

THE PREHISTORIC ARTEFACTS OF NORTHERN IRELAND

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Cover: Jadeite axe head from Ballyhill, County Antrim (after Mac Ilwaine 1880, 320)
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INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This monograph is intended to establish a base-line gazetteer of the prehistoric artefacts, which have been found in Northern Ireland. It has been designed to accompany two previous volumes, which investigated prehistoric burial sites (Welsh and Welsh 2014) and sites of prehistoric life (Welsh and Welsh 2018) within Northern Ireland. It is also the culmination of a process of research that began in 2010, when the Northern Ireland Environment Agency: Built Heritage (now HED), commissioned the Centre for Archaeological Fieldwork at Queens University, Belfast to begin work on what led to the publication of *Tomb Travel, a Guide to Northern Ireland's Megalithic Monuments* in 2011. This was followed by our participation in a research project into the prehistoric people of Ireland for the Royal Irish Academy, led by Professor Eileen Murphy and Dr Barra Ó Donnabháin (see Murphy *et al.* 2010). The research material gathered during these projects provided most of the information contained in our monographs. This book includes a review of the sources from where information on our prehistoric past can be obtained and how the methods of investigation and knowledge of prehistoric archaeology in Northern Ireland have developed over time. It also places the prehistoric artefacts of Northern Ireland in a wider context with the remainder of Ireland, Britain and north-west Europe. Also included is a discussion about the categorisation of such artefacts generally and the methodology by which this inventory is compiled. The inventory is followed by a short discussion about some of the issues highlighted by the inventory and suggestions as to how the distribution of artefact sites may help to understand the spread of early settlers into Northern Ireland. A comprehensive glossary and bibliography have also been provided.

Much information contained in these inventories has been made available by the Department for Communities: Historic Environment Division (HED) from the Sites and Monuments Record and our thanks go to Dr Paul Logue for his help and support over many years. At the School of Natural and Built Environment, Queen's University Belfast, Professor Eileen Murphy and Dr Colm Donnelly provided us with the opportunities and support to research the activities of the prehistoric people of Ireland and to highlight the results of many years of work by a great number of Irish archaeologists. The staff of the Centre for Community Archaeology (formerly the Centre for Archaeological Fieldwork) freely gave of their time and considerable expertise of the prehistoric archaeology of Northern Ireland. Also at Queen's University, Libby Mulqueeny provided illustrations for the text. The Ulster Archaeological Society also provided information on prehistoric sites, much obtained from the programme of monument surveys by the Survey Group between 2005 and 2020. We particularly appreciate the mapping resources made available to us by Anne MacDermott. Malachy Conway, from the National Trust in Northern Ireland gave his enthusiastic support and extensive archaeological knowledge over many years. David Craig of *HeritageNI.com* supplied details of many of the sites recorded in the inventory and gave freely of his technical expertise, including the creation of the site distribution maps.



FIGURE 01: THE MODERN COUNTIES OF NORTHERN IRELAND LIBBY MULQUEENY, QUB

NORTHERN IRELAND IN AN HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The present state of Northern Ireland, consisting of the six counties of Antrim, Armagh, Down, Fermanagh, Londonderry and Tyrone, was created in 1921 by the Partition of Ireland into the Irish Free State (later Eire and now the Republic of Ireland), with twenty-six counties of Ireland, and Northern Ireland, which remains part of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The county system is an entirely political boundary and a legacy of Elizabethan attempts to administer Ireland. Townlands are similarly an administrative system, created to sub-divide counties and are thought to date to the same period, with perhaps a more ancient origin. Another land boundary system still in use is the Parish, both civil and ecclesiastical, with usually a combination of several townlands. All of these boundaries would have meant nothing to the people of prehistoric Ireland, who were more likely to think of themselves in terms of kinship or tribal areas, rather than geographical locations. However, the adoption of fixed county and townland boundaries provides us with a means of readily locating monuments and places, where artefacts were found and enables us to analyse the spread of populations and technology over time.

A SHORT HISTORY OF PREHISTORIC ARCHAEOLOGY IN NORTHERN IRELAND

The history of prehistoric archaeology in Ireland had its origins in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, with publications such as *The Antient and Present State of the County of Down* (Charles Smith and Walter Harris, 1744) and *Statistical Survey of the County of Down* (John Dubourdieu, 1802). Interest rapidly developed during the nineteenth century, with the establishment of several journals devoted to Irish history and archaeology. One of the earliest of these was the *Dublin Penny Journal*, published weekly in Dublin between 1832 and 1836. Details and illustrations of many prehistoric artefacts were recorded in such publications.

During the 1820s, the British government decided to commission a series of surveys and associated maps of Ireland for taxation purposes. These surveys were carried out meticulously, by members of the Royal Engineers for the

Ordnance Survey of Ireland, between 1833 and 1847. The locations of many historic monuments were recorded accurately on the new maps and the associated records, known as Ordnance Survey Memoirs, captured local knowledge from many of these. Many of these monuments have since been destroyed and those Ordnance Survey maps and Memoirs are now the only source of information available to us about them.



PLATE 01: WILLIAM FREDERICK WAKEMAN

As the nineteenth century progressed, so also did public interest in history and archaeology. Interested individuals met together and founded organisations, such as the Belfast Natural History and Philosophical Society, founded in 1821 and the Belfast Naturalists Field Club, founded in 1863. They also began to publish their findings in journals such as the *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, which was founded in 1853. It could be said that these were the pioneers of scientific archaeology, in what is now Northern Ireland. Many members of these societies took their interest in archaeology to a more practical level and began methodically to search for artefacts. These individuals are now known as antiquarians and some gathered vast collections of prehistoric tools, particularly from areas where these were readily available. These included sand dune sites along the north and east coasts and the beds and banks of rivers, such as the Bann, Blackwater and Erne. They also carried out excavations at known archaeological sites, such as megalithic tombs, but these excavations were often poorly recorded or not recorded at all. The activities of some antiquarians could only be categorised as treasure hunting, often

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for financial gain, but others made careful records and also published their findings in academic journals. Many antiquarians lived in County Antrim and became known as the *Northern Collectors*. Among the foremost of these was William Knowles [1832-1927], a land agent from Cullybackey. He collected extensively at sand dune sites, along the northern and north-eastern coasts and elsewhere, including Scotland. He removed huge quantities of prehistoric artefacts from some sites, ‘over 2000 from dunes at Portstewart and Grangemore, 3000-4000 from Whitepark Bay and over 4000 from Tievebulliagh. It is little wonder, then, that his collection totalled at least 32,000 objects (one source claims 50,000) (Wilson 2000, 21). It was sold at auction in 1927 and a portion of it today forms part of the Ulster Museum collection in Belfast.

William Wakeman [1822-1900], who worked at the Ordnance Survey in Dublin and later taught drawing at Portora Royal School, Enniskillen, excavated archaeological sites and published his findings in journals such as the *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* and also the *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*. His artistic skills have provided us with a wealth of high-quality drawings of prehistoric monuments and artefacts.

In addition to articles in academic journals, many text books were published on specific themes, such as *The Dolmens of Ireland* (William Borlase, 1897), in which he described almost nine hundred megalithic tombs. The activities of Victorian antiquarians can be viewed as both a blessing and a curse to modern archaeology. Those who kept meticulous records and published these in books and academic journals have contributed greatly to our current understanding of Irish prehistory, whereas others who engaged in looting archaeological sites for personal gain, without recording anything for posterity, have left us with gaps in our knowledge, which may never be filled. Another problem for archaeological researchers is the trade in forged antiquities. Again, this is not a new phenomenon, but has been noted for many decades, particularly with the development of tourism and the appetite of gullible individuals for souvenirs. Many forged artefacts, such as porcellanite axe heads, are almost indistinguishable from the genuine article. It has been reported that ‘the forgery of flint arrowheads and polished stone axes in the North of Ireland, the former especially at the Giant’s Causeway and the latter at Portglenone, is known to have been practised on a considerable scale last century’ (Collins 1970, 23).

Royal Commissions on the historic monuments of England, Scotland and Wales were established in 1908 and led to a formal system for identifying and recording monuments, usually referred to as the sites and monuments record. As is often the case, similar arrangements were not extended to Ireland and the Great War and the Partition of Ireland in 1921 militated against any further developments. The beginnings of Irish archaeology have been discussed in great detail by John Waddell in *Foundation Myths, the beginnings of Irish archaeology*, published in 2005, and it is not proposed to repeat this here. The governments of these two states, subsequently, established departments to oversee the recording and care of ancient monuments, within their respective jurisdictions and have set their own standards and policies accordingly. In the Republic of Ireland, twenty-one volumes in a series of county archaeological inventories have been compiled. These cover, some partially, sixteen of the twenty-six counties.

In Northern Ireland the Ancient Monuments Act 1926 (Northern Ireland) made the Ministry of Finance responsible for the archaeological monuments of Northern Ireland. The Ancient Monuments Advisory Council was established in 1937 and survey of such monuments (the first to be carried out in Ireland), began in 1938. The results were published in 1940 as *A Preliminary Survey of the Ancient Monuments of Northern Ireland*, often referred to as PSAMNI. The survey was edited by David Chart, Deputy Keeper of Public Records and included site reports from a range of Ulster archaeologists, including Lady Dorothy Lowry-Corry, George Paterson, Andrew McL May, Henry Lawlor and from Queen’s University, Oliver Davies and Estyn Evans. The only large-scale excavations to be carried out during this period were those of the Harvard University Archaeological Mission, led by Dr Hallam Movius in 1933. Their reports have been described as setting ‘a new standard in scientific archaeology and they were emulated by many Irish archaeologists’ (Evans 1966, 3). Due to the impact of the Second World War and economic difficulties thereafter, it was left to a few individuals to keep archaeology alive in

COUNTY	DATE OF PUBLICATION
Donegal	1983
Louth	1986
Louth (preliminary)	1987
Louth	1991
Cork (west)	1992
Carlow	1993
Galway (west)	1993
Cork (east and south)	1994
Cavan	1995
Laois	1995
Wexford	1996
Cork (mid)	1997
Offaly	1997
Waterford	1999
Galway (north)	1999
Cork (north)	2000
Tipperary (north)	2002
Leitrim	2003
Sligo (south)	2005
Cork	2009
Kerry (south and west)	2009

FIGURE 02: TABLE OF COUNTY
ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVENTORIES FOR THE
REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

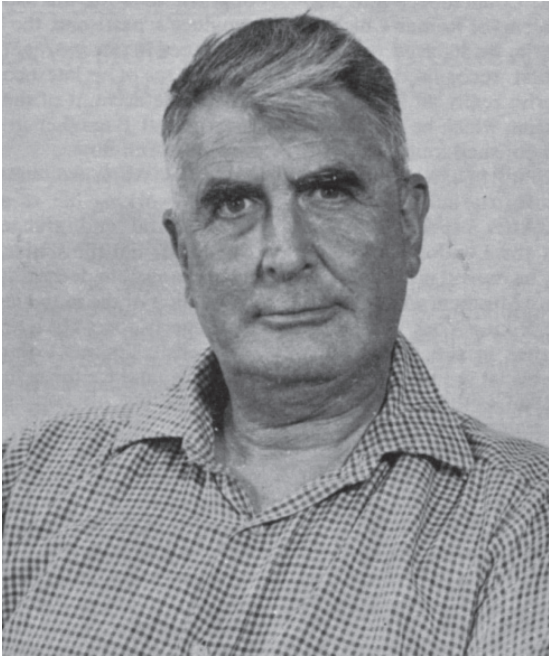


PLATE 02: DUDLEY WATERMAN



PLATE 03: A.E.P. 'PAT' COLLINS

Northern Ireland. Many of those, who had worked on PSAMNI, published their surveys and excavations in academic journals, particularly the *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*. Notable among these were Estyn Evans and Oliver Davies, whose prolific rates of archaeological fieldwork and publication remain unmatched to this day. They have added immensely to our knowledge of Irish prehistory.

In 1950, the Ministry of Finance established the Archaeological Survey of Northern Ireland, with Pat Collins and Dudley Waterman continuing the work of Evans and Davies. Dudley Waterman worked with the famous English archaeologist Mortimer Wheeler, before coming to Northern Ireland. He excavated and published reports on many megalithic tombs in Northern Ireland, but is perhaps best known for his work at Navan Fort in County Armagh. The Archaeological Survey directed their initial efforts to County Down, with *An Archaeological Survey of County Down* being published in 1966.

Alfred Edward Patrick, or 'Pat' Collins as he was known, was also very active in excavating and publishing many of the prehistoric sites in Northern Ireland, with over forty articles and notes published in the *Ulster Journal of Archaeology* alone. He investigated many of the megalithic tombs in Northern Ireland, including Barnes Lower, Ballymacaldrack and Audleystown court tombs, Ballykeel portal tomb and the enigmatic burial cairn at Keentagh (usually referred to as Millin Bay) in County Down. The meticulous work of archaeologists such as Dudley Waterman and Pat Collins has greatly enhanced our understanding of prehistoric sites generally and megalithic tombs, in particular. Collections of artefacts, from many of these and also from more recent excavations, are held by the current descendant of the Ministry of Finance, the Historic Environment Division of the Department for Communities (HED).

In 1971, the Historic Monuments Act finally established the Sites and Monuments Record for Northern Ireland. The work of Waterman and Collins was followed in the 1970s and 1980s by archaeologists such as Dr Ann Hamlin, Dr Chris Lynn, Dr Brian Williams, Claire Foley and Nick Brannon, until 1996, when the Environment and Heritage Service (EHS) was established. In 2008, the EHS was re-branded as the Northern Ireland Environment Agency: Built Heritage (NIEA)

COUNTY	DATE OF PUBLICATION
Down	1966
Armagh	2009
Fermanagh	2014

FIGURE 03: TABLE OF COUNTY ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVENTORIES FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

and due to recent reforms at the Northern Ireland Assembly, the NIEA became the Department for Communities: Historic Environment Division (HED). Information from all known archaeological sites in Northern Ireland (known as the Northern Ireland Sites and Monuments Record, or SMR), along with details of listed buildings, marine, defence and industrial heritage records have been brought together into the Historic Environment Record of Northern Ireland (HERoNI), which is maintained by HED. There are currently around 17,000 archaeological sites, 9,000 historic buildings and 16,000 industrial heritage sites on this record. Much of this information has been made available online, where site details and on-line mapping can also be accessed. Three county archaeological inventories have been completed.

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Several site-specific and thematic surveys, as well as a range of smaller archaeological monographs and information booklets have also been completed, or publication supported by HED, including:

SUBJECT	DATE OF PUBLICATION
Historic monuments not in state care	1969
Ancient Monuments of Northern Ireland	1926
Ancient Monuments of Northern Ireland in State Charge	1947
Carrickfergus Castle	1981
Historic Monuments, introduction and guide	1983
Pieces of the past, archaeological excavations 1970-1986	1988
Archaeological work of the DOENI 1986-1989	1990
Excavations at Navan Fort 1961-1971	1997
Coití, logboats from Northern Ireland	2000
Archaeological objects from County Fermanagh	2002
Strangford Lough archaeological survey	2002
Tide mills at Nendrum monastery	2007
Carrickfergus castle and walled town	2008
Historic monuments in state care	2009
CAMSAR survey of the archaeological resource	2009
Battles, boats and bones	2010
Deer Park Farms	2011
Hidden History below our Feet	2011
Tomb Travel, a guide to Northern Ireland's megalithic monuments	2011
Rathlin Island archaeological survey	2012
Dunluce Castle	2012
Unearthed: New Discoveries	2019

FIGURE 04: TABLE OF SITE-SPECIFIC AND SUBJECT SURVEYS PUBLISHED BY HED

Excavation work was devolved by HED to commercial archaeological companies and regulated by a licensing system during the 1990s. By the year 2000, with an improving economic situation, many infrastructure improvements, such as up-graded road schemes and service improvements such as electricity, gas and water, were all taking place. These schemes were subject to monitoring by licenced commercial archaeologists and a vast number of previously-unknown archaeological sites were discovered and excavated, in advance of destruction. However, the sheer volume of material uncovered has led to a backlog of associated work, which will take many years to resolve. Licence conditions place an onus on the developer to pay for publication of the excavation report relating to their project. However, analysis of the artefacts recovered can be a time-consuming and expensive exercise and this is usually an expense, which is unpopular with developers, leading to minimal expenditure upon it. Commercial archaeological companies usually try to store the artefacts recovered from an excavation, until such time as a developer provides funding for post-excavation analysis. If a developer goes bankrupt before post-excavation analysis has been completed, artefacts languish in commercial stores, for extended periods without adequate conservation. Most of the excavation reports relating to these sites remain unpublished, although summary articles are available in the annual *Summary Accounts of Archaeological Excavations in Ireland* (Wordwell) and some preliminary reports are also available online. Preliminary excavation reports, the so-called grey literature, are curated by HED, but access to this material is difficult.

Research-based archaeology commenced initially at the Queen's University of Belfast in 1909, with the appointment of Kingdon Tregosse Frost, or 'KT Frost' as he was known. However, following his death in action during the First World War and later political upheaval due to



PLATE 04: PROFESSOR ESTYN EVANS

THE PREHISTORIC ARTEFACTS OF NORTHERN IRELAND

DEPOSITORY

NORTHERN IRELAND

Armagh County Museum, Armagh
Artefact left at original location
Commercial archaeological companies
Confirmed destroyed
Down County Museum, Downpatrick
Fermanagh County Museum
Green Lane Museum, Limavady
Historic Environment Division: Department for Communities
In private ownership
Queens University, Belfast
National Trust, Northern Ireland
Ulster Museum, Belfast
Ulster University, Coleraine

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

Birr Scientific Heritage Foundation
Hunt Museum, Limerick
Monaghan County Museum
National Museum of Ireland, Dublin
Royal Irish Academy, Dublin
Stackallen College, County Meath
Trinity College, Dublin
University College Dublin

GREAT BRITAIN

Ashmolean Museum, Oxford
British Museum, London
Chester Museum
Cambridge Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology
Chadwick Museum, Bolton
God's Tower House Museum, Southampton
Hunterian Museum, Glasgow
Kelvingrove Museum, Glasgow
Lewes Castle and Barbican Museum, East Sussex
Manchester Museum
National Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh
Pitt Rivers Museum, Farnham, Dorset
Rotherham Museum
St Albans Museum
Salisbury Museum
Taunton Castle Museum, Museum of Somerset
West Berkshire Museum, Newbury
Wilson-Cheltenham Museum and Art Gallery, Cheltenham
York Museum

INTERNATIONAL

National Museum of Denmark, Copenhagen
Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Cambridge,
Massachusetts, USA
Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto, Canada

FIGURE 05: TABLE OF DEPOSITORIES OF ARTEFACTS FROM NORTHERN IRELAND

the Partition of Ireland, it was not until the post-war years that the subject was revived. In 1928, Estyn Evans was appointed as lecturer and later professor of Geography, but his interests also included anthropology, archaeology and Irish folk life. He was instrumental in setting up the Department of Archaeology in 1948, initially with Oliver Davies and later with Professor Martyn Jope. They began a programme of archaeological excavation and published most of their reports in the third series of the *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, which they had initiated in 1938. Their volume of publication was prolific and is one of the foundations upon which modern archaeology in Northern Ireland was based. Today, archaeology is still studied at university level in Northern Ireland. Queen's University is a world leader in the

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study of several archaeological technologies, including radiocarbon dating, dendrochronology and palaeoecology. At the University of Ulster, the Centre for Maritime Archaeology specialises in marine and coastal archaeology.

Since 2002, the university has been involved with encouraging public participation in archaeological fieldwork, first through the Centre for Archaeological Fieldwork and subsequently the Centre for Community Archaeology. Funding for this has largely been provided from the Heritage Lottery Fund, in association with community groups such as the Belfast Hills Partnership. While excavation reports are published on the university website, collections of artefacts from these excavations have accumulated at the university. These artefacts are in addition to those already held within the university teaching collection.

Prior to the Partition of Ireland in 1922, the National Museum in Dublin was the principal museum in Ireland and many artefacts from the north of Ireland were sent there to be recorded and curated. Many of these artefacts still reside there. In Northern Ireland, the Belfast Natural History and Philosophical Society, which was founded in 1821, held a collection of artefacts donated by its members. Since then this collection has taken on several titles, including the Belfast Museum and Art Gallery, before becoming the Ulster Museum in 1962. A similar situation occurred in Armagh, where a collection of artefacts was held by the Armagh Natural History and Philosophical Society, until it was taken over by the county council, to form the basis of the new Armagh County Museum in 1937. The first curator to be appointed was Thomas Paterson, usually referred to as T.G.F. Paterson, a post that he held until 1963. He published widely on a range of historical and archaeological subjects, including comprehensive catalogues on the Armagh Museum Collections. The Folk Museum was established in 1958 to preserve something of Ulster rural life, which was rapidly being lost to urbanisation. A site at Cultra, County Down, was opened in 1964 and in 1967 the transport museum was relocated to this site. Today, in addition to a wide range of reconstructed rural buildings, it houses galleries on rail and transport and has been renamed the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum. There are also many smaller museums, where collections of prehistoric artefacts are held, including county museums at Downpatrick, in County Down and Enniskillen, in County Fermanagh. As with museums everywhere, displays are limited by space available and most artefacts are held in storage. Many of the prehistoric artefacts of Northern Ireland are also held by museums around the world, predominantly at the National Museum of Ireland in Dublin, but also several museums within Great Britain and as far away as North America. Details of the holdings of this material are only sporadically published, sometimes by the organisation involved, or by researchers who have been permitted access. Classification systems are not usually in a standardised format and essential details such as provenance are often absent. To enhance their collections, museums often have to bid for artefacts at auctions or purchase them from individual owners.

Until recently, opportunities for members of the public to become involved in archaeological fieldwork were limited to field trips, organised by local archaeological and historical societies. Some opportunities do now exist through schools, universities, the National Trust and the Ulster Archaeological Society for participation in archaeological excavations and also monument surveys. The Young Archaeologists' Club (YAC) was formed in Northern Ireland in 2006 and provides opportunities for young people, between the ages of 8 and 16, to learn about archaeology and participate in field trips and excavation. The YAC currently have groups in Belfast, Downpatrick and Derry/Londonderry.

METHODOLOGY

The intention of this document is to capture and present details of prehistoric artefacts, which have been found in Northern Ireland. There are a number of reasons why an inventory of individual artefacts would not be practicable in a single volume. Firstly, the sheer number of individual artefacts found renders the recording of individual items impracticable. For example, at one site in Ballygalley, County Antrim, discovered in 1989, no less than 1,240 flint artefacts and 2,070 sherds of prehistoric pottery were recovered. At another site in Ballygalley, 50,000 flint artefacts were found, along with 5,000 prehistoric pottery sherds. It has also been estimated that the Ulster Museum in Belfast has a collection of over 5,000 stone axe heads. Secondly, archaeological artefacts are held at a wide range of locations, including government agencies, museums, universities, commercial archaeological companies, as well as private collections. These collections are often not documented or else they have been recorded in a multitude of ways. Any records, which do exist, are usually unpublished, with the exception of some museum collections, which have been published in journals such as the *Ulster Journal of Archaeology* and the *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*. Some artefacts have been recorded in the SMR, while most have not. Little attempt has been made to quantify these or make the information publicly available, with the exception of those from County Fermanagh (Williams and Gormley 2002). Thirdly, many artefacts have been lost or destroyed in the past, without any record of their existence. A great number probably await discovery, particularly in rivers, lakes, areas of bog and upland grazing land, which have so far escaped the attention of property or infrastructure development. For anyone caring to look, huge numbers of flint artefacts can be found on the beaches and sand dunes of Counties Antrim, Down and Londonderry, particularly following a storm. The difficulties referred to above were compounded, during the compilation of the inventory by

the coronavirus pandemic, which caused the closure of museums, libraries and academic institutions, thus preventing access to unpublished holdings of artefacts.

Despite these problems, many archaeologists have produced comprehensive documents on specific types of artefacts. One example is the logboat, for which a comprehensive survey was published by Malcolm Fry in 2000 (*Coití, Logboats from Northern Ireland*). These were in use in Ireland for around 7000 years. The oldest so far recorded was recovered at Brookend, in County Tyrone, with a radiocarbon age of 5490-5246 BC and the latest recorded use of one was in the late eighteenth century. It is not possible to date logboats by using style alone, as earlier examples were often more sophisticated in construction. Radiocarbon dating or dendrochronology is usually employed to identify prehistoric examples. Another example is drinking vessels, also thought to have been in use throughout prehistory, but very few have survived or have been securely dated. Examples of wood, stone, ceramic and horn are all known, with some examples having decoration. Examples from the early Bronze, or Beaker period, are sometimes found at burial sites and indeed have given the name to this early part of the Bronze Age. An undecorated ceramic example, 14cm in height and 12cm in diameter, was found at Whitepark Bay in County Antrim. A soapstone cup, with a single handle, was found at Connor, also in County Antrim. This measured 6cm in height and 9.5cm in diameter at the mouth. A horn cup, decorated with dotted zig-zag lines, was found in a bog near Slemish Mountain, also in County Antrim. It measured 9cm in height and 6.5cm wide at the mouth, tapering to 5cm in width at the base, which is made of wood. Another horn cup was found at Portglenone in 1889, also decorated with dotted zig-zags. Detailed information is also available in specialist volumes, such as Peter Woodman's *The Mesolithic in Ireland* in 1978 and Mallory and McNeill's *The Archaeology of Ulster from Colonisation to Plantation* in 1991. Archaeological journals, such as the *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, have published details of artefacts found over large areas, such as those from along the River Blackwater (Bourke *et al.* 1991/1992, 138-149), in addition to the details which are normally published in excavation reports.

The classifications used in this document comply generally in accordance with that of the Northern Ireland SMR and National Monuments Service of the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (which has also developed a system of codes, suitable for use in electronic databases). Both organisations hold classification lists, but these are not entirely consistent. In addition, many field archaeologists do not strictly adhere to these classifications and a variety of terms may be used to describe the same artefact. The use of terms, such as site and monument, have led to confusion, so in this inventory site is taken to mean 'an area of ground on which something is located' (Soanes and Hawker 2000, 968). The term monument is taken to refer to 'a structure of historical importance' (*ibid.*, 659). There may be many monuments on a single site and often these are all included, as one reference in the Northern Ireland Sites and Monuments Record. In the Republic of Ireland, each monument is allocated an individual reference number, which greatly assists in identification. As this inventory records artefacts by the sites, at which they were found, it will be consistent with previous volumes detailing the burial sites (Welsh and Welsh 2014) and sites of prehistoric life (Welsh and Welsh 2018) in Northern Ireland and should help to achieve a more complete picture of prehistoric activity within a particular location.

Entries are generally recorded as locations where artefacts were found, regardless of the number of individual items recovered. However, some locations are provided with multiple entries, where large numbers of artefacts, often of a similar type, were found. Entries are recorded alphabetically by county and then by townland.

Entries are recorded in the inventory, where a findspot has been provenanced to a specific townland, or county. Artefacts, which are simply referred to as being from Northern Ireland, Ulster, Ireland, or are simply suspected of having originated in Ireland, have not been recorded. Where multiple artefacts form part of a museum or private collection, these are not individually recorded, but some of the more significant items are noted. Details of these collections are provided, where available, to facilitate further research. Entries are by site location and therefore within the inventory, this may include artefacts from different time periods. In the tables, however, these are separated into artefact types from each time period. For example, one site may have been visited by people during the Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age and is therefore categorised as three sites. Where very large numbers of artefacts, and/or of several different materials are found, these are categorised as assemblages, collections or hoards, where appropriate.

CLASSIFICATIONS USED IN IRISH ARCHAEOLOGY

The classification of prehistoric artefacts into stone, bronze and iron (usually referred to as the *three-age system*), was first suggested by Christian Thomsen, Head of Antiquarian Collections at the National Museum of Denmark in Copenhagen Museum in 1836. Since then many attempts at refining these classifications have been made. These are usually based on studies of monuments, such as megalithic tombs, habitation sites and artefacts, in order to identify changes over time, but Thomsen's three-age system still provides the basic format that is in use today. There have been several attempts to refine these categories for Ireland, but common classification systems have not been agreed for

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ENTRY DETAIL	NOTES
* prefix	While individual artefacts do not attract statutory protection, some sites where they were found have been scheduled under the Historic Monuments and Archaeological Objects (Northern Ireland) Order 1995. These are indicated by a single asterisk in the inventory. Those in State Care are indicated by a double asterisk, with a third asterisk to indicate that both levels of protection have been afforded.
Townland	Townlands are recorded as on the relevant OS map. Where a site is not precisely located and may be in one of several townlands, the first townland in alphabetical order is used. Where multiple townlands of the same name occur in a County, the entry is distinguished by having the parish added in square brackets. Where a townland name is the same as the county name, such as Antrim and Armagh, and an artefact can be provenance to the townland, it is recorded in full as ANTRIM or ARMAGH. Where an artefact can only be traced to the county, it is recorded as UNKNOWN [ANT] or UNKNOWN [ARM].
OD height	The vertical height of a findspot in metres above mean sea level.
CS number	OS Six Inch County Series (1:10,500) map number
IG number	OS Irish Grid 1:10,000 map number
Irish Grid reference	OS Irish Grid location, consisting of the sheet letter and easting and northings to four decimal points
SMR number	The unique reference given in the Northern Ireland Sites and Monuments Record. The first three letters of the unique number indicate the county in which the monument is located. These are ANT for County Antrim, ARM for County Armagh, DOW for County Down, FER for County Fermanagh, LDY for County Londonderry and TYR for County Tyrone.
+	This symbol represents sites that have not been precisely located. Map references for these have been determined from the information currently available.
Text	A brief description is given for each site or artefact, including landscape and structural features. References, plates, plans and illustrations are provided where these are available.

FIGURE 06: TABLE OF INVENTORY ENTRY DETAILS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES

artefacts, sites or even time periods, making all-island comparisons difficult. Recent developments such as radiocarbon dating, dendrochronology and DNA studies have contributed significantly to our knowledge of Irish prehistory. These are evolving sciences, with exciting new discoveries adding to and often challenging our existing understanding.

CLASSIFICATION	DATE RANGES BC
Early Bronze Age	2500 – 1200
Middle Bronze Age	1500 – 1200
Late Bronze Age	1200 – 300

FIGURE 07: TABLE OF PERIODS OF IRISH BRONZE AGE (AFTER MALLORY AND MCNEILL 1991, 105-107).

TRADITIONAL PHASES IN IRISH PREHISTORY	APPROXIMATE DATES
Early Mesolithic	7000-5500 BC
Later Mesolithic	5500-4000 BC
Neolithic	4000-2400 BC
Copper Age	2400-2200 BC
Early Bronze Age	2200-1500 BC
Middle Bronze Age	1500-1000 BC
Late Bronze Age	1000-600 BC
Iron Age	600 BC – 400 AD

FIGURE 08: TABLE OF IRISH ARCHAEOLOGICAL TIME PERIODS (AFTER WADDELL 1998, 4)

APPROXIMATE DATES BC	IRISH PHASES	BRITISH PHASES
2400 -2200	Knochnagur	Assemblage I and II
2200-2000	Killaha	Assemblage III
2000-1600	Ballyvally	Assemblage IV and V
1600-1500	Derryniggin	Assemblage VI

FIGURE 09: TABLE OF IRISH AND BRITISH METALWORKING PHASES OF THE EARLY BRONZE AGE (AFTER WADDELL 1998, 124).

THE PREHISTORIC ARTEFACTS OF NORTHERN IRELAND

A further complication for the modern researcher is that the names given to types of artefacts have changed over time and these changes are reflected accordingly in documentary sources. This is further complicated by the freedom that individual archaeologists have had to propose classifications based on their own studies. These personal classifications often include time periods and artefact types.

TRADITIONAL PHASES	PHASES IN IRELAND	PHASES IN ENGLAND	APPROXIMATE IRISH DATES
Middle Bronze Age 1	Killymaddy	Acton Park Phase	1500-1350 BC
Middle Bronze Age 2	Bishopsland	Taunton Phase	1350-1200 BC
Middle Bronze Age 3		Penard Phase	1200-1000 BC
Late Bronze Age 1	Roscommon	Wilburton Phase	1000-900 BC
Late Bronze Age 2	Dowris	Ewart Park Phase	900-600 BC
Iron Age	Dowris C/Athlone	Llyn Fawr/Halstatt	600BC- AD 400
Iron Age	La Tène		

FIGURE 10: TABLE OF METALWORKING PHASES OF THE LATER BRONZE AND IRON AGES IN BRITAIN AND IRELAND (AFTER WADDELL 1998, 180)

CLASSIFICATION	FEATURES	SUB-DIVISION
Bronze Age		
Class A	Constructed of three sheets of bronze, riveted together. Two staples were cast into the rim to hold lifting rings.	Shipton (English) Wilburton (English) Tulnacross Portglenone
Class B	Multi-sheet bronze construction, with the rim rolled around a circular bronze rod for support. Staples may be cast into the rim, or riveted.	B1 (with added struts for strength)
Iron Age		
	Sheet bronze construction, with distinctive 'broad belly'	
	Sheet iron construction	
	Wooden construction	

FIGURE 11: TABLE OF CLASSIFICATIONS OF IRISH CAULDRONS (AFTER GERLOFF 1986 & WADDELL 1998, 229-231)

CLASSIFICATION	FEATURES	DATES
Early Series	Boat-shaped in plan, smooth, rounded butt and sharp cutting edge	Early Bronze Age
Intermediate Series	Expanding profile towards butt and blade ends	Early Bronze Age
Late Series, or Bann Type	Greater depth of concavity around the shaft perforation. Usually decorated.	Early Bronze Age 2000-1400 BC
Foreign Type	Long, drooping blade and pointed butt.	Dates and provenance uncertain

FIGURE 12: TABLE OF CLASSIFICATIONS OF IRISH BATTLE AXES (AFTER SIMPSON 1990, 5-40).

CLASSIFICATION	DETAILS
Lough Ravel	Flat, copper, with square and thick butt and gently splaying and deep cutting edge. Generally between 10cm and 15cm in length.
Ballybeg (sub-type of Lough Ravel)	As above, but with thin butt, no decoration. Generally between 8cm and 15cm in length.
Killaha	Bronze, flat or slightly hammered-up flanges, rounded, thick butt, sides splay widely, shallow cutting edge, sometimes shape of equilateral triangle
Ballyvalley	Bronze, flat or with slightly hammered-up flanges, rounded, thin butt, sides splay gently in lower half, gently splayed cutting edge
Derryniggin	Bronze, cast flanges, thin rounded or slightly square butt, straight sides from which an almost semi-circular cutting edge protrudes at right angles. Usually 10cm to 12cm in length.

FIGURE 13: TABLE OF CLASSIFICATIONS OF COPPER AND BRONZE AXE HEADS (AFTER HARBISON 1968-1969, 35-37).

INTRODUCTION

CLASSIFICATION	DISTINGUISHING FEATURES
B1	Oval horizontal handle-holes
B2	Round perpendicular handle-holes
B3	Oval handle-holes off the horizontal
B1/2	Combination of handle forms B1 and B2
B1/3	Combination of handle forms B1 and B3
B2/3	Combination of handle forms B2 and B3

FIGURE 14: TABLE OF CLASSIFICATIONS OF IRISH BEEHIVE QUERNS
(AFTER CAULFIELD 1977, 104-138).

CLASSIFICATION	FEATURES
Knocknagur (or Knocknague)	Flat, tanged dagger, usually of copper
Corkey	Bronze, flat riveted dagger with triangular blade.
Topped Mountain	Flat, triangular riveted dagger of bronze, with two grooves running parallel to the cutting edge of the blade

FIGURE 15: TABLE OF CLASSIFICATIONS OF COPPER AND BRONZE DAGGERS
(AFTER HARBISON 1968-1969, 37)

CLASSIFICATION	FEATURES
Carn	Copper, asymmetrical blade, three thick round-headed rivets arranged in a triangle, straight mid-rib
Cotton	As Carn type, but with curved mid-rib
Breaghwy	Bronze, symmetrical blade, rounded halfting plate, three or more conical-capped rivets arranged in an arc, straight mid-rib

FIGURE 16: TABLE OF CLASSIFICATIONS OF IRISH COPPER AND BRONZE HALBERDS
(AFTER HARBISON 1968-1969, 37)

APPROXIMATE DATES BC	IRISH PHASES	BRITISH PHASES
2400 -2200	Knochnagur	Assemblage I and II
2200-2000	Killaha	Assemblage III
2000-1600	Ballyvally	Assemblage IV and V
1600-1500	Derryniggin	Assemblage VI

FIGURE 17: TABLE OF IRISH AND BRITISH METALWORKING PHASES
OF THE EARLY BRONZE AGE (AFTER WADDELL 1998, 124)

CLASSIFICATION	DETAILS
Carinated bowls	This is the earliest type of Neolithic pottery, in use from around 4000 BC until about 3500BC, when regional variants began to be used. These variants, also known as Western Neolithic, include Lyles Hill (or Neolithic A Ware).
Decorated Bowls	These include Goodland, Sandhills Western, Dundrum, Broad-Rimmed and Murlough styles. These have a broad rim and are decorated with small channels, cord impressions or small dots. Globular bowls, such as Goodland Bowls, are decorated with cord impressions or incisions. A variant is Carrowkeel Ware, which has long grooves cut across the surface.
Bipartite Bowls	These vessels, also known as Ballyalton Bowls, have a small neck, which widens to a broad shoulder. The surfaces are decorated with incisions or cord impressions.

FIGURE 18: TABLE OF CLASSIFICATIONS OF IRISH EARLY NEOLITHIC POTTERY

CLASSIFICATION	DETAILS
Grooved Ware	This appeared around 3000 BC, as flat-bottomed, tub-shaped pots, some of which were decorated with parallel grooved lines.

FIGURE 19: TABLE OF CLASSIFICATIONS OF IRISH LATER NEOLITHIC POTTERY

THE PREHISTORIC ARTEFACTS OF NORTHERN IRELAND

CLASSIFICATION	DETAILS
Beaker	This appeared around 2400 BC as a range of vessels, used for drinking, cooking, storage and also in burial contexts. Humphrey Case proposed three categories to aid with identification. These are Style 1, also known as all-over-cord, or all-over-ornament after its form of decoration; Style 2 includes bell-shaped vessels, usually with comb-impressed or incised ornamentation, in horizontal zones. Coarse examples may not be decorated and are thought to have been employed solely for cooking; Style 3 appeared insular in fashion, with a variety of shapes and ornamentation.
Bowls	These are thought to be a legacy from the Beaker pottery style. These are also known as Bowl Food Vessels and usually measure between 8cm and 15cm in height. They can be simple or bipartite, or necked bipartite, tripartite or ribbed in shape. They are highly decorated on external surfaces, including the base, with comb-impressed lines, zig-zag and chevron ornament. Smaller versions, known as Pigmy Cups or Miniature Bowls were also made.
Vases	These are decorated vessels, measuring usually between 11 and 18cm in height and appearing in two main forms. The bipartite vase has a slightly everted rim and a rounded shoulder, producing a biconical profile. The tripartite vase has an angular profile and an everted or vertical neck above a sloping shoulder. Larger versions are known as Vase Urns (also Enlarged Food Vessels, or Food Vessel Urns) and can measure between 20cm and 30cm in height. A further variant is the Encrusted Urn, which can be up to 40cm in height. It is distinctive, due to its applied, rather than incised, ornamentation.
Cordoned Urns	These are distinctive, due to the horizontal cordons or raised ribs and also a single band of ornamentation around the uppermost part of the vessel. They are usually between 30cm and 35cm in height, but a few smaller examples of between 12cm-15cm have been found. A few examples are undecorated.
Collared Urns	These are distinguished by a collared rim above a concave neck. The collars and necks are often decorated with cord impressed or incised ornamentation, although these can also be plain. They are thought to date from around 2000 BC to around 1400 BC.

FIGURE 20: TABLE OF CLASSIFICATIONS OF IRISH BRONZE AGE POTTERY

CLASSIFICATIONS USED IN THE INVENTORY

The following classifications have been used in this inventory and are based on those used widely in modern databases and publications.

Adze

A bronze or iron tool, similar to an axe head, but which has an arched blade at right-angles to the handle. Used for cutting or shaping timber.

Anvil Stone

A slab of stone, which has a cone-shaped hollow on the upper surface. These were used for securing small rocks, while breaking them up, as part of the metal extraction process. Usually dated to the Bronze Age.

Ard Point

An elongated stone, which would have been attached to a wooden pole and dragged across the ground, in order to make a simple plough (Ard). Introduced during the early Neolithic.

Armlet

This is similar to a bracelet, but designed to be worn on the upper arm (see bracelet below). These are usually of gold, bronze or shale.

Arrow

This is a reasonably complete arrow, which includes arrowhead and wooden shaft.

Arrowhead

This was introduced to Ireland during the Neolithic, when early versions were hollow-based, lozenge or leaf-shaped. Arrowheads were also used during the Bronze Age, when barbed and tanged versions were common. Flint and chert were usually employed to make arrowheads.

Assemblage

This is a group of three or more artefacts of different materials, which are found together at a site or monument, usually during archaeological excavation.

Awl

Also known as a borer, this is a pointed tool, used to pierce holes in wood, leather or textiles throughout prehistory. Examples are found in flint, bone and bronze.

Axe

This is a complete axe, consisting of an axe head and the wooden shaft in which it was mounted. Complete prehistoric axes are extremely rare.

INTRODUCTION

Axe Hammer

These feature a sharpened blade on one side and a shaped hammer on the other. Originally fashioned in flint during the Neolithic and moulded in Bronze during the Bronze Age, metal axe hammers are usually provided with a vertical hole for attachment to a wooden shaft.

Axe Head (Bronze)

Introduced during the Bronze Age, these take a variety of forms, from simple flat axe heads, to those with flanges, to palstaves and socketed axe heads. Palstaves (also known as winged or wing-flanged axe heads) had raised flanges to the sides and a raised centrally placed bar, to enable it to be firmly attached to a wooden handle. They are thought to date to the Middle Bronze Age, 1500-1200 BC. Changes in bronze axe-making technology are often used in relative dating of sites.

Axe Head (Copper)

Flat axe heads of copper. These are thought to represent the earliest phase of metalworking, before the incorporation of tin to make bronze artefacts. This early metalworking phase is sometimes referred to as the Copper Age.

Axe Head (Flint)

During the Mesolithic, these were of two types: core axes and flake axes

Axe Head (Iron)

Early examples were copies of Bronze Age socketed axe heads.

Axe Head (Stone)

This is an axe head, which has been fashioned from a variety of rock types, including porcellanite, mudstone, schist and basalt.

Bann Flake

This is a leaf-shaped flint flake, resembling a spearhead, with the base trimmed to fit into a wooden shaft. They are also known as butt-trimmed flakes.

Battle Axe Head

A stone axe head, usually with a central, vertical perforation for mounting on a wooden shaft. Some are highly decorated and are found in a variety of stone types. It is thought to have been in use, throughout prehistory, as a weapon.

Basin Stone

Carved boulder, in the form of a basin, usually found in Neolithic passage tombs.

Bead

This is a small decorative object, which can be made of stone, ceramics or wood. It is usually provided with a perforation, to allow for threading together, in order to form an item of jewellery, such as a bracelet or necklace.

Bow

This is a weapon, consisting of a semi-rigid shaft, connected by a high tensile string at each end and used to launch arrows. Yew was a popular material for making bows, due to its flexibility and strength.

Bracelet

This is an item of jewellery, which was designed to be worn on the wrist (see armlet above).

Brooch (Fibula)

This is a large clothes fastener, which resembles a modern safety pin. They are usually decorative and thought to date from the Iron Age.

Bucket

A cylindrical vessel used for holding or carrying solids or liquids. Examples of bronze and wood have been found.

Bullroarer

Also known as a rhombus, or turdun, this is a musical device, which is also used for communication over great distances. Examples have been found at various archaeological sites across the world, with a few dated to the Palaeolithic period.

Bulla

This is a gold amulet [often thought to give protection against disease etc.], worn as a locket. It was named after a type of Roman pendant. In Latin Bulla means bubble.

Burin

A flint tool, used for graving bone or antler into tools. Dating to the early Mesolithic (8000-5500 BC)

Button

Thought to have been introduced during the early Bronze Age, these are usually v-perforated and are in a variety of materials, such as bone and stone.

Cauldron

This is a large pot for cooking over an open fire. They are thought to date from the late Bronze Age to the Iron Age. Usually formed of bronze, but wooden cauldrons have also been found.

Chape

A protective metal fitting, added to the point of a scabbard, usually for a dagger or sword.

Chisel (Bronze)

A bronze tool, thought to have been used in metal and woodworking. These are found in a variety of styles, including socketed and trunnion chisels.

Chisel (Stone)

A stone tool, thought to have been used for excavating and carving rock during the Neolithic.

Churn (Wooden)

A wooden vessel used to agitate milk in order to produce butter. Several, containing butter, have been found in bogs, giving rise to the term bog butter. The earliest churns date to the Iron Age.

Club (Stone)

A large stone club, measuring up to 40cm in length and usually incorporating a handle. Occasionally it is shaped like an axe. It is attributed to the later Mesolithic.

Collection

This is a group of artefacts created by someone. Individuals may have a private collection, while holdings of institutions, such as museums, are usually referred to as collections.

Core (Flint)

The remaining part of a flint nodule, after flakes have been removed.

Dagger

These are found in copper and bronze and usually dated to the early and middle Bronze Age. Sometimes, they are referred to as knives.

Decorated Stone

This is a boulder, on which a pattern of decoration has been inscribed. Patterns such as spirals or intersecting lines are thought to be Neolithic in date. Cup-and-ring design or simple hollows are usually attributed to the Bronze Age and in the Iron Age, La Tène style decoration is usually found.

Dirk

This is similar to a rapier (see below), but with a shorter blade, usually measuring less than 30cm in length.

Disc (Bronze)

These are thought to be decorative mounts, usually with high-quality artwork applied, dating to the early centuries AD.

Disc (Gold)

These are small decorated discs of sheet gold, measuring from 4 cm to 11cm in diameter. They are thought to date to the Beaker period of the early Bronze Age.

Disc (Stone)

Small stone discs, c.5-8cm in diameter and of a variety of rock types. Their function is not known.

Dress Fastener

This is a small curved bar, usually of gold and circular in section, with flattened terminals. It is thought to have been used to fasten garments together. Smaller versions are referred to as Slieve Fasteners (see below).

Drinking Vessel

Drinking vessels are thought to have been in use throughout prehistory, but very few are securely dated. Examples of wood, stone, ceramic and horn are known, with some examples having decoration. Examples from the early Bronze, or Beaker period, are sometimes found at burial sites and indeed have given the name to this early part of the Bronze Age.

Ear Ring

This is an item of jewellery, which has been designed to be worn through a piercing in the ear lobe. It usually takes the form of a penannular ring and is constructed of gold. See ear spoons below.

Ear Spoon

These are drum-shaped ear adornments and were known as ear spoons, which were designed to be fitted into an enlarged piercing in the ear lobe. They were usually constructed of sheet gold and decorated. See ear ring above.

Flesh Hook

This is thought to be part of ceremonial feasting equipment and dates to the Bronze Age, between 1050 BC and 900 BC.

Flint Blade

A type of flint cutting tool, usually twice as long as it is wide and with parallel sides and at least two dorsal (outer) ridges. Small blades, known as microliths, were a feature of the early Mesolithic (8000-5500 BC)

INTRODUCTION

Flint Flake

These were created, throughout prehistory, during the flint knapping process. Examples from the Paleolithic period are extremely rare and thought to have been transported to Ireland by the movement of glaciers. Most examples date to the Neolithic or Bronze Age.

Flints

Unclassified flint artefacts or debitage, as a result of the flint-working process.

Gouge

A chisel, with a concave blade, was used in woodwork or stone carving. Usually made of bronze and thought to date to the late Bronze Age.

Halberd

This was essentially a copper or bronze dagger, which was mounted at right angles to a wooden pole and thought to have been in use from 2200-1700 BC.

Hammer Stone

A pebble or small cobble, used to strike flint flakes off a flint nodule. This is usually identified by evidence of chipping at the point of striking. Not to be confused with Stone Hammer (see below).

Hoard

This is a collection of three or more artefacts of value, which are found together, but in such a way as to suggest that they were deliberately chosen to be together. This is sometimes referred to as a wealth deposit. These may be of a variety of materials and artefact types, or a collection of similar artefacts, such as coins. A buried hoard is sometimes referred to as a cache.

Horn (Bronze)

This is constructed of sheet bronze. These are thought to date from the late Bronze Age, but were also employed during the Iron Age. Some are end-blown, while others are side-blown.

Horse Tack

These form parts of the equipment, which are required for the control of horses. This includes items such as the bridle bit, horse bit and the terret, which is the ring through which driving reins were passed. These are usually associated with chariot harness.

Ingot

A block of metal, which is typically oblong in shape. Bronze, silver, gold and iron examples have been found.

Javelin head (Flint)

Thought to have been introduced to Ireland during the Neolithic Age, they usually measure between 5cm and 25cm in length. It is a weapon to be thrown, rather than hand-held (spear).

Knife (Bronze)

General-purpose tool, thought to have been introduced during the late Bronze Age c.900-500 BC.

Knife (Flint)

This is usually flat on one side and arched on the other. They can also be referred to as plano-convex knives and were in use during the Neolithic and Bronze Age.

Logboat

These are also referred to as a dugout canoe. These were employed throughout prehistory and many examples have been recovered from coastal areas, lakes and rivers.

Loom Weight

Stone weights that are tied to the vertical warp yarns to keep the threads taught. These can be simple pebbles, but are more often circular with a central perforation to tie them securely to the warp threads. It is thought to have been in use since the early Bronze Age.

Lunula (plural Lunulae)

These are usually of gold, which has been beaten into a thin crescent shape, which gives it its name (small moon). They are thought to date to the early Bronze Age.

Macehead (Stone)

Pebble maceheads were introduced during the Mesolithic, but the majority of stone maceheads are thought to date from the Neolithic. These were finely crafted from stone, such as gneiss and amphibolite. They are thought to have had symbolic, rather than practical applications.

Mirror Handle

This is a cast bronze handle, featuring bird-head motifs for an iron mirror. It is thought to be imported from Britain and dated to the Iron Age, around the first century AD.

Mould (Clay)

Moulds were of baked clay, into which molten metal can be poured to create an object. Clay moulds have been found for a wide range of metal artefacts, including socketed items, which required intricate moulding patterns.

Mould (Stone)

These are stones, into which the shape of an object has been incised. Molten metal can then be poured into this, creating the required object. Later versions employed two such stones, tied together, into which molten metal could be poured into one end, producing an object with detail on the upper and lower surfaces.

Pebble (Painted)

These are rare in Ireland and thought to date to the late Iron Age and are possibly of Pictish origin.

Pebble Tool

This is a stone tool, shaped like an axe head. It is also referred to as an elongated pebble tool. It is thought to date to the late Mesolithic and was employed to remove limpets from rocks.

Pick

A pointed tool, found made of stone, flint and bone. It is thought these were mainly used to excavate rock and were in use throughout prehistory.

Pin (Bone or Antler)

This was first introduced during the Neolithic period and was often found in passage tombs. They are also found during the early Bronze Age.

Pin (Bronze or Gold)

Also known as sunflower pins, or disc-headed pins, these were made of bronze or gold and were common in the late Bronze Age. Examples are found with a disc-shaped head, at right angles to the shaft, or with the shaft bent below the head, resulting in it being parallel to the shaft. These are also known as sunflower pins.

Polishing Stone

A slab of stone is used, with the addition of sand, for polishing stone axe heads. Found in a variety of stone types.

Pottery (Bronze Age)

Appeared in Ireland around 2400 BC with a range of vessels, usually highly decorative and known as Beaker pottery. Subsequent Bronze Age pottery styles include bowls (with smaller types known as pigmy cups, miniature bowls and miniature accessory cups), vases and cordoned and collared urns. Pottery-making in Ireland ended at the end of the Bronze Age, c.300 BC and did not resume until the medieval period, c. AD 450.

Pottery (Neolithic)

Pottery was first introduced into Ireland during the Neolithic and takes several forms, developing over time. Early forms include carinated, decorated and bipartite bowls and later tub-shaped pots known as Grooved Ware.

Pottery (Unclassified)

Usually found in the form of sherds, without any distinguishing features to enable attribution to a specific pottery style or time period.

Rapier (Bronze)

These are very thin sword-like weapons, which are thought to be more ceremonial than practical as combat weapons, with blades of up to 50cm in length having been found. Similar weapons, with a blade length of less than 30cm in length, are usually classified as dirks (see above). They are thought to date from the middle Bronze Age.

Razor (Bronze)

Thought to date from the middle Bronze Age and used for the removal of facial hair, suggesting a change of fashion at this time.

Ring

Item of jewellery designed to be worn on the finger. Rings of various materials have been found, but rings are usually of gold or bronze.

Ring Money

These are rings of bronze or gold, which are used as currency. They usually date to the Bronze Age.

Quern (Bee-Hive)

This is a more elaborate form of rotary quern (see below) and is known as a bee-hive quern due to its distinctive shape. It was introduced to Ireland during the second century BC and continued to be used throughout the Iron Age.

Quern (Rotary)

These consist of a circular flat-topped stone, with a similar circular stone set on top. The upper stone usually has a central hole into which grain was poured and another hole near the perimeter, into which a stick could be placed. The top stone could then be rotated, using the stick in order to grind the corn. It was introduced during the Bronze Age.

Quern (Saddle)

This is a stone, which has been fashioned into the shape of a horse-riding saddle, into which grain was placed and ground with a separate rounded stone. It is thought to have been introduced to Ireland during the early Neolithic and was still in use during the late Bronze Age.

INTRODUCTION

Ringed Pin

More common during the medieval period, a few cast bronze examples have been found and dated to the Iron Age.

Rubbing Stone

A small cobble, used for the grinding and smoothing of stone artefacts, such as axe heads, or animal skins. These are found in a variety of rock types and are usually identified by their polished surfaces.

Scabbard

This is a sheath for holding a sword, knife or other bladed weapon. Typically, it was made of leather or metal.

Scraper (flint)

These take a variety of forms and are named accordingly. They have been in use from the Mesolithic and are commonly found on Neolithic sites. Individual examples include end scrapers and hollow scrapers.

Sculpture

Carved anthropomorphic figures are usually made of stone, but are also found in wood. Perhaps the carving is of the upper body or just the head, or heads.

Shield

A protective device against blows or missiles and usually held by straps or a handle on one side. These are usually of thin bronze, leather or wood, or a combination of materials.

Sickle

A single-handed agricultural tool designed to harvest crops. It has a curved, sharpened inner blade for catching and cutting stems in one movement. This was first employed during the Bronze Age.

Slag

A by-product produced, after smelting metal from its raw ore. It is usually a mixture of metal oxides and silicon dioxide.

Sleeve Fastener

These are pennanular gold objects, designed with large terminals and are thought to have been used to fasten the sleeves of garments together. Larger versions are known as Dress Fasteners (see above).

Spear-butt

This is a metal protector for the base of a spear. It is usually made of bronze and considered to be more decorative than functional. These were found in a variety of types, including long tubular types and those that resemble door knobs.

Spearhead

The sharp point of a spear, designed to be a hand-held weapon and dated to the Bronze Age, these were usually cast with a hollow socket and loops to facilitate securing to a wooden shaft. By the late Bronze Age, loops had been abandoned in favour of holes to allow riveting to the shaft. Early examples were of bronze, although they were also produced in iron, during the Iron Age.

Spindle Whorl

A disc or spherical object, fitted onto a spindle to act as a flywheel to increase and maintain the rate of spin. This is usually as part of the textile spinning process.

Stone Ball

Modified stones of various rock types, including chalk and quartz have been found at ceremonial sites and Neolithic passage tombs. Thought to be part of a ritual purpose, they are usually well-rounded and range in size from 15cm to 5cm in diameter.

Stone Hammer

Thought to have been introduced during the early Bronze Age, in order to aid ore extraction and also in metalworking. Some are hand-held, while others were modified for hafting. Not to be confused with Hammer Stone (see above).

Sword (Bronze)

Late Bronze Age swords were heavy, slashing weapons, with distinctive leaf-shaped blades. They are thought to have been introduced around 1000 BC.

Sword (Iron)

Dating to the Iron Age, these were usually shorter than their Bronze Age predecessors and often decorated in the La Tène style.

Tankard

A roughly-cylindrical drinking cup, usually with one handle. A wooden example from Carrickfergus was stave-built, similar to modern barrels.

Torc

These are lengths of gold bar, which are formed in a variety of ways. They are usually classified in accordance with their method of construction. These include bar, ribbon and flange-twisted torcs. They are usually dated to the late Bronze Age.

Wooden Bowl

A variety of prehistoric wooden bowls have been found and it has been suggested that they often reflect metal vessels in their form. Examples date from the early Bronze Age to the Iron Age and display high levels of woodworking skills.

Wooden Former

A wooden object, which is used to give structure to an artefact during the manufacturing process. In the manufacture of leather shields, a wooden former was used, over which a leather skin was stretched to make a shield. These were usually circular or oval-shaped with a hole in the centre, probably to allow for a boss, or hand-hold. In the manufacture of large bronze artefacts such as swords, wooden formers gave stability to the unfired clay mould and burned away in the heat of the firing process to allow for the introduction of the molten bronze.

Wooden Mallet

A wooden hammer-like tool, which is often used in the building of timber trackways.

Wooden Stake

Wooden poles, which are sometimes sharpened to a point, usually found in association with wooden trackways or palisades in wetland or bogs.

Wrist Bracer

This is a small rectangular strip of stone, with perforations at each end. These were originally thought to have been worn on the wrist by archers, to give protection from the bow string after shooting an arrow. Recent research has indicated that these would not have offered much protection and they should instead be considered as items of personal adornment. They usually date to the early Bronze Age.

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE TEXT

ACM	Armagh County Museum
ACS	Archaeological Consultancy Services Limited
ADS	Archaeological Development Services Limited
AM	Ashmolean Museum, Oxford
BM	British Museum
CAF	Centre for Archaeological Fieldwork, Queens University, Belfast
CM	Centimetre
CMA	Centre for Maritime Archaeology, Ulster University
CS	Ordnance Survey County Series (6 inches to 1 mile) map number
DARD	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
FT	Foot or Feet
GAA	Gaelic Athletic Association
G&L	Gahan and Long Limited
GUARD	Glasgow University Archaeological Research Division
HED	Department for Communities Historic Environment Division (formerly NIEA Built Heritage and Environment and Heritage Service)
IDB	Industrial Development Board
IG	Ordnance Survey Irish Grid (1 :10,000 scale) map number
INS	Inches
JRSAI	Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland
KM	Kilometre
M	Metre
MM	Millimetre
NAC	Northern Archaeological Consultancy Limited
NIHE	Northern Ireland Housing Executive
NMI	National Museum of Ireland, Dublin
NPL	Not precisely located
OD	Height in metres above Ordnance Datum
OS	Ordnance Survey
PSAMNI	Preliminary Survey of the Ancient Monuments of Northern Ireland
QUB	Queen's University, Belfast
SMR	Northern Ireland Sites and Monuments Record
UCD	University College Dublin
UJA	Ulster Journal of Archaeology
UM	Ulster Museum
YDS	Yards