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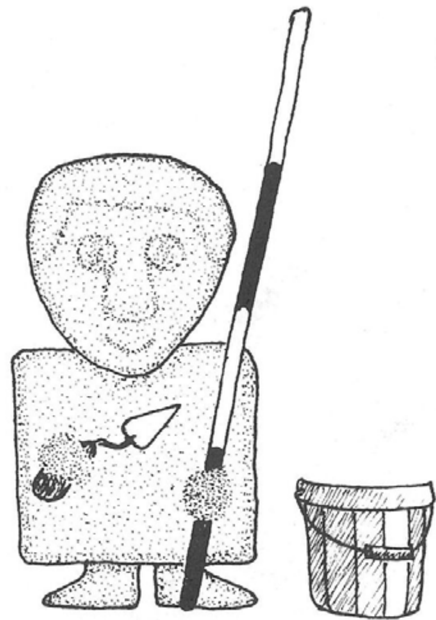
Trowel



archæological society
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FOREWORD

Students studying a subject such as archaeology often come across special points of interest which they might which to research in more detail. On occasions this interest may become a focus for a essay, or a postgraduate thesis. The aim of this publication is to illustrate the range and diversity of topics that both undergraduate and postgraduate students in University College Dublin are currently concerned with. It is hoped that this Trowel as a follow up to Trowel Vol. 1 will serve as an incentive to many more.

We would also like to acknowledge Diarmuid Delaney and Annelies Coghlan for their assistance during the various stages of publication. It remains only to extend thanks to those undergraduate and postgraduate students who contributed to this publication, making it possible.

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FRESHERS WEEK - WINNERS OF THE BEST STAND AWARD - AGAIN III

Niall Gregory

Subsequent to a visit to the Irish Life Viking centre, the Archaeological Society decided to build a Wood Quay type 2 house. At a scale of two-thirds its original size, it was to be twelve feet long, with a width of eight feet. The Head Porter, Peter McElroy was then approached with projected designs.

“That’s okay son, so long as you don’t use straw for the roof.”

Then came the small matter of where were we to get all the wood? For instance: 1240 feet of wattling material.

Two weeks later, we were to be found in Ticknock forest, courtesy of the Department of Forestry. We spent several days cutting wood, for which we were charged ten pounds. Valuable time was wasted by Conor McHale sleeping in the tent.

On our return to collect the timber, we arranged with the Forester to leave the gate unlocked. When we arrived there, it was locked, and it looked as if it was going to stay that way. Spending two and a half hours, lifting a trailer over a gate, rolling it downhill for a third of a mile, then piling it with timber and pushing it back uphill, was not our idea of having a good time. As it turned out it wasn’t.

Following an obscene phone call to the Forester, and assurances that this time, the gate would be open, we returned to the forest.

He was waiting at the gate; “Sure son, wasn’t the lock changed during the week, and didn’t I bring the wrong key.”

It is at one of these moments you wished you had a double-barrelled shotgun in your back pocket. We carried the remainder of the timber to the trailer.

For convenience, the main structure and the wattle walls were constructed in my back garden. The house was then transported to U.C.D in sections, without any further hitches.

The Saturday before Freshers’ week, was spent reassembling the house. On the Monday morning we completed it by installing the lighting. Just then Peter McElroy rounded the corner; “You’ll have to take that down, it’s a fire hazard.”

I explained to him that he already said we could put it there.

“Okay, if you move it over there you can keep it up.”

So the following two hours proceeded with much haggling with the Students’ Union over us encroaching on their area, before we could “move house”. All that was to be seen was a Viking house wearing 28 pairs of shoes, in assorted sizes and colours, slowly negotiating the corridor.

Freshers' week proceeded successfully, until Wednesday morning, when all the sockets along one side of the corridor blew. Coincidentally this happened as I plugged in our lighting.

We had to rewire the whole house, and plug it in to a socket on the opposite of the corridor, via a cable across the ceiling. It was finished minutes before the Judges arrived.

The reason behind building such an elaborate stand was firstly to win the best stand award, secondly, to increase the overall membership of the Society, and in so doing, to finance the twenty-four pounds costs of building it.

We were successful in achieving this so much so that we covered our costs six times over.

What happened at the party at the at the end of the week is yet another story, ask Conor McHale!!!

I would like to thank those who participated on the stand, especially Conor Stokes, John McCarthy, Fergus Murphy (for his car and trailer) and Alan Merry, and to apologise to my parents for the mess in the garden which I am still trying to clear up!!

A DISCUSSION OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE OF THE ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL ROLE OF THE VILLA IN THE COUNTRYSIDE OF ROMAN BRITAIN

Patricia Lynch

In Latin, villa simply means farm, though of a certain size. A villa was often the central building of an estate which might contain cottages and other farm buildings. The most remarkable feature of the development of the villas is its spontaneity. It was due not to the influx of settlers from abroad taking land in Britain, this can be seen in the continuity between villas and pre-roman buildings, existing on the same sites. An example of this is at Lockleys (Wewyn) and at Park street (near St. Albans). At Lock-leys, two pre-Claudian Belgic huts revealed that roman pottery had superseded Belgic pottery by late Nerolain times, where a new rectangular house with five rooms and a veranda was built. The picture is similar at Park street.

It is likely that these people who converted their houses into villas were wealthy Britons who had a seat in the “Ordo” of their tribe, and went there to live in the roman style. Yet at the same time it was confined to one class, the privileged, the peasants of the villages did not share in it. This development marked an increase in wealth and comfort, and the subdivision of houses into rooms indicated greater social differentiation between farmer and labourers.

The growth of villas, as seen through archaeological excavations went on at various places and at different paces, as wealth and demand increased. In general, few had baths before the later second century, and mosaics came even later, though villas at Angmering and Eccles had them in the first century. Villa life flourished in the period 150-200 AD, partly because the towns newly created by Rome brought into being fresh markets for agricultural produce. After a period of decline it revived, and in the late third and fourth centuries they enjoyed greater prosperity.

The architectural type of villas did not evolve from one to another in a neat chronological sequence. Archaeologists trace four main groups; the cottage, the winged corridor, the courtyard and the aisled villa

The simple cottage house, such as Lockleys and Park street, could easily be extended when the need was felt to expand, or further to separate the main family from the rest of the household. A corridor or veranda was built along the front, while projecting rooms were built on at each end. This was the essential structure of the winged corridor house, though there was a great deal of variety of detailed plans as additions were devised. This became the normal form of small country houses from around 100 AD. Similar buildings are found in France with an ultimately Italian ancestry. An example of this style is Great Staughton (Huntingdon Stone). Generally these corridor houses remained fairly modest and did net form the homestead of really large estates.

The third type of villa is the courtyard house, which were the largest and richest of the villas. All villas tended to have a space for the farmyard in front, and perhaps various small buildings at the sides. Sometimes two “LM shaped buildings were constructed so as to form a kind of courtyard. The typical “courtyard villa” however had an enclosed courtyard, generally entered by a front gateway. A good example of this style of house is at North Leigh (Oxfordshire), where a corridored court was surrounded by the wings of a house. The

complicated story of the villas growth may be traced from the small original house occupying the back and accompanied by a little detached barn/house. Checkworth (Cotswolds) is one of the best preserved villas in Britain. Occupation on the site was from the first half of the second century. The villa had an inner courtyard, which was also part of a garden, while an extension of the wings formed a second courtyard. In the fourth century all of the buildings were linked by corridors, and a large dining room. A set of baths were also built, one hot and one cold.

The fourth type, the Aisled house was a rectangular building. Two rows of pillars ran down the long axis. This house was obviously much simpler than the corridor or courtyard type of house. It could have served as a separate dwelling for the workers of a rich master, or have sheltered the farmer and his family, and perhaps his livestock. A simple example is at Sponnley Wood (Gloustershire) and a more elaborate version is at Clanville (Hampshire). At Llantwit Major (Glamorgan) an aisled house co-existed with a courtyard villa, and contrived in use after the large house was abandoned by its owner.

Villas had out-buildings, which might include an aisled house, for use as barn, cottages and stables. In the elaborate and generally later villas there were bath-houses, which were often separated from the main building to reduce the risk of fire.

There were two exceptions from the four main categories, Fishbourne (Sussex) and Lullingstone (Kent). Fishbourne is by far the most splendid of early country mansions. It covered more than five acres and may have served as a palace for Cogidubaus (a first century Romanised British king). It can be classed as a winged corridor house, but its inspiration was more directly Italian. It superseded a timber-built military construction of around 75 AD. The main colonnaded courtyard was some two hundred feet squared, and the higher dominating west wing was approached by a flight of steps from the main court. These led to a central room which may have served as an audience chamber. The east wing contained an entrance hall, a bath-house and two peri style courts. The walls were decorated with marble from Italy and Greece, and the and the floors with black and white mosaics, while the garden was landscaped with paths, hedges and fountains. Occupation seems to have ended about 270 AD.

The villa at Lullingstone has an impressive dining room. However it has a comparative shortage of other rooms. This suggests that it was built primarily for pleasure, rather than as the pivot of an agricultural estate. Its owner may have been non-British since it contained two sculptured busts in eastern Mediterranean style, which may have originally been portraits. During the third century the villa was neglected. It was rebuilt several times in the fourth century, when it obtained agricultural connections. The villa was destroyed by a fire around 500 AD. This villa also contained some exceptional mosaics; one depicting Bellerophen, Peagus and the Chimera, another, Europa and the Bull, with two lines referring to Virgil's Aeneid. If this house was owned by a native Briton as was possible, owing to the pagan nature of the mosaics, it shows how Romanised culturally some of them must have become.

An earlier example of the Britons becoming romanised culturally is at Fishbourne in its earlier phase, 75-80 AD. Its mosaics are contemporary with these in Italy, and the skill with which they were made suggests it was the work of an Italian craftsman. The successful use of shading on the body of cupid, shows the expertise of the workman.

Villas therefore ranged from luxurious mansions to small working farm houses. They are defined as Romanised farms, even though they are essentially confined to the lowland zones of Britain, in particular the South of the country. The distribution of the villas within the

lowland zones is uneven with the higher chalk uplands often left to the peasant settlements, while the villas are concentrated on the richer heavier soils.

It is evident, that through the extensive work of Archaeologists, it has become possible to look at and examine more closely the cultural and economic role of villas in Roman Britain.

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ÞE CASTEL AT BARROW

Caroline Donaghy

While playing golf at the New Tralee Golf Club, I came across an interesting round castle, partially hidden behind the third green. On making inquiries about it in the club-house, I was told by various people that it was a Martello tower, an Early Christian Round Tower, something to do with the Spanish Armada, to fight pirates, etc.

The tower is built on a rocky shore on the north side of the narrow entrance to Barrow Harbour, situated on the north side of Tralee Bay, about three miles from Ardfert and roughly six miles from Tralee. It is between six and seven metres high, just over ten metres in diameter and the vaulting is intact. There is an external offset at the base and it has an attractive batter. (Fig 1) It is built of mortared limestone but lacks parapets and crenulations. The doorway which faces east to the land, has a pointed arch, external rebate with chamfer finish and pocked dressing. In the lobby on the right is what looks like a sentry area, above is a murdering hole and dilapidated spiral stone stairs lead off to the left. A piece of the arch from the internal door has been reused as an outside step. The windows on the landward side ars slit, chamfered and also have pocked dressing, but the two facing the sea on the ground floor have been enlarged, probably for cannon since there are square holes at either side, twenty centimetres by twenty three centimetres, and twenty three centimetres deep to secure it. A garderobe outlet faces the sea, but the garderobe itself must be at the parapet level to which I could not gain access due to the broken stairs. Within the ground floor room, at the noith-east side there is a fireplace which looks like a later addition and there is a large cubby-hole in the south wall. Corbels to support the first floor in timber are just over five feet above the present floor level. On the first floor you can see a door giving access to the area above the murdering hole. The second story is barrel-vaulted with plank centring, which is perfectly intact.

The castle is referred to in a report by Miss Hickson, in *JRSAI*, (1883/84, pp. 195-6) which points out that the donjon or military round tower had escaped the notice of several named people, “and every other archaeologist or historian of Kerry.” (*ibid*). Apparently this still holds true since there does not seem to be any other references to it, except for a brief mention by Barrington, (1976, p.231) who appears to use the JRSAI report. Miss Hickson proposed a twelfth century date, and compared it to the round castle at Aghadoe. While the round castle at Aghadoe (Parkavonear) is similar in size and shape to this tower at Barrow, they belong to different periods. Aghadoe is a small round keep of the thirteenth century (Harbison, 1975, p. 103), but at Barrow the doorway, windows, lobby and spiral stairs all point to a later medieval date, as does the dressing on the

stones. These features are typical of the tower houses of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. (Leask, 1941, p.82).

The tower at Barrow is overlooked on the landward side and clearly built to defend the harbour mouth, probably by the owners of Fenit Castle which is located directly across the narrows from this tower. Miss Hickson, in referring to a map which accompanied an article by her in JRSAI,(1879-2, PP.161-8), points out that the castle was in existence in 1586, where it is clearly marked "Þe castel" on this Elizabethan Survey of the Manor of Tralee (Fig 2).

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“JOURNAL OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES OF IRELAND: A CASE STUDY FOR THE 1920’S AND 1930’S

Sarah Cross

In an attempt to find the theoretical and practical priorities of the archaeological community in Ireland in the twenties and thirties, the author undertook a thematic study of one journal from the period. The basic assumption of the study was that published articles represented contemporary interest in the themes thereof. It is the opinion of the author that changes in archaeological theory in one country are linked to changes in other countries, the political climate of that country and personal backgrounds, histories and beliefs. The material presented here is offered as a greatly shortened version of the original study intended to present opportunities rather than make specific statements.

The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland was chosen for study because of its broad national scope, the inclusion of contributions from both major scholars and amateurs and because of its availability. While the journal does not represent fully the archaeological community in Ireland at the time, it is fairly representative. The Society had both archaeological and historical roots and interests and this also influences its perspective. The period chosen for study was 1918 to 1938 because of the changing political climate, and because this period marked the beginning of modern archaeological methods on a world scale.

The graphs were compiled by counting the number of articles in each category for each year. All major articles, as well as articles in the “Miscellanea” were included. Reports in the Preface, Proceedings and Book reports were not included. If an article was continued in many numbers of a volume, it was counted only once per year, as reflecting only one instance of interest in the topic.

The numbers were not converted to percentages so the graphs show changes in the total number of articles as well as the changes in relations of the categories to one another.

These graphs do not represent all of the data collected for reasons of space and clarity of presentation, but they do show the important trends of the period.

The main influences which would be expected to affect the development of archaeology at this time fall into three categories; historical, political and archaeological. Historically, the depression “make work programs” provided funding for fieldwork. Politically, increasing nationalism put a greater emphasis on the Celtic heritage of Ireland. Archaeologically, the culture-historical school was flowering, putting an emphasis on artefact typologies, dating and “scientific techniques”. This journal was also affected by personal input. Changing membership, strong personalities and personal backgrounds will also, therefore have had an effect.

Figures 1, 2 and 3 all show a similar trend, with one group showing a decline and then a sharp rise after the 1930’s. The second two are linked to the first because it shows the division between fieldwork. The other two graphs showing similar curves in local studies and discussion of remains respectively are obviously linked to the dramatic rise in fieldwork. This fieldwork was mostly surveying and can be attributed to two main factors: the National Monuments Act of 1930 and the “make work” programs of the depression. Until this point

fieldwork was the task of a small number of enthusiastic members whose numbers were gradually diminishing. This caused the decline leading to 1930. The two factors mentioned above meant that fieldwork became more widespread and more systematic.

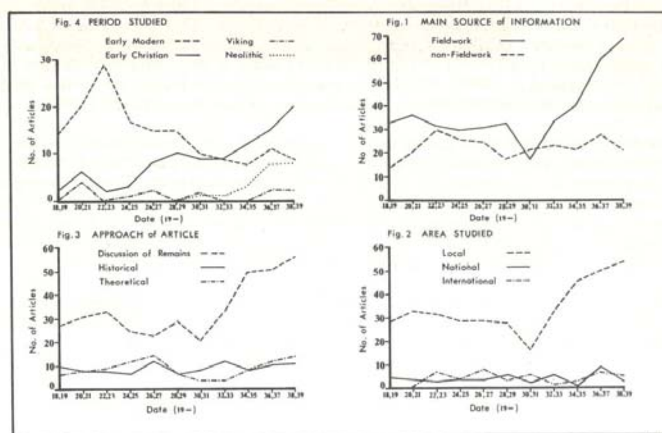
Looking more specifically at Fig. l, we can see how personalities come into play. Fieldwork and non-fieldwork research are correlated negatively. They were not seen as complementary, but rather as different fields vying for space. At the beginning of the period there were many members with more interest in documentary sources, while by the end of the period the journal was becoming increasingly archaeological - documents and collections were being shrugged off as part of the antiquarian past.

Fig.3 reflects a similar trend. As the culture-historical school gained strength in the world at large, description and classification were seen as better objectives than explanation or speculation. Period syntheses were still respected, however, the bulk of them were done at the beginning of our study period and they became classics. The theoretical structure, typologies and chronologies presented in this article are the basis for many of the later ones.

Fig.2 once again, shows the influence of changing interest groups. In the earlier part of the period, the membership was heavily Dublin based - especially the active members who controlled the journal. As the period progressed, however, there were other members from other areas - which is reflected in the rise of local studies.

Finally, fig.4 shows interesting developments in the period studied. The combined pattern is produced by a number of factors. Firstly, nationalism, which manifests itself in the desire to study “Celtic” things. Hence, the drop in both Early Modern and Viking, and the rise in Early Christian studies. Secondly, a change from more historical to more archaeological work, again reflected in the drop in Early Modem research. Finally, more modern methods led to more accurate dating of prehistoric sites - this is perhaps best reflected in the rise in the Neolithic near the end of the period.

This study is by no means complete. None of the reports of the Harvard Mission were published in this journal and they represent a strong influence both technically and theoretically on Irish Archaeology. It would be interesting to do a similar study of PRIA to see this influence in greater detail. Regional variation within archaeological theory is also important. Studying regional theory and doing a regional breakdown of national journals would surely yield interesting results.



From the study of this journal we have seen that archaeological theory underwent some major changes during the 1920s and ‘30s. The worldwide effect of the culture-historical school can be seen. Nationally, the political climate affected the research being done. Finally, on a more mundane level, the membership base widened. This led to greater diversity of topics studied. Archaeological research is isolated from its modern context. As much of our work today is based on research from that period of study, we have much to gain from a broader understanding of the

background in which it was written.

A NOTE ON EXPERIMENTAL HURDLE-MAKING

Aidan O'Sullivan and Conor McDermott

Hurdle-making today is a specialised craft, limited in its amount of uses. In the early Historic period however, woven panels were needed for house building, field boundaries and trackways, as is frequently mentioned in the literary sources. A passage in the twelfth century life of Colman of Ela reads as follows;

> "As to Baithin we have told how he ran away from study and went to hide himself in the wood above land Ela. And he saw a man fixing a single wattle (slaite) and when a wattle was fixed (mar dochuireadh slat) he would go to fetch another to fix it in the same way. However the house was (gradually) raised by him."

and below that, in verse;

> "The one wattle which the man cuts, and fixes on his house. The house arises pleasantly, Though little be the one wattle that he fixes." (Plummer, C. 1922 p. 173).

Hurdles have been found in recent excavations at Moynagh Lough, Co. Meath, (Bradley, J. 1985-86), at Deerpark farms, Co. Antrim, in Waterford and in Viking Dublin. Well preserved wattle walls at Deerpark farms testify to the skill of their maker. Here a special technique of weaving gave additional strength to the house. It was estimated that five miles of hazel rods would have been needed to make a typical house from this site (Lynn, C. 1987). With a system of coppicing such amounts would have been readily to hand. If the tree ring patterns can disprove that some kind of forest management was being carried out, then our conception of the contemporary landscape will need a rethink. Ash (fraxinus) was used in Viking Dublin in the making of wattle walls and pathways between the plots. The species also responds well to forest management and the number of coppiced stands that would have been necessary to service the demand by the 950s would have been great. It is a fact that says much about the settlement's relationship with its hinterland, although it remains to be proven. (Wallace, P. 1987)

The prehistoric record is scratchy on the subject of hurdle making by comparison. Presently the majority of the evidence is from bog trackways and even here there are problems of archaeological visibility. By their nature hurdles are light and can be easily destroyed. This leads to the local description of the turf as being "woody"! Dr Barry Raftery's excavations in Corlea and Derryoghil townlands have produced a great number of trackways of prehistoric date. Some of these have been hurdles (Raftery, B. 1986,1987 and Moloney, A. 1988). Well known examples of hurdles include the Walton heath, Eclipse, and Rowlands structures from the Somerset levels, England. (Coles, B. and Coles, J. 1986).

Prof. John Coles and Richard Darrah in their experimental work on the first of these have estimated that two men would need one and a half to two hours to complete the task (Coles, J. M. and Darrah, R. 1977). Inspired by the uniform simplicity of the hurdles so far found in Corlea and Derryoghil (in comparison with the Walton heath track) the authors attempted some reconstructions of their own. These were used to test various estimates of the number of man hours required. An appreciation was also gained of the methods used to make these multi-purpose structures. A small uncomplicated but perfectly serviceable hurdle was made in under half an hour, without proper tools and with much standing around.

Some hazel, coppiced like most modern stands, was identified in a hedgerow and cut with two knives. For this reason no rigorous time and motion study was attempted. The best parts of forty shoots were taken. Six sails were driven into the ground thirty five centimetres apart.

The rods were then let in to form the structure. Heavier rods were inserted first and last to strengthen it. They were woven alternately in front of or behind each sail in a simple manner, and kicked or hammered down to tighten the weave. Yet the manner of the weave was not strictly adhered to, sometimes a sturdy rod had to be inserted, to pull back in a sail which had become dangerously bent. It was then easily removed from the ground and carried around underarm or balanced on the head (it was certainly more portable than an armful of shoots would be, if one was constructing a brushwood track). It was then heavily photographed and trodden on without the slightest damage. Indeed the authors know of two willow hurdles which supported a Connemara pony, her rider and four adults! After the passage of time and some curious calves this structure sank into a bog.

The vital statistics of the hurdle were as follows. It was two metres fifty centimetres in length by one metre in width. There were six sails and thirty rods used (the former twenty five to thirty five millimetres in diameter, the latter around fifteen to twenty five millimetres). The operation took less than half an hour, and would have been quicker if proper tools were to hand.

Certain crafts that are peripheral to modern societies perhaps tend to be pushed to the fringes of pre-historic societies. As Renfrew has said;

Each age has in consequence its own archaeology, in which the interpretation owes as much to the interests and prejudices of the interpreter as to the inherent properties of the data."(Renfrew, C. 1982,1-2)

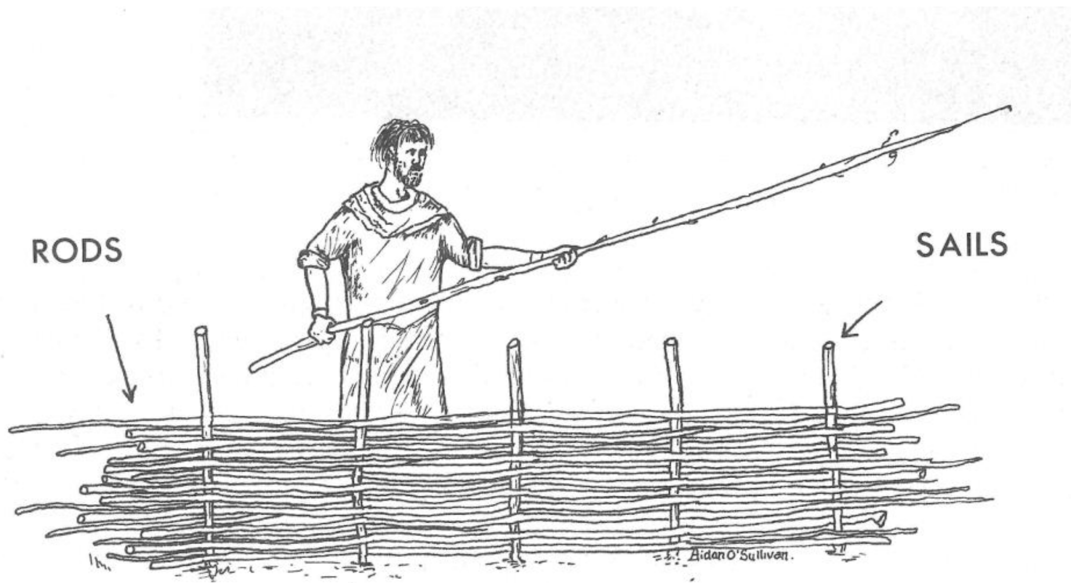
Craft specialisation is usually linked with complex or hierarchical societies in anthropological literature, with leadership being involved in the patronage of the manufacturing of certain products. This may or may not be true, but the stylistic uniformity in an artefact type or the presence of certain products need not automatically reflect the activities of specialist craftsmen.

Hurdle-making would have been part of the stock in trade of any self-respecting prehistoric-or-later farmer; a specialist usually would not have been needed. Regional weaving styles could reflect local customs rather than the signature of any individual. For complicated weaving co-operation could have been got from a local craftsman or even someone with the knack.

Anyone can make a simple hurdle. Yet their ease of construction should not detract from their worth, as they seem to parallel galvanised iron in a multiplicity of ways in which they could be used. More to the point they must have been easier to make, transport and use than a brushwood track. The authors intend to do farther experimental work next summer on the

various types of roundwood tracks being found in the midland bogs. Comparisons will be made between them to see which is the most efficient way of crossing the bogs. It should not be forgotten that these areas were often completely impassable in winter only thirty years ago.

The animals mentioned above raise a question as to usage. Surely considering weight distribution on a hurdle it could carry animals the size of the Kerry cow. Peter Reynolds has been using a similarly small breed, the Dexter, on his experimental farm on Butzer Hill. Many of the tracks go out to isolated islands in the bogs. These could have been areas of pasture at the time of their construction. Any attempt to drive animals over could lead to the loss of some of them. If cattle can walk on the stable platform that a hurdle provides, then we could see them as more than pedestrian ways.



METHOD OF HURDLE CONSTRUCTION

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“ST. ANTHONY AND ST PAUL IN THE DESERT’; A NOTE ON A COMMON MOTIF ON THE CROSSES OF MUIREDACH AND MOONE

Áine O’Neill

The spirit of Irish monasteries is embodied to a large extent in their high crosses which belong from the eight to the twelfth centuries approximately. The various elements of the crosses contain a large base which may be cubic or pyramidal into which the stem of the cross can fit securely. The stem of the cross is usually rectangular in section. It is made of one piece of stone, however, for a larger cross blocks are used. The capstone is usually shaped like a house or shrine while a few are conical. Irish high crosses’ characteristic feature is the stone ring which connects the arms of many of them. This is usually open-work. It is likely that these crosses were painted, giving a similar effect to that of manuscript illumination.

Figured crosses were essentially picture books of scriptural or other edifying stones intended for the layman. Francois Henry writes that the crosses were;

> “carved as a decoration for the precincts of monasteries, and in the case of figured crosses, as sermons in stone which could be the subject of a commentary or the theme of a mediation.”

The crosses were not funerary in character as the inscriptions all seem to commemorate their erection by a living person. For example on the cross of Muiredach Casndernad i [n] chros which has been interpreted by Macalister as; “A prayer for Muiredach for whom this cross was made”.

Many early monasteries grew up around the hermitages which by definition were in deserted places. From where did monasticism come and who founded it? In view of the panel which I have chosen for discussion it is most interesting to read from Mrs Jameson;

> “As Paul is regarded as the founder of the anchorites or solitary hermits so Anthony is regarded as the founder of the Cenobites or hermits living in communities; in other words the founder of monachism.”

Mrs Jameson also goes on to give a few examples of how the influence of Saint Anthony led to the establishment of monasteries. The first cloister was erected on an island surrounded by the River Nile under his immediate disciple Pachonius. Hilarian was converted by Saint Anthony, and became the founder of the first monastery in Syria. Jerome, who had visited him in the desert carried the fashion into Italy and Gaul. In a short time monasticism spread from the hermit life in Egypt over the whole of the western and eastern Christendom.

The scene of “Saint Anthony and Saint Paul in the desert” is a scene several times depicted on crosses in Ireland. As well as the panels mentioned in this essay, there are also panels on the market cross’ north side and on the south shaft of the cross at Arboe, Co. Tyrone. It was also found abroad. The scene has been explained on the Ruthwell Cross by an accompanying Latin inscription.

Quoted from Henry;

> “St. Paul and St. Anthony hermits broke bread in the desert”.

The scene represents the familiar legend of the visit of the aged hermit St. Anthony to the other hermit St. Paul of Thebes. St. Anthony at the age of ninety believed that no man had lived so long as he in solitude and self-denial. But he heard a voice saying "There is one holier than thou, for St. Paul the Hermit has served God in solitude and penance for ninety years". For this reason St. Anthony went in search of St. Paul who himself was to live for ninety eight years in this way. Mrs Jameson writes;

> "It was the divine will that his long penance and his wondrous virtues, as they were then deemed, should be made known for the edification of men through the medium of another saint even more renowned, the blessed St. Anthony."

While they were talking "forgetting the flight of time and the wants of nature there came a raven" sent from heaven with a loaf for their sustenance; and they broke the bread between them. It is this motif that is depicted on the panels.

These panels may be seen on the north side of the Cross of Muiredach on the topmost limb on the side panel. It is also depicted on the north side of the Cross of Moone on the top of the base. However the treatment of these scenes is quite different on each cross.

The fact that the cross at Monasterboice is made of grey-white sandstone has helped produce an amazing piece of work where figured models cover the cross in generous relief. In contrast the Cross of Moone is made of granite resulting in "a heaviness and a simplification of detail … a remarkable lack of relief ".(Henry)

The immediate difference that comes to light is the treatment of the two human figures, i.e. that of Anthony and Paul on the crosses. On high crosses human representations are relatively abundant when compared to the rarity of such representations in the contemporary manuscripts.

A.T. Lucas writes;

> "Although exceptions do occur on some of the high crosses, e.g. that of Muiredach at Monasterboice, the attitude and the treatment of the human form remain essentially from the beginning to the end of the period. However, if the Cross of Muiredach is an exception so too is the Cross of Moone where the treatment of the human form indicates that the cross is the work of a complete individualist, departing from the common tradition."

To compare the human figures one would have to first of all comment on the scrupulous naturalism of the Cross of Muiredach where these two figures are pictorially conceived in true scenes. One notes the freedom in pose of the figures. One of them stands holding a crooked staff in one hand and a loaf in the other. The other appears to be seated although as Macalister points out his stool is not clearly shown. He also holds a staff. Helen Roe gives a good description of the decoration above them; "Above the saint's head the angle made by the gable timbers is filled by a bold motif of three great snakes whirling out from a raised boss made by their knotted tails." This is unlike the treatment of the two saints on the panel on the Cross of Moone, where the figures are characterised by a simplification of outline. Here an oversized "conventionalised" head sits on a square or rectangular body. On the cross it is usual that only two profile feet and no arms are shown. Similarities may be made between this treatment and the Castledermot crosses and also the Matthew Symbol in the Book of Durrow. On the panel this simplification is extended to the bird and the loaf of bread.

It appears that the artist, as Lucas points out, has shed "all reminiscences of illumination and metal work, he sets out his interpretation of each pattern and each scene strictly in terms of stone." Much of the extra detail found at Monasterboice is omitted at Moone and the importance of the essentials, i.e. the two saints, the bird and loaf are emphasised.

Though the difference in style within the panels is noticeable so also is the similarity in the planning of the same.

The Cross of Muiredach is a beautifully proportioned monument. It is most carefully planned and its panels are arranged methodically. The same may be said of the Cross of Moone whose panels have been described by Henry as examples of "clear and logical arrangement."

The 'Cross of Muiredach and the Cross of Moone have both been grouped by Francois Henry who has established several groups of high crosses. The Cross of Moone is a group of three cross. These are all carved in granite. Other crosses in this group include those at Old Kilcullen, Ullard and St. Mullins. Henry proposes that the earliest carvings of this group may be the Cross of Moone. Group four contains the two crosses at Monasterboice. This group contains a few crosses which "stand out on this background of disciplined iconography both for the originality of choice of subjects and the masterful treatment of carvings." (Henry) Other crosses in this group contain one at Clonmacnoise and another at Durrow.

The dating of Irish high crosses involves the close examination of style, iconography and the equation of names which occur on a few inscribed examples with those of historically known persons. From the inscription on the South Cross at Monasterboice, the name Muiredach was deciphered. In the annals of the four masters we are given the name of Muiredach Mac Domhnall who died in 922 and in 923 according to the Annals of Ulster. Taking into account that the crosses were not funerary in character, this would indicate a date of nineth or early tenth century. Henry argues a date of the eighth century for the Cross of Moone due to "the analogy of several of its figures with those of enamelled bowls from Viking graves and of points it has in common with the crosses of group one (i.e. the Ahenny group). This would be understood by group one's close similarity to the style of metalwork, contemporary during the eighth century.

These crosses are quite different and well when looking at the naturalistic style of one and the careful simplification of the other. The ordered system of panels on both crosses on the other hand makes them quite compatible for a study such as this.

The scene representing the legend of "St. Anthony and St. Paul in the desert" is in itself of interest and beautifully carved on both crosses. Mrs Jameson provides an apt quote to end this limited discussion....

> "For sixty years, every day, hath this raven brought me half a loaf; but because thou art come my brother, lo! the portion is doubled and we are fed as Eligah was fed in the wilderness"

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