronze Age ornament was seemingly retained and worn out over several generations of circulation before deposition with later axeheads (Knight 2019: 13). For the worn and used out-of-time objects in the multi-period hoards under discussion here, we may speculate that these objects acquired certain inalienable qualities that were linked with a known past, accrued over an extended period of possession, circulation and use; in this way depositing objects and hoards may have been mnemonic practices for managing social strategies (cf. Levy 2010: 131ff.). Furthermore, the potential that Smalley Bight, Four Mile Bridge and Corsbie Moss are not true associations, but are instead revisited depositional sites, implies that the locations of deposition were remembered, and material was added over time.

Final thoughts

So where does this leave us concerning Bronze Age multi-period hoards? A number of case studies previously considered 'doubtful' have been highlighted, expanding the known corpus of possible, probable or certain multi-period hoards containing Bronze Age out-of-time metal objects to 52. It should be clear by now that although not a frequent occurrence, such hoards are widely distributed and occurred in a variety of ways and for a variety of reasons that fit within the known Bronze Age hoarding practices. This is not intended to be the final word on the topic, but by illustrating that former assumptions require interrogation, it is hoped that more thorough source criticism will be undertaken in the future to at least explore the possibility that the association of objects that do not fit expected typo-chronological frameworks may in fact be genuine, or at least plausible. The Bronze Age multi-period hoards now known from Britain offer the opportunity to explore theoretical themes, such as mnemonic practices, and can also be used to enhance our understanding of typologies and the relationships between people, objects and the landscapes in which they were deposited.

Acknowledgements

This paper expands on work I began during my Masters in 2014 on multi-period hoards in southern England and submitted for publication in 2015 (Knight forthcoming). The present paper is the result of numerous fruitful conversations with many colleagues and friends that continue to stimulate my

thoughts on this topic. I would like to particularly thank my co-editors for their firm but fair editing that brought this paper down to an (almost) manageable size, as well as Catriona Gibson for offering comments on what she endearingly calls 'Out-of-Time Objects 2.0', and Robyn Raxworthy for her continued patience listening to me talk about this topic. Thanks are also due to Rachel Chisholm at the Highland Folk Museum for accommodating my visit to see the Kincardine hoard, to Adam Gwilt for his help with the Welsh hoards, and to Katherine Baxter at Leeds Museums and Galleries and Dave Evans at Wakefield Museums & Castles for providing valuable information on the Smalley Bight hoard. Finally, Trevor Cowie has, as always, been a mine of information relating to the Scottish material and this paper is much stronger for his input and thought-provoking comments. Any remaining errors are my own.

Appendix

This appendix presents details of the 11 multi-period hoards identified during this research from northern England, Scotland and Wales (summarised in Table 2.1). The importance of source criticism was highlighted in text and this is emphasised by the thorough historiographies of some of the hoards outlined here. The likelihood that each hoard is indeed 'multi-period' is presented on a scale of Certain, Probable and Possible and the hoards are listed alphabetically within each certainty. The distribution is presented in Figure 2.2.

Certain multi-period hoards

(1) Kincardine, Abernethy, Highland (Inverness-shire), SCOTLAND[5]

Around 1873, a Middle Bronze Age dirk and two Late Bronze Age socketed axeheads were found under a granite boulder at Kincardine, Abernethy (O'Connor and Cowie 1995: 355). Kincardine (or Kinchardine) was a parish in the west of what is now Abernethy and can be identified on OS maps until 1874, though is now known as West Croftmore; the exact findspot location cannot be identified but it was likely in the vicinity. The objects were donated to Am Fasgadh in 1951 and now reside in the Highland Folk Museum, Kingussie (O'Connor and Cowie 1995: 355). The dirk is Burgess and Gerloff's (1981) Group IV type, broadly dating to the Penard metalworking phase of the Middle Bronze Age (*c.* 1275–1150 BC), whilst the socketed axeheads are of a type datable to the Wilburton phase (*c.* 1150–1020 BC). Although this group has traditionally been considered to not be associated based on the typological disparity of the objects (e.g. Coles 1966: 15; Schmidt and Burgess 1981: Nos 1025 and 1141), they are now considered to represent a legitimate association (Needham 2017: Appendix 1; O'Connor and Cowie 1995: 357).

(2) Mawr Community, Swansea, WALES

Two socketed axehead fragments, two casting jets and a rapier fragment were found while metal-detecting in the Community of Mawr, Swansea, in 2015 (Knight and Gwilt 2017). These objects were dispersed over an area of about three square metres but are considered to be a certain association (Knight and Gwilt 2017). The axeheads and the casting jets date to the Late Bronze Age, whilst the rapier fragment is more typical of the Middle Bronze Age.

[5] The modern local authorities for the Scottish sites are given here with historic counties in brackets where appropriate to allow cross-referencing with older sources.

Probable multi-period hoards

(3) Callander, Stirling (Perthshire), SCOTLAND

Two rapiers, a socketed axehead and a spearhead with asymmetrical side-loops were supposedly found together in the Callander area prior to 1830 and were purchased by what was then the National Museum of Scotland in 1955 (National Museums Scotland Acc. Nos X.DQ 321–324; Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland 1958: 473, fig.7). Museum records note that the artefacts were purchased from George Willis, the founder of Basingstoke Museum, and prior to this, the finds were in the possession of Captain James Richard Hill MacFarlane of Lochhouses, Prestonkirk, and were found between 1790 and 1820. Three other bronze artefacts from Callander were acquired at the same time, but were noted as single finds, including a flanged axehead, a socketed axehead and a spearhead (National Museums Scotland Acc. Nos X.DC 134, X.DE 124 and X.DG 105). This paper argues it is probable the original four objects were found together.

(4) Duddingston Loch, Edinburgh, Midlothian, SCOTLAND

The group of objects from Duddingston Loch was recovered in 1778 while dredging for shell marl (Callander 1923: 360–364). This assemblage contains in the region of 50 metal objects, though the exact number is unknown, including swords, spearheads, a bucket ring handle and a rapier fragment. Most of the material can be dated to the Wilburton to Ewart Park metalworking phases of the Late Bronze Age (1150–800 BC), including Wilburton swords and spearheads as well as Ewart Park counterparts, though the rapier fragment broadly dates to the Middle Bronze Age, probably towards *c.* 1100 BC and thus would have been a century old or more at the time of deposition. Assuming a deposition date for the hoard in the early Ewart Park date (*c.* 900 BC), some of the Wilburton phase metalwork could also have been old when deposited. However, as this was a dredged discovery, it cannot be considered absolutely certain that the rapier does not represent an earlier deposit in Duddingston Loch. Its similarity in condition to the other weapons recovered strengthens the idea that this is a genuine association.

Possible multi-period hoards

(5) Corsbie Moss, Scottish Borders (Berwickshire), SCOTLAND

A spearhead, sword and sword chape were recovered at the same time during drainage operations in a peat bog some time before 1854 (Coles 1962: 24, 107–108, fig.1; Proceedings of the Society of the Antiquaries of London 1856: 121). They were a foot or two below the surface (Colquhoun and Burgess 1988: 51). The chape was destroyed during recovery but was apparently metal. The surviving spearhead dates to the early part of the Middle Bronze Age (following Davis 2012), whilst the sword can be dated to the Wilburton metalworking phase (*c.* 1150–1020 BC). In 1866, an Earliest Iron Age socketed axehead was recovered from the same area (National Museums Scotland records; Schmidt and Burgess 1981: 242, No. 1589, recorded as 'Corsbie Tower'), post-dating the sword by 200–400 years and the spearhead by potentially a millennium. Whilst it is possible the spearhead, sword and sword chape were once associated, the later axehead raises the alternative possibility that this was a place where multiple depositions were made over time (cf. Davis 2012: 52). All objects were donated at the same time in 1920 along with two other finds from Corsbie Moss: a Neolithic flint arrowhead and a stone spindle whorl (Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland 1921: 14, 16–17, 19). There is no indication that any of these were associated.

(6) Fell Lane, Penrith, Cumbria, ENGLAND

At Fell Lane, a Middle Bronze Age spearhead and a Late Bronze Age socketed axehead were supposedly found together, but Clough has since cast doubt on this association as he was informed that they may

have been found in the River Lowther in 1931–32 (1969: 14). The Bronze Age Card Index at the British Museum records that the spearhead and axehead were found together while building a house in 1883–1893; these records are dated to 1923, thus predating the supposed discovery in the River Lowther. Moreover, the private collection in which the objects were held was documented as Lowther Street in Penrith, which may explain why it was suspected these objects came from the River Lowther. Unfortunately, the socketed axehead is now missing and the confusion surrounding the object history has been enough for subsequent authors to doubt the authenticity of the find (e.g. Davis 2012: 101); this association must remain only a possibility.

(7) Four Mile Bridge, Anglesey, Gwynedd, WALES

A Middle Bronze Age basal-looped spearhead and a Late Bronze Age pegged spearhead were found within three metres of each other, but on two separate occasions (Lynch 1991: 236). The earlier spearhead predates the later one by up to 400 years.

(8) Islay, Argyll and Bute, SCOTLAND

A group of five objects from Islay in the Inner Hebrides, including an Early Bronze Age halberd, a Middle Bronze Age spearhead and flanged chisel and two Late Bronze Age socketed axeheads, was acquired by National Museums Scotland in 1882 (Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland 1882: 409). However, no details of the circumstances of discovery are preserved. The typologically diverse nature of this hoard, spanning up to 1000 years, led Coles to suggest this probably represented a modern 'collector's hoard' (1966: 117), rather than a genuine association. However, it remains possible these objects were indeed found together due to similarities in patina and condition.

(9) Penllyn, Vale of Glamorgan, WALES

This hoard comprises fragments of two Late-type palstaves, a spearhead, an uncertain 'plate' object and a possible knife or rapier fragment (Gwilt *et al.* 2015). It was found while metal-detecting in the same field on two occasions in December 2013 and January 2014. Much of the hoard indicates a depositional date early in the Late Bronze Age, probably during the Wilburton metalworking phase at the end of the second millennium BC (*c.* 1150–1020 BC), but the possible rapier fragment could indicate the inclusion of earlier material in a later hoard (Gwilt *et al.* 2015). Although the association is secure, the identification of the objects is not.

(10) Smalley Bight, Stanley Ferry, West Yorkshire, ENGLAND

A group of eleven bronze implements was recovered together while dredging the River Calder just below Smalley Bight farm near Stanley Ferry and presented to Leeds City Museum in 1914 (Walker 1939: 15). This hoard appears to have included Middle Bronze Age flanged axeheads and palstaves alongside Late Bronze Age socketed axeheads, but there is some confusion in the history of the objects post-recovery. Despite reporting eleven implements, Walker only lists ten, which includes 'seven bronze looped celts... a winged celt without a stop-ridge... a looped palstave... and a bronze object with a bearded man's head delineated upon it' (Walker 1939: 15). Of these, he illustrates two: a socketed axehead and a palstave. Later, Varley (1977: 53–54) recorded that part of the hoard had been destroyed when Leeds City Museum was bombed during World War II and lists only six surviving axeheads, including four socketed axeheads, a Middle Bronze Age flanged axehead, and a palstave. However, none of these objects are the two illustrated by Walker. The hoard has now been traced to Wakefield Museums and Castles, where eight axeheads currently survive with the provenance 'Smalley Bight', including six Late Bronze Age socketed axeheads and a Middle Bronze Age flanged axehead and a Middle Bronze Age palstave. The surviving objects include the socketed axehead and palstave illustrated by Walker, but not the palstave

presented by Varley. A ninth fake socketed axehead is currently held at Wakefield Museums and Castles with the provenance of 'Smalley Bight', but it is unclear whether this is a replica of an original axehead, or simply a misattribution. Regardless, the Middle Bronze Age flanged axehead and palstave predate the socketed axeheads by several centuries and seem to have been part of the original group as described by Walker. Both the surviving flanged axehead and the palstave are types that can be broadly dated to the Taunton metalworking phase (*c.* 1400–1275 BC), whilst the socketed axeheads are more typical of the Ewart Park phase (*c.* 920–800 BC) (following Schmidt and Burgess 1981).

(11) Wester Galcantray, Highland (Nairnshire), SCOTLAND

A particularly convoluted case study concerns three axeheads from Wester Galcantray (repeatedly misspelled as 'Golcantry'), Highland (National Museums Scotland Acc. Nos X.DC 25, X.DE 114, X.DE 115); it is worth briefly indulging here to emphasise the necessity and benefit of a thorough analysis of object historiographies. In 1939, Alexander Keiller presented two Late Bronze Age socketed axeheads and an Early–Middle Bronze Age flanged axe to the National Museum of Scotland claiming that they were 'found at Wester Golcantry 'in the Tailor's Garden,' in 1887' (Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland 1940: 149). Later Walker reported that all objects came from Miss May Davidson of Clava and Cantray (1972: 117f.). It is still possible to locate the Tailor's House (now known as Auld Hoose) in Wester Galcantray and the Historic Environment Record records a site visit in 1964 made by the Ordnance Survey during map revision work, during which the owner confirmed that the objects were found in the front garden of that house (Canmore ID 15069[6]). The flanged axehead predates the socketed axeheads by several centuries and this has meant the association has been considered doubtful or not portrayed as an association at all (Clark *et al.* 2017: 27, 51; Coles 1962: 134). This doubt has been furthered by confusion around the recording of the axeheads in various papers. Whilst Walker is 'almost certain' that the axeheads were found together, he lists the wrong flanged axehead (1972: 117). Meanwhile, in his article on Middle Bronze Age metalwork Coles does not refer to any palstave from 'Wester Golcantry' but records a flanged axe as 'Probably nr Clava or Cantray' (1966: 135), presumably referring to Miss Davidson's address. The museum registration number provided by Coles is DC 125, which is recorded by the National Museum of Scotland as coming from 'Wester Golcantry' so is probably the same axe. The same axehead is recorded as 'Near Cantray' in Schmidt and Burgess (1981: 101, No 613), whilst two socketed axes are recorded as 'Wester Golcantry' which are possibly associated with a different flanged axehead (Schmidt and Burgess 1981: No 409). This latter axehead has the museum registration number DC 128, and there has clearly been some confusion over which of the axeheads were truly associated. This confusion can be cleared up as the flanged axehead DC 125 and the possibly associated two socketed axeheads are all marked with a consistent numbering scheme: 1939.1024–1026, and a printed note inside one of the socketed axeheads reads:

'FLINTS, BRONZE PALSTAVE AND SOCKETED AXE-HEADS PROBABLY FROM INVERNESS-SHIRE. Alexander Keiller, 1939.'

Unfortunately, as the artefacts came up in 1887 but did not arrive in the National Museum until 1939, nor do the flanged axehead and the socketed axeheads possess a consistent patina, this association cannot be considered certain.

Uncertain hoards

The surviving information for several 'multi-period' hoards was deemed too uncertain to include here. Of note, however, is the Greyfriars Church hoard from Dumfries and Galloway, which it was possible to investigate during the course of researching this paper and warrants describing here.

[6] Record last accessed 30th September 2018 via: https://www.canmore.org.uk/site/15069/wester-galcantray.

(no number) Greyfriars Church, Dumfries, Dumfries and Galloway (Dumfries-shire), SCOTLAND

This Middle Bronze Age hoard was found in 1866 when excavating the foundations of a church. Originally it contained a spearhead and two axeheads, though was transferred without provenance information from the Crichton Royal Institute to Dumfries Museum. In addition to the Greyfriars hoard, Dumfries Museum received an additional two axeheads and one spearhead also with minimal provenance (Schmidt and Burgess 1981: 92–94, No 529). All six objects have been attributed Greyfriars Church as the original findspot, but it is unclear which three objects constitute the original discovery. The collection of objects now includes an Early Bronze Age spearhead and axehead, as well as a Middle Bronze Age spearhead and three palstaves. Davis (2012: 40–41) argued that the Greyfriars Early Bronze Age spearhead is unlikely to have come from the area. Furthermore, of the three Middle Bronze Age palstaves, one is a South-Western type, which was probably originally from the Welsh Marches (Schmidt and Burgess 1981: 142) and another is an Irish type (Schmidt and Burgess 1981: 168); neither form is common in Scotland. Due to the confusion surrounding the provenance and the eclectic nature of the objects in question, it cannot be guaranteed that the original hoard was indeed multi-period.

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Chapter 3

Connecting with the past: Earliest Iron Age multi-period hoards in Wessex

Dot Boughton

The Salisbury Hoard is a collection of at least 535 artefacts dated from 2400–200 BC. It contains Early, Middle and Late Bronze Age objects as well as Earliest and Middle Iron Age artefacts. Unfortunately, the hoard was discovered and plundered by nighthawks; as it was not excavated by archaeologists and lacking documented evidence, this unique multi-period assemblage always seemed to be an improbable occurrence. However, when a similar hoard was found in 2011 nearby in the Vale of Wardour, it was reported to the local Finds Liaison Officer and excavated by a team of archaeologists from the British Museum. Its similar composition lent credence to the Salisbury Hoard. Furthermore, we may also include another, earlier find in this group of multi-period hoards: the small assemblage found just outside the hillfort of Danebury, Hampshire. This small group of multi-period assemblages suggest that the prehistoric inhabitants of this region were aware of earlier artefact assemblages and chose to curate them in some way. These hoards were either found and reburied in the Iron Age or a large portion of Iron Age material was added to an already existing and known multi-period deposit. This paper explores these multi-period assemblages and the possible reasoning of their (re-?)depositions by the local communities.

Keywords: *Earliest Iron Age, hoarding, multi-period hoards, socketed axes, Wessex*

Introduction: Earliest Iron Age hoards in Britain

The practice of consigning caches of metalwork to the ground is well-attested for the British Bronze Age (cf. Davies this volume; Knight this volume), especially the Late Bronze Age of East Anglia and Kent where numerous hoards have been discovered over the years (e.g. Pendleton 1999; Turner 2010). This practice did not cease after the Bronze Age, but the numbers of hoards decreased markedly and the regional foci shifted from Essex, Suffolk and Kent towards Wessex and Norfolk in what we now call the Earliest Iron Age (Boughton 2015; O'Connor 2007). O'Connor (2007: 64) acknowledged that for the various hoards belonging to the Llyn Fawr phase of the British Bronze Age many scholars now prefer the term 'Earliest Iron Age' rather than 'Late Bronze/Early Iron Age Transition'. Even though both Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age hoards contain, to a great extent, socketed axes, the individual axe types are very different and are rarely found associated with one another; they are regionally distinct (Boughton 2015; O'Connor 2007: 68). In addition, some Earliest Iron Age hoards also contain objects of iron, such as the hoards from Melksham and Hindon, both Wiltshire (Figure 3.1). O'Connor showed that the Llyn Fawr phase stretched nearly 200 years (*c.* 800–600 BC) with the hoard from Ferring (Sussex) dating from *c.* 800–750 BC, the Llyn Fawr and Cardiff (Glamorgan) hoards dating from *c.* 750–675 BC, and the Sompting (Sussex) hoard dating from *c.* 650–600 BC (Boughton 2015: Nos 999–1008, 1009–1025, 1292–1295; Milcent 2012: 155, 165; O'Connor 2007: 73–74, fig. 7)

The general composition of Earliest Iron Age metalwork hoards is very different from the composition of Late Bronze Age hoards. The latter often include a mixture of mainly contemporary heavily used, broken-up weapons, tools and ornaments (Huth 1997; Taylor 1993; Turner 2010): in contrast, British Earliest Iron Age hoards frequently include complete artefacts in good or even as-cast condition. However, these hoards do not only stand out because some of them were collections of artefacts in as-cast condition or hoards occasionally containing both copper alloy and iron artefacts; a small number of Earliest Iron Age hoards were composed of artefacts ranging in date from the Early Bronze Age to the Early Iron Age, which means that some of the hoard contents were centuries old at the time of

their re-deposition. It is noteworthy that, with one exception (Poolewe, Ross and Cromarty, Scotland), all of these multi-period hoards were discovered in a small region in Wessex, that is the area between Shaftesbury in Wiltshire and Andover in Hampshire. The questions this paper will discuss are *how*, *when* and *why* they were put together.

Hoarding during the Late Bronze Age–Earliest Iron Age transition

Since Evans' pioneering work on British Bronze Age metalwork and his introduction of the three categories 'founders' hoards', 'personal hoards' and 'merchants' hoards' (Evans 1881: 457), scholars have tried to fit new hoards into one of these categories. According to Evans, most hoards were buried for safe-keeping, and the contents of each hoard should give us a clue as to who may have buried it. 'Personal hoards' were generally smaller, with more diverse, 'personalised' contents and possible heirlooms. Larger hoards, meanwhile, should be viewed as more impersonal collections, i.e. the stock-in-trade of a merchant or possibly a metalworker's toolkit (Evans 1881: 457–459). Evans' third category, 'merchants' hoards' included mainly unworked, complete artefacts. However, most hoards are so diverse and the regional and contextual differences so great that it would be very unwise to categorise them using such a rigid and outdated system (Bradley 1990). The pre-dominant interpretation for Late Bronze Age hoard deposition has always been 'safe-keeping', that is depositions made with the intention to recover. However, today we have clear and unambiguous evidence that generally, metalwork deposition in the Bronze Age could be non-random, selective and purposeful, with no intention to recover (Barber 2001: 164; Fontijn 2002: 33–35; Needham 1988).

If we had indisputable evidence that the transition from the Late Bronze Age to the Early Iron Age had been an era of aggression, uncertainty, tension and conflicts, we might see why so many hoards were not recovered, but there is no supporting evidence for this from settlement and burial contexts (Darvill 2010: 244). On the contrary, settlement evidence suggests that sites first built in the Late Bronze Age carried on through the Early, Middle and possibly Late Iron Age without any major interruption, for example Danebury (Hampshire), the Breiddin (Powys) and Staple Howe (Yorkshire) to name a few (Brewster 1963; Cunliffe 1984; Musson 1991). Settlements were growing and becoming more diverse and they were occupied more intensively and for longer periods (Bradley 2007: 210). Furthermore, the building types within the settlements seemed to be more diverse and built for specific, possibly communal, purposes, e.g. granaries, pits or storehouses. Generally speaking, it seems that within the individual communities, efforts were directed towards land clearance, land division, food storage and possibly work specialisation, but not necessarily conflict, aggression and fighting which could have potentially resulted in metalwork being hidden for safe-keeping. In the Wessex chalk uplands, long linear earthworks may indicate the division of the land in defined smaller and larger territories (Bradley *et al.* 1994). These linear earthworks usually run from the river valleys towards the uplands and along the hill crests (Bradley 2007: 211) and were once interpreted as possible boundaries for cattle (Cunliffe 2004) or sheep grazing (McOmish 1996: 68–76). However, both Bell (2001: 6–7) and Bradley (2007: 212) suggest that they may have had a more universal purpose for land division, i.e. demarcating territories which would have contained a variety of different resources, such as grazing land, arable land, access to fresh water and summer pasture (Bell 2001: 6–7; Bradley 2007: 212). Even though these boundaries are usually assigned to the Iron Age, radiocarbon dates suggest that some of their development was already started in the period 1000–800 BC (Bradley 2007: 212), meaning that by the Early Iron Age they were established and needed to be curated and reinforced, probably literally as well as spiritually.

The character of Earliest Iron Age hoards

Earliest Iron Age metalwork hoards which contain objects other that socketed axes are rare: of 54 known associations, there are only 15 hoards where socketed axes were deposited alongside other metalwork

Figure 3.1: Melksham Hoard (Wiltshire). Image used with kind permission of Devizes Museum.

(Boughton 2015: 176–178) and we only recognise two Earliest Iron Age hoards that do not contain any socketed axes: the assemblages from Melksham (Wiltshire) and the small assemblage from Stockbury (Kent) (Figures 3.1 and 3.2) (Gingell 1979: 245–251; Roberts *et al.* 2011).

Therefore, according to type and number of associated objects, Earliest Iron Age hoards may be divided into two main groups: *axe hoards* and *mixed hoards*, with multi-period hoards falling into the latter category (Boughton 2015: 177):

Figure 3.2: Stockbury Hoard (Kent). Treasure Number 2011T110. Image courtesy of the Portable Antiquities Scheme, licensed under CC BY-SA 4.0.

1. Axe hoards
   a. Axe hoards
   b. Axe-dominated hoards
2. Mixed hoards
   a. Mixed hoards (i.e. with contemporary objects)
   b. Multi-period hoards (i.e. with curated, older objects)
   c. Fragmented hoards

Mixed hoards are made up of a much greater variety of artefact types than axe hoards and axe-dominated hoards: they often include evidence for feasting as well as horse riding, tools, weapons, ornaments and razors. Altogether there are seven mixed hoards, five of which are multi-period hoards, all containing material dating from earlier prehistoric periods, that is the Early, Middle and/or Late Bronze Age (Boughton 2015: Nos 1061–1202). In one instance, one hoard also contained artefacts dating from the later Iron Age (Salisbury, Wiltshire). These mixed hoards should be defined more accurately as multi-period hoards; they stand out not only because of the individual artefacts' earlier dates but also because they tend to contain more artefacts and artefact types than simple mixed hoards and they were

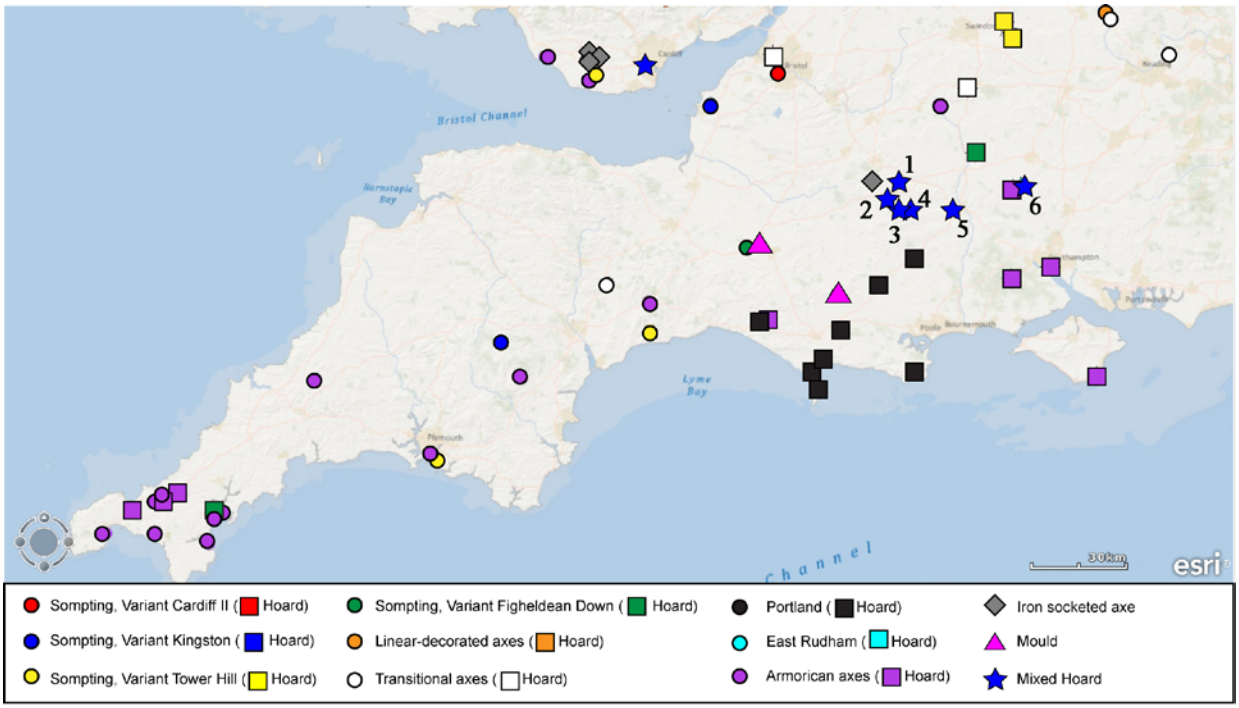

Figure 3.3: Distribution of Earliest Iron Age socketed axeheads in South England, South West England and South Wales. Key: 1 = Hindon, Wiltshire (WILT-9439A7); 2 = Hindon II, Wiltshire (WILT-A74356); 3 = Tisbury, Wiltshire (WILT-0594F7); 4 = Vale of Wardour (Tisbury II), Wiltshire (WILT-E8DA70); 5= Salisbury (Netherhampton), Wiltshire; 6 = Danebury, Hampshire. Map: D. Boughton.

all (with one exception) discovered in the confined area in Wessex, between Shaftesbury in Wiltshire and Andover in Hampshire (Figure 3.3).

Earliest Iron Age hoards in southern England

The area of southern England is broadly based on the outline of the counties of Hampshire, Wiltshire, Dorset, the south-eastern region of Somerset and the Isle of Wight. In the preceding Late Bronze Age, metalwork hoards were found in abundance in Kent and eastern England but were rare in southern England. In the Earliest Iron Age, however, we find that the picture is reversed: in contrast to the South East, the Earliest Iron Age metalwork assemblage of southern England is not confined to a small number of hoards and a few single finds but consists of a substantial metalwork assemblage from transitional and Early Iron Age contexts including settlements, middens and ritual, feasting and metalworking sites (Boughton 2015: 242).

There are 20 Earliest Iron Age hoards from southern England. This is nearly twice as many Earliest Iron Age hoards as from any other region in Britain (Boughton 2015: 244–245). These 20 hoards fall into three main groups: axe hoards, axe-dominated hoards and multi-period hoards which have different geographical foci. Whilst the southern part of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight are dominated by axe hoards made up solely of Armorican axes, Dorset is characterised by axe hoards with Blandford- and Portland-type axes (Figures 3.4 and 3.5).

The only exception is one large group of Portland-type axes (141+) which was discovered in the multi-period assemblage from Salisbury (Wiltshire) (Boughton 2015: 246, Nos 1061–1202; Stead 1998). Multi-period hoards are prevalent in the Salisbury region, the Vale of Wardour and the Danebury area of Hampshire. They are significant because they are not common elsewhere in Britain: pure

Figure 3.4: Examples of Portland-type axes from the Portland Hoard (Dorset). Image used with kind permission of The Salisbury Museum (Pitt Rivers Collection).

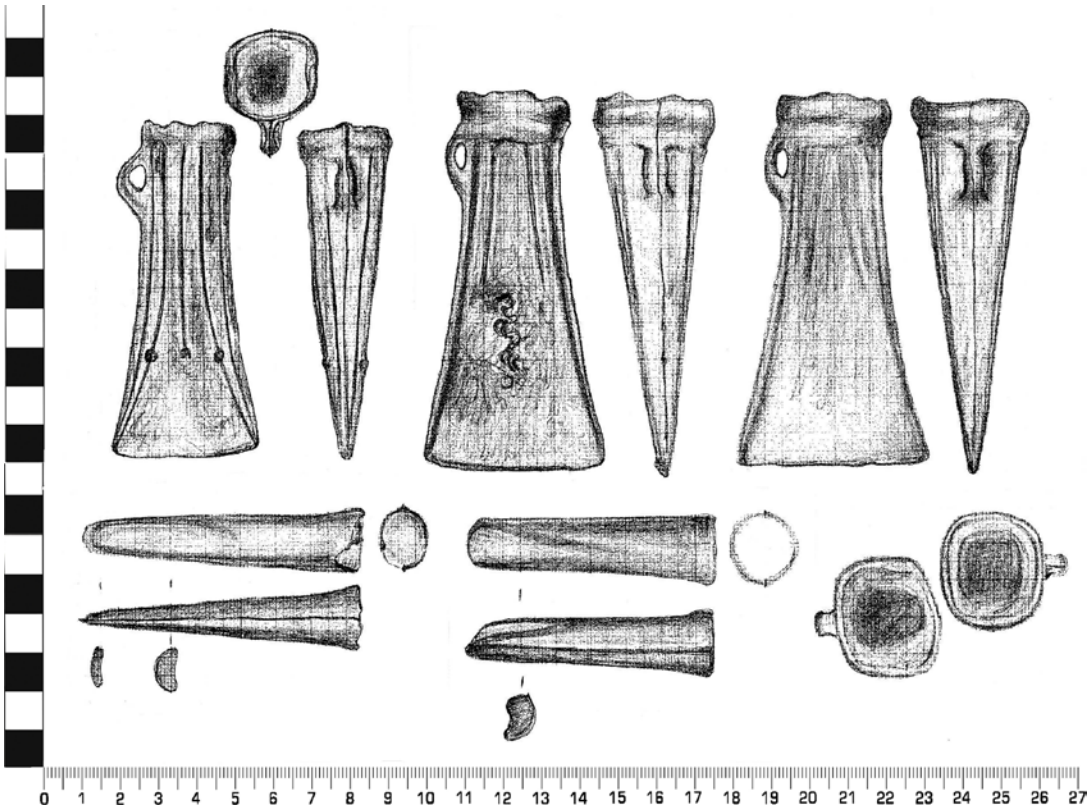

Figure 3.5: Top (left to right): socketed axeheads from Salisbury Hoard (1, 2), socketed axehead from Blandford Hoard (3). Bottom: socketed gouges from Blandford Hoard, (Dorset). Illustration: D. Boughton.

Figure 3.6: The Vale of Wardour Hoard (Wiltshire). Treasure Number 2011T684. Image used with kind permission of The Salisbury Museum.

axe hoards are much more frequently found than mixed and multi-period hoards (Boughton 2015: 249–250). In 2011–2012, three hoards from Tisbury, the Vale of Wardour and Hindon were discovered on the Salisbury Plain and the West Wiltshire Downs which have shed more light on this unique deposition practice (Boughton 2015: Nos 1354–1392, 1410–1412).

The original multi-period hoard is the Salisbury hoard: a deposit containing approximately 535 artefacts which was discovered during illicit metal-detecting in the late 1980s near the small village of Netherhampton (Stead 1998). The hoard was the first large multi-period assemblage discovered in Britain and the date of its latest contents suggest that it was deposited in the Middle Iron Age, *c.* 200 BC (Stead 1998: Table 1). Its size and deposition date set it apart from the Vale of Wardour hoard which also contained proportionally fewer axes (Figure 3.6; Boughton 2015: Nos 1388–1392). In addition to the axeheads already mentioned, the Salisbury hoard also included a small number of Late Bronze Age axeheads and one Earliest Iron Age axehead of Sompting type, Figheldean Down-variant (Boughton 2015: No. 1096; Stead 1998: Plates 2, 3, 6 and 15).

The discovery of Portland-type axeheads outside of their typical distribution, as well as the unusual combination of different axehead types suggests that the axes may not have been originally deposited at Netherhampton, but re-deposited there instead with other contemporary items (such as trapezoidal razors and socketed sickles) as well as items 'not of their time', that is objects dating from the Early Bronze Age to the Middle Iron Age. The same may have happened to the one sole axe of

Figure 3.7: Part of Figheldean Down Hoard (Wiltshire). Image used with kind permission of The Salisbury Museum.

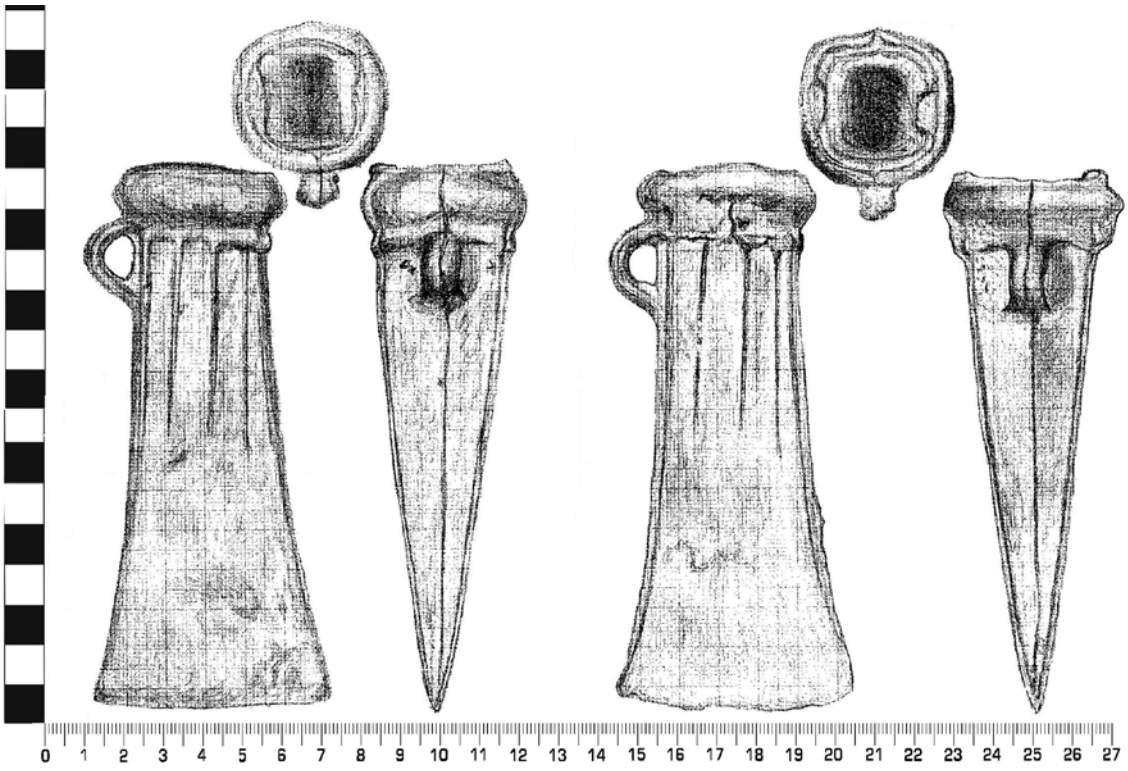

Figure 3.8: Comparison of two socketed axeheads from the Salisbury Hoard (left) and Figheldean Down Hoard (right), (Wiltshire). Illustration: D. Boughton.

Figure 3.9: Socketed axehead from Rookley Farm, Stockbridge (Hampshire). Portable Antiquities Number: HAMP1871. Image courtesy of the Portable Antiquities Scheme, licensed under CC BY-SA 4.0.

Sompting type, Figheldean Down-variant from Salisbury: like Portland-type axes, Figheldean Down-variant axes were only ever found deposited with other axeheads of this type and not with other types of metalwork or even socketed axes of contemporary types (Figures 3.4 and 3.7).

Moreover, the Figheldean Down-variant axe from Salisbury was almost certainly made in the same mould as seven of the axes from the Figheldean Down hoard (Wiltshire) as well as a single find from Stockbridge (Hampshire) which strongly suggests a certain degree of contemporaneity (Figures 3.7, 3.8 and 3.9; Boughton 2015: Nos 1033–1036, 1043, 1045, 1048, 1394).

The find from Stockbridge was discovered only 2.5km south of Danebury where another, smaller multi-period hoard was discovered during controlled archaeological excavation (Figure 3.10; Boughton 2015: Nos 686–689).

Figure 3.10: Danebury Hoard (Hampshire). Andover Museum (Hampshire Cultural Trust).

It is thus likely that these axes were produced locally and did not travel very far after manufacture. Like the Portland-type axes from Dorset, the larger Sompting-type axe may have been a 'token addition' to the collections of Salisbury hoard bronzes, added by the local community to the assemblage wherever it was curated at the time: above or below ground. The multi-period hoards from the Vale of Wardour and Salisbury have a very artificial composition: their composition strongly suggests that they were put together in different circumstances or possibly for different reasons than pure Earliest Iron Age axe hoards in which axes of Sompting type, Figheldean Down-variant and Portland-type axes normally occur (Boughton 2015: 251).

The closest relative to the Salisbury hoard is the Vale of Wardour hoard which is a smaller multi-period assemblage (Figure 3.4; Boughton 2015: Nos 1388–1392). The contents of the Vale of Wardour hoard (114 bronze weapons, tools and ornaments) date from the Early Bronze Age to the Early Iron Age, but unlike the Salisbury hoard which was deposited around *c.* 200 BC, the Vale of Wardour hoard was probably deposited in or towards the end of the 6th century BC. Wardour's object range is not as impressive as Salisbury's but in both hoards wood-working tools such as axes, gouges, chisels, awls and punches are prevalent and there are hardly any items of jewellery or fasteners for clothes. Only five of Wardour's nine socketed axes date from the Earliest Iron Age: there is a Blandford-type axe, an axe of Sompting type, Tower Hill-variant, an Armorican axe, Couville-variant and a specimen which is remarkably small and has its loop on one of the faces rather than its side, and may have been used as a pendant rather than an axe (Boughton 2015: Nos 1388–1392). Axes of similar size and with their loops on their faces were interpreted as pendants elsewhere, for example in the hoard from Ouessant (Finistère) which included three gouges and possibly five socketed axe pendants (Milcent 2012: 148, Pl.47).

The five multi-period or mixed hoards from Wessex are concentrated in a fairly small geographical area to the west of Netherhampton in Wiltshire, even though there is one outlier: the small hoard from Danebury in Hampshire (Figure 3.10; Boughton 2015: 254–255, Nos 686–689). Nearly all of these mixed hoards are connected and interrelated through certain artefact types, especially Blandford- and Portland-type socketed axes (Figure 3.5), socketed sickle fragments (present in the hoards from Wardour, Netherhampton, Hindon and the small new assemblage, also from Hindon (Roberts 2011)), winged chapes (Wardour and Netherhampton) and annular razors (Salisbury and Danebury) (compare Figures 3.6, 3.10 and 3.11).

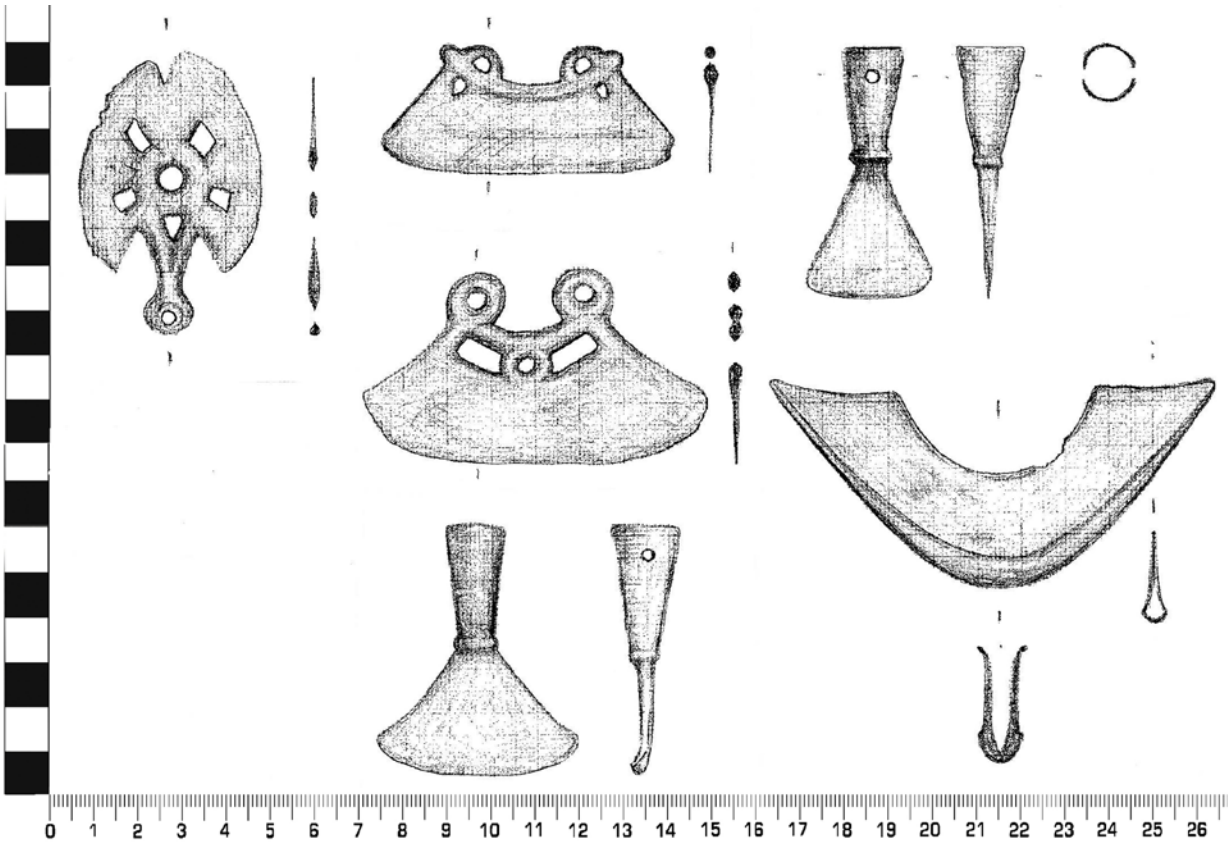

Figure 3.11: Razors, socketed leather-working knives and chape from Salisbury Hoard. Illustration: D. Boughton.

Both the place of deposition and the hoard composition are important factors when it comes to discussing the similarities and differences between the Salisbury hoard and other multi-period hoards in Wessex. For example, whilst communities in Dorset deposited Portland-type axes in axe hoards solely composed of socketed axes (Figures 3.4 and 3.12), the Portland-type axes found at Salisbury were not only deposited with items of other types of contemporary metalwork, but also items of other types of metalwork predating the group of Portland-type axes (Boughton 2015: 355–356). This is not unusual for Early Iron Age Wiltshire and a small part of Hampshire: communities here had adopted the practice of depositing collections of prehistoric and contemporary metalwork together. These two very different treatments of Portland-type axes suggest that the communities—one in Wiltshire and one in Dorset—had two very different ideas of how these axes were to be treated and deposited. Even though both communities shared the consecration of metalwork in the ground, the two contexts were very unique: while one type of deposition was solely focused on Portland-type axes, the other celebrated the differences of metalwork (spanning space and time), with Portland-type axes seemingly just 'another addition' to this multi-type group of artefacts. Although for our modern eyes the overriding factor in this scenario may be that the axes were the same, to the Earliest Iron Age communities of Wiltshire and Dorset, it was the difference in deposition that overrode the fact that the axes were same. Fontijn argued similarly for the treatment of Late Bronze Age axes in the Netherlands (2002: 187).

Bradley suggested that axes could have possessed a dual role in terms of use, serving both as everyday tools and as standard units of metal (1990: 119). However, in the case of Portland, Armorican and Sompting type, Figheldean Down-variant axes this seems unlikely. Even though they were cast in the shape of an everyday tool for woodwork or, possibly, warfare, the lack of wear suggests that they were not used for chopping or trimming. Whilst Armorican and Figheldean Down-variant axes are normally heavy, sparsely decorated or uniformly plain, they differ greatly from other axe types which have been identified as axe-shaped ingots in the past, such as those of Blandford and Portland types (Figures 3.4 and 3.12; Pearce 1983: 120–121, 253). It has been suggested that the mass production of morphologically-similar, functionally-useless socketed axes of Portland type—as opposed to the useful tools for everyday manual tasks—led to suggestions regarding their role in trade or even as a proto-currency, similar to that of Armorican axes (Briard 1987; Pearce 1983: 120–121; Roberts *et al.* 2015: 14–15). There is no doubt that bronze objects were also widely-tradable ingots that were melted down to form locally desirable forms and that this process is crucial to understanding cross-channel relations during the later Bronze and Early Iron Ages (Needham *et al.* 2013; O'Connor 1980). However, Roberts *et al.* (2015: 14-15) argue that the socketed axes of Portland-type found at Langton Matravers (Dorset) do not seem to be obvious candidates for trade or currency (Figure 3.12; Boughton 2015: Nos 226–598; Roberts *et al.* 2015: 14–15). They were discovered in a very small, well-defined 30m area and still retained their clay cores. Their very high lead and tin content would have lowered the temperature of their melting point to the extent that pure copper would have been needed to produce a more usable alloy (Roberts *et al.* 2015: 15). Existing theories suggest that the dramatic reduction in the quantity of bronze being recovered from the peak during the Ewart Park metalwork phase (*c.* 1000–800 BC) through to the Llyn Fawr metalwork phase (*c.* 800–600 BC) and then the Early Iron Age (*c.* 600–400 BC) should be interpreted in terms of a collapse in value of bronze (Roberts *et al.* 2015). This perspective has traditionally been based around the adoption of iron and the subsequent economic dumping of bronze as a collapsed commodity (e.g. Burgess 1979) but has recently been revised with the proposal that bronze lost its social or ritual value, with the consequence that far fewer bronze objects were subject to votive deposition after 800 BC (Needham 2007a).

Hoarding the past with the present for the future?

Amongst the corpus of 56 British Earliest Iron Age hoards there are only five multi-period hoards: the hoards from Danebury (Hampshire; Figure 3.10), Melksham, Salisbury, Vale of Wardour (Wiltshire; Figures 3.1, 3.5 and 3.6) and Poolewe (Ross and Cromarty) (Boughton 2015: figs 6.25–6.29, Nos 686–

Figure 3.12: One of over five hundred socketed axehead of Portland type from Langton Matravers Hoard (Dorset). Image used with kind permission of Dorset County Museum, Dorchester.

689, 1061–1202, 1275–1279, 1388–1392). It is important to recognise that there is no artefactual overlap between multi-period hoards and axe hoards, even though the Salisbury hoard comes close to representing both because it incorporates both a large number of socketed axes and artefacts dating from the Early, Middle and Late Bronze Age as well as the Early and Middle Iron Age. Nevertheless, the composition of the hoard strongly suggests that as with some of the mixed hoards, the multi-period aspect of Salisbury overrides the fact that the majority of Early Iron Age artefacts in the hoard are socketed axes. The final deposition date of the Salisbury hoard must lie somewhere in the 2nd century BC and not in the 8th or 7th century, like that of the other multi-period hoards in the region. This later date of deposition places it within a later tradition of Iron Age hoarding which Gosden and Garrow suggested commenced in *c.* 400 BC (2012: 132–133). However, its multi-period composition strongly

suggests that the Salisbury hoard was deposited with the earlier hoards known or still very much in the mind of the local communities. Stead and Hingley both argue that the composition of artefacts in the Salisbury hoard suggests that the older artefacts had been found (possibly during farming or land clearance) and curated by local people before their final deposition in the later Iron Age (Hingley 2009: 146; Stead 1998: 123). With the hoards from Wardour and Danebury found in the same region, we can take Stead's and Hingley's ideas further and argue that a hoard similar to Wardour and Danebury was discovered by people of the late 3rd or early 2nd century and seemingly understood as a collection of curated artefacts spanning a certain length of time. Contemporary artefacts like the miniature shields and cauldrons, were added to the contents of the hoard before re-deposition in the 2nd century BC (Stead 1998: 110). The subsequent excavation of the findspot near Salisbury strongly suggests that the hoard was deposited in a pit which was cut into an existing pit that had been of a local set dating from around 700–100BC. Stead argued that the original pit had been used as granary store (Stead 1998: 111). Another, much smaller yet contemporary later Iron Age hoard, Netherhampton B, was found nearby, in a similar pit suggesting that the hoarding of bronze metalwork was still practiced in this settlement in the later Iron Age (Stead 1998: 110–111). Re-deposition in pits previously used as granaries is a feature that the two assemblages from Salisbury share with the group of hoards from Langton Matravers which were also discovered in pits formerly used for grain-storage (Boughton 2015: Nos 226–598; Roberts *et al.* 2015).

Hingley (2009: 144) argues that multi-period hoards like the assemblage from Salisbury strongly suggest that Iron Age people must have felt enabled to define some artefacts as 'old' or 'ancient' and that these alien and ancient artefacts must have had some agency because they influenced the actions and reactions of people who (re-)deposited them after discovery. This in turn suggests that even though Bronze Age and earlier Iron Age artefacts may have appeared strange to Middle Iron Age people, these bronze objects were still recognisable to them in terms of their contemporary culture: they were made from a metal which was still in use and the general shape of axes—even though socketed axes went out of fashion after the Early Iron Age—had not changed much (Davies 2018: 321–327; Hingley 2009: 145). The idea of earlier prehistoric artefacts reused in a later prehistoric context raises a number of interesting questions: what did prehistoric people make of their history and prehistory? How did they understand artefacts that were left behind by earlier prehistoric people?

The life of an object in several acts

Without any written accounts from Iron Age Britain, the surviving material culture is one important aspect we can look at in search for answers. The fact that we find multi-period hoards such as the hoards from Danebury, Tisbury, Wardour and Salisbury strongly suggests that the meaning of the earlier prehistoric artefacts outweighed their value in scrap metal; the Iron Age people who consigned the Salisbury bronzes to the ground had obviously not reused the Portland axes or the Figheldean Down axe—or any of the even older Early and Middle Bronze Age metalwork—for the casting of their own metalwork. They did not see the artefacts as a source of recyclable material to be used for the casting of their own bronzes, but as artefacts that needed to be either curated or reburied or both.

It has been suggested that objects can be used for various tasks throughout their lives—and there is no reason why artefacts that were deposited by one person and dug up again by another, could not be resurrected to be used for or turned into something completely different (Joy 2009: 543). After all, that is what happens with most excavated assemblages today, be it hoards, graves or settlements. Originally, they were intended for a certain use or to perform a certain function, but today they have another use that the original maker possibly never thought of (or, possibly, controversially, hoped for?): for museum displays, antique collections, and research. There is no reason why, in fact, an object could not live through two or more processes of use, storage, transport, maintenance and discard if it was

rediscovered after initial deposition (Joy 2009: 542; Schiffer 1972: 157–160). If we take into account the act of recycling—which did not happen in the case of the Earliest Iron Age bronzes from Wardour, Danebury and Salisbury because they were found as deposited—objects could even live through procurement and manufacture more than once.

That objects (very much like people) have biographies and that they rest at the heart of their own life-stories are not new ideas, but they have never been applied to Earliest Iron Age metalwork hoards (Fontijn 2002; Gosden and Marshall 1999; Joy 2009; Kopytoff 1986). These object biographies as suggested originally by Kopytoff and more recently by Gosden and Marshall are very relevant to Earliest Iron Age metalwork, especially metalwork found in multi-period hoards. Both Bradley and Joy suggested that even though a use-wear analysis is important to determine the duration, type and intensity of usage as well as the object's initial function, objects cannot and must not be reduced to this single aspect of their lives (Bradley 1998: xxx; Joy 2009: 541–543). In addition to their use-life, there would have also been a cultural and social significance that must not be separated from the object's technological and functional properties (Fontijn 2002: 3–5).

Very few Earliest Iron Age socketed axeheads in the multi-period hoards demonstrate signs of use of resharpening (Boughton 2015: Nos 686–687, 1390). Likewise, the majority of Portland and Blandford axes from both the Salisbury and Wardour hoards were left in their initial as-cast condition even though they may have already been deposited and rediscovered at least once before their secondary—or intended final—deposition. However, use-wear analyses can rarely tell us how else artefacts could have changed in their function. It has been suggested that objects can also change through performance and social interactions which they play a part in and although we do not know what the initial or secondary deposition of the socketed axes in our multi-period hoards looked like, contemporary or—in case of the Salisbury hoard—preceding cases of hoard deposition with similar artefacts may help us see a glimpse of what their initial deposition looked like (Gosden and Marshall 1999: 169–170; Joy 2009: 541). Hodder and Hutson (2003: 5) argued that identical objects can have different meanings if discovered in different contexts which can be translated to socketed axes of the same type found in very different hoards, especially if the hoards were also found in two very different geographical locations. For example, a socketed axe of Portland-type that was deposited in an axe hoard on the Isle of Purbeck requires a different contextual interpretation from an identical socketed axe of Portland-type that was found in a mixed multi-period assemblage on Salisbury Plain. If, for the Portland-type axes and the single Figheldean Down-type axe, their deposition at Salisbury was their secondary deposition, as suggested above, it is likely that their primary deposition looked like that of other Portland and Figheldean Down axes, that is deposition in hoards accompanied by nothing but other Portland or Figheldean Down axes. This would have been very different from their deposition in a multi-period hoard and having been deposited by different people at a different (or, in this case, probably at the same) time, it is more than likely that different motives may have been behind the two individual depositions. Gosden and Garrow (2012: 127–128) suggested that a single axe (or any other object for that matter) was able to represent the condensation of relations of people and practices that had ever connected with this axe. This means that within itself the axe could hold everything that contributed to its final deposition, including the mining, smelting and casting of the axe, the polishing and finish, use, possible exchange, loss and rediscovery.

Bradley suggested that because material culture is used expressively, it must have been made by someone mindful of what already exists or existed in the recent past (2002: 12). Initially, an object—for example an axe—may have been made to perform a certain function and once it has fulfilled this function it is disposed of, but instead of deposition it could have also been used in a different context performing a different function, thus gaining a 'new life after death' (Joy 2009: 545; Marshall 2008: 63–65). It is notable though that the final deposition (or their *final role*) was mostly with others of their own kind. The final deposition of socketed axes was not a solitary affair: 80% of Early Iron Age socketed axes

were found in hoards which, for all intents and purposes, *was* their final (prehistoric) deposition. This addition of 'prehistoric' is a significant one: we do not know how many times hoards were deposited and excavated, but since we found the hoards in their specific resting places it can be assumed that these resting places are where the final prehistoric deposition happened over 2000 years ago. Now that they have been excavated and are kept in a museum collection, their 'life' effectively carries on. We cannot know if their findspot was meant to be their final resting place in the past: for all we know today, people could have revisited places of deposition each year or each season, dug up the socketed axes from the year before, used them again in the same or a different context as the year before, and then reburied them again only to revisit the same findspot again in the next year (cf. Hansen 2016: 212–215; Mörtz 2016: 124–125; Needham 2007b: 178–180).

Conclusion

There is little evidence to support that the transition from the Late Bronze Age to the Early Iron Age had been an era of aggression, uncertainty, tension and the deposition of large hoards of metalwork for 'safe-keeping' is therefore highly unlikely. On the contrary, the composition and deposition of multi-period assemblages in the region around Salisbury strongly suggests that people in that particular area were aware of their communities' past through earlier artefact assemblages. However, rather than recycle the older artefacts and turn them into usable new tools, weapons or ornaments, they decided that their function (as depositary) and resting place should not be changed. They may have been curated over- or underground or not curated at all prior to re-deposition, but it is indisputable that the artefacts had, at some point come from the ground and that was where they were meant to stay and needed to be returned to, possibly accompanied by communal gatherings, festivities and rituals. Communities and their settlements were growing and becoming more diverse and they were occupied more intensively and for longer periods. The building types within the settlements seemed to be more diverse and built for specific, possibly communal purposes, for example granaries or storage pits. The individual communities of the Wessex chalk uplands seem to have directed their efforts towards land clearance and division, food storage and possibly work specialisation. Contemporary or slightly earlier linear earthworks in the area may have defined smaller and larger territories, each of which would have contained a variety of different resources, such as grazing land, arable land, access to fresh water and summer pasture. Even though these boundaries are usually assigned to the Iron Age, radiocarbon dates suggest that some of their development was already started in the Late Bronze Age, meaning that by the Early Iron Age they were established and needed to be curated and reinforced, probably literally as well as spiritually—possibly through the medium of multi-period hoards reinforcing the longevity and endurance of the local communities.

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Chapter 4

The Devil or the Divine? Supernatural objects and multi-period hoards in later prehistory

Alex Davies

This article compares later Bronze Age hoards that contain objects from multiple periods with those from the Iron Age. It is demonstrated that the practice of actively collecting ancient objects is specifically Iron Age, and not shown clearly by the later Bronze Age hoard evidence. This pattern is then linked to the ethnographic record, where ancient objects are commonly thought to be closely associated with powerful supernatural human-like beings that are either feared or venerated. Foreign exotica and objects displaying intricate craftsmanship are often considered in a similar manner as ancient objects are they are also only producible outside of the current cultural context. These types of exotic objects are also attested more in the Iron Age compared to the later Bronze Age. This suggests that supernatural objects were socially employed in a different way during the Iron Age compared to the later Bronze Age.

Keywords: *Bronze Age, hoards, Iron Age, past in the past, supernatural*

Introduction

The contents of this volume demonstrate that the presence of 'out-of-time' objects—things that should date to a quite different period to that which they are found—is a recurring, if somewhat erratic, feature of the archaeological record. The discovery of ancient objects must have always taken place, and it has been accepted for some time that in the Anglo-Saxon period these were kept, redeposited and perhaps valued (e.g. Eckardt and Williams 2003; White 1988). However, it has taken longer for Bronze Age and Iron Age hoards containing 'out-of-time' objects of very different dates to be believed as true associations. Only with the discovery of the Vale of Wardour hoard in 2011, excavated under archaeological conditions, has the existence of mixed-periods hoards been undeniable (Hinds 2011).

A difficulty with recognising apparently similar practices in very different social contexts is the pitfall of trying to use explanations and interpretations that might be suitable for one period in quite different situations. The specific context of a practice, considering how wider aspects of the archaeological record can provide further insights, needs to be carefully considered before interpretation should proceed (e.g. Brittain and Harris 2010).

This paper seeks to compare and contrast later Bronze Age (*c.* 1550–800 BC) hoards containing objects from multiple periods with those dating to the Iron Age (*c.* 800 BC–AD 50). By analysing the composition of the hoards themselves and placing them within their wider archaeological context, it will be demonstrated that although the inclusion of much earlier objects in hoards from both broad periods appears to be a comparable practice, this should in fact be interpreted quite differently.

The dataset

Bronze Age metalwork can be divided into a series of stages, each defined by a set of objects that can be found together and are contemporary (Table 4.1; Needham *et al.* 1997; O'Connor 2007; Roberts *et al.* 2013: 22–25). Iron Age metalwork is more difficult to group in this way, partly due to a relative lack

Table 4.1: Metalworking chronology (After Needham *et al.* 1997; Garrow *et al.* 2009: 81–94; O'Connor 2007; Roberts *et al.* 2013: 22–25; Stead 2006)

Period	Absolute date (approx.)	Metalworking stage(s)
Early Bronze Age	2150–1550 BC	Migdale → Aylesford → Willerby → Arreton
Middle Bronze Age	1550–1150 BC	Acton Park/Acton 2 → Taunton → Penard
Late Bronze Age	1150–800 BC	Wilburton → Ewart Park
Earliest Iron Age	800–620 BC	Llyn Fawr
Early Iron Age	620–350 BC	Hallstatt D → La Tène A
Middle Iron Age	350–150 BC	La Tène B → La Tène C
Late Iron Age	150 BC–AD 50	La Tène D

of metalwork deposition and hoarding in the earlier part of the period, although metalwork stages following continental models can still be defined. These start with Hallstatt D, followed by La Tène A–D (e.g. Garrow *et al.* 2009: 81–94; Stead 2006). Although each period lasts a different length of time, they usually have a currency of *c.* 100–200 years (Needham *et al.* 1997; Stead 2006: 3).

Mixed-period hoards are defined as assemblages that contain objects belonging to two or more metalwork phases that are not sequential. This follows the definition of Knight (forthcoming; this volume). If hoards contain objects from two sequential phases, it is likely that the assemblage is transitionary and does not need to represent objects that are significantly older than the latest items and the date of its deposition. An example of this would be the Poolewe, Highlands, hoard as it contains a single cup-ended ornament usually assigned to the Ewart Park stage with a series of Llyn Fawr axeheads (Knight 2019; Schmidt and Burgess 1981: Pl. 152c). Such hoards with two sequential periods are not classed as mixed-period and are not considered in this study. However, a hoard containing a palstave belonging to the Taunton assemblage with a group of Ewart Park axeheads would be classed as mixed-period.

Matthew Knight (forthcoming; this volume) has recently compiled corpora of mixed-period hoards with the latest object belonging to the Bronze Age. The present paper will use these lists as the basis of the Bronze Age dataset. However, some caution must be given regarding the examples of unidentified or Late palstaves associated with Ewart Park metalwork as these may date to the preceding Wilburton stage and therefore not be true mixed-period hoards (Schmidt and Burgess 1981: 162–163; e.g. Boughton Malherbe; Hoaden II; Dartford; Leigh II; Sturry; possibly Carleton Road).

Table 4.2 lists the known British Iron Age mixed-period hoards (see Appendix). Those with the latest object belonging to the Llyn Fawr or Earliest Iron Age have been included in this group. The table should not be considered as a definitive list as a full study of these often-large assemblages needs to be undertaken. In particular, the number of periods represented, and the date of the latest object is only approximate on the lesser-studied examples and is subject to revision following more in-depth work.

The Bronze Age and Iron Age compared

There is a very clear pattern when mixed-period hoards with the latest object dating to the later Bronze Age are compared with those whose latest objects date to the Iron Age. None of the more certain Bronze Age mixed-period hoards include objects from more than two periods, with usually only a single 'out-of-time' object present. However, all but one of the Iron Age mixed-period hoards have objects from more than two periods, with many metalworking stages usually represented. Indeed, most of the Iron Age mixed-period hoards contain objects from five or more distinct periods.

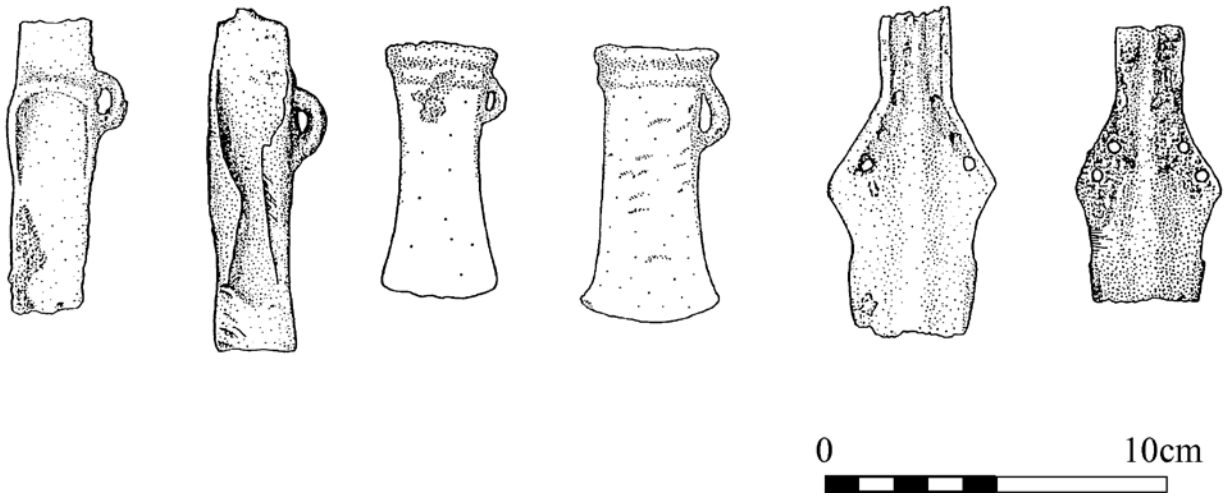

Figure 4.1: Part of the Minster hoard, showing a palstave belonging to the Penard stage, and other later objects of the Ewart Park stage (adapted from Turner 2010: Illustrations 108, 113 and 115). Reproduced with kind permission of BAR Publishing www.barpublishing.com.

Only one of the Bronze Age hoards listed by Knight (forthcoming; this volume) of Certain and Probable association contains objects from more than two phases. This is the Duddingston Loch assemblage, where a Middle Bronze Age rapier fragment was found with Late Bronze Age Wilburton and Ewart Park objects. However, uncertainty surrounds the association between the objects as they were discovered by dredging and need not all have been deposited together, and the assemblage falls into Knight's (this volume) 'Probable' category. The Bronze Age examples can be therefore almost all be classed as *double*-period hoards, whereas the Iron Age examples can be distinguished as true *multi*-period hoards.

Most of the Bronze Age mixed-period examples are hoards of fairly normal composition with the addition of a single earlier object. For example, although large, the Minster, Kent, hoard contains the expected range of material in the varied state of fragmentation that is normal within the carp's tongue/Boughton-Vénat group of the Ewart Park stage (Figure 4.1; Brandherm and Moskal-del Hoyo 2014; Burgess 1968: 17, 38–39; Turner 2010: 170–199). However, there is the addition of a single palstave dating some *c.* 400 years earlier.

Whilst there is much regional diversity, later Bronze Age hoards are prolific and comprise a large proportion of the archaeological evidence relating to the period (Taylor 1993). However, Early and Middle Iron Age hoards are in general much rarer than later Bronze Age hoards, and the practice of hoarding almost entirely ceases in the earlier part of the Iron Age, with a few regional and object-specific exceptions (Allen 1968; Hingley 1990; Joy 2014; O'Connor 2007).

The Iron Age mixed-period hoards look quite different to the Bronze Age examples, and include objects from a wide variety of periods with no single period usually particularly represented above the rest. An example is that from Crooksbury Hill, Surrey. Sadly, little is known about this hoard. Five axes were illustrated in an account written 'a short time since' the discovery (Figure 4.2) (Anon. 1857), and a further palstave is the only known surviving object (Needham 1980: fig. 5.4). The original account is tantalising, and suggests that the original find was much larger, and may represent more than the four or five periods that are illustrated:

> 'a variety [of objects] in bronze [were discovered]... from the rudest form down to the most elaborately finished weapon... [including] a considerable number of celts'
>
> Anon. 1857

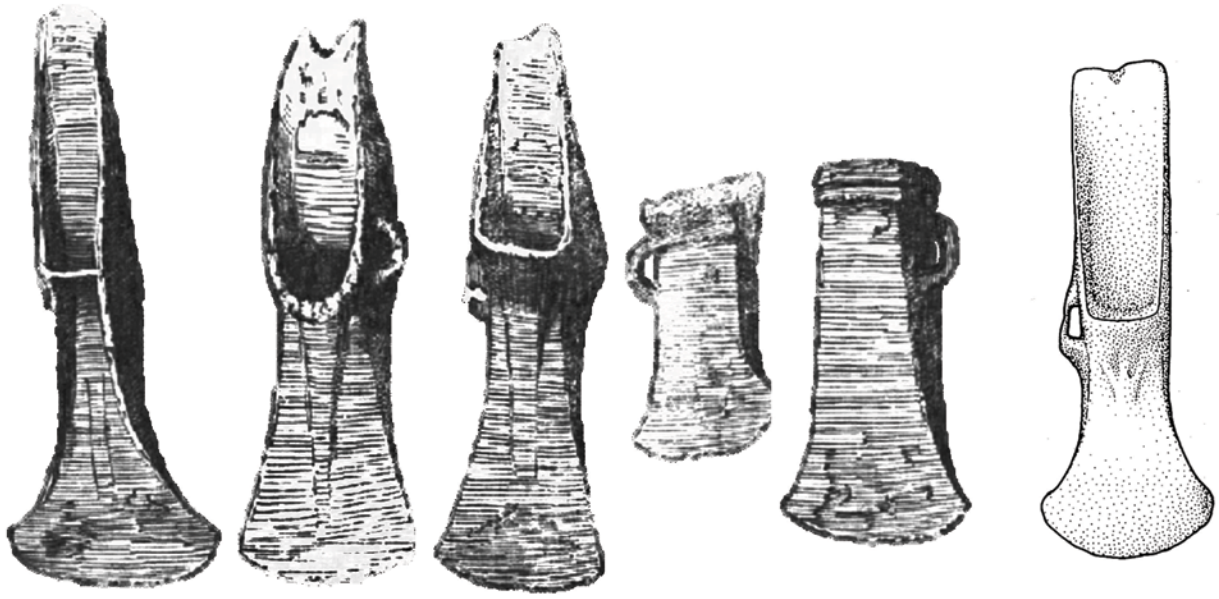

Figure 4.2: Six axes from the Crooksbury Hill hoard (Anon 1854, except palstave on right is from Needham 1980: fig. 5.4). Courtesy of Surrey Archaeological Society

Identification of these objects can only be tentative due to the existence of just a single drawing, but the flanged axe can probably be identified as a bar-stop/stopridge type. One of the palstaves is of midribbed Transitional type, the other might be a variant of this type, or might be a Late palstave. The midrib suggests this is of a type more common in northern Britain (Brendan O'Connor personal communication 2016).[1] A further Transitional palstave from the hoard has been published elsewhere (Needham 1980: fig. 5.4). The socketed axes appear to be South Eastern and Sompting types. The hoard therefore has at least one object each from the Acton Park, Penard, Ewart Park, Llyn Fawr and possibly Wilburton periods; perhaps more were originally present. This was found 'fifty yards' from the small unexcavated Soldiers Ring hillfort. The earliest date of the deposition of the hoard is shown by the probable Llyn Fawr Sompting axe, dating to the Earliest Iron Age.

Dot Boughton (this volume) discusses the 'Salisbury'/Netherhampton, Vale of Wardour and Danebury hoards. In summary, 'Salisbury'/Netherhampton hoard comprises over 500 objects from perhaps eight separate periods and includes a series of miniature Iron Age cauldrons and shields (see Table 4.2 in Appendix). About 2200 years separates the earliest and latest objects, and virtually every metalworking period between these is represented. A Middle Iron Age radiocarbon date was obtained from a bone from a pit into which the feature containing the hoard was cut (400–350 cal BC at 51% confidence, or 300–210 cal BC at 45% confidence; OxA-17511; Garrow *et al.* 2009: Table 2). A date towards the end of this range accords with the expected date based on typology of the latest objects and provides an approximate date of the deposition of the hoard, or the final addition to a hoard that was visited multiple periods of time.

Characteristics of Iron Age mixed-period hoards

Of the 11 confident Iron Age mixed-period hoards identified in this paper, nine were found on or very close to the chalk downlands of central southern Britain. The exceptions are Hounslow in Greater London, and Paston in Norfolk. These 11 include hoards with the latest objects dating to the Earliest, Early, Middle and Late Iron Age.

[1] Thanks to Brendan O'Connor and Dot Boughton for providing a second opinion on the typology of these pieces.

It is very difficult to be certain of the actual date of the deposition of each hoard given the mixed nature of the assemblages, and there is no certainty that the latest object was even nearly contemporary with the date of deposition. The latest object can only provide a *terminus post quem* for deposition. The gathering together of vastly diverse collections of earlier metalwork was a practice that continued into the Roman period, seen most spectacularly at the temple site at Ashwell, Hertfordshire, where numerous deposits of Bronze Age metalwork representing multiple discoveries of earlier material were made throughout the Roman period (Burleigh 2018: 159–162; Wilkin 2018; also Hingley 2009; King and Soffe 1998: 41; O'Connell and Bird 1994). This leads to the possibility that some, if not all, of the multi-period hoards were in fact Roman depositions (Hingley 2009: 149; Wilkin 2018: 312–313). The radiocarbon date from the 'Salisbury'/Netherhampton hoard goes far in demonstrating that this at least was deposited in the Middle Iron Age, and the appearance of multiple rare Iron Age objects that would have been unlikely discoveries in the Roman period also suggests that multi-period hoards were indeed deposited in the Iron Age. The common presence of otherwise rare trapezoidal razors and nail-headed pins in multi-period hoards are discussed below, and the 'Salisbury'/Netherhampton, 'Batheaston'/Wylye and Hounslow hoards contain rare Iron Age miniature objects that are unlikely to have been discovered and redeposited in the Roman period (Stead 1998: 114–122).

In the examples without independent dating evidence or where composition does not provide strong evidence for the date of deposition, we can only assume that the latest object in the hoard is approximately contemporary with when it was deposited. Although it cannot be demonstrated, one suspects that the deposition of the Danebury hoard, with its latest object dating to the Earliest Iron Age, occurred sometime later, during the main occupation of the hillfort in the Early or Middle Iron Age (Cunliffe and Poole 1991). The discovery of the Crooksbury Hill hoard also immediately outside of an (unexcavated) hillfort similarly might suggest that its deposition was in some way related to the occupation of the hillfort. Despite problems in dating the deposition of multi-period hoards, it appears that interest in collecting together extremely varied assemblages of earlier metalwork was a practice that took place throughout the Iron Age in central southern Britain.

Brief analysis of the composition of the Iron Age mixed-period reveals something of the processes surrounding the accumulation of the astonishing collections. There are three ways in which earlier objects might be present in much later periods of time. Either items were discovered (following deposition not long after their manufacture), or they were passed down for considerable periods of time, or copies of earlier objects were produced. It appears that all three of these were taking place to some extent, although it is likely that the vast majority of the objects were rediscovered in the Iron Age.

The vast lengths of time separating the date of manufacture of the earliest and latest objects in all of the confident Iron Age mixed-period hoards must argue against objects being retained and passed through generations as a major mechanism for the accumulation of these assemblages. The time periods between the oldest and youngest objects are huge—in all cases at least 800 years and often over 2000 years. However, it appears that one type of object present in multiple Iron Age mixed-period hoards—trapezoidal razors—was passed down over significant periods of time.

Trapezoidal and related razors are quite rare finds in Britain, with less than 20 known (Jockenhövel 1980: 173–193; O'Connor 2007: 77). These date to the Earliest Iron Age, or Llyn Fawr metalworking stage. Despite their rarity, three were found in the 'Salisbury'/Netherhampton hoard, and one each in the Danebury and Vale of Wardour hoards. Another very worn example was found associated with Middle Iron Age pottery and a dog burial in a pit at the back of a roundhouse at Slade Farm, Oxfordshire (Ellis *et al.* 2000: 224), and another was found in a Late Iron Age pit at Cadbury Castle (O'Connor 1994; 2000: 179). Approximately a third of all of these objects were therefore discovered in contexts that were centuries later than their accepted period of manufacture. These were clearly not commonly deposited in the

Earliest Iron Age, and it is unlikely that this many could have been discovered later in the Iron Age. Instead, it appears probable that these objects were kept and passed down as heirlooms for considerable periods of time.

One object type that is usually dated to the Bronze Age may have also been manufactured in the Iron Age. British nail-headed pins are generally dated to the Late Bronze Age, with Wilburton and Ewart Park associations, but are also occasionally known in the Earliest Iron Age (Coombs 1991: 135; Davies 2012: 30–34; O'Connor 1980: 200). They are not particularly common, and are only very rarely found in hoards in southern Britain, instead usually discovered in small numbers on settlements (Davies 2012: 30–34; e.g. Duncan 2009: 53, fig. 4.13). They are occasionally present in hoards in northern Britain (e.g. Britton and Longworth 1968; Daniels 2003; n.d.). However, at least seven nail-headed pins were found in the 'Salisbury'/Netherhampton hoard. One was present in each of the Vale of Wardour and Hagbourne Hill hoards, and around 50 were in the 'Batheaston'/Wylye hoard. The number of nail-headed pins from Iron Age mixed-period hoards in fact outnumbers those not in Iron Age hoards from all of southern Britain (Davies 2012: Appendix 2.3). Again, given their rarity and that they were not placed in hoards in the Late Bronze Age, it is very unlikely that these would have been discovered in any number in the Iron Age. It also seems unlikely that so many were passed down as heirlooms. Instead, this may be evidence of the Iron Age manufacture of an object type that is usually ascribed to the Bronze Age. This may have been copying an heirloom or discovered object, and may or may not have been specifically created for a social context associated with their unusual deposition. It is also possible that nail-headed pins were manufactured throughout the Iron Age, but, like many other types of metalwork that must have been in existence during this time, these may have eluded archaeologists due to the lack of a sustained depositional practice during much of the Iron Age in many areas of Britain (e.g. Davies 2018: 133–136, 224).

Nevertheless, despite the arguments that trapezoidal and related razors were passed down for considerable periods of time, and that nail-headed pins were manufactured in the Iron Age, the vast majority of the Bronze Age objects in Iron Age mixed-period hoards must have been discovered as hoards or single finds originally deposited in the Bronze Age.

For these wildly-varied accumulations to exist in the Iron Age, there must have been a concerted effort shared by a considerable number of people to collect together these ancient and unusual objects. An interest in and attraction to ancient objects would have to have been widely agreed. It is salient that in at least four of the Iron Age mixed-period hoards, there is evidence for the exchange of Bronze Age objects, probably taking place in the Iron Age. One of the Crooksbury Hill Transitional palstaves appears to be of a type more common in northern Britain (Brendan O'Connor personal communication 2016). Upwards of 141 Earliest Iron Age axes of Portland type were found in the 'Salisbury'/Netherhampton hoard that are very rare outside of Dorset (Boughton this volume). The Hounslow hoard contains a probable Dowris axe from Ireland that is very rare in the Thames Valley (Davies 2018: 65), and the Vale of Wardour hoard produced a swans-necked sunflower-headed pin. Only a few of these objects are known outside of Scotland and Ireland (Davies 2012: 39–40). In these four cases, it is probable that the non-local objects were discovered in the Iron Age in the areas where these are most commonly found in recent times, and were exchanged to form the varied collections of objects the define Iron Age mixed-period hoards. Full analysis of these hoards might bring to light further examples of exchange in the Iron Age.

When comparing the composition of later Bronze Age mixed-period hoards against those deposited in the Iron Age, the key difference is that later Bronze Age double-period hoards only need one moment of discovery, and no concerted effort to collect the objects together, or a wider cultural agreement that these unusual objects were important. The older objects within later Bronze Age hoards are almost incidental. Although still of interest, their presence is quite different to the earlier objects comprising Iron Age mixed-period hoards. The significance of the handful of examples of later Bronze Age hoards

that contain earlier objects is diminished by the huge number of hoards belonging to this period overall. However, in the Iron Age there is a distinct difference in how ancient objects were treated, with the practice of these being collected and clearly valued particularly Iron Age. There is evidence for ancient objects being discovered and valued in other, non-hoard contexts in the Iron Age (e.g. Bradley 2002: 54; Davies 2018: 136–141; Hey *et al.* 2011: 285–286; Hingley 2009), and these instances need to be the subject of another study.

Interpreting mixed-period hoards

A relevant common ethnographic observation is that ancient objects and monuments are frequently believed to have been left by supernatural beings, often from a time, 'age', context or dimension of the world that is quite separate to the present human society. For example, the Jivero of north-west Amazonia believe that archaeological remains belong to hostile alien spirits and should be feared, and they do not consider that ancient material culture has any relationship with present society (Taylor 2007: 149).

Many prehistoric monuments were ascribed to fearsome liminal supernatural creatures in the late Anglo-Saxon and medieval period, with these beliefs remaining in names today. There are numerous features named after Woden or his alter ego Grim, for example Wansdyke, Grim's Ditch, and Grimes Graves. Dragons and Giants have associations with earthworks, ruins, and even the discovery of ancient hoards (Semple 2013: 168–180). These archaeological features were part of a context that was alien from the Christian world of the medieval period, and were therefore deemed dangerous and should be feared. The association between prehistoric monuments with malevolent supernatural beings persists up to the present in some areas of Europe, with ancient earthworks and standing stones still places to be avoided (Dowd 2018: 454–457; Whitley 2002: 123). Until quite recently, discovered stone arrowheads and other pieces of worked flint were in some areas of Britain and Ireland thought to have been made by malicious 'elves' or 'fairies' and could cause disease, although could also protect against further attacks and heal (Black 1893: 462–468; Dowd 2018; Hall 2005).

Ancient objects and monuments are, in these cases, recognised as being made by human-like beings, but not humans themselves. This might be because they are outside of the cultural repertoire and perhaps technical ability of those finding them, and assigning these objects and monuments to actual ancestors of comparable constitution as living humans may not be appropriate. As they could not have been made by the present culture, they could not have been made by humans at all.

Things with supernatural potency can be seen either with fear and something that should be left alone, or positively, with powers that can be harnessed. For example, the Luwu of Sulawesi believe that ancient artefacts, including discovered sherds of pottery and iron tools, are infused with a supernatural energy that can be channelled by the possessor (Errington 1983: 229–230; Helms 1993: 158, 176). These objects are thought to have belonged to 'ancestors', with this force deriving from their predecessors, and the most highly-prized ancient objects were ascribed to specific supernatural cultural founders (Errington 1983: 229–230; Helms 1993: 158, 176). A Ming-period urn belonging to the Kodi of Sumba, Indonesia, was produced in south China centuries earlier and contains sacred healing water and ancient coins (Hoskins 1993: 125–135). It is thought to have been made at the beginning of time and descended directly from the heavens. Custodianship of the vessel affords the possessing family ritual authority over other lineages, and it is believed that the urn moves of its own accord to the ancestral house of the favoured dynasty (Hoskins 1993: 125–135).

While some ancient monuments were to be feared in the later Anglo-Saxon period, others were harnessed by emerging royals and kings to try and demonstrate the legitimacy of these new positions and powers

(Semple 2013: 193–223). These lineages were also claiming genealogical descent from supernatural gods (Thornton 1999). This shift from ancient monuments belonging to powerful beings that were disconnected with society, to later using this power by incorporating supernatural associations into living genealogies is also attested in medieval Ireland (Whitley 2002: 132). The seemingly contradictory relationship between ancient objects and places ascribed to the usually malicious *sí* ('fairies') in post-medieval Ireland also demonstrates a perceived power vested in things from outside of the current cultural repertoire. Ancient monuments, often early medieval ring-forts, were closely associated with the *sí* and were not to be entered or tampered with for fear of disastrous repercussions (Dowd 2018: 454–457). Disease and death could be caused by the *sí* when they fired prehistoric lithics at their victims; however, the same objects were collected, kept and used to heal the sick and protect against further attacks from the supernatural world (Dowd 2018).

Another ethnographic observation is relevant to the interpretation of Bronze Age and Iron Age mixed-period hoards. As well as ancient objects and landscape features often being associated with human-like supernatural beings, similar otherworldly associations are commonly made between exotic foreign objects and objects of particularly fine craftsmanship, especially those exhibiting complex decorative patterns (Gell 1992; 1998: 68–71; Helms 1988; 1993). In common with ancient objects, foreign exotica and those of very skilled manufacture are outside of the cultural capacity of actors, and are therefore often also ascribed to the supernatural or divine.

It is of note that one of the few Late Bronze Age hoards to contain an ancient object is also one of the few to contain a foreign object, and this is highly decorated. The Shoebury 1 hoard contains the expected range of material within the carp's tongue/Boughton-Vénat group, but also includes a palstave dating some 500 years before the other objects, and a large bracelet from the Alps with complex decoration (Figure 4.3; O'Connor 1980: 208–209; Turner 2010: 88–93). The presence of this foreign object in a British Late Bronze Age hoard is in fact quite unusual. Amongst the large quantities of Late Bronze Age metalwork known from Britain, relatively few objects are clearly of foreign import (e.g. Davies 2018: 64–65).[2] This is in spite of much of the metal itself deriving from the continent during this time (Rohl

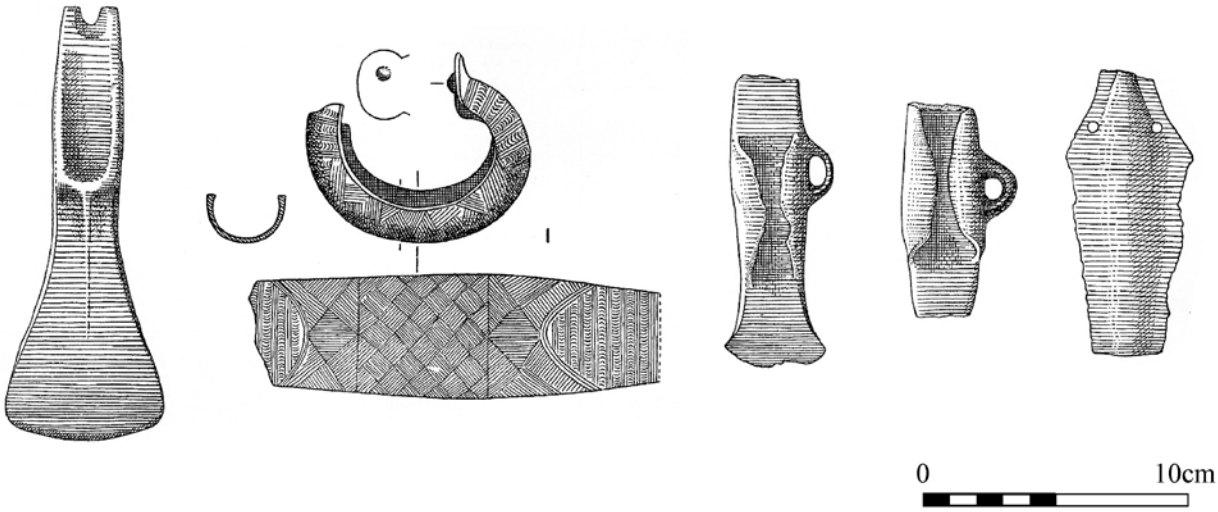

Figure 4.3: Part of the Shoebury 1 hoard, showing a palstave belonging to the Taunton stage, a large decorated bracelet from the Alps, and a selection of Ewart Park objects (adapted from Smith 1958). © Trustees of the British Museum

[2] Accepting that some metalwork groups are cross-channel phenomena, like the carp's tongue/Boughton-Vénat group. Objects specific to this group are only rarely found in Britain outside of the south-east where these occur in significant numbers (Brandherm and Moskal-del Hoyo 2014; Burgess 1968: fig. 14).

and Needham 1998), with shipwreck finds demonstrating that some of the raw metal was arriving in the form of finished objects, at least in the Middle Bronze Age (Needham *et al.* 2013). Indeed, the shipwreck finds are of interest as they primarily consist of objects from various continental regions, with the furthest so far known from Sicily. Significantly, types from shipwrecks are often extremely rare or entirely absent from non-shipwreck assemblages. Examples include median-winged axes: more than 60 of these were found at the Landon Bay shipwreck, but only one other has been found in Britain outside of shipwreck contexts (Needham *et al.* 2013: 58–91). These exotic and unusual objects were taken out of circulation in the later Bronze Age and presumably melted down and recast into local types.

In contrast, there is a group of mainly metal and ceramic objects that date to the Earliest and Early Iron Age that are of foreign provenance and exotic type. These include Mediterranean brooches, ceramic vessels and an arrowhead (Figure 4.4; Bradley and Smith 2007; Davies 2018: 109–111, 141–144, Appendix 5; Harbison and Laing 1974; Hull and Hawkes 1987: 7–11), as well as items from or distinctly influenced by those from northern and central Europe, for example razors, daggers, swords, pins, metal buckets/cauldrons, and even a polished stone shaft-hole axe (Davies 2018: 109–111, 141–144, Appendix 5; Gerloff 2010: 375; Jope 1961; 1982; 2000; MacDonald and O'Connor 1979; Needham 1980: 21; 1996: 188; Stead 1984).

There has been a tendency to reject the Mediterranean objects, especially the brooches, as not being genuine Iron Age imports. However, various studies have concluded that we should not dismiss all of these unusual finds, and recognise the importance of continental influence on British objects as indirectly suggesting the presence of imports (Bradley and Smith 2007; Champion 1977; Cunliffe 2005: 462–465; Davies 2018: 109–111, 141–144; Harbison and Laing 1974; Hull and Hawkes 1987: 7; Jope 2000: 10–16, 226–228; Joy 2015; Stead 1984; although see Adams 2013: 101–103).

Another contrast between Late Bronze Age and Iron Age metalwork is the presence of complex, often exquisite decoration on later Iron Age objects (Garrow *et al.* 2009), compared to the often plain and homogenous nature of Late Bronze Age material. The use of decoration on metalwork is also something that is surprisingly rare in the British Late Bronze Age. The vast majority of the metalwork of this period is plain or only decorated with the use of one or two very common, simple motifs (e.g. Colquhoun and Burgess 1988: 2, 55; Schmidt and Burgess 1981: Pls 74–99). Objects instead generally form very homogenous groups of material.

Ancient, foreign and highly decorated objects are all exotic: produced and only producible outside of present society. The ancient, foreign and highly decorated are therefore often seen in very similar ways to each other in non-western societies. The assessment of foreign objects and those exhibiting high craftsmanship is therefore relevant in understanding ancient objects and mixed-period hoards. As these three types of objects are beyond society, they are commonly regarded as having supernatural origins and associations (Gell 1992; Helms 1988; 1993: 32). Supernatural connotations can be seen negatively, as something that should be feared and avoided, or the same power can be thought of as positive and something that can be harnessed, for personal and group gain. If an individual or group can successfully associate themselves with the supernatural or divine, this can legitimise their social authority by giving it godly sanction (Godelier 1999: 108–138, 171–175). This is shown in the examples given above with regard to the Kodi and the emerging Anglo-Saxon royalty.

In the Late Bronze Age, there does not appear to have been a sustained practice of collecting ancient objects: mixed-period hoards are known in such few numbers relative to the vast collections of single-period Late Bronze Age hoards, and almost always only represent a single instance of discovery. Foreign objects certainly were obtained, but these almost invariably seem to have been melted down and removed from circulation. The evidence suggests that artistic embellishment and decoration was also

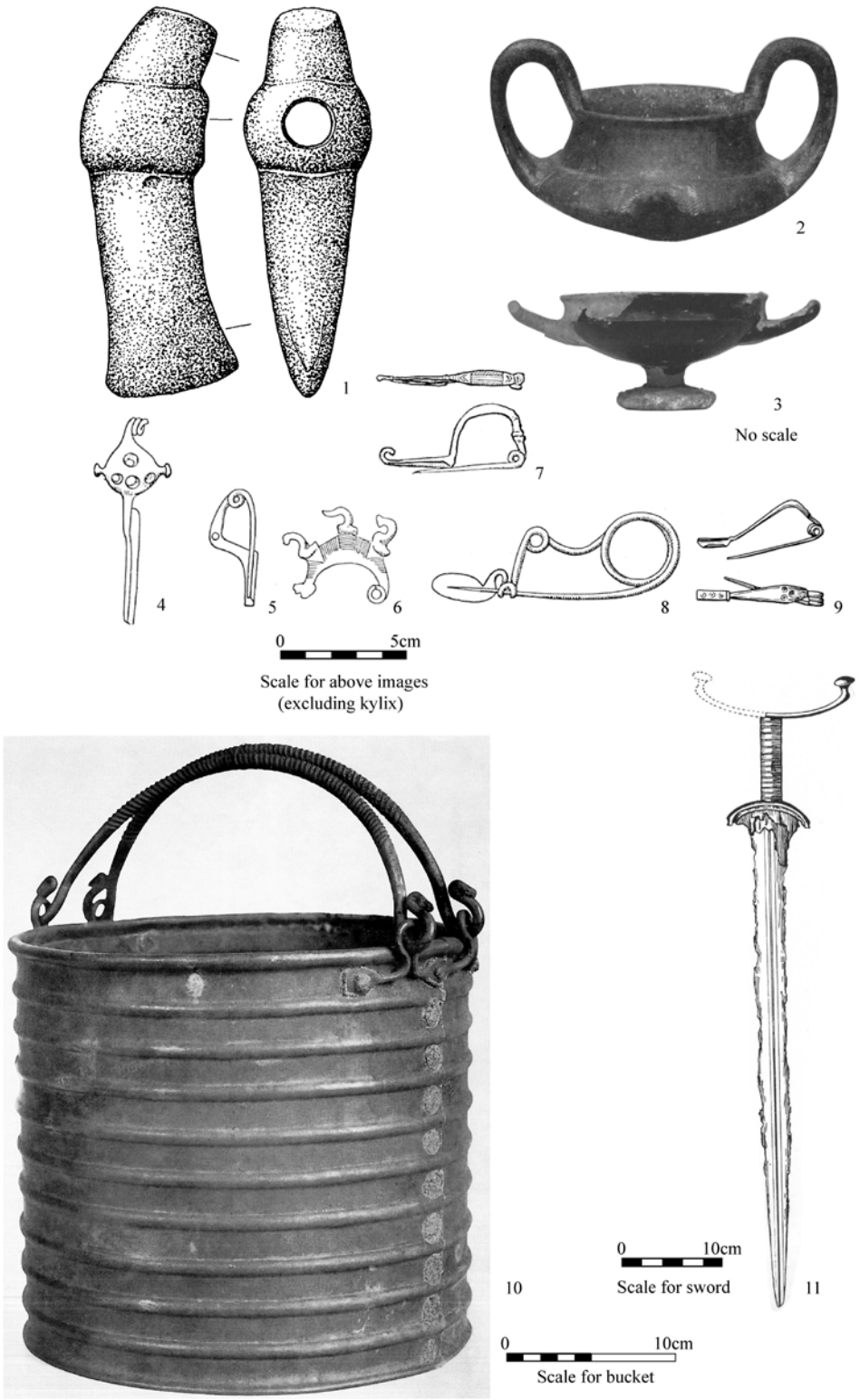

Figure 4.4: Earliest and Early Iron Age exotic objects from the continent.
1 – nackengebogene Äxte from Syon Reach; 2 – Cup from Barn Elms/Pool of London; 3 – Kylix from Reading; 4-9 – Brooches from Kingham, near Oxford, Brentford, Reading, Mincing Lane, Baydon; 10 – The Weybridge bucket; 11 – Sword from London
1 – Macdonald and O'Connor 1979: fig. 1 (London and Middlesex Archaeological Society); 2 – Smith 1925: fig. 88; 3 – Bradley and Smith 2007: fig. 3.1, courtesy of Reading Museum; 4–9 – Hull and Hawkes 1987: Pls 7, 11, 2, 5, 14, 18; 10–11 – Jope 2000: Pls 8, 10.

avoided. In the Late Bronze Age, there therefore seems to have been a distinct desire *not* to include these aspects of the supernatural into society. Perhaps objects with such associations were feared. In the Iron Age, however, ancient objects were clearly consciously collected, exchanged and assembled; foreign exotica were obtained, and fine metalwork was delicately embellished: a skill that very few could achieve. All of these features suggest that in the Iron Age, otherworldly powers were actively sought out to be incorporated into society.

This suggests significant differences in the ways in which power and social relationships were articulated in the later Bronze Age compared to the Iron Age. Objects with supernatural associations that could be used to differentiate individuals and groups and legitimise positions of authority were not created or obtained in the later Bronze Age and were indeed actively removed. However, such items appear to have been specifically exploited in the Iron Age. This could in turn suggest that Iron Age society had more explicit social differences compared to the later Bronze Age, although other aspects of the archaeological record need to be analysed to substantiate this suggestion afforded by the use of supernatural items across the two periods.

Conclusion

A reading of the ethnographic literature suggests that unusual objects or monuments that are not understandable within a current cultural context, including ancient artefacts, are often thought of as deriving from or being associated with supernatural human-like beings. These are sometimes thought of as 'ancestors', although these ancestors do not seem to be of a comparable constitution to living humans. Things associated with the supernatural are powerful, but this power is often malign and to be feared and avoided. Equally, in the right context such power can be harnessed. Individuals and groups can exploit association with the supernatural for their own social gain, appearing to have any position of power and authority divinely sanctioned.

The appearance of 'out-of-time' objects in any archaeological context needs to be carefully considered alongside other aspects of the archaeological record before interpretation should proceed. Although the presence of already ancient objects in both later Bronze Age and Iron Age hoards may seem comparable, patterns within the hoards themselves indicate that 'out-of-time' objects were used quite differently in the Iron Age compared to the later Bronze Age. It appears that exotica with supernatural connotations were actively exploited in the Iron Age and perhaps used as a mechanism for social expression and differentiation in quite a different manner as previously. This exploitation of exotica for social purposes is also suggested by use of other potentially otherworldly objects in the Iron Age.

The multi-period hoards of the central southern British Iron Age are among the most intriguing aspects of the archaeological record of the period. The dedication to collect such varied accumulations that the larger examples possess can often barely be comprehended. Full publication is necessary to draw out further patterns that will lead to a better understanding of these fascinating collections of objects.

Appendix

Table 4.2: Iron Age multi-period hoards

Key: E/M/LBA = Early/Middle/Late Bronze Age; EstIA/E/M/LIA = Earliest/Early/Middle/Late Iron Age

Hoard	Summary	Minimum number of periods (approx.)	Date of latest object (approx.)	Reference
'Salisbury'/ Netherhampton, Wiltshire	Consists of over 500 objects that have a date range of over 2,200 years, from the EBA to the M–LIA. This includes objects representing nearly every century of the intervening time. Objects include flanged axes dating to the Arreton metalwork phase of the EBA, palstaves, socketed axes, razors, chisels, ferrules and dirks of the Acton Park, Taunton and Penard metalwork phases of the MBA, socketed axes, spearheads, pins, chapes, socketed gouges, knives, ferrules and buttons of the Wilburton and Ewart Park metalwork phases of the LBA, socketed axes, chapes and razors of the Llyn Fawr metalwork phase of the EstIA; through to miniature cauldrons and miniature shields and a 'drinking horn' dating to the M–LIA. A MIA radiocarbon date was obtained from bone from a pit that the pit containing the hoard was cut into.	8	Middle or Late Iron Age	British Museum n.d.a; Stead 1998
'Batheaston'/ Wylye, Wiltshire	Consists of perhaps 400(?) objects that were acquired by the British Museum in two lots, in 1989 and 2010. Although previously thought to have been found in Batheaston (northeast Somerset), research by Stead (1998: 120–122) suggests this was actually from South Wiltshire, perhaps Wylye. Objects include, although are not limited to, an Arreton spearhead, Acton Park palstaves, a Taunton quoit-headed pin, Ewart Park socketed axes, Llyn Fawr cauldron pieces, and EIA brooches and pins. Further research and quantification on this hoard are overdue.	6	Middle Iron Age	British Museum n.d.b; Stead 1998
Danebury, Hampshire	1 Migdale flat axe; 1 Arreton flanged axe; 1 Group IV rapier (Penard); 1 LBA spearhead; 1 Ewart Park spearhead; 1 trapezoidal and 1 annular razor (Llyn Fawr); 2 Sompting socketed axes (Llyn Fawr)	5	Earliest Iron Age	Cunliffe and O'Connor 1979
Hounslow, Greater London	Found in a field around 1864, the 26 objects that were acquired by the British Museum shortly afterwards include 1 EBA flat axe; 1 Acton Park palstave; 1 Taunton quoit-headed pin and a possible Taunton socketed axe; 1 MBA or LBA palstave; 1 Wilburton socketed axe (Ulleskelf), 1 possible Wilburton spearhead; 4-5 Ewart Park socketed axes, 1 Ewart Park winged axe, 1 Ewart Park knife; 1 LBA spearhead, 1 LBA sword; 2 LBA/EstIA socketed gouges; 1 undated ?knife; 2 undated fittings; 3 LIA boar figurines and 2 other LIA animal figures. Further work is needed to confirm these identifications. The original report claims that the finders initially said all of the objects were found together, but later stated that the Bronze Age and Iron Age objects were found in separate parts of the same field (Franks 1865: 90). Stead (1998: 119) believes that A.W. Franks persuaded the finders that they could not have been found together in order to make sense of this unusual collection. Following the hoard through the literature it is clear that various objects have been later conflated with any original finds.	6	Late Iron Age	British Museum n.d.c; Franks 1865; Stead 1998: 119
Hagbourne Hill, Oxfordshire	2 Taunton spearheads; 1 M/LBA spearhead; 1 M/LBA palstave; 1 Ewart Park socketed axe; 1 LBA plain nail-headed pin or Ewart Park bracelet; 1 LBA decorated nail-headed pin; 1 E/MIA swan-necked ring-headed pin; 3 LIA terrets; 2 LIA horse bits; 2 coins, at least one appears to be LIA.	4	Late Iron Age	Harding 1972: 91–92, Pl. 77; King 1812; Stead 1998: 119–120

Hoard	Summary	Minimum number of periods (approx.)	Date of latest object (approx.)	Reference
Crooksbury Hill, Surrey	Size and contents unknown, although 5 axes were illustrated shortly following the discovery, and an additional palstave is the only known surviving object (Fig. 4.2). Identification of the 5 original axes is from an early illustration, suggesting the axes are from the following stages: 1 Acton Park; 2 Penard; 1 Penard/Wilburton; 1 Ewart Park and 1 Llyn Fawr. The account written 'a short time since' the find describes that 'a variety [of objects] in bronze [were discovered] ...from the rudest form down to the most elaborately finished weapon... [including] a considerable number of celts' (Anon. 1857).	4 or 5	Earliest Iron Age	Anon. 1857; Needham 1980: fig. 5.4
Vale of Wardour, Wiltshire	*c.* 114 objects including 1 EBA axe; 4 Taunton palstaves; 1 Penard palstave; and other MBA metalwork including 2 rapiers, 15 spearheads and 2 palstaves. M/LBA metalwork including 1 spearhead, 1 hammer, 1 pin and 1 sickle. Wilburton metalwork including 2 swords, 1 spearhead and 1 palstave. Ewart Park metalwork including 5 swords, 4 socketed axes, 1 chisel, 1 chape and 3 pins. Other LBA metalwork including 12 spearheads, 1 socketed axe, 2 gouges, 1 punch, 9 chisels, 4 sickles, 6 knives, 1 razor, 1 ring and 1 button. LBA/EstIA metalwork including 6 gouges, 1 bracelet and 1 strap fitting. Llyn Fawr metalwork including 4 socketed axes, 7 gouges, 1 sickle, 1 chape and 1 razor. IA metalwork including 1 pin, 1 collar/bracelet and 1 toggle. 2 possible EIA ?dagger hilts. 3 undated fragments.	7?	Early Iron Age	Hinds 2011
Yattendon, West Berkshire	59 objects, the majority of which can be accommodated into the Ewart Park stage, including socketed axes, spearheads, knives, gouges, chisels, swords and a perforated disc. However, at least 12 are certainly not of this phase. This includes 1 Aylesford/Willerby axe; 6 MBA spearheads; 2 Taunton palstaves; 1 Penard palstave; 1 Penard conical ferrule; 1 Llyn Fawr Sompting axe.	5	Earliest Iron Age	Burgess *et al.* 1972; Evans 1878
Melksham, Wiltshire	1 earlier MBA dirk; 3 LBA spearheads; 3 Llyn Fawr phalarae; 5 iron spearheads	3	Earliest or Early Iron Age	Gingell 1979; Osgood 1995
Whitchurch, Hampshire	1 Penard composite gold ring; 1 Ewart Park gold lock-ring; 1 spearhead (MBA or LBA); 5 miniature socketed axes (LBA to Roman); 1 silver-alloy lump and 1 torc fragment (later MIA or LIA); 2 copper-alloy binding strips (later MIA or LIA); 1 possible bow brooch (IA); 3 copper-alloy fragments	3	Later Middle or Late Iron Age	Webley 2011
Paston, Norfolk	3 earlier MBA unlooped palstaves; 1 Llyn Fawr linear faceted axe	2	Earliest Iron Age	Coombs 1971: fig. 336; Langmaid 1966: 29
Lanherne, Cornwall (possible)	Notched rapier (MBA); earlier MBA palstave; socketed axe/chisel without loop; possible saw; unknown number of lost socketed axes, although the description suggests they might be Armorican axes of Hallstatt C date (Llyn Fawr/EstIA).	3	Earliest Iron Age	Jago 1814; Pearce 1983: No. 94.
Corsbie Moss, Scottish Borders (possible)	1 earlier MBA spearhead; 1 Wilburton sword; 1 Est IA socketed axe; 1 sword chape. The axe was found at a later date from the same area.	3	Earliest Iron Age	Knight this volume

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Chapter 5

Iron Age antiques: Assessing the functions of old objects in Britain from 400 BC to AD 100

Helen Chittock

Old objects found in later prehistoric contexts have often been discussed by archaeologists as heirlooms, which were passed between people, forming powerful mnemonic devices in prehistoric histories or contributing to the maintenance of hereditary power. This paper examines ideas about later prehistoric heirlooms and other categories of curated objects, before suggesting that some old objects might also be considered as 'antiques': objects whose values are derived not only through the ancestral connections they might embody, but through their own patinas of age. A case study from Middle–Late Iron Age East Yorkshire will demonstrate the accumulation of value through the fostering of objects with visible layers of age and use.

Keywords*: Antiques, heirlooms, Iron Age, relics, Yorkshire*

Introduction

In September 2002, a hoard of weapons, now known as the South Cave hoard, was discovered by metal detectorists halfway up a slope of the southern edge of the Yorkshire Wolds: chalk uplands that arc through western and northern parts of the modern county of East Yorkshire. It was subsequently excavated and analysed by archaeologists (Evans *et al.* in prep.). The hoard comprised 33 iron spearheads wrapped in hide or fleece and five swords in copper alloy scabbards deposited in a pit. The deposit had been lined and capped with sherds of pottery, most of which were derived from a single Roman amphora (Evans *et al.* in prep.: 2). The likely dates of the Dressel 20-type amphora sherds and the swords within the pit (Evans *et al.* in prep.: 28, 44) suggest that the hoard was probably deposited between AD 50 and 80, shortly before or after the occupation of the region by Romans in *c.* AD 71. Indeed, much of the assemblage of weapons represents a mixing of 'native' and 'Roman' traditions, both aesthetically and possibly in terms of the functions of the weapons (Evans *et.al.* in prep.: 56–58). Stylistic and metallurgical analysis of the swords combined with study of wear, damage and repair, however, has suggested that some of the components of the five scabbards may have been made some time before this date (Chittock forthcoming; Evans *et al.* in prep.: 55; Northover in prep.).

Each scabbard is a complex construction made from multiple components in varied materials. Most of the components are in keeping with first-century AD style in northern Britain, and some make use of gunmetal and polychrome enamel, which do not generally predate the 1st century AD in Britain (Evans *et al.* in prep.: 37–38). The use of elephant ivory in the handle of one sword suggests contact with the Roman Empire at the time it was made (Evans *et al.* in prep.: 37–38). Several components, however, may be older. Analysis of the range of copper alloys used to make the scabbards has shown that while some alloys are characteristic of Late Iron Age interactions with the Roman-occupied Continent, others belong to older Iron Age metalworking traditions (Northover in prep.). The combination of different typological styles of components adds to this picture. For example, the bronze chape of the scabbard of sword RF40[1] can be identified as an early northern type (see Stead 2006: 14–15, type g), but was riveted onto a stylistically later brass scabbard in order to mend a break in the front and back plates (although this paper will later discuss the pitfalls of stylistically dating these types of objects) (Chittock forthcoming) (Figure 5.1). Three of the scabbards showed evidence of having been damaged and

[1] RF40 is the code given to this sword by the excavators. Its museum accession number is 2005,99.9 (Beverley Treasure House).

Figure 5.1: A sketch of RF40 from the South Cave Hoard, and a close-up of its replacement chape. H. Chittock, with kind permission from David Marchant, Beverley Treasure House.

repaired, potentially indicating long histories of use (Chittock forthcoming). The assemblage of sword scabbards from the South Cave hoard, therefore, represents a group of objects that had been well-used, incorporating old and new components before finally being deposited within their hillside pit.

This paper concerns the functions served by the older components incorporated into the South Cave scabbards, and the functions of older prehistoric objects in later prehistoric assemblages more broadly. As I will show, the practices of curating and reusing objects and components were fairly common in Middle–Late Iron Age Britain, and indeed across northwest later prehistoric Europe, something that this volume of papers demonstrates. Older objects were assimilated into younger assemblages in varied ways. They have often been discussed as heirlooms: objects passed down through generations of the same family (Giles 2012: Chapters 5–7; Lillios 1999; Woodward 2002). Other words, such as 'relic' (Woodward 2002) have also been used to refer to older objects and in this paper, I will suggest that some could also be seen as antiques: objects whose values derive partly from being old.

The paper will begin by introducing old objects in later prehistory and exploring the different contexts in which they appear before focusing on a case study from Middle–Late Iron Age East Yorkshire (UK), which will build the case for later prehistoric antiques. The paper will conclude with a discussion of the purposes of Iron Age antiques.

Heirlooms, relics, mementos or antiques?

A wide range of different types of object have been defined as heirlooms by archaeologists (e.g. Lillios 1999; Woodward 2002). The following paragraphs summarise this approach to prehistoric objects and also examine alternative approaches to older objects in the archaeological record, describing them as relics (Woodward 2002) and mementos (Jennings 2014). Finally, here I introduce the idea that some older objects from later prehistoric contexts could be considered 'antiques'.

The word 'heirloom' carries specific meaning relating to the passing of an object between generations of the same family, its etymology being derived from the middle English *heirlome*, which translates as a tool passed to one's heir. Heirlooms in later prehistory, therefore, have been seen as important in materialising pasts relating to lineage, kinship and ancestry (Lillios 1999), which contribute to the formation of what Gosden and Lock have termed 'genealogical histories' (1998: 5). Heirlooms may have functioned in this way over particular periods of time. Haug (2001) defines them as being linked to memories of the recent past, covering a period of about 80 years or three generations, whilst objects associated with a more distant past carried other meanings, perhaps relating to myth or legend (Caple 2010: 307).

The objects commonly described as heirlooms can be placed into several categories. The first contains objects handed down between groups or individuals over a period of time, being used and repaired over several generations and developing a visible history of use. A famous example from Iron Age Britain is the Kirkburn sword (East Yorkshire), which was excavated from a burial dating to between 360 and 110 BC (Garrow *et al.* 2009: 117) with a man who, at 17–25 years old at his time of death (Stead 1991a: 224), is thought to have been far younger than the sword itself, which has been identified as a possible heirloom (e.g. Giles 2012: 188; Gosden and Hill 2008: 11; Stead 1991a) through its many repairs and through radiocarbon dates (Jay *et al.* 2012: 183).

Old components can also be incorporated into newer composite objects, just as the bronze chape was riveted onto the scabbard of sword RF40 in the South Cave hoard. They can be identified through contrasting designs or production techniques, including metallurgy, and worn appearances or features related to previous usage. Woodward (2002) describes the reuse of amber spacer plate beads from crescentic necklaces, found in Early Bronze Age graves in Wessex, discussing them as heirlooms. A fragmented example from a grave at Beaulieu Heath (Piggott 1943: 14, Pl. VII; also see Beck and Shennan 1991: fig. 11.2, 1) had been incorporated into a possible necklace along with a small number of simple amber beads (Woodward 2002: 1044). In another grave at Felmersham, Bedfordshire (Hall and Woodward 1977), a reused spacer plate bead was incorporated into an assemblage of other various 'heirloom' beads, which probably did not form a necklace (Woodward 2002: 1044) but were more likely from an assemblage meant for another purpose. Beads, as small objects, sometimes made from unusual materials, which can be combined in varied ways, could be seen as making ideal heirlooms, and are treated in similar ways at different times and in different places. Repurposed amber spacer plate beads have also been found in Bronze Age contexts in Greece with secondary perforations, demonstrating their reuse (Hachmann 1957). Similarly, Giles notes the reuse of perforated coral beads as settings in a wheel-headed pin at Danes Graves in Middle Iron Age East Yorkshire (Giles 2013), a region where necklaces of glass beads may also have been composed from multiple sets (Giles 2012: 146). The recycling of metals may also have been carried out in conscious ways in order to create new objects from old ones. Caple identifies this practice in early medieval Britain, referring to the concept of 'ancestor materials' (2010: 310–315).

Woodward makes the point that the cultivation of heirlooms can involve fragmentation as well as incorporation, citing Chapman's work on artefacts in the Balkan Neolithic and Copper Age, which were manufactured in ways that made it easy to break them into recognisable and exchangeable pieces (Chapman 2000: 70–79, 104; Woodward 2002: 1040). Evidence for the curation of sherds of decorated pottery in parts of Iron Age eastern England suggests fragmentation may also have been important in forming curatable objects (Chittock 2017a: 273; Hill and Horne in Evans 2003: 180). It is important to note that Chapman never specifically refers to the fragments he describes as heirlooms (2000). However, the enchainment of relations he refers to (Chapman 2000: 23–48) was perhaps part of what some later prehistoric heirlooms did.

The functions of later prehistoric heirlooms have been discussed in several ways. Lillios argues that heirlooms were important in the development of chiefdoms during later prehistory and that the inheritance of powerful objects helped to foster hierarchies based on inherited rank (Lillios 1999). Heirlooms, in the forms of portable objects, objectified memories and histories, and represented restricted access to ancestral pasts, creating and maintaining social differences (Lillios 1999: 236). They may also have functioned as the mnemonic devices on which Gosden and Lock's genealogical histories partly rely, along with other materialisations of prehistoric histories, such as landscape features (Gosden and Lock 1998: 5).

Kinship may have been a significant aspect of the lineages of some of the objects discussed in this paper, but it must be acknowledged that ownership during the Iron Age, and during later prehistory more broadly, did not necessarily function in the same way it has done in more recent literate societies. Joy (2011: 208) and Hunter (2006: 105) have both discussed the question of how the ownership of Iron Age objects worked, suggesting that some objects may have been owned by individuals whilst others may have been more appropriate for communal ownership, making the issue of inheritance complex. Whilst heirlooms may have performed functions as mnemonic devices or ways of recounting histories, providing connections to the past, the importance of these connections may not necessarily have been related to biological ancestry, or, indeed, any form of human social relations.

A number of words have been posited as alternatives to 'heirloom' in order to avoid the connotations of family connections with which it is inherently associated, and explore the other potential functions of old objects in later prehistory (see also Knight *et al.* this volume). Jennings, writing on the reuse of Bronze Age objects, suggests that some old objects may not have served purposes relating to social relations but may have existed as private, personal objects (2014). He discusses Late Bronze Age 'ring-razors' from Switzerland, razors made from pieces of bronze cut from arm and leg ring jewellery pieces. These objects present an unusual form of recycling, which contrasts with the common form of Bronze Age recycling that involved melting down and recasting objects. Jennings (2014: 174) suggests that these objects, with their unusual histories made visible through the presence of leg and arm ring decoration, were created and used not as heirlooms but as 'individualised' objects, personal mnemonic devices. Objects such as these could be defined as '*mementos*', as Jennings refers to them, that is personal objects that remind their owners of a place, event or person, but that are not intended for use in social circumstances (Jennings 2014: 174).

Objects that were lost and later rediscovered can also be categorised differently to heirloom-type objects that are passed continually between people, because the histories attached to them will have arisen in a more independent manner. Woodward suggests these objects might be seen as relics, exploring the possibility that practices involving the gathering and deposition of old sherds of pottery from middens existed in Britain during Neolithic (2002: 1041). It has been argued that material found in some Neolithic pits and in the chambers of West Kennett long barrow was derived from middens (Case 1995: 10–11; see Anderson-Whymark 2008 for discussion of Neolithic middens). It is possible that, if the middens were in specific, significant locations with known origins, the objects from them could be considered heirlooms. However, they may also have simply been items recognised as being old. In this case, 'relic' is used not in in the religious sense in which it applies in later contexts, but instead refers to 'an object invested with interest by reason of its antiquity or associations with the past' (Woodward 2002: 1041). Caple uses the term 'venerable objects' to refer to objects with similar associations and meanings, with an emphasis on their potential mythic values (2010: 315). It is important to note, though, that these lost-and-found objects can emerge as ontologically different objects when they are found to the objects they were when they were lost. Until the 18th century, prehistoric flint tools found throughout Europe were defined as *ceraunia* or thunderstones, naturally occurring stone that formed in thunderclouds and fell to earth with bolts of lightning (Goodrum 2008).

Table 5.1: A table summarising previous approaches to old objects in later prehistory.

Term	Description	References
Heirlooms	Objects passed between groups or individuals over time, often through family inheritance.	Lillios 1999; Woodward 2002
Relics	Objects that are lost and later rediscovered.	Woodward 2002
Mementos	Private mnemonic devices relating to personal memory.	Jennings 2014
Venerable objects	Objects with associations with the past and potential mythic value.	Caple 2010
Ancestor materials	Older materials deliberately incorporated into newer objects.	Caple 2010
Antiques	Objects that hold value because they appear old.	This paper

This part of the paper has summarised existing approaches to old objects in later prehistory, which describe them as heirlooms, relics and mementos (see Table 5.1 for a summary). I will suggest that an additional word is included in the lexicon describing these objects: *antique*. Like heirlooms and relics, antiques are old by definition. Today, they are part of a lucrative commercial industry. However, they can also be passed between people in a similar way to heirlooms, but one that negates familial connections or ancestry. Indeed, they are not defined by the way they are passed between people, but by their own stories, in which they play the central characters. Most importantly, their value is defined by age. It is this point that I will return to later in the paper.

Identifying old Iron Age objects

A shared feature of later prehistoric heirlooms, antiques, relics and perhaps mementos is the fact that they were old when deposited (although the age at which a prehistoric object could be considered old is very much up for discussion). There is no set method for identifying old Iron Age objects and arguments about the ages of objects at the point of deposition tend to draw on multiple strands of evidence: relative and absolute dating evidence, and evidence for the use, repair and modification of objects. This section of the paper summarises these varied approaches and the ways they are integrated to identify old objects.

The decorative styles present on Iron Age objects, specifically the metalwork that constitutes 'Celtic Art' (see Garrow and Gosden 2012), have long been used as methods of dating (e.g. Jacobsthal 1944; Stead 1985a; 1985b), drawing on the idea that styles developed over time in a linear manner. For much of the 20th century, successive styles were seen as originating on the Continent and diffusing across the channel to Britain with waves of invaders or emigrants (e.g. Fox 1958; Hawkes 1931; 1959). Although ideas about the movement of people across Iron Age Europe have become subtler and more complex during recent decades, relative dating through decorative style has remained influential to an extent.

The idea of changing style over time can be used to identify old Iron Age objects, although the paragraphs below will present some important caveats to this statement. Objects decorated in older styles that are found in assemblages with objects decorated in younger styles present anachronism that is recognisable to archaeologists, and that may also have singled out these objects as old in the Iron Age. For example, the terminals of the 'Grotesque Torc', a neckring from a hoard in Snettisham, Norfolk, have unusual forms (Machling and Williamson in prep.: 4) and are decorated in Plastic Style, a style that will probably have been recognisably old in first- or second-century BC Norfolk, when the hoard was deposited (Joy in prep.: 7).

Recent advances in the radiometric dating of British Iron Age material have been extremely important in providing absolute dates that both support and contest different aspects of the established schemes of relative dates and the ways in which styles changed over time (Garrow e*t al.* 2009; Hamilton *et al.* 2015; Jay *et al.* 2012). The production of radiocarbon dates for organic material found in direct association with Iron Age metalwork, and in some cases incorporated into the objects themselves, has provided absolute dates for contexts and objects respectively (Garrow *et al.* 2009: 98; Jay *et al.* 2012). The results suggest that, whilst some of the relative dates assigned to objects are relatively accurate, some of the Stages applied to British Iron Age metalwork by Stead (1985a; 1985b) were not strictly successive, specifically Stages III to V. Whilst each of the stages emerged successively, their usage overlapped, meaning that, for example, some Stage IV and Stage V objects were in use at the same time in Britain (Garrow *et al.* 2009: 107). As Joy (in prep.: 7) emphasises, the use of old decorative styles in deliberate ways can destabilise these modes of dating (see also MacDonald 2007). Relict styles can be incorporated into newer designs. The 'accumulation of motifs' on later objects is also something that Garrow *et al.* (2009: 107) identify. Joy describes a decorative patch on a cauldron from Chiseldon, Wiltshire, that may incorporate both Waldalgesheim and Vegetal Styles (2014: 340), suggesting either that an old style was deliberately juxtaposed against a new style or that both styles were in existence simultaneously. Examples such as this demonstrate some of the potential pitfalls of identifying old Iron Age objects through the stylistic dating of the objects themselves. Broader questions have also been raised over whether viewing Iron Age art stylistically from the privileged position of being able to compare hundreds of objects from a 500-year period is necessarily helpful (MacDonald 2007).

However, combining dating evidence with other forms of evidence can strengthen arguments about old objects: heirlooms, relics or antiques. The extent to which objects are worn and repaired can provide information about whether they were old when deposited, although it is very difficult to distinguish between sustained use over a long time period and more intense use over a shorter period. The Grotesque Torc, the relict decoration of which was mentioned above, was heavily worn and repaired many times by the time it was deposited (Figure 5.2) (Joy in prep.; Stead 1991b). Repairs are also common features of cauldrons (Joy 2014) and sword scabbards (Stead 2006) in Iron Age Britain. In addition, it has been argued that the composition of metal alloys can be used to distinguish between older and newer components when examining contexts from the very end of the Iron Age, as was summarised in the introduction to this paper (Northover in prep.). Arguably, therefore, the most reliable ways of identifying old Iron Age objects integrate absolute dating with stylistic dating, the assessment of traits like use-wear and the analysis of metal alloys.

Many questions remain over old Iron Age objects. I have highlighted some well-known examples in this paper so far, namely complex objects with multiple components that are amenable to repair. These are objects that Joy refers to as having 'aura' or 'character' (Joy in prep.), at least in the eyes of archaeologists. In many ways, they make ideal heirlooms. However, heirlooms do not necessarily need to be unique, outlandish objects made from exotic materials. As the next section of the paper will touch upon, less conspicuous objects may also have made good candidates for curation during the Iron Age.

The accretion of value in Iron Age antiques: A case study from East Yorkshire

The curation, care and repair of some old objects in Iron Age Britain, added to deliberate deposition in graves and hoards, for example, suggests that these were objects with significant values and effects. This section of the paper will look at how old objects acquired their value. It will focus on objects from East Yorkshire and then broaden to consider other objects from across Britain, building the case for the discussion of Iron Age 'antiques' as a concept that complements and contrasts with that of prehistoric heirlooms.

Figure 5.2: The Grotesque Torc, Snettisham (British Museum 1991,0407.37)
©Trustees of the British Museum, with kind permission.

This part of the paper draws on a dataset derived from PhD research conducted by the author as the holder of the Collaborative Doctoral Award at the British Museum and University of Southampton (2013–2017). The project was entitled *Pattern and Purpose in Iron Age East Yorkshire* and presented a holistic study of decoration and plainness in East Yorkshire in northeast England between 400 BC and AD 100, considering the question: 'what did pattern do?'. Part of the research methodology involved an investigation of use-wear, damage, repair and modification in a varied sample of 145 plain and decorated objects. Objects made primarily from copper alloy and bone were examined and recorded in the collections of the British Museum, Beverley Treasure House, and Hull and East Riding Museum. The study included a shield, eight sword scabbards, nine sets of chariot fittings and 85 miscellaneous bone objects. These objects were excavated from settlement contexts; graves within large cemeteries; and the South Cave hoard (see Tables 5.2 and 5.3 in Appendix); the study allowed me to add to existing work on Iron Age objects from the region (e.g. Giles 2012; Stead 1991a). The following paragraphs will briefly summarise the results of this study (see Chittock 2017a or Chittock forthcoming for a fuller summary of results) before setting them within the context of discussions about later prehistoric heirlooms, relics, antiques and mementos in wider Iron Age Britain.

Wear

Overall, the assemblage of objects appeared well used. Bronze chariot fittings, for example, were worn at the points where they had rubbed against wooden chariot components or been subject to friction from the reins, for example. Bronze bridle bits and a terret, or rein ring, from Queen's Barrow chariot burial, Arras, were particularly worn. More subtle wear of the same type was visible on other sets of chariot fittings, such as those from Wetwang Village and Kirkburn. Polishing and slight wear to incised decoration was visible on the bronze front plate of a sword scabbard from Chariot Burial 3 at Wetwang Slack, perhaps indicating long periods of being worn against garments. Similar wear has been noted on scabbards from Chariot Burial 1 at Wetwang Slack and the Kirkburn sword (Giles 2012: 188). Polishing and wear patterns on bone and antler objects can also indicate that they were well used. Antler linchpins from Chariot Burial 1 at Wetwang Slack bore wear facets similar to those seen on metal examples (see Stead 1991a: 44–45). A small bone point from Iron Age layers at Rudston East Villa (see Stead 1980) appeared highly polished and its perforation was so worn it had worn through (Chittock 2017a: 252). Worn decoration on the handle of a long-handled comb from the same site was interpreted as showing where it had been held during use (Chittock 2017a: 259). Striations on bone points, such as an example from the Grimthorpe 'warrior burial' (see Stead *et al.* 1969), also suggested they may have been used before deposition in this grave along with a sword and shield.

Damage and repair

Damage was also common and was seen on objects across the assemblage, including instances such as the snapping of bone components and tearing of sheet bronze. Some of the damage observed will have occurred post-deposition. In particular, where bronze and iron components are combined, the expansion of iron during its corrosion process can cause the breakage of associated bronze components. The splitting of bronze sword scabbards containing iron blades is a particularly common example of this. However, repairs to the metal objects in the study, including split sword scabbards, showed that at least some damage occurred pre-deposition. Repairs took many different forms. A missing coral stud, once riveted to a bronze and iron terret from Wetwang Village, had been replaced with a blob of red glass (Hill 2001). Tears in the edges of the sheet bronze of shield fittings from Grimthorpe had been mended through riveting the torn edges to the wooden or leather backing they were once attached to. Breaks in the back-loop plate of scabbard RF41 from the South Cave hoard were mended by riveting detached sections back onto the back plate. Repairs to the splits in the front and back plates of scabbards described above were also noted. A patch on scabbard RF40, also from South Cave, and a repair strip that once encircled the circumference of the scabbard from the Grimthorpe warrior burial (only part of the strip remains today) (Stead 2006: 187) served the purposes of holding scabbards together and preventing further splitting.

Significantly, repairs to the objects did not appear to have been hidden and were carried out using very different techniques to those used in the assembly of these components, suggesting they had perhaps been carried out by different individuals. What makes them so noticeable is the improvised manner in which many have been performed. The *ad hoc* use of techniques contrasts with the highly specialised metalworking used to craft the objects in the first place. As Joy points out, it is significant that highly-valued objects like these were mended in an improvised manner (Joy in prep.: 12). If they were valuable heirlooms, why not wait until an individual with the appropriate skillset was available to carry out repairs? And why repair a seriously damaged object rather than melting it down and recycling the metal (Joy in prep.: 2)?

Some repairs in the assemblage I examined were made to be decorative in themselves, emphasising the processes of repair even further. The Grimthorpe scabbard, for example, had two decorative

repairs (see Stead 2006: 187). A strip repairing an openwork rung on the reverse of the scabbard was bordered with incised lines and traces of curvilinear decoration were observed on another repair strip that encircled the scabbard. A repair to the Kirkburn scabbard included the replacement of the bottom section of the front plate (Figure 5.3). This section was decorated in a way that emulated the patterns on the rest of the scabbard but used different motifs and infilling, carried out in a contrasting way, which Stead refers to as 'crude' (2006: 184), but which, perhaps, was intended to stand out as an addition to the object.

Fragmentation and reassembly

As well as evidence of damage caused to the objects in my study caused by over-use or the degradation of materials through age, evidence exists for deliberate interventions and modifications. In addition to the histories of use, damage and repair highlighted by this study, some of the objects examined showed evidence for deliberate fragmentation. The handle of the bone/antler comb from Rudston East Villa mentioned above, for example, was found at the base of a ditch (Stead 1980). It was broken across its middle and appeared to have been snapped in half deliberately with some force. The other half was not recovered, suggesting it may have been deposited elsewhere or curated above ground, perhaps as an heirloom-type object. Similar practice is visible in the deposition of small ceramic jars in graves in Middle Iron Age East Yorkshire, (e.g. Stead 1991a). The jars are rarely complete (Giles 2012: 133), often lacking sherds from their rims, suggesting, again that the missing sherds may have been deposited elsewhere or curated as heirlooms, antiques or mementos.

Some of the composite metal objects in the assemblage also showed evidence for having been deliberately fragmented through the process of disassembly. In addition to this, some had been reassembled in new configurations, with components being incorporated into new assemblages. The best example of this practice is the Grimthorpe shield (Figure 5.4), which comprises a group of six fittings in sheet bronze: two crescent-shaped plates, a central boss, two

Figure 5.3: An x-ray of the Kirkburn sword, showing repair to its front plate (British Museum, 1987,0404.2) ©Trustees of the British Museum, with kind permission.

Figure 5.4: The Grimthorpe shield (British Museum 1876,0208.1) ©Trustees of the British Museum, with kind permission.

ribs and a small disc. These fittings were excavated in 1868 by John Mortimer from the so-called 'warrior burial' within the hillfort at Grimthorpe (Mortimer 1905: 152; see also Stead *et al.* 1969). Originally, they would have been riveted to a wooden or leather backing to form a shield. The two crescent-shaped plates were extremely worn and damaged, with several substantial dents (plausibly made during armed combat) and many small tears around their edges. One of the plaques was also torn in half and repaired. The other fittings, however, displayed no such wear (although the small disc was slightly damaged, probably through corrosion). In addition, the distortion of some of the rivet holes of the two crescentic plaques suggests that they had been torn from their wooden or leather backings at some point in their history (R. Williamson personal communication 2016; see also Chittock 2017b). The many, varied rivet holes around the edges of these fittings suggest they had been riveted to backings more than once. My interpretation of this group of fittings is of one with varying, intertwining histories, derived from a range of sources. They may have once existed as parts of different shields but were brought together to form this assemblage. They may have been riveted onto a backing to form a shield, which was placed into the grave of the Grimthorpe warrior as has been previously suggested (Stead *et al.* 1969: 167). Given the early date of their excavation, however, their exact positioning in the grave was not recorded and it is also possible they never existed as a shield in this sense. The range of decorative styles present in the assemblage supports the idea that the fittings were derived from varied sources. Whilst the crescentic plates are bordered with a geometric, stepped pattern, the small disc has a contrasting asymmetrical pattern characteristic of the La Tène style that is found on Celtic Art across Europe. The central boss is decorated in a symmetrical pattern of curved and straight lines with infilling of fine lines and the ribs were decorated with motifs infilled with similar lines (Figure 5.5).

Whilst it cannot be assumed that a set of fittings like this would 'match' in an Iron Age context, there are assemblages of chariot fittings from the study decorated in similar ways, using similar patterns and coral embellishments, suggesting they were made as 'sets'. Elements of the patterns on fittings from the Wetwang Village chariot burial, for example, share unusual fine stippled patterns and applied coral decoration (Chittock 2017a: 176–177). Sets of terrets, or rein rings, from the Wetwang Slack 2 and Garton Slack chariot burials also carry applied coral decoration and similar designs, which allow them to be identified as related but distinct. Similarly, the designs of scabbards from the Kirkburn warrior burial, Wetwang Slack 1 chariot burial and Wetwang Slack 2 chariot burial are similar from a distance but individual when seen up close. Giles refers to these swords as 'cousins' (2012: 188, 214).

In contrast, other sets of objects display varied origins. The Ferry Fryston chariot, which was excavated from a grave in West Yorkshire, for example, had conspicuously differently designed and sized wheels and a set of 'sham terrets', created specifically for its final journey into the grave, suggesting it only existed in its final configuration for a short time (Brown *et al.* 2007: 138–141; Giles 2012: 203). The mismatching replacement wheel on the Kirkburn chariot suggests that this chariot had also been subject to a similar process, although use-wear evidence suggests it was driven for a time after its new wheel was added (Giles 2012: 203; Stead 1991a: 42). Giles comments on its mismatching terrets (2012: 203), whilst Garrow and Gosden note the varied appearances of its fittings as a whole group, which are decorated in a wide variety of different patterns (2012: 218). I also noted a similar mismatch within the group of five terrets from the Garton Station chariot. One terret is large and highly decorated, with three polished bone attachments, and has been made by casting a bronze form onto an iron ring. This contrasts with the four smaller and plainer terrets, which were made entirely from cast bronze, an unusual form of terret in East Yorkshire. The combinations of old and new components to form some of the scabbards from the South Cave hoard, described in the introduction of this paper, provide further examples of mismatching assemblages of components with varied origins.

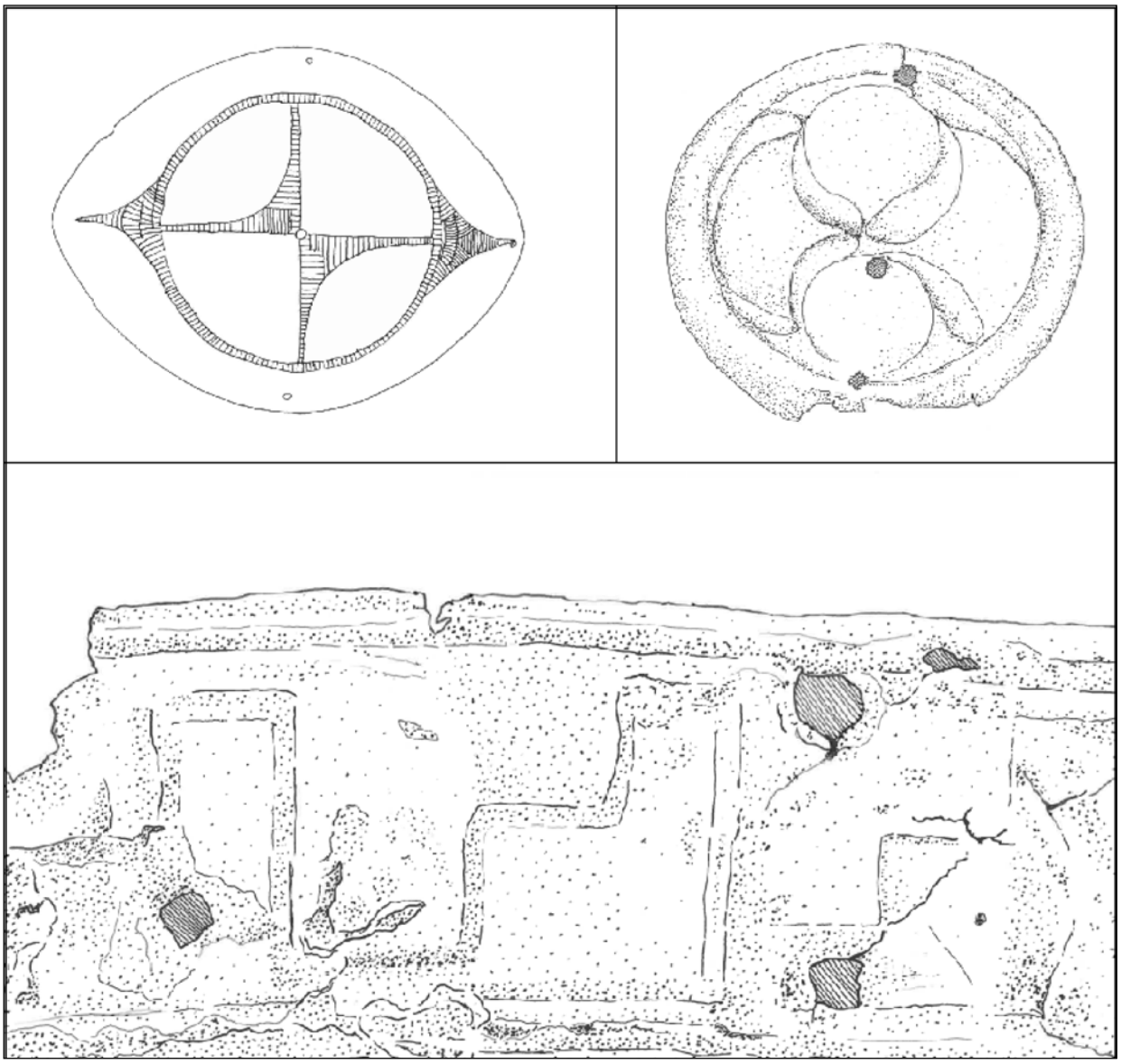

Figure 5.5: Sketches showing the varied patterns observed on the fittings of the Grimthorpe Shield. Top left: central boss. Top right: small disc. Bottom: border of crescentic plaque. See Figure 5.4 for scale. Illustration: H. Chittock.

Old objects in Iron Age East Yorkshire? Absolute dating evidence

The paragraphs above have demonstrated that objects of varying types were used, curated, damaged, repaired, fragmented and reassembled over time in Iron Age East Yorkshire. Many of the objects discussed 'look old', but what does absolute dating evidence say about their potential ages when buried? Garrow *et al.* (2009) radiocarbon-dated the contexts of a selection of objects from Middle–Late Iron Age graves in East Yorkshire and Jay *et al.* (2012) radiocarbon-dated burials from the Middle–Late Iron Age cemetery Wetwang Slack. The results of this work are hugely important and suggest, among other things, that chariots were present in East Yorkshire earlier than previously thought: from the 4th or 3rd century BC (Garrow *et al.* 2009: 102). East Yorkshire mirrors also produced earlier dates than expected (Garrow *et al.* 2009: 103), and the tradition of chariot burials, previously thought to have been long-lived, was confined to the decades around 200 BC (Jay *et al.* 2012).

As Jay and her co-authors stress, though, the dates produced through this work pertain to the deposition, rather than the production of objects (Jay *et al.* 2012: 162). They use examples of worn and repaired objects, such as typologically early brooches from cemeteries at Cowlam and Burton Fleming (see Stead 1979: 64–65), to suggest they were old by the time they were deposited (Jay *et al.* 2012: 162). Absolute dating has been able to support the idea that the Kirkburn sword was an heirloom, as it may have been deposited at a later date than its 'cousins' in Chariot Burials 1 and 3 at Wetwang Slack (Jay *et al.* 2012: 183). For the remainder of the objects discussed during this part of the chapter, however, the idea that they may have been old when buried relies on wear and repair.

A summary of the study

To summarise the results of the study outlined above, it is likely that at least some of the objects discussed in this part of the paper were old objects by the time they were buried. Whilst it is not possible to say exactly how old most of them were in terms of human lifetimes, the crucial point is that they were visibly old in ways that are identifiable to archaeologists, and that will have been identifiable in the Iron Age. My examination identified practices of fragmentation, reassembly, conspicuous repair and the reuse of old components, adding to existing evidence for these practices in Middle–Late Iron Age East Yorkshire (e.g. Giles 2012; 2013). Most significantly, the repairs and modifications made to the metal objects from my assemblage were unconcealed, even emphasised. Decorative patterns were used in this process, as ways of drawing the eye to repairs and juxtaposing contrasting components against each other. I argue that repairs and modifications to these objects were *meant* to be seen, presenting a contrast to the concerns that govern repair in modern, Western society, where newness and pristineness are often valued. The careful deposition of these objects, often to mark auspicious occasions like funerals, suggests they were valuable objects. I argue that their value and effects derived, in part, from their patinas of age, which developed though use, repair and modification.

This phenomenon is not peculiar to Middle–Late Iron Age East Yorkshire. Joy presents similar evidence relating to the Grotesque Torc, which was excavated from one of many hoards in Snettisham (Norfolk), and was mentioned earlier in the paper in the context of its use of an old decorative style. This object has many, highly visible repairs, including the mending of a break in the twisted rope of the torc using a section of tubular torc; the securing of a detached terminal with a piece of silver alloy ribbon; and the use of a twisted metal bracelet to clasp the terminals together where the ropes had lost their tension (Joy in prep.: 5–6). Other torcs from Snettisham also show signs of wear, damage and repair (Joy in prep.: 4–5; Machling and Williamson in prep.: 11–12), although most other repairs are less visually apparent than those found on the Grotesque torc. British Iron Age cauldrons are also objects with long histories, and often show signs of repair. The Kyleakin cauldron from the Isle of Skye was mended using multiple, rough-cut repair patches, which were layered on one another (Joy in prep.: 11–12). Seemingly, no attempt was made to conceal them. Repairs on cauldrons from Chiseldon, Wiltshire, were even decorated with scalloped edges (Joy 2014), which emphasise them even further. The Torrs chamfrain is a headdress designed to be worn by a horse and was excavated from a peat bog in modern Dumfries and Galloway. This object was modified during its history and includes three highly decorated repair patches (Briggs 2014: 346–347).

The list of examples given above is short, due to limits on space in this paper. They are also diverse in terms of dates and geography, and it must be acknowledged that they derive from diverse circumstances of production and use. However, they do seem to exemplify a practice that is, perhaps, visible across Britain during the Middle–Late Iron Age. Metal objects, including those traditionally defined as 'art', were well used and sometimes damaged, but when the time came to repair them, they were not restored in a way that attempted to reverse the damage. Instead, repairs and modifications became important

parts of these objects, and were visually emphasised, contributing to their patinas of age. Undoubtedly, further study of wear, repair and modification across Iron Age Britain is needed to properly characterise these practices across a wider area, but these examples do suggest that the practice of fostering objects with visible histories was not confined to East Yorkshire.

Iron Age antiques in East Yorkshire: What did old objects do?

Given the diversity of different types of old objects I discussed earlier in the paper, what were the old objects from East Yorkshire: heirlooms, mementos, relics or antiques? The answer is probably a complex combination of all four. As discussed, some objects from Iron Age East Yorkshire have previously been discussed as heirlooms: beads, chariots fittings and the famous Kirkburn sword (Giles 2012: 149, 241, 250; Gosden and Hill 2008: 11). These objects can be thought of as providing mnemonic connections to past kin, allowing for the mapping of lineages and the conscious performance of collective memories (see Jones 2007: 61–69). I suggest, however, that exploring them as antiques may introduce a wider range of possibilities of what they were for. Whilst heirlooms are defined by the ways they are passed between people and the lineages they represent, the power of antiques derives from their age, or at least from the appearance of age. Perhaps heirlooms can be seen as 'inscribed objects' (Marshall 2008), whose destinies were, to an extent, mapped out for them when they were first crafted or used, whereas antiques could be seen as 'lived objects' (Marshall 2008), accruing value over time through *ad hoc* and improvised, yet deliberate, performances. The functions of old objects in Iron Age East Yorkshire will have been multiple and complex, but I argue that at least some aspects of what they were for relate to their patinas of age, developed through use and deliberately enhanced through repair, modification and the use of pattern. I argue that these objects were important in the materialisation of histories, providing mnemonic devices in oral traditions at a time when written histories did not exist in Britain. Seeing them as antiques places them at the centres of these stories, introducing the possibility that the nature of their places in society were not necessarily related to hereditary ownership, but governed by other factors.

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Appendix

Table 5.2: A catalogue of the metal objects examined as part of the study for Pattern and Purpose in Iron Age East Yorkshire

Site	Object Type	Museum	Museum No.	Key references
Grimthorpe	Shield	British Museum	1876, 0208.2 1876, 0208.1 1876, 0208.3	Mortimer 1905; Stead *et al*. 1969
Grimthorpe	Sword	British Museum	1876,0208.10	Mortimer 1905; Stead 2006; Stead *et al.* 1969
South Cave	Sword	Beverley Treasure House	2005,99.9 (other ref. RF40)	Evans *et al.* in prep.; Northover in prep.
South Cave	Sword	Beverley Treasure House	2005,99.8 (other ref. RF18)	Evans *et al.* in prep.; Northover in prep.
South Cave	Sword	Beverley Treasure House	2005,99.10 (other ref. RF41)	Evans *et al.* in prep.; Northover in prep.
South Cave	Sword	Beverley Treasure House	2005,99.5 (other ref. RF17)	Evans *et al.* in prep.; Northover in prep.
Wetwang	Sword	Hull and East Riding Museum	KINCM:2010.8.65 KINCM:2010.8.31	Dent 1985
Wetwang	Sword	Hull and East Riding Museum	KINCM:2010.8.65 KINCM:2010.8.31	Dent 1985
Bugthorpe	Sword	British Museum	1905.0717.1	Stead 2006
Wetwang Village	Bridle bit x 2	British Museum	2001, 0401.1 2001, 0401.2	Giles 2012: 245; Hills 2001
Wetwang Village	Linchpin x 2	British Museum	2001,0401.15 2001,0401.14	Giles 2012: 245; Hills 2001
Wetwang Village	Strap union x 3	British Museum	2001, 0401.18 2001, 0401.8 2001, 0401.9	Giles 2012: 245; Hills 2001
Arras	Terret	British Museum	1877, 1016.9	See Giles 2012
Arras	Bridle bit x 2	British Museum	1877, 1016.11 1877, 1016.10	See Giles 2012
Garton Station	Terrets x 5	British Museum	1985, 0305.28 1985, 0305.27 1985, 0305.26 1985, 0305.25 1985, 0305.24	Brewster 1980
Wetwang 1	Terrets x 5	Hull and East Riding Museum	KINCM:2010.8.14 KINCM:2010.8.15 KINCM:2010.8.16 KINCM:2010.8.17 KINCM:2010.8.18	Dent 1985
Wetwang 2	Terrets x 5	Hull and East Riding Museum	KINCM:2010.8.57 KINCM:2010.8.56 KINCM:2010.8.55 KINCM:2010.8.58 KINCM:2010.8.59	Dent 1985
Wetwang 2	Linchpins x 2	Hull and East Riding Museum	KINCM:2010.8.45 KINCM:2010.8.46	Dent 1985

Site	Object Type	Museum	Museum No.	Key references
Wetwang 2	Bridle bits x 2	Hull and East Riding Museum	KINCM:2010.8.44 KINCM:2010.8.43	Dent 1985
Wetwang 3	Terrets x 4	Hull and East Riding Museum	KINCM:2010.8.66 KINCM:2010.8.68 KINCM:2010.8.69 KINCM:2010.8.67	Dent 1985
Wetwang Village	Tyres x 2	British Museum	2001, 0401.17 2001, 0401.16	Giles 2012: 245; Hills 2001
Wetwang Village	Nave hoops x 4	British Museum	2001, 0401.13 2001, 0401.12 2001, 0401, 11 2001, 0401.10	Giles 2012: 245; Hills 2001
Kirkburn	Bridle bits x 2	British Museum	1987, 0404.17 1987, 0404.16	Stead 1991a
Wetwang 1	Nave hoops x 4	Hull and East Riding Museum	KINCM:2010.8.10 KINCM:2010.8.11 KINCM:2010.8.13 KINCM:2010.8.12	Dent 1985

Table 5.3: A catalogue of the bone objects examined as part of the study for Pattern and Purpose in Iron Age East Yorkshire

Site	Object Type	Museum	Museum No.	Key References
Rudston Villa East Site	Comb	Hull	KINCM:1986.1826.170	Stead 1980
Rudston Villa East Site	Needle	Hull	KINCM:1986.1826.153	Stead 1980
Rudston Villa East Site	Bangle	Hull	KINCM:1986.1826.169	Stead 1980
Rudston Villa East Site	Needle	Hull	KINCM:1986.1826.154	Stead 1980
Rudston Villa East Site	Counter	Hull	KINCM:1986.1826.155	Stead 1980
Rudston Villa East Site	Object	Hull	KINCM:1986.1826.178	Stead 1980
Rudston Villa East Site	Perforated bone	Hull	KINCM:1986.1826.160	Stead 1980
Rudston Villa East Site	Peg	Hull	KINCM:1986.1826.152	Stead 1980
Rudston Villa East Site	Needle	Hull	KINCM:1986.1826.151	Stead 1980
Wetwang (Dent)	Comb	Hull	KINCM:2010.7.524	Dent 1984: fig. 4.4
Wetwang site XI (Dent)	Object	Hull	KINCM:2010.7.498	See Hull Museums Collections
Wetwang site VII (Dent)	Needle	Hull	KINCM:2010.7.499	See Hull Museums Collections
Wetwang site VII (Dent)	Spindle whorl	Hull	KINCM:2010.7.500	See Hull Museums Collections
Wetwang site VII (Dent)	Object	Hull	KINCM:2010.7.501	See Hull Museums Collections
Wetwang site VII (Dent)	Comb handle	Hull	KINCM:2010.7.502	See Hull Museums Collections
Wetwang site VII (Dent)	Point	Hull	KINCM:2010.7.503	See Hull Museums Collections
Wetwang site XI (Dent)	Pin head	Hull	KINCM:2010.7.505	See Hull Museums Collections
Wetwang site XI (Dent)	Comb or knife handle	Hull	KINCM:2010.7.506	See Hull Museums Collections
Wetwang site IX (Dent)	Fragment, possibly worked	Hull	KINCM:2010.7.507	See Hull Museums Collections
Wetwang site IX (Dent)	Pin	Hull	KINCM:2010.7.508	See Hull Museums Collections

Site	Object Type	Museum	Museum No.	Key References
Wetwang site VII (Dent)	Needle	Hull	KINCM:2010.7.509	See Hull Museums Collections
Wetwang site XI (Dent)	Slider/toggle	Hull	KINCM:2010.7.510	See Hull Museums Collections
Wetwang site IX burial 360 (Dent)	Point	Hull	KINCM:2010.7.512	Dent 1984: 156
Wetwang site IX burial 346 (Dent)	Point	Hull	KINCM:2010.7.513	Dent 1984: 156
Wetwang site IX burial 346 (Dent)	Point	Hull	KINCM:2010.7.514	Dent 1984: 156
Wetwang site IX burial 346 (Dent)	Point	Hull	KINCM:2010.7.515	Dent 1984: 156
Wetwang site IX burial 346 (Dent)	Point	Hull	KINCM:2010.7.516	Dent 1984: 156
Wetwang site IX burial 346 (Dent)	Point	Hull	KINCM:2010.7.517	Dent 1984: 156
Wetwang site IX burial 346 (Dent)	Point	Hull	KINCM:2010.7.518	Dent 1984: 156
Wetwang site IX burial 346 (Dent)	Point	Hull	KINCM:2010.7.519	Dent 1984: 156
Wetwang site VI burial 101 (Dent)	Point	Hull	KINCM:2010.7.520	Dent 1984: fig. A4
Wetwang site VIII burial 269 (Dent)	Point	Hull	KINCM:2010.7.521	Dent 1984: fig. A12
Wetwang site VIII burial 269 (Dent)	Point	Hull	KINCM:2010.7.522	Dent 1984: fig. A12
Wetwang site VIII burial 269 (Dent)	Point	Hull	KINCM:2010.7.523	Dent 1984: fig. A12
Wetwang site VII (Dent)	Two objects	Hull	KINCM:2010.7.1680	Dent 1984: fig. A12.
Wetwang site VII (Dent)	Object	Hull	KINCM:2010.7.1681	Dent 1984: fig. A12
Wetwang site III (Brewster)	Disc	Hull	KINCM:2010.6.234	Brewster 1980
Wetwang site III (Brewster)	Disc	Hull	KINCM:2010.6.235	Brewster 1980
Wetwang site III (Brewster)	Disc	Hull	KINCM:2010.6.236	Brewster 1980
Wetwang site III (Brewster)	Disc	Hull	KINCM:2010.6.237	Brewster 1980
Wetwang site III (Brewster)	Object	Hull	KINCM:2010.6.238	Brewster 1980
Wetwang Chariot Burial 3	Point fragment	Hull	KINCM:2010.8.88	Dent 1985
Wetwang site IX (Dent)	Needle	Hull	KINCM:2010.7.198	See Hull Museums Collections
Wetwang site IX (Dent)	Pin	Hull	KINCM:2010.7.199	See Hull Museums Collections
Wetwang site IX (Dent)	Needle/shuttle	Hull	KINCM:2010.7.197	Dent 1984: fig. 4.4
Garton Slack site V (Brewster)	Burnt toggle	Hull	KINCM:2006.11303.715.1	Brewster 1980
Garton Slack site VIII (Brewster)	Ring	Hull	KINCM:2006.11303.1368	Brewster 1980
Garton Slack site IX (Brewster)	Toggle	Hull	KINCM:2006.11303.1461	Brewster 1980
Garton Slack site IX (Brewster)	Possible slider	Hull	KINCM:2006.11303.1574	Brewster 1980

Site	Object Type	Museum	Museum No.	Key References
Garton Slack site X (Brewster)	Needle	Hull	KINCM:2006.11303.2821	Brewster 1980
Garton Slack site X (Brewster)	Pin	Hull	KINCM:2006.11303.2822	Brewster 1980
Garton Slack site X (Brewster)	Pin	Hull	KINCM:2006.11303.2823	Brewster 1980
Garton Slack site XI (Brewster)	Slider	Hull	KINCM:2006.11303.2961	Brewster 1980
Garton Slack site VIII (Brewster)	Pin	Hull	KINCM:2006.11303.3278	Brewster 1980
Garton Slack site VIII (Brewster)	Disc	Hull	KINCM:2006.11303.3288	Brewster 1980
Garton Slack site IXV (Brewster)	Needle/shuttle	Hull	KINCM:2006.11303.3414	Brewster 1980
Garton Slack XXV (Brewster)	Ox rib with 3 cuts (comb blank?)	Hull	KINCM:2006.11303.3846	Brewster 1980
Garton Slack site XXXIII (Brewster)	Toggle	Hull	KINCM:2006.11303.4557	Brewster 1980
Garton Slack site XI (Brewster)	Comb	Hull	KINCM:2006.11303.2956	Brewster 1980
Bell Slack	Handle	BM	1978, 1203.88	Stead 1991a
Garton Station	Point	BM	1985, 0305.13	Stead 1991a
Garton Station	Point	BM	1985, 0305.12	Stead 1991a
Garton Station	Point	BM	1985, 0305.11	Stead 1991a
Grimthorpe	Tool/ implement	BM	1876, 0208.22	Stead *et al.* 1969
Grimthorpe	Tool/ implement	BM	1876, 0208.18	Stead *et al.* 1969
Grimthorpe	Tool/ implement	BM	1876, 02-8.15	Stead *et al.* 1969
Grimthorpe	Tool/ implement	BM	1876, 0208.13	Stead *et al.* 1969
Grimthorpe	Point	BM	1876, 0208.23	Stead *et al.* 1969
Grimthorpe	Point	BM	1876, 0208.21	Stead *et al.* 1969
Grimthorpe	Point	BM	1876, 0208.20	Stead *et al.* 1969
Grimthorpe	Point	BM	1876, 0208.19	Stead *et al.* 1969
Grimthorpe	Point	BM	1876, 0208.17	Stead *et al.* 1969
Grimthorpe	Point	BM	1876, 0208.16	Stead *et al.* 1969
Grimthorpe	Point	BM	1876, 0208.14	Stead *et al.* 1969
Grimthorpe	Needle/point?	BM	1876, 0208.24	Stead *et al.* 1969
Grimthorpe	Tube	BM	1876, 0208.25	Stead *et al.* 1969
Makeshift	Object	BM	1975, 0401.186	Stead 1991a
Makeshift	Point	BM	1975, 0503.40	Stead 1991a
Makeshift	Antler tine	BM	1975, 0503.31	Stead 1991a

Site	Object Type	Museum	Museum No.	Key References
Makeshift	Knife handle	BM	1975, 0503.30	Stead 1991a
Makeshift	Knife handle	BM	1975, 0401.84	Stead 1991a
Garton Station	Object	BM	1973, 0302.47	Stead 1991a
East Field	Needle/bodkin	BM	1989, 0207.9	Rigby 2004
Wetwang Chariot Burial 1	Linchpin (antler)	Hull	KINCM:2010.8.29	Dent 1985
Wetwang Chariot Burial 1	Linchpin (antler)	Hull	KINCM:2010.8.30	Dent 1985

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Chapter 6
The Antique Antique?

Mark Lewis

Relationships with the past are documented by contemporary writers during the Roman period but personal attachment to historical objects may also be inferred stylistically and through examples of depositional context. This brief note uses items within the collection of the National Roman Legion Museum, Caerleon, in order to explore possible Roman (and post-Roman) attitudes to the historical. Within the archaeological record are we able to identify possible Roman attitudes demonstrating preferences for artefact historicity or utility? Case studies include the Caerleon jacinth marine goddess or Nereid, possibly 2nd–3rd centuries BC; the Caerleon genius togatus figurine, deposited post-AD 317 but having a debased Julio–Claudian style which still prevails in the late 3rd century or later; the Caerleon 'Celtic Horse' stud, a fourth-century deposition of a similarly dated artefact but stylistically very similar to first-century coinage—its report suggested implied survival of heirlooms; reworked antefixa from the Caerleon fortress baths and extramural area; and a seemingly intentionally deposited '?dedicatory' Republican denarius from the Praetorium. Can an understanding of Roman and later displays of curiosity with respect to the past also inform modern and future museum display and interpretation practice?

Keywords: *Artefact utility, collecting, curation, curiosity, Roman, wellbeing*

Prologue

Humankind's curiosity is long-standing, can be deep, and is often visible. In 1847, a group of philanthropic local middle-class gentlemen gathered together at The Priory, Caerleon, because they were concerned that the internationally significant archaeology of the Roman legionary fortress of Isca (founded *c.* AD 74/75 and occupied as the Legion's headquarters for over two centuries) was being actively mined for building stone (Lee 1862: 127). Its artefacts, including sculpture and inscriptions, were being lost at an alarming rate. Lee (1862: 130) noted that stones sculpted with Roman lettering could once be seen, reused, in the road surfaces of the town. Their utility for building projects and road-mending had been apparently commonly considered to outweigh any curiosity in them, or perceptions of historical importance, by those utilising them. The apparent general lack of curiosity, or indifference to the past and its material culture, including artefacts, at Caerleon, was nothing new. The geographer Strabo (*c.* 64 BC–*c.* AD 25) cited Polybius' description of the disregard for works of art and votive offerings displayed by the Roman soldiers that had sacked Corinth (Strabo 1927: 201, 8.6.23).

The meeting at The Priory saw the foundation of the Caerleon Antiquarian Association (now the Monmouthshire Antiquarian Association) with the object of building and maintaining a museum to 'save from the destroying hand of time the valuable relics of bygone days, impart a taste for liberal studies, enlighten the intellect and inspire the spirit of enquiry' (Kennerley 1987). It could be argued to have been founded, in part, to save curiosities, foster curiosity and satisfy it. Most Roman material (usually chance discoveries) offered to the then-new museum was accepted and its antiquarian and later collections show only limited collecting bias. The 'valuable relics of bygone days' included examples of many known and diverse Roman artefact types, as illustrated by the Museum's first catalogue published in 1862 (Lee 1862). The author's introductory remarks explain the value of the Roman (and other) artefacts to the nineteenth-century founders of the Museum, namely their capacity to 'illustrate the history and antiquities of Caerleon and the surrounding district'[1] (Lee 1862: xii). The catalogue was augmented with contextual 'literature' for 'an acquaintance with the history of the place seems essential to a correct knowledge of its antiquities' (Lee 1862: vii).

[1] Which included Roman Caerwent, the Roman *Venta Silurum, civitas* of the *Silures*.

Figure 6.1: The Museum of Antiquities, Caerleon, 1850, by James Flewitt Mullock (1818–1892). By permission of Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru / National Library of Wales. TIRLUN CYMRU Monmouthshire Top. B10/1 B024

We are able to see, already, that artefacts may be valued in many different ways, e.g. art-historically, technologically, aesthetically, for their intrinsic material (e.g. precious stone or scrap metal value), archaeologically (e.g. for dating or spatial distribution information, or culturally), or not at all. If, today, we live at a time characterised in western Europe, in part, by scientific endeavour, scientific archaeological approaches to the study and understanding of artefacts might be expected. Like the elephant's child 'who was full of satiable curiosity, and ...asked ever so many questions', human interest, responses and questions asked of archaeological artefacts might include, what it is, who made it, how, where, when, why, etc. (Kipling 1902: 82)[2] as well as an aesthetic or art-historic appreciation or iconographic understanding, where appropriate. Historical, including Roman, ways of valuing and appreciating ancient artefacts will have similarities and differences with many of these approaches. Can we hope to understand and demonstrate something of them through information elucidated from a combination of artefact and context?

Before presenting a range of case studies of Caerleon artefact 'biographies' [*recte* 'artefact hypotheses'] some context for them is considered. The Roman period in Wales represents the dawn of history and the passing of prehistory see Figures 6.2a and 6.2c). Consequently, we are able to avail ourselves of the surviving texts of the ancient world and glean much from them. With care and broad study, we may discern common traits in human curiosity, ideas and behaviours relating to the 'antique' which

[2] Cf. Rhetoric, after Hermagoras of Temnos and Cicero: *quis, quid cur, ubi, quando, quem ad modum, quibus adminiculis*; dividing a topic into its 'seven circumstances' - who, what, when, where, why, in what way, by what means (Copeland 1991: 67).

Figure 6.2: (a) The tombstone of Tadia Vallaunius from Caerleon with Latin capital letters cut at Caerleon during the second or third centuries AD (AC–NMW Acc. No. 31.78, RIB I 369). (b) Silver finger ring bezel from the Caerleon Fortress Baths (AC–NMW Acc. No. 81.79H/3.9), see footnotes 7 & 8 below. (c) Wales Millennium Centre in Cardiff Bay, commemorating two millennia of the written word in Wales. Images © Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales (2a and 2b) and Tony Hisgett, licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution 2.0 Generic license (2c)

transcend place, cultures and time. This paper will seek to begin to discern some of these traits using both ancient literature (briefly) and Caerleon artefact case studies.

Traits from Roman literature

In his work *The Lives of the Twelve Caesars,* Caius Suetonius Tranquillis (born in AD 70, just four or five years before the foundation of Isca, Roman Caerleon), described a collection of giant bones belonging to the Emperor Augustus.

> He disliked large and sumptuous country palaces... His own villas, which were modest enough, he decorated not so much with handsome statues or pictures as with terraces, groves, and objects

> noteworthy for their antiquity and rarity; for example, at Capri the monstrous bones of huge sea monsters and wild beasts called 'the bones of the giants', and the weapons of the heroes
>
> Rolfe 1913: 238

Historical interpretations of Augustus's collection of 'exceptionally large limbs' have included their identification as dinosaur bones, but, in truth, without greater detail they could have been from marine or extinct mammals such as those found at Capri today (Haug 2001: 118). Pliny (*Natural History* 9: 11) provides evidence of Roman wonder where out-sized bones are concerned. He recorded that:

> M. Scaurus, in his aedileship, exhibited at Rome, among other wonderful things, the bones of the monster to which Andromeda was said to have been exposed, and which he had brought from Jaffa, a city of Judaea. These bones exceeded forty feet in length, and the ribs were higher than those of the Indian elephant, while the backbone was a foot and a half in thickness
>
> Pliny *Natural History* 9: 11

Analogous curiosity may be cited in the form of whale bones historically curated at St Cadoc's parish church, Caerleon (now part of the collection of the Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum of Wales (AC–NMW) (Zoology), Acc. No. 31.78) and St Mary Redcliffe in Bristol as ribs of the mythical giant Dun Cow oft-supposedly slain by Guy of Warwick. Initially both were possibly primarily curated for their curiousness rather than their age *per se*. The Redcliffe example within St John's Chapel is said to have been actually brought to Bristol by John Cabot, returning from a voyage to the 'New World', in 1497 (St Mary Redcliffe 2019).

Augustus's evident passion for the antique and other curiosities was by no means unique in the ancient world. Recent detailed studies have resulted in books by Stephen Rutledge (2012) and Carolyn Higbie (2017) which cover the extensive ancient literature marking, especially, the cultural collecting habits of the Roman upper classes. Considering their cultural, political and social relevance, Rutledge (2012: 25, 36) notes the curation of trophies and other curiosities in the porticos, temples and fora of Rome and within Roman private collections: Cicero claimed that Verres had a 'zeal for collecting which morphed into disease, madness and fury' (Stuart 2003: 225–226). We might, today, recognise this as addiction? It is thought possible that Verres was a dealer (Stuart 2003: 225–226). Roman connoisseurs were recognised and respected, and collecting was certainly a marker of cultural identity for the Roman upper classes. Strabo (1927: 203–204, 8.6.23) reported that, despite what he considered to be the poor execution of terracottas in at least some cases, when Caesar's colonists discovered ancient terracottas and bronzes in a cemetery during the restoration of Corinth, the antiques entered the art market in Rome and were initially highly prized by collectors who admired their workmanship—a familiar-enough worldwide phenomenon today (Tubb and Brodie 2001).

However, not all 'graves' were looted in this way. Higbie (2017: 201–206) cites Phlegon and Pausanius describing the giant bones of an unearthed 'hero'. The finders, marvelling at the sight of a single tooth measuring over one foot in length and suspecting the bones to be those of a hero, sent the tooth to the emperor Tiberius. He reportedly ordered the geometer Pulcher to mould a scaled human head and body to match the tooth. The authors report that Tiberius was sufficiently satisfied with that spectacle and decided to return the original tooth to the 'grave' so as not to desecrate it. His curiosity regarding the scale of the buried being had been satisfied.

Higbie (2017: 196–199) notes a supporter of Vespasian, Mucianus, who is mentioned in no less than 20 of the 36 books of Pliny the Elder's *Natural History*. She concludes that Mucianus 'was curious, seemingly about everything in the world around him, and made good use of his imperial postings to investigate everything he could' (Higbie 2017: 196–197). He was particularly drawn to temples and their votives (*Natural History* 19, 12). Tacitus tells us of Mucianus's interest in ancient records and questioned how

he had been able to collect those he held—they had historically been stored in libraries (*Dialogus de oratoribus* 37.2).

Pliny the Elder discussed forgery (Higbie 2017: 199–200). For him, this primarily concerned the forgery of materials 'hard-won' from nature such as gems (Figure 6.3a and b). Ring-settings from Caerleon imitating semi–precious stones include nicolo paste and glass examples (Zienkiewicz 1986: 117–143, Nos 52 (illustrated), 76, 84 and 19, 29, 34 (illustrated), 69, 76). Pliny interestingly noted that fake coins were of more interest to collectors than genuine ones (*Natural History* 33, 132). The Llanvaches hoard of 599 silver denarii contained only two contemporary forgeries (Figure 6.3c and d; Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales Collections Online(a)). The Roman individual(s) responsible for accumulating the 'Llanvaches' hoard seem(s) to have taken care to select for genuine (high silver content and financial value) coins, rather than for curious forgeries. Their eyesight and numismatic knowledge appear to have been reasonably good also; unless the coin collection's origin betrays a bulk source possessing similar expertise and capability, or a good supply of genuine denarii, e.g. the legionary headquarters building at nearby Caerleon—possibly as a Roman military pension payment (with or without other savings)?

Pliny's observation that value could be commensurate with raw materials and other commodities that were 'hard-won', e.g. precious stones—many at Caerleon possibly originating in Sri Lanka and/or India (possibly *via* Muziris)[3]—suggests that 'utility' would have been (at all times) one significant driving force for long-term curation and reuse, repurposing, up-cycling, etc. Who, even today, does not have a garage, garden shed or cupboard full (or over-full) of artefacts (or, as we commonly refer to incomplete portable antiquities at Caerleon, '*partefacts*'—elemental parts of once-complete 'whole' things) that '*might be useful one day*', no doubt periodically necessitating a 'de-clutter'?

The age of the items was not always the primary factor in making them desirable, nor always the primary reason for prompting interest or curiosity. Curiosity *and* more-mundane utilitarian attitude may be observed.

It is highly unlikely that Roman curiosity was only the preserve of the upper classes. Curation of ancient artefacts and ecofacts is likely to have occurred at all levels of society and for varied reasons, such as basic utility, utility connected with superstition or veneration,[4] aesthetic utility, etc. The National Roman Legion Museum now houses a number of artefacts from Caerleon, the Roman ISCA, and Usk, Roman BVRRIVM, which may be said to have been antique 'antiques' at the time of their deposition in the archaeological record.

Case Study: The Prysg Field signet ring

Perhaps the strongest claim for an 'antique antique' from Caerleon, so far, is that associated with an engraved gem stone of jacinth set in an iron finger ring (Figure 6.4).

Martin Henig's corpus (1978: 221, No. 289) identifies the image as that of a Nereid or a swimming marine goddess, but concedes that the identification is iconographically problematic, offering Galene or Selene as alternatives. The artefact was discovered in a mid-second-century AD (Antonine) deposit

[3] See the Peutinger Table (Shajan *et al.* 2004; Talbert 2010).

[4] For example, the fossil name 'ammonite' is derived from the Latin *Ammonis coruna* or 'hammonis cornu' meaning 'horns of Ammon', referencing the ancient Egyptian god Ammon (or Amun), often depicted with ram's horns. The earliest record of the use of this term may be found in Pliny the Elder's *Natural History* 37.167: 'The Horn of Ammon, which is among the most sacred stones of Ethiopia, has a golden yellow colour and is shaped like a ram's horn. The stone is guaranteed to ensure, without fail, prophetic dreams (*praedivina somnia*)' (Oberhelman 2013: 224). A mystical quality associated with ammonite fossils is implicit.

Figure 6.3: (a) and (b) Glass and nicolo paste ring settings imitating gem stones from the Caerleon Fortress Baths excavations (AC–NMW Acc. No. 81.79H/4.52 (3a) and 81.79H/4.34 (3b)). (c) and (d) Contemporary forgeries from the Llanvaches Coin Hoard (AC–NMW Acc. Nos 2008.19H/598 (3c) and 2008.19H/599 (3d)). Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales accession numbers may be used to access the museum's catalogue entries (and images where available) online via 'Collections Online' at the museum's website https://museum.wales/collections/. © Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales

in a barrack block (block 7, room 11) within the legionary fortress. The subject and the material supported the conclusion that the gem was cut during the 3rd or 2nd century BC. Henig identified it as the earliest signet-ring found in Britain, noting it was 'clearly an heirloom; the ring was at least three hundred years old at the time of loss' (1978: 221).

The identification as an heirloom is a bold statement but it is an excellent 'artefact hypothesis' based on the evidence available at that and this time. The gem has an aesthetic which may have been variously appreciated at different times. It might not have remained the 'height of fashion' into the Antonine era (Pliny in Henig 1978: 31),

Figure 6.4: Caerleon Prysg Field Nereid gem and iron finger ring (AC–NMW Acc. No. 32.60/4. (stolen)). © Amgueddfa Cymru–National Museum Wales

given that colour trends alone had shifted from translucent multi–coloured gems towards opaque reds and dark blues or blacks (Zienkiewicz 1987: 13), but it did remain an undamaged signet ring setting capable of fulfilling its utilitarian role. It may well have been passed down as an heirloom, but it may equally have been a perhaps affordable, utilitarian acquisition? Nonetheless it is a remarkable survival. The iron setting at the time of deposition places it lower in the ring bezel hierarchy than silver and gold (Henig 1978: 36) and it is likely that iron rings were most commonly worn by the ordinary legionary (Zienkiewicz 1986: 142). It may even have been a remounted archaeological discovery, although the ring bezel *is* also considered to be consistent with an early date of manufacture.

Whatever it's biographic or hypothetical history, it probably retained sufficient 'utility' until lost or disposed of. Similar arguments may be made for stones and rings from Edinburgh, Shepreth in Cambridgeshire (Henig 1978: 31), and some of those from Vindolanda from fourth-century contexts but conventionally accorded an earlier manufacturing date on stylistic grounds (Henig 1978: 31). As claimed for so many of the engraved gem stones, one aspect of its utility with respect to Caerleon might be found in the notion of protection and possible links between the Second Augustan Legion and the sea, as proposed by Mike Fulford (2002: 83–101). Galene personified calm seas.

Case Study: The *Praetorium* deposit

The artefacts from the *Praetorium* deposit, some of which are illustrated in Figure 6.5, recall the rhyming couplet 'something old (a silver denarius), something new (a copper As), [something borrowed], something blue' (glass counters)... This curious deposit from Caerleon was recovered in 1908 from 'beneath the foundation where the partition and north walls of block I [of the legate's residence] unite' where the excavators hoped that it 'would furnish a reasonable post-quem date for the building' (Evelyn-White 1909: 82).

Figure 6.5: Glass counters from the Praetorium deposit (AC–NMW Acc. No. 31.78, Caerleon Number 6.1). © Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales

However, the cache included a very worn Republican denarius of M. Volteus of *c.* 78 BC depicting Hercules wearing a lion's scalp with a wild boar reverse which, it should be said, could still be circulating at the time of its deposition over 140 years after it was minted; a very corroded As of AD 71 or later bearing the legend SECURITAS AVGUSTI; and a small collection of glass counters (two of the three black counters and one blue can be seen in Figure 6.5).

Again, various models may be plausibly suggested. Could the deposit simply represent an early fortress loss or hiding place or repository whose memory was lost and possibly also then built over? Could the Republican denarius have been a curated memento or keepsake or good-luck charm whose iconography (the heroic Hercules, the boar (emblem?)) was meaningful?

Conversely, could it be argued that the deposit may have been dedicatory in nature, a 'foundation deposit' where the denarius had been, again, specially selected or, until then curated, for its iconography and the As selected for its contemporaneity and image of the reigning emperor, and former legate of LEG II AVG, Vespasian (Lewis 2011: 23, footnote 6)? A date after AD 71 is not inconsistent with the initial foundation of the legionary fortress in *c.* AD 74–75 and the earliest phase of construction at this site (Boon 1987: 5).

If nothing more than a collection of counters, a contemporary coin in the form of loose change with a good-luck charm, the find again may be said to be utilitarian in nature. If indeed a foundation deposit, I would still argue that the artefacts were probably still selected for their utility—they were deemed fit for purpose or particularly selected for their appropriateness for this particular foundation deposit. Similar behaviours could be argued for the collection of Roman 'charms' deposited in an open cist in a cairn at Monquhitter in Aberdeenshire. The collection included more than 50 natural stones including serpentine, agate, chalk, rock crystal, yellow amber and black flint and 12 artefacts, including a jet ring, an intaglio, two glass balls, possible glass gaming counters or ornaments and two Neolithic stone tools (Anderson 1902: 675–684; Hunter 1997: 113; Stevenson 1967: 143–145). Good luck, prestige, divination and magical healing were surmised for the hoard and it was questioned whether, in this quantity, they could have belonged to a dealer in charms (Stevenson 1967: 144–145).

Henig (1978: 37) discusses Roman votive practices, which included the gifting of finger rings at shrines. A study of the Lydney Park Temple finds reports (Bathurst 1879; Wheeler and Wheeler 1932: 68–131) illustrates the extensive gifting of bracelets, pins, brooches, coins, finger rings and other votives there. Piggott (1962: 55) discussed Roman coin finds from English barrows. Roman artefacts are commonly recovered from cave contexts (where a ritual deposition might be anticipated), e.g. Ogof yr Esgryn (tr. 'The Bone Cave'), Wales (D'Elboux 1924: 113–124; Mason 1968: 18–71). However, the association of most of the artefacts at Ogof yr Esgryn in 1923 with hearths was interpreted as evidence of two, closely occurring, periods of brief occupation following a single much earlier one (Mason 1968: 32) rather than anything associated with the supernatural, despite the hearths being situated 'out of sight of the entrance of the cave, rather than in the mouth itself' (Mason 1968: 122). Boon (in Mason 1968: 32) concluded that most of the Ogof yr Esgryn Roman finds published in 1968 were associated with second-century AD cave burials of (possibly native) individuals that more likely inhabited the Tawe Valley, noting that cremation would have been the prevalent Roman custom at the time. Roman artefacts and strata at Minchin Hole Cave, Gower, were interpreted by the excavators as evidence for domestic occupation and, perhaps, limited craft activity (Branigan *et al.* 1993: 40–73). In terms of artefact interpretation or meaning, context is everything.

Case Study: Repurposed *antefixa*

The apotropaic utility of artefacts for dedicatory or protective purposes was recognised by David Zienkiewicz (1986: 201, 334) at the Caerleon Fortress Baths. Purposefully deposited face upwards beneath the main entrance portal paving was a globose head carefully knapped from an *antefix* of a type interpreted by Boon (1984: 6–7) as depicting a protective *gorgoneion* which could ward off the evil eye (Figure 6.6b). Other examples of carefully 'knapped' *antefixa* may be cited from Caerleon but their contexts do not betray the reason for their potential 'repurposing' (Figure 6.6a and c). They could have been perfectly utilitarian, aesthetically pleasing, pot lids if not primarily dedicatory or protective in nature during their secondary, possibly repurposed, use (Boon nd). However, Paul Bidwell noted the occurrence of a complete face-mask *antefix* deliberately placed in a pit beneath the construction level of the Exeter baths, 'probably... to ensure the success of the building operations' (Bidwell 1979: 27).

Utility and status may, therefore, take many forms and alter over time and even over the 'lifetime' (perhaps *recte,* and less emotively, 'existence') of an artefact, unmodified or otherwise.

Figure 6.6: Repurposed Roman ceramic antefixa from Caerleon (AC-NMW Acc. Nos left to right (a): 63.228B F37b, (b): 81.79H/55.1 and (c): 56.214B F47 73). © Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales

Case Study: The 'Roman Gates' Celtic horse stud

The motif of this beautiful enamelled stud (Figure 6.7) was described as a 'nightmarish quadruped' by the finds specialist who published it (Webster 1993: 134, No. 135). The background enamel is blue and a dark green. A crescentic cell of enamel (?)within the delimited head is a particularly interesting formula. The published report noted the similarity between the appearance of this horse and those of first-century AD Celtic coins from the east of Britain, especially those of Cunobelin. The deposition of the stud in a barrack block at Caerleon was dated to the 4th century AD but the technique of manufacture was not thought to be consistent with an early, first-century, date. The specialist wrote 'a date of manufacture much closer to its fourth century deposition is likely' (Webster 1993: 134). If correct, then the artefact itself was not antique but its design was; in design parlance, '*Retro*'. Similarity with an enamelled disc brooch from Birdoswald depicting a 'conventionalised peacock' is noted here (Wilmott 1999: 412, No. 3 and fig. 295, No. 5c). Its report cited an identical example from Ambleside (Haverfield and Collingwood 1915: 461, fig. 182) and offered a possible interpretation where the motif may have been derived from posthumous *Consecratio* coins of the deified Faustina I, but noting that the execution 'is purely Celtic' (Wilmott 1999: 412). The reader is then referred to an artefact published by Bushe-Fox where a Celtic artist borrowed a sea-eagle from a Black Sea coin (Bushe-Fox 1913: fig. 10, No. 6).

Blue glass tesserae, probably raw material for enamelling artefacts such as the Celtic horse stud, have come from Hadrianic or Antonine contexts at Caerleon; that is the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD (Zienkiewicz 1993: 105–106). Red glass rods for enamelling have also come from the Caerleon British Telecom (AC–NMW Acc. No. 88.3H) and Bulmore settlement (AC–NMW Acc. No. 84.44H) sites (both currently unpublished). Unlike the, probably second-century AD, tesserae from West Clacton, England (Paynter *et al.* 2015: 67, fig. 1), no blue tesserae have yet been found at Caerleon with tesserae of other colours. The presence of caches of small, fairly uniformly-sized, blue glass tesserae from legionary and other contexts with military links, e.g. Castleford (Cool and Price 1998: 193), suggests that the army may have been involved in the distribution of at least some of the available, probably highly sought-after, commodity and/or some of its products. Perhaps the tesserae, as a raw commodity not otherwise available or widely so, were important economic or political tools for the army when seeking influence, perhaps even bidding to win over native 'hearts and minds'?

Figure 6.7: The Caerleon 'Roman Gates' excavation 'Celtic Horse stud' (AC–NMW Acc. No. 88.165H/71). © Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales

Webster's (1993: 134) specialist report for the Celtic horse stud concluded:

> How a fourth century stud from Caerleon came to derive its decoration from a first century native coin type peculiar to eastern Britain is not a question capable of direct answer but it implies the survival, perhaps as mementos or even heirlooms, of, and not a wholly limited familiarity with, the native coin types of the first century AD.

Case Study: The 'Roman Gates' *genius togatus*

Another 'Roman Gates', Caerleon, find is a statuette of a *Paterfamilias* (Webster 1993: 105, No. 1)—venerated as the personal guardian of the head of a household—perhaps that of a high-ranking officer (Figure 6.8). The toga and hair are faithfully Julio-Claudian, first-century in style. Deposition of the figurine probably occurred after AD 317, post-dating changes to the barrack block where it was found which suggested a change in the nature of its occupation. The figure may have been considered as literally the guardian of the head of the household of a family of a soldier at this time? Webster (1993: 105) concluded that at least half of similar figurines in Britain can be dated to the late 3rd century AD or later. Therefore, it is the antique stylistic image that prevailed. This object itself need not be antique. Its type form became fossilised during the 1st century AD.

And speaking of fossils...

Figure 6.8: (a) An epoxy resin cast from a pewter replica of the Caerleon 'Roman Gates' genius togatus *figurine made at the time of its discovery and owned by Graham Oxlade. (b) The replica figure during mould making for making the epoxy resin replica shown on the left. The original was lost from the museum during a professional robbery during the late 1990s and has not yet been recovered (AC-NMW replica Acc. No. 2007.38H). © Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales*

Case Study: Fossils

We began with Roman curiosity with possible fossils (Mayor 2000) and we end with fossils (Figure 6.9). Whilst Hadrian is known to have collected fossils near Troy (Solounias and Mayor 2004: 283) and that fossils could be valued for their supposed supernatural qualities (Pliny: see footnote 5 above), sadly, to date, the contexts for fossils from the fortress of Caerleon and that of the nearby fortress of Usk, Monmouthshire, which are also preserved at the National Roman Legion Museum, *do not* suggest that they were deliberately curated as a result of Roman curiosity. Consequently, they act to caution and remind us of the ever-present possibility of perfectly mundane explanations for artefact and ecofact movement and deposition. As noted already, context is everything: each fossil case study hypothesis presented here supports a perfectly mundane explanation for each occurrence within each legionary fortress.

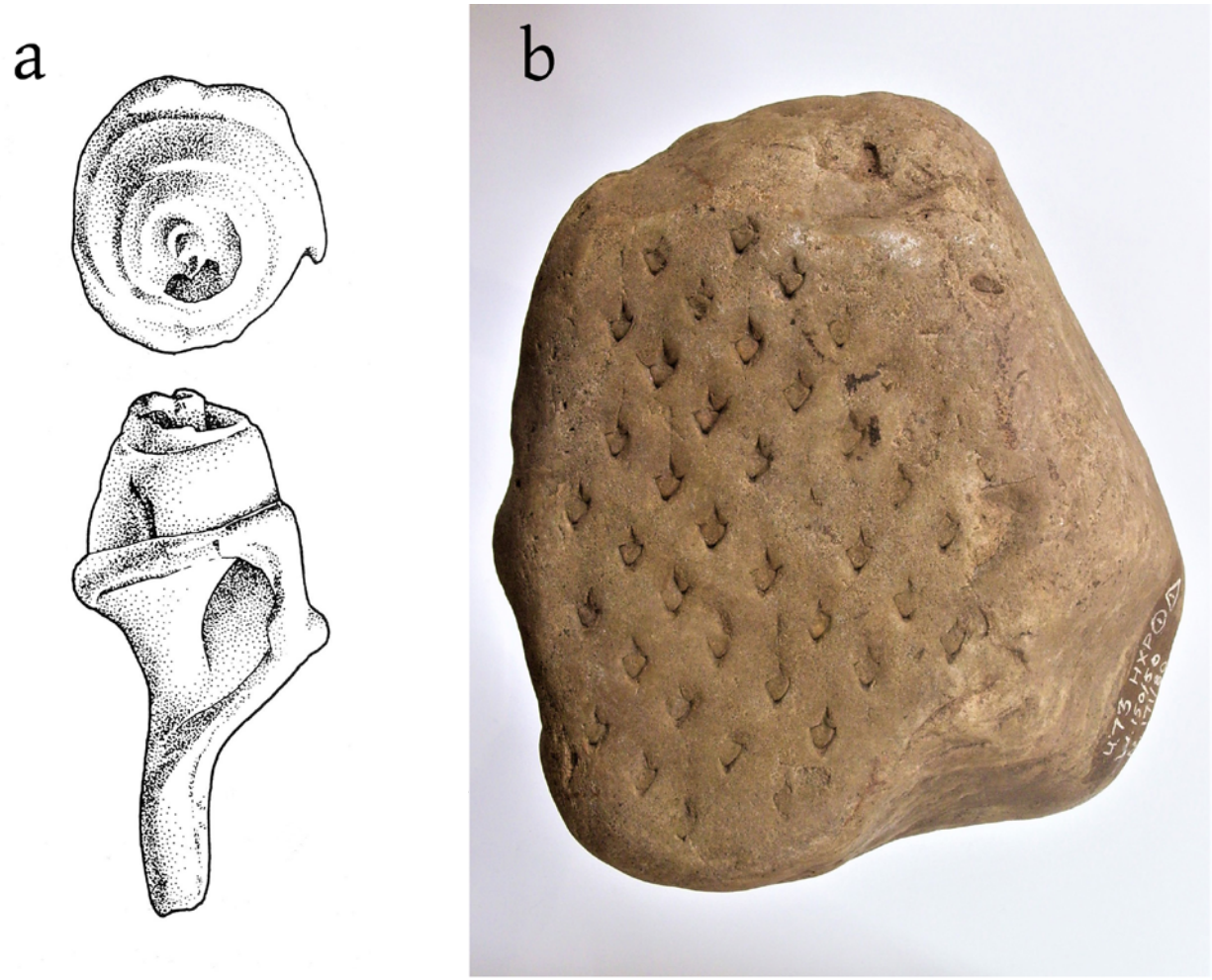

Figure 6.9: Published illustration and photograph of geological fossils from excavations at (a) Roman Caerleon and (b) Roman Usk (AC–NMW Acc. Nos (a): 81.79H/44.23; (b): 82.11H). © Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales

An Eocene gastropod mollusc shell (*Clavilithes marcrospira*) was recovered from the lime mortar concrete base of a hypocaust heating the changing rooms of the Caerleon fortress baths (Figure 6.9a), but it must have originated from the Barton Beds of Hampshire (Zienkiewicz 1986: 220, fig. 80, No. 4). These deposits outcrop on the coast, e.g. at Hengistbury Head where they may still be found amongst the shingle on the foreshore. This fossil shell presumably arrived in Caerleon as ballast or was included in gravel which had been shipped there for use as aggregate in concrete (Zienkiewicz 1986: 220, fig. 80, No. 4).

The locally-derived fossil lepidodendron (literally 'scale tree') stem imprint from Usk (Figure 6.9b) was utilised as building stone, but we sadly cannot tell whether it was the subject of legionary curiosity before it was finally deposited amongst Roman rubbish pits. Sadly, a segment of an ammonite from Usk was recovered from a disturbed, unstratified, context and cannot, with certainty, be linked with the Roman occupation there, still-less any Pliny-like prophecy. According to its archive label, the closest it could have been sourced geologically was reportedly Shropshire so its presence in Usk is almost certainly a product of human agency, *possibly* Roman. It recalls the 'wyrm-like creatures' of Roman finger ring bezels such as the Nether Wallop ring (Pearce and Worrell 2018: 421) and the Caerleon gold signet ring showing a nautilus and hound (Henig *et al.* 2000: 322, fig. 76, No. 1).

Concluding observations

It is almost inevitable that in any period of the past, or in the future, some artefacts will be curated or rediscovered long after most of the others of their type have ceased to be widely current. Roman attitudes to the 'antique' demonstrate an appreciation, by some at least, of the age and perceived qualities of ancient artefacts or ecofacts. However, the identification of past curiosity in, and appreciation of, 'antiques' must be approached with care. It could be easy in many cases to project possibilities onto artefacts and corroborating evidence should be sought. For example, if not representing leaves (e.g. of the arum family, *Aracae*; or orache, *Atriplex hortensis*) or other foliage, it has been suspected that some of the arrow-shaped motifs on samian bowls from southern and central Gaul may have been created as depictions of barbed and tanged prehistoric flint arrowheads that were revered as ancient artefacts, or possibly even revered as 'thunderbolts' (Rogers 1974: 183, U191; Stansfield and Simpson 1958: 24, fig. 27, No. 36; AC-NMW Acc. No. 84.43H/19.10, see Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales Collections Online (b)). The similarity between these samian poinçon when, as so often, arranged in groups on samian bowls, and the stem pattern of the lepidodendron fossil from Usk (reported above) should also be noted; it is unlikely, however, that the potter can have intended to represent both at the same time (or all three, including the leaf possibility). Whilst professionalism will favour the simplest explanation, a leaf or plant motif, as the potter's intention, the arrangement of these 'space fillers' in un-leaf-like layouts, unless interpreted as highly uniform stylised 'shrubbery', suggests that the possibility of other explanations should at least be considered. We should make allowance for alternative sound hypotheses that may then be tested against existing and future evidence, which is often contextual in nature.

Whilst ancient literary sources will have been penned usually by members of the middle- or upper-classes, and mostly describe their interests and behaviours, it is perfectly feasible that curiosity, reverence, and mystery surrounding ancient items were all commonplace amongst people of all classes, especially where healing or sacred aspects of the items were suspected or identified. As at Caerleon during the early years of the 19th century, the ability to recognise the value of ancient artefacts or ecofacts may not be, or may not have been, wholly distinguished by educational background or class. Perceptions of utility, influenced by the basic need to subsist and the level of formative education of the individual, will, no doubt, play a significant determining role in the ability of any individual to identify with, and curate, items for different kinds of importance. Equal weight was not given to each of the 'seven circumstances' by all people then, as now (see footnote 3, above).

What utility may be accorded to antiquities within the collections of museums such as the National Roman Legion Museum in Caerleon today? Museums are, by definition, places of formal[5] *and informal*[6] learning. This was recognised in the original Museums Act 1845 where museums were identified as institutions for the 'instruction and amusement' of the public (Lewis 2017: 28). From the beginning a duality of function (current utility) was recognised; learning and enjoyment. Curiosity might today be recognised in terms of 'wellbeing'. Within Wales, the Welsh Government's policies firmly recognise the importance of free access to culture for all and this is enshrined within its Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 (Legislation.Gov.UK 2015), Andrews' Report on Culture and Poverty (Andrews 2014), Smith's Report on the Arts and Education (Smith 2013) and Expert Review of Local Museum Provision in Wales (Edwards 2015). Wellbeing is central to the UK Government's mental health strategy. It states, 'evidence suggests that a small improvement in wellbeing can help to decrease some mental health problems and also help people to flourish' (Gov.UK 2019). The UK Government recognises the New Economics Foundation's report on behalf of Foresight which sets

[5] Which includes research and its publication.

[6] Which may include 'inspiring the spirit of inquiry'. The 2015 to current Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales vision is 'Inspiring People, Changing Lives' (https://museum.wales/vision-consultation/ accessed 28/01/2019). Inspiration from ancient artefacts need not be archaeological in nature in order to be 'legitimate'.

out '5 actions to improve personal wellbeing; connect, be active, take notice, keep learning, give' (Foresight 2010). 'Take Notice' is expanded as 'Be curious. Catch sight of the beautiful. Remark on the unusual... Be aware of the world around you...' (Foresight 2010: 3). Curiosity could be described as actively connecting, actively taking notice and actively keeping learning. 'It has its own reason for existing' and always did (Miller 1955: 281).

Successful museum exhibits and resources often rely on finding common ground with the visitor (often utility-based) from which any journey of curiosity or discourse may begin. Museum interpretation works best when it is layered, open-access (free), and where context is provided and enables people to begin a journey of discovery from their own, individual, starting points. The only true barrier to access and potential learning is the absence of physical, visual or audible access to the artefacts themselves and their accompanying information, which often seeks to explain their past utility, and in so-doing enhances their present utility. Increasingly diverse modern digital media are revolutionising opportunities for interpretation, access and enhanced artefact current utility.

Artefact utility can range from the profane mundane to the religiously sacred. However, with respect to considerations of the past the sacred should perhaps be regarded no differently than other daily worldly actions and transactions, being viewed instead as comprising the religiously mundane. Hard-won materials, and manufactured goods especially, can be curated for long-term utility. Most of the Roman inscriptions displayed at Caerleon were later preserved through re-use as flagstones (Collingwood and Wright 1965: RIB 331, 363, 359, 367 [used to support a medieval church font], 371, 372, 373, 374, 377) or as other architectural elements (Collingwood and Wright 1965: RIB 317, 322, 326, 327). My 35 years in field archaeology thus far have taught me that no building stone was ever sourced or moved any further than absolutely necessary, even by water. Explanations of the unusual often only require the identification of the peculiar overriding necessity that accounts for the decisions or actions apparently observed. In the instances of the tombstone/flagstone hypotheses, later Roman and subsequent mundane utility seems to have won the day over historical and sacred considerations.

Context is key when unlocking the arguments for and against different types of continued or later artefact utility. Perceived antique value could be regarded as financial, stylistic, aesthetic, antiquity, sacredness, or just recyclability, etc. The argument for the presentation of museum archaeological artefacts with contextual information is as strong as it ever was if the stories that they may tell are to be told (Lee 1862: vii). Continued research is essential for increasing understanding of context and utility, if any. Despite apparent limitations at first glance, Caerleon's Roman artefacts collection demonstrates that artefact utility in many, often diverse, guises can span generations, sometimes over many centuries, even millennia... (Figure 6.2c).[7]

IO SATURNALIA![8]

[7] This lecture being delivered at Cardiff in the week preceding the Roman Saturnalia, the silver finger ring bezel from the Caerleon Fortress Baths (Figure 6.2b, AC–NMW Acc. No. 81.79H/3.9) reminds us of the transfer from one Roman mid-winter festival to another, Christmas, still kept in many parts of the world around the time of the Roman *bruma* (also the *Natalis Invicti* or birth of the Unconquered Sun, whether Helios, Apollo, or Sol with his associate Mithras) on or near the 25th December. With regard to considerations of artefact utility (often metamorphosed) and human nature, we could do worse than to recall the words of the fourth- or third-century BC author commonly referred to as Koheleth: 'A generation goes and a generation comes, ...and there is nothing new under the sun... It has been already in the ages before us' (Ecclesiastes 1: 4–11). The Roman festival of Saturnalia, the harvest-home, was the '*optimus dierum*' – the 'greatest of days' – and began on 17th December and at its longest ran to the 23rd. A time of 'goodwill to all men', recalling the 'Golden Age of Saturn', it gave us many of our recognisable mid-winter Christmas traditions at this time of year, e.g. role reversal, holly and ivy decorations, special meals or banquets, present giving, winter merrymaking, first-footing, formal holiday, and even the image of 'Old Christmas' – a benevolent white-bearded old man with tousled hair (Santa/Saturnus/Old Father Time, an 'antique' image like the Caerleon *paterfamilias*).

[8] The *clamare Saturnalia,* "Io" (pronounced Yo or Eee-O) was used as a traditional Roman seasonal greeting at this festive time of year. This may be found today in the carol 'Ding, dong, merrily on high...' – '...and Io, Io, Io...', first published in 1924.

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[10] See also online interactive map, viewed 30 January 2019, <http://peutinger.atlantides.org/map-a/>.

Chapter 7
Rethinking heirlooms in early medieval graves

Brian Costello and Howard Williams

Since the influential work of Roger White (1988; 1990), there have been a range of studies exploring the reuse and recycling of artefacts in southern and eastern Britain in the 5th–7th centuries AD, focusing especially on the reuse of Roman artefacts in early Anglo-Saxon furnished inhumation graves. This chapter will reappraise the theoretical and methodological framework for such studies, suggesting that the focus on 'Roman' artefacts distracts attention away from the potential mnemonic significance of deploying early medieval curated artefacts in the mortuary arena as key components of burial assemblages. We propose a new approach to early medieval artefacts, focusing on how older early medieval 'heirlooms' were deployed within the burial tableau as significant elements of mortuary performance. This argument is illustrated by four furnished inhumation graves, two each from a pair of cemeteries in east Kent.

Keywords*: Early medieval, heirlooms, mortuary practices, object biography, social memory*

Introduction

In the last three decades, a range of studies focusing on different materials and parameters have sought to explain the presence of Roman-period materials within graves of 5th–7th century date from southern and eastern Britain (Eckardt and Williams 2003; Fleming 2010; Sherlock 2016; Swift 2006; White 1988). This phenomenon was recognised very early in the study of Anglo-Saxon furnished graves. For instance, the mid-nineteenth century collector and archaeologist Charles Roach Smith concluded that they may reveal direct relationships between the Romano-British and Anglo-Saxon incomers, attributing an 'heirloom status' upon the objects (Smith 1871). Alternatively, these items were thought to possess superstitious or magical connotations for early medieval people because of their antiquity (Smith 1871; Rhodes 1990). Such anecdotal narratives persisted through 20th-century archaeological literature—both cemetery reports and syntheses. When Audrey Meaney (1981) surveyed Roman objects deployed in early Anglo-Saxon-period graves, she interpreted their lack of apparent prosaic function to suggest they might join a range of other items (including fossils and miniature items) in being interpreted as 'amulets'. Yet, it was the significant national survey and analysis conducted by Roger White that first evaluated this practice in a systematic fashion. White (1988; 1990) recorded the presence of over five hundred Roman objects from 42 early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries. Unlike Meaney, White interpreted the reuse and recycling of Roman goods as practical rather than motivated by their perceived magical qualities: Roman items were selected as cheaper replacements for early Anglo-Saxon artefacts (White 1988; 1990). Whatever their motive of reuse, White argued that they cannot be used as evidence of the survival of Romano-British people in early Anglo-Saxon England.

Subsequent studies have taken contrasting approaches, although no study has attempted to supplant White's detailed analysis. Eckardt and Williams (2003) agreed with White that reused Roman objects were unlikely candidates as curated artefacts, but instead were scavenged from the remains of nearby Roman sites. Yet they emphasised the potential mnemonic significance of old artefacts in mortuary contexts, deriving from their *lack* of biographies, as opposed to their inheritance (Eckardt and Williams 2003: 155–156). As retrieved artefacts, they may have been important for fostering the creation of new myths and histories linked to the landscape via the medium of material culture, especially costume, and subsequently via their deployment in graves (Eckardt and Williams 2003: 163). This conjuring of fictive pasts through material media correlates with the reuse of the ancient monuments, including Roman ruins, as loci for many early Anglo-Saxon burial sites (Williams 1997).

The recycling of Roman objects in the formation of new objects during the early Anglo-Saxon period has also garnered attention and investigation. Ellen Swift (2006) analysed the biography of late Roman (4th century AD) bracelets and their modification into smaller rings, many of which were then deposited in early Anglo-Saxon graves. She doubted their heirloom status, since the bracelets' forms were physically modified, altering their original function and meaning (Swift 2006: 28). In contrast, Chris Caple (2010) afforded a significance to the process of recycling and reuse itself. He discussed the recycling of Roman metal into Anglo-Saxon style objects, such as disc brooches, concluding that the origins of the metal would cause the veneration of freshly made material culture, with them becoming what he termed 'ancestor artefacts' (Caple 2010: 314). However, Robin Fleming (2010: 78) regarded that the recycling and reusing of metal from Roman objects was intended for the creation of new objects or as cheap replacements during the early Anglo-Saxon period. Fleming (2016: 148) also discussed how the decline of smelting in Britain after AD 400 led to the necessary recycling of metals. Her work set this in the context of the recycling of Roman building materials which continued until the 11th century AD, concluding that recycling during the Anglo-Saxon period was a normal, convenient occurrence (Fleming 2016: 150). Most recently, in discussing seventh-century ('final-phase') grave goods Sherlock (2016) argued that Roman objects shifted in importance in the 7th century, and were reused as high-status jewellery, and possibly as amulets, as part of an expression of 'status, faith and antiquity' through female dress. In this argument, Sherlock echoes ideas developed elsewhere by Geake (1997) regarding the renewed importance of *Romanitas* in the 7th century.

Perspectives on the reuse of Romano-British artefacts in early medieval funerary contexts clearly vary significantly: some regard the practice as a prosaic use of old artefacts as cheap replacements or raw materials, whilst others entertain the potential symbolic and mnemonic significance of these artefacts. A key criticism of all these studies is their elision of our archaeologically derived period categorisations with how people between the 5th–7th centuries AD might have perceived the biographies of things. In other words, only objects we as archaeologists today identify and date as 'Roman' are considered of significance as 'old' items in early Anglo-Saxon life and death. Furthermore, these divergent approaches—symbolic, social, economic—share in relatively limited attention to the mortuary context of deposition. In particular, there is a lack of consideration regarding how these artefacts might have worked together with other (newer) items when deployed in both display and staged consignment into furnished graves to make statements about the dead by the living as assemblages (Williams 2006: 46–55, 123–134). Putting these critical points together, previous work has afforded limited attention to how items we regard as 'Roman' might work within the tableau of grave goods alongside artefacts with shallower, but still potentially significant, biographies of use linked to the social networks and histories of both the survivors and the deceased. Identifying these lacunae opens up new possibilities for interpreting the significance of old artefacts in early Anglo-Saxon communities and, in particular, during their mortuary practices. If interrogated within their mortuary contexts, Roman-period artefacts can be considered to operate as part of broader mnemonic compositions mediating social remembrance during the ritual process of early Anglo-Saxon funerals in which they were but one element (Eckardt and Williams 2003). This is a particularly significant area of neglect when it is realised that the vast majority of items deployed in early Anglo-Saxon-period funerals are not excessively old objects, but instead their curation and known biographies would have motivated their funerary deposition. Taking a mnemonic perspective and focusing on the burial context, this chapter suggests a new approach to the complex role of curated artefacts in early medieval furnished inhumation graves, focusing on 'early Anglo-Saxon' rather than 'Roman' artefacts, and drawing upon evidence from two well-excavated early Anglo-Saxon burial sites from east Kent: Mill Hill, Deal; and Saltwood Tunnel, Saltwood. The discussion here constitutes one element of a broader forthcoming study exploring the biographies of swords and brooches from early Anglo-Saxon Kentish cemeteries (Costello forthcoming).

Curated artefacts as 'heirlooms'

How might specifically curated artefacts operate in the early medieval mortuary arena? The term 'heirloom' might here be an effective catch-all term for such items. 'Heirloom' is defined by the Oxford English Dictionary (2018) as 'any piece of personal property that has been in a family for several generations' or 'anything inherited from a line of ancestors, or handed down from generation to generation'. The etymology of the word 'heirloom' originates from a combination of two medieval English words: 'heir' being the inheritor of property or rank, and 'lome' meaning a tool (Lillios 1999: 241).

The term 'heirloom' has been problematic in archaeological studies and its use has varied within academic contexts (Gilchrist 2013: 170). This can be partially attributed to the difficulty in discerning between artefacts that are 'old' when buried as opposed to simply old-fashioned in style, despite increasingly rigorous chronological phasing in early medieval archaeology, as well as enhanced investigations into evidence of wear and repair on artefacts. It also relates to the difficulty of interpreting older objects found in later contexts as belonging to a single family or lineage, rather than objects acquired or exchanged over long distances and between different groups. We must also remember that artefacts were being retrieved from the archaeological record in the Early Middle Ages by grave-robbing and the investigation of older sites (Eckardt and Williams 2003; Wessman 2007).

These points relate to another challenge: the absence of evidence regarding the familial structures or inheritance patterns of early Anglo-Saxon people to afford support for any postulated mechanisms of curation (Sayer 2009). Still, the term has been variously used in studies of early Anglo-Saxon graves and their contents. In the first academic discussion of early Anglo-Saxon heirlooms, Brown (1915: 208) concluded that the presence of fewer swords compared to other weaponry in early Anglo-Saxon graves was due to the inheritance of the sword by the deceased's heir. This presumption became known as Brown's "heirloom factor" and has been casually accepted as an explanation for the lower ratio of swords within burials as an assumption of inheritance patterns (see also Härke 2000).

These ideas have variously influenced numerous commentaries on the early Anglo-Saxon period, where the term heirloom has been used vaguely to describe an object which appears older than the rest of the grave assemblage (e.g. Härke 2000; Hills *et al.* 1984: 15; Huggett 1988; Parfitt and Brugmann 1997: 50). However, given the focus on Roman-period artefact reuse (see above), the curation of early Anglo-Saxon-period artefacts has tended to be downplayed. The only exceptions are instances where high-status artefacts are demonstrably old and exotic (as, for example, with some of the items found in the exceptional burial assemblage in Mound 1 from Sutton Hoo (see Williams 2001)). Indeed, the desire for more precisely dated grave assemblages, assisted by radiocarbon dating, has tended to rule out heirlooms as an important component of early Anglo-Saxon mortuary ritual (Hines and Bayliss 2013).

Whilst we recognise the problems with its use, we suggest that the term 'heirloom' can be still used effectively to discuss curated artefacts, if not necessarily discerning those related to direct familial inheritance. Specifically, it can be used in early medieval contexts to refer to older objects with biographies of early Anglo-Saxon date used in graves, in contrast to retrieved artefacts originally of prehistoric and Roman date. These objects can be thought of as 'antiques', where the age of the objects, rather than the known biography, most likely prompted their collection and presence (Whitley 2002: 226). Heirloom objects might include a range of items which have been selected, stored or displayed, but certainly items demonstrably curated and perhaps retaining a known biography to the owners. From simple or commonly used items such as beads or pottery to more precious items such as gold pendants and ivory bag rings (e.g. Huggett 1988), 'heirlooms' share in being important in social, economic, political and religious terms to the people who owned, curated, and continued their circulation beyond their utility or exchange value (Lillios 1999).

Later historical sources provide a problematic source of analogy to understand the circulation of items in early medieval graves. Still, inheritance was included within the first recorded law codes of the Anglo-Saxons; the law codes of Aethelbert of Kent in AD 602/603 (Reilly 2004; see also Härke 2000; Sayer 2009). Laws 78–81 of the codes present instructions and procedures for the inheritance of property within a family after a death or the absence of children as heirs (Härke 2000: 378; Reilly 2004: 20). These laws reveal that specific regulations were implemented when a normal inheritance protocol proved to be problematic. Although written from the beginning of the 7th century AD, these laws show that inheritance procedures were a normal occurrence which had been previously established (Härke 2000: 378; Sayer 2009).

Although far later, further evidence is derived from the tenth- and eleventh-century AD wills (Whitelock 1930). These written documents recorded details of the inheritance of land, wealth, as well as portable objects, such as clothes, swords, and jewellery. In some cases, the artefacts listed were described in detail, demonstrating their importance, value, or unique qualities (Whitelock 1930). Devlin (2009) has made the point that not all the possessions of an individual were included, suggesting that objects listed in the wills carried specifically important social meanings and messages, akin to the selection of artefacts for burial in the furnished inhumation burials of the 5th–7th centuries AD (see also Williams 2010). Devlin makes the connection that the roles of objects still played a major part for the remembrance of individuals, though the methods by which they were implemented had changed between the early to late Anglo-Saxon periods (Devlin 2009: 29–33).

Specific archaeological evidence can also bolster the argument that artefact-curation was integral to early Anglo-Saxon mortuary practice. In addition to exceptional high-status artefacts interred in 'princely graves' (see Williams 2001; 2006: 41, 135–141), evidence of the likely selective recycling of weapons and other iron implements from early Anglo-Saxon cremation pyres has been proposed (Williams 2005). Furthermore, some individual items are demonstrably old when buried in children's graves. Grave reopening has similarly been highlighted as a prolific social practice in sixth- and seventh-century Kent, linked to the retrieval of selected valued items: brooches and swords (Klevnäs 2011: 72; 2015: 166) whilst other accompanying objects were left behind within the grave cut (Klevnäs 2015: 168).

Further evidence can be discerned from evidence of wear and repair on early Anglo-Saxon artefacts. Later written documentation demonstrates the specific value of swords as objects of social status and curated over long periods (Bazelmans 1999; Davidson 1998; Härke 2000). Meanwhile, Brunning's (2013) work shows that many early Anglo-Saxon examples display asymmetrical abrasion upon the hilt, which may have been caused by the daily or frequent wearing and handling of the weapon when worn in its scabbard. Hence items were evidently interred that were valued for their age as much as their utility: they often show signs of being repaired and refitted through complex life-histories

Brooches have also been interpreted as important social signifiers linked to identity, life stages, and social relations, but also in the commemoration of the dead (Devlin 2007: 41–42; Stoodley 1999; Williams 2006: 47–55). Similar to swords, many brooches bear abrasion patterns (Parfitt and Brugmann 1997). Therefore, cremation technologies (which Williams (2005) demonstrated for early Anglo-Saxon England involved the fiery transformation and subsequent selective recycling of iron knives and weaponry), grave reopening, and the artefacts themselves, show that object biographies were integral to the performance and significance of mortuary rituals.

Set in this context, we can appreciate how artefacts inherited within a family or kin group during the early Anglo-Saxon period may have held a significant mnemonic role, especially when deployed to connect past and present during funerals. From their known and specific biographies, heirlooms placed in graves may have worked as mnemonic references to past people, events, and places, similar

to a genealogical history. The visual representation of an object owned by various individuals of the deceased's family would have provoked the social remembrance of those individuals, connecting their own achievements, stories, and privileges in relation to the deceased. In a period when funerals were used as a platform for social competition and reconfiguration, the genealogical connection of heirlooms would have directly affected the social remembrance of the status of the deceased and their surviving family. This mirrors Connerton's (1989: 85) discussion of how genealogies were public signs of privileged social station in the late to post-medieval periods. These genealogies comprised a direct connection to past relatives, which would also socially recollect the achievements of those individuals (Connerton 1989: 85). Therefore, as part of mnemonic perspectives on early medieval mortuary practice—investigating death rituals among communities experiencing the transformation of the Western Roman Empire and its barbarian successor states (Devlin 2007; Williams 2006)—archaeologists should explore the potentially complex biographies of grave goods. These items may have brought with them stories that connected the living with the dead and mediated commemoration in the mortuary arena (see also Devlin 2007; Williams 2006; 2010; 2014).

Why was social memory important in early medieval funerals? These open-air multi-staged ceremonies were not only public gatherings to mourn the dead, but also arenas for social competition through the quantity and quality of material culture amassed, exchanged and deposited (Halsall 1995: 247; Scull 1999). In addition, they were 'technologies of remembrance' in which material culture negotiated the selective remembering and forgetting of the dead in relation to social and cosmological schema (see Williams 2006). Curated items with complex histories, might have accrued significance in such environments due to their unique biographies, bringing fame and prestige to funerals and honouring those they were deposited with (Williams 2001). Hence, the quantity and types of grave goods, including their biographies, might have been one of the key media used to create a distinctive funerary performance, responding to, and competing with, previous funerals by others. The positioning and treatment of the body in relation to the location and placement of specific and selective deployments of grave goods, created an assemblage for mourners present during the funerary rituals. These assemblages, not just their components, would influence the social remembrance of the community and the reconfiguration of status post-funeral (Halsall 1995; Williams 2006). Informed by this mnemonic approach to heirlooms as key dimensions of burial assemblages, we can proceed to craft a new approach to early Anglo-Saxon furnished graves.

New approaches to heirlooms

To date, there has been no systematic exploration of the interactions between new and 'heirloom' artefacts within specific burial assemblages to further reveal their roles in social remembrance during early Anglo-Saxon mortuary practice. The analysis of a series of early Anglo-Saxon burial sites in Kent has identified disparities in the accepted typological dating of individual artefacts within the entire burial assemblage in order to identify them as potential 'heirlooms' (Costello forthcoming). This approach considers the differences in grave good chronology, such as older typologies of brooches in combination with later variants, as well as sword hilt pieces found with other artefacts of contrasting date. The inhumed individual's approximate age at death determined by osteological analysis was compared with the chronological timeframe of the analysed objects to discern any relationship.

A second factor was the identification of repairs or abrasion patterns upon the objects, a step taken with caution and in consideration of the entire grave context. In Leigh's (1980: 484) work on square-headed brooches, he discussed the problems in the interpretation of abrasion as a sign of age. Leigh presented the different scenarios and factors in which abrasion could occur at different rates. This included the type of metal, how and where the object was worn, and the frequency with which the brooch was used (Leigh 1980: 484–485). In addition, the recognition of repairs and abrasion patterns

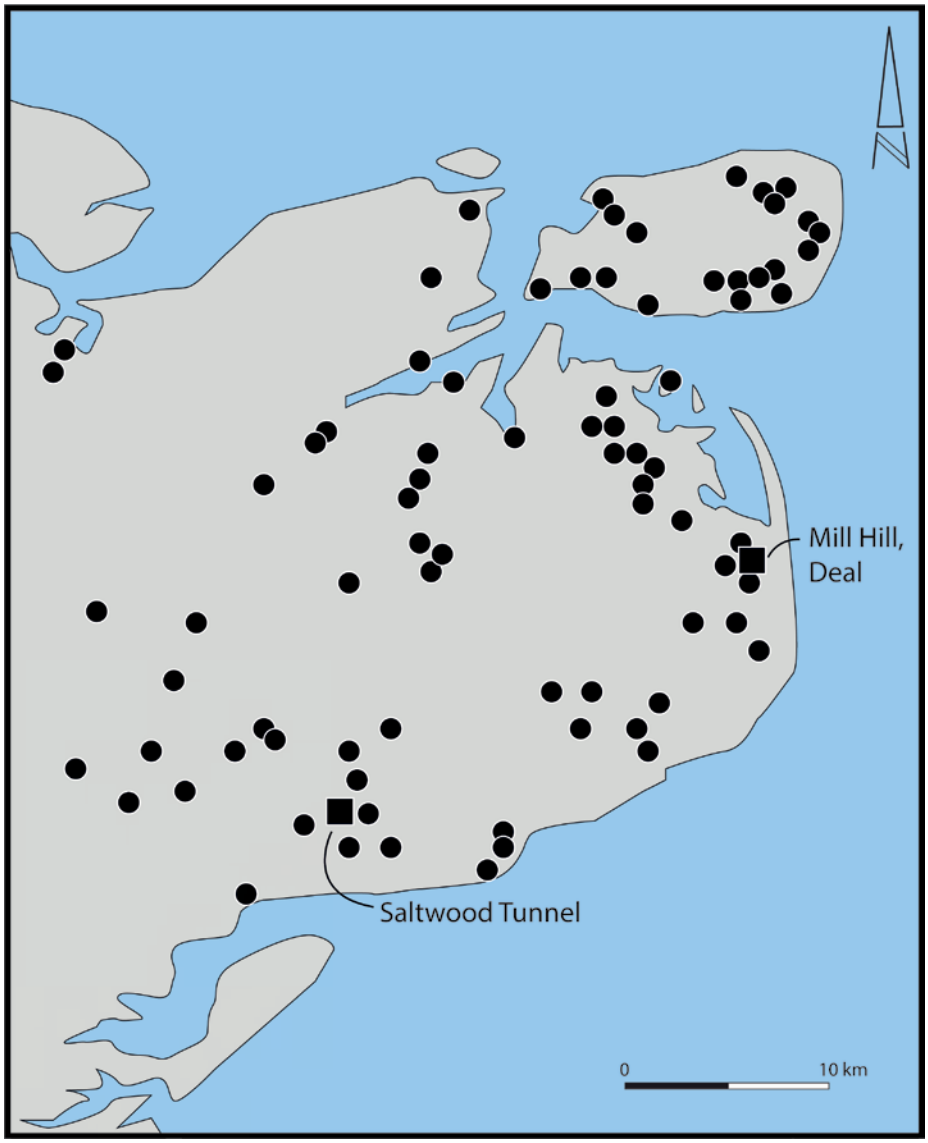

Figure 7.1: Map of east Kent showing the Mill Hill, Deal, and Saltwood Tunnel, Saltwood, cemeteries in relation to the overall distribution of known early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries (Base map of historic coastline re-drawn after Brookes and Harrington (2010: 38, fig. 10))

is dependent upon which regimes of handling, cleaning, and conservation techniques were deployed (Brunning 2013: 132). However, abrasion also signifies their frequent use as dress items, and their form and character would have made them recognisable and memorable in association with specific individuals or groups within small farming early Anglo-Saxon communities akin to the way Brunning (2013: 143) has interpreted this on the asymmetrical wearing of sword hilt pieces. The chronological evidence, in tandem with indications of abrasion, were then analysed for both brooches and swords.

Rethinking heirlooms at Mill Hill and Saltwood Tunnel

To illustrate the argument for this chapter, four graves from two early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries, both excavated and published to a high standard in recent times, have been selected for further discussion. The cemeteries of Mill Hill, Deal and Saltwood Tunnel, Saltwood, were chosen because they are both located in the east of the county of Kent, and thus both are part of a tight concentration of early Anglo-

Saxon furnished inhumation cemeteries revealing depositional practices and artefact-frequencies and types that differ from other parts of early Anglo-Saxon England (Brookes and Harrington 2010) (Figure 7.1). Their evaluation in relation to each other consequently alleviates regional disparities in mortuary practice. Moreover, both cemeteries were in use over a comparable duration throughout the 6th and 7th centuries AD (Parfitt and Brugmann. 1997; Riddler and Trevarthen 2006: 27; Sayer 2009: 158). They also both share locational characteristics: each reused Bronze Age round burial mounds as foci for mortuary practices (Parfitt and Brugmann 1997: 12; Riddler and Trevarthen 2006: 26; Williams 1997).

The types and frequencies of objects, such as dress fasteners and martial gear, were also found to be similar between the two cemeteries. This reflects a regional trend of early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries in Kent containing a higher ratio of sword burials as well as a larger variety of brooch type and number in graves, in comparison with other English regions (Brunning 2013; Gilmour 2007; Härke 1989). The similarities in mortuary practices between the two cemeteries, as well as both being excavated and recorded using modern techniques, provide a quality context for analysis.

The cemetery at Mill Hill contained 76 inhumation burials organised in three burials plots focused around a Bronze Age barrow. The entire cemetery was excavated, although it is likely that the graves were not situated in isolation (Parfitt and Brugmann 1997: 11): there is evidence of a second cemetery half a kilometre to the north-west, but this was never professionally excavated before the site was developed (Parfitt and Brugmann 1997: 4). Plot A designated the group on the south-west, Plot B on the north-east, and Plot C staggered across the length of the east side. The chronology of grave goods indicated that Plots A and B were used throughout the 6th century AD, and Plot C was used from the mid-6th to 7th century AD (Sayer 2009: 158). Most of the burials contained grave goods, with only 12 of the 76 not containing any objects (Parfitt and Brugmann 1997: 26).

The Saltwood Tunnel sample contained 217 graves excavated throughout three separate but proximal burial plots. The eastern cemetery contained 17 graves, 141 graves in the central cemetery, and 59 within the western cemetery. It is believed that the entirety of the eastern cemetery was excavated and most of the graves from the central cemetery. Due to the limits of the excavation, it is expected that more graves south of the western cemetery remained undiscovered (Riddler and Trevarthen 2006: 27; Riddler *et al.* 2006).

Both the Mill Hill and Saltwood Tunnel cemeteries contained burials with brooches and swords, which were analysed for characteristics of curation. This chapter will focus upon the brooches as examples of 'heirlooms' enacted in a mnemonic role of social remembrance during the funeral for four graves. There were 46 brooches found within 16 of the burials at Mill Hill, four of which displayed likely evidence of curation through the methods previously discussed (Parfitt and Brugmann 1997: 29–31). Seven other burials showed some curation characteristics but did not have enough evidence to positively identify them as such. The Saltwood Tunnel cemetery contained fewer brooches, with 17 from seven graves and two displaying likely evidence of curation (Ager *et al.* 2006: 4; Walton Rogers *et al.* 2006: 4). The other brooch burials did not display demonstrable characteristics of curation. The comparison of the most likely curated brooches between the cemeteries is similar at about a quarter of the total number of brooch burials (25% at Mill Hill, 28.5% at Saltwood Tunnel), suggesting that brooch-curation was neither ubiquitous nor rare. Let us begin with Mill Hill, where the selected analysed burials which display characteristics of curation are graves 61 and 102.

Mill Hill, grave 61

Mill Hill grave 61 has been dated between the early and mid-6th century (Figure 7.2, top-left). It was located in Plot A, inside the ring-ditch of the Bronze Age barrow. Skeletal preservation was poor, but

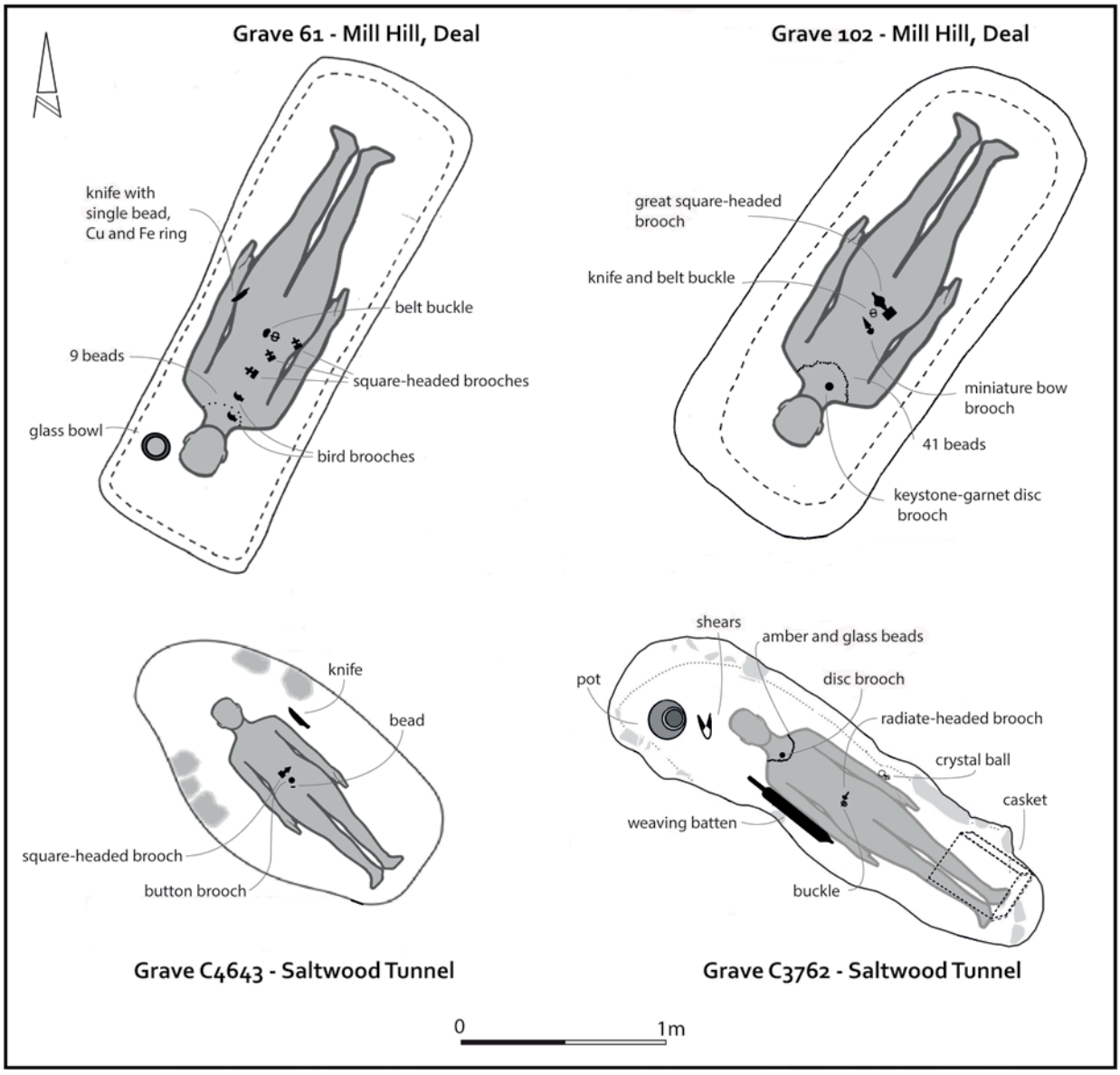

Figure 7.2: Schematic annotated grave-plans of the four early Anglo-Saxon inhumation graves that form the focus of this study. Top-left: grave 61, Mill Hill, Deal (after Parfitt and Brugmann 1997: 201); top-right: grave 102, Mill Hill, Deal (after Parfitt and Brugmann 1997: 211); bottom-left: grave C4643, Saltwood Tunnel, Saltwood, Kent (after Riddler et al. 2006, fig. 107); bottom-right: grave C3762, Saltwood Tunnel, Saltwood, Kent (after Riddler et al. 2006: fig. 83)

the fragmented skull and long bones survived well enough to estimate the age of the individual to be 20–25 years old at the time of death (Parfitt and Brugmann 1997: 138). The individual was buried with five brooches, arranged as two pairs, with a single brooch in between. The pair of bronze gilded square-headed brooches are of the Åberg type 131 and displayed no signs of abrasion (Åberg 1926; Parfitt and Brugmann 1997: 37). The pair of brooches has been chronologically dated to the early 6th century AD. The single square-headed brooch, an Åberg type 132, chronologically dated to the early to mid-6th century AD, displays no abrasion but had its footplate broken (Parfitt and Brugmann 1997: 100). The last two brooches were heavily abraded continental bird brooches of the *Aubing* type (Parfitt and Brugmann 1997: 45; Werner 1961: 43). This 'pair' are actually two separate brooch casts but were worn as a pair within the grave (Parfitt and Brugmann 1997: 45). One of the bird brooches

was bronze and the other silver. This *Aubing* type of bird brooch was in use on the Continent from the mid- to late 5th to early 6th century AD (Parfitt and Brugmann 1997: 100; Pirling 1966: 178). The other grave goods included within the burial were a group of nine beads placed near the neck, a glass bowl to the left of the skull, a copper and an iron ring, a knife, and a single bead: all beside the left hip. There was also a belt buckle with kidney-shaped inlaid belt plate which reused an Iron Age/Roman gaming piece. The grave goods comprised one of the wealthier burials within the cemetery (Sayer 2009: 159).

The contrasting abrasion patterns upon brooches in grave 61 present a peculiar situation. The continental bird brooches were probably adorned often or even daily, potentially recognisable throughout the settlement. As the individual within the grave was in their early twenties, the abraded bird brooches are most likely older than the individual who is likely to have only worn such brooches upon reaching maturity (Stoodley 1999). The heavily abraded bird brooches can be considered heirlooms transferred to the young adult from a previous generation.

The skeleton lay supine within the grave, with the five brooches aligned centrally in a vertical row. This style of brooch adornment reveals what seems to be a unique adaptation of Walton Rogers' (2007: 190) Kentish dress style IV. This style adopted the Merovingian vertical four-brooch system to accommodate a cloak or jacket and was prevalent in the mid-6th century AD (Walton Rogers 2007: 190). The top two (bird) brooches would attach the vertical opening of a dress, buckled by a belt at the waist. These were followed by the Åberg 132 square-headed brooch. The bottom two (square-headed) brooches closed the overlapping jacket or cloak near the waist, allowing all of the brooches to be visible when worn in life and when dressed on the cadaver in the grave (Walton Rogers 2007: 190–191). This dress style of brooch adornment was found elsewhere in Kent, including within the Mill Hill cemetery (Parfitt and Brugmann 1997: 48), but not in other areas of Anglo-Saxon England (Owen-Crocker 1986: 92). Nevertheless, the way in which the brooches were adorned is believed to have allowed all of the fasteners to be visible, displaying the contrast between their type and age.

Mill Hill, grave 102

The second Mill Hill burial, grave 102, was located in Plot B just outside the Bronze Age ring barrow with the bottom half of the grave slightly cut by grave 96. As for grave 61, only the fragmented skull and long bones survived within the grave and the individual was aged between 35–45 years old. The body was in a supine position accompanied by a variety of grave goods (Figure 7.2, top-right). These included three brooches, 41 beads in a cluster near the neck, a group of iron objects near the left waist, a belt buckle and an iron knife (Parfitt and Brugmann 1997: 157–158). Similar to grave 61, the type and amount of grave goods suggests this represents a further example of a high-status grave within the cemetery (Sayer 2009: 159). The grave dates to the middle to second half of the 6th century.

The typology of the included brooches was diverse comprising the only great square-headed brooch found within the cemetery, a miniature bow brooch (otherwise known as a Kentish radiate-headed brooch), and a keystone-garnet disc brooch. The great square-headed brooch bears traces of severe abrasion, and was found to have undergone a repair after it had broken in antiquity (Parfitt and Brugmann 1997: 37). The stylistic artwork upon the brooch is unique, and differentiates it from other great square-headed brooches. Its closest parallels come from Weimar and Bernburg, Germany (Haseloff 1981; Parfitt and Brugmann 1997: 37). Because the brooch was unique and old, it is very likely to have been known to the survivors, and recognisable and memorable upon deposition.

The miniature bow brooch is of Werner's western variant displaying a crouched animal upon the head plate (Parfitt and Brugmann 1997: 39; Werner 1961). This brooch also displayed heavy abrasion as well

as a replaced pin catch (Parfitt and Brugmann 1997: 49). Miniature bow brooches of this type date from the 5th century to the first quarter of the 6th century AD (Avent and Evison 1982; Brugmann 2012: 346).

The third brooch within grave 102 gives us the latest date for the burial. This brooch is a silver keystone-garnet disc brooch of Avent class 1.2 (Avent 1975: 24). Avent class 1 brooches date from the mid-6th century AD and persisted through the latter half of the 6th century. The pin-catch of the garnet disc brooch displayed some abrasion, but was overall in a fresh condition compared to the other two accompanying brooches (Parfitt and Brugmann 1997: 49).

The brooches in grave 102 were centrally located within the grave, although their arrangements suggest a different burial costume to that seen in grave 61: a variation of Kentish dress styles IV and V. The adornment of the disc brooch by the neck appeared in the second half of the 6th century AD and continued to the beginning of the 7th century AD (Walton Rogers 2007: 193). The combination of the square-headed brooch and the miniature bow brooch imply they were utilised for fastening a jacket or coat as part of Kentish dress style IV. The two brooches would have closed the jacket vertically and covered the belt buckle. Six other brooch burials followed this dress style at Mill Hill as well but did not contain any significant signs of curation upon the brooches (Parfitt and Brugmann 1997: 47).

Saltwood Tunnel, grave C4643

The two Saltwood Tunnel graves (C4643 and C3762) also contain examples of heirloom brooches but afford different contextual relationships with their burial assemblages compared to those found with the Mill Hill examples. Grave C4643 was in the western cemetery group of the Saltwood Tunnel sample. The burial was just outside the Bronze Age barrow on the southern side. It cut two other graves, C4726 and C4635, which may have necessitated the need for the stones lining a portion of the north and west areas of the grave cut. No human remains survived within the grave, but the small dimensions of the grave cut suggests the grave of a child (Riddler and Trevarthen 2006: 68) (Figure 7.2, bottom-left). The grave goods included a knife, a single glass cylinder bead, an iron key, and two brooches. The number and type of grave goods bear similarity to many other child burials aged 7–12 found across early Anglo-Saxon England (Stoodley 1999: 111).

The brooches of Grave C4643 were a button brooch and a Kentish square-headed brooch, and thus of markedly different types and appearance, and of divergent dates. The gilded copper-alloy button brooch falls into Avent and Evison's typological class Aii (Avent and Evison 1982), or more recently Suzuki's class A2 (Suzuki 2008). These A2 button brooches have been found to date to the mid-/late 5th to the beginning of the 6th century AD (Suzuki 2008: 334). Compared to other variants of button brooches, A-style button brooches have been known for their high-quality craftsmanship (Avent and Evison 1982; Walton Rogers *et al.* 2006: 2). The brooch also displays signs of abrasion and wearing, as the gilding upon the face of the brooch has mostly been worn away (Riddler and Trevarthen 2006: 68).

The accompanying brooch is chronologically later than the button brooch. The silver Kentish square-headed brooch is an Åberg Type 133, one of the later types of square-headed brooches dated to the late 6th century AD (Åberg 1926: 200; Leigh 1980; Walton Rogers *et al.* 2006). Taking the worn state of the button brooch into consideration, the chronological contrast between the brooches could be anywhere between 25 to 100 years. As a child's grave, this would mean the button brooch is far older than the deceased, which would have made it at least one other person's possession (cf. Williams 2006: 49–51).

As there were no surviving human remains it is difficult to ascertain the deceased's location and posture within the grave. However, both brooches and the single bead were found centrally within the grave, arranged vertically with the square-headed brooches found just about the button brooch. As vertically

arranged brooches were elements of Kentish dress styles II, III, and IV, it can be argued that the body was probably in a supine position in the grave (Owen-Crocker 1986: 91; Walton Rogers 2007: 190). This position would also render the brooches visually central during the funeral, allowing the brooch's extended biography to enact upon the social remembrance of the mourners.

Saltwood Tunnel, grave C3762

The second Saltwood Tunnel burial, grave C3762, was also located within the western cemetery, inside the south-east quarter of the Bronze Age ring-ditch. The grave was dated to the mid- to late 6th century AD (Riddler and Trevarthen 2006). The skeletal remains were in very poor condition, with only pieces of the skull surviving. The individual, aged 18–25 at the time of death, was buried with a wealthy assortment of grave goods (Riddler and Trevarthen 2006: 60) (Figure 7.2, bottom-right). These included two different types of brooches (radiate-headed and Kentish disc brooch), a wooden casket with bone and copper-alloy mounts, an iron weaving batten, 40 amber and glass beads, a belt buckle, a pair of iron shears, a crystal ball within a silver suspension mount, an iron knife, and a ceramic vessel.

The radiate-headed brooch is a Continent type of the 5th to 6th century AD and most likely was acquired from across the Channel (Koch 1998). It thus can be regarded as an 'heirloom' in the context of a grave most likely dating to the mid-/late 6th century (Riddler and Trevarthen 2006). This type of radiate-headed brooch is believed to have been an earlier variant of Koch's 1.3.1 or 1.3.1.5, dating to the late 5th to early 6th century AD, found mainly in the Middle Rhineland (Koch 1998; Walton Rogers *et al.* 2006: 3). The brooch is very worn, with one of the five radiating knobs broken off completely and another knob missing its garnet. The brooch was cast in silver while further analysis has found it was also gilded so it would have been potentially a valuable and distinctive item whilst looking obviously worn (Walton Rogers *et al.* 2006: 2).

The second brooch was an Avent class 2.2 Kentish disc brooch, dated to approximately the mid- to the end of the 6th century AD (Avent 1975; Brugmann 2012: 348; Walton Rogers *et al.* 2006: 19). This brooch was cast in silver with a gold inlay around the garnet settings. It had a high copper percentage giving green staining as the front became worn and abraded (Walton Rogers *et al.* 2006: 19). Some of the abrasion on the gilding of the brooch has been attributed to consistent contact with beads when worn, but it would have contrasted in appearance with the first brooch in style and degree of wear.

The overall dress style utilised in the grave is similar to Kentish dress style V (mid-6th to 7th century AD) with the addition of the heirloom radiate-headed brooch, potentially for fastening a jacket or cloak, or as an elaborate substitute for a pin.

The tableau of grave goods created by this burial assemblage signified a high social status of the individual and/or survivors. This is evidenced by the inclusion of the highly decorative Avent class 2.2 Kentish disc brooch. Another high-status item is an iron weaving batten which has parallels in some of the wealthiest of Kentish burials; this item implies an elevated social status, possibly linked to a standardised regime of textile production (Harrington 2016; Walton Rogers and Riddler 2006). Furthermore, this was the only weaving batten found at Saltwood Tunnel, also hinting that it denoted an elite individual and/or family using the burial ground.

Within this lavish display was the old, heavily worn, and damaged radiate-headed brooch. Repairs were commonly found upon brooches throughout the 5th–7th centuries AD (Martin 2012), as discussed for the brooch from Mill Hill grave 102 (Parfitt and Brugmann 1997). In grave C3762, the brooch was retained bearing this wear and placed in this condition within the grave of a young adult. The visual aesthetic character of the tarnished and broken brooch gave it a unique appearance among the other objects of

the grave assemblage, which made it likely to stand out as a unique focal point for the enactment of social remembrance by the mourners attending the funeral.

Discussion

Among the four burials discussed in this chapter, the Kentish dress styles enabled the brooches to become effective visual focal points upon the deceased in life and during the funeral. The combination of the types and ages of brooches can now be proposed as a key aspect of the burial assemblage: conveying the extended biography of the curated brooches emphasised by the addition of the later or more contemporary brooch styles.

In grave 61 at Mill Hill, the unabraded small square-headed brooches, which were relatively common but high-status dress accessories within Kentish graves, would have provided the evidence of a local 'East Kentish' elite identity, connecting the deceased and their family to the surrounding landscape. The noticeably abraded continental bird brooches further up the body, by contrast, would not only display a connection to the biography and identity of the previous owner(s?) and/or kin group, but perhaps to farther-flung connections across the sea. A similar combination, but alternate positions, for brooches can be identified in grave 102 at Mill Hill. Here, the juxtaposition involves a new brooch fastened by the neck and older brooches near to the belt line, including the only great square-headed brooch found within the cemetery and indicating its unique status within the burying community. Again, we might be here seeing a contrasting set of memories and associations performed through the dressing of the corpse and the display within the grave. The inclusion of the deteriorated and old radiate-headed brooch within the wealthy objects assembled in Saltwood Tunnel grave C3762 would have been publicly noticeable and memorable, bringing the remembrance of the biography of the brooch, the individual, and the family to the forefront of the funerary proceedings. Both Mill Hill grave 102 as well as Saltwood Tunnel grave C3762 deployed Kentish dress style V, utilising a Kentish disc brooch at the neck with the addition of a noticeably older brooch or brooches near the midsection.

Heirloom brooches may have been personal possessions, but might have equally been bequeathed to their final owner at the time of their death or funeral for a host of reasons. Graves containing brooches chronologically older than the deceased which they accompany may have been an emotionally-driven gift for an individual who perished in their youth, such as the suspected child grave of Saltwood Tunnel C4643. In the context of a young individual, this need not indicate low 'token' social status or an amuletic interpretation (cf. Crawford 2000: 30–32). Instead, the addition of a brooch with an extended biography might have mnemonically connected the identity of a previous owner(s) to the deceased. This may have reinforced or replaced the unfulfilled identity of the young person: a strategy of prospective commemoration (cf. Williams 2006: 49–51; 2010). As well as coalescing an emotive force to the funeral (see Williams 2007), perhaps this heirloom conveyed the history and status of the family or kin group: connecting the living and the dead to a shared past.

Conclusion

The recognition of curated heirloom brooches suggests that they may have had an active role in early medieval social remembrance because of their known histories in relation to the deceased and their social network among the survivors attending the funeral. The extended biographies of the brooches could have enhanced the social status and identity of the deceased, as well as the surviving family. Whilst most attention has been afforded to the shifting, and Christian-influenced significance, of curated and reused artefacts in seventh-century burial contexts (e.g. Sherlock 2016), the socially competitive climate of the mid-sixth- to seventh-century AD furnished inhumation graves has escaped attention. The examples identified in this chapter foreshadow ongoing research into the emerging sixth-century

phenomenon of heirlooms—both brooches and swords—in early Anglo-Saxon Kent. This future work will aim to show how artefacts were deployed in funerals to not only signal social identities, but to forge perceptions of the past, present and future. These heirloom brooches would have been worn regularly and seen publicly in daily life, as implied by the abrasion patterns discovered upon the objects. Yet in the funeral they took on an additional set of significances, connecting past, present and future for the survivors through the deployment and prominent display of the artefacts upon the cadaver in the burial assemblage.

Whilst only four graves were discussed in the context of this chapter, they provide the basis for a broader reinterpretation. At both the Saltwood Tunnel and Mill Hill cemeteries, we can identify a similar number of recognisable heirloom brooches. Their display within the funerary theatre would be a multifaceted mnemonic focal point of social remembrance, amplifying the use of social remembrance by a family or kin group's for the reworking or reconfiguration of social status in the area during and after the funeral. Such items would have had a social and mnemonic import for the funerals in a fashion that retrieved Roman objects might not have possessed. Future research should therefore adopt a more nuanced approach to considering the multiple evocations of reused and recycled heirlooms as integral elements of grave good assemblages.

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Chapter 8

Medieval engagements with the material past: Some evidence from European coin hoards, AD *c.* 1000–1500

Murray Andrews

This paper considers the interpretation and function of ancient objects in the European high and late middle ages through the lens of coin hoard evidence, with a particular focus on the inclusion of ancient coins and engraved gemstones in hoards of the 11th to 15th centuries. Comparative analysis emphasises the diverse trajectories of ancient objects in medieval society; locally-found and deliberately-imported antiquities were equally capable of being reused and reimagined as sources of bullion, as collectable markers of social status, as Christian devotional images, or as amulets and talismans imbued with divine or magical power.

Keywords: *Devotion, hoards, magic, medieval, value*

In his sixth-century treatise *De Consolatione Philosophiae* Boethius engages his nurse, Philosophy, in a dialogue on chance. For Philosophy, chance is understood as an unexpected event resulting from coincidental causes ordered together in time and place by Providence; to illustrate this point, she cites the example of a cultivator discovering long-buried treasure in a field, an unexpected result of two distinct causes—the finder digging the field, and the hoarder burying their possessions there at an earlier date—converging through the divine arrangement of all things in time and space (Weinberger 1934: 107–108). For readers engaging with Boethius at the height of his popularity in the high and late middle ages (Cornelius 2016: 270), Philosophy's example was not a wholly unusual one; throughout Europe prehistoric and Roman monuments and ruins remained prominent elements of the medieval landscape, and in many places the chance discovery of flints, brooches, coins, and other ancient objects would have been a regular occurrence when digging ditches, laying foundations, or ploughing fields.

Textual sources, particularly those relating to the royal prerogative of Treasure Trove, describe a great number of possible or definite examples of prehistoric and Roman objects unearthed in the medieval period. An account of the discovery of a large gold torc at Isleworth (London) in 1467, for example, very probably concerns an object of Middle Bronze Age date (Mattingly 1983: 182–183), while the description of a metal helmet filled with gold and silver pieces unearthed at Billericay (Essex; Evans 1957: 142, No. 257) in *c.*1384 bears more than a passing resemblance to the iron cavalry helmet buried with more than 1000 gold and silver Iron Age and early Roman coins at Hallaton (Leicestershire; Score 2011).[1] The 1539 find of a pot containing Roman coins of Postumus, Gallienus, Valerian, and others in a field near Anderlecht (Brussels-Capital, Belgium), meanwhile, has an undoubted antique pedigree (van Gansbeke 1955: 21). Enigmatic place names, like the 'Goldehord' field recorded at Ewell (Surrey) in 1408 (Deedes 1913: 49–51) and the 'Goldhurde' croft recorded at Midhurst (West Sussex) in 1585 (West Sussex Record Office SAS-BA/61), may well owe their origins to discoveries like these (although cf. Briggs 2016), as might certain 'out-of-place' objects recovered from medieval archaeological sites or preserved in church treasuries. A Middle Bronze Age palstave from a mid-thirteenth- to fourteenth-century context in a rural building at Ottery St Mary (Devon; Mudd *et al.* 2018), for example, can be reckoned among the former, while the latter includes the famous hammer of St Martin of Tours, a Late Bronze Age perforated axe re-mounted in *c.*1300 in a decorated and inscribed silver and wooden haft

[1] Unless otherwise stated, all locations are in Great Britain.

and revered as a saintly relic by the Catholics of Utrecht (Utrecht, Netherlands; de Kruijf 2014: 181; see cover image). While many such discoveries, like Philosophy's treasure, were probably 'chance finds' in the truest sense, others might have been obtained through deliberate treasure hunting. In search of royal revenue during the Hundred Years War, in 1389 Richard II of England directed his men to search for buried treasure at Halstead (Essex; Hunnisett 1962: 168, No. 286), just as his predecessor, Henry III, had done 150 years earlier in the prehistoric barrows of Cornwall and the Isle of Wight (Maxwell-Lyte 1908: 433–434); that such behaviour was not the exclusive preserve of the elite is confirmed by a court case of 1242–1243, in which two men from Yatton (Somerset) stood accused of pursuing an illicit treasure hunt at 'Waymerham' (Chadwick Healey 1897: 230, No. 759), almost certainly the site of the large Roman villa located 2.5km west of the village at Wemberham Lane (Reade 1885).

While it is evident, therefore, that medieval Europeans did sometimes uncover ancient objects, the nature of these engagements remains uncertain: how did medieval people understand the objects that they found, and what did they do with them? This paper offers some answers to these questions through an examination of two classes of ancient object—coins and engraved gemstones—that are represented in small numbers in medieval European coin hoards, a class of archaeological deposit defined as a group of two or more coins deposited together, sometimes in conjunction with other objects (Grierson 1975: 130). This focus on coin hoard evidence has a twofold basis; at one level, it expresses the potential of hoards to offer unique insights into the functions and perceptions of ancient material culture by merit of their intrinsic character as groups of deliberately and selectively assembled objects, whilst on another it reflects an attempt to disseminate awareness of a much neglected body of archaeological evidence that has hitherto remained the near unique preserve of numismatists and monetary historians (although see Andrews 2019; Scholz 2011).

Old money: ancient coins in medieval coin hoards

Coins, and particularly those of the Roman period, are among the most common archaeological finds encountered in the towns and countryside of modern Europe, and in many places their history of discovery extends as far back as the early post-Roman period. Several high-status Anglo-Saxon and Frankish burials of the 5th–7th centuries, for example, include Roman coins—sometimes adapted into jewellery through piercing or mounting, and sometimes left unaltered—as part of the mortuary assemblage (e.g. Doppelfeld 1960: 93–94; Moorhead 2006: 99–102). Similarly, the use of Roman coin types as models for certain seventh-century coin designs implies some familiarity with 'found' ancient coins among certain social groups from an early date (Grierson and Blackburn 1986: 162–163). The occasional inclusion of ancient coins in high and late medieval coin hoards underlines their persistence in the material worlds of the 11th to 15th centuries, and offers insights into the varied functions and meanings that medieval people ascribed to these objects as they transitioned into a new phase of their object biographies. This evidence has a wide geographical distribution, and is summarised by material below.

Ancient gold coins, exclusively in the form of Roman aurei, are represented in at least three medieval European coin hoards. The earliest of these is the hoard from Liminec (Bretagne, France), which consisted of a ceramic jar containing *c.*50 gold Almohad dinars, an aureus of Augustus, and a great number of silver and billon French feudal and English coins buried after 1212 (Audan 1876: 51; Clément 2008: 127; Duplessy 1985: 105, No. 271). The late fourteenth-century hoard from Erfurt (Thüringen, Germany), meanwhile, comprised a ceramic vessel containing an assortment of 177 medieval gold coins—including Hungarian and Italian florins and ducats and English nobles—and a lone aureus of Numerian (Figure 8.1) that had been pierced for suspension (Regling 1912: 232; Weissenborn 1878: 210–211). In addition, a third hoard from the Altmark (Sachsen-Anhalt, Germany) consisted of a number of fifteenth-century goldgulden augmented with a single aureus of Aurelian (Regling 1912: 232).

Figure 8.1: Pierced gold aureus of Numerian (RIC V Carus 443), issued in AD 283–284, from the late fourteenth-century Erfurt hoard (Weissenborn 1878: 211)

Ancient silver coins, and particularly Roman denarii, are not wholly uncommon in eleventh- and twelfth-century coin hoards from the North Sea and Baltic zone. The early eleventh-century hoards from Kolczyn (Sierpc, Poland; Gorlińska *et al.* 2015: 172, No. 53) and Ragow (Brandenburg, Germany; Dannenberg 1894: 525–526, No. 63), for example, both contain Roman denarii—in the first case, a denarius of Antoninus Pius and another of Marcus Aurelius, and in the second a lone denarius of Otho—alongside contemporary silver coins from Germany and other regions. Mid-eleventh-century hoards from Povlsker (Bornholm, Denmark; Jensen *et al.* 1992: 199, No. 5) and Züssow (Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Germany; Dannenberg 1898: 767–768, No. 113), meanwhile, both comprise a mixture of medieval silver coins—including German pfennige, English pennies, and older Arabic dirhams—and a single denarius, the Povlsker specimen having been issued under Marcus Aurelius and the Züssow specimen under Vespasian. The coins from the Züssow hoard were supplemented by a number of items of silver jewellery, ingots, and hacksilber, reflecting the dual use of coined and uncoined precious metal in economic transactions in the region at this date; a similar pattern is observed in the eleventh-century hoard from Thomasarfve (Gotland, Sweden), in which *c.*2000 silver coins—mostly of the 10th and 11th centuries, but also one denarius of Trajan and another of Hadrian—were hoarded alongside silver ingots and items of hacksilber (Hauberg 1894: 332, No. 47). Early twelfth-century Scandinavian hoards continue this trend. The hoard from Store Frigård (Bornholm, Denmark), for example, contained 1224 complete and fragmentary silver coins—primarily contemporary German and English coins, but also some other medieval European and Arabic coins and a single denarius of Hadrian—and some items of complete and fragmentary silver jewellery buried in a pot after 1106 (Jensen *et al.* 1992: 268–275, No. 37). Meanwhile, the hoard. from Övide (Gotland, Sweden) contained 712 silver coins—mostly contemporary German and English coins, supplemented by other medieval European and Arabic coins and a single denarius of Trajan—and some silver ingots buried together after 1131 (Jonsson 2014: 546). Certain high and late medieval coin hoards also contain ancient silver coins of similar types. The thirteenth-century hoard of silver bracteate coins from Sigmaringen (Baden-Württemberg, Germany), for example, contained a lone denarius of Vespasian (Regling 1912: 232), while the late thirteenth-century hoard from Fuchsenhof (Oberösterreich, Austria) contained a silver Celtic drachm and eight Roman denarii alongside more than 7000 complete and fragmentary twelfth- and thirteenth-century silver coins, ingots, and items of jewellery (Alram *et al.* 2004: 44–46). Fourteenth-century examples are also known; the hoard from

Sady (Poznań, Poland) contained a denarius of Philip I alongside contemporary silver bracteate coins (Regling 1912: 232), while the find from Mohiville (Namur, Belgium) consisted of a denarius of Galba in a hoard of 138 silver coins buried in a ceramic vessel (Anon. 1877).

Ancient bronze coins are also represented in medieval coin hoards. One example is provided by the mid-eleventh-century hoard from Oving (West Sussex), which comprised a single Roman bronze coin of an uncertain issuer within a hoard otherwise composed of English silver pennies of Edward the Confessor and Harold II (Metcalf 1957: 198). Heavily debased silver-bronze Roman antoniniani are also known from high and late medieval coin hoards. The early thirteenth-century hoard from Saint-Michel-en-l'Herm (Vendée, France), for example, contained a single antoninianus of Claudius II alongside upwards of 1700 silver deniers deposited after 1206 (Duplessy 1985: 116, No. 315); similar thirteenth-century French hoards are known from Gondrin and Monlezum (both Gers), and Vallon (Allier), each of which combined multiple medieval silver coins with a single antoninianus (issued respectively under Valerian I, Gallienus, and Philip I) (Geneviève 2016: 290). It is very likely that a worn and corroded coin-sized disc from the Plateau des Capucins (Maine-et-Loire, France) hoard of medieval silver coins also belongs to this group (Cardon 2010: 59). Finally, an antoninianus of the Divo Claudio type was present in a hoard of 353 silver coins buried in the mid-fourteenth-century at Pluvigner (Morbihan, France; Geneviève 2016: 290).

In most cases, it seems probable that the ancient coins included in medieval coin hoards were obtained locally, whether from the surface of a freshly-ploughed field, the spoil from new earthworks, or some other source. The Oving hoard, for example, was deposited in a parish that contains known Iron Age and Romano-British farmsteads (Bedwin and Holgate 1985), and it is possible that the Roman bronze coin it contained was originally found on one of these sites. Similarly, the Gondrin hoard was found in a commune whose fields have otherwise yielded finds of ancient coins and other portable objects, including a bronze statuette and lamp of the Gallo-Roman period (Gugole and Celot 1992), and there is no reason why they might not have proven equally productive of ancient objects during the medieval period. Since a considerable volume of gold and silver coin flowed north and east of the imperial *limes* in antiquity, it is quite possible that even those Roman coins included in medieval hoards from these regions represent locally-discovered ancient objects. Strong circumstantial evidence in this direction is provided by the pierced aureus from the Erfurt hoard, which clearly belongs to the widespread regional phenomenon of pierced and looped Roman coins reused as status symbols and insignia of power by the 'Germanic' elite of *Barbaricum* during the 2nd to 7th centuries (Bursche 2001; 2008: 400–401). This coin had, therefore, almost certainly already accrued a complex and prolonged biography beyond the *limes* in antiquity prior to its rediscovery in the 14th century, when it was presumably uncovered during the accidental disturbance or deliberate looting of a local cemetery or settlement site. The Fuchsenhof hoard, meanwhile, is of special interest as a medieval deposit containing multiple ancient coins that could represent a parcel from, or the entirety of, a Roman coin hoard uncovered in the middle ages, perhaps found in the vicinity of the nearby fortress-town of *Lauriacum* (Alram *et al.* 2004: 48).

What meanings and functions were ascribed to ancient coins by the people that found and hoarded them in the medieval period? Marked variations in standards of fineness, size, weight, and design between ancient and medieval coins suggest that a prosaic monetary function—in which the Roman aureus from the Altmark hoard, for example, was treated as an acceptable substitute for a contemporary goldgulden of the Holy Roman Empire—is unlikely, although would not preclude a more general economic function for ancient coins as small portable lumps of bullion (Geneviève 2016: 290; Greenhalgh 1989: 227–228). In this respect, the antiquity of ancient coins may have been an imperceptible, or at least irrelevant, aspect of their medieval reuse, which here entailed the secure retention of generic valuables within a hoard deposit. While this interpretation could explain the hoarding of ancient gold and silver coins, it is less convincing in the case of ancient bronze coins, whose ascribed economic values would have been fairly minimal. A second possibility is that the ancient coins present in medieval coin hoards

reflect efforts to secure collated valuables of a different kind: miniature *objects d'art* whose possession marked their owner's intellectual élan and refined taste, part of a humanistic tradition of collecting ancient coins that developed among the elite of Mediterranean Europe during the 14th and 15th centuries and had spread into courtly culture north of the Alps by the 16th century (Stahl 2009; Weiss 1968). The principal problem with this thesis, however, concerns the varied conditions of ancient coins preserved in medieval hoards; while some, like the Erfurt aureus, might have been of sufficiently good state to grace a ducal or princely collection, others, like the Store Frigård denarius and Plateau des Capucins antoninianus, were nearly worn flat or part-corroded at the time of their deposition, and are consequently implausible candidates for collection and retention of this kind.

An alternative explanation concerns the reuse of ancient coins as amulets or talismans, a theory that finds some support in comparative archaeological and ethnographic sources. Gilchrist (2008: 139–144), for example, notes that post-medieval folklore often attributed special healing powers to old coins, and on this basis suggests that the sporadic inclusion of ancient coins in English medieval graves—including a Roman coin placed on the chest of a twelfth- or thirteenth-century child burial at the Cluniac nunnery of Gorefields (Buckinghamshire), and another near the jaw of an adult woman at the cemetery of St Mary Spital (London)—may represent deliberate amuletic deposits interred with the dead. A similar phenomenon may be evident in the apparently deliberate deposition of single Roman coins near the hearth and below the threshold of thirteenth-century buildings at the deserted medieval village of Upton (Gloucestershire), two liminal locations that commonly served as the sites of placed apotropaic deposits in Anglo-Saxon and post-medieval domestic buildings (Rahtz 1969: 110; e.g. Hamerow 2006: 23–24; Manning 2014). An explicit case of the amuletic reuse of ancient coins is provided by an unprovenanced sestertius of Antoninus Pius—possibly from France or the Low Countries—that had been engraved on both sides in the 12th to 14th centuries with crosses and the legend AGLA, a kabbalistic formula frequently used in the medieval period as a talismanic slogan (Cardon 2017: 30). This reading evidently contrasts with the 'economic' interpretation insofar as the antiquity of ancient coins is recast as a key element of their medieval re-interpretation and function, but age might not be the only factor determining amuletic power. Images depicted on ancient coins, for example, could have been reimagined in a Christian framework (*interpretatio Christiana*) as depictions of Christ, the Saints, and other divine characters, as seems to have been the case with some items of statuary (Greenhalgh 1989: 215–216); in this manner, the image of the Emperor flanked by a winged Victory and kneeling and standing captives on the reverse of the Erfurt aureus could have easily been re-imagined as an image of two supplicating worshippers before Christ and an angel, and might have consequently imbued the coin with some of the religious-mnemonic and apotropaic powers ascribed to Christian devotional art in the medieval period (q.v. Camille 1996: 103). Such a phenomenon is attested in mid-fifteenth-century Polish documents describing the *interpretatio Christiana* of found Roman denarii as 'St John's pennies', a peasant reading of the iconography of imperial busts as images of the severed head of St John the Baptist (Bogucki *et al.* 2017: 277). If the ancient coins in medieval coin hoards were understood as amulets or talismans in this manner, their inclusion might have had a dual character. At one level, their presence may reflect their owner's desire to passively secure powerful objects in a safekeeping deposit for future recovery; on another, they could have been key tools in ensuring secure preservation, actively invoking divine or magical powers to ensure the integrity of the deposits that they belonged to.

A link to the past? Antique gems in medieval coin hoards

Like ancient coins, antique engraved gemstones have a history of curation or rediscovery extending into the early post-Roman period; examples are known from cemeteries in Anglo-Saxon England and Merovingian Francia (Ament 1991; Sherlock 2016: 246–250), and their presence in high and late medieval society is reflected in a variety of archaeological and textual sources. Evidence from coin hoards is modest—just four examples are known to the author—and restricted to the 12th–14th centuries,

Figure 8.2: Impression of a medieval silver signet ring, incorporating a Roman carnelian intaglio, from the Evesham Abbey Gardens hoard (Cuming 1876: 116)

reflecting a core period of popularity for ancient gems in medieval material culture (Henig 2008: 25). An early example is provided by the post-1144 hoard from Cluny Abbey (Saône-et-Loire, France), which consisted of a cloth bag containing 2113 silver French deniers and oboles and a second, internal, leather purse containing 21 gold Almoravid dinars, two lumps of gold, and a gold signet ring with a large oval bezel set with a Roman carnelian intaglio. This gem depicts the Emperor Caracalla with the attributes of Hercules, and is circumscribed by the engraved legend AVETE ('All hail'; Baud *et al.* 2018), a religious greeting spoken by the resurrected Christ to the two Marys after they left the Holy Sepulchre (Matthew 28:9). The early thirteenth-century hoard from Cross-on-the-Hill (Warwickshire), meanwhile, consisted of *c.*1000 silver pennies, a gold ring set with an uncut sapphire, and a silver seal matrix pendant set with a Roman carnelian intaglio engraved with a bust of Apollo and circumscribed by the legend +CAPVT+OMNIUM+XPc ('Christ, head of all'; Palmer and Seaby 1984: 109). Another thirteenth-century hoard from Flintsbach am Inn (Bayern, Germany) consisted of a group of four silver coins—three Bavarian pfennige and an Aquileian denaro—placed on the pelvis of an adult male inhumed a short distance from the church door, two of which formed a capsule enclosing a loose Roman heliotrope engraved with an image of the Mithraic tauroctony (Meier 2015: 337–341). Finally, a late example is provided by the late thirteenth- or early fourteenth-century hoard from Evesham Abbey Gardens (Worcestershire), which contained at least 160 English and Scottish silver pennies buried in a jug alongside a gilt silver ring set with a Roman carnelian gemstone depicting a seated sphinx and circumscribed with the reversed inscription LI COCATRIX ('The Cockatrice'; Figure 8.2; Barnard 1911: 114; Cuming 1876).

Whereas the ancient coins present in medieval hoards mostly comprise locally-found objects, ancient gemstones seem to have more distant sources. As Henig (2008: 27–29) has observed, Roman gemstones reused in medieval European objects are often high-quality specimens, especially when compared to examples from local archaeological sites, and may therefore reflect a degree of connoisseurship associated with the intervention of specialist glyptic merchants (*gemmarii*) based in major Mediterranean cities like Genoa (Liguria, Italy), Pisa (Toscana, Italy), or Venice (Veneto, Italy). Support for this thesis is provided by the stylistic attributes of hoarded gems. The carnelian intaglio set in the Evesham Abbey Gardens signet ring, for example, is engraved with a motif that is exceptionally uncommon among British site finds (q.v. Henig 1974: 87, Nos 653–655), but is encountered with greater frequency among Mediterranean site finds. That from the Cross-on-the-Hill hoard, meanwhile, closely parallels gemstones produced in the eastern Mediterranean—and in particular Asia Minor and the Levant—during the late 1st century BC (Palmer and Seaby 1984: 109). This latter object is of particular interest in emphasising the role of the Holy Land as a source of gemstones for the European market, which acquired particular importance in the aftermath of the First Crusade (Greenhalgh 1989: 231; Wentzel 1953: 342–343).

The contextual circumstances of the four hoards yielding ancient gems are especially relevant to an understanding of their ascribed meanings and functions; the Cluny and Evesham Abbey Garden hoards were both deposited at monastic sites, the Flintsbach am Inn hoard was included in a grave in a local churchyard, and the place name associated with the Cross-on-the-Hill hoard may reveal a topographic association with a now-lost freestanding monumental cross. These religious associations are reiterated by other examples of ancient gems attested from non-hoard contexts of medieval date. Antique cameos and intaglios frequently appear among the holdings of ecclesiastical treasuries; several examples are described in Matthew Paris' thirteenth-century account of the precious stones held by St Albans Abbey (Hertfordshire), including a celebrated cameo that probably depicted the deified Augustus (Henig and Heslop 1986: 151), while a gold reliquary cross of *c.*1100 from the monastery at Enger (Nordrhein-Westfalen, Germany) is not unusual as a ritual object ornamented by ancient gems and cameos (Krug 1995: 112–113). In France ancient gems occur with disproportionate frequency among the seals of senior ecclesiastics (Wentzel 1953: 342–343)—for instance, the 1237 seal of Raoul, Abbot of Corbie (Somme, France), whose counterseal was set with an ancient intaglio depicting Janus and circumscribed by the Biblical quotation SPIRITUS DN̄I SUP ME ('The spirit of the Lord is upon me', Luke 4:18; Demay 1875: 155, No. 1370)—and numerous examples are known to have been reset in the signet rings of their English counterparts. Some of these were taken to the grave; Gilchrist (2008: 142–143) records four examples of reset ancient intaglios from British monastic cemeteries, including ring-set gems from the tombs of Archbishop Hubert Walter at Canterbury (Kent) and Bishop Seffrid at Chichester (West Sussex). There is, therefore, a clear link between medieval Christian faith and ancient engraved gems that may extend beyond the privileged access of the institutional church and individual ecclesiastics to precious objects. Indeed, deep spiritual meanings are implied by the Christianised legends associated with jewellery-mounted gems; the inscription surrounding the Cross-on-the-Hill gem, for example, indicates an *interpretatio Christiana* reimagining the head of Apollo as that of Christ, and a similar process may have been operated in the case of the gem from the Cluny ring. Religious meaning read off ancient gems by medieval Christians may have been enhanced by the circumstances of their object biographies; engraved gems found in, and imported from, the Holy Land may have afforded Christians at the edge of the world a material link with the centre of their faith, a connection mediated on a physical level when mounted and worn as jewellery.

As objects linked to Christian faith, it is likely that the ancient gems from medieval coin hoards had symbolic properties that extended beyond their prosaic use as sealing tools, additionally functioning as emblems of religious devotion and as objects with amuletic or talismanic properties. Two documented cases of reuse support this general reading; Matthew Paris describes how the St Albans cameo was used as a prophylactic capable of inducing childbirth (Henig and Heslop 1986: 148), while the fifteenth-century humanist Niccolò Niccoli records the acquisition of a chalcedony intaglio from a poor family in Florence (Toscana, Italy), who had previously suspended it around their child's neck as a talisman (Kemp 1997: 146). The divine or supernatural puissance ascribed to these objects, however, is not restricted to their *interpretatio Christiana*, but may also relate to other aspects of contemporary magical and spiritual belief transmitted through texts and oral tradition. Cherry (1999: 143) suggests that some of the amuletic properties of ancient gems might relate to their Zodiacal iconography, a strong possibility in relation to the taurine symbolism of the Flintsbach am Inn heliotrope; similarly, the identification of the Sphinx on the ring-set gem from the Evesham Abbey Gardens hoard with the monstrous cockatrice may reflect an attempt to convert an image of a creature popularly thought to kill by sight or by breath (Breiner 1979: 34–36) into an amulet against the evil eye or dangerous miasmas. Inherited traditions of classical natural philosophy communicated through lapidaries, a class of literature devoted to the properties of stones and gems, emphasised the intrinsic powers of gems as apotropaic or prophylactic objects, and therefore would have also contributed to their amuletic efficacy. According to the *De Mineralibus* of Albertus Magnus, carnelians like those from the Cluny, Cross-on-the-Hill, and Evesham Abbey Gardens hoards were calming stones that could alleviate hemorrhoidal and menstrual bleeding, while

heliotropes like that from the Flintsbach am Inn hoard had a range of healing properties, including the ability to stem bleeding and remedy poisoning (Wyckoff 1967: 81–89). As in the case of ancient coins, the perceived amuletic or talismanic properties of ancient gems is likely to have been a determining factor in their inclusion in medieval hoard deposits, either reflecting a passive desire to protect such valuable objects from loss or theft, or representing a more active strategy to employ their powers as a means of insuring deposits against damage, loss, or theft.

Conclusion

The inclusion of ancient coins and engraved gemstones in eleventh- to fifteenth-century coin hoards illustrates the continued presence of 'old objects' in the material world of the European middle ages, a phenomenon contingent on an intermittent stream of newly-found antiques entering the medieval cultural sphere through accidental rediscovery and deliberate treasure hunting, sometimes facilitated by transnational networks administered by specialist middlemen. Contextual analysis allows us to trace the diverse functional contours of these objects in the medieval past, which might be variously repurposed and re-imagined by their possessors in prosaic (e.g. functional tools, lumps of bullion), connotative (e.g. markers of social status and taste), or symbolic (e.g. religious images, and amulets and talismans) terms. Interactions between medieval people and ancient coins and gems were predicated on an understanding of the latter as valuables in the broadest sense; indeed, it is precisely because of their ascribed values that antiques like these were securely retained in hoards alongside other precious and powerful objects like coins, jewellery, and ingots. However, coin hoards can only take us so far, and leave many questions unanswered; for obvious reasons, they tell us little about how medieval people perceived those ancient objects that they presumably found yet did not hoard, be they portable objects like beads and brooches or fragmentary and complete ceramics and worked flints. To this end, future research would benefit from re-membering coin hoards into their wider archaeological and historical setting, systematically reviewing their contents in relation to evidence from settlements, grave finds, and artistic and textual sources.

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Chapter 9

Deep Time in the ruins of a Tudor Palace? Fossils from the Palace of Placentia, Greenwich

Peter J. Leeming

Two fossils in the prehistory collections of the British Museum are labelled as coming from Greenwich (British Museum Acc. Nos 1954.1102.59 and 1954.1102.60). They are probably from the site of the Tudor palace of Placentia. There are no hints of prehistoric activity being discovered in the published information, which are brief newspaper articles from the time. Possible reasons for their being there are explored, including the activity of Tudor antiquarians. A further plausible explanation is that the fossils were passed on to the prehistoric collections in the twentieth century because of their perceived age, but other explanations should be considered.

Keywords: *Collections, deep time, fossils, interpretation, museums, Placentia*

Introduction

Fossils, the biomineralised remains of prehistoric creatures and their tracks, are found on a variety of archaeological sites worldwide. In Britain they are found on sites of all ages, even into the historic period, so there is no simple equation of a time period with the discovery of a fossil on a site. They are useless as dating evidence, which has probably had an effect on their study when discovered in archaeological contexts. Little work has been done and the majority of previous studies, especially those by Kenneth Oakley (e.g. 1978), have been through the prism of folklore, rather than considering the fossils as a class of objects in their own right. My PhD thesis attempted to draw together all known examples from the Neolithic and Bronze Age of Great Britain and Ireland (Leeming 2017). The following items were examined whilst visiting the British Museum in 2015 to examine their collections for archaeologically-recovered fossils.

The collections at the British Museum contain several fossils from Neolithic and Bronze Age contexts in Britain, but they also hold some items which are catalogued as prehistoric, but which are more dubious, both as to their provenance and whether they are finds as such. Whilst the individual provenances of the items discussed in this paper are ultimately unknown, their very blank nature allows different interpretations for their reasons behind their deposition and may allude to how past communities reflected on their own past.

Fossils from Greenwich

Listed as from 'Greenwich, London', there are two fossils in the British Museum collections accessioned in 1954. This article represents their first publication. One fossil is listed as a fragment of a shell in the museum catalogue (BM Acc. No. 1954,1102.60), but this identification is incorrect. It is in fact a belemnite. A belemnite is the fossil remains of an extinct cephalopod, resembling a modern squid or cuttlefish. The most commonly discovered feature of such animals is termed the rostrum (or guard), which was a harder part of the animal, part of an internal skeleton which probably acted as a counterbalance to the body and tentacles whilst the creature swam. The guard may preserve the siphuncle, which was a strand of tissue that passed laterally through the guard. The chambered phragmocone is analogous to the modern cuttlefish bone (for illustrations of these fossils and their features, see Figures 9.1 and 9.2).

Figure 9.1: A variety of fossil belemnites, showing the ends of two larger examples (A and B); the cross section of one specimen showing the concentric growth-rings and the siphuncle (C); a specimen where the siphuncle is not preserved; the join of the guard and the phragmocone (E) and a rolled specimen (F). E and F are 'amber-like' specimens from the Norfolk coast, the remainder are from the Yorkshire and Dorset coasts. Photo: author, specimens from author's collection

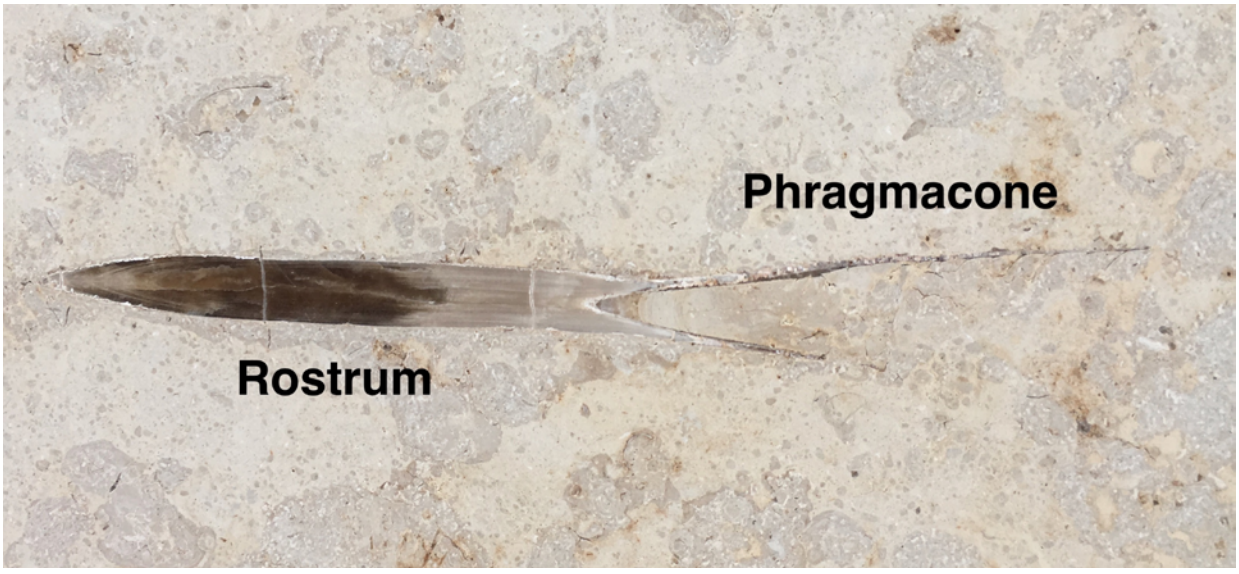

Figure 9.2: A fossil belemnite in cross section in a slab of polished Jura Limestone now used decoratively in the Arndale Centre, Manchester. This specimen has the usual hard bullet-like rostrum surviving, but also has the rarer survival of the phragmocone (the chambered portion of the shell). The other soft parts of the belemnite and its hooks and ink sacs are even scarcer survivals. Archaeologists will probably only encounter the rostrum. Photo: author

These bullet-shaped fossils can be of great size, over a metre in length, but this example is of more common dimensions. It is a 36 mm-long tapering cylinder, 19 mm at its wider end and 9 mm at its narrower end, which lacks the point of the rostrum (Figure 9.3a). Unlike most belemnite fossils it is not completely smooth, rather the surface is heavily rutted and fractured in places. This condition is known as 'decayed', and is illustrated in the Palaeontological Association's guide to chalk fossils (Smith and Batten 2002: pl. 44, Nos 4 and 10). The broken ends of the fossil show the characteristic internal radial fractures of such belemnites as seen in the guide's plate as well as the growth rings, which represent the growth of the animal similarly to those of a tree. Its exterior is a greyish orange and the exposed interior is more of a yellowish grey.

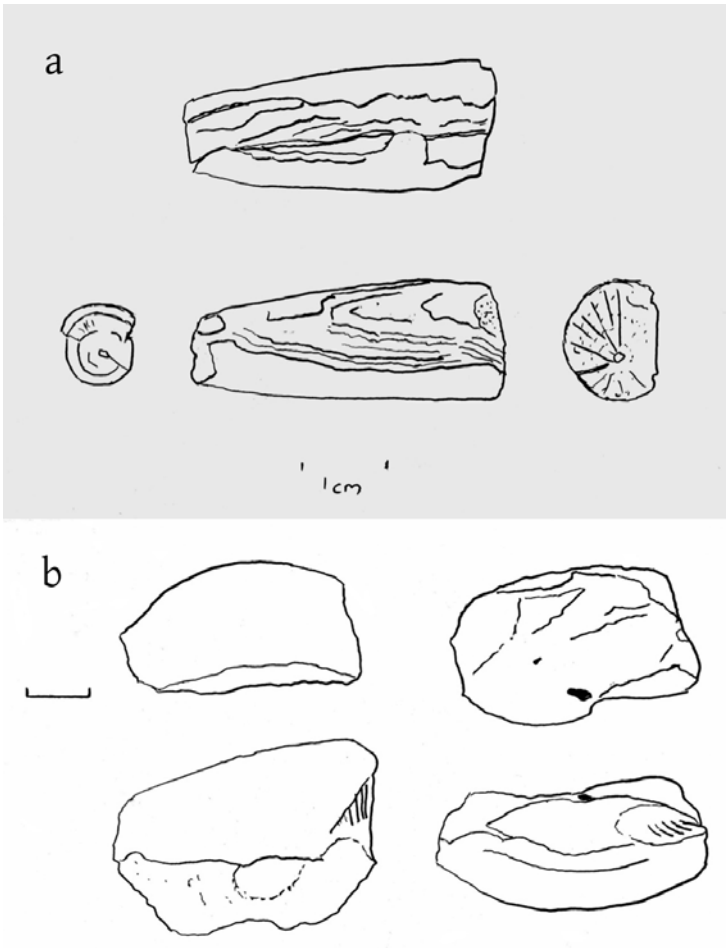

Figure 9.3: (a) Belemnite from Greenwich, BM Acc. No. 1954,1102.60; (b) Piece of stone with cast of fossil, BM Acc. No. 1954,1102.59. Sketches by the author

The second object is a small piece of yellowish grey stone with some staining and a small fragment of a cast (the negative impression) of a fossil (BM Acc. No. 1954,1102.59) (Figure 9.3b). It is 39 mm long, 24 mm wide at its mid-point, roughly triangular in section and it tapers towards the ends, one being 20 mm wide and the other being 10 mm wide. The impression preserves what could be the marks of a few ribs, which could be from a shell, showing a similarity to the modern shells such as the cockle, or part of a sponge,[1] but it has not yet been possible to further identify the species of this fossil.

The Tudor Palace of Placentia

There is no further information about these finds in the accessions register other than that they were donated by the estate office of Greenwich Hospital (Gill Varndell, personal communication 2015). This would appear to mean that the items were found on the estate of the Royal Naval Hospital at Greenwich, the site which is now occupied by the National Maritime Museum, but which was formerly the site of a royal palace.

The Palace of Placentia was built between 1497–1506 for Henry VII, on the site of (and probably reusing some of) the former mansion of Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, which itself was formerly the site of an ecclesiastical manor house. Court records, contemporary illustrations and archaeological investigations show that further works were carried out on the Palace through the 17th century and it was demolished

[1] I am indebted to Mr Richard Maddra for this latter observation. Further identification of this fossil cast may be possible by a palaeontologist more familiar with the London area.

after the Civil War between 1663–*c.* 1699 as part of a new palace for Charles II that was then built upon the site (Dixon 2006: 105). Following its time as an hospital, the site became part of the Royal Naval College in 1874 and since the 1930s is now part of the National Maritime Museum.

A clue to the fossils' provenance is perhaps to be found in the accession numbers, as an unpublished excavation of part of Henry VII's Palace of Placentia in Greenwich took place in 1954, for which the only record appears to be two notices in *The Times* (The Times 1954a; 1954b).

Negative evidence for the fossils being recent discoveries in 1954 is that they are not included in an earlier list of objects discovered in the Thames at Greenwich (Nunn 1915) and their accession numbers rule out anything more recent, such as Dixon's excavations in the same vicinity (Dixon 1971; 1972). It seems reasonable to assume that the fossils were discovered in or around 1954 and the accounts in the newspaper are the only recorded disturbance of the ground at that time.

The earlier of the two newspaper articles has a plan of the palace remains overlaid on the layout of the grounds as existed at the time. The second article admits that the area investigated was small, was only for a pipe trench, and that the drawing was a reconstruction, not an indication of how much of the palace was exposed in 1954 (The Times 1954b). The description in both articles does narrow the location of the pipe trench to the Grand Square in front of the Naval Hospital buildings, and probably within the north-east quadrant of the formal layout, since the interior of the courtyard is explicitly mentioned as being discovered during the works and this appears to be the only candidate for such a location using the plan in *The Times*.

Are you local?

When a fossil is discovered on an archaeological site the question which tends to be asked of a geologist is whether it is from the local geology or not. An affirmative answer will tend to activate an either/or decision in the archaeologist's mind: if it is local and natural then it cannot be evidence of human activity. It becomes an ecofact, when really it could be what Dickson terms a 'cultural ecofact' which are 'natural objects whose presence or abundance in the site is the result of human action' (1996: 75). There is probably an overemphasis on dismissing fossils which are not obviously modified as non-archaeological in the discipline as a whole (Leeming 2017).

The local solid geology in Greenwich is Cretaceous chalk, but it lies beneath a substantial layer of river gravels, that is drift geology which is Pleistocene in age. The former palace site is situated on lower ground with the plateau, on which the park and observatory sit, rising behind it to the south.

A fault to the north of Greenwich Park's boundary means that the drift geology is considerably deeper in that area (Holmes 1902: 63–66). At the Greenwich Hospital Brewery the top of the chalk formation lies just under 38 metres (124 ft 6 in) below the surface, but in the park it probably lies at a depth of just over nine metres (30 ft). The sheer depth of drift geology across the whole area suggests that the fossils in question were brought to the site from solid geology found elsewhere. The condition of the fossils does not suggest such a natural explanation. There is a small possibility that they were from the drift geology, but their condition is not 'rolled'. Unfortunately, there is no exact record as to the depth at which they were found.

Belemnites are found in the solid geology of the locality, represented by the species *Actinocamax verus* (Miller 1823) (Dewey *et al.* 1924: 47). Shells are also common discoveries across London, noted as having come from a variety of sites such as Stoke Newington and Trafalgar Square (Juby 2011). However the object found at the palace site is an impression in stone (probably chalk), not the actual shell itself.

My research has led to the conclusion that most fossils found on prehistoric sites tend to be from the immediate area (Leeming 2017). However, due to the historical nature of the palace, we cannot discount the purposeful extraction of building materials for the palace complex, that is quarrying. The area around Greenwich had substantial pits for the extraction of sand and chalk. Charlton, for example, has several, including the former sandpit in which Charlton Athletic's football ground was built and the geological type section of the Woolwich Beds at Gilbert's Pit (Pitcher *et al.* 1958: 9–10). Holmes also mentions several pits within Greenwich Park, which strongly suggests that there was extraction of materials in the vicinity of the palace; however, unfortunately there is little evidence of when they were in use (1902: 63–64). Since there is a *terminus ante quem* for the demolition of the Palace of Placentia after the Civil War, such a source for the material is possible, but later extraction may have probably masked such activity.

Tudor Antiquarians?

The two fossils in question were discovered in the ruins of the Tudor Palace of Placentia, so could they have been part of the collections of a Tudor antiquary? The most notable British antiquaries of the time—John Leland and William Camden—both recorded fossils, albeit in passing, in their *Itinerary* and *Britannia* respectively (Challinor 1953: 125–126). Camden is known to have used Leland's unpublished notes and most of the entries on fossils in the first edition of the *Britannia* are also found in the *Itinerary*, but there are also accounts which only appear in one source. In Challinor's summary cited above, both sources mention fossils (ammonites at Keynsham, Somerset and on the Yorkshire coast and shells found on hills inland which resembled cockles and oysters) so such items were not unrecognised, although they were probably interpreted in a variety of different ways compared to current scientific interpretation. Specific evidence of an antiquary having a collection at the Palace of Placentia is lacking, but it is also not inconceivable that this could have been part of a royal collection, given that collecting unusual objects by people in such a position of power is a known phenomenon. To give one example from the Roman Empire, the Emperor Augustus assembled what has been called the world's first palaeontological museum at his villa on the island of Capri (Mayor 2011: 143). Further documentary research may produce a possible context for the fossils from Greenwich.[2]

Equal weight must be given to the collection and use of the fossils for amuletic purposes as well as their being part of a proto–scientific collection. I have argued elsewhere that this may be another reason that such items have been marginalised in archaeological literature (Leeming 2015: 15–17). This does not preclude the objects being part of an antiquary's collection as they tended towards polymathy. All across Europe they devoted themselves to collecting what became known as 'curiosities'—such as the wonders of the natural world; what modern people would call archaeological finds and items of reputed power. Fossils were a large part of this tradition which produced major eclectic collections known as 'cabinets of curiosities' (Schnapp 1996: 167–177). In particular the belemnites have long been associated with thunderbolts and have been thought to have protective properties (Johanson 2009).

The following century then had the blossoming of differing interpretations of what fossils were; in Tudor times they were either regarded as relics of the Biblical Flood (Rudwick 1976: 36–37) or the work of giants (Woolf 2004: 417).

[2] A complete synthesis and commentary about British Tudor antiquarians' interpretation of fossils appears to be a lacuna in the history of palaeontology, which is beyond the scope of this present paper to fill. Selections are reprinted in Bromehead (1945), Challinor (1953) and Edwards (1976), although continental scholars dominate the latter discussion. British Tudor antiquarians have been more comprehensively studied in regards to historic, numismatic and manuscript studies (Levine 1970). A recent review of how the past was viewed in Tudor Britain, building on the work of Sir Keith Thomas and others, is found in Woolf (2004). Woolf notes that the Tudor period was an important one for the study of the past as it became a subject of intense discussion and he also notes that objects, including fossils, were circulated amongst interested persons, becoming the origins of collections and eventually museums (2004: 421–422).

Accidentally on site?

The poor condition of the belemnite and the unimpressive nature of the stone with the partial shell impression would also seem to suggest against them having been collected as curiosities by an early antiquarian and later abandoned or lost at the site. However, it is unknown what condition the fossils were in when they entered the archaeological record, so this cannot be stated with any certainty. The temptation to only ascribe 'perfect' specimens to hypothetical past collections is probably another instance of collection bias, of preferring intact and aesthetically pleasing specimens, which is well known to palaeontologists and has been dubbed 'ugly fossil syndrome' (Tang 2000: 175). Clearly they were interesting enough to have been picked up and kept in the 20th century, so a similar action earlier cannot be discounted.

Table 9.1: Selected phases from Dixon's suggested chronology for the Palace of Placentia, showing only those phases where stonework has been discovered (following Dixon 1972).

Phase	Evidence for stone
Phase 1 (14th century)	Stone sleeper walls
Phase 2 (1426–1433)	Limestone rubble foundation
Palace proper (*c.* 1500–1660s)	Stone string course
Post Civil War (after 1651)	Probable limekiln
c. 1660s	Demolition layer

With regard to the Palace of Placentia itself, the recently excavated remains add further evidence that the building was chiefly composed of brick (Current Archaeology 2017). It would be wrong to conclude from this that the previous buildings on the site were also of exclusively brick construction. Dixon's interim report is still the most comprehensive archaeological interpretation of the site and the existence and use of stone in various phases of the building can be extracted from the report (Table 9.1). There were up to two metres of demolition rubble discovered during the 1970s excavations (Dixon 1972: 9). Further uses of stone in the construction are mentioned in passing in a more recent discussion of the site by Dixon (2006: 109).

There is, therefore, evidence that stone, and potentially fossiliferous stone at that, could have been brought onto the site for rather more prosaic purposes. The excavated site which included all of these elements, in the north-east quadrant of the Grand Square in the courtyard in front of Sir Christopher Wren's buildings, also appears to be the location of the 1954 discovery according to the account in *The Times*, as it states that the small remains of walling revealed the inner walling of a courtyard, which would place this discovery in the north-east quadrant.

Subsequent building on the site was restricted. Even Wren was forced to locate his buildings at the southern edge of the site so that there would be an uninterrupted vista from the Queen's House to the river, something insisted upon by the Crown (Smith 2001: 109).

It is not inconceivable that the fossils were brought to the site with chalk to be used for building purposes. A further prosaic interpretation in this vein is to note the existence of cesspits on the site (Dixon 1972: 21), so these items could also have been detritus—rubbish.

Doubly prehistoric?

Why did these items end up in the Department of Britain, Europe and Prehistory at the British Museum? The Natural History Museum, seemingly a better place for the deposition of such finds, was legally part of the British Museum until the passing of the British Museum Act in 1963 and Kenneth Oakley, the foremost authority on fossils found on archaeological sites in Britain, was working there in 1954. However, the fossils from the Palace of Placentia seem to have escaped his notice. They are

not mentioned in his publications about fossils (e.g. Oakley 1978) or in his archive in the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford.[3]

A suggested solution is that the fossils were treated as prehistoric discoveries within the area of the Tudor palace and so were deposited with the British Museum.

The most obvious possibility is that the fossils were thought to be the remains of a Pleistocene or similar tooth[4] (such as the famous examples from the vicinity of Trafalgar Square, which also produced fossil shells (Juby 2011: 276–292)) and that the excavator passed them on to the British Museum for such a reason. In other words, a fossil is, by definition, prehistoric and whoever donated the fossils to the British Museum may have unconsciously determined that it was *doubly* prehistoric, both in itself and also in having been moved to the location where it was discovered in prehistoric times.

Prehistoric discoveries in the vicinity of Greenwich are sparse. Two Bronze Age finds, a palstave and socketed axehead, have been dredged from the Thames at Greenwich (Nunn 1915) and Cotton and Merriman note that there are two prehistoric flint implements from Deptford (1991: 39–41, fig. 6, Nos 8 and 10). They suggest further that prehistoric finds are probably under-represented because of both the post-medieval development and the Flandrian alluvial deposits (Cotton and Merriman 1991: 39–41). Further inland, in Greenwich Park, there are barrows, in fact probably a multi-period barrow cemetery, where over 50 barrows were opened by the Reverend James Douglas in 1784 (Jessup 1975: 59, 288, pl. 23) and about 30–40 are said to survive to some extent within the Park and Observatory grounds (Webster 1902: 15–16). In addition to these published prehistoric sites, the Greater London Historic Environment Record notes the discovery of Mesolithic flints, a Neolithic axehead, a Bronze Age axehead and a bronze sword in the vicinity of the site of the Palace of Placentia (Boston 2007: 122), all of which indicate potential prehistoric origins for the fossil finds under consideration here.

Older archaeological finds, from the Palaeolithic, seem to be excluded from Boston's brief survey. However, in 1875 there were discoveries of Pleistocene fauna in the Greenwich area, which went unpublished until Caroline Juby discovered them in the Natural History Museum and catalogued them as part of her PhD thesis (Juby 2011). The finds were discovered in St Alfege Passage and Churchfields (near Greenwich Market). Juby notes that this area is in the Kempton Park Gravel Formation, which overlies the Thanet Sand (2011: 306).

The finds were mainly of bovidae, with hippopotamus, reindeer, red deer and bison forming the remainder of the surviving assemblage. Juby identifies this Palaeolithic assemblage as mostly part of what has been named the Joint Mitnor Mammal Assemblage Zone, dating to the Ipswichian, the Last Interglacial, in Marine Isotope Stage 5e, that is around 124,000–119,000 years ago (Juby 2011: 307). This stage has been interpreted as either having no human presence or a very limited presence in Britain (Lewis *et al*. 2011) and is the stage in which the famous discoveries in and around Trafalgar Square belong. These finds of land animals are often fragmentary and accompanied by deposits of shells (Preece 1999).

Deep Time

When confronted with a fossil, a human being is confronted by a dead organism from what has been termed 'Deep Time'. This phrase was coined by the Scottish geologist James Hutton (1726–1797), a concept which shaped the development of that discipline, and to a certain extent its child, archaeology.

[3] It has to be said that the demarcation between what are now two institutions was more than a little blurred in this period. Oakley attempted to obtain as many specimens of fossils from archaeological sites for his part of the British Museum as he possibly could and many excavators obliged him. Many items are still held in the Natural History Museum's collections.

[4] The belemnite is an obvious contender for this, but the stone with the cast also resembles a tooth shape when viewed from certain angles.

It refers to the length of geologic time and represented a break from the chronologies based upon calculations of length of lifespans of Biblical figures (McIntyre and McKirdy 2012).

The archaeologist, when confronted with a fossil, is also confronted by deep time. There has been an unfortunate habit amongst archaeologists to realise that an object is a fossil and therefore think that it falls into the realm of the palaeontologist. Therefore it can be safely discarded or regarded as mere natural background noise, when other interpretations, including that of human activity, could be applied to these discoveries. However, a common factor I found in my research is that often the fossils are kept, but that accompanying information is minimal, as has been the case with these two enigmatic finds from London.

Conclusion

Whatever the reasons the unknown person(s) who picked up the fossils at Greenwich and donated them to the British Museum in 1954 had, they had the right idea. The unusual objects were worthy of attention. Where things appear to have gone awry is that the correct experts were not consulted and details of their discovery were not given with the objects.

These two finds, with their minimal provenance, have allowed several interpretations. These multiple interpretations are considered by archaeologists when confronted by the past in the past. However, the process of thinking through these issues also can be a warning about considering such objects. Archaeologists are meant to be 'reasonable'—to consider the most possible and/or the most probable explanations for their discoveries. The annals of archaeological writings are full of examples where these strictures were not held to, with disastrous results. Caution is the watchword, although the recent discussion of (equally contentious) chalk objects by Anne Teather arrives at the conclusion—also applicable to fossils—that such objects should be considered innocent, that the excavator must prove why they think they arrived in the site by natural, rather than human, means (Teather 2016).

In the case of the fossils discussed in this paper, the honest answer is that we simply do not know. They are objects from deep time, discovered at the site of a Tudor palace. Everything else is speculation.

Acknowledgements

These objects were studied during the course of a PhD thesis (Leeming 2017). Due to lack of contextual information these finds were not included in the main corpus of this thesis. This contribution represents an expansion of a brief note in Appendix 7 of the thesis. The thesis was begun at the University of Manchester and was completed at the University of Exeter. The supervisory teams at both institutions, Mel Giles and Chantal Conneller at Manchester and Anthony Harding and Linda Hurcombe at Exeter, are thanked for their efforts. They are in no way to blame for any of this contribution.

Gill Varndell arranged access to the objects and kindly checked the accession register and other records for information.

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Chapter 10

A shifting chronology of combat damage: Reassessing the evidence for use and reuse on Irish Bronze Age swords

David R. Bell

Use-wear analysis is increasingly employed to interpret damage apparent on Bronze Age metal weapons, with the resultant data used to support social paradigms founded on belligerent warrior elites. A reassessment of earlier work in this field suggests that little, if any, of the available use-wear evidence points to the type of blade-on-blade combat that this proposes. Indeed, with due allowance made for damage attributable to prehistoric ritual and subsequent recovery, the majority of the remaining edge damage on Irish Bronze Age weapons is probably the result of reuse by eighteenth- and nineteenth-century insurgents. There is no suggestion that prehistoric Ireland was a peaceful, egalitarian idyll, only that there is little conclusive evidence to support the inference that interpersonal combat was conducted using the earliest copper alloy swords in the manner now generally assumed.

Keywords: *Bronze Age, insurgents, material culture, reuse, swords, use-wear, warrior elites*

Introduction

The discovery of any ancient artefact will inevitably stimulate speculation, not only regarding the function of the object in question but also as to the nature of the society that produced it. Furthermore, implements such as metal tools and weapons will hold some intrinsic practical or material value. While those which simply enter the melting pot are lost forever, those which are recommissioned and reused will require an additional chapter in their life-story. For those engaged in the interpretation of ancient material culture, the accurate identification and differentiation of any physical evidence of use or reuse is essential to the construction of a meaningful and nuanced object biography.

This work will consider how two independent studies of the same material arrived at radically different conclusions and how the key to resolving this problem appears to be a more nuanced interpretation of evidence obtained through use-wear analysis. While the archaeological application of use-wear analysis to prehistoric metallic artefacts is a comparatively recent development, it builds upon a sound methodological foundation laid down over many years by researchers engaged in the study of lithic and osseous implements (Andrefsky 1998; Wall 1987). Dolfini and Crellin recently observed that use-wear analysis is now 'close to becoming a full-grown field of archaeological science' (2016: 78). It is increasingly employed not simply to determine what practical use an artefact might have been exposed to but also to draw broader inferences about the nature of the society that created it.

Based on re-sharpening patterns, a form of secondary use-wear, Kristiansen posited the existence of both ritual chiefs and warrior chiefs during the Nordic Bronze Age (1984: 75–88). Re-sharpening of the warrior chiefs' swords purportedly occurred most noticeably beneath the hilt, because of defensive parrying manoeuvres, and at the tip, due to damage sustained in thrusting attacks (Kristiansen 1998: 117–119; Kristiansen and Larsson 2005: 218; Kristiansen and Suchowska-Ducke 2015: 369). While asymmetric wear patterns are occasionally observed on Early Bronze Age halberds, nothing similar is present on Atlantic long-bladed metal weapons (Bell 2017; Bell and Brandherm 2014).

Kristiansen went on to argue for the application of structural Marxism to afford a better understanding of archaeological material culture, which would include metal-bladed weapons (2002: 325; 2011: 202).

His analysis has been questioned, nevertheless, not only on grounds of the narrowness of his sample base but also on the conclusions that he reached. While some are unconvinced by his flange-hilted/fully-hilted and ritual chief/warrior chief dichotomies, others dispute the basis of Kristiansen's model of a centralised Nordic Bronze Age society (Bunnefeld 2014: 133; Thrane 2006: 497–498).

Two major studies of Irish prehistoric weapons employed use-wear analysis. The first of these, Bridgford's PhD dissertation, examined Late Bronze Age Irish swords (2000). One of Bridgford's expressed aims was to 'consider the implication of the results in the context of the roles which weapons, warfare and warriors had within society and how they helped to shape that society' (Bridgford 2000: 1). Molloy's PhD dissertation, on the other hand, was a technical consideration of the functionality of Middle Bronze Age and Late Bronze Age weaponry in Ireland and, to a somewhat lesser extent, the Aegean Bronze Age (2006). Molloy's study (Study 1 hereafter), and later work by the same author relying upon its basic premise, became widely cited in the field of use-wear analysis in support of a sword-wielding warrior elite (Dolfini and Crellin 2016; Faulkner-Jones 2016; Harding 2007; Horn 2013; Moret *et al.* 2016).

Molloy also examined *in situ* a total of 65 (13%) of Irish Middle Bronze Age copper alloy blades housed at the National Museum of Ireland (NMI). Once again, use-wear analysis was relied upon not only to demonstrate ancient martial use but also to draw direct inferences regarding the status of the owners of these weapons and the structure of the societies in which they lived; the development of social complexity. With reference to the results of his early study, Molloy most recently suggested that, 'it is possible that the social infrastructures supporting warrior specialization, as much as the activities of those specialists, stimulated a paradigm shift in Bronze Age society in Ireland' (2017: 28–29).

In the course of a recently completed PhD study (Study 2 hereafter), the present author made an *in situ* assessment of *c.* 200 of the NMI's Irish Bronze Age blades, including 64 of the 65 pieces examined for Study 1. Substantially more damage was deemed to be the result of peri-depositional ritual practices, recovery and post-recovery reuse at the hands of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Irish insurgents and, consequently, less remained that was due to the actions of ancient warriors. A table setting out the details of both interpretations appears below (Table 10.1). For the purposes of this paper, each blade has a unique ID number that is used throughout when appropriate. Before discussing possible reasons for any discrepancies in damage interpretation however, a summary of the relevant methods employed in Study 2 would assist with context. These were broadly similar to those used in Study 1.

Damage types

Four common forms of edge damage exist on Bronze Age blades: V-notches, U-notches, dents (similar to U-notches but longer than they are deep) and bows (dents with a sideways displacement of impacted metal) (Figure 10.1). All might be explained by violent impacts of one form or another and experimental work has confirmed that V-notching and, to a somewhat lesser extent, U-notching are indeed normally the result of forceful blade-on-blade impacts (Horn 2013: 18; Molloy 2011: 75; O'Flaherty *et al.* 2011: 43).

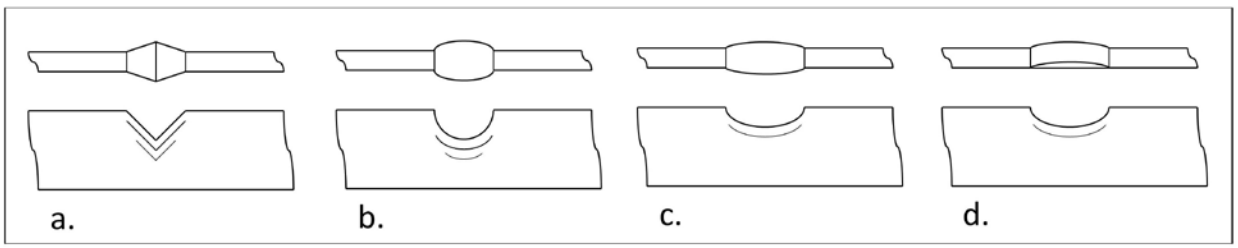

Figure 10.1: Edge damage forms in plan and elevation: a. V-notch; b. U-notch; c. dent, d. bow

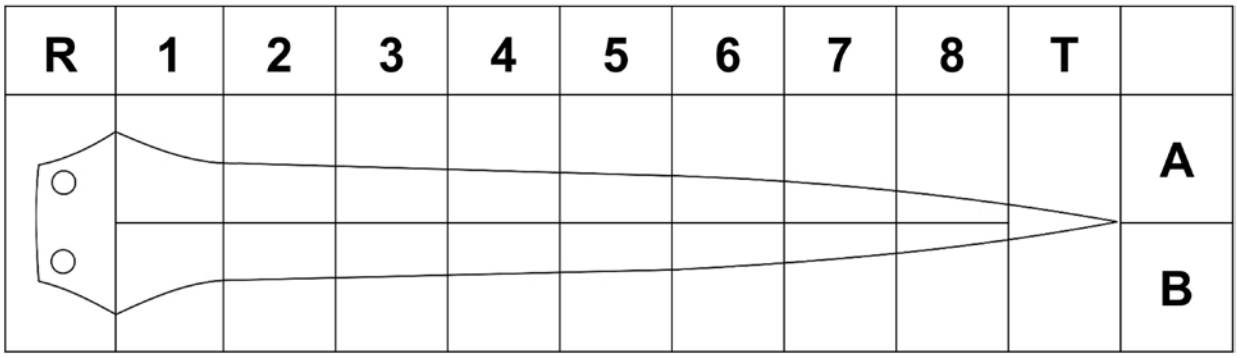

Figure 10.2: Recording grid for the location and frequency of occurrence of damage to rapier blades

The presence of damage to the sampled British and Irish rapiers and swords occurs at three discrete locations: the tip, the cutting edges and the rivet-holes. The blade edges were subdivided using a 16 square grid (Figure 10.2).

Damage location and frequency

The location and frequency of occurrence of damage at tips, edges and rivet-holes were recorded using the grid, as set out above. A pictorial representation of the results for British rapiers and swords appears below (Figure 10.3). The diameter of the coloured circles is proportional to the frequency of occurrence of damage at any particular location. To simplify matters, only the results for the 33 Burgess and Gerloff's (1981) Group IV rapiers in the sample have been included here, as these represent by far the largest proportion of British Middle Bronze Age long-bladed weapons, 58% and 61% of the British and Irish material respectively. They are also broadly coeval with early swords. Damage patterns on the earlier rapier groupings were, in any event, broadly similar to those seen on the Group IV pieces.

As might be expected of a weapon intended primarily for the delivery of thrusting blows, the tips of British rapiers had sustained a relatively high level of damage (Figure 10.3a). Apart from a spike in frequency at the centre of the blade, damage to the cutting edges is spread relatively evenly. Rivet-hole damage is as frequent as other damage forms on these blades. British Middle Bronze Age swords, on the other hand, displayed a considerably less frequent occurrence of impact marks than the rapiers they eventually replaced (Figure 10.3b). A slight increase to the generally even distribution occurs at the points on the blade where a slashing weapon might be expected to experience the greatest damage (Molloy 2011: 75). Rivet-hole damage was less obvious than with rapiers, perhaps reflecting the advantages of a developed hilt, and hinting at the possibility of an 'inappropriate' use of rapiers as slashing weapons.

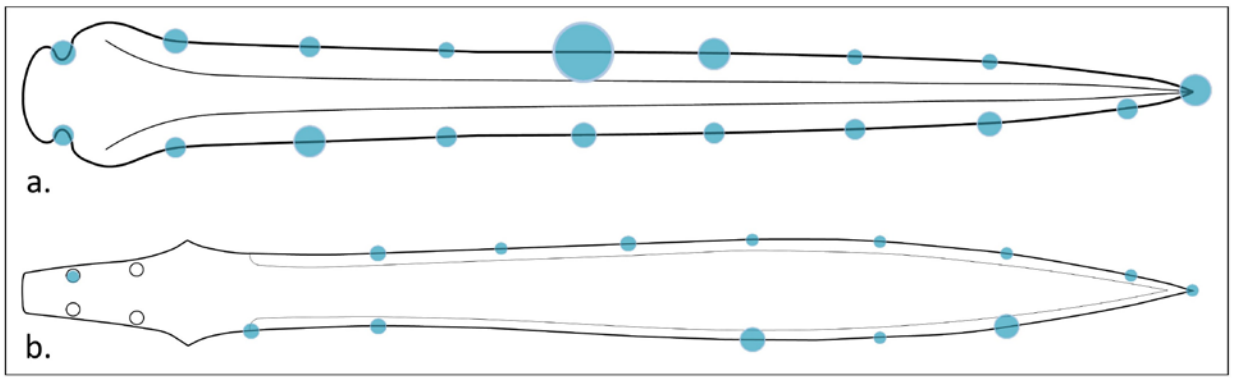

Figure 10.3: Damage location and frequency of occurrence on British Middle Bronze Age a. rapiers and b. swords

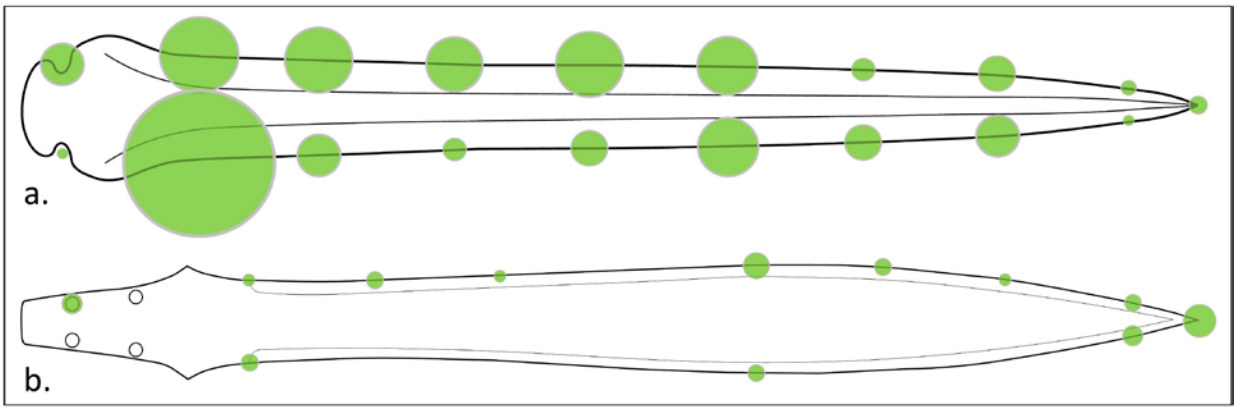

Figure 10.4: Damage location and frequency of occurrence on Irish Middle Bronze Age a. rapiers and b. swords

As with British blades, there was a distinct difference in the damage patterns evident on Irish rapiers and swords (Figure 10.4). There were however, substantially more impact marks on Irish rapiers (Figure 10.4a). The swords from both regions are remarkably similar in terms of the location and frequency of occurrence of damage, with only slightly more evidence of use on Irish blades, particularly at the tip (Figure 10.4b). Irish rapiers, on the other hand, display greatly increased levels of damage along the cutting edge and at the rivet-holes. This is most noticeable towards the butt, where signs of parrying might be expected to accumulate on blades used for thrusting attacks. Increased rivet-hole damage also suggests that Irish rapiers were being 'misused' more frequently than were their British counterparts.

Cross-blade ritual damage

Cross-blade damage is relatively uncommon but might be explained by the use of the flat of the blade to ward off attacks by a similarly armed opponent (Mödlinger and Ntaflos 2009: 197; Molloy 2006: App. 4, 55). Damage of the form seen in Figure 10.5 below occurred on only *c.* 1% of the material examined and is typified by this unprovenanced Irish rapier fragment. In the case of all long-bladed weapons, this consists mostly of U-notches with a deep and wide profile and is associated exclusively with peri-depositional destruction. All of the blades that displayed this form of damage were broken into several parts, usually two but occasionally three or more.

Cross-blade hack marks tend to appear in clusters and are always at, or relatively close to, 90° to the lateral axis of the blade. This uniformity makes it unlikely that they are the result of some martial encounter, but rather that they were inflicted in the course of a formal, possibly public, ritual spectacle. The involvement of more than one participant is suggested by the distinctive weight of impact of each cluster's marks and the slightly different orientation of clusters relative to each other. This might also be the result of age or gender differences or even the handedness of different partakers. The fine, black water patina noted by Burgess and Gerloff is also present within the cross-blade hack marks, pointing to both their antiquity and the peri-depositional immersion of this weapon (1981: No. 299). As will be considered further below, it appears likely that immediately prior to the commitment of these weapons to a watery resting place, they were repeatedly struck, probably with an axe or a chisel, based on the broad and rounded notches, rather than with another long-bladed weapon.

The cross-blade hack marks seen in Figure 10.5a are repeated on the obverse of the blade whereas those in Figure 10.5b appear on one side thus only making weaker the forward part of this weapon. Furthermore, there is a flattening of the cutting edge where some associated hacking is evident (Figure 10.5c). This might suggest that when the blows that created these marks were delivered, the blade was being supported on an anvil stone or indeed possibly an 'altar stone'. All of the blades treated in this

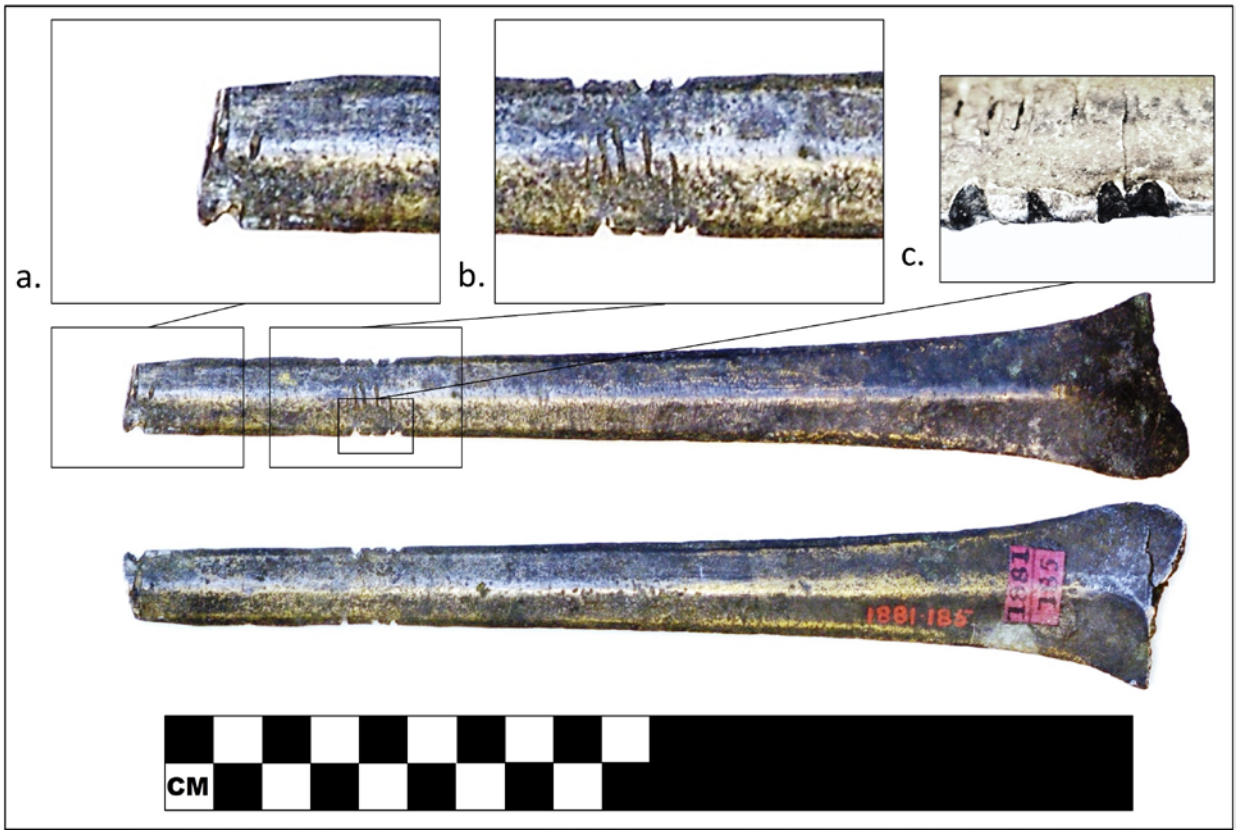

Figure 10.5: Cross-blade damage to an Irish Middle Bronze Age blade. With permission of the National Museum of Ireland.

manner appear to have subsequently been bent, possibly over the officiator's knee and occasionally to the point of breaking. Breaking, however, may not have been the intention of those involved. The weakened blade above may have broken inadvertently.

Examples of bent but unbroken weapons are not uncommon. A bent Middle Bronze Age Group II rapier coated with a 'dark brown and gold water patina' (Figure 10.6) was recovered from the foreshore of the River Thames at Kew Bridge (Burgess and Gerloff 1981: 22). A Late Bronze Age sword found in 1874 by workmen in Dalton-in-Furness, Cumbria, was bent when found but broke during attempts at straightening (Colquhoun and Burgess 1988: 89–90). Only close examination of the condition of the exposed cross-section of any break might reveal its approximate age. More successful instances of post recovery straightening will be considered below.

The frequency of use of wet deposition contexts for bladed weapons, a practice which 'increased dramatically in the Middle Bronze Age' (Burgess and Gerloff 1981: 5–6), has led to much speculation regarding the existence of a 'water cult or water religion' (Tylecote 1986: 11) during this period. This appears to have been the case nowhere more so than in Ireland (O'Sullivan 1997: 120). This beating, bending or breaking and 'drowning' appears to follow a typical 'triple-death' cycle noted on other Irish weapons and is reminiscent of the purported treatment of Irish bog-bodies (Kelly 2006; 2012: 13).

As with Middle Bronze Age weapons, examples of Late Bronze Age swords being subject to bending are relatively common. A sword from the Blackmoor hoard (Figure 10.7a) exhibits a similar slow bend to that seen in Figure 10.6. It also shares the deep U-notching seen in Figure 10.5, damage which for Mörtz was 'probably brought about by the purposeful employment of axes' (2014). Another Late Bronze Age sword from this hoard however, was treated in a very different fashion, a distinction common to this

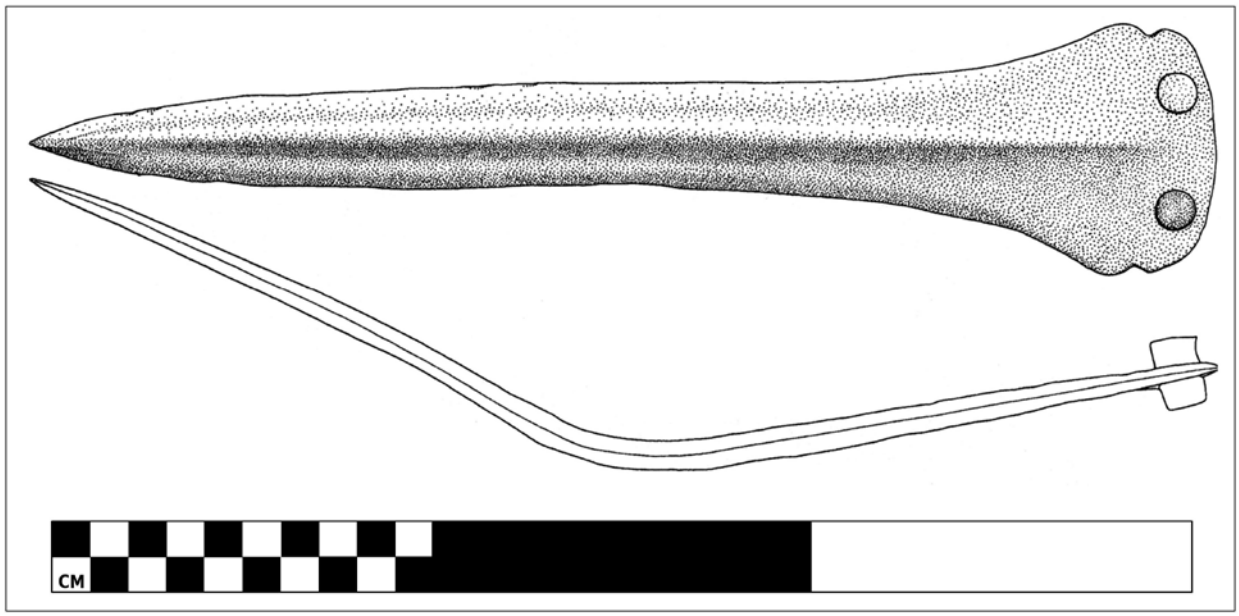

Figure 10.6: Bent Group II rapier from the River Thames (Burgess and Gerloff 1981: No. 82)

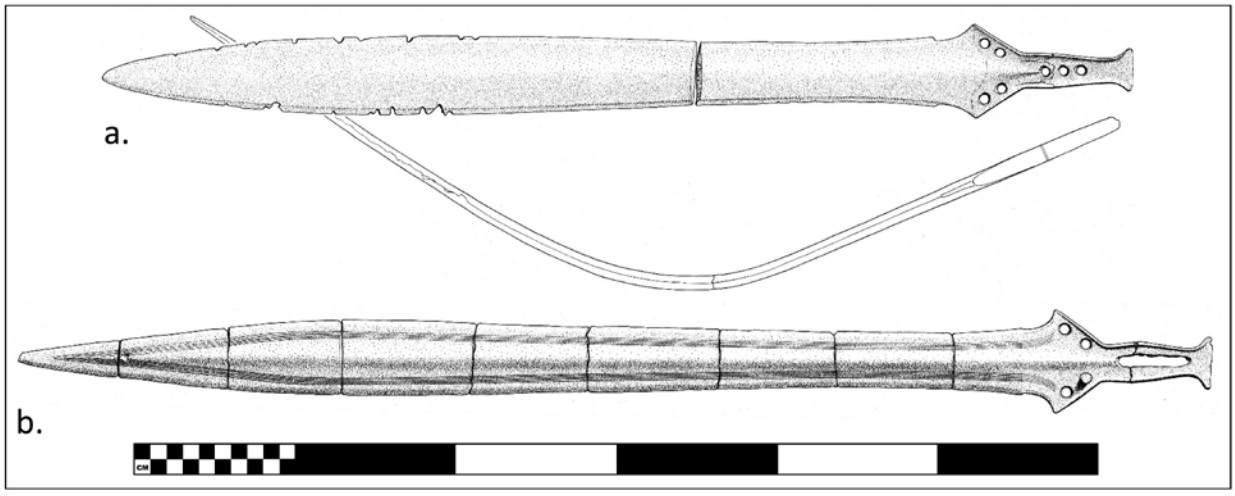

Figure 10.7: a. Bent Late Bronze Age sword and b. fragmented Late Bronze Age sword (Colquhoun and Burgess 1988: Nos 268 and 253)

period noted by Yates and Bradley (2010). While breaking into two or possibly three pieces was the norm throughout the Middle Bronze Age, the selective fragmentation of blades into as many as ten pieces came into vogue during the Late Bronze Age. Furthermore, there are no tell-tale clues that this breakage was achieved through any bending action. It appears more likely that some novel technique was being employed, possibly involving the preheating of the blade, as recently described by Knight (forthcoming).

An Irish Group IV British Middle Bronze Age rapier with typical cross-blade damage, ID No. 57, appears among those examined for both Study 1 and Study 2 (Figure 10.8). As with the example above, there are two sets of slightly differently orientated hack marks and the distal group are associated with a catastrophic break induced by bending. In this case however, both sections of the blade were recovered and subsequently re-joined (Figure 10.8b). Rather than 'parry scarring', as suggested by Molloy, this cross-blade damage was probably also the result of some peri-depositional ritual involving an

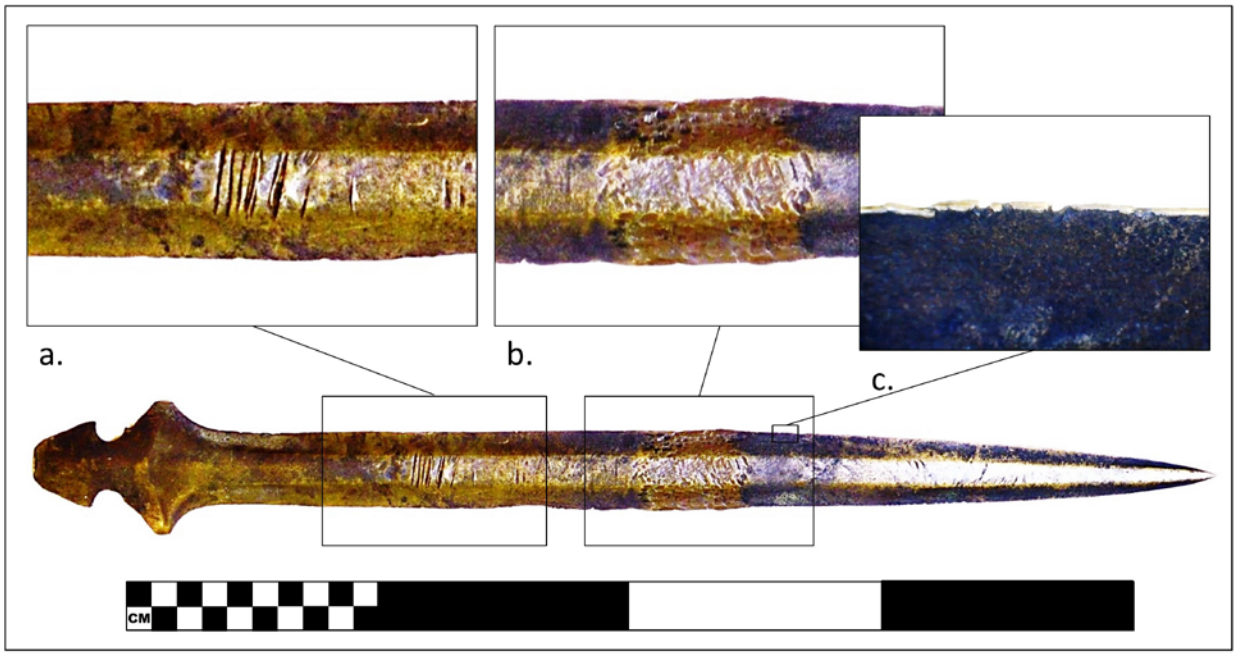

Figure 10.8: Cross-blade damage and modern blade repair to an Irish Middle Bronze Age rapier (ID No. 57). With permission of the National Museum of Ireland

implement such as an axe (2006: App. 4, 53). Damage to the cutting edge of this blade, on the other hand, is most likely the result of modern reuse, as is suggested by the evident loss of patina (Figure 10.8c). The flattening of the cross-blade hacks is probably the result of modern hammering, intended to straighten the blade prior to re-joining.

Cross-blade damage of a somewhat different nature can be seen on another common sample piece exhibiting modern refurbishment, ID No. 31 (Figure 10.9), in this case a reworked butt with clearly modern secondary rivet-holes (Bell 2016; Burgess and Gerloff 1981: No. 893). Rather than inflicted by

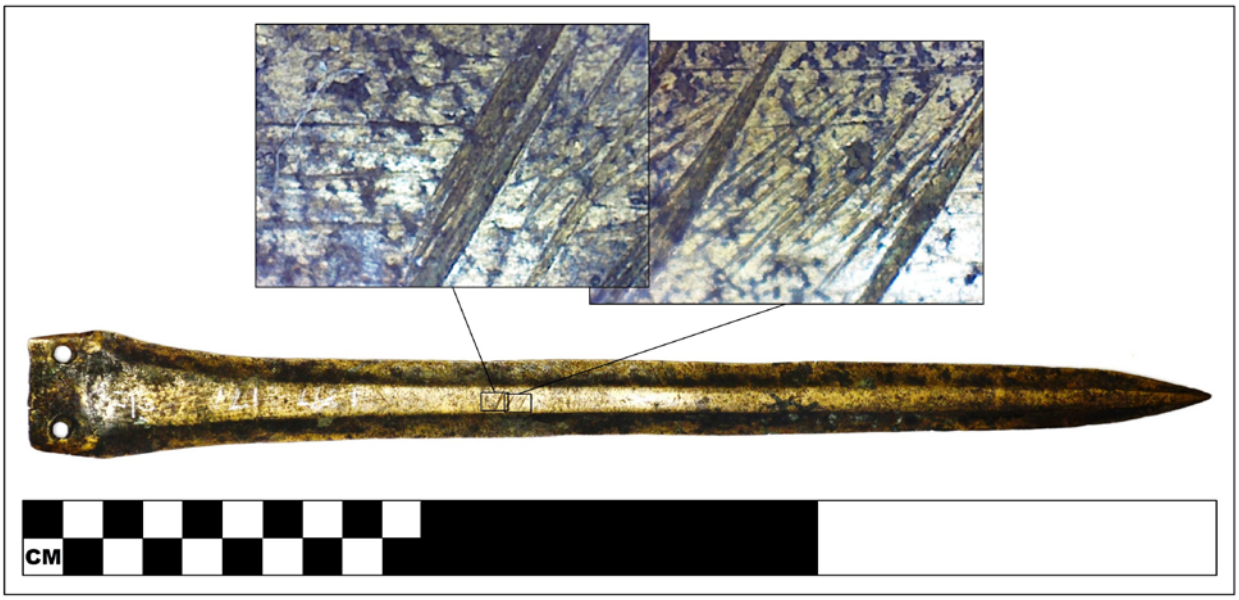

Figure 10.9: Cross-blade damage and modern hilt repair to an Irish Middle Bronze Age rapier (ID No. 31). With permission of the National Museum of Ireland

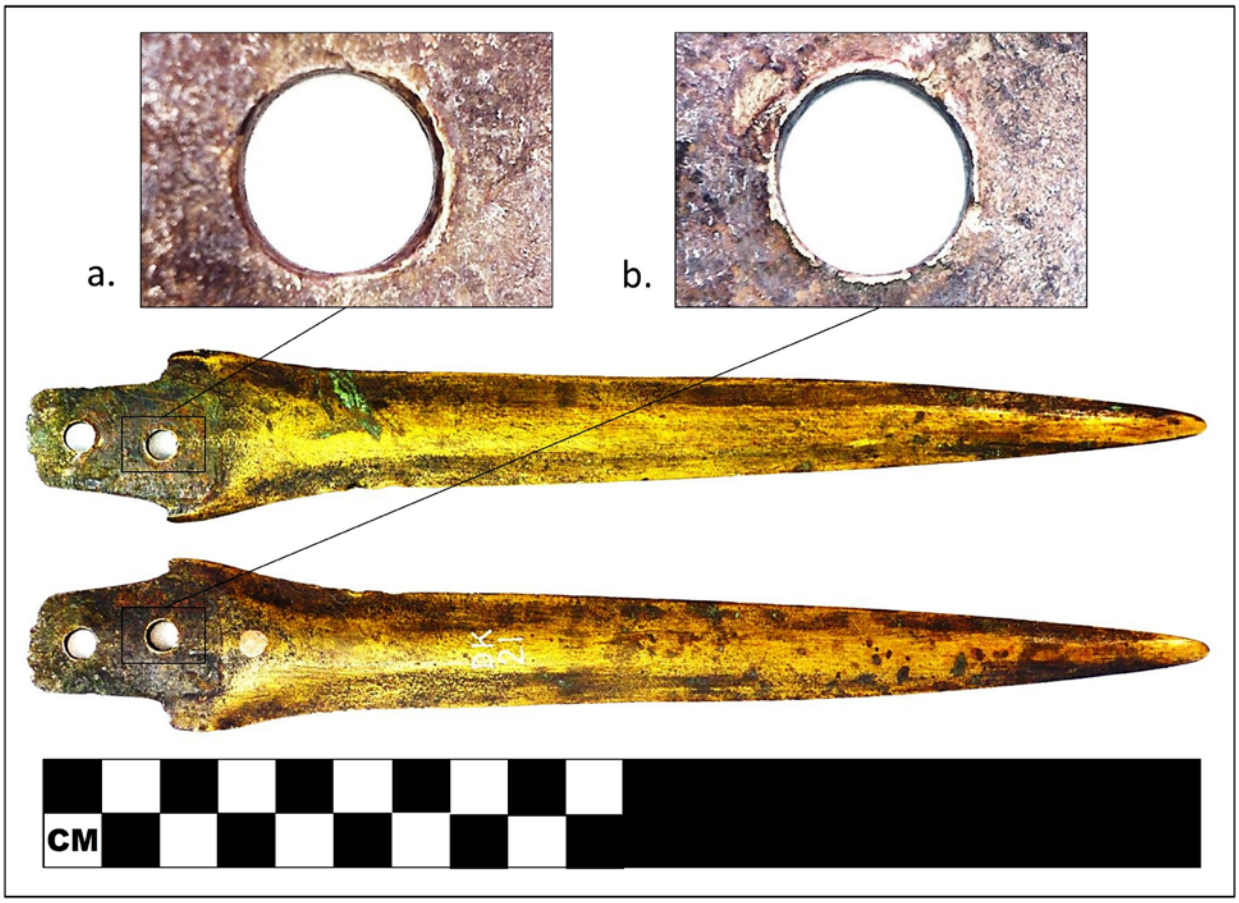

Figure 10.10: Modern reworking of Middle Bronze Age blade including secondary rivet holes (Acc. No. X.DK 21). Photo D. Bell © National Museums Scotland

some heavy percussive force however, this marking appears to be the result of some reciprocating abrasive action. There is little significant edge damage evident on this blade and, due to the vigorous abrasive cleaning which has left deep longitudinal scoring, all traces of any ancient patination have been removed.

A substantial amount of Irish Bronze Age weaponry was donated to the National Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh, by nineteenth-century Scottish antiquarian John Bell who, in the later years of his life, resided in Dungannon, Co. Tyrone (O'Connor and Briggs 2004: 215). This included a rapier which had two holes drilled along the central axis of its modified butt. Close inspection of these reveals distinctive entry and exit characteristics, Figures 10.10a and 10.10b respectively, suggesting a low speed, possibly mechanised process that could date this work to the 19th century. No patina survives on the blade and it is free of any obvious blade-on-blade impact damage.

Patina condition

It is now a well-established tenet of use-wear analysis that the condition of the patina coating on a copper alloy artefact can be indicative of the timing of any surface damage which might be present (Crellin 2014: 182; Melheim and Horn 2014: 12; Moyler 2007; Roberts and Ottaway 2003). Pre-depositional damage will lie beneath any accumulated patination whereas post-recovery damage will break through this protective accretion to expose the bright base metal beneath. A synthesis of both this consideration and the hypothesis proposed above—that V- and U-notching on prehistoric metal weapons is probably

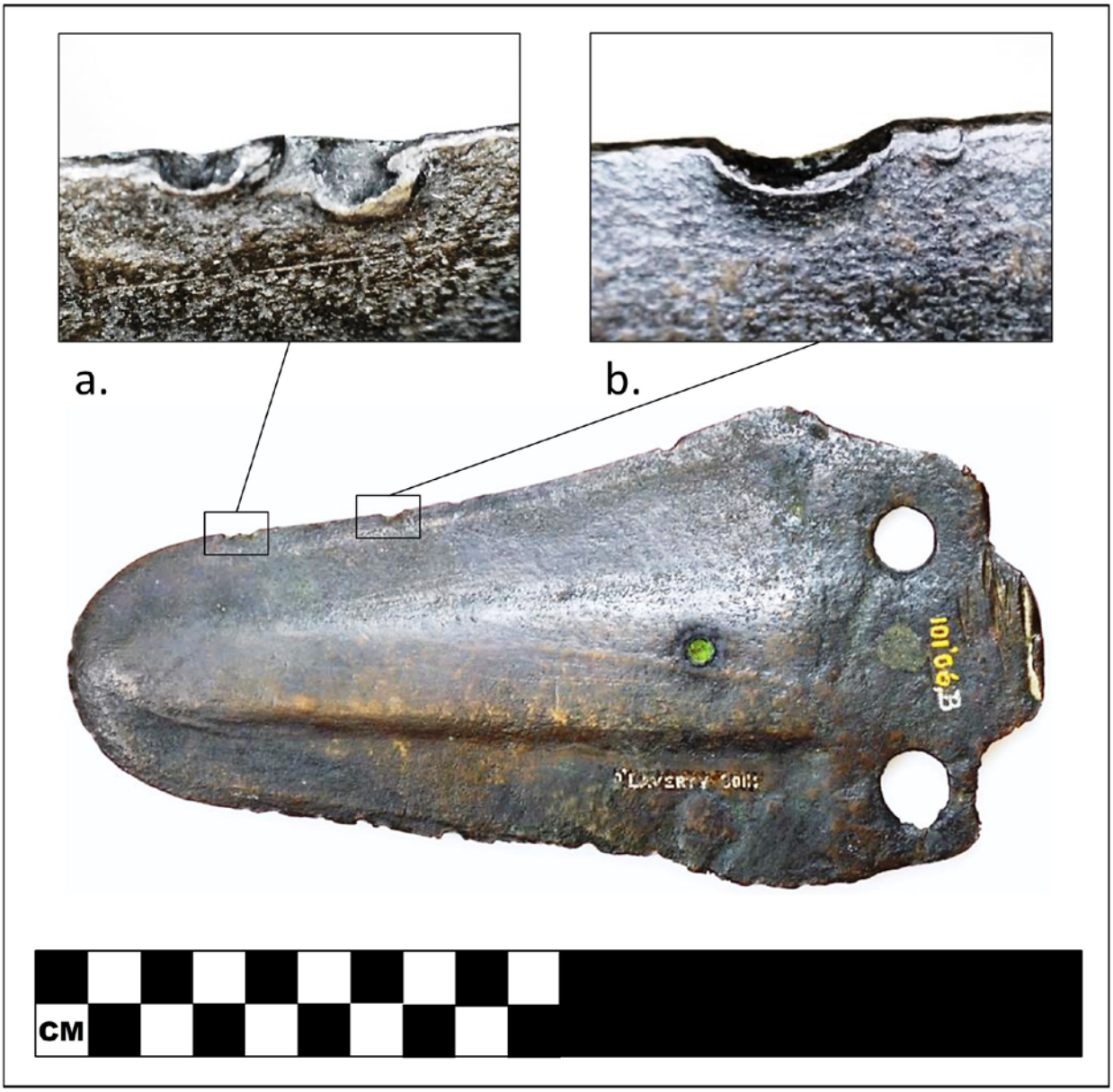

Figure 10.11: Pre- or peri-depositional edge damage to an Early Bronze Age halberd. With permission of the Ulster Museum, Belfast, accession number BELUM 101: 1906 B

the result of blade-on-blade contact—might differentiate between those which have been subject to use-wear either prior or subsequent to their recovery. An example of pre-depositional damage appears on an unprovenanced Early Bronze Age Type Clonard halberd formerly in the O'Laverty Collection but since 1906 housed in the Ulster Museum (UM), Belfast (Figure 10.11).

The large dents on this halberd's edge lie beneath the same even coating of ancient patina that covers the rest of the blade, indicating that these existed prior to its deposition. The same is true of the cross-blade hacking present at the butt (Figure 10.12b). In common with all the damage evident on this blade, it appears to be the result of blows with an implement such as a relatively dull metal axe rather than some other sharp-edged weapon, notwithstanding Horn's view that '*Ein Aufeinandertreffen der Klingen*', a violent clash of blades, was the primary cause of edge damage on Early Bronze Age halberds (2014: 298). An axe was possibly used to separate the blade from its organic shaft and then to attack its cutting

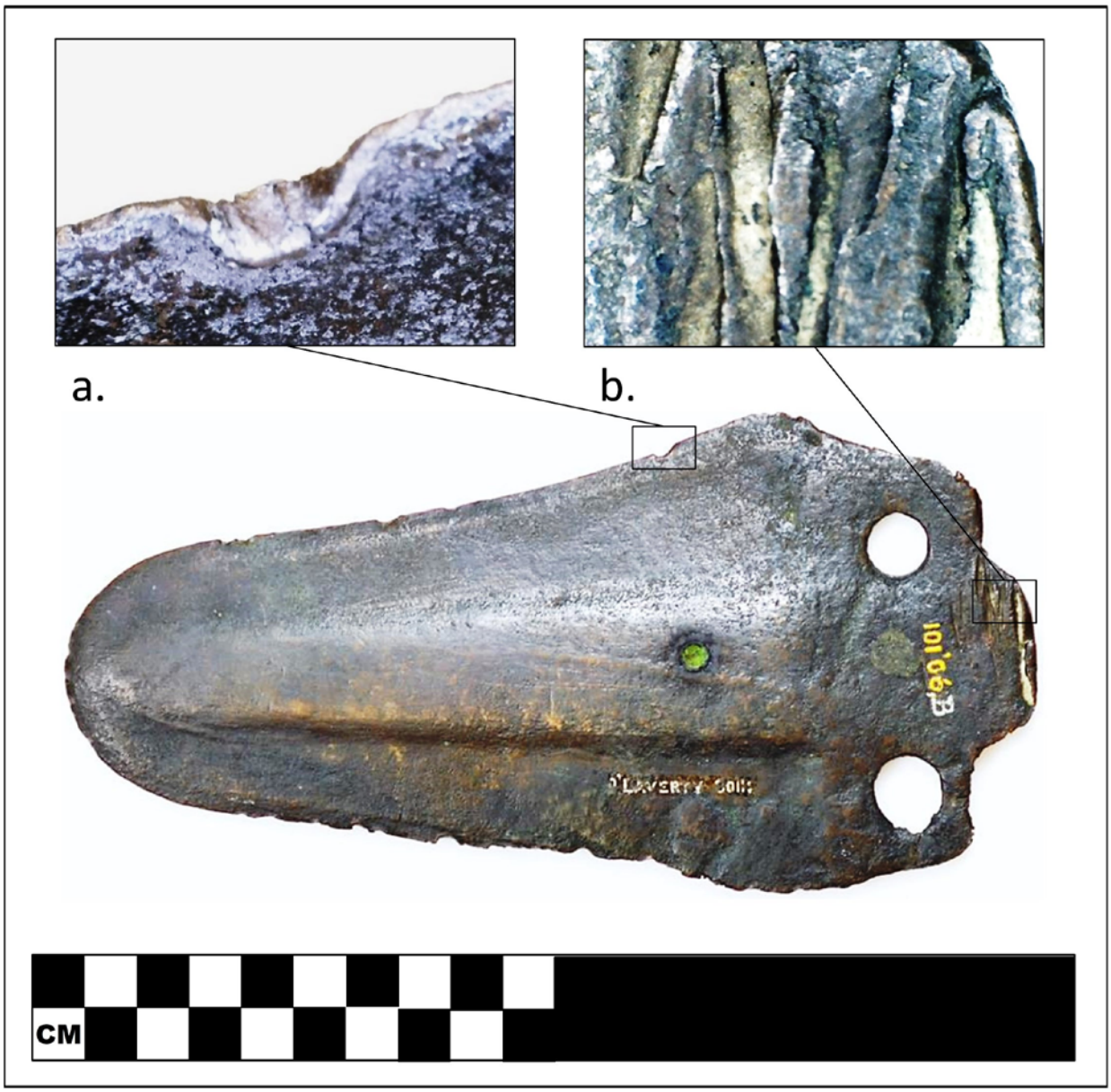

Figure 10.12: Possible peri-depositional ritual damage to an Early Bronze Age halberd. With permission of the National Museum of Ireland

edges. This is reinforced by the presence of reverberation marks of the sort that would be left following a measured 'dead' blow at this point with some relatively heavy, shafted implement (Figure 10.12a). Such damage strongly suggests peri-depositional ritual activity rather than pre-depositional combat.

An Irish Group IV rapier, ID No. 39 (Figure 10.13), displays damage that is unlikely to be the result of any peri-depositional ritual activity (Molloy 2006: App. 4, 43; 2011: 75). Indeed, interpersonal conflict is perhaps the most obvious cause of wear to later Atlantic long-bladed metal weapons, with most studies reaching a consensus that *c.* 90% of these artefacts had suffered violent, mostly blade-on-blade impacts (Bridgford 1997; Quilliec 2008: 71; York 2002: 85). While heavy blade-on-blade contact involving prehistoric warriors might seem the most plausible explanation, closer examination reveals that all of the V-notching evident on this weapon has an associated loss of patina coverage. This clearly suggests that, rather than any ancient combat activity, this blade has seen some form of modern reuse (*contra* Molloy 2017: 11).

Figure 10.13: Edge damaged Irish Group IV rapier (ID No. 39). With permission of the National Museum of Ireland

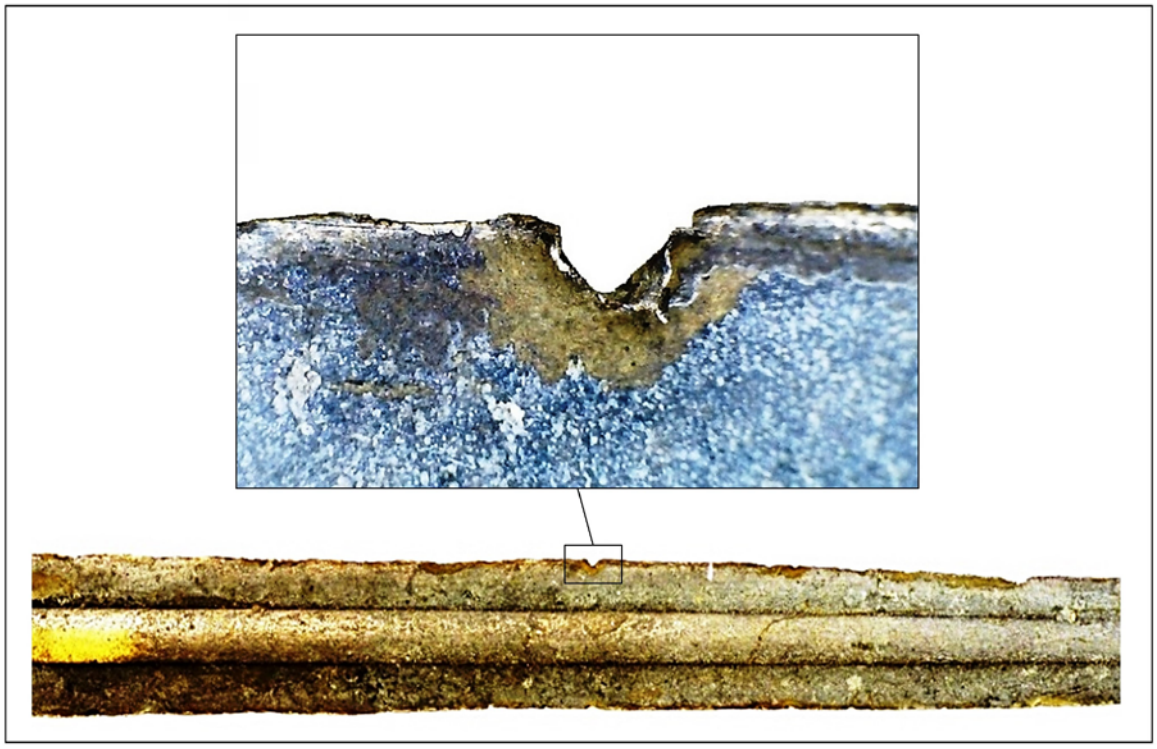

Figure 10.14: Detail of post-recovery edge damage (ID No. 39). With permission of the National Museum of Ireland

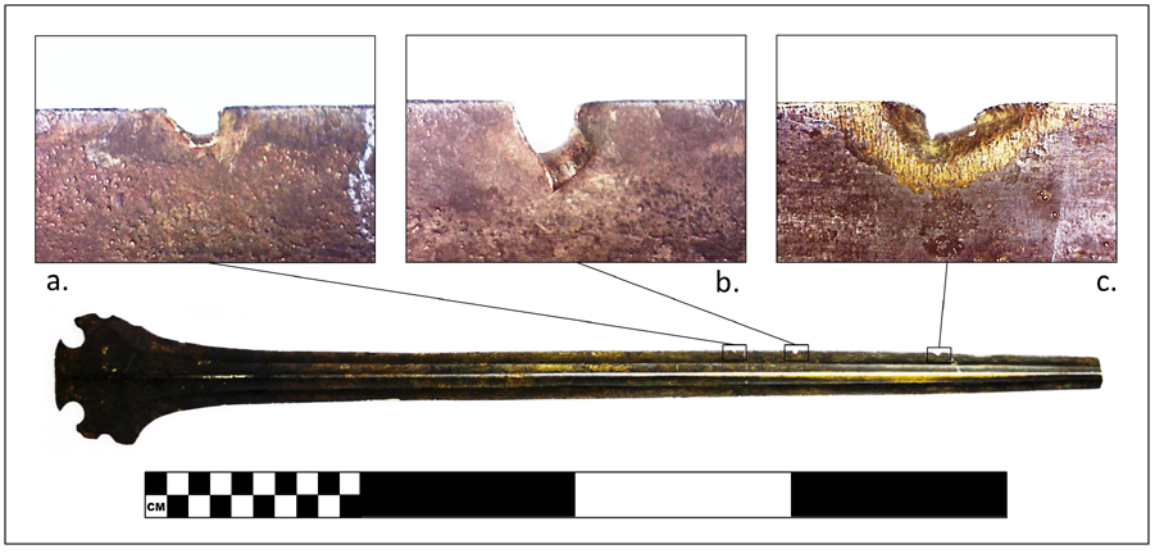

Figure 10.15: Post-recovery edge damage to an Irish Group III rapier (ID No. 27). With permission of the National Museum of Ireland

Furthermore, fine tabs of displaced metal exist at each point of impact (Figure 10.14). It is unlikely that such fragile slivers of prehistoric metal would survive until the present day when the effects of both corrosion and post-recovery handling are allowed for (Horn 2013: 17). Similar characteristics are obvious on an Irish Group III rapier, ID No. 27, recovered from the River Shannon, Co. Galway (Figure 10.15).

An unprovenanced Irish Group IV rapier, ID No. 35, also displays clear post-depositional edge damage with an associated patina loss that suggests modern attrition rather than the block and parry of ancient warriors (Molloy 2011: 75). In this case, the damage is mainly V-notching, the most common damage type observed on Irish material in the course of Study 2. Fine tabs of unpatinated metal are again present at the points of impact (Figure 10.16a). Furthermore, as can be seen with this example, patina loss along the whole of the central section of a blade is indicative of post-recovery straightening. Where this does not result in the blade breaking, it will frequently produce a fatigue fracture similar to that seen on a Group I rapier, ID No. 2, recovered from the River Barrow, Co. Kildare (Figure 10.17a). Post-depositional edge damage with associated patina loss is also evident on this example (Figure 10.17b). As will be discussed below, damage of this general nature might occur during recovery. In any event, it is clearly essential to discriminate between damage types before reaching any conclusions as to cause.

Recovery damage

Modern damage to Bronze Age weapons could occur in a number of ways but is a topic that remains under-explored. Apart from the minor knocks and scuffs of life as an *objet de curiosité* perhaps the most obvious cause of modern damage would be that sustained by the act of recovery. Due to the mechanised nature of modern peat harvesting, substantial injury might be inflicted to any artefact unearthed during this process. The curved iron tip of a traditional Irish *sleán* would also have been capable of causing damage to any object it might encounter lying buried under the surface. Indeed, such was the fate of the extant horn handle on a British Middle Bronze Age rapier, ID No. 8, recovered from Shower Bog, Co. Tipperary (Ó Muirghis 1934). Such an explanation would also seem a more plausible cause for

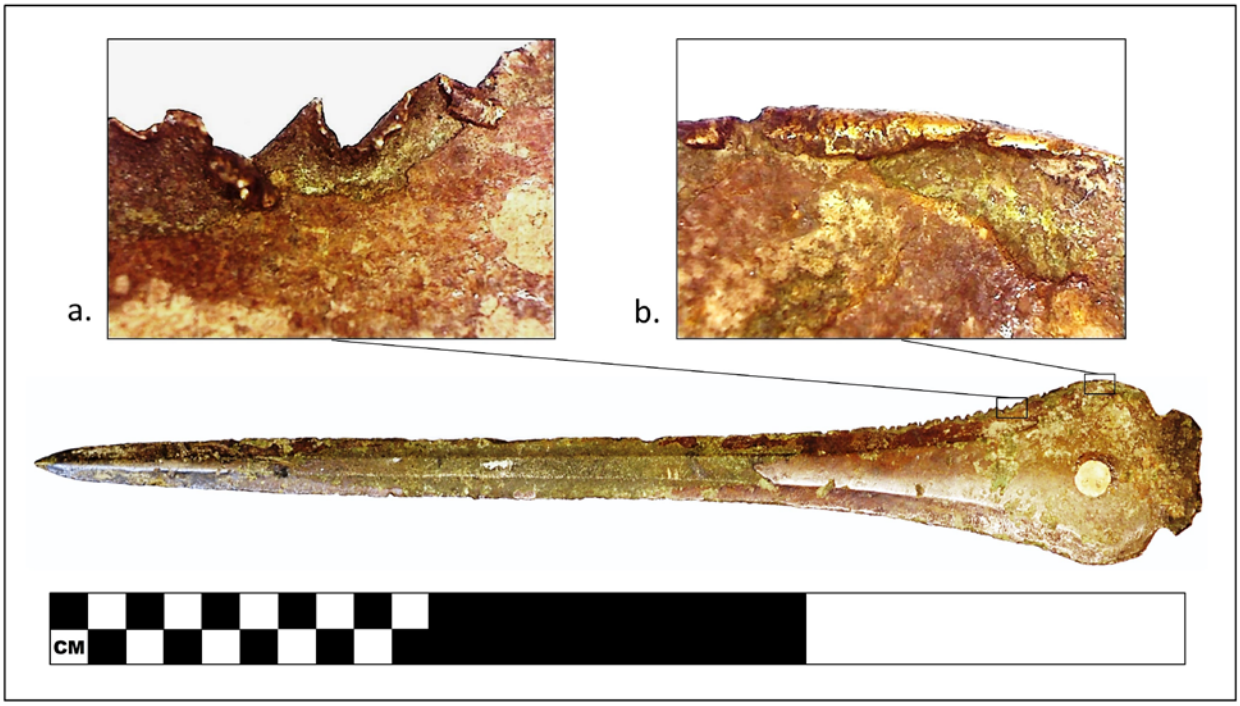

Figure 10.16: Modern damage to an Irish Middle Bronze Age rapier (ID No. 35). With permission of the National Museum of Ireland

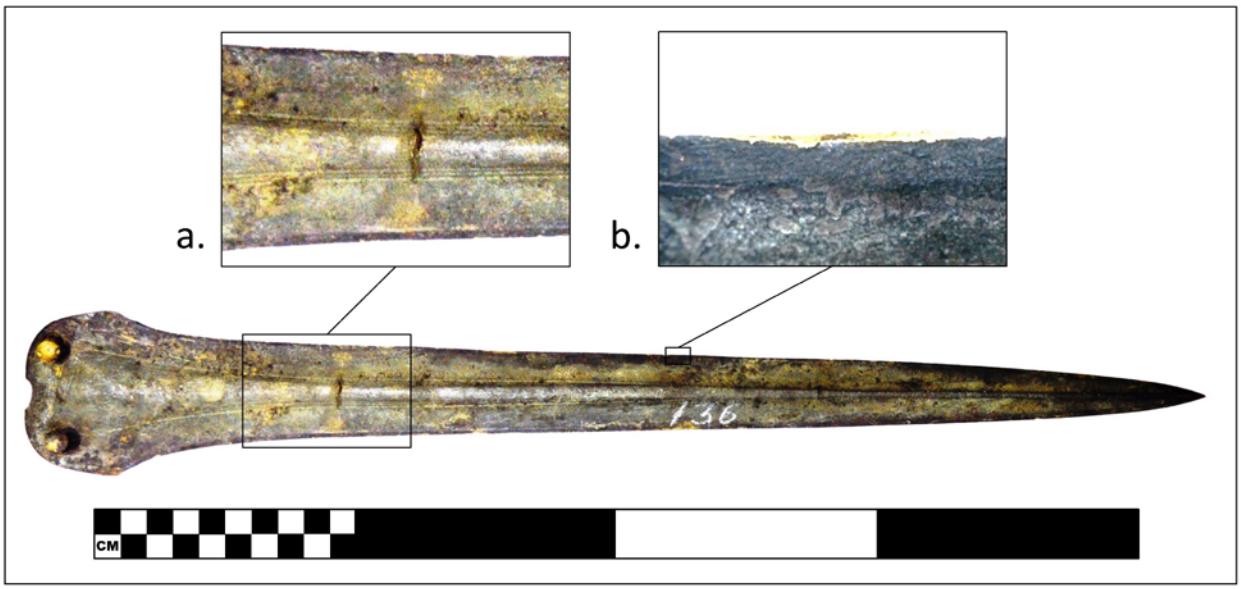

Figure 10.17: Straightening and possible recovery damage to an Irish Middle Bronze Age rapier (ID No. 2). With permission of the National Museum of Ireland

the patina removal evident on a British Middle Bronze Age rapier, ID No. 38 (Figure 10.18), than any ancient combat-inflicted trauma (cf. Molloy 2006: App. 4, 42).

Closer examination of this blade reveals the presence of what appears to be peri-depositional damage around the butt. As with some of the examples considered above, this weapon possibly had its hafting violently removed with an axe-like implement. The impression of a heavy blow from a blunt metal edge appears on the shaft of the remaining plug rivet (Figure 10.19). In addition to the possibility of recovery damage, there are a few recorded cases of British 'finders trying out their discoveries' (Fell and Coles 1965: 40; Mulvany *et al.* 1869: 39; Thorpe 2013: 236). For von Quillfeldt, much of the damage seen on Central European Bronze Age blades was in fact due to finders experimenting with their newfound weapons (1995: 21). More recently, a Late Bronze Age sword from Abbotsbury, Dorset, now housed in the Dorchester Museum, was used by its finders in 1945 as an earth for a radio (Colquhoun and Burgess 1988: 1).

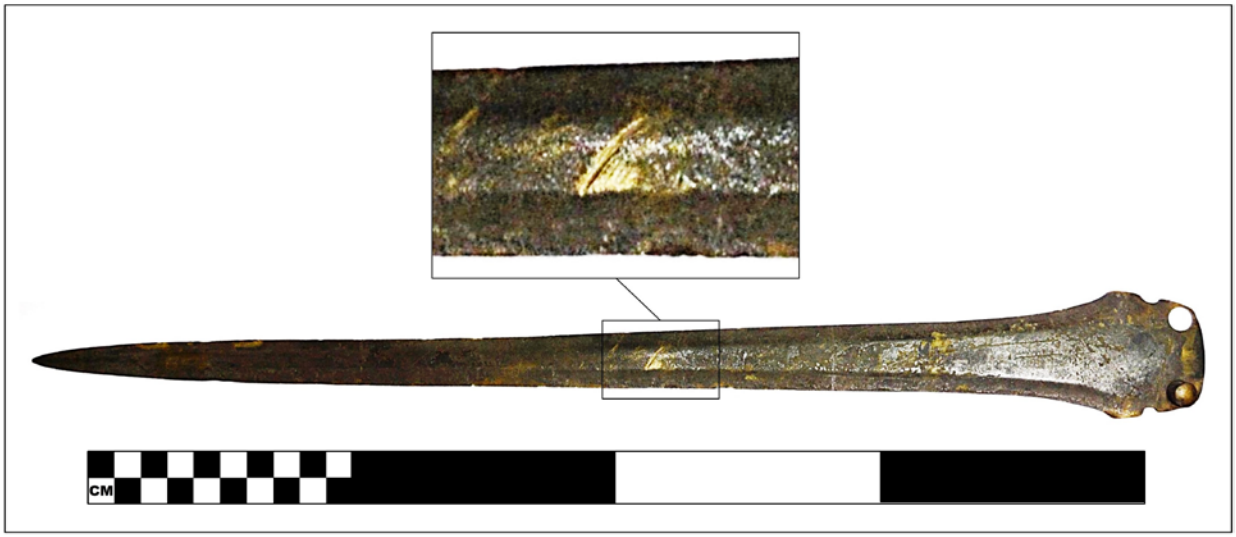

Figure 10.18: Recovery damage to an Irish Group IV rapier (ID No. 38). With permission of the National Museum of Ireland

Figure 10.19: Ritual damage to the butt and rivet of the above rapier (ID No. 38). With permission of the National Museum of Ireland

Regrettably, not all recovered antiquities survived in a state that would allow curation in modern times. The Ordnance Survey Memoirs of Ireland generally made a note regarding the condition in which any recorded ancient artefact was presented, or attempted to establish the means of its disposal. More than 60 Bronze Age weapons are mentioned in this series, of which approximately 31 appear to have been available for inspection. Of the remainder, most were sold for their scrap value to itinerant traders such as tinkers (Day and McWilliams 1993–1995).

Post-recovery damage: Refurbishment and reuse in modern times

Even more rarely discussed than modern damage to Bronze Age weapons is modern refurbishment, where ancient bronze blades are reworked for deployment as modern weapons. One possible example of such recommissioning is a diminutive pole-arm discovered during the excavation of a medieval site in Shapwick, Somerset. A bronze socket and zoomorphic holder now retain a reworked Bronze Age blade of indeterminate type (Figure 10.20). Based on stylistic comparisons however, this piece has been ascribed an Irish provenance where it would have originally served as a cross holder (Gerrard and Youngs 1997: 211).

A short bronze blade from Co. Derry provided an unequivocal example of reuse (Figure 10.21). The addition of a crude iron socket fastened with two iron rivets, presumably passing through the original rivet-holes, completely obscure the butt of this British Middle Bronze Age dirk. A small portion of decayed wooden shaft, probably ash, remains trapped within the heavily corroded socket. The nail-hole used to secure this can be observed in the upper view of Figure 10.21. The edges of the blade appear undamaged but the broken tip has been worked to a chisel-point, probably at the time of its refurbishment. A handwritten note filed with the records for this piece suggests that it was 'probably reused in 1798' (G. Ramsey pers. comm. 2017). Its inclusion in the Downshire Collection, probably as a trophy taken during the rebellion of that year, bolsters the credibility of this assumption. Arthur Hill, second Marquess of Downshire and then Colonel of the Royal Downshire Militia, was active in its suppression (Hay 1803: 257).

The political turmoil of late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Ireland created many opportunities for the improvisation and reuse of weapons of any description. Such measures became necessary when the first of a series of draconian Penal Laws was introduced in an attempt to pacify the indigenous population following the English victory over James I in the Williamite Wars of 1688–1691. This stipulated that an Irish Catholic might not possess a 'gun, pistol or sword, or any other weapon of offence or defence under penalty of fine, imprisonment, pillory or public whipping' (Ranelagh 2012: 79–80). Lecky recounts, 'Their arms consisted chiefly of pikes... A few men carried guns. Many others had pitchforks, scrapers, currying knives, or old rusty bayonets fixed on poles' (1890: 90) while Holt recalls 'a furious looking hag of a woman who had one-half of a pair of tailor's shears tied upon the end of a pole, (thus making a kind of pike)' (1838: 199). In another contemporaneous account, Musgrave

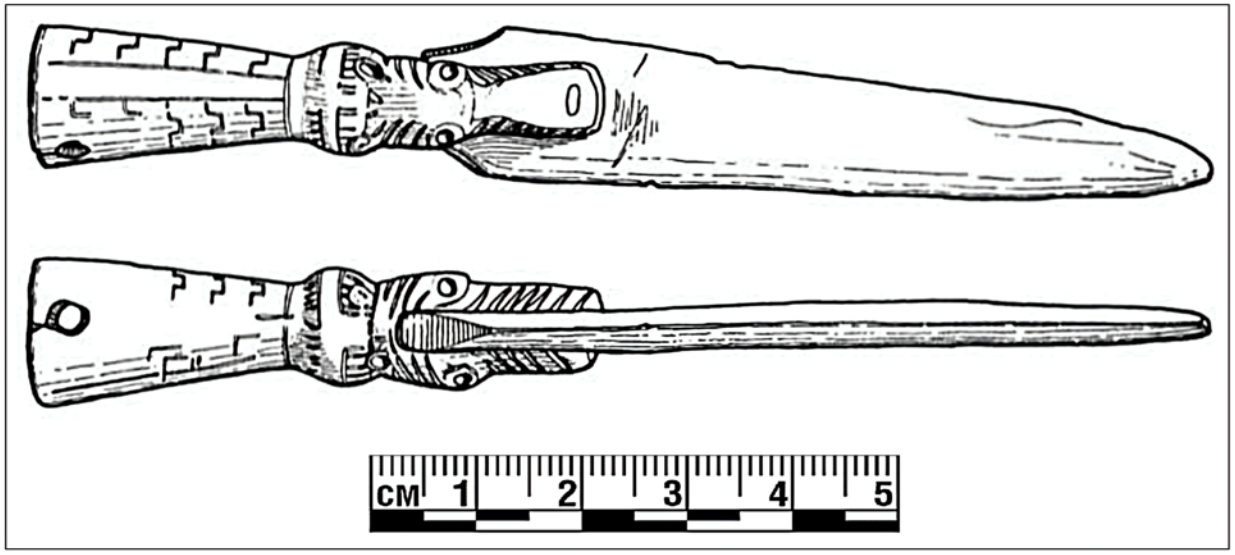

Figure 10.20: Irish medieval bronze socket on a Bronze Age blade (Gerrard and Youngs 1997: fig. 6)

Figure 10.21: Modern iron socket fastened onto a Middle Bronze Age rapier. With permission of the Ulster Museum, Belfast, accession number BELUM 51:1924

notes how in the winter of 1797 rebels in Co. Londonderry 'used to patrole [*sic*] the country by night, in immense numbers, plunder houses of arms, and cut down great quantities of ash-trees to make pike handles' (1801: 234).

The possible reuse of ancient weapons did not go entirely unnoticed. Antiquarian collector James Carruthers wrote to George Petrie M.R.I.A. "the father of Irish archaeology" regarding an artefact recently found in a bog in Co. Antrim (Harbison 1991: 94). This reads:

> Glencregagh near Belfast
> 7th Nov 1842
>
> Dear Sir,
> There is a spear head in Belfast which I have an opportunity of procuring but there is a high value set on it owing to its unusual shape. I take the liberty of sending you enclosed a paper pattern of it and shall feel extremely obliged by your informing me if it is ancient, having never seen one of the same kind before. I strongly think it is a 98 Pike. The metal seems ancient bronze, the workmanship is rude and the thread of the screw made with a file.
> I hope you will excuse this trouble
> And believe me Dear Sir
> Your very obt servant
> James Carruthers
>
> Cahill *et al.* 2004: 228

Charles Currelly, the first Director of Archaeology at the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM), amassed a substantial collection of European Bronze Age material. In addition to dealers in England, he purchased Irish antiquities from institutions such as the Royal Irish Academy and St. Columba's College, Rathfarnham (Pryor 1980: 2). A shipping document from antiquities dealers Fenton and Sons describes a Late Bronze Age sword, now housed in the ROM (Figure 10.22a), as 'taken at New Ross, Co. Wexford, Ireland, in the Rebellion of 1798' (Mason 2013). A second purportedly Irish Bronze Age sword described by Currelly, present whereabouts unknown, is less securely provenanced than that from New Ross but was also reused in 1798 (1915: 37–38; K. Sunahara personal communication 2017). In contrast to the

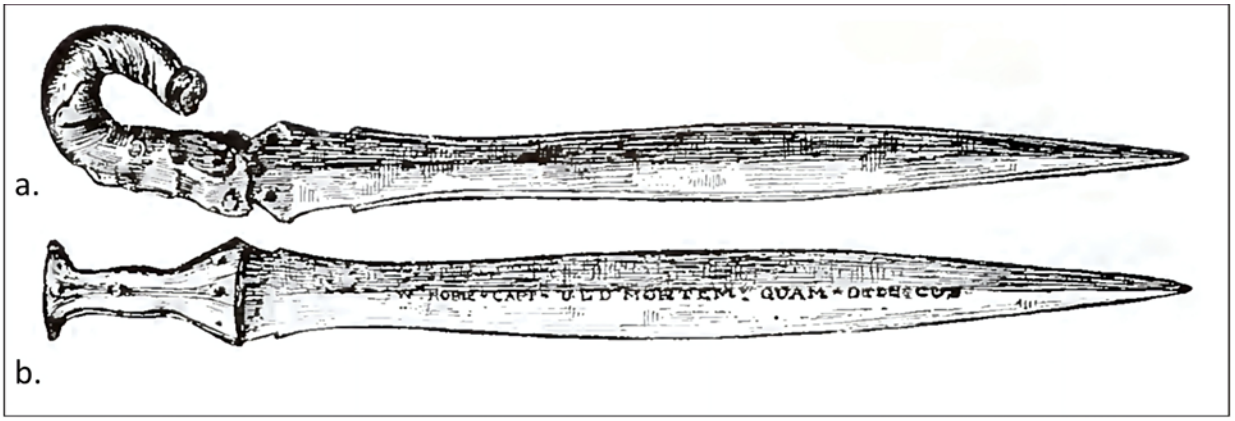

Figure 10.22: Re-hafted Irish Bronze Age swords confiscated in 1798, ROM accession number 909.68.1 (Currelly 1915: 37–38)

crude reworking of the New Ross sword, however, this had a pair of well-crafted bone hilt plates and a modern leather sheath (Figure 10.22b). An inscription on the blade carries the name of Light Dragoon officer Captain William Noble, and the motto of the Nobel family of Glassdrummond, Co. Fermanagh, *mortem quam dedecus*, death rather than dishonour (O'Laughlin 1997: 210).

There could be a curiously cyclical quality to the fate of Irish antiquarian collectables. Ancient artefacts might pass through the hands of a chain of owners being prised by each for very different reasons. Thomas Percy, the Bishop of Dromore, was a noted antiquary with a collection that included 'several heads of spears of brass, of different sizes and forms' (Dubourdieu 1802: 305). Following the Battle of Ballynahinch,

Figure 10.23: Plunder at the Palace of the Bishop of Ferns, by George Cruikshank (Maxwell 1854: fig. 5)

Figure 10.24: United Irishmen upon Duty, by James Gillray, 1798 (released by the British Museum under Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International)

the Bishop's secretary informed him that he had recovered 'two of the Pikes used by the Rebbles [*sic*], all bloody, for to be put along with your Lordship's other curiosities' (Riddell 1950: 276). An earlier prelate of the see of Dromore, Bishop Cleaver, fled his palace in the southern Irish diocese of Ferns and Leighlin, which insurgents plundered at the outbreak of the 1798 rebellion (Maxwell 1854: 89). The imagined scenes of chaos were drawn by Maxwell's illustrator, George Cruikshank, some years later (Figure 10.23). The more humble properties of Protestant farmers were also widely targeted for plunder (Figure 10.24).

Robert Emmet met the leader of the Kildare United Irishmen, Michael Dwyer, on 15 July 1803 at the Marshalsea Lane depot, a scene rendered by Cruikshank in typically unflattering detail (Figure 10.25). This work was clearly the inspiration for an 'airbrushed' version published in The Shamrock (1898) magazine to commemorate the centenary of the rebellion (Figure 10.26). James Gillray's (1798) contemporary depiction of Irish rebels, each sporting the *cocarde tricolore* of the French Republic, shows them engaged in the refurbishment of a cache of plundered arms and their oafish attempts to master these clearly second-rate weapons (Figure 10.27).

An Irish Middle Bronze Age Group I rapier, ID No. 6, has been re-joined in modern times (Figure 10.28a) and what appears to be 'fresh' damage from reuse can be seen towards the hilt (Figure 10.28b). It is possible, therefore, that this piece was reused in 1798. While the preferred weapon of Irish insurgents was the long-shafted pike, there are many examples of recommissioned Irish Bronze Age swords. All the re-joining of Bronze Age blades observed throughout Britain and Ireland occurred in modern times and is a particularly Irish phenomenon (Bell 2017). Seven of the 65 blades (11%) presently in question have

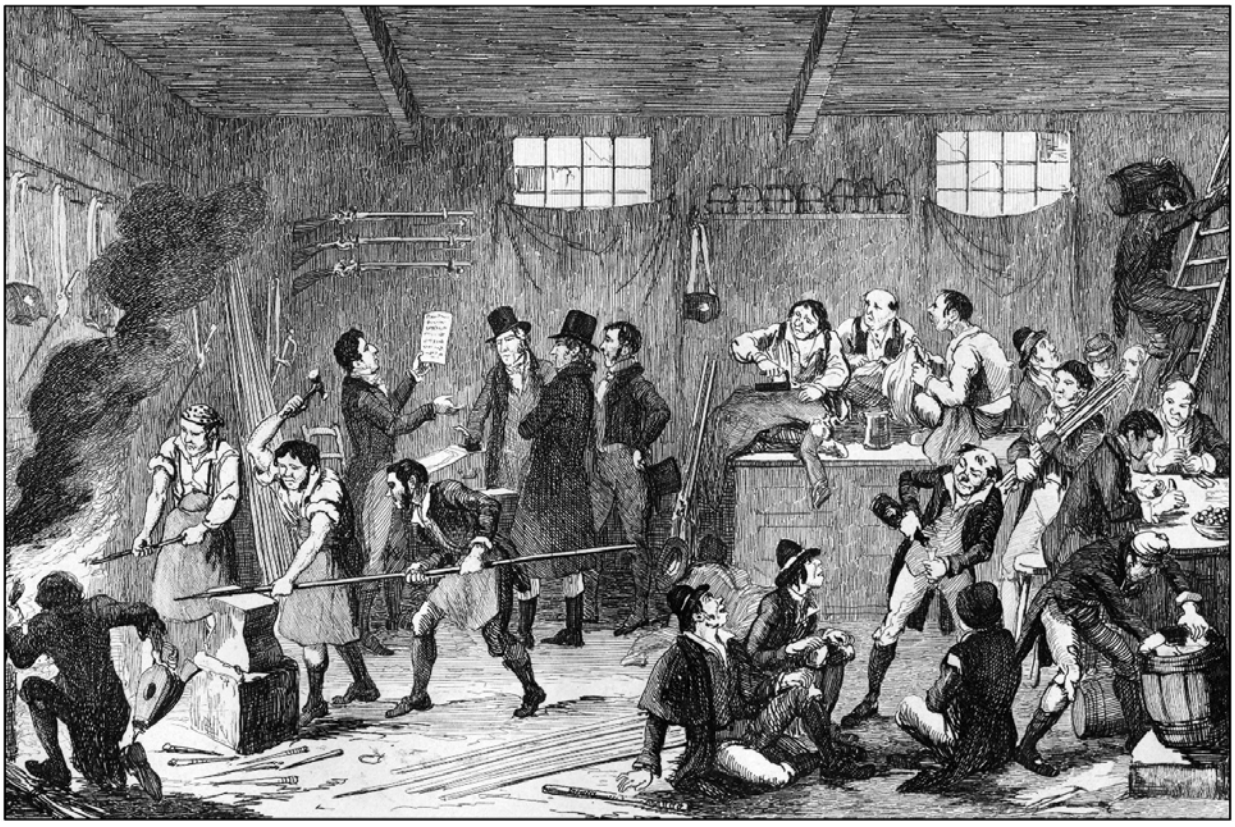

Figure 10.25: Emmett preparing for the Insurrection (Maxwell 1854: fig. 27)

Figure 10.26: Robert Emmet and Michael Dwyer in Marshalsea Lane depot, 1803 (The Shamrock 1898)

Figure 10.27: United Irishmen in training, by James Gillray, 1798 (released by the British Museum under Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International)

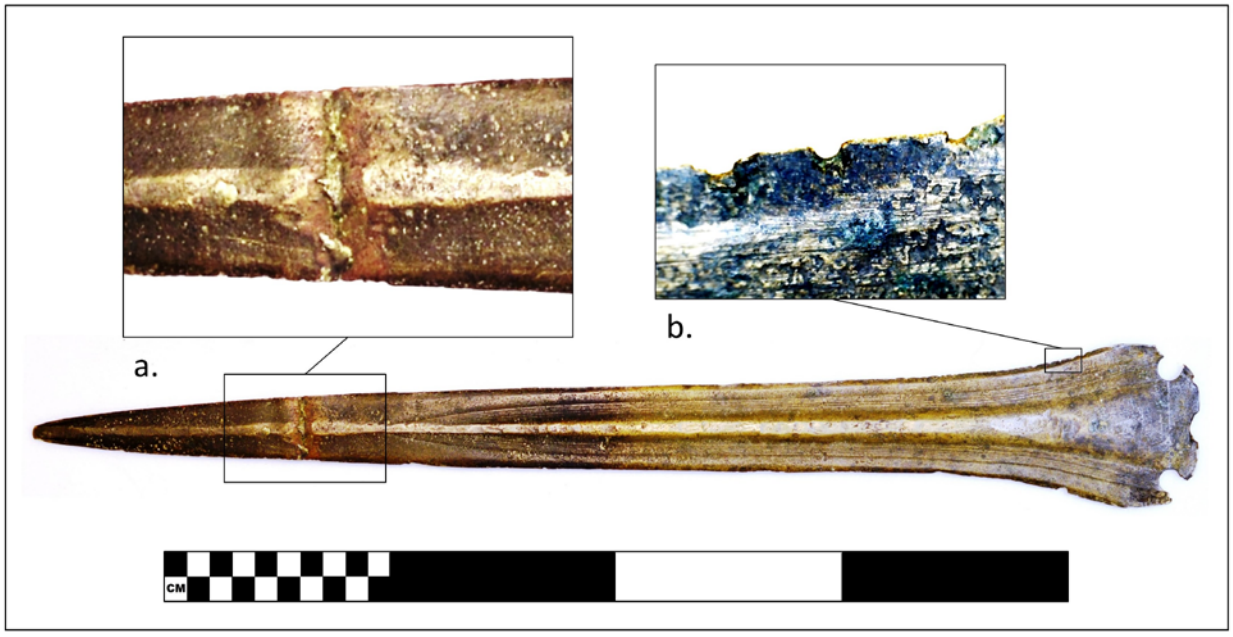

Figure 10.28: Modern repair and damage to a Bronze Age rapier (ID No. 6). With permission of the National Museum of Ireland

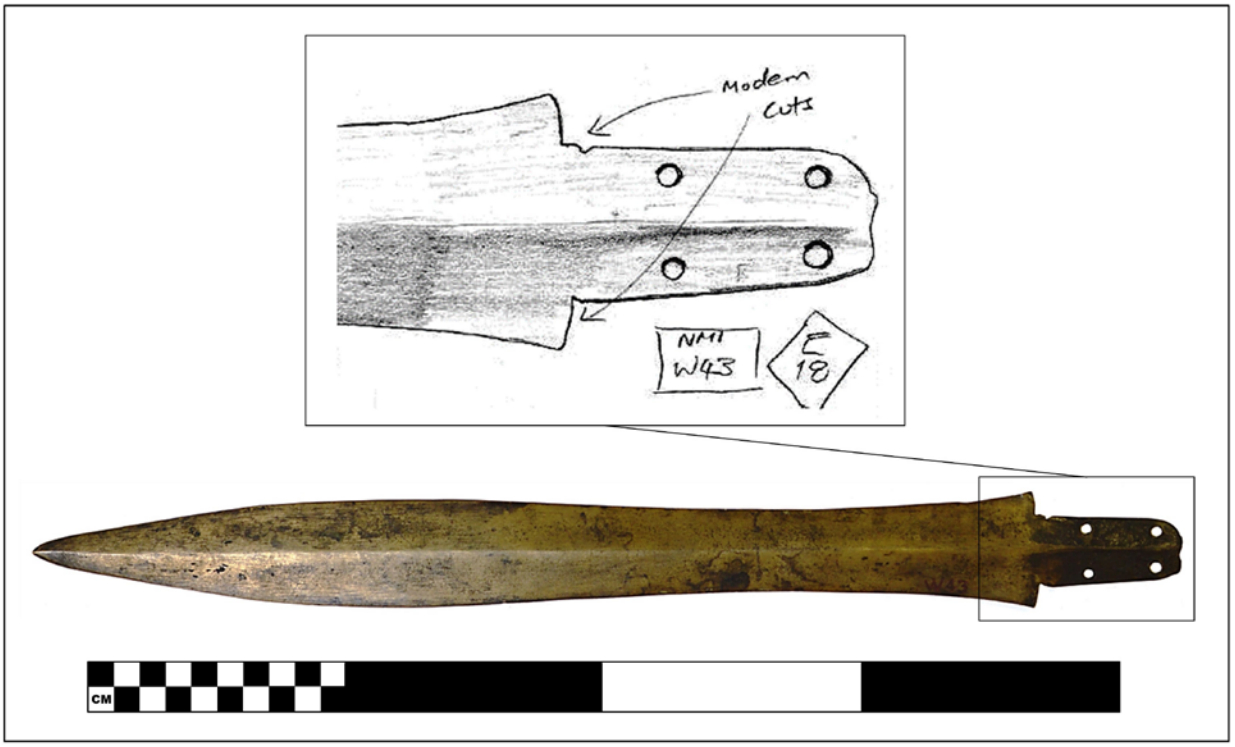

Figure 10.29: Modern reworking of a late Middle Bronze Age sword (ID No. 65) (Colquhoun 2015: No. 18). With permission of the National Museum of Ireland

been re-joined. This is a slightly smaller proportion than is found in the entire corpus of Irish Middle Bronze Age blades but much larger than the <1% found among similar British blades. Two of the three early leaf-shaped swords in the common sample had been re-joined and subsequently reused while the third, ID No. 65, as noted by Colquhoun (2015: No.18), had a modified hilt (Figure 10.29).

Discrimination of damage types

In light of the assessment by Dolfini and Crellin that 'an increase in scientific rigour and a focus on addressing limitations and open problems is required if metalwork wear-analysis is to flourish as a scientific field of research' (2016: 78), an analogy might be drawn with another scientific discipline which has been co-opted into archaeology. Following the development of radiocarbon dating, it became clear that, due to natural fluctuations in levels of ^{14}C over time, the ages that had been arrived at for two samples of Egyptian era wood were much too young (Libby *et al.* 1949: 227; Stuiver and Suess 1966: 535). Fortunately, however, a regularly updated calibration curve exists to offset this increasingly well-understood effect (Reimer *et al.* 2013). Corrections are also necessary due to the impact of two relatively recent human activities; the industrial use of fossil fuels, the Suess effect, and aboveground nuclear testing, the de Vries effect (de Vries 1958: 94; Suess 1955: 415).

As with radiocarbon dating, it is clear that use-wear analysis cannot simply make indiscriminate use of raw, unfiltered data and hope to produce scientifically-reliable results. The recognition of a clear distinction between pre-depositional, peri-depositional and post-recovery damage is essential. A fourth damage type, post-depositional, relates mainly to taphonomic processes, such as the various forms and degrees of corrosion, and is relatively simple to recognise. All these sources of 'background noise' must be identified and corrected for, as failure to do so will inevitably result in conclusions as flawed in their own way as the first radiocarbon dates. Only then can some significance be attributed to any remaining signs of prehistoric, pre-depositional activity remain.

Results

A total of 64 Middle Bronze Age long-bladed metal weapons were common to Study 1 and Study 2 (Table 10.1). Other than in the relatively few cases where there is no significant damage of note, there was little unqualified accord in the interpretation of the condition of these artefacts. For Study 1, by far the greatest cause of attrition was prehistoric combat. Study 2, on the other hand, identified substantially less prehistoric damage, with peri-depositional ritual activity being the largest identifiable contributor to this. Indeed, Study 2 recorded no evident damage on these weapons that might be confidently attributed to ancient combat activity. Ritual activity was one of the least common causes of damage for Study 1, along with modern activity, which Study 2 saw as the greatest single reason for damage to Irish Middle Bronze Age long-bladed weapons (Table 10.2). While there might be limited scope to argue that the damage apparent on the diminutive Irish Middle Bronze Age rapier (ID No. 31) seen in Figure 10.9 was due to some form of ancient combat activity, it is difficult to imagine anything other than ritual activity as the cause of the damage to the rapier (ID No. 38) seen in Figure 10.19.

For two Irish Middle Bronze Age blades, ID Nos 4 and 38, Study 1 concluded that forceful contact with the edge of a metal shield was a possible cause of damage (Figures 10.18 and 10.30) (Molloy 2006: App. 4, 21, 42). While Irish organic shields may have been dated to 'the first half of the second millennium BC', (Molloy 2009: 1053) metal shields are unlikely to have made an appearance here until at least the end of the Middle Bronze Age (Needham *et al.* 2012: 488; Uckelmann 2011: 193). It is highly unlikely, therefore, that the clash of a blade against the edge of a defender's metal shield could have been responsible for the damage so attributed. The evident loss of patina, on the other hand, would strongly suggest some modern cause.

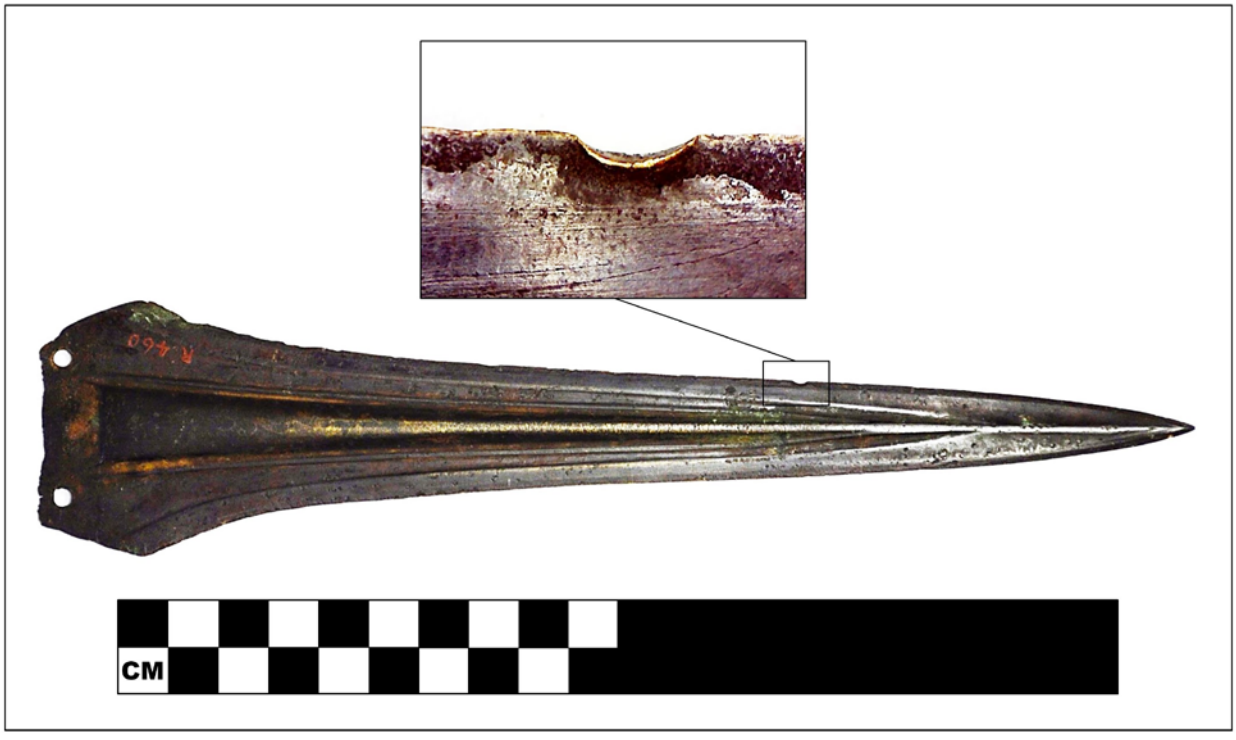

Figure 10.30: Modern, patina breaking, damage to a Middle Bronze Age rapier (ID No. 4). With permission of the National Museum of Ireland

Table 10.1: Interpretations of observed damage for Study 1 and Study 2

ID No.	B and G 1981 No.	NMI No.	Group	Provenance	Study 1	Study 2
1	20	1881:22	I	Roscrea area, Co. Tipperary	*AC	M
2	10	1932:6654	I	Riverstown Ford, Co. Kildare	AM	ARM
3	-	P.251	I	Claremorris, Co. Galway	AT	T
4	33	R.460	I	Co. Antrim	AC	M
5	24	1917:14	I	Enniskillen, Co. Fermanagh	ACT	N
6	11	W.101	I	Ireland	ACRM	ARM
7	228	1881:184	II	Castlereagh, Co. Galway	T	T
8	116	1934:5604	II	Shower, Co. Tipperary	N	N
9	-	1973:57	II	Cloontarsna, Co. Roscommon	M	M
10	-	1978:2	II	Movanagher, Co. Derry	N	N
11	206	P.261A	II	Ireland	AC	M
12	72	P.244	II	Kanturk, Co. Cork	N	N
13	102	W.64	II	Ireland	ACM	M
14	122	W.65	II	Keelogue Ford, Co. Galway	N	N
15	132	W.95	II	Keelogue Ford, Co. Galway	N	T
16	322	1890:31	II	Ireland	A	ART
17	366	1880:26	III	Drumcliff, Co. Sligo	N	M
18	389	1897:46	III	Ireland	ACR	M
19	444	1968:237	III	Lismore, Co. Waterford	AC	AR
20	387	1912:15	III	Lissane, Co. Derry	ACR	AR
21	460	1968:241	III	Claremount, Co. Mayo	AC	A
22	-	S.A.1898:108	III	Ireland	N	N
23	391	W.67	III	Mulawornea, Co. Longford	ACRT	M
24	367	W.66	III	Ireland	ACT	ART
25	174	W.96	III	Banagher, Co. Offaly	T	A
26	384	W.105	III	Keelogue Ford, Co. Galway	AC	M
27	339	W.107	III	River Shannon, Co. Galway	AC	M
28	528	W.117	III	Keelogue Ford, Co. Galway	N	N
29	-	1876:76	IV	Co. Down	AC	A
30	-	1884:744	IV	Ireland	A	A
31	893	1897:171	IV	Nr. Plumbridge Co. Tyrone	AC	M
32	327	1930:521	IV	River Barrow, Kilberry, Co. Kildare	AC	TM
33	541	1968:238	IV	Co. Galway	AC	AR
34	-	1988:5	IV	River Shannon, nr. Athlone Co. Westmeath	N	N

ID No.	B and G 1981 No.	NMI No.	Group	Provenance	Study 1	Study 2
35	757	P.251A	IV	Ireland	AC[1]R	ARM
36	884	P.244A	IV	Kanturk, Co. Cork	AC	AT
37	737	S.A.1909:34	IV	Ballygar, Co. Galway	ACR	M
38	481	W.102	IV	Keelogue Ford, Co. Galway	AC	ARM
39	759	W.104	IV	Clonard, Co. Meath	AC	M
40	509	W.106	IV	Killesandra Parish, Co. Cavan	AC	M
41	551	W.113	IV	Ireland	N	N
42	521	W.115	IV	River Shannon, Co. Galway	ACT	N
43	589	W.116	IV	River Corrib, Co. Galway	T	AT
44	404	W.118	IV	Jamestown, Co. Roscommon	A	A
45	749	W.119	IV	Athlone, Co. Westmeath	ACR	AT
46	529	W.120	IV	Keelogue Ford, Co. Galway	N	N
47	881	W.121	IV	River Shannon, Co. Galway	AC	-
48	700	W.123	IV	River Shannon, Co. Galway	AT	ATM
49	548	W.144	IV	Ireland	A	ARM
50	-	1000:3615	IV	Ireland	AC	ARM
51	-	R.1977	IV	Ireland	A	T
52	750	1000:3617	IV	Ireland	A	T
53	539	1887:4	IV	Ireland	AC	A
54	330	1000:3616	IV	Ireland	AR	M
55	777	1968:234	IV	Ireland	ACM	ARM
56	785	1875:38	IV	Ireland	AC	A
57	773	1897:166	IV	Nr. Carrickmore, Co. Tyrone	AC	ARM
58	779	1897:165	IV	River Erne, Co. Fermanagh	AC	M
59	790	1897:172	IV	Draperstown, Co. Derry	A	N
60	784	P.261	IV	Ireland	AC	A
61	775	W.100	IV	River Shannon, Co. Galway	ACT	T
62	789	W.155	IV	Ireland	AC	A
ID No.	**Eogan 1965 No.**	**NMI No.**	**Class**	**Provenance**	**Study 1**	**Study 2**
63	17	W.41	1	Ireland	AM	ARM
64	14	W.68	1	Ireland	AM	ARM
65	18	W.43	1	Ireland	A	AM

[1]see Molloy 2011: 75

*Damage type: Ancient; Combat; Modern; None; Ritual; Taphonomic

Sources: Bell 2017; Molloy 2006; 2011

Conclusions

That the only major independent studies of Irish Middle Bronze Age long-bladed weapons employing use-wear analysis should arrive at radically different conclusions should be a matter of some concern, particularly in light of a claimed increase in scientific rigour within this discipline. Study 1 has become a frequently cited orthodoxy supportive of a bellicose prehistoric warrior elite. It appears, however, that this may be based on a fundamental misinterpretation of the available evidence.

Table 10.2: Summary breakdown of interpretations of observed damage for Study 1 and Study 2

Description	Code	Study 1	Study 2
Ancient – pre-depositional	A	50 (77%)	28 (42%)
Combat – pre-depositional	C	36 (55%)	-
Modern – post-recovery	M	7 (11%)	29 (45%)
No significant damage	N	11 (17%)	12 (19%)
Ritual – peri-depositional	R	8 (12%)	14 (22%)
Taphonomic – post-depositional	T	10 (15%)	13 (20%)

Sources: Bell 2017; Molloy 2006; 2011

For Study 2, there are four major damage forms, the V-notch, U-notch, dent and bow, and recorded using a simple grid. Unlike Study 1, the resulting damage patterns were compared with what was in effect a control group, British Middle Bronze Age long-bladed weapons. Major differences in treatment prompted a fundamental reassessment of the causes of damage to Irish Middle Bronze Age long-bladed metal weapons. Cross-blade damage is most probably the result of peri-depositional ritual activity associated with a weapon's destruction. To describe this as 'parry scarring' would be to conjure up the improbable image of Dumasian swordplay involving weapons comparable in size to a modern kitchen knife.

The consistent and accurate recording of patina condition is clearly paramount to the differentiation of modern and ancient damage to prehistoric metal weapons. Furthermore, it is unequivocally the case that damage to a coating built up over millennia, when plainly associated with a forceful metal deforming impact, is due to some post-recovery activity. Closer inspection can often distinguish between depatination because of either recovery or violent, post-recovery damage. It is clear however, that a substantial amount of Irish material displays both types. It is equally apparent that the post-recovery reuse of Irish Bronze Age blades as offensive weapons has a long history that has gone almost completely unrecognised and unacknowledged. The proposed key to resolving interpretative problems created by this phenomenon is the adoption of a more nuanced approach to use-wear analysis with due allowance made for all possible means of damage accumulation.

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How did past communities view, understand and communicate their pasts? And how can we, as archaeologists, understand this? In recent years these questions have been approached through studies of the extended occupation and use of landscapes, monuments and artefacts to explore concepts of time and memory. But what of objects that were already old in the past?

Interpretations for these items have ranged from the discard of scrap to objects of veneration. Evidence from a range of periods would suggest objects of the past were an important part of many later societies that encountered them, either as heirlooms with remembered histories or rediscovered curiosities from a more distant past.

For the first time, this volume brings together a range of case studies in which objects of the past were encountered and reappropriated. It follows a conference session at the Theoretical Archaeological Group in Cardiff 2017, in which historians, archaeologists, heritage professionals and commercial archaeologists gathered to discuss this topic on a broad (pre)historical scale, highlighting similarities and contrast in depositional practices and reactions to relics of the past in different periods. Through case studies spanning the Bronze Age through to the 18th century AD, this volume presents new research demonstrating that the reappropriation of these already old objects was not anomalous, but instead represents a practice that recurs throughout (pre)history.

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