Prehistoric Burnt Mound Archaeology in Ireland

Volume 2 of 3
Catalogue 1 and 2: The excavated Burnt Mounds of Ireland 1950–2010

By
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May 2014
Thesis submitted for the qualification of PhD
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The following is a description of excavated burnt mounds in Ireland (by county) from the period 1950–2010. Catalogue 1 is a listing of these sites providing basic locational details, while Catalogue 2 includes a summary of the excavation record of each burnt mound investigated during this period. All radiocarbon dates are calibrated to 95.4% confidence level using the Oxcal 4.2 software (After Bronk Ramsey 2013).

**Terminology and abbreviations used**

**Meso**= Mesolithic

**NL**= Neolithic

**CL**= Chalcolithic

**EBA**= Early Bronze Age

**MBA**= Middle Bronze Age

**LBA**= Late Bronze Age

**IA**= Iron Age

**EM**= Early Medieval

**MED**= Later/High Medieval

*Multi-period within the Bronze Age, e.g. dating to both the early and late periods

**AB**= Animal bone

**Director**= Director of archaeological excavation and holder of archaeological licence

*Some abbreviated archaeology companies used in Catalogue 1*

**ACS**= Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd.

**Aegis**= Aegis Archaeology Ltd.

**Arch-Tech**= Archaeological Technology Services Ltd.
ADS= Archaeological Development Services Ltd.
CRDS= Cultural Resource Development Services Ltd.
Eachtra= Eachtra Archaeological Projects Ltd
GASU= Galway Archaeological Services Unit
Headland= Headland Archaeological Services (now Rubicon Heritage)
Independent= Excavation carried out by independently licenced archaeologist
IAC= Irish Archaeological Consultancy Ltd.
IAWU= Irish Archaeological Wetland Unit.
M.Gowen= Margaret Gowen and Company Ltd.
MMC= Mayo County Council.
NAC= Northern Archaeological Consultancy Ltd.
NAS= National Archaeological Services Ltd.
NMI= National Museum of Ireland.
NWAS= North West Archaeological Services Ltd.
QUB= Queens University College.
UCC= University College Cork.
TVAS= Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd.
VJK= Valerie J. Keeley Ltd.

Cat No= Unique numbering system given to each site throughout thesis.

SMR/RMP= Record of Monuments and Places. An update of the older SMR, (sites and monuments record), on which all known archaeological sites are marked and listed in an accompanying inventory. The sites marked afford legal protection under the National Monuments Acts 1930–2004. The record is based on the 6-inch map series for the country and is recorded on a county basis.

Sheet No= This relates to editions of the OS 6-inch maps for each county.

NGR= The Irish grid reference system is a system of geographic grid references commonly used in Ireland (both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland). Positions on maps are expressed in two dimensions as Eastings (E) and Northings (N).

NA= Information not available
**Licence No**= Numbering system given by licensing authority of the National Monuments Service to all archaeological excavations in Ireland. The catalogue uses a number of different licence numbers: the regular ones, which begin with the year the licence was first issued (98E114), which constitute the majority, the ‘Ministerial Direction’ licences, which refer mainly to road schemes (AE/00/52) (project number and site number). These are usually complemented by ‘E’ numbers (E2345) which refer to the ‘Ministerial Consent’.

**Barony, Parish, Townland**= These terms refer to land divisions in Ireland. The barony is the largest land division in a county, which is formed from a number of parishes. These parishes are in turn made up of several townlands, which are the smallest land division in the country.

**Consultants**= Archaeological consultants/company who carried out the excavations.

**Altitude OD**= This relates to the height above sea level and is given in meters.

**Ecofacts**= Material found at an archaeological site and carrying archaeological significance, but previously unhandled by humans. They are related to the natural environment, such as animal bone, charcoal, plants, and pollen.
Fig 10.1 Distribution of excavated burnt mound sites in Ireland 1950–2010.

Listed alphabetically by County. A separate alphabetical index of sites by townland is provided in Appendix 1.

Meso = Mesolithic   NL= Neolithic   CL= Chalcolithic   EBA= Early Bronze Age   MBA=Middle Bronze Age   LBA= Late Bronze Age   IA= Iron Age   EM= Early Medieval   MED= High/Late Medieval

*Multi-period within the Bronze Age, e.g. dating to both the early and late periods   AB= Animal bone

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500
**CATALOGUE 2**: Description of all excavated burnt mounds in Ireland 1950–2010

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<td>Monaghan</td>
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</table>
Location: Townland: Ballylumford  Six inch map no: 41
Parish: Islandmagee  NGR: 343700, 400270
Barony: Lower Belfast  Altitude: NA
County: Antrim

Excavation Details: Project: Scotland to Northern Ireland Gas Pipeline
Site Director: Paul Duffy
Consultants: Glasgow University Archaeological Division
Year: 1996

Physical Setting: This site was located in a waterlogged area at the base of Ballylumford Hill.

Cultural Landscape: There are a number of recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the areas investigated. The most prominent of these is the portal tomb known as ‘Druids Altar’ situated in the front garden of Druids Cottage, Ballylumford. Several discoveries of artefacts are also known from the area including urns, gold torques and what are described as ‘gold ornaments’. Along with the burnt mound activity discovered along the pipeline route, a number of lithic scatters have also been identified.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the Scotland to Northern Ireland Gas Pipeline. There was no surface trace of the sites prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed two areas of burnt mound material and a clay-lined trough and pit.

Burnt Spread: Deposit (010) was a spread of burnt mound material lying in a waterlogged area at the base of Ballylumford Hill. It consisted of a 0.12m-thick layer of charcoal and fire-cracked stones, spread over an area 17m long (east-west) and 4.5m at its widest point (north-south). The spread of material extended into the southern baulk, outside of the construction corridor. No associated features were found. The thickness and spread of the material suggest that the monument has suffered from plough damage.

Trough: Feature (003) consisted of two elements, a rectangular clay-lined trough and a sub-circular pit. The trough measured 1.75m by 1.1m and was 0.4m deep, with a 0.02m-thick clay lining on the southern, western and eastern sides. The single fill consisted of dark grey sandy clay with charcoal lumps and burnt, fire-cracked stones. Six worked flints were recovered from the fill, but these are thought to be residual.
Pit: The pit was sub-circular, 2.2m long, 1.5m wide and 0.6m deep, and was located at the northern end of the trough. It was flat-bottomed and contained the same fill as the trough.

Burnt Stone deposit: To the south and east of (003) was feature (004), a semi-circular strip of burnt, fire-cracked stones, 18m long, 1-1.5m wide and 0.03m deep. Occasional charcoal flecks were also present within the fill matrix. It lay partially under the southern baulk. No finds were recovered from the fill.

Findings:

Artefacts: A number of worked lithics were recovered from the trough, pit and burnt spread. The majority of this material was knapping waste, including two cores, a bladelet and two flakes.

Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (hazel) from fill of the pit (C003)
C14 (AA-28063) 3625±65 BP (2198–1776 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

Excavation of these areas revealed deposits of burnt and fire-cracked stone indicative of a pyrolithic technology possibly connected with water-boiling. The site was located on ground that was probably waterlogged during its period of use. The limited deposits of burnt stone recovered indicate that either the site was extensively damaged during later ploughing or it functioned as a small-scale pyrolithic site for short-term cooking episodes. The fact that the pit (C003) was clay-lined may indicate it functioned as a trough for boiling and would have required manual filling.

References

Location: Townland: Middle Division  Six inch map no: 52
Parish: Carrickfurgus  NGR: 340200, 390600
Barony: Carrikfurgus  Altitude: Unknown
County: Antrim

Excavation Details: Project: Belfast Transmission Pipeline
Site Director: Norman Crothers
Consultants: Archaeological Development Services
Year: 1996

Physical Setting: The site was location in a low-lying area close to a stream.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the site prior to excavation.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the Belfast Transmission Pipeline. There was no surface trace of the sites prior to excavation.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: The site was composed of a burnt mound and the remains of a wood-lined trough and some small associated features. However, the site had been greatly disturbed by later activity. Some of this probably happened in the early medieval period as several sherds of souterrain ware were recovered.

Unfortunately, little information is available for the site, therefore full interpretation of the archaeological record cannot be determined. The presence of deposits of heat-shattered stone and a timber-lined trough however would suggest the site functioned as pyrolithic water-boiling site, possibly for cooking. No prehistoric finds were recorded from the site and it was not scientifically dated.

References
Physical Setting: With regards to site location, there is no information available in relation to landscape setting.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the site prior to excavation. A recorded ringfort is situated adjacent to the site.

Adjacent excavated sites: Possible early medieval pits

**Pre-Excavation features**

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of development near a recorded early medieval ringfort.

**Excavation Record**

Summary of Features: The heavily truncated remains of two possible burnt mounds were identified during topsoil-stripping along with some early medieval pits. These consisted of spreads of charcoal-rich soil containing large amounts of heat-shattered and fractured stones. The larger of the two spreads measured 3.5m east–west by 3m and was 0.06m in overall thickness. The smaller measured 3.2m east-west by 2.5m and was 0.1m deep. A pit was identified, partially sealed by the smaller spread of charcoal-rich material. This measured 0.9m by 0.7m and was 0.35m deep. This may have functioned as a small boiling pit or more likely a pit for a pyrolithic dry heat such as in an oven (see Chapter 7). No prehistoric finds were recovered from the deposits and the areas were not scientifically dated.

**References**

Physical Setting: The site was located on a low-lying area at the interface between a natural drumlin and area of wetland.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the site prior to excavation although a number of Neolithic and Mesolithic activity areas were uncovered along the road development.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the Toome Bypass. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the area revealed six pits filled with burnt stone deposits suggesting a pyrolithic activity. No burnt mound or other similar fualacht fia features were revealed during the excavation.

Pit 1: C89 was an irregular oval with steep sides and a flattish base. It measured 1.8m long, 0.3m wide and 0.2m deep and was orientated northwest to southeast. It was filled by black loose friable organic clay which contained fragments of heavily decayed wood. The fill also contained two flint blades.

Pit 2: C1592 was an irregular oval in plan with steep sides and a flattish base. The pit was 5.16m long, 1.5m wide and 0.4m deep and was orientated north to south. It was filled by dark brown clay which contained medium to large stone inclusions. Some of the stones were burnt.

Pit 3: C1620 was sub-circular with steep sides and a flattish base. It measured 1.74m long, 1.52m wide and 0.35m deep, was orientated north to south and was located 10m east-southeast of C1592. It was filled by black, sandy clay which contained large quantities of charcoal (flecks and fragments) and burnt cracked stones.
Pit 4: C1642 was oval with steep sides and an irregular base. It measured 2.45m long, 1.32m wide and 0.2m deep and was located immediately north of C1620. The basal fill was grey clay which contained some charcoal flecking throughout and had a maximum thickness of 0.03m. The upper fill was black clay which contained large quantities of charcoal and burnt cracked stones throughout and had a maximum depth of 0.18m. This deposit also contained a flint artefact identified in the specialist report as a Late Neolithic javelin head. Charcoal from this pit is dated to the Middle Bronze Age.

Pit 5: C1647 was sub-circular with steep sides to the east which gradually shallowed to a gentle slope to the west with a rounded base. It measured 2.2m long, 1.6m wide and 0.46m deep with an east to west orientation and was located 2m northeast of C1620. The basal fill was orange, sandy clay which had a maximum thickness of 0.06m. The upper portion of the fill was subject to heating and had partially baked. Immediately above this was a layer of dark grey, ashy clay. The next layer was dark blue, sandy clay which contained a large quantity of charcoal and burnt stones and some undiagnostic fragments of burnt flint. This deposit contained a polished stone axe, convex end scaper and other flint flakes.

Pit 6: C1650 was oval with steep sides to the north, moderate slopes to the east, west and south and a flattish base. It was located 5m southeast of C1620 and measured 2.66m long, 1.17m wide and 0.42m deep, with a north to south orientation. The basal fill was grey clay which contained charcoal and burnt cracked stones and had a maximum thickness of 0.3m. The upper fill was black sandy clay (F88) which contained large quantities of charcoal flecks and fragments and burnt cracked stones throughout. This pit is dated to the early to Middle Bronze Age.

Finds:

Artefacts: A number of worked lithics were recovered from the pits along with a possible stone axe. These may have been residual artefacts from earlier activity in the area that became re-buried.

Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (unknown) from fill of the pit (C1642)
C14 (Lab number unknown) 3300±40 BP (1686−1496 BC)
Charcoal (unknown) from fill of the pit (C1650)
C14 (Lab number unknown) 3430±50 BP (1883−1622 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

Excavation of the area revealed numerous pits filled with deposits of burnt and fire-cracked stone and charcoal. No burnt mound or substantial deposits of waste-firing material was associated with these pits. While it is possible this may have been removed from later agricultural practices, it is more likely that the
site represented a short-term pyrolithic site. That said, the burnt stone was identified as basalt which can withstand at least 20 re-heatings before cracking. This may also be a reason why there are no substantial mound deposits. The pits may have functioned as ovens or roasting pits for cooking as they were too shallow and insubstantial to have been used as boiling troughs. The presence of baked clay and ash deposits in one of the pits may support the suggests that they could have functioned as roasting pits.

References


Fig. 10.3 Plan of excavated pits at Toome, Co. Antrim.
**Location:**
- Townland: Ballykennedy
- Six inch map no: 59
- Parish: Killead
- NGR: 328641, 396043
- Barony: Lower Massereene
- Altitude: NA
- County: Antrim

**Excavation Details:**
- Project: Unknown development
- Site Director: Norman Crothers
- Consultants: Northern Archaeological Consultancy Ltd
- Year: 2006

**Physical Setting:**
The site was located on a low-lying area close to a water source.

**Cultural Landscape:**
There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the site prior to excavation.

**Adjacent excavated sites:**
None

**Pre-Excavation features**
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of development. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

**Excavation Record**

**Summary of Features:**
Excavation of the area revealed a burnt mound, timber-lined trough and a large pit.

**Burnt Mound:**
The burnt mound material of burnt and fire-cracked stone was deposited in a large depression that measured 8.2m by 8.5m with a maximum depth of 0.2m. No other information is available for the composition of this waste-firing material. No finds are recorded from the site and it was not scientifically dated.

**Trough:**
The sub-rectangular trough, which measured 1.92m east–west by 0.9m by 0.55m deep, was situated close to the north edge of the depression. Its base and sides had been lined with unworked roundwood timbers. The lower fill of the trough was sticky grey clay containing a substantial quantity of medium-sized to large stones that had been sealed by a 0.34m-thick peat layer.

**Pit:**
A large irregular pit which measured 3m north-east/south-west by 2.1m by 0.12m deep was situated 1.5m to the south of the south edge of the large depression. There is no information available for the fill of this feature.

**References**
Excavation Details:

- Project: Unknown development
- Site Director: Norman Crothers
- Consultants: Northern Archaeological Consultancy Ltd
- Year: 2006

Physical Setting:
The site was located on a low-lying area close to a water source.

Cultural Landscape:
There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the site prior to excavation.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of development. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features:
Excavation of the area revealed a burnt mound and a timber-lined trough.

Burnt Mound:
The surviving burnt-mound material lay within an oval depression, 7.5m north–south by 5.9m by 0.16m deep, which may have been a natural waterlogged depression. It was composed of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Trough:
The oval cut for the trough, which had been cut through a layer of waterlogged brown clay into the underlying subsoil, was situated at the south edge of the depression and measured 1.9m north–south by 1.42m by 1.2m deep. A deliberately infilled layer of sticky brown clay sealed the basal fill, which was a 0.4m-thick layer of grey waterlogged clay containing medium-sized to large stones. The trough measured 1.2m north–south by 1m, with seven roughly worked planks on the base and wattle-lined sides. Upright planks had been inserted at the opposing (north and south) ends, with the cut ends of the wattle lining fed in behind. No dates are available for the site however it may be proposed, based on the lining method that it dates to the Early Bronze Age and functioned as a pyrolithic boiling site.

References

Location: Townland: Ballyalbanagh       Six inch map no: 45
Parish: Killead           NGR: 328641, 396043
Barony: Lower Massereene  Altitude: NA
County: Antrim

Excavation Details: Project: Unknown development
Site Director: Norman Crothers
Consultants: Northern Archaeological Consultancy Ltd
Year: 2006

Physical Setting: The site was located on a low-lying area close to a water source.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the site prior to excavation.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of development. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the area revealed two deposits of heat-shattered stone and charcoal that was badly truncated by a modern field drain.

Burnt Spread: The east spread measured 6m north–south by 5m and the west spread measured 10.3m north–south by 7.7m. Several subsoil-cut features, mostly modern land drains or produced as a result of agricultural activity, were revealed when the burnt-mound material was removed. The removal of the west spread of burnt-mound material revealed a raised oval area, 6m east–west by 5.3m, but no other associated features.

Trough: The main feature uncovered was a sub-rectangular trough that had been sealed to a depth of 0.51m by the east spread of burnt-mound material. The main fill in the trough was a 0.28m-thick layer of sticky clay containing large stones above a thin silty basal layer. The slightly splayed top of the trough measured 5.5m north-west/south-east by 4.95m. Its rectangular base measured 4.1m north-west/south-east by 2.9m and the trough was 0.84m deep. The poorly preserved remains of wattle and five uprights were discovered around the lower level of the trough.

References
Loca
[92x734]tion:
[221x734]Townland:
Creevamoy
[293x734]Six inch map no: 33
Parish:
Racavan
[221x712]NGR: 317140, 405930
Barony:
Lower Antrim
[221x689]Altitude: NA
County:
Antrim

Excavation Details:
Project:
North-West Gas Pipeline
Site Director:
Norman Crothers
Consultants:
Archaeological Development Services Ltd
Year:
2004

Physical Setting:
The site was located on a low-lying area close to a water source.

Cultural Landscape:
There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the site prior to excavation.

Adjacent excavated sites:
None

Pre-Excavation features
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the North-West Pipeline. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation

Excavation Record

Summary of Features:
The burnt mound material consisted of two layers in the exposed portion, both of which extended under the topsoil stack. The upper layer measured 3.5m long by 2m wide and 0.2m deep at the limit of excavation. This overlay a second layer, 2m long by 1m wide and 0.1m deep at the limit of excavation. No associated features were uncovered in the excavated area and no finds were recovered. The full extent of the deposit was not revealed during excavation, therefore cute features, such as troughs may lie outside the pipeline corridor. The site was not scientifically dated.

References

Location: Townland: Kinnegalliagh  Six inch map no: 39
Parish: Glenwhirry  NGR: 322540, 399790
Barony: Lower Antrim  Altitude: NA
County: Antrim
Excavation Details: Project: North-West Gas Pipeline
Site Director: Norman Crothers
Consultants: Archaeological Development Services Ltd
Year: 2004
Physical Setting: There is no information available for the landscape setting of this site.
Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the site prior to excavation.
Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the North-West Pipeline. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a thin deposit of burnt mound material that was extensively disturbed by later plough action.

Burnt Spread: This spread proved to be very thin, 0.05m maximum, and no associated features were revealed by its removal. This is almost certainly dispersed material dragged from the main burnt mound some 12m to the south-east, which survived as a low, irregular mound measuring 8.5m north-west/south-east by 7.9m and 0.08m maximum thickness.

Possible Trough: The only associated feature was a possible trough, measuring 2m long by 0.7m wide and 0.5m deep, located at the south-west edge of the mound.

Pits: Two large pits were also uncovered to the northwest of the burnt-mound spreads. One measured 1.35m long by 0.8m wide by 0.12m deep and was filled with a mid-brown, silty clay with orange clay subsoil inclusions, frequent charcoal flecks and occasional stones. The second pit measured 1.1m in diameter and was 0.18m deep and had two fills. The lower fill was a charcoal-flecked, orange/brown, sticky, silty clay packed with stones. The upper fill was a heavily charcoal-stained, silty clay packed with stones.

References

Location: Townland: Moore Lodge  Six inch map no: 22
Parish: Finvoy  NGR: 293270, 416110
Barony: Kilconway  Altitude: NA
County: Antrim

Excavation Details: Project: North-West Gas Pipeline
Site Director: Norman Crothers
Consultants: Archaeological Development Services Ltd
Year: 2004

Physical Setting: There is no information available for the landscape setting of this site.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the site prior to excavation.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the North-West Pipeline. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: The south-west portion of a burnt mound was revealed with the pipeline corridor and was therefore not fully excavated. Therefore, only a small proportion of this site was investigated and no cut features were exposed.

Burnt Mound: The burnt-mound material, consisting of two layers, lay within a semi-circular cut within the excavated area, measuring 6m by 2.5m and 0.35m deep. The lower layer was a black, silty clay with approximately 50% burnt stones and a moderate amount of charcoal. Above this was a black, silty clay with occasional burnt stones and a high charcoal content. No associated features were uncovered in the excavated area and no finds were recovered. Two modern drains were uncovered on the south-east side of the excavated area.

References

Location: Townland: Vow
Parish: Finvoy
Barony: Kilconway
County: Antrim
Six inch map no: 21
NGR: 291530, 417190
Altitude: NA

Excavation Details:
Project: North-West Gas Pipeline
Site Director: Norman Crothers
Consultants: Archaeological Development Services Ltd
Year: 2004

Physical Setting:
There is no information available for the landscape setting of this site.

Cultural Landscape:
There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the site prior to excavation.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the North-West Pipeline. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed two pits filled with deposits of burnt and fire-cracked stone. No burnt mound was revealed but could lie outside the area of investigation. The larger feature was an oval or sub-rectangular cut measuring 1.8m by 1.6m by 0.5m deep. The other feature was a sub-circular cut measuring 1.4m by 1.3m by 0.25m deep. Both were filled by a black silty clay containing sub-angular stones and a considerable quantity of charcoal. Both features had been sealed by a re-deposited tenacious grey-brown clay. Two struck flints were recovered from this field close to the burnt mound.

References
Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the North-West Pipeline. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: This site consisted of the ploughed-down remains of a burnt mound, 5m long by 3.85m wide, with a maximum depth of 0.1m. This burnt-mound material sealed a number of features, the largest of which was a possible trough on the western edge of the mound. The trough measured 2.1m long by 1.5m wide with a maximum depth of 0.4m. The trough, which had near-vertical sides and a fairly flat base, was filled with dark-brown sandy clay with frequent charcoal inclusions and burnt stones ranging from 0.1 to 0.2m in diameter. The burnt-mound material had also sealed seven stake-holes, ranging from 0.12m by 0.11m by 0.04m deep to 0.23m by 0.15m by 0.1m deep and filled with charcoal-rich silty clay. No finds were recovered from the site and scientific dating evidence is available.

References

Location: Lisdrumliska  
Parish: Finvoy  
Barony: Kilconway  
County: Armagh

Excavation Details: Project: A1 Road Improvement Scheme  
Site Director: Warren Bailie and Ros Ó Maoldúin  
Consultants: Archaeological Development Services Ltd  
Year: 2008

Physical Setting: The site was located either side of a small north-easterly-flowing stream, situated at and adjacent to the base of a north-facing slope.

Cultural Landscape: Nearby is the site of a possible large enclosure (ARM026-027) situated west of the existing Newry bypass, south of Bernish Road. Aerial photographs show a ring of white, c. 100m in diameter, which might suggest that there had been a bank at this point.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the North-West Pipeline. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: The burnt-mound material was located on the relatively flat ground at the base of the slope in Area 1A. A relatively upright mound was a classic crescent shape of heat-shattered stone, silty sand and charcoal, of which the majority of stone was granite. Two potential troughs were located within the arc of the burnt mound and filled by material identical to the burnt mound. Both troughs were severely truncated by the post-medieval drainage features. The most southerly trough was east–west-orientated, oval in plan and had sides that broke suddenly to a flat base. The northerly trough was east–west-orientated, sub-rectangular in plan and had moderately sloping sides that broke sharply to a concave base. There was no evidence of lining, wood or otherwise on the sides or base of either potential trough. Three stake-holes were revealed by the removal of the mound material.

References

Physical Setting: This site was located on the western bank of a fast-flowing stream in an area of generally flat ground. The stream feeds the rising Morningstar River c. 500m to the south-west.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric monuments in the vicinity of the site prior to excavation.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

**Pre-Excavation features**

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the proposed inner relief road for Carlow town. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

**Excavation Record**

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a mound of heat-shattered stone represented by two phases of activity and burnt timber pile and associated hearth. No trough was revealed during investigations. No finds were recovered or animal bone and the site had not been scientifically dated at the time of compilation.

**References**

Location: Location: Ardnehue Townland: Six inch map no: 08
Parish: Killerrig Parish: Killerrig NGR: 278015, 177527
Barony: Carlow Barony: Carlow Altitude: 72 m OD
County: Carlow County: Carlow
Excavation Details: Project: N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme
Site Director: Linda Hegarty
Consultants: Headland Archaeology Ltd.
Year: 2006

Physical Setting: This site was located on generally flat ground which was under pasture during the time of excavation.

Cultural Landscape: Two burnt mound sites (E2576 and E2575) and an adjacent site with a disused hollow-way of possible medieval or later formation (E2577) was excavated as part of the same road scheme, located c. 800 m to the south of site (E2574).

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a burnt spread of heat-shattered stone, two troughs, fifteen pits and two linear features.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound survived as a shallow spread (C036) of heat-shattered stone, black sandy silt with decayed stone and mica inclusions. It was irregular in shape and measured 8m by 6.5m with a thickness of 0.3m.

Trough 1: This trough (C033) was located to the north-west of the spread. It was sub-rectangular in shape with vertical sides and a flat base. It measured 3m by 2m with a depth of 0.6m. Two timber planks were revealed at the base of the trough at both edges and the excavator suggests that a compact layer of clay which was revealed over these planks or rails created the sides for a smaller elongated trough measuring 2.2m by 0.7m with a depth of 0.6m. Two fills were noted in this inner trough consisting of charcoal rich material and heat-shattered stone. Fragmented cattle teeth were retrieved from the fill.

Trough 2: A second trough (C038) was revealed 8m west of trough 1. It was oval in plan and measured 2.2m by 1.57m with a depth of 1.02m. Five fills were identified in the trough with the basal deposit consisting of grey clay, stones and wood fragments. The upper deposits composed of charcoal, pebbles and heat-shattered stone.
Pits: Located east of the shallow burnt spread (036) and trough (038), extending both north and south in an area measuring 15 m by 10 m, was a series of fifteen pits. They ranged in shape and size from sub-oval to irregular. The diameters varied from 0.5 m to 1.8 m, and all were relatively shallow.

Finds:

Artefacts: A chert flake was recovered from the site during testing. A worked flint blade was also retrieved from the topsoil.

Ecofacts: Cattle teeth fragments were recovered from the trough fill

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Wood fragments were unsuitable for dating

Excavation Interpretation

Excavation of the site revealed a deposit of waste-firing material associated with pyrolithic water-boiling. Two large troughs, one of which suggested it was timber-lined confirmed this suggestion. A number of pits were also revealed during the excavation and may have functioned in a similar capacity or for dry roasting. The recovery of cattle teeth fragments from the fill of the trough could indicate the site was used for the cooking and consumption of food. The recovery of worked lithics may indicate a Bronze Age date for the site as the wood fragments were unsuitable for radiocarbon dating.

References

Location: Townland: Johnstown Six inch map no: 08
Parish: Killerrig NGR: 277833, 176819
Barony: Carlow Altitude: 83 m OD
County: Carlow

Excavation Details:
Project: N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme
Site Director: Linda Hegarty
Consultants: Headland Archaeology Ltd.
Year: 2006

Physical Setting:
The site was located in generally flat ground that rose gently to the north-west. It was under pasture during the time of excavation.

Cultural Landscape:
A burnt mound with associated features (Site E2576) was excavated as part of the same road scheme and was located approximately 30 m to the north. Adjacent to the site and disturbing the south-eastern portion of one of the burnt mounds was a northeast/southwest laying field boundary that contained a disused hollow-way of possible medieval or later formation (Site E2577).

Adjacent excavated sites: None

**Pre-Excavation features**
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

**Excavation Record**

**Summary of Features:**
Excavation of the site revealed two burnt mound sites, each of which sealed timber-lined troughs and a number of pits.

**Site A**

**Burnt Mound:**
The burnt mound in this area was disturbed by a possible medieval routeway or hollow-way. The surviving mound was sub-circular in plan and measured 21.4m by 12m with a thickness of 1.2m. Five separate deposits were noted in the make-up of the mound. The majority of these consisted of silty clays, decayed stone and charcoal but the main deposit consisted of heat-shattered stone and charcoal-rich material. A Bann Flake was recovered from this deposit.

**Trough 1:**
This trough (C078) was the most southern of the pits underlying the burnt mound. It was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 1.55m by 1.25m with a depth of 0.5m. The north-west edge of the trough was intercut by another pit (C035) that was in turn connected to another pit and a gully or water channel. The trough itself consisted of five oak timbers placed horizontally along the sides and base of the feature. A single stake cut the base of the
trough in the north-western corner. Three fills were identified in the trough consisting of silty clays, stone, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

**Pit 1-3:**

The small pit (035) on the northwest edge of the trough was one of three interconnected features that were related to the trough. It was oval in shape and measured 1.08m by 0.8m with a depth of 0.22m. A timber fragment was recovered from the base of this pit. This was connected to a sub-rectangular pit (C033). It measured 1.96m by 1.8m with a depth of 0.26m. As in the small oval pit a timber fragment was recovered from its base. Connected to the north side of the sub-oval pit (033) was the curvilinear gully (101). It extended northeastwards for 1.2 m, turning northwest for 1.8 m before terminating.

**Trough 2:**

This trough (C103) was located 2m north-east of the trough C078. The full extent of this feature was not revealed. The exposed portion was sub-square in plan and measured 3m by 3m with a depth of 0.21m. Three alder planks lined the base of the feature. Overlying these planks was a deposit of black silty clay.

**Trough 3:**

This trough (C040) was located 2m to the north of the previous troughs. It was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 2.01m by 1.53m with a depth of 0.64m. An alder plank fragment lay on the base of the pit suggesting it was once timber-lined. Nine fills were identified in the trough consisting of grey gravel with stone and charcoal inclusions. The upper fills consisted of charcoal and heat-shattered stone. One of these fills contained a cattle humerus.

**Trough 4:**

Trough (C051) was located 4.5m north-west of the previous trough. It was oval in plan and measured 1.5m by 1.1m with a depth of 0.5m. It was connected to an adjunct shallow pit (044), located on its southeast end which may have been incorporated in order to provide easier access to the trough. This was sub-rectangular in plan measuring 2.4 m by 1.5 m with a depth of 0.16 m. It was filled with grey silty clay and charcoal flecks. It was dated to the Early Bronze Age.

**Trough 5:**

Trough (C051) was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 2.1m by 1.7m with a depth of 0.35m. It was filled with black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

**Pit 1:**

Pit (C083) was irregular in shape and measured 1.6m by 0.6m with a depth of 0.2m. Two fills were noted in the pit consisting of black silty clay, charcoal and ash deposits. It was dated to the Early Bronze Age.

**Pit 2:**

This pit (C088) was not fully exposed during the excavations. It was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 1.2m by 1.1m with a depth of 0.13m. A stake was revealed cut into the base of the feature along with a decomposed wood fragment. The fill consisted of black sandy silt.

**Pit 3:**

This pit (C087) lay adjacent to the previous pit. It measured 1.5m by 1.41m with a depth of 0.18m and was filled with grey silt and charcoal flecks.

**Pit 4:**

This pit (C091) was oval in shape and measured 1.57m by 1.3m with a depth of 0.18m. It was filled with dark silty clay, decayed stone and gravel.
Pit 5: Pit (C042) was irregular in shape and measured 1.4m by 0.9m with a depth of 0.4m. It was filled with grey silt and charcoal flecks.

Pit 6: Pit (C042) was irregular in shape and measured 2m by 1.1m with a depth of 0.45m. Four fills were identified in the pit consisting of silty clays, charcoal wood fragments and decayed stone.

Site B

Burnt Mound: This burnt mound was sub-oval in plan and measured 10.3m by 10m with a maximum thickness of 0.4m. Four deposits were noted in the make-up of the mound which mainly consisted of black silty clay, heat-shattered stone and charcoal.

Trough: The trough (C006) was located 1.2m south of the burnt mound and was irregular in plan. It measured 2.3m by 1.7m with a depth of 0.5m. Seven alder planks were recovered from the base of the trough suggesting it was once timber-lined. Three of these timbers seemed to have been burnt in antiquity. Three fills were noted in the trough consisting of black silty clay with charcoal and stone inclusions.

Pit 1: This pit (C021) was circular in shape and measured 0.5m in diameter with a depth of 0.1m. It was filled with loose, grey silty clay.

Pit 2: This pit (C008) was oval in plan and measured 1m by 0.8m with a depth of 0.3m. Two fills were identified in the pit consisting of dark silty clays, charcoal and stone.

Finds:

Artefacts: A Bann Flake was recovered from the burnt mound deposit in Site A.

Ecofacts: A cattle humerus was retrieved from the trough C040 in Site A

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (oak) from fill of the pit (C083) Site A
C14 (UB-8737) 3673±49 BP (2199–1924 BC)
Charcoal (oak) from the fill of the trough (C051) Site A
C14 (UB-8738) 3932±26 BP (2549–2308 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

Excavation revealed two substantial burnt mounds each overlying a number of cut features, some of which may have functioned as water-boiling troughs. Three of these features had evidence of in situ timber-linings while one particular trough had an associated emptying channel and pit. The presence of animal bone from one of the troughs may indicate that the sites function in a cooking capacity.

References

Fig. 10.5 Burnt mounds A and B at Johnstown with associated timber troughs.
Location: Johnstown  Six inch map no: 08
Parish: Castledermot  NGR: 277825, 176880
Barony: Carlow  Altitude: 83 m OD
County: Carlow

Excavation Details:
Project: N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme
Site Director: Linda Hegarty
Consultants: Headland Archaeology Ltd.
Year: 2006

Physical Setting: The site was located in generally flat ground that rose gently to the northwest. It was under pasture during the time of excavation.

Cultural Landscape: A burnt mound with associated features (Site E2576) was excavated as part of the same road scheme and was located approximately 30 m to the north. Adjacent to the site and disturbing the south-eastern portion of one of the burnt mounds was a northeast/southwest laying field boundary that contained a disused hollow-way of possible medieval or later formation (Site E2577).

Adjacent excavated sites: None

**Pre-Excavation features**

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation. The full extent of the site was not revealed during investigations as it lay outside the limits of the excavation.

**Excavation Record**

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a levelled burnt mound, a trough and a number of pits.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound was composed of five separate deposits, with the main burnt material consisting of dark silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. This was irregular in shape and measured 7.5m by 7m with a thickness of 0.15m. The full extent of the mound was not revealed due to wayleave constraints.

Trough: The trough (C019) was irregular in shape and situated under the southern portion of the mound material. It measured 2m by 1.95m with a depth of 0.38m. On its eastern edge was an adjunct shallow, sub-oval pit (025) that was 2 m long, 1.5 m wide and 0.15 m deep. The primary fill of the trough was hard, light blue, slightly silty clay under a soft grey silty clay with charcoal fleck inclusions. The upper fill of the trough, moderately compact black silty clay with frequent small heat shattered stone was also the primary deposit of the adjunct sub-oval pit (025).

Pit 1: Pit (C023) was irregular in shape and measured 0.4m by 0.2m with a depth of 0.2m. It was filled with black silty clay and charcoal.
Pit 2: This pit (C004) was situated to the north-west and was sub-rectangular in shape. It measured 1.89m by 1.41m with a depth of 0.42m. It was filled with light grey coarse sand, decayed stone and charcoal inclusions.

Pit 3: Pit (C028) was oval in shape and measured 0.8m long with a depth of 0.3m. The full extent of the pit could not be determined as it lay beyond the limits of excavation. It was filled with black silty clay and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 4: Pit (C026) was sub-rectangular. It measured 1.02m by 0.89m with a depth of 0.2m. The fill consisted of grey sandy clay.

Pit 5: This pit (C016) was semi-circular in shape and measured 2.49m by 1.03m with a depth of 0.32m. It contained a fill consisting of firm light grey sandy clay with charcoal inclusions.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Absolute dating: None

Excavation Interpretation

Excavation of the site revealed a spread of heat-shattered stone and a number of pits, one of which may have functioned as a water-boiling receptacle possible used for cooking. Others may have been used for dry heat, similar to examples found in other parts of Europe (see Chapter 3). No diagnostic artefacts were recovered during the excavation at site E2576 which would aid in the dating of the burnt mound activity. Charcoal obtained from samples taken from the secondary fill of the trough and the fill of an additional pit were deemed unsuitable to undergo radiocarbon dating due to their fragmentary nature.

References

Location: Johnstown  Townland:  Six inch map no: 07
Parish: Castledermot  NGR: 277650, 176216
Barony: Carlow  Altitude: 85 m OD
County: Carlow

Excavation Details:  Project: N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme
Site Director: Áine Richardson
Consultants: Headland Archaeology Ltd.
Year: 2006

Physical Setting:  The site was located in flat pastureland that sloped downwards from North to South where it was much wetter.

Cultural Landscape:  A burnt mound with associated features (Site E2576) was excavated as part of the same road scheme and was located approximately 30 m to the north. Adjacent to the site and disturbing the south-eastern portion of one of the burnt mounds was a northeast/southwest laying field boundary that contained a disused hollow-way of possible medieval or later formation (Site E2577).

Adjacent excavated sites:  A large concentration of pits was excavated immediately north of the burnt mounds.

Pre-Excavation features
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features:  Excavation of the site revealed two burnt mounds that sealed timber-lined troughs and a number of pits.

Site A

Burnt Mound:  This burnt mound (C103) was revealed as a dispersed spread of heat-shattered stone and charcoal in the south-eastern area of the site. It measured 8.25m by 6.5m with a thickness of 0.2m. It sealed a timber-lined trough and a number of stake-holes.

Trough:  Trough (C101) was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 2.28m by 0.78m with a depth of 0.2m. Four stake-holes were identified cut into the north-western corner of the trough. A large timber plank lined the base of the trough. A small rebate was noted around the edges of timber plank suggesting that the sides of the trough were, at one time, also lined with timber. The fill within this rebate was a mixture of deposit and the overlying burnt mound deposit. The fill of the trough consisted of dark brown silty peat with pebbles.
Pit 1: This feature (C112) was situated 5.5m south of the trough. It was irregular in shape and measured 4m by 2m with a depth of 0.2m. The fill of the feature consisted of dark brown clayey peat with wood fragments.

Site B

Burnt Mound: This mound was revealed in the south-western area of the site and was slightly larger than the other spread. It was oval in shape and measured 13m by 7m with a thickness of 0.2m. The spread was composed of charcoal-rich silty clay and heat-shattered stone. Two separate deposits were noted in the make-up of this spread.

Trough 1: This trough (C122) was sub-rectangular in plan and measured 2.04m by 1.41m with a depth of 0.2m. Three large oak planks lined the base of the trough. A stake was recorded in the north-eastern corner while a stake-hole was noted in the southern area of the pit under the base planks. Overlying these planks was an accumulation of light grey sandy silt which contained occasional angular to sub-angular fine pebbles. It is likely that this deposit formed as a result of the disintegration of sandstone used to heat the water in the trough.

Trough 2: Trough (C005) was located 3m south of the last trough. It measured 2.57m by 0.88m with a depth of 0.27m. The pit was sub-rectangular in plan with vertical sides and a flat base and was filled with black silty clay and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 1: This pit (C152) was situated 0.25m south of the trough (C122). It was sub-circular in plan with a flat base and measured 3.94m in diameter with a depth of 0.8m. Six fills were recorded in the pit consisting of silty clays, burnt stone and charcoal pieces. Wood fragments were also recorded.

Pits: A large concentration of pits was recorded to the north of these two burnt mound sites. The relationship of these pits to the burnt mound activity is uncertain, therefore they are not described here.

Finds:

Artefacts: Chert borer and a retouched flint flake was recovered in the topsoil deposits

Ecofacts: Fragmented animal bone was recovered from the trough C101

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (oak) from fill of the trough (C101) Site A C14 (UB-8822) 2855±22 BP (1115–934 BC) Charcoal (oak) from the fill of the pit (C008) Site B C14 (UB-8823) 2844±21 BP (1108–922 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

Excavation of the area revealed two burnt mounds sites broadly contemporary in date. Both contained troughs with evidence of timber lining suggesting a water-boiling activity associated with pyrolithic
technology. Fragmental animal bone was recovered from the trough of one of the sites possibly indicating the site was used for cooking however this cannot be confirmed.

References

Location: Townland: Busherstown  Six inch map no: 07
Parish: Killerrig  NGR: 277545, 174624
Barony: Carlow  Altitude: 79 m OD
County: Carlow

Excavation Details: Project: N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme
Site Director: Áine Richardson
Consultants: Headland Archaeology Ltd.
Year: 2006

Physical Setting: The site was located on flat ground that rose gently towards the north. The River Burren is located 2.75km to the south-west of the site.

Cultural Landscape: A group of pits and stake-holes were excavated as part of the same project 25m to the south of the burnt mound and were undated (E2585). An undated enclosure (CW008-49) was also located 1.5 km to the southeast of it.

Adjacent excavated sites: A concentration of pits and stake-holes was excavated immediately to the south of the burnt mound.

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed two phases of burnt mound deposits, a large trough cut into an enhanced hollow, several stake-hole clusters and numerous pits, some of which may not be directly associated with the activity. A well and a wooden access platform were also exposed.

Burnt Mound: This burnt mound sealed the northern group of cut features on the site including the trough and natural depression. It measured 14.5m by 12m with a maximum thickness of 0.36m. Seven separate deposits were identified in the make-up of the mound material with each consisting of dark sandy silts, charcoal and burnt stone. A sample of charcoal from the base of the mound material is dated to the Late Bronze Age. A flint flake and nine animal bone fragments were also recovered from this deposit. The deposits which overlay this also contained animal bone, including a cattle tibia.

Enhanced Hollow: A large sub-circular cut (C146) was revealed under the burnt mound. It measured 10m by 7m with a depth of 0.7m and it appeared to be an artificially enhanced hollow into which the trough (C065) was cut. The upper edge was steep to moderately sloped, and displayed some scorching on its western side. As the edge of this enhanced hollow progressed downwards, the sides became smooth and more gently inclined. A thin basal horizon of mid-brownish grey firm silty clay followed this contour. The
upper portion of this enhanced hollow was filled with the burnt mound material.

Trough: The trough (C065) was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 3.5m by 2m with a depth of 0.37m. It had gentle breaks of slope and a flat base. Three fills were recorded in the trough consisting of dark sandy silt and angular stones. A large stone was recorded in the trough between the two fills.

Pit 1: This pit (C236) was recorded immediately north-east of the trough. It was oval in shape and measured 2.6m by 1.1m with a depth of 0.7m. Three fills were recorded in the pit which consisted of dark silty clays and stone inclusions.

Stake-Holes: Two stake-hole groupings were recorded cut into the large sub-circular cut (C146) immediately south-west of the trough. The north-west group consisted of 10 stake-holes cluster together along with a slot gully. They were truncated by a second slot gully which was broader and held a roughly northeast to southwest alignment. The later slot gully appeared to be truncated by further stake-holes. Four stake-holes from the southeast group, (187), (190), (199) and (202), may have been double stake-holes, or have been replaced or repaired.

Post-Holes: Several other post-holes were recorded north-east of the stake-hole cluster.

Well and Platform: This pit (C353) represented the second phase of activity on the site which was located in the western portion of the burnt mound. It was interpreted as a well and measured 6m by 3m with a maximum depth of 1.28m. The base of the shaft was flooded by a natural spring. A timber platform was revealed at the south-western edge of the well which consisted of two oak planks held in place by a series of stakes. A number of other stakes were noted to the north-east of the platform and at the southern edge of the cut. Numerous fills were recorded in the fill of the well consisting of charcoal rich deposits, silty clays and stones. Charcoal from the basal deposit was dated to the Early Iron Age. This area was sealed by a burnt mound deposit composed of black silty clay and heat-shattered stone. This contained a significant quantity of animal bone. A human femur bone was also recovered from this deposit.

Spread: A spread of light grey compact silty clay (C078) with charcoal inclusions and heat-shattered stone was identified adjacent to the burnt mound. It measured 13m by 6m and was cut by pit (C089).

Pit 2: This pit (C089) was oval in shape and cut the spread. It measured 1m by 0.79m with a depth of 0.15m. It was filled with black silty sand.

Pit 3: The pit (C077) was revealed 1.5m west of the pit 089. It was sub-oval in shape and measured 1.2m by 0.9m with a depth of 0.35m. It was filled with black silty clay and stone inclusions.

Pit 4: Pit (C284) was recorded 3m north-west of the pit (C077). It was irregular in shape and measured 0.63m by 0.55m with a depth of 0.18m. It was filled with black silty clay.

Pit 5: This pit (C341) was situated 3m north-east of pit (C284). It was sub-oval in shape and measured 1.5m by 0.44m with a depth of 0.44m. Numerous fills were recorded in the pit which consisted of silty clays and stone inclusions.
Pit 6: 1m to the south-east, another pit was identified (C049). It was sub-circular in shape and measured 1m by 0.9m with a depth of 0.2m. Three fills were noted in the pit consisting of black silty clay, charcoal and stone inclusions.

Pit 7: Pit (C053) was located 0.8m from pit (C049). It was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 1.35m by 1m with a depth of 0.3m. It was filled with black silty clay and stone inclusions.

Pit 8: This pit (C051) was sub-circular in shape and measured 0.6m by 0.55m with a depth of 0.2m. It was filled with black silty clay and stone inclusions.

Pit 9: Pit (C056) was oval in shape and measured 1m by 0.75m with a depth of 0.25m. Two fills were noted in the pit consisting of silty sand and stone inclusions. A number of stake-holes were recorded in the vicinity of this pit.

Pits: A large number of pits were also recovered to the south of the burnt mound however the relationship of these pits to the burnt mound activity is unknown.

Finds:

Artefacts: A Neolithic stone axe was recovered from the topsoil. Three flint fragments were also retrieved from the burnt mound.

Ecofacts: A large amount of animal bone was recovered from the burnt mound which consisted of cattle, horse, pig and red deer. A human femur bone was also recovered from the burnt mound deposit overlying the well.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (alder) from burnt mound deposit C14 (UB-8816) 2799±27 BP (1016–850 BC)
Charcoal (oak) from the fill of the well (C353) C14 (UB-8823) 2437±29 BP (751–406 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

Excavation revealed a substantial burnt mound complex with a number of pits, troughs and stake-holes. A well with an access platform provided water for the central trough which was the largest feature on site set within a large hollow. Radiocarbon evidence from the site suggests multiphased activity which is further supported by the multitude of pits. The evidence suggests that the site functioned primarily as a water-boiling area more than likely for cooking and consumption of food. This is supported by the presence of large amounts of animal bone from the site. The stake-hole cluster adjacent to the trough and set within the natural hollow may be associated with a formal hearth that does not survive archaeologically.

References

Fig. 10.7 Plan of excavated features at Busherstown, Co. Carlow.

Plate 10.3 Mid-exavcation shot of Well at Busherstown.
Excavation Details:

- **Project:** N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme
- **Site Director:** Linda Hegarty
- **Consultants:** Headland Archaeology Ltd.
- **Year:** 2006

Physical Setting:
The site was located in a natural depression which was under pastureland at the time of excavation. The land rose gently to the south where it formed a crest and to north-west where it rose to 200m.

Cultural Landscape:
Located two fields southwest of the site was an enclosure (CW007-075) and two fields south was a second enclosure (CW007-074). Approximately 1 km to the south of site was the Linkardstown archaeological complex site (CW012-091). The site was also situated in close proximity to a number of other sites that were excavated as part of the same road scheme. Located c. 200 m to the northeast was a multi period site (E2589) while to the south was site (E2590) where two phases of archaeological activity occurred, the first phase was attributed to the middle to late Bronze Age.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

**Pre-Excavation features**
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation. The full extent of the site was not revealed during investigation, as it lay outside the area of excavation.

**Excavation Record**

**Summary of Features:**
Excavation of the site revealed a levelled burnt mound, two troughs, several pits and a wooden platform.

**Burnt Mound:**
The exposed portion of the burnt mound was sub-rectangular in plan and measured 30m by 22.5m with a maximum thickness of 0.35m. It consisted of black sity clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. One body sherd of possible Bronze Age pottery was recovered from the deposit along with a small flint flake.

**Trough 1:**
Trough (C013) was oval in shape and measured 2m by 1.2m with a depth of 0.3m. The base was lined with horizontally placed alder planks, suggesting that the trough was originally timber lined. It was filled with black sity clay and heat-shattered stone.

**Trough 2:**
This trough (C055) was located 7m north of the previous trough. It was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 2m by 1.29m with a depth of 0.2m. Three
stake-holes cut the base of the trough in the northern side. Three alder timber elements were identified in the fill of the trough suggesting that the pit was originally timber-lined. The trough was filled with loose black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Inter-cutting Pits: Two inter-cutting pits (C074 and C084) were located 7m north-east of pit (C062). C074 was sub-rectangular in plan and measured 3.95m by 2.1m with a depth of 0.5m. On its southern side was pit (C084). It was also sub-rectangular and measured 3m by 1.98m with a depth of 0.25m. The basal fill of the first pit consisted of silty clay with charcoal and heat-shattered stone. A charred stake with worked ends was recovered from this deposit. Overlying this was a number of timber planks laid horizontally on a north-west/south-east axis. The timber arrangement possibly represents the remains of a type of platform or footing associated with activity in the pit (074) (Hegarty 2009, 7). The fill of pit (C084) consisted of black peaty material, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 1: This pit (C026) was revealed to the north-west of the trough (C013). It was oval in shape and measured 2m by 1.2m with a depth of 0.35m. It was filled with black silty clay and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 2: Pit (C008) was located 6m to the south-west. It was oval in shape and measured 1.38m by 1.14m with a depth of 0.38m. Three fills were noted in the pit consisting of silty clays, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 3: This pit (C060) was situated 3m from the trough (C013). It was oval in shape and measured 1.6m by 0.85m with a depth of 0.08m. It was filled with compact brown sandy silt with heat-shattered stone and charcoal.

Pit 4: Located 1m from north-west of the previous pit was another cut feature (C050). It was oval in shape and measured 1.67m by 1.2m with a depth of 0.22m. It was filled with black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. Nine fragments of cattle bone were retrieved from this deposit. An isolated stake-hole was situated immediately adjacent to the pit.

Pit 5: Pit (C033) was oval in shape and measured 0.6m by 0.5m with a depth of 0.1m. It was filled with black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 6: This pit (C062) was located 3m north-east of the trough (C055). It was oval in shape and measured 1.8m by 1.3m with a depth of 0.08m. A timber piece was identified at the base of this pit. The pit was filled with black silty clay and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 7: Pit (C040) was irregular in shape and measured 2m by 1.2m with a depth of 0.3m. Three fills were recorded in the pit consisting of silty clays, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 8: This pit (C035) was irregular in shape and measured 2m by 1.2m with a depth of 0.3m. Three fills were recorded in the pit consisting of silty clays, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Finds:

Artefacts: Four flint flakes and a retouched flint artefact were recovered from a peat deposit below the mound material. A body sherd of possible Bronze Age date was recovered from the burnt mound.
Ecofacts: Fragments of cattle bone were recovered from the pit (C050).

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: None

Excavation Interpretation

The site consisted of a spread of heat shattered stone in a matrix of silty sand and occasional charcoal, two troughs, ten pits and two intercutting pits containing a wooden platform. It is likely that related features such as additional troughs or pits are located beyond the eastern edge of the road corridor. The lithic assemblage recovered from the site is likely to date to the Late Neolithic period. Activity on this site forms one part of a possible Late Neolithic and Bronze Age integrated landscape but without further dating evidence it cannot be demonstrated which component or components it is integrated with. The large pit with access platform may have functioned as a water-source for the troughs however the water-table at the site may have changed significantly since the Bronze Age.

References

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**Excavation Details:**
- **Project:** N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme
- **Site Director:** Joanne Hughes
- **Consultants:** Headland Archaeology Ltd.
- **Year:** 2006

**Physical Setting:** The site was located on flat agricultural land close to Rathcrogue House.

**Cultural Landscape:** A large Bronze Age habitation site was excavated 200m to south-west of the site during the same road project. A further site on this road scheme (E2589) possibly associated with activity on sites E2591 and E2592 was situated approximately 1 km to the southwest. Excavation here revealed two possible round-houses dating to the Bronze Age (Hegarty and O’Connell 2008).

Adjacent excavated sites: None

**Pre-Excavation features**

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

**Excavation Record**

**Summary of Features:** Excavation of the site revealed a levelled burnt mound, a large well or spring and numerous pits, some of which may have functioned as troughs.

**Burnt Spread:**

The burnt mound consisted of a spread of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered sandstone. The deposit measured 17.5m by 17m with a maximum thickness of 0.25m. Evidence of disturbance to the burnt mound was identified to the north-west. Here, it was truncated by underground electricity cables that lay parallel to the driveway leading to Rathcrogue House (Hughes 2009, 8).

**Well:**

A large pit (C064) was the most significant feature identified during the excavation. It was situated beneath the burnt spread and was sub-circular in shape with gradual to vertical sides and a flat base. It measured 8m by 5.5m with a depth of 1.65m and was filled with eighteen deposits consisting of silty clays, peat, charcoal and heat-shattered sandstone and granite inclusions. Fragments of burnt and unburnt animal bone was recovered from several of the fill deposits. Two pointed tips of worked wood were also recovered from the well.

**Pit 1:**

This pit (C036) was located west of the well and was circular in shape. It measured 0.76m by 0.6m with a depth of 0.15m and was filled with black silty clay and heat-shattered stone.
Pit 2: Pit (C012) truncated the pit C036 on its northern side. It was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 1.13m by 0.8m with a depth of 0.14m. Several fills were noted in the pit consisting of dark silty clays and charcoal.

Pit 3: This pit (C038) partly truncated the pit (C012). It was sub-circular in shape and measured 0.9m by 0.8m with a depth of 0.2m. The fill of the pit consisted of dark silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 4: Pit (C020) was oval in shape and measured 0.75m by 0.65m with a depth of 0.15m. It contained two fills consisting of black silty clays, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 5: A large sub-circular pit (C059) was revealed south of the burnt mound. It measured 1.65m by 1.3m with a depth of 0.4m. It was filled with black sand silt and heat-shattered stone. A sample of charcoal from this fill is dated to the Early Bronze Age.

Pit 6/Possible Trough: This pit (C006) was located to the south of pit (C059). It was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 1.65m by 1.1m with a depth of 0.65m. The feature contained two fills consisting of silty clays and occasional heat-shattered stone.

Pit 7/ Possible Trough: This pit (C063) was sub-rectangular in plan and measured 3m by 0.8m with a depth of 0.18m. Two fills were identified in the pit consisting of dark silty clay and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 8: To the south of the previous pit was feature (C046). It was sub-rectangular in plan and measured 1.47m by 0.6m with a depth of 0.24m.

Finds:

Artefacts: Possible wooden stakes were retrieved from the base of the well

Ecofacts: Burnt and unburnt animal bone was recovered from the well

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (hazel) from the fill of the pit (C059)
C14 (UBA-8426) 3567±46 BP (2031–1770 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

Excavation of the site revealed a large spread of heat-shattered stone and charcoal, a number of pits, possible troughs and a well. This well probably served as a water-source for pyrolithic water-boiling in the number of troughs identified at the site. It is unclear as to what this water was used for however the presence of small quantities of animal bon from the well may indicate that the site was used for cooking. The radiocarbon evidence suggests activity in the Early Bronze Age but the number of pits identified on site suggests it may have had a long period of use.

References

Fig. 10.9 Plan of Well and associated trough and pits at Rathcrouge, Co. Carlow.
<table>
<thead>
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<th>Six inch map no: 12</th>
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**Excavation Details:**

- **Project:** N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme
- **Site Director:** Linda Hegarty
- **Consultants:** Headland Archaeology Ltd.
- **Year:** 2006

**Physical Setting:**
The site was situated at the foot of the eastern side of the railway embankment, in a relatively flat field and at the base of a gentle south facing slope. A stream was located adjacent to the site.

**Cultural Landscape:**
Situated north of the field boundary a multi-period site with a Bronze Age flat cemetery (E2610) was excavated as part of the same road scheme. A second prehistoric site (E2608) was located approximately 70 m to the southwest, on the other side of the railway embankment.

**Adjacent excavated sites:**
Bronze Age flat cemetery

**Pre-Excavation features**
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation. The full extent of the site was not revealed as it lay beyond the limits of the excavation and it also extended under a railway embankment.

**Excavation Record**

**Summary of Features:**
Excavation of the site revealed a small spread of heat-shattered stone and charcoal. Possible Late Medieval activity was evident on site as several sherds of Leinster Cooking Ware were retrieved from an area adjacent to the spread.

**Burnt Spread:**
The spread (C005) measured 6m by 4.6m with a maximum thickness of 0.15m. It consisted of loose, small fragments of heat-shattered sandstone and quartz with charcoal and ash inclusions. The full extent of the spread deposit was not revealed as it continued under the railway embankment. Further spreads of heat-shattered stone were identified 46m from this deposit. These were quite small and disturbed. No finds were recorded from the site and it was not scientifically dated.

**References**

Location: Ballybar Lower
Parish: Clonmelsh
Barony: Carlow
County: Carlow

Excavation Details:
Project: N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme
Site Director: Liam Hackett
Consultants: Headland Archaeology Ltd.
Year: 2006

Physical Setting:
The land slopes gently to the south and west, where a slow moving stream runs along the southern edge of the proposed road-take and joins with another stream, running north. These streams have been artificially managed in modern times to maximize land usage and provide more efficient drainage. The land in this area was amalgamated into one large tillage field.

Cultural Landscape:
A number of sites excavated in the vicinity of this site, as part of the same road scheme development included: E2617, a corn drying kiln, associated pits and postholes and possible ring ditch; Site E2619, a modern lime producing pit; Site E2620, a cremation burial, token cremation burial, associated pits, two corn drying kilns; Site E2621, a cremation burial, token cremation burial, corn drying kiln and associated pits; Site E2622, a cremation cemetery and six corn drying kilns with the site of part of the grandstand of the Ballybar racetrack course.

Adjacent excavated sites:
Iron Age pits and light structures including hearths. A fulachtai fia was also excavated in Area C (CW 11)

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features:
Excavation of the site revealed a large burnt mound at the confluence of two streams, a number of water channels that connected to several pits or troughs and several stake-holes. A large amount of animal bone and other artefacts were also retrieved.

Burnt Mound:
The burnt mound (C003) was situated at the confluence of two streams and underlay a deposit of peat. The mound measured 21m by 10m with a maximum thickness of 0.35m. It consisted of black silty clay, charcoal and small heat-shattered stones. Twenty-one sherds of prehistoric pottery were recovered from the upper layers of the burnt mound.

Trough:
This pit (C004) was sub-rectangular in shape with vertical sides and a flat base. It measured 2.2m by 2m with a depth of 0.43m and was connected to downward sloping channel. It was filled with black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. Four post-holes cut the base of the trough, one in each...
of the corners. The fill of the pit consisted of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone, similar to the mound.

Channel and pit: The trough (C004) was connected to a channel (C296) which led downslope to a length of 1m into another pit (C028). This pit was sub-oval in shape and measured 2.1m by 1.75m with a depth of 0.65m. The basal fill consisted of brown silty clay with charcoal and stone inclusions. It was dated to Middle Bronze Age however this date has been cautioned by Hackett due to the ‘old wood effect’. Animal bone and wood was also recovered from this deposit. The upper fills consisted of black silty clay and heat-shattered stone.

Post-Holes/ Structure: A group of two post-holes were recorded 1.2m north-east of the pit (C004). Two other post-holes were situated to the south east of the trough pit. A post-pipe was also revealed in the area set at a 45 degree angle. The post-pipe (014) was angled directly towards the centre of this set of postholes, possibly to brace the structure that existed there (Hackett 2009, 7).

Channel System: The largest and most complex set of features on this site seemed to use a gravity fed system of channels from an artificial source of water that incorporated a number of pits and the topography of the environment. A curvilinear ditch (C176) skirted the base of a natural rise to the north of the activity. It ran for approximately 30m before running into a number of pits at the base of the slope. The return arm of the ditch began after a 7.5 m gap, and ran for approximately 48 m turning northwards, where it ran outside the road corridor. The maximum width of the ditch was 4.1m with a maximum depth of 0.28m. The ditch split into three channels where it ran into a number of pits. The fill of the channel consisted of light silty clay, small stones and charcoal inclusions.

Pit and Channel: A perpendicular channel (C157) ran from the ditch (C176) into a sub-rectangular pit (C017). The pit measured 1.8m by 2.1m with a depth of 0.84m and was filled with grey silty clay and stone inclusions similar to the channel. Another channel (C297) ran from the south-east corner of the pit in a southerly direction. Three stake-holes were found in association with the channel that were interpreted as the remains of a possible sluice system. These features may represent a type of gravity fed reservoir and water channelled system, with the pit (017) acting as the reservoir tank and the channels regulating the flow of water (Hackett 2009, 8).

Pit 2: This pit (C149) was the most southerly of the group and seems to have been the main focus of the site. The water channel (C297) entered the pit at the northern corner, the only sloping side of the pit. Two stake-holes were revealed on the north-eastern edge of the pit. The pit or trough was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 3.8m by 1.6m with a depth of 0.8m. The main fill, which forms the majority of the basal fill was a dark black silty clay with frequent medium sized stones; some heat affected, unworked timber; brushwood and stray pieces of wood and charcoal. Several artefacts were recovered from this deposit including a chert end-scaper, a wooden shovel blade, a shovel blade fragment, a red deer antler pick, worked animal bone, a leather fragment, worked wood and forty pieces of animal bone. The upper fills of the pit consisted of black silty clays, occasional charcoal and stones. One of these deposits is dated to the Middle to Late Bronze Age.
Pit 3: Pit (C025) was circular in shape and measured 2.4m in diameter with a depth of 0.42m. The basal fill of this feature contained dark silty clay with small stones. This deposit contained several sherds of possible prehistoric pottery.

Pits 4 and 5: To the north of (C025), dug directly into the ditch, were two pits: to the west was a sub-circular pit (C178) and to the east was pit (C181). There was no indication of these pits being cut through the ditch (176), instead it seems that they were in use contemporaneously and may have acted as pools or small reservoirs to gather water (Hackett 2009, 10). C178 measured 0.93m by 1.35m with a depth of 0.11m and was filled with brown sandy silt and small stones. C181 was sub-circular in shape and measured 1.74m by 2.06m with a depth of 0.16m. It was also filled with brown silty sand and small stones.

Pit 6: This pit (C161) was revealed 1m north of pit (C025). It was sub-circular in shape and measured 1.6m by 1.35m with a depth of 0.56m. The ditch (176) also respects this pit, narrowing to 0.30 m to accommodate the northern edge. It was also filled with brown silty sand and small stones.

Pit 7: Located 0.3m from the terminus of the ditch (C176) was a sub-circular pit (C186). It measured 1.36m by 1.83m with a depth of 0.17m. It was filled with a grey brown silty sand and occasional small stones.

Finds:

Artefacts: Chert tools, possible wooden shovel and fragment (alder), worked wood and bone, leather fragment and antler pick were recovered from pit (C149). Prehistoric pottery was found in the burnt mound and from the fill of the pit (C025). Several lithics were also recovered from the ditch (C176).

Ecofacts: A large amount of animal bone was recovered from the pit (C149). This included cattle, deer and pig bones.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (hazel) from the fill of the pit (C149)
C14 (UB-8807) 2857±23 BP (1117–935 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

Excavation of the site revealed a series of interconnected pits fed by large water-channel. The layout of these features would suggest contemporaneous usage, with some of the features respecting, connected to and in some cases changing direction or orientation, to accommodate a neighbouring feature. There is also the slightly unique construction of a series of interconnected pits, which may have used gravity-fed water, channelled from elsewhere in a retention-type reservoir with a possible sluice channel to allow water down slope and fill other pits, feeding directly back into the stream to the south. This elaborate system of pits and channels, coupled with the artefacts retrieved from the excavation would suggest that this is not a typical burnt mound.

References

Fig. 10.10 Plan of water-channels and pits/troughs at Ballybar, Co. Carlow.
Location: Townland: Ballybar Lower  Six inch map no: 12
Parish: Clonmelsh  NGR: 272265, 171013
Barony: Carlow  Altitude: 55 m OD
County: Carlow

Excavation Details: Project: N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme
Site Director: Liam Hackett
Consultants: Headland Archaeology Ltd.
Year: 2006

Physical Setting: This area was located to the south and east of the excavation area, against the bank of the stream flowing along the south-eastern part of the site.

Cultural Landscape: A number of sites excavated in the vicinity of this site, as part of the same road scheme development included: E2617, a corn drying kiln, associated pits and postholes and possible ring ditch; Site E2619, a modern lime producing pit; Site E2620, a cremation burial, token cremation burial, associated pits, two corn drying kilns; Site E2621, a cremation burial, token cremation burial, corn drying kiln and associated pits; Site E2622, a cremation cemetery and six corn drying kilns with the site of part of the grandstand of the Ballybar racetrack course.

Adjacent excavated sites: An extensive series of water channels and pits were revealed in Area A (CW 10). A number of Iron Age, pits, stake-holes and hearths were revealed in Area B

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a burnt mound or spread, several pits, some of which may have functioned as troughs and a number of stake-holes.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound (C103) was irregular in shape and measured 18m by 15m with a maximum thickness of 0.15m. It consisted of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 1: This pit (C133) was revealed centrally under the burnt spread. It was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 5m by 3m with a depth of 1.05m. It had steeply sloping sides and an uneven base where three depressions were recorded, interpreted as possible stone sockets. The basal fill consisted of black silty clay with charcoal and heat-shattered stone. A worked deer metatarsal, interpreted as a weaving shuttle was recovered from this deposit.

Pit 2: This pit (C148) was located within the pit C133 on a slight rise where it truncated pit C143. It was sub-oval in shape and measured 0.7m by 1m with a depth of 0.16m. Medium sized stones were placed along each east/west
edge, forming an enclosed trough type feature. It was filled by (147), a loosely compacted black silty clay with very frequent charcoal pieces and chunks throughout, and occasional pieces of wood and small stones. Several pieces of animal bone were recovered from the fill of this pit.

Pit 3: This pit (C143) was truncated by the pit C133 on the south-east. It was sub-oval in shape and measured 1m by 1m with a depth of 0.5m. The main fill of the pit consisted of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. Cattle bone was recovered from this deposit.

Trough: A sub-rectangular pit or trough (C107) was truncated by (C143) on the eastern corner. It measured 1.5m by 1m with a depth of 0.25m. Three stakes cut the base of the pit in the three surviving corners suggesting that the pit was originally lined. The pit was filled with black silty clay, charcoal and small stones. Flint and quartz debitage was recovered from this deposit along with fragments of animal bone.

Stake-Holes: A series of six-stake holes were revealed on the northern sides of pits C143 and C107. A further four stake-holes were identified to the western edge of the pit C133. To the south-west of pit C133 were a series of seven stake-holes. None of these stake-holes formed any structural plan.

Pit 4: Pit (C137) was sub-oval in shape and measured 0.26m by 0.26m with a depth of 0.27m. It was filled with black silty clay, charcoal and wood inclusions. A series of six stake-holes, arranged in a linear pattern ran north-east/south-west across the location of the pit.

Pits 5 and 6: The pit (C112) and (C114) were revealed north-east of the central activity. C112 was irregular in shape and measured 0.2m by 0.27m with a depth of 0.25m. It was filled with black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. Pit (C114) was revealed 8m to the east of the previous pit and was sub-circular in shape. It measured 0.8m by 0.8m with a depth of 0.13m. It was filled with black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. One piece of burnt flint debitage was recovered from this deposit.

Pit 7: This pit (C117) was sub-circular in shape and measured 0.6m by 0.68m with a depth of 0.2m. It was filled with black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Finds:

Artefacts: A worked deer metatarsal was recovered from the pit C133. It was interpreted as a weaving shuttle.

Ecofacts: Several pieces of animal bone were recovered from the fill of the pit (C148). Cattle bone was also recovered from the pit (C143)

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: None

Excavation Interpretation
This large burnt mound had at least three definite phases of pit/trough related activity, with specific truncations of earlier features by later developments. The repeated exploitation of an obviously targeted area would suggest a continued use by the same community or group of people. The first phase of activity centred on the small trough, with three surviving postholes in the remaining portion of the trough. This trough type is well known in many examples of burnt mound excavation. This was truncated by (143) which may be associated with the stake-holes found on the northern edge. This pit, in turn, was truncated by the largest pit in the area (133), which was the final phase of activity on site. The heavily disturbed mound deposits, are indicative of the truncations of earlier phases and it is possible that earlier features were totally lost during this later activity. The final and third phase (133) was also a large, sub-rectangular cut, with a possible stone lined trough in its base. This feature is ambiguous, as it is not watertight, nor did it show any traces of oxidisation. It may have been constructed to avail of the prevailing water table at the time of use.

References


![Fig. 10.11 Plan of trough and pit feature at Ballybar Lower, Co. Carlow.](image)
Location: 

Townland: Cranavonane

Parish: Tullowcreen

Barony: Carlow

County: Carlow

Six inch map no: 12

NGR: 268554, 167895

Altitude: 52 m OD

Excavation Details:

Project: N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme

Site Director: Tim Coughlan

Consultants: Irish Archaeological Consultancy Ltd.

Year: 2006

Physical Setting:

The site was situated on flat marshy poorly drained pasture land, with a stream located on its eastern and north-eastern edges. The surrounding fields are being used for pasture and are gently rolling, although the immediate terrain is quite level.

Cultural Landscape:

There was one recorded monument in the immediate vicinity of Cranavonane 1 – an enclosure site (CW012-083) is recorded immediately to the west of the site. An earthwork (CW012-039) is recorded 400m to the east and further to the east a ring barrow (CW012-043) is recorded 1.15km away. To the south-east a possible enclosure site (CW012-041) is recorded 700m away and a mound site (CW012-042) is recorded a further 150m to the south-east. An earthwork site (CW012-061) is located 700m to the south. A fulachtai fia site (CW011-011) is recorded 850m to the south-west and also to the south-west an enclosure site (CW011-010) is recorded 1.1km away. An enclosure (CW011-018) is also recorded 450m to the north-west.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

**Pre-Excavation features**

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

**Excavation Record**

**Summary of Features:** Excavation of the site revealed a spread of heat-shattered stone and single rectangular trough.

**Burnt Mound:** The burnt mound (C2) measured 7.5m by 4.6m with a maximum thickness of 0.39m. It consisted of five deposits of grey silty clay containing heat-shattered sandstone. Hazel charcoal from this material is dated to the Middle to Late Bronze Age.

**Trough:** The trough (C6) was revealed under the burnt mound material. It was rectangular in shape and measured 4.4m by 3m with a depth of 0.48m. Two fills were noted in the pit consisting of black charcoal-rich material and heat-shattered stone.
Excavation Interpretation

The excavation at Cranavonane 1 has produced evidence of burnt mound related activity that has been dated to the Bronze Age. There was no evidence for lining within the trough which is quite large in comparison to many other excavated examples. The mound material was also quite substantial suggesting that the site was potentially used more than once. The dearth of other significant archaeological features suggests that the main activity at the site was solely focussed on heating the water in the trough. There is no evidence from Cranavonane 1 as to what the heated water was subsequently used for. A small pit, to the south-west of the burnt spread, had no clear association with the burnt mound activity and its precise function is unknown.

References


Fig. 10.12 Plan of excavated trough and spread at Cranavanone, Co. Carlow
Physical Setting: This site was situated in a wet, boggy, flat field with a small stream, a tributary of the River Barrow, located c. 60m to the south of the site.

Cultural Landscape: Moanmore 3 is located c. 400m to the south-west and Moanduff 1 is located c. 1.2km to the north-east. There is a moated site (CW015-004) located c. 600m to the east and a fulachtai fia (CW015-007) c. 350m SSW.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

**Pre-Excavation features**

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

**Excavation Record**

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a spread of heat-shattered stone, a number of troughs, several pits and post-holes.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound (C2) measured 18m by 10m with a maximum thickness of 0.26m. It was composed of a number of deposits of heat-shattered stone and charcoal and extended beyond the limits of excavation. Two quartzite rubbing stones were recovered from the mound.

Trough 1: The trough (C13) was oval in shape and measured 1.25m by 1.1m with a depth of 0.29m. It was filled with burnt clay, heat-shattered stone and charcoal. A series of stake-holes cut the outer edge of the trough. Charcoal from the fill of the pit is dated to the Middle Bronze Age.

Trough 2: This trough (C14) was irregular in shape and measured 3.48m by 1.35m with a depth of 0.4m. It had straight sides and was filled with dark brown silty clay and heat-shattered stone.

Trough 3: Trough (C39) was oval in shape and measured 2.37m by 1.5m with a depth of 0.27m. It was filled with burnt clay, heat-shattered stone and charcoal. A single animal bone fragment was recovered from this fill.

Trough 4: Trough (C45) was rectangular in shape and measured 1.76m by 0.9m with a depth of 0.25m. It was filled with black silty sand, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.
Pits 1-6: Six pits, C23, C31, C34, and C40–C42, were associated with the burnt mound activity. All pits were either circular or oval with varied orientations and filled with material identical to the mound material. Pit C23 extended beyond the southern limits of the excavation and was cut to the north-east by the modern ditch C15.

Post-Holes: C32 and C46 were postholes associated with three of the pits C31, C34 and C41, located at the south-eastern side of the excavation. It is possible that in conjunction with the pits they formed some type of temporary structure but their precise function is unknown.

Finds:

Artefacts: Two quartzit rubbing stones were recovered from the burnt mound. A chert scraper and a hone stone were recovered from two modern agricultural features.

Ecofacts: A single animal bone fragment was recovered from the fill of trough 3 (C39).

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (cherry) from the fill of trough 1 (C13) C14 (UBA-12244) 3313±28 BP (1679–1519 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

The excavation at Bannagagole has produced evidence of burnt mound related activity that has been dated to the Bronze Age. The site produced two pits that have been interpreted as troughs that would have functioned for heating water. While it has been outlined that the surrounding area was marginal and wet, the presence of two larger pits may suggest that the precise location of the site may have been slightly drier. It is interpreted that these larger pits may have been for water storage rather than as troughs for heating water. The size of these pits would have required a considerable amount of heated stones to heat water contained within them. While only one feature was radiocarbon dated from the site it seems likely that there were at least two phases of occupation of the site. This is supported by the presence of at least two and possibly four troughs. The deposits of overlying burnt mound deposits are also in two separate locations, again suggesting that there were at least two phases of activity.

References

Catalogue No. CW 14
RMP No. NA
Licence No. E3839

Location: Townland: Moanduff Six inch map no: 15
Parish: Old Leighlin NGR: 267261, 164397
Barony: Carlow Altitude: 56m OD
County: Carlow

Excavation Details: Project: N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme
Site Director: R. Lynch
Consultants: Irish Archaeological Consultancy Ltd.
Year: 2008

Physical Setting: The site was situated on well drained, flat pastureland. The surrounding landscape is also pastureland and there are general views of the countryside in all directions. There is a stream that runs through the site in an east-west direction, this follows the modern field boundary and may have been created for the purpose of drainage.

Cultural Landscape: Moanduff 2, which was located c. 450m to the NNE of Moanduff 1, was not visible from the latter site. Moanduff 3 was located c. 600m to the NNE and Bannagagole 1 was located c. 900m to the SSW. A recorded enclosure (CW015-003) is located c. 350m to the east.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a spread of heat-shattered stone that sealed a number of troughs and pits. The site was later enclosed by a stake fence in the Iron Age for further unrelated activity. Medieval activity was also recorded outside the burnt mound area.

Burnt Mound: The main burnt mound deposit, C13, consisted of charcoal-rich silty sand and heat-shattered stones, and sealed many of the features on site. It measured 35m by 18m and was o. 35m in thickness. The full extent of the site was not revealed during excavation and it was badly truncated by later agricultural features. Ash, alder and willow charcoal was recovered from the mound material and the stone was identified as sandstone.

Trough 1: The trough (C4) was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 3.4m by 2.3m with a depth of 0.45m. It was filled with burnt clay, heat-shattered stone and charcoal. Burnt bone was recovered from this deposit. Four stake-holes
were located in an alignment along the western and northern edge of the trough. Charcoal from the trough is dated to the Early Bronze Age.

**Pit 1:**

Pit C179 was situated to the west of trough C4. It was oval and measured 1.1m by 0.35m with a depth of 0.5m. It extended beyond the excavation area and its full extent is therefore not known. Two stake-holes were identified on the eastern edge of the pit. Given the presence of stake-holes around the trough C4, perhaps C179 also functioned as a trough.

**Pit 2:**

Pit C186 was a large sub-oval, shallow pit located immediately to the east of Trough C4. It measured 2.5m by 2.3m with a depth of 0.31m. On the basis of its dimensions and depth it may have functioned as a trough.

**Pits 3-4:**

These two pits, C8 and C187 were located to the east of Trough C4 and Pit C186. Pit C8 was oval in plan with concave sides and a flat base (2.6m by 1.9m by 0.21m) while pit C187 was sub-circular with gradual sloping sides and a flat base. It measured 0.46 by 0.44m with a depth of 0.15m. Their association with the burnt mound, if any, is unclear.

**Hearth:**

Hearth C109 was located to the north-east of trough C4, approximately 17.5m away. It had oxidised edges and a charcoal-rich fill. It was sealed by the overlying mound deposit and as such may be associated.

**Linear Channel:**

The channel (C136), was located to the south-west of the hearth and given its location, near the field boundary/stream which divided the site, it is possible that it diverted water into a natural stream/channel. Its fill consisted of a relatively sterile clay which suggests it had been in-filled or had silted up prior to the levelling of the burnt mound deposit which sealed it.

**Pallisade:**

A later Iron Age palisade encircled the burnt mound. Although some of the palisade was sealed by the early Bronze Age burnt mound deposit it is felt likely that this is as a result of disturbance to the burnt mound associated with post-medieval or modern agriculture. The location of the mound in prehistory would have probably been confined within the limits of the palisade, and it is possible that the existence of a low mound may have been the attraction for the location of a later enclosing palisade. Some undated pit features lay within this structure and may be contemporary.

**Medieval activity:**

Two pits were identified to the east of the burnt mound. One of these pits contained an Early Bronze Age arrowhead, charcoal from which was dated to the early medieval period. This dated sample may be misleading. A pit and another hearth were also revealed in this area, charcoal from which is dated to the later medieval period.

**Finds:**

**Artefacts:**

Chert flake and barbed and tanged arrowhead from external pit

**Ecofacts:**

Burnt and unburnt animal bone identified as cattle was retrieved from the site
Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating:
- Charcoal (ash) from the fill of trough 1 (C4) 3874±23 BP (2464–2287 BC)
- Charcoal (hazel) from post-hole (palisade) 1762±22 BP (AD 215–376)
- Charcoal (Pomoidae) from the fill of pit (C148) 432±19 BP (AD 1432–1472)
- Charcoal (alder) from the fill of pit (C78) 1334±22 BP (AD 650–765)

Excavation Interpretation

The early Bronze Age activity on this site was typical of that generally found on burnt mound sites. Features such as the sub-rectangular trough with associated pits and a possible hearth are all commonly found on these sites. As with most burnt mound sites, the purpose of the smaller pits is unknown. It seems probable that the trough was filled with water which was heated by hot stones taken from the nearby hearth. Four small stake-holes represent possible evidence of a small fence or temporary structure associated with the trough, but there was no evidence of posts or stakes at the base of the trough indicating that it was unlikely to have been timber lined.

The dating of a second phase of burnt mound activity to the medieval period was not expected. It is possible that this burnt mound site did not utilise the water from the stream and may represent a large roasting pit, given the absence of a substantial overlying burnt mound deposit. It would possibly be expected that the base and sides of the trough would have been scorched if used as an oven roasting pit. That being said, the feature may not be associated with the use of pyrolithic technology. It must also be considered that the charred fuel debris associated with burnt mound activity would have become distributed across the site to enter open features or become mixed with sealing deposits and infills.

References

Fig. 10.13. Pre-excavation plan of features at Moanduff, Co. Carlow
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Location:</strong></th>
<th><strong>Townland:</strong> Moanmore</th>
<th><strong>Six inch map no:</strong> 15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parish:</strong></td>
<td>Old Leighlin</td>
<td><strong>NGR:</strong> 266476, 162016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Barony:</strong></td>
<td>Carlow</td>
<td><strong>Altitude:</strong> 59m OD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>County:</strong></td>
<td>Carlow</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Excavation Details:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Project:</strong> N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme</td>
<td><strong>Site Director:</strong> R. Jennings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Consultants:</strong> Irish Archaeological Consultancy Ltd.</td>
<td><strong>Year:</strong> 2008</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Physical Setting:**
The site was situated on well drained, flat pastureland. The surrounding landscape is also pastureland and there are general views of the countryside in all directions. There was a dried up stream course running along the field boundary approximately 30m to the south.

**Cultural Landscape:**
Shankill 6 was situated c. 150m beyond this to the south. Moanmore 2 was located c. 1.1km to the north. Directly to the west there were some modern farm buildings and outhouses. Three further fulachtai fia have been recorded nearby, (CW015-014) c. 400m to the north, (CW015-008) c. 1km to the north and KK016-003 c. 1km to the south-west.

**Adjacent excavated sites:** None

**Pre-Excavation features**
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

**Excavation Record**

**Summary of Features:** Excavation of the site revealed a burnt mound, an ancient palaeochannel, several troughs and a cluster of stake-holes.

**Burnt Mound:**
The main concentration of heat-shattered stones, charcoal and silts which formed the mound extended over a total area of 18m by 10m. Some of the waste material ended up in the stream and the remainder rested over the working area of the site. Five contexts of burnt mound material were identified.

**Trough 1:**
This small sub-rectangular trough (C188) was situated at the bend of the stream and north-east of Trough 2. It had steep to vertical sides and a flat base. It measured 1.9m by 1.3m with a depth of 0.3m. The basal fill of the trough, C187, consisted of a thin dark clayey silt deposit rich in charcoal and organic material and could have formed the charred remains of the internal lining. This was sealed by the main fill of the trough, C186, comprising typical burnt mound waste.
Pit 1: Pit C148 was located to the south of Trough 1 and was probably associated. It was almost circular in shape with steep to vertical sides and a generally flat base. It measured 0.85m by 0.54m with a depth of 0.21m. The fill consisted of burnt mound material, a sample of which is dated to the Middle to Late Bronze Age.

Trough 2: Trough 2 was the largest and deepest of the troughs identified on the site. Its cut (C32) was oval with concave to steep sides and a flat base. It measured 2.3m by 2.05 with a depth of 0.56m. A series of post/stakeholes were identified at the base of the trough in each corner and these most likely supported a timber lining, although no remains of any lining were recorded. This trough was particularly close to the stream and the presence of heat-shattered stones within the stream suggests that the waste material from the trough was discarded directly into the stream. Further waste material was also found to the east and to the south of the trough. The primary fill of the trough contained a relatively high proportion of charcoal and a significantly lower percentage of heat-shattered stones and may therefore represent the charred remains of the internal lining, the presence of which was attested to by the stakeholes in the trough’s corners. A sample of charcoal from the trough is dated to the Late Bronze Age.

Hearth: A possible hearth was identified immediately adjacent to the trough. No cut was evident to confirm that the burning was a formal hearth, but it clearly represents an area of in situ burning. The proximity of the deposit and Trough 2 suggested that perhaps it was associated with heating the stones for that trough.

Stake-holes: A large cluster of 105 postholes and stakeholes was identified in the area to the east of Trough 2 and south of Trough 1. These formed two distinct groups, one to the east and one to the west. The number of postholes and the density of their distribution means that no meaningful pattern can be identified in their arrangement and it must be assumed that they represent repeated activity rather than one phase or one particular structure.

Trough 3: Rectangular, north–south orientated Trough 3 (C23) was located on the north side of the stream. Its sides varied from steep to vertical with the steepest side being that nearest the stream. Its base was flat (Plate 2). Eight post/stakeholes were associated with the trough. Five were found within the trough and three on its exterior. The fill contained burnt mound material.
Excavation Interpretation

The activity was located at the site of a former stream or paleo-channel. The stream may represent an earlier channel of a small tributary of the Barrow that flows to the south of the site. The burnt mound activity was located at the bend in this watercourse. The majority of the activity was focussed on the south-west side of the stream and two separate troughs and a pit were located here. Trough 1 was roughly oval in plan, although a shallow extension of the cut to the west may have created a step, possibly for accessing the trough. A small circular pit was located to the south of Trough 1. Its function is unclear. To the west of Trough 1 and the pit was Trough 2. This was slightly larger than Trough 1 and had a post/stakehole in each corner. This was evidence that the trough was probably originally lined, most likely by timber planks that were held in position by the corner posts. Radiocarbon dating of the pit and Trough 2 indicates that the activity on the southwest of the stream bend is contemporary and dated to the mid-late Bronze Age.

Between Troughs 1 and 2 were four separate sets of post and stakeholes that appeared to make up the four corners of a roughly north south aligned square. The post/stakeholes in the two western groups were generally larger than those in the eastern groups. The concentration of postholes and stakeholes would suggest that one or more structures, associated with burnt mound activity, existed to the east of Trough 2.

References

Location: Townland: Moanmore  Six inch map no: 15
Parish: Old Leighlin  NGR: 266856, 163259
Barony: Carlow  Altitude: 59m OD
County: Carlow
Excavation Details: Project: N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme
Site Director: Sinéad Phelan
Consultants: Irish Archaeological Consultancy Ltd.
Year: 2008
Physical Setting: The site was located in a wet, flat field in pasture in the townland of Moanmore. A small stream, a tributary of the River Barrow, was situated c. 400m north of the site.
Cultural Landscape: Moanmore 2 was located c. 500m to the south-west and Bannagagole 1 was located c. 400m to the NNE. A fulachtai fiaís recorded c. 200m to the east (CW015-007).
Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a small burnt mound and a single trough which displayed evidence to suggest it may have originally timber-lined.
Burnt Mound: The burnt mound material (C3) consisted of charcoal, burnt clay and heat-shattered sandstone, with a maximum depth of 0.4m and was truncated by modern land drains. It measured 13m by 11m and charcoal was identified as oak, alder, ash and hazel. A sample of ash is dated to the Early Bronze Age.
Trough: The trough (C5) was oval in shape and measured 1.4m by 1.08m with a depth of 0.34m. A single stake-hole cut the base of the trough which may indicate that it was originally timber-lined, however this cannot be proven. The trough contained two fills, the lower of which contained dark brown silt, stones and pebbles. The upper fill contained heat-shattered stones and grey silt. Charcoal from the fill is dated to the Early Bronze Age.
Finds:
Artefacts: None
Ecofacts: None
Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating:
- Charcoal (ash) from the fill of trough (C5)
  C14 (UBA-12243) 3834±21 BP (2433–2201 BC)
- Charcoal (ash) from the burnt mound (C3)
  C14 (UBA-12242) 3957±20 BP (2577–2299 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

The excavation identified the remains of a burnt mound. A sub-oval trough was identified beneath the mound material. The trough was unlined and one stakehole was identified at the base, the function of which is unknown. The overlying mound deposit had been heavily disturbed and was truncated by a series of modern field drains. Two contemporary radiocarbon dates were returned from the site, one from the trough fill and one from the overlying mound material. While the 2 sigma date from the mound deposit indicates a possible late Neolithic date, the overlap between the two sets of dates is the likely date of the site - 2433–2291BC, placing the site in the early Bronze Age. The presence of other burnt mounds in the immediate area confirms that it is an area that was attractive for this type of activity throughout the Bronze Age.

References


Fig. 10.15 Trough and burnt spread at Moanmore 3, Co. Carlow.
Excavation Details: Project: N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme
Site Director: Ellen O'Carroll
Consultants: Irish Archaeological Consultancy Ltd.
Year: 2008

Physical Setting: The site was situated in undulating pasture land with a stream located, to the south, along a field boundary.

Cultural Landscape: There is an earthwork (CW012-039) located c. 800m to the south-west and there is a holy well (CW012-067) located c. 650m to the north-west.

Adjacent excavated sites: Possible Chalcolithic camp site excavated 70m from burnt mound.

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed an early Bronze Age burnt mound with an associated trough and pits, located c. 15m to the north-east of the pit cluster.

Burnt Mound: The burnt spread (C3) was heavily truncated and only sealed one post-hole. It measured 12m by 4m with a maximum thickness of 0.2m. It consisted of black, charcoal-enriched sandy silt with heat-shattered stone.

Trough 1: The trough (C4) was sub-oval in shape and measured 2.18m by 1.64m with a depth of 0.55m. 15 stake-holes cut the base of the trough and were positioned along the edges indicated the pit was once lined, possible with wattle. The primary fill of the trough contained heat-shattered stone and charcoal. A fragment of ash is dated to the Early Bronze Age.

Trough 2: Trough (C15) was oval in shape and measured 1.4m by 1.2m with a depth of 0.3m. Two stake-holes cut the base of the pit however it is unclear if these are related to an organic lining.

Pits: Pits C33 and C82 located north and west of trough C4, respectively, were medium sized pits and contained burnt mound material. Postholes C67 and C80 situated west and south-west of trough C4, respectively, had no clear
function, given their isolated positions. Gully C10 was possibly associated, and was located south-west of the main trough C4, and appeared heavily truncated. It was possibly associated with the burnt mound activity in this area, and acted as a water conduit for drainage, running southwards.

Finds:

Artefacts: None
Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None
Absolute dating: Charcoal (ash) from the fill of trough (C4) C14 (UBA-13131) 3673±23 BP (2137–1977 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

The site produced evidence of a number of unrelated phases of prehistoric activity. The earliest phase consisted of a single isolated pit dating to the late Neolithic/early Bronze Age. At a distance of 17-27m to the east were two further pits one of which was dated to the early Bronze Age and the other was undated. The relationship, if any, between these two pits is not known. In the southwest of the site a cluster of 5 pits was identified. These may represent a temporary structure or waste pits from a temporary campsite. They were dated to the early Bronze Age and while broadly contemporary with the two other early Bronze Age pits a direct relationship is unlikely as they are approximately 70m away. The final archaeological phase on the site consisted of an early Bronze Age burnt mound with an associated trough and pits. The trough was probably originally lined as a number of stakeholes were evident around the perimeter of its base. While dated to the early Bronze Age, the burnt mound is the latest phase of occupation on the site and is not contemporary with any of the other pit activity on the site.

References

Location: Townland: Cloughballybeg  Six inch map no: 40
Parish: Knock  NGR: 266440, 285380
Barony: Costellow  Altitude: 90m OD
County: Cavan

Excavation Details: Project: Northeastern Pipeline
Site Director: Margaret Gowen
Consultants: Margaret Gowen and Company Ltd
Year: 1992

Physical Setting: This site was identified at the edge of an area of deep peat.

Cultural Landscape: A recorded burnt mound site is located c. 50m to the south-east (CV040-057) while a holy well is situated c. 150m to the north-west (CV040-002).

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the Northeastern Gas Pipeline. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation and it extended beyond the pipeline wayleave.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Monitoring of topsoil removal on the Northeastern Pipeline (Phase 3) revealed a small fulacht fia, lying at the summit of a NE-facing slope towards Mullagh Lough. It had maximum dimensions of 8m x 8m with a centrally placed, stone-lined pit measuring 1.8m by 1m by 0.55m. The burnt mound material had a maximum depth of 0.2m around the trough. There were no other finds or related features.

References

Catalogue No.  CN 02
RMP No. NA
Licence No. 98E164

Location: Townland: Derrygarra Upper  Six inch map no: NA
Parish: Castleterra  NGR: 240986, 309765
Barony: Upper Loughtee  Altitude: 54m OD
County: Cavan

Excavation Details: Project: Cavan Bypass
Site Director: Deirdre Murphy
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd
Year: 1998

Physical Setting: This site was located on the eastern flank of a drumlin on the edge of bogland.

Cultural Landscape: Prehistoric activity in the area is represented by the presence of a standing stone in the neighbouring townland of Tullybuck and an unclassified megalithic tomb at Drummany, where further fulachtai fia were excavated.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the Cavan Bypass. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation and it extended beyond the road corridor.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a burnt spread of heat-shattered stone, four pits, a linear feature and a setting of stones.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound (F2) spread over an area measuring 13.8m by 6.3m reaching a maximum depth of 0.82m. It extended beyond the limits of excavation, therefore the full extent of the site was not revealed. The deposit consisted of heat-shattered sandstone in a matrix of charcoal and loose black gritty clay.

Linear Feature: This cut (F6) ran in an east-west direction across the site and had an exposed length of 4m with a maximum width of 1.9m. It ranged from V to U shaped in profile and had a maximum depth of 0.71m. Two fills were noted in the feature which consisted of brown silty clay and an upper deposit of black sandy peat.

Stone Setting: A semi-circular arrangement of stones was located at the east-end of the linear feature. It consisted of four large limestone slabs, three of which were upright. The base of the feature is lined with five slabs and the overall setting measured 0.89m by 0.49m.
Pit 1: This pit (F17) was circular in shape and measured 0.24m with a depth of 0.2m. It was filled with loose peaty soil with frequent stones.

Pit 2: This pit (F15) was sub-rectangular in shape with vertical sides and a flat base. It measured 0.16m by 0.20m with a depth of 0.17m. It was filled with loose peaty soil.

Pit 3: This pit (F12) was sub-circular in shape with vertical sides and a flat base. The north and south sides were lined with stones. It measured 0.5m by 0.58m with a maximum depth 0.42m. It was filled with dark brown peaty soil.

Pit 4: Pit (F13) was key-hole shaped with vertical sides and a flat base. It varied in width from 0.2m to 0.75m and had a depth of 0.42m. It was filled with dark brown peaty soil.

Finds:

   Artefacts: None

   Ecofacts: None

Dating:

   Relative dating: None

   Absolute dating: Charcoal (Unknown) from the mound material F2 C14 (GrN- Unknown) 3656±46 BP (2134–1972 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

The excavation revealed a substantial burnt mound that sealed a number of cut features too small to have functioned as troughs. As the full extent of the site was not determined during excavation, it is possible that further features, such as more well-defined troughs may lie outside the road corridor. The identified pits may have functioned as small roasting ovens. The stone setting may have had a similar function.

References

Excavation Details:  Project: Cavan Bypass  Site Director: Deirdre Murphy  Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd  Year: 1998

Physical Setting: This site was located on a slight slope close to a stream.

Cultural Landscape: Prehistoric activity in the area is represented by the presence of further burnt mounds excavated along the routeway within 1.5km of the site.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the Cavan Bypass. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation and it extended beyond the road corridor.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a much denuded and disturbed burnt mound. No cut features were identified. This spread (F101) was revealed in an area measuring 0.5m by 2.3m and consisted of heat-shattered sandstone in a matrix of charcoal and dark silty soil. No artefacts or animal bone was recovered. The spread had a maximum thickness of 0.28m. As the full extent of the site was not revealed it is possible it may be part of a larger site.

Finds: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (Unknown) from the mound material F101  C14 (QUB- Unknown) 2702±47 BP (906–814 BC)

References

Location:  Townland: Drumbo  Six inch map no: 20
Parish:  Annagh  NGR: 243042, 307909
Barony: Upper Loughtee  Altitude: 55m OD
County:  Cavan

Excavation Details:
Project:  Cavan Bypass
Site Director:  Deirdre Murphy
Consultants:  Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd
Year:  1998

Physical Setting: This site was located on a slight slope close to a stream.

Cultural Landscape: Prehistoric activity in the area is represented by the presence of further burnt mounds excavated along the routeway within 1.5km of the site.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the Cavan Bypass. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation and it extended beyond the road corridor.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a disturbed burnt mound and a trough pit which was plank-lined. An area of burning was also uncovered, interpreted as a hearth.

Burnt Mound: The burnt spread (F303) was roughly oval in shape and measured 8.88m by 5.6m with a maximum thickness of 0.17m. It consisted of heat-shattered sandstone in a matrix of charcoal and loose sandy clay. The excavator notes that the top of the deposit was disturbed, probably as a result of ploughing damage.

Trough: The trough (F302) was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 1.28m by 0.65m with a depth of 0.32m. The base of the trough was lined with three planks which were overlying each other as a result of agricultural damage (ibid, 8). The pit was filled with a deposit of burnt mound material.

Hearth: F301 was a sub-circular area of in situ burning which was revealed to the west. It was a circular compact area of black, charcoal-rich sandy clay with frequent heat-shattered stone that had been burnt in situ. It measured 2m by 2.2m.
Finds:

Artefacts: None
Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None
Absolute dating: Wood from the trough lining F302 Dendro (QUB-9748) (959 BC ± 9)

Excavation Interpretation

Excavation of the site revealed a substantial deposit of waste-firing material associated with pyrolithic water-boiling. The presence of a timber-lined trough would confirm this suggestion along with the identification of a formal hearth for heating stones. A rare denrochronological date indicates the site was in use during the Late bronze Age and can be compared with similar sites across the country.

References


Fig. 10.16 Remains of burnt spread and timber-trough at Drumbo 2, Co. Cavan.
Excavation Details:  
Project: Cavan Bypass  
Site Director: Deirdre Murphy  
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd  
Year: 1998  

Physical Setting:  
This site was located on a slight slope and was revealed during the removal of a field boundary.

Cultural Landscape:  
Prehistoric activity in the area is represented by the presence of further burnt mounds excavated along the routeway within 1.5km of the site.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features  
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the Cavan Bypass. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation and was revealed during the removal of a field boundary.

Excavation Record  
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed two deposits of burnt mound material and a trough pit with internal post-holes suggestive of a timber lining.

Burnt Mound: Two phases of burnt mound activity were revealed during excavated of the mound which consisted of heat-shattered sandstone. F211 measured 11m by 11.4m with a thickness of 0.3m and was irregular in shape. It consisted of heat-shattered stone in a matrix of charcoal and black silty clay. The second deposit (F208) was mostly removed by machine prior to investigation but was noted in section during excavation, measuring 4.8m. It was later than deposit F211 (Murphy 1998, 11). The mound was disturbed by later field drains.

Trough: The trough (F205) was sub-rectangular in shape with vertical sides and a flat base. It measured 1.4m by 2.05m with a depth of 0.33m and contained four post-holes cut into the base, one in each of the corners. Two of these post-holes contained surviving in situ stakes. Murphy notes the presence of a sticky grey clay lining the base and vertical sides of the trough and had the appearance of being pressed against the walls (ibid, 11). The fill of the trough consisted of heat-shattered stone, charcoal and sticky silty clay.
Finds:

Artefacts: None
Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (Unknown) from the mound material (F208)
C14 (QUB-Unknown) 2865±65 BP (1154–932 BC)
Wood (Unknown) stake from trough (F205)
C14 (QUB-Unknown) 2921±40 BP (1262–1007 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

Excavation revealed a spread of burnt mound material disturbed by a later filed boundary and drain. The deposit overlay a well-defined rectangular trough with a stake-hole in each of the four corners suggesting it was originally plank-lined. These stakes functioned as supports for the side planks and is a form particular common during the Late Bronze Age. The radiocarbon evidence from the site confirms this.

References


Fig. 10.17 Burnt spread and rectangular trough at Drumcalpin, Co. Cavan.
Location: Townland: Drummany Six inch map no: 77
Parish: Castleterra NGR: 240696, 310632
Barony: Upper Loughtee Altitude: 51m OD
County: Cavan

Excavation Details: Project: Cavan Bypass
Site Director: Deirdre Murphy
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd
Year: 1998

Physical Setting: This site was located on the western edge of a marshy area.

Cultural Landscape: Prehistoric activity in the area is represented by the presence of a standing stone in the neighbouring townland of Tullybuck and an unclassified megalithic tomb at Drummany. The site was also within 1km of the excavated site at Derrygarra Upper.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the Cavan Bypass. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation and was revealed during the removal of a field boundary.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed two deposits of burnt mound material and an unlined trough pit.

Burnt Mound: Two phases of burnt mound activity were revealed during excavated of the mound which consisted of heat-shattered sandstone. F500 measured 8.1m by 5.8m with a thickness of 0.35m and was irregular in shape. It consisted of heat-shattered sandstone in a matrix of charcoal and black silty clay. The spread was heavily disturbed by root activity and the full extent was not revealed. The second deposit (F502) consisted of similar material however the heat-affected stone was much larger than the earlier spread. It measured 3.3m by 4.2m and survived to a thickness of 0.15m.

Trough: The trough (F504) was sub-rectangular in shape and was revealed in the centre of the site. It measured 1.8m by 1.7m with a maximum depth of 1.05m. A depth of 0.55m was noted in the east of the pit. This eastern edge was cut by a field boundary and the pit contained a fill consisting of burnt mound material.
Finds:

Artefacts: None
Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None
Absolute dating: None

Excavation Interpretation

The site consisted of a burnt mound and a potential trough feature used as a boiling receptacle for a pyrolithic technology. At least two phases of activity were identified within the matrix of the mound material however as the site was not scientifically dated it is impossible to establish how long the site was abandoned. The identification of larger fire-cracked rock may indicate the a dry roasting activity or that water-boiling was abandoned shortly after the process began.

References


Fig. 10.18. Burnt mound ant possible trough pit at Drummany, Co. Cavan.
Location: Townland: Cootehill  Six inch map no: NA
Parish: Castleterra  NGR: 596000, 144300
Barony: Upper Loughtee  Altitude: 89m OD
County: Cavan

Excavation Details: Project: Cootehill Sewerage Improvement Scheme
Site Director: Judith Carroll
Consultants: Judith Carroll and Company Ltd
Year: 1999

Physical Setting: This site was located on a north-west facing slope in a slight hollow on a hillside. The field was in pasture prior to ground works.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric monuments within the vicinity of the site prior to excavation.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the Cootehill Sewerage Improvement Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a spread of heat-shattered stone and a shallow trough with the possible remains of a plank-lining.

Burnt Mound: The remains of the burnt mound (F21) covered an area measuring 22m² which extended beyond the pipeline corridor. The spread was quite shallow as a result of damage during topsoil stripping. The spread consisted of heat-shattered local Greywacke shale with occasional quartz fragments in a matrix of charcoal and black silty clay.

Trough: The trough (F7) had been cut into a peat layer which had developed in a slight hollow on a hillside. It was rectangular in shape and measured 1.75m by 0.9m with a depth of 0.36m. A curved piece of waterlogged timber was found in the trough fill interpreted as a displaced timber from the original lining. The trough fill consisted of heat-shattered shale with larger stones at the base representing the final use of the trough. Several phases of activity were represented by peat growth over earlier lenses of shattered stone.

Re-deposited Natural: To the north-east of the trough, and area of re-deposited clay was noted dumped onto the peat layer cut for the construction of the trough.
Post-Holes: Two post-holes were exposed 3.3m and 1.15m north-east of the trough.

**Finds:**

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: None

**Dating:**

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: None

**Excavation Interpretation**

Excavation revealed a damaged burnt mound which overlay a trough used for pyrolithic water-boiling. The remains of a possible timber-lining were present in the fill of the feature and the infill deposits suggested a number of use-phases were the site was returned to for further use. No diagnostic material was recovered to help with dating the site and at the stage of compilation it had not been scientifically dated.

**References**


![Fig. 10.19 Excavated trough and extent of burnt stone spread at Cootehill.](image-url)
Location: Townland: Pollamore Near Six inch map no: 138
Parish: Annaglelligf NGR: 243330, 203658
Barony: Upper Loughtee Altitude: m OD
County: Cavan

Excavation Details: Project: N3-N25 Cavan Link Road
Site Director: Ros Ó Maoldúin
Consultants: Valerie J. Keeley Ltd
Year: 2004

Physical Setting: This site was situated at the base of a southerly facing slope on the edge of a saturated peat bog.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the area prior to excavation.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

**Pre-Excavation features**

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N3-N25 Road scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

**Excavation Record**

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed spreads of heat-shattered stone and a possible trough.

Burnt Mound: The mound was c. 6.8m by 4.8m and had a maximum depth of 0.85m. It was placed on the upper edge of an indentation that was cut into the hillside and consisted of burnt/fire-cracked stone and charcoal-rich silty clay. A large amount of hazelnut shells was retrieved from the lower strata of this material. The other spread measured c. 10m by 7.5m and had a maximum depth of 0.35m. It consisted of charcoal-rich silty clay and burnt/fire-cracked stone.

Pit: The pit was semi-circular in plan and measured c. 5.82m by 3.4m and had a maximum depth of 0.63m. Unworked wood/branches and tree trunks were uncovered lying along the edges of the feature. No clear tool markings were recorded and only two pieces of wood appeared to be burnt.

**References**

Excavation Details:

Location: Townland: Straheglin
Parish: Annagh
Barony: Lower Loughtee
County: Cavan
Six inch map no: NA
NGR: 235890, 315800
Altitude: 55m OD

Excavation Details: Project: N3 Butlersbridge to Belturbet Road Scheme
Site Director: Gearoid Kelleher and Vicky Ginn
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd
Year: 2008

Physical Setting: This site was located on the shore of Putiagahan Lake in an area of bog land at the bottom of a slope which was prone to flooding.

Cultural Landscape: Several similar site types were revealed on the shore of the lake during the road project dating from the Early to Late Bronze Age.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N3 Butlersbridge to Belturbet Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed spreads of heat-shattered stone and several pits, one of which may have served as a trough. Late Medieval activity was also revealed at the site.

Burnt Spread 1: This spread (F51) was heavily damaged by agricultural processes and survived only to a thickness of 0.15m with a diameter of 4m. It consisted of grey/black clay with charcoal and moderate amounts of heat-shattered stone. A bramble fruitstone was recovered from this spread.

Burnt Spread 2: This was another small deposit of heat-affected stone (F25) which measured 1.6m by 0.4m with a thickness of 0.1m. It consisted of compact heat-shattered stone in a matrix of charcoal and black silty clay.

Trough: This possible trough (F21) was sub-oval in shape with steep sides and a flat base. It measured 1.25m by 1m with a depth of 0.25m. It contained a fill consisting of heat-shattered stone and charcoal rich material.

Pit 1: This pit (F36) was sub-oval in plan and measured 0.75m in diameter with a depth of 0.2m. The fill consisted of silty clay and stones.
Pit 2: This pit (F44) was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 0.7m by 0.3m with a depth of 0.22m. It contained a fill consisting of heat-shattered stone and charcoal rich material.

Pit 3: Pit (F45) was sub-oval and measured 1.4m in diameter with a depth of 0.49m. It contained two fills consisting of silty sands.

Pit 4/Well: This pit (F22) was the largest on site and was oval in shape. It measured 3.8m by 2.2m with a maximum depth of 1.62m. The upper fills of the pit consisted of hill wash material while the primary deposit was a 0.8m layer of undecayed organic matter including brush wood and tree trunks. Uncharred hazelnut fragments and animal bone was recovered from the waterlogged bottom. A Middle Bronze Age date was returned from this pit.

Finds:

Artefacts: Amber bead and copper-alloy ring pin from the topsoil. Two flint flakes were also recovered. A metal blade was recovered from a secure context in the pit F22.

Ecofacts: Animal bone was recovered from the pit F22 which included adult remains of red deer. Hazelnuts also recovered.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (alder) from the fill of the pit (F22)
C14 (UBA-11188) 3217±28 BP (1599–1425 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

Excavation revealed two small spreads of heat-shattered stone and charcoal along with a number of pits, one of which may have served as a trough. Medieval activity was also identified at the site with the identification of a pit containing a medieval ring pin and a metal blade. The site may have been the remains of a destroyed burnt mound however it may equally be an area for small scale roasting/boiling adjacent to a water-source. For instance, material from the well is dated to the Middle Bronze Age.

References

Catalogue No.  CN 11
RMP No. NA
Licence No. E3812

Location: Townland: Kilduff  Six inch map no: NA
Parish: Annagh  NGR: 238369, 313935
Barony: Lower Loughtee  Altitude: 51m OD
County: Cavan

Excavation Details: Project: N3 Butlersbridge to Belturbet Road Scheme
Site Director: Gearoid Kelleher and Vicky Ginn
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd
Year: 2008

Physical Setting: This site was located on the edge of a slight rise in relatively low-lying area. Trough filled naturally with water.

Cultural Landscape: Several similar site types were revealed on the shore of the lake during the road project dating from the Early to Late Bronze Age.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N3 Butlersbridge to Belturbet Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a spread of heat-shattered stone, a possible trough and a field boundary ditch.

Burnt Spread: This spread (F13) was irregular in shape and measured 3.5m by 1.8m with a thickness of 0.12. It consisted of heat-shattered stone and charcoal rich material. The spread was possibly disturbed by agricultural activity.

Trough: The trough (F10) was sub-oval in shape and measured 2.4m by 1.4m with a depth of 0.25m. It had steep sides and a flat base and filled naturally with water. The trough contained two fills consisting of dark silts and heat-shattered stone.

Finds:
Artefacts: A worked burnt flint flake was recovered from the topsoil
Ecofacts: None

Dating:
Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (oak or hazel) from the fill of the trough F10 C14 (QUB-11189) 3829±28 BP (2458–2151 BC)

**Excavation Interpretation**

Excavation revealed a small deposit of waste-firing material associated with a pyrolithic technology. While it is possible the pit functioned as a boiling receptacle, due to its shallow nature it is more likely it is associated with a dry heat such as roasting/baking. These small-scale cooking sites are becoming particularly common in the archaeological record in recent years.

**References**


Plate 10.5 Burnt stone deposit and possible roasting pit/boiling trough at Kilduff, Co. Cavan.
Physical Setting: Drumalure Beg 1 was located on the edge of peat bog where the shore line of a lake would have existed in antiquity.

Cultural Landscape: Several similar site types were revealed on the shore of the lake during the road project dating from the Early to Late Bronze Age.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N3 Butlersbridge to Belturbet Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed several pits which contained heat-shattered stone. One of these pits may have served as a boiling trough related to pyrolithic activity. A modern ditch was also exposed.

Spread: F19 represented a spread of charcoal and stone and overlay many of the features on site. It contained several sherds of modern pottery and it also contained a prehistoric scraper. It measured 1.5m by 0.6m with a maximum thickness of 0.2m.

Trough: The trough (F7) was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 1.5m by 1.1m with a depth of 0.3m. The pit had steep sides and a flat base and contained two fills consisting of dark silty clays, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 1: This pit (F10) was circular in shape and measured 0.36m by 0.3m with a depth of 0.15m. It contained a fill consisting of silty clay.

Pit 2: Pit F16 measured 1.75m by 1.45m with a depth of 0.5m. It contained a fill consisting of heat-shattered stone and sand layers.
Pit 3: Pit (F23) measured 0.4m by 0.33 with a depth of 0.15. It contained a fill consisting of heat-shattered stone and charcoal. It was truncated by a later field drain.

Pit 4: This pit (F25) was circular in shape and measured 0.7m by 0.5m with a depth of 0.12m.

Finds:

Artefacts: Flint scraper was recovered from spread F19

Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: None

Excavation Interpretation

Excavation revealed a small deposit of waste-firing material associated with a pyrolithic technology. While it is possible the pits functioned as boiling receptacles, they may have equally been associated with a dry heat such as roasting/baking. These small-scale cooking sites are becoming particularly common in the archaeological record in recent years. The site was not scientifically dated however the recovery of a flint scraper may suggest a Bronze Age date for the site.

References

Location: Townland: Drumalure Beg  Six inch map no: NA
Parish: Annagh     NGR: 238866, 313688
Barony: Lower Loughtee   Altitude: 49m OD
County: Cavan

Excavation Details: Project: N3 Butlersbridge to Belturbet Road Scheme
Site Director: Derek Gallagher and Vicky Ginn
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd
Year: 2008

Physical Setting: Drumalure Beg 2 was located to the northwest of Drumalure Beg 1, and 1km to the east of the River Erne in a relatively low-lying area.

Cultural Landscape: Several similar site types were revealed on the shore of the lake during the road project dating from the Early to Late Bronze Age.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N3 Butlersbridge to Belturbet Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed several pits which contained heat-shattered stone.

Pit 1: This pit (F5) was the largest of the group and was sub-oval in plan. It measured 3.43 by 3.23m with a depth of 0.23m. It was filled with natural silts, heat-shattered stone and charcoal-rich material. The pit was heavily disturbed by agricultural ploughing.

Pit 2: Pit (F7) was sub-oval in plan and located 1.2m to the north-east of F5. It measured 1.5m by 1m with a depth of 0.2m and contained a fill consisting of heat-shattered stone and charcoal rich material.

Pit 3: Pit (F9) was located 4m to the north of pit F5. It was sub-oval in plan and measured 1.5m by 1m with a depth of 0.2m. It was filled with similar material to that of the other pits.

Bog Oak: A sample of bog oak returned an Early Neolithic Date.
Finds:

Artefacts: None
Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None
Absolute dating: None

Excavation Interpretation

The pits may have been associated with prehistoric, burnt mound activity. It is possible that F7, with its sub-rectangular shape and sharp profile, represents a trough. Other sites along the project, such as Kilduff (E3812) and Puttiaghан Upper 2–4 (E3822, E3823, E3824, respectively), had evidence for similar burnt mound type material. The location of the site at Drumalure Beg 1, near the edge of a bog which may have been a lakeshore in prehistory, may indicate use of this site for burnt mound activities, as a constant water course / relatively easy access to water was a necessity for the processes carried out at such sites. The exact function of burnt mounds remains elusive however the small scale nature of the site may indicate an association with cooking similar to sites identified in mainland Europe.

References

Catalogue No.  CN 14
RMP No. NA
Licence No.  E3816

Location:  Townland:  Bun  Six inch map no: NA
Parish:  Annagh  NGR: 237127, 314891
Barony:  Lower Loughtee  Altitude: 62m OD
County:  Cavan

Excavation Details:  Project:  N3 Butlersbridge to Belturbet Road Scheme
Site Director:  Derek Gallagher and Robert O’Hara
Consultants:  Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd
Year:  2008

Physical Setting:  The site was located on a south-facing slope, beside the River Erne, within the northwest Lakeland region of counties of Fermanagh and Cavan.

Cultural Landscape:  Several similar site types were revealed on the shore of the lake during the road project dating from the Early to Late Bronze Age.

Adjacent excavated sites:  Late Bronze Age settlement site, a possible Late Bronze Age ring-ditch and several pits.

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N3 Butlersbridge to Belturbet Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features:  Excavation of the site revealed a Late Bronze Age settlement site and a broadly contemporary ring-ditch and an enclosure. The burnt mound was disturbed and survived as a large spread of heat-shattered stone which sealed a four-post structure.

Burnt Mound:  The burnt mound survived as a spread of material measuring 17.5m by 9m with a thickness of 0.49m. It consisted of heat-shattered stone in a matrix of charcoal and black silty clay. The full extent of the spread was not revealed and it continued into the adjacent spread. The spread contained Late Bronze Age pottery, animal bone and two flint blades. A Late Bronze Age date was returned from the deposit.

Structure:  The spread overlay four post-holes placed in a square arrangement. It surrounded an irregular feature interpreted as a tree bole. Each of the post-holes contained burnt mound material and some contained flint artefacts. A Late Bronze Age date was returned from this possible structure which resembled a funerary platform however the function of the structure remains problematic given the lack of funerary evidence from the adjacent ring-ditch.
Post-Holes: Further post-holes were revealed to the south of the possible structure which also contained burnt mound material and flint artefacts.

Finds:

Artefacts: Late Bronze Age pottery was recovered from the burnt mound spread including a single pig bone and two flint flakes. A convex end scraper was recovered from one of the post-holes.

Ecofacts: A single pig bone was recovered from the spread F11.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (oak or hazel) from the burnt spread F11
C14 (QUB-11190) 2771±28 BP (997–841 BC)
Charcoal (oak or hazel) from the post-hole structure
C14 (QUB-11192) 2895±22 BP (1192–1006 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

The spread of heat-fractured stone and charcoal, F11, which covered part of the eastern area of excavation, is likely to represent a disturbed burnt mound located beyond the area of excavation. The spread at Bun 4 contained pig bones, burnt bone, Late Bronze Age pottery and flint. The disturbed nature of the spread unfortunately hampers the interpretative value of these remains; the broad contemporaneous nature of the spread and the structure is not out of the ordinary. F11 post-dated the four-post structure and adjacent features; however, this may be a result of later disturbance of the spread.

References


Plate 10.6 Prehistoric settlement site at Bun 4, Co. Cavan.
Location: Townland: Putiaghan Upper  Six inch map no: NA
Parish: Urney  NGR: 236867, 314880
Barony: Lower Loughtee  Altitude: 68m OD
County: Cavan

Excavation Details: Project: N3 Butlersbridge to Belturbet Road Scheme
Site Director: Gearóid Kelleher and Vicky Ginn
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd
Year: 2008

Physical Setting: The site was located on the summit of a hill rather than the typical low-lying area. It overlooked the River Erne and a boggy area at the base of the hill. Several well features seem to have provided water for the site.

Cultural Landscape: Several similar site types were revealed on the shore of the lake during the road project dating from the Early to Late Bronze Age.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N3 Butlersbridge to Belturbet Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a large burnt spread of heat-shattered stone, several troughs and a number of pits/wells.

Burnt Spread: The spread of burnt material (F10) was roughly circular in shape with a diameter of 13m and a maximum thickness of 0.14m. It consisted of heat-shattered stone, charcoal and dark silty clays. A charred hazelnut shell and two sun spurge seeds were recovered from F10 and the charcoal was identified as ash, hazel, oak and elm with lesser quantities of willow/poplar, Maloideae, and spindle. An Early Bronze Age date was returned from this spread.

Trough 1: This trough (F38) was the largest of the group and was circular in shape. It measured 1.8m in diameter with a depth of 0.6m. The remains of a possible stone lining survived in the base of the trough consisting of two large sandstone slabs placed side by side. The excavators noted that these slabs were heat-affected (Kelleher and Ginn 2009, 2). The fill consisted of burnt mound material.
Trough 2: Trough (F61) was situated 1m north of trough F38. This trough had a figure-of-eight shape and measured 1.5m by 1.4m with a depth of 0.42m. The fill consisted of burnt mound material.

Trough 3: This trough (F74) was situated 0.3m south of F61. It was circular in shape and measured 1.6m in diameter with a depth of 0.49m. A single post-hole was associated with this trough and situated at its southern edge, angled inwards.

Pit/Well: This pit (F54) was situated north of the previous trough grouping and was not covered by the spread material. It was sub-rectangular and measured 4.4m by 2.4m with a depth of 0.28m. It was filled with heat-shattered stone and charcoal. This fill was cut by another pit which was irregular in shape. It measured 3.15m by 1.5m with a depth of 0.53m. The excavators suggest they may be contemporary but their relationship is unclear due to truncation (Kelleher and Ginn 2009, 3). Both cut the watertable and filled naturally.

Pit 2: The previous pit was cut by a pit F55. It was tadpole-shaped in plan and measured 3.85m by 2.05m with a depth of 0.9m. Two fills were noted in the pit consisting of charcoal flecks and clay deposits. The pit filled naturally with water.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: A single animal tooth fragment was recovered from the site. The presence of the charred hazelnut in spread F10 may indicate that such nuts supplemented the diet at the site while the sun spurge seeds suggest that nearby ground was cultivated or disturbed. ‘The charcoal assemblages suggest that the local deciduous woodland was dominated by ash and oak, with elm forming a minor component’. The presence of hazel, Maloideae and spindle indicate an understorey or scrub vegetation. ‘The absence of alder at Putiaghan Upper 1 suggests that most of the fuelwood was collected from woodland growing on the slopes of the hill, rather than the wetland areas at its base’

Dating: Charcoal (ash) from the burnt spread F10 C14 (QUB-11184) 3747±24 BP (2275–2041 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

Excavation of the site revealed a substantial spread of heat-shattered stone and charcoal along with a number of possible boiling troughs. It is clear the remains represent a technology associated with water-heating given the identification of a possible water-source on site. The site is dated to the Early Bronze Age and can be compared with a growing number of burnt mound sites dating to this period in Ireland. It was located on top of a hill rather than the typical low lying waterlogged area. An absence of alder was noted in the charcoal assemblage which suggested that the majority of the fuelwood was gathered from the slope of the hill, rather than from the wetland areas at its base. Charred hazelnut shells and sun spurge seeds were identified, indicating that the local diet may have been supplemented by wild foods, and that the locale was most likely cultivated or disturbed.

References

Fig. 10.20 Plan of excavated pits, including well feature at Putiaghan Upper Co. Cavan.
Location: Townland: Putiaghan Upper   Six inch map no: NA
Parish: Urney   NGR: 236800, 315120
Barony: Lower Loughtee   Altitude: 50m OD
County: Cavan

Excavation Details: Project: N3 Butlersbridge to Belturbet Road Scheme
Site Director: Gearóid Kelleher and Vicky Ginn
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd
Year: 2008

Physical Setting: The site was located on the shore of Putiaghan Lake.

Cultural Landscape: Several similar site types were revealed on the shore of the lake during the road project dating from the Early to Late Bronze Age.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N3 Butlersbridge to Belturbet Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed two burnt spreads, two pits and two post-holes.

Burnt Spread 1: This spread (F3), was situated on the edge of the lake and measured 3.6m by 3.2m with a thickness of 0.18m. It consisted of black silty clay and heat-shattered stone which overlay natural deposits of lacustrine sediment.

Burnt Spread 2: This spread (F4) was situated to the west and measured 5m by 4.55m with a thickness of 0.08m. It consisted of clayey sand with inclusions of heat-shattered stone. It overlay two post-holes.

Pit 1: This pit (F5) was sub-oval and measured 1.2m by 0.8m with a depth of 0.1m. Two fills were noted in the pit, with the upper deposit consisting of oxidised clay fragments and charcoal, while the primary deposit composed of charcoal and silt.

Pit 2: F11 was located 1.8m north of pit F5. It measured 0.39m by 0.16m with a depth of 0.07m. Iron smithing slag was recovered from the pit along with cremated animal bone. A Late Iron Age/Medieval Date date was returned from the pit.
Finds:

Artefacts: Smithing slag from pit F11
Ecofacts: 1.9g of cremated animal bone from pit F11

Dating:

Relative dating: None
Absolute dating: Charcoal (hazel or oak) from the pit F11
C14 (QUB-11185) 1538±20 BP (AD 432–581)

Excavation Interpretation

The presence of the spreads of heat-shattered stone and charcoal-rich material and the pits filled with charcoal and oxidised clay would seem to indicate the presence of burnt mound activity that complements the features present on adjacent Putiaghan Upper 1, 3 and 4. The postholes excavated did not appear to form a structure and may have been mooring posts at the lakes edge or the remains of a frame / upright construction used to store the materials or the end product after processing. The postholes were too substantial to interpret as the supports for a windbreak.

However, the Iron Age date from and the inclusion of slag in the fill of pit F11 suggests that this feature at least, and most likely the others on site, was associated with ironworking. The profile of pit F11 does not represent a slag-tapping, smelting or bowl furnace and it is therefore likely that F11 represents a waste pit.

At least one of the features, pit F11, dates to the Iron Age and is broadly contemporary with a date from the adjacent site of Putiaghan Upper 3 (E3823), indicating the presence of Iron Age activity, most likely associated with metalworking, in the area.

References

Location: Townland: Putiaghan Upper  Six inch map no: 15
Parish: Urney  NGR: 236867, 314880
Barony: Lower Loughtee  Altitude: 49m OD
County: Cavan

Excavation Details: Project: N3 Butlersbridge to Belturbet Road Scheme
Site Director: Gearóid Kelleher
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd
Year: 2008

Physical Setting: The site was located on the shore of Putiaghan Lake.

Cultural Landscape: Several similar site types were revealed on the shore of the lake during the road project dating from the Early to Late Bronze Age. Two crannogs are also visible from the lakeshore (CV015:061 and CV015:68).

Adjacent excavated sites: Late Iron Age waste pits

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N3 Butlersbridge to Belturbet Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed two burnt spreads of heat-shattered stone and two pits.

Burnt Spread 1: This spread (F3), was situated on the edge of the lake and measured 2.65m by 1.5m with a thickness of 0.1m. It consisted of black silty clay and heat-shattered stone which overlay natural deposits of lacustrine sediment. Ash and hazel returned an Early Bronze Age date.

Burnt Spread 2: This spread (F4) was isolated and not related to the previous spread. It measured 1.1m by 1m with a thickness of 0.1m. It consisted of black silty clay and heat-shattered stone which overlay natural deposits of lacustrine sediment.

Upon excavation it was noted that the spreads overlay subsoil with a higher concentration of stone than the areas without spreads. This was also noted on the adjoining sites Putiaghan Upper 2 and 3. This may possibly represent the selection of drier patches of stony subsoil around the lake prior to the deposition/processing of the burnt stone material.

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Pit 1: This pit (F8) was sub-oval in plan and measured 2.2m by 2m with a depth of 0.7m. It contained two fills consisting of burnt mound material. Due to the sandy subsoil this pit did not fill naturally with water, suggesting a roasting function rather than a boiling function (Kelleher 2009, 2).

Pit 2: Pit (F5) was sub-oval and measured 1.6m by 1.4m with a depth of 0.4m. The pit was truncated by machine. The pit was later re-cut indicating separate phases of activity at the site.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (ash and hazel) from the spread F3 C14 (QUB-11187) 3738±22 BP (2205–2039 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

The features excavated at Putiaghan Upper 4, with their heat-shattered stone and charcoal-rich fills, were typical of burnt mound activity. The pits present were cut into sandy subsoil and are more likely to represent roasting pits or pits for the burnt stone material than troughs. The site was one part of a lakeshore complex and a number of characteristic burnt mound features were revealed including a spread of heat-shattered stone and charcoal-rich material from which ash and hazel charcoal was identified and a radiocarbon date of 2060–2039 BC was derived placing at least one feature from the site in the Bronze Age.

References

### Physical Setting
The site is located in a low-lying area the Burren of Co. Clare, a limestone region, whose drainage is mostly subterranean.

### Cultural Landscape
There are no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the *fulacht fia*.

### Adjacent excavated sites
None

#### Pre-Excavation features
Prior to excavation the site survived as a grass-covered horseshoe-shaped mound of burnt limestone.

#### Excavation Record

<table>
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<td>Carran</td>
<td>NGR: 129182, 198841</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Burren</td>
<td>Altitude: NA</td>
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<td>Clare</td>
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**Excavation Details:**
- **Project:** Research
- **Site Director:** Diarmuid Ó Drisceoil
- **Consultants:** Independent
- **Year:** 1980

**Physical Setting:** The site is located in a low-lying area the Burren of Co. Clare, a limestone region, whose drainage is mostly subterranean.

**Cultural Landscape:** There are no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the *fulacht fia*.

**Adjacent excavated sites:** None

**Pre-Excavation features**
Prior to excavation the site survived as a grass-covered horseshoe-shaped mound of burnt limestone.

**Excavation Record**

**Summary of Features:** Excavation of the site revealed a large mound of burnt stone revetted by a considerable stone revetment which seemed to enclose a large plank-lined trough which was dated to the Middle Bronze Age. A formal hearth, stake-holes and a number of pits were also revealed. Many features along with the mound material contained animal bone consisting of the teeth of cattle and deer along with many small bone fragments. A barbed and tanged arrowhead along with an amber bead and red deer antler were also recovered. No other information is available for the site.

**Plate 10.7 Stone revetment and timber-trough at Fahee South, Co. Clare.**

**Dating:**
Wood from trough (Unknown species)
C14 (GrN-11437) 3050±35 BP (1409–1212 BC)

**References:**
Location: Townland: Ballymaley  Six inch map no: 33
Parish: Templemaley  NGR: 135060, 180685
Barony: Bunnatty Upper  Altitude: 50m OD
County: Clare

Excavation Details:
Project: Ennis Sewage Scheme
Site Director: Michael Tierney
Consultants: Judith Carroll Archaeological Services
Year: 1998

Physical Setting: Located in a dryland setting on a gentle sloping hill, 20m from a small boggy area.

Cultural Landscape: Recorded prehistoric archaeology in the area is limited to a few upstanding monuments which may date to any period of Irish archaeology however a prehistoric origin is possible. These consist of an enclosure located c. 700m to the south-west (CL033-124) and an earthwork situated c. 1km to the south-west (CL033-038). A possible fulachtai fia is recorded c. 700m to the north-west (CL034-183001).

Adjacent excavated sites: Fulachtai fias site identified at Corrovorrin (See below)

Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during archaeological monitoring along the line of a proposed sewage scheme running north out of Ennis, Co. Clare. The site had no surface expression prior to investigation. The excavator notes that the site had been largely levelled by recent human activity with the mound being bulldozed into the adjacent bog.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a stone-lined trough, a hearth and several stake-holes interpreted as an associated superstructure for the trough.

Trough: The trough (C34) was sub-rectangular in shape with rounded corners. It measured 6.62m north-south by 2.28m east-west and 0.22m deep. The break of slope was gradual and the sides were slightly concave on the south side and convex on the north and west sides. The break off slope at the base was gradual and the base was uneven following natural slope from east to west. The excavator notes a limestone lining on the north end of the pit and significant burning at the base. A post-hole at the southern end of the pit along with several extending along the sides of the pit were interpreted as the remains of a possible superstructure over the trough. The primary fills in the trough consisted of a thin, compact layer of heat-affected stones that were
embedded into the natural. The uppermost contexts were a series of backfills with inclusions of burnt stone.

**Hearth:**
An area interpreted as a hearth was located 2.7m south-west of the trough. It measured 0.9m by 1.8m with a depth of 0.4m. The fill consisted of loose silty sand, with moderate amounts of charcoal and burnt clay.

**Pit:**
This pit was located north of the hearth and measured 0.27m by 0.23m with a depth of 0.1m. The fill consisted of grey/brown silty sands in a matrix of charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

**Finds:**

- **Artefacts:** None
- **Ecofacts:** None

**Dating:**

- **Relative dating:** None
- **Absolute dating:** Site not scientifically dated.

**Excavation Interpretation:**

Prior to excavation the majority of the waste-firing material associated with pyrolithic water-boiling was re-deposited by machinery into the nearby bog. The remains of the site consisted of a very large trough that may have originally been stone-lined. In situ burning noted during the excavation in the base of the feature may indicate that the pit functioned as some sort of oven however this may relate to a later phase of activity on the site. The excavator interpreted numerous stake-holes in the vicinity of the site as relating to some sort of covering for the trough however it is likely that many of these features are not contemporary, therefore this cannot be confirmed.

**References:**

Catalogue No.  CE 03
RMP No.  CL 033-144
Licence No.  98E0400

Location: Townland: Corrovorrin  Six inch map no: 33
Parish: Templemaley  NGR: 135060, 180685
Barony: Bunratty Upper  Altitude: 50m OD
County: Clare

Excavation Details:
Project: Ennis Sewage Scheme
Site Director: Michael Tierney
Consultants: Judith Carroll Archaeological Services
Year: 1998

Physical Setting: Located directly on top of fen peats in a wet, boggy area.

Cultural Landscape: Recorded prehistoric archaeology in the area is limited to a few upstanding monuments which may date to any period. These consist of an enclosure located c. 700m to the south-west (CL033-124) and an earthwork situated 1km to the south-west (CL033-038). A possible fulachtá fia is recorded c. 700m to the north-west (034:183001).

Adjacent excavated sites: Fulachtá fia at Ballymaley (CL033-143) adjacent to Corrovorrin.

Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during archaeological monitoring along the line of a proposed sewage scheme running north out of Ennis, Co. Clare. A series of archaeological traces were disturbed when the peat was being stripped by machine that subsequently got stuck.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Investigation of the site revealed the partial remains of a burnt stone spread and a number of significant finds which were discovered in situ. Only the edge of this possible fulachtá fia were revealed with the artefactual remains uncovered at the periphery of the site. No cut features were excavated at the site.

Finds:

Artefacts: Worked wood fragments, a rhyolite flake and a number of worked antler pieces

Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None
Absolute dating: Site not scientifically dated.

Excavation Interpretation:

A number of worked pieces of wood and a rhyolite flake were found as well as a number of fragments of antler which showed signs of being worked or the remains of butchery activity. At first this material appeared to be the remains of a trackway, but consultation with the Irish archaeological wetland unit from UCD and the subsequent excavation of areas 2 and 3 showed it to be the remains of rubbish dumped on the edge of a fulacht fia. All contexts mention burnt limestone spread and fragments of worked wood.

The remains found in areas 2 and 3 are associated with peripheral dumping associated with a fulacht fia. The material found in area 1 consists of a series of fragments of worked wood, stone tools and worked antler which occurred at the same stratigraphic level as the undisturbed deposits in the other two areas. Taken together this evidence strongly suggests that the excavators clipped the edge of a burnt mound.

References:

Catalogue No.  CE 04
RMP No.  CL051-188002
Licence No. 01E0668

Location: Townland: Clonmoney North  Six inch map no: 51
Parish: Bunratty  NGR: 143671, 162799
Barony: Bunratty Upper  Altitude: 31m OD
County: Clare

Excavation Details:
Project: N18/19 Ballycasey-Dromoland Road Scheme
Site Director: Deirdre Murphy
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services
Year: 2001

Physical Setting:
The site was located on a west-facing slope close to an extant field boundary and marshland. A well is located to the north (CL051-177).

Cultural Landscape:
Bronze Age activity in the area is indicated by the presence of two standing stones in Ballycasey Beg and Ballycasey More (CL051-147 and CL051-149 respectively). A complex of Early Medieval structures, enclosures and pits were excavated at Ballycasey More, 1km to the north-west. Prehistoric activity was also recorded here in the form of pit burials (CL051-176011, 2) and pyre structures. A prominent hilltop enclosure is also recorded c. 600m to the north-west (CL051-153) and a habitation site of unknown date is recorded in the neighbouring townland of Clonmoney West (CL051-185002).

Adjacent excavated sites: An Early Bronze Age kiln (CL051-188001).

Pre-Excavation features
The site was uncovered during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N18/19 Ballycasey-Dromoland Road Improvement Scheme. No surface trace of the site was evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features:
Excavation of the site revealed a substantial spread of heat-shattered stone and charcoal which sealed a number of pits, troughs and stake-holes. An unrelated kiln was which dated to the Early Bronze Age was also excavated here.

Burnt Mound:
The burnt mound spread (F003) measured 17.5m by 14.5m and was circular in shape. It consisted of loose grey-black sandy loam containing 65-70% heat shattered limestone and 5-10% charcoal. It varied in parts with patches of grey loam containing 90% heat-shattered limestone and only 1% charcoal. There were also frequent inclusions of decayed stone. The spread was cut by a number of furrows. Fragments of animal bone were also recovered from the spread and from later drains which cut through the site. One post-hole was uncovered below the spread.
Trough 1: Trough (F007) was oval in shape and measured 3m by 2.3m with a depth of 0.7m. A flat stone was evident in the base. The trough contained two fills with the primary deposit consisting of loose black loam containing heat shattered limestone, occasional charcoal flecks and some large angular stones. Cremated bone was recovered from this fill. The upper fill contained a deposit of peat.

Trough 2: The second trough (F008) was located 0.4m to the north of the first. It was roughly oval in shape and measured 2.1m by 2.08m with a maximum depth of 0.9m. Two fills were also noted in this trough which contained an upper deposit of peat and a primary fill of loose black loam containing occasional charcoal flecks, 10% heat-shattered limestone and 5% large stones averaging. Two stones were evident in the base of the trough. Animal bone was also recovered from the fill of this pit.

Pit 1: F010 was located west of the first trough and was circular in shape. It measured 0.6m in diameter with a depth of 0.15m. The fill consisted of loose black loam and heat-shattered limestone.

Pit 2: F011 was located north of the previous pit. It was oval in shape and measured 1.88m by 1.18m with a depth of 0.4m. The fill consisted of compact black silty clay with 7% charcoal and 20% heat shattered limestone. The profile of this pit was U-shaped and it had a ledge to its north western extent. The base of the pit was cut by twelve angular stake-holes running in an east/west direction. Three further stake-holes were uncovered north of the pit.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: Animal bone and cremated animal bone was recovered from the spread and both troughs. It identified as cattle bone from a juvenile animal and some gnawed fragments suggest the presence of dogs or wolves in the area.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (unknown species) from the spread (F003) C14 (Beta-159660) 3090±60 BP (1490–1200 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

Excavation of the site revealed a large spread of heat-shattered limestone and a number of troughs and associated pits. Animal bone from the trough and spread would suggest that cooking was the primary activity which was carried out at the site during the Bronze Age however the presence of limestone as a heating agent would seem to question this hypothesis. Once subjected to intense heat, limestone turns to calcium hydroxide which is poisonous. However, certain limestones may be more resistant to this activity than others and it is also likely the food produces may have been protected with straw or other vegetation. The excavation also demonstrated that the site was returned to after periods of inactivity. This is demonstrated by the re-cutting of some trough and pit features.
References:


Plate 10.8 Burnt mound and associated troughs at Clonmoney North, Co. Clare.
Location:  Townland: Killulla  Six inch map no: 51  Parish: Clongloghan  NGR: 140147, 164893  Barony: Bunratty Lower  Altitude: 11m OD  County: Clare

Excavation Details:  Project: N18/19 Ballycasey-Dromoland Road Scheme  Site Director: Deirdre Murphy  Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services  Year: 2001

Physical Setting: The site was located in a low-lying area of undulating marginal ground. A stream was evident at the eastern side of the fulacht fia.

Cultural Landscape: Bronze Age activity in the area is indicated by the presence of five fulachtai fia clustered in a sheltered area close to a water source. One of these sites had an associated structure and was dated to the Late Bronze Age (CL051-172002).

Adjacent excavated sites: Eleven pits, a hearth and a number of spreads were revealed at the northwestern area of the excavation which dated to the Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age. Possible associated Bronze Age settlement.

Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N18/19 Ballycasey-Dromoland Road Improvement Scheme. The site was initially identified as an enclosure but was later revealed as a fulachta fia.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a number of pits and spreads in the northwestern area of the excavation dating to the Late Bronze Age. Investigations in the south-eastern area revealed two spreads of heat-shattered sandstone, a trough, a pit and a timber platform. Several other stone spreads were also noted.

Burnt Mound: Two main spreads of burnt mound material were exposed during excavation. F028 was oval in plan and measured 12m by 15m with a maximum thickness of 0.3m. It consisted of consisted of dark grey-black silty clay containing 70% heat shattered sandstone and 10% charcoal. A whetstone was recovered from this spread. F029 was less substantial and was circular in plan. It measured 2.1m in diameter with a maximum thickness of 0.3m. It consisted of a compact deposit of grey gritty marl containing 80% heat-shattered sandstone and 5% charcoal.
Trough: The trough (F030) was oval in plan and sealed beneath the main spreads. It measured 1.8m by 1.5m with a depth of 0.2m. The trough was cut into natural with straight sides and a relatively flat base which contained two fills consisting of an upper deposit of peat and a primary deposit of compact black silty clay containing moderate amounts of small-medium sized stones and moderate amounts of sandstone. A timber plank was revealed in situ on the eastern side of the trough suggesting it was originally timber-lined. Five other post-holes cut into the base supports this theory also. A nutshell was the only other find from the trough.

Pit: An oval pit (F034) was also revealed. It measured 1.15m by 1.32m with a maximum depth of 0.32m. Its fill consisted of compact black silty clay with frequent charcoal, sandstone and organic inclusions. A wooden peg was uncovered in the fill of this pit. A Late Bronze Age date was obtained from this pit.

Timber Platform: A timber platform (F038) was also uncovered below the main mound deposits. It consisted of seven timber planks (F038 A-G) and ten timber dowels resting within a shallow rectangular depression in the natural marl. There was no cut for this structure, instead the timbers appeared to have been placed directly onto the natural marl and the dowels were used to secure the timbers in place (Murphy 2001). A deposit (F036) of compact grey-black silty clay containing occasional charcoal flecks and fragments of sandstone was uncovered above this platform.

Finds:

Artefacts: Whetstone from the spread (F028)

Ecofacts: Burnt fragments of cattle tooth and a pig molar were recovered from the platform while a nutshell was noted in the trough fill.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (unknown species) from the spread (F003) C14 (Beta-159676) 2810±60 BP (1120–820 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

Excavation of the site revealed a dispersed burnt mound and a well-defined rectangular trough that may have originally been timber-lined. This conforms that the site functioned as pyrolithic water-boiling area and the presence of animal bone remains may indicate that this water was used to cook meat during the Late Bronze Age. A rectangular plank-lined feature was interpreted as the remains of a possible platform however it is more likely that this is the remains of a truncated timber-lined trough. The presence of stake-holes in the corner of this feature would conform this along with small fragments of shattered sandstone found overlying the feature which may have resulted from the boiling process.
References:


Plate 10.9. Trough and possible ‘platform’ at Killulla, Co. Clare.
Location: Townland: Killulla  Six inch map no: 51
Parish: Clongloghan  NGR: 140106, 164955
Barony: Bunratty Lower  Altitude: 14m OD
County: Clare

Excavation Details: Project: N18/19 Ballycasey-Dromoland Road Scheme
Site Director: Deirdre Murphy
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services
Year: 2001

Physical Setting: The site was located in a low-lying flat marginal ground. A field boundary drain ran was evident also on the site.

Cultural Landscape: Bronze Age activity in the area is indicated by the presence of five *fulachtái fia* clustered in a sheltered area close to a water source. One of these sites had an associated structure and was dated to the late Bronze Age (CL051-172002).

Adjacent excavated sites: Two further *fulachtái fia* were excavated 26m west of the site.

Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N18/19 Ballycasey-Dromoland Road Improvement Scheme. No surface trace of the site was evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a ploughed out spread of heat-shattered stone which as cut by a modern field drain. The excavator states that the drain may have destroyed any cut features that once lay below this spread (Murphy, 2001). The spread (F003) measured 5.2m by 2.84m with a maximum thickness of 0.15m. It was oval in plan and consisted of compact grey marl containing 70% heat shattered sandstone and 5% charcoal. No cut features were identified below this shallow spread.

Finds: None

Dating: Charcoal (unknown species) from the spread (F003)
C14 (Beta-159694) 3950±70 BP (2600–2220 BC)

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**Excavation Details:**
- **Project:** N18/19 Ballycasey-Dromoland Road Scheme
- **Site Director:** Deirdre Murphy
- **Consultants:** Archaeological Consultancy Services
- **Year:** 2001

**Physical Setting:**
The site was located in a low-lying flat marginal ground. A field boundary drain ran was evident also on the site.

**Cultural Landscape:**
Bronze Age activity in the area is indicated by the presence of five *fulachtai fia* clustered in a sheltered area close to a water source. One of these sites had an associated structure and was dated to the Late Bronze Age (CL051-172002).

**Adjacent excavated sites:**
Two further *fulachtai fia* were excavated close to the site.

**Pre-Excavation features**
The site was uncovered during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N18/19 Ballycasey-Dromoland Road Improvement Scheme. No surface trace of the site was evident prior to investigations.

**Excavation Record**

**Summary of Features:**
Excavation of the site revealed a ploughed out spread of heat-shattered stone which as cut on its southern side by a modern field boundary. The burnt stone spread (F003) was circular in shape and measured 14m by 4.5m with a thickness of 0.44m. It consisted of loose black loam containing 60-70% heat shattered sandstone and 7% charcoal. An oval pit was exposed under this spread. It was oval in shape and was cut by a modern field boundary. It measured 1.8m by 1.52m with a depth of 0.35m and had a U-shaped profile.

**Finds:**
None

**Dating:**
Charcoal (unknown species) from the spread (F003)
C14 (Beta-159695) 3240±70 BP (1680–1390 BC)

**References:**
Location:  Townland: Killulla  Six inch map no: 51
Parish: Clongloghan  NGR: 140081, 164977
Barony: Bunratty Lower  Altitude: 15m OD
County: Clare

Excavation Details:  Project: N18/19 Ballycasey-Dromoland Road Scheme
Site Director: Deirdre Murphy
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services
Year: 2001

Physical Setting:  The site was located in a low-lying flat marginal ground. A field boundary drain ran was evident also on the site. Trough was located on a natural spring.

Cultural Landscape:  Bronze Age activity in the area is indicated by the presence of five fulachtai fia clustered in a sheltered area close to a water source. One of these sites had an associated structure and was dated to the Late Bronze Age (CL051-172002).

Adjacent excavated sites:  Two further fulachtai fia were excavated close to the site, CE06 and CE07.

Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N18/19 Ballycasey-Dromoland Road Improvement Scheme. No surface trace of the site was evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features:  Excavation of the site revealed a spread of heat-shattered stone which as cut by a modern field boundary.

Burnt Mound:  The burnt stone spread (F003) was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 11m by 14.75m with a thickness of 0.50m. It consisted of loose black loam containing 60-70% heat shattered sandstone and 10% charcoal.

Trough:  An oval trough pit was exposed under this spread. It was oval in shape and it measured 3m by 1.9m with a depth of 0.5m. The fill consisted of loose mid-brown loam containing sandy gravel and 60% re-deposited peat. Its sides were steep to the north where the break of slope was 0.2 metres, elsewhere the slope was very gentle and gradual with the break of slope at 0.8 metres on average

Finds:

Artefacts: None
Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal from the spread (F003)
C14 (Beta-159696) 3000±60 BP (1400–1030 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

This site was in a typical location for a *fulacht fia*, in low lying marshy ground close to a water supply. The heat shattered sandstone spread (F003) was quite substantial and the underlying trough was a simple type cut into the natural marl. There was no evidence for the use of timber in the construction of the trough. The field boundary and land drain destroyed the eastern extent of this site. A radiocarbon date of 1400-1030 BC obtained from the spread (F003) indicated that this site was occupied during the Middle to Late Bronze Age. It was not contemporary with the two nearby burnt stone deposits as both these sites were used at an earlier date.

References:


Plate 10.10 Burnt spread and possible trough pit at Killulla Co. Clare.
Location: Knockaun
Parish: Clongloghan
Barony: Bunnatty Lower
County: Clare

NGR: 140398, 163095
Altitude: 5m OD

Excavation Details:
Project: N18/19 Ballycasey-Dromoland Road Scheme
Site Director: Deirdre Murphy
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services
Year: 2001

Physical Setting:
The site was located in undulating swampy marshland with rock outcrops and extended over a large area.

Cultural Landscape:
Bronze Age activity in the area is indicated by the presence of five fulachtai fia situated c. 300m to the north-west clustered in a sheltered area close to a water source. One of these sites had an associated structure and was dated to the late Bronze Age (CL051-172002). Another fulachtai fia is recorded in the neighbouring townland of Cullen c. 200m to the south-east (CL051-192). A possible standing stone is situated to the south in the townland of Ballycasey Beg (CL051-147).

Adjacent excavated sites: Fulachtai fia excavated to the north.

Pre-Excavation features
The site was uncovered during Archaeological Monitoring in advance of the N18/19 Ballycasey-Dromoland Road Improvement Scheme. No surface trace of the site was evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features:
Excavation of the site revealed two spreads of heat-shattered stone, a number of pits, furrows and a wood-lined trough.

Burnt Mound:
The burnt stone spread (F003) was revealed as three deposits suggesting that agricultural activity had damage the site sometime in the past. The first spread measured 11.6m by 3m, while the second measured 7.2m by 5.6m and the third measured 2.6m by 3m. All consisted of loose black loam containing 10% charcoal and 60-70% heat shattered sandstone. The average depth was 0.15m with a maximum depth of 0.4m.

Pit:
An oval pit (F021) was located east of a gully and measured 1.1m by 0.98m with a depth of 0.08m. Its fill consisted of black loam containing frequent charcoal flecks and occasional fragments of timber. A whetstone was recovered from this fill.
Gully: The gully (F020) was north-south orientated and was cut along a natural slope and consequently its height varied. It was situated west of the pit and possibly directed water into it (Murphy 2001). The fill consisted of loose black loam containing 60-70% heat shattered sandstone and 10% charcoal. This linear gully measured 11.8 metres by 0.9 metres and reached an average depth of 0.30 metres.

Spread: This spread (F026) was located at the south-western extent of the site. The excavator notes that it was heavily ploughed out but it may extend beyond the limits of excavation (Murphy 2001). It measured 3.9m by 2.8m with a maximum depth of 0.4m. It consisted of loose black sandy loam containing 60% heat shattered sandstone and 5% charcoal. Two rim sherds of prehistoric pottery and a whetstone were recovered from this spread.

Trough: The trough (F029) was rectangular in plan and measured 2m by 1.25m with a depth of 0.42m. Six planks formed the base of the trough, three posts supported the sides and two planks form the northern and eastern sides respectively. The timbers representing the southern and western sides of the structure were not in situ. The timbers worked edges were most evident to the east where a timber plank (H) had protected them. A late Bronze Age date was returned from the timber planks. The fill of the trough consisted of loose black sandy loam containing 60% heat shattered sandstone and 5% charcoal. A large cattle bone fragment was recovered from this fill.

Finds:

Artefacts: Whetstone recovered from pit (F021) and another from spread (F026) along with two rim sherds of unidentified prehistoric pottery.

Ecofacts: Animal bone was also recovered from the fulacht spread (F026) and the topsoil (F025) along with the trough and total fragments numbered eighteen pieces. These were identified to cattle, sheep/goat and deer. The sheep and cow bones were butchered and may be described as food waste while the deer bone consisted of antler and metatarsal with no evidence of butcher marks. The deer antler may have been used as a raw material and the metatarsal fragment has a low meat value and therefore does not exclude the possibility that venison was consumed (Murphy, 2001).

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (unknown species) from the spread (F003) C14 (Beta-159699) 3450±80 BP (1950–1530 BC)
Wood (unknown species) from trough (F027) C14 (Beta-162000) 3000±60 BP (1300–930 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:
The radiocarbon dates provided evidence that while the two burnt stone sites were in close proximity, they were not contemporary as previously thought. Further stripping in the adjacent area failed to identify any other archaeological features. The spread (F003) was not very substantial and was quite shallow (average depth less than 0.15 metres) and clearly has been greatly disturbed and reduced in size through ploughing. The numerous east-west and north-south furrows that cut through the spread would confirm this. No trough was recovered in association with this deposit probably having been destroyed through agricultural activity. A pit (F021) and a gully (F020) were the only features found in association with this spread and were exposed after it was excavated. The second spread (F026) was situated close to the fence line in marshland and extended into the adjoining field. In all likelihood it was only the south eastern limit of the spread that was exposed in the road corridor. Animal bone of cattle and sheep and deer antler was recovered from the spread and it sealed a timber lined shallow trough. The trough (F029) also contained animal bone and other finds recovered from the fill included a whetstone and two sherds of pre-historic pottery.

References:


Plate 10.11 Burnt mound and timber-lined trough at Knockaun Co. Clare.
Excavation Details:  
Project: N18/19 Ballycasey-Dromoland Road Scheme  
Site Director: Deirdre Murphy  
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services  
Year: 2001

Physical Setting:  
The site was situated near the base of a rock outcrop to the west of low-lying marshland.

Cultural Landscape:  
Bronze Age activity in the area is indicated by the presence of five *fulachtaí fia* situated c. 300m to the north-west clustered in a sheltered area close to a water source. One of these sites had an associated structure and was dated to the late Bronze Age (CL051-172002). Another *fulacht fia* is recorded in the neighbouring townland of Cullen c. 200m to the south-east (CL051-192). A possible standing stone is situated to the south in the townland of Ballycasey Beg (CL051-147).

Adjacent excavated sites: *Fulacht fia* excavated to the south.

**Pre-Excavation features**

The site was uncovered during Archaeological Monitoring in advance of the N18/19 Ballycasey-Dromoland Road Improvement Scheme. No surface trace of the site was evident prior to investigations.

**Excavation Record**

Summary of Features:  
Excavation of the site revealed a spread of heat-shattered stone and a single trough.

Burnt Mound:  
The burnt stone spread (F003) was sub-circular in shape and measured 4.3m by 6.3m with a maximum depth of 0.2m. It consisted of loose sandy loam containing 60% heat-shattered sandstone, 5% charcoal and moderate inclusions of decayed stone.

Trough:  
The trough (F004) was located beneath the small spread and was oval in shape. It measured 2.1m by 1.26m with a depth of 0.31m. Two stones rested on the base of the trough and a single post-hole was also recorded. The fill of the trough consisted of loose sandy loam containing 60% heat-shattered sandstone, 5% charcoal and moderate amounts of decayed stone.
Finds:

Artefacts: None
Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None
Absolute dating: Charcoal from the spread (F003) C14 (Beta-159690) 3930±70 BP (2580–2210 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

This site is in a typical location for a fulacht fia, near low lying marshy ground prone to water logging. The spread (F003) was not very substantial and probably represents the remains of a ploughed out burnt mound. The underlying trough was a simple type, cut into the natural marl and the posthole in the base would suggest the presence of a post for the suspension of vessels/meat or a spit. There was no evidence for the use of timber in the construction of the trough. A radiocarbon date (2580–2210 BC) obtained from the spread (F003) indicated that this site was occupied during the Early Bronze Age and was broadly contemporary with other sites excavated nearby at Killulla and Knockaun townland identified along the road route.

References:

Location: Smithstown  Six inch map no: 51
Parish: Drumline  NGR: 140795, 163973
Barony: Burren Lower  Altitude: 9m OD
County: Clare

Excavation Details:
Project: N18/19 Ballycasey-Dromoland Road Scheme
Site Director: Deirdre Murphy
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services
Year: 2001

Physical Setting:
The site was situated on the side of a small slope close to a field boundary.

Cultural Landscape:
Bronze Age activity in the area is indicated by the presence of five *fulacht fia* situated c. 1km to the north-west clustered in a sheltered area at Killulla. One of these sites had an associated structure and was dated to the late Bronze Age (CL051-172002). Another *fulacht fia* was excavated in the neighbouring townland of Knochaun c. 250m to the north-east (CL051-194). An enclosure on unknown date is located c. 250m to the north-west (CL051-140) while a similar site and an earthwork are recorded to the south (CL051-142, CL051-143001). A standing stone is situated c. 500m to the south-west in the townland of Ballycasey Beg (CL051-147).

Adjacent excavated sites: None

**Pre-Excavation features**

The site was uncovered during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N18/19 Ballycasey-Dromoland Road Improvement Scheme. No surface trace of the site was evident prior to investigations.

**Excavation Record**

Summary of Features:
Excavation of the site revealed a spread of heat-shattered stone and a single rectangular which may have originally been timber-lined.

Burnt Mound:
The burnt stone spread (F003) was oval in shape and measured 4.45m by 4.2m with a maximum depth of 0.25m. It consisted of a spread of compact grey clay containing 60-70% heat shattered sandstone, frequent decayed stone and frequent flecks of charcoal.

Trough:
The trough (F004) was discovered beneath the burnt spread and was rectangular in shape. It measured 2.2m by 1.3m with a maximum depth of 0.35m. It was cut into the side of a slope however the base was flat and did not follow the contour of the slope. Consequently it was deeper at its western extent than it was at its eastern extent. A concentration of charcoal was
revealed along the sides and base of the trough suggested that it may have been timber-lined (Murphy, 2001). The fill of the trough consisted of compact grey marl containing 50% heat shattered sandstone, 10% re-deposited natural, 10% charcoal and 5% decayed stone.

**Finds:**

- **Artefacts:** None
- **Ecofacts:** None

**Dating:**

- **Relative dating:** None
- **Absolute dating:** Charcoal (unknown species) from the spread (F003) C14 (Beta-159692) 2610±40 BP (820−770 BC)

**Excavation Interpretation:**

This site was near low-lying ground close to the edge of the line of the proposed new road. The spread (F003) was not very substantial and probably represents the remains of a ploughed out burnt mound, although considering its location it is also possible that part of the site extends outside the roadtake. The underlying trough was a simple type cut into the natural marl and the concentration of charcoal along the sides and base of the trough would suggest that it was originally timber lined. A radiocarbon date of 820–770 BC obtained from the spread (F003) indicated that this site was occupied during the Late Bronze Age. It was broadly contemporary with similar sites identified along the road route.

**References:**


Plate 10.12 Burnt stone deposit and rectangular trough at Smithstown, Co. Clare.
Catalogue No. CE 11
RMP No. NA
Licence No. 01E0522

Location: Townland: Smithstown    Six inch map no: 51
Parish: Drumline   NGR: 140739, 163737
Barony: Bunratty Lower  Altitude: 8m OD
County: Clare

Excavation Details: Project: N18/19 Ballycasey-Dromoland Road Scheme
Site Director: Deirdre Murphy
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services
Year: 2001

Physical Setting: The site was situated on the side of a small south facing slope close to a field boundary. Trough located on natural spring.

Cultural Landscape: Bronze Age activity in the area is indicated by the presence of five *fulacht fia* situated c. 1km to the north-west clustered in a sheltered area at Killulla. One of these sites had an associated structure and was dated to the late Bronze Age (CL051-172002). Another *fulacht fia* was excavated in the neighbouring townland of Knochaun c. 250m to the north-east (CL051-194). An enclosure on unknown date is located c. 250m to the north-west (CL051-140) while a similar site and an earthwork are recorded to the south (CL051-142, CL051-143001). A standing stone is situated c. 500m to the south-west in the townland of Ballycasey Beg (CL051:147).

Adjacent excavated sites: *Fulacht fia* (see above)

**Pre-Excavation features**

The site was uncovered during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N18/19 Ballycasey-Dromoland Road Improvement Scheme. No surface trace of the site was evident prior to investigations.

**Excavation Record**

**Summary of Features:** Excavation of the site revealed a spread of heat-shattered stone, nine pits, two troughs and a series of stake holes.

**Burnt Mound:** The burnt stone spread (F003) was bisected by a modern field drain resulting in two spreads. The northern deposit measured 12m by 6m while the southern spread measured 4m by 7.42m. Both spreads had an average thickness of 0.25m. The consisted of loose grey-black loam containing 60-70% heat shattered sandstone and 5% charcoal.

**Trough 1:** Trough (F014) was located at the eastern extent of the site and was roughly circular in shape with two smaller circular pits extending from the northern sides. It measured 3.9m by 3.1m with a maximum depth of 0.85m. The two oval pits along the northern side of the trough had slight central depressions.
in their bases. There was a natural spring in the base of this trough and once the fill had been excavated the trough filled up with water. The fill of the pit consisted of loose black loam containing 50% heat shattered sandstone and moderate flecks of charcoal.

**Trough 2:**
This trough (F018) was located to the south of pit (F10). It was oval in shape and Murphy notes that the sites were lined with a grey marl containing charcoal flecks (Murphy, 2001). The sites of the cut were straight and the base was flat. It measured 1.22m by 1.05m with a depth of 0.7m. The fill consisted of loose black loam containing 5% charcoal and 60-70% heat shattered sandstone.

**Pit 1:**
F010 was oval in shape and measured 2.35m by 1m with a depth of 0.25m. It was filled with material similar to the spread.

**Pit 2:**
F011 was also oval in shape and measured 1.4m by 1m with a depth of 0.4m. The fill consisted of black-grey loam containing chunks of marl, 60-65% heat shattered sandstone and occasional flecks of charcoal.

**Pit 3:**
A u-shaped pit (F012) was located 2m south of the previous pit and measured 2.9m by 1.22m with a depth of 0.12m. The fill consisted of loose grey-black sandy loam containing 90% heat shattered sandstone.

**Pit 4:**
This pit (F013) was rectangular in shape and measured 2.43m by 1.34m with a depth of 0.18m. The fill consisted of loose black-grey loam containing frequent heat shattered stone and occasional charcoal flecks.

**Pit 5:**
Pit (F025) was oblong in shape and measured 1.8m by 0.66m with a depth of 0.18m. The fill consisted of loose black–grey loam containing 60-70% heat shattered sandstone and occasional charcoal flecks.

**Pit 6:**
F024 was circular in shape and measured 0.42m by 0.48m with a depth of 0.12m. The fill consisted of loose black loam containing 60% heat shattered sandstone and frequent charcoal flecks.

**Pit 7:**
Pit (F015) was oval in shape and measured 2.4m by 0.8m and reached a depth of 0.25m. The fill consisted of loose black loam containing 60% heat shattered sandstone and frequent charcoal flecks.

**Pit 8:**
Pit (F026) was oval in shape and measured 1.68m by 0.66m and reached a depth of 0.21m. The fill consisted of loose black loam containing 60% heat shattered sandstone and frequent charcoal flecks.

**Pit 9:**
Pit (F027) was oval in shape and measured 0.4m by 0.64m with a depth of 0.21m. The fill consisted of compact grey loam containing 5% stone, both heat shattered and decayed and frequent flecks of charcoal. Worked flint fragment.

**Trough/Pit:**
Pit F020 was oval in shape and measured 2.6m by 1.6m and survived to a depth of 0.35m. Sixteen stake-holes were uncovered cutting the base of the pit forming two roughly parallel lines, which extended north-west to south-
east with two stake-holes between the two lines and two situated in the western corner of the pit. It is possible that further stake-holes existed in the western segment of the pit and were destroyed by the linear feature (F004). The fill of the pit consisted of loose black loam containing 60% heat shattered sandstone and frequent charcoal flecks.

Finds:

Artefacts: Worked flint fragment from pit (F027)

Dating:

Absolute dating: Charcoal (unknown species) from trough (F014)
C14 (Beta-159691) 2790±80 BP (1140–800 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

This site was near low lying ground close to a field boundary on a south facing slope. The spread (F003) was quite extensive but was not very deep and probably represents the remains of a ploughed out burnt mound. It was truncated by a field drain (F004) and a furrow (F005) and numerous pits and a trough (F014) surrounded it. The trough was located on a natural spring. When the spread was removed a second trough (F018) and four pits (F019, F020, F027, F028) were exposed. The underlying trough was a simple type cut into the natural marl. A series of sixteen stakeholes were evident in the base of the pit (F020) and these may indicate the former presence of a timber lining.

References:


Plate 10.13 Truncated trough and well pit at Smithstown, Co. Clare.
Physical Setting: The site is located in a hollow between two hills in poorly drained pasture. The site was waterlogged during excavation.

Cultural Landscape: Prehistoric activity in the area is indicated by fulachtái fia situated c. 60m to the north-east (CL050-069002) and c. 600m to the south-west (CL050-070001, CL050-070002). A pit burial was also recorded a 100m to the north-east (CL050-069003). Several burnt pits were revealed during excavation c. 1km to the south-west (CL050-070003, CL050-070004). A hilltop enclosure is situated c. 1km to the west (CL050-013).

Adjacent excavated sites: Fulachtái fia excavated 60m to the north-east (CL050-069002)

**Pre-Excavation features**

The site was uncovered during Archaeological Monitoring in advance of the Bord Gáis Pipeline to the West. No surface trace of the site was evident prior to investigations.

**Excavation Record**

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a large spread of heat-shattered stone, two intercutting troughs and a large sump which may have acted as a well.

Burnt Mound: The substantial burnt mound measured 23m by 17m with a height of 1.55m. It consisted of 90% heat-shattered sandstone with a charcoal rich fill. Seven separate deposits were noted in the mound material.

Intercutting Troughs: Two intercutting troughs were identified at the site with a combined measurement of 4.1m by 3.1m and a depth of 0.48m. Halpin notes that originally this may have been one large trough which was re-cut (2007, 171). They were oval to sub-rectangular in shape and the fill consisted of material similar to the mound material. A rough spread of unburnt limestone was uncovered on the south-east edge of the trough. The troughs filled with water during excavation.
Pit/Well: A large pit was excavated on site which was sub-circular in shape. Halpin notes that may have been a natural depression that was re-shaped during the Bronze Age, possibly to facilitate access to the feature (2007, 171). The pit was backfilled with burnt material including hazelnuts and worked wood. The feature measured 10.2m by 9m with a depth of at least 1.85m.

Finds:

Artefacts: Worked tree stump from large pit and a quantity of hazelnuts.

Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: None

Excavation Interpretation:

Excavation of the site revealed a large spread of heat-shattered stone which can be interpreted as the remains of the waste-firing material associated with pyrolithic water-boiling. A large pit excavated on site probably functioned as a water-source for the adjacent troughs which showed signs of being intercut. This may indicate that site was re-used. The troughs filled with water during the excavation which may imply that the water table has changed significantly since the Bronze Age. A small stone-lined pit was also excavated on site and was interpreted as a possible roasting oven.

References:


Fig. 10.22 Excavated troughs, possible well and worked timber from Ballycorick, Co. Clare.
Catalogue No. CE 13  
RMP No. CL050-069002  
Licence No. 02E1186

Location:  
Townland: Ballycorick  
Parish: Clondagad  
Barony: Islands  
County: Clare  
Six inch map no: 50  
NGR: 128573, 166832  
Altitude: 35m OD

Excavation Details:  
Project: Pipeline to the west  
Site Director: Brian Halpin  
Consultants: Margaret Gowen & Company  
Year: 2002

Physical Setting:  
The site is located in a hollow between two hills in poorly drained pasture.

Cultural Landscape:  
Prehistoric activity in the area is indicated by fulachtá fia situated c. 60m to the south-west (CL050-069001) and c. 600m to the south-west (CL050-070001, CL050-070002). A pit burial was also recorded 100m to the north-east (CL050-069003). Several burnt pits were revealed during excavation c. 1km to the south-west (CL050-070003, CL050-070004). A hilltop enclosure is situated c. 1km to the west (CL050:013).

Adjacent excavated sites: Fulachtá fia excavated 60m to the south-west west (CL050-069001).

**Pre-Excavation features**

The site was uncovered during Archaeological Monitoring in advance of the Bord Gáis Pipeline to the West. No surface trace of the site was evident prior to investigations.

**Excavation Record**

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a spread of heat-shattered stone, a re-cut trough and a possible metalled surface.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound was spread over an area measuring 7m by 5.25m with a surviving height of 0.3m. It was kidney-shaped in plan and consisted of five distinct layers of heat-shattered sandstone in a matrix of black silts and charcoal.

Trough: The trough was U-shaped in plan and measured 1.55 by 1.28 with a depth of 0.2m. It had steep sides and an uneven base and the fill consisted of black sandy clay with heat-shattered sandstone and limestone.

Trough Re-cut: The trough was later re-cut at right angles by a sub-rectangular trough measuring 1.45 by 0.95 with a depth of 0.25. The fill consisted of black sandy clay with heat-shattered sandstone and limestone.
Surface: In the south-western area of the site a compact layer of pebbles and small stones was exposed. This possible represented an attempt to consolidate the wet area around the trough.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: None

Excavation Interpretation:

Excavation of the site revealed a mound of heat-shattered stone which can be interpreted as the remains of the waste-firing material associated with pyrolithic water-boiling. The stratigraphic make-up of the mound material indicates that the site was returned to multiple times to carry out pyrolithic water-boiling. Although this cannot be confirmed by radiocarbon dates from the site, the trough showed signs of being re-cut at a later period suggesting that the site was indeed returned to in later periods.

References:

Catalogue No.   CE 14
RMP No. CL060-028
Licence No. 02E1207

Location: Townland: Ballyleaan  Six inch map no: 60
Parish: Clonderalaw  NGR: 125998, 160532
Barony: Killadysert  Altitude: 45m OD
County: Clare

Excavation Details: Project: Pipeline to the west
Site Director: Kate Taylor
Consultants: Margaret Gowen & Company
Year: 2002

Physical Setting: The site was situated at the edge of a bog surrounded by gently undulating hills. The site sloped down sharply, with a spring at the base of the slope.

Cultural Landscape: Prehistoric activity in the area is indicated by fulachtai fia situated c. 150m to the north (CL060-029) and a hilltop enclosure located c. 1.5km to the south-west (CL060-030).

Adjacent excavated sites: Fulachtai fia excavated 150m to north (CL060-029)

Pre-Excavation features
The site was uncovered during Archaeological Monitoring in advance of the Bord Gáis Pipeline to the West. No surface trace of the site was evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a spread of heat-shattered stone that possibly continued outside the area of excavation. The excavated portion of the burnt mound was spread over an area measuring 11m by 6m with a surviving height of 0.3m. The mound was semi-circular in plan and continued beyond the wayleave into the bog. It consisted of charcoal-rich silty clay with 50% heat-shattered stone. No finds or animal bone was recovered from the mound material and it was not scientifically dated.

Finds: None
Dating: None

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<td>Margaret Gowen &amp; Company</td>
<td><strong>Year:</strong></td>
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**Physical Setting:**
The site was situated in wet ground at the base of a south-west facing slope overlooking a stream and a bog to the west.

**Cultural Landscape:**
Prehistoric activity in the area is indicated by *fulachtai fia* situated c. 150m to the south (CL060-028) and a hilltop enclosure located c. 1.5km to the south-west (CL060-030).

**Adjacent excavated sites:**
*Fulachtai fia* excavated 150m to South (CL060-028)

**Pre-Excavation features**
The site was uncovered during archaeological monitoring in advance of the Bord Gáis Pipeline to the West. No surface trace of the site was evident prior to investigations.

**Excavation Record**

**Summary of Features:**
Excavation of the site revealed a large spread of heat-shattered stone, a trough and a pit. The excavated burnt mound was spread over an area measuring 20m by 8m with a surviving height of 0.2m. It consisted of four deposits of black ash and silt with a high proportion of heat-shattered sandstone and charcoal. The trough was oval in shape with steep sides and a flat base. It measured 1.85m by 1.42m with a depth of 0.4m. An Early Bronze Age date was returned from charcoal within this pit. A sub-oval pit was also excavated on site measuring 2m by 1.4m with a depth of 0.45m. The fill consisted of material similar to the make-up of the mound. No finds were recovered from the site.

**Dating:**
Charcoal (unknown species) from the trough
C14 (UB-6064) 3894±32 BP (2473–2293 BC)

**References:**
Catalogue No.  CE 16
RMP No. CL050-060
Licence No. 02E0951

Location: Townland: Ballynagard  Six inch map no: 50
Parish: Kilchreest  NGR: 126599, 154266
Barony: Clonderalaw  Altitude: 60m OD
County: Clare

Excavation Details:
Project: Pipeline to the west
Site Director: Brian Halpin
Consultants: Margaret Gowen and Company Ltd.
Year: 2002

Physical Setting: The site was situated in wet ground at the base of a south-west facing slope overlooking a stream.

Cultural Landscape: Possible prehistoric activity in the area is indicated by the presence of a metalworking site located 500m to the north (CL050-060) in the townland of Ballynacally.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during archaeological monitoring in advance of the Bord Gáis Pipeline to the West. No surface trace of the site was evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a large spread of heat-shattered stone, and a series of interconnected troughs, one of which timber-lined consisting of a hollowed-out tree trunk.

Burnt Mound: The excavated burnt mound was spread over an area measuring 17m by 8m with a surviving height of 1m. It consisted of four deposits of charcoal-rich soil with heat-shattered stone. Charcoal from one of these deposits returned a Middle Bronze Age date.

Timber Trough: This trough is described as a triple trough and measured 2.07m by 1m with a depth of 0.42m (Halpin 2007, 178). It was cut into bedrock and lined with the partial remains of a hollowed-out tree trunk. No other information on other trough features related to this timber example. The fill consisted of burnt mound material and charcoal produced a Middle Bronze Age date.

Post-holes: North-east of this trough several stake-holes were exposed along with an upcast area of stone interpreted as material from the initial digging of the trough.
Interconnected troughs: To the north of the timber trough, a double pit feature was exposed that measured 3.6m by 2.6m with an unknown depth. They had sharp sloping sides and were cut into the underlying bedrock. The excavator notes that they cut the timber trough suggesting that this was later phase of activity and may have held water naturally.

Finds:

Artefacts: None
Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None
Absolute dating: Charcoal from the trough
C14 (UB-6090) 3170±32 BP (1518–1407 BC)
Charcoal from the mound material
C14 (UB-179171) 3160±40 BP (1510–1380 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

Limited information is available for this site however it is evident from the large deposit of waste-firing material and the multiple troughs that this site functioned as a water-boiling area during the Middle Bronze Age period which may have been revisited a number of times which is attested to by the presence of a number of troughs that may not be contemporary in date. A hollowed-out tree trunk was possibly used as a boiling trough and is dated to the Middle Bronze Age. These trough types are particularly common during this period (see Chapter 5).

References:


Fig. 10.23 Burnt mound and double trough features at Ballynagard
Located in the hollow of two sharply sloping limestone hills.

Prehistoric activity in the area is indicated by the presence of a fulacht fia located c. 600mm to the west (CL026-165). An earthwork is also recorded c. 250m to the south (CL026-050) which may date to any period.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during archaeological monitoring in advance of the Bord Gáis Pipeline to the West. No surface trace of the site was evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a two spreads of heat-shattered stone and a well-defined unlined trough pit. The burnt spread was sub-circular in shape and measured 14m in diameter with a depth of 0.4m. It consisted of several distinct layers of heat-shattered stone and charcoal rich material. Another smaller spread was revealed 6m to the north-west. The trough had a U-shaped profile and measured 4.5m by 2m with a substantial depth of 1.6m to access the water table. It had sharp sloping sides with a rounded base. Halpin noted two further cuts at either side of the trough, possibly to facilitate access (Grogan et al. 2007, 181). No information on the fill of the trough. No finds were recorded from the site and it wasn’t scientifically dated.

References:

Location: Townland: Bearnafunshin Six inch map no: 26
Parish: Kilraghtis NGR: 138426, 185885
Barony: Burreatty Upper Altitude: 60m OD
County: Clare

Excavation Details: Project: Pipeline to the west
Site Director: Emer Dennehy
Consultants: Margaret Gowen and Company Ltd.
Year: 2002

Physical Setting: The site lies in an area of flat, low-lying farmland with unrestricted views. The site was severely truncated by the natural rise and fall of the nearby Millbrook River.

Cultural Landscape: Possible prehistoric activity in the area is indicated by the presence of a ringditch located c. 300m to the north (CL026-186001) and a cremation pit situated a further c. 50m away (CL026-186001). An enclosure is recorded c. 300m to the south-east (CL026-059).

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features
The site was uncovered during Archaeological Monitoring in advance of the Bord Gáis Pipeline to the West. No surface trace of the site was evident prior to investigations. The site extended beyond the wayleave.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a burnt mound situated close to a river. Investigations of the site suggested that the area was flooded by the river on numerous occasions. The spread consisted of heat-shattered limestone in a charcoal rich matrix. A deposit of unburnt limestone in a clay/silt matrix overlay the shattered stone. Dennehy states that the mottled nature of the deposit suggests that it was left open for a period of time during which time the nearby river flooded, causing the silting of material to the lower layers (Grogan et al. 2007, 181). Another layer of heat-shattered stone and charcoal overlay this flooding event suggesting later re-use of the site.

References:
Excavation Details:

Location: Townland: Cahermalough
Parish: Kilraghtis
Barony: Bunratty Upper
County: Clare

Pipe to the west

Site Director: Brian Halpin
Consultants: Margaret Gowen & Company
Year: 2002

Physical Setting:
The site was located immediately south of a small, fast flowing stream in an undulating landscape of low-lying hills.

Cultural Landscape:
Possible prehistoric activity in the area is indicated by the presence of a ringditch located c. 300m to the north (CL026-186001) and a cremation pit situated a further c. 50m away (CL026-186001). An enclosure is recorded c. 300m to the south-east (CL026-059).

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during archaeological monitoring in advance of the Bord Gáis Pipeline to the West. No surface trace of the site was evident prior to investigations. The site extended beyond the wayleave.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features:
Excavation of the site revealed a burnt mound spread which sealed a small unlined trough. The spread consisted of several layers of heat-shattered sandstone in a charcoal rich matrix (Dimensions unknown). The trough was sub-circular and measured 1.36m by 1.34m and survived to a depth of 0.32m. It was U-shaped in profile with steep sides and a flat base. It was filled with deposits of heat-shattered stone and charcoal. No finds were recorded and the site was not scientifically dated.

References:

Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during archaeological Monitoring in advance of the Bord Gáis Pipeline to the West. The site extended beyond the wayleave.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a large burnt mound and a smaller spread. Two troughs were indentified showing several phases of use including one phase that suggested two troughs were in use at the same time, connected by a channel.

Burnt Mound: The large burnt mound was horseshoe-shaped in plan and measured 19.5m by 9m with a height of 0.72m. A second, smaller burnt mound was associated with a separate phase and measured 6.5m by 7.2m with a height of 0.42m. The debris consisted of 85% heat-shattered sandstone in a charcoal rich matrix. The authors sate that the second deposit was located north and east of the troughs, leaving a clear 2m wide space, indicating that a more extensive working area existed on the south side.

Trough 1: This trough was sub-rectangular in plan and measured 2.2m by 1.44m with a depth of 0.22m. It was lined with four alder planks, three on the base and
one surviving at the side. One of these planks produced a Late Bronze Age date.

This trough was rebuilt during a later phase of use (third phase). It was slightly smaller than the previous measuring 1.8m by 1.1m with a depth of 0.3m. It was lined with oak planks along the sides and base and held in place with oak pegs in the corners. A Late Bronze Age date was returned from this phase.

Trough 2: The second trough identified on site was not excavated due to wayleave constraints but it was connect to the first trough by a channel indicating a possible relationship.

Gully: A linear channel extended from the first trough and was connected to the second, implying that water flowed between the two pits. Two Late Bronze Age dates were obtained from this gully.

Debris: Burnt wood and organic material beneath the mound may indicate a residual woodpile or debris associated with the initial clearing of the site.

Hearth: Two fireplaces were identified in the mound deposited to the south and east. No other detail available.

Stakes: Two groups of in situ pegs were identified to the west and south of the trough.

Platform: A large stone platform covered trough 1 and the channel and was possibly associated with the second unexcavated trough during a fifth phase of use on site. The platform measured 4m by 3.24m.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: The wood was identified as alder and oak.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Wood (alder) from trough 1 (Phase 1)
C14 (GrN-28195) 2660±30 BP (900–790 BC)
Charcoal (unknown) from the water channel
C14 (UB-6022) 2853±38 BP (819–669 BC)
C14 (UB-6021) 2653±43 BP (902–794 BC)
Oak peg from cluster close to trough
C14 (GrN-28196) 2780±30 BP (1000–830 BC)
Oak peg from phase 2 trough
C14 (GrN-28194) 2525±20 BP (800–540 BC)
Excavation Interpretation:

Excavation of the site revealed a multi-period *fulacht fia*. The presence of two troughs, one of which was timber-lined on a number of different occasions suggests the site functioned as a water-boiling location and was deemed important enough for re-visiting in later periods. The presence of a water-channel between the two troughs would also imply that they functioned concurrently where water may have flowed between the two pits. One may have functioned as an emptying feature for the trough however as the site was not fully exposed this cannot be confirmed. Water inundation may have been a problem at the site explaining the presence of the water channel and later stone surface.

References:

Location: Townland: Cahiracon  Six inch map no: 69
Parish: Killadysert  NGR: 122625, 155211
Barony: Clonderalaw  Altitude: 60m OD
County: Clare

Excavation Details: Project: Pipeline to the west
Site Director: Emer Dennehy and Sinéad Madigan
Consultants: Margaret Gowen and Company Ltd.
Year: 2002

Physical Setting: This was one of a cluster of sites excavated close to the base of a shallow peaty valley that extends c. 500m to the north. The site was situated on the top of a north-west facing slope in an elevated, shallow valley. Water naturally accumulated in the base of this valley.

Cultural Landscape: Prehistoric activity in the area is indicated by the presence of further fulachtai fia in the vicinity. Several sites were excavated here during the same pipeline scheme c. 150m to the north (CL069-026001) and c. 100m to the north (CL069-026002). A further site was excavated c. 150m to the south-west (CL069-025).

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during archaeological monitoring in advance of the Bord Gáis Pipeline to the West.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a large burnt mound, several troughs, a number of pits and stake-holes and a hearth.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound was oval in shape and measured 14.8m by 7.3m with a height of 1.15m. It consisted of heat-shattered stone in a matrix of charcoal and black silty clays.

Pit 1: This pit represent the first phase of activity on the site. It measured 0.96m by 1.95m with a depth of 0.32m. This pit was associated with a series of stake-holes interpreted as a rack or screen.

Pit 2: This pit cut through the first and is therefore related to a second phase of activity at the site. It measured 0.58m by 0.42m with a depth of 0.32. Both pits contained black silty clays and heat-shattered sandstone and shale.

Catalogue No. CL 21
RMP No. CL069-024
Licence No. 02E1138
Trough 1: A trough measuring 2.36m by 1.41m with a depth of 0.63m cut the second pit suggesting that this was related to a third phase of activity.

Hearth: This hearth was related to the trough mentioned above.

Pit 3: This pit measured 1m by 0.28m and reached a depth of 0.19m. The fill consisted of heat-shattered sandstone.

Trough 2: This trough was associated with a fourth phase of activity and measured 3.21m by 2.45m and reached a depth of 0.45m. A hearth was located to the south.

This trough was deliberately shortened in another separate phase and an associated fireplace occurred over the backfilled portion.

Stockpile: A deposit of unburnt sandstone was located on the west side of this trough.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: The wood was identified as alder and oak.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: None

Excavation Interpretation:

Excavation of the site revealed a multi-period fulacht fia as evident from the large intact burnt mound and numerous intercutting features. The excavators confirmed that at least five phases of pyrolytic activity at the site which was established through the well preserved stratigraphy present on the site. The presence of numerous troughs, some of which were re-cut, and burnt areas suggest that area was an important water-boiling site to a local Bronze Age family or community.

References:

Excavation Details:

Location: Cahiracon
Parish: Killadyser
Barony: Clonderalaw
County: Clare

Physical Setting:
This was one of a cluster of sites excavated close to the base of a shallow peaty valley that extends c. 500m to the north. The site was situated in the base of a shallow, elevated bowl valley within sight of the Shannon estuary.

Cultural Landscape:
Prehistoric activity in the area is indicated by the presence of further *fulachtai fia* in the vicinity. Several sites were excavated here during the same pipeline scheme c. 150m to the south (CL069-024) and c. 100m to the north (CL069-026002). A further site was excavated c. 300m to the south-west (CL069-025).

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during archaeological monitoring in advance of the Bord Gáis Pipeline to the West.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a large burnt mound and a single trough with several separate phases evident.

Burnt Mound: The large burnt mound was horseshoe-shaped in plan and measured 19.5m by 9m with a height of 0.72m. A second, smaller burnt mound was associated with a separate phase and measured 6.5m by 7.2m with a height of 0.42m. The debris consisted of 85% heat-shattered sandstone in a charcoal rich matrix.

Trough: The trough was rectangular in plan and measured 2.3m by 1.27m with a depth of 0.56m. It was constructed with slit oak planks with four pegs in each of the corners. Groves were noted in the east and west sides of the base planks for the insertion of the side planking. The trough was fed from a spring directly to the west. A layer of sand was noted under the base of the trough where the planks were laid. A Late Bronze Age date was returned.
from this phase of use. The remains of a timber platform were also uncovered south of the trough.

A second phase of use was evident when the trough was halved in size by a deposit of stone laid down in the western half acting as a platform. Dennehy suggests that this signified a possible change in function and provided a solid working area (2007, 188). A late Bronze Age date was returned from this phase. The trough was then deliberately backfilled with burnt wood that Dennehy suggests was a symbolic act.

Hearth: A hearth was uncovered on the east side of the mound and was interpreted as another phase of activity associated with the site.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: The timber lining was identified as oak. Pollen analysis indicated a large clearing within woodland including oak, pine and alder on the margins of swampy land with slow moving water nearby. Weevil was noted in the trough whose larvae live in the galls of the oak gall wasp. Oak galls have a long history of use in the cloth-dying industry.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating:
- Charcoal/wood (unknown) from trough (Phase 1)
  C14 (GrN-28197) 2660±40 BP (900–790 BC)
- Charcoal (unknown) from the stone infill (Platform trough (Phase 2)
  C14 (UB-6024) 2854±26 BP (803–525 BC)
- Burnt timber from fill of trough
  C14 (UB-6023) 2607±38 BP (832–775 BC)
  C14 (GrN-28193) 2660±30 BP (900–790 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

Excavation of the site revealed a multi-period fulacht fia as evident from the large intact burnt mound and timber-lined trough. The excavators confirmed that a number of phases of pyrolithic activity at the site which was established through the well preserved trough that was returned to and shortened for further use during the Early Iron Age. This indicates that the area was an important water-boiling site to a local Bronze Age family or community.

References:

Fig. 10.25 Different trough phase recorded in the site at Cahiracon, Co. Clare.
Location: Townland: Cahiracon Six inch map no: 69
Parish: Killadysert NGR: 122702, 155474
Barony: Clonderalaw Altitude: 60m OD
County: Clare

Excavation Details: Project: Pipeline to the west
Site Director: Emer Dennehy and Bruce Sutton
Consultants: Margaret Gowen and Company Ltd.
Year: 2002

Physical Setting: This was one of a cluster of sites excavated close to the base of a shallow peaty valley that extends c. 500m to the north. The site was situated on the north-facing cusp of a low-lying hill, 150 downslope from site CL021 (CL069-026001).

Cultural Landscape: Prehistoric activity in the area is indicated by the presence of further fulachtai fia in the vicinity. Several sites were excavated here during the same pipeline scheme c. 150m to the south (CL069-024) and c. 150m to the north (CL069-026001). A further site was excavated c. 400m to the south-west (CL069-025).

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during Archaeological Monitoring in advance of the Bord Gáis Pipeline to the West. The site extends beyond the wayleave.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a burnt mound of heat-shattered stone and several troughs cut into each other indicating several phases of use.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound was D-shaped in plan and measured 9.3m by 4m with a height of 0.3m. It consisted of heat-shattered sandstone and limestone with ore residues in a charcoal rich matrix. Alternate layers of burning and smelting within the mound were noted. These were not associated with any of the cut features. A Middle Bronze Age date was returned.

Site preparation: Dennehy notes that the ground level beneath the mound appeared to have been deliberately reduced to provide a contained work surface.

Trough 1: This trough was L-shaped in plan and measured 2.5m by 1.7m with a depth of 0.72m. It represents the first trough cut on site. The trough contained burnt ore-like material, probably burnt iron pan.
Trough 2: The trough was later re-cut and shortened measuring 1.8m by 1m. It was lined with slate flags to define the edges. Several of the flags were scorched suggesting they had been fired to a considerable heat.

Trough 3: During the third phase of activity the trough was re-cut again, through the eastern portion. It measured 0.8m by 1.15m with a depth of 0.25m. It contained a single fill of 40% burnt sandstone in a black silt-clay matrix.

Finds:
Artefacts: None
Ecofacts: None

Dating:
Relative dating: None
Absolute dating: A sample from the burning and smelting layer in the mound C14 (Beta-179176) 3090±80 BP (1520–1120 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:
Excavation of the site revealed a multi-period fulacht fia as evident from the large intact burnt mound and numerous intercutting features. The excavators confirmed at least three phases of pyrolithic activity at the site which was evident from the three troughs all inter-cutting each other. The ‘ore’ and ‘smelting’ layers noted in the mound material probably relate to a natural phenomenon. The excavator suggests that the lack of any sod layers beneath the mound suggests that the wet ground level was reduced to facilitate a dry and level working environment (see Chapter 5). All three troughs intercut suggesting some level of importance to this central area. The trough relating to the second phase was stone lined and appears to have been used for dry roasting activities as is evident from the scorched remains. The trough was later cut again for water-boiling at a later period.

References:

Fig. 10.26 Burnt mound and different phases of use at the site.
Catalogue No.  CE 24
RMP No. NA
Licence No. 02E1151

Location: Townland: Cahiracon  Six inch map no: 69
Parish: Killadysert  NGR: 122219, 155498
Barony: Clonderalaw  Altitude: 60m OD
County: Clare

Excavation Details:
Project: Pipeline to the west
Site Director: Tony Bartlett and Emer Dennehy
Consultants: Margaret Gowen & Company
Year: 2002

Physical Setting: This was one of a cluster of sites excavated close to the base of a shallow peaty valley that extends c. 500m to the north. The site is in bogland at the base of a gently sloping hill to the east.

Cultural Landscape: Prehistoric activity in the area is indicated by the presence of further fulachtai fia in the vicinity. Several sites were excavated here during the same pipeline scheme c. 150m to the south (CL069-024) and c.150m to the north (CL069-026001). A further site was excavated c. 400m to the south-west (CL069-025).

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during archaeological monitoring in advance of the Bord Gáis Pipeline to the West. The site extends beyond the wayleave.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a burnt spread of heat-shattered stone and a stone-lined roasting pit.

Burnt Spread: The spread of burnt material measured 8m by 6m with a depth of 0.15m. It was badly truncated prior to investigation and it extended beyond the area of excavation. The remaining burnt spread located to the east of the pit measured 1.9m by 1m with a thickness of 0.03m. This consisted of grey/black silty clay with heat-shattered sandstone and charcoal.

Pit: The pit measured 1.4m by 0.9m with a depth of 0.4m. It was oval in shape and was slightly truncated by a post-medieval drain to the south. The fill consisted of oxidised silty sand with a large amount of charcoal. This oxidised layer was revealed below a setting of sandstone slabs forming a rectangular platform which the authors suggest may have been for roasting (Bartlett and Taylor 2007, 193). Above this was a deposit of 40% heat-
shattered sandstone and charcoal. Animal bone fragments were recovered from the base of the feature.

**Finds:**

- **Artefacts:** None
- **Ecofacts:** Animal bone fragments were recovered from the fill of the stone-lined pit.

**Dating:**

- **Relative dating:** None
- **Absolute dating:** A sample of charcoal (context unknown) C14 (UB-6013) 3314±38 BP (1731–1517 BC)

**Excavation Interpretation:**

Excavation of the site revealed a spread of heat-shattered stone and charcoal associated with possible dry roasting activities. This is evident from a small stone-lined pit filled with burnt and oxidised silty sand. The sub-soil below the basal stones in the pit also exhibited some degree of burning suggesting it may have functioned as an oven feature similar to that of Ballyourney Co. Cork where an in situ heating element along with the addition of heated stones cooked the meat (see Chapter 7).

**References:**

Location: Townland: Cappagh Beg Six inch map no: 26
Parish: Kilraghtis NGR: 137828, 182095
Barony: Bunratty Upper Altitude: 60m OD
County: Clare

Excavation Details: Project: Pipeline to the west
Site Director: Emer Dennehy
Consultants: Margaret Gowen and Company Ltd.
Year: 2002

Physical Setting: This site lay on a raised area of land on the western dry slope of a small valley that extends for over 500m to the north. The base of this valley is covered by blanket bog to a depth of c. 1m. Stream located 15m to the east.

Cultural Landscape: Prehistoric activity in the area is indicated by the presence of further fulachtai fia in the vicinity. Several burnt stone spreads were revealed during the pipeline project including one site located a short distance to the north (CL026-181002). A Megalithic tomb is recorded c. 600m to the north-east (CL026-177) while a pit burial was excavated c. 600m to the north-west (CL026-188). A burnt mound is situated c. 300m to the north-west (CL026-177).

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during Archaeological Monitoring in advance of the Bord Gáis Pipeline to the West. The site extends beyond the wayleave.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a burnt mound of heat-shattered stone, two pits and a series of stake-holes.

Burnt Mound: The spread of burnt material measured 15m by 13m with a depth of 0.32m. It consisted of a semi-circular mound containing 45% heat-shattered limestone in a black clay matrix.

Pit 1: This pit was semi-circular in shape and measured 1.8m by 1.32m with a depth of 0.47m. The fill consisted of heat-shattered limestone in a dark clay matrix.

Stake-Holes: An arc of six stake-holes was recorded to the north of pit 1. Dennehy suggests that this may have been the remains of a windbreak structure (2007, 193).
Pit 2: This pit measured 1.5m by 0.42m deep. The full extent of the feature was not determined as it lay beyond the limits of excavation. The fill consisted of heat-shattered limestone in a dark clay matrix.

Finds:

Artefacts: None
Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None
Absolute dating: None

Excavation Interpretation:

As with many burnt mound revealed during this pipeline project, this site was not fully exposed therefore a full interpretation of the site cannot be established. Nevertheless, the spread of heat-shattered stone and the presence of two pits may imply that the site functioned as a pyrolithic water-boiling area. Even though these pits may have been used for dry roasting, there relative depths suggests that water-boiling is also a possibility. No finds were recovered and the site was not scientifically dated.

References:


Fig. 10.27 Remains of burnt mound and possible trough features at Cappagh Beg, Co. Clare.
Catalogue No. CE 26
RMP No. NA
Licence No. 02E1514

Location: Townland: Cappagh Beg Six inch map no: 69
Parish: Killadysert NGR: 137828, 182095
Barony: Clonderalaw Altitude: 60m OD
County: Clare

Excavation Details: Project: Pipeline to the west
Site Director: Emer Dennehy
Consultants: Margaret Gowen and Company Ltd.
Year: 2002

Physical Setting: This site lay on a raised area of land on the western dry slope of a small valley that extends for over 500m to the north.

Cultural Landscape: Prehistoric activity in the area is indicated by the presence of further fulachtai fia in the vicinity. Several burnt stone spreads were revealed during the pipeline project including one site located a short distance to the north (CL026-181002). A megalithic tomb is recorded c. 600m to the north-east (CL026-177) while a pit burial was excavated c. 600m to the north-west (CL026-188). A burnt mound is situated c. 300m to the north-west (CL026-177).

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during archaeological monitoring in advance of the Bord Gáis Pipeline to the West. The site extends beyond the wayleave.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a spread of heat-shattered stone, two pits and a water channel.

Burnt Spread: Data unavailable

Pit 1: This pit measured 1.9m by 1.3m with a depth of 0.38m. It extended beyond the wayleave but the fill consisted of 60% burnt limestone and sandstone in a matrix of charcoal and black silty clays.

Pit 2: This pit measured 3.02m by 1.8m with a depth of 0.51m. A natural spring was noted in the base. The fill consisted of 60% burnt limestone and sandstone in a matrix of charcoal and black silty clays.

Channel: A channel connected pit 1 with a nearby stream. This gully or water channel measured 8.7m by 0.18m with a depth of 0.05m.
Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: None

Excavation Interpretation:

Excavation of the revealed a small deposit of heat-shattered stone and charcoal, presumably the waste-firing debris from pyrolithic water-boiling. Two pits were revealed within the area exposed, one of which was connected to a water-channel that may have provided water to the pit from the adjacent stream. This confirms that the site functioned as a small water-boiling area possibly for cooking. However, no animal bone was recovered and the site was not scientifically dated.

References:


Fig. 10.28. Burnt spread, gully and possible trough pit at Capagh Beg, Co. Clare.
Location: Townland: Carrahil Six inch map no: 26
Parish: Inchicronan NGR: 139085, 186905
Barony: Bunratty Upper Altitude: 60m OD
County: Clare

Excavation Details:
Project: Pipeline to the west
Site Director: Emer Dennehy
Consultants: Margaret Gowen and Company Ltd.
Year: 2002

Physical Setting:
This site is at the base of a small shallow valley with rockland to the south.

Cultural Landscape:
Prehistoric activity in the area is indicated by the presence of further fulachtai fia in the vicinity. Several Early Bronze Age fulachtai fia were excavated in the neighbouring townland of Caheraphuca to the west. There is a Megalithic Tomb recorded c. 500m to the north (CL026-015) and there is another fulachtai fia situated c. 170m to the north-east (CL026-138).

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features
The site was uncovered during Archaeological Monitoring in advance of the Bord Gáis Pipeline to the West.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed two phases of activity centred around a number of re-cut pits filled with heat-shattered stone.

Intercutting Pits/Troughs: The first phase of activity was centred around two conjoined pits. The first pit measured 0.95m by 1.95m with a depth of 0.17m. The second pit was sub-rectangular and measured 2.2m by 2.05m with a depth of 0.68m. Dennehy noted two distinct fills with the lower deposit consisting of 40% burnt sandstone in a clay sand mix. The upper fill, and the fill of pit 1 consisted of 60% sandstone and limestone in a clay and sand matrix (2007, 197). The lower fill of pit 2 indicated that pit 1, although part of the same phase of activity was of a later date and the two were subsequently used in tandem (2007, 197).

Trough 3: This pit was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 2.3m by 2.05m with a depth of 0.2m. It contained a fill consisting of 60% burnt and unburnt limestone and sandstone in a sandy silty matrix. A middle fill marked a
period of abandonment while the upper fill contained another deposit of heat-shattered limestone.

Pit 4: This pit was irregular in shape and measured 1.9m by 0.94m with a depth of 0.39m. The basal fill consisted of 25% burnt sandstone in a silty matrix with 4% charcoal. The upper fill was composed of 10% sandstone.

Finds:

- Artefacts: None
- Ecofacts: None

Dating:

- Relative dating: None
- Absolute dating: None

Excavation Interpretation:

Excavation of the revealed a number of pit features filled with heat-shattered stones. Some were intercut suggesting periods of re-use at the site. While some of the pits may have functioned as water-boiling troughs, the insubstantial depth of others suggests another function, possibly relating to dry roasting. No mound or waste-firing debris was revealed during excavation but this may lie outside the exposed area or may have been removed through later ploughing at the site, particularly if it was a small spread. No finds were recovered from the site and it was not scientifically dated.

References:


Fig. 10.29 Pits and troughs at Carrahill, Co. Clare.
Location: Townland: Carrowkilla  Six inch map no: 50
Parish: Kilchreest  NGR: 127202, 163829
Barony: Clonderalaw  Altitude: 60m OD
County: Clare

Excavation Details:
Project: Pipeline to the west
Site Director: Emer Dennehy
Consultants: Margaret Gowen & Company
Year: 2002

Physical Setting:
This site is on a south-west sloping plain of pastureland. The immediate area is wet and poorly drained

Cultural Landscape:
There is no prehistoric activity recorded in the area

Adjacent excavated sites:
None

Pre-Excavation features
The site was uncovered during Archaeological Monitoring in advance of the Bord Gáis Pipeline to the West.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features:
Excavation of the site revealed several phase of activity relating to the use of hot-stone technology. These features consisted of a number of pits cut into the natural bedrock.

Trough:
The trough was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 2.6m by 1.7m with a depth of 0.4m. The basal fill of this featured returned a Middle to Late Bronze Age date. The fill consisted of heat-shattered sandstone and limestone in a charcoal rich matrix.

Channel:
A narrow curving channel connected this trough to a small pit which measured 0.79m by 0.54m with a depth of 0.35m.

Pit 1:
This pit was oval in shape and measured 1.35m by 0.99m with a depth of 0.36m. The fill consisted of heat-shattered sandstone and limestone in a charcoal rich matrix.

Trough/Pit:
This pit was oval in shape and measured 3.1m by 2.24m with a depth of 0.46m. A Middle Bronze Age date was returned from this site.

Pit 2:
This pit was oval in shape and measured 3m by 2.5m with a depth of 0.55m. The pit was fed by a natural spring in the base.
Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal from basal fill of trough 1 (C70)
C14 (UB-6012) 2932±32 BP (1260–1010 BC)
Charcoal from pit/trough C78
C14 (Beta-179175) 3220±80 BP (1690–1310 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

Excavation of the revealed a number of pit features filled with heat-shattered stones. Some were intercut suggesting periods of re-use at the site. While some of the pits may have functioned as water-boiling troughs, the insubstantial depth of others suggests another function, possibly relating to dry roasting. No mound or waste-firing debris was revealed during excavation but this may lie outside the exposed area or may have been removed through later ploughing at the site, particularly if it was a small spread. No finds were recovered from the site and it was not scientifically dated. Some troughs were cut into the natural bedrock suggesting that they may not have need an organic lining to facilitate emptying the fired stones. One pit had an associated water-channel which may have acted as an overflow drain or emptying feature.

References:

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<td>Graham Hull</td>
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<td>Consultants:</td>
<td>Margaret Gowen &amp; Company</td>
</tr>
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<td>Year:</td>
<td>2002</td>
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Physical Setting:

This site was on level boggy rough pasture with wetland and a stream 25m to the west.

Cultural Landscape:

Prehistoric activity in the area is indicated by the presence of further *fulachtai fia* in the vicinity. Several burnt stone spreads were revealed during the pipeline project c. 150m to the north (CL041-176001,02,03). A *fulachtai fia* situated c. 350m to the south-west (CL041-174) while similar sites were excavated further to the south in the townland of Lisheen.

Adjacent excavated sites:

Possible trough pit that may have been associated with the site.

Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during Archaeological Monitoring in advance of the Bord Gáis Pipeline to the West. The site continued beyond the wayleave.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features:

Excavation of the site revealed a mound of heat-shattered stone. The mound of burnt material measured 12m in diameter with a height of 0.7m. Two phases were noted in the mound consisting of laminated deposits of burnt limestone that continued outside the excavated area. A period of abandonment was noted by the presence of a peat layer. The most significant aspect of the excavation was the presence of human skull fragments in the upper deposit of the mound. Cattle and sheep bone were also recorded in the earlier layers.

Dating:

Charcoal (unknown species) from the mound C14 (UB-6059) 2977±31 BP (1372–1100 BC)

References:

Location: Townland: Cragbrien  
Parish: Clondagad  
Barony: Islands  
County: Clare

Excavation Details: Project: Pipeline to the west  
Site Director: Graham Hull  
Consultants: Margaret Gowen & Company  
Year: 2002

Physical Setting: This site was situated on the north-east slope of a low hillock in rough pasture. This site may have been associated with the other spreads excavated adjacent to the site.

Cultural Landscape: Prehistoric activity in the area is indicated by the presence of further fulachtai fia in the vicinity. Several burnt stone spreads were revealed during the pipeline project adjacent to the site in question (CL041-176001, 02). A burnt mound is situated c.150m to the south-west (CL041-175) while similar sites were excavated further to the south in the townland of Lisheen.

Adjacent excavated sites: Several small burnt stone spreads (CL041-176001, 02)

Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during Archaeological Monitoring in advance of the Bord Gáis Pipeline to the West.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a mound of heat-shattered stone which sealed several pits and a cremation burial.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound of heat-shattered stone measured 8.56m by 8.16m with an overall depth of 0.26m. It consisted of black silty clay which contained heat-shattered sandstone and limestone with charcoal fragments.

Pit 1: This pit was oval in shape and contained human cremated bone and charcoal flecks. An Iron Age date was returned from this pit.

Pit 2: This pit was sub-oval and measured 2.32m by 1.08m with a depth of 0.14m. The fill consisted of black silty clay which contained animal bone. This fill produced an Iron Age date also. The second fill contained black silty clay and heat-affected stone.
Pit 3: This pit was located west of the mound and was oval in shape and measured 0.32m by 0.29m with a depth of 0.11m. The fill consisted of black clay and stones. A post-hole was cut into the base of this feature. This pit was connected to two shallow features.

Finds:
Artefacts: None
Ecofacts: Animal and human bone from cremation pit.

Dating:
Relative dating: None
Absolute dating: Charcoal (unknown species) from cremation pit 1 C14 (UB-6060) 2134±30 BP (352–101 BC)
Charcoal (unknown species) from pit 2 C14 (UB-6061) 2115±30 BP (338–92 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:
Excavation of the site revealed a spread of heat-shattered stone and a number of pits, one of which may have served as either a water-boiling trough or a dry roasting pit dating to the Middle Iron Age period. A broadly contemporary cremation burial was also revealed on site suggesting the activity involving pyrolithic technology may have involved some feasting activity associated with a funerary event. However, this cannot by fully confirmed.

References:

Fig. 10.31 Burnt mound, cremation burial and possible trough at Cragbrien, Co. Clare.
### Excavation Details:

- **Project:** Pipeline to the west
- **Site Director:** Graham Hull
- **Consultants:** Margaret Gowen & Company
- **Year:** 2002

### Physical Setting:
This site was situated on boggy ground in undulating terrain 15m south-east of a small stream.

### Cultural Landscape:
Prehistoric activity in the area is indicated by the presence of further burnt stone spreads in the vicinity of the site in question (CL059:045001, 002).

### Adjacent excavated sites:
None

### Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during Archaeological Monitoring in advance of the Bord Gáis Pipeline to the West. The site extended beyond the wayleave to the north-east.

### Excavation Record

#### Summary of Features:
Excavation of the site revealed a mound of heat-shattered stone which sealed a single trough. Only a portion of this was excavated as it lay beyond the limits of the excavation. The portion of the burnt mound which was revealed during excavation measured 3.6m by 2.7m with a depth of 0.2m. It consisted of charcoal rich material containing heat-affected sandstone. The trough pit was sub-oval and measured 1.85m by 1.3m with a depth of 0.45m. It had steeply sloping sides and a flat base with a fill consisting of charcoal rich clay and stone which may have been heat-affected. No finds were recovered from the site and it was not scientifically dated.

#### Finds:
None

#### Dating:
None

### References:


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Catalogue No. CE 31
RMP No. CL059-044
Licence No. 02E1114
Catalogue No.  CE 32
RMP No. CL059-0045
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Excavation Details:
- **Project:** Pipeline to the west
- **Site Director:** Martin Jones and Kate Taylor
- **Consultants:** Margaret Gowen & Company
- **Year:** 2002

Physical Setting:
The two sites were excavated in a low area of rough pastureland between two steep hills and beside a stream. The authors note that both sites were covered by a considerable amount of alluvium.

Cultural Landscape:
Prehistoric activity in the area is indicated by the presence of further burnt stone spreads in the vicinity of the site in question (CL059-045001, 002).

Adjacent excavated sites:
Two sites were situated 25m apart. No other sites were excavated adjacent to these sites.

**Pre-Excavation features**
The site was uncovered during Archaeological Monitoring in advance of the Bord Gáis Pipeline to the West.

**Excavation Record**

**Summary of Features:**
Excavation of the site revealed two burnt mound sites excavated 25m apart. They both sealed a number of features, including troughs, hearths and pits. Other features may have been masked by a considerable amount of alluvium which covered both sites.

**Area A**

**Burnt Mound:**
The mound of burnt stone was oval in shape and measured 8.6m by 5m with a height of 0.7m. It extended beyond the wayleave. It consisted of two deposits of charcoal enriched silts with heat-shattered sandstone and limestone.

**Trough:**
The trough was located on the north edge of the site and was oval in shape. It measured 1.7m by 1.34m with a depth of 0.61m. The base of this feature was lined with flat sandstone slabs. The fill consisted of heat-shattered sandstone and occasional limestone with charcoal and black silty clay. An Early Bronze Age date was returned from this fill.
Pit 1: This pit was uncovered at the southern edge of the mound. It was sub-oval and contained two fills. It measured 1.4m by 1.05 with a depth of 0.4m. The upper fill consisted mainly of unburnt sandstone.

Hearth: The hearth was situated on the western edge of the mound but was truncated by a modern field drain. It measured 1.2m in diameter and showed evidence of in situ burning.

Area B

Burnt Mound: The mound of burnt stone covered the primary features on site but extended beyond the wayleave. It measured 7m in diameter with a height of 0.51m and consisted of heat-shattered stone in a charcoal enriched silt. A Middle Bronze Age date was returned from this deposit.

Trough: The trough was sub-rectangular and measured 2.9m by 1.5m with a maximum depth of 0.24m. The fill consisted of material similar to the mound.

Hearth: The hearth consisted of a thin deposit fire-reddened clay the extended beyond the limits of excavation. It measured 1.3m by 1m with a thickness of 0.06m.

Finds:

Artefacts: None
Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None
Absolute dating: Charcoal from the stone lined trough (Area A)
C14 (UB-6043) 3717±49 BP (2290–1977 BC)
Charcoal from mound material (Area B)
C14 (UB-6044) 3266±38 BP (1672–1448 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

Excavation of the site revealed two areas of pyrolithic activity 25m apart. Both sites contained extensive deposits of waste-firing debris associated with pyrolithic technology and each contained well-defined troughs and hearths associated with water-boiling. Radiocarbon dating has established that both were not contemporary but the area remained a focus for pyrolithic activity for hundreds of years.

References:

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**Excavation Details:**

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**Physical Setting:**

The site was on level, poorly drained pastureland with a steep scarp 300m to the north and a small stream immediately to the east. The site extended beyond the wayleave.

**Cultural Landscape:**

Prehistoric activity in the area is indicated by the presence of further burnt stone spreads c. 200m to the north-east. Another *fulachtai* was situated a short distance from the site in question (CL050-065001).

**Adjacent excavated sites:** None

**Pre-Excavation features**

The site was uncovered during Archaeological Monitoring in advance of the Bord Gáis Pipeline to the West. It extended beyond the pipeline corridor.

**Excavation Record**

**Summary of Features:** Excavation of the site revealed a burnt mound of heat-shattered stone which sealed two troughs and a number of pit features.

**Burnt Mound:**

The excavated portion of the burnt mound measured 15.6m by 14.4m with a height of 0.25m. It consisted of heat-shattered sandstone and limestone in a charcoal enriched silty clay. Hull suggests that the burnt mound was laid down in stages suggesting several phases of activity on the site (2007, 210).

**Trough 1:**

This trough was sub-rectangular in shape with steep sides and a flat base. It measured 2.35m by 1.53m with a depth of 0.16m. The fill consisted of black silty clay with charcoal inclusions and heat-shattered sandstone and limestone.

**Trough 2:**

This trough was oval in shape with steeply cut sides. It measured 4.1m by 1.3m with a depth of 0.5m. Two fills were recorded in the trough with the primary deposit consisting of orange/grey silt with burnt stone while the secondary fill contained a dark mixture of heat-affected sandstone and limestone with some charcoal.
Pit 1: This pit was one of two which were located to the west of the troughs. It measured 2.05m in diameter with a depth of 0.57m. The fill consisted of material similar to the mound. A Late Bronze Age date was returned from this feature.

Pit 2: The second pit was oval in shape and measured 4.5m by 3.7m with a depth of 0.9m. The fills were similar to that of the previous pit. A Late Bronze Age date was returned from this pit.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating:
- Charcoal from pit 1
  C14 (Beta-179181) 2790±40 BP (1020–830 BC)
- Charcoal from pit 2
  C14 (UB-6062) 2808±33 BP (1042–900 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

This pyrolithic site is dated to the Late Bronze Age and functioned as a pyrolithic water-boiling site. This is confirmed by the presence of waste-firing debris associated with pyrolithic technology and a number of pits that may have functioned as troughs in the process. A number of phases are evident within the make-up of the mound material. The troughs showed no signs of being lined in anyway suggesting they functioned as unlined water-boiling pits. No finds are animal bone was recovered from the site to confirm what the water was utilised for.

References:

Location:  Townland: Lisheen  Six inch map no: 50
Parish: Clondagad  NGR: 129455, 167565
Barony: Islands  Altitude: 20m OD
County: Clare

Excavation Details:
Project: Pipeline to the west
Site Director: Graham Hull
Consultants: Margaret Gowen and Company Ltd.
Year: 2002

Physical Setting: The sites were situated in rough pasture at the base of a gentle north-east facing incline.

Cultural Landscape: Prehistoric activity in the area is indicated by the presence of further burnt stone spreads c. 200m to the north-east. Another fulachtí fia was situated a short distance from the site in question (CL050-065002).

Adjacent excavated sites: The two sites described here were excavated 14m apart.

Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during Archaeological Monitoring in advance of the Bord Gáis Pipeline to the West. It extended beyond the pipeline corridor.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed two burnt mound sites excavated 14m apart. Both sites contained burnt mounds of heat-shattered stone that sealed several cut features. Both extended beyond the wayleave.

Site A

Burnt Mound: The excavated portion of the burnt mound measured 12.8m by 12.1m with a height of 0.6m. It consisted of at least two deposits of heat-shattered stone in a charcoal enriched silty clay. Charcoal from the mound returned a Late Bronze Age date. The mound was cut by a series of modern drains.

Site B

Burnt Mound: The burnt stone mound overlay the trough and measured 7.4m by 4.1m with a height of 0.24m. It consisted of black silty clay with charcoal and heat-shattered stone.
Trough 1: This trough was oval in shape and measured 1.6m by 1.06m with a depth of 0.5m. It had vertical sides and a flat base. The fill consisted of material similar to the mound.

Trough 2: This trough was also oval in plan with concave sides and a flat base. It measured 0.8m by 0.54m with a depth of 0.29m. Two fills were noted in this pit with the primary deposit consisting of similar material to the mound while the upper fill contained dark grey silt and small angular stones and charcoal.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (unknown species) from the mound material (Site A) C14 (UB-6063) 2828±32 BP (1065–910 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

Limited excavation of the site revealed two separate areas of pyrolithic activity. Mound A was damaged by a number of field drains and no cut features were identified. It is possible these may lie outside the area of excavation or may have been damaged by the drains. A sample from the burnt mound is dated to the Late Bronze Age. Mound B was located 14m away and was composed of a spread of heat-shattered stone and two troughs possibly used for water-boiling. In the absence of scientific dating, it cannot be confirmed whether this site is contemporary with Mound A.

References:


Fig. 10.34 Burnt mounds A and B at Lisheen, Co. Clare.
Location:  Townland: Mount  Six inch map no: 50
Parish: Kilchreest  NGR: 127891, 165427
Barony: Clonderalaw  Altitude: 8m OD
County: Clare

Excavation Details:
Project: Pipeline to the west
Site Director: Kate Taylor
Consultants: Margaret Gowen and Company Ltd.
Year: 2002

Physical Setting:
The site was situated on dry land at the base of a steep hill, 20m south of a stream.

Cultural Landscape:
There are no recorded prehistoric sites in vicinity of the site however several Bronze Age sites were uncovered in the neighbouring townlands of Ballycorick and Lisheen to the north.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during Archaeological Monitoring in advance of the Bord Gáis Pipeline to the West. It extended beyond the pipeline corridor.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features:
Excavation of the site revealed two small burnt stone spreads at the junction of two modern field drains. The first spread measured 2.3m by 1.4m with a thickness of 0.11m. It consisted of dark brown silty clay with 40% heat-shattered sandstone and charcoal flecks. This spread produced a Middle Bronze Age date. The second spread measured 2m by 1.3m with a thickness of 0.03m. Hull notes that it had an ashy appearance and consisted of silty clay with 20% heat-shattered sandstone (2007, 213). No finds or animal bone were recovered from the site.

Dating:
Charcoal (unknown species) from the stone spread 1 C14 (UB-6135) 3253±38 BP (1631–1440 BC)

References:
Location: Shannakea Beg  Six inch map no: 50
Parish: Kilchreest  NGR: 12107, 15277
Barony: Clonderalaw  Altitude: NA
County: Clare

Excavation Details:
Project: Pipeline to the west
Site Director: Edmond O’ Donovan
Consultants: Margaret Gowen and Company Ltd.
Year: 2002

Physical Setting:
The site lay in the centre of a boggy hollow between two gently sloping hillocks to the north and south, 200m from the shore of the Shannon estuary, on ground that falls gently to the south-west.

Cultural Landscape:
Prehistoric activity in the area is indicated by the presence of further burnt stone spreads and fulachtai fia excavated as part of the same pipeline project.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features
The site was uncovered during Archaeological Monitoring in advance of the Bord Gáis Pipeline to the West. It extended beyond the pipeline corridor.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features:
Excavation of the site revealed a low mound of heat-shattered stone, a stone-lined trough and a possible earlier water channel. The burnt mound covered a centrally place rectangular trough. The mound was oval in plan and measured 7.2m in diameter with a height of 0.1m. It consisted of black silty clay in a matrix of heat-shattered stone. The trough was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 0.92m by 1.35m with a depth of 0.25m. The base and sides of the trough were lined with stone flags and the fill consisted of heat-shattered stone and charcoal. A sample of hazel from under the flagstone floor produced an Early Iron Age date. No finds or animal bone was recovered.

Dating:
Charcoal (unknown species) from the stone spread 1
C14 (GrN-27086) 2410±60 BP (761–393 BC)

References:
Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during Archaeological Monitoring in advance of the Bord Gáis Pipeline to the West.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a low mound of heat-shattered stone, a trough and two pits. The burnt stone mound was kidney-shaped in plan and measured 8m in diameter with a height of 0.4m. It consisted of seven distinct layers of burnt material containing charcoal, heat-shattered sandstone with occasional peat mixed throughout. The sub-circular trough measured 1.25m by 1.1m with a depth of 0.16m. It had gradually sloping sides and a flat base with a fill consisting of 70% heat-shattered sandstone and limestone in a charcoal rich silty clay.

Dating: Context and material dated unknown
C14 (UB-6128) 3577±38 BP (2036–1786 BC)

References:

Catalogue No.   CE 38
RMP No. CL033-161
Licence No.  04E0024

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Physical Setting: The site was east of the N68 Kilrush Road in an open boggy field and the fulachtai fiawas found near the base of a steep incline that dropped down from higher ground at the east to wet ground at the west. The hillside was densely wooded, mostly with hazel scrub, and little or no topsoil was present over outcropping limestone. A small unrectified stream ran parallel to the road and west of the monument.

Cultural Landscape: Seven small and discrete burnt stone spreads were investigated as part of this road project (AR127 04E0028, Taylor 2006a) at the edge of, and close to the surface of, a peat bog on the opposite side of the stream. Six of these burnt stone spreads have been radiocarbon dated to the late Neolithic/early Bronze Age and the seventh was dated to the late Bronze Age. (RMP CL033-162001-7)

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during Archaeological Monitoring in advance of the N18 Ennis Bypass. The site lay unrecorded prior to investigations and survived as a horseshoe-shaped mound of heat-shattered stone which was heavily overgrown by mature hazel trees.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a well preserved fulachtai fiamound of heat-shattered stone consisting of several phases of use. A large stone-lined trough was also uncovered between the arms of the mound.

Burnt Mound: The burnt stone mound was kidney-shaped in plan and measured 13.5m by 17.5m with a height of 1.6m. It consisted of seven distinct layers of burnt material containing charcoal, heat-shattered sandstone and limestone representing several phases of use. It was estimated that the mound contained 400 tonnes of burnt stone. The first deposit (C22) consisted of 10% heat-affected sandstone with charcoal and black peaty silt. This returned a Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age date. The next deposit (C21)
consisted of 80% heat-affected limestone with charcoal and black sooty silt. The third deposit (C19) contained much the same as the previous layer and a Late Bronze Age date was returned from this. The fourth layer (C22) consisted of a discrete dump of stones which were subjected to intense heat but were not shattered through thermal shock. Hull suggests that these stones were not put into water after they were heated (Hull 2006, 7). The fifth (C18) layer contained 80% heat-shattered limestone with charcoal and black silty material. A stone revetment was also noted at this stage. The sixth (C17) phase again contained 80% heat-shattered limestone although some sandstone was present. The final deposit (C16) contained 70% limestone 30% black silty soil with some sandstone present.

Revetment: The revetment consisted of four limestone slabs set into C19 to prevent slippage of the mound material into the trough.

Trough: The trough (C4) consisted of six large upright slabs that were held in place by smaller stones. It measured 1.8m by 0.9m with a depth of 0.45m. Hull states that fossil marine shells densely covered many of the 6 large stones and it is not unreasonable to suspect that this ‘decoration’ influenced selection (Hull 2006, 7). The slabs were placed on the underlying bedrock in most instances but in places it could be demonstrated that the slabs were stratigraphically later than the burnt stone material 19 (Hull 2006, 7).

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: 15 fragments of animal bone. Two pieces had sawn edges thus were interpreted as later intrusions. All of the animal bone came from the mound deposits. Several fragments had cut marks also. Species were identified as pig and cow. Charcoal was identified as hazel, oak, ash, willow, hawthorn and elm. A varied woodland environment local to the site is indicated by the range of taxa present in the samples. The identified taxa are broadly consistent with the picture of wood use from the other Ennis Bypass sites. The charcoal of the site has probably derived from fire fuel debris, and a particularly ready access to, and possible preference for ash (Fraxinus) is indicated.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (ash) from mound material (C22)
C14 (Beta-207728) 3930±40 BP (2550–2300 BC)
Charcoal (hazel) from mound material (C21)
C14 (Beta-211564) 3100±40 BP (1440–1280 BC)
Charcoal (hazel) from mound material (C20)
C14 (Beta-211563) 2860±40 BP (1130–920 BC)
Charcoal (hazel) from mound material (C19)
C14 (Beta-211565) 2880±40 BP (1190–930 BC)
Excavation Interpretation:

This site is distinguished from other burnt mounds excavated on this scheme as it was intact and retained a stone-built trough. The site’s location, on a limestone outcrop within an area of bog formed in a shallow valley, protected it from agricultural damage. Multiple phases of activity were identified spanning several centuries. This repeated use resulted in the accumulation of a crescent-shaped mound comprising an estimated 400 tonnes of stones. Three phases of activity have been defined using radiocarbon dating of charcoal derived from distinct deposits. The identification of a large stone-lined trough would imply the use of the site as an important water-boiling area and the recovery of some animal bone could suggest the site was used for cooking.

References:


![Fig. 10.35 Extant burnt mound and stone-lined trough at Cahircalla Beg, Co. Clare.](image-url)
Catalogue No. CE 39
RMP No. CL033-161
Licence No. 04E0190

**Location:**
- Townland: Killow
- Parish: Doora
- Barony: Bunratty Upper
- County: Clare
- Six inch map no: 42
- NGR: 136888, 174611
- Altitude: 3.5m OD

**Excavation Details:**
- Project: N18 Ennis Bypass and N85 Western Relief Road
- Site Director: Kate Taylor
- Consultants: TVAS Ireland Ltd
- Year: 2004

**Physical Setting:**
The fields in which the excavation took place slope down from north to south, forming the northern side of a peat filled river valley, with a small stream at the base of the slope, just 10m from the edge of the excavated area.

**Cultural Landscape:**
Seven small and discrete burnt stone spreads were investigated as part of this road project (AR127 04E0028, Taylor 2006a) at the edge of, and close to the surface of, a peat bog on the opposite side of the stream. Six of these burnt stone spreads have been radiocarbon dated to the late Neolithic/early Bronze Age and the seventh was dated to the late Bronze Age. (RMP CL033-162001-7)

**Adjacent excavated sites:** None

**Pre-Excavation features**
The site was uncovered during Archaeological Monitoring in advance of the N18 Ennis Bypass. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations.

**Excavation Record**

**Summary of Features:**
Excavation of the site revealed a small spread of heat-shattered stone and a large pit along with a bank of material.

**Burnt Spread:**
The burnt stone spread (sandstone and limestone) consisted of two deposits of heat-shattered stone that measured 11m by 8m with a depth of 0.25m. The lower deposit was a loose silty deposit and the upper layer was largely composed of fire-cracked stone and charcoal. The site was truncated by a modern drainage ditch, therefore the full extent of the site could not be determined.

**Pit:**
This pit was sub-circular and measured 4.7m in diameter with a depth of 1.7m. The fill consisted of natural peat and silt which must have formed naturally over time. No heat-shattered stone was found. The pit also had an associated bank which may have been the upcast from the initial digging of the pit.
Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: A small assemblage of bone was recovered from the site most of which came from the fill of the large pit. In addition, a small amount of burnt bone was found during the testing on the surface of the stone spread. The 30 pieces of cremated bone were unidentifiable while the bone from the pit was mostly from cattle. The charcoal was identified as hazel, oak, ash, alder and dogwood.

Dating:

Absolute dating: Hazelnut shell from the stone spread
C14 (Beta-211588) 2710±40 BP (920–800 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

The excavation of site AR103 at Killow, Co. Clare has revealed evidence of a single fire event using small roundwoods that took place in the Late Bronze Age and the stratigraphically later excavation of a large pit. A spread of burnt stone and charcoal-rich soil was excavated at the edge of a peat filled river valley. No directly related cut features such as troughs, nor hearths were revealed in the excavated area although the site was probably originally larger, having been truncated by a post-medieval drainage ditch. The purpose of the large pit and bank that were located adjacent to the burnt stone spread is unclear. The size and depth of the pit would have been appropriate for a well, however the boggy location is unlikely to have been so dry that the excavation of a 1.7m deep well was required to reach the water table. The pit at Killow did not contain any burnt stone material and there is no evidence to suggest that the pit and bank were related to or contemporary with the stone spread.

References:


Location: Townland: Killow  Six inch map no: 42
Parish: Doora  NGR: 136822, 175115
Barony: Bunratty Upper  Altitude: 3.5m OD
County: Clare

Excavation Details: Project: N18 Ennis Bypass and N85 Western Relief Road
Site Director: Kate Taylor
Consultants: TVAS Ireland Ltd
Year: 2004

Physical Setting: The landscape to the north and east of the site is characterised by deep bog with occasional drumlins apparent as gravel islands within the bog. To the south and west the land is higher and drier. This site straddled these two landscapes, occupying parts of two gravel islands, an area of bog and the edge of the drier ground.

Cultural Landscape: Seven small and discrete burnt stone spreads were investigated as part of this road project (AR127 04E0028) at the edge of, and close to the surface of, a peat bog on the opposite side of the stream. Six of these burnt stone spreads have been radiocarbon dated to the late Neolithic/early Bronze Age and the seventh was dated to the late Bronze Age. (RMP CL033-162001-7).

Adjacent excavated sites: Cremation pits

Pre-Excavation features
The site was uncovered during Archaeological Monitoring in advance of the N18 Ennis Bypass. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations. The stone spread extended beyond the limits of the excavation.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed two small spreads of heat-shattered stone and twenty pits associated with funerary activity. The site also produced a wooden bowl dating to the Iron Age.

Burnt Spread: The burnt stone spread (sandstone and limestone) consisted of two deposits of heat-shattered stone recorded in two patches with a total area of 200m² with a thickness of 0.4m. The first deposit consisted of dark brown sandy silt with heat-shattered sandstone and limestone in a matrix of charcoal enriched soil. The second deposit was 0.1m in thickness and consisted of much the same material as the previous deposit. It may have been associated with a small pit which was circular in shape and contained a fill consisting of dark brown sandy silt with occasional charcoal.
Pits: Over half the pits contained bone and some may represent cremation burials. In a few cases there was evidence of \textit{in situ} burning and it is possible that some of the pits had a domestic function. The majority of the twenty pits were concentrated outside the enclosure ditches to the south-east.

Finds:

Artefacts: Several chert and flint lithics were uncovered in the topsoil during initial testing of the site. A piece of a wooden bowl was also found close to the burnt stone spread. The bowl was identified as ash and returned a date of 2461±32 (2 sigma Cal BC 777 to 407)

Ecofacts: Several unidentified animal bones also came from the burnt stone spread.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Hazelnut shell from the stone spread C14 (Beta-211588) 2710±40 BP (1280–1010 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

The excavation straddled an area of reclaimed peatland punctured by a substantial gravel island or drumlin, and the edge of nearby higher ground. Excavations revealed multiple phases of prehistoric and medieval activity with the earliest phase represented by a burnt mound. The mound occupied the south-east corner of the excavation where it survived in two parts and overlying a peat-filled hollow. Immediately south-west of the mound was a second smaller burnt spread that overlay a small circular pit with charcoal. Six other pits were identified and may not be associated. It is unclear whether these mounds are waste-firing debris from pyrolithic water-boiling or dry-roasting.

References:


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Excavation Details: Project: N18 Ennis Bypass and N85 Western Relief Road
Site Director: Kate Taylor
Consultants: TVAS Ireland Ltd
Year: 2004

Physical Setting: The field in which the site was located was once part of the River Fergus’ flood plain and was kept relatively dry by a defensive bund flanking the river.

Cultural Landscape: Seven small and discrete burnt stone spreads were investigated as part of this road project (AR127 04E0028) at the edge of, and close to the surface of, a peat bog on the opposite side of the stream. Six of these burnt stone spreads have been radiocarbon dated to the late Neolithic/ early Bronze Age and the seventh was dated to the late Bronze Age. (RMP CL033-162001-7).

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during Archaeological Monitoring in advance of the N18 Ennis Bypass. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed two small spreads of heat-shattered stone. No cut features were uncovered. The first spread was oval in shape and measured 4m by 2.1m with a thickness of 0.1m. The deposit consisted of heat-affected sandstone which was rich in charcoal. Taylor suggests that this spread is likely to be associated with the larger spread 25m to the north-west. This deposit measured 15m in all directions and was 0.3m in thickness. It consisted of heat-shattered limestone with some sandstone pieces.

Finds: None

Dating: Charcoal (hazel) from the spread
C14 (Beta-211574) 2770±40 BP (1000–820 BC)

References:
Location: Clareabbey
Parish: Clareabbey
Barony: Islands
County: Clare

Excavation Details:
Project: N18 Ennis Bypass and N85 Western Relief Road
Site Director: Graham Hull
Consultants: TVAS Ireland Ltd
Year: 2004

Physical Setting:
The investigated area took up only a small section of a much larger field that was wet and became boggier towards the north.

Cultural Landscape:
Seven small and discrete burnt stone spreads were investigated as part of this road project (AR127 04E0028) at the edge of, and close to the surface of, a peat bog on the opposite side of the stream. Six of these burnt stone spreads have been radiocarbon dated to the late Neolithic/early Bronze Age and the seventh was dated to the late Bronze Age. (RMP CL033-162001-7).

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features:
The site was uncovered during Archaeological Monitoring in advance of the N18 Ennis Bypass. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a small spread of heat-shattered stone and a single pit that may have functioned as a trough. The burnt stone spread measured 8m by 3m and had a thickness of 0.25m. It consisted of heat-shattered limestone in a matrix of charcoal enriched soil. A small portion of the spread lay outside the area of excavation. This pit was circular in shape with steep sides and a flat base. It measured 0.5m in diameter with a depth of 0.25m. The fill consisted of charcoal enriched soil and heat-shattered limestone similar to the overlying spread.

Dating:
Charcoal (alder) from the pit/trough
C14 (Beta-211560) 3700±40 BP (2200–1960 BC)

References:
Fig. 10.36 Burnt Spread and possible roasting pit Clareabbey, Co. Clare
Location: Cahircalla More
Parish: Drumcliff
Barony: Islands
County: Clare
Six inch map no: 33
NGR: 132700, 175500
Altitude: 9m OD

Excavation Details:
Project: N18 Ennis Bypass and N85 Western Relief Road
Site Director: Kate Taylor
Consultants: TVAS Ireland Ltd
Year: 2004

Physical Setting:
The fields encompassed a bog, bounded by a stream at the east, and drier land rising gently to the west. The bog is extremely wet and floods frequently during the winter months - this was experienced on occasion during excavation. At the time of the excavation the land was used as rough pasture.

Cultural Landscape:
Seven small and discrete burnt stone spreads were investigated as part of this road project (AR127 04E0028) at the edge of, and close to the surface of, a peat bog on the opposite side of the stream. Six of these burnt stone spreads have been radiocarbon dated to the late Neolithic/early Bronze Age and the seventh was dated to the late Bronze Age. (RMP CL033-162001-7). A large fulachtí fia was excavated 95m to the east of these spreads and sealed a large stone-lined trough.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features
The sites were uncovered during Archaeological Monitoring in advance of the N18 Ennis Bypass. There was no surface trace of these monuments prior to investigations.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the area revealed seven discrete spreads of heat-shattered stone which sealed no cut features. These spreads dated from the Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age to the Late Bronze Age.

Burnt Spread 1:
This deposit formed two irregular spreads of heat-shattered limestone and sandstone in a matrix of charcoal enriched soil. The two deposits measured 9.5m by 6.8m and 3.7m by 1.9m with a thickness of less than 0.05m. An Early Bronze Age date was returned from this site.

Burnt Spread 2:
This spread measured 9.3m by 7.3m with a thickness of 0.1m. It consisted of heat-affected stone and charcoal. An Early Bronze Age date was returned from this site.
Burnt Spread 3: This deposit measured 3m by 2m with a thickness of 0.2m. The site was truncated during testing but consisted of similar material to the other sites in question. An Early Bronze Age date was returned from this site also.

Burnt Spread 4: This spread measured 11.2m by 6.7m with a thickness of 0.1m. Again this spread consisted of much the same material as the previous spreads.

Burnt Spread 5: This spread measured 7m by 5m and was 0.2m in thickness. This returned an Early Bronze Age date also.

Burnt Spread 6: This spread measured 13.3m by 8.9m and was 0.1m in thickness. It consisted of heat-shattered stone and charcoal enriched soil. Again an Early Bronze Age date was returned from this spread.

Burnt Spread 7: This was the only spread that returned a Late Bronze Age date. It measured 8.4m by 5.6m and had a maximum thickness of 0.2m. Again this deposit consisted of heat-affected limestone with some sandstone present.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: Charcoal was identified as oak, hazel, ash, will, elm, yew and pomoideae.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (hazel nut shell) from the spread 1 C14 (Beta-211566) 3870±40 BP (2470–2210 BC)
Charcoal (hazel) from the spread 7 C14 (Beta-211567) 2830±40 BP (1100–900 BC)
Charcoal (hazel nut shell) from the spread 2 C14 (Beta-207735) 3490±40 BP (1910–1700 BC)
Charcoal (hazel) from the spread 3 C14 (Beta-211568) 3840±40 BP (2450–2150 BC)
Charcoal (ash) from the spread 4 C14 (Beta-207731) 3790±40 BP (2330–2060 BC)
Charcoal (hazel) from the spread 5 C14 (Beta-211569) 3760±40 BP (2290–2040 BC)
Charcoal (hazel nut shell) from the spread 6 C14 (Beta-211570) 3570±40 BP (2020–1770 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

All the spreads were similarly composed, thin deposits and there was no evidence of hearths or of cut features such as troughs. The low-lying site location and the presence of alluvial silts both above and below several of the stone deposits suggest that the use of the sites may have been seasonal, with the bog being flooded in the winter months. The small volume of material in each spread indicates a short period of use, perhaps even single episodes. The almost exclusive use of sandstone at the thirteen burnt stone spreads (including the early phase of the *fulachtai fia*AR126) is significant, as the later deposits that
became the AR126 *fulachta fia* were predominantly limestone. It is very likely then, that sandstone was gathered from the glacial debris in the late Neolithic/early Bronze Age and that this resource was exhausted by the later Bronze Age, at least locally, and substituted as a heating medium by more commonly occurring limestone. Another explanation for the change from sandstone to limestone implies a change in use - sandstone might be a better rock-type if food preparation was the function of the earlier burnt stone sites. The burnt stone spreads from the Ennis Bypass road scheme were found at characteristically wet locations and these ill-defined spreads of stone ranged in size from a metre or two to 15m across and were typically less than 0.1m thick. It is not clear what specific activity the spreads represent; but it is likely that the stone was used to heat water in a similar manner to *fulachta fia* with the lack of a trough perhaps indicating that the water was held in a portable container. The shallow burnt stone spreads may perhaps be thought of, in some cases, as precursors to *fulachta fia* at which the process of repeated deposition of burnt stone across many years was not continued long enough for the full blown mound to develop.

**References:**


Location: Townland: Keelty
Parish: Drumcliff
Barony: Islands
County: Clare

Excavation Details: Project: N18 Ennis Bypass and N85 Western Relief Road
Site Director: Kate Taylor
Consultants: TVAS Ireland Ltd
Year: 2004

Physical Setting: The site was on a relatively level part of the flood plain of the Claureen River, lying on very slightly higher ground than the surrounds.

Cultural Landscape: Seven small and discrete burnt stone spreads were investigated as part of this road project (AR127 04E0028) at the edge of, and close to the surface of, a peat bog on the opposite side of the stream. Six of these burnt stone spreads have been radiocarbon dated to the late Neolithic/ early Bronze Age and the seventh was dated to the late Bronze Age. (RMP CL033-162001-7).

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The sites were uncovered during Archaeological Monitoring in advance of the N18 Ennis Bypass. There was no surface trace of these monuments prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the area revealed an amorphous burnt stone spread mixed with nineteenth century refuse material.

Burnt Spread: This deposit measured 17m by 10m with a maximum thickness of 0.2m. It consisted of heat-shattered limestone in a matrix of charcoal enriched soil. Taylor notes that some reddening of the surrounding natural clay suggests in situ burning (2006, 7).

Finds:

Artefacts: None
Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None
Absolute dating: None

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Excavation Interpretation

The excavation of Site AR130, Keelty, Co. Clare, has found a later 19th century/earlier 20th century refuse dump. The dumped material may have been burnt on site and this caused underlying stones to crack and clay to oxidise. The fact that the stones overlay a field drain demonstrates that the burnt stone deposit was modern and certainly could not have had a prehistoric origin as was suspected at the time of the testing. The deposit was in a field that was liable to flood and it is therefore very likely that if the burning was of any great antiquity it would have been sealed by alluvium.

References:


Plate. 10.14 Burnt stone deposit and modern dump material at Keelty, Co. Clare.
Location: Townland: Caheraphuca  Six inch map no: 18
Parish: Inchacronan  NGR: 139206, 188029
Barony: Islands  Altitude: 34m OD
County: Clare

Excavation Details:
Project: N18 Gort to Crusheen Road Scheme
Site Director: David Baley
Consultants: Irish Archaeological Consultancy
Year: 2007

Physical Setting: The site was located in a slight hollow in a gentle undulating landscape. The field had recently been used for pasture.

Cultural Landscape: There is one possible enclosure (CL018-085) located c. 230 m northeast of Caheraphuca 1. Further nearby recorded monuments include a burial ground (CL018-042) and a burnt mound (CL018-083) located c. 350 m northeast and 250 m west of the site respectively. The Caheraphuca burnt mound cluster focused on a former wetland. Caheraphuca Lough was situated approximately 900 m to the south. Excluding the sites excavated as part of the project there are also burnt mounds identified surrounding the Caheraphuca cluster to the south. These are located to the southeast in Carrahil townland (CL026–137 and CL026–138) and to the southwest in Caheraphuca (CL026–143, 128, 134 and 136) and Ballyline (CL026–133).

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The sites were uncovered during Archaeological Monitoring in advance of the N18 Gort to Crusheen Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of these site prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the area revealed a mound of heat-shattered stone and several trough features and pits. A number of Neolithic stone tools were uncovered a peat layer below the mound indicating activity in the area prior to the accumulation of the heat-affected stone.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound consisted of three deposits of heat-affected stone. The main spread (C124) measured 12.15m by 8.05m with a thickness of 0.08m. It consisted of dark brown silty material with heat-shattered limestone and chert. The next deposit (C95) measured 16.15m by 10.35m with a thickness of 0.34m. This consisted of heat-affected stone in a charcoal enriched silt. An Early Bronze Age date was returned from this spread. The last deposit (C96) measured 7.35m by 6.34m with a thickness of 0.25m. It was oval in
shape and consisted of black silty clay with charcoal and heat-affected stone. Several chert artefacts were recovered from spread C95 and C96.

Trough 1: This trough (C57) was sub-rectangular in plan and measured 2.6m by 2.4m with a depth of 0.24m. The fill consisted of black silty clay with heat-affected stone. This trough cut an earlier pit (C74). Two stake-holes were recorded at the north and south end of the trough while a post-hole was uncovered cut into its western side. Further stake-holes were recorded along the edge of the trough also. A fragment of hazel returned a Middle to Late Bronze Age date for the trough.

Trough 2: This trough (C70) was sub-circular in shape with gentle sides and a flat base. It measured 1.8m by 1.05m with a depth of 0.15m. A single stake-hole was recorded in each of the corners. The trough contained two fills with the basal deposit consisting of a charcoal rich silt while the upper layer contained small stones and charcoal flecks. A rubbing stone fragment was found in this trough.

Trough 3: The trough (C42) was sub-circular with a stepped profile (C49) and a flat base. It measured 1.7m by 1.61m with an overall depth of 0.41m. This step could have been used to regulate the amount of water that was required in the trough. If only a small quantity of water was required C49 may have been used, while the whole pit (C42 and C49) may have been used when larger quantities of water were required (Baley 2010, 15)

Well/Cistern Features: C100 was sub-oval in shape with steep sides and a flat base. It was located at the centre of the site and measured 2.75m with a depth of 0.38m. This pit seemed to connect to another – C101 suggesting that they were in use at the same time. This pit measured 3.5m with a depth of 0.74m. They both contained a silt and charcoal fill. Pit C102 was adjacent to C101 however, this contained a different fill. C102 was sub-circular in shape with convex sides and a flat base. It measured 3.35m with a depth of 0.8m. This was cut into the watertable and contained several silt layers. Some animal bone was recovered from these pits also.

Pit 1: C19 was sub-circular in shape and measured 1.33m by 1.2m with a depth of 0.12m. The fill consisted of brown silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 2: C11 was sub-circular in shape and measured 0.94m by 0.85m with a depth of 0.15m. The fill consisted of dark silty clay and stones.

Pit 3: C25 was oval in shape and measured 1.45m by 1.2m with a depth of 0.2m. It contained two fills consisting of silty clays, charcoal and stones.

Pit 4: C41 was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 0.9m by 0.84m with a depth of 0.33m. The fill consisted of dark sandy silt, charcoal and heat-affected stone.

Pit 5: C51 was circular in shape and measured 0.68m by 0.68m with a depth of 0.28m. The fill consisted of grey sandy silt.
Pit 6: C45 was oval in shape and measured 1.55m by 0.61m with a depth of 0.28m. Four fills were noted in this pit consisting of sandy silts and moderate amounts of charcoal.

Pit 7: C67 was oval in shape and measured 1.5m by 0.85m with a depth of 0.12m. The fill consisted of loose black sandy silts with charcoal and heat-affected stone.

Pit 8: C126 was sub-circular in shape and measured 2.2m with a depth of 0.38m. Three fills were noted in the pit consisting of sandy silts, charcoal and small stones.

Stone deposits: Several small charcoal and heat-shattered stone deposits were also noted at the site. A large spread of gravelly clay with stone and occasional charcoal inclusions, C89, was located on the southern part of the site to the south of the burnt spread (section 2.3.14). This spread of material overlay a smaller sub-circular deposit, C90, which was located to the east of the drainage feature, C128. The spread of material C89 also sealed deposits C56 and C94. A charcoal-rich deposit with heat-affected stones, C114, overlay the southern extremity of spread C89 and the north side of pit C70. This spread was very similar to fill C71, of pit C70 and may be the same material. These deposits are all dump deposits (Baley 2010, 18). A large amount of unburnt animal bone was recovered from these deposits.

Finds:

Artefacts: Eleven lithics were recovered from the site from trough and pit features, burnt spreads and peat layers below the Bronze Age burnt mound. These included a rubbing stone, a retouched flake, flint flakes, debitage and two polished stone axes.

Ecofacts: Animal bone was recovered from the well/Cistern features and several of the burnt stone spreads. Thirteen bones were identified as cattle from meat-rich cuts. Bones of deer, horse and sheep/goat were also uncovered with some producing cut marks.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (hazel/alder) from the spread (C95) C14 (UBA-12745) 3418±41 BP (1877–1620 BC)
Charcoal (hazel/alder) from fill of trough (C58) C14 (UBA-12744) 2979±39 BP (1373–1073 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

Excavation of the site revealed a large spread of heat-shattered stone and charcoal resulting from a pyrolithic water-boiling technology. The site produced evidence of multi-phased activity in the form of numerous troughs and many pits. This is confirmed by the radiocarbon evidence which established at least two phases during the Early and Late Bronze Age periods. The recovery of butchered animal bone remains may support the interpretation that the site functioned as cooking area.
References

### Physical Setting:
Sites Caheraphuca 3–12 were situated around a peat basin in a steepsided valley, north of Caheraphuca Lough. The peat basin has been improved and was crossed with large wet drains.

### Cultural Landscape:
The sites at Caheraphuca 3–12 were located approximately 900 m south of the burnt mound at Caheraphuca 1. Burnt mounds were also located approximately 750 m to the north in Caheraphuca (CL018–83) and another approximately 1.25 km to the northeast at Drummanneen (CL018–88). Extant burnt mounds were also identified surrounding the Caheraphuca cluster to the south. These are located to the southeast in Carrahil townland.

### Adjacent excavated sites:
None

### Pre-Excavation features
The site was uncovered during Archaeological Monitoring in advance of the N18 Gort to Crusheen Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations.

### Excavation Record

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary of Features:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excavation of the area revealed a small disturbed spread of heat-shattered stone. No other features were identified. The burnt spread (C317) was heavily disturbed and measured 4.5m by 3.7m with a thickness of 0.35m. It consisted of charcoal rich material in a matrix of heat-shattered limestone, sandstone, quartz and chert. Two chert artefacts were recovered from the backfill material of several tree bowls identified on site. Two chert flake artefacts were recovered from the backfilled tree bowls identified on site.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### References
Physical Setting:
The sites at Caheraphuca 3–12 were situated around a peat basin in a steep-sided valley, north of Caheraphuca Lough. The peat basin has been improved and was crossed with large wet drains.

Cultural Landscape:
The sites at Caheraphuca 3–12 were located approximately 900 m south of the burnt mound at Caheraphuca 1. Burnt mounds were also located approximately 750 m to the north in Caheraphuca (CL018–83) and another approximately 1.25 km to the northeast at Drummanneen (CL018–88). Excluding the sites excavated as part of the project there were also burnt mounds identified surrounding the Caheraphuca cluster to the south. These are located to the southeast in Carrahil townland.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during Archaeological Monitoring in advance of the N18 Gort to Crusheen Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the area revealed two mounds of heat-shattered stone, one of which sealed a timber-lined trough. Several unworked timbers were also uncovered which may have served as runamentry walkways.

Burnt Mound 1: This mound (C405) was the larger of the two and sealed the timber-lined trough. It measured 13.3m by 13m with a thickness of 0.4m. It consisted of dark brown silty clay with charcoal and heat-shattered limestone and quartzite. Adult cattle bones and sheep/goat bones were found in this deposit. A Middle to Late Bronze Age date was returned from this mound.

Burnt Mound 2: This mound (C404) measured 11.6m by 10.2m with a thickness of 0.43m. It consisted of charcoal rich material with heat-shattered sandstone/quartzite. Cattle bone was also found in this deposit. Charcoal from the mound was identified as hazel, alder/hazel, oak, ash, cf hawthorn, blackthorn/sloe, poplar/willow and elm charcoal.
Trough: The trough (C408) consisted of 12 alder planks which were half, quarter and radial split. It measured 2.5m by 1.26m with a depth of 0.06m. It was sealed by a layer of re-deposited ashy, fire debris. The wood was in very poor condition and no tool marks were evident.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: Animal bone was recovered from two of the burnt mound deposits. These were identified as adult remains from a cow and sheep/goat. No butchery marks were evident on the remains.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (hazel) from mound material (C405)
C14 (UBA-12746) 2950±18 BP (1299–1024 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

The Bronze Age activity on Caheraphuca 4 consisted of two burnt mounds and a timber trough situated on the edge of a peat basin. It is unclear if the two burnt mounds were contemporary or if they indicate two separate phases of activity. Given the location of the timber trough under burnt mound C405, it is likely that it was directly related to the formation of this mound. However, it is unclear if the trough activity was directly related to the formation of the second mound, C404. No other troughs or associated features were discovered on site. Moderate amounts of animal bone were discovered within both burnt mounds C404 and C405 and also on top of peat deposit. There were no apparent butchery marks on any of the bone. A large unworked timber was recorded leading from the southern edge of the site towards the large burnt mound C405. No tool marks were apparent on any of the timbers, but they may have served as gangways / platforms around the burnt mound (Baley 2010, 20).

References:


Plate 10.15 Remains of burnt mound and trough at Caheraphuca 4, Co. Clare
Location: Townland: Caheraphuca  Six inch map no: 18
Parish: Incharcronan  NGR: 138943, 187441
Barony: Islands  Altitude: 30m OD
County: Clare
Excavation Details: Project: N18 Gort to Crusheen Road Scheme
Site Director: David Baley
Consultants: Irish Archaeological Consultancy
Year: 2007
Physical Setting: Sites Caheraphuca 3–12 were situated around a peat basin in a steep-sided valley, north of Caheraphuca Lough. The peat basin has been improved and was crossed with large wet drains.
Cultural Landscape: The sites at Caheraphuca 3–12 were located approximately 900 m south of the burnt mound at Caheraphuca 1 (Bayley 2009b). Burnt mounds were also located approximately 750 m to the north in Caheraphuca (CL018–83) and another approximately 1.25 km to the northeast at Drummmanneen (CL018–88). Excluding the sites excavated as part of the project there were also burnt mounds identified surrounding the Caheraphuca cluster to the south. These are located to the southeast in Carrahil townland (CL026–137 and CL026–138) and to the southwest in Caheraphuca (CL026–143, 128, 134 and 136) and Ballyline (CL026–133).
Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features
The site was uncovered during Archaeological Monitoring in advance of the N18 Gort to Crusheen Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the area revealed a spread of heat-shattered stone and several timber fragments. No cut features were identified.
Burnt Spread: The burnt spread of stone (C504) measured 7.2m by 6.6m with a depth of 0.16m. It consisted of charcoal enriched soil in a matrix of heat-shattered quartzite. A single timber was uncovered on the site with no evidence of tool marks. Charcoal from the spread was identified as birch, oak, ash, Maloideae (hawthorn/rowan/crab apple), poplar/willow and yew charcoal inclusions. An Early Bronze Age date was returned from this spread.

Finds:
Artefacts: None
Ecofacts: None
Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (hazel) from the spread material (C504)
C14 (UBA-12719) 3814±23 BP (2340–2149 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

The Bronze Age activity on Caheraphuca 5 consisted of a thin spread of charcoal-rich, burnt material. Although no associated features were found on site, it is possible that C504 is the result of accumulated discarded material generally associated with water-heating activity. It is possible that any trough or hearth was disturbed by the modern field drains which ran along the south and west of the site. The burnt nature of the spread as well as its location on the edge of a former lake and its proximity to a cluster of burnt mound sites suggests it was part of the larger complex of burnt mounds / spreads in Caheraphuca. A single, large non-archaeological timber was found within the underlying peat deposit, C503. As with the timbers in Caheraphuca 4, there was no evidence of tool marks but the timber may have functioned as a small gangway or platform on the waterlogged peat. It was identified as Quercus sp. (oak) and probably grew in the area prior to the bog growth (Bayley 2010, 21).

References:

Sites Caheraphuca 3–12 were located within the townland of Caheraphuca in the parish of Inchacronan, Co. Clare. They were situated around a peat basin in a steep-sided valley, north of Caheraphuca Lough. The peat basin has been improved and was crossed with large wet drains.

The sites at Caheraphuca 3–12 were located approximately 900 m south of the burnt mound at Caheraphuca 1. Burnt mounds were also located approximately 750 m to the north in Caheraphuca (CL018–83) and another approximately 1.25 km to the northeast at Drummanneen (CL018–88). Excluding the sites excavated as part of the project there were also burnt mounds identified surrounding the Caheraphuca cluster to the south. These are located to the southeast in Carrahil townland (CL026–137 and CL026–138) and to the southwest in Caheraphuca (CL026–143, 128, 134 and 136) and Ballyline (CL026–133).

Adjacent excavated sites: The excavation was broken into two areas 9.5m apart.

**Pre-Excavation features**

The site was uncovered during Archaeological Monitoring in advance of the N18 Gort to Crusheen Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations.

**Excavation Record**

**Summary of Features:** Excavation of the area revealed a burnt mound of heat-shattered stone and several associated spreads. The mound sealed a hollowed-out timber trough and an associated stone platform.

**Burnt Mound 1:** The mound of burnt stone (C604) measured 14.5m by 9m with a thickness of 0.44m. It consisted of two deposits of sandy silt, charcoal and heat-shattered limestone and quartzite. Charcoal from this deposit returned a Late Bronze Age date.

**Burnt Spread:** This spread (C608) measured 8.3m by 4.75m with a thickness of 0.1m. It was located 9.5m from the main burnt mound. It consisted of dark brown silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered sandstone and quartzite.
Trough: The trough (C612) consisted of a hollowed out oak tree trunk that measured 2.75m by 0.66m with a depth of 0.35m. The trough was supported by several stones placed on the north, west and east sides along with some re-deposited natural. Bayley notes that the timber trough was placed on a ‘bed’ of re-deposited peat and burnt stone. A natural spring was uncovered west of the trough. Fragmented animal bones were found in the peat layer. A sample of alder from the bedding layer returned a Late Bronze Age date.

Stone Platform: A roughly linear cluster of 24 flat limestone flags of various sizes, C611, was uncovered just north of the timber trough C612. These stones were deliberately laid down and may have functioned as a work surface or platform relating to the activity taking place in the timber trough. The stone setting measured 2.6m by 1.3m with a thickness of 0.03m.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: Thirteen fragments of animal bone came from the layer of peat underneath the wooden trough. Eight of these fragments were identified as sheep skull bones. The remaining fragments were burnt. No butchery marks were evident on the bone.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (alder) from the burnt mound (C604) C14 (UBA-12720) 2789±24 BP (1007–850 BC)
Alder fragment from deposit under wooden trough (C617) C14 (UBA-12721) 2806±24 BP (1016–900 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

The site consisted of a burnt spread of heat-shattered stone resulting from a pyrolithic technology. A spring was also identified on site which may imply that the trough was filled naturally. This was confirmed by the presence of a hollowed-out tree trunk used as a boiling trough. These trough types are particularly common during the Middle Bronze Age and this would be the latest example recovered from Ireland, although the site may have had earlier beginnings or the trough may have been re-used. The flat stones recovered on the shorter ends of the trough were interpreted as a walking surface or work platform for access to the pit, although they may equally be the remnants of a stone-built hearth which are commonly situated here.

References:

Plate 10.16 Dug-out trough and burnt mound at Caheraphuca 7, Co. Clare.
Location: Townland: Caheraphuca  Six inch map no: 18
Parish: Inchacronan  NGR: 138957, 187367
Barony: Islands  Altitude: 30m OD
County: Clare

Excavation Details: Project: N18 Gort to Crusheen Road Scheme
Site Director: David Bayley
Consultants: Irish Archaeological Consultancy
Year: 2007

Physical Setting: Sites Caheraphuca 3–12 were situated around a peat basin in a steepsided valley, north of Caheraphuca Lough. The peat basin has been improved and was crossed with large wet drains.

Cultural Landscape: The sites at Caheraphuca 3–12 were located approximately 900 m south of the burnt mound at Caheraphuca 1. Burnt mounds were also located approximately 750 m to the north in Caheraphuca (CL018–83) and another approximately 1.25 km to the northeast at Drummanneen (CL018–88). Excluding the sites excavated as part of the project there were also burnt mounds identified surrounding the Caheraphuca cluster to the south. These are located to the southeast in Carrahil townland.

Adjacent excavated sites: The excavation was broken into two areas 9.5m apart.

Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during Archaeological Monitoring in advance of the N18 Gort to Crusheen Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the revealed a spread of heat-shattered stone, deposits of re-deposited natural and a single trough pit.

Burnt Spread: This spread (C703) measured 10.1m by 9m with a thickness of 0.4m. It consisted of dark brown silty clay with heat-shattered limestone and coarse sandstone. Very little charcoal was noted. This spread was later cut by two pits.

Pit/Trough: Trough (C715) was sub-oval in shape with concave sides and a flat base. The basal fill consisted of dark brown silty clay, charcoal and heat-affected stones. The rest of the pit was filled with burnt mound material similar to C703.
Re-deposited Natural: There were several deposits of re-deposited natural on site which contained charcoal and heat-shattered stone. One of these deposits returned a Late Bronze Age date.

Pit 1: C711 was oval in shape and cut into the spread of heat-affected stone. It measured 2.1m by 1.45m with a depth of 0.15m. The fill consisted of charcoal rich material with heat-shattered stone.

Pit 2: C712 was oval in shape with concave sides and a flat base. It too was cut into the main spread of burnt mound material. It measured 3m by 2.4m with a depth of 0.3m. Two fills were noted in this pit which consisted of dark silty sands, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. A Late Bronze Age date was returned from this pit.

Finds:
Artefacts: Two natural pieces of chert were recovered from the site.

Dating:
Relative dating: None

Absolute dating:
- Charcoal (alder/hazel) from pit 2 (C712) C14 (UBA-12723) 2577±35 BP (813–554 BC)
- Charcoal (hazel) from the deposit (C708) C14 (UBA-12722) 2478±23 BP (766–420 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:
Excavation revealed a spread of heat-shattered stone resulting from a pyrolithic technology. A number of pits were also identified during excavation, one of which may have served as a boiling trough. Radiocarbon evidence from the site would imply the site was in use for short period of time, unlike other larger burnt mounds.

References
Location: Townland: Caheraphuca  Six inch map no: 18
Parish: Inchacronan  NGR: 138903, 187351
Barony : Islands  Altitude: 30m OD
County: Clare

Excavation Details: Project: N18 Gort to Crusheen Road Scheme
Site Director: David Bayley
Consultants: Irish Archaeological Consultancy
Year: 2007

Physical Setting: Sites Caheraphuca 3–12 were situated around a peat basin in a steep-sided valley, north of Caheraphuca Lough. The peat basin has been improved and was crossed with large wet drains.

Cultural Landscape: The sites at Caheraphuca 3–12 were located approximately 900 m south of the burnt mound at Caheraphuca 1 (Bayley 2009b). Burnt mounds were also located approximately 750 m to the north in Caheraphuca (CL018–83) and another approximately 1.25 km to the northeast at Drummanneen (CL018–88). Excluding the sites excavated as part of the project there were also burnt mounds identified surrounding the Caheraphuca cluster to the south. These are located to the southeast in Carrahil townland (CL026–137 and CL026–138) and to the southwest in Caheraphuca (CL026–143, 128, 134 and 136) and Ballyline (CL026–133).

Adjacent excavated sites: The excavation was broken into two areas 9.5m apart.

Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during Archaeological Monitoring in advance of the N18 Gort to Crusheen Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed several spreads of heat-shattered stone and a number of structural features and pits.

Burnt Spread 1: This spread (C803) measured 10.3m by 6.7m with a thickness of 0.1m. It consisted of charcoal enriched soil in a matrix of heat-shattered stone.

Burnt Spread 2: This spread (C829) measured 5.15m by 5m with a thickness of 0.15m. Another small spread (C830) of similar material was also noted here measuring 1.55m by 1m. They consisted of dark silty clays and heat-affected limestone, sandstone and quartz. Two chert artefacts were recovered from these deposits consisting of a blade and a hollow scraper.
Pit 1: C832 was circular in shape and measured 1.6m by 1.3m with a depth of 0.24m. It was filled with the burnt spread material C829.

Pit 2: C833 was oval in shape and measured 1.81m by 1.02m with a depth of 0.33m. It was filled with the burnt spread material C829.

Burnt Spread 3: This shallow burnt spread (C827) measured 2.8m by 2.5m with a thickness of 0.14m. It consisted of dark silts with charcoal and heat-affected stone. One large unworked timber was recovered adjacent to this spread.

Burnt Spread 4: Two deposits of heat-affected stone were identified here. (C835) measured 7.15m by 4.3m with a depth of 0.19m. This consisted of heat-shattered limestone, quartz and chert with charcoal. This returned an Early Bronze Age date. C836 measured 2.98m with a depth of 0.1m and consisted of re-deposited subsoil.

Timber Structure: This was a series of timbers on the eastern side of site which appeared to form some kind of structure or platform. The timbers were deliberately positioned as a platform /structure on the former lake shore between the thick waterlogged peat deposit C802 and the dry natural subsoil C2. The platform was constructed of oak and alder radial and tangential split planks.

Timber Channel: The feature (C814) consisted of half split alder planks laid on edge in the growing peat. The planks may have been more extensive, perhaps extending towards the close by root system C809. The planks were located just 0.8 m away from the root system and although there is no physical relationship to suggest they were connected, it is possible that together that combined they formed a surface or water management feature.

Platform: C809 was a series of intertwined roots measuring 5.3m by 3m which may have acted as a natural platform surface. The roots were held in place by at least one man-made peg. It was located just 0.8 m to the east of C814, a number of horizontally laid tree trunks which may have been used as a platform.

Burnt Deposits: A series of deposits associated with fire based activity were located within a natural depression. They consisted of burnt wood, an ash layer and heat-affected stone. An Early Bronze Age date was returned from the burnt stone deposit.

Pit 3: This pit C822 was sub-rectangular in plan with vertical sides and a flat base. It measured 1.7m by 1m with a depth of 0.37m. It contained a single fill consisting of peaty clay with heat-affected stone. C822 may have been related to the activity taking place around the platform, C809 and possible platform, C814, but there is nothing to indicate a definite connection.

Finds:

Artefacts: Eight lithics were recovered from the site. Three of these were natural chert chunks while four were worked. A single worked flint was uncovered. The finds were associated with peat deposits and two burnt spreads. The assemblage comprises a blade, a flake, a convex end scraper, a fragment of a flint hollow scraper and a fragment of a polished stone axe. The assemblage is typologically and technologically diagnostic and dates to the middle Neolithic.
Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (alder) from spread/deposit (C810)
C14 (UBA-12724) 3783±22 BP (2287–2140 BC)
Charcoal (hawthorn/rowan/crab apple) from the burnt spread (C835)
C14 (UBA-12725) 3923±27 BP (2480–2300 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

The Bronze Age activity on Caheraphuca 8 consisted of a number of areas of activity. An area of activity was found to the east of site. This consisted of a number of natural timbers which appeared to have been laid down deliberately to create some kind of structure / platform. This may have functioned as a work platform or safe access area to the wetland. Also probably connected with this earlier phase of activity there were three separate burnt spreads. The spread of heat-affected stone to the northeast of the site was the most extensive and it filled two pits. The relationship between the spread and the pits is unclear. The most extensive area was focused around a timber feature possibly used as a platform, a root system (platform), a number of spreads and a pit. There was some evidence of fire activity: a small deposit of burnt spread material and a small piece of burnt wood.

References


Fig. 10.37 Burnt mound and brushwood platform at Caheraphuca 8, Co. Clare
Location: Townland: Caheraphuca  
Parish: Inchacronan  
Barony: Islands  
County: Clare  
Six inch map no: 18  
NGR: 138855, 187335  
Altitude: 30m OD

Excavation Details: Project: N18 Gort to Crusheen Road Scheme  
Site Director: David Bayley  
Consultants: Irish Archaeological Consultancy  
Year: 2007

Physical Setting: Sites Caheraphuca 3–12 were Caheraphuca in the parish of Inchicronan, Co. Clare. They were situated around a peat basin in a steepsided valley, north of Caheraphuca Lough.

Cultural Landscape: The sites at Caheraphuca 3–12 were located approximately 900 m south of the burnt mound at Caheraphuca 1 (Bayley 2009b). Burnt mounds were also located approximately 750 m to the north in Caheraphuca (CL018–83) and another approximately 1.25 km to the northeast at Drummanneen (CL018–88).

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features
The site was uncovered during Archaeological Monitoring in advance of the N18 Gort to Crusheen Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a single pit filled with heat-shattered stone. The pit (C904) was sub-circular in shape and measured 1.05m by 1m with a depth of 0.4m. It had steep sides and a flat base. It contained four fills. The basal deposit consisted of sterile waterlogged silt. The second layer contained black charcoal rich material while the next deposit was laid down as a result of natural silting. Finally the upper fill consisted of peaty organic material probably a result of natural processes when the pit was abandoned.

Dating:
Charcoal (alder) from the fill of the trough (C904)
C14 (UBA-12726) 3892±22 BP (2465–2299 BC)

References
Location: Townland: Caheraphuca
Parish: Inchacronan
Barony: Islands
County: Clare

Parish: Inchacronan
NGR: 138894, 187242

Barony: Islands
Altitude: 30m OD

County: Clare

Excavation Details: Project: N18 Gort to Crusheen Road Scheme
Site Director: David Bayley
Consultants: Irish Archaeological Consultancy
Year: 2007

Physical Setting: Sites Caheraphuca 3–12 were situated around a peat basin in a steep-sided valley, north of Caheraphuca Lough. The peat basin has been improved and was crossed with large wet drains.

Cultural Landscape: Burnt mounds were also located approximately 750 m to the north in Caheraphuca (CL018–83) and another approximately 1.25 km to the northeast at Drummanneen (CL018–88). Excluding the sites excavated as part of the project there were also extant burnt mounds identified surrounding the Caheraphuca cluster to the south.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during Archaeological Monitoring in advance of the N18 Gort to Crusheen Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed two spreads of heat-shattered stone. No cut features were identified. The burnt mound consisted of two deposits of heat-affected stone. Both layers consisted of sandy/gravel material containing heat-shattered sandstone, limestone, chert and quartzit. C1008 measured 6m by 5.6m with a thickness of 0.36m. C1009 measured 9m by 7m with a thickness of 0.48m. Spread (C1005) measured 7.2m by 4.5m with a thickness of 0.13m. It consisted of black silty clay and unburnt stone.

Dating: Charcoal (alder/hazel) from burnt mound (C1008)
C14 (UBA-12747) 3705±40 BP (2204–1974 BC)

References

Location: Townland: Caheraphuca  
Parish: Inchacronan  
Barony: Islands  
County: Clare  

Six inch map no: 18  
NGR: 138854, 187190  
Altitude: 30m OD  

Excavation Details: Project: N18 Gort to Crusheen Road Scheme  
Site Director: David Bayley  
Consultants: Irish Archaeological Consultancy  
Year: 2007  

Physical Setting:  
Sites Caheraphuca 3–12 were located within the townland of Caheraphuca in the parish of Inchacronan, Co. Clare. They were situated around a peat basin in a steep-sided valley, north of Caheraphuca Lough. The peat basin has been improved and was crossed with large wet drains.

Cultural Landscape:  
The sites at Caheraphuca 3–12 were located approximately 900 m south of the burnt mound at Caheraphuca 1. Burnt mounds were also located approximately 750 m to the north in Caheraphuca (CL018–83) and another approximately 1.25 km to the northeast at Drummanneen (CL018–88). Excluding the sites excavated as part of the project there were also burnt mounds identified surrounding the Caheraphuca cluster to the south. These are located to the southeast in Carrahil townland (CL026–137 and CL026–138) and to the southwest in Caheraphuca (CL026–143, 128, 134 and 136) and Ballyline (CL026–133).

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during Archaeological Monitoring in advance of the N18 Gort to Crusheen Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a small shallow spread of burnt stone material that sealed a single trough/pit.

Burnt Spread: The spread of burnt material (C1112) measured 4.95m by 3.4m with a thickness of 0.12m. It consisted of charcoal rich material with heat-affected stone.

Trough: The trough (C1009) was circular in shape and measured 1.5m by 1.5m with a depth of 0.34m. It contained two fills consisting of a basal sterile layer and an upper deposit containing charcoal rich material and heat-affected stone. This layer produced an Early Bronze Age date. A Neolithic platform flake was uncovered in this fill also.
**Finds:**

Artefacts: Chert debitage from tree bowl feature and platform flake from upper fill of trough.

Ecofacts: None

**Dating:**

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (alder/hazel) from fill of trough (C1009) C14 (UBA-12748) 3823±39 BP (2458–2143 BC)

**Excavation Interpretation:**

The Bronze Age activity on Caheraphuca 11 consisted of a pit / trough and a thin spread of burnt material. Although the pit contained some artefacts, it was not deliberately cut and both of the fills were very sterile. It is possible that was a tree bole and the artefacts were washed in with the silt fills. Its relationship with the burnt spread and the pit / trough is not clear. The site has been dated to the early Bronze Age period (Cal 2458–2143 BC).

**References:**


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Fig. 10.38. Burnt stone deposit and possible roasting pit at Caheraphuca 11, Co. Clare.
Location: Townland: Caheraphuca  Six inch map no: 18
Parish: Inchacronan  NGR: 139009, 187503
Barony: Islands  Altitude: 30m OD
County: Clare

Excavation Details: Project: N18 Gort to Crusheen Road Scheme
Site Director: David Bayley
Consultants: Irish Archaeological Consultancy
Year: 2007

Physical Setting: Sites Caheraphuca 3–12 were situated around a peat basin in a steepsided valley, north of Caheraphuca Lough. The peat basin has been improved and was crossed with large wet drains.

Cultural Landscape: The sites at Caheraphuca 3–12 were located approximately 900 m south of the burnt mound at Caheraphuca 1. Burnt mounds were also located approximately 750 m to the north in Caheraphuca (CL018–83) and another approximately 1.25 km to the northeast at Drummanneen (CL018–88). Excluding the sites excavated as part of the project there were also burnt mounds identified surrounding the Caheraphuca cluster to the south. These are located to the southeast in Carrahil townland.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during Archaeological Monitoring in advance of the N18 Gort to Crusheen Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a mound of heat-shattered stone that sealed a single pit/trough. A natural spring was also identified.

Burnt Mound: The spread of burnt material (C1203) was sub-circular in shape and measured 12.5m by 12.25m with a thickness of 0.64m. It consisted of charcoal rich material with heat-affected stone. A sample of hazel returned a Late Bronze Age date.

Trough: The trough (C1205) was sub-rectangular in plan with a flat base and measured 2.85m by 2.1m with a depth of 0.22m. It contained a single fill consisting of dark-brown silty clay and heat-affected stone. An Early to Middle Bronze Age date was returned from the fill of this trough. The fill also contained elder, alder, alder/hazel, oak, ash and wild/bird cherry charcoal inclusions. The stone from the fill was identified as very coarse quartzite.
Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (alder/hazel) from fill of trough (C1205)
C14 (UBA-12750) 3325±39 BP (1730–1510 BC)
Charcoal (alder/hazel) from fill of trough (C1205)
C14 (UBA-12749) 2844±21 BP (1108–922 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

Excavation of the sited revealed a mound of heat-shattered stone derived from a pyrolithic water-boiling activity. The identification of a single rectangular trough would confirm this hypothesis with the radiocarbon evidence suggesting at least two phases of activity separated by several hundred years.

References:

Excavation Details:

Physical Setting: The site was located at the base of a steep east-facing slope on the edge of a wetland area.

Cultural Landscape: Rathwilladoon 4 was located approximately 1.4 km to the south of the two burnt mounds at Curtaun and it was located approximately 900 m north of the cluster of burnt mounds at Gortavoher and Monreagh.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during Archaeological Monitoring in advance of the N18 Gort to Crusheen Road Scheme. It was still visible on the surface as a grass-covered horseshoe-shaped mound. The part of the mound within the excavation area consisted of the back of the mound. The majority of the site was preserved in situ.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Limited excavation on the site revealed a mound of heat-shattered stone. The only archaeological feature exposed was a small linear feature. The other irregular pits were interpreted as tree holes. The burnt mound (C3) was horseshoe-shaped in plan and measured 10m by 10m with an excavated depth of 0.2m. It consisted of black charcoal enriched soil in a matrix of heat-affected limestone. A secondary layer (C15) was recorded extending from it which represented material washed out of the mound and contained small stones and a charcoal-flecked silt.

Dating: Charcoal (alder/hazel) from mound deposit (C3)
C14 (UBA-12737) 3231±22 BP (1601–1436 BC)

References:

Location: Townland: Derrygarriff  Six inch map no: 18
Parish: Inchacronan  NGR: 140463, 191046
Barony: Inchacronan  Altitude: 24m OD
County: Clare

Excavation Details: Project: N18 Gort to Crusheen Road Scheme
Site Director: Joe Nunan
Consultants: Irish Archaeological Consultancy
Year: 2008

Physical Setting: It was located on the west facing slope of low gravel ridge surrounded by wetland with the Derrygarriff stream to the south.

Cultural Landscape: Derrygarriff 1 (though completely unrelated) was located approximately 1.8 km to the south of the (Bronze Age) burnt mounds at Monreagh (see below) and was located approximately 550 m north of the Bonze Age burnt mound at Derrygarriff 3 (see below). There are two cashels (CL018-021 and CL018-018) located c. 80 m southeast and c. 420 m southwest of Derrygarriff 1.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during Archaeological Monitoring in advance of the N18 Gort to Crusheen Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a disturbed spread of heat-shattered stone which sealed a small shallow pit.

Burnt Spread: The spread of burnt material (C3) measured 5m by 4m with a thickness of 0.14m. It consisted of black gravelly silts, with heat-shattered limestone and charcoal. A shotgun cartridge recovered from the spread indicates the extent of its disturbance and suggests also that the disturbance may have been a modern event. A modern date was returned from this spread probably a result of modern disturbance.

Pit: This pit (C5) was sub-circular inn shape with irregular sides. It measured 0.9m by 0.85m with a depth of 0.11m. It contained dark brown silty clay, charcoal and stones and was revealed under the spread. A medieval date was returned from the fill of this pit. Oak was the main charcoal recovered from the pit and is a long burning timber that gives off good heat. The remaining charcoal recorded consisted of alder and maloideae species (hawthorn, rowan, crab apple). They were likely to be used as kindling and were collected in the immediate area.
Finds:

Artefacts: None
Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None
Absolute dating: Charcoal (hazel) from spread deposit (C3)
C14 (UBA-12713) 69±20 BP (AD 1695–1955)
Charcoal (alder) from fill of pit (C5)
C14 (UBA-12714) 543±21 BP (AD 1326–1343)

Excavation Interpretation:

This site was discovered during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N18 Gort to Crusheen road project. It consisted of a small spread of black gravel silts, charcoal and heat-shattered limestone. Considerable disturbance of the site was indicated by the presence of modern material in the matrix of the spread and a modern radiocarbon date (UBA-12713). The more recent of the two dates may be disregarded, as it can be associated with modern disturbance. The earlier date was sealed by the burnt stone spread and seemingly retrieved from a secure context (Nunan 2009, 15). The small size of the pit makes it unlikely that it was used as a receptacle for heating liquids. There is no record of heat-shattered stone in the fill. Given the damage noted at the site and the presence of early medieval activity in the vicinity, it is possible that this site may not be related to pyrolithic process or may have suffered considerable intrusion in later periods.

References

Location: Townland: Derrygarriff  Six inch map no: 18
Parish: Inchacronan  NGR: 140399, 190444
Barony: Inchacronan  Altitude: 26m OD
County: Clare

Excavation Details: Project: N18 Gort to Crusheen Road Scheme
Site Director: Joe Nunan
Consultants: Irish Archaeological Consultancy
Year: 2008

Physical Setting: The burnt mound was discovered on raised ground within a wetland area in Derrygarriff townland in north Co. Clare.

Cultural Landscape: Derrygarriff 3 was located approximately 550 m to the south of the burnt mound (not contemporary) at Derrygarriff 1 (Nunan 2009a) and was located approximately 550 m north of the burnt mound at Sranagalloon 1 (Nunan 2009b) which for one phase was contemporary with it.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during Archaeological Monitoring in advance of the N18 Gort to Crusheen Road Scheme. The site existed as an extant mound which was only partially excavated during road works.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a mound of heat-shattered stone, a pit and two troughs.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound (C3, C13) measured 8.5m by 6m. It consisted of black clay loam, ash, charcoal and heat-shattered limestone. The whole mound was a classic horseshoe-shape and most of it lay outside the excavation area. Charcoal identified from the mound material was identified as alder/hazel, ash, Maloideae species (hawthorn/rowan/crab apple), hawthorn and poplar/willow charcoal fragments.

Trough 1: The trough (C6) was oval in shape with steep sides and measured 1.6m by 1.2m with a depth of 0.4m. It contained two fills consisting of charcoal enriched soil in a matrix of heat-affected stone. The basal fill returned a Late Bronze Age date.

Trough 2: This trough (C4) was sub-oval in shape and measured 2.85m by 2m with a depth of 0.5m. Three fills were noted in the pit which all contained some form of charcoal-enriched, sandy silt with inclusions of heat-shattered stone (80%) with an upper peat deposit. The middle fill C9 contained fragments of...
undiagnostic burnt animal bone. This trough returned a Late Bronze Age date.

Pit: The pit C12 was irregular in shape and measured 1m by 0.7m with a depth of 0.18m. The fill consisted of stone, charcoal and loose dark/grey soil.

Water Channel: C15 was a possible prehistoric drain designed to conduct water to the nearby trough C4. Drain C15 extended beyond the limits of excavation. It was orientated NNE/SSW, located under the northern arm of the horseshoe mound and only identified in section.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: Undiagnostic animal bone from fill of trough 2 (C4)

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (alder/hazel) from fill of trough (C6)
C14 (UBA-12718) 2788±24 BP (1006–850 BC)
Charcoal (alder) from fill of trough (C4)
C14 (UBA-12717) 2640±21 BP (829–793 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

Limited excavation on site revealed two possible troughs, a pit and a possible water-channel. The full extent of the site was not revealed and the associated mound was preserved in situ. Radiocarbon dating from the site confirms a Late Bronze Age date and the identification of possible troughs implies a water-boiling activity possibly associated with cooking, as suggested by the recovery of small amounts of animal bone.

References

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<td>Physical Setting:</td>
<td>The sites were located in Monreagh townland, Co. Clare in an undulating, peat covered area running along the bottom of a low lying north-south orientated stream valley. The field boundary to the north, aligned on the Scarriff Stream marked the townland, county and provincial boundary with Galway.</td>
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<td>Cultural Landscape:</td>
<td>Derrygarriff 3 was located approximately 550 m to the south of the burnt mound (not contemporary) at Derrygarriff 1 (see above) and was located approximately 550 m north of the burnt mound at Sranagalloon 1 (see below) which for one phase, was contemporary with it.</td>
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**Pre-Excavation features**

The site was uncovered during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N18 Gort to Crusheen Road Scheme. The two sites uncovered here were excavated under the same licence number.

**Excavation Record**

**Summary of Features:**

Excavation of the site revealed two areas of archaeological potential. The features identified in the first area were interpreted as natural hollows. A large stone axehead was recovered from one of these hollows. The second area consisted of a burnt mound which sealed several troughs and pits.

**Burnt Mound:**

The first spread of mound material (C22) measured 11.48m by 8m with a maximum thickness of 0.21m. It consisted of dark brown silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered limestone with some sandstone present also. The second spread (C23) measured 7.05m by 4m with a maximum depth of 0.18m. It consisted of black grey silty clay which contained charcoal and heat-shattered limestone with some sandstone.
Trough 1: Trough C28 was sub-rectangular in plan and measured 2.5m by 1.5m with a depth of 0.3m. The fill consisted of black peaty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Trough 2: This trough (C30) was oval in shape and measured 2.3m by 1.05m with a depth of 0.39m. The fill consisted of dark brown silty clay with charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Trough 3: The trough C35 was sub-rectangular in plan with sloping sides. It measured 1.97m by 1.34m with a depth of 0.22m. The fill consisted of dark brown silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. This trough returned a Middle Bronze Age date.

Trough 4: This trough (C38) was oval in shape with concave sides. It measured 2.24m by 1.67m with a depth of 0.23m. The fill consisted of dark grey silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Trough 5: Trough C46 was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 2.1m by 0.7m with a depth of 0.25m. The fill consisted of grey silt and heat-shattered stone.

Cistern: This pit (C32) was sub-circular in shape and measured 1.56m by 1.34m with a depth of 0.6m. It was located on slightly higher ground west of the troughs. It contained two fills with the basal deposit consisting of dark brown silty clay and charcoal while the upper layer contained silty clay. It retained water only after prolonged rainfall and may represent a cistern for accessing water when the ground water was high and the other cistern C26 could not be accessed.

Trough 6 and Cistern: The trough (C24) was sub-circular in shape and measured 1.88m by 1.64m with a depth of 0.33m. The single fill consisted dark silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered limestone and quartzite.

The cistern (C26) was conjoined to the trough and was much deeper. It is possible that it provided water for the much shallower trough. The pit was circular in shape and measured 2m by 1.68m with a depth of 1m. It contained a single fill consisting of dark silty clay, charcoal and burnt and unburnt limestone and quartz stone. Burnt and unburnt animal bone was recovered from from this deposit. A Late Bronze Age date was returned from the cistern.

Finds:

Artefacts: The lithic finds from the archaeological excavation at Monreagh 1, Co. Clare are a polished stone axe made of shale and a large coarse quartzite saddle quern. The axe dates to the first half of the Neolithic period and represents a residual find at this site. The saddle quern is a classic Bronze Age artefact and is almost certainly associated with domestic activities carried out at the nearby Bronze Age site at Monreagh 2.

Ecofacts: Undiagnostic animal bone from fill of trough (C24) and cistern (C26)

Dating:

Relative dating: None
Absolute dating:
Charcoal (alder/hazel) from fill of trough (C35)
C14 (UBA-12755) 3067±23 BP (1409–1269 BC)
Charcoal (hazel) from fill of cistern/pit (C26)
C14 (UBA-12754) 2758±25 BP (975–832 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

Excavation of the site revealed an extensive deposit of heat-shattered stone and six possible troughs. One of these troughs was conjoined to a possible well or cistern feature. It may have served as an emptying pit for the trough above where water was released after use (see Chapter 5). At least two phases of activity were established from the radiocarbon evidence, however it is likely that this site operated for many years as a water-boiling area.

References

Excavation Details: Project: N18 Gort to Crusheen Road Scheme
Site Director: Joe Nunan
Consultants: Irish Archaeological Consultancy
Year: 2008

Physical Setting: It was located in a flat pasture field and had been cut by a drain. The field was prone to flooding. The landscape was slightly undulating and was overlooked to the south by a slope. It sloped downwards to the north.

Cultural Landscape: Sranagalloon 1 was located approximately 550 m to the south of the burnt mound at Derrygarriff 2 (see above) and was located approximately 750 m north of the burnt mound at Sranagalloon 3.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during Archaeological Monitoring in advance of the N18 Gort to Crusheen Road Scheme. No surface trace of the site was evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a spread of heat-shattered stone and a timber-lined trough that was cut by a modern drain.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound spread consisted of a number of deposits (C6, C5, C4). C6 measured 3m by 1m with a thickness of 0.15m. It consisted of light brown silty clay. The lower layer (C5) measured 6m by 2.4m with a thickness of 0.34m. It consisted of dark brown silt, heat-shattered stone and charcoal. The upper deposit (C4) measured 9.3m by 5.95m with a thickness of 0.42m. This consisted of dark brown silty clay, heat-shattered stone and charcoal. C5 returned a Late Bronze Age date. Alder/hazel, oak, ash, Maloideae species (hawthorn/rowan/crab apple), poplar/willow and elm charcoal were also identified from the basal layer of the burnt mound indicating a mixed deciduous woodland in the surrounding area. The shattered stone was identified as limestone.

Trough: The trough C8 was oval in shape with steep, irregular sides. The surviving portion measured 2.24m by 1.15m by 0.44. The southern section of the trough was destroyed by a drain. Three base timbers were uncovered in the trough which were identified as alder. Two of the timbers were radially split. No Tool marks were evident. The timbers were positioned a thin gravel layer
which returned a Middle Bronze Age date. The trough was filled with a dump of stony material which Nunan suggests was an attempt to raise it up to the same level as the mound material (2009, 11).

Revetment/Platform: Several limestone slabs were evident lining the edge of the trough pit, possibly acting as a revetment for the mound material or acting as a platform stabilising the trough pit from the damp conditions.

Finds:

Artefacts: A portion of a mudstone axe was uncovered in the topsoil close to the excavation.

Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (hazel) from fill of trough (C8)
C14 (UBA-12759) 3106±26 BP (1433–1313 BC)
Charcoal (hazel/alder) from burnt spread (C5)
C14 (UBA-12758) 2925±38 BP (1260–1012 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

Excavation of the site revealed a Middle to Late Bronze Age fulacht fia which, based on the radiocarbon evidence and accumulated mound material, was probably used for some time sporadically. The central area of the mound and much of the trough was destroyed by a modern drain however it was nevertheless confirmed that the site functioned as a water-boiling area using a timber-lined trough. A rough paving area found around the trough may have also been used to stabilise the working area due to waterlogging.

References


Fig. 10.39 Burnt Mound, stone paving and remains of timber trough at Sranagalloon 1, Co. Clare
Loca

Parish: Inchicronan
NGR: 129751, 189290
Barony: Inchicronan
Altitude: 34m OD
County: Clare

Parish: Inchicronan
NGR: 129751, 189290
Barony: Inchicronan
Altitude: 34m OD
County: Clare

Excavation Details:
Project: N18 Gort to Crusheen Road Scheme
Site Director: Joe Nunan
Consultants: Irish Archaeological Consultancy
Year: 2008

Physical Setting:
The site lay at 34 m OD on marginal land between pasture and a peat-covered area running along the bottom of a steeply sloped north-south orientated stream valley. The field boundary to the east was aligned on a canalised stream and was situated on the edge of wetland with a steep slope to the west.

Cultural Landscape:
Sranagalloon 3 was located approximately 250–295 m to the northeast of the burnt mounds at Gortaficka 1 and 2 (Nunan 2009d) and was located approximately 750 m south of the burnt mound at Sranagalloon 1. Another burnt mound (CL018–67) was also located approximately 1.50 km to the northwest in Sranagalloon.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features
The site was uncovered during Archaeological Monitoring in advance of the N18 Gort to Crusheen Road Scheme. No surface trace of the site was evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features:
Excavation of the site revealed two phases of burnt mound activity which consisted of spreads of heat-shattered stone, troughs and pits.

Phase 1
Burnt Mound:
This burnt mound spread consisted of two deposits of fired stone and charcoal. C3/C12 measured 7.5m by 9.5m with a thickness of 0.5m. It consisted of greyish black peaty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered limestone. Charcoal from the spread included hazel, alder/hazel, cf hawthorn, cf crab apple, blackthorn/sloe and elm charcoal inclusions. A smaller spread was also identified belonging to this phase. It measured 4.5m by 5m with a thickness of 0.5m.

Trough:
The trough pit (C28) was sub-circular in shape with a rounded base. It measured 3.9m by 3.4m with a depth of 0.28m. Nunan noted concave ‘steps’
in the pits profile which may have facilitated access to the trough (Nunan 2010, 11). Eight fills were recorded in the feature. These fills were generally grey / black silt clays. Twelve timbers situated at different elevations within a single deposit (C33) may have been the partial remains of a timber-lined base in the trough, but no pattern was apparent in the layout of the timbers. The two lower deposits within the trough appeared to have been deliberately packed into the base of the feature and contained a yew club/handle. A fragment of animal bone was recovered from an upper deposit in the trough. A Middle Bronze Age date was returned from the pit. Five stake-holes were also recorded on the edge of the trough pit.

Pit 1: Pit (C19) was located 4m from the trough pit C28. It was oval in shape and measured 1.22m by 1.08m with a depth of 0.3m. It contained four fills. The lower fill, C20, was silty sand. The two middle fills, C21 and C22, were peat and appeared to have formed as a result of abandonment probably when C13 peat growth was occurring across the site. The upper fill, C23, comprised of a disturbed subsoil deposit which was possibly derived from the excavation of trough C50 in a period of later activity. A Middle Bronze Age date was returned from this pit.

Pit 2: (C24) was oval in shape and measured 2.1m by 1.52m with a depth of 0.4m. It contained two fills consisting of peaty material and disturbed subsoil.

Phase 2

Burnt Mound: This burnt stone spread consisted of three deposits of fired material related to hot stone technology. The main deposit (C8) measured 8.2m by 5.2m with a thickness of 0.5m. It consisted of black stony peaty clay with heat-shattered limestone. This spread sealed a timber-lined trough and returned a Late Bronze Age date. This deposit also contained alder, ash and cf hawthorn charcoal fragments.

Trough: The trough (C50) was rectangular in shape and measured 2.7m by 1.8m with a depth of 0.2m. The base of the feature was lined with eighteen roundwood pieces consisting of ash, alder and holly. It was sealed by the mound material C8.

Pit: This pit (C4) was located 11m south of the trough C28. It was oval in shape and measured 1.2m by 0.92m with a depth of 0.5m. The fill consisted of light brown peat. Two lithic blades were recovered close to this pit.

Finds:

Artefacts: Worked Yew handle/club deliberately deposited in trough C28. The lithic finds from the archaeological excavation at Sranagallon 3, Co. Clare are a bipolar chert blade and a bipolar chert flake. The artefacts date to the second half of the Neolithic period and represent residual material from an earlier occupation of this site.

Ecofacts: Cattle bone from upper deposit of trough C28.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (hazel) from fill of trough (C28)

711
Excavation Interpretation:

The site represents a Mid Bronze Age burnt mound that was abandoned and reused in the late Bronze Age period. The first phase of activity included the use of a large sub-circular trough and a contemporary smaller trough and pit. A worked yew club/handle was deliberately placed at the base of the large trough as a symbolic or ritual gesture. A fill within this trough has been dated to 1494–1399 BC. The site went out of use and was sealed by new peat growth. The final archaeological activity at the site was focussed on another timber-lined trough to the south of the site. Charcoal from the mound of heat-shattered stone that sealed this trough has been dated to 706–400 BC. Two diagnostically late Neolithic stone artefacts were recovered from the area of the excavation but they are not likely to have been associated with the burnt mound site excavated.

References

Physical Setting: Ballyline 1 and 2 were burnt mound sites located on flat land, which was prone to flooding, close to the base of a hill in Ballyline townland.

Cultural Landscape: The sites at Ballyline 1 and 2 were located approximately 800 m south of the burnt mound cluster at Caheraphuca 3–12. They were also located in an area with a high concentration of known burnt mounds. These are located approximately 500 m to the northeast in Carraghil townland (CL026–137 and CL026–138) and within 800 m to the north and northwest in Caheraphuca (CL026–143, 128, 134 and 136) and Ballyline (CL026–133), 800 m to the southwest in Ballyline (CL026–144) and 700 m to the south in Bearnafunshin townland (CL026–149 and CL026–179). Clusters of burnt mounds were excavated on the project to the north in Monreagh and Derrygarriff, Sranagalloon/Gortaficka and Caheraphuca townlands.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during Archaeological Monitoring in advance of the N18 Gort to Crusheen Road Scheme. No surface trace of the sites were evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed two disturbed burnt mound spreads which sealed several trough and pit features.

Site A

Burnt Mound 1: This disturbed burnt mound (C3) was spread over an area measuring 10m by 9m with a thickness of 0.3m. It consisted of black/brown silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. It sealed all the cut features on site.

Trough 1: This trough (C4) was oval in shape and measured 2.5m by 1.5m with a depth of 0.3m. The fill consisted of charcoal enriched soil and heat-affected stones.

Trough 2: This trough (C6) was oval in shape with straight sides. It measured 1.8m by 1m with a depth of 0.35m. Two fills were noted in the trough consisting of
dark silty clays with charcoal and heat-shattered stone. An Early Bronze Age date was returned from this fill.

**Trough 3:**

This trough (C9) was oval in shape with gradual concave sides. It measured 2.4m by 1m with a depth of 0.3m. The fill consisted of black brown yellow silty sand and heat-shattered stone.

**Trough 4:**

C11 was oval in shape with straight sides. It measured 2.4m by 0.8m with depth of 0.4m. The fill consisted of brownish grey silt and heat-affected stones.

**Trough 5:**

This trough (C13) was oval in shape with gradual sides. It measured 1.8m by 1.4m with a depth of 0.41m. The fill consisted of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

**Pit 1:**

The pit (C15) was oval in shape with sloping sides. It measured 1.8m by 1m with a depth of 0.36m. The fill consisted of blackish grey silt, stone and charcoal.

**Site B**

**Burnt Mound 2:**

This was the second burnt mound spread (C21) identified at the site. It measured 6.95m by 5.6m with a thickness of 0.3m. It consisted of dark grey silty clay, charcoal and 50% limestone and 50% sandstone.

**Trough 6:**

Trough (C22) was oval in shape with vertical sides. It measured 1.95m by 1.25m with a depth of 0.63m. The trough contained two fills consisting of dark silty sands, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. The trough returned an Early Bronze Age date.

**Pit 2:**

Pit (C35) was circular in shape with straight sides. It measured 0.6m by 0.6m with a depth of 0.39m. The fill consisted of brown sandy silt and stones.

**Trough 7:**

This trough (C30) was oval in shape with concave sides. It measured 2.68m by 1.9m with a depth of 0.42m. The fill consisted of a single deposit containing black/grey sandy silt, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

**Trough 8:**

Trough C37 was sub-oval with vertical sides. It measured 2.4m by 0.85m with a depth of 0.36m. The fill consisted of charcoal enriched silty sand and heat-shattered stone.

**Finds:**

**Artefacts:**

A fragment of a possible mudstone axe was recovered from the topsoil. Possibly dates to the Neolithic period.

**Ecofacts:**

None

**Dating:**

**Relative dating:**

None

**Absolute dating:**

Charcoal (hazel/alder) from fill of trough (C6) Site A
C14 (UBA-12742) 3604±40 BP (2129–1828 BC)
Charcoal (hazel/alder) from fill of trough (C22) Site B
C14 (UBA-12740) 3481±38 BP (1897–1692 BC)
**Excavation Interpretation:**

Ballyline 1 and 2 were burnt mound sites located on flat land, which was prone to flooding, close to the base of a hill in Ballyline townland. The sites were very badly disturbed and the three spreads of heat shattered stone sealing the features were very thin. Despite this evidence for six troughs of varying sizes was identified from the two areas. Its date range indicates a site that was returned to on a number of occasions over a long period in the early Bronze Age period. It was ideally located in wetland at the base of a steep slope in an area close to a stream. No animal bone was retrieved from the fills of the troughs and there is nothing to indicate a precise function for the site.

**References**

**Location:** Townland: Drumminacloghaun  
Parish: Kilmacduagh  
Barony: Kilmacduagh  
County: Clare  
Six inch map no: 18  
NGR: 144104, 201641  
Altitude: 24m OD

**Excavation Details:** Project: N18 Gort to Crusheen Road Scheme  
Site Director: Siobhán McNamara  
Consultants: Irish Archaeological Consultancy  
Year: 2008

**Physical Setting:** It was situated on raised ground which was under pasture. The land was covered in gorse bushes and a natural spring and a wetland area were located to the north.

**Cultural Landscape:** Drumminacloghaun 1 was the most northerly identified burnt mound on the N18 Gort to Crusheen road scheme and was excavated as an isolated site. A review of the RMP records indicates that the only known burnt mound (GA 122–134) in close proximity to it is at Newtown, which is approximately 1 km to the west.

**Adjacent excavated sites:** None

**Pre-Excavation features**

The site was uncovered during Archaeological Monitoring in advance of the N18 Gort to Crusheen Road Scheme. No surface trace of the site was evident prior to investigations.

**Excavation Record**

**Summary of Features:** Excavation of the site revealed a spread of heat-shattered stone which sealed a single trough.

**Burnt Spread:** The spread (C3) was irregular in shape and measured 8.5m by 6.5m with a thickness of 0.25m. It consisted of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered limestone. The heat shattered stone was a disturbed layer and although it sealed the trough it appears to represent earlier activity on the site than the trough. Charcoal analysis of the burnt spread has produced evidence for alder/hazel, oak, ash, yew and elm and a single carbonised yellow water lily seed. A single unidentified bone fragment was also identified. An Early Bronze Age date was returned from the spread.

**Trough:** The trough (C4) was oval in plan and measured 1.62m by 1.3m with a depth of 0.5m. Two fills were noted in the trough. The lower fill, C6, consisted of a clay with charcoal flecks and the upper fill C5 comprised a dark-brown peat with heat-affected limestone inclusions. This trough was dated to the Late Bronze Age.
Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (hazel/alden) from burnt spread material (C3)
C14 (UBA-12752) 3779±39 BP (2339–2042 BC)
Charcoal (ash) from fill of trough (C4)
C14 (UBA-12751) 2580±38 BP (817–551 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

Drumminacloghaun 1 was located on a rise within a pasture field that was prone to flooding. The site comprised of a spread of burnt and unburnt limestone with charcoal that has been dated to 2339–2042 BC. The site appears to have been abandoned only to be reused again in the late Bronze Age period when the trough or pit was dug. The site had been disturbed and the earlier burnt mound material had ended up sealing the late Bronze Age trough/pit. This may simply have occurred through years of trampling and disturbance by livestock.

References

Catalogue No. CE 64a-b

RMP No. NA

Licence No. E3721

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| Physical Setting: | The Curtaun site is located below the summit of a ridge which trends northeast/southwest. The site was located on its east-facing slope on well-drained ridge. It overlooked bog to the east and southeast. |
| Cultural Landscape: | A review of the RMP records indicates a burnt mound at Fiddaun approximately 2 km to the northwest (GA 128–91) of Curtaun and a cluster a further 2 km to the northwest at Rockvale in County Clare (CL011–34 and CL011–35). There is a cluster of burnt mound sites around the lakes on the eastern slopes of Mullagh More in the Burren (approximately 7 km to the west). Drumminacloghaun 1, a burnt mound excavated as part of this project was located approximately 6 km to the north. Situated approximately 2 km to the south was Rathwilladoon 4 which was an intact horseshoe-shaped burnt mound located on the edge of a seasonal lake (it was only partially excavated as most of it lay outside the CPO area) with the Gortavoher and Monreagh sites further to the south. |

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during Archaeological Monitoring in advance of the N18 Gort to Crusheen Road Scheme. No surface trace of the site was evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed three areas of archaeological significance including two fulachtai fia and a substantial kiln dating to the Early Medieval period.

Area 1

Burnt Spread 1: The burnt stone spread (C194) measured 10m by 7m with a thickness of 0.08m. It was irregular in shape and consisted of black silty clay and heat-affected stone. The spread was disturbed by post-medieval agricultural activity.
Trough 1: Trough (C89) was oval in shape with gradual sloping sides and measured 2.45m by 1.9m with a depth of 0.4m. A single stake-hole was recorded in each of the corners and three further stake-holes were recorded around its edge. The fill of the trough consisted of charcoal rich material and heat-shattered stone.

Area 2

Burnt Spread 2: This burnt stone spread (C6) measured 10m by 9m with a thickness of 0.16m. It sealed three of the four pits and was badly disturbed by post-medieval agricultural activity.

Trough 2: This possible trough (C16) was sub-oval in shape with steep sides. It measured 2.3m by 1.46m with a depth of 0.64m. Three fills were noted in the pit consisting of black silty clays, peat and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 1/Trough 3: C7 was sub-oval in shape with steep sides. It measured 2.2m by 1.6m with a depth of 0.58. The fill consisted of dark brown coarse sand and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 2: Pit (C3) was oval in shape and measured 2.5m by 1.15m with a depth of 0.3m. It contained a black peaty fill.

Pit 3: C9 was irregular in shape and measured 2.1m by 1.3m with a depth of 0.38m. Four fills were noted in this pit consisting of dark silty sands, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. A Middle Bronze Age date was returned from this feature. A pig tusk was also recovered from this site.

Well: This shallow well feature (C14) was irregular in shape with steep sides. It measured 2.2m by 1.05m with a depth of 0.3m. The fill consisted of peat with charcoal inclusions.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: Wild boar tusk from pit C9

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (hazel) from pit (C9) C14 (UBA-12708) 3256±21 BP (1608–1459 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

Two separate areas of Bronze Age activity were identified at Curtaun 1 and 2. These were both the remains of burnt mounds. Both were very badly disturbed with only fragmentary spreads of heat-shattered stone left in situ. In Area 1 the remains of an earth-cut trough had been timber lined as there was evidence for four corner posts, a lining method common during the Late Bronze Age. Ninety metres to the southeast another burnt spread was excavated at Area 2. Five pits were found under or around the spread...
of which three were part filled with heat affected stone. The remaining two, one of which was under the spread and the other next to it, were filled with peat. The two peat-filled pits may have acted as shallow wells while the three pits containing heat-shattered stone acted as troughs for heating the water.

References


Plate 10.19 Remains of trough cut with stake-holes at Area I, Curtaun, Co. Clare
Location: Clooneen  Townland: Clooneen  Six inch map no: 18
Parish: Inchicronan  NGR: 139186, 188268
Barony: Inchicronan  Altitude: 32m OD
County: Clare

Excavation Details: Project: N18 Gort to Crusheen Road Scheme
Site Director: David Bayley
Consultants: Irish Archaeological Consultancy
Year: 2008

Physical Setting: The site was located in a peat basin in a gently undulating landscape, with the ground rising gently to the east and west of the site. Located on relatively dry bogland, this land was used for pasture.

Cultural Landscape: Clooneen 1 was located approximately 900 m south of the group of burnt mounds at Gortaficka/Sranagalloon, with burnt mounds also located approximately 1.50 km to the north northwest in Sranagalloon (CL018–67) and 875 m to the west in Clooneen (CL018–76). The Caheraphuca burnt mound group, focussed on a former wetland approximately 900 m to the south.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features
The site was uncovered during Archaeological Monitoring in advance of the N18 Gort to Crusheen Road Scheme. No surface trace of the site was evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a spread of heat-shattered stone and a sub-circular plank-lined trough.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound (C3) was horseshoe-shaped and measured 12.1m by 11.5m with a thickness of 0.27m. It consisted of a black charcoal rich silty clay with heat-shattered quartzite. Charcoal identified from the burnt mound included alder, hazel, alder/hazel, ash and poplar/willow.

Trough: The trough (C8) was sub-circular in shape with steep sides and measured 1.5m by 1.43m with a depth of 0.22m. It contained a primary fill of ash, C19, located behind and beneath the vertical timbers. The trough was lined with ash timbers. The basal planks overlapped and so did the nine vertical timbers which were placed around the perimeter of the trough. Bayley suggests that this overlapping may helped to keep the trough watertight. Two ash wood stakes, C20, were then driven into the base of the trough and into the natural peat at opposing sides of the trough, one at the east and one at the west. The function of these stakes was most likely to support the vertical
timbers (Bayley 2010, 11). Further ash layers were noted on the base of the trough along with stone that was identified as quartzite. These ash deposits were silty materials that would have settled from the heated stones that had been placed in the functioning trough. A possible peg was also noted under the basal timbers. The final fill of the trough contained a deposit of heat-shattered stone and charcoal rich material.

Hearth:
An area of scorching was identified during the excavation which may represent the hearth used to heat stones. It measured 3.6m by 1.8m with a thickness of 0.04m. It consisted of a thin layer of ash sand which Bayley suggests may have been the result of the peat having been the base of a hearth.

Pit:
This pit (C12) was sub-circular in shape 1.15m by 0.74m with a depth of 0.15m. It contained two fills consisting of dark silty clays, charcoal and stones.

Finds:
Artefacts: None
Ecofacts: None

Dating:
Relative dating: None
Absolute dating: Charcoal (alder) from fill of trough (C8) C14 (UBA-12730) 3637±33 BP (2132–1909 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:
The Bronze Age activity at Clooneen 1 consisted of a wood-lined trough, a pit, a hearth and a burnt mound. The site was located on an already existing peat deposit and the trough was cut into this enabling easy availability of water for the trough through the bogs high water table. A lot of effort went into the construction of the timber trough. This amount of effort is at odds with the size of the burnt mound, which is quite small and suggests a short lifespan for the site. Alternatively, the mound could have been larger but was disturbed during land improvement and reclamation works in the area as evidenced by the modern ditch that was situated to the west of the burnt mound. The trough was constructed of split alder and ash timbers that were overlaid to improve their seal. No finds or animal bone were recovered from the trough or associated features and as a result it is impossible to posit a function other than to say that stones were placed in the trough to heat water for any number of reasons.

References

Fig. 10.41 Burnt mound and circular plank-lined trough at Clooneen
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Townland: Gortavoher</th>
<th>Six inch map no: 18</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parish:</td>
<td>Beagh</td>
<td>NGR: 140657, 193043</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barony:</td>
<td>Beagh</td>
<td>Altitude: 24m OD</td>
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<td>County:</td>
<td>Clare</td>
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**Excavation Details:**

- **Project:** N18 Gort to Crusheen Road Scheme
- **Site Director:** Shane Delaney
- **Consultants:** Irish Archaeological Consultancy
- **Year:** 2008

**Physical Setting:**

It was located at the base of a southwest facing slope and on the flood plain of the Scarriff stream which flowed to the south. The field was prone to flooding.

**Cultural Landscape:**

Gortavoher 1 was located approximately 900 m to the south of the burnt mound at Rathwilladoon (see above) and it was located approximately 200 m northeast of the cluster of burnt mounds at Monreagh. The site is part of a cluster at this location that occupies a shallow stream valley and includes the Monreagh sites on the southern side of the stream.

**Adjacent excavated sites:** None

**Pre-Excavation features**

The site was uncovered during Archaeological Monitoring in advance of the N18 Gort to Crusheen Road Scheme. No surface trace of the site was evident prior to investigations.

**Excavation Record**

**Summary of Features:**

Excavation of the site revealed two spreads of heat-shattered stone. No other features were identified. C3 was identified in the eastern area of the site and measured 14.4m by 12.4m with a thickness of 0.36m. It consisted of black gravelly silt, charcoal and heat-shattered sandstone. An Early Bronze Age date was returned from the spread. Spread (C6) was identified on the western extent of the site and measured 4.2m by 3.4m with a thickness of 0.22m. It consisted of black gravelly silt, charcoal and heat-shattered sandstone.

**Dating:**

Charcoal (hazel) from burnt spread (C3)

C14 (UBA-12753) 3591±25 BP (2023–1887 BC)

**References**

Location: Townland: Monreagh  Six inch map no: 18
Parish: Kilkeedy  NGR: 140607, 193039
Barony: Kilkeedy  Altitude: 25m OD
County: Clare
Excavation Details: Project: N18 Gort to Crusheen Road Scheme
Site Director: Shane Delaney
Consultants: Irish Archaeological Consultancy
Year: 2008

Physical Setting: The sites were located in Monreagh townland, Co. Clare, in an undulating, peat-covered area running along the bottom of a low-lying north-south orientated stream valley. The field boundary to the north, aligned on the Scarriff Stream marked the townland, county and provincial boundary with Galway.

Cultural Landscape: Monreagh 3 was located approximately 900 m to the south of the burnt mound at Rathwilladoon 4 (Lyne 2009). The site was also located approximately 150 m north of the main concentration of activity at Monreagh 2 (McNamara 2009b) and approximately 100 m west of the burnt mound site at Gortavoher 1 (Delaney 2009b). This cluster is composed of five burnt mounds and numerous troughs and pits and is not all contemporary. It is located on the north and south banks of the Scarriff stream.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features
The site was uncovered during Archaeological Monitoring in advance of the N18 Gort to Crusheen Road Scheme. No surface trace of the site was evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed two areas of archaeological interest including a spread of heat-shattered stone which sealed a possible trough and another site which was located nearby consisting of a single pit/trough with small deposits of heat-affected stones.

Burnt Mound: This low mound (C3) measured 9.6m by 5.6m with a depth of 0.3m. It consisted of black silty material and heat-shattered sandstone and quartzite. Alder, oak, ash and elm charcoal and two carbonised hazelnut shells were also identified. Hazelnut shell may have been consumed or was attached to the branches when burnt. An Early Bronze Age date was returned from this site.
Trough: Sixty meters to the south of the burnt mound (C3) was a trough (C10) and a number of small deposits of heat-shattered stone, probably the remnants of a burnt mound destroyed by agricultural activity. The trough was rectangular in plan and measured 2m by 1.75m with a depth of 0.25m. It was filled with a fine, bluish grey silt with few inclusions and there was limited evidence for heat-shattered stone and only tiny flecks of charcoal within. The stone from the trough was identified as 90% limestone. Oak, ash and Maloideae (hawthorn/rowan/crab apple) charcoal fragments and unburnt blackberry and stone bramble seeds were also identified from the trough.

Burnt Spread: A small spread of heat-shattered stone was identified in a natural hollow (C8) close to the trough and was probably the remnants of a removed burnt mound. The heat-shattered stone was predominantly limestone and the charcoal assemblage was identical to that of the trough deposits.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (hazel) from burnt mound (C3) C14 (UBA-12756) 3427±23 BP (1871–1665 BC) Charcoal (hazel/alder) from trough (C10) C14 (UBA-12757) 2708±39 BP (925–802 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

This site consisted of a spread of heat-affected material including shattered stone. No trough or pits were found close by or in association with this spread of material. A fragment of hazel charcoal from the spread of heat-shattered stone returned a 2 Sigma calibrated date of 1871–1665 BC. A second area of activity was identified approximately 60 m to the south and, although included in this report, is not contemporary. This site consisted of one large rectangular pit or trough with a silt fill and in the surrounding area some small deposits of heat-shattered stone with charcoal. This area had been improved for agricultural reasons and it is likely that these are all that is left of a burnt mound which has been scarped away. The fill of the pit/trough returned a 2 Sigma calibrated dates of 925–802 BC.

References

Location: Townland: Gortaficka
Parish: Inchicronan
Barony: Inchicronan
County: Clare
Six inch map no: 18
NGR: 139592, 139549
189162, 189124
Altitude: 33m OD

Excavation Details: Project: N18 Gort to Crusheen Road Scheme
Site Director: Joe Nunan
Consultants: Irish Archaeological Consultancy
Year: 2008

Physical Setting: The sites were located in Gortaficka townland, Co. Clare, on dry land adjacent to a peat-covered area running along the bottom of a steeply sloped north-south orientated stream valley. A field boundary to the east was aligned on a canalised stream.

Cultural Landscape: Gortaficka 1 and 2 was located approximately 250–295 m to the southwest of the burnt mound at Sranagalloon 3 and was located approximately 900 m north of the burnt mound at Clooneen 1 with burnt mounds also located approximately 1.50 km to the north northwest in Sranagalloon (CL018–67) and 875 m to the west in Clooneen (CL018–76).

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features
The site was uncovered during Archaeological Monitoring in advance of the N18 Gort to Crusheen Road Scheme. No surface trace of the site was evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed two areas of archaeological interest including a spread of heat-shattered stone and another similar deposit which sealed a number of troughs, pits and stake-holes.

Site A
Burnt Spread 1: The spread of burnt mound material C3 was irregular in shape and measured 8m by 5m with a maximum thickness of 0.2m. It consisted of heat-shattered limestone and sandstone within a charcoal/peat matrix. Charcoal from the heat-affected material included hazel/alder, ash and wild/bird cherry inclusions.

Site B
Phase 1
Burnt Spread 2: This small spread (C20) measured 2.3m in length with an unknown width. It had a thickness of 0.24m. It consisted of black sandy clay silt with predominately heat-shattered sandstone. Charcoal identified from the deposit C20 included hazel, alder/hazel, oak, ash and yew fragments.

Trough 1: This shallow trough (C3) was sub-oval in shape and measured 2.13m by 1.33m with a depth of 0.14m. Four stake-holes were cut into the base of the feature around the inner edge and were regularly set apart. The trough contained two main deposits consisting of light sandy clays and silts with heat-affected sandstone. The trough was cut on its northern edge by pit C21.

Pit 1: C21 was irregular in shape and measured 1.77m by 0.92m with a depth of 0.36m. The pit contained six separate deposits of clay silt and sand and was sealed by the burnt spread. A single stake-hole was identified on the northern edge of the pit. The pit returned an Early Bronze Age date.

Phase 2

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound relating to the second phase of activity consisted of two deposits of heat-affected stone (C8, C10). C8 measured 6m by 6m with a thickness of 0.29m, C10 measured 5m by 7m with a thickness of 0.8m. The mound material consisted of charcoal enriched silty clays and heat-shattered sandstone with some limestone present.

Trough 2: Trough (C39) was sub-oval in shape with a flat base. It measured 1.62m by 1.26m with a depth of 0.09m. The trough pit was lined with oak timbers of which only three partially survived in the base. The oval trough contained 14 circular stakeholes/slots, which were cut into the trough base and set principally along the bottom edge. Two further stake-holes were noted on the western and eastern edges of the trough. The fill of the trough consisted of dark sandy clays and burnt mound material. A Middle Bronze Age date was returned from the feature.

Channel: A shallow gully (C53) extended from the eastern edge of the trough (C39) and ran north-south down the slope. The gully contained three deposits, all a result of natural formation and silting. The gully may have controlled and managed the flow of water out from the trough and towards a circular pit (C23).

Pit 2: Pit (C23) was circular in shape with steep sides and an uneven base. It measured 0.92m by 0.9m with a depth of 0.32m. It was located 3m south of the trough (C39). The pit was encircled by nine stake-holes set evenly apart. The trough contained two fills consisting of dark silty clays. The upper fill contained cattle bone.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: Cattle bone from pit C23 (comprising of one rib fragment and nine cranial bone fragments) and wild boar tusk from peat deposit (Site A)

Dating:

Relative dating: None
Absolute dating:
Charcoal (hawthorn/crab apple) from pit (C21)
C14 (UBA-12707) 3776±24 BP (2287–2137 BC)
Charcoal (hazel/alder) from trough (C39)
C14 (UBA-12706) 3168±25 BP (1496–1409 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

Gortaficka 1 and 2 were the remains of burnt mound sites. At Gortaficka 1 all that remained was a small spread of heat-affected sandstone. At Gortaficka 2 evidence for timber lined troughs or pits was identified. The activity represented indicates that the site was used in the early Bronze Age period (2287–2137 BC [UBA 12707]), abandoned for approximately 600 years. This period of abandonment was represented by new peat growth that separated the earlier burnt mound from the later one. The location was then reused in the middle Bronze Age period (1496–1409 BC [UBA 12706]) for a similar function. Both sites were situated in typical locations associated with burnt mound sites, the interface between dry and wet land environments, which allowed for easy access to a water source. The sites would have been used for an industrial or food processing function that required the use of a heated water source.

References

Excavation No.  NA

Location: Townland: Kilnaglery  Six inch map no:  99
Parish: Carrigaline  NGR: 175414, 061473
Barony: Kerrycurrihy  Altitude: 75m OD
County: Cork

Excavation Details: Project: Rescue (Land Reclamation)
Site Director: Sean P. O’Riordáin
Consultants: University College Cork
Year: 1937

Physical Setting: The site is located in the townland of Kilnaglery, approximately 1km south-east of Carrigaline town centre. The spread is situated on a gentle north-facing slope (75m OD) overlooking the Owenboy estuary. It is situated adjacent to a natural spring.

Cultural Landscape: The prehistoric period is represented by a number of other fulachtáí fia recorded in the townland, none of which have any surface expression. Prehistoric activity was recorded during archaeological testing in advance of a residential development c.1km to the west of the site in 2006 (Purcell 2006). Four sherd s of beaker pottery and a number of possible cut features were identified suggesting Early Bronze Age activity in the area.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was discovered during agricultural works in the townland of Kilnaglery where it is stated that Major T. Morgan removed a mound from one of his fields (O’Riordáin 1937, 57). The fulacht fia was originally marked by a mound about fifty-six feet in diameter (L. c. 17m). The subsequent excavation focused primarily on the hearth and it is possibly that O’Riordáin was hindered by certain excavation constraints.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a mound of heat-shattered stone, a semi-circular stone-lined hearth structure and a rectangular trough.

Burnt Mound: O’Riordáin fails to record the burnt mound in great detail however he does state that mound originally measured fifty-six feet in diameter (L c. 17m).

Hearth: The hearth structure was recorded below the mound and was revealed as a horseshoe-shaped, double setting of stones sunk into the clay. The base of the hearth was paved with flat stones. The structure measured 1.8m in length. O’Riordáin states that over the hearth, the depth of material was about 4 feet. This may have been the fill of the hearth structure however, little other detail is given.
Trough: The hearth lay open to a roughly rectangular pit (Not fully excavated). It measured 1.5m by 1.2m and was 0.8m in depth. O’Riordáin notes that the pit length may have extended beyond the limit of the excavation (O’Riordáin 1937, 57). The trough filled naturally with water during the excavation. There was no evidence to suggest the pit was lined however, O’Riordáin states that it may have contained a portion of the wooden trough but constant flooding made investigation of the pt quite impossible.

Finds:

Artefacts: The only find from the excavation was an ‘ox bone’

Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Site not scientifically dated.

Excavation Interpretation:

The excavation at Kilnagleary uncovered a substantial stone-lined hearth structure and a portion of a rectangular pit or trough. The hearth was outlined by a double setting of stones and the base of the structure was paved with flat stones. This double setting may indicate a re-lining of the hearth after a certain period of time due to the stones being subjected to intense heat for a prolonged period. Formal hearths are quite rare in the archaeological record. Previous to recent infrastructural work, only a small number of formal hearth structures were known from burnt mound sites in Ireland (see Chapter 5). These would include the quite elaborate and substantial sites of Ballyourney and Drombeg (O’Kelly 1954; Fahy 1960). Here, the hot stones can simply be racked out of the fire and rolled into the trough. The trough pit was only partially excavated by O’Riordáin, who notes that during the investigation it filled naturally with water. This may have been a result of a well in the immediate vicinity of the site. Due to the waterlogged conditions, no wood or stone lining could be confirmed by O’Riordáin, however he does state that ‘without doubt it did originally hold it’ (O’Riordáin 1937, 57). One can assume from the form of the site that it may date to the Middle to Late Bronze Age. This would be consistant with other stone hearth structures excavated elsewhere.

References

Location: Townland: Gortnatubbrid Six inch map no: 58
Parish: Ballyvourney NGR: 120010, 076856
Barony: West Muskerry Altitude: 100m OD
County: Cork

Excavation Details: Project: Research
Site Director: Michael J. O’Kelly
Consultants: University College Cork
Year: 1952

Physical Setting: The site is located on an almost level area at the upper end of a small glade shaded by steeply-rising, rocky and heavily wooded ground on all sides except the south-east, where the trees open to give view of the surrounding undulating landscape.

Cultural Landscape: The landscape of Ballyvourney town is rich in prehistoric monuments including megalithic tombs, stone circles and standing stones. There are two standing stones located c. 600m to the south west of the Gortnatubbrid site and a stone circle 300m further south. One kilometre to the south, a stone row is situated while in the neighbouring townland of Gortnacracca another stone circle is recorded. There is a cluster of six fulacht fia also located roughly a kilometre to the south of Gortnatubbrid.

Adjacent excavated sites: Oval shaped structure excavated immediately south of the trough which measured 5.6m and 0.4m on its long and short axes respectively.

Pre-Excavation features

The site was chosen for excavation due to its appearance being similar to a hut structure that O’Kelly was excavating in the area the previous year. He states that the mound ‘had the appearance of a small circular house which appeared to be bounded at its edge by a circle of stone slabs’ (O’Kelly 1954, 106).

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a mound of heat-shattered stone, a wood-lined trough, two hearth structures, a stone-lined roasting pit and a hut structure with associated features. The fulacht fia site rested on a layer of natural peat which had an average thickness of 0.1m.

Burnt Mound: The mound itself was noted as being similar to a small circular hut site with a shallow saucer-like depression in the centre (Plate 1). The material itself consisted of heat affected sandstone which was readily available in the area in the form of boulders and natural outcrops. O’Kelly also notes a plentiful amount of charcoal mixed with the burnt stone. The full extent of the burnt mound was not measured during excavation although O’Kelly states that the main dump lay on the rising ground to the west and was 0.6m in thickness. He also notes that a calculation of the mound content produced a
measurement of 27 cubic metres of burnt stone present on site (O’Kelly 1954, 115). From the site plan, one can conclude that the mound extended c. 13m NS by c. 9m EW.

**Trough:**

The trough was revealed as a wedge-shaped pit that measured 1.8m by 1m and was 0.4m deep. The sides of the pit were lined with a combination of wood and stone. On the SW, NW and NE sides of the trough, peat was used to fill the spaces between the timbers. Moss was also evident in a number of places. The trough filled naturally with water since it was cut directly into peat and O’Kelly notes that it could not be kept empty during excavation (O’Kelly 1954, 106). The sides of the trough were lined with birch and oak roundwoods which had been laid one above the other so as to form vertical walls. O’Kelly notes a bed of small stone chips below the timbers on each side and suggests that it was placed deliberately to form a firm bed for the wood. The south-east end of the trough was constructed using two long slabs of stone set on edge, one above the other. The north-west end was formed from a single slab of stone. An oak plank was noted just in front of this stone and was used to wedge the slab in place. Oak stakes were uncovered at the corners of the trough. These stakes had been split and shaped to a point. The tool marks were still clearly visible. These stakes were driven down into the compact and impervious white soil which occurred naturally below the peat and which formed the bottom of the trough. The basal fill of the trough consisted of peaty material that contained twigs, hazel nuts and leaves which must have resulted from the trough being left open after it went out of use. The upper fill contained burnt stone which was covered by a thin spread of peat.

**Primary Hearth:**

The primary hearth was situated at the south-west end of the trough and was delimited by an arc of six low standing slabs set with the open side towards the trough. The distance between the horns of the arc measured 4.5m. O’Kelly notes that the stones forming the arc were set not on the surface of the peat but on small quantities of white soil deliberately placed under and behind them (O’Kelly 1954, 110). This white soil possibly represents the upcast from the trough when the pit was being dug, therefore the hearth could only have been constructed during or immediately after the trough was being constructed. After a certain amount of time, it seems that the hearth was narrowed by the setting of four stones on edge running from the back of hearth towards the trough. After this hearth had gone out of use a series of paving slab were laid down which covered the stones put in to narrow the hearth. It seems likely that the purpose of these flags was to provide access to the trough over the wet bog. This marked the final abandonment of this hearth site.

**Secondary Hearth:**

A second hearth was subsequently discovered at the north-west end of the trough. The structure was similar in form to the primary hearth being delimited by a series up upright stones and open to the trough. The stones were not bedded in white soil as with the primary hearth. Instead the arch of stones were directly inserted into the peat and no packing was used. O’ Kelly notes also that the line of the arc had first been set out by sticking short pieces of slpit oak into the peat. These oak splits were found standing upright in a number of the stone sockets (O’Kelly 1954, 111). The hearth measured 4.7m between the two horns of the arc and structure seems to have been made smaller some time during its use. An inner arc of standing stones were inserted, and in doing this, five stones from the original hearth had been pulled up and reused in the second construction.
Stone-Lined Pit: This structure was located north-east of the trough. It was wedge-shaped in plan and measured 2m in length by 1.8 in width at its northern end by 0.8m at its southern end. Its maximum depth was 0.6m. The pit made to receive the stones was no more than a few centimetres deep. The base of the structure was lined with six thin flags of shale and the sites were constructed of heavy slabs set on edge. Immediately north of the pit was a thick layer of fine charcoal. This had the appearance of having been brushed out of the pit through the gap in the north-east corner of the structure. The base of the feature seemed to be heat-affected and certain stones were cracked suggesting that the structure was subjected to intense heat.

Hut Structure: This roughly oval shaped structure lay immediately south of the trough. The oval area measured 5.6m and 0.4m on its long and short axes respectively and was delimited by a series of ten posts, all of them pointing inwards towards a common centre (O’Kelly 1954, 113). It was noted that the posts were driven through the peat and into the white subsoil. Seven of the nine surviving posts were identified as oak while the other two were of Scots pine. An irregular shaped pit was noted north-west of a group of naturally occurring stones inside the structure. O’Kelly notes that the pit had been dug out and backfilled again before the hut was constructed. This was evident due to a small amount of white soil being left on the surface of the peat on the western edge of the disturbed area, and the hole for one of the posts of the hut was cut through it. The floor of the hut was covered in a layer of burnt stone. None of the post holes contained burnt stone, therefore O’Kelly suggests that hut was constructed before this burnt stone layer was laid down (O’Kelly 1954, 114). In this case, it is clear that the hut is contemporary with the trough being constructed on the surface of the peat at the same time.

There were a number of other internal features excavated within the structure also. Four small post-holes were forming a rectangular feature were found. The holes were vertical and had been entered deeply into the white subsoil. The feature measured 2m by 0.95m and O’Kelly suggested that it may have formed a bed or butchers block for preparing meat (O’Kelly 1954, 114). Two other post-holes were found in the eastern part of the oval structure and did not seem to be a part of the hut itself. O’Kelly proposed that they may have formed verticals with crutch tops into which would have been placed a horizontal timber, the whole forming a rack upon which to hang meat carcases (O’Kelly 1954, 114).

Finds:

Artefacts: Spindle whorl (topsoil), stone discs (mound material) and stone pounder (trough)

Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Site not scientifically dated.

Excavation Interpretation:
Excavation of the site revealed several phases of activity. These phases were evident in the different stone hearths identified on site. A stone and timber-lined trough was the focus of activity on the site which was surrounded by a series of small stones set on edge. These formed part of the two formal hearths but may have equally served as a mound revetment for the site. The identification of a stone-lined roasting oven confirms that cooking may have been undertaken at the site. No animal bone was recovered however the acidic nature of the soil may responsible for the absence of such remains. The adjacent hut-site was lined to the water-boiling area by a series of stepping stones and may have functioned as a temporary shelter or a small sweatlodge (see Chapter 7).

References

Location: Townland: Shanacloon  Six inch map no: 58
Parish: Ballyvourney  NGR: 120532, 076754
Barony: West Muskerry  Altitude: 100m OD
County: Cork

Excavation Details:
Project: Research
Site Director: Michael J. O’Kelly
Consultants: University College Cork
Year: 1952

Physical Setting:
The site is located on the dry alluvial floodplain of the river Sullane 46m back from the water’s edge.

Cultural Landscape:
The landscape of Ballyvourney town is rich in prehistoric monuments including megalithic tombs, stone circles and standing stones. There is a cluster of five fulachtí fia located approximately 750m to the south west of the site in question. O’Kelly excavated another fulacht fia c. 500m to the north-west of shancaloon in the townland of Gortnatubbrid.

Adjacent excavated sites:
Two hut structures located 6.5m from the trough on the south-west edge of the mound. Small structure 2.4m in diameter was succeeded by a larger hut 5m in diameter.

Pre-Excavation features
The site was chosen for excavation due to its location in a dry area which was different from all others in the district, being sited on marshy ground. Prior to excavation the site was marked by a low oval mound with ill-defined edges and measured 24m by 16m with a maximum height of 0.65m.

Excavation Results

Summary of Features:
Excavation of the site revealed a mound of heat-shattered sandstone, a pit which contained a dug-out wooden trough, a stone hearth, and two hut structures.

Burnt Mound:
As stated above, the mound was oval in shape however ploughing had removed a significant amount of material from the top of the mound which had spread the burnt stone downward and outward to the subsequent limit. The surviving mound measured 24m by 16m and the surviving height measured 0.65m. The material consisted of heat-shattered sandstone which was mixed black soil composing largely of fine particles of charcoal. O’Kelly noted no stratigraphy in the mound material and calculated that the mound contained 139 cubic metres of burnt stone (O’Kelly 1954, 127).

Hearth:
The hearth lay at the south-eastern end of the trough and was horseshoe shaped in plan. Its open side faced the end of the trough and it measured
2.7m in length and 2m in width. O’Kelly noted that the hearth itself was placed in a shallow pit with the upcast being used to form semi-circular ridge at the back of the structure. The ‘horns’ of the hearth were marked by standing slabs which were heavily fire-cracked and burnt. The excavation of the hearth base revealed several possible phases of use. O’Kelly noted that the original hearth fire lay directly on the soil floor due to large concentrations of charcoal, however subsequently a number of flagged floors had been laid down over this charcoal layer suggesting a number of different phases of use (O’Kelly 1954, 126).

Trough Pit: The trough was located near the northern edge of the mound and was cut into the natural subsoil. The trough pit was rectangular in shape and measured 5.1m NW-SE by 2.8m in maximum width and was 0.7m deep. No wood or stone lining was noted during the excavation, however O’ Kelly noted a thin grey band of fine putty-like soil which may have represented the original wooden trough.

Removal of the grey material along the length of the pit revealed the concave surface of the bed against which the outer surface of the wood had rested. The bed consisted of flat slabs, small stones and gravel packed in around the trough after it had been set in position. The boat-like shape of the trough was best defined at the hearth end, where a greater deposit of iron pan had firmly cemented the packing material, thus preserving the negative cast of this end of the wood (O’Kelly 1954, 125). O’Kelly suggests that the trough would have been of a dug-out form with overall dimensions of 4.1m by 1.4m and would have been filled manually with water from the nearby water source.

Hut Structure 1: This structure was located 6.5 meters from the trough at the south-west edge of the mound. It was defined as an oval depression 0.25m deep surrounded by seven small post-holes and was 2.4m in diameter. No hearth was noted internally and there was also no centre post found suggesting that the structure was formed by a framework of light branches set in post-holes, with the upper ends drawn together and tied over the centre (O’Kelly 1954, 126).

Hut Structure 2: After a certain period of time the first structure was replaced by a larger hut which partly overlay the first. This is shown by the fact that one of its post-holes was cut through the layer of broken burnt stone which overlay the floor of the first structure. This hut was defined by a circular setting of ten post-holes with a maximum diameter of 5m. These post were not found set into a pit as with the first structure. Again, no hearth was noted internally and there was no centre post evident. Around the south and west sides of the structure low ridges of soil were deliberately placed possibly to add structural support to the hut.

Finds:

Artefacts: Spindle whorl (topsoil), stone discs (mound material) and stone pounder (trough)
Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None
Absolute dating: Site not scientifically dated.

Excavation Interpretation:

Excavation of the site revealed a mound of heat-shattered stone, a possible dug-out trough, formal hearth and two possible hut structures. No timber-lining survived in the trough pit, however the form of the feature suggested in may have been a trough formed from a single tree trunk. These troughs are typically found in Middle to Late Bronze Age contexts and usually have a formal hearth at one end, as was found at this site. The stones found in the fill of the pit may have been packing stones for the trough to keep it stable. These have been noted at other sites (see Chapter 5).

The two structures identified on site probably functioned as temporary shelters, however, they could equally have functioned as sweatlodge. In fact, the smaller structure may not have functioned as a hut due to its size in comparison to the larger example. It could have been re-used as a pit for hot stones and incorporated into the large hut for sweat-bathing, similar to the example at Rathpatrick, Co. Kilkenny (KK19) (see Chapter 7).

References

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Location:</th>
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<td>Consultants:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Physical Setting:</td>
<td>This site was one of three <em>fulachtai fia</em> located on the bank of a stream on the bottom of a broad valley in a predominately marshy area. The ground composed of a 5-20cm layer of peat below which, an impervious bed of clay exists. The valley itself is strewn with natural outcrops of red sandstone and today the area is bare of woodland.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cultural Landscape:</td>
<td>Several <em>fulachtai fia</em> are recorded in the vicinity of the site and a number of standing stones are situated to the north-east.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adjacent excavated sites:</td>
<td>Two other <em>fulachtai fia</em> were excavated at this location by O’Kelly which produced further evidence of intense activity in the Bronze Age.</td>
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**Pre-Excavation features**

Attention was drawn to the site in 1953, when a wooden trough was discovered in the hollow of a horseshoe-shaped mound. Two other sites were subsequently discovered when the area was surveyed prior to excavation. The first site chosen for excavation was marked by a horseshoe-shaped with its open side facing north. It had an overall diameter of 16m and a maximum height of 1.4m.

**Excavation Record**

**Summary of Features:** Excavation of the site revealed a horseshoe-shaped mound of heat-shattered sandstone and an elaborate wood-lined trough at its centre.

**Burnt Mound:** As stated previously, the mound of site one was horseshoe-shaped and consisted of heat-shattered sandstone mixed with charcoal, black soil and other humus material. It measured 16m in diameter and survived to a maximum height of 1.4m. Using the contours which had been drawn at vertical intervals of 10cm, O’Kelly calculated the total volume of the mound at 198.225 cubic metres (O’Kelly 1954, 131).

**Trough:** The trough was rectangular in shape and had internal measurements of 1.76m in length by 1.13m in width with a maximum depth of 0.52m. O’Kelly notes that access to the site was gained through the ‘horns’ of the mound and this area was deliberately kept free of broken stone. At the inner end of this
passage, a single oak plank was found at the northern end of the trough. O’Kelly suggests that this may have functioned as a ‘Kneeler’ by somebody bending over the trough (O’Kelly 1954, 129). The pit dug for the trough was fairly regular in plan, although an extension was noted at the northern corner. The packing material in the pit consisted of peaty material and stones but a considerable amount of moss was found during excavation at the corners of the trough. The base of the trough was constructed with four oak planks laid side by side and were not touching. Their northern ends were cut off square, but at the south, three of them had broad asymmetrical v-shaped ends which suggests the planks were yewn from the same tree by an axe (O’Kelly 1954, 130). Grooves were noted cut across planks at the southern end to receive the back board. Other groves were discovered at the edge of each outer base plank to receive the lower edges of the two long side boards.

When the sides and ends had been fitted together over the floor boards, stakes were driven down outside the long sides thus locking the whole structure together. An extra height of 7cm was now given to the trough sides by adding a framework of narrow timbers, all being locked in place by the end members (O’Kelly 1954, 130).

On removal of the wood lining, the trough pit was examined and an area of loose broken stone was discovered under the northern portions of three base planks. As this was removed, a small gold object was found. O’Kelly states that the object was found in such a position that it must have been dropped before the floor boards of the trough had been put down (O’Kelly 1954, 130). Further investigation of the pit revealed a hollow, oval in plan which was lower than the drainage channel dug by O’Kelly to facilitate excavation. This hollow was interpreted as a ‘sink-hole’ made to drain water from the trough while it was originally being constructed because the pit filled naturally with water.

Finds:

Artefacts: Gold object from below the trough timbers (See above)

Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Sample of timber plank from trough
C14 (GRN-11438) 3115±35 (1460–1240 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

This site was composed of a substantial burnt mound and a single trough that was lined with timber-planks. The trough remains one of the most exceptional examples of Bronze Age woodworking in Ireland, with each timber fitted neatly together and set into grooves, without the need for corner stakes. Deliberate dump deposits could not be established within the make-up of the burnt mound but it is clear the site was used episodically for some time. The recovery of a gold ring from under the base planks of the trough may
imply the site was given added importance prior to the beginnings of pyrolithic technology as a ‘foundation deposit’ (see Chapter 7). This is somewhat supported by the clustering of similar sites in this small area suggesting some connection with what had gone on at the site before. It could equally however, be a stray find, lost during the construction of the trough. The site can be interpretation as a pyrolithic water-boiling site, used on certain occasion for cooking.

References

Excavation Details:

- Project: Rescue (Drainage)
- Site Director: Michael J. O’Kelly
- Consultants: University College Cork
- Year: 1952

Physical Setting:
This site was one of three fulachtai fia located on the bank of a stream on the bottom of a broad valley in a predominately marshy area. The ground composed of a 5-20cm layer of peat below which, an impervious bed of clay exists. The valley itself is strewn with natural outcrops of red sandstone and today the area is bare of woodland.

Cultural Landscape:
Several fulachtai fia are recorded in the vicinity of the site and a number of standing stones are situated to the north-east.

Adjacent excavated sites:
Two other fulachtai fia were excavated at this location by O’Kelly which produced further evidence of intense activity in the Bronze Age.

Pre-Excavation features
This site lay 10m to the north-west of Site 1 and was heavily overgrown with furze. Once the dense growth had been removed it was recognised as mound of heat-shattered stone 15m in diameter with a maximum height of 0.85m.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features:
Excavation of the site revealed two phases of activity. Period one began with the construction of a pit, into which a dug-out oak trough was placed with two associated stone built hearths at north-east end and the north-west end. The second phase of activity resulted in the abandonment of the first dug-out trough and the construction of a new rectangular trough at a right angle to the first.

Burnt Mound:
The burnt mound measured 15m in diameter and was 0.85m in height. It consisted of heat-shattered sandstone and charcoal.

Hearth A:
This was the principal hearth associated with phase one and lay at the north-east end of the elongated dug-out trough. The hearth was formed by an arc of rough stones and slabs set on edge and measured 1.5m across the ‘horns’ and 1m from front to back. The base of the hearth was paved with roughly laid slabs. Several reconstructions were noted also (O’Kelly 1954, 133).
Hearth B: The second hearth was located near the north-west end of the trough and was defined as an arc of small boulders opening on to the long side of the trough. The hearth measured 2m across the ‘horns’ and 1m from back to front.

Trough 1: The pit dug to receive the oak dug-out trough was 5m in length by 1m and was 0.31m deep. Its long axis lay NE/SW and the south-west end of the trough was situated just at the waters edge therefore O’Kelly suggested its position was deliberately chosen so the trough could be easily filled with water. Only the bottom portion of the trough survived due to the reduced level of ground water in the area. The fill of the pit consisted of heat-shattered stone.

Trough 2: After a certain period of time a second trough was constructed beside the south-west part of the dug-out. The pit was rectangular in shape and measured 2.5m by 1.8m and was 0.15m deep. The trough seemed to be plank lined due to the presence of four oak corner stakes which must have held the lining in place.

Finds:

- Artefacts: None
- Ecofacts: None

Dating:

- Relative dating: None
- Absolute dating: Wood sample from dug-out trough C14 (GRN-15885) 3250±25 (1610−1450 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

The excavation at this site revealed two clear phases of pyrolithic activity centred on two superimposed troughs (see Chapter 6). The first trough was composed of a hollowed-out tree trunk and a formal stone-lined hearth, dating to the Middle Bronze Age, while the second cut across this at a later stage. The latter example was rectangular in shape with four stake-holes in each of the corners, a lining technique that was particularly common in the Late Bronze Age (see Chapter 5). Troughs of different types and sizes are often superimposed on one another, ‘as if to subvert or undermine the existing meaning of a particular construction’ (Bradley 2002, 100). As with the changes from timber to stone, this development could be emphasised by destroying the older trough before pyrolithic water-boiling re-commenced at the site (see Chapter 6). The clustering of fulachtai fia in this small area may reflect lineage ties and kin relationships within a specific territory.

References

Plate 10.21 Burnt mound and different trough phases at Killeens II, Co. Cork
Physical Setting: This site was one of three *fulachtaí fia* located on the bank of a stream on the bottom of a broad valley in a predominately marshy area. The ground composed of a 5-20cm layer of peat below which, an impervious bed of clay exists. The valley itself is strewn with natural outcrops of red sandstone and today the area is bare of woodland.

Cultural Landscape: Several *fulachtaí fia* are recorded in the vicinity of the site and a number of standing stones are situated to the north-east.

Adjacent excavated sites: Two other *fulachtaí fia* were excavated at this location by O’Kelly which produced further evidence of intense activity in the Bronze Age.

**Pre-Excavation features**

This site lay to the north of the first site and was distinguishable on the ground as a very slight crescent shaped mound. It measured 5m in diameter and 0.25m in height

**Excavation Results**

**Summary of Features:** Excavation of the site revealed an oval pit set between the ‘horns’ of the mound. No other features were noted. The trough was oval in plan and measured 1.85m by 1.15m and was 0.2m deep. The pit fill consisted of heat-shattered sandstone mixed with charcoal impregnated soil. No timber, stone or clay lining was evident in the pit and O’Kelly suggests that it may have been a very temporary site.

**Dating:**

Wood sample from dug-out trough  
(GRN-15885) 3250±25 (1610−1450 BC)

**References**

Location: Townland: Drombeg Six inch map no: 143
Parish: Kilfaughnabeg NGR: 124625, 035129
Barony: East Carbery (WD) Altitude: 400-500m OD
County: Cork

Excavation Details: Project: Research
Site Director: E. M. Fahy
Consultants: University College Cork
Year: 1957−58

Physical Setting: This site is located two miles east of the village of Glandore on the southern slope of a hill on a natural rock terrace overlooking a bowl-shaped valley, beyond which the Atlantic Ocean is visible over a mile away to the south.

Cultural Landscape: There are a number of recorded prehistoric monuments in the immediate vicinity of the site and in the surrounding landscape that suggest the area was intensively occupied in prehistory. Along with the contemporary hut-site and stone circle excavated on site there are a number of recorded fulacht fia located c. 750m to the south-west and another 150m to the south-east. There is also a possible cist burial 750m to the south and a number of standing stones over a kilometre to the east and west of the site.

Adjacent excavated sites: There were two other sites excavated during these investigations. A hut-site which is directly associated with the fulacht fia and a stone circle located 50m to the east.

Pre-Excavation features

The burnt mound site at Drombeg was described by Somerville in 1909 as a ‘stone heap’ which probably served as a burial monument (Somerville 1909, 106). Prior to excavation Fahy observed that the hut-site was free from vegetation, while the fulacht fia mound was supported by a strong growth of briars, furze and other bushes which effectively disguised the true nature of the site (Fahy 1960, 3).

Excavation Results

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a figure-of-eight hut structure which revealed three separate phases of activity, a causeway and a fulacht fia with a large enclosing stone revetment with a hearth, well, over-flow drain and trough.

Post-Hole structure: A C-shaped posthole structure was interpreted as the first phase of activity on site. It measured 4.5m by 2.4m and enclosed an oval unlined pit containing a fill of heat-shattered stone. Two large post-holes penetrated through the cooking pit in the south-western arc of the post-hole structure. Three of the post-holes nearest the cooking pit were also filled with burnt stone, while two also had packing stones. Fahy notes that it was possible further post-
holes could have been located below the roasting pit associated with phase 2, but it was not excavated (Fahy 1960, 3).

**Hut Structure 1:**
Phase 2 involved the construction of Hut 1, which survived as a pair of orthostatic jambs with associated post-holes. The jambs of the doorway were splayed towards the interior of Hut 2 and the door opening itself was blocked with large boulders. The door jamb had actually been moved out of position and the post-holes indicated that the structure originally stood to the east of the doorway. This area of gently sloping ground had been levelled up to accommodate the structure and a further arc of stones on the northern side of the site may have formed a footing for the outer face of the structures wall. The central relationship of the two post-holes to the doorway and the arcs of boulders indicate that these may have been structural supports associated with Hut 1, which was probably about 5m in diameter. It appeared that the posts were eventually removed and the hut deliberately demolished.

**Roasting Oven:**
Phase 3 consisted of a roasting pit filled with heat-shattered stones. It was wedge-shaped in plan and measured 1m at its western side and 0.6m wide at the eastern side.

The bottom of the pit was lined with a slate slab and contained much charcoal. Two arcs of small standing slabs extended from the front of the oven to the orthostats of the doorway of Hut 1. Immediately outside the roasting oven near the northern arc of standing stones, a small slate lined sub-rectangular pit was uncovered. This was filled with heat-shattered stones also but may have originally served as a water container. This roasting pit appeared to post-date Hut 1 as charcoal flecks and burnt stone fragments from the oven and hearth sealed down the centre post-holes of the structure.

**Hut Structure 2:**
Phase 4 occurred after Hut 1 had been dismantled and its doorway was incorporated into Hut 2, which resulted in the northern jamb being altered as noted above. Hut 2 was constructed on a level platform excavated out of the hill slope immediately west of Hut 1. The western half of the structure was constructed of a rubble and earth fill between a double row of orthostates, while the outer face of the eastern side was revetted with boulders. The eastern arc of Hut 2 was represented by the blocked up doorway of Hut 1 and a few of its western flanking stones. The roof appeared to be supported by a central post, or two set close together. Near the central post-hole were three small slabs/paving stones overlying a rectangular foundation of stones surrounding a deposit of charcoal. At only 0.25m by 0.2m it did not represent a hearth but a charcoal brazier (Fahy 1960, 5). The excavated evidence shows that while the western half of the hut wall was composed of a rubble and earth fill between a double row of orthostats, the outer face of the eastern side was revetted with boulders, some of which were found in situ. The roof was supported by a central post, or two placed close together (Fahy 1960, 6).

**Causeway/Pathway:**
A causeway of boulders over 1m wide and 8m long extended from the second Hut site to the burnt mound site. This causeway overlay a dump of burnt stone and abutted against the enclosing revetment surrounding the
trough and associated features. This suggests that Hut 2, the roasting oven and the burnt mound were contemporary in use.

Burnt Mound: Prior to excavation the *fulacht fia* appeared as an extensive mound with a concave central area. It measured 17m by 12m and was 0.56m in height above the surrounding ground to the east and west.

Revetment: The enclosing bank was not a primary feature of the *fulacht* site, but had been laid down and subsequently added to as the occasion arose, after the site had been in use for some time. It was horseshoe-shaped in plan and was revetted on its inner and outer faces with large boulders. In its final form the bank varied from 0.8m to 2.3m in width and averaged about 1m in height.

Trough: The trough was rectangular in plan and measured 1.5m by 1m and was 0.56m deep. The long sides of the trough were lined with slate slabs. The short sides, or ends, of the trough were each made of a single sandstone slab while the floor area was largely taken up by a single, finely quarried slab of slate which sloped gently towards the south eastern end of the trough outside of which stood the hearth. The trough was placed within a pit which measured 2.85m by 2.10m and burnt stone was noted below the slab lined floor of the trough possibly indicating an earlier phase (Fahy 1960, 8). Charcoal found from the fill of the trough returned a date of 770-400BC.

Hearth: The hearth was situated immediately east of the trough and consisted of a stone-built structure which was discoloured and heat-shattered due to the intense heat from the fire. The hearth was enclosed on three sides by boulders, but the back, or east side, had been increased in height when it was incorporated into the surrounding bank. The base of the hearth was 0.10m deep so that the end stone of the trough formed a barrier against the ashes which would otherwise have been knocked into the water while it was being filled with hot stones.

The Well: A well was incorporated into the north-eastern arc of the horseshoe-shaped enclosure/revetment. The well was u-shaped in plan and its walls were built of rough, angular boulders. The roof consisted of four large slabs and the main support of the well structure was a substantial pillar stone 1.1m high. The overall height of the well was 1.6m and it measured 1.25m by 1.6m at water level. An overflow outlet in the back wall of the well kept the water level 10cm below the floor level of the site.

Drains: Outside the well and extending a few metres east of the enclosing bank, two features were noted. These were interpreted as drains associated with the use of the site. One drain was covered while the second was open. More than 2.5m of the covered primary drain survived. It consisted of a narrow channel between a double line of boulders carefully roofed with flat slabs, one of these was found to be a saddle quern.

Finds:
Artefacts: Perforated Stone (Southern side of well beneath broken stone), Saddle Quern (Re-used as part of drain covering), Stone Disc (Eastern side of enclosing bank).

Ecofacts: Charcoal recovered from Hut 2 and the roasting oven was identified as Willow, Elder, and Holly. Charcoal recovered from the mound was identified as Willow, Hazel, Oak and Alder while Willow and Hazel were noted from the trough samples.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (willow/hazel?) from beneath mound of broken stone (GRN-14719) 2740±50 BP (1000–800 BC)
Charcoal (willow/hazel?) from bottom fill of trough (GRN-14718) 2460±50 BP (770–400 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

Fahy estimated that the burnt mound at the site represents some 300 or more water-boiling events. This suggests that the site was used over many years, probably on a periodic basis for special ceremonies and feasting rituals. These were probably connected with another monument, located 40m east of the hut-site and fulacht fia on the same terrace. It is not uncommon for fulachtaí fia to occur close to Bronze Age ritual sites, raising the possibility that they were somehow connected to feasting rituals at those sites. It is also possible that the hut sites were not associated with domestic living, but served a more specialised function given the identification of a roasting oven in one of the structures. Artefacts were also absent lending further support to this suggestion (see Chapter 4 and 7).

References


Plate 10.22 Stone-lined trough, hearth, well and stone revetment at Drombeg, Co. Cork
Excavation No. NA

Location: Townland: Mashanaglass  Six inch map no: 71
          Parish: Aghina            NGR: 136244, 070870
          Barony: East Muskerry      Altitude: 50 OD
          County: Cork              

Excavation Details: Project: Hydro-Electric Development scheme
                     Site Director: E. M. Fahy
                     Consultants: University College Cork
                     Year: 1957

Physical Setting: This site was located in a marshy strip of land in the townland of Mashanaglass two miles south-east of Macroom.

Cultural Landscape: The only recorded prehistoric monuments in the immediate vicinity of the site are fulachtai fia. There is a cluster of six sites 600m south-east of this site while there are two other fulachtai fia 600m to the east of Mashanaglass.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The fulacht fia site at Mashanaglass was excavated as part of the development of the Hydro-Electric Scheme in the Lee Valley in 1957. Prior to excavation the site survived as a, furze covered, horseshoe-shaped mound in a marshy strip of land.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a mound of heat-shattered stone, a formal hearth and a trough pit with four stake holes at each corner which presumably held a wooden lining in place.

Mound: Removal of the top-soil revealed an extensive deposit of broken burnt stone intermixed with charcoal. No mound measurements taken, however prior to excavation the site was described as a classic horseshoe-shaped mound.

Trough: The trough was rectangular in shape and measured 2.1m by 1.2m and was 0.35m deep. Four post-holes were recorded in each of the corners which presumably held a timber lining in place.

Hearth: The hearth was identified at the western end of the trough as a 0.05m thick layer of compacted charcoal. Oxidisation was also noted by Fahy below this charcoal layer.

Finds:

Artefacts: None
Ecofacts: None

Dating:
Relative dating: None
Absolute dating: None

Excavation Interpretation:

The excavation at Mashanaglas uncovered a mound of heat-shattered stone, a formal hearth and a large trough pit with associated post-holes. Fahy fails to mention the type of burnt stone revealed at Mashanaglas however, one can confidently assume that sandstone was used to heat the water on site. The formal hearth was located immediately adjacent to the western end of the trough where the stone would have been heated and subsequently rolled into the through. Discoloration of the soil below the compact charcoal layer indicated that this area was subjected to intense heat. This can be compared to a number of other excavated fulachtaí fia in Ireland (see Chapter 5). The trough pit revealed at Mashanaglas was located between the two horns of the burnt mound and four stake-holes located at each of the corners indicates that the trough was originally timber lined however, due to preservation conditions, this lining no longer survives. This is a particularly common lining technique during the Late Bronze Age (see Chapter 5).

References

Excavation Details:

Project: Cork to Dublin Gas Pipeline
Site Director: M. Hurley
Consultants: University College Cork
Year: 1982

Physical Setting:
This site is situated in undulating terrain on the north facing slope of a low hillock, abutting a natural depression which is subject to flooding.

Cultural Landscape:
Several prehistoric monuments are recorded in the area. Most noteworthy are a group of three *fulachtaí fia* immediately north of the site which remained unexcavated during the project. There is also a group of monuments including two standing stones and a *fulacht fia* located 1 kilometre to the south-east.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The *fulacht fia* site at Kilcor South was first recognised during the removal of topsoil during testing for the Cork to Dublin Gas Pipeline. Prior to pipeline construction no surface features indicating the existence of the site were evident. Following the removal of the topsoil the site was visible as a spread of heat shattered sandstone mixed with charcoal and clay. It measured 15m in diameter.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a spread of heat-shattered stone, a pit containing the remains of a wood-lined trough and a hearth which seemed to be revetted by a series of deliberately laid stones.

Mound: The mound was roughly semi-circular in shape and measured 8.3m by 4m. It consisted of heat-shattered sandstone and charcoal which had been deliberately backfilled into the pit when the site went out of use.

Pit: The pit was rectangular in shape and measured 4m in length by 2.90 in width and was 1.03m deep. Hurley notes that the trough pit was much larger than was necessary to accommodate the trough and that this was probably intentional on the part of the builders to facilitate access to the trough. This attests to the presence of a large flat stone and a wide horizontally placed oak plank at the south end of the pit that probably acted as a ‘step’ to access the trough (Hurley 1987, 47).
Re-deposited clay: An area of re-deposited boulder clay was revealed to the east of the pit and may represent the up-cast from when the pit was dug.

Trough: The trough was almost square in shape and measured 1.4m by 1.45m and was 0.5m deep. It was made from a combination of horizontally laid planks and brushwood supported by stakes. The base was lined with oak twigs while the east and north sides were faced with planks. Hurley states that the timber from the west side may have been removed or it may have been made from wattle and no longer survives (Hurley 1987, 47). The ‘step’ feature formed the south side of the trough. In all cases the wood was poorly preserved with the timbers on the north side only visible as stains in the soil.

Hearth: The hearth appeared as an area of oxidised clay which had been cut by a later drain. A semi-circular setting at the south-east side of the hearth may have acted as a revetment for mound material.

Finds: None

Dating: Wood (oak) sample from the trough (GrN-14255) 3185±30 BP (1300–1170 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

The excavation at Kilcor South uncovered a spread of heat-shattered sandstone, a large pit containing the remains of a wood-lined trough and a formal hearth, all classic elements of a fulacht fia.

The site at Kilcor can be paralleled with other fulachtai fia in Ireland where a combination of timber and brushwood was used in the construction of the trough (see Chapter 5). The stone and the horizontally placed timber identified in the pit as a step feature was later suggested by Ó Drisceoil as a possible Kneeler similar to an example found at Killeens. However, one cannot dismiss the possibility that the pit may have been an earlier trough which was made smaller by the insertion of a timber example later in its use. The hearth identified on site was cut by a later drain, therefore its full extent could not be determined however it was delimited by a series of stones set on edge on the south-east side. This can be paralleled with a number of formal hearth sites identified in Ireland (see Chapter 5) and probably represents a revetment in order to keep the hearth clear of burnt mound material. It may also function as a retaining feature to sustain the heat of the fire.

References:

Excavation Details: Project: Cork to Dublin Gas Pipeline
Site Director: M. Doody
Consultants: University College Cork
Excavation Year: 1982

Physical Setting: This site is situated in a low-lying area close to a stream approximately 0.5km south of Ballinacurra, Midleton, Co. Cork.

Cultural Landscape: The only prehistoric monument located in the immediate vicinity of this site is a standing stone situated 600m to the south-east.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The fulacht fia site at Castleredmond was first recognised during the removal of topsoil during testing for the Cork to Dublin Gas Pipeline. Prior to pipeline construction no surface features indicating the existence of the site were evident. Following the removal of the topsoil the site was visible as a large spread of heat-shattered sandstone in a bed of charcoal enriched soil.

Excavation Results

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a spread of heat-shattered stone, two large pits and a trough. The investigation failed to recognise a hearth although this may lie outside the limits of the excavation.

Trough: The trough (F3) was rectangular in shape and measured 2.4m east-west by 1.6m north-south and was 0.6m deep. The fill of the trough consisted of burnt mound material and Doody notes that the pit must have been backfilled shortly after it went out of use (Doody 1987, 50). Four substantial post-holes were noted at each of the corners and at three of these, the remains of earth-cut slots, into which the side timbers would have fitted, were visible. None of these timbers survived in situ and only remained as a dark bands of soil. The trough did not fill naturally with water, as with the other two pits identified on site, therefore it must have been filled manually from the nearby stream located 16m away. However, this may have been a result of fluctuating levels in ground water since the prehistoric period.

Stake-Holes: Four small stake-holes were found on the eastern edge of the trough.
Pit 1: This pit (F2) was uncovered c. 2m north-west of the trough. It was oval in shape and measured 2.5m north-south by 2m east-west and was 0.9m deep. Large stones were noted at the bottom of the pit which Doody suggests must have fallen in from the western edge where a scatter of similar stones were identified (Doody 1987, 49). This pit filled naturally with water and doesn’t seem to have been backfilled after it went out of us.

Pit 2: This pit (F1) was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 2.5m east-west by 2m north-south and had a maximum depth of 1m. No timber or stone lining was noted in the pit which filled naturally with water.

Finds:

Artefacts: None
Ecofacts: None

Dating:
Relative dating: None
Absolute dating: None

Excavation Interpretation:

The excavation at Castleredmond uncovered a spread of heat-shattered sandstone, two large pits and a trough which produced evidence to suggest it was timber-lined. The presence of large pits is not uncommon on fulacht fiadh. The pit F1 was tentatively interpreted as a trough based on the steep nature of the sides, especially the west and south sides which were particularly steeply cut. There was also charcoal remains in the basal layers of this pit. No hearth was identified in the immediate area, however the excavation was quite limited and the trenches small compared to the extent of the burnt spread, therefore any hearth or associated features may lie outside the excavated area. The other pit identified on site, F2 had large stones at its base with a concentration of similar stones on its western edge. The trough identified at Castleredmond produced good evidence to suggest it was once timber-lined. That the sides, at least, were plank built is evident from the earth-cut slots surviving at three of the corners of the rectangular trough. Further evidence for this is the presence of four post-holes at each of the corners which would have added additional support for the plank lining. This is a common lining method in the Late Bronze Age (see Chapter 5).

References:
Excavation Details:

- Project: Drainage Scheme
- Site Director: D. Lehane
- Consultants: Independant
- Year: 1982

Physical Setting:

The site is situated 500m west of the Quane farmhouse in the townland of Ballyclogh near Fermoy. The area is poorly drained and the site is located in a boggy field at the base of which runs a small stream that has a tendency to flood in wet weather.

Cultural Landscape:

This site is one of ten fulachtai fia recorded in the immediate vicinity with a further six sites located 600m to the north-east. There are several other sites c. 1km to the north-west.

Adjacent excavated sites:

This site was one of two fulachtai fia excavated in the area. The second site (SMR CO 027-05802) was situated 10m to the north-east and produced a radiocarbon date of 1030-760 BC indicating activity in area 1000 years after Ballyclogh I.

Pre-Excavation features

The fulachtai fia cluster identified at Ballyclogh were noted as horseshoe-shaped mounds prior to excavation with only one mound marked on the 1934 edition of the OS 6” map. When the topsoil was removed, a circular spread of burnt material was revealed. Only the depression in the centre of the mound was targeted for excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features:

Excavation of the site revealed a spread of heat-shattered stone and a rectangular wood-lined trough with associated stake-holes.

Mound:

When revealed, the mound material consisted of compacted, heat-shattered sandstone within a voided matrix of friable black soil and measured 11m north-south by 11.7m east-west with a maximum depth of 0.5m.

Trough:

The trough was located almost centrally under the mound and was set into a rectangular pit which measured 2.3m N/S by 1.3m E/W. The pit was backfilled in order to hold the wooden trough in position. The trough was plank built with a large portion of the floor surviving as a single plank. Side planks also preserved quite well, however no tool marks were evident on the timbers due to the various states of preservation noted. The trough filled
naturally with water and was filled with a deposit of heat-shattered stones in a blue-black clay loam.

**Finds:**

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: None

**Dating:**

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Timber (unknown) from the trough (GRN-11803) 3850±30 BP (2460–2200 BC)

**Excavation Interpretation:**

The excavation at Ballyclogh uncovered a spread of heat-shattered sandstone, and a plank-lined trough with associated stake-holes. Lehane notes that the mound had suffered considerable damage in the past due to the presence of plough furrows and dispersed mound material during the excavation and that it must have been circular in shape originally. No stratigraphy was noted in the mound material and the absence of turf horizons suggests that there were only short intervals between each use of the site (Lehane 1988, 85). The trough excavated at Ballyclogh compares well with other similar troughs recovered from Ireland (see Chapter 5). Stake-holes are increasing common on fulachtai fia, particularly near the trough and Ballyclogh had twelve stake-holes surviving in the north-west edge of the pit. The function of these stake-holes is somewhat unclear, however Lehane suggests that they may have functioned as bases for a rack system for hanging meat. The Timer pieces uncovered in the trough were not identified by species, however it may be assumed that oak was used to construct the trough.

**References**

Location: Townland: Ballyclogh Six inch map no: 27
Parish: Glanworth NGR: 179892, 104536
Barony: Fermoy Altitude: 30
County: Cork

Excavation Details: Project: Drainage Scheme
Site Director: D. Lehane
Consultants: Independant
Year: 1982

Physical Setting: The site is situated 500m west of the Quane farmhouse in the townland of Ballyclogh near Fermoy. The area is poorly drained and the site is located in a boggy field at the base of which runs a small stream that has a tendency to flood in wet weather.

Cultural Landscape: This site is one of ten fulachtai fia recorded in the immediate vicinity with a further six sites located 600m to the north-east. There are several other sites c. 1km to the north-west.

Adjacent excavated sites: This site was one of two fulachtai fia excavated in the area. The second site (SMR CO 027-05802) was situated 10m to the north-east and produced a radiocarbon date of 1030-760 BC indicating activity in area 1000 years after Ballyclogh I.

Pre-Excavation features

The fulachtai fia cluster identified at Ballyclogh were noted as horseshoe-shaped mounds prior to excavation with only one mound marked on the 1934 edition of the OS 6” map. When the topsoil was removed, an irregular spread of burnt material was revealed. Only the depression in the centre of the mound was targeted for excavation.

Excavation Results

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a spread of heat-shattered stone and a rectangular pit which produced evidence to suggest it was timber lined and a series of stake-holes.

Mound: The irregular spread of heat-shattered sandstone measured 8.5m N/W by 8.5m S/E and was 0.4m in thickness, however the full extent of the spread was not determined since the area was completely under water.

Trough: The trough was located near the eastern edge of the mound. It was rectangular in shape and measured 1.5m S/E by 2m N/W. The sides of the trough were visible as a band of grey clay which contained small pieces of decayed wood, indicating that the trough was once timber-lined. No evidence
of a lining was noted on the base of the trough. The trough filled naturally with water with its main fill consisting of burnt mound material.

**Stake-Holes:**
A number of stake-holes were identified at the north-west end of the trough.

**Finds:**

- **Artefacts:** None
- **Ecofacts:** None

**Dating:**

- **Relative dating:** None
- **Absolute dating:** Timber (unknown species) from the trough (UB-11803) 2705±70 BP (1030−760 BC)

**Excavation Interpretation:**

The excavation at Ballyclogh II uncovered a spread of heat-shattered sandstone and a trough with associated stake-holes. Although the excavation only targeted the central area of the spread, a rectangular trough was identified which provided evidence that it was once timber lined. This was evident from a band of grey clay that contained timber fragments at the sides of the trough. As with the previous site located 10m to the north-west, stake holes were noted on the edge of the trough. Their function is unclear, however they may have supported a rack for hanging meat or the stakes may have supported a wooden board to prevent charcoal and other debris from entering the trough at this end, presuming that the hearth is located here outside the excavated area. Excavation has demonstrated that the two burnt mounds are not contemporary with almost 1000 years separating the two. This clearly demonstrates some connection to the site or that the site was suitable for pyrolythic water-boiling.

**References**

The site was located at Dromnea in the south-west peninsula north of Dunmanus bay in an area that has not been intensely surveyed. The *fulacht fia* was also adjacent to a stream.

The nearest recorded *fulachtai fia* are on the peninsula south of this in the Schull district. Possible stone row located c.350m to the south-west.

Adjacent Structures: None

**Pre-Excavation features**

The site was discovered during land reclamation when a mechanical digger levelled the mound of heat-shattered stones. Originally the *fulacht fia* consisted of a horseshoe-shaped mound which measured 10m NW-SE by 6m NE-SW. The excavation was confined to the north portion of the mound.

**Excavation Results**

Summary of Features: The site was laid out in quadrants and two of these were excavated which subsequently revealed a hearth, a stone-lined trough and a possible mound revetment.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound was horseshoe-shaped and measured 10m NW-SE by 6m NE-SW and survived to a thickness of 0.4m. Cleary states that the original height may have reached 1m (1986, 50). Mound consisted of heat-shattered stone, charcoal and ash. Stone type not noted, however possibly sandstone due to green sandstone being used to line the trough on site.

Mound Revetment: Large boulders, 15-40cm in length, were recorded against the north-west edge of the mound. Cleary suggests that this may have form part of a revetment for the mound (1986, 50).

Hearth: The hearth was rectangular in shape and measured 2.2m by 1.6m. It was enclosed by a stone-built revetment on three sides and was open on the northeast where it was adjacent to the trough. The stone revetment consisted of one course of large boulders which were set in part over a layer of heat-shattered stones. This seems to suggest that the revetment was built after the *fulacht fia* had been use for some time (Cleary 1986, 50).
hearth area consisted of a 10cm lense of almost pure charcoal intermixed with heat-shattered stone.

Trough: The trough was stone-lined with green sandstone and was roughly trapezoidal in shape, measuring 2.15m NE/SW by 1.25m NW/SE and was 0.8m in depth. The trough lay at the lowest end of the site and was lined on all sides by large slabs. The south-east slab did not fully cover that side and a large quartz stone was inserted on the south end to fill the gap in the side of the trough. The base of the trough was not lined and lay on the natural subsoil. The trough was filled with charcoal and heat-shattered stone. Areas of paving were recorded on the north-east and north-west sides of the trough. The paving consisted of carefully laid flat sandstone slabs and it probably functioned as a walkway for activities being carried out on the site.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: An animal bone was recovered from the disturbed mound material and may not be directly associated with the site.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Oak and hazel charcoal from the hearth C14 (GRN-12915) 3090±35BP (1440−1260 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

The excavation at Dromnea uncovered a mound, a stone-lined trough and a hearth. All classic elements of a fulacht fia. The excavation was a rescue one by nature and confined to a limited area, therefore, other possible features may remain outside the excavated area. This is evident by the random scatter of stones adjacent to the trough in the north-east quadrant. The revetment on the north-west edge of the mound may suggest that it was built to prevent mound material from slipping into the working area. The trough did not fill naturally with water and was apparently above the water table; however this may have dropped because of a dry spell during the weeks previous to the excavation (Cleary 1986, 54). Stone-lined troughs are not common in the archaeological record and all are found in Middle to Late Bronze Age contexts in Ireland (see Chapter 5). The hearth was enclosed by a stone-built setting on three sides while the north-east side was open to the trough. This compares well with other formal hearth structures excavated elsewhere. Interestingly, there was an absence of an old turf horizon during the excavation. One Another possibility is that the topsoil was stripped prior to the construction of the fulacht as part of an organised clearance of the site (see Chapter 5).

References

Location: Clonfert  (NGR: 130115, 113142)  Parish: Clonfert  County: Cork  Barony: Duhallow  Altitude: 250m OD

Physical Setting: The site of Clashroe is located on the bank of a stream in a marshy area in undulating land at c.250m above OD. The underlying rock is limestone and the surrounding land is now used for pasture and forestry.

Cultural Landscape: The fulacht fia at Clashroe is one of a group of sites located in the area. At least five other fulachtaí fia lie within a 300m radius of the site, all unrecorded on the Ordnance Survey 6” maps.

Adjacent Structures: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site appeared as a low crescent-shaped mound in a marshy area. Part of a wooden trough was exposed during modern drainage and was subsequently brought to the attention of the Cork Archaeological Survey. The trough was exposed at the side of the stream and was beginning to deteriorate. When the nature of the site was reported to the Office of Public Works, a full archaeological excavation was deemed necessary.

Excavation Results

Summary of Features: Excavation revealed a well preserved trough made from a single, hollowed-out tree trunk and a hearth site surrounded by stake holes and a mound of burnt and shattered stone.

The Mound: Prior to excavation the mound appeared as a crescent-shaped feature 0.5m in height and was composed largely of heat-shattered sandstone and charcoal. Mound dimensions not available.

The Hearth: The hearth was set in a shallow depression or pit on the north-eastern side of the trough. The circular pit was 1.2m in diameter and was 0.1m deep. The hearth was cut into clay and the bed of the pit was oxidized. The pit was filled with black soil, ash and charcoal. The charcoal was identified as birch, hazel and holly. A radiocarbon date of 1750-1600 BC was returned from this fill.
Stake- Holes: Eleven stake-holes were identified on the southern and western side of the heath. All of the stake-holes were set vertically in the clay and they may have been crossed to support a small roasting pit (Hurley 1987, 101). They were generally V-shaped in section, 1.5cm in diameter at the surface and 3.5cm deep.

Trough: The trough was set in a pit and consisted of two individual pieces of timber, and may have originally consisted of three. The largest part seems to have been hollowed from a single tree trunk (oak). The trough measured 1.8m by 0.6m and it tapered slightly from east to west. On the eastern side of the hollowed trunk, a groove had been chiselled or axed out to accommodate a plank which blocked the eastern end. A small perforation was also noted cut into the base of this groove. This may have contained a peg to hold the end in place. It is possible that a similar plank may have blocked the western end (Hurley 1987, 97). The inside and outer surface of the hollowed out tree-trunk seems to have been finely worked using an axe. Some traces of burning were also noted on the outer surface.

Finds:

Artefacts: A number of flint flakes. May be a result of natural flaking. On piece is struck and retains striking platform. Heavily patinated and appears to be burnt (Johnson 1987, 105).

Ecofacts: None

Dating: Charcoal from the hearth (birch, hazel and holly)
C14 (GRN-13878) 3370±35BP (1750-1600 BC)
A sample of wood from the trough (oak)
C14 (GRN-13877) 3490±35BP (1910-1730 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

The excavation at Clashroe uncovered a mound of heat-shattered sandstone, a well preserved trough made from a single, hollowed-out tree trunk and a hearth site surrounded by eleven stake-holes. The trough at Clashroe was the principal feature on site and is a good example of a dug-out wooden vessel used as fulacht fia trough. Similar troughs have been excavated at Killalough and Killeens II Co. Cork (Cotter 2005; O’Kelly 1954). Originally it would have held upwards of 264 litres (58 gallons) of water and Hurley has suggested that the trough would have required manual filling from a stream c. 10m away (Hurley 1987, 103). The location of the hearth is also not unusual in the archaeological record, being slightly elevated and open to the adjacent trough. The stake holes that occurred close to the hearth at Clashroe suggest the use of a roasting spit, possibly a single stick lying at a 45 degree angle through cross stakes. The use of a spit of this kind would be one possible explanation for the concentration of stake-holes on one side of the trough (Hurley 1987, 103).

Reference

Fig. 10.45 Plan of excavated features and hollowed-out trough at Clashroe, Meelin, Co. Cork.
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**Excavation Details:**

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<td>M. McCarthy</td>
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<td>Archaeological Services Unit UCC</td>
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**Excavation Year:** 1999

**Physical Setting:** The site is located approximately four miles east of Cork city on Little Island in Cork Harbour. The area immediately north of the excavation site appears to have been reclaimed in the late nineteenth century.

**Cultural Landscape:** Several known archaeological sites are recorded on Little Island, however, little prehistoric archaeology has been noted.

**Adjacent excavated sites:** Two stone-lined linear features was also excavated at this site which were interpreted as a corn-drying kilns and dated to the Early Medieval Period.

**Pre-Excavation features**

Prior to excavation, no surface features indicating the existence of the site were evident. Following the removal of the topsoil the site was visible as a levelled mound of heat-shattered stone.

**Excavation Results**

**Summary of Features:** Excavation of the site revelled two conjoining circular troughs, several post-holes and four pits.

**Burnt Mound:** A D-shaped spread (F3) of heat-shattered stone and charcoal sealed the features uncovered at the site. It measured 10.46m E/W by 9.6m N/S and varied in thickness from 0.1m to 0.45m. The mound was cut by a modern land drain (F4).

**Trough:** The trough consisted of two conjoined pits (F16 and F18) which were circular in shape and divided by a stone slab which was 0.6m in length. Both pits were filled with a similar deposit of heat-shattered stone and charcoal-enriched silt. F16 measured 1.45m in diameter and 0.5m in depth. The remains of a possible stone lining existed on the eastern edge. F18 measured 2m E/W by 1.92m N/S and was 0.25m deep.

**Stake/Post Holes:** Three small stake-holes (F5, F6 and F7) were located to the south of the conjoined troughs. A portion of one of these stakes (F7) survived in situ. A post-hole was also identified close to the northern edge of the troughs.
Pits: Two small oval pits (F8 and F9) were exposed 1.5m south of the troughs. Another shallow pit (F13) was identified to the west of trough F18 while a large waterlogged pit (F12) was excavated to the north. This was sub-circular in plan and measured 1.5m E/W by 1.4m N/S and was 0.35m deep. Its fill consisted of heat-shattered stone similar to the excavated troughs.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Absolute dating: Charcoal (hazel/oak) from the burnt mound C14 (GRN-26739) 3010±40BP (1390−1120 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

The excavation revealed a spread of heat-shattered stone and two conjoined pits that probably functioned as boiling troughs. The remains of a possible stone-lining remained on one of the pits but it was too insubstantial to be certain it was originally lined with stones. It is also uncertain whether these troughs functioned concurrently or if one was earlier. No distinct phases could be determined from the mound material and one date was returned for the site. The post-holes could have functioned as supports for a temporary shelter for activities in the trough.

References

**Location:**

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**Excavation Details:**

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<td>Eamonn Cotter</td>
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<tr>
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**Physical Setting:**

The site is located on the northern flank of the Watergrasshill Anticline, a ridge of Devonian Old Red Sandstone. The land slopes steeply to the north overlooking the Bride River valley some 3.5Km distant. The immediate topography is dominated by a northern slope, with the ground level also generally rising to the east. A stream flows southeast to northwest 50m to the north of the site. The immediate landscape is currently being used for pasture.

**Cultural Landscape:**

There are three *fulachtáí fia* located 310m to the north-east in Skahanagh townland. Two other *fulachtáí fia* were excavated as part of the same road project. Meenane (RMP CO 053-099), 80m to the north returned a late Bronze Age date while Meenane Site AR23 (RMP CO 053-098) c. 750m to the south-west returned a Middle to Late Bronze Age date.

**Adjacent excavated sites:**

Meenane *fulacht fia* excavated 80m to the north.

**Pre-Excavation features**

The site was discovered during archaeological field-walking on the route of the proposed motorway in 1995. It was identified as a low grass-covered spread of burnt stone, approximately 10m by 10m in extent, located on a north-facing slope.

**Excavation Results**

**Summary of Features:**

Excavation of the site revealed a mound of heat-shattered stone, a large rectangular trough and a hearth which survived as a semi-circular setting of stones at the southern end of the trough. A large pit was also uncovered adjacent to the trough.

**Burnt Mound:**

The burnt mound (F1) was exposed as an irregular spread of heat-shattered stone measuring 15m N-S by 14m E-W. The mound had a maximum thickness of 0.5m.
Hearth: A horseshoe-shaped setting of stones (F26) delimited an area of burnt clay (F10). The 1.2m long arc of stones were set on edge in a shallow trench dug into subsoil on the higher ground immediately west of the trough. The reddish colour of the clay on the ‘shelf’ indicated that it had been exposed to intense heat. Exposure to heat was also responsible for the fracturing of the stones at each terminal of the ‘C’ and those in F26, to the west of the shelf.

Post and stake-holes: A series of post and stake-holes were also uncovered around the western end of the trough (F1-15). Two of these, F13 and F11 clearly held very substantial posts and were located on opposite sides of the trough. The fill of these features contained burnt mound material which suggests that the site was in use before the post pipes were dug.

Trough: The rectangular trough (F27), measured 2.12m in length and ranged in width from 1.2m at its east end to 1.4m at its west end (Plate 3). Its average depth was 0.3m. The fill of the trough consisted of heat-shattered stone similar to that of the mound material. There was no evidence that the trough was lined however the excavator has suggested that the impermeable nature of the clay subsoil would have allowed it to hold water naturally.

Pit: A large pit (F28) was also uncovered 0.5m east of the trough. The pit was oval in shape and measured 4.6m by 3.6m and had an average depth of 0.55m. While its fill contained some burnt mound material it consisted predominantly of layers of grey/black silt containing some burnt stones, suggesting that it had lain open for a long period and had silted up slowly.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: None

 Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charred remains from the hearth C14 (UCD-00148) 2750±50BP (1004–810 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

The excavation at Meenane uncovered a trough, hearth, associated post and stake-holes and a large pit. All classic elements of a fulacht fia. The trough would have held 800 litres or 176 gallons of water. No lining was evident in the trough suggesting it would have held water naturally during its use as a boiling pit. The location of the hearth directly on the edge of the trough and its position at a slightly higher level would have made it easy to simply roll the hot stones into the pit. Cotter notes the presence of two retaining stones set on edge at the northwest and southwest corners of the trough suggesting that they may have functioned as retaining elements. The postholes to the north and south of the trough may have been some form of windbreak or revetment for the mound. The function of the large pit to the east of the trough is uncertain. From the high silt content of its fills it is clear that it remained open for a long period of time and silted up gradually, in contrast to the main trough which had a single homogeneous fill suggesting it had been deliberately backfilled after its last use.
References

Catalogue No. CO 17a-c
RMP No. CO053-092-01, CO053-092-02, CO053-092-03
Excavation No. 99E0462

Location: Mitchellsfort
Parish: Kilquane
Barony: Barrymore
County: Cork

NGR: 176156,083111
176164,083122
176189,083137

Altitude: 150m OD

Parish: Kilquane
Barony: Barrymore
Altitude: 150m OD

Physical Setting: The site is located close to the summit of Watergrasshill Anticline ridge, mainly consisting of old Devonian Red Sandstone. The immediate topography has a pronounced southerly aspect. The land is wet and boggy in nature, though much has been brought into agricultural production by modern drainage.

Cultural Landscape: There are a number of recorded monuments in the landscape. Of particular interest is a possible fulacht fia located 700m to the west and a standing stone, 1.2Km to the northwest. The current road project revealed three further sites excavated 300m to the southwest. Two of these were fulacht fia and the third was a cremation burial.

Adjacent excavated sites: Meenane fulacht fia excavated 80m to the north.

Pre-excavation features

The site was discovered during archaeological field walking of the proposed route in 1995, when it was identified as three grass-covered spreads of burnt stone, which were designated as three fulacht fia. The site was originally designated as three fulacht fia, however because of the proximity of the three spreads, they were treated as one site for the purpose of excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: It is likely that only two fulacht fia existed in the area and that what was originally identified as a third was in fact a spread of burnt stone which had been displaced during modern land reclamation work. Each of the two sites comprised a small spread of burnt stone and two troughs.

Site A
Burnt Spread: Oval spread of heat-shattered stone (F1) which measured 3m by 4m and was 0.56m in depth. This was the main burnt mound on site however there were additional small spreads located to the northeast and west of the mound.

Trough 1: This oval trough (F4) was located to the north-east of the main cutting and measured 2m by 1.5m and was 0.25m deep. It was situated 2.5m from the main mound and was filled with heat-shattered stone. No evidence of lining.

Trough 2: This trough (F25) was located 6m to the southeast of the first and was sealed underneath a smaller spread (F3). The trough was rectangular in shape and measured 1.5m by 1.5m and was 0.38m deep. It too was filled with material similar to that in the burnt mound, and a quantity of white clay was found in the southern portion of the fill which may represent a collapsed clay lining (Cotter 2005).

Site B

Burnt Spread: The main features of site B were located c. 15m from site A. An irregular shaped spread (F10) measured 3.5m by 5.5m and was 0.5m deep. It comprised of 60% heat-shattered sandstone.

Trough: This trough (F27) was oval in shape and measured 2.3m by 1.6m and was 0.35m deep. It was filled with burnt mound material.

Pit: Excavation of (F12) revealed it to be a small pit located 3m from the trough (F27). It was filled with silty clay and burnt stone.

Site C

Burnt Spread: This was a rectangular spread which measured 6m by 4m and was 0.2m deep. It consisted of 40% heat-shattered sandstone.

Finds: None

Dating: Not dated

Excavation Interpretation

Unfortunately the amount of archaeological information to be gleaned from these sites has been limited by modern drainage and land reclamation work within the past decade which has damaged the sites. This was particularly so in the case of Site C where the ‘burnt mound’ was reduced to a thin spread and no definite archaeological features could be identified. Indeed it is possible that this was never a separate site and that the spread of burnt stone here had simply been displaced from Site B during land reclamation works (Cotter 2005). Two troughs survived on the sites with no definitive evidence of linings. The presence of deposits of white clay in the trough on Site B and in the most southerly trough on Site A might suggest these originally had a clay lining. The limited scale of each of these three sites in terms of the size of the mounds and of the troughs suggests a small number of uses, perhaps on a temporary, transient basis.

References

Excavation Details:

- **Project:** Caherlag to Ballincollig Gas Pipeline
- **Site Director:** Tim Coughlan
- **Consultants:** Margaret Gowen and Associates Ltd
- **Year:** 1999

Physical Setting:

This site was situated on a north-facing slope near the summit of a small hill, with no obvious water source nearby.

Cultural Landscape:

There are no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the site however a Bronze Age house was excavated c. 1km to the north-west of the site in the townland of Killydonoghoe.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

**Pre-Excavation features**

The site was discovered during archaeological testing in advance of the Caherlag to Ballincollig Gas Pipeline. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation and it extended beyond the limits of the pipeline corridor.

**Excavation Record**

Summary of Features:

The site comprised a spread of heat-shattered stones, trough, hearth, stony surface and pit.

**Burnt mound:**

The overlying spread of blackened and heat-shattered stone (F1) extended N–S along the pipeline working strip for approximately 25m and on western side of the strip for up to 10m, presumably also continuing west beyond the limit of excavation. The spread was at maximum 0.25m thick, thinning to 0.01–0.02m at the edges and represented the plough-out remnants of the burnt mound. The stone averaged <0.1m in diameter and roughly consisted of 80% sandstone and 20% limestone stones

**Trough:**

The trough was immediately inside the west limit of excavation and the south-west corner was unexcavated. The trough (F2) consisted of an elongated oval pit measuring 4.62m (E–W) x 1.4m (N-S) x 0.45–0.55m deep with relatively straight sides and a flat base. Stone-lining survived *in situ* along the east and west sides. The lining on the east side consisted of rectangular limestone stones. The fill consisted of burnt mound material.
Hearth: A hearth (F3) at the east end of the trough was roughly horseshoe-shaped in plan, open towards the trough. It was set into a slight depression possibly made to facilitate the removal of hot stones from the fire to the trough and also the low hearth base made have provided some shelter for the hearth. The edge of the hearth was defined by small stones and it measured a maximum of 1.3m (N–S) by 1.1m (E–W) by 0.15–0.25m deep.

Stone surface: A roughly-laid stone surface (F11) on the north side of the trough comprised small stones set in the natural subsoil and covered an area that measured approximately 2m (E–W) by 0.8m (N–S). Some larger stones around the north-west corner of the trough may have been part of the stone surface or displaced trough lining. The deposit may have equally functioned as a stockpile.

Finds:

Artefacts: A fragment of a broken saddle quern was recovered from the trough. It formed part of the lining for the trough.

Dating:

Absolute dating: The site was not scientifically dated.

Excavation Interpretation

Excavation of the site revealed a spread of heat-shattered stone, a large trough and a formal hearth. The full extent of the site was not established due to pipeline restrictions. The trough displayed evidence of being originally stone-lined, a technique common in Middle to Late Bronze Age examples. The identification of a possible stone-built formal hearth would also support a later Bronze Age date for the site as these are also typically of this date. The site can be interpreted as a permanent water-boiling site possible used for cooking.

References

Location: Townland: Killeens  Six inch map no: 63
Parish: St. Mary’s Shandon  NGR: 163286, 74351
Barony: Cork  Altitude: Unknown
County: Cork

Excavation Details: Project: Caherlag to Ballincollig Gas Pipeline
Site Director: Tim Coughlan
Consultants: Margaret Gowen and Associates Ltd
Year: 1999

Physical Setting: The site was on the western-face and near the base of a small hill. A small stream was located 5–6m to the west.

Cultural Landscape: The site is located in an area of considerable prehistoric activity. Several *fulachtai fia* are recorded in area, including those excavated by O’Kelly during the 1950’s, one of which is dated to the Middle Bronze Age. A number of standing stones are also recorded in the area (CO74-08, 09, 124, 125, 127).

Adjacent excavated sites: None

**Pre-Excavation features**

The site was discovered during archaeological testing in advance of the Caherlag to Ballincollig Gas Pipeline. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation and it extended beyond the limits of the pipeline corridor.

**Excavation Record**

Summary of Features: The site consisted of a spread of heat-shattered stone, a trough and a stony surface.

Burnt mound: The burnt mound spread of blackened and heat-shattered stones (F1) extended NE–SW along the pipeline working strip for approximately 20m and across the strip for up to 9m and presumably westwards beyond the limit of excavation. The dispersed mound was 0.25m in maximum thickness, thinning to 0.01–0.02m deep at the edges. The heat-shattered stone averaged <0.1m in diameter and comprised approximately 80% sandstone and 20% limestone stones.

Trough: The trough (F2) was a rectangular pit, c. 3m (N–S) by 1.8m (E–W) by 0.6m in maximum depth with vertical sides and a flat base; the north side was removed by modern disturbance. The trough was timber-lined (F5) although only two pieces of the side lining survived. It is estimated that the trough measured approximately 2.2m (N–S) x 1.1m (E–W) when the timber lining

Catalogue No. CO 19
RMP No. CO063-112
Excavation No. 99E0503
was in place. A large stone (F7) on the east side of the trough where the trough edge was wider was immediately outside the timber lining and possibly acted as a chock to support the trough timber. Four stake-holes (F8) in the north-west corner were recorded under the basal sand (F6). The stake-holes were paired in two sets and were probably the vestiges of trough timber supports. A fifth stake-hole (F9) was 0.3m to the north of stone F7 and the stake was preserved *in situ* and probably also supported the vertical planking.

**Stone Surface:**
A roughly-laid stony surface (F10) around the east edge of the trough measured 2.3m (N–S) x 1.3m (E–W), although the north end was truncated by the modern disturbance (F3).

**Finds:**

*Artefacts:* None

*Dating:*

*Absolute dating:* The site was not scientifically dated.

**Excavation Interpretation**

Excavation of the site revealed a much disturbed burnt mound site with the surviving remains of a timber-lined trough. Modern disturbance had truncated much of the burnt mound and may have removed evidence of a possible formal hearth at one end of the trough. The plank-lined trough may have originally been similar to that excavated by O’Kelly in the same townland during the 1950s (O’Kelly 1954). The site was not scientifically dated but based on the form of the trough, it may date to the Middle to Late Bronze Age, similar to other examples found in Ireland (see Chapter 5). The site can be interpreted as a water-boiling location, possible for cooking.

**References**


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Fig. 10.46 Remains of plank-lined trough and rough stone surface at Killeens, Co. Cork
### Pre-Excavation features

The site was discovered during archaeological testing in advance of the Caherlag to Ballincollig Gas Pipeline. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation and it extended beyond the limits of the pipeline corridor.

### Excavation Record

#### Summary of Features:

The *fulacht fia* comprised a spread of heat-shattered stone and charcoal with an associated trough.

#### Burnt Spread:

The trough and extension/possible hearth were sealed by a spread of dispersed mound material (F1). This spread was blackened and heat-shattered stones, extended E–W along the pipeline working strip for c. 20m and across the area (N–S) for up to 9m, presumably also continued further south beyond the limit of excavation. The mound material (F1) was 0.25m in maximum thick, thinning to 0.01–0.02m deep at the edges. The heat-shattered stone averaged <0.1m in diameter and comprised of approximately 80% sandstone and 20% limestone stones.

#### Trough:

The trough (F2) was a roughly oval pit measuring 2.1m (N–S) by 1.78m (E–W) by 0.50–0.62m in maximum depth with vertical sides and a flat base that sloped slightly from south to north. The primary fill (F4) was a high concentration of heat-shattered stones within silty clay, above which was a second fill (F5) of heat-shattered stones in charcoal-flecked soil. A re-cut (F7) of the east end of the trough extended the length by 1.2m and
maintained the same width of 1.8m but was shallower (depth unrecorded). This extended area may have increased the trough size or as there was some evidence for scorching at the base, the area may have been used as a hearth.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Dating:

Absolute dating: The site was not scientifically dated.

Excavation Interpretation

Excavation of the site revealed a large spread of heat-shattered stone and a single pit that may have function as a water-boiling trough. The trough was unlined but was deep enough to have been used as a receptacle for boiling liquids. A possible timber-lining may not have survived to the acidic soil conditions. An extension to the trough which showed evidence of scorching may have function as a hearth to heat the stones. This confirms a water-boiling process at the site possible used for cooking.

References

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**Excavation Details:**
- **Project:** N8 Glanmire-Watergrasshill Bypass
- **Site Director:** Eamonn Cotter
- **Consultants:** Sheila Lane and Associates
- **Year:** 2000

**Physical Setting:**
The site is located in a pasture field at the base of a steep sided glen, on land sloping eastward towards a south-flowing stream at an elevation of 75m OD. Ground level rises sharply to the east and west of the narrow valley floor, to 125m OD and 150m OD respectively.

**Cultural Landscape:**
There are three *fulacht fia* located 310m to the north-east in Skahanagh townland. Another *fulacht fia* was excavated as part of the same road project in Meenane (RMP CO053-095) 80m to the north. Another was excavated 30m to the east on the opposite side of the stream (RMP CO 064-152-01). A Bronze Age settlement site and three Bronze Age burials were excavated in Killydonoghoe townland between 0.7Km and 1.4Km to the south of the present site.

**Adjacent excavated sites:**
- Meenane *fulacht fia* excavated 80m to the north (RMP CO 053:095).
- Another *fulacht fia* was excavated at Ballinvinny 30m to the east (RMP CO 064:152-01).

**Pre-Excavation features**
The site was discovered during archaeological field walking of the proposed route in 1995, when it was identified as a low grass-covered mound of burnt stone extending over an area of 20m by 20m.

**Excavation Results**

**Summary of Features:**
Excavation of the site revealed a levelled burnt mound and semi-circular setting of stones which represented a hearth. A trough was also uncovered and consisted of a dugout canoe which was laid into a large pit.

**Burnt Mound:**
Removal of topsoil revealed a spread of black soil and burnt, shattered stone (F1) extending over an area measuring c. 27m N-S by 19m E-W. Subsequent excavation revealed that the material extended to a depth of up to 1m near the centre of the site, and petered out towards the edges. The site sloped steeply to the east and, along its eastern edge, close to the stream, the burnt mound was covered by a layer of silty mud which had built up over the years as a result of flooding of the stream.
Hearth: A horseshoe-shaped setting of dry stone walling was located 6m from the eastern edge of the site (F9), its open end facing east. Three courses of quarried sandstone survived and clay was used as a bonding agent between the stones. All of the stone were fractured also which suggest intense exposure to heat and slight oxidisation was also noted in the clay indicating that this setting of stones was used as a hearth.

Trough: The trough (F13) was located immediately east of the hearth, however its full length could not be determined due to truncation by modern drainage works. The trough pit measured 4.6m by 1.2m and ranged in depth from 0.25m to 0.65m at its western end. Into this pit, a wooden trough similar in shape to a dugout canoe was placed. Unfortunately the trough had been damaged by modern drainage work and when uncovered was found to consist of two main sections with two smaller broken pieces. The eastern end of the trough was missing and the surviving remains would have had a total length of at least 3m, with the hollowed out section measuring 0.7m wide x c. 0.2m deep. The sides may well have been higher originally and been damaged by modern machinery. A groove was also noted near the west end of the trough that may have been used to attach ropes when it was being moved.

Finds: None

Dating:

Absolute dating: Charcoal (unknown species) from the hearth C14 (UCD-00149) 3130±45BP (1433−1333 BC) Section of Trough (oak) Dendro (QUB-Q9999) 1535±9 BC

Excavation Interpretation

The wooden trough was carved from a split oak trunk and may have originally been used as a dugout canoe. The original length of the trough is unknown as its eastern end is now missing. The trough had been laid into a pit which had been dug through the natural clay subsoil and gravels. The occurrence of natural gravels on site would of course have made lining a necessity in order to retain water in the trough (Cotter 2005). The horseshoe setting of stones which was open to the trough undoubtedly functioned as the hearth in which stones were heated and placed into the trough due to the oxidised nature of the clay and the fractured stone. The difference in radiocarbon dates might be due to the reuse of the wooden trough. Evidence from another burnt across the stream from the Killalough site, suggested the presence there of a wooden trough sitting on the ground surface. The date of the Killalough trough (1535 BC) fits neatly within the date rage returned by radiocarbon analysis from the Ballinvinny site (1681−1460 BC), and it may well be that the trough was removed from the Ballinvinny site when it was abandoned, and reused on the Killalough site (Cotter 2005).

References

Fig. 10.47 Dug-out trough and formal stone-built hearth at Killalough, Co. Cork.
**Location:** Townland: Ballinvinny South  
Parish: Templeusque  
Barony: Barrymore  
County: Cork

**Six inch map no:** 64

**NGR:** 173801, 079527

**Altitude:** 75m OD

**Excavation Details:**

**Project:** N8 Glanmire-Watergrasshill Bypass

**Site Director:** Eamonn Cotter

**Consultants:** Sheila Lane & Associates

**Year:** 2000

**Physical Setting:**

The site is located in a narrow overgrown valley, on the east side of a south-flowing stream. A parallel ridge, known as the Watergrasshill Anticline, lies immediately north of the valley.

**Cultural Landscape:**

The valley floor itself holds two other known *fulacht fia*. One of these was located 30m to the west and was excavated under license number 00E0009 (RMP CO 064-152-02). A Bronze Age settlement site and three Bronze Age burials were excavated in Killydonoghoe townland between 0.7Km and 1.4Km to the south of the present site, as part of the same programme of archaeological resolution in advance of road construction.

**Adjacent excavated sites:**

Meenane *fulacht fia* excavated 80m to the north (RMP CO 053-095). Another *fulacht fia* was excavated at Killalough 30m to the west (RMP CO 064-152-02).

**Pre-excavation features**

The site was discovered during the excavation of another nearby *fulacht fia*, also on the route of the proposed motorway. It was identified as a low scrub-covered mound of burnt stone, *circa* 1m high and approximately 12m by 7m in extent, located in a narrow overgrown valley, on the east side of a south-flowing stream.

**Excavation record**

**Summary of Features:**

Excavation of the site revealed a burnt mound and semi-circular setting of stones which represented a hearth. No trough was uncovered.

**Burnt Mound:**

The burnt mound survived as a low scrub-covered mound of heat-shattered stone which measured 12m by 7m and was 1m in maximum thickness. Evidence of flooding was noted by the presence of waterlogged layer of peaty silt overlying the mound. Below this was another layer of compact silt and sand.

**Hearth:**

Removal of the burnt mound revealed a semi-circular setting of large stones (F9) set on edge in the clay. The setting showed signs of being exposed to intense heat, however there was no other evidence that the area had been used as a hearth. Within the stone setting a layer of silty clay appeared to
have been deliberately laid against the lower edges of the stones. Within the area enclosed by the stones the inner limit of this clay packing was approximately 0.08m deep and had a straight, vertical edge along its north and east sides. The vertical edge suggested that the clay had originally been laid against some supporting formwork such as wooden planks (Cotter 2005). Beneath the clay packing was a thin layer of burnt mound material, suggesting that the mound had already been in use before this clay was laid in place. This layer of burnt mound material lay directly on the natural undisturbed gravel. Surprisingly, in spite of extensive investigation of the area, no evidence for a dug pit or trough was found.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: No animal bone was recovered from the site, although three soil samples were taken and analysed. A small quantity of seeds (sedge and spearwort) were recovered which came from plants commonly found in marshy conditions. The samples also contained charcoal, waterlogged wood and beetle fragments. At least three wood species were identified at the site. These included oak, hazel and willow.

Dating: Charcoal (Hazel) from the hearth
C14 (UCD-0266) 3290±60BP (1640−1490 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

The presence of a mound of burnt stone and a formal hearth suggest that pyrolithic activity was carried out at the site. In the absence of a trough, it cannot be confirmed whether this involved water-boiling. While it may be possible that the stone structure functioned as an over for dry roasting, the excavator, based on similar radiocarbon evidence, suggests that the dug-out trough at Killalough may have originally been used here before the site became inundated with water.

References

Location:  Townland: Derrigra East  Six inch map no: 109
Parish: Ballymoney  NGR: 134163, 54809
Barony: Carbery East  Altitude: Unknown
County: Cork

Excavation Details:  Project: Ballincollig to Ballineen Gas Pipeline
Site Director: Redmond Tobin
Consultants: Margaret Gowen and Company Ltd.
Year: 2000

Physical Setting: The site lies in a stream valley running from north to south on an east-facing slope. The spring supplying the water rises to the north of this location.

Cultural Landscape: There are no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the excavated area.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-excavation features
This site was seriously damaged before and during topsoil-stripping of the Ballincollig–Ballineen gas pipeline leaving just a few patches of the distinctive burnt mound intact.

Excavation record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a heavily disturbed burnt mound and a single pit. The burnt spread survived as a thin, patchy deposit of heat-shattered stone and charcoal. The deposit measured 7m by 4.8m.

Trough: A possible trough survived as an oval/sub-rectangular feature that measured 1.62m by 1.47m. The main fill was burnt material. Once removed, this revealed a layer of reddish-brown silt, which covered a very substantial layer of charcoal. The charcoal extended up to line the side of the trough on the southern side. The excavator suggests that it may have been wattle-lined. No finds were recorded from the site and it was not scientifically dated.

Finds: None

Dating: None

References
Location: Townland: Derrycool Six inch map no: 109
Parish: Kilbrogan NGR: 142811, 56204
Barony: Kinalmeaky Altitude: Unknown
County: Cork

Excavation Details: Project: Ballincollig to Ballineen Gas Pipeline
Site Director: Redmond Tobin
Consultants: Margaret Gowen and Company Ltd.
Year: 2000

Physical Setting: The site lies in low ground to the east of a drainage ditch that channels the water from a stream rising to the north of the site.

Cultural Landscape: There are no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the excavated area.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-excavation features
This site was seriously damaged before and during topsoil-stripping of the Ballincollig–Ballineen gas pipeline. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a burnt mound, a single trough and a stone surface that may have been a stockpile. There were no finds from the site and was not dated scientifically.

Burnt Mound: The burnt material was barely exposed during the stripping. It was reduced by hand to expose its full extent. It measured 7.2m by 5.4m with a maximum thickness of 0.7m. It was composed of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Trough: The trough was rectangular in shape and measured 1.1m by 1.05m. The fill was of blackened soil containing large lumps of charcoal, burnt stone and some oxidised clay. The base of the trough was a very dense layer of charcoal. The full extent of the trough could not be determined, as it was truncated by the baulk to the north.

Stone spread: These stones were not structural in their plan. They were very loosely set, and the old sod layer lay between the stones and, in places, partially covered them. This layer of stone may correspond to the establishment of a dry work surface for the site or may be a dump of stones used in the heating process.

References
Excavation Details:  
Project:  Ballincollig to Ballineen Gas Pipeline  
Site Director:  Redmond Tobin  
Consultants:  Margaret Gowen and Company Ltd.  
Year:  2000

Physical Setting:  
The site lies on a south-facing slope and was in pastureland at the time of excavation.

Cultural Landscape:  
There are no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the excavated area.

Adjacent excavated sites:  None

**Pre-excavation features**

This site was seriously damaged before and during topsoil-stripping of the Ballincollig–Ballineen gas pipeline. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

**Excavation record**

Summary of Features:  
Excavation of the site revealed a burnt mound and a number of possible unlined troughs.

Burnt Mound:  
The burnt material extends 6.05m north–south by 10.2m. The edge of the burned material was emphasised by a layer of ash extending from under it. Distinct features appeared through the burned material. One was an area of burned clay in the centre of the spread. A further sub-circular spread of grey/white clay was noted on the south-west side of the spread. These may represent fire-spots or hearths for heating the stones.

Trough 1:  
This possible trench appeared to have been cut through the burnt mound material into the subsoil. When fully excavated it appeared as a sub-rectangular pit 1.73m by 2.17m with an overall depth of 0.5m. The basal layer contained a high density of charcoal. The main fill was grey silt, which, in section, had settled with an obtuse V-profile. The greyish/white clay projected above the level of the burnt material. The cut of this pit on the south side showed some evidence for a stone lining.

Trough 2:  
The feature to the south-western extremity of the mound, when fully excavated, appeared as subcircular in plan, measuring 2.04m east–west by 1.54m, to a maximum depth of 0.91m. This feature, when half-sectioned, showed a relatively steep-sided V-profile. In the section, a deposit of iron pan showed in the base, projecting down into the base of the feature in a
steep-sided cut. The principal fill of this feature was the grey silt, which had settled in the cut leaving a slight depression, again ‘plugged’ by greyish/whiteclay.

**Finds:**
None

**Dating:**
The site was not scientifically dated.

**Excavation Interpretation**

Excavation of the site revealed a large deposit of waste-firing stone associated with pyrolithic water-boiling. Two unlined troughs identified support the suggestion that the site functioned as a water-boiling site, possibly for cooking. Discrete deposits of ash encountered during the excavation may have been remnants of fires at the site. None of the troughs were lined however, the impermeable white clay may have acted as a sealant for the troughs suggesting they were manually filled with water. The fact that trough 1 seemed to cut through the mound material suggests that it may have been a late feature on the site.

**References**


Plate 10.23 Burnt mound and clay-lined trough at Dromvane II, Co. Cork
Excavation No. 00E0584

Location:
- Townland: Teadies Upper
- Six inch map no: NA
- Parish: Kilbrogan
- NGR: 136760, 55256
- Barony: Kinalmeaky
- Altitude: Unknown
- County: Cork

Excavation Details:
- Project: Ballincollig to Ballineen Gas Pipeline
- Site Director: Redmond Tobin
- Consultants: Margaret Gowen and Company Ltd.
- Year: 2000

Physical Setting:
The site lies on a south-facing slope and was in pastureland at the time of excavation.

Cultural Landscape:
There are no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the excavated area.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-excavation features

This site, noted during work on the Ballingollig– Ballineen gas pipeline, was first brought to attention by the landowner. It lies on good grazing land on a south-facing slope. The landowner’s interpretation was verified by the presence of a low mound of blackened earth and heat-shattered stones. This mound was not disturbed during the process of stripping but had been spread extensively during years of ploughing.

Excavation record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a burnt mound and a single pit that may have functioned as a trough. The spread measured 8m by 15.3m with a maximum thickness of 0.3m. It was composed of black silty clay and heat-shattered stones. A pit was located towards the northern edge of the spread. This feature was subrectangular/elliptical in plan, measuring 2.54m east–west by 1.75m. When fully excavated it reached a maximum depth of 0.6m. The fill was quite uniform consisting of black silty clay and heat-shattered stone with a dense layer of charcoal at the base. No finds were recorded from the site and was not scientifically dated.

References

Excavation Details: Project: Ballincollig to Ballineen Gas Pipeline
Site Director: Redmond Tobin
Consultants: Margaret Gowen and Company Ltd.
Year: 2000

Physical Setting: The site lies on a gently sloping natural terrace to the west of a steep west-facing slope. West of the site the land shelves towards the River Castlehane. There are springs rising to the north and south.

Cultural Landscape: There are no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the excavated area.

Adjacent excavated sites: Teadies 1 fulacht fia (see below)

Pre-excavation features

The site was uncovered during testing in advance of the Ballincollig to Ballineen Gas Pipeline. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a burnt mound and a single pit that may have functioned as a trough.

Burnt Mound: The western deposit extended 9.15m north–south by 25.8m, in four separate concentrations of burnt material. A fragment of a lignite bracelet was recovered from the burnt material in the north-eastern portion of the site. The only feature encountered was a field drain crossing the site from the north-east. The eastern site consisted of a single concentration of blackened earth and heat-shattered stones located 0.35m to the west of the previous site. The concentration extended 4.35m south–north by 15.6m. The depth of the material was quite extensive in parts, reaching a maximum depth of 0.6m.

Trough: This feature was aligned north-west/south-east and measured 2.7m by 1.65m. It was sub-circular in shape and was filled with deposits of charcoal, silty clay and burnt stones.

References

Excavation No. 01E0691

Location: Townland: Meenane
Parish: Ardnageehy
Barony: Barrymore
County: Cork
Location: Six inch map no: 53
Location: NGR: 176736, 084414
Location: Altitude: 168m OD
Location: Project: N8 Glanmire-Watergrasshill Bypass
Location: Site Director: Brian Halpin
Location: Consultants: Sheila Lane & Associates
Location: Year: 2001

Physical Setting: The site was situated in rough pasture in gently undulating ground on a south facing slope. Land in the general vicinity was poorly drained and of limited agricultural use. Approximately 130m to the south a small watercourse flowed east west across the road corridor.

Cultural Landscape: There are three fulachtai fia located c. 1km to the north-east in Skahanagh townland. Two other fulachtai fia were excavated as part of the same road project. Meenane (RMP CO 053-099), c. 850m to the north returned a late Bronze Age date while another (RMP CO 053-098) c. 750m to the north-east returned a Middle to Late Bronze Age date.

Adjacent excavated sites: Two fulachtai fia were excavated to the north of this site.

Pre-excavation features

The site was revealed as a spread of heat-shattered stone during top-soil stripping.

Excavation record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed two features of archaeological interest. No mound was uncovered, however a spread of heat-shattered stone 14m in diameter was noted. A pit and a circular trough with a large amount of stake-holes were excavated.

Trough: The trough (C110) was identified as a sub-oval feature and measured 3.5min length, 2.5m in width and was 0.74m deep. The trough had five fills consisting of burnt stone with brown clay with various amounts of silt and sand throughout. 27 stake-holes were uncovered surrounding the inner edge of the trough base. 38 further stake-holes were noted surrounding the outside of the eastern portion of the trough. 36 of these were directly on the surface, while two were on the break of slope. A single large rectangular stone measuring 0.54m by 0.33m by 0.7m was in place at the western edge at the base of the trough.

Pit: This irregular pit (C44) was identified 8m north of the trough measured 5.32m in length and was 0.54m in depth. The fills of the pit were generally
re-deposited grey-brown sandy silt subsoil with occasional inclusions of clay and yellow silty sand. A moderate amount of charcoal was present. No stratigraphical relationship could be identified between the trough and the pit therefore their relationship could not be ascertained. One of the fills of this pit produced one piece of flint débitage.

Finds:

Artefacts: Possible hammerstone from topsoil and a flint flake from the pit.

Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (alder) from the trough
C14 (GRA-24200) 2965±40BP (1267–1047 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

The archaeological remains identified and excavated on the site suggest the presence of the levelled remains of a fulacht fia. The site comprised a trough with twenty seven stake holes in its base and thirty-five more flanking its eastern side. Approximately 8m northeast of the trough a large irregular pit was identified, however, no stratigraphic link was determined between these two features. Given that the trough was cut into sandy subsoil, some form of lining was necessary to hold the water within the trough during use. If wattle was used it would probably have been clay lined (Halpin, 2004). Almost forty stake-holes were identified east of the trough which may have supported a light structure or possibly a windbreak. The replacing of the stakes in the windbreak would account for the presence of the large number of stake holes. The nature of the excavated remains suggests the site was used as a cooking place with a temporary light structure, or windbreak, located at the eastern end of the trough. Such a structure may have given shelter from the prevailing wind and would have allowed a fire to be lit more easily, however no evidence of a hearth site was revealed.

References


Plate 10.24 Burnt spread and possible wattle-lined trough at Meenane, Co. Cork.
Physical Setting: The site was situated in flat agricultural land. The surrounding field system appeared modern with the underlying geology consisting of mixed clays.

Cultural Landscape: There are a small number of known archaeological sites within 500m of the Propoge site. The closest areas of archaeological interest were the pit feature (AR 19) 200m to the southwest that contained pottery of possible Bronze Age date and the remains of another damaged fulacht fia 800m to the south in the townland of Clashadunna East (see below). These sites, along with the discovery of a possible Bronze Age unenclosed settlement at Ballyvergan West indicate the remains of a Bronze Age landscape in the Youghal area.

Adjacent excavated sites: Fulacht fia 800m to the south and pit feature 200m to the south-west.

Pre-excavation features

The site was revealed as a spread of heat-shattered stone during top-soil stripping.

Excavation record

Summary of Features: The site consisted of a levelled fulacht fia which extended beyond the CPO line to the east and west. The only archaeological feature exposed on the site was a circular unlined trough that was cut by a modern filed drain.

Burnt Mound: The burnt spread (C2) covered much of the site and measured 6m E/W by 3m N/S. It consisted of a layer of dark-brown slightly sandy silty clay set amongst heat-shattered stones and charcoal. It measured between 0.2m and 0.3m deep. This spread was the levelled remains of a possibly crescent-shaped burnt mound. The modern drain cut through the middle of this spread. The spread continued beyond the edge of the CPO line to the east.

Trough: The circular trough (C4) was located north of the spread and measured 2m by 1.8m and was 0.46m deep. The trough was backfilled with a single deposit of heat-shattered stones and burnt mound material. There were no other fills in the trough that may indicate whether it was open for any period or was filled soon after use. The modern field drain, C5, cut through the western edge of the trough (Noonan 2002).
Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts:

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (alder) from fill of the trough
Lab Unknown 1120–910 BC

Excavation Interpretation

The damage remains of a *fulacht fia* (AR 34) encompassing an area of 6m east–west by 6m north–south was excavated on the route of the Kirks’ Farm Access Road. A single circular trough, 1.8m east–west by 2m north–south and 0.46m deep, was uncovered when the disturbed remains of a burnt spread was removed. There was no other evidence for a lining of either stone or wood in the circular trough. Radiocarbon dating of the site to 1120–910 BC places the site in the Late Bronze Age. The small size of the single trough uncovered, coupled with the lack of identifiable variation in the surviving burnt mound material and trough fill, would tentatively indicate that activity at this site was carried out over a short period.

References

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**Excavation Details:**

- **Project:** N25 Youghal Bypass
- **Site Director:** Daniel Noonan
- **Consultants:** Archaeological Consultancy Services
- **Year:** 2001

**Physical Setting:**

The site was situated in flat agricultural land. The surrounding field system appeared modern with the underlying geology consisting of mixed clays.

**Cultural Landscape:**

The site of Clashadunna East is one of three fulachtai fia excavated along this road scheme. A site excavated in the townland of Propoge 800m to the north returned a Late Bronze Age date, while a fulacht fia at Muckridge produced an Early Bronze Age date. These sites, along with the discovery of a possible Bronze Age unenclosed settlement at Ballyvergan West indicate the remains of a Bronze Age landscape in the Youghal area.

**Adjacent excavated site:** None

**Pre-excavation features**

The site was revealed as a spread of heat-shattered stone during top-soil stripping.

**Excavation record**

**Summary of Features:**

The site consisted of a levelled fulacht fia. The only archaeological feature exposed on the site was an oval shaped trough with a series of stake-holes cut into its base suggesting it was wood-lined sometime in the past.

**Burnt Mound:**

The main feature on site was a large spread of heat-shattered stone with a number of other smaller spreads dispersed over an area measuring 13m by 8m. The main spread (C3) consisted of heat-fractured stones set in a dark brown silty clay with frequent charcoal flecks and occasional charcoal fragments. C3 measured 9m E/W by 5m N/S and varied in depth between 0.05m and 0.1m.

**Trough:**

The trough (C19) was oval in shape and measured 2.3m E/W by 1.9m N/S and was 0.9m deep. The fill of the trough consisted of material similar in composition to the spread which suggests it may have been backfilled when the site went out of use. Three stake-holes were identified at the base of the trough, two located on the western edge and one located at the eastern edge.
Finds:
Artefacts: Flint debitage (Unknown context)
Ecofacts: None

Dating:
Relative dating: None
Absolute dating: Charcoal (unknown species) from fill of the trough
Lab Unknown 1410–1120 BC

Site Interpretation

The small size of the single trough uncovered, coupled with the lack of identifiable variation in the surviving burnt mound material and trough fill, would tentatively indicate that activity at this site was carried out over a short period. The site at Clashadunna East was one of three fulachtaí fia sites of varying sizes and levels of preservation which were excavated as part of this scheme.

References:


Fig. 10.48 Burnt mound and circular trough cut at Clasdunna East.
Excavation Details:

- Project: N25 Youghal Bypass
- Site Director: Daniel Noonan
- Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services
- Year: 2001

Physical Setting:
The site is located halfway down the northern slope of the low hilltop that dominates Muckridge townland. This slope falls towards the mudflats of the Tourig River to the north. The ground was marshy, covered in coarse grass/reed and was water sodden. Subsequent observation of construction groundworks in the area indicated that the underlying geology of the site lent itself to being a place of natural springs with upper clay layers masking sand and gravel bands.

Cultural Landscape:
The site of Muckridge is one of three fulachtai fia excavated along this road scheme. These sites, along with the discovery of a possible Bronze Age unenclosed settlement at Ballyvergan West indicate the remains of a Bronze Age landscape in the Youghal area.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed as a spread of heat-shattered stone during top-soil stripping in an area measuring 23m by 16m.

Excavation Results

Summary of Features:
The site consisted of two main spreads of heat-shattered stone along with two smaller spreads of re-deposited burnt mound material. Two large troughs were identified along with five small pits and numerous stake-holes.

Burnt Mound:
The burnt mound consisted of two main spreads of heat-shattered sandstone (C6 and C15) mixed with a compacted dark brown silty clay. The lower of these spreads, C15, measured 14m N/S by 9.6m E/W and varied in depth from 0.15m to 0.4m. There were no indications of the size or location of any original mound(s) if such a feature existed. Above this layer was evidence for a second episode of re-deposition. The upper spread, C6, consisted of similar material to that of C15 but was lighter in colour. It measured 22m N/S by 12m E/W and was 0.15m in thickness. There was further evidence for
re-deposition in conjunction with these two spreads also including a dumped deposit of oxidised clay.

**Trough 1:**
This trough (C 126) was the larger of the two and was rectangular in shape. It measured 2.08m N/S by 3.32m E/W and was 1.02m deep. Three fills were identified in this fill. The lower deposit consisted of loosely-compact black sandy silt containing both burnt and un-burnt sandstone and a moderate amount of charcoal flecking. The next layer contained much of the same material, however it was between these two deposits that that five fragments of timber representing two individual pieces were recovered, which may have been used initially as some form of lining. The timbers did not appear to be *in situ*, however, nor was there any evidence for any original lining beneath the basal deposit (Noonan 2002).

**Stake-Holes:**
Over 85 stake-holes were identified east-south-east of trough 1. The majority of these were clustered together with no obvious overall pattern which suggests they were probably inserted over a period of time to fulfil specific needs rather than as one planned event. However, fifteen stake-holes formed a curved alignment roughly 1.6m southeast of Trough 1 and which has been interpreted as a fence or windbreak connected specifically to that trough. It should be noted, however, that this observation is based purely on a physical relationship; there was no direct stratigraphical relationship between these stake-holes and Trough 1 (Noonan 2002).

**Trough 2:**
The second trough (C125), was bowl-shaped and measured 2.7m N/S by 2.86m E/W and was 0.7m deep. The three fills identified in this trough all contained moderate amounts of heat-shattered stone and charcoal.

**Pit 1:**
There were five smaller pits in the area that could also be interpreted as possible troughs. C55 was a circular pit cut into natural subsoil roughly 1.40m in diameter and 0.4m deep. It had vertical sides with a gentle break of slope and hat a flat base. The fill consisted of heat-shattered stone and charcoal flecking.

**Pit 2:**
C68 was a sub-circular and cut into natural subsoil. It measured 1.30m north–south by 1.20m east–west and was 0.32m deep. The sides were generally gradually sloping, becoming steeper on the western side. The base was flat. It contained just one fill and consisted of compact sandy silt with typical burnt-mound material included.

**Pit 3:**
C78 was a roughly circular, cut into natural subsoil and measuring 1.44m north–south by 1.25m east–west and was 0.6m deep. It had gradually-sloping sides except for the eastern edge which was slightly steeper. The base was concave. It contained three fills, all of which contained moderate amounts of heat-fractured stones and charcoal flecking.

**Pit 4:**
C135 was a roughly circular cut into natural subsoil that measured 1.38m north–south by 1.68m east–west and was 0.26 m deep. It had gradually-sloping sides and a concave base. It contained just one fill of compact greyish-black sandy clay with a mixture of burnt and unburnt stones.
Pit 5: C137 was the remains of a heavily-truncated possible pit. It measured 0.54m north–south by 1.92m east–west and was 0.32m deep. It had gradually-sloping sides and a concave base. It contained two fills. The lower deposit was a silty deposit above which was a deposit of typical burnt-mound material.

Finds:

Artefacts: None
Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None
Absolute dating: Charcoal and context unknown
Lab Unknown 2620–2280 BC

Excavation Interpretation

Prior to development, no surface remains indicated any archaeological activity. The amount of re-deposited burnt stone would appear indicative of either one large or several smaller mounds, if any such feature existed. Trough 1 appears to have been the more important of the two. The fill of this trough produced two pieces of timber which although not in situ may have been part of an original timber lining. It was heavily truncated by a modern drain. Perhaps more significant is the clustering of stake-holes immediately east of the trough which are considered to be connected to this trough and particularly the arc of stakeholes which complements the eastern and south-eastern sides of the trough. This has been interpreted as a windbreak or some form of fencing. The evidence would suggest that Trough 1 was probably a semi-permanent site that was re-used on more than one occasion. It was not determinable through excavation to chronologically phase both troughs and it is not possible to say at present whether they were used simultaneously or not. There is strong evidence that Muckridge was of great importance to the settlements within the area.

Reference

Excavation No. 01E0729

Physical Setting: The site was situated in a low-lying area which was under pasture at the time of excavation.

Cultural Landscape: There were several burnt stone deposits excavated in this area close to the Maglin River.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-excavation features

The site was revealed as a spread of heat-shattered stone during top-soil stripping.

Excavation records

Summary of Features: The site consisted of a shallow spread (F3) of heat-shattered sandstone with an associated shallow pit which was exposed below the spread. No other features were recorded on site. No finds were recorded from the site.

Burnt Mound: The mound survived as a heavily ploughed spread of burnt material consisting of charcoal stained clay with occasional charcoal flecking and a high percentage of fire-cracked sandstone. It measured 14m by 11.5m and varied in thickness from 0.02m to 0.15m in depth.

Pit: The irregular shaped pit (F6) was sealed by the burnt spread and measured 1.5m by 5.50m and varied in depth from 0.18m to 0.60m. An oval extension running northwards from the western end of F6 was c0.60m deep and measured 3.00m by 1.50m. It probably represents a trough or similar feature.

Dating: Charcoal (unknown species) from the spread (F3) (Lab Unknown) 3360±40BP (1760−1500 BC)

References

Location: Townland: Maglin Six inch map no: 74
Parish: St. Nicholas NGR: 158896,069101
Barony: East Muskerry Altitude: 8m OD
County: Cork

Excavation Details: Project: N22 Ballincollig Bypass
Site Director: Edward Danaher
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services
Year: 2001

Physical Setting: The site was situated in a low-lying area which was under pasture at the time of excavation.

Cultural Landscape: There were several burnt stone deposits excavated in this area close to the Maglin River.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-excavation features

The site was revealed as a spread of heat-shattered stone during top-soil stripping. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation records

Summary of Features: The site consisted of a shallow spread of heat-shattered sandstone with two associated pits filled with burnt material. No finds were recovered from the site and it was not scientifically dated.

Burnt Mound: The mound survived as a heavily ploughed spread (F3) of fairly compact, dark brown/black clay silt with occasional charcoal flecking and a high percentage of heat cracked sandstone. The deposit measured 6.5m by 5.5m and had a maximum depth of 0.25m. On excavation the deposit proved to be sitting within a slight depression. Some 3.00m to the south of F3 was an elliptical pit (F4), c.0.60m in diameter, with a maximum depth of 0.25m. fill consisted of grey/brown clay sand with stone inclusions.

Trough: Located one metre from the spread was a sub-rectangular pit (F5) which measured 1.5m in diameter and was 0.22m. The fill consisted of a compact dark brown clay with frequent burnt and fragmented sandstone and may represent the remains of a trough.

References

### Location
- **Townland:** Curraheen
- **Parish:** Carrigrohane
- **Barony:** Cork
- **County:** Cork
- **Six inch map no:** 74
- **NGR:** 160722, 069228
- **Altitude:** 13m OD

### Excavation Details
- **Project:** N22 Ballincollig Bypass
- **Site Director:** Edward Danaher
- **Consultants:** Archaeological Consultancy Services
- **Year:** 2001

### Physical Setting
The site is located within a flat area of marsh north of the Maglin River, which flows east–west.

### Cultural Landscape
Within the townlands of Curraheen/Carrigrohane, a large cluster consisting of three sites that have been interpreted as *fulachta fia* and a further nine sites which contained related features such as troughs and pits were excavated. Other clusters were present within the townlands of Ballinaspi More and Greenfield. A Bronze Age roundhouse was excavated at Greenfield. Cremation pits were present within the townlands of Carrigrohane, Barnagore, Greenfield and Ballinaspi More.

### Adjacent excavated sites
None

### Pre-excavation features
The site was revealed during testing, as spread of burnt-mound material consisting of dark-brown/black clay containing burnt and fragmented sandstone and charcoal flecks.

### Excavation record

#### Summary of Features
The site consisted of a spread of heat-shattered sandstone and a sub-circular pit that may have been a trough. No finds were recovered from the site and it was not scientifically dated.

#### Burnt Mound
The spread (C4) of this material that was present within the site covered a small area measuring 8m north–south by 7.5m east–west and had an average depth of 0.03m. It consisted of a dark-brown–black silty clay with frequent burnt sandstone and charcoal fleck inclusions.

#### Pit
This pit (C3) was sub-circular in shape and measured 2.35m in length by 2.1m in width and was 0.45m deep. The pit contained two fills which consisted mainly of material similar to the spread.

### References
Excavation Details: Project: N22 Ballincollig Bypass

Site Director: Brian Halpin

Consultants: Sheila Lane and Associates Ltd.

Year: 2001

Physical Setting: It was situated on an east facing slope on a very slight hill. Visibility from the site was very good to the east for a distance of 5-7km, to the south, north and west the view was much more limited.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites within the vicinity of the site prior to excavation, however several levelled sites without any surface expression were revealed during the project.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-excavation features

The spread was revealed during archaeological testing in advance of the N22 Ballincollig Bypass. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation record

Summary of Features: The site consisted of a spread of heat-shattered stone. No cut features were identified form the site. Any trough at the site may have been destroyed by later activity or could lie outside the area of excavation.

Burnt Spread: The spread of fulacht fia material extended over an area measuring 24m long (north-south) by 16m wide. It consisted of charcoal-rich material with inclusions of fire-shattered stones. The site was significantly disturbed as a result of repeated ploughing and this is likely to have reduced any remains of any mound which may have been present.

Dating: Charcoal (hazel) from the spread (GrN-28250) 3360±40BP (1603−1315 BC)

References:

Physical Setting: The site is located within a flat area of marsh north of the Maglin River, which flows east–west.

Cultural Landscape: Within the townlands of Curraheen/Carrigrohane, a large cluster consisting of three sites that have been interpreted as fulacht fia and a further nine sites which contained related features such as troughs and pits were excavated. Other clusters were present within the townlands of Ballinaspig More and Greenfield. A Bronze Age roundhouse was excavated at Greenfield. Cremation pits were present within the townlands of Carrigrohane, Barnagore, Greenfield and Ballinaspig More.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-excision features

During monitoring for the proposed Ballincollig Bypass, a spread of burnt-mound material consisting of dark-brown/black clay containing burnt and fragmented sandstone and moderate amounts of limestone as well as charcoal flecks was exposed. No surface trace of the mound was evident.

Excavation record

Summary of Features: The site revealed two phases of activity which consisted of a burnt stone spread, a number of pits and a sub-rectangular trough. The second phase of activity consisted of three pits and a deposit of burnt mound material which dated to the Iron Age.

Phase 1
Burnt Mound: The burnt mound material (F10) consisted of ten different layers of heat-shattered stone and charcoal. The stones present within the mound were mainly angular, heat-shattered sandstone with moderate amounts of burnt limestone, which was generally larger in size and located towards the base of the mound. Five blackberry seeds, two achenes of buttercup, one elder seed, two fragments of cattle bone and a disc-headed pin were also recovered from the burnt mound material. A sample of charred alder retrieved from the burnt mound returned a Late Bronze Age date of Cal BC 1000–800. The material covered a maximum area of fifty-seven square metres and had a maximum
depth of 0.84m. It sealed two *in situ* stakes, three pits, a trough and two linear features.

**Limestone Spreads:**
This stone (F16) spread was located directly north of F10 and measured 5.8m by 4.4m with a maximum thickness of 8cm. It consisted of a compact deposit of white stone and frequent round and angular limestone. Two fragments of burnt bone from a large mammal were retrieved from this spread. The second spread (F23) was located 15m south of the primary mound F10 and measured 2.5m by 2m with a maximum depth of 3cm. It consisted of burnt limestone.

**Scarp Feature:**
This semi-circular feature measured (F14) measured 15m east-west and was cut into subsoil. It had a maximum depth of 0.84m along its northern edge but became shallower as it extended southwest and southeast eventually levelling out. Two timber stakes were uncovered within the south-western quadrant of the feature. Burnt mound material overlay these two stakes.

**Trough:**
The trough (F9) was located 1m north of the primary burnt spread F10 and was sub-rectangular in shape. It measured 3.12m in length by 2.07m in width and had a depth of 0.56m. It was filled with compact black clay containing moderate inclusions of angular and heat-shattered stone, mainly sandstone but with limestone also present.

**Pits:**
Three pits were identified on site related to this first phase of activity. F3 was exposed less than a metre from the trough and measured 1.4m by 0.76m with a depth of 0.19m. The fill consisted of heat-shattered sandstone. F7 was exposed to the west of the first limestone deposit and measured 0.6m by 0.57m and was 0.11m deep. Its fill consisted of heat-shattered limestone. The third pit (F22) was exposed to the north of the rectangular trough. It was circular in shape, measuring 0.42m in diameter, 0.09m deep and had been filled with a dark-grey–black clay and heat-shattered sandstone.

**Phase 2**

**Spread:**
This small spread (F31) was oval in shape and measured 0.22m in length, 0.2m in width and 9cm in thickness and consisted of loose dark-brown sandy clay containing moderate inclusions of angular stone and charcoal flecks.

**Pits:**
The first pit (F28) was oval in shape and measured 0.91m in length, 0.59m in width and 0.14m in depth. It contained frequent angular stone and charcoal flecks. Charcoal from the base of this pit was identified as alder, birch and willow. A sample returned a radiocarbon date of Cal BC 185–Cal AD 85. The second pit (F30) was situated 0.7m southeast of F27. It was oval in shape and measured 1.43m in length, 1.2m in width and extended to a depth of 0.07m. It contained a compact dark-brown sandy clay containing moderate inclusions of angular stone and charcoal. The third pit (F34) was located just over 3m south of F30. It was oval in shape and measured 1.0m in length, 0.52m in width and extended to a depth of 0.17m. It had been filled with dark-grey–black coarse clay containing frequent inclusions of angular and heat-shattered sandstone and occasional charcoal flecks.
Finds:

Artefacts: Disc-headed stick pin from the burnt mound

Ecofacts: Plant seeds and animal bone from the burnt mound and peat layer.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (alder) from the burnt mound
(Beta-181752) Uncalibrated date unknown (1000−800 BC)
Charcoal (alder, birch and willow) from the pit (F28)
(Beta-181753) 2040±60BP (185 BC−AD 85)

Excavation Interpretation

The two radiocarbon dates obtained for the site differ enormously. The margin of error associated with radiocarbon dating is too large to give an accurate time span of use of the site. What we can say is that the main part of the site was used in the Late Bronze Age possibly within a hundred years while in the Middle Iron Age activities associated with burnt mound technology were carried out south of the Late Bronze Age site. Of the three fulachta fiadh and numerous burnt mound related features excavated within the townland of Curraheen, only dates for this site and the neighbouring Curraheen 5 were obtained.

References

### Physical Setting:
The site was located in low-lying marginal land at a height of about 13m (43ft) above OD, 2 kilometres southeast of the village of Ballincollig and directly south of a stream.

### Cultural Landscape:
Within the townlands of Curraheen/Carrigrohane, a large cluster comprising three sites that have been interpreted as *fulachtaí fia* and a further nine sites which contained related features such as troughs and pits were excavated. Bronze Age activity in the form of pits and hearths was unearthed in the townland of Ballinaspig More while a Bronze Age roundhouse was excavated at Greenfield. Cremation pits were present within the townlands of Carrigrohane, Barnagore, Greenfield and Ballinaspig More while other pits of Bronze Age date were also excavated within these townlands.

### Adjacent Structures:
None

### Pre-Excavation features:
During the course of archaeological monitoring in advance of the Ballincollig Bypass, a large area of archaeological activity was exposed at this site in the townland of Curraheen. In total nine zones were investigated of which seven were archaeological in nature. These zones were spread over a wide area covering over 140m by 50m.

### Excavation Results:
**Summary of features:**
The large area uncovered comprised of three rectangular troughs, six pits, a hearth and various spreads of burnt mound material.

**Site A**

**Spread:**
F102 was an oval spread of black clay containing frequent angular and heat-shattered stone and lay directly above the natural orange sandy clay and stone. It measured 3.8m by 2.81m and was 0.1m deep.

**Site B**

**Pit:**
This pit (F202) was exposed south of CO 8A and was semi-circular in shape. It had been cut by a possible river channel (F205) to the south. The remaining portion of the pit was semicircular in shape and measured 1.7m in length, 1.0m in width and extended to a depth of 0.38m. The pit was filled...
with back clay material and heat-shattered stone.

**Site C**

**Spreads:**
A total of four burnt spreads (F303-305) were exposed in area CO 8C. The first, (F303), was irregular in shape and measured 5.6m by 2.1m in width and a maximum of 7cm in thickness and consisted of a deposit of black clay, heat-shattered stone and occasional–moderate inclusions of charcoal. The second burnt spread (F304) was exposed to the north of F303. It was oval in shape and measured 1.2m by 0.68m in width and 6cm in thickness and consisted of a deposit of black clay and heat-shattered stone. Both F303 and F304 had been partially cut by two modern north–south linear features (F308). The third burnt spread (F305) was exposed to the east of F303 and southeast of F304. It consisted of an oval-shaped deposit of black clay containing heat-shattered stone and measured 4.0m by 0.6m and 5cm in depth. The fourth burnt spread (F306) was exposed to the north of F305 and east of F304 and consisted of an oval-shaped deposit of black clay containing heat-shattered stone. It measured 1.51m by 0.49m in width and 8cm in thick.

**Pit:**
A single oval shaped pit (F309) was exposed following the excavation of the burnt spread F303 in Zone 3. It had been cut into the natural clay and measured 1.2m in length, 0.7m in width and extended to a maximum depth of 0.2m. It contained sharply-sloped sides to a concave base and had been filled with the black clay and heat-shattered stone.

**Site D**

**Spread:**
This burnt spread (F402) was oval in shape and measured 2.4m in length, 1.67m in width and a maximum of 0.24m in thickness. It consisted of a deposit of black coarse clay containing moderate inclusions of angular and heat-shattered stone and rare charcoal flecks and lay directly above the natural clay.

**Site E**

**Pit:**
This large pit (F611) measured 7.7m in length, 2.9m in width and a maximum of 0.61m in depth. It was roughly oval in shape and had been filled with compact grey clay containing occasional inclusions of small round stone and measured a maximum of 7cm in thickness. This lay above a layer of soft mid-grey silty clay containing occasional inclusions of burnt stone and charcoal flecks. It measured 0.18m in thickness and lay directly above the natural orange clay and a possible oval-shaped hearth (F607) to the east and the compact mid-brown peaty clay and a black clay and heat-shattered stone to the west.

**Hearth:**
A possible hearth site (F607) was also exposed which was oval in shape and measured 1.8m in length, 0.79m in width and 2cm in thickness and consisted of a deposit of compact light-brown clay containing occasional inclusions of small stone, gravel and ash.
Trough: The wooden trough (F608) seemed to have been used in two phases. The first and larger phase was constructed from a total of twenty-four timbers and seven posts. The side planks to the north and south appeared to have been packed with clay bonding which consisted of soft yellow clay. The base of the trough had been constructed within the western portion of the large pit directly above the natural orange clay on a bed of organic material, possibly fern leaves. The trough was made smaller during its use (Phase 2) by the insertion of an additional plank (Timber 8) across its width to the west which created a rectangular area to the west measuring 1.2m in length by 0.64m in width. This area was then deliberately backfilled with the black clay containing frequent inclusions of heat-shattered stone. A number of nuts and nut fragments were recovered from this clay. It measured 1.4m in length, 1.2m in width and a maximum of 0.2m in thickness and lay directly above a number of white burnt limestone rocks that lay within and above the timber trough. Removal of the timber trough revealed moss and other organic material (Russell 2004).

Pit: The oval pit (F614) was exposed to the southwest of the wooden trough and measured 2.39m in length, 0.68m in width and 0.28m in depth. It contained straight–slightly-sloped sides to a concave base and had been filled with grey gravelly clay containing frequent inclusions of angular stone and heat-shattered stone and occasional charcoal flecks.

Spread: The burnt spread (F615) was exposed at the edge of the large pit to the northeast. It was oval in shape and measured 0.52m in length, 0.4m in width and 0.03m in thickness and consisted of a deposit of black clay containing frequent inclusions of burnt stone and occasional charcoal flecks.

Site F

Trough: This trough (F709) was exposed to the east of the site. It was rectangular in shape and measured 1.8m in length, 1.22m in width and a maximum of 0.34m in depth. It had been filled with black clay containing frequent inclusions of angular and heat-shattered stone and moderate inclusions of charcoal and roots. Some fragmentary traces of poorly-preserved wood were exposed at the base of the trough.

Pit: This pit (F711) was exposed to the north of the rectangular trough and was oval in shape. It measured 0.71m in length, 0.5m in width and 0.18m in depth. It was filled with black clay containing moderate inclusions of angular and heat-shattered stone and moderate–frequent inclusions of charcoal.

Pit: The second pit (F712) was exposed to the south of the rectangular trough. It was roughly circular in shape and measured 0.52m in diameter to a depth of 0.19m. It was been filled with a mid-grey clay containing frequent inclusions of angular stone and moderate charcoal flecks. Traces of oxidisation were visible on the northern edge.

Site G

Trough: The trough (F903) was rectangular in shape and measured 2.7m in length,
1.4m in width and 0.32m in depth. It contained sharply-sloped–vertical sides extending to a flat base and had been filled with black–grey sandy clay containing frequent angular and heat-shattered stone and moderate inclusions of charcoal. It had been cut by the field drain F905 and appears to have been partially cut by the pit F908 to the southeast.

Pit:

The pit (F908) was oval in shape and measured 0.85m in length, 0.6m in width and 0.52m in depth. It contained gradually-sloped sides to a concave bowl-shaped base and had been filled with black clay containing frequent inclusions of angular and heat-shattered stone and occasional charcoal flecks. It measured 0.49m in thickness and lay below a secondary fill which consisted of light-grey sandy clay containing occasional–moderate inclusions of charcoal flecks.

Finds:

Artefacts:
None

Ecofacts:
There was no animal bone recovered from the site although environmental samples were taken. There are five species groups present in the charcoal and wood remains from the site. The range of species identified from this excavation includes large (oak & ash) and smaller type (alder and hazel) trees and scrub (Prunus spp.).

Organic material from under the trough timbers at CO 8E was identified as moss with a few well preserved wood and fine twig fragments.

Dating:
Charcoal (unknown species) from the fill of pit (Site B) (Beta-181754) 3850±40BP (2455–2190 BC)
Charcoal (unknown species) from burnt spread (Site A) (Beta-181745) 3840±40BP (2165–2150 BC)
Charcoal (unknown species) from burnt spread (Site C) (Beta-181755) 2880±40BP (1205–940 BC)
Charcoal (alder) from the fill of pit (Site E) (Beta-181756) 2710±70BP (985–785 BC)
Charcoal (oak) from the fill of trough (Site G) (Beta-181757) 2910±50BP (1260–930 BC)
Alder post from timber-lined trough (Site D) (Beta-186005) 2820±70BP (1120–810 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

The evidence suggests that, in the Bronze Age, the area around Curraheen 5 would have been a marginal wetland with dispersed streams, flanked by drier, tree-covered ground. People exploited the natural resources of the area—the ready availability of wood (for trough-building and for fuel), high ground water and the availability of mosses to help filter clean water into wood-built troughs. Excavations at Curraheen 5 revealed a variety of isolated pits, troughs and pockets of burnt mound material scattered over a large area. It is likely that the site originally contained three separate fulachtaí fia, i.e. one of suspected Chalcolithic date (Zones 1/2) and two of Late Bronze Age date (Zones 3/4/9 and Zones 6/7, respectively).

References:

### Location:
- **Townland:** Carrigrohane
- **Parish:** Carrigrohane
- **Barony:** Cork
- **County:** Cork

### Six inch map no: 73

### NGR:
- **16068, 06969**

### Altitude:
- **27m OD**

### Excavation Details:
- **Project:** N22 Ballincollig Bypass
- **Site Director:** Donald Murphy
- **Consultants:** Archaeological Consultancy Services
- **Year:** 2002

### Physical Setting:
The site was situated in a low-lying area close to a water-source.

### Cultural Landscape:
Within the townlands of Curraheen/Carrigrohane, a large cluster comprising three sites that have been interpreted as *fulachta fiadh* and a further nine sites which contained related features such as troughs and pits were excavated. Bronze Age activity in the form of pits and hearths was unearthed in the townland of Ballinaspi More while a Bronze Age roundhouse was excavated at Greenfield. Cremation pits were present within the townlands of Carrigrohane, Barnagore, Greenfield and Ballinaspi More while other pits of Bronze Age date were also excavated within these townlands.

### Adjacent Structures:
- None

### Pre-excavation features
Prior to excavation the site was recognised as a low mound, with gently sloping sides, situated at the base of a slope, rising to the north, and with a flat area of marsh extending southwards.

### Excavation record

#### Summary of Features:
Excavation of the site revealed a mound of heat-shattered stone and five circular pits.

#### Burnt Mound:
The mound was approximately circular c10.0m in diameter and rose some 0.50m above the marshy area to the south. It consisted of heat-shattered stone (F3) within a matrix of black silty clay. It was apparent that the deposit had been severely disturbed by ploughing and the spread contained a high percentage of brown humic material (Murphy 2002).

#### Pit 1:
This pit (F40) was oval in shape with sloping sides and a flat base. It measured 1.7m N/S by 1.5m W/E with a maximum depth of 0.28m. It was filled with heat-shattered stone in a matrix of black silty clay with charcoal inclusions.
Pit 2: This pit (F52) was situated north-east of F40 and measured 2.4m NW/SE by 1.6m SW/NE and was 0.2m deep. It was filled with heat-shattered stone in a matrix of black silty clay with charcoal inclusions.

Pit 3: Pit F52 was cut by the third pit on site (F46). This pit was circular with a diameter of 1.4m. It had a maximum depth of 0.3m. A circular depression was found at the base of this bit. Its function is unclear and Murphy states that because of the disturbed nature of the overlying fulacht material (F3) it was unclear as to the phasing of pit F46 (Murphy 2002). It was filled with heat-shattered stone in a matrix of black silty clay with charcoal inclusions.

Pit 4: Further to the north-east was another pit (F30). This pit was circular, diameter 1.50m, with sloping sides a flat base and a maximum depth of 0.15m. The fill of this pit contained a lens of re-deposited natural, sloping from west to east.

Pit 5: Immediately to the north east of F30 was another circular pit (F28). This pit was circular with a diameter of 1.50m and was 0.35m deep.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: None

Dating: Site not scientifically dated

Excavation Interpretation

Excavation of the site revealed a spread of heat-shattered stones and charcoal and a number of circular pits that may have function as water-boiling troughs. Equally, these pits could have functioned as dry-roasting ovens given their relative depths (see Chapter 7). None of these showed evidence of linings which may lend further support to this theory. Given the sites wet location however, it is possible that water was important in the function of these pits. Therefore, it is difficult to establish what precise pyrolic activity was carried out at the site.

References

Location: Townland: Ballinaspig More Six inch map no: Sheet 73
Parish: St. Finbars NGR: 163319, 069078
Barony: Cork Altitude: 11m OD
County: Cork

Excavation Details: Project: N22 Ballincollig Bypass
Site Director: Donald Murphy
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services
Year: 2001

Physical Setting: The site was situated in a low-lying area close to a water-source.

Cultural Landscape: Within the townlands of Curraheen/Carrigrohane, a large cluster comprising three sites that have been interpreted as fulachta fiadh and a further nine sites which contained related features such as troughs and pits were excavated. Bronze Age activity in the form of pits and hearths was unearthed in the townland of Ballinaspig More while a Bronze Age roundhouse was excavated at Greenfield. Cremation pits were present within the townlands of Carrigrohane, Barnagore, Greenfield and Ballinaspig More.

Adjacent Structures: None

Pre-Excavation features
This site was identified as four irregular spreads of heat-shattered sandstone during archaeological testing in advance of the N22 Ballincollig Bypass. No cut features were uncovered.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed four irregular spreads of heat-shattered sandstone. Spread 1 had maximum dimensions of 0.75m by 0.75m. Spread 2 measured a maximum 5m in length by 1.2m in width. Spread 3 measured 1.75m in length by 0.40m in width and Spread 4 measured 5.3m in maximum length by 2.40m in maximum width. The spreads consisted of dark brown clay, heat-shattered sandstone and small amounts of charcoal. No finds were recovered and the site was not scientifically dated.

References
Pre-excavation features

This site was identified as a spread of heat-shattered sandstone during archaeological testing in advance of the N22 Ballincollig Bypass. No cut features were uncovered.

Excavation record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a spread of heat-shattered stone, a hearth and the shallow base of a possible trough.

Burnt Spread: This spread (F4) consisted of a loose, dark brown to black silty sand with frequent inclusions of burnt stone. The deposit was considerably darker to the west and measured c.4.5m in maximum length by 2.75m in maximum width. The deposit sat in a deliberate cut (F11) into the natural F2.

Hearth: Situated to the south of the burnt spread was an area of dark orange to red silty clay (F5). The deposit measured 1.40m in length by 0.80m in width and sat within an irregular cut c.0.10m deep. The sides of the cut sloped gradually and the base was uneven. There were small inclusions of charcoal in the deposit in addition to an area of oxidised clay and it would seem likely therefore that this feature represented a hearth area.
Pit: To the east of the hearth area F5, lay a shallow pit 0.05m in depth. It was bowl shaped and measured 1.5m in length by 0.7m in width. Its fill consisted of occasional burnt stone with charcoal inclusions.

Finds: None

Dating: None

Excavation Interpretation

The nature of the deposit would indicate that F4 is a burnt stone spread and that F5 is an associated hearth. Ploughing has interfered with the site considerably but not to the extent where a shallow pit (F6) could be considered to be the remains of the base of a trough. No finds or suitable samples were retained to assist in dating the site but it seems probable, based on comparable sites, that this was a pyrolithic site used for cooking in the Bronze Age.

References

Location: Townland: Ballinaspig More  Six inch map no: Sheet 73
Parish: St. Finbars  NGR: 163851, 069178
Barony: Cork  Altitude: 11m OD
County: Cork

Excavation Details: Project: N22 Ballincollig Bypass
Site Director: Donald Murphy
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services
Year: 2001

Physical Setting: The site was situated in a low-lying area close to a water-source.

Cultural Landscape: Within the townlands of Curraheen/Carrigrohane, a large cluster comprising three sites that have been interpreted as fulachtai fia and a further nine sites which contained related features such as troughs and pits were excavated. Bronze Age activity in the form of pits and hearths was unearthed in the townland of Ballinaspig More while a Bronze Age roundhouse was excavated at Greenfield. Cremation pits were present within the townlands of Carrigrohane, Barnagore, Greenfield and Ballinaspig More.

Adjacent Structures: None

Pre-excavation features

This site was identified as a spread of heat-shattered sandstone during archaeological testing in advance of the N22 Ballincollig Bypass. No cut features were uncovered.

Excavation record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a spread of heat-shattered stone and a shallow pit which may represent a trough. The spread (F12) measured in maximum width by 8m in length. The maximum depth of the deposit was 0.20m. It consisted of dark brown sandy soil containing burnt stone. The spread overlay a sub-rectangular pit (F14) which measured 2m by 2.5m with a depth of 0.4m. The base was flat and the sides were gently sloped except on the south side where the sides were almost vertical. The fill consisted of material similar to that in the fulacht spread F12. This pit may represent the base of a trough associated with the fulacht spread. No finds were recovered from the site and was not scientifically dated.

References

Location: Townland: Ballinaspig More       Six inch map no: Sheet 73
Parish: St. Finbars       NGR: 162560, 69150
Barony: Cork       Altitude: 11m OD
County: Cork

Excavation Details: Project: N22 Ballincollig Bypass
Site Director: Donald Murphy
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services
Year: 2001

Physical Setting: The site was located in low-lying pastureland roughly 400 m west of the River Twopot.

Cultural Landscape: Within the townland of Ballinaspig More, a large cluster of previously unrecorded fulachtai fia were excavated while a Bronze Age roundhouse was excavated at Greenfield. Cremation pits were present within the townlands of Carrigrohane, Barnagore, Greenfield and Ballinaspig More. Further pyro lithic activity was also revealed in these townlands.

Adjacent Structures: None

**Pre-excavation features**

This site was identified as a spread of heat-shattered sandstone during archaeological testing in advance of the N22 Ballincollig Bypass.

**Excavation record**

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a burnt mound, trough, hearth and a stake-hole fence dating to the Early Bronze Age.

Burnt Mound: This comprised a spread (10 m east–west by 7 m by 0.3 m deep) of burnt mound material that overlay nearly all the other archaeological features and deposits. The burnt mound consisted mainly of sandstone, with small quantities of limestone also present. A sample of charcoal is dated to the Early Bronze Age.

Trough: This was sealed beneath the burnt mound and measured 1.78 m east–west by 0.77 m by 0.7 m deep. The base of the trough was cut into a natural gravel layer suggesting that it would not have contained water naturally, therefore, some kind of lining within this pit would have been necessary to make it functional as a water container. Two early Bronze Age dates were retrieved from charcoal within the feature.
Hearth: While no formal hearth was noted, a well-worn track of trampled burnt stone led from the trough to a small area of oxidised soil to the north-west. This oxidisation may have been the remnants of a hearth.

Stake-Holes: A linear alignment of 16 stake-holes ran NE–SW along the periphery of the site. This alignment may have acted as a possible screening. A number of other stake-holes, as well as a pit (104), were present within this enclosed area. Charred alder from this pit, which was sealed beneath the burnt mound, was dated to Early Bronze Age.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: None

Dating:
Charcoal (unknown) from the burnt mound
C14 (Beta-178212) Unknown (2130–1870 BC)
Charcoal (alder) from the basal fill of trough
C14 (Beta-178214) Unknown (2130–1800 BC)
Charcoal (hazel) from the upper fill of trough
C14 (Beta-178212) Unknown (2190–1940 BC)
Charcoal (alder) from the fill of pit
C14 (Beta-178212) Unknown (2140–1880 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

The archaeological remains identified and excavated on the site suggest the presence of the levelled remains of a fulacht fia. The site comprised a trough, hearth, pit and a stake fence. The site was dated securely to the Early Bronze Age. The stake-fence, while possible serving as a windbreak for the hearth could equally have functioned as some formal boundary for the burnt mound. The presence of a trough, although unlined and associated formal hearth suggests the site functioned as a water-boiling location, possible for cooking.

References

Location: Townland: Ballinaspig More  Six inch map no: Sheet 73
Parish: St. Finbars  NGR: 162640, 069130
Barony: Cork  Altitude: 13M OD
County: Cork

Excavation Details: Project: N22 Ballincollig Bypass
Site Director: Ed Danaher
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services
Year: 2002

Physical Setting: The site was located in low-lying pastureland about 3.5 kilometres southeast of the village of Ballincollig and roughly 350m west of the Twopot River. A second burnt mound, Ballinaspig More 6, was present 50m to the west (see above).

Cultural Landscape: Within the townland of Ballinaspig More, a large cluster of previously unrecorded fulachtai fia were excavated while a Bronze Age roundhouse was excavated at Greenfield. Cremation pits were present within the townlands of Carrigrohane, Barnagore, Greenfield and Ballinaspig More. Further pyrolithic activity was also revealed in these townlands. An Early Bronze Age burnt mound was situated c.50m to the west.

Adjacent Structures: None

Pre-Excavation features
This site was identified as a mound of heat-shattered sandstone during archaeological testing in advance of the N22 Ballincollig Bypass.

Excavation Results
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed the remains of a multi-phased site representing at least two fulachtai fia. Three troughs, a hearth, a drainage feature and a series of stake-holes were all located underneath the burnt-mound material.

Phase 1
Burnt Mound: This deposit (C28) consisted of heat-shattered sandstone and brownish-black silty clay mixed with frequent amounts of charcoal. It covered a maximum area of thirty square metres and had a maximum depth of 0.14m. The spread sealed a number of stake-holes and post-holes which seemed to be contemporary with the mound material C28. The spread did not seal the trough C81. A second phase of mound accumulation was noted by the presence of a thin layer of silt over the spread which formed part of the western walls of troughs 2 and 3.
Trough 1: This trough (C81) was located to the south-east of the site and consisted of a sub-oval pit measuring 1.75m in length by 1.15m in width. It was 0.73m deep and cut into the predominant subsoil. According to Danaher this feature did not appear to be infilled with burnt mound material when the site was abandoned. Instead, the trough was left to silt up naturally (Danaher 2004). When full, this feature may have been able to hold in excess of 1,400 litres of water. A possible post-hole for a split timber plank was cut through the base within this quadrant of the trough. It would appear that this feature would have held water naturally, as was evident during spells of rain during the excavation when all troughs became efficient water containers, particularly troughs C32 and C40. No tangible evidence for a waterproof lining was evident from the excavation of this feature with the post-hole being the only intimation for such a structure.

Stake and post-holes: Fourteen stake-holes and one post-hole were associated with this phase of activity. All were sealed by burnt mound material and were situated to the west of the trough C81. Although no clear pattern could be discerned, the majority of the stake-holes were aligned in a north-westerly direction and may have formed a possible screen/windbreak (Danaher 2004).

Intermediate Phase

Site Clearance: Excavation revealed the presence of a possible episode of field clearance prior to the second phase of fulacht fia activity on the site. This was evident by the presence of a lens of charcoal and pinkish sandy clay soil, C68 and C69, above the natural gravel layer C66 and below C63 (a substratum into which troughs C32 and C40 were cut). Charcoal from this layer was identified as holly and prunus and dated to 1910–1700BC, post-dating the earliest fulacht by roughly eight centuries and predating the second by less than four.

Phase 2

Artificial platform: The second and third phases of activity in the stratigraphic sequence appeared to have begun with the burnt-mound derived from Fulacht 1 being levelled and spread (C28) over a thirty square metre area. This was followed by an accumulation of silt (C84) and then by the deposition of C27. Both C27 and C28 were utilised to construct the western wall of the secondary trough. C27 appeared to have functioned as a platform into which a series of postholes and stake-holes were cut. Prior to the construction of the second fulacht, the site would have existed as an area of higher ground to the east with a steeply sloping side. The formation of Fulacht 2 altered this natural undulating feature to facilitate the construction of Trough 2. The steeply-sloping eastern side was cut into, becoming near vertical and forming the eastern wall of this trough. The subsoil derived from this event was used to raise the levels of the western side, thus creating an artificial platform (Danaher 2004).

Trough 2: The platform (C27) described above formed the eastern portion of this trough (C32) which was sub-rectangular in shape and truncated on its southern side by trough 3 (C40). It measured 1.9m in length corresponding stake-holes
positioned to the west imply that a canopy/tent covered C32. The trough was cut into impermeable clay and was able to hold water naturally without the need of a lining. The stake-holes present on a roughly N/S alignment to the east of this feature and the

Hearth: A hearth (C71) was revealed above the north end of the trough C32. It consisted of a semicircular arc of stones set into the boulder along its northern edge with the open end facing south towards C32. It covered an area of just over one square metre. The underlying subsoil was badly scorched while the stones showed signs of being fire-affected.

Burnt Mound: It was possible to differentiate from a number of cut features, at least in part, the material associated with this *fulacht* as opposed to that produced by *Fulacht* 3. However, it was much more difficult to accurately estimate the overall quantities of this material (secondary refuse) produced by each of these *fulachtia fia* as some may have become integrated with each other as a result of subsequent ploughing. Danaher suggests that trough 2 (C32) and hearth (C71) were abandoned at the same time with the associated burnt stone overlaying these features. C78 was a burnt mound deposit noted to the west of trough 2. This context was present along the entire western axis of C32 and was one of the primary deposits within this trough. It can, therefore, be determined that Trough 3 was cut through this deposit, demonstrating that C78 was *in situ* prior to the formation of C40 (Trough 3) and that this trough had been allowed to completely back-fill before Trough 3 was cut.

Phase 3:

Trough 3: The third trough (C40), which formed part of this sequence of events, was excavated to the south of Trough 2 in a similar alignment and was cut through the equivalent subsoils. This trough appeared to be contemporary with C21, a northeast–southwest aligned ditch which seemed to have functioned as a drain that carried water into the trough. The distinguishing aspect of this trough, however, was that its base was oxidised to a bright pink colour, suggesting that it had been subjected to intense heat. A series of stake-holes were positioned to the east and west of this feature and as with Trough 2, these may have formed a superstructure overlaying C40.

Channel: This feature (C21) was present to the south of trough C40 and was possibly used as a means of getting water into this trough.

Finds:

Artefacts: Possible whetstone

Ecofacts: None

Dating: Charcoal (birch) from the burnt mound (Beta-178218) 4080±40 (2860–2490 BC)
Charcoal (oak) from fill of trough 2 (C32) (Beta-178217) 3160±40 (1500–1380 BC)
Charcoal (hazel) form fill of trough 3 (C40)
Excavation Interpretation

The excavator suggested that the main function of these two Middle Bronze Age fulachtai fia appears to have been that of a bath or sauna. This interpretation is based upon the construction of the troughs and the evidence for associated superstructures, albeit light/temporary in nature. Hearth 071 was contemporary with Trough 2 and appears to have gone out of use at the same time. Trough 3, which partially cut the fills of the backfilled Trough 2, appeared to contain a hearth within the trough itself, suggesting that a method of heat production commonly used in sweat baths. Trough 3 may have been employed as a dry steam bath or a water trough, as suggested by the presence of the associated drainage feature (021). It is noteworthy that when Trough 2 went out of use and was backfilled, Trough 3 was created and the site reused as a sauna/bathing place.

While these interpretations are plausible, it is equally possible, based on similar evidence elsewhere that there was a significant change in the use of the technology during the second and third phases. This change involved a development from water-boiling to a dry heat. The in situ burning noted in the base of trough 2 may be evidence of a particular type of roasting oven commonly found at fulachtai fia. The third phase involved a return to a water-boiling function as evident from the water-channel.

References

Excavation Details:  Project:  ESB Substation Site (Rescue)
Site Director:  Elinor Larsson
Consultants:  Archaeological Technology Ltd.
Year:  2002

Physical Setting:  The site was situated in a low-lying, wet marshy area surrounded by low hills and was located in the corner of the field of the proposed substation.

Cultural Landscape:  There are no recorded prehistoric sites
Adjacent Structures:  None

Pre-Excavation features

This site was identified during the monitoring of topsoil stripping in advance of a proposed substation. The site was not identified prior to investigation due to its elongated shape and its location, being situated parallel to a field boundary. The low bank was capped with a thin layer of grass and soil with occasional gorse bushes.

Excavation Results

Summary of Features:  Excavation of the site revealed the remains of a substantial burnt mound spread, the partial remains of a stone-lined trough, a single pit and a series of stake-holes.

Burnt Mound:  The burnt mound extended over an area measuring 40m by 10.5 but only a portion measuring 6m by 15m was excavated. The maximum depth of the mound measured 0.5m and consisted of two main deposits. The upper material (F2) consisted of loosely compacted dark-brown sandy silt mixed with frequent heat-shattered sandstone and charcoal flecks. The lower deposit (F7) contained black soil with a high concentration of charcoal chunks and heat-shattered stone.

Trough:  The trough (F14), was not fully revealed as it lay beyond the limits of the excavation. The excavated portion measured 1.8m by 1.6m and was 0.4m deep. It was cut into the natural subsoil and was irregular in plan being dived into two sections by four vertical sandstone slabs. A large flat boulder partially covered the top of the southern edge of the trough. The four sandstone slabs (with the exception of the most northerly) rested directly on the bottom of the excavated trough. Two fills were noted in the trough. A
dark primary fill consisting of burnt mound material and another fill containing material similar to F2.

Stake-Holes: Seven stake-holes were revealed immediately to the east of the trough and formed a rough sem-circle which lay open to F14. Larsson states that the nature of their fills suggest the stake-holes were associated with the initial stage of activity on site and possible represent a table or hanging structure (Larsson 2003).

Pit: Pit F21 was situated 7.5m north-east of the trough and was sub-circular in plan. It measured 1.6m by 1.2m and was 0.45m deep with vertical sides and a flat base. The fills consisted of heat-shattered stone and grey silty clay.

Finds: None

Dating: The site is not scientifically dated

**Excavation Interpretation**

Excavation of the site revealed a disturbed burnt mound that was not fully exposed during the investigation. Only a portion of the trough was revealed but it displayed evidence of a stone lining, a common lining technique during the Late Bronze Age in Ireland. Interestingly, the trough also showed evidence of being internally divided by a series of upright stones. These compartments may have separated the hot stones from potential food produce being cooked in the trough.

**References**


Plate 10.26 Burnt stone spread and stone-lined, divided trough at Aughinda, Co. Cork
Excavation Details:

**Project:** N8 Rathcormac-Fermoy Bypass

**Site Director:** Annette Quinn

**Consultants:** Archaeological Consultancy Services

**Year:** 2003

**Physical Setting:**

The site was located in an area of flat pasture and prior to investigation, was used for cattle grazing. The topography in this region can be characterised by a series of east west ridgelines with river corridors and agricultural plains in the valleys. The major towns and smaller settlements are predominately located within the valleys and often at important river crossings.

**Cultural Landscape:**

During archaeological investigations of N8 Rathcormac-Fermoy Bypass route, ten fulachtai fia sites were identified which varied from small isolated burnt mound spreads to multiple burnt spreads with associated activity. Bronze Age settlement evidence include those uncovered at Ballybrowney Lower and Killydonoghoe. All of these sites were unrecorded sites with no surface expression prior to topsoil stripping.

**Adjacent Structures:** None

**Pre-excavation features**

This site at Ballynahina was identified as a spread of heat-shattered stone during testing in advance of the N8 Rathcormac-Fermoy Bypass. There were no visible surface traces of the site prior to investigation.

**Excavation record**

**Summary of Features:** Resolution of the site revealed a levelled mound of charcoal and heat-shattered stone, three troughs and associated drainage features as well as a number of irregular pits.

**Burnt Mound:** The burnt mound survived as a spread of loose black sandy silt with 60% heat-shattered stone with frequent charcoal flecks included. It measured 12m N/S by 9m E/W and had a maximum thickness of 0.2m.

**Trough 1:** This trough (F13) was cut into natural clays and was located to the west of trough F5. It was square to rectangular in plan with rounded corners, gently sloping sides and a flat base. It measured 2.9m N/S by 3.4m E/W and was 0.6m in depth. There was no evidence to suggest that this trough was lined.
with wood or stone, however the clay would have facilitated the natural retention of water (Quinn 2005)

Trough 2: The second trough on site (F9) was located to the east of F13. It was sub rectangular in plan with rounded corners, vertical sides and a flat base. Two large flat stones were uncovered resting upright the south-east and north-west edges indicating that this trough was possibly stone lined. The trough measured 3m E/W by 1.7m N/S and was 0.7m deep.

Trough 3: The third trough identified on site (F5) was located to the north-east of F9. A narrow band of re-deposited clay divided the two troughs and Quinn suggests that this may have prevented water flowing from one to the other (Quinn 2005). The trough was irregular in plan with ill defined corners and undulating edges and base. The western edge of the trough was more defined with vertical sides and flat base. It measured 4.3m NW/SE by 1.2m W/E by 0.53m in depth. There was no evidence to suggest the trough was lined.

Water Channels: Several deliberately cut channels were evident on site (F17, F23 and F30). These channels were associated with troughs F13 and F9 with one channel (F17) connecting the two troughs while the others may have fed water out of the troughs.

Pits: Seven pits were identified on site, all surrounding the troughs. The majority of the pits were irregular in plan with undulating sides and bases. The pits were mainly filled with compact grey/black sandy silt with 60% heat-shattered stone. Pit F11 measured 2.4m by 1m and was 0.32m deep. Pit F19 was irregular in plan and measured 1.76m by 0.75m and was 0.4m deep. Pit F41 was located to the south-east of F19 and was oval in plan. It measured 0.6m by 0.4m and was 0.15m deep. F43 was oval in plan and measured 0.95m by 0.5m and was 0.2m deep. F32 was oblong in shape and located to the east of trough F5. It measured 2m by 1m and was 0.21m deep. Pit F15 was irregular in plan and measured 2.4m by 0.9m and was 0.35m deep. F26 had dimensions of 3.5m by 2.2m and was 0.47m deep. It was located to the south of the three troughs. F28 was oval in shape with a flat base and measured 1.14m by 1.1m and was 0.27m deep.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: No animal or human bone was recovered from the site however charcoal recovered from the four samples was identified as oak, alder and blackthorn.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal from basal fill of trough 1 (F13) (Beta-201072) 2610±80 BP (900–500 BC) (Beta-201072) 2590±80 BP (460–430 BC) Charcoal from basal fill of trough 2 (F9)
Excavation Interpretation

Excavation of the site revealed a levelled burnt mound, three troughs and a number of pits. The connected nature of the troughs suggests a complex water-management system at the site during the Late Bronze Age. One water-cannel connected two troughs while another functioned as an overflow drain or emptying feature. Water was obviously important in the activities carried out at the site and it can be suggested that these activities involved water-boiling processes. The presence of multiple troughs at Ballynahina may suggest that the site was used on numerous occasions over a relatively long period of time or that it catered for a large group of people or community. It is not clear, however, if one trough replaced the other or if they were in use simultaneously as there was no direct stratigraphic relationship between the cuts. See Chapter 5 for discussion on water channels.

References

Location: Townland: Corrin  Six inch map no: Sheet 35
Parish: Castlelyons  NGR: 181355, 095687
Barony: Barrymore  Altitude: 70m OD
County: Cork

Excavation Details: Project: N8 Rathcormac-Fermoy Bypass
Site Director: Aidan O’Connell
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services
Excavation year: 2003

Physical Setting: The site in question is located c.150m east of Coolcarron Hillfort, on well drained pasturland on the western edge of Ballyoran Bog.

Cultural Landscape: During archaeological investigations of N8 Rathcormac-Fermoy Bypass route, ten fulachtaí fia sites were identified which varied from small isolated burnt mound spreads to multiple burnt spreads with associated activity. Bronze Age settlement evidence include those uncovered at Ballybrowney Lower and Killydonoghoe. All of these sites were unrecorded sites with no surface expression prior to topsoil stripping. This particular site lies in the shadow of a large, potential Late Bronze Age hillfort, the interior of which is dominated by a large cairn

Adjacent Structures: None

Pre-excavation features
This site at Corrin was identified as several spreads of heat-shattered stone during testing in advance of the N8 Rathcormac-Fermoy Bypass. There were no visible surface traces of the site prior to investigation.

Excavation record

Summary of Features: Resolution of the site revealed a levelled mound of charcoal and heat-shattered stone, a pit and a possible trough with several associated stake-holes.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound material (C6) consisted of a thin spread of brown/black charcoal enriched silty clay with frequent heat-shattered stone. It measured 17m N/S by 8m E/W and was 0.5m deep. There were no post-medieval finds from the spread leading O’Connell (2006) to suggest that the mound was levelled in antiquity.

Trough: The trough (C9) was sub-rectangular in plan with rounded corners and measured 2.66m by 1.06m in width and was 0.5m in depth. The south end of the trough was stepped and there was a gradual brake of slope on all sides
leading to a flat base. The trough was filled with a compact charcoal enriched silty clay with frequent inclusions of heat-shattered stone.

Stake-Holes: Five stake-holes were identified on site in close proximity to the trough C9. Little pattern can be discerned from the stake-holes therefore their function remains unclear.

Pit: This pit (C4) was kidney-shaped and measured 1.04m E/W by 0.5m N/S and was 0.17m deep. There was a sharp break of slope at the top of this cut, It led to straight sides and a rounded base. It was located at a distance of 1.5m southwest of the trough and was filled with a compact charcoal enriched silty clay with frequent inclusions of heat-shattered stone. Two flint flakes were recovered from this fill and interpreted and waste material from flint working.

Finds:

Artefacts: Two flint flakes were recovered from the fill of pit C4. One was interpreted as a possible scraper while the other may have been a piece of debitage from flint working.

Ecofacts: No animal or human bone was recovered from the site however charcoal form the spread was identified as oak, ash, blackthorn and holly.

Dating: Modern date obtained. Contaminated sample

Excavation Interpretation

Archaeological excavation at Corrin 4 revealed a possible ploughed-out *fulacht fia*. The spread of burnt mound material (C6) was analysed and has produced a modern date. It should noted that this spread was ploughed out by modern agricultural activity which may have contaminated the sample. A prehistoric date for the site should therefore not be ruled out. A possible prehistoric date is supported by the recovery of worked flint form the site. The sub-rectangular pit identified during excavation possibly functioned as a boiling trough used to heat water for cooking.

References

Excavation Details:  
Project: N8 Rathcormac-Fermoy Bypass  
Site Director: Aidan O’Connell  
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services  
Year: 2003

Physical Setting: The site in question is located c. 150m east of Coolcarron Hillfort, on well drained pasturland on the western edge of Ballyoran Bog.

Cultural Landscape: During archaeological investigations of N8 Rathcormac-Fermoy Bypass route, ten fulachtai fia sites were identified which varied from small isolated burnt mound spreads to multiple burnt spreads with associated activity. Bronze Age settlement evidence include those uncovered at Ballybrowney Lower and Killydonoghoe. All of these sites were unrecorded sites with no surface expression prior to topsoil stripping. This particular site lies in the shadow of a large, potential Late Bronze Age hillfort, the interior of which is dominated by a large cairn.

Adjacent Structures: None

Pre-excavation features

This site at Corrin was identified a spread of heat-shattered stone during testing in advance of the N8 Rathcormac-Fermoy Bypass. There were no visible surface traces of the site prior to investigation. The site was located in ground that had been reclaimed through the introduction of topsoil from the higher north eastern part of the field. Numerous drains of recent origin were noted in this part of the field. The fulacht fia had been partially disturbed through agricultural activity.

Excavation record

Summary of Features: Resolution of the site revealed two spreads of charcoal and heat-shattered stone and three troughs.

Burnt Spread 1: This spread of burnt mound material (C3) consisted of loosely compacted charcoal enriched soil in a matrix of heat-shattered sandstone. The spread measured 9.1m N/S by 6m E/W and was 0.35m deep.

Trough 1: This trough (C6) was sub-rectangular in plane with rounded corners, straight sides and a flat base. It measured 1.7m by 1.2m and was 0.3m deep. The fill of the trough consisted of 80% heat-shattered sandstone while the remaining 20% contained charcoal enriched silty clay.
Burnt Spread 2: This spread of burnt mound material (C4) consisted of loosely compacted charcoal enriched soil in a matrix of heat-shattered sandstone and was located 5m north of the first spread (C3). The deposit measured 7.65m N/S by 4.2m E/W and was 0.25m thick.

Trough 2: This trough (C11) was circular in shape and had a sharp break of slope with concave sides and a rounded base. It measured 1.63m in diameter and was 0.45m deep. A compact grey clay uncovered at the base and sides of the trough was interpreted as a possible clay lining (O’ Connell, 2005). The fill of the trough consisted of 80% heat-shattered sandstone while the remaining 20% contained charcoal enriched silty clay.

Trough 3: The second trough (C14) associated with this spread was sub-rectangular in plan with rounded corners. The brake of slope was quite gradual leading to a flat base. The trough measured 1.32 by 1.5m and was 0.36m deep. It was sealed by the burnt spread and contained a fill similar to the previous troughs C6 and C11.

Finds:

Artefacts: Three flint flakes were recovered. One piece of debitage was identified in the fill of one of the troughs. Another piece was identified as a possible arrowhead tip while the other was another waste piece from flint working.

Ecofacts: No animal or human bone was recovered from the site however charcoal from the troughs was identified alder, hazel, ash and oak.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating:
Charcoal from fill of trough 1 (C6) (Beta-201102) 3810±80 (2480−1970 BC)
Charcoal from the fill of trough 2 (C11) (Beta-201103) 3850±80 (2550−2040 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

Excavation of the site revealed a disturbed burnt mound consisting of two spread deposits of burnt stone associated with the use a pyrolithic technology. Three distinctive troughs were identified on the site suggesting that this technology involved boiling water through the immersion of hot stones. The site was dated to the Chacolithic/Early Bronze Age period in Ireland when the use of the technology was particularly widespread (see Chapter 6). The recovery of a potential arrowhead tip would confirm an early prehistoric date for the site.

References

Excavation Details: Project: N8 Rathcormac-Fermoy Bypass
Site Director: Deirdre Murphy
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services
Year: 2003

Physical Setting: The topography in this region can be characterised by a series of east west ridgelines with river corridors and agricultural plains in the valleys. The major towns and smaller settlements are predominately located within the valleys and often at important river crossings. The site was located in wet marshy pastureland south of the river Blackwater with the town of Fermoy to the west.

Cultural Landscape: During archaeological investigations of N8 Rathcormac-Fermoy Bypass route, ten fulachtai fia sites were identified which varied from small isolated burnt mound spreads to multiple burnt spreads with associated activity. Bronze Age settlement evidence include those uncovered at Ballybrowney Lower and Killydonoghoe. All of these sites were unrecorded sites with no surface expression prior to topsoil stripping. This particular site lies in the shadow of a large, potential Late Bronze Age hillfort, the interior of which is dominated by a large cairn.

Adjacent Structures: None

Pre-excavation features

This site at Fermoy was identified a spread of heat-shattered stone during testing in advance of the N8 Rathcormac-Fermoy Bypass. There were no visible surface traces of the site prior to investigation.

Excavation Results

Summary of Features: Resolution of the site revealed several spreads of heat-shattered stone and a trough which seemed to have been re-lined. Several stake-holes were also identified.

Burnt Spreads: Eight small burnt stone spreads were identified on the site (C003-C010), representing the levelled and dispersed remains of a burnt mound. These deposits were each no more than 3m in length except for C010 which measured 6m by 3m with a depth of 0.14. Each deposit consisted of black-charcoal enriched silty clay and heat-shattered stone.
Trough: The trough (C013) was rectangular in shape with rounded corners, vertical sides and a flat base. It measured 2m in length by 1.5m and was 0.4m deep. The fill of the trough consisted of brownish black silty clay with occasional charcoal flecks and frequent amounts of burnt sandstone. The burnt remains of a timber lining was uncovered within the trough, concentrated mainly at the sides. The charcoal from this deposit was dated to 1190–800 BC. Four stake-holes were noted at the corners of the trough which were sealed by the burnt remains of the timber lining and the excavator suggests that this may be evidence of re-lining event.

Finds: None

Dating: Charcoal (oak) from trough lining (Beta-201096) 2780±90 (1190–800 BC) Charcoal (oak) from oval spread (C004) (Beta-201095) 2520±70 (820–410 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

From an analysis of the stratigraphy of this site, we can form the conclusion that this was the site of a fulacht fia. A trough was constructed at this site. It originally had four stakes at its base, representing the initial lining of the trough. Presumably these stakes supported the timber lining at the sides of the trough. However, the trough was later relined with timber planks at the base and when excavated this lining sealed the timber stakes.

References

Murphy, D. 2006. *Archaeological excavations at Fermoy 1, Co. Cork*. Unpublished excavation report prepared by Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd.

Plate 10.27 Burnt stone spread and trough pit with internal corner supports at Fermoy 1, Co. Cork
The topography in this region can be characterised by a series of east west ridgelines with river corridors and agricultural plains in the valleys. The major towns and smaller settlements are predominately located within the valleys and often at important river crossings. The site was located at the summit of a hill in close proximity to a natural spring used as a modern well.

During archaeological investigations of N8 Rathcormac-Fermoy Bypass route, ten fulachtaí fia sites were identified which varied from small isolated burnt mound spreads to multiple burnt spreads with associated activity. Bronze Age settlement evidence include those uncovered at Ballybrowney Lower and Killydonoghoe. All of these sites were unrecorded sites with no surface expression prior to topsoil stripping.

A Neolithic pit, a stone lined corn drying kiln, a cremation pit, a pit containing medieval pottery and a rotary quern fragment, a hoard of struck flint pebble cores and various linear features.

This site at Fermoy was identified during phase one testing in advance of the N8 Rathcormac-Fermoy Bypass as seventeen separate features including spreads of heat-shattered stone, hearths, pits and post-holes.

Resolution of the site revealed three fulachtaí fia associated with troughs, pits and postholes. In addition a Neolithic pit, a stone lined corn drying kiln, a cremation pit, a pit containing medieval pottery and a rotary quern fragment, a hoard of struck flint pebble cores and assorted stake-holes, pits and linear features were identified.

This pit (C169) was located north-west of the three fulachtaí fia. It was circular in plan with vertical sides and a flat base. The pit measured 1.2m
E/W by 1.07 N/S and was 0.36m deep. The fill consisted of loose dark brown sandy silt with frequent burnt stone and charcoal inclusions.

**Site B**

**Burnt Mound:**
This mound material (C23) was associated with the first *fulacht fia* on site and consisted of compacted black charcoal enriched silty clay with frequent heat shattered burnt stone. The burnt stone comprised *circa* 75–80% of the overall deposit and the charcoal enriched clay comprised the remainder. There were frequent inclusions of charcoal flecks and chunks contained within the fill. The presence of post medieval pottery within the mound material (C23) is an indication that the original burnt mound was greatly disturbed in the past. The dimensions of the spread were 8m east–west by 7.1m north–south by 0.32m maximum depth.

**Trough 1:**
This primary trough (C137) was located directly north of the well that was situated at the summit of the hill. It was sub-rectangular in plan with straight sides and an uneven base. The trough measured 2.03m N/S by 1.4m E/W and was 0.67m deep. A clay lining was noted at the base and sides of the pit which consisted of a compact light grey mastic gley. The primary fill of the trough contained heat-shattered stone with charcoal inclusions.

**Pit/Trough 2:**
This pit (C132) cut the primary trough C137 and was sub-circular in plan. It measured 1.7m N/S by 1.1m E/W and was 0.26m deep. The fill consisted of dark brown silty clay with charcoal inclusions. There was no burnt stone recorded in the fill.

**Pit/Trough 3:**
This pit (C135) cut the previous trough/pit C132 and is the last in the sequence related to the primary trough C137. It was sub-oval in plan and measured 2m N/S by 0.69m E/W with a depth of 0.31m. The fill consisted of dark brown silty clay with charcoal inclusions.

**Pits/Post-holes:**
In addition of 40 small pits/postholes cut the boulder clay in this area. There were no discernible spatial patterns to suggest the presence of a structure or structures.

**Site C**

**Burnt Mound:**
This mound material was associated with the second *fulacht fia* on site. This (C24) consisted of a loosely compacted black charcoal enriched silty clay with frequent heat shattered burnt stone. The burnt stone comprised *circa* 80% of the overall deposit and the charcoal enriched clay comprised the remainder. It measured 14m by 10m and was 0.4m in depth.

**Trough 1:**
This trough (C190) was sub-circular in plan and had a diameter of 1.04m with a depth of 0.33m. The upper portion of this pit was truncated by another (C160). It was located 1.1m west of the well located at the summit of the hill and was sealed by the mound material C24. The fill of the trough consisted of loose mid brown sandy silt with charcoal flecking. This fill would seem to represent a silted layer at the base of the trough that would have formed in advance of the secondary cut (C160). It would therefore appear that the primary trough (190) was out of use for some time before the secondary trough (C160) cut it (O’Connell 2006).

**Trough 2:**
This later trough (C160) cut the primary trough on site (C190). It was sub-circular in plan with steep rounded sides and a flat base. The trough
measured 2.04m N/S by 1.54m E/W and was 0.25m deep. The fill of this pit consisted of dark gley/black silty clay in a mix of charcoal and burnt stone.

Pits: There were four further pits associated with this site (C191, 120, 121 and 129). Pit (191) was sub-circular and measured 0.8m E/W by 0.62m N/S and was 0.21m deep. It seems probable that the pit (C191) was constructed at a time when the underlying pit (cut C160, fill C159) had gone out of use. This pit (C120) was oval in plan with dimensions of 1.13m E/W by 1.01m N/S by 0.13m deep. It (C120) was located at a distance of 0.38m west of the pit (C121) and 1.4m southwest of the well. Pit (C21) was sub-oval in plan and had dimensions of 1.96m N/S by 0.7m NW/SE by 0.45m deep. Pit C129 was similar in form to C191. It was circular and measured 0.54 in diameter by 0.25m deep. A clay lining was noted in this pit and the fill consisted of black silty clay with heat-shattered stone.

Site D

Burnt Mound: This mound material (C25) was associated with the third fulacht fia on site and consisted of a loosely compacted black charcoal enriched silty clay with frequent heat shattered burnt stone. The burnt stone comprised circa 75–80% of the overall deposit and the charcoal enriched clay comprised the remainder. It measured 6.55m N/S by 4.55m E/W and was 0.18m in thickness.

Trough 1: This trough (C49) was sub-rectangular in shape steep, slightly rounded sides and a flat base. It measured 2.52m E/W by 2.42m N/S and was sealed by the associated spread C25. It was located 3.2 m south-east of another trough C179. To the east of the trough, three stake-holes were uncovered aligned in a linear arrangement north-south. The fill of the trough consisted of heat-shattered stone, charcoal and a black carbonised silty clay. At the eastern side of the trough, a large flat stone was recorded which O’Connell (2006) states is not associated with activities carried out at the site.

Trough 2: This trough (C179) was located 3m north-west of the C49. It was rectangular in plan with rounded corners, steep sides and a flat base. It measured 1.93m E/W by 0.96m N/S and was 0.3m deep. The fill consisted of loose black silty clay with frequent burnt stone and charcoal inclusions. Three post-holes were also recorded to the north of this trough.

Flint Hoard: Cut of pit (C22). This was a small oval pit that was located close to the northern limit of the trench (2). It (C22) was oval in plan with dimensions of 0.2m north–south by 0.15m east–west by 0.1m deep. There was a sharp break of slope at the top of the cut that led to straight sides and an uneven base. There was one fill contained within the cut that contained 65 pieces if flint debitage. It would seem that the pit was created specifically and deliberately to hold the flint pieces. A Bronze Age date is suggested for this hoard on the basis of the location of the three burnt mounds in the same trench and the recovery of a similar artefact from burnt mound 1.

Finds:

Artefacts: Flint hoard consisting of 65 pieces of flint debitage located c 25m to the north-east of fulacht fia 1. A struck flint pebble was also uncovered from the mound material of fulacht fia 1.

Dating: Absolute dating: Charcoal from Neolithic pit
**Excavation Interpretation**

The *fulachtáí fia* at Fermoy 2 have all been dated to the Bronze Age period. The first site was located north of the well. There were three successive sub-rectangular inter-cutting troughs associated with this mound. The main fill (C136) of the earliest trough (C137) has been dated to the Chalcolithic. In excess of 40 additional small pits cut the natural boulder clay in this area. There were no discernible spatial patterns to suggest the presence of a structure or structures. All these features were covered by the burnt mound material. The site probably functioned as an intensive water-boiling areas used for cooking. *Fulacht fia 2* was located at the southwest of the well. Two successive circular troughs were recorded in association with this burnt mound, the fill of one is dated to the Early Bronze Age. Four additional pits were associated with this burnt mound. All of these features were covered by the burnt mound material (C24) which extended 13 m east-west by 13 m north-south by 0.34 m deep. *Fulacht fia 3* was located at the northeast of the well. Two sub-rectangular troughs (C49 and C179) were associated with this mound. Both of these troughs were associated with small post holes and stake-holes which may have supported wind-breaks or other small structures associated with the operation of the troughs. The fill (C50) of one of these troughs has been dated to the Middle Bronze Age. The troughs and postholes were covered by burnt mound material.

**References**

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<td>Site Director: Tara O’Neill</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year:</td>
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| Physical Setting: | Although situated on a ridge, the site is located within flat ground in the valley between the Fermoy townland and the Strawhall townland. The soft reed occupied ground close to the site is indicative of lying water and demonstrates that this area is occasionally prone to flooding. |

| Cultural Landscape: | During archaeological investigations of N8 Rathcormac-Fermoy Bypass route, ten *fulacht fia* sites were identified which varied from small isolated burnt mound spreads to multiple burnt spreads with associated activity. Bronze Age settlement evidence include those uncovered at Ballybrowney Lower and Killydonoghoe. All of these sites were unrecorded sites with no surface expression prior to topsoil stripping. |

| Adjacent Structures: | None |

**Pre-excavation features**

This site at Fermoy was identified during phase one testing in advance of the N8 Rathcormac-Fermoy Bypass. This site had been visible on the ground surface as a marshy uncultivated stony area prior to assessment.

**Excavation record**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary of Features:</th>
<th>Resolution of the site revealed the remains of a <em>fulacht fia</em> consisting of a spread of heat-shattered stone, a hearth, wood-lined trough and two pits.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Burnt Spread:</td>
<td>The burnt spread (F3) of heat-shattered stone was sub-circular in shape and consisted of a compact dark brown/black rich sandy silt containing 40% fire-cracked stone. The stone was composed of 60% limestone, 30% sandstone and 10% mudstone. It measured 10m by 12m and was 0.25m in thickness. The spread sealed all features on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearth:</td>
<td>The hearth (F7) was located at the north-east end of the trough F4. It consisted of several stone setting into which a deposit had built up. This consisted of moderately compact dark-brown/black silty sand resting on large stone slabs which measured 0.30–0.40m across and were 0.10m thick.</td>
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Some smaller sub-angular stones were also present. This feature measured 1.40 by 0.90m.

Trough: The trough (F4) was directly associated with the hearth F7. It was sub-rectangular in shape and lined with five oak planks. The trough pit measured 1.6m by 2.5m and reached a depth of 0.37m. Two large timbers lined the base of the trough with one lining the north-east side placed vertically along the edge. Another was placed similarly on the south-western side of the trough. The final panel was discovered on the south-eastern edge. The trough contained three different deposits which consisted of a peat layer, a deposit of brown/black silty sand with heat-shattered stone in the middle fill and a final deposit of dark grey/brown loam with rare charcoal inclusions.

Pits: Two pits containing burnt mound material were also uncovered. The pits represented different phases of use. The first pit (F5) was circular in shape and measured 1.13m in diameter and was 0.17m in depth. The later pit (F6) was oval in shape and measured 3m by 2.05m and was 0.3m.

Finds: None

Dating: Charcoal (oak and alder) from the spread F3 (Beta-201104) 2760±90 (1030–810 BC) Charcoal (willow) from the pit F5 (Beta-201105) 2660±40 (830–780 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

The composition of the various features on this site suggests that this was a typical burnt mound that displayed elements of re-use. The form of the site, complete with a formal stone-built hearth and plank-lined trough is typical of those found in Late Bronze Age contexts in Ireland (see Chapter 9). The site can be interpreted as a pyrolithic water-boiling site, possible used for cooking.

References

Physically, the Kilbrien area is located on a gentle southeast-facing slope overlooking the Bride valley. Much of the land in the area is of a somewhat wet and boggy nature and has required drainage to bring it to full productivity. The field was in rough pasture at the time of excavation.

Cultural Landscape: During archaeological investigations of N8 Rathcormac-Fermoy Bypass route, ten fulachtai fia sites were identified which varied from small isolated burnt mound spreads to multiple burnt spreads with associated activity. Bronze Age settlement evidence include those uncovered at Ballybrowney Lower and Killydonoghoe. All of these sites were unrecorded sites with no surface expression prior to topsoil stripping.

Adjacent Structures: None

Pre-excavation features

This site at Kilbrien was identified during phase one testing in advance of the N8 Rathcormac-Fermoy Bypass. No visible surface trace of site prior to investigation.

Excavation record

Summary of Features: Resolution of the site revealed the remains of a trough, two post-holes and pit. The trough (C3) was oval in plan and measured 1.6m by 1.24m and was 0.54m deep. Its fill consisted of black silty clay containing heat-shattered stone and some charcoal. Some scorching was noted around the lower edges of the pit suggesting in situ burning. This pit (C5) was located 4m north of the trough C3 and was oval in plan. It measured 0.86m by 0.66m and was 0.55m deep. It was filled with black silty clay with some burnt stone and charcoal. Single piece of flint débitage recovered from stake-hole.

Dating: Charcoal from upper fill of trough C3 (Beta-201053) 3370±80 (1760-1420 BC)

References

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**Excavation Details:**
- **Project:** N8 Rathcormac-Fermoy Bypass
- **Site Director:** Deirdre Murphy
- **Consultants:** Archaeological Consultancy Services
- **Year:** 2003

**Physical Setting:**
The townland is located between Ballybrowney Lower and Kilbrien townlands and is to the west of the village of Rathcormac. The topography in this region can be characterised by a series of east west ridgelines with river corridors and agricultural plains in the valleys. The site at Lisnagar Demesne 2 is serviced by a stream at the north separating it from Lisnagar Demesne 3. The field consisted of flat pastureland.

**Cultural Landscape:**
During archaeological investigations of N8 Rathcormac-Fermoy Bypass route, ten *fulachtai fiata* sites were identified which varied from small isolated burnt mound spreads to multiple burnt spreads with associated activity. Bronze Age settlement evidence include those uncovered at Ballybrowney Lower and Killydonoghoe. All of these sites were unrecorded sites with no surface expression prior to topsoil stripping.

**Adjacent Structures:**
None

**Pre-Excavation features**

This site at Lisnagar Demesne was identified during phase one testing in advance of the N8 Rathcormac-Fermoy Bypass. The disturbed remains of a *fulachtai fiata* was uncovered. No surface trace of the site existed prior to investigation.

**Excavation Results**

**Summary of Features:**
Resolution of the site revealed spreads of heat-shattered stone, a trough and a group of stake-holes that represent the remains of a later structure possible associated with site C 41 excavated a short distance away.

**Burnt Spreads:**
South of the trough (C014) were the remains of three burnt stone spreads (C004, C007 and C010). The first spread (C04) measured 2.5m by 1.5m and had a depth of 0.1m. It consisted of a loose brown/black silty clay with burnt stone and charcoal inclusions. To the north of this spread lay C007 which measured 5m by 1m and was 0.05m in thickness. It consisted of a loose brown/black silty clay with burnt stone and charcoal inclusions. C010 was a loose dark brown-black silty clay spread with occasional charcoal flecks and
moderate small-medium stones which measured 4m by 1.5m and was 0.1m in depth.

Trough: The trough (C014) was oval in shape with sloping sides and a flat base. It measured 2m by 1.8m and was 0.7m in depth. The trough was filled with a basal deposit of compact grey clay containing small angular stones and charcoal. A loose stone dump deposit was also noted in the fill of the trough mixed with brown silty clay.

Pit 1: This pit (C073) was linear in shape with curved corners to the east. It measured 2.2m by 0.5m and was 0.5m in depth. It had vertical sides and a flat base and was filled with dark brown silty clay containing frequent burnt stone and occasional charcoal. Four stake-holes were uncovered immediately east of the pit.

Pit 2: Pit (C016) was rectangular in shape with vertical sides and an uneven base. It measured 1m by 0.5m and had a maximum depth of 0.35m. It was filled with brown/black silty clay with a moderate amount of broken burnt stone.

Structure: To the east of the site, the remains of a small structure was excavated which returned a Late Bronze Age date. This is contemporary with the fulacht fia CO53, excavated a short distance away. For this reason, the structure will be discussed below in relation to this site.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (alder) from fill of the trough C014 (Beta-201091) 3490±60 (1950−1670 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

Excavation of the site revealed three small deposits of heat-shattered stone, a single trough and two pits. The presence of heat-shattered stone and deposits of charcoal indicate that the site functioned as a pyrolithic water-boiling area for a short period before being abandoned. The immediate area was returned to during the Late Bronze Age for further pyrolithic activity. This is evident from the structure excavated on site (see below) which was dated to this period.

References

Location: Lisnagar Demesne  
Parish: Rathcormac  
Barony: Barrymore  
County: Cork

Excavation Details: Project: N8 Rathcormac-Fermoy Bypass  
Site Director: Deirdre Murphy  
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services  
Year: 2003

Physical Setting: The site at Lisnagar Demesne 3 is serviced by a stream at the south separating it from Lisnagar Demesne 1. The field consists of flat tillage and the site is located near the southern end of the field in what was formerly marshy ground.

Cultural Landscape: During archaeological investigations of N8 Rathcormac-Fermoy Bypass route, ten fulachtai fia sites were identified which varied from small isolated burnt mound spreads to multiple burnt spreads with associated activity. Bronze Age settlement evidence include those uncovered at Ballybrowney Lower and Killydonoghoe. All of these sites were unrecorded sites with no surface expression prior to topsoil stripping.

Adjacent Structures: None

Pre-excavation features

This site at Lisnagar Demesne was identified during phase one testing in advance of the N8 Rathcormac-Fermoy Bypass. No surface trace of the site existed prior to investigation.

Excavation record

Summary of Features: Resolution of the site revealed a spread of heat-shattered stone, a trough and several pits. A small structure was also excavated at the adjacent site C40 which produced Late Bronze Age dates similar to this site. Therefore the structure will be described here.

Burnt Spread: To the west of the trough was a spread (C008). It consisted of loose dark grey-black silty clay with moderate medium stones and sandstones with occasional charcoal flecks. It measured 1.1m by 3.3m and was 0.16m in depth. It was surrounded by C013, dark brown, loose silty clay with moderate sandstones and moderate charcoal flecks and measured 5m by 3.2m and was 0.15m in depth.

Trough: The trough (C015) was rectangular in plan with rounded corners, vertical sides and a flat base. It measured 2.3m by 1.5m and was 0.35m deep. The excavator suggests that it may have originally been stone-lined due to the
presence of moderate flat angular stones in the bottom fill of the trough. The trough contained three deposits mostly consisting of heat-shattered sandstone and compact silty clays. A clay lining was also noted.

Pit 1: This pit (C018) was irregular in shape and measured 4.1m by 2.4m and had a maximum depth of 0.6m. It had a number of different fills including soft light brown-grey silty clay containing moderate charcoal flecks and carbonised wood and occasional small fragments of orange sandstones. Another fill consisted of re-deposited natural gravel with occasional charcoal flecks and frequent small angular and sub-angular sandstone.

Pit 2: To the east of C018 was a possible natural water channel into which a pit (CO31) was cut. The shape was indeterminable with sharp slopes and a concave base. It measured 0.8m by 0.5m and was 0.5m in depth. Its fills consisted of large angular sandstones, charcoal flecking and blue-grey silty clay. Four similar pits were uncovered to the west of the site and also contained burnt mound material.

Structure: This possible structure was located 40m south-west of this site on the opposite side of the stream. 28 stake-holes were uncovered below a pit (C005) which was sub-angular in shape and measured 2m by 1.5m and was 0.16m in depth. The stake-holes, cut into the natural subsoil, had a similar burnt deposit, with more charcoal in the central ones. Some of the stake-holes were conjoined and may represent stakes being reinforced or different phases of a structure. This probable wooden structure was burnt down and the deposits seem to represent burning in-situ. Charcoal from this structure was radiocarbon dated to the Late Bronze Age.

Finds: None

Dating: Charcoal (alder) from fill of the trough C0115 (Beta-203729) 2890±40 BP (1140–920 BC)
Charcoal (species unknown) from the structure (Beta-201092) 2830±60 BP (1120–820 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

Excavation of the site revealed a small deposits of heat-shattered stone, a single trough and several pits. The presence of heat-shattered stone and deposits of charcoal indicate that the site functioned as a pyrolytic water-boiling area for a short period before being abandoned. The structure, which was contemporary with the site was located 40m to the west. This may have functioned as a temporary shelter for the users of the burnt mound, representing the nearest dry area above the stream.

References

Location: Townland: Scartbarry  Six inch map no: Sheet 44
Parish: Rathcormac  NGR: 178392, 087553
Barony: Barrymore  Altitude: 60m OD
County: Cork

Excavation Details: Project: N8 Rathcormac-Fermoy Bypass
Site Director: Tara O’Neill
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services
Year: 2003

Physical Setting: This site was located along the western edge of an existing aircraft runway and the eastern edge of a tree plantation. The northern end of this field was quite marshy and soft underfoot while the southern end was dryer. The field sloped from east to north-west and there was a good aspect in all directions except south where the land was undulating.

Cultural Landscape: During archaeological investigations of N8 Rathcormac-Fermoy Bypass route, ten fulachtai fia sites were identified which varied from small isolated burnt mound spreads to multiple burnt spreads with associated activity. Bronze Age settlement evidence include those uncovered at Ballybrowney Lower and Killydonoghoe. All of these sites were unrecorded sites with no surface expression prior to topsoil stripping.

Adjacent Structures: None

Pre-excavation features

This site at Scartbarry was identified as a burnt stone spread and a number of features during phase one testing in advance of the N8 Rathcormac-Fermoy Bypass. No surface trace of the site existed prior to investigation.

Excavation record

Summary of Features: Resolution of the site revealed several phases of activity throughout the Bronze Age. The excavation uncovered spreads of heat-shattered stone, a large stone-lined trough surrounded by a palisaded trench and an associated hearth. A later trough was also uncovered along with the remains of an undated ditch that possibly surrounded the site.

Burnt Spreads: Two burnt stone spreads (F3 and F4) represented the earliest activity on site. They both consisted of compact grey-black sandy silt containing frequent amounts of charcoal and heat-shattered limestone and mudstone. Both spreads were originally one entity but were badly damaged by recent activity. F3 measured 7m by 13m and ranged in depth from 0.10m to 0.35m. F4
measured 10m by 17.5m and was located above a range of features. This spread was dated to the Early Bronze Age.

**Pits:**

Pit (F5) was oval in shape dark grey-brown silty clay with charcoal and burnt stone inclusions. It measured 0.9m by 1.37m and had a depth of 0.3m. Located 6m from F5 were two further pits F11 and F12. F11 was circular in shape with near vertical sides and a flat base. It measured 0.59m by 0.63m and had a depth of 0.32m. Its fill consisted of loose brown silty sand and small stone. F12 was sub-oval and measured 0.94m by 0.4m in depth. Its fill consisted of loose brown silty sand with charcoal flecking and moderate amounts of angular stone. Two other pits were located outside the surviving enclosing element F16/18. F15 was sub-circular in shape and measured 0.65m by 0.67m and was 0.28m deep. Its fill was similar to that of F11 and F12. F14 abutted and was seen as contemporary with the possible enclosing element F16/18. The pit was sub-circular and measured 0.8m by 0.9m and was 0.26m deep. Again, the fill of this pit was similar to that of F11 and F12.

**Enclosing Feature:**

This shallow boundary/enclosure (F16/18) partially enclosed the fulacht fia site. Because the site was not fully excavated, only a small portion survived and the excavator suggests it is contemporary with the trough, enclosing structure and the hearth. The portions that do remain however appear to contain an entrance feature, that consists of a causeway towards its southern extent. The shallow curvilinear boundary/enclosure almost encircled the burnt spread.

**Hearth:**

The hearth (F7) was located at the eastern end of the stone-lined trough F23. It consisted of a sub-rectangular structure with a mud-stone setting of dressed blocks beneath the burnt spread F4. The hearth measured 2.30m by 1.56m and was composed of three horizontally placed thin slabs of stone surrounded to the north, south and east with arranged stones forming a semi-circular border to a height of approximately 0.25m. Many of the stones were dressed and fire reddened. The hearth was open to the trough where a stone marked the divide between the two features.

**Windbreak:**

A shallow slot trench (F20) curved around the eastern extent of the hearth F7. The fill of this feature consisted of dark brown silty clay with moderate amounts of charcoal and small stone. The feature was 0.15m in width and was 0.2m deep. It had an overall length of 7m.

**Trough 1:**

This stone-lined trough (F23) was sub-rectangular in shape with the hearth F7 located on its eastern end. It measured 4.9m by 1m and had a depth ranging from 0.3m-0.67m. The trough was lined with medium to large stones along its sides. The stones were sealed into a structural lining consisting of yellow silty clay with rare charcoal inclusions. Some of these stones were also dressed and squared off so that they could fit securely together. The stone lining was evident on the northern, southern and eastern sides of the cut for this feature. However, the western end of the cut contained two squared off stones which instead of being placed vertically along the cut edge they were placed horizontally to form a low step prior to the descent into F33 further to the west. The trough contained three deposits. The eastern extent of the trough contained a deposit consisting of loose mid-dark brown sandy clay
containing charcoal and frequent burnt sandstones and mudstones. The secondary deposit consisted of dark grey-purplish-black friable sandy silt containing moderate amounts of sandstone and mudstone inclusions and frequent charcoal flecks. The primary deposit was located at the western end and consisted of loose -coarse mid-brown-pinkish sand containing occasional small stones and flecks of charcoal and occasional burnt sandstones and mud-stones.

**Slot-Trench:**
This slot trench was pen-annular in shape. The entrance was located in the south. The trench contained a number of stones set into its edges which would have supported split upright timbers. These were then further secured by the addition of regularly placed postholes containing posts along the length of the slot trench. All three portions of the slot trench contained the same fill of loose dark grey-black sandy silt containing frequent charcoal flecks and small stones. The overall slot trench enclosed both the linear channel F23 and two surfaces containing the stake and postholes. This surface was semi-circular and measured 4.20 in diameter and it had a radius of 1.10m. This surface also contained a number of stake-holes. There were no finds from this context.

**Trough 2:**
Trough (F29) was located below the much disturbed spread F4 which sealed most features on site. This trough was sub-rectangular in shape with steep sides and a flat base. The capacity of the excavated portion of this trough when full was 1196 litres. The trough cut measured 0.74m by 2.10m and reached a depth of 0.77m. It contained three fills with the primary deposit consisting of pink yellow sand containing frequent charcoal flecks. The two other fills consisted of loose light grey-black silt containing frequent burnt pebbles, small stones and moderate amounts of charcoal. There were five concentrations of stake-holes associated with this trough either cut into its base or its corners.

**Finds:**
- **Artefacts:** None
- **Dating:**
  - **Absolute dating:**
    - Charcoal (alder) from spread F4
      (Beta-201080) 3490±60 BP (1940–1630 BC)
    - Charcoal (hazel) from the trough F23
      (Beta-201083) 3170±90 BP (1650–1190 BC)
    - Charcoal (hazel) from the pit F11
      (Beta-201081) 3130±60 BP (1520–1290 BC)
    - Charcoal (oak) from the slot trench F22
      (Beta-201082) 3030±80 BP (1440–1020 BC)
    - Charcoal (oak) from the trough F29
      (Beta-201084) 2950±90 BP (1420–920 BC)

**Excavation Interpretation**

The increased area of the trough supports the theory that this site may have functioned as a sauna/sweat lodge. The larger the trough size, the greater the surface area for steam to evaporate off the water. If the trough was filled with heated water and hides or thatch were used to roof the timber structure, high humidity levels would have been achieved. There are however, alternative explanations as the archaeological record now supports more convincing examples of sweatlodges, where the stones are simply transported to a small tented environment and sprinkled with cold water (see Chapter 7).
References


Fig. 10.50 Stone-built trough, hearth and slot-trench structure at Scartbarry 1, Co. Cork
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<td>Consultants:</td>
<td>University College Galway</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year:</td>
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<td>Physical Setting:</td>
<td>The site is located on the Beara Penninsula on a north facing slope of the Barrees valley. It consists of a <em>fulacht fia</em> close to the western side of a small stream. The water source consists of a 0.2-0.4m wide rivulet that flows northwards.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Cultural Landscape:</td>
<td>The Barrees valley contains a wealth of prehistoric archaeology in a landscape which has been predominantly untouched by large scale agricultural activity. Other Bronze Age sites excavated in the vicinity include a <em>fulacht fia</em> (RMP CO 102:03101) and a stone pair (RMP CO 102-030007). A middle Bronze Age copper mine was also excavated in the Barees valley (RMP CO102-023) indicating further Bronze Age activity on the Penninsula.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Adjacent Structures:</td>
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**Pre-excavation features**

The site was identified prior to sampling as a grass covered crescent shaped mound measuring 8.8m N/S by 5.6m, with an average height of 0.2-0.4m.

**Excavation record**

**Summary of Features:** The 1m square test pit was excavated on the western edge of the burnt mound to minimise the damage. A section of the mound was uncovered and sampled for a radiocarbon date. The excavated section of the burnt mound consisted of three distinct layers. Layer one consisted of a grey-brown stony sediment within a fine silt matrix. Layer two consisted of black mound sediment containing loose stony material with fire-cracked stone. The third layer consisted of heat-shattered stone and charcoal similar to layer two except for greater compaction. This layer produced a date of 1630-1460 BC.

**Dating:** Charcoal (birch) from the third layer of burnt stone (GRN-27470) 3280±30 BP (1630−1460 BC)

**References**

**Physical Setting:**
The site is located on the Beara Penninsula on the eastern side of a small stream, on the lower slopes of the Barrees valley.

**Cultural Landscape:**
The Barrees valley contains a wealth of prehistoric archaeology in a landscape which has been predominantly untouched by large scale agricultural activity. Other Bronze Age sites excavated in the vicinity include a *fulacht fia* (RMP CO 102-03101) and a stone pair (RMP CO 102-030007). A middle Bronze Age copper mine was also excavated in the Barrees valley (RMP CO102-023) indicating further Bronze Age activity on the Penninsula.

**Pre-excavation features**
The site was identified prior to sampling as a grass covered crescent shaped mound partly eroded on its western side by a stream. The full extent of the mound is uncertain however it measures approximately 7.5m SE/NW by 3.2-5.2m and is less than 0.8m in maximum height.

**Excavation Record**

**Summary of Features:**
The 1m square test pit was excavated on the south-eastern edge of the burnt mound to minimise the damage. The excavated section of the burnt mound consisted of two distinct layers. Layer one consisted of a brown humic silt and numerous rootlets. According to O’Brien (2009), this represented the root-altered upper part of the burnt mound. The second layer consisted of broken stone within a dark brown silty matrix. It contained numerous fire reddened stone and charcoal. A radiocarbon date of 1120–890 BC was obtained from this layer.

**Dating:**
Charcoal (alder) from the second layer of burnt stone (GRN-27471) 2820±35 BP (1120–890 BC)

**References**
Excavation Details: Project: Rescue excavation (Unlicensed digging)
Site Director: Professor William O’ Brien
Consultants: University College Galway
Year: 2004

Physical Setting: The site is located on the Beara Peninsula at the bottom of a small valley in an area of hilly topography. The site lies at the base of a west-facing hill slope and is overlooked to the south-west by a prominent hill. It also lies 6.5m east of a small stream that flows through the valley forming the boundary between Garranes townland and Brackcloon.

Cultural Landscape: The Beara Peninsula contains a wealth of prehistoric archaeology, however there are no recorded monuments in the immediate environs of this site. The closest possible prehistoric sites are a hut site and two standing stones located approximately 1.3km to the north-east. There is a possible promontory fort also situated c.300m to the south-east.

Adjacent Structures: Yes

Pre-Excavation features
Prior to the unlicensed digging, the site was known as ‘The Priests Grave’ and was visible as an arc of stones. It was not recorded in the Record of Monuments and Places for Co. Cork however the digging exposed an oval setting of uprights stones, a semi-circular annex of upright slabs and deposits of burnt stones and charcoal.

Excavation Results
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed two distinct phases of activity. The first phase of activity consisted of a stone-lined trough and associated formal hearth. The second phase centred on the re-use of the hearth incorporated into a slab-lined enclosure/hut with an associated pathway.

Phase 1
Burnt Spreads: At the southern end of the hearth (C35) lay a series of spreads associated with the use of the fulacht fia. Two of these spreads were interpreted as fuel ash deposits (C12 and C21) while the third was identified as a spread of burnt stone. C12 consisted of a mid-brown lense of ashy material rich in charcoal with rare burnt stone fragments. C21 was another ash deposit containing much charcoal and numerous burnt stones. C11 comprised mainly...
of heat-shattered burnt stone and charcoal. A spread of fuel ash and a thin deposit of gritty charcoal were also identified close to the northern side of the trough.

**Trough:**

The trough (C34) was located immediately north-west of the hearth structure C35. It was polygonal in shape and stone-lined with eight slabs of Old Red Sandstone. It measured 1.32m N/S by 1.3m E/W with a maximum depth of 0.4m. The pit filled naturally with water. Some of the stones used to line the sides and base of the trough showed traces of being deliberately shaped in order to fit securely together. An additional slab was uncovered on the ground surface immediately adjacent to the trough possible to assist as a kneeler or working surface. The main fill of the trough consisted of deliberately backfilled material containing heat-shattered stone, charcoal fragments and loose soft silt which probably represented material that through the overlying backfill deposit. The trough was subsequently overlain by the stone slabs of the pathway associated with phase 2.

**Water Channel:**

This channel (C31) extended 1.8m west of the trough and possibly represented an overflow channel associated with the trough when full with water.

**Hearth:**

The hearth (C35) was located on the eastern side of the trough C34 and consisted of a substantial U-shaped stone structure with a central chamber open to the west. The floor of this central chamber was paved with tightly packed slabs and it was noted during excavation that the floor slabs and side walls were intensely fired reddened. The walls of the hearth were roughly 1.2m in length with the central area measuring 0.4m in width. The walls consisted of double U-shaped setting of overlapping slabs with the space between filled with tightly packed smaller stones. The hearth was filled with a series of fuel ash deposits associated with the second phase of activity where the hearth was incorporated into the structure. Spreads C12, C21 and C11 located on the southern exterior of the hearth were associated with phase one.

**Pit:**

This pit (C23) was located close to the northern side of the trough C34. The pit was circular in shape and measured 0.7m N/S by 0.61m E/W and had a maximum depth of 0.4m. The pit filled naturally with water as with the trough and was filled with a loose deposit of angular stones within a silt matrix containing charcoal.

**Phase 2**

**Slab Enclosure:**

After the water trough was backfilled, a second phase of activity began with the construction of a sub-circular enclosure (C33) that incorporated the hearth F35. The structure was built using thin stone slabs placed vertically into the B-horizon surface. These slabs were used to build two wall lengths, separated by a funnel-shaped entrance gap, 0.9m in width, on the western side. These slab walls enclosed an area measuring 2.8m E/W by 2.5m N/S. The stones used in both walls were carefully selected slabs of Old Red Sandstone.
Sandstone and O’Brien notes that the majority exhibited edge tooling suggesting that they were deliberately shaped following extraction (O’Brien 2012). No post-holes or stake-holes were uncovered along either wall line or in the interior of the structure.

Pathway: A substantial slab pathway (C20) was uncovered in the interior of the structure partially covering the trough C34. It extended 5m west from the hearth opening through the entrance as far as the excavation baulk. The path consisted of overlapping sandstone slabs which overlay the earlier water channel C31.

Box Feature: The construction of phase 2 slab enclosure created a small compartment feature (C09). The insertion of slab S6 created a small chamber with the opposing S7 slab of the hearth. This compartment measured 0.66m in length by 0.26m in width. It had an internal depth of 0.51m. It may have acted as an oven where hot stones from the hearth were used to cook food or it may have functioned as a flue for the adjacent hearth to ventilate the structure (O’Brien 2012).

Finds:

Artefacts: Thumbnail scraper (disturbed silt C06 close to hearth opening) and a stone hammer (found near hearth opening during illegal digging)

Ecofacts: None

Dating: Fuel/ash from burnt stone deposit C10 (GrN-29049) 3310±30 BP (1681–1516 BC) Charcoal from spread C21 (GrN-29050) 3180±50 BP (1606–1318 BC) Charcoal from fill (C30) of trough C34 (GrN-29051) 3125±35 BP (1493–1311 BC) Fuel ash deposit C16 from hearth phase 2 (GrN-29048) 2695±35 BP (910–801 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

The first phase at Garranes is consistent with the use of an open-air fulacht fia. This involved the boiling of water in a slab-lined trough using stones heated in an adjacent formal hearth. The process resulted in the deposition of fuel ash and broken stones in the site area. The limited occurrence of burnt stone suggests that this pyrolithic site was used for a short period of time, most probably around the fifteenth century BC. This ended with the deliberate backfilling of the trough. The second phase of activity began with the construction of a sub-circular stone enclosure. This partly overlays the backfilled water trough from phase 1, as did a slab-built path inside the enclosure. The stone enclosure may represent the base of a hut structure that was roofed and incorporated the large stone hearth. The possibility that the slab enclosure delimited an open-air working area must also be considered. It may be that the second phase of activity involved a change of use of the pyrolithic process, from one of water-boiling to dry-roasting.

References

Fig. 10.51 Phase 1 *fulacht fia* (left) and phase 2 cooking hut (right).
Physical Setting: The site is located in Fermoy Wood on the northern slopes of the summit at Ballyoran. The geological make-up of the area is the Ballytrasna formation consisting of purple mudstone with some sandstone dating to the Upper Devonian period.

Cultural Landscape: The environs of the site in question is rich in prehistoric archaeology with *fulachtai fia* constituting the majority of sites located in immediate landscape. There are two *fulachtai fia* located c. 150m to the south (CO035-057,127) with a further cluster c. 600m to the north-west (CO035:075,077). There is a further two sites located c.600m to the south-west (CO035-050001, 2). A *fulacht fia* excavated c.450m to the south (CO035-126) in the townland of Corrin produced an Early Bronze Age date which is contemporary with a habitation site excavated c. 1.5km to the north-east. A *fulacht fia* excavated 1.2km to the north-east (CO035-11001) produced an Iron Age date similar to the site excavated here at Fermoy Wood. A ring-ditch was discovered and excavated in the townland of Ballybrowney and a prehistoric house site was excavated at Gortroe.

Adjacent Structures: None

**Pre-Excavation features**

Removal of trees from the area of Fermoy Wood in advance of the N8 Rathcormac to Fermoy Bypass revealed a shallow heavily disturbed *fulacht fia*.

**Excavation Results**

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a disturbed mound of heat-shattered stone, a trough which may have been wood-lined, two post-holes and a pit.

Burnt Mound: The mound material measured 15m N/S by 12.5m E/W. Two distinct layers were identified. The upper C3 consisted of black loose sandy mixed with topsoil material. This layer represented disturbed material from root action and heavy machinery. The basal layer C16 consisted of compact black sandy clay with 40% heat-shattered sandstone.
Trough: The trough (C4) was rectangular in shape with concave sides and a flat base. A stake was located in the southern corner. The other corners were squared and the eastern corner had been disturbed by a portion of a collapsed possible oak post. The trough measured 2.8m by 2.2m and was 0.6m deep and was filled with ten sand and silt deposits. The basal fill consisted of loose mid-brown sand which was probably laid down from the erosion of the heated sandstone. The main fill of the trough was a brown-black sand with frequent stone inclusions and rotting wood.

Post-Holes: One post-hole (C18) was located 0.6m to the south of the trough while the other (C21) was immediately to the east of the trough. C21 contained the preserved base of an oak stake.

Pit: Pit C25 was located 15m to the west of the mound material. It was circular in plan and measured 1.5m by 1.4m and was 0.35m deep with concave sides and a rounded base. Its fill consisted of sandy clay with frequent burnt stone and charcoal flecks.

Finds: None

Dating: Oak from fill of post-hole C17 (QUB-6834) 2224±36 BP (384–203 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

The site had been disturbed by modern forest plantation and the frequent passage of heavy machinery associated with forestry works. In spite of this, the site produced a well-defined rectangular trough and waste-firing material associated with pyrolytic water-boiling. Two corner post-holes were located externally at the western end of the trough. One of these (021) contained an in situ oak post, the base of which showed signs of tool markings. A collapsed piece (017) of this post was located in the western corner of the trough. The broken oak post (017) was radiocarbon-dated to Iron Age. This site is only one of a few sites that can be confidently dated to this period in Ireland (see Chapter 6). Additional dated samples from this site however could make this argument stronger.

References

Catalogue No.  CO 59
RMP No.  CO019-170
Excavation No.  04E1070

Location: Townland: Mitchelstown Six inch map no: Sheet 19
Parish: Brigown NGR: 181441, 096233
Barony: Condons and Clang Altitude: NA
County: Cork

Excavation Details: Project: N8 Rathcormac-Fermoy Bypass
Site Director: Bruce Sutton
Consultants: Eachtra Archaeological Projects
Year: 2004

Physical Setting: The site is located on the northern bank of the Gradoge River c.1.5 km to the west of Mitchelstown. The landscape of the Mitchelstown area is dominated by the Galtee Mountains to the north, the Ballyhoura Mountains to the west and the Kilworth Mountains (the foothills of the Knockmealdown Mountains) to the south.

Cultural Landscape: The immediate environs of the site has a number of recorded prehistoric site-types worth mentioning. A Barrow (CO010-048) is located c.1km to the north while three middle Bronze Age houses (CO010-065, 66, 67) were excavated 600m to the north-east.

Adjacent Structures: None

Pre-excavation features
The site was uncovered during archaeological testing as a burnt mound which had been truncated by a diverted stream bed.

Excavation record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a disturbed mound of heat-shattered stone which sealed two small pits. A further pit containing Bronze Age pottery and a post-hole were recorded 13m north-west of the mound.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound (C4) consisted of black sandy silt with frequent inclusions of heat-shattered sandstone. It measured 9.5m by 1.66m with a depth of 0.25m. The mound material was truncated to the south by a former stream channel C3.

Pit 1: Pit C16 was located under the burnt mound material and measured 0.28m by 0.2m and was 0.18m deep. This pit contained a single fill of burnt mound material.

Pit 2: Pit C18 was located 2.5m east of C16 and measured 0.15m in diameter with a depth of 0.14m. The fill of this pit was similar to that of C16.
Pit 3: This pit (C12) was located 13m to the north-west of the mound material. The pit measured 0.6m by 0.5m and was 0.3m deep. It had concave sides and a rounded base. Two flat stones were uncovered on the base of the pit on which three pottery vessels were placed. A stake-hole was recorded 1.1m north-west of the pit. Sandy clay was recorded in the fill of the pit along with charcoal which was dated to the Early Bronze Age.

Finds:

Artefacts: Three pottery vessels uncovered in pit C12

Dating: Charcoal (oak) from fill of pit C12 (QUB-6743) uncalibrated date unavailable (1916–1696 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

The use of *fulachtaí fia* for social gatherings and ceremonial feasting may indicate that this activity was ritualised to a considerable extent. This introduces what is possibly the most intriguing find on the site, namely the discovery of a ceramic cup with a human face. The site consisted of a truncated burnt mound overlying two small pits. No trough was found, however, this probably is a *fulacht fia* site. A small pit was discovered 13 m away from the burnt mound, close to the edge of the road corridor. This contained three pottery vessels (a cordoned urn, a handled and footed face mask cup and a tub-shaped pot) and a ceramic spoon. There are no parallels for the latter two vessels in Ireland, or indeed for the spoon. Charred oak from the upper fill is radiocarbon-dated to the Early Bronze Age.

References

Location: Stagpark  Six inch map no: Sheet 19
Parish: Brigown  NGR: 180275, 111397
Barony: Conmonds and Clang  Altitude: NA
County: Cork

Excavation Details: Project: N8 Rathcormac-Fermoy Bypass
Site Director: Bruce Sutton
Consultants: Eachtra Archaeological Projects
Year: 2004

Physical Setting: The site is located c.1 km to the southwest of Mitchelstown in low-lying pasture to the southeast and downslope of another excavated fulacht fia (CO019:166) located 900m to the north-west. The landscape of the Mitchelstown area is dominated by the Galtee Mountains to the north, the Ballyhoura Mountains to the west and the Kilworth Mountains (the foothills of the Knockmealdown Mountains) to the south.

Cultural Landscape: Prehistoric activity in the immediate vicinity of the site is characterised by a number of sites excavated along this road scheme. A complex of Early and Late Bronze Age pits are located c.600m to the north-west (04E1120). There is a recorded fulacht fia located c.300m to the north (CO019-121) while another fulacht fia was excavated along the same road scheme c.900m to the north-west.

Adjacent Excavated Sites: Another fulacht fia was excavated 6m to the north-west (CO019-169).

Pre-Excavation features
The site was uncovered during archaeological testing in advance of the N8 Rathcormac-Fermoy Bypass. No surface features of the site were evident prior to investigation. Two separate fulachtaí fia were uncovered less than 6m apart.

Excavation Results
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a mound a substantial mound of heat-shattered stone which sealed 33 stake-holes, three post-holes, two pits and a rectangular trough.

Burnt Mound: The mound (C4) was located in the south-east of the site and measured 19.2m by 15.4m with an average thickness of 0.1m-0.2m in depth. The mound consisted of grey-black clay silt with frequent inclusions of heat-shattered sandstone.

Pit 1: Pit (C17) measured 4.15m by 1.45m and was 0.57m deep. It was truncated by another pit (C8). Sutton notes that the four fills uncovered within C17
contained no burnt stone even though it was located under the mound C4 which suggests that it was filled prior to the build-up of the mound.

**Stake-Holes/Post-Holes:**

The pit C17 was surrounded by 25 stake-holes and three post-holes which all contained single fills. The stake and post-holes were located to the southwest and north-east of the pit along both sides. Seven stake-holes were situated at the south-eastern and north-western ends. Charcoal from one of these stake-holes was identified as hazel or alder and returned an Early Bronze Age date.

**Pit 2:**

The pit (C8) truncated C17 and measured 1.9m by 1.55m and was 0.35m deep. The fill of this pit contained three deposits including heat-shattered stone.

**Trough:**

The trough was located under the north-eastern portion of the mound, 2.3m north of the pit C17. It was rectangular in shape and measured 2.02m by 1.45m and was 0.65m deep. 8 stake-holes were recorded in the corners of the trough and the basal fill contained a badly degraded piece of timber which lay flat on the base suggesting that the trough was originally timber-lined. The trough contained three other fills which predominantly contained peat which must have accumulated after the trough was abandoned.

**Finds:**

**Artefacts:** None

**Ecofacts:** Plant remains were examined from the site however there were no charred seeds in the sample which is consistent with most burnt mound sites.

**Dating:**

Charcoal (hazel/ alder) from fill of stake-hole C51 (QUB-6718) 3599±38 BP (2122–1828 BC)

**Excavation Interpretation**

Excavation of site revealed a large deposit of burnt stone associated with pyrolythic water-boiling. A large pit surrounded by stake-holes is dated to the Early Bronze Age. The stake-holes surrounding the pit did not form any discernible pattern or structure; it is likely that they formed a windbreak, spit or fireside furniture associated with the pit. The morphological characteristics of the trough however suggests that it may be Late Bronze Age in date. Rectangular troughs with four corner stakes are particular common during the later Bronze Age in Ireland. This tentatively implies that there were two phases of activity on the site separated by a lengthy period of abandonment.

**References**

The site is located c.1 km to the southwest of Mitchelstown in low-lying pasture to the southeast and downslope of another excavated fulacht fia (CO019-166) located 900m to the north-west. The landscape of the Mitchelstown area is dominated by the Galtee Mountains to the north, the Ballyhoura Mountains to the west and the Kilworth Mountains (the foothills of the Knockmealdown Mountains) to the south.

Prehistoric activity in the immediate vicinity of the site is characterised by a number of sites excavated along this road scheme. A complex of Early and Late Bronze Age pits are located c.600m to the north-west (04E1120). There is a recorded fulacht fia located c.300m to the north (CO019-121) while another fulacht fia was excavated along the same road scheme c.900m to the north-west.

Another fulacht fia was excavated 6m to the south-east (CO019-168).

Pre-exca vation Features

The site was uncovered during archaeological testing in advance of the N8 Rathcormac-Fermoy Bypass. No surface features of the site were evident prior to investigation. Two separate fulachtaí fia were uncovered less than 6m apart.

Excavation results

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a shallow mound of heat-shattered stone, a trough, four pits and a number of stake-holes.

Burnt Mound: The mound (C3) was located c.6m north-east of the first fulacht fia mound C4. It measured 15.4m by 14m and was quite shallow, similar to that of C4 averaging from 0.1m-0.2m in thickness. It consisted of grey-black clay silt with frequent heat-shattered sandstone. Charcoal from this material was identified as hazel and/or alder and was radiocarbon dated to the Early Bronze Age. The mound covered the trough and four pits including a number of stake-holes.
Trough: The trough (C88) measured 2.75m by 2m and was 0.88m deep. It contained six fills which mostly consisted of sand and silty clays. The upper fill consisted of 50% heat-shattered sandstone. Stake-holes were recorded in the base of the trough on the northern section.

Stake-Holes: Six stake-holes were recorded on the edge of the trough and four on the western perimeter. Sutton suggests that these stakes-holes may have formed a windbreak, spit or fire-side furniture, open to the east.

Pit 1: This pit (C80) was located 1.9m south of the trough C88. It was rectangular in plan and measured 1.3m by 1.1m and was 0.3m deep. The four fills noted in the trough consisted of silt and clay sands with frequent amounts of heat-shattered stone.

Stake-Holes: Five stake-holes were recorded on the northern and western edges of the pit and Sutton suggests that they may have served a similar function to the stakes found on the edge of the trough C88.

Pit 2: Pit (C115) was located was located 5.5m west of the trough C88. It was rectangular in plan and measured 2.6m by 1.1m and was 0.36m deep. The single fill recorded consisted of clay silt including heat-shattered stone. The pit truncated a post-hole to the west.

Pits and post-holes: This small grouping of pits and post-holes were interpreted as a possible small structure with an entrance to the south-west. A semi-circular arc of three pits, three postholes and five stake-holes were located c.3.6m northeast of pit C.115 and c. 2.5m northwest of trough C.88. The arc measured c. 6m and the possible entrance was to the southwest.

Pit/ditch feature: This cut feature (C5) was located on the northern edge of the excavated area. It measured 5.5m by 3m and had a maximum depth of 1.4m. The feature filled naturally with water. It is possible that the cut maybe a pit or the terminal of a ditch. The upper fill was a silty clay, similar to the natural subsoil, the underlying fill was a peat deposit and the basal fill was a silty sand with inclusions of heat-shattered stone. It is possible that the feature is associated with modern drainage features.

Finds: Single piece of worked flint from trough C88 and a flint flake from post-hole C117

Dating: Charcoal (hazel/alder) from burnt mound C3 (QUB-6744) 3561±38 BP (2023-1773 BC)

References
Excavation No. 04E1246

Location: Townland: Barnahely  Six inch map no: 87
Parish: Barnahely  NGR: 17629, 06447
Barony: Kerrycurrihy  Altitude: NA

Excavation Details: Project: Industrial development
Site Director: Margaret McCarthy
Consultants: UCC Services Unit
Year: 2005

Physical Setting: The site is located on the west side of Cork Harbour, 3km east of Carrigaline and 0.5km west of Ringaskiddy. Prior to excavation the site consisted of a large grassy field with a pond immediately to the east.

Cultural Landscape: Prehistoric activity in the immediate vicinity of the site is characterised by further pyrolithic activity found during testing in the area of medieval ringfort close to the site.

Adjacent Excavated Sites: None

Pre-excavation Features

The site was uncovered during archaeological testing in advance of an area zoned for industrial development. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation results

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a spread of heat-shattered stone, two troughs, an enclosing slot-trench and a possible structure.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound was composed of two deposits of heat-shattered stone and charcoal. Stratigraphically, the earliest deposit (C218) measured 25m by 20m with a maximum thickness of 0.25m. The later deposit measured 27.3m by 32m composing of dark silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stones.

Trough 1: The main trough (C110) on site was rectangular in plan and cut into the natural bedrock. It measured 1.82m by 1.16m with a maximum depth of 0.27m. The fill was composed of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. A sample of burnt bone from this deposit is dated to the Middle Iron Age. Poorly preserved barley grain, cereal grain and grasses were also recovered.

Possible structure: Four postholes surrounded the trough (C110) forming a rectangular structure. Burnt animal bone and charred hazelnut shells were recovered from some of these post-holes. This structure may have provided shelter for the trough.

Trough 2: Trough (C119) was situated adjacent to the trough 1. It was rectangular in shape and measured 1.64m by 1.15m with a depth of 0.25m. The pit was also
rock cut and filled with a deposit of heat-shattered stone and black sandy silt. An oval pit extended from the trough measuring 0.87m by 0.64m with a depth of 0.25m. It contained a similar fill to the trough and also contained fragmented cattle bone.

**Pallisade trench:** A substantial curvilinear ditch extended across the entire northeast quadrant of the site. Two shorter trenches were found in the south and southeast that may have at some point formed one continuous fence-line or windbreak, sheltering the site from the prevailing winds. It was mostly filled with burnt stone and charcoal-rich material, a sample of which is dated to the Middle Iron Age.

**Hearth:** A large hearth (C190) was identified 8m to the southwest of the troughs. It measured 1m by 0.7m and was composed of an area of burnt timbers, ash and vitrified stone. Some burnt bone was also found. Two other possible fire spots were identified at the site. C138 measured 1.4m by 1.05m and was composed of burnt timbers, pockets of ash and oxidised subsoil. Another potential hearth was C175. This was composed of a pit measuring 1m by 1.14m by 1.024. In situ burning was noted in the base and the sides of the feature. While this may have functioned as a hearth for heating stones, it is equally possible that it may have served as a roasting pit.

**Timber-lined pit:** Interpreted by Colbert as a timber-lined pit. The feature survived archaeologically as a double pit. It was sub-circular in shape and measured 0.88m by 0.58m with a depth of 0.41m. A smaller, later pit seems to have been cut into this feature (dimensions unknown). The base and sides of the smaller pit were heavily charcoal flecked suggesting a burnt and degraded timber-lining. There is however, some suggestion that the pit may have been stone-lined as flat stones were noted on the base and sides of the feature. The complex use-history of this pit is unclear and at this time, no interpretation can be offered.

**Associated pits:** Approximately twenty-five pits were excavated, many interpreted by Colbert as possible pits for dumping fired debris. Others had in situ burning suggesting they may have functioned as roasting pits. Some contained burnt animal bone.

**Structure:** A possible hut-structure was excavated on the western side of the site. Twelve post-holes delineated the remains of a sub-circular area measuring 7.5m by 6m. There was no evidence for any internal supports, so it is likely the posts defining the external wall formed the main structural support for the roof. A possible hearth was also identified in the interior of the structure. Charcoal from one of these posts is dated to the Middle Iron Age.

**Finds:**

- **Artefacts:** A possible whetstone from the burnt stone spread.

- **Ecofacts:** Plant remains were examined from the site and identified as barley and cereal grains. Hazelnut shells were also recovered from the site. Animal
bone was identified as cattle, sheep and pig and was poorly preserved, consisting mostly of teeth.

**Dating:**
Charcoal (hazel) from fill of post-hole of structure (GrA-588005) 1955±55 BP (40 BC–125 AD)
Charcoal (willow) from palisade trench (GrA-588006) 1985±40 BP (91 BC–123 AD)
Charcoal (alder) from burnt ‘lining’ in pit C199 (GrA-57979) 1905±35 BP (AD 23–214 AD)
Bone (animal) from fill of trough 1 (GrA-57443) 1904±35 BP (23 BC–130 AD)

**References**

Catalogue No. CO 63
RMP No. CO019-169
Excavation No. A014/002

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Excavation Details: Project: N8 Rathcormac-Fermoy Bypass
Site Director: John Tierney
Consultants: Eachtra Archaeological Projects
Year: 2005

Physical Setting: The site at Scarbary is located on gently rolling open farmland, combined with wooded river valleys and old red sandstone ridges.

Cultural Landscape: Prehistoric activity in the immediate vicinity of the site is characterised by a number of sites excavated along this road scheme. Another fulacht fia (CO053-103) interpreted as a possible sweatlodge is located c. 200m to the north-east of the site in question. Another possible burnt mound site is located 450m to the south-west also.

Adjacent Excavated Sites: None

Pre-exca

Pre-excavation features

The site was uncovered during archaeological testing in advance of the N8 Rathcormac-Fermoy Bypass. No surface features of the site were evident prior to investigation.

Excavation records

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a burnt mound of heat-shattered stone, a trough, several stake-holes and a watercourse.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound was located to the south of a watercourse C20 and consisted of two layers C6 and C17. The mound measured 9m by 8m and was 0.3m deep. The main layer C6 consisted of brown soft silty clay with 30% heat-shattered stone.

Trough: The trough (C41) was located in a probable natural hollow (C76) measuring 6m by 4.4m which was cut by a field drain. The trough was rectangular in plan and measured 2.22m by 1.36m and was 0.88m deep. The trough had 14 fills and was plank-lined with 15 timbers. The fills consisted of burnt mound material, heat-shattered stone and re-deposited subsoil. The timbers were mostly tangentially split and some displayed evidence of tool marks. A number of timbers were also extensively burned and it has been suggested that these were not always positioned in the trough, as the rising water table would have protected the timbers from fire. Three stake-holes were located...
in the base of the trough and one of these was inserted through a timber plank, presumably to keep the trough lining in place (Tierney, 2006).

**Stake-Holes:** 17 stake-holes were located in the north-east corner of the trough. 10 of these were oriented at an angle. A further 4 stake-holes were located in the northern corner of the trough.

**Pit:** The eastern section of a possible pit (C77) was recorded 0.6m southwest of the trough. It had been truncated by the forestry drain C.16.

**Watercourse:** A dried up watercourse (C20) was noted to the north of the mound and may have been used to fill the trough when in use. It measured 27m in length and 12.5m in width.

**Finds:**

**Artefacts:** None

**Ecofacts:** No charred seeds were uncovered however hazel nut -shell fragments, sedges and members of the buttercup family were found along with bramble, dock and nettle reflecting open conditions.

**Dating:**

**Absolute dating:** Charcoal (species unknown) from fill of trough C41 (QUB-6778) 2570±38 BP (811−548 BC)
Charcoal (species unknown) from stake-hole C34 (QUB-6779) 2499±37 BP (789−419 BC)

**Excavation Interpretation**

The site at Scartbarry 6 consisted of a late Bronze Age burnt mound, a wood-lined trough with a series of associated stake-holes and a dried up watercourse which may have supplied water to the trough. The rectangular trough was lined with 15 well preserved wooden planks with 3 stake-holes cut into the base to provide additional support for the lining. 21 stake holes were located around the north-eastern and south-western corners of the trough suggesting repeated use of the site. Some of these stake-holes were angled inward which may represent some form of spit from which an object may have been suspended into the trough keeping it separate from the burnt stone. Alternatively these stakes may represent a windbreak or screen which would have blocked ash or cinders from entering the trough. The stakes may also represent a light roof or canopy which could have covered the trough. The mound comprised two main deposits of burnt stones, suggesting that there were at least two episodes of trough use.

**References**

Catalogue No. CO 64
RMP No. CO035-144
Excavation No. 05E0078

Location: Townland: Fermoy  Six inch map no: Sheet 35
Parish: Fermoy  NGR: 182113, 098246
Barony: Condans and Glan  Altitude: 50-60M OD
County: Cork

Excavation Details: Project: N8 Rathcormac-Fermoy Bypass
Site Director: Fiona Reilly
Consultants: Eachtra Archaeological Projects
Year: 2005

Physical Setting: The site was located east of Fermoy town within the eastern perimeter of Fermoy townland and in the Barony of Condons and Clangibbon. The site occurred on a north-facing ridge above the low-lying valley of the River Blackwater.

Cultural Landscape: Prehistoric activity in the immediate vicinity of the site is characterised by a number of sites excavated along this road scheme.

Adjacent Excavated Sites: Two Neolithic pits containing Neolithic pottery and flint tools. No burnt stone was recorded in the fills.

Pre-excavation features

The site was uncovered during archaeological testing in advance of the N8 Rathcormac-Fermoy Bypass. No surface features of the site were evident prior to investigation.

Excavation record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed two Neolithic pits containing prehistoric pottery, a group of early and late Bronze Age pit features and a late Bronze Age burnt mound, associated trough, stake-holes, hearth and a group of pits.

Burnt Mound: The shallow burnt mound (093) consisted of multiple thin spreads of heat-shattered small to medium angular pebbles and small stones, covering an area of c. 10 m by c. 9 m. It covered the trough, hearth, pits and a cluster of stake-holes.

Trough: The trough (102) was rectangular in plan and measured 2.2 m by 1.5 m and 0.5 m deep. It was filled with the burnt mound material. A total of 20 stake-holes cut the base of the trough. These were clustered in three of the corners and along the sides of the trough. None were found along the north-western side where there was a concave depression. Others found in the base of the northern part of the later Trough/Pit 103 most likely belong to this trough. The stake-holes varied in size, the smaller being on average 0.04 m in diameter and the larger averaging 0.1 m in diameter. Larger stake-holes were found in the original ground level at the northern and western corners.
(rack?). Five additional stake-holes were located on the perimeter of the trough.

**Trough/pit:**
The southern corner of the trough was cut by a sub-rectangular trough/pit (103) measuring 1.8 m by 1.1 m by 0.53 m deep. Another pit (105) was located south-east of, and was cut by, Trough/Pit 103. The fills of both pits included burnt mound material.

**Hearth:**
A hearth (164), 1.5 m by 1.1 m, was located to the north-west of the trough. A 1.4 m-long cluster of 16 stake-holes (remnants of a screen?) crossed over the northern end of it and a further three stake-holes were located to the west.

**Associated features:**
Some pits, stake-holes and an 8.5 m-long alignment of six post-holes were located east and northeast of the burnt mound. These may have been contemporary with the burnt mound and some were backfilled with burnt mound-like material. A post-hole (110), located to the east of Trough/Pit 103, was cut through one of the deposits of natural up-cast clay. A sample from this post-hole is dated to the Late Bronze Age.

**Finds:**

**Artefacts:**
Neolithic pottery and flint tools uncovered from Neolithic pits excavated on site. Flint flake recovered from Pit C23 also.

**Dating:**
Charcoal (oak) from fill of pit C22 (QUB-6775) 3770±41 BP (2335–2036 BC)
Charcoal (species unknown) from mound material that filled C110 (QUB-6776) 2756±38 BP (997–825 BC)

**Excavation Interpretation**

Several pits were present at Fermoy 5 and the intercutting of some of the pits suggests the continuous use of the site over a period of time. To the excavator, the discovery of several pits, the positions for possible tenters, a large, probably lined, trough and the proximity to running water, all suggest the possibility that fulling, felting, dyeing or cloth washing were carried out on site. Though textile processing is indeed a possible function of the site, further work is required to validate the theory.

**References**

Physical Setting: The site was located on the south facing slope of a small hill. The land had been extensively drained during the 1960’s but the ground would have originally been wet and boggy.

Cultural Landscape: The excavations at Carrigane 2 demonstrate a continued human presence in the area into the Early Bronze Age. This site is just one of a number of previously unknown Bronze Age sites excavated along the route of the N8. Sites excavated in close proximity include two Middle Bronze Age fulachtaí fia and another two fulachtaí fia to the northeast.

Adjacent Excavated Sites: None

Pre-Evacuation Features

The site was uncovered during archaeological testing in advance of the N8 Cashel to Mitchelstown Bypass. No surface features of the site were evident prior to investigation.

Excavation Results

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a large pit and two troughs. At the centre of the site a large pit (F6) was excavated. It was sub-oval in plan and measured 2.3m by 1.5m and was 0.4m deep. The fill of the pit consisted of black silty clay. Trough F8 was located was located 1.5m south of F6. It was sub-circular and measured 1m by 0.95m and was 0.16m deep with sloping sides and a flat base. The main fill was a dark brown silty clay with charcoal inclusions and burnt stone. The trough pit (F12) extended beyond the road take therefore only a portion of this trough was excavated. The excavated portion was sub-circular in plan and measured 3.3m by 1.55m and was 0.5m deep with a sharp break of slope, a u-shaped profile and a concave base.

Dating: Charcoal (hazel) from fill of trough F12 (QUB-7388) 3657±35 BP (2139−1937 BC)

References

Excavation Details:

- Location: Townland: Carrigane
- Parish: Brigown
- Barony: Condans and Glan
- County: Cork
- Project: N8 Cashel to Mitchelstown Bypass
- Site Director: Melanie Mc Quade
- Consultants: Margaret Gowen and Company Ltd.
- Year: 2005

**Physical Setting:**
The site is located on the southern foothills of the Galtee Mountains. It was situated on land which had been drained in the 1960’s, but would have originally been wet, boggy ground.

**Cultural Landscape:**
The excavations at Carrigane 2 demonstrate a continued human presence in the area into the Early Bronze Age. This site is just one of a number of previously unknown Bronze Age sites excavated along the route of the N8. Sites excavated in close proximity include two Middle Bronze Age fulachtí fia and another two fulachtí fia to the northeast.

**Adjacent Excavated Sites:**
None

**Pre-excavation features**
The site was uncovered during archaeological testing in advance of the N8 Cashel to Mitchelstown Bypass. No surface features of the site were evident prior to investigation.

**Excavation record**

**Summary of Features:**
Resolution of the site revealed two troughs and the truncated remains of a burnt mound.

**Burnt Mound:**
The burnt mound (F3) sealed the two troughs F5 and F7. It measured 9.5m by 7.5m with an overall thickness of 0.19m and consisted of black silty sand with frequent inclusions of heat-shattered stone and charcoal. Analysis of the charcoal from the mound material identified alder, birch, hazel, holly, oak and yew. The large variety of wood species represented in the mound suggests that it had built up as the result of several burning episodes.

**Trough 1:**
Trough F5 was located at the southern end of the site and was rectangular in plan. It measured 2.22m by 0.86m and was 0.42m deep with steeply sloping sides and a concave base. The fill was very dark- brown silty sand with frequent inclusions of fire heated stone and charcoal F4. Charcoal from this fill was identified as alder, birch and oak, with oak predominating. The absence of insect holes in the wood indicates that freshly cut pieces were selected for fuel. Radiocarbon analysis of a sample of hazel charcoal from this fill returned a Middle Bronze Age date.
Trough 2: The second trough F7 was located 0.10m east of the trough F5. This trough was sub-circular in plan with gradually sloping sides and a rounded concave base. It measured 1.94m by 1.55m and was 0.49m deep. Three small stake-holes were uncovered in the base of the trough, two at the western slope and the other situated on the eastern slope.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Dating: Charcoal (hazel) from fill of trough F5 (QUB-7389) 3240±34 BP (1608–1437 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

Excavation of the site revealed a substantial burnt mound of charcoal and heat-shattered stone implying a technology possibly associated with pyrolithic water-boiling. Two troughs were identified on site, one of which displayed evidence of having being internally lined with timber. This further supports that the site functioned as a water-boiling area, possible for cooking.

References

Excavation Details:  
Project: N8 Cashel to Mitchelstown Bypass  
Site Director: Melanie Mc Quade  
Consultants: Margaret Gowen and Company Ltd.  
Year: 2005

Physical Setting: The site is located upslope from and 85m to the south-east of the fulacht fia CO66. Both sites were located in the same field that had been drained in the 1960's, but would have originally been wet and boggy.

Cultural Landscape: The excavations at Carrigane demonstrate a continued human presence in the area into the Early Bronze Age. This site is just one of a number of previously unknown Bronze Age sites excavated along the route of the N8. Sites excavated in close proximity include two Middle Bronze Age fulacht fia and another two fulachtal fia to the northeast.

Adjacent Excavated Sites: None

**Pre-excavation features**

Prior to excavation the site was visible as a long low ridge approximately 30m by 8m by 1.5m. It was subsequently identified during archaeological testing along the route of the N8 road improvement scheme.

**Excavation Results**

**Summary of Features:** Resolution of the site revealed a burnt mound of heat-shattered stone, two troughs and a number of pits.

**Burnt Mound:** The burnt mound (F3) extended beyond the road take. The excavated portion measured 13.4m by 13.8m with a maximum depth of 0.44m. It consisted of charcoal enriched silty sand with frequent inclusions of heat-shattered stone. Charcoal from the mound was identified as hazel, birch, oak, yew, holly and alder. The identifications were dominated by oak. Some insect holes were present in the alder pieces, indicating that these were from decayed or degraded wood.

**Trough 1:** Trough F4 was located towards the southern limit of the excavation. It was rectangular in plan and measured 2.2m by 1.8m with a depth of 0.36m. It was steep with slightly overhanging sides. The trough produced evidence to suggest it was wood-lined in the form of four post-holes in each corner and the faint traces of timbers which gave a clear picture of the original structure. The basal planks were laid horizontally, while those at the sides were in an upright position and were set behind the corner posts which presumably
served as support. A packing of re-deposited natural was evident along the edges and behind the upright timbers in the trough. It may have formed a type of sealant for the timbers. The trough F4 was filled by loosely compacted dark grey black sandy gravel with frequent (95%) inclusions of fire cracked stone and charcoal. This material represents waste material from a fire burnt in association with the fulacht fia and was probably backfilled after the last use of the trough.

Trough 2:

The second trough (F6) was located to the south-west of trough F4. It was rectangular in plan with sloping sides and a flat base. It measured 3m by 1.55m and was 0.7m deep. Two post-holes were located in each of the eastern corners and a line of seven preserved stakes divided the eastern and western sides. Fifteen timber pieces were preserved in the lower fill of the trough and were mainly located along the western edge. The excavator states that they were laid in a haphazard manner and may be the remains of a collapsed superstructure associated with the pit. The planks were identified as oak, alder and birch which were half split, radially and tangentially split.

Pit 1:

An irregular shaped pit cut into the trough F6, which damaged its upper levels. It was filled with the same peaty material which was found in the lower fill of F6 leading the excavator to suggest it may have been a sump to hold water. The cut measured 7.5m by 2.5m and was 0.25m deep.

Finds:

None

Dating:

Charcoal (hazel) from the burnt spread F3
(QUB-7505) 3060±34 BP (1415−1219 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

Excavation of the site revealed a substantial burnt mound of charcoal and heat-shattered stone implying a technology possibly associated with pyrolithic water-boiling. This is confirmed by the presence of two troughs, each with evidence to suggest they were timber-lined with four corner stakes, a method common in Ireland during the Middle to Late Bronze Age.

References

Location: Gortnahown
Parish: Glanworth
Barony: Condans and Glan
County: Cork

Excavation Details:
Project: N8 Fermoy-Mitchelstown Bypass
Site Director: James Lyttleton
Consultants: Eachtra Archaeological Projects
Year: 2006

Physical Setting: The site is located in pasture, which slopes into a valley that is orientated north-west to south-east. It is occupied by a small stream or drain flowing to the north-west.

Cultural Landscape: There are no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the investigated area however the current road scheme unearth several previously unknown archaeological sites.

Adjacent Excavated Sites: None

Pre-excavation features
There was no surface trace of the burnt mound prior to excavation. The site was revealed as a spread of charcoal enriched soil and fire-cracked stone during archaeological testing in advance of the N8 Fermoy-Mitchelstown Bypass.

Excavation record
Summary of Features: Resolution of the site revealed four deposits of disturbed burnt mound material overlain by re-deposited subsoil.

Burnt Spreads: The burnt mound deposits (C13), measured 20m by 7m with a maximum thickness of 1m. The material was *ex-situ* and appeared to be re-deposited from a burnt mound in the vicinity. It consisted of heat-shattered stone and charcoal mixed with modern branches and roots. Re-deposited subsoil was discovered below the burnt mound deposits containing modern material.

References
Catalogue No. CO 69

RMP No. NA

Excavation No. E3971

Location: Townland: Kildrum       Six inch map no: Sheet 20
Parish: Brigown                  NGR: 183844, 113353
Barony: Condans and Glan       Altitude: 110m OD
County: Cork

Excavation Details: Project: N8 Fermoy-Mitchelstown Bypass
Site Director: John Tierney
Consultants: Eachtra Archaeological Projects
Year: 2006

Physical Setting: The site is located in low ground on a gently west facing slope. The ground to the west of the site was forested and the land to the east was marginal.

Cultural Landscape: There are no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the investigated area however the current road scheme unearth several previously unknown archaeological sites.

Adjacent Excavated Sites: None

Pre-excavation features

There was no surface trace of the burnt mound prior to excavation. The site was revealed as a spread of charcoal enriched soil and fire-cracked stone during archaeological testing in advance of the N8 Fermoy-Mitchelstown Bypass. The site was covered in trees prior to excavation.

Excavation record

Summary of Features: Resolution of the site revealed two shallow spreads of burnt mound material with five associated troughs, post-holes and stake-holes.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound material (C34) covered an irregular area measuring 6m in length by 5.3m in width and was 0.1m high. It sealed three troughs. The second deposit of material (C54) was located to the south-east and was truncated by a modern drain and sealed one trough. The overall volume of the two layers of burnt mound material (C34 and C54) came to 4.72 m³.

Trough 1: Trough C9 was sub-rectangular in plan and measured 1.6m by 1.52m and was 0.54m in depth. It contained six fills mainly consisting of burnt mound material. Four stake-holes were recorded in the base of the trough.

Trough 2: Trough C13 was sub-circular in plan and measured 2.9m by 2.2m and was 0.6m deep. It contained eight deposits mainly consisting of burnt mound material. Three stake-holes were uncovered in the base of the trough.
Trough 3: The third trough (C35), was oval in shape and measured 1.8m by 1.3m and was 0.28m deep. It was filled with a grey clay and moderate amounts of charcoal. The trough was located 0.75m south of the trough C13.

Trough 4: Trough C59 was circular in shape and measured 1.4m in diameter and was 0.43m in depth. It was filled with black soft silt.

Trough 5: Trough C66 was 1.3m long by 0.93m in width and was 0.49m in depth. It contained two deposits of backfilled material consisting of heat-shattered stone and charcoal similar to the mound material C34. This trough was not sealed by the layers of burnt stone.

Finds: None

 Dating: Charcoal (hazel/alder) from the fill of trough C13 (UB-12985) 3677±23 BP (2138−1978 BC)
Charcoal (hazel/alder) from the fill of trough C9 (UB-12986) 3830±23 BP (2434−2199 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

The mound at Kildrum did not survive to any great height, it was 0.1 m high on the northern side of the ditch and 0.2 m on the southern side. It was composed of layers of heat shattered stone mixed with charcoal. It was truncated during the modern period by the excavation of a substantial ditch. No formal hearth was identified in association with the mound. There were two substantial troughs recorded at Kildrum. Both showed evidence of lining as stake-holes were recorded in the base of the troughs. The other three possible troughs had a limited capacity for boiling water, less that 1 m³. If a trough was too small the water would boil off very quickly. They may have been associated with a dry heat.

References

Excavation Details:  Project: N8 Fermoy-Mitchelstown Bypass  
Site Director: James Lyttleton  
Consultants: Eachtra Archaeological Projects  
Year: 2006

Physical Setting: The site is located in low poorly drained ground c. 1km east of Mitchelstown.

Cultural Landscape: There are no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the investigated area however the current road scheme unearth several previously unknown archaeological sites.

Adjacent Excavated Sites: Another fulacht fia was excavated 500m to the north of this site in the townland of Kildrum (E3971).

Pre-excavation features

There was no surface trace of the burnt mound prior to excavation. The site was revealed as a spread of charcoal enriched soil and fire-cracked stone during archaeological testing in advance of the N8 Fermoy-Mitchelstown Bypass.

Excavation record

Summary of Features: Resolution of the site revealed a substantial burnt spread, a trough, two pits and a post-hole.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound (C5) consisted of black stony silt measuring 19.9m by 19.4m and was 0.3m in thickness. The spread of mound material seemed to be heavily disturbed due to the presence of medieval pottery and iron. Two smaller spreads (C38 and C50) were recorded to the north and south and were probably a continuation of the main mound (Lyttleton, 2009).

Trough: The trough C24 was sealed by the mound and was located at the centre of the site. It was rectangular in shape and measured 2.54m by 1.6m and was 0.56m deep. The trough seemed to have a step located at the south-western end. Four deposits were noted in the fill of the trough and all were similar in composition to the mound material. A post-hole (C30) was noted on the eastern side of the trough along with the two pits C14 and C53.
Pit 1: Pit C14 was located 0.2m north-east of the trough. It measured 1.4m by 1.05m and was 0.25m deep. Scorching was noted on the sides of the pit suggesting that it may have functioned as a hearth or roasting pit.

Pit 2: Pit C53 was located 2.1m south-east of the trough and measured 1.24m by 0.94m and was 0.14m deep. It was filled with burnt mound material.

Finds: None

Dating: Charcoal (hazel/alder) from the fill of pit C53 (UB-12988) 2822±25 BP (1044–911 BC) Charcoal (Pomoideae) from the fill of trough C24 (UB-12989) 2758±29 BP (978–829 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

The mound at Kilshanny 3 was well preserved. It survived to a height of 0.3m. It was composed of layers of heat shattered stone mixed with charcoal. There was one substantial trough recorded at the site. It was rectangular in plan with one internal stake-holes suggesting it may have been timer-lined originally. The other two possible pits had a limited capacity for boiling water, less that 1 m³. If a trough was too small the water would boil off very quickly. They may have held containers made from organic material such as baskets or wooden buckets and one may have functioned as a hearth. A small quantity of charred cereals and seeds were recovered from the main layer in the mound of burnt material and the fill of the trough. The cereals included small amounts of wheat, indeterminate cereal grains and weed seeds.

References

The site at Ballinglanna North 1 is located on the western bank of the Glencorra Stream and the northern side of the Glencorra Bridge. The Glencorra Bridge crossed the southern end of the Glencorra Stream c. 400 m before it flows into the River Funshion. The site is located on the flood plain of the river. The western side of the Glencorra valley, which is mostly wooded, rises to the west.

There are no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the investigated area however the current road scheme unearth several previously unknown archaeological sites.

Medieval metalworking area and post-medieval structure

Pre-excavation features

There was no surface trace of the burnt mound prior to excavation. The site was revealed as a spread of charcoal enriched soil and fire-cracked stone during archaeological testing in advance of the N8 Fermoy-Mitchelstown Bypass.

Excavation record

Resolution of the site revealed a number of features dating to the Medieval and Post-Medieval periods however Bronze Age activity on the site consisted of fulacht fia comprising of a stone-lined trough and an associated water management feature.

Burnt Mound: The mound material (C163) overlay all the cut features related to the fulacht fia. It consisted of charcoal and heat-shattered stone and measured 15.6m by 7.75m and was 0.4m in thickness. Due to the site being located at the base of a slope, colluvium deposits overlay the burnt mound deposits.

Trough: The trough C183 was rectangular in shape and measured 2.2m by 1.8m and was 0.8m deep. It had a flat base, steep sides and the remnants of a stone-lining was noted at the base. Three post-holes and all five stake-holes were associated with the main trough, either truncating it or in close proximity.
These features surrounding the trough suggest either possible support for its base or a structure overlying it relating to its function. Three other post-holes and three pits (C168, C178 and C181) were located underneath the spread of burnt mound material found around the trough (C183). The trough was connected to a possible water-management feature to the south.

**Water Channel and Well:**
The trough directly connected to a gully (C229) which measured 2.22 m in length, 1.46 m in width and 0.27 m in depth. This in turn connected to a well (C230) (Plate 6). The well was located 2.28 m south of the trough. It measured 2.16 m in length, 1.66 m in width and 0.51 m in depth. This was used as a water supply to fill and possibly empty the large trough. The trough, gully and well were truncated by later cut features, which were interpreted as possible troughs (C187, C191 and C219).

**Pit 1:**
Pit C268 was excavated to the west of the site. It was sub-circular in shape and measured 2.42m by 1.4m and was 1.22m in depth. A moderate amount of cereal grain was identified in the fill of this pit. A single stake-hole was identified 1.5m south of the pit.

**Pit 2:**
Pit C292 was located directly north-east of the pit C268. It measured 1.56m by 1.77m and was 0.76m deep. The primary fill of in situ burning indicates a possible domestic use for these features while slag material from later fills indicates possible dumping of waste from nearby industrial practices.

**Finds:**
One lithic was recovered from the burnt mound

**Dating:**
Charcoal (willow) from post-hole within trough C183 (UB-12969) 2589±21 BP (766–524 BC)

**Excavation Interpretation**

The layers of burnt mound material covered a substantial rectangular trough which was connected to a small well. The deposits of burnt stone and charcoal at the site suggest it was used for a pyrolithic technology. The large trough and smaller pits indicate that there was extensive use of hot stone technology at this site and that it was probably used for heating water. The trough displayed evidence to suggest it was stone-lined and connected to a possible well by a water-channel. This suggests the trough was manually filled at the site and the water-channel possible served as an emptying mechanism.

**References**
Location: Ballynamona  Six inch map no: Sheet 19
Parish: Brigown  NGR: 182792, 111731
Barony: Condans and Glan  Altitude: 90-100m OD
County: Cork

Excavation Details:
Project: N8 Fermoy-Mitchelstown Bypass
Site Director: Linda Hegarty
Consultants: Eachtra Archaeological Projects
Year: 2006

Physical Setting:
The site was situated on level ground between 90 and 100 m OD to the east of Brigown and Mitchelstown. The area is drained by the Gradoge River.

Cultural Landscape:
There are no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the investigated area however the current road scheme unearth several previously unknown archaeological sites.

Adjacent Excavated Sites:
Two Bronze Age roundhouses, metalworking features and a cremation burial.

Pre-Excavation Features
There was no surface trace of the burnt mound prior to excavation. The site was revealed as a spread of charcoal enriched soil and fire-cracked stone during archaeological testing in advance of the N8 Fermoy-Mitchelstown Bypass.

Excavation Results
Summary of Features:
Resolution of the site revealed a number of features including two Bronze Age roundhouses, a cremation burial, metalworking features and a fulacht fia. The burnt mound overlay three troughs, a number of stake-holes, a possible hearth and a curvilinear ditch.

Burnt Mound:
The mound was oval in plan and measured 21m by 13m and was 0.3m in depth. The main layer (C254) consisted of dark black silt with ash (60%) and heat-shattered stone (40%).

Trough 1:
The trough (C281) was rectangular in plan with vertical sides and a flat base. It measured 2-3m in length by 1.3m in width and was 0.5m in depth (True length could not be determined due to truncation). The excavator noted a row of large stones at the base of the trough. These may have been used to divide the trough into two sections or compartments. The fill of the trough consisted of burnt mound material.
Hearth:
A hearth (C296) and two stake-holes were uncovered to the south of the trough C281. The hearth consisted of a shallow depression measuring 2.4m by 1.9m. It comprised of a 0.35m thick layer of dark silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. Two stake-holes were recorded on the southern edge of the hearth.

Trough 2:
The northern section of trough C281 was truncated by another trough C284. It was sub-rectangular in shape with steep sides and a flat base. It measured 2m by 1.8m and was 0.55m in depth. There were two deposits in the trough, both similar to the main burnt mound material.

Trough 3:
The third trough C265 was located c. 2m north-east of C81. It was circular in plan with steep sloping sides and a concave base. It measured 0.9m in diameter and was 0.23m deep. The primary fill (C267) of the trough consisted of sub-angular and sub-rounded stones and pebbles, overlying this was a thin layer of charcoal around the edges and a burnt clay deposit in the western part of the trough.

Curvilinear enclosure:
The mound covered a curvilinear ditch (C262), similar to a ring ditch with a possible entrance on the north-west side. The enclosure measured 4.5m internally with an external diameter of 5.7m. The ditch fill contained material similar to the mound, containing heat-shattered stone and moderate amounts of charcoal. A single post-hole was uncovered within the enclosure.

Finds:
None. Some cereal grains were recovered from the burnt mound.

Dating:
Hazelnut shell from the fill of trough C218
(UB-14114) 3082±28 BP (1393−1135 BC)
Cereal grain from the burnt mound
(UB-14115) 3131±28 BP (1492−1316 BC)

Excavation Interpretation
The layers of burnt mound material covered substantial rectangular troughs and a large area of burning. The deposits of burnt stone and charcoal at the site along with several boiling troughs and a hearth suggest it was used for a pyrolithic water-boiling technology. The discovery of a possible ring ditch underneath the burnt mound deposit is a relatively unusual occurrence. There is no indication of the function of the ditch but it is possible that it was originally a ring ditch that was never actually used for burials and cremation deposits.

References
Excavation Details:

- **Project:** N8 Fermoy-Mitchelstown Bypass
- **Site Director:** John Tierney
- **Consultants:** Eachtra Archaeological Projects
- **Year:** 2006

**Physical Setting:**
The site at Ballinglanna North 3 was located on the 100m contour, on the western reef of the Glencorra stream. The ground slopes to the south and to the west. The first burnt mound was located at the base of a hollow and water from the surrounding landscape would have drained and collected here. The Neolithic house (Structure 1) was located to the north. Both the first burnt mound and Structure 1 were situated on stony subsoil. The second burnt mound and the second Neolithic house (Structure 2) were located on higher, drier, virtually stone-less subsoil to the south.

**Cultural Landscape:**
There are no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the investigated area however the current road scheme unearth several previously unknown archaeological sites.

**Adjacent Excavated Sites:**
Two Neolithic Houses.

**Pre-excavation features**
There was no surface trace of the burnt mound prior to excavation. The site was revealed as a spread of charcoal enriched soil and fire-cracked stone during archaeological testing in advance of the N8 Fermoy-Mitchelstown Bypass.

**Excavation recorded**
**Summary of Features:**
Resolution of the site revealed a number of features including two rectangular Neolithic houses and two fulachtai fia. The first fulacht fia consisted of three layers of burnt mound material, three troughs and three pits. The second site consisted of two layers of burnt mound material, two troughs, eleven pits and a possible water channel.

**Site A**
**Burnt Mound:**
The burnt mound consisted of three layers (C6, C8 and C9) located in the northern part of the site in a hollow towards the base of a sloping valley. The excavator notes that its location resulted in a build up of colluvial deposits 0.25m in depth above the burnt mound. The three layers of burnt mound material consisted of dark grey to black sandy silt with burnt angular stones.
and moderate inclusions of charcoal flecks. They were found within a limited area that covered approximately 42.75 m². They ranged between 1.4 m and 5.6 m in length, 0.6 m and 3.5 m in width and 0.06 m and 0.15 m in depth.

**Trough 1:**
The earliest trough on site (C22) was sub-rectangular in plan and measured 2.26m by 1.2m and was 0.45m in depth. The fill of this trough consisted of silt and charcoal rich deposits. The trough was re-cut by another trough C15.

**Trough 2:**
This trough (C15) re-cut C22 and was oval in shape. It measured 1.9m by 1m and was 0.31m deep. These troughs were located at the southern extremity of layer C.6 with the burnt layer covering just the northern part.

**Trough 3:**
The third trough (C78) measured 1.75m by 1.6m and was 0.55m deep. It contained six fills with inclusions of pebbles, stones and charcoal.

**Pit 1:**
Pit C10 underlay the burnt mound material and measured 1.4m by 0.6m and was 0.06m deep. The excavator notes that the fill of the pit was indistinguishable from the layer of burnt mound material, suggesting that the pit was open when the layer of burnt mound material accumulated in this area.

**Pit 2:**
Pit C18 was located between the two burnt mound layers C6 and C8. It measured 0.96m by 0.81m and was 0.19m deep. The fill of this pit was similar to that of the mound material C6 indicating a direct link between this pit and the burnt mound to which it was adjoined.

**Pit 3:**
Pit C49 was located 2m south of the trough C22 and may have functioned as a trough due to morphological similarities with C22, C15 and C78. It measured 2m by 1.3m and was 0.2m deep.

**Site B**

**Burnt Mound:**
The second burnt mound was located south of the site and comprised of a main mound (C509) and two layers (C510 and C511) measuring 9.82m by 6.5m and was 0.18m deep. The material consisted of brown and black silty sand with inclusions of pebbles and charcoal. Two pieces of flint were recovered from C510 and three pieces of flint and six pottery fragments were recovered from C511.

**Trough 1:**
Trough C494 was located beyond the north-western edge of the mound. It was sub-rectangular in plan and measured 3m by 1.38 and was 0.2m in depth. It contained a fill consisting of charcoal and stony material.

**Trough 2:**
The second trough (C547) was covered by the mound and was oval in plan. It measured 1.96m by 1.19m by 0.3 and contained two deposits consisting of stones and charcoal.

**Pits 1-6:**
A total of six possible pits (C649, C667, C701, C708, C711 and C713) were revealed below the burnt mound layers (C510 and C511). These varied in shape between sub-rectangular, irregular, oval and linear; they
were generally filled with silty and sandy soils with inclusions of pebbles, stones and occasionally charcoal.

**Pits 7-11:** Another five possible pits (C493, C603, C624, C625, C641 and C681) were found in the area near Burnt mound 2. The largest was the oval pit (C603), located to the west of the burnt mound. A piece of flint was recovered from one of the fills within the pit. It is possible that pit (C603) was a third trough used in conjunction with the burnt mound activity. It was a suitable shape and size for holding water. However, there was evidence at the base and sides for *in situ* burning and burnt clay was recovered from two of its fills and it is also possible that this was a large cooking/roasting pit.

**Linear feature:** A linear features (C120) was found near the southern end of the burnt mound. It was linear with an irregular, flat base and dimensions of 1.27 m in length and 0.8 m in width. It was truncated by a drainage ditch. It is possible that it was a gully that was used in conjunction with the troughs of the burnt mound.

**Finds:** The lithic and pottery fragments recovered from burnt mound 2 are dated to the Neolithic and interpreted as residual from the Neolithic settlement activity at the top of the hill.

**Dating:** Charcoal (oak) from the fill of trough (C79) (site A) (UB-13147) 3791±26 BP (2293–2140 BC) Charcoal (hazel) from fill of trough (C475) (site B) (UB-13148) 3400±25 BP (1750–1628 BC) Charcoal (alder) from fill of trough (C546) (site B) (UB-13149) 3385±22 BP (1740–1627 BC)

**Excavation Interpretation**

The deposits of burnt stone and charcoal at the site along with several boiling troughs suggest they were used for a pyrolithic water-boiling technology. Radiocarbon dating confirms that the two burnt mound sites are not contemporary in date, a phenomenon that can be replicated across the country (see Chapter 6). Several pits were also identified at each of the burnt mounds. While some of these were interpreted as possibly Neolithic, others were associated with the burnt mounds, possible for dry heat.

**References**

Excavation Details:  
Project: N8 Fermoy-Mitchelstown Bypass  
Site Director: Linda Hegarty  
Consultants: Eachtra Archaeological Projects  
Year: 2006

Physical Setting:  
The site was situated at the head of the glen that surrounds the Glencorra Stream, on the side of a small watercourse on a gentle south-facing slope. It was on the opposite side of the hill to the sites excavated at Caherdrinny 2 E2421 and Caherdrinny 3 E2422.

Cultural Landscape:  
There are no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the investigated area however the current road scheme unearth several previously unknown archaeological sites.

Adjacent Excavated Sites:  
None

Pre-excavation features  
There was no surface trace of the archaeological features prior to excavation. The extensive site was revealed during archaeological testing in advance of the N8 Fermoy-Mitchelstown Bypass.

Excavation Results  
Summary of Features:  
The excavation of the site revealed a single deposit of black silty clay and heat-shattered stone. The deposit measured 11 m long by 2.5 m wide and 0.1 m deep. This deposit was interpreted as the truncated remains of a burnt mound, although there was no trough or other cut features associated with the spread of burnt mound material. However, the burnt mound was located by the side of a stream and it is possible that the trough was originally located within the stream No finds were recorded and the site was not scientifically dated.

References  
Catalogue No. CO 75–CO78

RMP No. CO076-120–23

Excavation No. 06E612

Location: Townland: Ballyadam  Six inch map no: 79
Parish: Carrigtohill  NGR: 183877, 73714
Barony: Barrymore  Altitude: 100m OD
County: Cork

Excavation Details: Project: Industrial development
Site Director: Rose M. Cleary
Consultants: Services Unit UCC
Year: 2006

Physical Setting: The site is situated 2km east of Carrigtohill and 3km west of Midleton on the north-east side of Cork Harbour. The area was located within the north of the Old Red Sandstone Ridge of the Great Island Anticline and south of the Cork Youghal Anticline. Two ponds were located on the west side and these have seasonal water-levels.

Cultural Landscape: The site is located within an area of known Bronze Age settlement and land use. Bronze Age settlement and burial sites were uncovered during groundworks for Fota Island golf course in the early 1990s. Prior to excavations at Ballyadam, there were four known fulachtaí fia in the environs of the site. One to the south (RMP CO 076-105) in Ballyvodock East townland was discovered after the field was tilled. There is also a cluster of three fulachtaí fia south of Barryscourt Castle (RMP CO 075-070/072).

Adjacent Excavated Sites: Iron Age pits (RMP CO076-119) and Carrigtohill fulacht fia and ring-ditch (RMP CO076-124).

Pre-excavation features
There was no surface trace of the archaeological features prior to excavation. The extensive site was revealed during archaeological testing.

Excavation Results

Summary of Features: The excavation of the site revealed four fulachtaí fia with related troughs and pits dating to the Early Bronze Age.

Site CO75

Burnt Mound: The burnt stone spread (C10) was dispersed over an area measuring 20m by 15m with a maximum thickness of 0.4m. It was composed of heat-shattered stone, black silty clay and charcoal. A mixture of alder, hazel and apple-type charcoal returned an Early Bronze Age date. Two flint flakes were recovered from the spread.
Trough 1: Trough (C33) was located north of the pond and was sub-circular in plan. The pit had a diameter of 2.4m with a maximum depth of 0.5m and showed no signs of being lined with timber or stone. A linear channel was associated with the pit and was upslope suggesting it may have functioned as a water-inlet channel. The trough was black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Trough 2: Trough (C23) was located north-east of the pond and was sub-circular in shape. It measured 1.6m by 1.4m with a depth of 0.5m. Seven small stake-holes cut the base of the feature suggesting it may have been lined with wattle, a common lining technique of the Early Bronze Age. A single fill was recorded in the pit composed of heat-shattered stone and black silty clay.

Trough 3: This trough (C20) was located 6m east of the pond. It was oval in plan and measured 2.2m by 2m with a depth of 0.6m. Two post-holes cut the base of the pit suggesting it may have been timber-lined originally. A linear channel also extended from this trough and can be interpreted as an overflow or emptying drain for the trough. The trough was filled with a single deposit of heat-shattered stone and black silty material.

Pits: Six other pits (C12, 13, 15, 23, 24 and 62) were identified beneath the burnt mound spread and two pits (C5 and C18) were outside the burnt stone spread. These pits varied in shape and size and none displayed evidence to suggest they functioned as troughs.

Site CO76

Burnt Mound: This spread (C33) was irregular in shape and extended over a distance of 20m. It was composed of black silty clay with high concentrations of charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Trough 1: The trough (C5/C20) was located 4.8m south of the pond. It was irregular in plan and the edges sloped into a second steep-sided pit (C20) that probably housed the trough lining. The outer pit (C5) was rounded on the southern end with a maximum width of 2.6m and length of 4.1m. The pit sides tapered towards the north where a narrow channel extended downslope from the pit. This possibly served as a drainage feature for the trough. The trough infill comprised a series of layers of heat-shattered stone and charcoal. Oak charcoal from this pit is dated to the Late Bronze Age.

Post-Holes: Four post-holes and two stake-holes were recorded on the north-west side of the trough. Their positioning adjacent to the trough may indicate a windbreak or drying rack.

Trough 2: A large pit (C63) to the south-east of the pond is also interpreted as a trough. It was oval in plan and measured 2.3m by 1.4m with a depth of 0.5m. A mixed silty deposit with heat-shattered stones was overlain by black soil and peat representing localised wet conditions. This trough was also associated with a water drainage feature.
Stake-Holes: Ten stake-holes were recorded to the south of the trough. The stake-holes were likely to have held some light temporary structure associated with activities at the site.

Pits: Six pits were recorded in the environs of the trough and these were either oval or circular in plan and varied in depth and infill. C1 was deep enough to have functioned as a trough. The others may have functioned as pits employing a dry heat.

Site CO77

Burnt Spread: The burnt stone spread (C3) was irregular in plan and measured 6.8m by 6.3m with a maximum thickness of 0.25m. It was composed of charcoal-enriched soil with some heat-shattered stones.

Pit 1: Pit (C1) may have functioned as a trough. It was oval in plan and measured 1.1m by 1.6m with a depth of 0.5m. The basal fill consisted of charcoal-enriched silt and some heat-shattered stones. Charcoal from this layer is dated to the Early Bronze Age.

Pit 2: The second pit (C2/8) was figure-of-eight in plan with a wider northern section. It measured 2m by 1.1m with a depth of 0.15m. It was filled with heat-shattered stone.

Site CO78

Burnt Spread: The burnt spread (C10) was spread over an area measuring 20m by 15m and was composed of heat-shattered sandstone, charcoal and black silty clay.

Trough: The pit (C3) was the largest on site and interpreted as a possible trough. It was oval in plan and measured 2.65m by 2.2m with a maximum depth of 0.45m. Six stake-holes cut the base of the trough suggesting the feature may have originally been wattle-lined. A short channel also extended from the trough and may have functioned as a drainage feature. The trough was filled with two deposits of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. Two post-holes were also recorded immediately adjacent to the trough.

Possible Trough: Pit (C42) was located 4.6m north of the trough. It was circular in plan with a diameter of 1.6m and a depth of 0.65m. A small channel extended from the feature and may have acted as an overflow. A single stake-hole cut the base of the pit and may have served as a support for a timber-lining. A number of fills were recorded in the pit composed of charcoal-enriched soil and heat-shattered stone.

Pits: Five other pits were excavated on site and these were either oval or circular in plan and varied in depth and infill.

Finds: A number of flint flakes were recovered from the burnt spread at Site CO75.

Dating: Charcoal (alder, hazel, apple) from burnt spread (Site CO75) (UBA-8449) 3788±30 BP (2335–2063 BC) Charcoal (alder and holly) from fill of trough (C5/20) (Site CO76)
(UBA-8452) 2804±31 BP (1044–894 BC)
Charcoal (alder) from fill of pit C2 (Site CO76)
(UBA-8451) 3571±46 BP (2033–1770 BC)
Charcoal (apple-type and willow) from fill of C1 (Site CO77)
(UBA-8453) 3726±33 BP (2271–2028 BC)
Charcoal (hazel, apple-type and willow) from post-hole (C38) (Site CO78)
(UBA-8454) 3714±34 BP (2203–1983 BC)

**Excavation Interpretation**

The remains of four *fulachtaí fia* were revealed at Ballyadam representing intense pyrolithic activity during the Latter Chalcolithic in Ireland. All of the sites were sited within low-lying areas with a ready source of water, which is typical for these sites. All sites revealed classic features of *fulachtaí fia* including troughs, pits, water-channels and evidence of trough linings. This suggests a combination of water-boiling and dry roasting activities at the site, possibly for cooking. The lack of butchered animal bone at the site can be explained by the acidic sandstone burnt stone deposits.

**References**


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![Fig. 10.51 Burnt mound sites and natural ponds at Ballyadam, Co. Cork.](image-url)
Location: Townland: Carrigtohill Six inch map no: 76
Parish: Carrigtohill NGR: 183210, 73120
Barony: Barrymore Altitude: NA
County: Cork

Excavation Details: Project: Sewerage Pipeline
Site Director: Rose M. Cleary
Consultants: Services Unit UCC
Year: 2007

Physical Setting: The site is situated 2km east of Carrigtohill and 3km west of Midleton on the north-east side of Cork Harbour. The area was located within the north of the Old Red Sandstone Ridge of the Great Island Anticline and south of the Cork Youghal Anticline. Two ponds were located on the west side and these have seasonal water-levels.

Cultural Landscape: The site is located within an area of known Bronze Age settlement and land use. Bronze Age settlement and burial sites were uncovered during groundworks for Fota Island golf course in the early 1990s. Prior to excavations at Ballyadam, there were four known fulachtai fia in the environs of the site. One to the south (RMP CO 076-105) in Ballyvodock East townland was discovered after the field was tilled. There is also a cluster of three fulachtai fia south of Barryscourt Castle (RMP CO 075-070/072).

Adjacent Excavated Sites: Ballyadam fulachtai fia (See above)

Pre-excavation features
There was no surface trace of the archaeological features prior to excavation. The extensive site was revealed during archaeological testing.

Excavation Results
Summary of Features: The excavation of the site revealed a large deposit of heat-shattered stone, a trough and associated water-management features and a Late Bronze Age ring-ditch.

Burnt Mound: The spread of burnt stones and charcoal-rich clay (C2) was irregular in plan and extended over an area measuring 18m E/W by 12m N/S and was up to 0.3m thick. The stones were shattered through exposure to fire and identified as sandstone. The mound material built up over the ring-ditch (F9) and pit (F46) and stratigraphically later and was also cut through by a medieval ditch (C44). The mound material varied in composition and included compact lenses of stone and mixed clay, charcoal and stone. A sample of charcoal from the deposit is dated to the Late Bronze Age.
Trough: The trough was located slightly downslope and to the north-east of the ring-ditch (F9). It was rectangular in plan, aligned north-west/south east, the long axis (NW/SE) was 2.5m in length and the width was 1.6m (SW/NE). Where best-preserved on the south–west side, the trough was steep-sided and remained intact to a maximum depth of c. 0.35m below boulder clay level. The north end of the trough was largely destroyed by the insertion of a ditch in the early eleventh/twelfth century AD and little remained except the basal ground plan.

Reservoir and channel: A large pit (F29) was recorded adjacent to the north-east corner and this is interpreted as a water reservoir (similar to a modern water-butt) which possibly held water for use in the fulacht fia. The pit was 5.6m in overall length (NW/SE), at maximum 4m wide (E/W) and was deepest at 0.6m in the centre of the pit. The pit linked to the fulacht fia by a short channel (F48) that was c. 1.1m long and 1–2m wide, being widest where it drained into the pit (F29). The channel was separated from the pit (F29) by a line of six stake-holes (F49). Four of these stake-holes formed a line that extended for 1.5m between the channel and pit and were set at intermediary distances. These stakes may have supported a gate that functioned as some type of sluice or filtration system. A partially-excavated channel (F33) was recorded on the east side of the pit. This was 1m wide at the junction with the pit (F29) and appeared to continue for up to 7m towards the east.

Pits: Two conjoined pits (F27 and F35) lay to the north-west of the ditch (C9). F35 was oval in plan and measured 1.33m (N/S) by 2.50m (E/W) by 0.55m deep (Figs 2 and 5) with sloping sides and a rounded base; the fill was burnt stone, charcoal and soil. A lip occurred at a depth of 0.33m below the surface where a stake-hole (F35A) was recorded on the north side.

Ring-ditch: The ditch (F9) was located c. 2.5m south-east of the trough (F47) of a fulacht fia. Fire-shattered stone and charcoal (F2) from pyrolithic technology associated with the use of the fulacht fia spread over and filled both the enclosing ring-ditch (F9) and the central pit (F46). As there were no silt layers or any evidence of infill in either the ditch or the pit it is probable that the ring-ditch was dug and near-contemporary with the use of the fulacht fia.

Finds: A worked flint flake was recovered from the mound while a fragment of a lignite bracelet was found in the central pit associated with the ring-ditch.

Dating: Charcoal (hazel and ash) from the burnt mound (UBA-8455) 2749±33 BP (890–800 BC)
Charcoal (hazel) from fill of ring-ditch (UBA-8457) 2679±33 BP (890–800 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

The absence of any silting in the ring-ditch and in the central pit suggests that the ring-ditch and the initial phase of mound accumulation were virtually contemporary events. The proximity of the ring-ditch to a fulacht fia at Carrigtohill is closely paralleled at Ballynmona 2, Co. Cork where both site types were
excavated in advance of the M8 road scheme east of Mitchelstown. The focus of pyrolithic activity at the site centred on a rectangular boiling trough (F47) and a large circular pit (F29) interpreted as a reservoir or water cistern. Although the hydrology of the site may have changed significantly since the Bronze Age, the trough at Carrigtohill did not fill naturally during the excavation and the presence of a water-holding facility (F29) suggests the trough would have required a sealant for water retention and may have required manual filling. The trough (F47) was connected to a topographically lower pit (F29) by a small channel (F48) interpreted as a mechanism to either release or drain excess water. The channel (F48) was cut by six stake-holes, four of which formed a line where the channel terminated before entering the pit. It is suggested that these stakes functioned as supports for a wooden sluice allowing water to be released into the lower pit. It may be that water was heated to the necessary temperature in the trough before being released into the lower pit via the sluice system, allowing the fired debris to be removed before the process could begin again. With this scenario, the connected features functioned to separate the heat-shattered stone and fired debris from the water with the additional wattle structure acting as a filter where the water may have been recycled.

References

Excavation No. 07E771

Location: Townland: Burgersland  Six inch map no: 76
Parish: Carrigtohil  NGR: 184690, 73340
Barony: Barrymore  Altitude: 36
County: Cork

Excavation Details: Project: Gas Pipeline
Site Director: Maurice F. Hurley
Consultants: Independant
Year: 2007

Physical Setting: The site was located in the townland of Burgersland, approximately two miles from Midleton and seven miles from Cork. The *fulacht fia* was located approximately 5m east of a stream, which runs in a North South direction.

Cultural Landscape: The site is located within an area of known Bronze Age settlement and land use. Bronze Age settlement and burial sites were uncovered during groundworks for Fota Island golf course in the early 1990s. Prior to excavations at Burgersland, there were four known *fulachtaí fia* in the environs of the site. One to the south (RMP CO 076-105) in Ballyvodock East townland was discovered after the field was tilled. There is also a cluster of three *fulachtaí fia* south of Barryscourt Castle (RMP CO 075-070/072). Recent archaeological excavations have also identified further pyrolithic activity to the north of the site at Ballyadam and Carrigtohill.

Adjacent Excavated Sites: None

**Pre-excavation features**

There was no surface trace of the archaeological features prior to excavation. The site was revealed during archaeological testing and its full extent was not revealed.

**Excavation Results**

Summary of Features: The excavation of the site revealed a large deposit of heat-shattered stone. No troughs were revealed. The burnt spread measured 11.3m by 5.2 with a maximum thickness of 0.55m. It was composed of four varying deposits of heat-shattered stone (60% sandstone), dark silty clay and charcoal flecking. The deposit was situated in large natural hollow. Two small pits were revealed, one of which may have functioned as a roasting pir as it contained oxidised clay. No finds were recovered and the site was not scientifically dated.

**References**

Excavation No. 07E217

Location: Townland: Carrignafoy  Six inch map no: Sheet 87
Parish: Templerobin  NGR: 180668, 067356
Barony: Barrymore  Altitude: 60m OD
County: Cork

Excavation Details: Project: Housing Development
Site Director: Máire Ni Loingsigh
Consultants: Sheila Lane and Associates
Year: 2007

Physical Setting: The site originally comprised a large field and was located on the east slope of a hill which dominates the town of Cobh. At the east boundary of the site a small stream flows north down a steep hill and joins the west/east flowing Ballyleary stream in the valley below. The lower (eastern) part of the field was quite wet and boggy prior to development.

Cultural Landscape: There are a number of recorded monuments in the vicinity of the site at Carrignafoy, however there are only a small number of prehistoric sites consisting of fulachtaí fia located 950m to the northnorthwest in the townland of Ballynacrusha (CO 087-1101 and 02) and 1km to the north-west in the same townland (CO 087-100). A multi-period site including an Early to Middle Bronze Age house was excavated 5km to the north-west of Carrignafoy (92E020).

Adjacent Excavated Sites: None

Pre-excavation features

There was no surface trace of the archaeological features prior to excavation. The site was revealed as a large spread of heat-shattered stone within a charcoal rich deposit during topsoil removal for a large scale housing development.

Excavation record

Summary of Features: The excavation of the site at Carrignafoy uncovered a large spread of burnt mound material, two large troughs and a smaller associated trough, a hearth, a water channel, a circular structure and a number of post-holes.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound spread (F1) was sub-oval in shape and measured 9m N/S by 16m E/W. It consisted of burnt and blackened, heat-shattered stone and charcoal rich material.

Trough 1: Trough F35 was located to the west of the site and was sub-rectangular in shape. It measured 5.18m by 1.5m wide and ranged from 0.7-0.9m in depth. It had steep sides on the north, east and west but was quite shallow at the
southern end. The fill of the trough consisted of black silty sand, charcoal and heat-shattered sandstone. Two stake-holes were recorded half way up the south-east side. Medium sized flat sandstones were noted on the south-west, south and south-east of the trough, but were absent in the north-east. Two parallel flat timbers were recorded at the base of the trough. Both ends of the timber were decayed and it was broken in two about a third of its length from the thinner end. The upper surface of the timber was significantly smoother than the underside. The excavator notes that it was unclear if the stone and timber linings were contemporary.

Hearth:
On the northern edge of the trough F35 was a substantial sandstone lined hearth structure surrounded by six slabs placed in the natural subsoil. The stones showed no evidence of being heat-affected. The base of the hearth was formed by well-laid flat slabs. The slabs were shattered, but showed no evidence of scorching. At the south of the hearth the slabs had begun to slip into the trough (F35), which the excavator suggests were in contemporary usage. The overall dimensions of the hearth were 2.1m square by c. 0.3m deep.

Structure:
A circular cut feature (F20) was recorded surrounding the trough F35 and partially cut it. It was c. 5m in diameter and was represented by seven post-holes and a series of slot trenches. There was a gap measuring 0.5m wide in the north-eastern portion of the structure which may represent an entrance feature. The depth of the slot-trench varied from 0.18m to 0.4m with a combination of both v-shaped and u-shaped profiles. Packing stones were present in most of the square to sub-circular post-holes. The ground surface in the interior or internal part of the circle (F20) was of natural stony subsoil. There was one posthole (F43) located inside the circle, to the east of the trough (F35).

Hollow/Pit:
Immediately to the south of the trough F35 was an irregular hollow (F30) measuring 2m by 2.5m with a maximum depth of 0.3m. Offshoots were noted to the west and south-east. The excavator suggests that this hollow may have resulted from the flow of water from activity being carried out in the trough F35 (Ní Loingsigh 2007).

Water channel:
A shallow channel (F59) led eastwards from trough F35 and F30 to a steep edged trough F17 which abutted a second oval shaped trough F9. The channel was on average 0.6m wide at the top and 0.2m wide at the base, and a maximum of 0.25m deep. At the base of the channel was a 0.1m layer of either fill or natural subsoil which had been affected by the running water.

Trough 2:
Two troughs were located in this eastern part of the site also. The smaller trough (F17) measured 1.4m by 2m and was 0.5m deep. It had steep-sided edges but was cut by a modern drain. Two large stones separated this trough from another larger trough F9. Trough F17 had an orange brown gritty clay base and it was filled with stony black soil with occasional charcoal.

Trough 3:
This larger oval shaped trough (F9) cut the smaller trough F17. It measured 5.18m by 4.2m with a maximum depth of 0.65m. A row of small stones
(F84) set on edge at the base of the trough may indicate the original north edge of the smaller trough (F17), which was worn/washed away by water/scouring action. The basal fill of F9 consisted of silty gray clay and charcoal. The second fill contained stony gravel and orange clay while the upper fill contained black stony soil.

Post-holes/stake-holes: 4m to the east of the rectangular trough (F35) and 1m to the north of the oval trough (F9) was an area measuring c.4.5m SW/NE by 3m SE/NW containing a number of postholes and or stake-holes in an apparently irregular arrangement. No apparent form or plan was evident in the layout/location of the postholes, but they may represent a structure that was ploughed out, truncated by later agricultural activity. There was no evidence to link these cut features with the troughs and associated features to the south and west (Ní Loingsigh, 2007).

Finds: Possible whetstone recovered from the burnt mound

Dating: None

Excavation Interpretation

Excavation of the site revealed extensive evidence for pyrolithic technology within a substantial enclosure. A substantial stone-built trough and hearth imply that the site was a permanent feature in the local landscape where water-boiling was carried out. The large pit features associated with the internal trough also suggests a group proficient in the management of water. The increased area of the trough supports the theory that this site may have functioned as a sauna/sweat lodge. The larger the trough size, the greater the surface area for steam to evaporate off the water. If the trough was filled with heated water and hides or thatch were used to roof the timber structure, high humidity levels would have been achieved. There are however, alternative explanations as the archaeological record now supports more convincing examples of sweatlodges, where the stones are simply transported to a small tented environment and sprinkled with cold water (see Chapter 7).

References

Excavation No. 06E1110

Location: Townland: Cappagh  
Parish: Ringcurran  
Barony: Kinsale  
County: Cork  

Six inch map no: Sheet 87  
NGR: 162775, 050319  
Altitude: 60m OD  

Excavation Details:  
Project: Housing Development  
Site Director: Tony Cummins  
Consultants: Sheila Lane and Associates  
Year: 2008  

Physical Setting:  
The development site comprised a number of pasture fields situated on the south-facing slope of a steep ridge overlooking a stretch of the River Bandon c.1km upstream (west) of Kinsale harbour. The fulacht fia was uncovered adjacent to an underground spring on a gently sloping terrace in the west end of the development site.

Cultural Landscape:  
While there are a number of recorded monuments in the vicinity of the site excavated at Cappagh, prehistoric archaeology is scarce with only one recorded fulacht fia located c. 700m to the east (CO 111:076).

Adjacent Excavated Sites: None

Pre-Excavation Features

There was no surface trace of the archaeological features prior to excavation. The site was revealed as a large spread of heat-shattered stone within a charcoal rich deposit during topsoil removal for a housing development.

Excavation Results

Summary of Features:  
The excavation of the site at Cappagh uncovered a disturbed spread of burnt mound material which sealed a rectangular trough and an associated hearth.

Burnt Mound:  
The burnt mound spread (C4) extended over an area measuring 6.7m by 9.6m and ranged in depth between 0.02 and 0.38m. It filled a shallow hollow on the terrace and comprised of a charcoal-enriched, sandy clay deposit with frequent inclusions of heat-shattered stones. The spread was truncated by a modern drainage ditch, cultivation furrows and tree roots. Samples from the spread identified oak, hazel, willow, cherry and elm, with hazel and oak the main taxa present.

Trough:  
The trough C24 was located at the centre of the burnt spread and was cut into the natural subsoil. It was heavily truncated by a modern drainage trench. Its surviving extent measured 2.4m by 0.5m deep and it extended 0.5m north
from the edge of the drainage trench. The concave north and east sides of the trough turned gradually to a flat base and there were no traces of a timber or stone lining present. There were eleven fills noted in the trough. These thin fills appeared to represent a number of phases of use of the site as well as slumps of burnt spread material into the trough. The upper surface of the trough was sealed with a re-deposited layer of sterile subsoil. This compact deposit appeared to be associated with the ground disturbance created by the excavation of the adjacent modern drainage trench.

Hearth: The hearth (C31) was located adjacent to the east edge of the trough. It was revealed as an area of scorched subsoil measuring 0.6m by 0.83m. This feature was also truncated by the modern drainage ditch which ran through the centre of the site. There was no visible trace of a cut or stone-lining associated with the hearth indicating that the stones were heated on the open ground surface and then deposited into the adjacent trough.

Finds: None

Dating: Charcoal (species unknown) from the burnt spread C4 (GRN-4100) uncalibrated date unknown BP (1527−1427 BC)

Site Interpretation

The site was heavily truncated by a modern drainage ditch which effectively bisected the features identified on site. The presence of a small mound of heat-shattered stone and a well-defined trough pit and formal hearth would confirm without any doubt that the site functioned as a pyrolithic water-boiling site. No lining was evident in the pit and there was no evidence of internal stake-holes. This may imply the site was used for short term boiling process and this can be supported by the small mound of waste-firing debris.

References

Catalogue No. CO 83

RMP No. NA

Excavation No. 08E665

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<td>NGR: 161019, 068810</td>
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<td>Altitude: 19m OD</td>
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Excavation Details: Project: Ballynora to Lehenaghmore Gas Pipeline

Site Director: Maurice F. Hurley

Consultants: Independent

Year: 2008

Physical Setting: The site was located in a field on the east bank of the Curraheen River. It is at the foot of a small valley through which the river runs down from the ridge of hills to the south, into the broad valley of the River Bride, a tributary of the River Lee. The site is located on low lying ground.

Cultural Landscape: The site is located c. 250m southeast of a fulacht fia (08E804), c. 240m southeast of a ring-ditch (08E802) and c. 350m southeast of a roundhouse (08E803) all located in the townland of Curraheen and excavated as part of this project. There is one recorded fulacht fia in Doughcloyne (RMP CO086-007) and seventeen were excavated in advance of the Ballincollig Bypass.

Adjacent Excavated Sites: Fulacht fia, ring-ditch and roundhouse all excavated within 400m of this site.

Pre-excavation features

There was no surface trace of the archaeological features prior to excavation.

Excavation Results

Summary of Features: Resolution of the site revealed a roughly oval spread of heat-shattered stone, an oval shaped hearth and a shallow pit. The burnt spread (F1) was oval in shape and measured 4.3m by 6.7m and was 0.09m in thickness. It consisted of heat-shattered stone within a charcoal rich deposit and was revealed 0.54m below the modern ground surface. An oval shaped hearth (F2) was located at the south-west point of the spread and measured 1.66m by 1.4m and was 0.12m deep. A small circular pit (F3) was located immediately south-west of the hearth F2. It measured 0.4m in diameter and was 0.05m deep. It was filled with dark brown/black soil with small heat-shattered stones. No finds were recovered.

Dating: Charcoal (alder) from the burnt mound (UBA-15507) 3845±32 BP (2459–2204 BC)

References

Excavation No. 08E665

Location: Townland: Curraheen
Parish: Inishkenny
Barony: Cork
County: Cork

Six inch map no: Sheet 87
NGR: 160987, 068966
Altitude: 19m OD

Excavation Details: Project: Ballynora to Lehenaghmore Gas Pipeline
Site Director: Maurice F. Hurley
Consultants: Independent
Year: 2008

Physical Setting: The site was in agricultural use prior to the commencement of construction work

Cultural Landscape: The site was c. 250m north-west of a second fulacht fia (08E665) in the townland of Ballinveiltig also excavated as part of this project. A ring-ditch (Curraheen 1 08E802) and Bronze Age roundhouse (Curraheen 2 08E803) were located 19m east and 230m west-northwest respectively from this site. There is one recorded fulacht fia in Doughcloyne (RMP CO086-007---) and seventeen were excavated (including eight in the townland of Curraheen) prior to construction of the Ballincollig Bypass.

Adjacent Excavated Sites: Fulacht fia, ring-ditch and roundhouse all excavated within 400m of this site.

Pre-excavation features

There was no surface trace of the archaeological features prior to excavation.

Excavation record

Summary of Features: Resolution of the site revealed a hearth and an associated channel leading to a spread of burnt mound material.

Burnt Mound: The burnt spread (F3) extended south beyond the pipeline corridor. The maximum recorded dimensions at the uppermost level of excavation were 7m by 2.7m. The burnt material was in a pit which gradually sloped inward and decreased in width from 7m at 0.6m below ground level to 2.6m at 1.78m below the original ground surface level. Natural gravel was present below the burnt material. There was no evidence for a trough below the burnt material (F3).

Hearth: The circular hearth (F1) consisted of a pit with gently sloping sides and a flat base measuring 0.94m in diameter by 0.12m deep. The pit was cut into the natural underlying clay which was oxidised in a 0.1m wide band around the hearth. The hearth was filled with heat-shattered sandstone and charcoal.
Two stake-holes were identified west of the hearth while a further stake-hole was uncovered to the west of these.

Channel: The hearth was connected to the main spread of burnt material (F3) to the south by a 2.4m long channel (F2) 1m to 1.5m wide with a maximum depth of 0.33m. The channel was filled with a layer of brown, stony clay over a layer of burnt stones and charcoal.

Finds: None

Dating: Charcoal (prunus) from the hearth (UBA-15508) 1224±30 BP (AD 690–886 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

The site consisted of a hearth with associated channel leading to a spread of heat-shattered stones and charcoal that continued beyond the limit of excavation to the south. It is suggested that the dated charcoal may be intrusive or the hearth may relate to secondary use of the site, particularly as there is currently no archaeological evidence to support the use of fulachtai fia during the Early Medieval period (see Chapter 6). No trough or other pit used for pyrolithic processes was confirmed during the excavation.

References

Location: Townland: Castlemary Six inch map no: Sheet 88
Parish: Inch NGR: 189390, 067520
Barony: Imokilly Altitude: NA
County: Cork

Excavation Details: Project: East Cork Gas Pipeline
Site Director: Terry Connell
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services
Year: 2008

Physical Setting: The site is situated in a low-lying area adjacent to a small spring.

Cultural Landscape: There are no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the site.

Adjacent Excavated Sites: Another burnt spread was excavated 300m north-east of this site (see below)

Pre-Excavation Features

This was a recorded during archaeological testing for the East Cork Gas Pipeline. The site was heavily damaged by ploughing.

Excavation Results

Summary of Features: Resolution of the site revealed the presence of two burnt spreads. No other features were uncovered on site. Two shallow spreads (F3 and F4) were uncovered which may have originally been one entity that was ploughed away across its centre. F3 was sub-circular and measured 2.5m by 1.7m and was 0.15m deep. It consisted of loose charcoal enriched clay with a large amount of heat-shattered stone. F4 was located 3m to the south-east and was sub-rectangular in shape. It measured 2.7m by 5m and was 0.25m deep. It consisted of material identical to that of F3. Charcoal from the spread F3 was identified as alder brushwood. No finds were recorded from the spread deposits.

Dating: Charcoal (alder) from the burnt spread F3 (GU-17305) 3135±35 BP (1500–1310 BC)

References

Pre-excavation features

There was no surface trace of the archaeological features prior to excavation. The site was revealed as two pits containing burnt mound material during topsoil stripping in advance of the East Cork Gas Pipeline.

Excavation record

Summary of Features: Resolution of the site revealed two pits containing charcoal and heat-shattered stones. No spread of mound of burnt stone was recovered.

Pit 1: Pit F3 was sub-circular in shape and measured 2m by 1.5m and was 0.66m deep. It had steeply sloping sides with a concave base and the fill consisted of loose black sandy silt with charcoal and small-medium sized heat-shattered stone.

Pit 2: Pit F4 was oval in shape and measured 3m by 1.5m and was 0.33m deep. It had a sharp break of slope with steep sides and a concave base. It was filled with material similar to that of pit F3 consisting of black silty sand, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. Charcoal from the pit was identified as oak and alder.

Dating: Charcoal (Alder) from the burnt spread F3 (GU-17306) 3305±35 BP (1690–1500 BC)

References

Excavation Details:  
Project:  East Cork Gas Pipeline  
Site Director:  Tara O’Neill  
Consultants:  Archaeological Consultancy Services  
Year:  2008

Physical Setting:  The site was situated in low-lying area close to a water-source.

Cultural Landscape:  There are no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the site.

Adjacent Excavated Sites:  None

Pre-excavation features

There was no surface trace of the archaeological features prior to excavation. The site was revealed as a spread of burnt mound material during topsoil stripping in advance of the East Cork Gas Pipeline.

Excavation record

Summary of Features:  Resolution of the site revealed two pits containing charcoal and heat-shattered stones and a large spread of burnt mound material.

Burnt Mound:  The burnt mound (F3) measured 20m by 11m and was 0.5m thick. It consisted of black silty clay with frequent charcoal flecks and heat-shattered stone. It sealed two underlying pits (F5 and F9). Charcoal from the spread was identified as hazel. The heat-shattered stone consisted of 80% Sandstone and 20% limestone.

Pit 1:  Pit F5 was sub-circular in shape and measured 0.65m by 0.4m and was 0.27m deep. It had steeply sloping sides and the fill consisted of black silty clay with heat-shattered sandstone and occasional charcoal.

Pit 2:  Pit F9 was sub-circular in shape and measured 0.95 by 0.70 and was 0.32m deep. It had steeply sloping sides and the fill consisted of black silty clay with heat-shattered stone and occasional charcoal flecks.

Dating:  Charcoal (hazel) from the burnt spread F3  
(GU-17309) 2900±35 BP (1220–970 BC)

References

Pre-excitation features

There was no surface trace of the archaeological features prior to excavation. The site was revealed as a spread of burnt mound material during topsoil stripping in advance of the East Cork Gas Pipeline.

Excavation record

Summary of Features: Resolution of the site revealed two small burnt mound spreads.

Burnt Mound: Two small burnt mound spreads (F3 and F4) were revealed during excavation. F3 measured 1m by 0.5m and was 0.1m thick. The spread consisted of black silty clay with frequent charcoal flecks and 80% heat-shattered sandstone. The burnt spread F4 was located adjacent to F3 and measured 5.5m by 2m and was 0.1m thick. It consisted of loose black silty clay with charcoal and 70% heat-shattered sandstone. Charcoal from the site was identified as alder.

Finds: None

Dating: Charcoal (alder) from the burnt spread F3 (GU-17310) 3690±30 BP (2150−1970 BC)

References

Located in a low-lying area close to a water-source. There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the site. Adjacent excavated sites: None.

The project was revealed as a spread of burnt mound material during topsoil stripping in advance of the East Cork Gas Pipeline.

Resolution of the site revealed a crescent-shaped burnt mound spread and a linear feature associated with modern agricultural activity.

The burnt mound spread (F3) was crescent-shaped and measured 15m by 10.5m and was 0.19m thick. It consisted of loose brown/black silty clay with moderate amounts of heat-shattered limestone and very occasional sandstone and charcoal inclusions. The linear feature F5 cut the spread and was agricultural in nature.

Excavation record

Summary of Features: Resolution of the site revealed a crescent shaped burnt mound spread and a linear feature associated with modern agricultural activity.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound spread (F3) was crescent shaped and measured 15m by 10.5m and was 0.19m thick. It consisted of loose brown/black silty clay with moderate amounts of heat-shattered limestone and very occasional sandstone and charcoal inclusions. The linear feature F5 cut the spread and was agricultural in nature.

Finds: None

Dating: Charcoal (alder) from the burnt spread F3 (GU-17315) 3380±35 BP (1760–1600 BC)

References

Pre-excavation features

This was a recorded archaeological site prior to excavation (RMP CO 088-090/091). It was revealed during testing for the East Cork Gas Pipeline.

Excavation record

Summary of Features: Resolution of the site revealed a crescent shaped burnt mound spread. The site was heavily disturbed by root activity.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound spread (F3) was sub-circular in shape and measured 10m by 7.7m and was 0.4m in thickness. It consisted of black silty clay with charcoal flecks and concentrations of heat-shattered sandstone (60%). Limestone accounted for 40% of the stone at the site. A modern spring well was located north-west of the spread. Charcoal was identified as oak and hazel.

Dating: Charcoal (oak and hazel) from the burnt spread F3 (GU-17311) 3020±35 BP (1180–1130 BC)

References

Location: Townland: Ballincarroonig  Six inch map no: Sheet 88
Parish: Aghada  NGR: 185080, 064352
Barony: Imokilly  Altitude: NA
County: Cork

Excavation Details: Project: East Cork Gas Pipeline
Site Director: Linda Clarke
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services
Year: 2008

Physical Setting: The site was situated in low-lying area close to a water-source.

Cultural Landscape: There are no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the site.

Adjacent Excavated Sites: None

Pre-excavation features

There was no surface trace of the archaeological features prior to excavation. The site was revealed as a spread of burnt mound material during topsoil stripping in advance of the East Cork Gas Pipeline. Much of this site was preserved in situ due to the presence of a 2.5m bank of material under which the burnt mound extended.

Excavation record

Summary of Features: Resolution of the site revealed a large burnt mound spread. Most of the site was not impacted upon therefore, this portion, was preserved in situ.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound spread (F3) measured 15m by 10.5m and was 0.19m thick. It extended beyond a vertical face (2m in height) of overburden to the eastern extent of the site therefore this area was left intact. The spread consisted of loose black silty clay with moderate amounts of heat-shattered limestone (90%), occasional charcoal flecks and very occasional heat-shattered sandstone (10%). The spread was cut by three field drains. Charcoal was identified as ash and hazel.

Dating: Charcoal (ash and hazel) from the burnt spread F3 (GU-17312) 2835±35 BP (1120–900 BC)

References

Excavation Details: Project: East Cork Gas Pipeline
Site Director: Tara O’Neill
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services
Year: 2008

Physical Setting: The site was situated in low-lying area close to a water-source.

Cultural Landscape: There are no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the site.

Adjacent Excavated Sites: None

Pre-excavation features
There was no surface trace of the archaeological features prior to excavation.

Excavation record
Summary of Features: Resolution of the site revealed two spreads of burnt mound material, two pits and two linear features.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound consisted of two spreads F13 and F14 which were contained within a slight depression. Spread F13 was irregular in shape and measured 3.63m by 2.55m and was 0.22m deep. It consisted of black silty clay with heat-shattered sandstone and frequent charcoal flecks. This spread overlay spread F14 which consisted of loose grey silty sand and occasional pebbles. It measured 1.25m by 0.95m and was 0.07m thick.

Pit 1: Pit F5 was oval in shape and measured 1.14m by 1.25m and was 0.42m deep. It had steeply sloping sides with a concave base and the fill consisted of brown/black silty sand with frequent heat-shattered stone and charcoal.

Pit 2: Pit F8 was sub-circular in shape and measured 1.9m by 1.6m and was 0.27m deep. It had steeply sloping sides with a flat base and the fill consisted of loose black sandy clay with occasional charcoal flecks and heat-shattered stone.

Dating: Charcoal (alder) from pit F5 (GU-17314) 3065±35 BP (1230–1210 BC)

References
Location: Townland: Walshtown Beg Six inch map no: 54
Parish: Templenacarriga NGR: 188220, 082010
Barony: Barrymore Altitude: NA
County: Cork

Excavation Details: Project: Curraleigh West to Middleton Gas Pipeline
Site Director: Brenda O’ Meara and Bernice Molloy
Consultants: Margaret Gowen and Company
Year: 2009

Physical Setting: This site lay in the catchment area of the Dungourney River. The underlying bedrock geology was of sandstone. The site was situated along a tract of poor quality marshy ground. It was located in a very wet hollow at the base of a north and south-facing slope. The land was under pasture following intensive modern drainage. Natural subsoil consisted of yellow grey sandy clay.

Cultural Landscape: This site was recorded in relative isolation along the pipeline corridor route, due probably to the nature of the land which the pipeline route traversed in this location. There are very few recorded monuments located in the townland of Walshtown Beg. The only recorded monument within a 1km range is a fulacht fiadh (CO054-011).

Adjacent Excavated Sites: None

Pre-exavation features
There was no surface trace of the archaeological features prior to excavation. The site was revealed as a spread of burnt mound material during topsoil stripping in advance of the Curraleigh to Midleton Gas Pipeline.

Excavation record

Summary of Features: Resolution of the site revealed two spreads of burnt mound material, a trough, several intercutting pits, two water channels and gravel surface.

Phase 1 (Stone Surface): F36 consisted of a compact light grey clay gravel stony silt that was recorded overlying the natural subsoil across the site. It covered an area measuring 10.4m by 9.7m. The authors suggest that this deposit may have been introduced to raise the ground level which was low-lying and prone to waterlogging (O’Meara and Molloy, 2009). The trough and pits were cut into this deposit.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound spread (F2) was sub-circular in shape and measured 12.5m by 11.6m and varied in depth from 0.12 to 0.35m. The deposit consisted of loose black sandy silt with frequent inclusions of heat-shattered sandstone
and charcoal. Charcoal from the spread was identified as alder, birch, blackthorn and willow.

**Trough:**

The trough (F10) was situated at the north-western extent of the site and was sub-circular in plan. It measured 2.1m by 1.7m and was 0.78m in depth with a stepped profile and a concave base. Three fills were recorded in the trough consisting of sandy gravel and unburnt stone, dark brown peaty silt with heat-shattered stone and backfilled burnt mound material. A whetstone was recovered from the fill of the trough. Charcoal was identified as birch, willow and alder which was radiocarbon dated to Early Bronze Age.

**Pit 1:**

Pit F13 was located 0.3m to the north of the trough. It was sub-oval in plan and measured 0.8m by 0.78m and was 0.41m deep. Its fill consisted of brown sandy gravel with inclusions of charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

**Pit 2:**

Pit F34 was located 0.40m to the west of trough F10 and 1.01m to the southwest of pit F13. It was sub-circular and measured 1.1m by 0.65m and was 0.38m deep. Its fill consisted of brown sandy gravel with inclusions of charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

**Pit 3:**

Pit F35 was located between pit F34 and pit F13. The full extent of this pit could not be recorded as it was truncated by pit F15 to the northwest. It was sub-circular and measured 1m + by 0.8m with a depth of 0.55m. The fill consisted of brown sandy gravel with inclusions of unburnt stone.

**Pit 4:**

This pit (F15) truncated F35 and was in turn truncated by pit F16. The pit was sub-rectangular in plan and measured 2m by 1.35m in width. It was irregular in profile, with stepped sides and an uneven base and measured 0.75m in maximum depth. Four fills were recorded in this pit with the primary fill consisting of brown sandy gravel with inclusions of unburnt stone. This was sealed by lenses of compact mid-grey silty clay and a deposit of silty peaty clay. These lenses were sealed by a layer of loose grey silty gravel. The upper fill consisted of burnt mound material which had slumped into the pit.

**Pit 5:**

Pit F16 truncated the northwest end of pit F15, and it was truncated on the eastern side by a water channel (F19). The pit was sub-circular in plan and measured 2.6m by 2.3m with a maximum depth of 0.92m. Two fills were recorded in section. The primary fill consisted of loose brown gravel with small stone inclusions, which was sealed by burnt mound material which had slumped into the cut. A lens of peat was recorded in the burnt mound at this location.

**Water Channel:**

Two linear features were identified at the northern extent of the site on a roughly east to west alignment. The wider of the two gullies (F19) truncated the narrower gully (F20). Gully F20 was curvilinear in plan and measured 4.7m (E-W) in length by 0.25m in width. The cut varied between 0.08m and 0.27m in depth. Gully F19 truncated gully F20 and extended from the eastern side of pit F16. The cut was curvilinear in plan and measured 10m (E-W) in length by 0.5m in width. Two fills were recorded in section. The primary fill
of the channel consisted of dark brown silt with inclusions of peat, wood and bark (F22) with moderate inclusions of heat-shattered stone. This was sealed by a layer of compact brown clay silt (F33) with occasional small stones and inclusions of charcoal.

**Finds:**
Whetstone from fill of trough F10

**Dating:**
Charcoal (Alder) from trough F10
(UB-13620) 3533±23 BP (1939-1772 BC)

**Site Interpretation**

The function of this particular site is unclear. No animal bone was identified at the site but this is not unusual for this site type where animal bone rarely survives. One distinct trough (F10) was identified at this site but the series of intercutting pits to the northwest of trough F10 could perhaps represent a series of intercutting trough features. The two gully features (F19 & F20) at the northern extent of the site could be interpreted as either channels extending or carrying water to pit F16. Water management in the form of narrow gullies has been identified at other sites in Ireland (see Chapter 5).

**References**


![Fig. 10.52 Burnt mound, troughs and water-channels at Walshtown Beg, Co. Cork.](image-url)
**Location:**
- Townland: Coolmoohan
- Six inch map no: 28
- Parish: Macroney
- NGR: 187020, 105620
- Barony: Condons
- Altitude: NA
- County: Cork

**Excavation Details:**
- Project: Curraleigh West to Middleton Gas Pipeline
- Site Director: Brenda O’ Meara
- Consultants: Margaret Gowen and Company
- Year: 2009

**Physical Setting:**
The land in which this site is located lies in the catchment area of the Araglin River, and at the foothills of the Kilworth Mountains. The underlying bedrock geology was of sandstone, which dominates the northern extent of the pipeline route. The site was located on a north facing slope at an unusually high elevation for a *fulacht fia* and no streams were noted in the immediate vicinity of the site. A natural spring was incorporated into a large pit at the site.

**Cultural Landscape:**
This site was located amongst a cluster of *fulacht fia* located along a 1.46km stretch of gas pipeline corridor. There are also a number of sites recorded in the Record of Monuments and Places in the area. The site was located c.630m north north-west of a *fulacht fia* (CO028-007). Site CO028-007 was partially exposed during test excavation but was avoided during pipeline construction. Enclosure sites at Ballinvoher (RMP CO028-004), Graigue (RMP CO028-003) and standing stones in Ballinvoher (RMP CO028-006 & CO028-005) could suggest further Bronze Age settlement activity in the area.

**Pre-excavation features**

There was no surface trace of the archaeological features prior to excavation. The site was revealed as a spread of burnt mound material during topsoil stripping.

**Excavation record**

**Summary of Features:**
Resolution of the site revealed a burnt mound spread, two possible wells, a large trough with associated structural evidence, a hearth another trough and a pit.

**Burnt Mound:**
The burnt mound (F2) was sub-rectangular in plan and measured 25m by 17.5m and varied in depth from 0.35m to 0.55m. It consisted of moderately compact black sandy silt with frequent inclusions of heat-shattered sandstone and charcoal.
Trough: The large pit/trough F10 was oval in plan and measured 5m by 1.55m and varied in depth from 0.42m to 0.60m. O’Meara notes a series of flat stones set against the sides of the cut, mainly at the northern end. The stones were not carefully set and did not form a lining although their presence did appear deliberate (O’Meara and Molloy, 2009). The pit was U-shaped in profile and contained two fills consisting of compact grey silt with heat-shattered sandstone (primary fill) and dark grey/black sandy clay silt with frequent inclusions of charcoal and heat-shattered sandstone (upper fill). Analysis of charcoal from this deposit identified alder, hazel, oak, holly, pomaceous fruitwood, oak and willow.

Hearth: A stone built hearth (F74) was constructed at the southern edge of pit F10. The hearth structure was defined by a sub-oval setting of upright stones. A large flat stone was recorded at the base of hearth which was partially sealed by a deposit of charcoal. All of the seven upright stones were heat-affected.

Structure: Pit F10 and hearth F74 were located within a possible post-built structure (F85). Nine post-holes were recored around the trough representing a possible structure measuring c. 7m (N-S) in length and between 1.8 and 2.9m wide. The posts formed a roughly figure-of-8-shape, narrowing at the junction of the pit (F10) and the hearth (F74). The wide variety of wood taxa identified would suggest that the posts were not burnt in situ but either decayed or were removed.

Pit 1 (Well): Pit F76 was identified at the western extent of the site at the base of which a natural spring was identified. The excavator suggests that this was the water source for the site as no stream was evident in the immediate vicinity. The pit was sub-circular and measured 3.65m by 3.35m and had a maximum depth of 0.75m. Five fills were recorded in section. The primary fill consisted of compact mid-grey clay with moderate charcoal inclusions. Analysis of charcoal from this deposit yielded alder, hazel, ash and oak. This feature could not be fully excavated as it continually filled with water.

Pit 2: A large deep pit (F14) was identified immediately west of the structure and east of pit F76. The pit was sub-oval in plan and measured 4.20m (N-S) in length and 3.20m in width and was 1m in maximum depth. The pit was stepped in profile and had a flat base. A cluster of 20 stake-holes was identified to the north-west side this pit adjacent to pit F10.

Trough: Trough F32 was situated c.1.10m to the north of pit F14. The trough was sub-rectangular in plan and measured 2.1m (NE–SW) in length, 1.4m in width and was 0.27m deep. It had steep sloping sides and a flat base. The fill consisted of dark grey-black silty clay with frequent inclusions of heat-shattered stone. Analysis of charcoal from deposit F33 identified alder, ash, holly and pomaceous fruitwood. Two post-holes were recorded at the base of the north-east end with two stake-holes recorded at the north-east end.

Pit 3: A sub-circular pit was identified between pit F10 and trough F32. It measured 0.80m in length (NW–SE) by 0.65m in width and was 0.18m deep.
The northeastern edge of the concave pit was slightly scorched. The fill consisted of orange mottled mid-dark grey brown clay silt with moderate inclusions of heat-shattered stone and frequent charcoal inclusions. The excavator notes that this feature may have functioned as a roasting pit.

Finds: None

Dating: Charcoal (ash) from post-hole structure F85 (UB-13613) 2860±24 BP (1119–937 BC)
Charcoal (hazel) from pit/Well F76 (UB-13618) 3015±22 BP (1381–1134 BC)

Site Interpretation

The site was interpreted as a possible sweat house, identified as nine substantial post-holes enclosing a rectangular space measuring within which was a large oval pit, perhaps originally stone-lined, with a stone-built hearth at the southern end. The site compares well to other similar structures identified in Cork in recent years, all interpreted in a similar manner, with external pits used as plunge pools. It is argued in Chapter 7 however that these sites may have had alternative functions relating to cooking and feasting as more convincing sweatlodges involving dry heat have been found in other areas.

References

Physical Setting: The land in which this site is located lies in the catchment area of the Araglin River, which flowed c. 1.6km to the east. The underlying bedrock geology was of sandstone, which dominates the northern extent of the pipeline route. This site was situated on a gentle east-facing slope in a generally flat marshy pasture field, which had been extensively drained by the landowners. The Ordnance Survey map indicates a large number of springs rising in this general area, one of which is located in close proximity to the site.

Cultural Landscape: This site was located amongst a cluster of fulachtai fia located along a 1.46km stretch of gas pipeline corridor. Two further fulachtai fia were recorded in the RMP (Record of Monuments and Places) outside the pipeline corridor in close proximity to these sites. Site CO028-007 was partially exposed during test excavation but was avoided during pipeline construction. It was located c. 180m to the north of the site and the second fulacht fia was located c. 360m to the northeast of the site.

Adjacent Excavated Sites: None

Pre-Excavation Features

There was no surface trace of the archaeological features prior to excavation. The site was revealed as a spread of burnt mound material during topsoil stripping in advance of the Curraleigh to Midleton Gas Pipeline.

Excavation Results

Summary of Features: Resolution of the site revealed two phases of activity. The first phase of activity consisted of three troughs and a pit, all of which were sealed by a burnt mound. The second phase of activity consisted of one trough truncating the burnt mound.

Phase 1

Burnt Mound: The burnt (F3) was somewhat oval in plan and measured 14.4m (E-W) in length by 9.65m in width. It had a maximum depth of 0.22m. Molloy notes
that the mound is likely to have been considerably truncated and probably altered in plan by modern agricultural practices (Molloy, 2009). It consisted of charcoal rich sandy silt with frequent inclusions of heat-shattered sandstone. Analysis of charcoal from this deposit identified alder, hazel, holly, pomaceous fruitwood, prunus and oak, with oak the dominant taxa.

**Trough 1:** Trough F6 was located towards the western extent of the site. It was sub-circular and measured 1.86m by 1.58m and had a maximum depth of 0.44m. The cut had vertical sides with a sharp brake of slope and the base was flat. Two fills were recorded in the trough which consisted of loosely compacted charcoal-rich silty sand with moderate inclusions of heat-shattered stone (Primary fill) and black silty sand with frequent charcoal inclusions and heat-shattered stone (Upper fill).

**Trough 2:** Trough F4 was located 1.20m to the southeast of trough F6. The trough was sub-rectangular in plan and measured 1.72m in length, 1.08m in width and 0.44m in maximum depth. The sides of the trough were almost vertical apart from the eastern edge which was slightly undercut and the base was flat. The single fill consisted of black silty sand with frequent charcoal inclusions and heat-shattered stone.

**Trough 3:** Trough F9 was located less than 0.10m to the southeast of Trough F4. It was oval in plan and measured 2.40m (NE-SW) in length, 1.95m in width and 0.72m in maximum depth. The sides of the trough were almost vertical at the top and became more gradual towards the base. The base was concave and a concentration of unburnt stone along the southern end of the trough would suggest the trough may have been stone-lined (Molloy, 2009). Analysis of charcoal from the fill of the trough was identified as alder, birch, hazel, holly and oak with oak the dominant taxa.

**Intercutting Pits:** Two intercutting pits (F13 and F20) were identified 0.40m to the north of the Trough F9. Pit F20 was heavily disturbed and truncated by pit F13 and trough F4. The cut was filled with redeposited natural (F21). It had gradual sloping sides and a concave base. Pit F13 lay to the northwest of Pit F20, and the northern extent of this pit was truncated by modern activity. The pit was sub-oval in plan and measured 1.05m (+) in length (E-W), 0.62 in width and 0.25m in depth. The fill (F14) consisted of dark brown sandy clay with frequent inclusions of heat-shattered stone and occasional charcoal inclusions.

**Phase 2**

**Trough 4:** Trough F17 was located at the western extent of the site. This trough truncated the burnt mound suggesting it was later in date than the burnt mound. It was sub-oval in plan and measured 1.74m (N-S) in length, 1.30m in width and had a maximum depth of 0.65m. Two fills were identified within the u-shaped cut. The primary fill (F19) consisted of loose mid brown black silty sand with moderate inclusions of heat-shattered stone and occasional charcoal inclusions. The upper fill (F18) consisted of silty sand...
with frequent inclusions of heat-shattered stone and frequent charcoal inclusions.

**Finds:**

None

**Dating:**

Charcoal (oak) from trough F9
(UB-13631) 3766±23 BP (2284–2059 BC)

**Site Interpretation**

Excavation of this site revealed a burnt mound and four associated troughs. The presence of five other *fulachtat fia* (Site 9.1, Site 10.1, 2, RMP CO028-007 and RMP CO028-039) in close proximity to this site would suggest considerable activity in the area during the Bronze Age. The site can be interpreted as a pyrolithic water-boiling site due to the presence of a number of water-boiling troughs and deposits of burnt and fire-cracked stone. Although the site was dated to the Chalcolithic/Early Bronze Age, at least two phases of activity were detected. A later trough pit was cut through the burnt mound during a second phases of pyrolithic activity on the site.

**References**

Physical Setting: This site was located in the valley of the River Blackwater, which flowed c. 600m to the north. The underlying bedrock geology was of sandstone, which dominates the northern extent of the pipeline route. This site was situated in a natural hollow at the base of a north and south-facing slope. The site lies immediately north of a shallow drain, which is likely to be a widened and deepened stream bed. The field in which the site was located was used for arable farming and had been extensively ploughed.

Cultural Landscape: This site was located amongst a cluster of seven sites identified along a 1.5km stretch of gas pipeline corridor. Late Bronze Age activity in the form of a structure, pits and post-holes was identified 460m to the north. A single isolated pit (Site 16.2) was identified 260m to the north, which would appear to be some form of sunken hearth or charcoal production pit. A rectangular pit (similar in plan to a trough but with no associated burnt stone) and associated pit (Site 16.4) was identified 70m to the south (ibid). Further south (c.2.2km) three Bronze Age structures dating to the Early and Middle Bronze Age were identified at Knockdromaclogh (Site 17.1) All of these sites are located in the River Blackwater valley and preliminary findings would suggest fairly intense occupation of this area during the prehistoric period, in particular the Bronze Age.

Adjacent Excavated Sites: None

Pre-Excavation Features

There was no surface trace of the archaeological features prior to excavation. The site was revealed as a spread of burnt mound material during topsoil stripping in advance of the Curraleigh to Midleton Gas Pipeline.

Excavation Results

Summary of Features: Resolution of the site revealed yielded a burnt mound, beneath which three troughs were identified. A number of ancillary features, such as pits, post-
holes and stone surfaces were also recorded during the course of the excavation.

**Phase 1**

**Burnt Mound:** The burnt mound was oval in plan and measured 16.50m in length by 11m in width and had a maximum depth of 0.30m. Two deposits of burnt mound material were identified in section. The primary deposit (F4) consisted of loose dark grey/black sandy clay with frequent inclusions of heat-shattered stone and moderate charcoal inclusions. A possible hone stone was retrieved from this deposit. This layer was concentrated mainly in the eastern extent of the excavation and was sealed by dark grey/black sandy silty clay (F38) of loose compaction that contained frequent stone and heat-shattered stone inclusions and frequent charcoal inclusions.

**Trough 1:** Trough F9 was identified towards the southwestern limit of the site. It was roughly circular in plan and measured 1.63m (E-W) (N-S) in length, 1.55m in width and had a maximum depth of 0.30m. A possible hearth base (F15) was identified on the north-western side of the cut. This trough was filled with dark brown/black sandy silty clay of loose compaction which had frequent inclusions of heat-shattered stone and charcoal.

**Trough 2:** Trough F23 was identified 4.5m to the north of Trough F9. This feature was truncated by the trough F16 to the south and ran northwards beyond the limit of excavation. It was rectangular in plan, had steep sides and a flat base and measured 0.90m in width and 0.44m in maximum depth. The remains of a stone lining (F24) were identified along the western edge of the trough. A series of stake holes (F28.1-4) were identified along southern extent of the trough.

**Post-Holes:** Two post-holes (F20 and F39) were identified a short distance from the trough F23. Post-hole F20 was identified c. 3m from the southern edge of trough F23 while F39 Post-hole F39 was located 1.20m from the western edge of trough. Both were circular and filled with sandy silt with moderate amounts of charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

**Pit 1:** Pit F7 was located circa 0.72m south of trough F9. It had a concave profile with gently sloping sides and a flat base and measured 1.42m (N-S) in length, 1.40m in width and had a maximum depth of 0.15m. The fill consisted of grey silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

**Pit 2:** Pit F30 was located c. 0.95m to the southeast of the trough F23. The northern, eastern and western extent of the pit was truncated by trough F16, and only the southern edge and the base were still visible in section. It measured 1.10m (N-S) in length, 0.85m in width and had a maximum depth of 0.27m. The fill of this pit consisted of grey brown sandy silty clay that contained frequent small stone and burnt stone inclusions.

**Pit 3:** Pit F18 was located 4.3m to southwest of pit F30. This feature was rectangular in plan with a concave profile and flat base. It measured 0.90m
(NE-SW) in length, 0.86m in width and 0.07m in depth. The fill consisted of grey silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 4:
Pit F36 was located *circa* 8.5m to the northwest of Pit F18 towards the northern limits of excavation. The pit truncated by the wall cut F5 (modern boundary wall). The pit was circular in plan and had gradually sloping sides and a concave base. It measured 1.30m (E-W) in length, 0.46m in width by 0.24m in depth.

Stone Surface 1:
A stone surface was identified extending from the southwestern corner of trough F16 (it may have been truncated by this trough and is probably associated with trough F23) in a south-westerly direction beyond the eastern limits of excavation. It consisted of a very compacted deposit of heat-shattered vitrified stone. It was roughly linear in plan and measured 4.20m in length (NE-SW) and varied in width between 0.50m and 1m. The vitrified nature of the stone could suggest that stones were heated here prior to deposition in the trough. A possible hearth (F22) was identified partially overlying the stone surface.

Stone Surface 2:
A second stone surface (F43) was identified south of post-hole F20. The surface extended for a distance of c. 1.70m from the southern edge of the post-hole and measured 0.50m in maximum width. It consisted of a cluster of angular stones (mainly limestone) which varied in length between 0.10m and 0.40m. Its function is unclear but it may have been some form of working surface.

Phase 2

Trough 3:
Trough F16 was located towards the northwest corner of the site and truncated the burnt mound and an earlier trough (F23) and pit (F30). It was sub-circular in plan, and measured 3.25m (N-S) in length by 2.80m in maximum width and 0.34m in maximum depth. It was filled with dark grey/black sandy silty clay that contained very frequent heat-shattered stone and charcoal. Three stake-holes were identified in the base of the trough.

Trough 4:
Trough F11 also truncated the burnt mound. This feature was located c.1.30m to the northeast of trough F16. It was rectangular in plan and measured 2.07m (E-W) in length by 1.27m in width had a maximum depth of 0.38m. The primary fill (F12) consisted of mid-grey sandy clay of loose compaction that contained very frequent stone and burnt stone inclusions.

Pit 5:
Pit F41 was identified in section cutting the mound and the trough F23. It may be a recut or redefinition of trough F23. The cut had curving sides and concave base. It measured 1.20m in width (E-W) and 0.21m in depth.

Pit 6:
An isolated pit was identified at the eastern extent of the excavation c. 11m to the east of the burnt mound. It was oval in plan and concave in profile and measured 0.47m (N-S) in length by 0.36m in width and 0.20m in depth. It was filled with dark grey/black silty clay that contained moderate stone and burnt stone inclusions.
Finds: Whetstone recovered from burnt mound F4

Dating: Charcoal (hazel) from F17
(UB-13622) 2630±24 BP (829−787 BC)

Site Interpretation

The excavation of this site yielded a burnt mound, and associated troughs, pits and paved surfaces. The location of this site is a typical location for a *fulacht fia*, in proximity to a water source, in this case a shallow drain which may be an old stream bed. At least two phases of activity was identified at the site and can be interpreted as the remains of a pyrolithic water-boiling site due to the presence of heat-shattered stone and well-defined boiling troughs. The stone surfaces on site suggests that it was a waterlogged site with the compacted surfaces providing dry areas to work the site and access the hearths to transport the stones.

References

Location: Townland: Macroney Upper Six inch map no: 28
Parish: Macroney NGR: 186680, 104155
Barony: Condons Altitude: NA
County: Cork

Excavation Details:
Project: Curraleigh West to Middleton Gas Pipeline
Site Director: Nikolah Gilligan

Physical Setting:
This site was located on a southeast-facing slope, with views to the south and south-east. A narrow stream was adjacent to the site on the western side and originally extended further south eastwards across the field.

Cultural Landscape:
Additional Bronze Age fulacht fia Site 10.2/10.3 was situated c. 500m away in Castlecooke townland, while Site 10.4 was also located in Castlecooke at a distance of c.750 km (Molloy and O’Meara 2010a). Another fulacht fia was uncovered c.1.6 km north of Site 10.1 in Coolmoohan townland.

Adjacent Excavated Sites:
None

Pre-Excavation Features
There was no surface trace of the archaeological features prior to excavation. The site was revealed as a spread of burnt mound material during topsoil stripping in advance of the Curraleigh to Midleton Gas Pipeline.

Excavation Results
Summary of Features:
Resolution of the site revealed a large burnt mound deposits that overlay, twenty-five stake-holes, a metalled surface, three pits and a trough.

Burnt Mound:
The mound was composed of an irregular-shaped spread of heat-shattered limestone mixed with charcoal fragments and charcoal-stained silty clay (F14/F44) that extended across an area measuring c. 16m in diameter by 0.14m deep. The charcoal comprised of mainly oak with smaller amounts of alder, hazel and cherry also present.

Trough 1:
Trough F71 was located under the south-western edge of the burnt mound deposit and was sub-rectangular in plan. It measured 2.48m by 1.38m with a depth of 0.6m. The basal, primary fill (F73) consisted of grey clay, while the secondary fill (F72) was dark-brown silty clay with charcoal inclusions. A sample from this context is dated to the Middle Bronze Age.

Stake-Holes:
The twenty-five stake-holes (F97–F100, F102–F117 and F155) lay to the south and south-east of the trough, where there was the remnants of a surface consisting of trampled clay. Stake-holes F110–F117 formed an east–west
linear and probably represented a small structure, such as a rack, associated with this trough.

Pit 1: Just north of trough F71 was pit F91, which was cut into the water-table and was therefore constantly waterlogged during excavation. It was circular in plan, measuring 1.60m in diameter x 0.42m deep and was filled (F92) with black/brown clay with abundant amounts of charcoal and heat-shattered stones throughout. A possible hammerstone was recovered from this pit.

Pit 2: Pit F93, located just north of pit F91, had been severely truncated along its southern end by a modern water-pipe and had also been disturbed by Post-medieval ploughing. It was sub-rectangular in plan, measuring 2.30m (N–S) by 1.90m (E–W) and the depth sloped from 0.05m in the north to 0.10m in the south. It may have been stone-lined prior to its disturbance as there were a number of limestone blocks (set into the base and these may have originally been set in an east–west line.

Trough 2: Trough F40, which had been truncated by pit F42 (see below), was oval in plan, measuring 1.04m by 0.52m by 0.38m deep and contained a fill (F41) of black charcoal-rich clay and heat-shattered limestone. Six stake-holes were located at the base of this trough and may represent some form of superstructure or that the trough was originally lined.

Trough 3: Trough F60, located c. 3.5m to the south-east of trough F40, had been truncated on its southern side by the later trough F69 and its re-cut F63. It was sub-circular in plan, measuring 1.36m by 1.15m by 0.48m deep. The primary fill (F62) consisted of a layer of flat stones along the base and probably representing some form of lining. They were covered by the upper fill (F61), which consisted of dark-brown charcoal-rich silty sand, containing a large amount of heat-shattered limestone. 37 stake-holes were associated with this trough some located in the base while others along the sides.

Trough 4: Trough F69 was directly south of trough F60, and it would have been possible to step down into it from trough F60. It was oval in plan, measuring 1.90m by 1.23m by 0.52m deep in the west to 0.90m deep in the east. The primary fill (F68) was brown friable clay containing non-burnt angular stones and this was deposited over stake-hole F101, which was situated in the south-eastern corner of the trough and measured 0.10m in diameter by 0.14m deep.

Trough 5: This fill of trough 4 was truncated by Trough F63, which appeared to have been a re-cut of the earlier trough F69. It measured 2.17m by 2m by c. 0.45m deep. The primary fill (F67) appeared to have been natural clay lining, which probably formed while the cut was open to the elements. The secondary fill (F65) consisted of compact grey/brown clay with no charcoal inclusions, while there was a 0.12m thick narrow band (F66) of sand, charcoal and burnt stones within this fill.

Pits: Five pits (F17, F23, F54, F56 and F85) were located close together to the east and north-east of troughs F60 and F69/F63.
Trough: Directly north of the burnt mound spread F14/F44 and south-west of post-hole F22 and pits F31 and F36 there were additional features that were not covered by any burnt mound material. These consisted of a trough (F8) with four associated stake-holes (F29, F30, F87 and F88) and two pits (F27 and F89). Trough F8 was truncated by pit F27 along its western side, by pit F89 along its north-eastern side and by modern drain. It appeared to originally have been oval in plan, measuring 1.80m by 1.60m and surviving to a depth of 0.34m. The primary fill (F9) was black silty clay, within which there were large chunks of charcoal. The upper fill (F12) was loose black silt with heat-shattered stones and charcoal. There were three stake-holes located in the north-eastern, north-western and south-western corners. Another stake-hole (F86) was located to the south of the trough and was in-line with stake-hole F29. These stake-holes may have formed some kind of superstructure, either within or above the trough.

Pits Four additional pits were identified in this area of varying dimensions and depths and all contained similar material of black silty clay, and burnt stone.

Finds: Possible hammerstone recovered from pit and animal bone fragments recovered from small pit (F56)

Dating: Charcoal (hazel) from fill of the trough (F71) (UBA-13627) 3354±21 BP (1735−1537 BC)

Site Interpretation

The excavation of this site yielded a burnt mound, and associated troughs, pits and paved surfaces. The location of this site is a typical location for a fulacht fia, in proximity to a water source, in this case a shallow drain which may be an old stream bed. A number of phases of activity were identified at the site and can be interpreted as the remains of a pyrolithic water-boiling site due to the presence of heat-shattered stone and well-defined boiling troughs. The stone surfaces on site suggests that it was a waterlogged site with the compacted surfaces providing dry areas to work the site and access the hearths to transport the stones.

References

Location: Townland: Castlecooke  
Parish: Macroney  
County: Cork  
Barony: Condons  
Altitude: NA  
Six inch map no: NA  
NGR: 186695, 104625  

Excavation Details: Project: Curraleigh West to Middleton Gas Pipeline  
Site Director: Nikolah Gilligan

Physical Setting: It was located in badly drained and waterlogged pastureland on a south-east-facing slope, with views to the north-east, east and south-east. A water-source was identified directly to the east of the northern limit of the mound material.

Cultural Landscape: Two more *fulachtai fia* are recorded for the townland of Castlecooke (CO028-007 and-039), while those excavated along this pipeline included Site 10.1 in Macroney Upper townland, c. 500m to the south, Site 10.4, also in Castlecooke townland and c. 230m to the north and one in Coolmoohan townland c. 1.5 km to the north (Site 9.1).

Adjacent Excavated Sites: None

Pre-Excavation Features

There was no surface trace of the archaeological features prior to excavation. The site was revealed as a spread of burnt mound material during topsoil stripping in advance of the Curraleigh to Midleton Gas Pipeline.

Excavation Results

Summary of Features: Excavation revealed an extensive mound, a stone-lined trough and two pits, while located c. 5m to the north, was a smaller spread of burnt mound material that covered a sub-rectangular trough.

Site A

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound was composed of several layers of sandy silty, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. F18, measuring 6m by 5m by 0.10m deep, was located in the eastern half of the mound and consisted of yellow/orange sand, while F19 in the middle of the mound measured 3m by 5m by 0.10m deep and consisted of brown sandy clay. F19 was overlain by another layer, F20, which consisted of yellow sandy clay spread over an area measuring 1m by 1m by 0.07m deep. The main body of the large mound was primarily composed of layer F12, charcoal-rich, grey/black sandy clay with heat-shattered stones that measured 24m by 19.50m by 0.34m deep.
Trough 1: Trough F21, located in the middle of the large mound, was rectangular in plan and measured c. 2.50m (NE–SW) x 1.40m (NW–SE) x 0.62m in total depth. The sides were straight and the eastern and north-eastern sides were lined with stone, consisting of limestone blocks (F22) that varied in size. A constructed linear of stones that ran northwards from the north-eastern corner appeared to be a continuation of the line of the limestone lining. The base of the trough was flat and the basal primary fill (F23) consisted of dark-grey/black silty clay with charcoal, a sample of which is dated to the Middle Bronze Age.

Stake-Holes: Thirty-one stake-holes were associated with this trough; stake-holes F49–F60 were located to the east of the trough and stake-holes F61–F79 were situated along the western side. They were all similar in shape and may have formed some sort of superstructure over the pit.

Trough 2: Pit F9, located directly to the south-east, was also oval in plan, measuring 2.45m by 1.70m by 0.44m deep, with the sides sloping steeply at the top but more gradually towards the middle. Twenty-three stake-holes (F25–F48) were positioned along the flat base and the sides of the pit and it is possible that they held a lining within the pit. Pit F9 contained a single fill (F10) consisting of loosely compacted black clay sand with heat-shattered stones and charcoal mixed throughout.

Pit 1: Pit F7 was located below the northern edge of the main burnt mound layer (F12). It was oval in plan, measuring 2.20m by 1.60m by 0.20m deep, with the sides sloping to a flat base and a fill (F8) of loosely compacted dark-brown/black silty clay.

Site B

Burnt Mound: A smaller mound of similar burnt material (F15) was located c. 5m to the north. This measured 2.70m by 2.30m with a thickness of 0.10m and consisted of loosely compacted black/brown sand that contained heat-shattered stones and charcoal.

Trough: F3 was sub-rectangular in plan with a U-shaped profile, measuring 2.40m by 1.77m by 0.40m deep. A single stone was along its southern edge. The primary basal fill (F6) was dark-grey/black moderately compacted sand with heat-shattered stones mixed throughout.

Finds: None

Dating: Charcoal (unknown) from fill of the trough (F21) (UBA-13630) 3294±21 BP (1625–1513 BC)

References

Location:  Townland: Killeagh  Six inch map no: 28
Parish: Macroney  NGR: 189900, 752400
Barony: Condons  Altitude: NA
County: Cork
Excavation Details: Project: Curraleigh West to Middleton Gas Pipeline
Site Director: Nikolah Gilligan
Physical Setting: This site was located in a long and narrow greenfield on a south-facing hill, which sloped to the Dungourney River.
Cultural Landscape: A site at Roxborough was located to the south, at a distance of c. 500m and it was comprised of two pits, one of which was a Late Bronze Age cremation pit. Carrigshane Site 37.2, 2 km to the south and visible from the site due to its elevated position, consisted of a Middle-Late Bronze Age settlement, with a possible small structure, a pit, a hearth and stake-holes. The majority of the prehistoric sites in the vicinity are fulachtaí fia.
Adjacent Excavated Sites: None

Pre-Excavation Features
There was no surface trace of the archaeological features prior to excavation. The site was revealed as a spread of burnt mound material during topsoil stripping in advance of the Curraleigh to Midleton Gas Pipeline.

Excavation Results
Summary of Features: Two phases of prehistoric activity were uncovered below a shallow and patchy mound of charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Phase 1

Burnt Mound: The remains of a very shallow and patchy burnt mound deposit (F7) were located in the eastern and southern parts of the site, spread over an area measuring 14.40m by 13.35m by 0.15m in maximum depth. The main bulk of the mound survived in natural depressions in the subsoil due to heavy truncation by ploughing activity. The deposit consisted of brown/dark-grey silty clay, which contained both heat-shattered and non-heat-shattered stone.

Trough: Trough F12, located under the eastern side of the burnt mound (F7), was rectangular in plan with a regular U-shaped profile and a flat base. It measured 2.20m by 1.45m by 0.60m deep. F12 was heavily truncated by a Post-medieval field drain. Eighteen stake-holes were present at the base of the trough suggesting it may have been timber lined. Charcoal from one of these stake-holes is dated to the Middle Bronze Age. The basal fill (F14) of
the trough was 0.12m deep and consisted of loosely compacted grey sand with occasional stone and charcoal inclusions. This was sealed by a 0.51m deep secondary fill (F13), which was dark-brown silty clay of moderate-to-hard compaction.

Water-Channels: Two feeder channels (F35 and F70) were also closely associated with trough F12 and seemed to be associated with each other. F35 was a curvilinear channel that appeared to feed into the southern side of the trough. Channel F70 appeared to feed into the western side of the trough.

Pits: Four additional pits (F5, F64, F59 and F67) were also associated with this Phase I activity and were located in close proximity to trough F12.

Surface: To the south-west of trough F12 and associated activity there was a possible surface that consisted of concentrations of flat stones (0.12m x 0.10m) that appeared to have been set into the subsoil. It measured 6.75m by 2.80m by 0.10m deep and the northern and southern ends were truncated by two of the Post-medieval field drains.

Hearth: To the south-east of the surface there was an area of very compact vitrified clay and stone (F46) that appeared to have been the remnants of a substantial hearth. It was irregular in plan, covering an area measuring 2.20m by 2.50m.

Phase 2

Trough: Trough F31 was located in the north-western area of the site. It was oval in plan with steeply sloping sides on all but the south, which sloped gradually to the concave base. It measured 1.50m (NE–SW) x 1.40m (NW–SE) x 0.43m deep. Seven stake-holes (F37–F43) were identified around the edges of the base suggesting it may have been lined originally. The primary fill (F32) of the trough was 0.10m thick and consisted of charcoal-rich silty clay of moist, loose compaction with occasional heat-shattered stone.

Water-channel: On the eastern side this trough abutted channel F47, which extended to the north-east for 3.70m (NE–SW), measuring 0.74m wide x 0.15–0.47m in depth. The point at which the trough and channel abutted was demarcated by a large stone which appeared to have been deliberately placed there, perhaps to control the flow of water. A second channel (F8) assigned to this phase of activity was already mentioned as it truncated pit F58 and sloped into the south-eastern side of trough F12, indeed it is probable that channel F8 truncated an earlier channel that fed the trough.

Surface: Another possible surface (F3), located east of trough F31 and channel F47, consisted of a large, broadly rectangular cut that measured 7.75m by 2.80–3.70m by 0.20–0.30m deep. The fill (F4) was grey silty clay that was mottled with patches of orange/brown and dark-brown/black clay. It was very loose in compaction and contained a large amount of stone, some of which was heat-shattered.
Finds: None

Dating: Charcoal (unknown) from fill of stake-hole within rough (F12) (UBA-13619) 3256±24 BP (1610–1456 BC)

Site Interpretation

The excavation of this site yielded a burnt mound, and associated troughs, pits, paved surfaces and water-channels. A number of phases of activity were identified at the site and can be interpreted as the remains of a pyrolithic water-boiling site due to the presence of heat-shattered stone and well-defined boiling troughs, some of which had associated water-inlet channels that displayed evidence of water control. The stone surfaces on site suggests that it was a waterlogged site with the compacted surfaces providing dry areas to work the site and access the hearths to transport the stones.

References

Location: Townland: Ballard  Six inch map no: 28
Parish: Macroney  NGR: 187855, 10670
Barony: Condons  Altitude: NA
County: Cork
Excavation Details: Project: Curraleigh West to Middleton Gas Pipeline
Site Director: Bernice Molloy
Physical Setting: This site was located in a flat, low-lying, slightly marshy pasture field, with a narrow stream or drain 150m to the west and the Muckragh Stream c. 250m down-slope to the north.
Cultural Landscape: A cairn (CO0210-010) is recorded approximately 1.5 km to the north-west and excavation in advance of the gas pipeline to the south uncovered four additional fulachtai fia (see above).
Adjacent Excavated Sites: None

Pre-Excavation Features

There was no surface trace of the archaeoological features prior to excavation.

Excavation Results

Summary of Features: This site consisted of a trough (F3) and two pits (F6 and F8), while any associated burnt mound had been completely eroded, probably due to agricultural practices.

Trough: Trough F3 was located at the southern extent of the site and was rectangular in plan, measuring 1.60m by 1.30m by 0.32m in maximum depth. It had straight sides and a flat base, with linear imprints along the sides suggesting the trough was originally wood-lined. This was also evidenced by the presence of seven stake-holes cut into the base along the sides. Two fills were noted in the trough composed of silty clays, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. A sample from the lower fill is dated to the Late Bronze Age.

Pits: Pit F6 was irregular in plan and measured 1.35m by 1.15m by 0.14m in maximum depth. Pit F8 was was oval in plan and measured 1.05m by 0.90m by 0.33m in depth. Both contained black silty clay and burnt stone.

Dating: Charcoal (holly) from lower fill of trough
(UBA-13624) 2810±22 BP (1014−905 BC)

References

Location: Townland: Coole Lower  Six inch map no: 28
Parish: Macroney  NGR: 186930, 09535
Barony: Condons  Altitude: NA
County: Cork

Excavation Details: Project: Curraleigh West to Middleton Gas Pipeline
Site Director: Bernice Molloy

Physical Setting: This site was located in flat, low-lying pastureland at the western limits of the gas pipeline corridor and it is likely that it continues into the adjoining field to the east.

Cultural Landscape: It was c. 850m to the south of Late Neolithic pits and post-holes with Grooved Ware pottery at Coole Upper and an enclosure (CO036-044) of unknown date was situated 720m to the west.

Adjacent Excavated Sites: None

Pre-Excavation Features

There was no surface trace of the archaeological features prior to excavation. It extended beyond the limits of excavation.

Excavation Results

Summary of Features: The site consisted of a partially exposed spread of burnt mound material (F3) that measured a minimum of 5m by a maximum of 6.50m by 0.17m in maximum depth. The mound was composed of dark-black silty sand with frequent inclusions of heat-shattered stone and charcoal that was identified as hazel, ash, oak, alder and pomaceous fruitwood. No finds were recovered.

Dating: Charcoal (hazel) from the burnt spread (UBA-13628) 3569±24 BP (2016−1783 BC)

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**Excavation Details:**
- Project: Curraleigh West to Middleton Gas Pipeline
- Site Director: Bernice Molloy

**Physical Setting:**
This site was located in a low-lying flat pasture field and was truncated on its western extent by a land drain, which was probably a widened and deepened stream bed.

**Cultural Landscape:**
The site was situated c. 1.6 km south-west of two undated pits and a post-hole at Site 22.1, while a *fulacht fia*, recorded as a kidney-shaped mound of burnt material (CO045-126) is c. 720m to the south-east in the townland of Ardra and a standing stone (CO045-096/02) is c. 850m to the south-east in the vicinity of a later burial ground.

**Adjacent Excavated Sites:**
None

**Pre-Excavation Features**
There was no surface trace of the archaeological features prior to excavation. It was revealed during archaeological testing.

**Excavation Results**
- **Summary of Features:** This site consisted of a single trough (F3), with the associated burnt mound presumably completely truncated or eroded. It was sub-rectangular in plan, measured 2.56m by at least 1.12m by 0.65m in maximum depth and the edges sloped steeply to a flat base. The primary fill (F4) was 0.58m deep and consisted of dark-grey black sandy clay with frequent inclusions of heat-shattered stone and charcoal. This deposit was partially sealed by the upper fill (F5), which was 0.48m deep and consisted of grey/black sandy clay with frequent inclusions of heat-shattered stone and occasional charcoal inclusions. No finds were recovered and the site is not scientifically dated.

**References**
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### Excavation Details:

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<td>Bernice Molloy</td>
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### Physical Setting:

This site was situated towards the base of a gradual east-facing slope. A field boundary lay immediately south of the site, and may have partially disturbed the archaeological deposits.

### Cultural Landscape:

The site was located c. 1.1 km to the south-west of a recorded *fulacht fia* (CO065-106) in the same townland and another *fulacht fia* was identified on the gas pipeline, c. 790m to the south (Site 31.2)

### Adjacent Excavated Sites:

None

### Pre-Excavation Features

There was no surface trace of the archaeological features prior to excavation.

### Excavation Results

#### Summary of Features:

This site consisted of a spread of burnt mound material, trough and a pit.

#### Burnt Mound:

The spread of burnt mound material (F3) consisted of compact black silty sand with frequent inclusions of heat-shattered stone and charcoal. It was truncated and irregular in plan, measuring 3.85m by 2.47m by 0.06m deep.

#### Trough:

Trough F6 was rectangular in plan with straight sides and a flat base and measured 1.73m by 1.44m by 0.33m in maximum depth. A single stake-hole was identified in each corner, suggesting that the trough may originally have been wood-lined. The primary fill (F5) of the trough consisted of dark silt with moderate charcoal inclusion sand frequent inclusions of heat-shattered stone. This was sealed by a 0.22m deep secondary fill consisting of grey silty sand with frequent inclusions of both heat-shattered and non-burnt stone.

#### Pit:

Pit F9, located directly south-east of trough F6, was oval in plan and measured 2.23m by 1.74m by 0.26m in maximum depth.

#### Dating:

Charcoal (hazel) from lower fill of trough (UBA-13621) 2843±21 BP (1082–921 BC)

### References

**Location:**

Townland: Barnashillane
Parish: Macroney
Barony: Condons
County: Cork

**Excavation Details:**

Project: Curraleigh West to Middleton Gas Pipeline
Site Director: Bernice Molloy

**Physical Setting:**

This site was situated in a flat pasture field, approximately 300m to the south of a stream. It was located at the western extent of the gas pipeline corridor and continued into the adjoining field beyond the limits of excavation.

**Cultural Landscape:**

A Late Bronze Age *fulacht fia* was excavated c.790m to the south (Walshtownmore; see above).

**Adjacent Excavated Sites:**

None

### Pre-Excavation Features

There was no surface trace of the archaeological features prior to excavation. It was revealed during archaeological testing.

### Excavation Results

**Summary of Features:**

Excavation of the site revealed a spread of burnt mound material that extended beyond the limits of the excavation. The spread of burnt mound material (F3) was irregular in plan, measured 9.50m by 4.35m by 0.16m in maximum depth and was composed of charcoal-rich silty sand with frequent inclusions of heat-shattered stone and charcoal. Analysis of this charcoal identified hazel, oak and pomaceous fruitwood, with oak the dominant taxa. No cut features typical of this site-type were identified underneath the spread of burnt mound material, but some could be located in the adjoining field to the west. No finds were recovered from the site and it was not scientifically dated.

### References

Location: Townland: Coolkeeragh  Six inch map no: NA
Parish: Clondermot  NGR: 247510, 421170
Barony: Tirkeeran  Altitude: NA
County: Derry

Excavation Details: Project: Industrial Development
Site Director: Eoin Halpin
Consultants: Archaeological Development Services Ltd
Year: 2002

Physical Setting: The site is 600m from the east bank of the River Foyle.

Cultural Landscape: Evidence of prehistoric settlement in this area was uncovered at Thornhill College in Ballynashallog townland, which produced a multi-phased defended settlement site, and Caw, Londonderry, where the remains of a Neolithic house were excavated.

Adjacent Excavated Sites: None

Pre-Excavation Features
The site was revealed during archaeological testing. No trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Results
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed two separate spreads of burnt stone.

Burnt Spread 1: The spread of burnt stone covered an area of c. 12m by 9m and was c. 0.2–0.3m deep. In the northern quadrant, a hollow of unknown use was revealed, 4m long and 2m in diameter. Finds recovered included several sherds of Neolithic pottery, found among the stone spread. Evidence of small-scale flintworking was also found, in the form of a small flint flake and a possible projectile head. No sign of a water trough was detected.

Burnt Spread 2: A fairly large burnt mound measuring c. 10m by 9m and 0.4–0.5m deep was revealed here. Several small fire-pits were also noted just outside the edge of the mound. Finds recovered consisted mostly of slag from the upper levels but included pottery from within the burnt material. A stone feature in the central area of the stone spread may be the remains of a stone trough. No other information available for the site.

References
Excavation Details: Project: Oakgrove College Development
Site Director: Robert M. Chapple
Consultants: Northern Archaeological Consultancy Ltd
Year: 2002

Physical Setting: The site is located on a ridge or river terrace, which rises abruptly from the east bank of the river Foyle. This ridge is an area of modestly raised land between the rivers Foyle and Faughan.

Cultural Landscape: The Bronze Age is well represented near the development. A group of aerial photographic circular enclosure sites in Enagh townland (LDY 14-65) could be funerary monuments of this period. There is also a concentration of Bronze Age sites across the Foyle in the Londonderry area, including several cist burials and a probable barrow cemetery (LDY 14-42-50) at Ballynashallog at the other end of the Foyle Bridge. Material of this period was also located during excavations at Rough Island in Lough Enagh (LDY 14-11), including a bronze ‘socketed and looped’ spearhead and a great deal of pottery.

Adjacent Excavated Sites: Early Neolithic activity

Pre-Excavation Features
The site was revealed during archaeological testing. There was no trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Results
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a burnt mound, trough, pit and a number of stake-holes possibly representing a structure.

Burnt Mound: F5 was a compact, black sandy-silt, with extensive, small fire-cracked stones and frequent charcoal flecks. It measured 14.14m by 5.86m with a maximum thickness of 0.35m. Stone from the spread was identified as sandstone, slate and quartzite.

Trough: C60 was a sub-rectangular pit with steeply sloping sides and a flat base. It measured 1.82m by 1.31m with a depth of 1m. This feature was filled by F56, a compact, black-grey sandy-silt which contained frequent fire-cracked stones and charcoal flecks. F56 was cut by the C11 recut of the trough. C11 was a sub-rectangular pit with gently sloping sides and a generally flat base (1.89m by 1.30m by 0.57m). While C11 was not dug as deeply as C60, it extended slightly further to both the north and south, where it cut through.
subsoil. This led to the slightly ‘stepped’ appearance of the sides of the cut. C11 contained a series of four fills. The trough was recut for a third time by C13. This feature was a subrectangular pit with sloping sides and a flat base (2.19m by 1.43m by 0.81m). C13 cut F5 and contained a series of six fills composed of varying dark silts and burnt stone.

Stake-Holes:
In the eastern portion of the site, to the north of the C60 trough, a series of 30 stake-holes was discovered. This complex was divided in two by the digging of the drainage channel, which led to the initial identification of the site, but undoubtedly destroyed some evidence in the process. The southern portion consisted of five stake-holes while the northern portion contained twenty-five.

Pits:
Five small, circular and shallow pits were also excavated on site and all contained burnt mound material.

Finds:
None

Dating:
Charcoal (unknown) from the lowest fill of third trough recut (Beta-227759) 3590±40 BP (2116−1779 BC)
Charcoal (unknown) from the second lower fill of third trough recut (Beta-227760) 3290±70 BP (1738−1430 BC)

Site Interpretation
The site, although heavily disturbed by animal burrowing and machine truncation can be interpreted as a pyrolithic water-boiling site of the Early Bronze Age. The presence of large deposits of heat-shattered stone and a large trough would seemingly confirm this suggestion, although the smaller pits may have served a roasting purpose. As a group, it is extremely difficult to ascribe function to the stake-hole complex. Nonetheless, it may be tentatively suggested that a number did articulate to form a structural element. Together, the line of five stakes may have formed a stake-and-wattle wind break to shelter activities on the site. Directly to the south-west of these lines a series of eight stakeholes may be construed as forming a small sub-rectangular structure. Such a configuration would have produced an enclosed space measuring 1.05m (N-S) by 0.87m, enclosing an area of 0.93m2. Of interest is the fact that such a postulated structure would have enclosed the pit at its centre. While structures are not uncommon on burnt mound sites, this example would have been at the smaller end of the scale and may have been used as a temporary shelter of small sweatlodge.

References
Location: Townland: Macosquin  Six inch map no: NA
Parish: Clondermot  NGR: 282250, 428620
Barony: Tirkeeran  Altitude: Unknown
County: Derry

Excavation Details: Project: Housing Development
Site Director: Norman Crothers
Consultants: Northern Archaeological Consultancy Ltd
Year: 2003

Physical Setting: The development lies on low-lying ground beside the Macosquin River on the outskirts of Macosquin village that had been used as rough grazing prior to the commencement of site works. The northern half of the site was formerly occupied by a millpond which served a corn mill and a flax mill, both now removed and replaced by private housing.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the site prior to excavation.

Adjacent Excavated Sites: Possible metal working area

Pre-Excavation Features
The site was revealed during archaeological testing. There was no trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Results
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a substantial spread of charcoal-rich soil, the remains of a badly truncated burnt mound, was uncovered. Associated with this burnt spread were numerous post-holes/stake-holes, but there was no trace of an accompanying trough. Further subsoil-cut features were revealed within the southern half of the site which included evidence for metalworking in the form of shallow, bowl-shaped pits. The fill of all these pits contained a lot of charcoal and a substantial quantity of iron slag. A narrow natural water channel close to these pits may have been used as a quenching source for the metalworking.

Finds: None
Dating: None

References
### Excavation Details

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### Physical Setting:
The site was situated in a low-lying area close to a stream.

### Cultural Landscape:
There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the site prior to excavation.

### Adjacent Excavated Sites:
None

### Pre-Excavation Features
The site was revealed during archaeological testing. There was no trace of the site prior to excavation.

### Excavation Results

#### Summary of Features:
A badly disturbed spread of burnt-mound material was uncovered immediately to the east of a field drain. No remains of the burnt mound survived on the west side of the drain. The spread measured 9.5m north-south by 1.75m and survived to a depth of 0.4m. A large irregular pit measuring 3m east-west by 2.5m and 0.6m deep and filled with a dark-brown sandy clay lay 11.5m to the south-east. No troughs or associated features were uncovered upon excavation of the burnt-mound spread and no finds were recovered from either feature.

#### Finds:
None

#### Dating:
None

### References
Location: Ballynacally More  Six inch map no: NA
Parish: Aghadowey  NGR: 283040, 421180
Barony: Coleraine  Altitude: Unknown
County: Derry

Excavation Details:
Project: North-West Gas Pipeline
Site Director: Norman Crothers
Consultants: Northern Archaeological Consultancy Ltd
Year: 2004

Physical Setting: The site was situated in a low-lying area close to a stream

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the site prior to excavation.

Adjacent Excavated Sites: None

Pre-Excavation Features
The site was revealed during archaeological testing. There was no trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Results
Summary of Features: Two spreads of burnt-mound material were uncovered immediately to the west of a field drain. The drain had been straightened and lined with concrete in the recent past and had truncated the burnt-mound material. No remains of the burnt mound survived on the east side of the drain. The larger spread measured 14m north-south by 8m and survived to a depth of 0.4m. The smaller spread, measuring 6m north-south by 5m and only 0.1m deep, has almost certainly been dragged from the main area of burnt-mound material. No troughs or associated features were uncovered and no finds were recovered.

Finds: None

Dating: None

References
Location: Townland: Coolagh       Six inch map no: NA
Parish: Faughanvale       NGR: 258750, 422020
Barony: Tirfkeeran       Altitude: Unknown
County: Derry

Excavation Details: Project: North-West Gas Pipeline
Site Director: Norman Crothers
Consultants: Northern Archaeological Consultancy Ltd
Year: 2004

Physical Setting: The site was situated in a low-lying area close to a stream
Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the site prior to excavation.

Adjacent Excavated Sites: None

Pre-Excavation Features

The site was revealed during archaeological testing. There was no trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Results

Summary of Features: Faint traces of a burnt mound survived in this field spread over an area measuring 7m by 6.5m. The overall shape of the mound could be traced, but the surviving material proved too thin to allow sections to be drawn. No finds were recovered form this site.

Finds: None

Dating: None

References

Physical Setting: The site is located in low-lying ground between two low hills to the south – south-east of the town of Killybegs and approximately 65m from Killybegs Harbour, at its nearest point to the east and south-east.

Cultural Landscape: The earliest monuments in the Killybegs area are the court tombs at Binroe, Drumanoo and Cashelcummin, all situated on low rocky bluffs overlooking Killybegs harbour. There are no other prehistoric sites recorded in the immediate environs of the site.

Adjacent Excavated Sites: None

Pre-Excavation Features

The site was revealed during archaeological testing. There was no trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Results

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a spread of burnt stones and charcoal and a possible trough that may have been used for pyrolithic water-boiling.

Burnt Mound: The spread was composed of black soil containing heat shattered stone and moderate charcoal, measuring 8m N-S by 6.6m E-W and with a maximum depth of 0.20m at the center of this area. The layer formed a low dome, higher at the center and with a minimum depth of 5cms at the edges. There was no indication of the mound prior to the removal of topsoil.

Possible Trough: The pit was a sub rectangular/irregular shaped cut measuring 1.6m by 1m and 0.25m deep. The cut had a gradual break of slope at the top, concave sides and an irregular base. There was some stone pressed into the base of the cut. The pit was filled with burnt mound material.

Finds: None

Dating: None

Excavation Interpretation
The burnt material comprised, in the main, fire shattered sandstone and blackened soil, the volume of charcoal being much less than would normally be expected. The trough was represented by a deposit of compact, black clay and large un-shattered stones, extending over a rectangular area measuring 1.6m N-S and 1m E-W. It was also noticeable that this deposit contained a greater volume of charcoal than the main mound material. Excavation of this material showed that it was contained within an irregular/sub-rectangular cut and that the deposit/cut were only 0.25m in depth. There were a number of stones embedded in the sterile basal clay at the base of the cut but they are unlikely to represent any form of stone lining for the trough. Given the shallow nature of the trough, it also seems unlikely it functioned as a pit to boil water. It is possible that the feature functioned as a roasting pit or oven and the stones embedded into the base of the feature may have formed some sort of crude lining.

References

Location: Townland: Killybegs (Glebe)  Six inch map no: NA
Parish: Killybegs Upper  NGR: 317138, 337571
Barony: Banagh  Altitude: NA
County: Donegal

Excavation Details: Project: Private Development
Site Director: Martin Fitzpatrick
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Ltd
Year: 2001

Physical Setting: No information available on site location

Cultural Landscape: There are no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the investigated area.

Adjacent Excavated Sites: None

Pre-Excavation Features
The site was revealed during archaeological testing. There was no trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Results
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed burnt stones which were revealed in the north-facing section of a drain. Removal of the sod revealed the outline of a semicircular-shaped mound with a maximum measurement of 7.1m east-west by 3.1m. Concentrated areas of burnt stones were evident in the centre of the mound and around the perimeter. The stratigraphical record shows that the mound consisted of heat-shattered and rotten stone and a small quantity of charcoal. It appears that the stone represented a stone spread which was almost totally removed by a drainage channel. Further deposits of burnt stone visible to the west of the mound were also excavated. No finds were recovered from the site and it was not scientifically dated.

References
Location: Townland: Conwal
Parish: Conwal
Barony: Kilmacrenan
County: Donegal

Six inch map no: NA
NGR: 317138, 337571
Altitude: NA

Parish:
Barony:
County:

Excavation Details: Project: Sewerage Scheme
Site Director: Melanie McQuade
Consultants: Margaret Gowen and Company Ltd.
Year: 2004

Physical Setting: The site was located on an east-facing slope of a field to the north of a tributary of the River Swilly.

Cultural Landscape: There are no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the investigated area.

Adjacent Excavated Sites: None

Pre-Excavation Features
The site was revealed during archaeological testing. There was no trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Results
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a burnt mound site that was truncated by post-medieval features.

Burnt Mound: The main concentration of burnt material was a maximum of 5m long and 3m wide. The original mound had been disturbed as a result of agricultural activity and only the lower part survived, to a depth of 0.05-0.18m. This overlay fine grey sand with some charcoal. Agricultural activity had resulted in the deposition of burnt material to the east of the main mound. There was no evidence for a hearth associated with the burnt mound and no finds were recovered. The site was not scientifically dated.

References
Location: Townland: Ballycroghan  Six inch map no: 02
Parish: Bangor  NGR: 353800, 379900
Barony: Ards Lower  Altitude: NA
County: Down

Excavation Details: Project: Research
Site Director: W.M Hodges
Consultants: Independent
Year: 1955

Physical Setting: The site was located on the banks of a buried river. Two other sites were situated nearby in field covered with rush and coarse bog plants.

Cultural Landscape: There are no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the investigated area however three Late Bronze Age swords were found adjacent to one of the excavated fulachtai fia in 1953.

Adjacent Excavated Sites: None

Pre-Excavation Features

The sites survived as low grass-covered mounds prior to excavation.

Excavation Results

Summary of Features: Excavation of the sites revealed mounds of burnt stone, timber-lined troughs and possible structural evidence.

Site A

Burnt Mound: The mound was circular in shape and measured sixty feet in diameter. The deposit of burnt stone rested on a natural hillock of clay and was composed of burnt shale, quartz and charcoal-enriched material. It was damaged by recent ploughing.

Trough: The rectangular trough was cut into the natural clay and measured 6ft. 6ins by 3ft. 3ins. The internal structure was lined with oak roundwoods with the seams caulked caulked with moss. Four corner stakes supported the side walls of the lining. The upper end of the trough was divided from the rest by a transverse log which formed a septum, and the floor at this upper end was lined by logs laid transversely. A gully ran from the lower end of the trough to the river. This possibly functioned as an emptying drain.

Possible hearth: Encompassing the trough, was found a crescent area of burnt clay. This had the appearance of a hard pan, and in places near the trough this alteration had penetrated to a depth of six inches.
Platform: The excavation was extended to the north to verify that this cooking-place did, in fact, stand on the bank of a buried river. Here it was found that a rough platform had been built up on each side of the river. This consisted of a number of untrimmed logs, occasionally pegged into place and backed with brushwood. This platform was interrupted by the gully.

Site B

Burt Mound: The mound was oval in shape and measured thirty-five by fifteen feet. The deposit of burnt stone rested on a natural hillock of clay and was composed of burnt shale, quartz and charcoal-enriched material. Removal of the mound material revealed two shallow, circular pits cut into the clay, 1ft. 9ins. And 2ft. 3 ins. in diameter.

Site C

Burnt Mound: This site appeared as a low crescent mound about thirty feet across. The deposit of burnt stone rested on a natural hillock of clay and was composed of burnt shale, quartz and charcoal-enriched material.

Trough: The trough was rectangular in plan and was cut into the natural clay. It measured 4ft. by 6ft and lay between the horns of the burnt mound. Only the base of the internal lining survived, composed of roundwood logs. The eastern end of the trough had been filled with a dump of unburnt stones. This may have been a stockpile of stones for use during a later period. A second, possibly earlier trough was evident under this timber lining.

Possible Hearth: The clay surface around the trough showed signs of charring and alteration due to fires.

Possible Structure: Immediately north of the trough survived a thin layer of sand which was delimited by four small post-holes, each two inches in diameter. None of which sank for more than three inches into the underlying clay.

Site D

Burnt Mound: This site appeared as a patch of burnt stone and charring on the shoulder of a substantial ridge of clay. The deposit had been considerably spread by recent ploughing, and the depth of this material was exceptionally shallow. A field drain cut across the site, from which a shale bracelet was recovered.

Trough: The trough was roughly square in plan, with sides four feet and four feet two inches long. The internal lining had completely decomposed, but the structure had clearly been built of planks as the remains of decomposed planks survived in places.

Stockpile: A dump of unburnt stones was revealed to the west, near the crest of the clay ridge. These may have been the remains of stones ready to be used in the boiling process.

Finds: Shale Bracelet recovered from a drain at Site D
**Dating:**
The peat samples obtained from the trough at Site A and the boring at Site B showed on analysis that these sites are not likely to have been in use prior to the Late Bronze Age.

**Excavation Interpretation**
Sites A, C and D can be interpreted as pyrolithic water-boiling sites due to the presence of heat-shattered stone and well-defined timber-lined troughs. The identification of areas of burning close to the troughs would also support this suggestion. The presence of moss and internal roundwoods at Sites A and C would also imply that the troughs filled naturally with water with the gully at Site A serving as an overflow drain, transporting water to the nearby stream. While no trough was found at Site B, it is possible a similar feature lies outside the area of investigation. The shallow pits may have also served as roasting ovens.

**References**


Fig. 10.55 Burnt mound and divided roundwood trough at Site A, Ballycroghan, Co. Down.
Location:  Townland: Dromaroad  Six inch map no: 36
Parish: Loughinisland  NGR: 337200, 344300
Barony: Kinelarty  Altitude: NA
County: Down

Excavation Details:  Project: Mourne Conduit Replacement (Aquarius Project)
Site Director: Audrey Gahan
Consultants: Archaeological Development Services Ltd.
Year: 2000

Physical Setting:  There is no information available as to the locational setting of the site.

Cultural Landscape:  There are no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the investigated area.

Adjacent Excavated Sites: None

Pre-Excavation Features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of a pipeline project. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation and it was not fully exposed during investigation.

Excavation Results

Summary of Features: Excavation of the sites revealed the remains of a burnt mound. This measured c. 10m by 3m and consisted of a deposit of charcoal-rich soil containing abundant amounts of heat-fractured and shattered stone.

Construction of the pipe-trench would have resulted in the destruction of approximately half of the feature, and therefore this portion of the burnt mound was manually excavated. The remaining section was preserved in situ. No artefacts were recovered from the excavation, nor were any further features associated with the burnt mound activity identified. No cut features such as troughs were revealed and no finds were recovered.

References

Physical Setting: There is no information available as to the locational setting of the site.

Cultural Landscape: There are no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the investigated area.

Adjacent Excavated Sites: None

Pre-Excavation Features
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of a pipeline project. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation and it was not fully exposed during investigation.

Excavation Results
Summary of Features: Excavation of the sites revealed the remains of a burnt mound. The mound was found to consist of a spread of charcoal-rich soils containing moderate to abundant amounts of heat-fractured and shattered stones. The spread of material, which was roughly circular in plan, measured c. 15m in diameter. It was an average of 0.1m deep. A sub-circular pit was identified within the charcoal-rich deposits; it measured 1.2m in diameter and was 0.3m deep. This represents the possible remains of a trough or cooking-pit. Two stake-holes were identified close to the pit, with a third identified at the south-east edge of the burnt mound material. No artefacts were recovered and the site was not scientifically dated.

References
Excavation No. AE/01/85

Location: 
Townland: Breezemount 
Parish: Dromara 
Barony: Kinelarty 
County: Down 
Six inch map no: NA 
NGR: 337650, 362100 
Altitude: NA

Excavation Details: 
Project: Mourne Conduit Replacement (Aquarius Project) 
Site Director: Ciara McManus 
Consultants: Archaeological Development Services Ltd. 
Year: 2001

Physical Setting: 
There is no information available as to the locational setting of the site.

Cultural Landscape: 
There are no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the investigated area.

Adjacent Excavated Sites: None

Pre-Excavation Features
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of a pipeline project. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Results
Summary of Features: 
Excavation of the sites revealed the remains of a burnt mound. The remains of a low spread of burnt mound material, c. 25m by 8m in size, were uncovered within the corridor of the proposed pipeline. As the deposits were within an area under threat from the pipe insertion, excavation was required. Clearance of the burnt spread revealed three large subsoil-cut pits, all filled with blackened, charcoal-rich material. The largest and most central of the pits also contained large quantities of burnt and heat-shattered stones, suggesting a function similar to that of a fulacht fia.

References
Location: Townland: Killinure  Six inch map no: NA  Parish: Saintfield  NGR: 337800, 363450  Barony: Castlereagh Upper  Altitude: NA  County: Down


Physical Setting: The site is situated at the base of the east-facing slope of a small drumlin. The burnt mound material extended downslope in an east–west direction.

Cultural Landscape: There are no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the investigated area.

Adjacent Excavated Sites: None

Pre-Excavation Features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of a pipeline project.

Excavation Results

Summary of Features: Excavation of the sites revealed a burnt mound and two troughs.

Burnt Mound: It consisted of a single layer of black, charcoal-rich, silty clay with moderate quantities of heat-fractured stone. The spread was truncated by plough-furrows and a modern field drain extended north–south across the eastern end of the spread. A second spread was recorded approximately 10m to the north of Spread 1. This measured 6m by 2.5m before extending beyond the limit of excavation to the west. It consisted of a charcoal-rich silty clay with moderate quantities of heat-fractured stone with a maximum depth of 0.15m.

Trough 1: Trough 1 was roughly circular in plan and had a diameter of 1.75m. It was cut almost vertically into subsoil to a depth of 0.35m and contained a single fill consisting of black charcoal-rich sandy silt with heat-fractured stones.

Trough 2: Trough was roughly sub-rectangular in plan. It measured 2.6m north–south by 1m and was cut into subsoil to a depth of 0.28m. It contained a single fill, which consisted of black silty clay with frequent heat-fractured stones.

Reference

Excavation No. AE/01/21

Location: Carricknaveagh Six inch map no: 15
Parish: Killaney NGR: 336500, 361200
Barony: Castlereagh Upper Altitude: NA
County: Down

Excavation Details: Project: Mourne Conduit Replacement (Aquarius Project)
Site Director: Chris Long
Consultants: Archaeological Development Services Ltd.
Year: 2001

Physical Setting: The site is situated at the base of the south-facing slope of a small drumlin. The burnt mound material extended downslope in a north–south direction.

Cultural Landscape: There are no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the investigated area.

Adjacent Excavated Sites: None

**Pre-Excavation Features**

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of a pipeline project.

**Excavation Results**

Summary of Features: Excavation of the sites revealed a burnt mound and two troughs.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound measured approximately 8m north–south by 16m and extended downslope in an approximate north–south direction. It contained two layers. The upper layer consisted of a loose, charcoal-rich silty loam with abundant heat-fractured stone, with an average depth of 0.1m. The basal layer consisted of a compact light grey clay containing abundant ash material. It had an average depth of 50mm.

Trough 1: As it survived, the trough was roughly subtriangular in plan, with a maximum width of 2.5m. It was cut into subsoil to a depth of 0.7m and contained two fills. The upper fill consisted of a loose, black, charcoal-rich silty loam with moderate quantities of heat-fractured stone and a maximum depth of 0.45m. The basal fill formed the lining of the trough and consisted of a compact white plastic clay with occasional charcoal flecking and a maximum depth of 0.25m.

Trough 2: Trough 2 was roughly oval in plan, measuring 2.5m north-east/south-west by 1.1m, and was cut into subsoil to a depth of 0.3m. It contained two fills. The upper consisted of a loose, black, charcoal-rich clay silt with moderate quantities of burnt stone and a maximum depth of 0.2m. The basal fill
consisted of a white/grey plastic clay with a maximum depth of 0.1m and formed the lining of the trough.

Hearths: A hearth was located approximately 10m south-west of Trough 1. It was sub-rectangular in plan, measured 1.5m east–west by 1.1m and was cut into subsoil to a depth of 0.25m. It contained a single fill, a black charcoal-rich clay. The base of the hearth contained four stake-holes which were on average 0.1m in diameter and 0.15m deep. A second hearth was located approximately 6m west of Trough 1. It was sub-circular in plan with a diameter of approximately 1.15m and was cut into subsoil to a depth of 0.2m. It contained a single fill, a charcoal-rich silty clay. A slot measuring 0.7m by 0.1m was cut to a depth of 0.1m into the base of the hearth along its south-west side. A series of relatively large stones was placed along the length of the slot.

Quarry pits: Two quarry pits were located immediately south of Trough 1. The first of these was irregularly shaped in plan, measuring 4m north–south by 2.5m, and was cut through bedrock to a depth of 0.6m. It contained two fills. The upper fill consisted of burnt mound material and had a maximum depth of 0.45m, while the basal fill consisted of a loose mid-grey silt with frequent ash inclusions and had a maximum depth of 0.15m. The second quarry pit was immediately to the north–east of the first. Again irregularly shaped in plan, it measured 2m north–south by 1m and was cut through bedrock to a depth of 0.3m. It was filled by two layers of burnt mound material. The upper layer consisted of the black charcoal-rich material and had a maximum depth of 0.1m, while the basal layer was the light grey ash material and had a maximum depth of 0.2m.

Finds: No finds reported from the site

 Dating: The site was not scientifically dated

Reference

Excavation Details:
Project: Mourne Conduit Replacement (Aquarius Project)
Site Director: Chris Long
Consultants: Archaeological Development Services Ltd.
Year: 2001

Physical Setting: The site is situated at the base of the east-facing slope of a small drumlin.
Cultural Landscape: There are no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the investigated area.

Adjacent Excavated Sites: None

Pre-Excavation Features
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of a pipeline project.

Excavation Results
Summary of Features: Excavation of the sites revealed a burnt mound and timber-lined trough. No finds were recovered and the deposits are not scientifically dated.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound measured approximately 4.8m north–south by 3.6m and extended east from the cut of the trough. It consisted of a single layer, a charcoal-rich silty clay with moderate quantities of heat-fractured stone.

Trough: The cross-section of the trough indicated that it had been recut during its period of use. The initial trough was oval in plan and measured 2.6m by 2.1m. It was cut into subsoil to a depth of 0.7m. The base was lined with a series of thin wooden planks. The remainder of the base was lined with a plastic orange clay, into which was set a number of large flat stones. The trough was filled with a series of clays distinguishable by their varying charcoal and burnt stone content. The recut trough was roughly oval in plan and measured 1.6m by 1.2m. It was cut into the fills of the initial trough to a depth of 0.55m. The base and sides were lined with a mid-grey plastic clay with a maximum thickness of 0.15m. It was filled with a series of charcoal-rich silty clays, which contained moderate quantities of heat-fractured stone.

References
Excavation Details:
Project: Mourne Conduit Replacement (Aquarius Project)
Site Director: Chris Long
Consultants: Archaeological Development Services Ltd.
Year: 2001

Physical Setting: The site is situated at the base of the south-facing slope of a small drumlin.

Cultural Landscape: There are no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the investigated area.

Adjacent Excavated Sites: None

Pre-Excavation Features
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of a pipeline project. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Results
Summary of Features: Excavation of the sites revealed a burnt mound and two troughs. No finds were recovered and the deposits are not scientifically dated.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound material measured 8.5m north–south by 9.5m. It consisted of an overlapping series of thin silty clays distinguishable by their charcoal and heat-fractured stone content. The burnt mound was originally located upslope (north) of the troughs but over time has spread south as a result of the effects of hill-wash and west through ploughing action.

Trough 1: Trough 1 was roughly sub-rectangular in plan and measured 1.3m east–west by 1m. It was cut almost vertically into subsoil to a depth of 0.35m and contained a single fill, a friable grey/brown clay loam with occasional charcoal flecking and a maximum depth of 0.35m.

Trough 2: Trough 2 was approximately 0.2m south of Trough 1. Roughly sub-rectangular in plan, it measured 1.6m east–west by 1m. It was cut almost vertically into subsoil to a depth of 0.4m. It contained a single fill, a friable mid-grey/orange silty clay with occasional charcoal flecking.

References
Physical Setting: There is no information available as to the locational setting of the site.

Cultural Landscape: There are no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the investigated area.

Adjacent Excavated Sites: Early medieval features

**Pre-Excavation Features**

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of an unspecified project. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

**Excavation Results**

Summary of Features: The area was extremely disturbed by modern agricultural activity. Several sherds of Early Christian pottery were recovered. A former track/path, width c. 1m, also cut through Area 1. Three trenches were cut through the path; sherds of post-medieval pottery were recovered. Area 2 was a burnt spread, a possible *fulacht fia*, c. 12m by 8m, containing numerous shattered burnt stones. A series of trenches was cut through the spread exposing a trough, 2.6m in length and 1.2m wide, with a surviving depth of 0.3m. A series of timbers were evident lining the base of the trough which were overlain with burnt mound material. There were two post-holes, to the southern side of the trough possible used as supports for the side walls. To the south of the trough a number of Late Bronze Age pottery sherds were recovered. A partial reconstruction was possible. The pot is S-shaped in profile, and flat-bottomed with an everted rim. The site was not scientifically dated however the recovery of Late Bronze Age pottery may suggest that the site was in use during this period.

**References**

Excavation Details: Project: Briggs Rock to Donaghadee Pipeline

Site Director: Colin Dunlop

Consultants: Northern Archaeological Consultancy Ltd

Year: 2006

Physical Setting: The sites lay in low-lying areas that were prone to waterlogging

Cultural Landscape: There are no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the investigated area however several burnt mound deposits were revealed during monitoring and a prehistoric ring-ditch.

Adjacent Excavated Sites: Ring-ditch

Pre-Excavation Features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of a pipeline scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Results

Summary of Features: Excavation of the area revealed three burnt mound areas consisting of spreads, troughs and pits.

Site A

Burnt Mound: This deposit was roughly oval and had maximum dimensions of 10m east to west and 8m north to south. It was badly truncated by modern stone drains. The material was composed of a mix of charcoal, ash and burnt, cracked stones. No artefacts were recovered during the cleaning up and recording of this feature. No features were recorded and it was preserved in situ. A sample of charcoal however is dated to the Early Bronze Age.

Site B

Pit 1: This pit was roughly oval in plan with steep sides and a flat base. It measured 2.06m by 1.25m with a depth of 0.19m. It was filled by loose black silty loam containing a very large quantity of angular stones and charcoal. The base of the pit showed some signs of burning in situ as the subsoil was scorched in places.
Pit 2: The second pit (C13) was orientated north to south and measured 2.50m by 1.75m by 0.12m. It was very shallow and irregular in shape, and may have been a natural depression in the ground. That said, the pit was damaged during topsoil stripping. It was filled by loose black silty loam containing a very large quantity of angular stones and charcoal. The base of the feature displayed evidence of scorching.

Site C

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound was roughly oval, with maximum recorded dimensions of 11.5 m east to west and 14.2 m north to south. The full extent of the feature could not be determined as it continued east beyond the bounds of the project. It was comprised of loose black silty loam containing a very large quantity of angular stones, ash and charcoal. This layer lay on top of a layer of burnt subsoil and a layer of yellow-grey silty clay which may represent a hearth.

Trough: The first of the troughs, C32, was roughly rectangular and was orientated east to west. It measured 3.00m by 1.80m by 0.60m. It was a steep sided, flat based trough. The base of the trough was wood-lined with oak planks and contained the remains of several posts. The planks were split oak from the same tree, laid side by side and orientated east to west. It was likely that the trough also had wood-lined sides but these did not survive. Two matching pairs of post holes were found at either end of the trough and were presumably used to hold the side plank sin place. These posts may have had a wooden sluice between the larger and smaller posts; this may have allowed water from this trough to be released into the second lower pit which was connected to the trough.

Well pit: The second pit was to the east of the first. This was not fully excavated as it lay partially beyond the bounds of the project. This pit was roughly circular and measured 3.00m diameter and 1.20 m deep (C43). Its base was filled by a layer of dark brown peaty material. This was probably a natural deposition caused by plant growth in waterlogged conditions, which suggested that the pit was open for a prolonged period after it was dug. The upper layers of this trough were filled by the main burnt mound fill. This trough was below the water table and constantly filled with water during the excavation.

Site D

Burnt Spread: The spread encompassed an area 14m by 6m. The full extent of the feature could not be determined as it continued beyond the bounds of the project to the north. The spread of the burnt mound was comprised of loose black silty loam containing a very large quantity of angular stones and charcoal (F75). This layer had a maximum thickness of 0.10 m. It overlay an area of burning which may represent a hearth.

Pit: The large pit, C80, had a diameter of 3.20 m and a maximum depth of 0.15 m; it had steep sides and a flat base. This pit was the most likely of the
features uncovered in this area to have been the burnt mound’s trough but as it was very shallow it may not have been

**Finds:**
None

**Dating:**
Charcoal (unknown) from burnt stone spread (Site A)  
(UB-7286) 3539±33 BP (1955–1756 BC)  
Charcoal (unknown) from the fill of pit (C13) Site B  
(Beta-232773) 3530±40 BP (1920–1690 BC)  
Charcoal (unknown) from the fill of pit (C43) Site C  
(Beta-232774) 2880±40 BP (1010–820 BC)  
Timbers from the base of trough (C32) Site C  
(Q-10842) 993 BC (Q-10843) 1016 BC (Q-10844) 1024 BC  
Charcoal (unknown) from burnt stone spread (Site A)  
(Beta-232776) 3450±40 BP (1880–1670 BC)

**Site Interpretation**

Three areas of burnt mound activity were exposed during the pipeline scheme. Site A was composed of a burnt mound deposit that was preserved in situ but was radiocarbon dated to the Early Bronze Age. This deposit was broadly contemporary with the pits revealed in Site B. These three pits displayed evidence of in situ burning and were filled with deposits of burnt stone suggesting they may have functioned as roasting pits employing a dry pyrolytic heat. This is in contrast to the Late Bronze Age water-boiling site revealed in Site C. A well-defined plank-lined trough was exposed with a connected lower pit, probably used as an emptying feature for the topographically higher trough pit. As it cut the water-table it could have also supplied water to the trough above suggesting it would have required manual filling.

**References**


Plate 10.33 Remains of plank-lined trough and connected ‘emptying pit’ at Balloo, Co. Down
Physical Setting: The development site lay on the High Donaghadee Road, to the west of Donaghadee town, beside the former Donaghadee Carpet Factory, in gently rolling pasture. The site lay just to the south-east of the former course of a small stream, identified from aerial photography.

Cultural Landscape: There are no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the investigated area however the early medieval period is represented by possible ploughed-out ringfort.

Adjacent Excavated Sites: None

Pre-Excavation Features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of a water treatment plant.

Excavation Results

Summary of Features: Excavation revealed the presence of four troughs, seven pits, one stake-hole and one spread of burnt-mound material.

Burnt Mound: This spread lay slightly downslope from the remainder of the features, at the edge of a palaeo-channel, and was composed of the same mix of charcoal-rich material and heat-affected stones that characterised the trough fills. It measured 13m by 6m with a maximum thickness of 0.13m. A pebble flake derived from a possible hammerstone was recovered from the deposit.

Trough 1: The main features were the C10 and C12 troughs. Trough (C10) was sub-rectangular in plan and measured 2.4m by 1.5m with a depth of 0.6m. The pit contained four fills, all of which contained large quantities of heat-fractured sandstone and basalt. Charcoal from one of these fills is dated to the Early Bronze Age.

Pit 1: C9 lay directly south-east of trough C10 and was conjoined with it. It was sub-circular in shape and measured 0.8m by 0.7m with a depth of 0.3m. This
A pit was filled with material identical to the trough C10. Some flint flakes were also recovered.

**Trough 2:**
Trough (C12) was also sub-rectangular in shape and measured 2.6m by 1.6m with a depth of 0.5m. The base of the C12 trough contained the impressions and charred remains of a plank and lath base. Although very fragmentary, it appears that thicker ‘planks’ were laid north-west to south-east, while thinner ‘laths’ were laid from north-east to south-west. No indication of any vertical remains could be identified, suggesting that this wooden base was utilised without any upstanding walls. It appears that the sides were, at least partially, sealed by a layer of sticky clay. Above this, the trough contained four further layers of heat-fractured sandstone and basalt. A small pit (C11) was conjoined to this trough and contained a similar fill.

**Troughs 3 and 4:**
Two further subsidiary troughs (C14 and C17) lay outside these and were, again, filled with heat-fractured sandstone and basalt. One of these troughs (C14) was partially covered by the F41 horseshoe-shaped spread.

**Finds:**
Struck flint flakes were recovered from the pit C9 and a possible hammerstone fragment was recovered from the spread.

**Dating:**
Charcoal (unknown) from the fill of trough C10 (Beta-228654) 3620±60 BP (2133–1767 BC)
Charcoal (unknown) from the fill of trough C12 (Beta-228655) 3650±50 BP (2139–1828 BC)

**Site Interpretation**
The archaeological activity at the site centred on two main troughs, one of which produced evidence to suggest it was plank-lined. This lining survived as an area of charcoal suggesting the internal structure may have been burned *in situ*. Although difficult to prove, it is possible that this burning event may be associated with an abandonment process after the trough emptied with water and dried out. It can be compared with other burnt trough linings elsewhere (see Chapter 5). The site can be interpreted as a pyro lithic water boiling area used during the Early Bronze Age period.

**References**

Physical Setting: There is no information available as to the locational setting of the site.

Cultural Landscape: There are no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the investigated area.

Adjacent Excavated Sites: None

**Pre-Excavation Features**

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of an unspecified project.

**Excavation Results**

Summary of Features: Excavation revealed the burnt stone deposits, pits and stake-holes.

Burnt Mound: The larger spread, which measured 14.6m north-west/south-east by 7.6m and survived to a depth of 0.5m, proved to be a burnt mound made up of three layers. The smaller spread, which measured 3m north–south by 3.6m, lay 5m to the north of the burnt mound at the western limit of the working width.

Pit features: Two sub-circular pits, with diameters of 0.58m and 0.42m by 0.2m and 0.22m deep respectively, had been cut into the south-west edge of a depression. A circular stake-hole was situated immediately to the north-east of the smaller (south) pit. A pair of post-holes or small pits lay on the north-west edge of the level platform, 0.2m to the east, with a similar pair 2.5m and a group of nine small stake-holes and one larger one further to the south-east. A small pit and three stake-holes lay 3.6m to the north and there was an isolated stake-hole 1.8m from the south-east edge of the platform. The remaining features associated with this burnt mound consisted of a complex of 41 stake-holes situated on the south-west edge of the large depression on the east side of the water channel.

**References**

Location: Townland: Ballyman          Six inch map no: 28
Parish: Oldconnaught           NGR: 323800, 218600
Barony: Rathdown            Altitude: 61m OD
County: Dublin

Excavation Details: Project: Research
Site Director: Elizabeth O’Brien
Consultants: Independent
Year: 1979–1986

Physical Setting: The site is located towards the bottom of the southfacing slope of a steep valley, at a point where the slope becomes less steep and forms a slight platform immediately above a freshwater spring. Below the spring the slope continues gently downwards to the river known as County Brook, which forms the boundary between Dublin and Wicklow.

Cultural Landscape: The ruined remains of an early medieval church are located c. 80 metres west of the excavation site. In 1979 during field walking in the area around the excavation site, the remains of a pit containing two inverted Bronze Age-type urns was recognised in a newly-cut bank bordering a driveway.

Adjacent excavated sites: Early Medieval corn-drying kiln

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological fieldwalking as a spread of burnt stones and charcoal, c. 80m from the ruins of a Medieval church. The site was excavated over a period of eight seasons.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site consisted of a heavily disturbed burnt mound that did not seal any cut features such as a trough. The layer of burnt stone was cut by later stone drains and intermixed with prehistoric flint, animal bone, early medieval metalwork, and metal slag and other material associated with iron working at the site.

Burnt Spread: The overall extent of the burnt stone spread is unknown. The excavation trench measured 20m by 20m and was divided into five metre grid squares. The western limit of the spread of F26 was located in the eastern half of squares X and B, and the eastern limit was located on the western side of squares 8, G, C. The deposit varied in thickness, from 40/50cm at the north end of the site to 15cm at the south end. A large quantity of worked and unworked flint and chert was recovered throughout all levels of FN26. Animal bone was also recovered in all areas of N26 while early medieval
artefacts, medieval artefacts, furnaces bottom and slag were also recovered. It is evident that the burnt mound was heavily disturbed from the early medieval period onwards. This is evident from the finds recovered throughout all layers, the medieval church located 80m from the site and early medieval corn drying kiln also identified.

Spring: During excavation it became clear that the slightly saucer-shaped sandy area around fresh-water spring FN21 was the base of a small pond, with gully FN25 being formed by over-flow from the pond.

Stone setting: FN24 was a semi-circular setting of stones that was overlain by the burnt mound material. When the entire setting was exposed, it could be seen that the stones had been deliberately set into sockets in the boulder clay and all had packing stones at the base. The flat upper surface of stone 3 was pocked and abraded, suggesting that it had been subjected to pounding, and minute quantities of iron hammer-scale were recovered horn around the base of the stone. FN5 was located beneath FN26 at a depth of about 60cm from the surface. It consisted of a spread of black grit and mica (?degraded burnt granite) and small burnt stones. The northern part of FN5, extending for about one metre from FM24, contained charcoal and small pieces of slag mixed through the black grit.

Finds:

Artefacts: Prehistoric chert and flint tools, early medieval artefacts and late medieval pottery and iron implements. Coarse stone tools were also recovered.

Ecofacts: Animal bone from the site was recovered from spread deposit and identified as. It was identified as cattle, pig, sheep/goat, horse and dog.

Dating: Bone (animal) from the deposit FN26
C14 (UB-4372) 1231±41 BP (AD 683–887)
Bone (animal) from the deposit FN26
C14 (UB-4373) 1058±53 BP (AD 830–1151)
Charcoal (unknown) from the upper deposit of FN26
C14 (UB-2662) 585±65 BP (AD 1280–1440)

Excavation Interpretation

The site appears to have been abandoned as a place of activity after the fourteenth century, probably because the spreading of the stones of FN26 during the iron-working phase caused the springs to become blocked, causing the formation of a fen-peat layer. This layer of burnt stone seems to have been heavily disturbed by later activity on the site. The presence of both prehistoric and early medieval artefacts, along with slag and furnace material, attests to this being the case. The radiocarbon dates obtained from the animal bone must therefore be viewed with a degree of caution and cannot be taken as evidence of early medieval fulacht fia activity. While the semi-circular setting of stones may have functioned as some sort of roasting oven for pyrolythic cooking, it may equally have related to the medieval iron working phase.

References


Excavation Details: Project: Carrickmines to Bray Gas Pipeline

Site Director: John Ó Néill

Consultants: Margaret Gowen and Company Ltd.

Year: 1998

Physical Setting: There is no information available as to the landscape setting of the site.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the townland prior to archaeological investigations, however a number of previously unknown fulachtai fia were discovered during the pipeline.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during topsoil stripping in advance of the Carrickmines to Bray Gas Pipeline. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed several phases of burnt mound activity on the site. A possible Wedge Tomb was also identified during the excavation, however this structure seems more likely to have functioned as a hearth relating to pyrolithic activity and can be compared with other similar examples across the country. This structure relates to a separate phase of activity on the site.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound was composed of heat-affected granite and shale, charcoal and black silty clay. It measured 14m by 9m with a maximum thickness of 0.4m.

Trough 1: This trough relates to the first phase of activity on the site. It was oval in shape and measured 1.5m by 1.1m with a depth of 0.3m. A deposit of clay sealed a number of trough fills composed of burnt stone. The trough had been excavated down to the local shale bedrock and appeared to fill freely with water. A line of stake-holes ran parallel to the trough and may have acted as some form of windbreak.

Structure: An area of stake-holes measuring 3.6m by 2.1m defined an oval setting with no indication of an entrance. The presence of multiple lines of stake-holes in
some places however suggested that there were a number of phases of reuse for some form of light structure.

Cobbled surface: A cobbled area measuring 4.2m by 2.4m lay between the hut site and the line of stake-holes. A flint flake was recovered from the surface.

Wedge Tomb/Hearth: This structure was identified as a possible hearth with cairn material and related to a separate phase of activity. This was incorporated into the mound and covered the earlier trough and stake-holes. A dense layer of charcoal was recovered on the floor of this structure which was overlain with ‘cairn’ material. It was a U-shaped setting of stones with a number of courses and was set within the mound. It measured 2.35m by 3.4m externally. The stones exhibited evidence of fire damage and is similar in style to a number of formal hearths which are usually located immediately adjacent to a trough and are open-ended to allow the stones to be easily transported. As the area adjacent to the structure was no investigated, it is possible an undetected trough lies in this area.

Later trough: The final prehistoric phase on the site saw the construction of a second trough. The trough was circular in shape and measured 1.9m in diameter with a depth of 0.3m. It was cut into a natural spring.

Finds:

Artefacts: Flint flakes were recovered from the cobbled surface

Dating: There are no scientific dates available for the site.

Excavation Interpretation

The site can be interpreted as a pyrolithic water-boiling area with several phases of use. The first phase of activity was associated with a trough, stake-fence, hut structure and cobbled area. The second phase was associated with a large formal hearth which is probably associated with a trough that lies outside the excavated area. The final phase of activity was a second trough that filled naturally with water. No dating is available for the site however, stone built hearths of this kind are common during the Middle to Late Bronze Age in Ireland (see Chapter 5).

References


Plate 10.35 Stone-built hearth interpreted as ‘wedge tomb’ at Shankill, Co. Dublin.
Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the South-Eastern Motorway Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a number of burnt spread deposits, a trough, a number of stake-holes and an old river bed.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound survived as three separate spreads of heat-shattered stone, charcoal and black silty clay. This was probably due to severe truncation by later agricultural activity which is attested to by a number of post-medieval plough furrows. The first spread measured 2.7m by 3m with a maximum thickness of 0.1m while the second spread occupied an area measuring 9m by 8.4m with a thickness of 0.15m. The third deposit measured 4.4m by 3.8m with a thickness of 0.1m.

Trough: The trough was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 2.3m by 1.8m with a depth of 0.3m. A deposit of hard packed boulder-clay was noted on the northern side of the pit suggesting it may have been clay-lined. However two post-holes were revealed cut into the base of the trough in the south-eastern and north-western corners suggesting the presence of a timber-lining. An even spread of heat-affected granite stones were noted in the base of the trough indicating the trough was not cleaned out after its final use.

Water-Channel: A small channel extended from the north-eastern corner of the trough. It measured 1.2m by 0.23m with a depth of 0.35m and extended to the lined of
the old river course. The excavator suggests it functioned as an overflow conduit for the trough.

**Hearth:**

To the west of the trough two closely set areas of red burnt clay were uncovered beneath the burnt mound material. They measured 1.26m by 0.9m and 0.6 by 0.23m respectively.

**Stake-Holes:**

A total of seventeen post-holes were revealed to the west of the trough in a clusters formation. No discernable pattern could be deduced from the cluster.

**Finds:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artefacts</th>
<th>Ecofacts:</th>
<th>None</th>
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</thead>
</table>

**Dating:**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Relative dating:</th>
<th>None</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Absolute dating:</td>
<td>None</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Excavation Interpretation**

The excavated pit appears to be the only deliberately clay-lined trough associated with a water-channel or gully, of the type usually interpreted as overflow drainage features. However, as the trough is clay-lined it would have required manual filling from the adjacent palaeochannel and as such, an overflow conduit would not been necessary. It is possible the channel functioned as water inlet gully allowing water to fill the trough more easily when the water-table was higher. This is also supported by the level of the trough in comparison to the palaeochannel. The burnt stone on site was identified as granite, a hard stone that can withstand numerous heatings before shattering. This explains the lack of any mound or large burnt stone deposits on site and the unshattered granite stones found in the base of the trough. The site can be interpreted as a pyrolithic water-boiling area, possible for cooking.

**References**

Location: Townland: Cherrywood  Six inch map no: 26
Parish: Killiney  NGR: 32425, 22322
Barony: Rathdown  Altitude: 36m OD
County: Dublin

Excavation Details: Project: Industrial Development
Site Director: John Ó Néill
Consultants: Margaret Gowen and Company Ltd.
Year: 1998

Physical Setting: The site was located on a low hill overlooking the N11 and the Shanaganagh River to the east and the eastern side of a narrow glen down to the Loughlinstown River to the west.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the townland prior to archaeological investigations.

Adjacent excavated sites: Prehistoric roundhouse, barrow and cremation

Pre-Excavation features
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of an industrial development. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the area revealed multi-phased activity, however several of the prehistoric features may have been contemporaneous.

Site A
Burnt Mound: The burnt mound was located in the south-western corner of the field and measured 24m by 9m. It was identified along with features relating to the Loughlinstown military camp. The mound had been considerably levelled as a result of this disturbance which is attested to by the presence of a half-penny token and animal one.

Troughs: Eight troughs were identified at the site along with two possible troughs disturbed by a lane. All were circular or sub-circular and unlined. The diameters ranged from 1.2m to 2m and were between 0.3-0.8m in depth. Several were cut into natural springs. No other information is available for these features.

Hearths: A number of possible hearths were identified as circular areas of oxidised or burnt clay beside a number of the troughs.
Site B

Burnt Mound: This deposit lay on a west-facing slope and appeared as an irregular shaped deposit of burnt stone that was composed of burnt granite and charcoal. The overall dimensions of the spread are 7.1m by 3.6m.

Trough: The trough lay below the north-eastern corner of the burnt spread and was truncated by a drain cut. The trough had two phases of use with the original trough re-cut later by another phase. The original trough measured 1.8m by 0.5m with a depth of 0.8. The re-cut measured 2.05m by 1.35m with a depth of 0.6m. Post-hole from the original lining were visible along the long sides of the trough, five on each south.

Finds:

Artefacts: Both decorated and undecorated prehistoric pottery was recovered from the burnt mound. Sherds of possible beaker pottery were also recovered from the burnt mound. Flint flakes, debitage and hammerstones were also retrieved along with javelin heads, a leaf-shaped arrowhead and scrapers.

Ecofacts: Butchered animal bone was recovered from the upper deposits of the site.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: None

Excavation Interpretation

Excavation of the area revealed extensive prehistoric activity in the form of Bronze Age burials and fulachtaí fia. Site A was a large pyrolithic site with eight troughs and hearths suggestive of prolonged water-boiling activities in the Early Bronze Age. The recovery of several sherds of beaker pottery from Site A would support this early prehistoric date for the site. Butchered animal bone from the site may also imply it was used for cooking. Site B, was a smaller deposit that overlay a single trough that sowed evidence to suggest it was timber-lined in the past. It was also re-cut during a later period of use suggesting that the site remained an important boiling area.

References

Location: Townland: Cherrywood Six inch map no: 26  
Parish: Killiney NGR: 32425, 22322  
Barony: Rathdown Altitude: 33m OD  
County: Dublin

Excavation Details:  
Project: Industrial Development  
Site Director: John Ó Néill  
Consultants: Margaret Gowen and Company Ltd.  
Year: 1999

Physical Setting: The site was situated in a glen between two low hills overlooking the Loughlinstown River.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the townland prior to archaeological investigations.

Adjacent excavated sites: Multi-phased activity dating from the Neolithic to the Bronze Age.

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of an industrial development. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the area revealed multi-phased activity dating from the Neolithic to Bronze Ages. Pre-dating the fulacht fia, a number of Neolithic features were revealed including hearths, pits and possible structural remains. Ardmarks were also preserved below the burnt mound deposit which seemed to represent activity associated with the initial ground-stripping for the construction/use of pyrolithic technology.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound survived as a large, levelled spread of heat-shattered stone and charcoal-rich material that was heavily damaged by early agricultural furrows and the occupation by military camp phase in the 1790s.

Trough: A single, oval unlined trough was identified at the site. No other information available.

References

Location: Townland: Newtown Six inch map no: 26
Parish: Coolock NGR: 311900, 242422
Barony: Coolock Altitude: NA
County: Dublin

Excavation Details: Project: Golf Course Development
Site Director: Martin Reid
Consultants: Archaeological Development Services Ltd.
Year: 1999

Physical Setting: The site was situated on a natural knoll on the lower slopes of the Dublin Mountains, west of the Owendoher River.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the townland prior to archaeological investigations.

Adjacent excavated sites: No

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of a golf course development. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a low mound of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone along with fragments of burnt clay. It measured 15m by 6m with a maximum depth of 0.15m. A number of pits were identified, one of which had four post-holes cut into the base, one at each of the corners. Charcoal from this pit is dated to the Bronze Age.

Finds:
Artefacts: None Ecofacts: None

Dating:
Relative dating: None
Absolute dating: Charcoal (Unknown) from the basal fill of the trough C14 (UCD-unknown) 3700±60 BP (2285–1926 BC)
Location: Townland: Fonthill  Six inch map no: 26
Parish: Palmerston  NGR: Unknown
Barony: Uppercross  Altitude: NA
County: Dublin

Excavation Details:
Project: Bord Gáis Pipeline
Site Director: John Ó Néill
Consultants: Archaeological Development Services Ltd.
Year: 2000

Physical Setting:
The site is situated on the banks of the River Liffey approximately 100m from a large weir.

Cultural Landscape:
There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the townland prior to archaeological investigations.

Adjacent excavated sites: No

Pre-Excavation features
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of a pipeline development. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a small deposit of burnt mound material that measured 4.2m by 5.4m with a maximum thickness of 0.25m. It was composed chiefly of heat-shattered sandstone in a charcoal-rich matrix. No trough was encountered during the excavation. Other features could lie outside the area of investigation. No finds were recovered from the site and it was not scientifically date.

References
Location: Coldwinter
Parish: Unknown
Barony: Unknown
County: Dublin

Excavation Details: Project: Northern Motorway (Airport to Balbriggan Bypass)
Site Director: Kieran Campbell
Consultants: Valerie J. Keeley
Year: 2000

Physical Setting: The site was located 2km inland from the head of the Rogerstown estuary in a natural hollow between two ridges.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the townland prior to archaeological investigations.

Adjacent excavated sites: Large prehistoric pit filled with pottery and flint débiage. Possibly Neolithic.

**Pre-Excavation features**

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the Northern Motorway Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

**Excavation Record**

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a spread of heat-shattered stone, a trough and a cluster of stake-holes.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound survived as a levelled spread of heat-shattered stone, charcoal and stony grey silty clay. It covered an area measuring 10m by 8m with a thickness of 0.08m.

Trough: The trough was oval in shape with steep vertical sides and a flat base. It measured 1.96m by 1.4m with a depth of 0.57m and was filled with deposit of burnt mound material. A sample from the lower fill of the trough is dated to the Bronze Age.

Stake-Holes: Forty-three stake-holes were revealed in the vicinity of the trough. On the south side of the pit two parallel linear arrangements of stake-holes were aligned north-south set 1m apart. The arrangement of stake-holes suggested a fence line or lines, or a light structure. A further group of fourteen stake-holes were also revealed and extended beyond the limits of the excavation.

**Finds:**
Artefacts: None  
Ecofacts: None

**Dating:**

Relative dating: None  
Absolute dating: Charcoal (alder and ash) from the basal fill of the trough  
C14 (GrN-30018) 3450±60 BP (1922–1618 BC)

**Excavation Interpretation**

The site can be interpreted as a pyrlithic water-boiling location. This is supported by the presence of a large deposit of waste-firing material and a trough. Although the trough is unlined, it is assumed, based on its size that it functioned as a boiling pit. The purpose of the stake-hole arrangements adjacent to the trough is unclear but as hearths are usually located in these areas, it may have some connection to this feature. Alternatively, it may have been a light, temporary shelter.

**References**


Radiocarbon date provided by Kieran Campbell pers. comme.
Location: Townland: Carmanhall  Six inch map no: NA
Parish: Tully  NGR: 320009, 225551
Barony: Rathdown  Altitude: 89m OD
County: Dublin

Excavation Details: Project: South-Eastern Motorway
Site Director: Thaddeus Breen
Consultants: Valerie J. Keeley
Year: 2002

Physical Setting: The site was situated adjacent to an eighteenth or nineteenth century ornamental pond.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the townland prior to archaeological investigations.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

**Pre-Excavation features**

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the South-Eastern Motorway Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation

**Excavation Record**

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a heavily disturbed burnt mound that lay adjacent to a nineteenth century pond. The deposit covered an area measuring 12m by 10m and was heavily disturbed by later landscaping. It was covered by a recent clay layer that contained modern ceramics and glass. One pit was identified which may have been a prehistoric trough. It was rectangular in shape and measured 2.56m by 1.2m with a depth of 0.8m.

**Finds:**

Artefacts: Flint flake  Ecofacts: None

**Dating:**

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (alder) from the burnt spread C14 (SUERC-10767) 2875±35 BP (1200–920 BC)

**References**

Location: Townland: Jordanstown  Six inch map no: NA
Parish: Palmerstone  NGR: 318793, 257044
Barony: Balrothery  Altitude: NA
County: Dublin

Excavation Details: Project: Bord Gáis Pipeline to the West
Site Director: Redmond Tobin
Consultants: Margaret Gowen and Company Ltd
Year: 2002

Physical Setting: The site is located in a rolling well-drained landscape, sloping to the east and used for pasture. It lies on a natural break in slope, beyond which the ground drops steeply to the south into a river valley.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the townland prior to archaeological investigations.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the Bord Gáis Pipeline to the West. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a small spread of burnt mound material and single trough.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound survived as a small deposit of heat-shattered stone and grey leached material. It measured 3.3m by 2.3m with a thickness of 0.4m. The slope breaks 1.3m south towards a stream. A further deposit of burnt mound material was revealed at this break of slope. It measured 2.3m by 3.3m and was composed of heat-shattered stone.

Trough: The possible trough was sub-circular in shape and measured 1.26m by 1.12m with a depth of 0.39m. A wedge of re-deposited natural was within the fill of the trough was interpreted as collapse after the pit had been abandoned. The pit seemed to retain water naturally.

References

Location: Townland: Knock Six inch map no: 05
Parish: Balrothery NGR: 318693, 260752
Barony: Balrothery Altitude: NA
County: Dublin

Excavation Details: Project: Bord Gáis Pipeline to the West
Site Director: Redmond Tobin
Consultants: Margaret Gowen and Company Ltd
Year: 2002

Physical Setting: The site is located at the base of an east-facing slope at the interface between solid ground and a bog. It lies to the east of a stream which probably acted as the principal water source.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the townland prior to archaeological investigations. A similar truncated fulacht fia was identified to the south of the site.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the Bord Gáis Pipeline to the West. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed the remains of a severely truncated fulacht fia site. A number of thin spread deposits were identified along with two troughs.

Burnt Mound: The remains of the burnt mound seems to have been completely removed by later agricultural activity. This is attested to by the presence of thin spreads of heat-shattered stone and cut features truncated by plough furrows.

Trough 1: This pit was sub-circular in shape and measured 2.1m by 1.8m with a depth of 0.2m. The trough was lined with a thin brushwood matting, the remains of which were preserved in the primary fill which represented natural sedimentation. The later fills of the trough were composed of burnt mound material.

Trough 2: This trough was oval in shape and measured 1.25m by 1.18m with a depth of 0.58m. It contained a single fill composed of heat-shattered stone and charcoal.
Post-Holes: Two post-holes were identified in close proximity to trough 1. The excavator suggests that they may have supported a superstructure over the trough.

Finds:

Artefacts: None
Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None
Absolute dating: None

Excavation Interpretation

Excavation of the site revealed the plough-out remains of a burnt mound and a single trough with associated post-holes. The waste-firing material associated with this site appeared to have been completely removed by later agricultural activity on the site with only small spreads of burnt stone remaining. The site can be interpreted as a pyrolithic water-boiling area for small-scale cooking. The posts-holes located at the opposite ends of the trough have been interpreted as the remains of a small shelter or canopy for trough possibly used in adverse weather conditions.

References


Location: Townland: Knock  Six inch map no: 05  
Parish: Balrothery  NGR: 318745, 260312  
Barony: Balrothery  Altitude: NA  
County: Dublin  

Excavation Details: Project: Bord Gáis Pipeline to the West  
Site Director: Redmond Tobin  
Consultants: Margaret Gowen and Company Ltd  
Year: 2002  

Physical Setting: The site was situated in low-lying marginal land at the juncture of the agricultural soils with the heavy natural clays and overlying peat. A stream lies to the east of the site.  

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the townland prior to archaeological investigations. A similar truncated fulacht fia was identified to the north of the site.  

Adjacent excavated sites: None  

Pre-Excavation features  
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the Bord Gáis Pipeline to the West. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.  

Excavation Record  
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed the remains of a severely truncated fulacht fia site. A number of thin spread deposits were identified along with a single trough.  

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound consisted of patchy spreads of heat-shattered stone and charcoal-rich material. This patchy material covered an area measuring 10.2m by 2m with a maximum thickness of 0.2m and extended beyond the limits of excavation.  

Trough: The possible trough was circular in shape and measured 1.2m by 0.6m with a depth of 0.3m. It was filled with burnt mound material.  

References  

Physical Setting: The site was situated in low-lying area at the base of a slope.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the townland prior to archaeological investigations.

Adjacent excavated sites: Medieval cemetery and hearths

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the South-Eastern Motorway. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed the remains of a burnt spread that measured 14m by 10m. It was composed of charcoal-rich material and decayed and burnt granite. No trough was encountered during excavation however a number of gullies, possibly modern were identified.

References

Location: Townland: Murphystown  Six inch map no: 22
Parish: Tully  NGR: 318819, 226033
Barony: Rathdown  Altitude: NA
County: Dublin

Excavation Details: Project: South-Eastern Motorway
Site Director: Thaddeus Breen
Consultants: Valerie J. Keeley Ltd
Year: 2002

Physical Setting: The site was situated in low-lying area at the base of a slope.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the townland prior to archaeological investigations.

Adjacent excavated sites: Medieval cemetery and hearths

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the South-Eastern Motorway. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed the remains of a burnt spread and a single pit that may have functioned as a trough.

Burnt Spread:  The burnt mound material consisted of a spread of black sandy silt, charcoal and heat-effected granite. It extended over an area measuring 18m by 15m with a maximum thickness of 0.22m.

Trough:  The trough was oval in shape and measured 2m by 1.5m with a depth of 0.7m. It had vertical sides, a flat base and was filled with deposits of burnt mound material.

Finds:

Artefacts: Three scrapers and one piece of débitage

Dating: Charcoal (alder) from the burnt spread  C14 (SUERC-10768) 3315±35 BP (1200–920 BC)

References

Location: Townland: Carrickmines Great
Parish: Tully
Barony: Rathdown
County: Dublin

Location Details:

Location: Carrickmines Great
Parish: Tully
Barony: Rathdown
County: Dublin

NGR: 322489, 223569
Altitude: 63m OD

Excavation Details:

Project: South-Eastern Motorway
Site Director: Fiona Reilly
Consultants: Valerie J. Keeley Ltd
Year: 2002

Physical Setting:
The site was at the break in slope between the lower foothills of the Dublin Mountains and the coastal plain. The land rose very gently to the south-east, to a low ridge c. 0.5km away, and more steeply to the south-west.

Cultural Landscape:
There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the townland prior to archaeological investigations.

Adjacent excavated sites: Ditch and fire pit

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the South-Eastern Motorway. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features:
Excavation of the site revealed the remains of a burnt spread and a number of cut features including troughs, pits and stake-holes.

Burnt Mound:
The burnt mound survived as a roughly circular spread of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered granite and quartzite. The deposit measured 10.75m by 8.6m with a thickness of 0.19m.

Trough 1:
The trough was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 1.9m by 1.1m. It was filled with deposits of burnt mound material which also contained several sherds of food vessel pottery. A low ridge of material was found to the south-west of the trough made of compacted soil. The excavator suggests it may have acted as a barrier to retain the mound material. Other stone deposits along the southern and eastern sides of the area suggest that a stone feature retained the mound. Three stake-holes were found west of the trough.

Hearth:
A small oval area of scorched earth was found 0.4m to the north of the trough which may represent the base of a hearth or fire spot.
Trough 2: This possible trough was rectangular in shape and measured 2m by 1.17m with a maximum depth of 0.32m. It was surrounded on its northern, western and southern sides by a metalled surface of rounded pebbles. The trough had several fills, one of which gave the impression that it was decayed planking that had deteriorated to a fine black silt.

Metalled Surface: The trough was surrounded on its northern, western and southern sides by a metalled surface of rounded pebbles that measured 5m by 4m. The surface provided a dry area for the activity carried out in the trough.

Trough 3: A circular pit was identified a short distance away from the trough. It measured 0.6m by 0.7m with a depth of 0.1m. Eight stake-holes cut the base of the pit along the internal perimeter. This may suggest the feature was lined.

Finds:

Artefacts: Prehistoric pottery (food vessel) was recovered from the trough. A hollow scraper, two end and side scrapers, three flint blades and none flakes were recovered from the site.

Ecofacts: 80 fragments of animal bone were recovered from the site which included cattle, sheep, pig and horse.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (oak) from the trough 1
C14 (SUERC-11316) 3705±35 BP (2200–2010 BC)
Charcoal (hazel) from the trough 1
C14 (SUERC-11317) 2660±35 BP (2140–1930 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

The site can be interpreted as a pyrithic water-boiling location. This is supported by the presence of a large deposit of waste-firing material and two troughs, one of which may have been timber-lined. The presence of metalled surface around the troughs would also suggest the area was waterlogged during use. At other sites paving stones or kneelers are found giving support to the trough and wet ground during trough use (see Chapter 5). The third trough was circular in shape and had eight stake-holes cutting the base suggesting it may have been wattle-lined, a common lining technique during the Early Bronze Age. The animal bone recovered from the site may imply that it functioned as a water-boiling location for cooking.

References

Location: Townland: Laughanstown Six inch map no: 26
Parish: Tully NGR: 322892, 223026
Barony: Rathdown Altitude: 72m OD
County: Dublin

Excavation Details: Project: South-Eastern Motorway
Site Director: Matthew Seaver
Consultants: Valerie J. Keeley Ltd
Year: 2002

Physical Setting: The site was located between rocky granite upland with a boulder clay cover and significant deposits of silt which fill an extensive low-lying area running north and west to the Shanganagh River.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the townland prior to archaeological investigations.

Adjacent excavated sites: Cremation burial and Early Bronze Age occupation deposits

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the South-Eastern Motorway. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed an extensive area of burnt mound activity consisting of troughs and a series of water-holes or wells. The remains of a possible cremation burial was also revealed.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound covered an area measuring 20m by 20m with a thickness of 0.3m. It extended beyond the limits of the excavation but was composed of black sandy silts, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Trough 1: This trough was revealed in ‘Area A’ which was artificially divided from ‘Area B’ by a modern fence. It was rectangular in shape and measured 1.7m by 1.1m with a depth of 0.4m. Two post-holes cut the base of the trough suggesting it may have originally been timber-lined. It was filled with burnt mound material.

Water-Hole/Wells: The removal of natural silts from the area uncovered two large pits. The first pit was sub-rectangular and measured 5m by 3m with a depth of 1.5m. The smaller pit measured 2.6m by 1.3m with a depth of 0.68m. Both were filled with a combination of silts and marls and filled naturally with water. The smaller cut contained a number of food vessel sherds along with animal
teeth. A scatter of c. 100 potsherds representing a Middle to Late Bronze Age bucket-shaped pot were recovered near the larger water-hole. A cup-marked stone was also found in the area.

Trough 2: This trough was rectangular in shape and measured 3.75m by 1.4m with a depth of 0.2m. It was stone-lined with a course of squared granite stones laid on edge. Larger mammal bone was found in the fill of the trough and a flat granite burnishing stone was found nearby, along with some coarse Bronze Age pottery.

Water-Hole 3: This pit was circular in shape and measured 3.5m by 3.25m with a depth of 0.8m. It was filled with a series of silts and did not contained burnt stone. A flint slug knife was found in the pit.

Pit: This pit was oval in shape and measured 1.19m by 1.07m with a depth of 0.23m and was surrounded by a number of stake-holes.

Structure: A four-post structure measuring 2m by 1m was found in the north-east of the area.

Finds:

Artefacts: Prehistoric pottery (food vessel) was recovered near the trough and c. 100 sherds of coarse ware pottery was identified near the water-hole. Chert, quartz and debitage was recovered from the site including scrapers, knives and cores.

Ecofacts: 98 fragments of animal bone were recovered from the site with some showing traces of burning. The bone consisted of cattle and horse.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (alder) from the trough 1
C14 (OXA-127520) 3641±31 BP (2140–1890 BC)
Charcoal (alder) from the trough 2
C14 (OXA-12749) 2724±30 BP (920–810 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

Excavation of the site revealed the extensive remains of a burnt mound suggesting an activity associated with pyrolithic water-boiling. This is confirmed by the presence of water-boiling troughs, both of which produced evidence to suggest they were lined. The identification of large wells adjacent to these features also implies they may have required manual filling. The recovery of animal bone and flint tools suggests the site functioned as location for cooking and the large assemblage of pottery indicates contemporary settlement in the locale. Radiocarbon dating confirmed at least two phases of activity at the site.

References

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Excavation Details:

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<td>Consultants:</td>
<td>Arch-Tech Ltd</td>
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<td>Year:</td>
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Physical Setting:
The site was located on the north-facing foothills of the Dublin Mountains. It was located adjacent to a natural spring.

Cultural Landscape:
There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the townland prior to archaeological investigations.

Adjacent excavated sites:
A possible prehistoric/early medieval habitation site was identified 150m to the west of the site.

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of a housing development.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features:
Excavation of the site revealed an extensive area of burnt mound activity consisting of spreads, troughs a metalled surface and a possible hearth.

Burnt Mound:
The burnt mound was composed of several deposits covering an irregular area measuring 9m by 7m. It was composed of heat-shattered sandstone in a matrix of black silty soil and charcoal. It was situated adjacent to a dried up stream bed.

Trough 1:
Trough (C181) was rectangular in plan and measured 1.75m by 0.9m with a depth of 0.65m. The base of the trough was divided into two steps, both flat, with the deeper and smaller part forming a rectangle in the eastern end of the cut. The eastern part of the trough was cut by a later ditch. The base of the trough consisted of nine roughly linear, horizontal concentrations of charcoal-rich material, six crossing the main, western part of the trough on the north-south, short axis, at irregular intervals. The deposits were interpreted as the remains of wooden planks compresses into the natural subsoil base.

Trough 2:
This trough was oval in plan and measured 2.07m by 1.08m with a depth of 0.62m. It had sharply sloping sides and a flat base which was cut by three
stake-holes on the northern end. The trough truncated an underlying metalled surface. The decayed and charred remains of a wooden lining was noted on the eastern and western sides of the trough. The pit was filled with burnt mound material.

Metalled surface: A metalled surface was identified on the site. It was cut by the second trough.

Hearth: A circular area of scorched earth 0.65m in diameter was located 0.5m to the east of the trough. This probably represents a hearth to heat the stones. Two other scorched areas were identified on the site.

Post-Holes: Six post-holes and twelve stake-holes were identified across the site. Some of these were located in the vicinity of the troughs while others were found in the eastern part of the site.

Pit 1-7: This pit (C107) was sub-oval in plan and measured 1.45m by 0.58m with a depth of 0.14m. The fill was composed of silty clays and heat-shattered stone. Pit (C108) was oval in plan and measured 1.32m by 1.29m with a depth of 0.34m. The fill was composed of silty clays and heat-shattered stone. This pit (C135) was oval in plan and measured 1.1m by 0.78m with a depth of 0.16. The fill was composed of silty clays and heat-shattered stone. It contained five fills composed of silty clays and heat-shattered stone. A struck flint was found in one of the fills. Pit (C138) was sub-circular and measured 0.9m by 1.05m with a depth of 0.2m. It contained two fills composed of silty clays and heat-shattered stone. Pit (C154) was oval in shape and measured 1.1m by 0.75m with a maximum depth of 0.2m. A possible stake-hole was identified in the north-western part of the cut. This pit (C166) was irregular in shape and measured 1.15m by 0.75m with a depth of 0.14m. The fill was composed of silty clays and heat-shattered stone. Pit (C203) was circular in plan and measured 1.4m by 1.76m with a depth 0.7m. It was situated below the metalled surface and is therefore related to an early phase of activity. One flint flake and a burnt flint nodule was found in the fill.

Finds: Flint flake and burnt flint nodule recovered from pit (C203)

Dating: None

Excavation Interpretation

Excavation of the site revealed the extensive remains of a burnt mound suggesting an activity associated with pyrolithic water-boiling. This is confirmed by the presence of water-boiling troughs, both of which produced evidence to suggest they were internally lined. One trough also seems to have been divided in two, possibly to separate materials within the trough from the boiling stones. The presence of metalled surface around the troughs would also suggest the area was waterlogged during use. At other sites paving stones or kneelers are found giving support to the trough and wet ground during trough use.

References

Location: Townland: Roganstown  Six inch map no: 11
Parish: Swords  NGR: 31555, 24915
Barony: Nethercross  Altitude: NA
County: Dublin

Excavation Details: Project: Residential development
Site Director: Goorik Dehaene
Consultants: Arch-Tech Ltd
Year: 2002

Physical Setting: There is no information available as to the landscape setting of site.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the townland prior to archaeological investigations.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

**Pre-Excavation features**

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of a housing development. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

**Excavation Record**

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a spread of heat-shattered limestone and sandstone stone and charcoal that extended beyond the limits of excavation. The deposit was irregular in shape with only a 3.6m wide section exposed that measured 5.6m in length. No finds were recovered from the deposit and it was not scientifically dated. No other information available for the site.

**Finds:**

- Artefacts: None
- Ecofacts: None

**Dating:**

- Absolute dating: Site was not scientifically dated.

**References**

Location: Staffordstown  
Parish: Lusk  
County: Dublin  
Townland: Staffordstown  
Six inch map no: 12  
NGR: 319282, 250627  
Parish: Lusk  
Barony: Balrothery  
Altitude: NA  
County: Dublin  

Excavation Details:  
Project: Airport-Balbriggan Bypass  
Site Director: Patricia Lynch  
Consultants: Valerie J. Keeley Ltd  
Year: 2002  

Physical Setting:  
The site was located in a low-lying area close to a stream  

Cultural Landscape:  
There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the townland prior to archaeological investigations.  

Adjacent excavated sites: None  

Pre-Excavation features  
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the Airport to Balbriggan bypass. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.  

Excavation Record  
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a spread of burnt mound material, two adjacent troughs and a hearth, each filled with deposits of heat-shattered stone. The hearth was composed of an area of oxidised or burnt subsoil. There is no other information available for the site at present.  

Finds:  
Artefacts:  
Ecofacts:  

Dating:  
Relative dating: None  
Absolute dating: None  

Reference  
Location: Townland: Thomondtown Six inch map no: 08
Parish: Lusk NGR: 319346, 252185
Barony: Balrothery Altitude: NA
County: Dublin

Excavation Details: Project: Airport-Balbriggan Bypass
Site Director: Patricia Lynch
Consultants: Valerie J. Keeley Ltd
Year: 2002

Physical Setting: The site was located in a low-lying area close to a stream

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the townland prior to archaeological investigations.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the Airport to Balbriggan bypass. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a spread of burnt mound material and a single trough filled with deposits of heat-shattered stone. No other information is available for the site at present.

Finds:

Artefacts:

Ecofacts:

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: None

Reference
Excavation Details:

- Project: Airport-Balbriggan Bypass
- Site Director: Patricia Lynch
- Consultants: Valerie J. Keeley Ltd
- Year: 2002

Physical Setting:
The site was located in a low-lying area close to a stream.

Cultural Landscape:
There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the townland prior to archaeological investigations.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the Airport to Balbriggan bypass. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features:
Excavation of the site revealed a spread of burnt mound material and a single trough filled with deposits of heat-shattered stone. The trough was sub-circular in shape and measured 1m in diameter. No other information is available for the site at present.

Finds:

Artefacts:

Ecofacts:

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: None

Reference

Location: Townland: Lusk  Six inch map no: 08
Parish: Lusk  NGR: 322066, 254790
Barony: Balrothery  Altitude: 21m OD
County: Dublin

Excavation Details:
Project: Residential Development
Site Director: Ellinor Larsson
Consultants: Arch-Tech Ltd
Year: 2002

Physical Setting:
The site was located in a low-lying area near a natural spring.

Cultural Landscape:
There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the townland prior to archaeological investigations however a number of prehistoric sites have been uncovered during archaeological testing south of Lusk village. These include a possible ring-ditch and several burnt spreads. Further burnt mound activity was identified along the Lusk Relief Road and west of the Lusk village during further housing development.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of a residential housing development. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features:
Excavation of the site revealed a spread of burnt mound material, a large water-hole or well and an adjacent trough which displayed evidence to suggest it may have been timber-lined.

Burnt Mound:
The burnt mound material survived as a dispersed spread of burnt stone measuring 3.4m by 5m. It was composed of charcoal-rich material and heat-shattered stone. A large field boundary ditch cut across the site along with a modern drain which cut through the trough.

Pit/Well:
This feature (C46) was irregular in plan and measured 9m by 4 with a maximum depth of 2.4m. The cut narrowed in its lower half to a regular sub-rectangular cut with steep to vertical sides. The pit lay immediately adjacent to a trough and probably served as a water-source for the site. The fill of the pit consisted of various silty deposits containing heat-shattered stone and charcoal. The base of the feature was waterlogged and contained large pieces of wood and brushwood with hazelnut shells and animal bone. Several pieces
of struck flint were also retrieved. Two horizontal layers of burnt mound material were identified within the cut and separate by several layers of silt, which may suggest that the site had been in phases and abandoned at least twice, possibly indicating seasonal activity.

**Trough:**

The trough (C16) was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 2.2m by 1.45m with a depth of 0.38m. The base was flat with impressions of parallel horizontal planks in situ, mainly situated in the north-eastern part of the trough. A clay lining was noted into which the planks seems to have been placed. The trough was cut by a modern ceramic drain pipe. The trough was filled with mostly silty clays and heat-shattered stone. Two pieces of flintdebitage were recovered from the fill. A number of stake-holes cut the base of the trough adding as supports for the timber-lining.

**Post-Hole:**

A large post-hole was identified immediately south-west of the trough.

**Finds:**

**Artefacts:**

Flint flake was recovered from the base of the well while two pieces of flint debitage were retrieved from the fill of the trough.

**Ecofacts:**

Hazelnut shells, pips and snail shells were recovered from the base of the well along with unidentified, partially decayed faunal remains.

**Dating:**

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: None

**Excavation Interpretation**

Excavation of the site revealed the extensive remains of a burnt mound suggesting an activity associated with pyrolithic water-boiling. This is confirmed by the presence of a water-boiling trough that showed evidence to suggest it was timber and clay lined. This would also imply the pit had to be manually filled which would explain the immediately adjacent water-source/well. The faunal remains from the bottom of the well pit may in indicate that the site functioned as a water-boiling location for cooking.

**References**

Fig. 10.56 Well pit and associated rectangular trough at Lusk, Co. Dublin.
Catalogue No. DN 23
RMP No. NA
Licence No. 03E1450

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Excavation Details:
Project: N2 Finglas to Ashbourne Road Scheme
Site Director: Holger Schweitzer
Consultants: CRDS Ltd
Year: 2004

Physical Setting:
The site was located in gently undulating terrain which had been landscaped during the construction and maintenance of the Open Golf Course.

Cultural Landscape:
The earliest evidence for settlement in the area around the site dates to the Bronze Age and comes in the form of a bronze axehead found at Newtown. The only other evidence for prehistoric activity is a ring-ditch site located in Coldwinters, which is adjacent to the road take in this area.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N2 Finglas to Ashbourne Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features:
Excavation of the site revealed a spread of burnt mound material and a number of pits adjacent to a shallow peat basin.

Burnt Spread:
The burnt spread (F04) lay immediately adjacent to the peat basin and was irregular in shape. The deposit measured 10m by 3.5m with a maximum thickness of 0.15m. It was damaged by a number of sondage trenches which were cut during the archaeological testing. It was composed of dark sandy silt, pebbles and heat-shattered stone.

Trough:
This pit (F06) was sub-circular in shape and measured 1.66m by 1.44m with a depth of 0.51m. It had gently sloping sides leading to a flat base and was filled with a grey silt. The upper fill of the feature contained frequent charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 1:
Pit (F05) was sub-circular in shape and measured 0.96m by 0.94m with a depth of 0.14m. The single fill was composed of black silty clay and charcoal.
Pit 2: F07 was sub-circular in shape and located 10m east of the burnt spread. It measured 0.3m by 0.5m with a depth of 0.05m. The fill was composed of black friable silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Cut: F21 was a linear, sub-rectangular feature located between the trough and the peat basin. The fill consisted of grey clay, charcoal and frequent burnt stone. The excavator suggests it may have served as a path to access the peat basin from the trough area or even an overflow channel.

Platform: A shallow natural peat basin was identified adjacent to the burnt spread. It contained considerable quantities of wood such as brushwood and branches however three large split oak planks were also retrieved in the centre of the basin lying parallel to each other. They may have been placed deliberately to access water for the site.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: None

Excavation Interpretation

The excavation of Site 1, Newtown, Co. Dublin revealed a single-phase burnt spread or *fulacht fia* consisting of the construction of a single trough with associated pits and a spread of burnt mound material. This concentration of archaeological activity was located immediately to the south and upslope of a natural peat basin. All archaeological deposits had been truncated by agricultural activity and modern landscaping for the Open Golf Course. The features associated with the burnt spread consisted of two pits and a sub-circular trough. Within the peat basin large amounts of wood were excavated, mainly brushwood and branch material. Three large unworked split round woods, placed roughly parallel to each other were excavated in the basin. Due to their location a deliberate deposition of these timbers associated with the use of the burnt mound cannot be ruled out.

References

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**Physical Setting:**
The site was located immediately on the southern bank of a tributary of the Ward River and partly truncated by modern stream re-alignments.

**Cultural Landscape:**
The earliest evidence for settlement in the area around Ward Lower dates to the Bronze Age and comes in the form of a bronze axe-head (NMI 1962:259) and a fragmented lignite bracelet (NMI 1955:41) of late Bronze Age date, both found at Newtown, Co. Dublin. The only other evidence for prehistoric activity is a ring ditch site located in Coldwinters, c. 3km south-east of Ward Upper (DU014-015).

**Adjacent excavated sites:** None

**Pre-Excavation features**
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N2 Finglas to Ashbourne Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

**Excavation Record**

**Summary of Features:**
Excavation of the site revealed a burnt mound, two troughs and a possible hearth.

**Burnt Mound:**
The burnt mound (F11) was irregular in shape and measured 13.25m by 9.5m with a thickness of 0.34m. It was truncated at the northern limit of excavation by the re-aligned stream bed and its full extent to the north could therefore not be determined. The deposit was composed of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

**Trough 1:**
Trough (F13) was revealed under the burnt mound and was sub-rectangular in plan. It measured 1.8m by 1.45m with a depth of 0.45m and contained three fills. The basal fill was composed of clay material which may have formed from slumped packing material for the timber-lining. The upper fills were composed of silty clays and burnt mound material.
Hearth: A possible formal hearth (F15) was identified 1.1m south-east of the trough. It consisted of a sub-circular cut measuring 1.5m by 1.45m with a depth of 0.29m. The base of the feature was heavily oxidised due to intense burning.

Trough 2: This trough (F25) was truncated along its northern side by a re-aligned stream. The surviving southern half of the pit was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 1.05m by 1.1m with a depth of 0.4m. The base of the features was filled with riverine silt while the remaining surviving fill was composed of burnt mound material.

Pit 1: This pit (F2) was sub-oval in shape and measured 1.07m by 0.82m with a depth of 0.11m. It was filled with burnt mound material.

Pit 2: F21 was sub-circular in shape and measured 0.62m by 0.82m with a depth of 0.15m. It was filled with burnt mound material.

Finds:

| Artefacts: | None |
| Ecofacts: | None |

Dating:

| Relative dating: | None |
| Absolute dating: | Charcoal (alder, hazel and blackthorn) from the trough (F13) C14 (WK-18173) 3816±71 BP (2470–2030 BC) |

Excavation Interpretation

The excavation of Site 7, Ward Lower revealed a single-phase burnt spread or *fulacht fia* consisting of two individual troughs and other associated features, represented by two shallow pits and a hearth. Since the site was located immediately next to but above the current stream bed, which also serves as a field and County boundary, the archaeological deposits were heavily disturbed by tree-root activity along the stream bank and by deep ploughing. The site can be interpreted as a pyrolithic water-boiling site due to the presence of waste-firing material and two troughs, both of which were unlined.

References

Fig. 10.57 Trough pit and burnt stone deposit at Ward Lower, Co. Dublin
Location: Townland: Ballynakelly Six inch map no: NA
Parish: Rathcoole NGR: 300579, 288451
Barony: Newcastle Altitude: NA
County: Dublin

Excavation Details: Project: Housing Development
Site Director: Redmond Tobin
Consultants: Margaret Gowen and Company Ltd
Year: 2003

Physical Setting: There is no information available as to the physical location of the site.

Cultural Landscape: There were no other recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the site prior to excavations, however a number of prehistoric sites came to light during recent archaeological excavations in the townland (see below).

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of a housing development. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a small burnt spread and trough. The trough measured 1.2m by 0.8m and was filled with heat-shattered stone. A small spread of similar material was also identified adjacent to the pit. Unfortunately, no other information is available for the site.

Finds:

Artefacts: None
Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Absolute dating: None

Reference

Excavation Details: Project: Housing Development  
Site Director: Stuart Elder  
Consultants: The Archaeology Company  
Year: 2004

Physical Setting: The site was situated in low-lying pasture at the base of a north-facing slope, close to an area of persistent wetland centred upon a small stream.

Cultural Landscape: There were no other recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the site prior to excavations.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of a housing development. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a small, sub-rectangular spread of burnt mound material and a small pit. The pit was oval in shape and measured 1.92m by 0.97m with a depth of 0.23m. It had a clay lining and contained two fills consisting of dark silty clays and heat-shattered stone. This site has been interpreted as the remains of a plough-out burnt mound location. The pit most likely represents a single trough, lined with clay to prevent water seepage.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Dating:

Absolute dating: None

Reference

Location: Townland: Grange  Six inch map no: NA
Parish: Baldoyle  NGR: 722624, 741152
Barony: Coolock  Altitude: NA
County: Dublin

Excavation Details: Project: Housing Development
Site Director: Stuart Elder
Consultants: The Archaeology Company
Year: 2004

Physical Setting: The site was situated on a south-east facing slope of an area of high ground. There was low-lying marshy ground to the south and east.

Cultural Landscape: There were no other recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the site prior to excavations.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

**Pre-Excavation features**

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of a housing development. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

**Excavation Record**

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a small burnt mound and a number of pits, some of which may have functioned as troughs.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound survived as a spread of heat-shattered stone and charcoal-rich material. It was circular in shape and measured 3m in diameter.

Pits: The pits were sub-circular or sub-rectangular in shape and varied in size from 1.1m in diameter up to 1.78m in length, 1.66m in width, with depths of 0.15-0.3m. One of the pits yielded a single struck piece of struck chert and a possible decorated hammerstone. Two large sub-rectangular pits were interpreted as troughs as stake-holes were recorded in each of the corners suggesting they were originally timber-lined. No other information available for the site.

Finds: Chert flake and possible hammerstone

Dating: None

**Reference**

Location: Townland: Kilgobbin  Six inch map no: 25
Parish: Kilgobbin  NGR: 319000, 224220
Barony: Rathdown  Altitude: NA
County: Dublin

Excavation Details: Project: Housing Development
Site Director: Stuart Elder
Consultants: The Archaeology Company
Year: 2004

Physical Setting: The site was located directly to the west and south of the early medieval church of Kilgobbin and a repositioned high cross.

Cultural Landscape: There were no other recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the site prior to excavations.

Adjacent excavated sites: Medieval iron working site and kiln

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of a housing development. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a portion of a burnt mound, the majority of which is located under the Enniskerry road. It was situated adjacent to a natural spring and was composed of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered granite. No cut features such as trough were identified. The full extent of the site was not established during excavation.

Finds:

Artefacts: None  Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: None

Reference

Location: Townland: Taylorsgrange Six inch map no: 22
Parish: Whitechurch NGR: 31572, 22549
Barony: Rathdown Altitude: NA
County: Dublin

Excavation Details: Project: Housing Development
Site Director: Ciara McCarthy
Consultants: Arch-Tech Ltd
Year: 2005

Physical Setting: The site was located directly to the west and south of the early medieval church of Kilgobbin and a repositioned high cross.

Cultural Landscape: There were no other recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the site prior to excavations.

Adjacent excavated sites: Possible prehistoric structures and metalled surface

**Pre-Excavation features**

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of a housing development. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

**Excavation Record**

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site a number of possible prehistoric features including a series of post-holes and a metalled surface indicating possibly prehistoric habitation. A possible flint knapping area was also identified adjacent to the fulachtai fia activity.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound material was composed of heat-affected granite and charcoal-rich material which was deposited on a wall in the west of the site. No other information is available.

Trough 1: The trough was rectangular in shape and measured 1.7m by 1.1m. Post-holes were identified in the north-west and south-west corners of the pit suggesting it may have been timber-lined. The trough was cut into subsoil below a layer of grey silt and was partially covered by a linear stone wall.

Trough 2: This trough was also sub-rectangular in plan and located in a natural depression adjacent to a spring. It measured 2.55m by 1.3m with a depth of 0.3m. It was cut by a post-medieval pit. The trough was filled with charcoal-rich material and heat-affected granite boulders.

**Finds:**
Artefacts: Flint, prehistoric pottery and a number of hammerstones were recovered from the site however their context is unknown.

Ecofacts: None

Dating: 
Relative dating: None
Absolute dating: None

Excavation Interpretation

The development is located within a rich prehistoric landscape. Excavations revealed numerous features and deposits. It is unclear if the series of post-holes and metalled surfaces are related to the use of the burnt mound. This may have been a related habitation site. Well-defined troughs and deposits of heat-affected granite indicate the use of a pyrolithic water-boiling technology. The corner post-holes identified in one of the troughs may suggest a Late Bronze Age date as this is a lining technique common to the period.

References

Location: Townland: Kilsallaghan  Six inch map no: NA
Parish: Kilsallaghan  NGR: 31010, 24815
Barony: Nethercross  Altitude: NA
County: Dublin

Excavation Details: Project: Housing Development
Site Director: John O’Connor
Consultants: Archaeological Development Services Ltd
Year: 2007

Physical Setting: The site was located in a low-lying area.

Cultural Landscape: There were no other recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the site prior to excavations.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of a housing development. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record.
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a severely truncated burnt mound and a single pit. Both the mound material and the pit were truncated by a field drain and agricultural activity. The surviving mound material measured 6.2m by 11.2m. No other information available.

Finds:
Artefacts: None
Ecofacts: None

Dating:
Relative dating: None
Absolute dating: None

References
Catalogue No. DN 31
RMP No. NA
Licence No. 07E0245

Location: Ballynakelly, Townland Ballynakelly, Six inch map no: 21
Parish: Rathcoole, NGR: 30075, 22790
Barony: Newcastle, Altitude: 90m OD
County: Dublin

Excavation Details:
Project: Hotel Development
Site Director: Ciara McCarthy
Consultants: Archaeological Development Services Ltd
Year: 2007

Physical Setting: The site was located on a gently undulating north-facing slope, with the foothills of the Dublin Mountains to the south, and the River Liffey to the north.

Cultural Landscape: The most significant prehistoric site in the vicinity of the proposed development is that of Lyons Hill (Recorded Monument No. KD015-006), 2km south-west of the village of Newcastle. In 2003 investigation revealed human activity in the form of a fulachtaí fiai (remains of an ancient cooking site), characteristic of the Bronze Age. It was located to the north of the R120 in Newcastle Manor housing development.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of a housing development. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed multi-period activity consisting of a ring-ditch, cremation burials and a possible early medieval settlement. The pyroliptic site consisted of a deep well and adjacent pits, some of which may have functioned as boiling pits. This area appears to have been heavily truncated by recent agricultural activity and it is likely that a substantial amount of surface features were lost.

Burnt Mound: A large spread of burnt stone in charcoal-rich silt typical of ‘burnt mound’ activity was located to the northeast of the large pit (C121). It measured 6.60m by 7.80m in size and was a maximum of 0.15m in thickness. It consisted of firm grey charcoal stained clayey silt, with 40% burnt stone inclusions. Some burnt bone was recovered from this deposit.

Well: The most-significant feature of Area E was a very large well or man-made pond located in the centre of the site. It was comma-shaped in plan, and
measured 16m in length. The well was 10m wide in the east and 5m wide in the west. It was very deep, reaching a maximum depth of 2.80m in the west. The well had three steep edges and a gradual edge or ramp-like slope in the east allowing easy access to the deepest part of the pit. The eastern edge or ramp began quite gently but became steeper as it descended towards the base of the pit. At this point, the ramp undulated suggesting that it originally may have been stepped. It was possible to walk in and out of the well without difficulty. The base of the well was filled with grey clay (C142) with inclusions of charcoal and small fragments of naturally preserved wood. Above this basal layer and overlying the eastern slope, was a thick layer of burnt stone in a charcoal-rich silt matrix (C80), typical of ‘burnt mound’ material. Charcoal from this deposit identified as deriving from the alder species, was radiocarbon dated to 1449-1270BC. The layer of stone was interspersed with very thin layers of organic rich silt. Fragments of burnt and unburnt animal bone were recovered from this layer. A Middle Bronze Age palstave axe head was recovered from the main fill (C138) of the well at a depth of 2.40m below the lip of the pit (refer Plate 18; Figure 19). The axehead appears to have been used several times, and may have been purposefully deposited into the well, during the gradual accumulation of the silty deposit (C138). Several organic artefacts comprising bundles of grass and wood, some of which had been bound, were also recovered from this fill (C138). Some iron slag was recovered from the upper fill of the pit suggesting it was open during the early medieval period. Two large postholes were located at either edge of the Middle Bronze Age well. These were filled with burnt mound material and some animal bone was recovered.

Pits:

Five pits and postholes (C42, C64, C74, C135, and C436) were identified cut into the upper slope of the Middle Bronze Age well (C121), where the slope was very gentle. The pits were cut into the natural subsoil and were visible once the layers of clay (C120) and burnt stone (C80) were removed. The pits were located in close proximity, within 1m of each other. They were quite different in morphology and may have had different functions.

Trough:

This trough was located immediately to the east of the Middle Bronze Age well (C121). It was heavily truncated on the surface by recent agricultural activity and on its southern side by a later field boundary ditch (C76). The trough was rectangular in plan, with rounded corners. It measured 1.78m in length and 1.32m in width. The trough was only 0.20m deep. The edges of the trough were vertical and the base was flat. The trough was filled with charcoal-rich silt (C82) with frequent inclusions of burnt stone. Charcoal identified as deriving from the willow species was radiocarbon dated to 1193-1008BC, the earlier part of the Late Bronze Age. This would appear to be the primary fill of the trough, indicating that it was not cleaned out prior to being abandoned. Three postholes were identified in the base of the trough suggesting it may have originally been timber-lined.

Trough 2:

This pit was located to the immediate south of the Middle Bronze Age well (C121). It was circular in plan with a diameter of 1.35m. The pit was extremely shallow with a depth of only 0.09m. The eastern edge had been
truncated to below the level of the base. The remaining edges were vertical and the base was flat. The pit was filled with burnt stone (C70), typical of burnt mound material.

Roasting pit: A circular pit was located in the centre of the site. Its northwestern edge was slightly truncated by ditch C40. The pit had a diameter of 0.70m and a depth of 0.25m. The pit was filled with dark mottled blackish brown silty clay (C39) with occasional inclusions of burnt stone, a small quantity of burnt bone. A layer of charcoal (C310), 0.08m deep lay on the base of the pit. The edges of the pit were scorched red and it is likely that this pit functioned as a hearth or possibly a roasting pit.

Pits: Several smaller pits were identified on the site, some of which were truncated and quite shallow from later ploughing. These were filled with burnt mound material and possibly functioned as oven features or roasting pits.

Finds: Middle Bronze Age palstave axehead was recovered from the well. Possible quartz blade recovered from one of the pits.

Artefacts: Middle Bronze Age palstave axehead was recovered from the well. Possible quartz blade recovered from one of the pits.

Ecofacts: Cow, horse, sheep and pig bone was recovered from the well deposits, burnt mound and other pits.

Dating: None

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (fruit tree) from the fill of the Well C14 (UBA-9870) 3105±37 BP (1449–1270 BC)
Charcoal (unknown) from the fill of pit (C64) C14 (UBA-9871) 2877±23 BP (1128–946 BC)
Charcoal (willow) from the fill of the trough C14 (UBA-9872) 2900±23 BP (1193–1008 BC)
Charcoal (fruit tree) from the fill of the pit (C64) C14 (UBA-9874) 2929±25 BP (1258–1008 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

The central feature is an enormous pit (C121) that may have functioned as a well or pond. Several of the pits surrounding the well functioned as troughs for heating water through the familiar process of placing fire-heated stones into them. It is likely that the shattered stone and charcoal waste from these pits and those cut into the ramp of the large pit, were dumped into the well, leading to the build up of a thick layer of burnt stone (C80). There was no evidence of burnt stone material in any of the pits cut into the ramp of the well and it is possible that those pits had another function. It is not clear whether the troughs were contemporary, representing a single large concentration of activity, or if they were used consecutively, thus representing many phases of activity.

References

Fig. 10.58. Well pit and associated pits and troughs at Ballynakelly, Co. Dublin.
Location: Jamestown  Townland: Jamestown  Six inch map no: NA
Parish: Drimmagh  NGR: 21190, 24000
Barony: Uppercross  Altitude: 35m OD
County: Dublin

Excavation Details: Project: Sewerage Pipeline
Site Director: Ciara McCarthy
Consultants: Archaeological Development Services Ltd
Year: 2007

Physical Setting: There is no information available as to the landscape setting of the *fulacht fia*.

Cultural Landscape: There are no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the excavated area.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

**Pre-Excavation features**

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of a sewerage pipeline. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

**Excavation Record**

Summary of Features: The *fulacht fia* produced the remains of a timber-lined trough, a sample of which was dated by dendrochronology to the Late Neolithic period. Unfortunately, no other information is available for this excavation.

**Dating:** Dendro date: Timber (unknown), 2852±9 (Q9783).

**References**

Location: Townland: Derryharney Six inch map no: NA
Parish: Cleenish NGR: 229800, 336500
Barony: Magherastephana Altitude: NA
County: Fermanagh

Excavation Details: Project: Research/Survey
Site Director: Malachy Conway
Consultants: Historic Monuments, Environmental Service
Year: 1993

Physical Setting: The site is located on the west shore of Derryhowlagh Lough, near the village of Carry Bridge (Upper Lough Erne).

Cultural Landscape: Ploughing in the area had exposed a complex of archaeological sites consisting of at least 10 burnt mounds, a linear barrow cemetery of at least three barrows, spreads of burnt daub and charcoal rich soil and a concentrated area of slag. Finds from this preliminary survey included a quantity of animal bone and a late Mesolithic flint knife, recovered close to the west shore of the lake.

Adjacent excavated sites: Unknown

Pre-Excavation features
On the northern peat margin of the lake, burnt mound material was visible on the ground before excavation. After clearance, a low, flattened, roughly oval burnt mound approximately 7m x 5m in size was uncovered.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed burnt stone deposits, ramp-like wooden structures and possible troughs internally lined.

Burnt Mound: The burnt material comprised a compact black cinder and charcoal rich deposit intermixed with burnt shattered sandstone and lesser quantities of basalt fragments and fine sand. The deposit was at maximum of 0.55m deep. To the east, the burnt mound was flanked by a deposit of varying extent and depth and of a similar matrix to the burnt mound except that it contained a higher frequency of small basalt stone and was noticeably less burnt. These deposits overlay a sticky grey clay (sooted black on its upper margin) varying in depth from 30mm to 0.1m and noticeably unburnt by the overlying burnt mound. The clay deposit overlay a thin lens of fine brown soil which in turn overlay the peat.
Ramp feature: Several metres to the south of the burnt mound lay a wedge shaped ramp-like feature cut into the peat, 1.8m wide and 2.1m long. The ‘ramp’ was comprised of alternating layers of soil intermixed with shattered sandstone, charcoal, peat, cinder, ash, fine sand and grey clay. A small wooden stake was recovered from the base of the ramp on its shallow southern end. The stratigraphic interface between this feature and the burnt mound had been disturbed by a recent field drain. Both the burnt mound and the ramp feature overlay part of a series of 10 roughly equidistantly spaced wooden posts (1m-1.2m apart) which had been driven directly into the peat. The posts did not extend beyond the end of the ramp (south) but did extend beyond the burnt mound as far as the wood to the north. All posts had been worked using a metal tool.

Possible trough 1: This feature consisted of an egg-shaped pit 1.2m long, 0.65m wide and 0.15m deep. The pit had a basal spread of crushed sandstone onto which was set a single piece of tree bark and then covered with a coarse charcoal-enriched black soil mixed with shattered sandstone and cinder.

Possible trough 2: This keyhole-shaped pit was c. 1.2m long and consisted of a wooden lattice work set onto crushed sandstone and covered with a spread of small unburnt basalt stones. The wooden lattice was 1m-1.2m long and 0.8m wide and consisted of a series of thin branches, some of whose ends had been roughly worked. A small dump of characteristic burnt mound material 0.5m wide lay beside the wooden lattice (west). The only find from this feature was a small wooden stake from below the wooden lattice.

Finds:

Artefacts: No artefacts or bone was recovered from the excavation

Dating: Unknown

Excavation Interpretation:

Excavation and the site revealed an extant burnt mound composed of burnt and shattered stone suggesting the site functioned as a pyrolithic water-boiling site. A possible wooden ramp and rail feature possibly provided access to an adjacent water-source however full interpretation of the feature is difficult as it has not been fully published. Two possible troughs were also revealed, one of which lined with tree bark, the other lined with wattle-work. Again, it is difficult to provide a full interpretation of the site due to the unpublished record.

References

Pre-Excavation features

The site survived as an intact burnt mound prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a burnt mound and two troughs composed of dug-out canoes.

Burnt Mound: The intact burnt mound had a plan shaped like a broad waisted figure of eight, about 15m long, about 8m wide at its broadest, and about 0.25m high. Under a cover of soil was burnt mound material consisting of burnt shattered sandstone pieces in a black matrix rich in charcoal. The burnt mound deposit was up to 0.5m thick, and rested on a deposit of peat up to 1.75m thick. Within the burnt mound deposit a saddle quern was found.

Log Boats/Troughs: Close by within the burnt mound material, a complex which included two dug-out alder trunks came to light. These were presumably portions of two different log boats. The upper boat had a beam of 1m and a surviving length of 3.17m along the port side. The lower boat had a beam of 0.62m and a surviving length of 0.73m along its starboard side. The lateral offset between the sides mentioned was 0.2m. Each boat was flanked along both sides with flanking poles placed parallel to the hulls. These poles were placed from the level of gunwhales to near the base of the boats. The base of the upper boat lay on a layer of yellow silt overlying a bed of moss. Below the moss was a single layer of split logs, split side downwards, each 0.11m thick, aligned along the long axis of the boat, with no gaps between them. The insides of both hulls were filled with unburnt white siltstone pieces which were quite
unlike the garishly coloured sandstone pieces of the burnt mound material. The whole two-boat arrangement was surrounded by ten pointed (with scalloped axe-marks) stakes which had been driven vertically into the basal peat at distances varying from zero to 0.4m from the hulls. Some of the stakes were doubled up. The entire boat complex was covered with brushwood and burnt mound material entirely covered this. The boat complex was placed on top of a vigorously active spring of water which gushed up from fissures in the basal peat.

Finds:

Artefacts: Saddle quern was recovered from the burnt mound.

Dating: Fragment (alder) of trough 1 is dated to 1193–931 BC
        Fragment (alder) of trough 2 is dated to 1260–1001 BC

Excavation Interpretation:

Excavation and the site revealed an extant burnt mound composed of burnt and shattered stone suggesting the site functioned as a pyrolithic water-boiling site. The presence of two logboats possibly utilised as boiling troughs would also support this suggestion. These vessels were seemingly re-used for this purpose during the Late Bronze Age. The saddle quern recovered from the mound would also indicate the presence of Bronze Age settlement in the vicinity of the site. As the stratigraphic sequence is unclear from the summary account it is still difficult to conclude whether the boats are associated with the burnt mound. There is some indication that one of the boats rested on split planks and a bed of moss, possibly representing the base of a trough feature.

References


Catalogue No.  FH03a-b
SMR No. NA
Licence No. Unknown

Location: Townland: Derryvullan  Six inch map no: NA
Parish: Derryvullan  NGR: 226800, 340600
Barony: Tirkenndedy  Altitude: NA
County: Fermanagh

Excavation Details: Project: Research/Survey
Site Director: Frederick Carroll
Consultants: Historic Monuments, Environmental Service
Year: 1994

Physical Setting: This site is 190m from the shore of Lower Lough Erne
Cultural Landscape: Several burnt mounds and other prehistoric sites were discovered in this area during intensive field survey.
Adjacent excavated sites: Unknown

Pre-Excavation features
The site was discovered in 1993 during a planned search in Fermanagh for burnt mounds by Environment Service: Historic Monuments and Buildings. The site appeared as a mound of circular plan, about 16m across. It was 3.5m high with respect to the land towards the lake.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Partial excavation of the site revealed a large burnt mound and a pit that may have functioned as a trough.

Site A
Burnt Mound: Partial excavation in the summer of 1994 revealed no finds. There were however some interesting structural details within the mound, which, under a cover of soil, contained burnt, shattered sandstone pieces in a black matrix rich in charcoal. The generality of the burnt deposit was up to 0.4m thick.

Pit: Just off from the geometrical centre of the mound there was a kidney shaped pit dug into the lacustrine plastic blue-grey clay on which the mound rested. This pit measured, in plan, 2.3m by 1.6m at the top and 1.6m by 0.9m at the bottom, and was up to 0.46m deep below the generality of the base of the mound. The pit was entirely filled with burnt mound material which showed light and dark parallel layering above the rim of the pit. There was some indication to suggest that the pit was stone-lined.

Site B
Burnt Mound: The site appeared as a very slight rise on the land about 3m across. Under a layer of soil about 0.2m thick, a deposit of burnt mound material was found. This consisted of burnt, shattered sandstone pieces in a black matrix rich in charcoal.

Pit: The entire burnt mound deposit was contained in an oval pit dug through a stratum of lacustrine blue-grey plastic clay, stone-free for the most part, 0.3m thick, which underlay the soil. The pit was dug through the entire thickness of the clay and was floored with the till which underlay the clay. The plan dimensions of the pit were 2.3m by 1.5m at the top and 1.5m by 1.1m at the flat bottom

References

Location: Enniskillen  Townland:  Enniskillen  Six inch map no:  NA
Parish: Enniskellen  NGR: 224700, 344100
Barony: Tirkenndy  Altitude: NA
County: Fermanagh

Excavation Details:
Project: Research/Survey
Site Director: Frederick Carroll
Consultants: Historic Monuments, Environmental Service
Year: 1994

Physical Setting: This site is a few metres from the Enniskillen municipal boundary on the shore of Killynure Lough about 36m from the Enniskillen to Tempo road.

Cultural Landscape: Several burnt mounds and other prehistoric sites were discovered in this area during intensive field survey.

Adjacent excavated sites: Unknown

Pre-Excavation features
The site was discovered in 1993 during a planned search in Fermanagh for burnt mounds by Environment Service:Historic Monuments and Buildings.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Partial excavation of the site revealed a large burnt mound that overlay a brushwood deposit that may have been the basal remains of a trough or working surface/platform.

Burnt Mound: The intact burnt mound appeared as a slight rise on the land. It was crescentic in plan, about 8m by 7m and about 0.2m high. The concavity of the plan opened out towards the lake. Excavation revealed a deposit of burnt mound material under a cover of soil about 0.2m thick. The burnt mound material consisted of burnt shattered sandstone pieces in a black matrix rich in charcoal. Below the soil cover, on top of the burnt mound deposit, two amber beads were recovered. A few pieces of burnt bone (unidentifiable) and a portion of a porcine humerus, unburnt, was also found.

Structural deposit: At the base of the burnt mound deposit (but within it) a grid of wooden beams was uncovered. This beam grid lay on a layer of brushwood which in turn lay on the surface of a deposit of peat which underlay the whole of the burnt mound. The beams had a squared-off section with rounded corners. The grid consisted of four horizontally placed beams set down in parallel with equal gaps between. These beams were from 0.07m to 0.12m thick and
all were 1.86m long. It is unclear as to what this structure represents although it could be the remains of a timber trough.

Finds: Two amber beads were recovered from the burnt mound

Dating: No scientific dates given in the summary account, however the author observes that the wood from the beam grid and the charcoal from the base of the burnt mound each gave carbon dates (from Groningen), which, calibrated, worked out as 4,000 years before present.

Excavation Interpretation:

Excavation and the site revealed an extant burnt mound composed of burnt and shattered stone suggesting the site functioned as a pyrolithic water-boiling site. Some degree of disturbance was noted in the burnt mound as a number of post-medieval and modern finds were uncovered. That said, a number of possible prehistoric finds were uncovered, including two amber beads and some burnt bone. The structural wooden deposit identified within the mound can be interpreted as a possible trough for water-boiling.

References

Pre-Excavation features

The site was discovered during archaeological testing in advance of a private development. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a spread of heat-shattered stone and a number of pits.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound material (C204) was roughly crescent shaped and measured 6m by 7m with a maximum thickness of 0.3m. It was composed of heat-shattered sandstone, black sandy silt and charcoal. A later pit (207) cut through this spread and was not contemporary with the site.

Pit 1: This pit (214) was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 1.77m by 1.66m with a depth of 0.65m. It was steep sided and the fill consisted of burnt mound material. The burnt stone in the fill of this feature was slightly larger than the mound material. This may suggest that the stones were not re-used a number of times.

Pit 2: Pit (216) was also sub-rectangular in shape and measured 0.58m by 0.8m with a depth of 0.48m. The lower fill was composed of large fragments of heat-shattered stone, silty clay and charcoal. Directly above this fill was a sticky clay which was also found in the pit 214.
Pit 3: This pit (C212) was cut by a later pit (C207) on site. It measured 1.4m by 0.78m with a depth of 0.32m. The fill was composed of charcoal-enriched silty loam.

**Finds:**

**Artefacts:** A possible sherd of coarse prehistoric pottery was recovered from the pit C212.

**Dating:**

- Charcoal (unknown) from the burnt spread
  C14 (UBA-9753) 3654±21 BP (2131–1950 BC)
- Charcoal (unknown) from fill of pit 207
  C14 (UB-9754) 3835±23 BP (2456–2201 BC)
- Charcoal (unknown) from the fill of pit 212
  C14 (UB-9755) 3762±21 BP (2280–2058 BC)
- Charcoal (unknown) from the pit 214
  C14 (UB-9756) 3761±21 BP (2280–2058 BC)

**Excavation Interpretation:**

Excavation of the area revealed a small burnt mound site. In the absence of definitive troughs from the site, the identified pits may be interpreted as oven features using a dry heat pyrolithic technology for cooking. The larger fragments of burnt stone in the fill of the trough may support his suggestion implying that they were not exposed to high temperatures of sudden quenching form water.

**References**


![Fig. 10.59 Plan of burnt spread and trough pits at Roassmacaffry](image)
Excavation Details:

**Location:**
- Townland: Doughiska
- Six inch map no: 82

**Parish:**
- Oranmore
- NGR: 134700, 226657

**Barony:**
- Galway
- Altitude: 27m OD

**County:**
- Galway

**Excavation Details:**
- Project: N6 Galway Eastern Approach Road
- Site Director: Martin Fitzpatrick and Richard Crumlish
- Consultants: Galway Archaeological Services Unit
- Year: 1995

**Physical Setting:**
The sites excavated here were a complex of six burnt mounds located in a large field of flat and low-lying rough grazing, scrub and rock outcrop, which was liable to flooding. Several natural springs were identified during the excavation.

**Cultural Landscape:**
There is little recorded prehistoric monuments in the vicinity of the burnt mounds however a standing stone and a possible cist burial are located c. 2km to the south (GA094-071 and GA094-071001).

**Adjacent excavated sites:**
Three of the six visible mounds were excavated here under the same licence number. The other mounds were later excavated by Liam McKinstry (GY14).

**Pre-Excavation features**
Prior to excavation the sites survived as low grass covered mounds of heat-altered stones. As a result of new road development, three of these mounds were to be affected, therefore full excavation was undertaken. The other mounds were later excavated in 2007 (see below).

**Excavation Record**

**Summary of Features:**
Excavation of the site revealed three mounds of heat-shattered stone. Although several interesting features were uncovered, no definitive troughs were encountered.

**Site A**

**Burnt Mound 1:**
This extant mound was roughly horseshoe-shaped in plan and measured 6.8m by 5.1m with a height of 0.5m. The mound was situated on a slight rise of natural limestone bedrock. It consisted of of black silty material and heat-shattered limestone. A natural spring was noted below the mound and another 3m form its south-east corner. The remains of four partially burnt timbers were recovered near the centre of the mound at its base. Three Early Bronze Age dates were returned from the mound material.
Site B

Burnt Mound 2: This mound was located 47m east of the first mound. This was larger in size but was similar in shape. Only a small portion of this mound was investigated. It was situated on a slight rise of natural limestone geology. No Dimensions given. Two natural springs were noted under this mound similar to the first mound. A possible stone revetment was uncovered adjacent to the mound which roughly mirrored a set of similar curving stones on the west site. It consisted of nine upright boulders.

Site C

Burnt Mound 3: This mound was kidney-shaped in plan and measured 7.8m by 6.4m with a height of 0.4m. It consisted of heat-shattered stone in a charcoal rich matrix. The mound lay on the natural boulder clay unlike the previous mounds. Middle Bronze Age dates were returned from the mound deposits.

Pit 1: A large pit was identified adjacent to the mound. This was 1.35m deep and it returned a Middle Bronze Age date.

Stake-hole Structure: Seven post-holes were uncovered under the mound material cut into the boulder clay. They formed a U-shaped pattern and may indicate the presence of a wooden structure, frame or canopy associated with the activity at the site (Fitzpatrick and Crumlish 2000, 141).

Finds:

Artefacts: Polished stone axe was recovered in the topsoil between mounds one and two.

Dating: Charcoal from the mound material Site A C14 (UB- 3926) 3826±25 BP (2454–2200 BC) Charcoal from the mound material Site A C14 (UB- 3955) 3825±36 BP (2456–2146 BC) Charcoal from the mound material Site A C14 (UB- 3957) 3817±52 BP (2458–2140 BC) Charcoal from the mound material Site C C14 (UB- 3996) 3090±64 BP (1516–1168 BC) Charcoal from base of Pit 1 Site C C14 (UB- 3995) 3016±41 BP (1404–1132 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

Excavation and these area revealed three burnt mounds, none of which produced convincing troughs which one would expect in extant mound deposits such as found at these sites. It is possible however, as the excavators suggest, a dry heat using shallow features was employed at the site for roasting meat. It is also possible that portable receptacles were utilised at the sites.

References

Location: Townland: Brackernagh Six inch map no: 94
Parish: Oranmore NGR: 179621, 230890
Barony: Galway Altitude: NA
County: Galway

Excavation Details: Project: Bord Gás Pipeline to the West
Site Director: Billy Quinn
Consultants: Margaret Gowen and Company Ltd
Year: 2002

Physical Setting: The site was located near the base of a gentle slope beside a narrow stream.

Cultural Landscape: There is little recorded prehistoric monuments in the vicinity of the burnt mounds however a standing stone and a possible cist burial are located c. 2km to the south (GA094-071 and GA094-071001).

Adjacent excavated sites: None

**Pre-Excavation features**

The site was uncovered during archaeological testing in advance of the Bord Gás Pipeline to the West.

**Excavation Record**

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a low mound of heat-shattered stone which sealed a rectangular trough which may have been timber lined when it was in use. A possible platform was also uncovered.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound spread over an area measuring 11.6m by 10.4m with a thickness of 0.2m. It was horseshoe-shape in plan and consisted black silty material, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. Two cattle teeth were recovered from the mound.

Trough: The trough was rectangular in shape with vertical sides and an uneven base. It measured 2.4m by 1.4m with a depth of 0.5m. A thin layer of sand lined the base of the pit. A single stake-hole was found in each of the four corners of the trough suggesting it was once timber-lined. The trough contained two deposits consisting of loose black charcoal-enriched sand and heat-shattered stone. A possible platform was located at the north-western end of the trough with a step leading to the pit.

**References**

Location: Perssepark
Parish: Oranmore
Barony: Galway
County: Galway

Excavation Details:
Project: Bord Gás Pipeline to the West
Site Director: Billy Quinn
Consultants: Margaret Gowen and Company Ltd
Year: 2002

Physical Setting:
The site was located on a low rise sloping towards marshy ground

Cultural Landscape:
There are no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the site prior to excavation.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

**Pre-Excavation features**
The site was uncovered during archaeological testing in advance of the Bord Gás Pipeline to the West. No surface trace of the site was evident prior to investigations.

**Excavation Record**

**Summary of Features:**
Excavation of the site revealed a low mound of heat-shattered stone which sealed a rectangular trough which was timber-lined and an associated platform.

**Burnt Mound:**
The burnt mound was oval in plan and measured 16m by 12m with a height of 0.42m. It extended beyond the limits of the excavation. It consisted of two layers with the basal deposit consisting of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. Animal bone was recovered from this deposit. The upper layer consisted of brown/black silty peat with charcoal and limestone.

**Trough:**
The trough was rectangular in shape with vertical sides and an uneven base. It measured 3.05m by 1.8m with a depth of 0.56m. Two timber layers were noted at the base of the trough representing at least two phases of lining. The lower examples consisted of six timbers. Four stake-holes were observed in the corners. The second layer of wood consisted of nine timbers. Five were aligned E-W along the base while the other timbers were lined at the sides of the trough. The fill of the trough consisted of blackened compact peaty silt with charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

**Platform:**
A small pit adjacent to the trough was interpreted as a small working platform for activities carried out in the trough.
Finds:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artefacts:</th>
<th>None</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ecofacts:</td>
<td>Animal bone and a single tooth was recovered from the burnt mound material.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dating:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relative dating:</th>
<th>None</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Absolute dating:</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Excavation Interpretation:

Excavation of the site revealed a burnt mound and a single timber-lined trough which represented at least two separate phases of use. The lowest timbers consisted of poorly preserved remains of six timbers while the second layer represented a re-use of the trough and re-lining with nine timbers remaining. The corner stake may suggest the trough was Late Bronze Age in date as this technique was common during that period in Ireland. The site can be interpreted as the remains of a pyrolithic water-boiling site and the recovery of animal bone may suggest that this involved cooking.

References

Location: Lissarulla  Six inch map no: NA
Parish: Claregalway  NGR: 139500, 235000
Barony: Dunkellin  Altitude: NA
County: Galway

Excavation Details: Project: Bord Gás Galway Gas Pipeline
Site Director: Eoghan Kieran
Consultants: Judith Carroll & Company
Year: 2004

Physical Setting: The site was situated in a low-lying area

Cultural Landscape: No prehistoric sites are recorded in the vicinity of the site.
Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features
The site was uncovered during archaeological testing in advance of the Bord Gás Galway Pipeline. No surface trace of the site was evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a small spread of heat-shattered stone and charcoal and a rectangular pit which may have functioned as a trough.

Burnt Spread: The spread measured 2.9m by 2m with a thickness of 0.1m. It consisted of black charcoal rich clay with heat-shattered stone.

Pit: The pit was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 0.8m by 0.8 with a depth of 0.1m. The fill of the pit consisted of black charcoal rich clay with heat-shattered stone.

Finds: Two flint artefacts were recovered from the site. One of these was a scraper (Context Unknown).

Dating: The site was not scientifically dated.

References
The site was uncovered in a pasture field close to a small stream. There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the site prior to excavation. None of the excavated sites were adjacent to the site.

Pre-Evacuation features
The site was uncovered during archaeological testing in advance of the N6 Loughrea Bypass. No surface trace of the site was evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a large mound of heat-shattered stone and two troughs. Several other adjacent features of unknown date were also uncovered.

Burnt Mound: The mound measured 24.8m by 12.7m with a depth of 0.69 and consisted of three deposits of loam and heat-shattered stone.

Trough 1: This trough was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 2.86m by 2.04m with a maximum depth of 0.28m. Several stake-holes were cut into the base of the pit around the inner-edges forming a rough rectangular. Several fills were noted in the trough consisting of silty clays and mound material.

Trough 2: This trough was located to the south and was rectangular in shape. It measured 2.02m north to south. Several stake-holes were also noted in the vicinity of this trough and were arranged in a rough rectangle. This trough was dated to the late first millennium BC from charcoal recovered from the fill.

Ditch: A curvilinear ditch was revealed to the south of the mound and ran for 12.95m along a gentle brake of slope above the lower-lying area to the north. A corroded copper alloy or bronze pin was recovered from the ditch fills.

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Finds:

Artefacts: Copper or bronze pin from upper fill of ditch feature.

Ecofacts: No

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (hazel) from fill of trough 1
C14 (GrA-30149) 2940±40 BP (1266–1016 BC)
Charcoal (rose) from fill of trough 2
C14 (GrA-30150) 2495±35 BP (791–419 BC)
Charcoal (hazel) from linear cut containing burnt mound material
C14 (GrA-30147) 2910±40 BP (1258–1000 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

The mound at this site is quite large and conforms to the standard form and dating for a Bronze Age site of this type. The radiocarbon dates recovered from the south trough post-dates those of the north-most trough and primary mound deposit by some 500 years. This suggests long-term use of the site and is supported by the presence of the large mound and two troughs. Stake-holes in one of the troughs suggest it may have been timber-lined originally with other stake-holes may relate to some light structures associated with the activity at the site.

References

Location: Townland: Cloonbar       Six inch map no:  28
Parish: Kilconla          NGR: 132803, 354785
Barony: Loughrea       Altitude: 10m OD
County : Galway

Excavation Details: Project: Mayo to Galway Gas Pipeline
Site Director: Tara O’ Neill
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services
Year: 2005

Physical Setting: The site was uncovered in a low-lying marshy area. The presence of peat in the base of the trough is further evidence of this wet environment.

Cultural Landscape: There are no recorded prehistoric site-types/monuments in the vicinity of the fulacht fia, although the Medieval Period is well represented.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features
The site was uncovered during archaeological testing in advance of the Mayo to Galway Gas Pipeline. No surface trace of the site was evident prior to investigations. The full extent of the site was not revealed during excavation.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed the remains of a ploughed out burnt mound spread which sealed a probable trough. The burnt mound spread (C2) measured 8m by 3.5m with a height of 0.33m. It consisted of mid-brown/black silty clay, charcoal and 95% heat-shattered limestone. A layer of peat was uncovered overlying this spread of burnt material. The trough (C3) was sealed beneath the burnt spread. It was sub-circular in shape and measured 1.1m by 0.9m with a depth of 0.4m. It had sloping sides and a concave base. The fill of the pit consisted of black clay silt with charcoal flecks and heat-shattered limestone. A deposit of peat was found in the base of the trough suggesting the presence of water. Hazel and ash charcoal was identified in the trough. No finds were recovered from the site.

Dating: Charcoal (Hazel) from fill of trough (C3)
C14 (Beta-241718) 3600±25 BP (2030–1780 BC)

References
Excavation Details:

Physical Setting: The burnt spread was located along a 30m wide wayleave on the western bank of the Sinking River to the north of Dunmore town. The immediate terrain surrounding the feature consisted of a gently undulating hill sloping to low lying marshy ground along the riverbank.

Cultural Landscape: There are no recorded prehistoric site-types/monuments in the vicinity of the fulacht fia, although the Medieval Period is well represented.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during archaeological testing in advance of the Dunmore to Kilkerrin Sewerage Scheme. No surface trace of the site was evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed the remains of a circular mound of heat-shattered stone which sealed a timber-lined trough.

Burnt Mound: The spread of burnt material (C5) measured 10.8m by 9.5m with a depth of 0.3m. It consisted to black-orange charcoal enriched silty sand with heat-shattered metamorphic gneiss and schist. Quinn also notes the presence of ash deposits within the matrix of the mound material. The stones within the mound were quite small suggesting the re-use of the material over a prolonged period of time.

Trough: The trough (C7) was rectangular in shape and measured 1.25m by 1.95m with a depth of 0.18m. The structure was wood-lined consisting of six base planks and four side planks preliminary identified as oak. The base planks were arranged side by side and consisted of 6 roughly hewn, tangentially faced timbers braced by three (partially surviving) cross pieces or laths. No joints were evident nor were the planks tightly fitting, implying either shrinkage of the wood or the generous use of a clay lining. A fine sand was...
noted between the base planks representing the sediment form the shattered stone. The trough was sealed by shattered stone, ash and charcoal.

**Finds:**

- **Artefacts:** No
- **Ecofacts:** No

**Dating:**

- **Relative dating:** None
- **Absolute dating:** None

**Excavation Interpretation:**

The site excavated in Dunmore was a classic example located along a flood plain with easy access to water, wood and stone. The immediate terrain at the time of its use was very probably forested with adjacent farm land in the more level and better drained areas. The river was probably faster and narrower than the more gently meandering waterway that exists today. All the elements for a functioning *fulacht fia* were available in abundance and based on the size of the mound this example was used on a significant number of occasions.

**References**


Plate 10.37 Burnt mound and truncated plank-lined trough and Dunore, Co. Galway.
Physical Setting: The site was uncovered in the north-western edge of a field that was defined by the Craigabby or Lavally river which becomes the Clarin River further west. The land was under good quality permanent pasture and grazed by cattle at the time of excavation.

Cultural Landscape: There are no recorded prehistoric site-types/monuments in the vicinity of the fulacht fia, although the Medieval period is well represented.

Adjacent excavated sites: The site at Newford was excavated immediately across the river.

Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during archaeological testing in advance of the N6 Galway to Ballinasloe Road Scheme. No surface trace of the site was evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed the remains of a ploughed out burnt mound spread. No definitive cut features were identified.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound spread (3006) measured 8m in diameter with a thickness of 0.3m. It consisted of black silty clay with charcoal and 70% heat-shattered stone. The excavator states that the spread was heavily disturbed. A possible alluvial deposit was exposed beneath the mound consisting of light brown silty clay and charcoal flecks. Pottery identified as possibly funerary in nature was uncovered in this deposit.

Burnt Deposit: The spread (3008) consisted of black silt with charcoal and no heat-affected stone. It was 0.15m thick and extended for 1.4m. A light grey silt was identified below this which may represent an ash deposit.

Pit: Pit (3003) was revealed to the east of the site. It was circular in plan with irregular sloping sides and an irregular base. It measured 2.4m by 2.3m with a depth of 0.42. The primary fill consisted of brown silty sand with occasional charcoal and limestone. The upper fill was composed of dark silty...
sand and 80% limestone and occasional charcoal. This feature may be natural in origin used for the deposition of fired material (Wilkins 2007, 7).

**Finds:**

**Artefacts:** Prehistoric pottery (Food vessel) from possibly alluvial layer beneath the burnt mound.

**Ecofacts:** No

**Dating:**

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (hazel) from burnt mound spread C14 (UB-7407) 3600±25 BP (1611–1443 BC)

**Excavation Interpretation**

The burnt spread deposit was 0.3 m thick and approximately 8 m in diameter and heavily mixed with topsoil and, in places, had been ploughed out to a thin layer overlying subsoil. Due to the level of ground disturbance and truncation, the information that could be gained from the stratigraphy of the site was limited. A small quantity of poorly preserved prehistoric pottery was recovered from the subsoil beneath the burnt mound. This derived from a bipartite bowl, a vessel more usually associated with funerary sites. The disturbed nature of the site and lack of other associated features meant that function was difficult to interpret. It is possible that this was a heavily truncated burial site, and not a burnt mound site.

**References**

Excavation Details:  Project: N6 Galway to Ballinasloe
Site Director: Brendan Wilkins
Consultants: Headland Archaeology Ltd.
Year: 2006

Physical Setting:  This site was located close to the Graigabbey/Lavally River on the western bank of a sweeping meandering curve. The site was set within a slight depression in the natural subsoil and was likely to have been severely truncated.

Cultural Landscape:  There are no recorded prehistoric site-types/monuments in the vicinity of the fulacht fia, although the Medieval period is well represented.

Adjacent excavated sites:  Late Bronze Age funerary site with associated post-holes and a pyre.

Pre-Excavation features
The site was uncovered during archaeological testing in advance of the N6 Galway to Ballinasloe Road.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features:  Excavation of the site revealed the remains of a late Bronze Age funerary pyre and associated features. An Earlier burnt mound was also uncovered. The burnt mound (2004) was oval in shape and measured 12m by 5m with a maximum depth of 0.30m. It was composed of black silty gritty sand with frequent charcoal. It was comprised of about 80% burnt heat-shattered stones. The pit (2005) was revealed south-west of the burnt mound and was sub-rectangular in shape. It measured 4m by 4m with a depth of 1.35m. The south-western portion had near vertical sides with a stepped north-western corner. Three springs were noted in the base. Nine deposits were uncovered in the pit and a hazelnut shell produced an Early Neolithic date.

Finds:  Red deer vertebrae were recovered from the pit

Dating:  Charcoal (hazelnut shell) from large pit/well
C14 (UB- 7404) uncalibrated date unknown (3639–3501 BC)

References
Location: Townland: Clogharevaun Six inch map no: 28
Parish: Athenry NGR: 157692, 224124
Barony: Athenry Altitude: NA
County: Galway

Excavation Details: Project: N6 Galway to Ballinasloe
Site Director: Brendan Wilkins and Amy Bruce
Consultants: Headland Archaeology Ltd.
Year: 2006

Physical Setting: The sites were located on the northern side of the Dooyertha/Clogharevaun river. The landscape consisted of low lying hills sloping down to the river and was under permanent pasture. The areas closest to the river were liable to flood after heavy rainfall, and the course of the original channel of the river could become extremely waterlogged.

Cultural Landscape: There are no recorded prehistoric site-types/monuments in the vicinity of the fulacht fia, although the Medieval Period is well represented.

Adjacent excavated sites: Field systems

Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during archaeological testing in advance of the N6 Galway to Ballinasloe Road.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed the remains of a burnt mound and a single trough. Several field systems were also investigated. The burnt mound was horseshoe-shaped and measured 12m by 11m with a height of 0.2m. The deposit consisted of 50% burnt limestone and 10% unburnt stones within a dark grey-black charcoal rich silt. The trough was sub-rectangular in shape with a flat base. It measured 2.8m by 1.6m with a depth of 0.27m. The fill of the trough consisted of loose charcoal rich silt with 50% heat-shattered limestone. The fill was composed of heat-shattered stone.

Finds: Burnt bone was recovered from the trough fill

Dating: Charcoal (willow) from the burnt mound deposit
C14 (UB-7408) Uncalibrated date unknown (1496–1373 BC)
Charcoal (oak) from the fill of the trough
C14 (UB-7409) Uncalibrated date unknown (1419–1268 BC)

References

Location: Townland: Barnacragh  Six inch map no: 87
Parish: Kilcloony  NGR: 181170, 228507
Barony: Clonmacmowen  Altitude: 70m OD
County: Galway
Excavation Details: Project: N6 Galway to Ballinasloe
Site Director: John Tierney
Consultants: Eachtra Archaeological Projects
Year: 2006

Physical Setting: The site was situated within an area of flat, low-lying ground surrounded by gently undulating terrain. The solid bedrock is Middle to Upper Carboniferous Limestones, with Calp Limestones predominating in the area of this site. The burnt mound was located near an esker, a sand and gravel ridge composed of glaciofluvial sediments that was laid down by rivers formed from glacier meltwater.

Cultural Landscape: Two burnt mounds lying in close proximity to each other have been identified in Loughbown townland and two other newly recorded sites at Cooltymurragh (E2448) and Urraghry (E2449), as well as this site at Barnacragh (E2446), have been excavated during the course of the present excavation programme. A Bronze Age settlement site (E2445) was also excavated in Mackney townland and Bronze Age dates were retrieved from another site in Mackney (E2443).

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features
The site was uncovered during archaeological testing in advance of the N6 Galway to Ballinasloe Road Scheme. No surface trace of the site was evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed the remains of a burnt mound spread, trough and associated stake-holes.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound (C5) spread over an area measuring 5.8m by 2.3m and survived to a height of 0.34m. The material consisted of charcoal and heat-shattered limestone, sandstone and quartzite. Tierney states that it was homogenous throughout. A convex chert scraper was recovered from the mound material. Two further small spreads of similar material were noted close to the mound that were probably dispersed from the same context.

Trough: The trough (C6) was sealed beneath the mound material. The northern section was sub-circular in shape and measured 2.39m by 2.2m with a depth
of 0.38 m. The trough was filled by a basal organic layer (C7) of peaty sediment with some fragmentary timbers. This was overlain by a deposit of charcoal and heat-shattered stone (C5), which spread beyond the confines of the trough and constituted the main deposit of burnt mound material. Twelve stake-holes were uncovered cut into the base of the trough suggesting a possible timber-lining which no longer survives.

Water Channel: A possible overflow outlet was associated with the trough. It consisted of linear cut extended from the southern part of the trough for a distance of 1.8 m.

Stake-Holes: A curvilinear arc of fifty-seven stake-holes were uncovered north-west of the trough. This was interpreted as a possible windbreak structure to protect the site from the prevailing winds (Tierney 2009, 5).

Pit: A shallow pit was uncovered west of the trough. It was circular in shape and measured 1.36 m by 1.30 m with a depth of 0.26 m. Three fills were noted in the pit.

Finds:

Artefacts: Two flint artefacts were recovered from the site. A flint blade was recovered from the topsoil and a chert scraper was found in the mound material.

Dating: Charcoal (willow) from the burnt mound deposit C14 (UB-7357) 3597±35 BP (2115–1831 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

Excavation of the site revealed a small mound of waste-firing material associated with pyrolithic water-boiling. The presence of a trough and overflow channel confirms this suggestion. The base of the trough was cut by a number of stake-holes suggesting it may have been lined with wattle, a technique that was particularly common during the Chalcolithic and Early Bronze Age periods in Ireland. The radiocarbon date from the site would confirm this. The line of stake-holes at the site probably functioned as a windbreak and can be compared with a number of similar structures identified in Ireland (see Chapter 5).

References

Location: Townland: Cooltymurraghy Six inch map no: 87
Parish: Aughrim NGR: 177716, 228176
Barony: Kilconnell Altitude: 70m OD
County: Galway

Excavation Details: Project: N6 Galway to Ballinasloe
Site Director: Mick Drumm and David Fallon
Consultants: Eachtra Archaeological Projects
Year: 2006

Physical Setting: The site was situated within an area of low-lying ground surrounded by gently undulating terrain. The burnt mound was located near an esker, a sand and gravel ridge composed of glaciofluvial sediments that was laid down by rivers formed from glacier meltwater.

Cultural Landscape: Two burnt mounds lying in close proximity to each other have been identified in Loughbown townland and two other newly recorded sites at Cooltymurraghy (E2448) and Urraghry (E2449), as well as this site at Barnacragh (E2446), have been excavated during the course of the present excavation programme. A Bronze Age settlement site (E2445) was also excavated in Mackney townland and Bronze Age dates were retrieved from another site in Mackney (E2443).

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features
The site was uncovered during archaeological testing in advance of the N6 Galway to Ballinasloe Road Scheme. No surface trace of the site was evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed the remains of a burnt mound spread which was cut by a drain. No other features were identified. The burnt mound (C7) spread over an area measuring 5.26m by 3.40m and survived to a height of 0.17m. The material consisted dark black silty silt with charcoal and heat-shattered stone. The charcoal was identified as oak, alder and ash. No finds were recovered.

Dating: Charcoal (alder) from the burnt mound deposit C7 C14 (UB-7359) 3768±35 BP (2293–2042 BC)

References:
Location: Townland: Urraghry  Six inch map no: 87
Parish: Clontuskert  NGR: 180424, 228489
Barony: Clonmacnowen  Altitude: 60m OD
County: Galway

Excavation Details: Project: N6 Galway to Ballinasloe
Site Director: Mick Drumm and John Tierney
Consultants: Eachtra Archaeological Projects
Year: 2006

Physical Setting: The site was located at the eastern edge of low lying reclaimed peatland, adjacent to a natural water course. The solid bedrock is Middle to Upper Carboniferous Limestones, with Calp Limestones predominating in the area of this site. The site is situated within a gently undulating glacial landscape used as open pastureland with isolated areas of peat.

Cultural Landscape: Two burnt mounds lying in close proximity to each other have been identified in Loughbown townland and two other newly recorded sites at Cooltymurraghy (E2448) and Urraghry (E2449), as well as this site at Barnacragh (E2446), have been excavated during the course of the present excavation programme. A Bronze Age settlement site (E2445) was also excavated in Mackney townland and Bronze Age dates were retrieved from another site in Mackney (E2443).

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during archaeological testing in advance of the N6 Galway to Ballinasloe Road Scheme. No surface trace of the site was evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed the remains of a burnt mound spread which sealed a trough and numerous stake-holes.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound material (C8) measured 3.9m by 1.95m with a height of 0.2m. It consisted of charcoal and heat-shattered limestone and sandstone.

Trough: The trough (C5) was sealed by the burnt mound material and was oval in plan. It measured 1.64m by 1.36m with a depth of 0.18m. The base of the trough was cut by seven stake-holes suggesting the pit may have been timber lined during the Bronze Age. Two fills were noted in the trough with the basal deposit containing frequent charcoal chunks. This was overlain by an
organic peaty deposit. An Early Bronze Age date was obtained from the basal layer.

**Palaeochannel:** This channel pre-dated the burnt mound activity. It was a linear feature (C17) that was exposed for a length of 20m. Two stake-holes cut the northern part of the channel.

**Water Channel/Gully:** This curving feature (C27) was interpreted as a gully and extended beyond the limits of the excavation. It was filled with a peaty material and was cut by six stake-holes.

**Finds:**

**Artefacts:** Two worked chert artefacts were recovered from which dated to the Mesolithic period. A chert blade was also recovered.

**Ecofacts:** None

**Dating:**

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (hazel) from fill of the trough (C5)
C14 (UB-7352) 3966±34 BP (2574–2348 BC)

**Excavation Interpretation:**

Excavation of the site revealed a small mound of waste-firing material associated with pyrolithic water-boiling. The presence of a trough and overflow channel confirms this suggestion. The base of the trough was cut by a number of stake-holes suggesting it may have been lined with wattle, a technique that was particularly common during the Chalcolithic and Early Bronze Age periods in Ireland. The radiocarbon date from the site would confirms this. The line of stake-holes at the site probably functioned as a windbreak and can be compared with a number of similar structures identified in Ireland (see Chapter 5).

**References**

Location: Townland: Doughiska  Six inch map no: 87
Parish: Oranmore  NGR: 134700, 226650
Barony: Clonmacnowen  Altitude: 27m OD
County: Galway
Excavation Details: Project: N6 Galway to Ballinasloe
Site Director: Liam McKinstry
Consultants: Valerie J. Keeley Ltd.
Year: 2006
Physical Setting: The sites were located in a large field of flat and low-lying rough grazing, scrub and rock outcrop, which was liable to flooding. Several natural springs were identified during previous investigations (GY01).
Cultural Landscape: There is little recorded prehistoric monuments in the vicinity of the burnt mounds however a standing stone and a possible cist burial are located c. 2km to the south (GA094-071 and GA094-071001). The previous excavations on the site uncovered several burnt mounds dating to the Bronze Age (GY01).
Adjacent excavated sites: Three burnt mounds were excavated in 1995 as part of the Galway Eastern Approach Road (GY01). This work identified six further mounds four of which were the subject of the current excavation at Doughiska (Mounds A-D).
Pre-Excavation features
The site was uncovered during archaeological testing in advance of the N6 Galway to Ballinasloe Road Scheme. The sites survived as grass covered mounds prior to investigations.
Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed the remains of three mounds of heat-shattered stone. The only cut feature identified was a single pit, uncovered below the mound at Site D.
Site A
Burnt Mound: This mound was kidney-shaped and measured 18.10m by 15.50m with a height of 1.22m. Limited investigations my Fitzpatrick and Crumlish uncovered the possible remains of a stone revetment in the mound material (Fitzpatrick and Crumlish 2000, 135-143). Fifteen layers and deposits made up the mound. Two pits were noted cut into the mound and one of these contained the remains of a relatively modern horse burial. The mound layers consisted of thick deposits of heat-shattered stone with charcoal and various
clay layers composed of peat and staining form large amounts of burnt stone. Early and Late Bronze Age dates were returned from this mound.

**Site B**

**Burnt Mound:** This mound was located 5m north-west of the mound at Site A. It was kidney-shaped in plan and measured 3.25m by 6.75m with a maximum height of 0.34m. The mound consisted of one deposit of dark silt with large amounts of heat-shattered stone and charcoal. A late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age date was retrieved from this deposit.

**Site C**

**Burnt Mound:** This mound was located 18m south of the mound at Site A. It was irregular in plan and measured 7.5m by 5.25m with a maximum height of 0.42m. The material consisted of dark silt and heat-shattered stone with charcoal. Middle to Late Bronze Age dates were obtained from this deposit.

**Site D**

**Burnt Mound:** This mound was identified 42m north-east of Site A. It was sub-circular in plan and measured 6m by 6m with a maximum height of 0.34m. The mound consisted of one deposit of dark clay, heat-shattered stone and charcoal. Medieval dates were returned from this deposit.

**Pit:** This pit was revealed under the mound. It was oval in shape and measured 1.9m by 1.45m with a depth of 0.24m. The sides of the pit sloped gradually towards the base at a 45 degree angle. The base itself was relatively flat. The pit was filled by [C009] which was similar to the mound material above except it contained more charcoal inclusions. A Medieval date was returned from this pit.

**Finds:**

**Artefacts:** None

**Ecofacts:** None

**Dating:**

**Relative dating:** None

**Absolute dating:**
- Wood (pine) from burnt mound (Site A) C14 (UB- 7580) 4081±36 BP (2861–2491 BC)
- Charcoal (mixed species) burnt mound (Site A) C14 (UB- 7855) 2825±34 BP (1124–846 BC)
- Charcoal (alder, ash, pomoideae) from burnt mound (Site A) C14 (UB- 7857) 2803±23 BP (1012–902 BC)
- Charcoal (mixed species) from burnt mound (Site A) C14 (UB- 7859) 2742±28 BP (918–814 BC)
- Wood (pine) from burnt mound (Site A) C14 (UB- 7580) 4081±36 BP (2861–2491 BC)
- Charcoal (mixed species) from burnt mound (Site B)
C14 (UB-7860) 3944±29 BP (2566–2342 BC)
Wood (oak) from burnt mound (Site C)
C14 (UB-7581) 2691±34 BP (904–802 BC)
Charcoal (elm) from burnt mound (Site C)
C14 (UB-7580) 3156±23 BP (1494–1397 BC)
Charcoal (alder, hazel) from burnt mound (Site C)
C14 (UB-7858) 2904±36 BP (1253–1001 BC)
Charcoal (ash, hazel) from burnt mound (Site D)
C14 (UB-7861) 957±25 BP (AD 1022–1155)
Charcoal (blackthorn, elm) from burnt mound (Site D)
C14 (UB-7874) 928±34 BP (AD 1024–1182)
Charcoal (mixed species) from pit (Site D)
C14 (UB-7877) 1054±30 BP (AD 897–1025)

Excavation Interpretation:

The Doughiska site does not seem to correspond with the ‘classic’ burnt mound or fulacht fia site. Only Mound D was situated over a pit and this proved to be Early Medieval in date. The only possible pit feature associated with the Bronze Age mounds was found adjacent to one of the mounds uncovered during the first excavations at Doughiska. As with these sites, it is possible that these mounds were associated with roasting activities or portable boiling troughs may have been utilised. Three medieval dates were obtained from a burnt spread that was located 42m north-east of a cluster of prehistoric fulachtaí fia. The spread measured 6m by 6m with a maximum thickness of 0.34m. It consisted of heat-shattered stone and charcoal, dated to the medieval period (UB-7861). It overlay a shallow pit containing similar material with a higher charcoal content. While the dated material may be associated with the use of hot-stone technology, the pit containing burnt stone cannot be associated with water-boiling, given its size and profile. Its significance is unknown.

References


Plate 10.39 Extant burnt mounds at Doughiska, Co. Galway
Location: Townland: Caraun More Six inch map no: 97
Parish: Oranmore NGR: 164083, 225314
Barony: Clonmacnowen Altitude: 61m OD
County: Galway

Excavation Details: Project: N6 Galway to Ballinasloe
Site Director: Nora Bermingham
Consultants: Cultural Resource Development Services
Year: 2006

Physical Setting: The site was situated in an area of heavily drained pasture. The burnt mound Caraun More 1 is located on the west flank of the Kilreekil ridge which extends into east Galway. The watertable in this area is typically high and is countered by an the site is located is subject to seasonal flooding.

Cultural Landscape: There is little recorded prehistoric monuments in the vicinity of the burnt mounds however two other fulachtifia were excavated in the area as part of the same project.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features
The site was uncovered during archaeological testing in advance of the N6 Galway to Ballinasloe Road Scheme. No surface trace of the site was evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed the remains of a burnt mound comprising of heat-shattered stone. No cut features were identified. The mound of burnt material was sub-circular in shape and measured 6.5m by 5.3m with a maximum depth of 0.4m. The deposit consisted of dark charcoal enriched silt with heat-shattered sandstone with some limestone present also. A small amount of animal bone was retrieved from this material. Birmingham states that the mound was deposited against the side of a slope.

Finds: Animal bone was retrieved from the mound material. Five fragments of bone and teeth (Cattle, horse and dog).

Dating: Charcoal (pomoideae) from burnt mound material C14 (WK-21777) 2454±30 BP (760–410 BC)

References
### Physical Setting
The site was situated in an area of heavily drained pasture. The watertable in this area is typically high and is countered by an extensive network of field drains. The field in which the present site is located is subject to seasonal flooding. The burnt mound is situated at the edge of the field next to a large field drain.

### Cultural Landscape
There is little recorded prehistoric monuments in the vicinity of the burnt mounds however two other fulachtai fia were excavated in the area as part of the same project.

### Adjacent excavated sites
None

### Pre-Excavation features
The site was uncovered during archaeological testing in advance of the N6 Galway to Ballinasloe Road Scheme. No surface trace of the site was evident prior to investigations.

### Excavation Record

#### Summary of Features:
Excavation of the site revealed the remains of a burnt mound, a trough and seven pits.

#### Burnt Mound:
The mound of burnt material (F106) was sub-circular in shape and measured 6m by 5.2m with a maximum depth of 0.28m. The deposit consisted of dark charcoal enriched silt with heat-shattered sandstone with some limestone present also. There was little evidence of internal stratigraphy except the presence of leached material.

#### Trough:
The trough was situated at the south-eastern edge of the mound and was rectangular in plan with steep sides and a flat base. It measured 2.95m by 1.33m with a depth of 0.4m. The primary fill of the trough consisted of a charcoal enriched blackened silt that covered the base and sides of the trough. The upper fills composed of slump glacial material and stony grey silt.
Pit 1: The trough was cut on its northern edge by a roughly circular pit that measured 1.25m in diameter with a depth of 0.3m. Three fills were noted in the pit with the basal layer consisting of dark silt, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. The upper deposits were natural accumulations of silty material.

Pit 2/Cistern: This pit (F161) was the largest on site. It was oval in plan and measured 3.33m by 2m with a depth of 0.62m. It contained six fills characterised by varying degrees of charcoal, stone and burnt animal bone. This large pit cut a smaller pit F157.

Pit 3: Pit (F157) was oval in plan and was cut by pit F161. It measured 2.2m by 1.8m with a depth of 0.3m. It had a flat base with sloping sides. The primary fill consisted of charcoal enriched silt and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 4: Pit (F160) was roughly circular in plan and measured 1.1m in diameter with a depth of 0.11m. The fill of the pit consisted of charcoal enriched silt and heat-shattered stone. This pit was later cut by F159.

Pit 5: Pit (F159) was sub-rectangular in plan and cut pit F160. It measured 2.35m by 1.5m with a depth of 0.12m. The fill was similar to that of F161.

Pit 6: This pit (F156) was located east of the large pit F161. It was 0.34m in depth and contained a fill consisting of dark silty material.

Pit 7: This pit (F158) was oval in plan and was partly truncated by F156. It was 0.44m in depth and contained a similar fill to that of F156.

Finds: 121 fragments of animal bone were recovered from the large pit F161. Large-sized mammals such as cattle and, medium-sized animals such as sheep/goat, are represented. A range of body parts were present, including fragments of ribs, vertebrae, scapulae and long bones. Only one bone was identifiable as to species: a fragment of cattle femur.

Dating: Charcoal (pomoideae) from burnt mound material F106 C14 (WK-21340) 2840±36 BP (1120–910 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

The main features of archaeological significance at Caraun More 2 comprise one burnt mound, one trough and seven pits. The mound at Caraun More 2 exhibits little internal stratigraphy, which might indicate phasing or repeated use. The pits and trough, and the cutting of one feature by another, however, imply multiple episodes of use. In addition, the pit and trough fills indicate the deliberate dumping of charcoal-rich deposits and the natural accumulation of silt. Deliberate backfilling of troughs and pits is recorded at other burnt mound sites. The animal bone retrieved from the large pit was largely unidentifiable to species though the remains of cattle and perhaps sheep/goat were represented. This may indicate the site functioned as a pyrolithic water-boiling site for cooking.

References

Location: Townland: Caraun More  Six inch map no: 97
Parish: Killimordaly  NGR: 164175, 225335
Barony: Kilconnell  Altitude: 62m OD
County: Galway

Excavation Details: Project: N6 Galway to Ballinasloe
Site Director: Tamás Péterváry
Consultants: Cultural Resource Development Services
Year: 2006

Physical Setting: The site lay close to marginal land some 3.5 km south-west of Cnoc Breac (New Inn) on one of the ridges that project westward from a c. 8 km wide area of elevated ground known as the Kilreekill ridge. The surrounding fields are covered with rough grass. Two small streams, tributaries of the Raford River (Dúghiortach), flank the ridge that accommodated the burnt mound.

Cultural Landscape: There is little recoded prehistoric monuments in the vicinity of the burnt mounds however two other fulachtaí fia were excavated in the area as part of the same project; one within 10 m east of the site (Caraun More 2) and a further isolated example some 50 m to the west (Caraun More 1). A number of barrows were excavated to the opposite, eastern direction in Cross (Crois) within 0.3km to the east of the burnt mound. A multiperiod hilltop enclosure in Rahally (Rath Uí Cheallaigh) was investigated within 2 km of the site.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features
The site was uncovered during archaeological testing in advance of the N6 Galway to Ballinasloe Road Scheme. No surface trace of the site was evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed the remains of a burnt mound and a wicker-lined trough which produced a wooden artefact. A possible structure was also uncovered.

Site Clearance: The site seems to have been cleared of topsoil prior to the construction of the trough and other features.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound spread (F2) was highly disturbed from agricultural practices. It measured 4.9m by 3.6m with a maximum thickness of 0.1m. The deposit consisted of black silty clay with charcoal and heat-shattered non calcareous erratics presumably collected from the glacial drift in the vicinity. A rather thin deposit of material covered the area defined by the loose, circular arrangement of shallow depressions. This material was a primary deposit at a location that may have been a lightly sheltered
functional area. The presence of stone fragments at this location may reflect an attempt to provide a safe environment on the slippery marl surface that lined the sandy subsoil.

**Trough:**
The trough (F3) was sub-rectangular in plan and measured 2.6m by 1.6m with a depth of 1.3m. It had slightly sloping sides and a flat base. Péterváry notes that the trough may have been divided in two halves by a wattle screen with the other portion lined with a fine grey marl (Péterváry 2009, 16). The wattle lining in the north-western portion consisted of thick vertical alter stakes with hazel rods and other brushwood interwoven between them. The corner stakes of the partitioning screen were supported at either side by subsidiary stakes driven at an angle. The vertical stakes would have been the same length as the height of the trough with one notable exception: a stake with forked upper end probably projected slightly above the south-western rim of the trough. A wooden paddle-shaped artefact was recovered from the base of the trough. A handful of hazelnuts was also recovered from the wattle section of the trough. The trough was filled with two deposits consisting of dark silty sands, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. Animal bone was recovered from this deposit.

**Hearth:**
An oval hearth (F8) was uncovered 0.4m east of the trough consisting of an oval pit filled with black clayey silt with occasional charcoal. The base of the feature was oxidised.

**Possible Structure:**
Four depressions (possible post-holes) defined a sub-circular area measuring 8m by 7.5m immediately north and east of the trough and hearth. Péterváry states that this could possibly mark the remains of a light structure but the absence of clear-cut stake-holes suggest that the rods were held in place by some other means (possibly leaning against the side of the original topsoil material left in place outside the periphery of the structure or simply lying on the surface in the manner of an inverted basket held down by weights on the covering material along the sides) resulting in shallow depressions in the subsoil over a period of time (Péterváry 2009, 24).

**Finds:**
**Artefacts:** Wooden paddle from base of the trough.

**Ecofacts:** Two animal bones were recovered from the fill of the trough. A red deer metatarsal and an unidentified long bone.

**Dating:**
**Relative dating:** None

**Absolute dating:** Wood (hazel) from timber lining in trough C14 (WK-21247) 3231±64 BP (1667–1393 BC)

**Excavation Interpretation:**
The excavation showed that the deposit of heat-shattered stones lay directly on the marl-lined subsoil surface indicating that the original topsoil material had been removed as an initial phase of constructing the monument. The mound of burnt stone and substantial trough, which showed signs of being compartmentalised suggests the site functioned as a pyroilitic water-boiling site, possibly for cooking. The presence of animal bone seems to confirm this suggestion. The wattle-lining was dated to the Middle
Bronze Age which is mostly found in Chalcolithic/Early Bronze Age troughs. Some evidence suggested it was divided, possibly to separate the hot stones from the meat. The wooden paddle is not unique in the archaeological record with other examples found in Co. Limerick and Kildare (see Chapter 5). This paddle may have been used to remove the hot stones from the trough or the food produce.

References

Physical Setting:
The site is located at the foot of an esker - the object of the quarry, within a reclaimed wetland formed in the floodplain of a small river, in this case, a tributary of the river Raford. Land use at the time of the excavation was predominantly pastoral farming and gravel quarries.

Cultural Landscape:
There is little recorded prehistoric monuments in the vicinity of the burnt mounds. The burnt mound E2070 is one of five excavated by CRDS Ltd along the route of the proposed road, and is located within the same river floodplain as the burnt mound E2071, approximately 750 m to the west. Though the sites are not contemporary, their presence within the same wetland zone shows this area was an attractive location for small-scale activity.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features
The site was uncovered during archaeological testing in advance of the N6 Galway to Ballinasloe Road Scheme. No surface trace of the site was evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features:
Excavation of the site revealed the remains of substantial burnt mound activity in the form of stone spreads, troughs, platforms and other wooden structures. Several phases were identified.

Phase 1
Burnt Mound: The burnt stone spread (F14) was crescent shaped in plan and measured 23m by 6.8m and survived to a height of 0.20m. The deposit consisted of heat-shattered sandstone with charcoal and black silty material. A small amount of animal bone was retrieved from the spread. A Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age date was obtained from the spread.

Trough: A wooden structure (F28) located to the south-east may be interpreted as the remains of a trough base. It consisted of a rectangular arrangement of split
roundwoods and seventeen stakes used to secure the timbers in place. The wood was a mixture of ash, alder, hazel, oak, birch and willow. The split roundwoods were laid parallel to one another and close together with the split and, therefore flat, surface facing upwards. The structure measured 0.9m by 0.55m and may have originally been at least 0.15m in depth due to the presence of a stake which sat up 0.15m above the upper surface of the roundwoods implying that it may have supported side timbers. The structure was sealed by the mound material.

Stake-Cluster: A cluster of eight stakes were revealed under the burnt mound deposit F14. The stakes were identified as hazel, alder and yew and Curran states that the arrangement of the stakes appeared to be random but may have supported some sort of structure (Curran 2009, 19).

Phase 2

Burnt Spreads: These stone spreads (F3 and F2) represent the second phase of activity on the site. F3 was a deposit of silt, charcoal and heat-shattered sandstone. It measured 6m by 4.5m with a thickness of 0.38m. F2 was similar material and was irregular in plan. It measured 9.5m by 6.5m with a thickness of 0.3m. A sub-circular hearth was identified in the centre of this spread.

Hearth: The sub-circular hearth (F5) was revealed in the centre of the spread F2. The deposit consists of orange silty ash mixed with burnt stones, charcoal and oxidised clay.

Phase 3

Platform/Trough Base: A sub-rectangular arrangement of horizontal roundwoods and brushwood was exposed to the south-west. It measured 1.7m by 1.3m with a thickness of 0.12m. The structure consisted of twenty two horizontal elements and fourteen vertical stakes, holding the structure together. The roundwoods are half-split and 12 are worked on one or both ends, into a wedge or chisel point using a flat metal blade. Most of the timbers are of ash while two were identified as alder. All the split roundwoods had been laid with the flat surface facing down to form a single layer of wood.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: Seventy fragments of bone and teeth were uncovered from the site. Most of the material came from the burnt mound F14 and the possible trough F48. The assemblage was identified as coming from cattle, sheep/goat, pig and deer.

Pollen analyses of two sequences taken within close proximity of the burnt mound suggest the presence of a hazelpine dominated woodland that included trees of alder, birch, oak and elm. Wild grasses, sedges and other herbs form the woodland understorey. The woodland later gives way to a wetter sedge-dominated environment that is more or less maintained to the top each sequence, i.e. until relatively recently.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (alder) from burnt mound deposit F14
C14 (WK-21343) 3947±40 BP (2570–2300 BC)
Charcoal (alder and ash) from burnt mound deposit F2
C14 (WK-21245) 3826±41 BP (2458–2144 BC)
Charcoal (alder and ash) from hearth F5
C14 (WK-21246) 3855±107 BP (2580–2015 BC)
Charcoal (alder) from timber platform F8
C14 (UB-7242) 3023±34 BP (1394–1132 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

Killescragh 1 represents a multi-phased burnt mound with the remains of what was most probably at least one wooden trough. Prior to deposition of the burnt mound, existing deposits of peat and wood were removed creating a clean surface on which possible troughs were constructed. Situated in a wet wooded area, the site was easily accessible from a nearby esker and close to a river. The presence of the remains of cattle, pig, sheep/goat and red deer suggests at least one form of domestic activity, perhaps cooking, took place. The occurrence of dung beetles suggests that animals, such as cattle, grazed in and around the site. Later activity on-site took the form of a small wooden platform or trough when the abandoned mound, already ancient, was still visible as a dry knoll in the margins of the bog. The difference in time between this structure and the mound suggests the activities are unrelated.

References


Plate 10.41 Burnt mound, trackway and remains of timber trough at Killescragh, Co. Galway
**Location:**
Townland: Killescragh  
Parish: Killimordaly  
Barony: Kilconnell  
County: Galway

**Six inch map no:** NA  
**NGR:** 163306, 225224  
**Altitude:** 55m OD

**Excavation Details:**
Project: N6 Galway to Ballinasloe  
Site Director: Ken Curran  
Consultants: Cultural Resource Development Services  
Year: 2006

**Physical Setting:**
The site is located at the foot of an esker - the object of the quarry, within a reclaimed wetland formed in the floodplain of a small river, in this case, a tributary of the river Raford. Land use at the time of the excavation was predominantly pastoral farming and gravel quarries.

**Cultural Landscape:**
There is little recorded prehistoric monuments in the vicinity of the burnt mounds. The burnt mound E2071, also known as Killescragh 2, is one of five excavated by CRDS Ltd along the route of the proposed road. It is located within the same river floodplain as Killescragh 1, a second burnt mound (E2070), approximately 750 m to the east. Though the sites are not contemporary, their presence within the same wetland zone shows this area was an attractive location for the placement and use of burnt mounds.

**Adjacent excavated sites:**
None

**Pre-Excavation features**
The site was uncovered during archaeological testing in advance of the N6 Galway to Ballinasloe Road Scheme. No surface trace of the site was evident prior to investigations.

**Excavation Record**

**Summary of Features:**
Excavation of the site revealed the remains of several burnt stone spreads, trackways and natural wood deposits.

**Phase 1**

**Burnt Spread:**
The burnt mound spread (F25) was the earliest archaeological deposit on site. It measured 2.75m by 3.75m with a maximum thickness of 0.24m. It consisted of grey-black friable silt with charcoal and heat-shattered stone. An Early Bronze Age date was returned from the burnt mound deposits. A single worked post was recovered 3m south of the spread.

**Phase 2**

Catalogue No. GY 19
RMP No. NA
Licence No. E2071
Burnt Spreads: The burnt spreads F4 and F11 represented the next phase of activity on site. The spread (F4) extended beyond the limits of the excavation but the excavated portion measured 4m by 3.75m with a maximum thickness of 0.16m. It consisted of dark grey silt, charcoal and heat-shattered sandstone with some limestone. A Middle Bronze Age date was returned from this deposit. The spread F11 was located to the south-east of F4. It measured 5m by 9.5m with a thickness of 0.21m. It consisted of dark silty material, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Wooden Features: F13 was a half split ash tree trunk located close to spread F11. A number of stakes supported the trunk on its western side and another timber fragment lay under the half split trunk. A split oak plank (F26) was also retrieved from the site. The plank was tangentially split and both ends had been cut. Close to one end are two oval perforations each measuring. A longitudinal notch in one end was later identified as decay. The original purpose of the plank is unknown but it is likely it represents a re-used timber and may have formed part of a trough though not one that has survived intact (Curran 2009, 22).

Phase 3:

Trackway 1: A trackway (F21) was exposed meandering southwards of the site towards the nearby river. It comprised of brushwood and roundwoods and 19m of the structure was revealed during the excavation. Parts of the track, in the north and south, comprised parallel roundwoods orientated approximately North - South. Elsewhere the trackway appeared to be more haphazard or casual in its construction. The trackway took advantage of the remnants of the earlier woodland preserved in the peat below that dispensed with the need for careful construction in all places.

Trackway 2: This brushwood trackway (F43) was quite short in comparison to F21. It consisted of three overlapping layers of wood, secured with stakes. It measured 5.7m by 2m and was truncated at both ends.

Finds:

Artefacts: Sixteen fragments of chert were recovered over the course of the excavation. On examination, seven were identified as natural. The remaining nine represent a mix of primary knapping or manufacturing debris; a single modified chunk and an end scraper. A finely dressed yew pin or peg was also uncovered.

Ecofacts: Pollen analyses of two sequences taken within close proximity of the burnt mound suggest the presence of a hazel-pine dominated woodland that included trees of alder, birch, oak and elm. Wild grasses, sedges and other herbs form the woodland understorey. The woodland later gives way to a wetter sedge-dominated environment that is more or less maintained to the top each sequence, i.e. until relatively recently.

Dating:
Relative dating: None

Absolute dating:
Wood (alder) from burnt mound deposit F25
C14 (WK-21342) 3730±37 BP (2280–2020 BC)
Wood (hazel) from burnt spread deposit F4
C14 (WK-21341) 3211±36 BP (1610–1410 BC)
Wood (alder/buckthorn) from trackway F21
C14 (UB-7241) 2870±35 BP (1190–926 BC)

**Excavation Interpretation:**

Killescragh 2 represents a multi-phased site in which each phase is characterised by the use of local resources on a relatively small scale. Each phase involved exploitation of a range of resources with wood, water and stone of primary importance. There is little evidence for the processing, preparation or consumption of meat; a single skull fragment of cattle was retrieved. This contrasts with the neighbouring site of Killescragh 1. That said, food may not have been consumed at the site. Other types of domestic activity that appear to have taken place include the manufacture of lithics and woodworking. The lithic assemblage contains debris and finished implements that were made on or near the site. The recovery of wood off-cuts made using a metal blade, suggests more than just the gathering and cutting wood for use as firewood.

**References**

Location: Townland: Ballinillaun Six inch map no: 95
Parish: Stradbally NGR: 144570, 222643
Barony: Dunkellin Altitude: 10m OD
County: Galway

Excavation Details: Project: N18 Oranmore to Gort
Site Director: Tori McMorran
Consultants: Eachtra Archaeological Projects
Year: 2007

Physical Setting: The site is located on slightly raised ground along the western edge of a large turlough. There are good wide views from the site to the east and south across the open expanse of rough pasture which corresponds with the turlough when the water has receded. The fields are bounded by single-leaf dry-stone walls lined with small trees and scrub.

Cultural Landscape: Several fulachtái fia identified along this road scheme. There were no previously recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the area.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during archaeological testing in advance of the N18 Oranmore to Gort Road Scheme. No surface trace of the site was evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a small burnt spread which overlay several pit features, some of which were connected.

Burnt Spread: The small spread of burnt stone (C13) measured 4.5m by 3.4m with a thickness of 0.3m. It consisted of small to medium sized angular stone in a matrix of brown silt and charcoal. It was located north of the central intercutting pits.

Pit 1: This oval pit (C9) was the earliest and the largest pit on site with steep sides and an uneven base. It measured 2.75m by 1.65m with a depth of 0.75m. The fill consisted of black stony silt with charcoal inclusions. The feature was cut by C7.

Pit 2: Pit C7 cut the previous large pit. It was also oval in plan and measured 3.35m by 1.8m with a depth of 0.35m. The fill consisted of black stony silt with occasional charcoal and animal bone fragments.
Pit 3: The third pit was the latest in the sequence and seemed to cut the pit C7. It was oval in shape and measured 2.4m by 1.23m with a depth of 0.34m. Two fills were noted in the pit with the lower deposit consisting of black sandy silt, charcoal, heat-shattered stone and occasional animal bone.

Pit 4: This pit (C14) was situated under the stone deposit C13. It was square in plan and measured 1.6m in length with a depth of 0.32m. The fill consisted of black stony silt with frequent charcoal flecks.

Post-Hole: A single post-hole (C15) was uncovered under the stone spread close to the pit C14.

Finds:

Artefacts: Chert platform flake from spoil heap.

Ecofacts: Animal bone from the fill of the three central pits.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (hazel) from fill of the pit (C9)
C14 (UB-11505) 2945±23 BP (1260–1055 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

The site excavated at Ballinillaun 1 was one of a pair of poorly preserved burnt mounds identified in Ballinillaun townland. Three intercutting pits were filled with charcoal-rich fills. Two more pits and a possible post-hole were located just to the north of the site. The pits may be associated with unrecorded burnt mound site located outside the extent of the road scheme or they could be the surviving remnants of truncated burnt mound. The pyrolithic activity may have been associated with a dry heat.

References


The site is located on slightly raised ground along the western edge of a large turlough. There are good wide views from the site to the east and south across the open expanse of rough pasture.

Several fulachtai fia identified along this road scheme. There were no previously recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the area.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during archaeological testing in advance of the N18 Oranmore to Gort Road.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a poorly preserved burnt mound spread and three pits filled with heat-shattered limestone. Only traces of the burnt mound spread were revealed during excavation. It seems that the material was disturbed/destroyed by agricultural practices.

Pits: This oval pit (C6) was the earliest and the largest pit on site with steep concave sides and an uneven base. It measured 2.01m by 1.6m with a depth of 0.61m. The fill consisted of brown silty sand with charcoal and heat-shattered stone. (C9) was similar in shape and measured 1.5m by 1.3m with a depth of 0.6m. It had steep concave sides and a concave base. The fill consisted of black silty clay with charcoal and heat-shattered stone. (C12) was the smallest on site. It was irregular in shape and measured 0.65m by 0.32m with a maximum depth of 0.09m. The fill consisted of black sandy silt with charcoal lumps.

Dating: Charcoal (hazel) from fill of the pit (C9)
C14 (UB-11506) 3533±20 BP (1934–1773 BC)

References

Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during archaeological testing in advance of the N18 Oranmore to Gort Road Scheme. No surface trace of the site was evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a poorly preserved burnt mound spread and two pits, one of which can be interpreted as a large trough.

Burnt Spread: No distinct mound of shattered stone was present on the site however a small deposit was situated west of the trough. It measured 0.54m by 0.46m with a thickness of 0.12m. The layer possibly originated from the burnt mound activity which is represented by the secondary fill of the large trough and the fill of the smaller pit which are located in close proximity.

Trough: The trough (C5) was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 4.52m by 3.36m with a depth of 0.85m. Three stakes were revealed cut into the base of the pit. Two stake-holes were revealed in the north-western corner while the third was situated in the south-east. Three fills were noted in the trough pit with the basal deposit consisted of black silty clay with small stones. The middle layer consisted of heat-shattered stone and charcoal while the upper fill contained black silty clay and fragments of animal bone. Two pits were identified (C16 and C17) at the south-eastern end of the pit in the base. These may have been poorly preserved post-holes (Mullins 2010, 13).
Pit 1: This pit (C4) was oval in shape and measured 1.6m by 1.54m with a depth of 0.25m. The fill consisted of dark sandy clay with heat-shattered stone. Two animal bone fragments were recovered from this pit.

**Finds:**

**Artefacts:** None

**Ecofacts:** Animal bone was recovered from the trough (C5) and the pit (C4)

**Dating:**

**Relative dating:** None

**Absolute dating:** Charcoal (hazel) from fill of the trough (C5)
C14 (UB-11507) 2424±20 BP (731–406 BC)

**Excavation Interpretation:**

The troughs may be associated with unrecorded burnt mound site located outside the extent of the road scheme or they could be the surviving remnants of truncated burnt mound. As the trough displayed evidence of being timber-lined, the site can be interpreted as the remains of a fulacht fia for pyrolithic water-boiling. It is possible that further features and deposits relating to this activity lie unrecorded outside the investigated area.

**References**


**Location:**
- Townland: Moyveela
- Six inch map no: 95

**Parish:**
- Athenry
- NGR: 144919, 223257

**Barony:**
- Dunkellin
- Altitude: 10m OD

**County:** Galway

**Excavation Details:**
- Project: N18 Oranmore to Gort
- Site Director: Gerry Mullins
- Consultants: Eachtra Archaeological Projects
- Year: 2007

**Physical Setting:**
The site is located on slightly raised ground along the western edge of a large turlough. There are good wide views from the site to the east and south across the open expanse of rough pasture which corresponds with the turlough when the water has receded. The fields are bounded by single-leaf dry-stone walls lined with small trees and scrub.

**Cultural Landscape:**
Several *fulachtai fia* identified along this road scheme. There were no previously recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the area.

**Adjacent excavated sites:**
None

**Pre-Excavation features**
The site was uncovered during archaeological testing in advance of the N18 Oranmore to Gort Road Scheme. No surface trace of the site was evident prior to investigations.

**Excavation Record**

**Summary of Features:**
Excavation of the site revealed a poorly preserved burnt mound spread which sealed several trough pits and stake-holes.

**Burnt Spread:**
The shallow spread of burnt mound material occupied the central position on a slight rise. The deposit measured 6.34m by 5.98m with a thickness of 0.19m. It consisted of grey/black sandy clay with charcoal and heat-shattered limestone.

**Trough 1:**
This pit (C21) was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 2.45m by 1.45m with a depth of 0.33m. Three stake-holes were revealed cut into the upper sides of the western and eastern edges. A small pit (C34) was also uncovered at the base of the trough on the western side. The fill of the trough consisted of burnt mound material.

**Pits 1-2/Post-Holes:**
Two pits were revealed 2.5m north-east of the large central trough. C31 was oval in plan and measured 0.78m by 0.52 with a depth of 0.47m. The fill consisted of burnt sandy silt with heat-shattered stone. Pit (C35) was sub-circular in shape and measured 0.52m by 0.43m with a depth of 0.37m. The fill consisted of dark sandy silt with virtually no heat-shattered stone.
Mullins suggests that these pits may have functioned as post-holes for a possible H-frame structure (Mullins 2010, 11).

**Trough 2:**
This pit (C14) was located south of the burnt mound and was sub-circular in shape with well defined sides and a flat base. It measured 2.7m by 2.3m with a depth of 0.56m. Six stake-holes were revealed cut into the base of the trough at the brake of slope. The fill consisted of burnt mound material. A single animal bone fragment was recovered from this fill.

**Pit 3:**
This pit (C15) was revealed south of the trough C14. It was sub-circular in shape and measured 1.48m by 1.36m with a depth of 0.55m. A stake-hole was revealed cut into the western slope of the pit. The fill consisted of burnt mound material.

**Finds:**

**Artefacts:** None

**Ecofacts:** Animal bone was recovered from the trough C14. It was identified as red deer antler. Two fragments of cow horn core were uncovered from the trough C21.

**Dating:**

**Relative dating:** None

**Absolute dating:**
Charcoal (hazel) from fill of pit (C15)
C14 (UB-11508) 2809±20 BP (1010–909 BC)
Charcoal (hazel) from fill of the trough (C21)
C14 (UB-11509) 2669±20 BP (894–798 BC)

**Excavation Interpretation:**

Excavation of the site revealed a number of troughs and pits along with a deposit of waste-firing material associated with pyrolicth water-boiling. This is further supported by the indication that these troughs were lined and designed to hold water. The lining method employed is also indicative of a Late Bronze Age technique and this is supported by the radiocarbon evidence. The site possible functioned as a cooking area as a number of animal bones were recovered from the site.

**References**


Catalogue No.  GY 24
RMP No. NA
Licence No.  E3887

Location:  
Townland:  Coldwood  
Parish:  Athenry  
Barony:  Dunkellin  
County:  Galway

Excavation Details:  
Project:  N18 Oranmore to Gort  
Site Director:  Enda O’Mahony  
Consultants:  Eachtra Archaeological Projects  
Year:  2007

Physical Setting:  
The site is located on relatively low-lying, flat, level, ground. There are relatively unobstructed views to the south and east. The large boulder boundaries are the result of reclamation work that was undertaken by bulldozer in the 1980s. All the hollows and lags were backfilled and levelled at the same time. Prior to this reclamation the field would have been subject to flooding during the winter months.

Cultural Landscape:  
Several *fulachtai fia* identified along this road scheme. There were no previously recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the area.

Adjacent excavated sites:  None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during archaeological testing in advance of the N18 Oranmore to Gort Road.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features:  
Excavation of the site revealed a disturbed and levelled burnt mound. A buried topsoil horizon (C5) was uncovered in the southern half of the site. Animal bone, a chert flake and an arrowhead were recovered. This deposit of burnt mound material (C4) was heavily disturbed and mixed with re-deposited material. It ranged in size from 13-8m by 6-8m in length with a maximum thickness of 0.26m. It consisted of dark black silty clay with heat-shattered stone and charcoal flecks. Evidence of earth-moving machinery in the form of tracks was uncovered below the mound material indicating disturbance in the recent past. The site was not dated.

Finds:  
Two chert flakes and a barbed and tanged arrowhead were recovered from the buried topsoil and the burnt spread deposit. Cattle and sheep bone were recovered from the burnt spread and the buried topsoil.

References

Location: Townland: Caherweelder Six inch map no: 103
Parish: Killeely NGR: 144426, 215719
Barony: Kiltartan Altitude: 28m OD
County: Galway

Excavation Details: Project: N18 Oranmore to Gort
Site Director: Enda O’Mahony
Consultants: Eachtra Archaeological Projects
Year: 2007

Physical Setting: The burnt mound is situated along the rim of a natural depression which is subjected to annual flooding.

Cultural Landscape: The distribution map of prehistoric recorded monuments shows a concentration of ring barrows located to the south of Craughwell. This is known as the Dunkellin barrow group. The Caherweelder burnt mound group is located just to the west of this concentration. Two recorded burnt mounds (GA103-083 and GA103-081), one of which (Caherweelder 5) lay within the lands acquired for the scheme and was excavated, are located to the north of the site. A series of other excavation areas in Caherweelder townland including four other burnt mounds are located to the north and south of the site.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during archaeological testing in advance of the N18 Oranmore to Gort Road Scheme. No surface trace of the site was evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a burnt mound spread. The full extent of the spread was not exposed during the excavation. The spread sealed a trough and a well.

Burnt Mound: The spread of mound material (C3) exposed during excavation measured 10m by 6m with a thickness of 0.3m. It consisted of dark grey silty clay with heat-shattered stone and charcoal.

Trough 1-2: The trough consisted of two intercutting pits. The earlier of the two, (C12), measured 1.5m by 1.10m with a depth of 0.37m. It had steep sides and a flat base. Another rectangular trough (C8) cut this feature. It was rectangular in plan and measured 3.16m by 2.66m with a depth of 0.37m. Both troughs contained the same three fills with the basal deposit consisting of fine grey
silty sand with charcoal flecks. The middle fills consisted of brown silty clays while the upper deposits composed of dark brown silty clay and heat-shattered stone.

Well: A well (C11) was located 0.5m north of the trough. It was oval in shape with a natural spring in its base. It measured 3.3m by 2.74m with a depth of 0.67m. Two fills were noted in the pit with the basal deposit consisting of grey silty sand with charcoal inclusions. The upper fill composed of dark brown silt with heat-shattered stone and charcoal.

Finds: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (hazel) from fill of trough C8
C14 (UB-11274) 2755±24 BP (974–831 BC)
Charcoal (hazel) from fill of well C11
C14 (UB-11275) 2811±26 BP (1038–901 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

Excavation of the site revealed a number of troughs and along with a deposit of waste-firing material associated with pyrolithic water-boiling. This is further supported by the indication that these troughs were designed to hold water. The presence of an adjacent well pit would suggest that the trough had to be filled manually and could have held water naturally without the aid of a lining. While at least two phases of activity are evident from the radiocarbon dates, this is further supported by the fact that the trough was later re-cut for further use. The site possible functioned as a cooking area for pyrolithic water-boiling. The full extent of the site was not revealed during the project therefore it is possible that further features lie outside the exposed area.

References

O’Mahony, E and Delany, F. 2010. Archaeological excavations at Caherweelder 1, Co. Galway. Final excavation report prepared by Eachtra Archaeological Projects Ltd.

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Physcial Setting: The burnt mound is situated along the rim of a natural depression which is subjected to annual flooding. The field to the east of the site is a large rectangular field sloping from east to west, causing excess water to accumulate on its western boundary.

Cultural Landscape: The distribution map of prehistoric recorded monuments shows a concentration of ring barrows located to the south of Craughwell. This is known as the Dunkellin barrow group. The Caherweelder burnt mound group is located just to the north of this concentration. Two recorded burnt mounds (GA103-083 and GA103-081), one of which (Caherweelder 5) lay within the lands acquired for the scheme and was excavated, are located to the north of the site. A series of other excavation areas in Caherweelder townland including four other burnt mounds are located to the north and south of the site.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

**Pre-Excavation features**

The site was uncovered during archaeological testing in advance of the N18 Oranmore to Gort Road Scheme. No surface trace of the site was evident prior to investigations.

**Excavation Record**

**Summary of Features:** Excavation of the site revealed a disturbed burnt mound which sealed a trough and interconnecting pits.

**Burnt Mound:** The burnt mound material (C4) measured 11m by 8m with a maximum thickness of 0.2m. It consisted of dark black silty clay with a high density of heat-shattered stone and charcoal flecks. A few fragments of cattle teeth were recovered from the spread.

**Trough:** The trough (C17) was sub-circular in shape and measured 2.65m by 1.95m with a maximum depth of 0.43m. The fill of the trough consisted of heat-shattered stone and charcoal, similar to the burnt mound material. Two other
fills were noted in the trough consisting of gritty sand with charcoal and stone.

Pit 1: This pit (C9) was located 6m north of the trough and was sub-circular in shape. It measured 2.15m by 1.75m with a depth of 0.3m. Three fills were noted in the pit. Fragments of cattle teeth were recovered from one of these fills. This pit was connected to pit (C10).

Pit 2: This pit (C10) was connected to the previous pit (C9). It was sub-circular in shape 2.4m by 2m with a depth of 0.32m. The pit contained similar fills to that of C9.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: Charcoal was identified as hazel, birch and prunus. Two animal bones were recovered from the site. A complete molar from an adult cow was recovered from the heat-shattered stone and another cow molar was retrieved from the pit C9.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (hazel) from burnt spread C4 C14 (UB-11276) 2896±23 BP (1192–1005 BC) Charcoal (hazel) from fill of trough C17 C14 (UB-11277) 2973±23 BP (1194–1124 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

Excavation of the site revealed a number of pits along with a deposit of waste-firing material associated with pyrolithic water-boiling. One of these pits is interpreted as a boiling trough while the other pits may have functioned as ovens or roasting pits. Cooking at this site is supported by the recovery of animal bone from the site.

References


Location: Townland: Caherweelder Six inch map no: 103
Parish: Killeely NGR: 144481, 215982
Barony: Kiltartan Altitude: 27m OD
County: Galway

Excavation Details: Project: N18 Oranmore to Gort
Site Director: Enda O’ Mahony
Consultants: Eachtra Archaeological Projects
Year: 2007

Physical Setting: The burnt mound is situated on the north-western fringes of a large field enclosed by trees and bushes and a low stone wall. The field slopes from east to west, and is currently under grass and used for grazing of sheep. The burnt mound lay on a small rise within the field. Water features appear to be a characteristic of the surrounding landscape as a small spring marked as ‘Poolbaun’ is shown to the east of the site and two wells close to the turlough.

Cultural Landscape: The distribution map of prehistoric recorded monuments shows a concentration of ring barrows located to the south of Craughwell. The Caherweelder burnt mound group is located just to the north of this concentration. Two recorded burnt mounds (GA103-083 and GA103-081), one of which (Caherweelder 5), lay within the lands acquired for the scheme and was excavated, are located to the north of the site and a series of other excavation areas in Caherweelder townland including four other burnt mounds are located to the north and south of the site.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features
The site was uncovered during archaeological testing in advance of the N18 Oranmore to Gort Road Scheme. No surface trace of the site was evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a disturbed burnt mound which sealed two possible troughs.

Burnt Mound: The spread of burnt mound material consisted of two deposits (C4 and C7), one of which was disturbed. The low mound measured 11m by 8m with a maximum thickness of 0.38m. C4 was the upper deposit and it consisted of black silty clay with heat-shattered stone. The lower layer (C7) composed of brown silty sand with heat-shattered stone and charcoal.
Trough 1: This trough (C12) was located to the north of the site. It was rectangular in shape with steep sides and a flat base and measured 3.4m by 1.3m with a depth of 0.53m. The trough contained three fills consisting of dark silty clays, charcoal flecks and rounded pebbles.

Trough 2: The southern trough (C13) was sub-circular in shape and measured 1.9m by 1.4m with a depth of 0.22m. It contained a fill of lower burnt mound material.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

ecofacts: Charcoal was identified as hazel, oak and pomoideae. A single molar from an adult cow was recovered from a disturbed layer on the site.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (pomoideae) from re-deposited mound material (C5)
C14 (UB-11278) 3302±33 BP (1668–1501 BC)
Charcoal (pomoideae) from fill of trough C12
C14 (UB-11279) 3121±25 BP (1448–1316 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

Excavation of the site revealed a number of pits along with a deposit of waste-firing material associated with pyrolithic water-boiling. The pits were identified as unlined troughs used for water-boiling at the site. One of the troughs was particularly large and may have been used for cooking large amounts of meat. Equally, the pit may have housed a dug-out trough, commonly used at pyrolithic sites during the Middle Bronze Age. A single molar from a cow may indicate that the site was used for cooking.

References


Location: Caherweelder  Six inch map no: 103
Parish: Killeely              NGR: 144599, 216442
Barony: Kiltartan  Altitude: 26m OD
County: Galway

Excavation Details:
Project: N18 Oranmore to Gort
Site Director: Enda O’ Mahony
Consultants: Eachtra Archaeological Projects
Year: 2007

Physical Setting: The excavation area lies to the south of a low, gorse covered, hill on the western edge of a turlough. The site is located adjacent to a deep drainage ditch which runs east-west and forms the southern extent of the area of excavation.

Cultural Landscape: The distribution map of prehistoric recorded monuments shows a concentration of ring barrows located to the south of Craughwell. This is known as the Dunkellin barrow group. The Caherweelder burnt mound group is located just to the north of this concentration. Another recorded burnt mound (GA103-081) is located to the north-east just outside the lands acquired for the road project and a series of other excavation areas in Caherweelder townland, including four other burnt mounds, are located to the north and south of the site.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features
The site was uncovered during archaeological testing in advance of the N18 Oranmore to Gort Road Scheme. The site survived as a large kidney-shaped mound of heat-shattered stone prior to investigations.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a well preserved kidney-shaped burnt mound and unlined oval shaped trough pit.

Burnt Mound: The mound of burnt material (C12) was kidney-shaped and measured 12.1m by 9.2m with a height of 1m. The mound consisted of several deposits of heat-shattered stone and black silty material. The upper layer (C6) composed of black peaty silt with heat-affected stone. This sealed a thicker deposit of softer peaty material with heat-shattered stone and charcoal (C12). This returned a Middle Bronze Age date. In the southern portion of the mound under the upper deposits, was a layer of large heat-affected stones (C7) devoid of any soil. Under this material was deposit of similar material in a matrix of orange/brown silty clay (C8). Five separate layers of similar burnt material were revealed under these deposits. Under the upper layers in the...
northern portion of the mound, a deposit of blue/white silt (C13) with heat-shattered stone was uncovered which contained some degree of slag. A piece of work chert came from the lowest deposit in this mound material. An Early Bronze Age date was obtained from the lower mound deposits along with some animal bone.

Trough: The trough (C20) was uncovered c. 1.5m from the centre of the mound material. It was oval to sub-rectangular in shape and measured 2.15m by 1.3m with a depth of 0.3m. The upper fill of the trough consisted of black peaty material while the lower deposit composed of fine gritty silt material. O’Mahony states that the trough was lined with a greyish black clay similar to the original topsoil (O’Mahony 2010, 16). A piece of timber was recovered from the trough however the other suggests that the trough was not lined with wood or stone.

Finds:

Artefacts: A chert end scraper was retrieved from the lower deposits of the mound material. Slag was also retrieved from the mound.

Ecofacts: Charcoal was identified as hazel mainly. Fragments of animal bone were uncovered in the lower mound deposits.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (hazel) from mound material (C12)
C14 (UB-11280) 2872±22 BP (1125–947 BC)
Charcoal (hazel) from mound material (C27)
C14 (UB-11281) 3538±23 BP (1944–1773 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

This site survived as a horseshoe-shaped mound prior to excavation. Investigation established that the mound was made up of a number of separate but similar deposits of heat-shattered stone, charcoal and peat deposits. The large upstanding mound is indicative of repeated and prolonged use of pyrolithic water-boiling at the site. The radiocarbon dates from the site support this suggestion. Only one pit shallow pit was identified at the site and interpreted as a boiling trough. It is possible however that a more substantial trough lies outside the area of investigation.

References

Location: Townland: Caherweelder Six inch map no: 103
Parish: Killeely NGR: 144646, 216541
Barony: Kiltartan Altitude: 27m OD
County: Galway

Excavation Details:
Project: N18 Oranmore to Gort
Site Director: Linda Hegarty
Consultants: Eachtra Archaeological Projects
Year: 2007

Physical Setting: The excavation area lies to the south-east of a low gorse covered hill on the western edge of a turlough. The area is used as rough pasture land for grazing cattle and is divided by deep drainage ditches lined with post and wire fences. The excavation area straddles the break in slope along the western edge of the turlough which still floods during the winter despite repeated attempts to drain the area.

Cultural Landscape: The distribution map of prehistoric recorded monuments shows a concentration of ring barrows located to the south of Craughwell. This is known as the Dunkellin barrow group. The Caherweelder burnt mound group is located just to the north of this concentration. Another recorded burnt mound (GA103-081) is located to the north-east just outside the lands acquired for the road project and a series of other excavation areas in Caherweelder townland, including four other burnt mounds, are located to the north and south of the site.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during archaeological testing in advance of the N18 Oranmore to Gort Road Scheme. No surface trace of the site existed prior to the investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a shallow spread of heat-shattered stone and six pits interpreted as possible troughs.

Burnt Mound: The mound of burnt material consisted of two layers (C4 and C5). It measured 11.5m by 9m with a maximum depth of 0.6m. The upper deposit (C4) was disturbed consisted of soft brown clayey silt with occasional stones. The lower layer of mound material (C5) consisted of loose dark grey/black sandy silt with frequent small sub-angular stones and occasional flecks of charcoal. A Mesolithic chert blade was recovered from this layer.

Trough 1: The central trough pit (C8) was oval in shape and measured 2.35m by 1.35m with a depth of 0.86m. The basal fill consisted of grey silty sand with sub angular stones. The upper fill consisted of burnt mound material.
Trough 2: The western trough (C15) was circular in shape and measured 1.4m in diameter with a depth of 0.4m. The fill consisted of burnt mound material.

Trough 3: The north-eastern trough (C9) was sub-rectangular in plan and measured 3.6m by 1.22m with a depth of 0.55m. The fill consisted of burnt mound material.

Trough 4: This pit was uncovered to the south and was oval in shape. It measured 2.6m by 1.5m with a depth of 0.7m. The fill consisted of burnt mound material.

Trough 5: This pit was sub-circular in plan and measured 1.3m by 1.2m with a depth of 0.4m. It was filled with burnt mound material.

Trough 6: This trough was irregular in shape and measured 2.4m by 1.7m with a depth of 0.4m. It contained a dark brownish black silty sand with very frequent sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles and small stones. There were frequent inclusion of flecks and small pieces of charcoal.

Stockpile: Between troughs C8 and C13 was a deposit of unburnt stone. It measured 3.6m by 2.3m. The excavator suggests that this may have been a stockpile of stone ready to be used in the heating process (Hegarty 2010, 13).

Finds:

Artefacts: A Late Mesolithic chert blade was recovered from the mound material.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (hazel) from mound material (C5)
C14 (UB-11282) 3720±33 BP (2264–1985 BC)
Charcoal (hazel) from basal fill of trough (C7)
C14 (UB-11283) 3287±35 BP (1448–1316 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

Excavation of the site revealed a spread of heat-shattered stone and waste-firing material associated with pyrolithic water-boiling. Six possible troughs were exposed, none of which displayed evidence of being lining originally. A Late Mesolithic chert blade recovered from the mound material is interpreted as a residual find. At least two phases of activity can be calculated from the radiocarbon evidence and this can be somewhat supported by the number of troughs identified. A rare cache of unburnt stone is interpreted as a stockpile for water-boiling.

References


Location: Townland: Roevehagh  Six inch map no: 103
Parish: Killeely  NGR: 144564, 218745
Barony: Dunkellin  Altitude: 12m OD
County: Galway

Excavation Details: Project: N18 Oranmore to Gort
Site Director: Tori McMorran
Consultants: Eachtra Archaeological Projects
Year: 2007

Physical Setting: The burnt mound is located in the townland of Roevehagh on the northern edge of the floodplain of the Dunkellin River. The northern extent of the floodplain and former turlough is defined by a stone wall revetting a substantial rise in the ground level. The excavation area lies just to the north of this boundary.

Cultural Landscape: The distribution map of prehistoric recorded monuments shows a concentration of ring barrows located to the south of Craughwell. This is known as the Dunkellin barrow group. The Caherweelder burnt mound group is located just to the north of this concentration.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during archaeological testing in advance of the N18 Oranmore to Gort Road Scheme. No surface trace of the site existed prior to the investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a shallow, heavily disturbed burnt spread of heat-shattered stone and three pits, one of which was interpreted as a trough.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound was heavily disturbed and remnants of which survived in the southern edge of the excavated area. A sub-rectangular deposit (C33) measuring 1.2m by 0.45m with a thickness of 0.09 was uncovered under an alluvial layer. It consisted of brown/black silty clay with angular stone inclusions. Another deposit (C36) was uncovered in the north-western area. It was irregular in shape and measured 2.2m by 1.4m with a thickness of 0.09m. It consisted of silty clay, stone, charcoal fragments and lumps of scotched clay. A similar larger deposit (C15) was located to the south. It measured 3.7m by 2.2m with a thickness of 0.18m.

Trough: The trough (C9) was oval in shape and measured 2.1m by 1.58m with a depth of 0.21m. Nine stake-holes were recorded in the base of the pit around
the inner eastern and northern edges. The trough contained a single fill consisting of black sandy silt with frequent stone and charcoal.

Pit 1: This pit (C4) was square in plan and measured 0.94m in diameter with a depth of 0.22m. The fill consisted of black silty sand with heat-affected stones.

Pit 2: This pit (C8) was located 4m to the south and was sub-circular in plan. It measured 0.94m in diameter with a depth of 0.18m. The fill consisted of black silty sand with heat-shattered stone.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: Charcoal was identified as hazel, ash and pomoideae.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (hazel) from fill of pit (C9)

C14 (UB-11511) 2759±26 BP (976–832 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

The excavated features consisted of three pits filled with blackened silt, angular stones and some charcoal. The site is interpreted as a poorly preserved burnt mound associated with pyrolithic water-boiling. The largest shallow pit contained a number of stake-holes in the base suggesting it may have been timber-lined originally.

References


Location:  
Townland: Ballyglass West  
Six inch map no: 113  
Parish: Ardrahan  
NGR: 144536, 209608  
Barony: Dunkellin  
Altitude: 29m OD  
County: Galway  

Excavation Details:  
Project: N18 Oranmore to Gort  
Site Director: Agnes Kerrigan  
Consultants: Eachtra Archaeological Projects  
Year: 2007  

Physical Setting:  
The burnt mound was located at the southern end of a well-drained rectangular field of grazed pasture, bounded on the north, east and west sides by stone walls and by low scrub to the south. The field slopes gently from north to south and the burnt mound was located on the south-facing aspect of the field where it sloped into a low-lying depression. The spring was utilized as a water source for the Bronze Age burnt mound and was subsequently remodelled with a stone wall and steps in the nineteenth century.

Cultural Landscape:  
The distribution map of recorded prehistoric monuments close to the road scheme reveals two concentrations of ring barrows with seemingly corresponding concentrations of burnt mounds in close proximity. There is a concentration of ring barrows around the townland of Derrydonnell North and a concentration of burnt mounds to the east of this located to the south and south-west of Atherny.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during archaeological testing in advance of the N18 Oranmore to Gort Road Scheme. No surface trace of the site existed prior to the investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features:  
Excavation of the site revealed a large burnt mound which sealed several troughs, stake-holes and pits. A deep well was also uncovered.

Burnt Mound:  
The large mound of burnt material was irregular in shape and measured 18.5m by 48.5m with a maximum height of 1.5m. The spread extended beyond the limits of the excavation. It consisted of sixteen separate layers of varying consistency and colour. The stone was identified as heat-affected limestone with some sandstone present. The upper layers of the mound composed of black silty clays, charcoal and heat-shattered stones. A lens of ash from within the mound returned an Early Bronze Age date.
Well: The natural spring or well was situated at the base of a south-facing slope. This served as a water source for the activities carried out in the site during the Bronze Age but continued to be used right up until the 1960’s where it served as a water source for the surrounding houses (Kerrigan 2010, 24). Two separate stone linings were evident in the well with the latest being introduced in the nineteenth century. A possible earlier stone lining was evident in the base of the feature.

Trough 1: Trough (C17) was irregular in shape and measured 1.5m by 1.12m with a depth of 0.26m. It contained a single fill of greyish/brown silty clay with charcoal and heat-shattered stone. The trough seemed to connect to another trough (C19).

Structure: Thirteen stake-holes surrounded the pit C17 possibly indicating the presence of a structure over the trough with a diameter of c. 3m. Kerrigan states that the structure may be contemporary with the trough C17 or may have formed a shelter associated with the use of the trough C19 (Kerrigan 2010, 12). A layer previously interpreted as a buried topsoil over the features was re-interpreted as calcareous till and may represent a collapsed clay-built structure relating to C17, C19 and C133.

Trough 2: C19 was located on the eastern side of C17. It measured 2.2m by 1.85m with a depth of 0.5m. The trough contained a single fill of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. Fifteen stake-holes were uncovered cut into the base of the trough possibly representing a timber lining. Sixteen stake-holes were uncovered clustered on the southern edge of the trough.

Water Channel: The trough C19 was cut by a linear channel (C133) on its western side. It measured 3.6m by 0.58m with a depth of 0.3m.

Trough 3: This trough (C41) was identified east of the well and was sub-rectangular in shape. It measured 2.4m by 1.7m with a depth of 0.5m. Five stake-holes were revealed in the interior of the trough on the brake of slope. Six more were uncovered on the south-western edge of the trough. The trough contained a single fill of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. A deposit of upcast material is also associated with the trough.

Trough 4: This trough (C193) was sub-rectangular in shape with well-defined edges. It measured 2.65m by 1.66m with a depth of 0.4m. A limestone bedrock formed the base of the trough. The fill of the trough consisted of silty clays and heat-shattered stone. Two pig teeth were recovered from the fill.

Trough 5: Trough (C85) was oval in shape and partially stone-lined. It measured 2.75m by 1.95m with a depth of 0.7m. A clay-lining was evident under this stone element which was in turn sealed by another clay deposit. A thin linear line of charcoal was evident on the north-east side possibly suggesting the burnt remains of a timber element. Two post-holes were recorded on the south side of the trough possibly used to support the stone lining (Kerrigan 2010, 17). The main fill of the trough consisted of a burnt stone layer.
Trough 6: The trough (C15) was circular in shape and measured 1.44m in diameter with a depth of 0.29m. It had steep sides and a concave base and was filled with a deposit of grey silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Trough 7: Trough (C130) was identified at the base of a slope and was cut by another (C122). It was sub-circular and measured 2.2m by 1.46m with a depth of 0.4m. It had a single fill consisting of yellow/grey silty clay.

Trough 8: C22 cut the trough C130. It was oval in shape and measured 2m by 1.44m with a depth of 0.35m. The fill of the trough consisted of grey silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 1: This pit (C172) was sub-circular and measured 1.96m by 0.8m with a depth of 0.3m. The fill consisted of burnt mound material.

Pit 2: Pit (142) was sub-circular and measured 1.3m by 0.97m with a depth of 0.15m. Two fills were noted in the pit consisting of silty clays and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 3: This pit (C168) was located west of the well and was oval in shape. It measured 2m by 1.73m with a depth of 0.3m. The fill consisted of brown silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Finds:

Artefacts: A chert blade was recovered from the mound material

Ecofacts: Charcoal was identified as hazel, ash, oak and pomoideae (apple/pear). An assemblage of pig teeth were recovered from one of the troughs.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (hazel) from fill of trough (C85) C14 (UB-11270) 3070±23 BP (1411–1270 BC)
Charcoal (hazel) from burnt mound layer (C172) C14 (UB-11272) 3377±23 BP (1740–1618 BC)
Charcoal (hazel) from fill of trough (C41) C14 (UB-11273) 2873±21 BP (1125–978 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

Excavation of the large burnt mound revealed a number of archaeological features. The mound itself contained up to 16 different deposits representing a number of different use phases. Eight possible troughs were identified, one of which was stone-lined, while others may have been timber-lined originally. The site can be interpreted as the remains of an extensive burnt mound site for pyrolithic water-boiling. A natural spring, which was adapted in more modern times was the primary water-source for the water-boiling site.

References


Fig. 10.60 Plan of excavated troughs and burnt mound at Ballyglass West, Co. Galway
Location: 
Townland: Dunlo  
Parish: Kilclooney  
Barony: Ballinasloe  
County: Galway  

Parish: Kilclooney  
NGR: 185050, 230100  
Altitude: 35m OD

Barony: Ballinasloe  

County: Galway  

Excavation Details: 
Project: Retail Park Development  
Site Director: Tamlyn O’ Driscoll  
Consultants: Moore Group Ltd.  
Year: 2008

Physical Setting: 
The physical landscape is flat to undulating lowland, characterised by small pasture fields defined by hedges, drainage ditches and occasionally drystone walls. Within the development area is a small conifer plantation. Overall the proposed site covers 6.8 hectares, rising upslope towards the eastern extent. The sites were identified in a wet boggy area.

Cultural Landscape: 
The existence of a mobile and wealthy population is evident in the countryside surrounding Ballinasloe. This is attested by stray finds in the surrounding area, including a Late Bronze Age dirk and part of a leaf-shaped bronze spearhead, both found in the river Suck in the 1880’s. The location of an ancient crossing point (RMP GA 088-047) of the river is situated in the vicinity of the site development.

Adjacent excavated sites: 
Medieval iron working site.

Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during archaeological testing in advance of industrial development. Site A was identified as a low grass covered mound in a wet boggy area. No surface trace of the other sites existed prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: 
Excavation of the site revealed three burnt mound related site-types, one of which sealed a well preserved wicker-lined trough.

Site A

Burnt Mound: 
This mound (C3) revealed itself as a slight rise in the field prior to investigations. Excavation exposed a circular mound composed of several layers of burnt stone, ash and charcoal. The main mound of material measured 10m by 10m with a height of 0.6m. C3 consisted of greyish/black sandy silt with heat-shattered limestone and charcoal. C7 was another separate layer identified composed of light grey sandy material with heat-shattered stone and charcoal. C29 was another deposit however the heated stones were much larger suggesting a shorter phase of use. Features of a later
date were also uncovered cut into the mound, including a stone-lined drain and a pit feature which produced an iron blade.

**Trough:**

The trough (C50) was located below the mound material in quadrant b. It was set into a large sub-rectangular pit and consisted of a sub-circular wattle-lined trough. It measured 2.85m by 1.5m with a depth of 0.55m. The structure was composed of vertical (ash, alder, hazel) pegs in which hazel rods were interwoven. Between this wattlework, were twigs and fine grained black silt. Moss was also noted between the wattle lining. At the southwestern end of the trough was a large horizontal timber which O’Driscoll suggests may have acted as a step or shelf for the trough (O’Driscoll 2010, 52). The trough filled naturally with water and the contained a deposit of material similar to the make-up of the mound. A deposit of heavily compacted yellow clay was noted in the area of the trough. This may have been the upcast material from when the trough pit was dug. Some of the vertical hazel post showed signs of charring. Occasional hazel-nut shells were recovered.

**Site B**

**Burnt Spread Deposit:**

These small deposits of burnt stone material were revealed to the south-west of Site A. C6 measured 1.55m by 1.35m with a thickness of 0.12m. The second spread (C7), measured 1.4m by 1m with a thickness of 0.1m. Both consisted of burnt stone material mixed with peat, charcoal and ash.

**Site C**

**Burnt Spread:**

This spread was revealed c. 25m south of Site A. It consisted of a heavily disturbed spread (C20) which measured 15.6m by 8.75m with a thickness of 0.2m. It consisted of firm black silty clay with charcoal and 80% heat-shattered stone. A number of furrows were revealed under the deposit suggesting considerable disturbance during later periods.

**Pit:**

A large pit (C34) was revealed under the spread at the centre of the site. It was sub-oval in shape and with steep sides and a concave base. It measured 1.7m by 1.5m with a depth of 0.55m. The pit filled naturally with water and contained several fills consisting of dark silty deposits, heat-shattered stone and charcoal.

**Finds:**

**Artefacts:**

An amber bead was recovered from the topsoil in Site A. A possible rubbing stone was recovered from the burnt spread in Site C.

**Ecofacts:**

Animal bone was recovered from the burnt mound and trough in Site A. It was identified as cattle, deer, sheep/goat and pig.

**Dating:**

**Relative dating:**

None

**Absolute dating:**

Charcoal (hazel) from burnt mound material (C3) Site A
Excavation Interpretation:

Excavation of Site A revealed a substantial burnt mound that overlay a large oval trough that was wattle-lined, a common lining technique during the Chalcolithic and Early Bronze Age period in Ireland. Charcoal from the fill of this example however is dated to the Late Bronze Age making this one of the very few wattle troughs assigned to this period in Ireland (see Chapter 5). The mound was extensive suggestive of prolonged pyrolithic water-boiling at the site. Animal bone, some of which displayed evidence of butchery may imply the site was used for cooking, possibly in a feasting context. Site C was dated to the Iron Age and can be interpreted in a similar manner. The trough in this area however was not lined and filled naturally with water.

References

Location: Townland: Annagh Hill  Six inch map no: 57
Parish: Kilmoyley  NGR: 145904, 239801
Barony: Clare  Altitude: NA
County: Galway

Excavation Details: Project: M17/M18 Gort to Tuam road scheme
Site Director: Liam McKinstry
Consultants: Headland Archaeology Ltd.
Year: 2010

Physical Setting: The site was located within a relatively flat field on the northeast-facing slope of Annagh Hill. The slope of the hill, where the site was situated, was fairly gentle though the site itself lay within a large natural hollow.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the site prior to excavation however the medieval and post-medieval periods are well represented.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during archaeological testing in advance of the M17/M18 road scheme.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a spread of heat-shattered stone and a pit.

Burnt Spread: The burnt spread consisted of a single deposit; (205) which was situated at the northwestern limit of excavation area. This spread (205) was sub-circular in plan, measuring 5 m (northwest/southeast), 4.85 m and 0.14 m in thickness. It consisted of loosely compacted, dark greyish black silty clay, with occasional charcoal and heat-affected stone inclusions.

Pit: Approximately 3.60 m to the south-southwest of the burnt spread (205) lay an oval pit (204). It measured 1.60 m by 1.50 m by 0.20 m deep. The basal fill within this feature comprised black, firmly compacted silt with occasional charcoal and heat-affected stones. A sample of charcoal from this deposit is dated to the Middle Bronze Age. The upper fill was composed of frequent heat-shattered stone and black silty clay.

Dating: Charcoal (hazel) from the fill of pit
C14 (UBA-17007) 2978±28 BP (1314–1117 BC)

References

Location: Townland: Ardskeagh Beg  Six inch map no: 57
Parish: Kilmoylan  NGR: 144688, 242015
Barony: Clare  Altitude: NA
County: Galway

Excavation Details: Project: M17/M18 Gort to Tuam road scheme
Site Director: Nial O’Neill
Consultants: Headland Archaeology Ltd.
Year: 2010

Physical Setting: The site was located on a gentle, east-facing slope on reasonably good pasture land. Burren Limestone is the most extensively outcropping rock type in the area.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the site prior to excavation however the medieval and post-medieval periods are well represented.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during archaeological testing in advance of the M17/M18 road scheme.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a burnt mound, a number of troughs, water-channels, fire spots and stake-holes.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound was made of several deposits of material. The primary deposits (003) measured 15.5m by 10m with a maximum depth of 0.4m and was composed of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered limestone. Three slightly different deposits (007, 009 and 010) overlay the primary mound deposit (003). These deposits were similar in composition to mound material (003) but were lighter in colour and appeared to contain less charcoal. Deposit 007 was dated to the Middle Bronze Age.

Trough 1: The first or larger trough (051) was sub-rectangular in plan with steeply sloping sides leading to a flat base. The trough measured 3.07 m in length (north-east/south-west), 1.4 m in width and 0.67 m in depth. The trough contained three fills. Charcoal from the basal deposit is dated to the Early to Middle Bronze Age. This trough had a linear overflow channel to the north-east that fed into a natural depression.

Hearth: A firespot (103) was located immediately west of the larger trough (051) and was surrounded by a myriad of stake-holes – 122 in total – forming no
discernable pattern. They may relate to some spit structure above the fire that was replaced a number of times. This firespot measured 0.62 m (north-east/south-west), 0.37 m in width and 0.04 m in depth.

Trough 2: The second, smaller, trough (017) was located immediately to the north of trough (051). It was oval in plan with steeply sloping sides leading to a flat base and measured 1.8 m in length (NNE/SSW), 1.4 m in width and 0.46 m in depth. The trough contained four fills, two of which were basal fills.

Water-channel: These two troughs were connected by a linear channel with gradual to steeply sloping sides and a flat base. It measured 0.34 m in length, 0.34 m in width and 0.1 m in depth and contained one fill. This channel presumably fed water between the two troughs.

Stockpile: A deposit of unburnt limestone (005), which sat atop the natural subsoil, was also located to the north of the smaller trough (017); this measured c. 2.10 m by 1.20 m. This may have been a stockpile of stones ready to be heated in the fire.

Pits: Several small pits were also identified adjacent to the troughs. These may have been additional posts-holes for some ephemeral structures.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: Animal bone was recovered from bulk sampling of the burnt mound and a number of other cut features. 20 fragments were recovered composed of large mammal and pig bones.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (hazel) from burnt mound layer (007)
C14 (UBA-17003) 3349±26 BP (1733–1533 BC)
Charcoal (hazel) from fill trough 1 (052)
C14 (UBA-17004) 3453±25 BP (1878–1691 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

Excavation of the site revealed a burnt mound, hearth and a complex water-management system employed as an emptying mechanism for the troughs which may have required manual filling. The presence of skeletal elements from the trunk and the long bones suggests primary and secondary butchery and could indicate the utilization of this species for meat consumption. The pig specimens consist of one left scapula, one humerus and one maxillary sow canine. This small assemblage includes primary butchery waste, represented in the post-cranial elements, along with teeth, which are considered slaughter waste. This suggests that the slaughter and processing of pigs (killing, preparation, consumption and disposal) may have been carried out in the same area.

References

Fig. 10.61 Plan of burnt spread, pits, troughs and water-channel at Ardskeagh Beg
Location: Cloondarone Townland: Six inch map no: 43
Parish: Tuam NGR: 142493, 249154
Barony: Clare Altitude: NA
County: Galway

Excavation Details:
Project: M17/M18 Gort to Tuam road scheme
Site Director: Liam McKinstry
Consultants: Headland Archaeology Ltd.
Year: 2010

Physical Setting:
The sites were situated on flat ground that appeared to be well drained at the time of excavation though they are liable to flooding during the winter months.

Cultural Landscape:
There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the site prior to excavation however the medieval and post-medieval periods are well represented. Considerable burnt mound activity was recovered in this townland during the current road scheme.

Adjacent excavated sites: Yes

Pre-Excavation features
The sites were uncovered during archaeological testing in advance of the M17/M18 road scheme. They had no surface expression prior to discovery.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features:
Excavation of the site revealed several small spreads of heat-shattered stone. A number of these deposits had associated pits, some of which may have functioned as boiling troughs.

Site GY35
Burnt Spread:
Excavation revealed an irregular burnt spread consisting of moderately compact silty clay with moderate fire-cracked stone and charcoal fleck inclusions (1003). It measured 4.50 (north/south) m by 2.50 m and 0.10 m deep. A sample of charcoal is dated to the Middle Bronze Age. No pits or trough features were exposed.

Site GY36
Burnt Spread: Excavation revealed an irregular burnt spread (3003) overlying the natural peat horizon (3004). It consisted of a single deposit of moderately compact, dark brown to black peaty clay with moderate fire-cracked stone and charcoal fleck inclusions. It measured 9 m (north/south) by 8 m and 0.24 m deep. No troughs or other cut features were associated with the burnt spread.
A sample of charcoal from the spread deposit is dated to the Middle Bronze Age.

**Site GY37**

**Burnt Spread:** The spread consisting of a single deposit of moderately compact, dark grey to black silt with moderate fire-cracked stones and charcoal fleck inclusions (4003). It measured 13 m (northeast-southwest) by 7.30 m and 0.20 m deep. Animal bone were recovered from the spread deposit.

**Trough:** The spread overlay a single trough. It had a sub-rectangular shape in plan, measuring 2.86 m (northeast-southwest) by 1.20 m and 0.39 m deep, with sharply sloping sides and a flat base, which was cut by two possible postholes suggesting it was timber-lined originally. Fragments of the animal bone were recovered from the trough pit.

**Site GY38**

**Burnt spread:** The burnt spread consisted of moderately compact black brown peaty, silty clay with frequent fire-cracked stone and charcoal flecks (5004). It measured 16.50 m (north/south) by 13 m and 0.20 m deep. Animal bone fragments were collected from the burnt mound during excavation and also retrieved from a bulk soil sample taken from it during processing.

**Finds:**

**Artefacts:** None

**Ecofacts:** Animal bone was recovered from the burnt stone deposits and trough at GY37 and burnt spread at GY38.

**Dating:**

**Relative dating:** None

**Absolute dating:** Charcoal (alder) from burnt stone (1003)
C14 (UBA-16991) 3313±26 BP (1688–1519 BC)
Charcoal (ash) from burnt stone spread (3003)
C14 (UBA-16992) 3104±26 BP (1432–1312 BC)
Charcoal (hazel) from burnt stone spread (4003)
C14 (UBA-17099) 3147±33 BP (1497–1321 BC)
Charcoal (hazel) from burnt stone spread (5019)
C14 (UBA-16993) 3112±26 BP (1437–1313 BC)

**Excavation Interpretation:**

Excavation of the area revealed numerous spreads of burnt stone deposits resulting from short-term pyrolithic activities. While the trough identified at Site GY37 is indicative of water-boiling processes, the other deposits may have been associated with a dry heat employed in ovens or shallow pits. This may explain the absence of troughs. Equally these may lie outside the areas of excavation. The animal bone recovered from the sites consisted of limb bones of large mammals which may imply a cooking function.

**References**

Location: Townland: Cloondarone  Six inch map no: 43
Parish: Tuam  NGR: 142701, 248852
Barony: Clare  Altitude: NA
County: Galway

Excavation Details: Project: M17/M18 Gort to Tuam road scheme
Site Director: Liam McKinstry
Consultants: Headland Archaeology Ltd.
Year: 2010

Physical Setting: The sites were situated on flat ground at the base of a gentle east facing slope with the river Clare c.800 m to the west of the sites. Bogland lies c.100 m to the east.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the site prior to excavation however the medieval and post-medieval periods are well represented. Considerable burnt mound activity was recovered in this townland during the current road scheme.

Adjacent excavated sites: Yes

Pre-Excavation features
The sites were uncovered during archaeological testing in advance of the M17/M18 road scheme. They had no surface expression prior to discovery.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed two small burnt spreads and related trough features.

Site GY39
Burnt Spread: The burnt spread was roughly circular burnt spread of moderately compact, black silty peat with small fire-cracked stone and charcoal inclusions (6004). It measured 2.30 m (northwest-southeast) by 1.57 m and 0.08 m deep.

Trough: Excavation revealed a sub-rectangular trough (6006) near the eastern edge of the site. It measured 1.40 (east-west) by 1.05 and 0.30 m deep, with straight to undercut sides and a flat to irregular base. The trough contained two fills. The lower fill consisted of compact, blue grey, silty sand, with occasional charcoal fleck inclusions. The lower fill consisted of compact, blue grey, silty sand, with occasional charcoal fleck inclusions. A sample is dated to Early Bronze Age.
Site GY40

Burnt Spread: The burnt mound overlay the trough. It had an irregular shape in plan, measuring 12m (northwest-southeast) by 5.50 m and 0.18 m deep and consisted of moderately compact black silty clay, with moderate charcoal and frequent heat-shattered stone inclusions (7003).

Trough: A sub-rectangular trough (7004) was recorded at the center of the site. It measured 2 m (east-west) by 1.50 m and 0.48 m deep and had steep sides and a slightly concave base. Four stake-holes were recorded, one in each corner of the trough, cutting the base of the feature. The decayed and friable remains of waterlogged wooden planks (7023) lining the base of the feature presented as very soft wood fragments included within a pale brown to dark greyish black soil matrix. The primary fill of the trough measured 0.28 m in depth and consisted of moderately compact, mid brown-black silty clay, with frequent decayed stone inclusions (7005) from which some animal bone was recovered.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: Animal bone was recovered from the basal fill of the trough at site GY 39 and 40.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating:
- Charcoal (hazel) from the fill of trough (6006) C14 (UBA-16994) 3684±31 BP (2193–1965 BC)
- Charcoal (ash) from the fill of trough (7004) C14 (UBA-17100) 2784±32 BP (1007–843 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

Excavation of the area revealed numerous spreads of burnt stone deposits resulting from short-term pyrolithic activities. The trough at Site GY40 produced evidence to suggest it may have been lined originally and used to boil water. It is suggested that the presence of vertebrae bodies in this trough is associated with the secondary butchery of animal carcasses and could be related to the exploitation of animals as a meat source.

References

The sites were situated on flat ground that were well-drained.

There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the site prior to excavation however the medieval and post-medieval periods are well represented. Considerable burnt mound activity was recovered in this townland during the current road scheme.

Adjacent excavated sites: Yes

Pre-Excavation features

The sites were uncovered during archaeological testing in advance of the M17/M18 road scheme. They had no surface expression prior to discovery.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a number of burnt stone deposits, some of which had associated pit features that may have functioned as troughs.

Site GY41

Burnt Spread: Excavation revealed an irregular burnt spread consisting of a single deposit of moderate to firmly compact dark greyish black clayey silt containing pockets of mid-orange clayey silt and redeposited natural clay, moderate inclusions of small stones, coarse pebbles and flecks of charcoal (10003). It measured 3 m (east/west) by 1.2 m and 0.14 m thick.

Site GY42

Burnt Spread: A circular burnt mound composed of a single deposit of moderately compact, mixed, mid black, grey and orange silty clay, very frequent heat-shattered stone and occasional charcoal flecks (1103) overlay the trough (1105) described below. The mound measured 7 m (north-south) by 6.70 m and 0.20m thick.

Trough: The oval trough (1105) was located at the centre of the site. It measured 1.87 m (east/west) by 1.30 m and 0.52 m deep with straight to concave sides and a flat base. The trough contained four fills. The primary fill consisted of
compact, grey yellow silty sand, with charcoal flecks (1109). Charcoal from this deposit is dated to the Early Bronze Age.

**Site GY43**

**Burnt Spread:** The burnt spread (1204) was located to the southeast of the trough. It consisted of moderately compact, black/dark grey peaty silt, with frequent fire-cracked stone and occasional charcoal fleck inclusions. It measured 5.50 m by 5 m and 0.10 m deep.

**Trough:** A sub-rectangular trough (1203) was located near the western limit of the site. It measured 1.70 m (northwest/southeast) by 0.45 m and 0.22 m deep with steep vertical sides and a flat base. The trough contained two fills. The primary fill was a firm, dark grey-black clay with decayed stone, charcoal and possible burnt bone or shell fleck inclusions. Charcoal from this deposit is dated to the Middle Bronze Age.

**Finds:**

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: Animal bone was recovered from the burnt stone deposits and trough at GY37 and burnt spread at GY38.

**Dating:**

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating:
- Charcoal (hazel) from fill of trough (1105) C14 (UBA-16996) 3623±35 BP (2127–1891 BC)
- Charcoal (birch) from fill of trough (1203) C14 (UBA-16997) 3094±24 BP (1426–1308 BC)

**Excavation Interpretation:**

Excavation of the area revealed numerous spreads of burnt stone deposits resulting from short-term pyrolithic activities. While it is possible that Site GY41 is not a burnt spread it may have been completely destroyed by later ploughing across the area. The later sites are clearly representative of pyrolithic activities and probably functioned as water-boiling sites for cooking.

**References**


Plate 10.47 Burnt mound deposits at Cloondarone D, Co. Galway
Physical Setting: The site was situated on flat, well-drained ground with the river Clare c. 800 m to the west of the site. Bogland lies c. 100 m to the east.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the site prior to excavation however the medieval and post-medieval periods are well represented. Considerable burnt mound activity was recovered in this townland during the current road scheme.

Adjacent excavated sites: Yes

Pre-Excavation features

The sites were uncovered during archaeological testing in advance of the M17/M18 road scheme. They had no surface expression prior to discovery.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a single spread of burnt mound material. No trough or other cut features were identified. The burnt spread was recorded at the southeastern limit of the site and extending beyond the eastern edge of the CPO and excavation area. The exposed portion of the spread measured 4 m (north-south) by 0.88 m and 0.40 m deep and was composed of moderately compact, dark brownish grey silty clay, with moderate charcoal fleck and frequent fine and medium pebble inclusions. No finds were recovered from the deposit and it was not scientifically dated.

References

Excavation Details:

- Project: Rescue (Land Reclamation)
- Site Director: Dermot C. Twohig
- Consultants: University College Cork
- Year: 1973

Physical Setting:

The site is located at the edge of a peat bog which had developed on an alluvial plain. The soil in the immediate area had developed on a white marl deposit (Twohig 1977, 5).

Cultural Landscape:

The presence of a number of ringforts in the immediate hinterland of Dromkeen East indicates intense activity during the early medieval period. The *fulacht fia* described here is the only burnt mound located in the area. There is however a number of other recorded sites which indicate activity during the prehistoric period. There are two recorded cist burials located c. 600m to the north-west (KE015-028, 001) and two hut sites situated c. 700m to the north-east.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

Prior to excavation the site survived as a crescent shaped grass covered mound supported by an overgrowth of furze. Between the horns of the mound, a clearly defined hollow was visible which presumably marked the location of the trough. Excavation was hindered by extreme weather conditions.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a mound of heat-shattered stone and three pits. One of these pits contained a timber-lined trough.

Burnt Mound: The mound measured 23m by 20m and was 1.2m in overall thickness. It consisted of heat-shattered sandstone and charcoal. Twohig noted the presence of a buried turf-horizon below the mound material (Twohig 1977, 6). The southern arc of the mound consisted of re-deposited natural or up-cast from the original excavation of the trough pit.

Trough: The timber-lined trough was set into a large pit which measured 5m by 4m and was c. 1.5m deep. Much of the fill of this pit consisted of mound slip resulting from the weathering of the sides (Twohig 1975, 10). The pit filled naturally with water and along with consistent rain, the excavation proved difficult to determine the dimensions of the timber trough. Nevertheless the
trough was visible in the form of a number of almost horizontally-set timbers which measured c. 1m. One vertically driven corner post was recorded adjacent to these timbers.

Pit 1: This pit was situated 1m to the east of the trough pit. It measured 2.3m by 1m and was 0.5m deep. Twohig notes that the fill of this pit consisted of material similar to that of the mound of heat-shattered stone (Twohig 1977, 11).

Pit 2: This pit was situated 3.5m to the north of the trough pit. It measured 2.5m by 2.5m and was 0.5m deep. The fill consisted of mound material and there was no evidence of silting as with pit 1. No silting was noted at the base of these pits and both we interpreted as earlier features that pre-dated the mound material (Twohig 1977, 11).

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: None

Dating: None

Excavation Interpretation

The excavation at Dromkeen East uncovered a substantial burnt mound that sealed a number of features including the remains of a timber-lined trough and several pits. The site can be paralleled with a number of excavated sites across Ireland with similar features being identified at Kilcor South and Killeens Co. Cork (Hurley 1987; O’Kelly 1954). The trough was uncovered within a large pit set between the two arms of the crescent shaped mound of heat-shattered stone. They are often uncovered in this location (Fahy 1957; O’ Kelly, 1954). The pit dug to receive the trough was quite large compared to the trough itself. Twohig suggests that large pit was dug in order to reach the water level which was at a lower level. The other pits recorded on site were interpreted in the same way, however these were abandoned when they failed to produced the required volume of water (Twohig 1977, 12). Recording of the timber trough was made difficult by the harsh weather conditions when the site was being excavated however Twohig suggests that it had been constructed of horizontally-placed timbers which had been held in place by vertically driven posts positioned in each corner. The identification of posts set in each of the corners is common in timber-lined troughs and can be paralleled with a number of excavated sites dating to the Late Bronze Age.

References

Location: Rath More
Parish: Kilcummin
Barony: Magunihy
County: Kerry

Excavation Details:
Project: Housing Development
Site Director: Michael Ryan
Consultants: National Museum
Year: 1974

Physical Setting:
The site lies on the fairly steep western side of a long ridge commanding extensive views over hilly country to the north-west and west. Below the site is a fairly extensive shallow valley in which there are patches of marshy ground. A quarter of a mile to the north-west at c. 470 O.D., two streams join and flow south-west along the valley. Ryan notes that no watercourse was uncovered near the site but the ground in which it lies is poorly drained despite the steepness of the slope (Ryan 1976, 11).

Cultural Landscape:
There are no recorded prehistoric sites located in the vicinity of the fulacht fiadh described here.

Adjacent excavated sites:
None

Pre-Excavation features
No mound of heat-shattered stone was investigated at this site and Ryan notes that it was destroyed before the trough was uncovered. A low mound was witnessed in the vicinity of the trough however this had been bulldozed when the site was cleared. He also states that the circumstances of discovery militated against finding other features at the site (Ryan 1976, 12).

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Investigation of the site revealed the presence of a substantial timber-lined trough with a damaged north-east end.

Trough: The trough was rectangular in shape and measured 2.41m by 1.02m and was 0.21m deep. It was set in marl with its longer axis orientated north-east/south-west. The north-east portion of the trough had been destroyed when work was being carried out on the site. The pit in which the trough was set could not be identified and fill of the trough had been removed prior to investigation by Ryan however heat-shattered stone was noted in the vicinity of the trough mixed with re-deposited soil. The base of the trough consisted of two broad, adzed planks. A groove was cut in the north end for the insertion of the end plank D. Outside this, on plank A, a rectangular hole was cut. Only a small portion of side plank E survived which formed the north-
east side of the trough. Plank C formed the south-east side and was wedged in place by four stones placed between it and the edge of the pit. Two stakes were noted by Ryan driven into the base of the pit, adjacent to plank A at its south-west end. The other stake protruded from the side of the cutting for the septic tank at the north-east end of plank A.

**Finds:**

- **Artefacts:** None
- **Ecofacts:** None

**Dating:**

- **Relative dating:** None
- **Absolute dating:** Wood sample from trough C14 (GRN-14185) 3260±160 BP (1942–1185 BC)

**Excavation Interpretation**

Investigations at Rathmore led to the discovery of a well preserved, quite elaborate, timber-lined trough. Unfortunately the burnt mound was destroyed by development work prior to these investigations and no other cut features were identified. Therefore, it seems that little or no archaeological excavation was conducted at the site with only the recovery of the trough being the ultimate goal of the investigation.

The trough discovered at Rathmore can be paralleled with a number of well preserved troughs excavated in recent years. The identification of a series or grooves for the side walls implies a degree of sophistication which has not been witnessed at many excavated sites and illustrates that a great deal of pre-planned effort went into the construction. Similar grooves have been uncovered at Clashroe, Co. Cork along with similar dowel holes and at Cahiracon, Co. Clare where a series of groves were cut around the circumference of the basal planks.

**References**

Location: Townland: Coarha More 
Parish: Valentia 
Barony: Iveragh 
County: Kerry 

Excavation Details: Project: Rescue (Drainage Operations) 
Site Director: John Sheehan 
Consultants: South East Kerry Archaeological Society 
Year: 1988 

Physical Setting: The site is situated on Valentia midway along the southern shore of the island. It is located on the ‘Reenarea Rise’, a small promontory delineated on the north by a gully, this slightly elevated, peat covered area breaks the uniform seaward slope that characterises most of the southern side of the island. The peat on the rise has been cut over in places and survives to a maximum depth of 2m. The area is now largely used for rough grazing (Sheehan 1990, 27).

Cultural Landscape: Valentia Island is rich in prehistoric archaeology and this attests to a number of recorded monuments in the immediate vicinity of the Coarhamore site. There is a burnt spread (KE 087-041) located 150m to the south-east and a Late Bronze Age hut site (KE 087-040) 17m to the north-east which was constructed at a similar level to the fulacht fia.

Adjacent excavated sites: Late Bronze Age hut site (KE 087-040) excavated 17m to the north-east (Hayden 1994)

Pre-Excavation features
Prior to excavation the site consisted of a slab-lined trough located beside a broad, low, turf covered mound. A modern drain ran close to the site.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Investigation of the site revealed a rectangular slab-lined trough, a rough paving area and a low mound of heat-shattered stone.

Burnt Mound: The low mound was oval in plan and measured 10m by 7m with an average height of 1.35m. The material rested on brown peat which returned a radiocarbon date of 960–930 BC. The mound material consisted of heat-shattered sandstone mixed with deep brown/reddish peat ash and nodules of peat charcoal.

Revetment: On the north-west slope of the mound, a loose tumble of large stones and slabs were uncovered. Sheehan suggests that these stones may have served as a revetment for the mound material, preventing its accumulation around the
trough however none of the stones were set in or rested on the pre-mound surface (Sheehan 1990, 31).

**Trough:**

The slab-lined trough was set into a pit which measured 2.74m by 2.32m and was c. 0.65m deep. The trough was constructed towards the south end of the pit and consisted of regular sandstone slabs set on edge at each end and the north-east side while the south-west side required a small vertically – disposed slab to be positioned as its south corner. A large rectangular slab formed the base of the trough. A number of stones were recorded in the pit fill which served to stabilise the stone trough. The rest of the pit fill consisted of firm but loosely packed dark peat with some charcoal. The fill of the stone trough however seemed to have been removed in the past.

**Working surface:**

On the south-west side of the trough a number of sizeable slab-like stones were uncovered. Sheehan suggests that these stones may have served as a suitable working surface for activities carried out on site than that provided by the underlying peat (Sheehan 1990, 31).

**Finds:**

**Artefacts:**

Spindle whorl (outside the western corner of the stone trough in the sticky clay deposit which capped the backfill of the pit). Twenty-six sherds of pottery (found in the upper levels of the north-west slope of the mound material).

**Ecofacts:**

None

**Dating:**

**Relative dating:** Possible Bronze Age pottery. Late Bronze Age spindle whorl

**Absolute dating:** Sample from peat underlying mound material

C14 (I-15470) 2950±80 BP (960–930 BC)

**Excavation Interpretation:**

Excavation of the site revealed a substantial burnt mound of heat-shattered stone, a stone-lined trough with an associated stone working surface and the possible remains of a revetment for the mound material. The site was dated to the medieval period by the recovery of a spindle whorl which was found outside the western corner of the stone trough in a sticky clay deposit which capped the backfill of the pit (Sheehan 1990, 31). The spindle whorl has been recently identified as being Late Bronze Age in date (R.O’ Brien 2009, 347; R.O’ Brien 2010, 19). It may be compared with a growing number of Bronze Age examples discovered in recent development projects. While the artefact was retrieved from a secure context, it seems likely that its origins lie in the Late Bronze Age and not the Early Medieval period. This is supported by the *terminus post quem* date from the underlying peat, as well as by the adjacent hut structure of Late Bronze Age date. A similar date range is likely for the pottery recovered from both sites.

**References**

Fig. 10.63 Plan and profiles of excavated burnt mound and nearby hut-site at Coarhamore, Co. Kerry.
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<th>Townland:</th>
<th>Dromthacker</th>
<th>Six inch map no:</th>
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**Excavation Details:**

- **Project:** Rescue (Development)
- **Site Director:** Rose M. Cleary
- **Consultants:** UCC
- **Year:** 1997

**Physical Setting:**
The site is located at the north-eastern side of Tralee town on a gradually rising ridge between the Big River to the west and a tributary of the River Lee to the south. Both were situated in poor land where ground conditions were frequently wet.

**Cultural Landscape:**
There are few recorded prehistoric sites in the environs of the sites excavated at Dromthacker. There is a single burnt mound recorded 400m to the south (KE 029-268) and Cleary notes five recorded fulachtai fia at some distance from the excavations. A group of four exist c. 5km to the north-west while a fifth site is located 4km to the south-east (Cleary 2008, 54).

**Adjacent excavated sites:** Both sites are located c. 200m apart.

**Pre-Excavation features**

Prior to excavation, no surface remains of the fulachtai fia were noted, however site KY04a was identified as a mound on the second edition of the 6” OS map.

**Excavation Record**

**Summary of Features:**
Investigation of both sites by Cleary identified a burnt stone spread at site KY04a, while the second site (KY04b) sealed a pit interpreted as a trough and a possible hearth area.

**Site A**

**Burnt Mound:**
This spread of heat-shattered stone was partly overlain by a grey clay sediment which was 0.4m thick. This was interpreted as natural in origin which must have accumulated during flooding (Cleary 2008, 51). The spread was noted in a natural depression and measured 4m by 4.25m and ranged from 0.10m to 0.30m in thickness. It consisted of heat-shattered stone which included charcoal and partly oxidised silty clay.
**Site B**

**Burnt Mound:** This mound of heat-shattered stone was irregular in plan and measured 14m by 10m and ranged in thickness from 0.15m-0.30m. It consisted of heat-shattered sandstone in a matrix of charcoal and silty clay. Cleary notes a layer of grey clay on the upper surface of the depression which may have accumulated in a pre-existing hollow at the location of the trough (2008, 52).

**Trough:** The grey clay which was a result of natural silting also sealed the trough pit. The trough was cut by a modern drain therefore the original dimensions of the pit could not be determined. The surviving remains measured 1.5m by 1.2m. No lining was noted and the fill consisted of material similar to the mound. Cleary notes that the pit sides of boulder clay were relatively solid and impervious (2008, 52).

**Hearth:** No formal hearth was identified however a lens of charcoal enriched soil was noted on the eastern side. It measured 0.75m by 0.50m and was 0.15m thick.

**Finds:**

**Artefacts:** Hammerstone (mound material site KY04b)

**Ecofacts:** None

**Dating:**

**Relative dating:** None

**Absolute dating:** Charcoal from mound material (Site KY04b) C14 (GRN-23796) 3670±30 BP (2140–2080 BC)

**Excavation Interpretation:**

Excavations at Dromthacker uncovered two spreads of heat-shattered sandstone with one of these sites sealing a trough and a possible hearth. Both sites were located near a water source with site KY04a situated in a wet field where the dip to the west of the burnt stones easily filled with water. The fulachtai fia were relatively small scale-sites and may have only been used for a few seasons (Cleary 2008, 54).

The absence of a trough at site KY04a is not unusual and may have been a result of agricultural damage however one cannot discount the possibility that a portable trough may have been used here. The trough may also lie outside the area of excavation. No date was obtained from this spread and it cannot be suggested broadly contemporary with site KY04b on the grounds of recent infrastructural work which has identified and excavated fulachtai fia clusters that are sometimes separated by a thousand years or more.

**References**

Fig. 10.64 Plan of burnt mound, truncated trough and possible hearth at Dromthacker.
Catalogue No.  KY 05  
RMP No. KE 029-244  
Licence No. 99E0553

Location:  
Townland: Buntalloon  
Six inch map no: 29

Parish: Tralee  
NGR: 083560, 116000

Barony: Trughanacmy  
Altitude: 15m OD

County: Kerry

Excavation Details:  
Project: Housing Development

Site Director: Jacinta Kiely

Consultants: Eachtra Archaeological Projects

Year: 1999

Physical Setting:  
This site is located in the northern part of Tralee town at Monavalley Industrial Estate.

Cultural Landscape:  
Recent archaeological excavations along with known recorded monuments in the immediate landscape surrounding the site at Buntalloon highlight the intense activity in the area during the late prehistoric period. Several burnt spreads and pit features were excavated in the neighbouring township of Ballynahoulort c. 500m to the north-west (KE19a-c). A late Iron Age crematoria and Early Bronze Age structure (99E0615) was uncovered at Ballyvelly roughly 1KM to the south. A possible Late Bronze Age settlement/domestic site (06E0037) was excavated here in 2005. Middle Bronze Age dates were returned from two pits excavated at Cloonalour 1km to the south-east (01E119).

Adjacent Excavated:  
Four other pits were excavated in close proximity to this possible trough. A saddle quern and rubbing stone was recovered from one of these pits (99E0360).

Pre-Excavation features  
A number of pit features were uncovered during archaeological monitoring in advance of a factory site in the Monavalley Industrial Estate. No surface remains of these features were evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record  
Summary of Features:  
Excavations across the site revealed a series of pits. Only one of these pits resembled a fulacht fia trough that contained material similar to other excavated sites. Four other pits were excavated on site, one of which was stone-lined on the south-east side with a saddle quern and rubbing stone. Iron slag was recovered from the upper fill. Only the pit that contained heat-shattered stone will be described here.
Pit/Trough: The pit measured 1.82m by 0.92m and survived to a depth of 0.82m. Two fills were noted in the trough with the lower deposit containing high percentage of charcoal and the upper material contained 30% heat-shattered sandstone fragments. Nine stake-holes cut the base of the pit at the western end while two stake-holes cut the eastern end. These stake-holes may represent supports for a timber lining which no longer survives. Further stake-holes were revealed immediately west of the pit. These were interpreted as a possible windbreak. A Middle Bronze Age date was returned from the fill of the pit.

Finds: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (unknown) from fill of trough C14 (UCD - 0013) 3370±70 BP (1744–1524 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

This was one of a number of pits excavated during development works. It was the only pit to produce heat-affected stone suggesting that pyrolytic technology was being practiced here in the Bronze Age either as part of a water heating activity or a some sort of roasting or steaming practice. One important factor that may hinder its interpretation as classic fulacht fiadh site is the lack of an associated mound or spread of heat-shattered stone, charcoal and other burnt material. It is not unusual however to find such isolated pits filled with burnt stone. Numerous examples have been excavated across Ireland in recent years and occur either in isolated areas or in domestic settlement contexts as small cooking pits. The stake-holes uncovered outside the outer-edges of the trough are more difficult to interpret. They may relate to some form of spit structure for activities carried out in the trough.

Fig. 10.65 Trough and stake-holes at Buntalloon

References:

Location: Townland: Cloghers Six inch map no: 29
Parish: Annagh NGR: 084240, 113030
Barony: Trughanacmy Altitude: 15m OD
County: Kerry

Excavation Details: Project: Housing Development
Site Director: Jacinta Kiely
Consultants: Eachtra Archaeological Projects
Year: 2000

Physical Setting: The site forms a natural saddle along a low ridge between the Slieve Mish Mountains and the Lee Valley. The site is located at an altitude of 15 m OD. It is located on a south-facing slope c. 500m from the River Lee and 2.5km from Tralee Bay. Geologically, the dominant stratum consists of prominent limestone bedrock that breaks the surface in large east-west outcrops, known as Waulsortian Reefs.

Cultural Landscape: The landscape surrounding the fulachtai fia and Bronze Age houses is rich in prehistoric archaeology with a number of ritual and domestic monuments in the vicinity. There is a recorded ring-ditch in the townland of Cloghers (KE029-280) and another c. 1km to the south-east (KE038-009) along with a possible standing stone (KE038-010004). There is also a cluster of five fulachtai fia located to the east of Cloghers townland (KE038-127001-5) along with a ring-barrow (KE038-105) and a Neolithic house. A late Bronze Age fulacht fia was excavated in the neighbouring townland of Skanagh.

Adjacent excavated sites: Site KY 06a was located c. 100m from a series of roundhouses dating to the Middle-Late Bronze Age. The second site, KY 06b, was located c. 400m to the east and was dated to the Early Bronze Age.

Pre-Excavation features
No surface features were evident prior to monitoring carried out by Eachtra in advance of a housing development at Cloghers, Tralee Co.Kerry.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Resolution of the site revealed four structures located in close proximity to one another while the fourth was located c. 150m further east. Over 500 stake-holes and a group of pits were excavated to the north and east of the four structures. Two burnt mounds were excavated in the area of the excavation. The mounds were located 500m apart at the western and eastern ends of the site. It will only be the fulachtai fia that will be discussed here.
Site A

Burnt Mound: The mound was made up of four layers with the most substantial spread (C1891) measuring 3.3m by 1.6m and was 0.35m deep. It consisted of 40% heat-shattered sandstone and charcoal fragments. Three small spreads (C1901, C1902 & C1908) were excavated 1.5 m to the west of the trough, all extended beyond the area of the excavation. They included some burnt stone fragments. A single stake-hole C1897 was excavated 1.5 m south-east of the trough.

Trough: The trough (C1906) was located under the northern section of the mound material and was cut into white impermeable clay. It measured 1.6m by 1.2m and was 0.37m deep. The fill consisted of a basal layer of medium and large sized stones which had been dumped into a layer of charcoal. A sand layer was evident at the base of the trough.

Site A

Burnt Mound: The second mound was located at the extreme eastern end of the road re-alignment corridor, at a general distance of 400m to the east of the structures. The mound consisted of two spreads of material (C470 & C471). The upper was a brown sandy silt with moderate inclusions of burnt stone and re-deposited natural. A small spread of re-deposited natural C.469 overlay part of the mound. The lower and more extensive spread (C471) was a black sandy silt with inclusions of charcoal and heat-shattered fragments of sandstone. The fragments were coarse pebble and small stone sized. It extended under the northern baulk. It measured 4.8 m north-south by 3.5 m east-west and was on average 0.2 m deep.

Trough: The trough (C600) was oval in plan and measured 2m by 1.85m and was 0.47m deep. It contained three fills consisting of silt, charcoal and heat-shattered sandstone. The trough was cut into whit impermeable clay and was cut at the base by twenty-six stake-holes. Kiely suggests that the pattern of the stake-holes suggested that they may have held a lining in place (Kiely, 2003).

Pit: A small pit (C474) was located 2.3m to the south of the trough. It was sub-circular in plan and measured 0.43m by 0.31m and was 0.2m deep. It contained two silty clay fills with inclusions of heat-shattered stones. Some weeds seeds and cereals were recorded in the fills of the pit.

Linear features: Three linear features, aligned north to south were recorded. Two C606 & C700) underlay the mound and extended under the northern baulk. They measured 1.75 m by 0.4 m by 0.24 m and 1.5 m by 0.58 m by 0.14 m respectively. The third C608 was located 1 m to the south of the trough and was truncated on the eastern side. It measured 0.96 m by 0.35m by 0.17 m.

Finds:

Artefacts: None
Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal from fill of trough C600
C14 (UCD-00139) 3740±72 BP (2349–1940 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

The burnt mound features excavated at Cloghers are not unusual and are fairly typical of fulachtai fia sites consisting of a spread or spreads of heat-shattered stone with an associated trough or pits presumably used as to boil water. Kiely notes that neither a spring nor a stream was evident during excavation and both troughs were cut through white impermeable clay (Kiely 2003, 27). This suggests that both troughs would have been manually filled with water and the clay was sufficient enough to act as a sealant during use. The lack of a nearby water source is unusual however it is possible that a dried up river bed or a natural spring may lie outside the excavated area. The trough at site KY06b was cut through the same impermeable clay as the first site, however the base of this pit was cut by twenty-six stake-holes surrounding the inner sides of the trough. The pattern of these stake-holes is consistent with other troughs excavated across the country and suggests that they may have held a plank or wicker lining in place. The latter interpretation is more plausible due to similar examples excavated at Dromvane Co. Kerry (Lynch, 2007) and Coolroe Co. Mayo (Gillespie, 1998) where wicker linings of interwoven rods held in place by numerous stake pegs were preserved in situ.

The discovery of numerous roundhouses in the immediate vicinity of both fulachtai fia is interesting and lends further credence to the suggestion that these sites do not occur in isolation in the landscape and are an integral part of Bronze Age habitation often lying in marginal areas in close proximity.

References

### Physical Setting:
It site was situated at the base of Glanbane Hillfort in a wet and low-lying field used for rough pasture and was bounded to the south and east by a substantial drainage dyke.

### Cultural Landscape:
A prehistoric burial was excavated 250m to the south-east (KE039-180) which contained Early Bronze Age pottery along with a barrow (KE039-164) in the immediate vicinity which may be contemporary. There is another recorded barrow 100m to the south of the *fulacht fia* described here along with another in the neighbouring townland of Gortatlea. Three more *fulachtáí fia* were excavated as part of this realignment project in the townlands of Garraunderragh and Urrohogal. All of these monuments are situated at the base of Glanbane hill fort, and represent part of a ritual and domestic landscape, which has hitherto lain unnoticed beneath the ground in this part of County Kerry.

### Adjacent excavated sites:
Early Bronze Age burial located 250m to the east along with the portion of a ring-ditch or barrow. Three more *fulachtáí fia* were excavated as part of this realignment project in the townlands of Garraunderragh and Urrohogal to the west of Flemby. Connolly notes that a Neolithic date (4210–4190) was returned from a burnt stone spread in close proximity to a recorded *fulacht fia* (KE 039-003).

### Pre-Excavation features
The site was identified during test excavations in advance of the N22 Bealagrellagh to Gortatlea realignment scheme. These potential archaeological features were identified through field-walking and geophysical survey.

### Excavation Record

**Summary of Features:** Resolution of the site revealed three areas relating to hot stone technology. Area A consisted of a mound of heat-shattered stone, Area B consisted of a
sub-circular trough surrounded by a crescent shaped deposit of fire-cracked sandstone and Area C consisted of a thin spread of burnt mound material cut by a later drain.

**Area A**

**Burnt Mound:** A shallow deposit of burnt mound material was revealed in this area measuring 7m by 3.2m. A basal spread 0.1m deep, consisting of mottled brown/black, silty clay, was overlain by C14, a deposit of mid-grey, silty clay composed of 40% fire-cracked sandstone.

**Area B**

**Burnt Mound:** The burnt spread revealed in this area surrounded a sub-circular trough. The material was heavily truncated but survived to a depth of 0.07m. It consisted of thin layers of black/brown, silty clay composed of 70% heat-shattered sandstone.

**Trough:** The trough was sub-circular in shape and located centrally between the arms of the burnt spread. It measured 1.8m by 1.7m and survived to a depth of 0.6m. Four timbers were found in the western portion of the trough, one of these was found in an upright position possibly indicating that the trough was lined at least on the sides by upright timbers. One stake survived internally and was located directly opposite the wooden upright. Six other stake-holes were identified at the upper north-east edge of the trough.

**Area C**

**Burnt Spread:** This was an area identified as a thin spread of material measuring 2.3m by 3.9m and survived to a depth of 0.12m.

**Finds:** None  
**Dating:** None

**Site Interpretation**

The burnt mound deposits and associated cut features identified in this area are fairly typical of sites identified during such linear road developments. The heat-affected stone spreads uncovered in Areas A and C may have associated pit features that lie outside the area of excavation. Isolated spreads of firing debris associated with *fulacht fia* activity are common in the archaeological record and could suggest that a portable trough was used in the heating process. However, it may also be plausible that the features remain unexcavated or destroyed by centuries of intensive agricultural activity in the area.

**References**

Location: Townland: Groin  Six inch map no: 66
Parish: Annagh  NGR: 095182, 927170
Barony: Magunihy  Altitude: NA
County: Kerry

Excavation Details:
Project: Housing Development
Site Director: Emer Dennehy
Consultants: Eachtra Archaeological Projects
Year: 2001

Physical Setting: The site was located in a low-lying, marshy area prior to the development of the housing estate.

Cultural Landscape: The immediate landscape surrounding the site is well represented by prehistoric archaeology in the form of recorded fulachtai fia. There is a cluster of six such sites to the north in the neighbouring townland of Caher (KE 066-031001-6). Another fulacht fia is recorded c. 400m to the north-west (KE 066-162), while the excavated site of Coolgarriff is located 400m to the north-east which returned an Iron Age date.

Adjacent excavated sites: The site excavated at Groin Co. Kerry, was one of two burnt mounds discovered during development works for a proposed housing estate. The other site (01E0066) not discussed here was revealed in section but was not fully excavated.

Pre-Excavation features
No surface features were evident prior to monitoring carried out by Eachtra in advance of a housing development outside Kilarney town. Site was heavily truncated.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed thin deposits of burnt mound material, two troughs, one of which was re-used for smelting metal and associated pits which were interpreted as pot-boilers.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound material consisted thin deposits of heat shattered stone and charcoal which was oval in plan and measured 9m by 4.2m and was 0.26m in maximum depth.

Revetment: Limited evidence for a retaining kerb was also uncovered c. 1m north-west of trough C43.

Trough 1: Trough C43 was circular in plan and measured 1.67m by 1.56m and had a maximum depth of 0.65m. Brushwood and a number of timber pieces were recovered from the trough indicating it was originally wood-lined.
Trough 2: Trough C46 was sub-circular and measured 1.3m by 1.67m and had a maximum depth of 0.36m. Dennehy notes that it was later re-cut and used for smelting metal. The fills of both troughs indicated a multi-phase use of the site and both were used simultaneously.

Pits: Three pits (C23, C19 and C40) were also uncovered at this site and were located in the immediate vicinity of the troughs. (Pit dimensions unavailable).

Finds:
Artefacts: None
Ecofacts: None

Dating:
Relative dating: None
Absolute dating: Not Available

Excavation Interpretation

The site excavated at Groin Co. Kerry, was one of two burnt mounds discovered during development works for a proposed housing estate. The other site (01E0066) not discussed here was revealed in section but was not fully excavated. Investigations by Dennehy uncovered a relatively small spread of burnt mound material, two circular troughs and a number of pits. A small setting of stones was also tentatively interpreted as the remains of a revetment for the mound material. The burnt mound features excavated at Groin are not unusual and are fairly typical of fulachtai fia sites consisting of a spread or spreads of heat-shattered stone with an associated trough or pits presumably used as to boil water. The mound sealed two circular troughs with one of these producing evidence to suggest it may have originally been lined with brushwood or a series of round-woods. Troughs lined with brushwood are quite rare with only a small number have previously being identified. Brushwood along with horizontally laid planks was identified in a trough at Kicor South, Co. Cork (Hurley 1987). The pits identified at the site were all in close proximity to the two troughs suggesting they were associated with activities carried out in the troughs. Dennehy identified these pits as pot-boilers used to heat water in a ceramic vessel for cooking or for some industrial activity, however archaeologically, these pits are difficult to interpret and may have had a number of functions.

References


Location: Coolgarriff  Six inch map no: NA
Parish: Aghadoe  NGR: 095500, 092900
Barony: Trughanacmy  Altitude: NA
County: Kerry

Excavation Details:
Project: Housing Development
Site Director: Jacinta Kiely
Consultants: Eachtra Archaeological Projects
Year: 2001

Physical Setting: The site is located in a low-lying area close to a water source.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the area prior to the excavation.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features
No surface features were evident prior to monitoring carried out by Eachtra in advance of a housing development out.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a mound of heat-shattered stone and charcoal, an oval trough and a stone trackway.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound revealed during excavation measured 8m by 8m with an average depth of 0.4m. It consisted of six deposits of heat-shattered sandstone and charcoal. A possible kerb or mound revetment was noted by Kiely consisting of a number of large stones (Kiley 2001, 163).

Trough: The trough was oval in shape and was located on the eastern side of the mound. It showed evidence of being re-cut. Dimensions and other information unknown.

Trackway: A stone trackway was recorded to the north of the site. It measured 2.6m by 1.9.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: None
**Dating:**

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating:
Charcoal from unknown context
C14 (Lab Unknown) uncalibrated date unknown (410–160 BC)*

**Excavation Interpretation**

Little information is available for this excavation, however some interesting features are noted, including a possible stone trackway or surface and kerbing associated with the spread of burnt mound material. These features are a rarity on excavated sites with the stone surface being the only site in the county with such evidence. Stone surfaces or trackways have been uncovered on previous excavations and are often interpreted as pathways or working areas for activities carried out at the site due to the wet ground conditions. More evidence of site organisation was evident by the presence of a possible stone kerbing or revetment associated with the mound. This feature may have prevented the firing debris and other burnt material from slipping into the trough, thus keeping the working area clean. The Iron Age date returned from the site is also worth noting however it is unknown at present where the sample for this date was taken. Therefore, a degree of caution should be applied.

The function of this site is also open for debate, however one would assume that the application of pyrolithic technology was practiced here in prehistory either through the introduction of hot stones to water or dry heating for roasting.

**References:**


*Radiocarbon obtained from Eachtra Archaeological Projects*
Location:  Townland: Ballydowney  Six inch map no:  66
Parish: Aghadoe  NGR: 95242, 91822
Barony: Magunihy  Altitude: NA
County: Kerry

Excavation Details:
Project:  Housing Development
Site Director: Jacinta Kiely
Consultants:  Eachtra Archaeological Projects
Year:  2002

Physical Setting:  The development site was a green field site, used for pasture for horses belonging to the Equestrian Centre, located in the western suburbs of Killarney town. Killarney National Park is located to the south of the site. Ballydowny is bordered to the north by Groin townland and the development site holds panoramic views of Tomies Mountain and the Magillycuddy Reeks to the south-west. No stream was noted in the vicinity of the site.

Cultural Landscape:  This area of Kerry is rich in prehistoric archaeology particularly *fulachtai fia*. Excavations in the neighbouring townland of Groin uncovered a cluster of five sites. Further excavations in the townland of Coolgarriv, roughly 1km from Ballydowny uncovered another *fulacht fia* which was dated to the Late Bronze Age. The ring-ditch and copper working area excavated within 50m of the *fulacht fia* cluster highlights the intensity of occupation in the area during the later prehistoric period north of Lough Leane.

Adjacent excavated sites:  Five *fulacht fia* were excavated here along with a ring ditch and cremation dating 50m to the east which was dated to the Iron Age (KE066-144006). Another prehistoric site was uncovered with evidence of copper working 50m to the north (KE066-144007).

Pre-Excavation features  No surface features were evident prior to monitoring carried out by Eachtra in advance of the housing development. They were all clustered in the eastern portion of the site. Each site was identifiable by the remains of a truncated burnt mound composed of silts or sandy silts with 50-60% heat shattered stones.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features:  Excavation of the site revealed five truncated burnt mound deposits with associated troughs, formal hearths and stake-holes.
Site A

Burnt Mound: The mound of burnt material consisted of two layers (C65 and C61). The upper layer contained dark brown sandy silt which included 70% heat-shattered sandstone. The lower layer was rich in charcoal and compact sandy silt which contained 50% heat-shattered sandstone. The spread of mound material measured 11m by 3.4m and covered the hearth and associated trough.

Trough: The trough (C71) was oval in shape and was situated directly south-east of the hearth. It measured 1.95m by 1.42m and was 0.62m deep with a flat base and vertical sides. Kiely notes that the trough was cut through the natural subsoil and was capable of holding water quite sufficiently (Kiely, 2010).

Hearth: The hearth (C70) was located south-east of a large boulder and directly north-west of the trough C71. It consisted of a layer of scorched orange/red silty clay. The boulder was also heat-affected and may have functioned as a revetment along with other stone settings which may have been removed some time in the past.

Stake-Holes: Four stake-holes were uncovered 2m west of the hearth which Kiely suggests may have formed a screen or windbreak for the hearth from prevailing westerly winds (2010).

Site B (i)

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound spread measured 5m by 5m and consisted of two layers (C104 and C125). The upper layer was a dark brown silt (104) that included 50% heat shredded sandstones. The lower layer was a black silt (125) that included charcoal and 50% heat-shattered sandstones.

Trough 1: Trough C128 was sub-circular in plan and measured 1.7m in diameter with a depth of 1.02m. It had steep sides, a flat base and was cut into the natural subsoil which Kiely notes was suitable for containing water. Burnt animal bone was recovered from the fill of this trough.

Trough 2: The second trough (C127) recorded on site was kidney-shaped in plan and was located 2m south of trough C128. It had steeply sloping sides and a flat base with a fill consisting of material similar to the mound.

Site B (ii)

Burnt Mound: This mound was located 3m south of site KY10b and was irregular in plan. It measured 4m by 5m and consisted of a single layer (C80) of charcoal rich sandy silt with heat-shattered sandstone. This spread of mound material overlay a pit and a single trough.

Trough: The trough (C123) was sub-oval in plan and measured 2.6m by 1.6m and was 0.5m deep with irregular sides and a flat base. The fill of the trough...
consisted of two sandy layers and a basal fill of burnt mound material. Nine stake-holes cut the clay base of the trough in an arc at the eastern end.

Pit: An oval pit (C99) with uneven sides and an irregular base was also recorded on site. It was filled with mound material and a dark grey/black sandy silt.

Site C

Burnt Mound: This mound was located 30m south of sites KY10b-c. The spread of mound material measured 12m by 5m and consisted of five layers of sandy silt which included 50% heat-shattered sandstone. The trough and hearth were covered by the spread. A chert axe was uncovered 1.2m west of the mound on the surface of the sub-soil.

Trough: The trough (C45) was located 0.80m south-west of the hearth (C163). It was rectangular in plan and measured 2.36m by 0.8m and was 0.46m deep with steep vertical sides and a flat base. It was cut through the natural sub-soils and was filled with two layers consisting of greyish/brown stony silt with charcoal and material similar to the mound.

Hearth: The hearth (C163) was sub-circular in plan and measured 1.6m by 1.4m and was 0.15m deep. Kiely notes that the sides of the hearth had been ‘banked’ or pushed upwards from the outside in order to contain the fire. The south-western side of the hearth lay open to the trough presumably to allow the stones to be easily removed and deposited into the pit. Two stake holes were recorded under the base of the hearth which consisted of a layer of sand which Kiely suggests may have accumulated from eroded or heat-affected sandstone (2010).

Un-burnt stone deposit: Six large heat-altered stones were uncovered set in re-deposited clay (C152) in an area between the trough and the hearth. Kiely suggests that these may represent stones which were used in the heating process that were not fully utilised (2010).

Pits: Three pits (C144, C153 & C158) were excavated in the vicinity of the hearth and trough. The smallest pit (C158) was located closest to the hearth and trough and was the only one filled with mound material (C139).

Site D

Burnt Mound: The remains of the mound were the smallest of the four recorded at Ballydowny while the trough and the hearth were the most elaborate. It consisted of one deposit of black silt with 60% heat-shattered sandstone. It measured 5.8m by 2.2m and was 0.22m in thickness. A layer of fine sterile silt (160) underlay the eastern side of the mound. The silt layer measured 3.6m by 3.1m by 0.54m in depth. It is thought to have accumulated as a result of repeated flooding as the depth is considerable.
Trough: The trough (C174) was rectangular in plan and measured 2.5m by 1.8m and was 0.55m deep with steep sides and a flat base. Stones (169) lined the south-eastern and the north-western sides of the trough. They varied in size from 1m by 0.50m to 0.17m by 0.15m and were set in brown, stony silt. The trough pit contained five fills mostly consisting of heat-shattered sandstone and charcoal.

Hearth: A stone lined hearth was located c. 0.3m east and upslope of the trough. It was filled with charcoal-rich silt (167). The full extent of the stone lining (172) was revealed when this silt was removed. A calibrated radiocarbon date from the Middle Bronze Age, ranging from 1490 – 1200 BC, was obtained from charcoal. A number of sandstones and one limestone were used to line the outer limit of the hearth. They were set on edge into dark yellow/brown sandy silt. The stones were all heat-affected and the hearth was sub-circular in plan and open on the southwest side, to allow easy access to the trough. A Middle Bronze Age date was returned from charcoal obtained from the hearth.

Finds:

Artefacts: A hammerstone was recovered from the mound material at site KY10c and a chert axe was found 1.2m south-west of the mound at site KY10c.

Ecofacts: Burnt animal bone was recovered from the fill of trough 2 at site KY10b and from the mound material at site KY10c.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (unknown) from hearth (Site KY10d)
C14 (Beta-168811) 3090±60 BP (1490–1200 BC)
Charcoal (unknown) from mound (Site KY10a)
C14 (Beta-168809) 3420±60 BP (1890–1540 BC)

References

Catalogue No.  KY 11
RMP No.  NA
Licence No.  03E1716

Location: Townland: Ballingowen  Six inch map no:
Parish: Ratass  NGR: 086750, 113350
Barony: Trughanacmy  Altitude: NA
County: Kerry

Excavation Details: Project: N21 Tralee to Ballycarty Road Scheme
Site Director: Laurence Dunne
Consultants: Eachtra Archaeological Projects
Year: 2003

Physical Setting: The site was located on the side of a natural hollow that may have been an old streambed.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the area prior to excavation.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during testing in advance of the N21 Tralee to Ballycarty road scheme. No surface trace of the burnt mound was evident prior to investigation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed an irregular spread of heat-shattered stone and a shallow trough.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound spread was irregular in shape and measured 6.3m by 4.2m and survived to a depth of 0.3m. It consisted of black, silty, charcoal-rich material that contained 40% heat-shattered and reddened sandstone and occasional charcoal lumps. The excavator notes that the spread was situated on the side of a natural hollow which measured 3m in diameter and 0.5m deep.

Trough/Pit: The possible trough was oval in shape and positioned on the side of the hollow on sloping ground. It measured 2.4m by 0.9m and was 0.32m deep. Dunne suggests that it was unlikely that this feature was used as a trough to heat water because the base of the feature was sharply inclined from east to west and its position on sloping ground means that it could not have been used to contain much water (Dunne 2006, 210).

Finds:
Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: None

Excavation Interpretation

The burnt spread and pit probably represents a small cooking site employing a dry pyrolithic technology. This is based on the shallow nature of the identified pit, making it unlikely it was used as a water trough for boiling. These small cooking sites are becoming increasingly common in the archaeological record and are particularly a feature of the Early Bronze Age.

References

Location: Townland: Farranastack Six inch map no: 05
Parish: Lisselton NGR: 93052, 141185
Barony: Trughanacmy Altitude: 130 m OD
County: Kerry

Excavation Details: Project: Housing Development
Site Director: Marion Dowd
Consultants: Eachtra Archaeological Projects
Year: 2003

Physical Setting: The site is located 60m east of a small road which runs north from Lisselton village, 130m east of a small stream.

Cultural Landscape: There are two recorded fulachtáí fia in the vicinity of the site (KE005-096 and KE005-095).

Adjacent excavated sites: Medieval metalworking site (03E0171)

Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during testing associated with the Listowel Regional Water Supply Scheme. No surface features were evident prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed three sub-rectangular pits filled with material similar to that found at fulacht fia sites. No mound or spread of heat-shattered stone was revealed.

Pits: Three pits and a narrow curvilinear ditch were excavated in this area. The pits were sub-rectangular in shape and contained similar fills of heat-shattered sandstone and charcoal (oak, willow and hazel/alder). All were orientated east-west and measured 1m in width, between 1.94 and 1.42m in length and between 0.25 and 0.35m deep. Charcoal from one of these pits returned a Late Bronze Age date. Two flat stones were embedded in the bases of two of the pits suggesting they may have been deliberately lined.

Ditch: An arch-shaped ditch truncated the third pit on site. It measured 3.6m by 0.4m with a depth of 0.28m. Dowd notes that the ditch was neither an enclosing feature nor a drainage channel and its function remains unknown (2006, 218)

Finds:
Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: Charcoal from the site was identified as oak, hazel/Alder and willow.

**Dating:**

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (hazel/alder) from fill of pit/trough 2

C14 (Beta-180810) 2830±40 BP (1100–900 BC)

**Excavation Interpretation**

The burnt mound features excavated at Farranastack are not unusual and are fairly typical of *fulachtai fia* sites consisting of a spread or spreads of heat-shattered stone with an associated trough or pit presumably used to heat water. The arch shaped pit identified on site truncated one of the pits and was therefore later in date. Dowd states that its function remains elusive (2006, 218) however such features are common on burnt mound sites and could possibly be related to post-medieval drainage. The possibility that it functioned as a drainage channel is unlikely given its questionable relationship with the pit/trough. Charcoal from the site was identified as oak, hazel/alder and willow. Wood types such as these, in particular alder and willow, are often found at *fulachtai fia* sites; they are damp-loving and therefore often grow near the low-lying ground where *fulachtai fia* are commonly situated.

**References**


Physical Setting: It is situated at the southern end of a wet and low-lying field used for rough pasture and is bounded to the south and east by a substantial drainage dyke.

Cultural Landscape: Two fulachtai fia are located close to the route (KE039 -067 & -109) and an additional eight new sites were recorded. Three sites were recorded in Garraundarragh townland within the area of the road take. A further five burnt mound deposits were recorded while monitoring topsoil stripping at a ‘borrow site’ in the same townland c. 80m to the west of 04E0646. The sites were located outside the lands made available for the road improvement scheme. The sites were recorded and mapped and covered with geoterim.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during testing in advance of the N22 Gortatlea to Farranfore road scheme. It consisted of the basal remains of a fulacht fia mound that has been disturbed by land reclamation and the digging of drainage ditches.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a disturbed mound of heat shattered stone that sealed a single feature which has been tentatively interpreted as a trough.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound (F2), was oval in plan and measured 15m by 17m and was 0.40m in thickness. Generally the mound was composed of dark brown/black friable silt with 50% of it composed of burnt, coarse, angular small stones. The layer, F2, was relatively level and was located in a shallow hollow. Charcoal was identified as hazel/alder and willow which was radiocarbon dated to 1530–1400 BC.

Pit/Trough: F6 was recorded below the burnt mound spread and was tentatively interpreted as a trough. It was sub-circular in plan with vertical sides, a flat
base and measured 0.98 by 0.95 by 0.50m deep. There were two fills recorded within F6. The lower fill, F5 was waterlogged and composed of dark grey/brown peaty silt with 90% coarse small unburnt stones. The upper fill, F4 was composed of dark grey/black peaty silt with only 20% unburnt coarse small stones. Fragments of roots and twigs were recorded in the basal fill, F5, some of these were burnt and one piece was possibly worked. A hazelnut shell was recorded from the upper fill, F4.

Finds:

Artefacts: Possible worked piece of wood from trough F6
Ecofacts: Charcoal was identified as hazel/alder and willow/poplar.

Dating:

Relative dating: None
Absolute dating: Charcoal (unknown) from mound material F2
C14 (Beta-200761) 3220±40 BP (1530–1400 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

The burnt mound features excavated at Garraundarragh are not unusual and are fairly typical of fulachtaí fia sites consisting of a spread or spreads of heat-shattered stone with an associated trough or pits presumably used as to boil water. The mound itself had been levelled and possibly spread out beyond its original location. It sealed a single pit with vertical sides and a flat base which the excavator suggests may have been a trough (O’ Callaghan, 2010). This site was one of two sites excavated in the townland as part of this road project.

References


Plate 10.48 Burnt mound and single pit at Garraundaragh, Co. Kerry.
Physical Setting: The site is located in a rough poorly drained field in pasture c. 40m north of the southern boundary of Garraundarragh townland. The soils have a limited use range and are not suitable for tillage. The grazing season would be confined largely to the summer period.

Cultural Landscape: Two *fulacht fia* are located close to the route (KE039 -067 & -109) and an additional eight new sites were recorded. Three sites were recorded in Garraundarragh townland within the area of the road take. A further five burnt mound deposits were recorded while monitoring topsoil stripping at a ‘borrow site’ in the same townland c. 80m to the west of 04E0646. The sites were located outside the lands made available for the road improvement scheme.

Adjacent excavated sites: *Fulacht fia* excavated 36m to the south

**Pre-Excavation features**

The site was uncovered during testing in advance of the N22 Gortatlea to Farranfore road scheme. It consisted of a well preserved *fulacht fia* mound standing to a maximum height of 0.8m.

**Excavation Record**

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a well preserved burnt mound with two large troughs, one of which may have been timber lined and connected to a lower well feature.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound (C3 and C4) was relatively well preserved and measured 15m by 14m and survived to a height of 0.8m. It consisted of small fragments of burnt and heat shattered sandstone with frequent amounts of charcoal enriched silt. The two troughs were located under the north-west portion of the mound.

Trough 1: Trough C7 was non-symmetrical in plan and measured 4.4m by 3.1m and was 1.05m deep. Four fills were recorded in the trough mainly consisting of charcoal enriched silts and heat-shattered stone. The base of the trough was lined with a compact white clay C.11. The average depth of the clay was...
0.1m but a depth of 0.35m was recorded in the deeper western side. Charcoal was identified as oak, hazel/alder and willow.

**Trough 2:**
Trough C8 was located immediately east of C7. A possible overflow channel connected the two troughs. It measured c. 0.3m north-south by 0.7m east-west by 0.15m in depth. The plan of the trough suggested that the trough may have initially been rectangular in plan and that a substantially deeper circular section was dug in the southwest corner. No re-cut was recorded. The rectangular section measured c. 1.7m north-south by 2.4m east-west and was 0.5m deep.

**Well:**
The circular well feature was connected to the trough C8 and measured c. 1.2m north-south by 1.7m east-west and was 1.2m deep. It was cut below the water table or into a rising spring and filled with water. Two fills were recorded in the trough. Five timbers were recovered from the basal fill in the area of the deeper well section.

**Finds:**

**Artefacts:**
Five worked timber pieces from trough C8

**Ecofacts:**
None

**Dating:**

**Relative dating:**
None

**Absolute dating:**
Charcoal (unknown) from mound material F2
C14 (Beta-200762) 3220±40 BP (1000–790 BC)

**Excavation Interpretation**

Excavations at Garraudarragh uncovered a relatively complex series of features consisting of a trough connected by a channel which led to a lower well or spring. The strategic placement of the trough on a natural spring implies significant forethought on the part of the builders. A similar arrangement of features was uncovered at other sites in Ireland (see Chapter 5) where troughs were located at a slightly elevated position and connected to a lower water source by a channel. These wells may have acted as cisterns for the storage of water for use in the trough. A more plausible explanation is that they functioned as emptying features for the trough allowing stagnant, standing or sullied water to be released from the pit and replenished with fresh water from the well. The two troughs were connected by a channel which may also suggest the movement of heated water between the two allowing boiling water to be released from the first trough C7 and re-used for a separate activity in trough C8, with the elevation of these pits being crucial to their overall function.

**References**

**Location:** Townland: Urrohogal  
Parish: Currans  
Barony: Trughanacmy  
County: Kerry  

**Parish:** Currans  
NGR: 092888, 107262  
Altitude: 15m OD  

**Excavation Details:** Project: N22 Gortatlea to Farranfore  
Site Director: Jacina Kiely  
Consultants: Eachtra Archaeological Projects  
Year: 2004  

**Physical Setting:** The levelled *fulacht fia* was located in Field 14 a rough poorly drained pasture close to the northern boundary of Urrohogal townland. The soils have a limited use range and are not suitable for tillage.

**Cultural Landscape:** Two *fulachtaí fia* are located close to the route (KE039 -067 & -109) and an additional eight new sites were recorded. Three sites were recorded in Garraundarragh townland within the area of the road take. A further five burnt mound deposits were recorded while monitoring topsoil stripping at a ‘borrow site’ in the same townland c. 80m to the west of 04E0646. The sites were located outside the lands made available for the road improvement scheme.

**Adjacent excavated sites:** *Fulacht fia* excavated 36m to the north

**Pre-Excavation features**

The site was uncovered during testing in advance of the N22 Gortatlea to Farranfore road scheme. It consisted of a mound which was disturbed to the north by a modern field boundary bank with associated drainage ditches on either side. The construction of the boundary may well have been the action that levelled the mound.

**Excavation Record**

**Summary of Features:** Excavation of the site revealed two distinct layers of heat-shattered stone which sealed a trough and a shallow pit.

**Burnt Mound:** The disturbed mound was amorphous in plan and measured 17m by 9.5m and ranged in depth from 0.04m to 0.34m. It consisted of two layers (C12 and C14) which consisted of 70-80% heat-shattered sandstone in a matrix of silty clays and charcoal.

**Trough:** The trough (C24) was located at the southern end of the mound. Sub-oval in plan, and orientated north-south, it measured 1.52m by 1.2m by 0.4m in depth. The trough was cut into natural clay sub-soils and contained three fills.
Pit: A single pit was recorded north-east of the trough. It was sub-circular in plan and measured 0.58m by 0.62m by 0.12m in depth. Two silty clay fills (C15 and C16) were recorded within the pit. Occasional fragments of metal slag were recorded within C15 - the upper fill. The base of the pit was heat scorched but it did not show evidence of prolonged in situ burning. It is possible that material was deposited when it was hot which caused incidental scorching of the base of the pit.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (unknown) from fill of trough C24
C14 (Beta-Unknown) Unknown BP (1290–1020 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

The burnt mound features excavated at Urrohogal are not unusual and are fairly typical of fulachtai fia sites consisting of a spread or spreads of heat-shattered stone with an associated trough or pits presumably used as to boil water. A single trough was uncovered at the site which was sub-oval in plan. No lining was evident and the features uncovered were very similar to other sites excavated in the county. Although not unusual in the archaeological record, the site at Urroghogal probably represents burnt mound activity on a small scale, however sites have been excavated in neighbouring townlands which highlights that the area was selected continuously for pyrolithic operations over a long period of time.

The second pit on site contained fragments of slag in the upper fill and Kiely notes that the base showed signs of being heat scorched but was not exposed to prolonged burning. This pit is probably unrelated to pyrolithic technology and is likely medieval in date.

References

### Physical Setting

The site lay in a rough, fairly wet pasture field adjacent to a rectified stream. The land sloped from approximately 97m above OD in the south to 93m OD in the north. In the majority of the field the deposits were a yellow silty sands with iron and manganese staining with sandstone boulders.

### Cultural Landscape

There are no recorded prehistoric monuments recorded in the immediate vicinity of Kilmaniheen West. However there is a *fulacht fia* located in the neighbouring townland of Kilmaniheen East (KY024-002) and there is a standing stone located to the east of Kilmaniheen West in the townland of Beheenagh (KY023-008). Roughly 1.5km to the north-west of Kilmaniheen west there are several recorded prehistoric sites including two *fulachtai fia* (KY023-003,7) and two barrows (KY023-004,6).

### Adjacent excavated sites

*Fulacht fia* excavated 220m to the south-west.

### Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during testing in advance of the N21 Limerick to Tralee Road Scheme. It consisted of a mound of heat-shattered stone and there was no surface remains of the site prior to excavation.

### Excavation Record

#### Summary of Features

Excavation of the site revealed a low mound of heat-shattered stone which sealed two troughs.

#### Burnt Mound:

The burnt mound material (C56) was crescent shaped and measured 5.9m by 3.95m and was 0.3m in thickness. It consisted of loose brown/black sandy silt with moderate amounts of heat-shattered sandstone and charcoal.

#### Trough 1:

This trough was interpreted as the earliest feature on site and was sub-circular in plan. It measured 0.85m by 0.8m and was 0.38m deep with steep sides and a concave base. The fill consisted of heat-shattered stone with frequent charcoal inclusions in a dark grey silt matrix.
Trough 2: The second trough was located on the northern side of the mound, 1.1m from the first trough. It was not sealed by the mound material. The trough was sub-oval and measured 1.7m by 1.15m and was 0.32m deep. It contained two fills consisting of grey/yellow sandy silt with charcoal inclusions (Primary) and large pieces of sandstone (Secondary fill). The trough was truncated on the north-east.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: Charcoal from the site was identified as oak, hazel and alder.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (hazel) from fill of trough
C14 (Beta-202184) 2860±40 BP (1130 – 920 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

This was one of two sites excavated within the same townland in advance of Limerick to Tralee Road Scheme. Both sites produced Late Bronze Age dates, however full site histories cannot be determined due to single radiocarbon dates. For instance the circular trough on site was interpreted as an earlier feature before the construction of the second trough. However, the burnt stone mound was not extensive therefore this site may have only been used on several occasions. The clustering of sites is also not uncommon with fulachtai fia and where numerous sites are excavated in one catchment area, contemporaneous dates are rare, therefore the similar dates obtained from these sites excavated within 200m from each other is unusual.

References:

### Location:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Townland</th>
<th>Six inch map no:</th>
<th>Parish</th>
<th>Brosna</th>
<th>NGR: 108339, 122042</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barony</td>
<td>Trughanacmy</td>
<td></td>
<td>County</td>
<td>Kerry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altitude</td>
<td>101m OD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Excavation Details:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>N21 Limerick to Tralee Road Scheme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Site Director</td>
<td>Graham Hull</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultants</td>
<td>TVAS Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>2004</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Physical Setting:

The site lay in a rough, fairly wet pasture field adjacent to a rectified stream. The land sloped down from the south (106.5m OD) to the north (98m OD). A series of springs was observed in the field following a line running along the side of the hill.

### Cultural Landscape:

There are no recorded prehistoric monuments recorded in the immediate vicinity of Kilmaniheen West. However there is a *fulacht fia* located in the neighbouring townland of Kilmaniheen East (KY024-002) and there is a standing stone located to the east of Kilmaniheen West in the townland of Beheenagh (KY023-008). Roughly 1.5km to the north-west of Kilmaniheen west there are several recorded prehistoric sites including two *fulacht fia* (KY023-003,7) and two barrows (KY023-004,6).

### Adjacent excavated sites:

*Fulacht fia* excavated 220m to the north-east.

### Pre-Excavation features

The site was uncovered during testing in advance of the N21 Limerick to Tralee Road Scheme. It consisted of a low mound of heat-shattered stone and there was no surface remains of the site prior to excavation.

### Excavation Record

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary of Features</th>
<th>Excavation of the site revealed a low mound of heat-shattered stone which sealed a timber lined trough.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Burnt Mound</td>
<td>The low mound of burnt stone (C52) was crescent-shaped and measured 13m by 12m and had a maximum thickness of 0.75m. It consisted of loose dark brown/black silty sand with a large component of heat-shattered sandstone and a small amount of charcoal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trough</td>
<td>The trough was located at the north-western side of the mound, adjacent to a natural spring. It was rectangular in plan and measured 1.9m by 1.16m and</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
survived to a depth of 0.12m. The excavator notes that the trough was truncated at the northern end. Three oak planks were uncovered at the base of the trough which were abutted tightly against each other. No clay was noted between these planks to seal the base. The side planking did not survive however hull states that they may have originally existed. Beneath the planks a thick deposit of clay and sandy silt was uncovered. This sand may represent material which was washed through the timbers either during or after use of the trough. Above the timbers, a small amount of loose dark grey to black sandy silt with occasional burnt sandstone and charcoal was observed.

**Finds:**

**Artefacts:** None

**Ecofacts:** Charcoal from the site was identified as oak with isolated fragments of hazel and hawthorn. The samples of wood from the lining were all oak.

**Dating:**

**Relative dating:** None

**Absolute dating:** Charcoal (hazel) from burnt mound C52 C14 (Beta-202183) 2780±40 BP (1010–830 BC)

**Excavation Interpretation**

The crescent shaped mound of heat-shattered stone sealed a single trough which was the only feature on site. A single radiocarbon date was obtained from the mound material which dated the site to the Late Bronze Age. These planks were the remnants of a timber lining consisting of oak planks. Oak is commonly used as lining at fulachtai fia sites and is often used as a fuel also because it tends to burn longer than other woods. Hull noted the presence of clay beneath the planks which probably acted as a sealant to make the pit watertight and also to bind the planks to the pit base and side walls. The presence of such material is common on excavated sites and confirms a water-boiling process.

**References:**

Location: Townland: Dromore  Six inch map no: Parish: Molahiffe  NGR: 093640, 103240 Barony: Magunihy  Altitude: NA County: Kerry  

Excavation Details: Project: Development Site Site Director: Linda Hegarty Consultants: Headland Archaeology Ltd. Year: 2005  

Physical Setting: No Information  

Cultural Landscape: No Information  

Adjacent excavated sites: A platform was excavated by Aegis Archaeology in 2007 consisting of a number of large timbers and pegs up to 2m in length (07E0900). These were interpreted as a platform or trackway focused a particular deep portion of bog.  

Pre-Excavation features

Prior to archaeological investigation the site survived as a roughly circular mound measuring 15m in diameter. The excavation was carried out in advance of a proposed development consisting of a housing estate and ancillary site works.  

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a low mound of heat-shattered stone and a number of loosely arranged oak planks which were uncovered near the base of the mound.  

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound was roughly circular in shape and measured 15m in diameter with a maximum depth of 0.65m. It overlay peat deposits and consisted of heat-shattered stone and charcoal in a black silty matrix. Hegarty (2008, 167) states that the mound material was relatively uniform and no distinct phases of activity could be identified.  

Trough/Trackway: A number of large oak planks were revealed near the base of the main mound material. They were loosely arranged in a linear fashion and consisted of two large planks and three smaller fragments of wood, all of which were straight and regular in form. The excavator notes that they were deliberately deposited and located in the wettest area of the mound. The suggestion was that these planks may have functioned as a rough trackway (Hegarty 2008). Burnt stone was found under this wooden material therefore these were laid down after the fulacht fia was established.
Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: The timbers were identified as oak

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (unknown) from burnt mound material
C14 (Lab Unknown) uncalibrated date unknown (1326–1128 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

Little information is available for this excavation however the main features identified were a large mound of heat-shattered stone and a timber structure interpreted as the remains of a possible trackway. It is also important to note a deposit of burnt mound material under the plank arrangement suggesting that this was a later addition to the site. No cut is noted in relation to this setting of planks therefore its interpretation as a trough base is tentative, however it cannot be ruled out.

No trough was uncovered at the site, however the size of the mound does suggest that activity at the site was carried out over a relatively long period of time. It seems likely therefore, that any cut features associated with this firing debris may lie outside the area of excavation.

References:

Location: Townland: Ballynahoulort Six inch map no: 29
Parish: Tralee NGR: 082350, 116050
Barony: Trughanacmy 084550, 116750
County: Kerry Altitude: 29 OD

Excavation Details: Project: Tralee Western Link Road
Site Director: Frank Coyne
Consultants: Kerry County Council
Year: 2005

Physical Setting: The site was located in a low-lying marshy area.

Cultural Landscape: There are three burnt mounds recorded in the immediate area (KE 029-270, 71, 72) and two burnt spread features (KE 029-273, 74) which further highlights that this was an ideal location for pyrolithic technology. Several burnt stone features were also excavated in the neighbouring townland of Buntaloon (Kiely, 1999). Several pits produced stake-holes and deposits of heat-shattered stone. A quern stone was also uncovered.

Adjacent excavated sites: Several pits containing deposits of heat-shattered stone were excavated to the east of this site in the townland of Buntaloon.

Pre-Excavation features
Several burnt spreads were uncovered during testing in advance of the Tralee Western Link Road. These were all unrecorded features prior to excavation and no visible surface remains were evident.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed several spreads of heat-shattered stone and numerous pit features which may have acted as troughs for boiling water.

Site A
Burnt Spread: The spread (C1) measured 3.6m by 1.2m and had a maximum thickness of 0.3m. It consisted of black silty clay with frequent amounts of heat-shattered stone and charcoal. The deposit was situated in a sub-circular cut C11.

Pit: This pit (C3) was semi-circular in shape and measured 0.8m by 0.66m and had a maximum depth of 0.45m. It had steeply sloping sides with a flat base. The pit was located 0.3m south-west of another pit C11. Connolly noted no
in situ burning within the feature (Coyne, 2006). The fill of this pit consisted of friable, black silty clay with heat affected stone and charcoal.

**Linear Feature:**
This feature (C7) measured 1.8m by 0.2m and was 0.07m deep. It had a U-shaped base with gently sloping sides and was filled with light brown silty clay.

**Burnt Spread:**
This circular spread (C8) measured 1.16m by 0.82m and had a maximum thickness of 0.15m. This deposit was found over a natural layer of brown silty clay that accumulated in a natural depression.

**Pit 2:**
C9 was semi-circular and measured 1m by 2.2m and was 0.45m deep. It was filled with a light grey sandy silt with occasional charcoal flecks.

**Pit 3:**
C11 was a large sub-circular cut filled with the burnt spread C1. It measured 3.6m by 1.2m and was 0.3m in depth. No in situ burning was noted (Coyne, 2006).

**Site B**

**Burnt Spread:**
The deposit C2 was circular in plan and measured 1.5m by 1.3m and had a maximum thickness of 0.08m. It consisted of greyish-brown clay with frequent amounts of heat-shattered stone and charcoal. It was located 0.5m south-west of the pit C4.

**Pit 1:**
This pit (C4) was irregular in shape and measured 1.1m by 0.6m and had a maximum depth of 0.3m. It had gradual sloping sides and an irregular base. Its fill consisted of dark-greyish clay with frequent amounts of burnt stone and charcoal flecking.

**Hearth?:**
A small charcoal stained deposit (C5) which overlay three stake-holes was located 1.1m south of another similar deposit C6. It contained a moderate amount of small angular stones and a moderate amount of charcoal flecks.

**Site C**

**Burnt Spread:**
This spread C6 measured 2.8m by 1.8m and was 0.25m in maximum thickness. This was composed of a moderately compacted brownish-black clay that was located on the top of, and on the side of, a low but steep descending gradient which may have corresponded with the edge of an ancient water-filled depression or pool. The spread seems to have been dumped over the edge of the depression.

**Finds:**

**Artefacts:**
Hone Stone from spread of site KY19c

**Ecofacts:**
None

**Dating:**
Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: None

**Excavation Interpretation**

During the course of excavation several spreads of shattered stone and other burnt material was exposed. These spreads sealed a number of small pits that may have served as troughs in the process of water boiling or as small pits for the roasting of foodstuffs. No in situ burning was noted in the pits therefore, the latter interpretation seems unlikely. The burnt stone spreads were also quite small which possibly suggests that the site saw relatively small scale activity over a short period of time. It is also possibly however that the site was heavily truncated by agricultural processes which may have spread the material over a large area resulting in several small spreads but it is also possible more substantial features related to this activity may lie outside the area of excavation.

**References:**

Coyne, F and Pawle, I. 2006. *Archaeological excavations at Tralee Western Link Road, Tralee, Co. Kerry.* Unpublished excavation report, Aegis Archaeology Ltd.

Plate 10.49 Burnt stone spread and excavated pit at Ballynahoulort, Co. Kerry.
Location: Townland: Skahanagh Six inch map no: 38
Parish: Tralee NGR: 084860, 112370
Barony: Trughanacmy Altitude: NA
County: Kerry

Excavation Details:
Project: Rescue
Site Director: Laurence Dunne
Consultants: Kerry County Council
Year: 2006

Physical Setting: The southern half of the site consists of low-lying neglected pasture that is wet and peaty especially near its southernmost limits where a noticeable stream demarcates its boundary parallel to a minor roadway.

Cultural Landscape: There are three burnt mounds recorded in the immediate area (KE 029-270, 71, 72) and two burnt spread features (KE 029-273, 74) which further highlights that this was an ideal location for hot-stone activities.

Adjacent excavated sites: Several Prehistoric pits were excavated north of this site in the townland of Buntalloon.

Pre-Excavation features

The site was identified during archaeological testing following the burying of a recorded enclosure (KE 038:014) under imported topsoil. Twenty-two test trenches were subsequently opened and two areas of burnt material were recorded related to fulacht fia activity.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Archaeological testing revealed two burnt spreads of heat-shattered stone. Area A contained a burnt spread and a possible trough cut. Another burnt spread was revealed in Area B along with an oval trough.

Area A
Burnt Mound: The burnt mound spread covered an irregular area measuring 9m by 8m. The density of heat shattered stones varied across the area but an average morphology of 70% heat shattered stones and 30% black sandy silt can be assigned. The western extent of the burnt mound material is comprised of a dark brown clayey silt with 30% heat shattered stones, though it is not a discrete entity.

Trough/Pit: A shallow trough cut was identified. It exposed length measured 0.82m with gradually sloping sides and a flat sandy base. The possible trough had an
overall depth of 0.22m. A late Bronze Age date was obtained from the fill of this feature.

Area B

Burnt Mound: This burnt stone spread was exposed 5m south-east of Area A. It measured 1.85m by 1.75m. The material was similar in morphology to that in Area A; comprising 70% heat shattered stones and 30% black sandy silt.

Trough/Pit: A northwest facing section was excavated across the burnt mound material revealing a potential trough which was found to be 0.45m in depth. It was oval in plan with vertical sides and a flat base. Three layers were recorded beneath the plough furrow fill; a soft black clayey silt with 50% heat shattered stones, a soft mid-grey clayey silt with 30% heat shattered stones and occasional charcoal flecks, and a soft dark grey clayey silt with 40% heat shattered stones and occasional charcoal flecks.

Finds: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (hazel) from the potential trough (Site A) C14 (QUB-7342) 3235±45 BP (996–837 BC) Charcoal (hazel) from burnt stone spread (Site B) C14 (QUB-7343) 3860±100 BP (1253–1010 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

Archaeological testing in the area revealed two separate spreads of heat-shattered stone and two pit features that may have functioned as troughs for the purposes of heating water. The pits were not fully excavated therefore their interpretation as troughs remains speculative. Although only two dates were returned from the sites, it indicates that they may not have been contemporaneous. The sites were not fully investigated.

References:

Physical Setting: The site is located on the northern outskirts of Kenmare town in south Co. Kerry

Cultural Landscape: There are no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the two fulacht fia described here however there is a boulder burial (KE093-018001) and a stone circle (KE093-018) located c. 1km to the south-east of Dromvane. There is also a possible stone row (KE093-016) situated c 1km to the south and a standing stone (KE093-017001) 800m to the south-east.

Adjacent excavated sites: Second fulacht fia excavated 40m to south-west.

Pre-Excavation features

During archaeological testing in advance of a housing development, two in situ burnt mounds were uncovered. Both were unrecorded prior to investigation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed two mounds of heat-shattered stone located 40m from each other. A sub-rectangular wicker-lined trough was associated with burnt mound A, while a circular trough was located near the centre of the second burnt mound.

Site A

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound (C2) measured 4.9m by 7.2m and was 0.28m in height. It consisted of loose charcoal rich sandy silt with heat-shattered sandstone. The southern portion of the mound was truncated by a modern drain. Peat overlay the outer margins of the mound.

Trough: The trough (C20) was sub-rectangular in plan and measured 2.05m by 1.3m and was 0.25m deep. The trough was lined with wickerwork comprising of small horizontal rods interwoven around upright stakes. There was a stake in
each of the four corners of the pit. An internal division of wickerwork was also noted in the trough and this was contemporary with the side walls (Lynch 2007). A large timber post was recorded lying flat in the smaller division of the trough. The northern half of the trough was filled with dark brown silty peat, with occasional hazelnuts and wood fragments. The southern half of the trough was filled with a stony deposit of heat-shattered sandstone.

Re-deposited Natural: This was a compact yellow/white clay which was partially overlain with mound material and represents re-deposited natural from the digging of the trough (Lynch 2007).

Site B

Burnt Mound: This second burnt mound was located 40m south-west of the mound C2. C9 measured 6.4m by 4.64m and was 0.26m in height. It consisted of loose charcoal rich sandy silt with heat-shattered sandstone. The mound was truncated by two modern drains.

Trough: The trough (C15) was sub-circular in shape and measured 1.32m by 1.35m and had a maximum depth of 0.45m. The break of slope at the top was sharp, the sides were near to vertical, the break of slope at the base was gradual, and the base was flat. No wood or stone lining was evident and it filled naturally with water. The fills of this trough comprised of heat-shattered sandstone and loose gritty sand.

Finds:

Artefacts: Hone Stone from spread of site KY19e

Ecofacts: Hazelnut shells were recovered from the trough of site A.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: None

Excavation Interpretation

The site at Dromnevane consisted of two fulachtai fia sites located 40m from each other. Both mounds sealed a single trough and some post-medieval stone capped drains. No other features were recorded on these sites.

Burnt mound A sealed a well preserved sub-rectangular trough which was lined with woven wickerwork. The trough was also divided internally by further wicker and the pit was dug into natural boulder clay. The double wicker-lined trough also had a split length of round wood lying on its base. It is apparent that the division in this trough was an important and integral part of its function, but the actual nature of that function is elusive as yet (Lynch 2007). Wicker-lined troughs are quite rare in Irish burnt mound archaeology however a number of parallels can be drawn from the evidence presented Lynch. Several preserved wicker linings have been excavated in recent years (see Chapter 5). The internal division noted
in the trough is another rarity however similar features have been found across the country including sites at Curaheen, Co. Cork and Currinagh, Co. Roscommon (see Chapter 7). The circular trough excavated at the second burnt mound site seemed to be unlined and filled naturally with water unlike the wicker lined example. It was noted however, that during heavy rain, the wood-lined example held water quite adequately.

References:


Fig. 10.66 Plan of excavated wattle-lined trough with internal division at Dromneavane, Co. Kerry
Location: Townland: Caherleheen  Six inch map no: 38
Parish: Ballyseedy  NGR: 085271, 111945
Barony: Trughanacmy  Altitude: 10m OD
County: Kerry

Excavation Details:
Project: Housing Scheme
Site Director: Laurence Dunne
Consultants: Laurence Dunne Archaeology
Year: 2007

Physical Setting: The site was located in an extensive tract of wet, marshy land.

Cultural Landscape: This particular landscape, south of Tralee town is rich in recorded prehistoric archaeology. There is a standing stone recorded 500m to the north (KE038-102) along with a possible cairn at Ballyseedy (KE038-092) and a barrow (KE038-161). There is a cluster of five recorded fulachtai fia 1km to the east (KE038-127001-5). Excavations have also highlighted the importance of this area during the later prehistoric period. A Neolithic house along with Bronze Age structures and fulachtai fia were excavated in Cloghers townland roughly 2km to the north-west of Caherleheen (00E0065). Iron Age boiling pits were uncovered at Cloonalour (01E1119) and a multi-phased prehistoric site was revealed at Manor West townland roughly 1km to the north of Caherleheen. Bronze Age dates were returned from two burnt stone spreads at Skahanagh 1.2km to the west (KY20). A late Bronze Age cemetery and settlement site was uncovered at Mouthawk townland in the suburbs of Tralee town in 1996 (96E390).

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

Prior to investigation the site was identified by as a clearly visible mound in a wet, marshy area. The site was archaeologically tested as part of a pre-development testing programme.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Testing of the site revealed a mound of heat-shattered stone and three further spreads of burnt stone.

Burnt Mound: The previously recorded mound measured 24m by 11m and survived to a high of 0.6m. It comprised of heat-shattered stone, charcoal and black silty soil. A Middle to Late Bronze Age date was obtained from hazel charcoal.
Burnt Spread 1: 20m to the north-west of the mound, another spread of burnt stone was revealed measuring 3m by 2m.

Burnt Spread 2: A second spread of heat-shattered stone was exposed 15m north-east of the mound and measured 12m by 11m. An Early Bronze Age date was obtained from a sample of hazel.

Burnt Spread 3: A third spread was revealed 35m north-east of the mound and measured 6m by 5.3m.

Hearth: A possible hearth site was identified 73m south-east of the main mound and consisted of a sub-circular area that measured 1.2m by 1m.

Pit: The pit was circular in shape with gradually sloping sides and a rounded base. It measured 0.4m in diameter with a depth of 0.15m. A sterile fill consisting of soil and pebbles was noted.

Finds: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (Hazel) from burnt mound
C14 (QUB-7837) 2937±32 BP (1262 – 1029 BC)

Charcoal (Hazel) from burnt stone spread 2
C14 (QUB-7838) 3603±100 BP (2130 – 1783 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

The site was identified during testing in advance of a housing development at Caherleheen. A large mound of heat-shattered stone and several spreads were uncovered along with a possible hearth. No other pits or trough features were identified during testing however there is the possibility that these may lie outside the area of investigation. Two radiocarbon dates were obtained from hazel charcoal that suggest at least two phases of activity. The large burnt mound returned a Middle Bronze Age date while one of the smaller spreads produced an earlier Bronze Age date. It is unknown if the site was fully excavated however one can assume that the use of pyrolithic technology was employed at the site either through the heating of water for industrial purposes or the roasting of foodstuffs.

References:

Location: Townland: Rinawade Upper  Six inch map no: NA
Parish: Donaghcumper  NGR: 98900, 34300
Barony: North Salt  Altitude: NA
County: Kildare

Excavation Details: Project: Industrial Development
Site Director: Colin Gracie
Consultants: Valerie J. Keeley Ltd.
Year: 1995

Physical Setting: The site was situated in a wet area at the edge of an ancient turlough.

Cultural Landscape: Prior to archaeological investigations, there were no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the area.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of industrial development associated with Hewlett Packard.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a large spread of heat-shattered stone and charcoal that overlay four pits.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound measured 20m in diameter and consisted of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Pits: Four pits were revealed at the site which all retained water naturally due to the underlying clay marl. They each measured c. 1.5m in diameter with a depth of 0.5m.

Finds: None

Dating: None

Excavation Interpretation:

The presence of large amounts of heat-shattered stone and numerous pits would support the suggestion that the site functioned as a pyrolithic water-boiling area. The fact that the pits filled naturally with water would also support this hypothesis.

Reference

Location: Mayfield
Parish: Duneany
Barony: Offaly West
County: Kildare

Location: Townland: Mayfield
Parish: Duneany
Barony: Offaly West
County: Kildare

Excavation Details:
Project: Kildare Town Bypass
Site Director: Breandán Ó Riordáin
Consultants: Valerie J. Keeley Ltd.
Year: 1998

Physical Setting: No information available
Cultural Landscape: Prior to archaeological investigations, there were no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the area.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the Kildare town bypass. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a burnt area measuring 30m² with a depth of 0.15m. It consisted of charcoal-rich material and heat-shattered limestone. The trough pit was lined with wood (no details available) and the excavator suggests there were three phases of use. Charred animal bone fragments were recovered from the fill of the feature.

Finds: Burnt animal bone
Dating: None

Excavation Interpretation:
Although a very limited amount of information is available for the site, the presence of a timber-lined trough suggests that site can be interpreted as a fulacht fia used for pyrolithic water-boiling. The recovery of animal may indicate it was used for cooking.

References
Catalogue No. KD 03
RMP No. KD 038-076
Licence No. 99E0453

Location: Townland: Ballyvass  Six inch map no: 38
Parish: Castledermot  NGR: 276937, 188147
Barony: Kilkea and Moone  Altitude: NA
County: Kildare

Excavation Details: Project: Bord Gáis pipeline
Site Director: Niall Gregory
Consultants: Margaret Gowen and Company Ltd.
Year: 1999

Physical Setting: No information available

Cultural Landscape: Prior to archaeological investigations, there were no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the area.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of a Bord Gáis pipeline. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a levelled burnt mound that extended beyond the limits of the corridor. Three shallow pits and two troughs were exposed, all of which were filled with deposits of burnt mound material. Two flint scrapers were recovered from one of the pits. The troughs were oval and circular in shape (no dimensions available). A clay cladding was noted lining one of the troughs suggesting it had to be filled naturally with water.

Finds: Two flint scrapers

Dating: None

Excavation Interpretation:

The presence of large amounts of heat-shattered stone and numerous pits would support the suggestion that the site functioned as a pyrolithic water-boiling area. The fact that one of the pits had a clay-lining would also suggest that it was designed to hold water for boiling. Two scrapers were recovered indicating a possible prehistoric date for the site.

Reference

Excavation Details: Project: Celbridge Interchange  
Site Director: Fiona Reilly  
Consultants: Valerie J. Keeley Ltd.  
Year: 2001

Physical Setting: No information available

Cultural Landscape: Prior to archaeological investigations, there were no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the area.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the Northern Link Celbridge Interchange. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a large spread of heat-shattered stone that extended beyond the area of investigation. A possible L-shaped structure was also identified along with a pit. No trough was revealed.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound was revealed as a large spread of heat-shattered stone and charcoal-rich material that extended beyond the limits of excavation. No other information available.

Possible Structure: A series of post and stake-holes formed an L-shaped structure to the east of the site. A shallow slot-trench between two of the posts at the southern end may suggest a wattle screen formed part of the wall. The possible structure or windbreak continued beyond the area of excavation.

Pit: A circular pit (C59) measuring 0.6m by 0.45m with a depth of 0.16m was revealed at the southern end of the site and contained cremated bone. A saddle quern was also found in the fill of this pit.

Finds: Saddle quern and cremated bone

Dating: None

References

Cultural Landscape:
Prior to archaeological investigations, there were no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the area.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of a golf course. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features:
Excavation of the site revealed two separate spreads of burnt mound material, one of which sealed a sub-circular trough.

Site 05 A
Burnt Spread:
This spread was irregular in shape and measured 5.2m by 1.8m with a maximum thickness of 0.28m. It was truncated by a number of drains but was composed of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. A number of flint artefacts were recovered from the topsoil including a leaf-shaped arrowhead, a possible stone mould and twelve pieces of struck flint.

Site 05 B
Burnt Spread:
This spread measured 8.8 by 5.8m with a maximum thickness of 0.15m. It was composed of similar material to the last deposit, heat-shattered stone in a matrix of black silty clay and charcoal. An animal tooth and a flint plano-convex knife was recovered from the spread.

Trough:
The trough was sub-circular in shape and located in the north-western quadrant. It measured 1.72m by 1.34m and was filled with charcoal-rich material and heat-shattered stone. Twelve post or stake-holes cut the base of the trough surrounding the inner circumference of the pit. This suggests that pit may have been wattle-lined, which is a typical Early Bronze Age tradition in relation to burnt mound archaeology.
Finds:

Artefacts: Flint arrowhead was recovered from the topsoil in Site A, along with a number of other struck flints. A possible stone mould was also retrieved. A plano-convex knife or end scraper was recovered from the burnt spread at Site B.

Ecofacts: Animal tooth from the burnt spread at Site B.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: None

Excavation Interpretation

Excavation of the site revealed two separate areas of pyrolithic activity. Only Site B can be confirmed as a water-boiling site as a well-defined trough was identified. Morphologically, this trough can be interpreted as the remains of a wattle-lined examples, the majority of which are dated to the Chalcolithic and Early Bronze Age periods in Ireland. The recovery of flint tools would confirm a prehistoric date for the site. Site A may even be contemporary as this spread produced a flint arrowhead, possibly of Early Bronze Age origin.

References

Excavation Details: Project: Golf course development

Site Director: Eoin Sullivan

Consultants: Margaret Gowen and Company Ltd

Year: 2001

Physical Setting: No information available

Cultural Landscape: Prior to archaeological investigations, there were no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the area however two other fulachtai fia were revealed during this project.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of a golf course. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed the remains of heavily disturbed and ploughed-out burnt mound, truncated by modern drains. Two troughs were exposed at the site.

Burnt Spread: As mentioned previously, the spread was heavily truncated by modern activity including plough damage and a number of land drains. The average thickness of the deposit was 0.06m. It was composed of burnt stone and charcoal.

Trough 1: This trough was sub-circular in shape with gently sloping sides and a flat base. It measured 2.4m by 2m with a depth of 0.52m. It was filled with heat-shattered stone and charcoal.

Trough 2: This trough was kidney-shaped and measured 2.6m by 1.5m. It contained a fill consisting of burnt stone and charcoal.

Finds: Flint flake from burnt spread

References

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the Kildare Bypass. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed the remains of heavily ploughed-out burnt mound that overlay three pits.

Burnt Spread: The spread deposit measured 17.5m by 12m and was composed of heat-shattered limestone in a matrix of charcoal-rich material.

Pit 1: This pit was sub-circular in shape and measured 2.5m by 2m with a depth of 0.85m. The excavator suggests it may have originally been a natural hollow deliberately enlarged. It was filled with material similar to the spread.

Pit 2: The pit measured 0.95m by 0.7m with a depth of 0.6m. It was filled with similar material to the spread.

Pit 3: This pit measured 1.2m by 0.8m with a depth of 0.38m. It was filled with similar material to the spread deposit.

Finds:

Artefacts: A flint flake and a possible worked cobble
Ecofacts: 28 fragments of animal bone were recovered from the site consisting of cattle, horse and rabbit/hare

Dating:
Relative dating: None
Absolute dating: Charcoal (alder) from fill of pit 1
               C14 (WK-12802) 3465±61 BP (1940–1620 BC)

Excavation Interpretation
Excavation of the site revealed a heavily ploughed out burnt mound of charcoal and heat-shattered limestone. The pits identified during excavation may have functioned as pyrolithic water-boiling troughs, although they could have equally been used as oven or dry roasting pits using a similar technology. The presence of animal bone from the site may support a cooking function during the Early bronze Age.

References
Location: Cherryville
Parish: Lackagh
Barony: Offaly West
County: Kildare

Excavation Details:
Project: Kildare Town Bypass
Site Director: Thaddeus Breen
Consultants: Valerie J. Keeley Ltd.
Year: 2001

Physical Setting: The site was situated in a low-lying area near a stream.

Cultural Landscape: Prior to archaeological investigations, there were no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the area however a number of fulachtai fia were revealed during this project.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the Kildare Bypass. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed the remains of heavily ploughed-out burnt mound that that was cut by a number of lazy-bed furrows.

Burnt Spread: The spread deposit measured 7.5m by 2.5m with a maximum depth of 0.2m and was composed of heat-shattered sandstone in a matrix of charcoal-rich material. It was cut by a number of furrows and the mechanical excavator during topsoil stripping.

Pit 1: This pit was oval in shape and measured 2.85m by 1.9m with a depth of 0.27m. It was filled with heat-shattered stone and charcoal. It was cut by an agricultural furrow.

Stake-Holes: A group of twenty-five stake-holes were revealed in a clustered formation covering an area measuring 1m by 0.8m.

Finds: Two cattle teeth were recovered from the burnt spread

Dating: Charcoal (alder) from fill of pit 1
C14 (WK-12944) 3892±64 BP (2500–2190 BC)

References
Location: Townland: Cherryville Six inch map no: 22
Parish: Lackagh NGR: 269617, 211959
Barony: Offaly West Altitude: 85m OD
County: Kildare

Excavation Details: Project: Kildare Town Bypass
Site Director: Thaddeus Breen
Consultants: Valerie J. Keeley Ltd.
Year: 2001

Physical Setting: The site was situated in a low-lying with frequent bogs spreading from here to the River Barrow to the west.

Cultural Landscape: There is ample evidence of prehistoric activity in the area. A socketed bronze axehead of Later Bronze Age date was found in Kildare town, while two bronze spearheads and a palstave were found near the town. Many burial mounds ranging from Bronze Age to Iron Age in date survive on the Curragh, along with a linear earthwork from the latter period. South-east of the Curragh, on slightly higher ground, is the hillfort of Dun Ailinne.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the Kildare Bypass. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed the remains of two burnt spreads which overlay a number of features.

Site 09A
Burnt Spread: The burnt spread measured 13m by 6m and consisted of heat-shattered sandstone, black silty clay and charcoal-rich material. A stone axehead was recovered 8m from the spread. A number of other smaller spreads were revealed across the site, some of which contained animal bone. The entire site was truncated by numerous cultivation furrows.

Platform/Surface: This unburnt stony layer measured 11m by 7m with a thickness of 0.1m. The stones were unburnt sandstone and may have been laid down as a type of crude paving. The layer contained flecks of charcoal. The only find was a single worked flint.

Possible trough: This pit was identified as a sunken structure but more than likely represents a truncated trough due to the remains of stake or post-holes in each of the
corners. The feature was rectangular in shape and measured 2.6m by 1.64m with a depth of 0.2m.

Pit 1: This pit was oval in shape and measured 1.59m by 1.44m with a depth of 0.4m. It cut an earlier, shallow pit. It contained a number of fills consisting of silty clay and burnt stone. Animal bone was recovered from one of the fills. Five stake-holes cut the base of the pit which may represent evidence for a timber lining.

Pits: Approximately 23 pits were revealed at the site some of which had stake-holes cutting the base possibly representing the remains of timber-linings. No information available for these pits.

Stake-Holes: Groups of stake-hole clusters were also identified at the site. No coherent plans could be distinguished.

Site 09 B

Burnt Spread: This spread measured 11m by 9m with a maximum thickness of 0.1m. It was composed of heat-shattered sandstone and limestone in a matrix of black silty clay and charcoal. An earlier surface containing flint and stone artefacts was revealed under the burnt stone deposit.

Pit: This pit was sub-rectangular in plan and measured 1.32m by 1m with a maximum depth of 0.1m. The fill consisted of charcoal and burnt limestone. Two stake-holes cut the base of the feature suggesting the presence of a timber lining that no longer survives.

Findings:

Artefacts: Flint and other stone objects such as axheads were recovered from both sites.

Ecofacts: Burnt and unburnt animal bone was recovered from most features at Site A. It was identified mostly as cattle. 200 fragments of animal found in a peat layer Site B. Cattle and horse bone was also recovered from other features at the site.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Burnt animal bone from peat layer (Sit B)
C14 (WK-12809) 4472±59 BP (3360–2920 BC)
Bone (animal) from fill of pit (Sit A)
C14 (WK-12806) 3189±51 BP (1540–1370 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

Site A is similar to the other burnt spreads excavated in the Cherryville area, but it is the most complex example in the series, with at least 23 pits. The animal bone here mostly represents cattle. These were mainly kept for meat, and were smaller than modern cattle (the sample is quite small, however, representing as few as three animals). A small amount of bone had been burnt at a very high temperature. A number of the flint and chert objects are consistent with the radiocarbon dates, including the bifacially retouched chert tanged point. Some, however, were of Late Mesolithic date, and one was Early Mesolithic. These were found in the silty layer underlying the main burnt spread. The burnt spread on Site B was similar to the material found on Site A and a number of sites further to the west, dealt with in this
project. However, Site 6 lacked the troughs and pits found under the burnt spreads in the other sites. The only feature of this sort was [113], the sub-rectangular pit filled with burnt limestone and with two stakeholes in the base. This suggests a rather limited use for Site B, perhaps as a satellite of Site A. As was the case in Site A, there may have been earlier occupation on the site, as evidenced by the stone axehead and the associated flints. Burnt bone from the latter context gave a radiocarbon date of 3360–2920 BC. This is an unexpectedly early date, and may relate to activity on the site before the burnt spread.

References


Plate 10.50 Burnt stone spread and Neolithic stone tools recovered from Cherryville, Co. Kildare.
Excavation Details:

Project: Kildare Town Bypass
Site Director: Thaddeus Breen
Consultants: Valerie J. Keeley Ltd.
Year: 2001

Physical Setting: The site was situated in a low-lying boggy area not far from the River Barrow to the west.

Cultural Landscape: There is ample evidence of prehistoric activity in the area. A socketed bronze axehead of Later Bronze Age date was found in Kildare town, while two bronze spearheads and a palstave were found near the town. Many burial mounds ranging from Bronze Age to Iron Age in date survive on the Curragh, along with a linear earthwork from the latter period. South-east of the Curragh, on slightly higher ground, is the hillfort of Dun Ailinne.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the Kildare Bypass. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed the remains of a burnt mound composed or burnt stone and underlying natural marl. No troughs or pits were exposed however additional features could lie outside the area of excavation. The site was damaged and truncated by the construction of a haul road and by machinery during topsoil removal.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound was circular in shape and measured 10m in diameter with a thickness of 0.5m. It was composed of five layers of dark brown silty peat, charcoal and heat-shattered sandstone and limestone. Deposits of white marl, similar to the underlying natural clays was also noted throughout the mound material. A sherd of Early Neolithic pottery was found during initial cleanback of the mound material while another sherd was found at the base of the mound in a crevice of natural peat.

Deposit: Further to the south of the mound another deposit was noted however it had been damaged by machinery. It measured 4.6m by 1m and consisted of white marl, burnt stone and charcoal.
Surface: These stones were 0.5–0.10m across and were mostly rounded in shape. They appeared to have been laid down on the natural clay to provide a firm surface for working or walking on. A further sherd of prehistoric pottery was found here, and a leaf-shaped arrowhead.

Finds:

Artefacts: Sherds of Neolithic carinated pottery and leaf-shaped arrowhead. Deposit of cremated bone wrapped in bark.

Ecofacts: 454 fragments of animal bone mostly consisting of cattle

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (oak) from burnt mound
C14 (WK-12812) 5129±68 BP (4250–3700 BC)
Bone (animal) from burnt mound
C14 (WK-12813) 4695±59 BP (3640–3360 BC)
Bone (animal) from cobbled surface
C14 (WK-12810) 4954±41 BP (3910–3640 BC)
Bone (animal) from cobbled surface
C14 (WK-12811) 4944±73 BP (3950–3630 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

Initially Site 7 appeared to be a typical fulacht fia, with a low mound consisting of heat-shattered stone and charcoal-rich soil located in the vicinity of a stream. However, the feature proved to be atypical for a number of reasons. Firstly, the mound contained layers of white marl in addition to the usual burnt material. Secondly, there was nothing resembling a trough, nor were there any pits. The purpose is uncertain. It is certain that stones were heated, animal bones were discarded—some unburnt, others burnt at very high temperatures—and marl was dug up from under the peat. Most of the flints found here—blades, flakes and a leaf-shaped arrowhead—had been burnt, having evidently been thrown into the fire after use. The pottery consists of three definite pieces of shouldered carinated bowls, and other sherds, undiagnostic in shape, but similar in fabric. This type of pottery spans the period 3800–3500 BC. The unburnt bone mainly consisted of cattle and sheep/goat, with a slight preponderance of the latter in terms of minimum numbers.

References


Plate 10.51 Neolithic burnt mound at Cherryville 7, Co. Kildare.
Physical Setting: The site was situated in a low-lying boggy area not far from the River Barrow to the west.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the site prior to excavation however similar sites were uncovered during this project in the neighbouring townland of Cherryville.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

**Pre-Excavation features**

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the Kildare Bypass. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations.

**Excavation Record**

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed the remains a levelled and severely truncated *fulacht fia*. The burnt mound was completely removed and only survived as small patches of heat-shattered stone and charcoal. A possible structure was identified at the site consisting of a series of six post-holes and possible post-holes defining a rectangular area. There is no evidence of the date of this feature nor is its relationship to the burnt mound clear. A number of pits were revealed at the site however dimensional information is not available.

**Finds:**

Artefacts: Flint waste flakes and whetstones

Ecofacts: Highly fragmented cattle scapula. 37 fragments of burnt animal bone

**Dating:**

Charcoal (alder) from pit

C14 (WK-12814) 3838±74 BP (2490–2120 BC)

**References**

Location: Kilmorebrannagh  Townland:
Parish: Cadamstown  Six inch map no: 03
Barony: Carbury  NGR: 274377, 240484
County: Kildare  Altitude: 72m OD

Excavation Details: Project: M4 Motorway
Site Director: Deirdre Murphy
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd.
Year: 2002

Physical Setting: The site was situated in low-lying pastureland, close to a stream.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the site prior to excavation however similar sites were uncovered during this project. An Early Bronze Age burial was also excavated in the same townland.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M4 Motorway. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed the remains of a levelled burnt mound that sealed a number of features including two troughs and a possible hearth.

Burnt Mound:
The burnt mound was exposed as a spread of heat-shattered sandstone in a matrix of black silty clay and charcoal. It measured 13m by 21m with a maximum thickness of 0.21m. The spread was truncated in places by modern agricultural furrows.

Trough 1:
Trough (F035) was sub-circular in plan and measured 1.84m by 1.61m with a depth of 0.34m. A degraded wooden plank identified as oak lined the base of the feature suggesting the trough was originally timber-lined. It contained two fills consisting of charcoal-rich material and heat-shattered stone.

Hearth:
A possible hearth (F055) was identified immediately west of the trough. It was revealed as an area of bright orange oxidised clay measuring 2m by 0.9m.

Trough 2:
This trough (F065) was also sub-circular in shape. It measured 1.78m by 1.62m with a depth of 0.26m. The base of the feature contained the degraded remains of a plank lining identified as oak. The trough contained two fills consisting of a basal layer of ashy material and an upper fill of burnt mound
material. A sample of charcoal from this fill is dated to the Early Bronze Age.

Pit 1: This pit (F052) was oval in shape and measured 1.6m by 1.88m with a depth of 0.32m. The feature contained three fills, the upper deposit consisting of burnt mound material. The secondary fill consisted of dark grey silty clay and pebbles and contained a stone disc or possible bead. The basal deposit was composed as grey silty clay and pebbles.

Pit 2: Pit (F063) was sub-circular and measured 1.02m by 0.72m with a depth of 0.32m. It contained two fills composed of burnt mound material.

Pits 3-4: Two conjoined pits were also identified. F067 was circular in shape and measured 1.45m by 1.73m with a depth of 0.38m. It contained one fill consisting of grey silt and gravel. Pit (F066) was also circular and contained a similar fill. It measured 1.93m by 1.64m with a depth of 0.12m.

Finds:

Artefacts: Stone disc or bead was recovered from the fill of pit 1

Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (hazel) from pit (F065) C14 (WK-12814) 3838±74 BP (2130–1760 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

Excavation of the site revealed a truncated burnt mound, a number of troughs and pits. The presence of large amounts of heat-shattered stone and trough pits, some of which were timber-lined suggests the site functioned as a pyrolithic water-boiling area. The identification of a hearth would also confirm that stones were heated for this process during the Early Bronze Age.

References


Physical Setting: The site was situated in low-lying pastureland, close to a stream.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the site prior to excavation however similar sites were uncovered during this project. An Early Bronze Age burial was also excavated in the nearby townland of Killmorebrannagh.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

**Pre-Excavation features**

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M4 Motorway. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations.

**Excavation Record**

**Summary of Features:** Excavation of the site revealed the remains of a levelled burnt mound that sealed a number of pit features that may have functioned as troughs.

**Burnt Mound:** The burnt mound survived as a spread of heat-shattered stone, charcoal and black silty clay. It overlay the pit features on site. No dimensions available.

**Trough:** The trough was rectangular in shape and measured 3.38m by 1.8m with a depth of 0.45m. It had steep sides and a flat base and was filled with deposits of heat-shattered stone. A pit was revealed directly east of the trough. It was circular in shape and measured 1.2m by 1.1m with a depth of 0.28m. It was filled with burnt mound material which was in turn sealed by a deposit of light grey silt and fine ash. It may represent a hearth.

**Finds:** A flint scraper was found at the site during the initial site cleaning.

**Dating:** None

**References**

Physical Setting: The spread is located beside a small stream and within a marshy environment.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the site prior to excavation however similar sites were uncovered during this project. An Early Bronze Age burial was also excavated in the nearby townland of Killmorebrannagh.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M4 Motorway. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed the remains of a levelled burnt mound extended beyond the road corridor.

Burnt Spread: Only the western half of the spread has been exposed and measures 23m in length and at least 12m in width. It consisted of black silty clay and charcoal. The rest of the site was preserved in situ.

Dating: Charcoal (ash) from the burnt spread C14 (Beta-186491) 3790±80 BP (2460–1960 BC)

References

Murphy, D. 2004. Further archaeological works along the N4/N6 Kinnegad to Kilcock Motorway Scheme. Unpublished excavation report prepared by Archaeological Consultancy Ltd.
Location: Townland: Ballyburn Lower  Six inch map no: NA
Parish: Killelan  NGR: 277606, 281790
Barony: Kilkea  Altitude: NA
County: Kildare

Excavation Details: Project:  N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme
Site Director: Liam Hackett
Consultants: Headland Archaeology Ltd.
Year: 2006

Physical Setting: The site was located in low-lying pastureland was extensively drained in recent years.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the site prior to excavation however two trackways are recorded at Prumplestown Upper within 1km of the site (KD039-029; KD039-031). Several other fulachtaí fia were revealed during this road development.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed the remains of a levelled burnt mound which overlay a deep trough, an adjacent pit and a cluster of stake-holes.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound was revealed as a spread of heat-shattered sandstone with high amounts of mica throughout. The stones were in a matrix of black silty clay and charcoal that measured 11m by 4.5m with a maximum thickness of 0.2m.

Trough: The trough (005) was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 2.5m by 1.4m with a depth of 0.64m. It had a stepped profile down to a long, narrow flat base sloping slightly to the east. The base was under the water table, and could only be partially exposed for very short periods of time. Two long, narrow pieces of oak timber had been inserted on both sides of the length of the trough, at exactly the level of the water table, creating a narrow channel. Subsequent to the insertion of the timber rails the sides and ends of the trough were re-packed with a black-orange mix of heavily compacted crushed quartz and charcoal rich silty clay which narrowed the trough and provided a more stable working area. The fill of the trough was composed of various deposits of burnt mound material and stray pieces of unworked wood identified as ash.
Stake-Holes: A large cluster of stake-holes was identified on the south-western side of the trough. No pattern could be established however a double linear arrangement was identified. A substantial amount represented failed attempts to embed the stake in the stony subsoil.

Pit: A large circular pit (004) was revealed 0.45m east of the trough. It measured 1.9m in diameter with a depth of 0.28m and contained a number of silty fills and charcoal.

Finds: None

Dating:
- Relative dating: None
- Absolute dating: Charcoal (oak) from packing material within trough C14 (UBA-8687) 3493±31 BP (1900–1700 BC)
  Charcoal (hazel) from the fill of the stake-hole C14 (UBA-8689) 3549±31 BP (2008–1772 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

The composition of the spread suggests heating quartz and mica, similar to the heating of sandstone and other stone types to heat water. The construction used in the trough is also not typical of the majority of troughs found in association with burnt spreads. The haphazard arrangement of the stake-holes may suggest a seasonal or repeated use of the site, and may be the result of several similar structures built in the same location. The excavator suggests that it is possible that some form of fibre was being processed, perhaps willow or hemp, using the length of the trough to soak or boil the rods/stalks used in the production of rope fibres.

References


Fig. 10.67 Trough pit and associated stake-hole Complex at Ballyburn Lower.
**Location:**
- Townland: Ballyburn Lower
- Six inch map no: NA

**Parish:**
- Killelan
- NGR: 277883, 181393

**Barony:**
- Kilkea
- Altitude: NA

**County:**
- Kildare

**Excavation Details:**
- Project: N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme
- Site Director: Liam Hackett
- Consultants: Headland Archaeology Ltd.
- Year: 2006

**Physical Setting:**
The site was located in low-lying pastureland. No streams or rivers were identified nearby.

**Cultural Landscape:**
As part of the same road scheme, a number of other sites were excavated in the vicinity of Site E2566. These included a burnt mound with associated trough (E2563) 1 km to the northwest, a burnt mound with an associated timber lined trough (E2565) 0.5 km to the northwest and an unenclosed Middle to Late Bronze Age cremation cemetery (E2573) 0.75 km to the southeast.

**Adjacent excavated sites:**
None

**Pre-Excavation features**
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations.

**Excavation Record**

**Summary of Features:**
Excavation of the site revealed the remains of a heavily disturbed and truncated burnt mound and a two large pits and stake-holes interpreted as possible bath-houses.

**Burnt Mound:**
A spread of burnt material (006) was truncated by the ditches, leaving a 2 m wide and 9.80 m long strip of undisturbed burnt material in the centre. The remainder of the spread may have been ploughed out, as no trace of it was found outside the field boundaries. The spread was 0.18 m deep and contained black silty clay with frequent charcoal and moderate small burnt stones.

**Pit 1:**
The main area of activity on the site was focused on a large pit (007). It was circular in shape and measured 5.4m by 5.55m with a depth of 1.05m. The sides sloped gradually down to the level of the watertable where they dropped vertically to a flat base forming a sub-rectangular basin measuring 2.4 m by 2.5 m which would have been constantly inundated. A timber structure was constructed around the basin as evidenced by a series of 71 stake-holes. This basin contained two fills composed of charcoal and heat-
shattered stone. Animal bone, two rubbing stones and a honestone were recovered. A sample of charcoal is dated to the Late Bronze Age. The remainder of the pit was filled with various silty clays with burnt stone and charcoal. Animal bone, burnt bone and a possible anvil stone was recovered from the fill. An Early Iron Age date was obtained from this deposit.

Pit 2: This pit (013) was located immediately to the northwest of pit 1. It was sub-circular in shape and measured 3.4m by 3.3m with a depth of 1.10m. A drain or gully cut the pit on the north-western side and ran upslope beyond the limits of excavation. This suggests the pit was fed by water from an unknown source. The pit was filled with a number of deposits. The basal layer of the feature was a dark brown mix of gritty silty clay and organics, with a large concentration of brushwood in the northern half of the deposit, which seemed to be in no apparent order. This layer also contained small fragments of disarticulated animal bone and the unretouched upper end of a bipolar produced flint flake. The second fill contained a large deposit of brown silty clay and charcoal which also contained animal bone.

Water Channel: This linear-channel had a v-shaped profile and was connected to the pit (013) on its north-western side. It ran for 3.2m rising upslope before it extended beyond the limits of excavation.

Pit 3: Pit (010) was heavily truncated by a modern field boundary. It was roughly rectangular in shape and measured 0.8m by 2.5m with a maximum depth of 0.28m. It was loosely filled with black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. Groups of stake-holes were recorded around the pit arranged in a possible structural order, however the disturbance caused by the truncation of the drainage ditch eradicated the possible remainder of the structure; the surviving remains were arranged in a possible double row of east/west running stake-holes. Burnt bone was recovered from some of the stake-holes.

Pit 4: Pit (014) was irregular in shape and measured 3.1m by 3.62m with a depth of 0.98m. It was filled with varying deposits of silty clay, charcoal and stones.

Finds:

Artefacts: Two rubbing stones, a honestone and a possible anvil stone from the pit (007). A bipolar flint flake was recovered from the pit (013)

Ecofacts: Disarticulated animal bone (cattle and horse) along with red deer antler was recovered from the fill of the pit (007). Similar material was recovered from the pit (013). Burnt bone was also identified in a number of cut features across the site.

 Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Hazelnut (shell) from fill of pit 007
C14 (UBA-8690) 2489±39 BP (778–416 BC)
Charcoal (alder) from the fill pit 007
C14 (UBA-8692) 2822±34 BP (1112–898 BC)
Charcoal (alder) from the fill of tree bole
C14 (UBA-8691) 2927±33 BP (1259–1016 BC)
Excavation Interpretation

Excavation of the site revealed several possible phases of pyrolithic water-boiling activity. The site at Ballyburn Lower is enigmatic with a broad date range in the Late Bronze Age. The disturbance caused to the archaeological remains by the later ditches and drainage features may have unfortunately eradicated the most informative aspects of the site to the south and east of the central pit (007). Therefore, we are left with the structural evidence of the central pit (007) and its associated features (013, 008 etc) to form a reasonable theory on the activity carried on at the site. The main facts of the construction of the pit revolve around the level of available groundwater. The excavator proposes that the large pit may have functioned as a bathhouse or sauna however this does not seem plausible due to the size of the pit and the effort involved in emptying the pit of burnt stone (see Chapter 7). Large water-holes are now common at excavated burnt mounds and are usually found adjacent to troughs, serving as water-sources for boiling. Pit (C010) may have functioned as such a feature but was heavily truncated by later activity.

References


Fig. 10.68 Well pits and associated water-channel at Ballyburn Lower Co. Kildare.
**Location:**
- Townland: Prumplestown
- Parish: Prumplestown
- Barony: Kilkea
- County: Kildare

**Six inch map no:** NA

**NGR:** 276627, 182513

**Altitude:** NA

**Country:** Kildare

**Parish:** Prumplestown

**Excavation Details:**
- **Project:** N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme
- **Site Director:** Liam Hackett
- **Consultants:** Headland Archaeology Ltd.
- **Year:** 2006

**Physical Setting:**
The site was located in low-lying tillage field which sloped slightly to the south. The high watertable at the site made the field prone to flooding during the excavation.

**Cultural Landscape:**
As part of the same road scheme, a number of other sites were excavated in the vicinity of Site E2524. These were: E2626, a flint and chert processing site, c 800 m to the northeast, E2625, a possible prehistoric industrial site of indeterminate function, c 600 m to the northeast, E2628, with modern field clearance, prehistoric and post-medieval topsoil finds, c 850 m to the northeast. Two excavated Middle Bronze Age burnt mound sites, E2563 and E2565, where located between c 900-1200 m to the southeast of the site.

**Adjacent excavated sites:** None

**Pre-Excavation features**
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations.

**Excavation Record**

**Summary of Features:**
Excavation of the site revealed the remains of an over burnt mound spread which sealed a number of pits.

**Burnt Mound:**
The burnt mound (002) was oval in shape and spread over an area measuring 9.5m by 8m with a maximum thickness of 0.5m. It was composed of dark silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered sandstone.

**Pit 1:**
Pit (003) was sub-oval in shape and measured 2.7m by 1.3m with a depth of 0.45m. It was filled with black silty, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. A fragment of hazelnut came from the fill and charcoal is dated to the Early Bronze Age. A spring was noted in the base.

**Trough 1:**
This pit (004) was rectangular in shape with steep sides and a flat base. It measured 1.55m by 1.22m with a depth of 0.3m. It was filled with black silty
clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. One sherd of prehistoric pottery and two pieces of burnt bone were recovered from this fill.

Pit 2: Pit (005) was sub-oval and measured 1.9m by 1.1m with a depth of 0.2m. It was filled with black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. An animal bovine tooth was recovered from the fill.

Pit 3: This pit (006) was sub-circular in shape and measured 0.85m by 0.8m with a depth of 0.28m. It was filled with similar material to the other pits.

Trough 2: Pit (007) was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 1.9m by 1.35m with a depth of 0.25m. It was filled with black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. A sherd of thin-walled pottery was found in the fill of the feature. Charcoal from the fill is dated to the Early Bronze Age.

Pit 4: This pit (010) was sub-rounded in shape and measured 2.4m by 1.3m with a depth of 0.2m. It was filled with black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. It was truncated by a linear drain but is dated to the Early Bronze Age.

Pit 5: Pit (011) was irregular in shape and measured 2.15m by 1.6m with a depth of 0.28m. It was filled with burnt mound material.

Pit 6: Pit (012) was sub-circular in shape and measured 1.25m by 1.2m with a depth of 0.22m. It was truncated by a drain and was filled with burnt mound material.

Pit 7: Pit (015) was sub-oval in shape and measured 1.1m by 1m with a depth of 0.18m. It was filled with black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone which contained five pieces of animal bone.

Finds:

Artefacts: Two sherd of prehistoric pottery were recovered from the fill of two pits one of which may have functioned as a trough.

Ecofacts: Animal bone was recovered from the fill of several pits and was identified as cattle. Some pieces were burnt.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (hazel) from fill of pit 1 (003)
C14 (UBA-8693) 3810±43 BP (2458–2137 BC)
Charcoal (hazel) from the fill of pit/trough (007)
C14 (UBA-8694) 3873±34 BP (2467–2210 BC)
Charcoal (alder) from the fill of pit (010)
C14 (UBA-8695) 3906±34 BP (2474–2291 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

Excavation of the site revealed an extensive burnt mound site dating to the Chalcolithic. The presence of numerous pits, troughs and heat-shattered stone suggests that the site functioned as a pyrolithic water-
boiling location. At least two troughs were identified on the site, none of which produced evidence to suggest they were lined. The other pits may have functioned as ovens or roasting pits where a different technology was employed for dry heat. Animal bone identified from some pits may indicate that the site was used for cooking or feasting. Some unidentified pottery may have been Beaker ware.

References


Fig. 10.69 Burnt mound and underlying pits at Prumplestown Lower, Co. Kildare.
Catalogue No.  KD 18
RMP No. NA
Licence No. E2563

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**Excavation Details:**

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<td>Liam Hackett</td>
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<td>Headland Archaeology Ltd.</td>
</tr>
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<td>Year:</td>
<td>2006</td>
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**Physical Setting:**
The site was located in low-lying pastureland that was prone to flooding. Modern drainage channels on the site attest to this being the case.

**Cultural Landscape:**
As part of the same road scheme, a number of other sites were excavated in the vicinity of Site E2563. These were: E2626, a flint and chert processing site, c 800 m to the northeast, E2625, a possible prehistoric industrial site of indeterminate function, c. 600 m to the northeast, E2628, with modern field clearance, prehistoric and post-medieval topsoil finds, c 850 m to the northeast. Two excavated Middle Bronze Age burnt mound sites, E2563 and E2565, where located between c 900-1200 m to the southeast of the site.

**Adjacent excavated sites:**
None

**Pre-Excavation features**
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations.

**Excavation Record**

**Summary of Features:**
Excavation of the site revealed the remains of a circular burnt mound that sealed a number of pits.

**Burnt Mound:**
The burnt mound was circular in shape and measured 15m by 9.5m with a maximum thickness of 0.6m. It was composed of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered sandstone and limestone and seems to have been deposited around a large granite boulder. These boulders are common in the area but the central location of the boulder, with the mound built around it, suggests that it may have served as a focus point for activity in this instance. A pig canine and a cattle tooth were recovered from under the mound material. Two Early Bronze Age dates were obtained from charcoal from the mound.

**Post-Hole:**
A possible post-hole with in situ timber was revealed under the burnt mound and may have been associated with further posts however modern activity in the area may have removed this evidence.
Pit 1: Pit (023) was sub-circular in shape and measured 0.44m by 0.37m with a depth of 0.24m. It was filled with two deposits of burnt mound material.

Trough: The trough (003) was sub-circular in shape and measured 1.9m by 2m with a depth of 0.45m. It had steep sides and a flat base. Two pieces of timber were recovered lying on the sub-soil to the south-west. A possible post-hole was identified cutting through the basal deposit of the pit. The trough contained three fills with the basal fill consisting of a mottled mix of white ash and charcoal. The upper fills consisted of charcoal, bright orange grit and burnt mound material.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: 17 pieces of animal bone were recovered from burnt mound and were identified as cattle and pig.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating:
- Charcoal (hazel) from the burnt mound material C14 (UBA-8684) 3634±31 BP (2131–1907 BC)
- Charcoal (alder) from the fill of pit/trough (007) C14 (UBA-8685) 3620±25 BP (2111–1900 BC)
- Charcoal (oak) from the fill of the trough (003) C14 (UBA-8695) 3593±25 BP (2023–1889 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

Excavation of the site revealed an extensive burnt mound site dating to the Early Bronze Age. The presence of heat-shattered stone and a trough that may have been timber-lined suggests the site functioned as a pyrolithic water-boiling location. The burnt stone was deliberately deposited around a large granite boulder suggesting it may have served as a focus for activity. Animal bone recovered from the site may indicate that pyrolithic cooking was being employed possibly in a feasting context.

References

Location: Townland: Burtonhall Demesne       Six inch map no: NA
Parish: Prumplestown                   NGR: 278421, 180262
Barony: Kilkea                        Altitude: NA
County: Kildare
Excavation Details: Project: N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme
Site Director: Angus Stephenson
Consultants: Headland Archaeology Ltd.
Year: 2006
Physical Setting: A short distance beyond the northern foot of the small hill on which the
mansion house of Burtonhall Demesne was built in the early 18th century. The site was bounded on the south-west side by an embanked stream channel which flows north to the River Lerr.
Cultural Landscape: As part of the same road scheme, a number of other sites were excavated in the vicinity of Site E2567. This included a group of Late Bronze Age cremation pits (E2573) 500m to the north-west.
Adjacent excavated sites: Early Bronze Age pit

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed the remains of a burnt mound, a number of pits and a trough which was revealed in section. The full extent of the site was not determined.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound was revealed as a spread of heat-shattered stone and charcoal-rich material covering an area measuring 16m by 10m. The interface between the burnt material and the underlying glacial till was irregular and many of the ash-filled anomalies below the mound are likely to have been naturally formed.

Trough: The exposed portion of trough (C1035) was rectangular in shape and measured 2.1m by 1.3m with a depth of 0.17m. Five stake-holes were cut into the corners of the feature suggesting it may have been timber-lined in the past. Upcast from the digging of the trough was revealed adjacent to the pit. The excavator suggests that the trough was re-cut by a deeper, oval-shaped cut. This later trough appears to have been allowed to silt up slightly at the bottom. The upper trough was covered by a major black ash spread, which also filled the stake-holes.
Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: Animal bone identified as cattle was recovered from the trough.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (alder) from the fill of the trough
C14 (UBA-8475) 2332±31 BP (509–261 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

The site can be interpreted as a pyrolithic water-boiling location, possibly for cooking. This may be supported by the recovery of animal bone from the trough. The radiocarbon sample was taken from the upper fill of the later trough. This may relate to the second trough re-cut, therefore the site may have had earlier origins. This date would place this particular fulacht fia towards the end of the usually accepted date range for such monuments but not implausibly so. Although there was a considerable amount of disturbance of the uppermost deposits of the mound from animal burrowing, the context (1034) was considered secure.

References


Plate 10.53 Dispersed burnt spread and different trough phases at Burtenhall Demesne.
Location: Townland: Boleybeg Six inch map no: NA
Parish: Narraghmore NGR: 299038, 197138
Barony: Narragh Altitude: NA
County: Kildare

Excavation Details: Project: N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme
Site Director: Emer Dennehy
Consultants: Headland Archaeology Ltd.
Year: 2007

Physical Setting: The site was situated in a low-lying area and appeared to be located on a natural ‘platform’ within bog land and was surrounded by deep peat deposits. A stream was located to the immediate northeast; this had been re-routed, resulting in the truncation of the site.

Cultural Landscape: The only known archaeological sites in the vicinity of E2855 in advance of the current excavations were a possible mound (KD036-004) located approximately 650 m to the west-southwest of site in Boleybeg townland and an enclosure (KD032-042), located approximately 1.2 kilometres to the north-northwest in the townland of Narraghmore Demesne.

Adjacent excavated sites: Early Bronze Age pit

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed the remains of a levelled burnt mound located on a natural platform. It overlay a number of pit features, some of which may have functioned as troughs. The site was heavily truncated by field drains and a modern boundary ditch.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound was irregular in shape and consisted of a spread of heat-shattered sandstone in a matrix of black silty clay and charcoal. It measured 12.5m by 10m with a maximum thickness of 0.24m. It was situated on a natural platform and was heavily truncated by later activity.

Trough 1: This trough (047) was oval in shape and located 3m to the north-east of pit (044). It measured 1.63m by 1.23m with a depth of 0.27m. It had vertical sides and a flat base and was filled with gravel silt and occasional burnt stone.
Pit 1: This pit (044) was situated 11 m to the south of the northern limits of excavation. It was oval in plan, measuring 1.40 m in length, 1.05 m in width and 0.14 m in depth, with concave sides and a rounded base. The primary fill of the feature consisted of brown silty sand with charcoal and occasional burnt stone. Overlying this deposit was a layer of black silty sand with very occasional unidentified cereal grain. Two flakes of chert debitage were recovered from this deposit. The burnt stone was noted as being larger than normal indicating to the excavator that the pit may have been used for roasting. Charcoal from the upper fill is dated to the Late Iron Age.

Stone stockpile? A possible stone stockpile of unburnt sandstone measuring 2.51m by 0.08m in depth was identified on site.

Pit 2: This pit (053) was oval in plan and measured 1.7m by 1.4m with a depth of 0.2m. The feature was truncated by a field drain but was filled with silty sand, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Trough 2: Trough (048) was rectangular in shape and measured 2m by 1.7m with a depth of 0.3m. The fill consisted of black sandy silt, charcoal and heat-shattered sandstone.

Pit 3: Pit (040) was oval in plan and measured 1.05m by 0.8m with a depth of 0.18m. The single fill consisted of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 4: This pit (050) was oval in plan and measured 1.4m by 0.7m with a depth of 0.13m. It was filled with silty sand and gravel.

Finds:

Artefacts: Flakes of chert debitage were recovered from pit 1

Ecofacts: Unidentified cereal grain was recovered from pit 1

Dating: Grain (charred barley) from the upper fill of pit 1 (044) C14 (SUERC-25468) 1625±50 BP (AD 250–560)

Excavation Interpretation

Excavation of the site revealed an extensive burnt mound and a number of pits, some of which may have functioned as troughs for pyrolithic water-boiling. A Late Iron Age date was retrieved from a cereal grain from the upper fill of a possible roasting pit. A certain degree of caution should be applied to this dating evidence as the grain may have been intrusive to the site. The sample was also taken from the upper fill of the pit and therefore, may not have been secure. In the absence of other dating evidence, this cannot be interpreted as an example of a Late Iron Age fulacht fia.

References

Location: Townland: Mullamast Six inch map no: NA
Parish: Narraghmore NGR: 278261, 196057
Barony: Kilkea and Moone Altitude: NA
County: Kildare

Excavation Details: Project: N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme
Site Director: Angus Stephenson
Consultants: Headland Archaeology Ltd.
Year: 2007

Physical Setting: The site was located in low-lying wet pasture land between two small streams.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the site prior to the road development however several were identified in advance of the project. These included: Site E2856, located approximately 120 m to the southwest, which contained the remains of a burnt spread and a medieval settlement; Site E2857, located approximately 800 m to the southwest, which contained several possible Bronze Age structures and associated pits.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed the extensive remains of a fulacht fiadh that overlay the remains of a timber-lined trough, a possible platform, a possible structure and an ancient river-channel.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound (1003) was revealed as a kidney-shaped deposit that measured 13.5m by 13.15m and a maximum thickness of 0.4m. It was composed of black silty clay, heat-shattered stone and charcoal. Two cattle molars were retrieved from the spread. A sample of alder is dated to the Early Bronze Age.

Trough: Trough (1086) was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 1.55m by 1.3m with a depth of 0.25. A deposit of black clay silt with frequent small stones lined the base and sides of trough and may have been intentional. The sides of the trough were lined with split ash logs some of which displayed evidence of chop marks. A sample of one of these timbers is dated to the Late Neolithic/Chalcolithic period. Some of these timbers were displaced by
subsequent damage. The lining was secured by a series of stakes driven into the corners of the trough base. The gap between the trough cut and the lining was sealed by a deposit of black clay silt which contained the fragments of a possible wooden vessel. The remainder of the trough was filled with deposits of burnt mound material and organic material that contained burnt stone and 15 cattle bones and a red deer scapula. A date from this organic layer is dated to the Early Bronze Age.

Stake-Holes 1: A cluster of twenty-five stake-holes were revealed to the west and south-west of the trough forming two semi-circular patterns.

Stake-Holes 2: A second cluster of nineteen stake-holes were identified to the south-west of the trough. Two of these seemed to form very short linear alignments, while the third produced a small sub-square arrangement.

Stream Bed: An ancient stream bed was also revealed at the site. A deposit of yellow mixed with peat was identified at the base of the channel which contained wood fragments and animal bone. This was overlain with more peat which contained a larger quantity of animal bone.

Trackway: A dump of wooden sticks was discovered overlying the stream bed north of the trough. It was suggested that the material was intentionally placed in this area as a form of rudimentary trackway through the stream.

Platform: A later platform or trough base was also revealed on site. It was located 1.6m south-west of the trough and consisted of 7 decayed alder and hazel timber planks. The feature was rectangular in shape and measured 1.35m by 0.9m. It is dated to the Early Bronze Age.

Finds:

Artefacts: Retouched chert flake and debitage was recovered from the topsoil including a piece of prehistoric pottery. The remains of a possible wooden vessel was recovered from between the trough cut and the timber-lining.

Ecofacts: Cattle, pig and red deer bone was recovered from the stream bed while cattle and deer bones were recovered from an organic deposit overlaying the trough.

Dating:

Relative dating: None


Excavation Interpretation
The subsoil cut features, as well as the deposit of charcoal and heat-affected stone, combined with the location of this site in a marginal wetland area, has led to it being interpreted as the remains of a *fulacht fia* and associated components. Based on the faunal assemblage from Site E2858 it is likely that one of the primary tasks being carried out within trough (1086) was cooking. A total of twenty-nine bone fragments were recovered from deposit (1004) and although this deposit was quite widespread, all of the faunal remains were situated at its interface with the trough. Despite the lack of butchery marks, the element distribution - particularly for cattle which was the dominant species - is indicative of slaughter, primary and secondary butchery. A moderate amount of bone was also recovered from the deposits within the former stream bed. This may suggest that the waste material from the cooking process was being thrown into the stream as a means of disposal. Despite the apparent lack of knowledge displayed in the construction of the trough-lining, the extensive size of the resulting *fulacht fia* suggests prolonged use of the site, this is further supported by the evidence from radiocarbon dating, which indicates multiple phases of activity from the Late Neolithic to Early Bronze Age.

References


Fig. 10.70 Plan of excavated features including timber trough at Mullamast, Co. Kildare.
Excavation Details:
Project: N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme
Site Director: Gillian McCarthy
Consultants: Headland Archaeology Ltd.
Year: 2007

Physical Setting:
The site was located close to a field boundary on a gentle northeast facing slope of a small hillock. A marshy area was located at the base of the site in a natural depression between two hillocks to the northeast.

Cultural Landscape:
There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the site prior to the road development however several were identified in advance of the project. E2868 located approximately 500 m to the north where a series of prehistoric pits were uncovered and E2869 where a burnt mound was identified along with associated troughs, pits a well feature and a possibly earlier metalled surface. Several other burnt mounds were revealed in the neighbouring townlands of Blackrath and Ballymount.

Adjacent excavated sites: Bronze Age Cist burial and isolated pit filled with pottery and flint and stone tools.

Pre-Excavation features
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed the extensive remains of a fulacht fiadh that overlay the remains of a number of possible troughs and a well. An early cist burial was also excavated which was later re-used as a trough.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound survived as a spread of heat-shattered stone and charcoal that overlay a number of features on site including several troughs, stake-holes and a well. The deposit (C083) was irregular in plan and measured 14m by 12.4m with a thickness of 0.13m. Ten fragments of animal bone were recovered from this deposit. Another deposit of burnt mound material was identified on site that overlay the main spread. The excavator suggests in may relate to a later phase of pyrolithic activity, possibly relating to the re-use of the cist as a trough. 627 fragments of animal were associated with this deposit consisting of cattle mainly, with one horse tooth.
Trough 1: This trough (048) was sub-circular in shape and measured 1.44m by 1.45m with a depth of 0.52m. Four stake-holes cut the base of the trough mainly in the south-eastern side suggesting that the pit may have been timber-lined in the past. The fill in the base of the trough consisted of a light silty sand with small stones and charcoal. A sample from this deposit is dated to the Early Bronze Age. Overlying this layer were deposits of dark silty sand and heat-shattered stone.

Trough 2: Trough (079) was also sub-circular in shape and measured 2.8m by 2.2m with a depth of 0.32m. The pit was filled with varying deposits of dark silty clays, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Trough 3: This trough (075) was sub-circular in shape and measured 1.56m by 1.2m with a depth of 0.32m. A single stake-holes was identified immediately adjacent to the trough and was probably related. The pit was filled with varying deposits of dark silty clays, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Well: A well (107) was identified 4m south-east of the trough. It was oval in shape and measured 1.75m by 1.5m with a depth of 0.45m. Surrounding the feature, the ground gradually sloped towards the interior where it broke sharply on to steep sides which broke gradually onto a rounded but uneven base. The fill of the feature consisted of light grey sandy material, charcoal and decayed wooden remains. A high concentration of animal bone was identified around the well during excavation. 392 pieces were recovered identified as cattle, pig and sheep.

Stake-Holes: A number of stake-hole clusters were identified on site near the troughs however no discernable pattern could be identified.

Cist/trough 4: A stone-lined cist and a large oval pit were located 5.5m to the south of the trough. The pit was identified as a possible ‘court’ area for the cist burial. This burial was later disturbed and re-cut by another pit interpreted as a trough. It was sub-rectangular in plan and measured 3m by 2m with a depth of 0.7m. Three basal deposits were recorded for this feature; the first was located along the eastern most edge of the cut and consisted of loosely compacted dark blackish-grey clayey silt which contained moderate amounts of charcoal. The second basal deposit was similar to fill and was also located in the eastern area of the feature and consisted of loosely compacted blackish grey charcoal rich clayey silt with inclusions of charcoal and ash. Fifty-eight pieces of animal bone were recovered from this fill from which only one fragment of a cattle tooth was identifiable. Charred cereal grain and animal bone was found in the fill of the feature. A stake-hole truncated the western side of the possible trough.

Hearth: Located immediately west of the trough was a hearth defined by a sub-rectangular cut with evidence of in situ burning. It measured 2.2m by 1.2m with a depth of 0.3m. Two stake-holes cut the base. It was filled with red-oxidised clay, charcoal and black silty clay.

Finds:

Artefacts: A large amount of flint and chert artefacts were recovered from the site, most of which came from a colluvial deposit overlying the burnt mound material.
Ecofacts: Considerable amounts of animal bone were recovered adjacent to the well, from the fill of the trough 4 and from the burnt mound material. It was identified as cattle, sheep and pig.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (alder) from the fill of trough 1
C14 (SUERC-25843) 3810±50 BP (2460–2060 BC)
Charcoal (Pomoideae) from the fill of the cist
C14 (SUERC-25844) 3820±50 BP (1690–1440 BC)
Charcoal (Pomoideae) from the fill of trough 4
C14 (SUERC-25841) 3265±50 BP (1670–1430 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

The main focus of activity on site was centred around the Early Bronze Age burnt mound with its three associated troughs and the well feature. This first phase of activity also involved a storage pit which was used as a cache that incorporated a processing toolkit and projectile implements (both finished and in stages of production). Two later phases of activity dating to the Middle Bronze Age were quite unusual. The first was characterised by the presence of a stone lined cist placed in the western corner of a large ‘court’-like pit. This was succeeded by Phase 3, which included the recutting and reuse of the cist as a trough. Located throughout site were a number of isolated pits with the majority truncated by later post-medieval furrows. Both phases of burnt mound activity are associated with a relatively large animal bone assemblage that included among some of the earliest evidence of the presence of horses within the Bronze Age. In addition the rich assemblage of environmental evidence of cereal grains and weed seeds, demonstrate the presence of cereal husbandry within the area. Site E2867 was more than just a burial place and a burnt mound, as domestic pottery with residues and a cache of artefacts were recovered and although no further evidence of a settlement was uncovered on site, the possibility of that a contemporary settlement area is located in the vicinity of the site, remains high.

References

Location: Inchaquire  Six inch map no: 32
Parish: Narraghmore  NGR: 280790, 199422
Barony: Naragh  Altitude: m OD
County: Kildare

Excavation Details:
Project: N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme
Site Director: Gillian McCarthy
Consultants: Headland Archaeology Ltd.
Year: 2007

Physical Setting:
The site was located on a slight rise within a relatively flat landscape which overlooks Narraghmore Bog to the north. The site was bounded by primarily by pasture which was surrounded by tillage fields.

Cultural Landscape:
There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the site prior to the road development however several were identified in advance of the project. These include burnt mounds in and cremation burials.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed the remains of burnt mound, a metalled surface, a well and two conjoined troughs. The full extent of the site was not revealed during excavation.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound deposit measured 12m by 3m with a maximum thickness of 0.15m. It was composed of heat-shattered stone, charcoal and black silty clay. A lot of the material was removed due to disturbance and agricultural activity. It also extended beyond the limits of excavation.

Metalled surface: The burnt mound material overlay a large stone surface which was irregular in shape and extended beyond the limits of excavation. The deposit measured 19m by 18m and consisted of small sub-angular stone. The excavator suggested that the irregular shape of the surface might suggest that the surface may have been a natural phenomenon that was enhanced and utilised in prehistoric times, however later activity could also have played a factor in the preservation of this surface. A flint point of possible Mesolithic date was recovered from the deposit.

Troughs 1-2: The troughs identified on site both truncated the stone surface. 049 was sub-circular in shape and measured 1.3m by 1.05m with a depth of 0.3m. The
trough was filled with a dark sand, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. This trough was truncated on its western side by another trough (007). It was also sub-circular in shape and measured 2.35m by 1m with a depth of 0.3m. The trough was filled with deposits of sand, charcoal and heat-shattered stone, a sample of which is dated to the Early Bronze Age.

Well:
The well was located 6.5m to the south-west of the troughs. It was sub-oval in shape and measured 1.7m by 1.05m with a depth of 0.65. The pit was excavated below the water-table and was filled with deposits of dark silt, pebbles and clayey sand. Cutting the top of the well was a wider sub-oval cut measuring 1.1m by 0.7m with a depth of 0.3m. This pit may have provided better access for the well.

Pit 1:
This pit (018) was located 8m north-west of the troughs. It was sub-circular in shape and measured 1.6m by 1.1m with a depth of 0.6m. It contained two fills composed of sandy clay and heat-shattered stone and charcoal. Fragments of animal bone were recovered from the pit. A number of other small pits and possible post-holes were identified on the site but they may have been natural in origin.

Finds:

Artefacts: A possible Mesolithic flint borer/point was recovered from the stone surface.

Ecofacts: Animal bone identified as cattle teeth were recovered from the pit 1

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (alder) from the fill of trough 1
C14 (SUERC-25707) 3615±40 BP (2140–1880 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

The main focus of activity on site is centred around the Early Bronze Age burnt mound, which is also commonly called fulacht fia. Earlier activity on site was identified in the form of a substantial metalled surface which was truncated by later trough and well activity, associated with the burnt mound. It would seem likely that the construction of a metalled surface would be of benefit when undertaking activities associated with a fulacht fia, which are generally associated with water sources and located in water logged areas. Proximity to water seems to be one of the vital factors in the location of burnt mounds, with access to water on this site provided by a well (012), which similar to the troughs (007) and (049) truncated the metalled surface (038). Although the shaft of the well was relatively short and narrow, access to the feature was enhanced through the inclusion of pit (048) acting somewhat as a step into the feature.

References

Physical Setting: The site was located to the west of the current N9 on a level area between the base of a gravel ridge and Narraghmore Bog.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the site prior to the road development however several were identified in advance of the project.

Adjacent excavated sites: Post-medieval cottage and ancillary structures and ditches.

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Road Scheme. There

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed the remains of burnt mound and two pits.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound (030) was exposed as a spread of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone mixed with peat deposits. It measured 12.5m by 8.5m with a maximum thickness of 0.2m. The spread was heavily disturbed in recent history which is attested to by the presence of modern textile.

Pits:

This pit (166) was sub-oval in plan and measured 4m by 2m with a depth of 0.3m. It was filled with various deposits of silty clay with no inclusions. Pit (171) was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 2.45m by 1.55m with a depth of 0.38m. Several fills were noted in the pit consisting of varying deposits of silty clay and occasional stones. Both of these pits had a deposit of upcast material lying adjacent to them.

Finds: Animal bone identified as cattle teeth were recovered from the pit 1

Dating:

Charcoal (alder) from the burnt spread

C14 (SUERC-25406) 3845±50 BP (2470–2141 BC)

References


1192
**Physical Setting:**
The site was located on the western slope of a gravel ridge which extended in a north/south direction on the eastern edge of Narraghmore bog.

**Cultural Landscape:**
There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the site prior to the road development however several were identified in advance of the project. These include burnt mounds, one of which was identified 200m no the north-east (E2874).

**Adjacent excavated sites:**
None

**Pre-Excavation features**
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations.

**Excavation Record**

**Summary of Features:**
Excavation of the site revealed the remains of a horseshoe burnt mound that overlay a number of pits and stake-holes.

**Burnt Mound:**
The burnt mound survived as a large kidney-shaped deposit measuring 14.75m by 12.7m with a thickness of 1m. It was composed of a number of deposits consisting of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. A fragment of flint debitage and a number of animal bone fragments were retrieved from the mound.

**Trough:**
The trough (014) was located at the centre of the burnt spread and was subcircular in shape with vertical sides and a flat base. It measured 1.9m by 1.8m with a depth of 0.51m. Fifteen stake-holes cut the base of the trough surrounding the inner sides suggesting the presence of a possible wattle lining that no longer survives. The fill of the trough was composed of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. Further burnt mound material overlay this which contained a single pig bone.
Stake-Holes: Eight stake-holes were recorded south-east of the trough cut. These features possibly represented the remains of some form of windbreak or acted as additional support for the trough-lining.

Trough 2: Trough (049) was sub-oval in shape and measured 2.3m by 1.2m with a depth of 0.42m. The main fill of the trough consisted of silty clay, charcoal and stone. Three cattle bones were recovered from this fill along with flint debitage.

Pit 1: This pit (048) was located south of the burnt mound. It was sub-circular in shape and measured 1m by 0.8m with a depth of 0.31m. It contained a single fill consisting of silty clay and fragments of animal bone.

Pit 2/post-hole: This pit (032) was interpreted as a post-hole and was located west of the trough 014. It was sub-oval in shape and measured 1.38m by 0.64m with a depth of 0.92m. It contained two fills consisting of peat, charcoal and silty clay with wood fragments. Cattle and pig bones were also retrieved. A sample of charcoal is dated to the Late Neolithic period.

Other pits: A number of other small pits and post-holes were revealed south-west of the burnt mound. Pit (036) was circular in plan and measured 0.98m by 0.9m with a depth of 0.29m. Deliberately placed stones lined the base of the feature which was filled with silty clay. Animal bone was retrieved from this fill.

Finds:

Artefacts: Flint debitage was retrieved from the burnt mound, the fill of trough 1 and from pit (036)

Ecofacts: Animal bone identified as cattle and pig was retrieved from the fill of the troughs, several pits, a post-hole and the burnt mound.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (hazel) from the fill of the post-hole/pit (032) C14 (SUERC-27197) 4085±30 BP (2860–2490 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

Although the site was relatively small in scale, two defined phases of activity were identified. Phase I related to the burnt mound and its associated features. Radiocarbon dating results from posthole (032) show this phase relates to the Late Neolithic Age, returning a date of 2860–2490 BC. Phase II to the pits and spreads located to the south of the burnt mound and the stakeholes both isolated, and in clusters across the site. This phase may represent activities taking place in the environs of the burnt mound, but no concrete evidence exists to substantiate this possibility or to establish a relationship between these features and the burnt mound. The spreads (055), (056), (066) are positioned at the base of a slope and probably represent hill wash rather than any deliberate spreading of the deposits. Fifteen stakeholes were uncovered in trough, eleven cut vertically into the base, and four more cut into the sides of the feature at an angle. It is likely that these stake-holes represent the traces of a probable timber lining for the trough.

References

Fig. 10.72 Plan of burnt mound, trough and outlying pits at Ballymount, Co. Kildare.
Catalogue No.   KD 26
RMP No. NA
Licence No.  E2873

Location:       Townland: Ballymount       Six inch map no: 32
Parish:         Usk                              NGR: 281581, 201100
Barony:         Naragh                           Altitude: NA
County:         Kildare                          

Excavation Details: Project: N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme
Site Director: Robert Handbidge
Consultants: Headland Archaeology Ltd.
Year:           2007

Physical Setting: The site was located on the western slope of a gravel ridge which extended in a north/south direction on the eastern edge of Narraghmore bog.

Cultural Landscape: The site is overlooked by Brewel hill approximately 3 km to the east where an enclosure encircling a stone circle (KD032-02601/02) is located. There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the site prior to the road development however several were identified in advance of the project including numerous burnt mounds.

Adjacent excavated sites: Possible Bronze Age and Neolithic settlement evidence along with a crouched Bronze Age burial surrounded by a possible ring-ditch.

Pre-Excavation features
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the area revealed evidence of multi-period activity from the Mesolithic to the Bronze Age. Domestic Neolithic and Bronze Age activity was revealed in a small hollow consisting of several possible structures. Adjacent to this was a Bronze Age burial and the remains of a burnt mound which will be discussed here.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound covered an area measuring 18m by 16m with a maximum thickness of 0.25m. It was irregular in shape and was composed of several different deposits of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Trough: The trough (112) was sub-circular in shape and measured with a sub-circular projection to the north-west. It measured 3.9m by 1.9m with a depth of 0.85m. Forty-two stake-holes cut the base of the trough pit with most occurring in pairs. The base of the trough was filled with deposits of yellow sandy clay inclusions of charcoal and burnt stone. Twenty-nine animal bone
fragments were retrieved from the fill of this trough, some of which were identified as cattle.

Stake-Holes: Further stake-holes surrounded the trough including one post-hole and the excavator suggested they may have formed part of a superstructure.

Pit 1: Pit (061) lay adjacent to the trough and was sub-oval in plan. It measured 2.24m by 1.4m with a depth of 0.35m and was connected to the trough by a channel (286). It was filled with silty sand and gravel.

Channel: This feature (286) was short and linear and measured 0.7m by 0.6m with a depth of 0.27m. It adjoined trough (112) at its north-western end and feature (061) at its south-eastern end. Although defining the base and sides of this feature was difficult mainly due to the similarities between the fills and the natural which resulted in the lack of a clear cut. This may also indicate the presence of water activity flowing down from pit (061) into trough (112).

Pit 2: This pit (092) was located directly to the south-west of pit (061). It was circular in plan with stepped sides and a flat base. It measured 0.85m in diameter with a depth of 0.42m and contained a fill consisting of silty sand, stone and charcoal. Animal bone was recovered from this deposit. Three stake-holes were recorded close to this pit.

Finds:

Artefacts: Flint debitage was retrieved from the site

Ecofacts: Animal bone was recovered from the fill of the trough and from the pit 2. Some fragments were identified as cattle.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (alder) from the fill of post-hole C14 (SUERC-26267) 3905±30 BP (2470–2290 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

The burnt mound on this site consisted of several deposits of burnt stones mixed with charcoal and peat which were spread over a wide area. Located in the centre of the burnt mound was an unusual trough (112) with an associated water channel and pits. The two rings of stake-holes may have formed part of a wattle lining to the trough or else formed part of a superstructure that covered the entire trough which would enclose the steam which was generated. The water-channel may have served as an emptying mechanism for the trough, allowing used water to be released to a lower pit after a particular episode of use. The animal bone recovered from the trough suggests the pit may have functioned as a boiling pit for cooking.

References

Fig. 10.73 Burnt spread and remains of possible wattle-lined trough at Ballymount, Co. Kildare.
Location: Townland: Ballymount  Six inch map no: 32
Parish: Usk            NGR: 281581, 201100
Barony: Naragh        Altitude: NA
County: Kildare

Excavation Details: Project: N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme
Site Director: Gillian McCarthy
Consultants: Headland Archaeology Ltd.
Year: 2007

Physical Setting: The site was located on the western slope of a gravel ridge which extended in a north/south direction on the eastern edge of Narraghmore bog.

Cultural Landscape: The site is overlooked by Brewel hill approximately 3 km to the east where an enclosure encircling a stone circle (KD032-02601/02) is located. There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the site prior to the road development however several were identified in advance of the project including numerous burnt mounds. Located 300 m to the southwest of the this site, was site E2871 also partially within the townland of Blackrath identified a burnt mound with associated pits. Site E2872 (situated 200 m to the southwest) contained a large prehistoric burnt mound with associated troughs and pits (Twomey 2009a). Adjoining this site E2874 to the south was site E2873 and comprised of a burnt mound with an associated trough and occupational deposits dating from the Mesolithic through to the Neolithic and Bronze Age.

Adjacent excavated sites: Large stone pit interpreted as a ritual setting

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the area revealed evidence of multi-period activity from the Mesolithic to the Bronze Age. The most interesting feature of the site was a large pit lined with limestone blocks defining some sort of open-air space. The presence of large amount of butchered animal bones suggested a ritual significance possibly associated with feasting. This structure was broadly contemporary with the burnt mound activity.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound survived as a small spread of heat-shattered stone that overlay a number of hillwash deposits. The spread (003) was situated adjacent to the trough and measured 1.2m by 1.7m with a maximum
thickness of 0.08m. Two similar deposits were noted upslope from the trough.

**Trough:**

The trough (026) was located 3.75m from the stone setting. It was rectangular in shape with vertical sides and a flat base. The pit measured 3.15m by 1.8m with a depth of 0.56m. The basal fill of the feature consisted of dark brown silty clay, charcoal and small stones. Seventeen animal bones were recovered from this deposit. A sample of holly from this fill is dated to the Late Bronze Age. Covering this basal fill was a second thin fill, 0.03 m deep, which consisted of soft mid brown silty clay with frequent inclusions of charcoal flecking. Three unidentifiable animal bone fragments were recovered from this fill. This charcoal rich deposit partially extended up and around the sides of the trough in the eastern corner with both deposit and represented the charred remains of a timber lining to at least the base and lower half of the sides. Covering this deposit was a black silty clay, charcoal and burnt stone. A sample from this fill is dated to the Late Bronze Age.

**Stone Setting:**

006 was composed of a large sub-circular stone-lined pit dating to the Late Bronze Age. The feature had a shallower semi-oval shaped projection to the north-northeast. It measured 6.60 m north/south by 4.80 m east/west by 0.50 m deep, while the projection measured 3.30 m north/south by 2.35 m east/west to give the feature a total length of 9 m. A greyish/brown silty gravel filled the feature which contained large amounts of butchered animal bone identified as cattle, horse, pig, dog, red deer and sheep/goat. Flint debitage was also recorded.

**Finds:**

**Artefacts:**

Flint debitage from stone setting.

**Ecofacts:**

Animal bone was recovered from the fill of the trough identified as cattle along with large amounts of butchered bone from the stone setting.

**Dating:**

**Relative dating:**

None

**Absolute dating:**

Charcoal (holly) from the basal fill of the trough
C14 (SUERC-25287) 2855±30 BP (1130–920 BC)
Charcoal (hazel) from the second fill of trough
C14 (SUERC-25285) 2870±30 BP (1130–930 BC)

**Excavation Interpretation**

The close positioning of this trough (026) and its associated burnt spread (033) to the ritual stone setting (006) along with the overlap in dates also suggests that the two features may have been connected. The large amount of unburnt animal bones which were recovered from the fills of the stone setting (006) may have been cooked within this trough as part of the ritual feasting that occurred. This would also facilitate the use of fire within the ritual use of the stone setting (006) as there was little evidence for the use of fire within this feature.

**References**

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**Excavation Details:**

- **Project:** N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme
- **Site Director:** Liam Hackett
- **Consultants:** Headland Archaeology Ltd.
- **Year:** 2007

**Physical Setting:**
The site was located in the corner of a flat, low lying field, used at the time of excavation for pasture. A canalised stream was adjacent to the site, which was used to direct water to a small mill that was in use in the 19th and early 20th century on the nearby farm.

**Cultural Landscape:**
There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the site prior to the road development however several were identified in advance of the project including numerous burnt mounds. Site E2878 was 800 m to the southeast, and revealed an Early Bronze Age settlement site with a hearth and structural remains.

**Adjacent excavated sites:** None

**Pre-Excavation features**
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations.

**Excavation Record**

**Summary of Features:** Excavation of the site revealed the remains of a burnt mound, an old stream course, a trough and a number of pits.

**Burnt Mound:** The burnt mound was irregular in shape and measured 9.5m by 9m with a thickness of 0.25m. It was composed of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered sandstone. Two smaller spreads were identified to the east. One measured 7m by 3m with a thickness of 0.1m and contained unburnt animal bone.

**Trough:** The trough (053) was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 2.1m by 1.7m with a depth of 0.6m. It had vertical sides and a flat base which was cut by an oval-shaped arrangement of twelve alder stakes. The basal fill of the trough was composed of sandy silt, charcoal flecks and unburnt wood fragments. A sample from this deposit is dated to the Early Bronze Age. Overlying this deposit was layer of silty sand, charcoal and wood fragments which in turn was overlain by 11 pieces of alder timber displaying evidence of burning.
Overlying this was burnt mound material which contained burnt and unburnt animal bone.

Pit 1: This pit (034) was oval in shape and measured 1.5m by 1.05m with a depth of 0.2m. It was filled with black silty sand and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 2: Pit (003) was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 1m by 0.9m with a depth of 0.1m. It was filled with burnt mound material.

Pit 3: This pit (049) was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 3m by 1.5m with a depth of 0.5m. The fill consisted of burnt mound material with occasional burnt bone.

Pit 4: Pit (017) was oval in shape and measured 1.1m by 0.65m with a depth of 0.3m. The fill consisted of burnt mound material.

Pit 5: Pit (005) was oval in shape and measured 2.05m by 1.4m with a depth of 0.25m. It was filled with small stones and occasional animal bone.

Pit 6: Pit (007) was sub-circular in shape and measured 1.7m by 1.4m with a depth of 0.3m. The fill was composed of burnt mound material. A flint flake was recovered from the fill of this pit.

Finds:

Artefacts: Flint flake was recovered from the pit (007)

Ecofacts: Animal bone was recovered from the fill of the trough and the burnt mound material. Burnt bone was also retrieved from the fill of several pits. Some of this animal could be identified as cattle.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (hazel) from the basal fill of the trough (053) C14 (SUERC-26269) 3730±25 BP (2210–2030 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

Excavation of the site revealed a burnt mound that overlay numerous pits, one of which is interpreted as a trough for prolithic water-boiling. The pit produced evidence to suggest it may have been timber-lined originally as a number of preserved stakes were recovered. Animal bone was also recovered suggesting that the site functioned as a cooking area, possibly for feasting.

References

Location: Townland: Old Kilcullen Six inch map no: 32
Parish: Kilcullen NGR: 283644, 206511
Barony: Kilcullen Altitude: m OD
County: Kildare

Excavation Details: Project: N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme
Site Director: Linda Cagney
Consultants: Headland Archaeology Ltd.
Year: 2007

Physical Setting: The site was located in low-lying pastureland that had been extensively drained in recent times.

Cultural Landscape: The site of Dún Áílline (KD028-038001), a large hillfort referred to as the seat of the kings of Leinster in early Irish literature, is located 1 km to the west. There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the site prior to the road development however several were identified in advance of the project including numerous burnt mounds. A small burnt mound dated to the Early Bronze Age was uncovered on a site (E2888) located c. 800 m to the NNE of the present site, in the townland of Yellowbog Common.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed the remains of a shallow spread of heat-shattered stone, black silty clay. It measured 1.45m by 1.04m with a thickness of 0.09m. A sample of hazel from this deposit was dated to the Early Bronze Age.

Dating: Charcoal (hazel) from the burnt spread deposit C14 (SUERC-25845) 3690±50 BP (2210–1930 BC)

References
Location: Townland: Ballyvass Six inch map no: 32
Parish: Castledermot NGR: 276955, 188017
Barony: Kilkea Altitude: NA
County: Kildare

Excavation Details: Project: N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme
Site Director: Tara Doyle
Consultants: Headland Archaeology Ltd.
Year: 2007

Physical Setting: The site was located at the base of a gravel ridge that sloped gently to the north. This field was ploughed with the remains of a sugar beet crop in situ. A field boundary traversed the site to the northeast, dividing the site in two.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the site prior to the road development however several were identified in advance of the project.

Pre-Excavation features
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed the remains of a burnt mound badly disturbed by a levelled filed boundary and other post-mediaval activity.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound was sub-circular in shape and measured 13.5m by 11m with a thickness of 0.25m. It contained several deposits and was heavily truncated by a drainage ditch (007) and a field boundary ditch (009) dividing the mound into two. These deposits were composed of black silty sand, charcoal and heat-shattered sandstone. Burnt and unburnt animal bone identified as cattle was retrieved from the mound material. A late Mesolithic dated was returned from the deposit however the excavator suggests that the date more than likely represents the ground surface pre-dating the burnt mound or possibly intrusive material that became mixed up with the burnt mound when the field boundary was constructed.

Finds: Burnt and unburnt animal bone was identified in the mound

Dating: Humified wood from peat layer under burnt mound material C14 (SUERC-25323) 5655±30 BP (4550–4370 BC)

References
Physical Setting: The site was located in the southeast corner of a large, relatively flat, rectangular field which was under pasture prior to the excavation.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the site prior to the road development however several were identified in advance of the project including numerous burnt mounds dating to the Bronze Age. These included: E2953, which was located approximately 230 m to the north-northwest and contained the remains of a shallow burnt spread.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed the remains of a burnt mound badly disturbed and levelled by agricultural activity. It survived as a spread of heat-shattered stone that overlay a trough, a number pits and stake-holes.

Burnt Mound: The spread of burnt mound material was curvilinear in plan and measured 18.8m by 10.6m with a thickness of 0.26m. It overlay a number of stake-holes and was truncated by a plough furrows. It was composed of black silty sand, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. A number of animal bones identified as cattle and sheep were recovered from the deposit.

Trough: The trough (007) was oval in plan and measured 1.8m by 1.6m with a depth of 0.18m. It had vertical sides and a flat base and was filled with charcoal, black silty clay and heat-shattered stone. The upper fills of the trough contained cattle bone. A sample of this bone was dated to the Late Bronze Age/Iron Age.

Stake-Structure: A number of stake-holes were identified approximately 3-4 m to the west, southwest and south of trough (007). These seemed to form two lines.
orientated in a northwest/southeast direction for a distance of 7 m. At the south-eastern end of this formation another series of stake-holes identified. These seemed to delineate a sub-rectangular area, measuring approximately 8 m², which surrounded stake-hole. Although numerous arrangements could be discerned, when viewed as a whole the stake-holes did not seem to form any viable pattern that would indicate the presence of a structure.

**Finds:**

Artefacts: Flint debitage from topsoil

Ecofacts: Cattle bone was recovered from the fill of the trough and from the burnt spread.

**Dating:**

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Bone (animal) from the fill of the trough C14 (SUERC-27167) 2485±30 BP (780–410 BC)

**Excavation Interpretation**

The subsoil cut features, as well as the deposit of charcoal and heat-affected stone, combined with the location of this site in a marginal wetland area, has led to it being interpreted as the remains of a *fulacht fia* and associated components. Based on the faunal assemblage from Site E2952 it is possible that cooking was one function being carried out within the trough. Although the assemblage was too small for conclusive comparisons, it was noted that the species and elements recovered have been found at previously excavated burnt mound sites. The relatively large size of trough (007) meant that it would have been adequate for use as a bath, although the numerous stakeholes in the surrounding area are believed to be the remains of a rudimentary windbreak rather than forming part of a structure which would have enclosed the trough.

**References**

Location: Townland: Belan  Six inch map no: 32
Parish: Belan  NGR: 276902, 189801
Barony: Kilkea  Altitude: NA
County: Kildare

Excavation Details:
Project: N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme
Site Director: Redmond Tobin
Consultants: Headland Archaeology Ltd.
Year: 2007

Physical Setting:
The site was located on low ground, within the bend of a stream that flowed into the River Greese to the north.

Cultural Landscape:
There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the site prior to the road development however several were identified in advance of the project including numerous burnt mounds dating to the Bronze Age. These included: E2953, which was located approximately 230 m to the south-southeast and contained the remains of a shallow burnt spread.

Adjacent excavated sites:
None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features:
Excavation of the site revealed the remains of a burnt mound that overlay a trough that was partially lined with timber. Human bone was recovered from the topsoil and upper fill of the trough.

Burnt Mound:
The burnt mound survived as a thin spread (003) of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. It measured 13.4m by 8m with a maximum depth of 0.05m. A re-touched flint artefact was recovered from this deposit along with chert debitage. Two human tibiae were recovered during topsoil stripping, a sample of one is dated to the Early Bronze Age.

Trough:
The trough (006) was sub-oval in plan and measured 1.54m by 1.15m with a depth of 0.37m and had concave sides and a flat base. The basal fill of this feature was composed of light grey sandy clay that lay beneath a deposit of silty clay and sub-rounded stones. The remains of a poorly preserved timber plank overlay this deposit on the base of the trough suggesting that the pit may have been timber-lined in the past. The timber was overlain by a deposit of light yellow sand with frequent small pebbles and charcoal. A sample of charcoal is dated to the Early Bronze Age. The next fill in the trough was
composed of large heat-affected stones in a matrix of charcoal-rich material which lay beneath black silty sand which contained charcoal and small angular stones. Occasional sheep/goat bone was recovered from this deposit along with two poorly preserved timbers. Charcoal from beneath these timbers is dated to the Early Bronze Age. The upper fill of the trough was composed of brown silty sand with small pebbles and unidentified bone. Fragments of human skull were also recovered which were dated to the Early to Middle Bronze Age. If the trough were still in use when the skull fragments were deposited then the radiocarbon date provides a terminus ante quem for the trough activity.

Finds:

Artefacts: Flint debitage from upper fill of trough. A re-touched flint artefact was recovered from the burnt spread.

Ecofacts: Sheep/goat bone was recovered from the upper fill of the trough along with human skull fragments dating to the Middle Bronze Age. Human bone was also recovered from the topsoil which was dated to the Early Bronze Age indicating the presence of two individuals.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (Pomoideae) from the basal fill of trough C14 (SUERC-25337) 3830±30 BP (2460–2150 BC)
Charcoal (hazel) from the middle fill of trough C14 (SUERC-25341) 3660±30 BP (2140–1940 BC)
Bone (human) from the upper fill of trough C14 (SUERC-25251) 3395±30 BP (1770–1610 BC)
Bone (human) from the topsoil deposit C14 (SUERC-25252) 3865±30 BP (2470–2200 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

Based on the faunal assemblage from the site it is plausible that trough (006) was utilised for cooking. However, the identified species, namely sheep/goat and hare, represented only a fraction of the assemblage; a total of 95 bones could not be identified as either human or animal remains. Normally, from the find context of trough fills, it can be assumed that any unidentified bone recovered would come from animals. The recovery of the human skull fragments from the trough on Site E2953, however, makes this assumption more difficult to verify. The recovery of the human skull fragments may also represent a deliberate symbolic deposition within the trough indicating some kind of votive offering. The deliberate, possibly symbolic deposition of human remains within the trough at Site E2953 suggests that this part of Belan was considered to be appropriate for sacred activity. The site is therefore an important addition to the Early Bronze Age evidence for this type of votive offering in relation to burnt mound activities.

References

Catalogue No.  KD 33
RMP No. NA
Licence No. E2981

Location: Townland: Moone  Six inch map no: 36
Parish: Moone  NGR: 276988, 194779
Barony: Kilkea  Altitude: m OD
County: Kildare

Excavation Details: Project: N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme
Site Director: Emer Dennehy
Consultants: Headland Archaeology Ltd.
Year: 2007

Physical Setting: The site was located in the southwest corner of the field, in a low-lying wet area prone to flooding from the stream and deterioration of the site had occurred as a result of the congregation of livestock to access the stream water.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the site prior to the road development however several were identified in advance of the project including numerous burnt mounds dating to the Bronze Age. This includes a multi-phased site immediately adjacent to the west of site E2981. Site E2982 incorporated burnt mound material, several episodes of habitation and the remains of a children’s burial ground.

Adjacent excavated sites: Slag reduction pits were noted on the western banks of the pond and excavated under licence E2982

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed the extensive remains of a burnt mound that overlay a large amount of pits. It lay adjacent to a large natural pond and several phases of activity were identified.

Burnt mound: The burnt mound material was concentrated on the western half of the site and several deposits of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered sandstone and limestone were noted. No overall dimensions available.

Trough 1: This trough (038) was irregular in shape and measured 3.86m by 3.2m with a depth of 0.32m. It contained three fills containing silty clay and gravel material. Frequent fragments of animal bone were retrieved which were identified as cow, pig, horse and sheep/goat. The upper deposit consisted of brown, peaty clay with bone, wood and slag deposits. Environmental remains included dock and sedge plant seeds and beetle fragments. Two worked pieces of oak were also identified along with a single human bone identified.
as the right humerus of an adult male. This was dated to the Iron Age. The slag identified in the trough may relate to nearby iron-working activity.

Trough 2: Trough (032) measured 3.1m by 2.72m with a depth of 0.34m and contained two fills consisting of brown peaty clay and silty clay with frequent stones. The basal deposit contained animal bone identified as cattle.

Trough 3: This trough (120) was sub-circular in plan and measured 1.7m by 1.6m with a depth of 0.29m. It contained two fills with the upper layer consisting of sandy clay and loose heat-affected stones. The basal deposit (119) comprised of mid-greyish brown clayey loam deposits with occasional unburnt medium-sized stones, brushwood and low frequencies of bone. Decayed wood comprising brushwood from a blackthorn or wild plum tree and possible structural elements, were also present. Fragmented wooden stakes and planks were retrieved at the base of trough (120); they comprised of a mixture of oak, hazel, birch, blackthorn, hawthorn and alder and some displayed tool marks. Fragments of cow and horse bone were also retrieved from the basal deposit along with the primary off-cut of antler.

Well: A possible well (004) was identified 3m from the trough (038). It was sub-oval in plan and measured 1.7m by 1.57m with a depth of 0.38m and was cut into the natural pond. The upper fill was composed of burnt mound material. The basal fill (002) comprised firmly compacted dark brown clay; the animal bone retrieved from the two fills and was identified as originating from cow, horse, sheep, goat and pig. A charcoal sample from the base of the well is dated to the Iron Age.

Trough 4: This trough (010) was oval in plan and measured 2.8m by 1.9m with a depth of 0.49m. It contained two fills, the upper fill of which was composed of charcoal-enriched sandy clay with frequent stones, animal bone (horse and cow) and wood fragments. The basal deposit was composed of brown/grey silty clay with no inclusions. The eastern side of the pit was cut by a post-hole that contained burnt and unburnt animal bone while the north-western side was cut by a small pit.

Trough 5: Trough (110) was oval in shape and measured 1.1m in diameter with a depth of 0.6m. It contained four fills with the basal deposit consisting of a mixture of brushwood and peat deposit with occasional inclusions of unidentified mammal bone. The other fills were composed of silty clays with animal bone. Charcoal from this pit is dated to the Iron Age.

Pit 1: This pit (093) was circular in shape and measured 1.24m in diameter with a depth of 0.13m. It contained a single fill composed of burnt mound material.

Pit 2: Pit (102) was oval in shape and measured 0.9m by 0.59m with a depth of 0.24m. The single fill was a loose mid-orang/ brown charcoal enriched silty sand with occasional inclusions of coarse pebbles and unidentified mammal bone. The pit was cut by another smaller pit on its northern side.

Trough 5: This trough (015) was sub-rectangular in shape and was stratigraphically later than the previous examples. It measured 2.25m by 2.1m with a depth of 0.64m and contained six fills consisting of waterlogged deposits, charcoal and frequent burnt stone. Wood deposits and animal bone was also retrieved from the deposit along with a work horse metatarsal.
Stake-Holes: A small cluster of post-holes were identified adjacent to the trough 015. The northeast/southwest alignment of these postholes and the stake-hole support the theory of the presence of a standing frame or rack.

Stockpile: A possible stone stockpile of unburnt sandstone and limestone was identified in the north-west corner of the pond. Some heat-shattered stone fragments and animal bone was also recognised amongst the deposit.

Finds:

Artefacts: A worked horse metatarsal and an antler off-cut

Ecofacts: Animal bone was identified as cattle, pig, deer and sheep/goat. These were recovered from the fill of the troughs. A human femur from an adult male was also recovered from the fill of trough 1.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Bone (human) from the fill of trough 1
C14 (SUERC-24993) 2165±30 BP (360–110 BC)
Charcoal (hazel) from the fill of Well
C14 (SUERC-24993) 2110±50 BP (360–AD 10)
Charcoal (alder) from the fill of trough (110)
C14 (SUERC-25333) 2155±50 BP (360–90 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

Excavation revealed the remains of an Iron Age burnt mound located within a small natural pond. The site measured 35 m east/west by 35 m with a total number of 157 contexts recorded. A number of troughs were identified, some of which were cut into the base of the pond; in addition, one well, several pits, postholes and stake-holes were also recorded. The waterlogged wood retrieved from the site possibly functioned as a lining for the troughs and or as a possible superstructure, such as a spit. The exploitation of animals as a food source is represented by the large assemblage of faunal material retrieved from a variety of contexts; burnt mound deposits, the well, the troughs, pits and postholes. The assemblage is dominated by cattle, followed by horse, sheep or goat and pig and a few fragments were identified as hare and red deer. Approximately 10% of the animal bone was burnt and some specimens displayed evidence of carnivore gnawing and another four bones exhibited butchery marks, suggesting that skinning, carcass dismemberment and filleting were practised on site.

References

Location: Gallowshill
Parish: St. Michaels
Barony: Narragh
County: Kildare

Excavation Details:
Project: N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme
Site Director: Lynda Cagney
Consultants: Headland Archaeology Ltd.
Year: 2007

Physical Setting:
The site was located in a large, flat, sub-rectangular field, just south of the boundary between Barkersford and Gallowshill townlands.

Cultural Landscape:
The only known archaeological sites in the vicinity of E2993 in advance of the current road development were two burials (KD035-045001 and KD035-045002) recorded in Gallowshill townland 650 m to the south, and an enclosure (KD035-040) was identified 750 m to the east in Foxhill townland.

Adjacent excavated sites:
None

Pre-Excavation features
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Road Scheme.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features:
Excavation of the site revealed the remains of a possible trough and deposits of burnt mound material. The site was truncated by a number of furrows.

Burnt Spreads:
Four spreads of burnt mound material were revealed at the site. 005 was irregular and measured 0.65m by 0.48m with a thickness of 0.05m. It was composed of grey silty, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. 011 measured 0.55m by 0.33m with a thickness of 0.08m while 008 measured 0.7m by 0.7m with a depth of 0.1m. 013 measured 0.93 by 0.7 with a thickness of 0.07m.

Trough:
The trough (003) was sub-oval in shape with vertical sides and a flat base. It measured 1.65 by 0.96 with a depth of 0.6m and contained five deposits of dark silty clays, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. The trough was truncated by a modern field drain.

Dating:
Charcoal (hazel) from the fill of trough
C14 (SUERC-25454) 3695±50 BP (2280–1940 BC)

References
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<td>Site Director:</td>
<td>Tara Doyle</td>
</tr>
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<td>Physical Setting:</td>
<td>The site was situated on agricultural land that sloped gently from south to north; a drainage ditch was located to the immediate south.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cultural Landscape:</td>
<td>There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the burnt mound prior to investigations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adjacent excavated sites:</td>
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**Pre-Excavation features**

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations.

**Excavation Record**

**Summary of Features:** Excavation of the site revealed the remains of a burnt mound and two troughs, one of which produced evidence to suggest it may have been timber-lined in the past.

**Burnt Mound:** All features identified at the site were overlain with the remains of a burnt mound deposit that measured 10.25m by 6.75m with a thickness of 0.14m. It was composed of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered sandstone. It consisted of two main deposits.

**Trough 1:** Trough (021) was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 2.95m by 1.1m with a depth of 0.43m. Two stake-holes cut the base of the trough suggesting it may have been timber-lined. The trough contained two fills consisting of yellow/grey white ash and gravel and burnt mound material.

**Trough 2:** This trough (012) was also sub-rectangular in shape and measured 1.7m by 0.55m with a depth of 0.30m. It contained two fills composed of burnt mound material. A single stake-hole was identified adjacent to the trough.

**Trough 3:** Trough (024) was sub-oval in shape and measured 1.7m by 1.32m with a depth of 0.35m. Twelve stake-holes and two possible post-holes cut the base of the trough forming a circle around the perimeter indicating the presence of...
a possible wattle-lining. The trough was filled with deposits of burnt mound material.

**Pit 1:**
This pit (062) was oval in shape with vertical sides and a flat base. It measured 0.35m by 0.25m with a depth of 0.18m. It was filled with black silty clay. Two post-holes were identified close to the pit.

**Finds:**

- **Artefacts:** Thumbnail scraper
- **Ecofacts:** None

**Dating:**

- Relative dating: None
- Absolute dating: None

**Excavation Interpretation**

Excavation of the site revealed a thin spread of waste-firing material associated with a pyrolithic technology. The identification of a number of troughs on site would suggest that this technology was a water-boiling one. Internal stake-holes identified in the base of these troughs would imply they were originally timber-lined. One example may have been wattle-lined, a technique usually only found in Chalcolithic and Early Bronze Age troughs. A thumbnail scraper found during testing would support this suggestion. The site can be interpreted as a water-boiling area possibly for cooking.

**References**

**Location:**

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**Excavation Details:**

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<td>Site Director:</td>
<td>Liam Hackett</td>
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<td>Headland Archaeology Ltd.</td>
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<td>Year:</td>
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</table>

**Physical Setting:**

The site was situated on agricultural land that sloped gently from south to north; a drainage ditch was located to the immediate south.

**Cultural Landscape:**

There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the burnt mound prior to investigations however a number of similar sites were revealed in the environs of the site during the project.

**Adjacent excavated sites:**

*fulacht fia* excavated 50m to the south (KD37)

**Pre-Excavation features**

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations.

**Excavation Record**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary of Features</th>
<th>Excavation of the site revealed the remains of a burnt mound, a trough, a pit and a number of stake-holes.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Burnt Mound:</td>
<td>The burnt mound was oval in shape and measured 11.3m by 8.9m with a thickness of 0.38m. It was composed of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. A worked flint artefact and animal bone was found in the deposit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trough:</td>
<td>The trough (012) was oval in shape and measured 1.8m by 0.7m with a depth of 0.16m. Two timbers lined the base of the pit suggesting it may have originally been timber-lined in the past. The trough was filled with two deposits of silty clays and heat-shattered stone. A modern drainage channel truncated the trough.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pit:</td>
<td>Pit (007) was oval in shape and measured 1.8m by 1.1m with a depth of 0.2m. It was filled with black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stake-Holes:</td>
<td>A north/south running linear arrangement of four stake-holes and was located along the east edge and side of oval pit. The excavator suggests that they may have acted as a rack or small fence-line.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Finds:

Artefacts: Worked flint flake was recovered from the burnt spread
Ecofacts: Animal bone was recovered from the burnt mound

 Dating:

Relative dating: None
Absolute dating: Charcoal (*pomoideae*) from modern drainage ditch?
C14 (SUERC-25267) 3560±30 BP (2020–1770 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

Excavation of the site revealed a thin spread of waste-firing material associated with a pyrolithic technology. The identification of a number of troughs on site would suggest that this technology was a water-boiling one. Internal timbers in the base of the troughs would imply its was originally timber-lined, however it was truncated by a modern drain. The site can be interpreted as a water-boiling area possibly for cooking. This is supported by the recovery of animal bone from the burnt mound.

References

Physical Setting: The site was situated at the southern end of a low-lying rough pasture field. The waterlogged conditions of the ground necessitated the almost constant need for a pump to be used.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the burnt mound prior to investigations however a number of similar sites were revealed in the environs of the site during the project.

Adjacent excavated sites: *fulacht fia* excavated 50m to the north (KD38)

### Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations.

### Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed the remains of two burnt mounds situated 10m apart.

#### Site KD 37A

Burnt Mound: This burnt mound (004) was oval in plan and was not fully revealed during the excavation as it lay outside the road corridor in private land. The exposed portion measured 18.3m by 11.75m with a thickness of 0.9m. It was composed of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. A large granite boulder (3.2m by 2.3m) was partly covered by the northern portion of the mound. Though its top surface was sloping it would have provided a convenient dry platform for working or preparation. This may have influenced the siting of the burnt mound at this location.

Pit: Pit (018) was revealed underlying the mound. It was sub-oval in plan and measured 1.46m by 0.74m with a depth of 0.2m. It was filled with black sandy silt, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

#### Site KD37B

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Catalogue No.  KD 37a-b

RMP No. NA

Licence No.  E2956
Burnt Mound: This mound was identified 10m to the south-west. It was irregular in plan and measured 11.26m by 7.24m with a thickness of 0.5m. It was composed of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Trough: The trough (008) was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 1.8m by 1.14m with a depth of 0.22m. It had vertical aides and a flat base with a stake-hole in three of its corners suggesting it may have been lined. The pit was filled with burnt mound material.

Pit 1: Pit (016) was oval in shape and measured 0.52m by 0.42m with a depth of 0.2m. It was filled with black sandy silt, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 2: This pit (006) was sub-oval in shape and measured 1.17m by 0.52m with a depth of 0.18m. It was filled with burnt mound material.

Pit 3: Pit (010) was sub-circular in shape and measured 2m by 1m with a depth of 0.33m. It was filled with peaty clay, charcoal and unburnt stone.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Dating:

Absolute dating: Charcoal (*pomoideae*) from fill of trough (008)
C14 (SUERC-25272) 2760±30 BP (1000–820 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

Excavation of the area revealed two burnt mounds revealed as spreads of waste-firing material associated with a pyrolithic technology. The identification of a well-defined trough with evidence of internal stake-holes at Site B suggest that this technology was a water-boiling one. This feature is dated to the Late Bronze Age and is supported by the lining technique, common during that time in the Bronze Age (see Chapter 5). Site A was not fully revealed therefore a number of cut features may lie outside the area of excavation. The large granite boulder in the mound may also be of some significance providing a focal point in the landscape to carry put boiling activities. The sites may have served as water-boiling locations and given may not be contemporary in date given other evidence now evident for burnt mound clusters (see Chapter 6).

References

Location: Townland: Prumplestown Lower
Parish: Castledermot
Barony: Kilkea
County: Kildare

Excavation Details: Project: N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme
Site Director: Patricia Long
Consultants: Headland Archaeology Ltd.
Year: 2007

Physical Setting: The site was located on a northeast/southwest orientated gravel ridge on the south side of the River Lerr. The River Lerr was bordering the north of the site but had been culverted and used as a mill race in the 19th century.

Cultural Landscape: The only recorded prehistoric site in the vicinity of the excavation was a cist burial located 300m to the north-east (KD040-003). Site E2966 was located in Woodlands West, directly across the River Lerr to the north of E2967. The archaeological investigations carried out here identified a multi-period site, with evidence of a Mesolithic Bann flake, three circular ring-ditches, a horseshoe-shaped-ditch, posthole alignments, cremation burials, metalworking, post-medieval field boundaries and gravel-extraction pits. Its location directly across the river from E2967 suggests that the two sites were closely linked and essentially constituted a single archaeological landscape.

Adjacent excavated sites: Potential Bronze Age settlement, pit circle, ring ditch, cremation burials and trackways.

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a pit containing a cache of three Mesolithic artefacts, a causewayed ring-ditch, a pit circle, cremation burials, a house structure, a curvilinear ditch, four inhumation burials, wooden trackways, three burnt mound deposits and a trough.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound survived as an irregular spread of heat-shattered stone, black silty clay and charcoal. It measured 9.25m by 6.6m with a maximum thickness of 0.11m.

Trough: The trough (3017) was sub-circular in shape with near vertical sides and a flat base. It measured 1.05m by 0.94m with a depth of 0.3m. The earliest fill within the cut was dark grey sandy silt. This contained frequent heat affected stones and charcoal flecking and measured 0.04 m in depth. Evidence of a
possible lining was identified in the form of vertical stakes and horizontal wood chips, which formed a latticelike structure around the edges of the cut.

**Trackway:**

The remains of a timber and brushwood trackway were identified adjacent to the trough and burnt spread. This area also produced large amounts of animal bone and wooden artefacts.

**Finds:**

**Artefacts:**  Late Bronze Age socketed axe haft

**Ecofacts:**  None

**Dating:**

Relative dating:  None

Absolute dating:

- Charcoal (alder) from fill of trough (3017)
  C14 (SUERC-27186) 2695±30 BP (905–800 BC)
- Charcoal (waterlogged hazel) from burnt stone deposit
  C14 (SUERC-27617) 2930±35 BP (1260–1010 BC)

**Excavation Interpretation**

This site revealed multi-period activity. The pyrolithic activity was revealed at the base of a small hill from where several Bronze Age structures were uncovered. The burnt mound was composed of a thin spread of heat-shattered stone with several other smaller deposits located immediately adjacent to the site. Possible flooding events were noted within the deposits as layers of silt, therefore the site may have been seasonal. The trough was truncated but survived as a sub-circular feature that was possibly wattle-lined originally. This is a rare example of a Late Bronze Age wattle-line trough. The date is supported by the recovery of a Late Bronze Age socketed axe haft found nearby.

**References**


Plate 10.55 Remains of possible watt-lined trough and burnt spread at Prumplestown Lower.
Physical Setting: The site lies on a southward-facing slope at the east end of the ridge forming the watershed between streams flowing northwards to the River Nore and those flowing southwards to join the Suir. The immediate area of the site is marshy with no immediate watercourses present.

Cultural Landscape: Several prehistoric monuments are recorded with a 1km radius of the excavated site. A megalithic tomb is recorded c. 1km to the south (KK035-112) and a standing stone is situated roughly the same distance to the east in the neighbouring townland of Kilkeasy (KK035-100). An unclassified cairn is also situated here (KK035-012). Several fulachtai fia area also recorded in the area immediately surrounding the excavated site.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features
Prior to excavation the sites survived as extant, grass covered mounds, one of which was horseshoe-shaped and the other, oval. The mounds were overgrown with furz and other scrub. Three mounds were identified in the area, however only two sites were excavated.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed two mounds of heat-shattered stone, one of which sealed a trough while the other a number of stone structures and hearths.

Site A
Burnt Mound: The burnt mound was horseshoe-shaped in plan with a central depression that was filled with water. It measured 21m by 13.7m with a hight of 1m. The mound was composed of heat-shattered stone and charcoal-rich silty clay. The excavator states that it was difficult to distinguish individual tip lines within the make-up of the deposit (Ryan 1990, 41). A notched stone disc and a number of possible whetstones were retrieved from the mound.

Trough: The trough was revealed between the arms of the mound material. It measured 2.4m in width and had a depth of 0.42m. It was cut into the natural subsoil. The basal fill of the pit consisted of fine charcoal-rich gritty material, scatters of twigs, charred oak fragments, a number of oak timbers which may have been planks and an alder stake. A sample from this deposit
was dated to the Late Bronze Age/Iron Age. The upper deposit of the trough consisted of burnt mound material.

Site B

Burnt Mound: Prior to excavation, this mound was oval in shape and overgrown with scrub that had been stripped and burned. It measured 20m by 16m with a maximum height of 1.5m. It was composed of heat-shattered sandstone and charcoal-rich material, the latter being washed down into the lower deposits due to leaching.

Stone Setting: A stone setting was revealed in the south-eastern quadrant of the mound. It consisted of a pair of roughly parallel rows of small stones, five of which were set on edge. This setting ran for roughly three metres before terminating in an arc of smaller stones also set on edge. The fill of the setting consisted of charcoal and deposits of heat-shattered stone.

Stone Paving: A series of flat stones to the east of the excavated area were interpreted as an area of paving. It was overlain by a deposit of black silty material which formed the lowest level of the mound.

Pit 1: This pit was identified on the western edge of the mound. Only half of the feature was revealed during excavation. The exposed area measured 2.36m long with a depth of 0.36m. The sides and base of the pit were marked by patches of reddish marl and charcoal concentrations suggesting some burning. It was filled with burnt mound material.

Stake-Hole: A single stake occurred immediately east of the larger pit described above.

Pit 2: This smaller pit occurred to the south-west of the larger example. The exposed portion was irregular in shape and measured 1.54m by 0.5m with a depth of 0.2m. The fill consisted of burnt mound material.

Finds: A number of crude stone discs, once of which was notched came from the burnt mound at Site A. A number of possible whetstones were also recovered.

Dating: Wood (oak) fragment from the trough pit (Site A C14 (HAR-1367) 2440±70 BP (766–401 BC)
Charcoal (unknown) from a hearth on old ground level under mound C14 (HAR-1369) 760±60 BP (AD 1159–1389)

Excavation Interpretation

A rescue excavation was carried out in this townland in 1974 to investigate a number of fulachtaí fia. Wood from a disturbed pit at one of these sites was dated to the late Bronze Age to early Iron Age (HAR-1367). A medieval date came from a pit cut into the old ground surface on the western side of the mound (Ryan 1990, 46). The date provides the terminus ante quem for the fulacht fia. The hearth seems to be a secondary feature on site related to separate activity. The stone settings from Site B may relate to some formal hearth feature however interpretation is limited to the limited scale of excavation.

References

Catalogue No.  KK 02
RMP No. KK020-076
Licence No. NA

Location: Townland: Clohoge  Six inch map no: 20
Parish: Clara  NGR: 658296, 654549
Barony: Gowran  Altitude: NA
County: Kilkenny

Excavation Details: Project: Cork to Dublin Gas Pipeline
Site Director: B. O’ Flaherty
Consultants: University College Cork
Year: 1980

Physical Setting: The site was situated in low-lying marshy terrain.

Cultural Landscape: Several *fulachtai fia* are recorded in the vicinity of the site including one situated 20m to the north-east (KK020-039). Two other sites are recorded 100m to the north-east in the neighbouring townland of Rathcash West (KK020-077 and KK020-078). Two more similar sites are recorded to the south-west (KK020-075 and KK020079).

Adjacent excavated sites: None

**Pre-Excavation features**

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the Cork to Dublin Gas Pipeline. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations.

**Excavation Record**

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a levelled *fulacht fiadh* or burnt mound. It consisted of a spread of heat-shattered stone and charcoal-enriched soil. A trench measuring 17.5m long by 2m wide was opened and a spread 2m wide was exposed. No cut features were revealed and the majority of the site may extend beyond the area of excavation.

**Finds:**

*Artefacts:* None

*Ecofacts:* None

**Dating:**

*Relative dating:* None

*Absolute dating:* The site was not scientifically dated.

**References**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Townland:</th>
<th>Bonnetstown</th>
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<td>St. Canice</td>
<td>NGR: 245686, 158793</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barony:</td>
<td>Crannagh</td>
<td>Altitude: 145m OD</td>
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<tr>
<td>County:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Excavation Details:</td>
<td>Project:</td>
<td>Ballyconra to Baunlusk Gas Pipeline</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Site Director:</td>
<td>Paul Stevens</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Consultants:</td>
<td>Margaret Gowen and Company Ltd</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Year:</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Setting:</td>
<td>The site was located on a steep sloping ridge of the Slieve Ardagh foothills, overlooking the Nore Valley. No water source was noted close to the site.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Landscape:</td>
<td>There are no recorded prehistoric monuments in the immediate vicinity of the site however a number of enclosures are recorded which may date to any period.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjacent excavated sites:</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Pre-Excavation features**

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the Ballyconra to Baunlusk Gas Pipeline. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations. The site extended beyond the limits of the excavations.

**Excavation Record**

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a levelled or denuded burnt mound that sealed a small oblong trough.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound was heavily disturbed due to agricultural activity. It was irregular in shape and measured 11m by 9m with a maximum thickness of 0.1m. The mound was composed of heat-shattered sandstone in a matrix of black silty clay.

Trough: This pit or trough was oblong in shape with a concave profile. It measured 1.5m by 0.75m with a depth of 0.2m. The fill consisted of heat-shattered stone and black silty clay. A single stake-hole was recorded to the south-east of this pit.

Finds: None

**Dating:** Charcoal (unknown) from the burnt spread  
C14 (GrN-25783) 3250±30 BP (1604–1438 BC)

**References**

Location: Castleinch
Parish: Castleinch
Barony: Shillelogher
County: Kilkenny

Excavation Details:
Project: Ballyconra to Baunlusk Gas Pipeline
Site Director: Paul Stevens
Consultants: Margaret Gowen and Company Ltd
Year: 1999

Physical Setting:
The site was located 4km south-west of Kilkenny City. The underlying geology was limestone bedrock which stretched east of the Slieve Ardagh Hills to the Nore Valley. A small stream was situated 60m to the south.

Cultural Landscape:
A prehistoric cremation burial was excavated c. 1km to the north west along the same pipeline route (KK019-017) while a standing stone is situated c. 3km to the south-east (KK023-008). No other prehistoric monuments are recorded within the vicinity of the site although the Early Medieval period is well represented with enclosures and church sites.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the Ballyconra to Baunlusk Gas Pipeline. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations. The site extended beyond the limits of the excavations.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a well preserved burnt mound, two troughs, a platform or working surface and a stone stockpile.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound was partly truncated and was oblong in shape. It measured 10m by 7m with a maximum thickness of 0.45m. The deposit was composed of heat-shattered sandstone in a matrix of black silty clay with charcoal.

Trough 1: This trough was situated north-west of the site and was irregular in shape with steep sides and a flat base. It measured 1.1m by 0.75m with a depth of 0.5m. The excavator suggests that it may have been re-cut (Stevens 2005, 12). It contained a primary fill of fine grey sand, charcoal and heat-shattered stone which contained fragmented cattle bone. This was sealed by an upper deposit of burnt mound material.

Trough 2: This trough was situated 3m south-east of trough 1 and post-dated it. It was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 1.8m by 1.5 with a depth of 0.25m. Four post-holes and two stake-holes were identified cut into the base of the trough around the western edge. Two were cut into the centre of the trough suggesting that the feature was originally timber-lined. The trough cut below the watertable and was filled with burnt mound material.
Working Surface: A possible working surface was exposed to the east of trough 2. It consisted of a compact area of re-deposited natural boulder clay with occasional charcoal flecks.

Pit 1: This pit was exposed north of trough 2. It was oval in shape and measured 0.6m by 0.5m with a depth of 0.2m. The fill consisted of dark brown silty clay with heat-shattered stone and charcoal. A broken lead/copper alloy pin of Hallstatt type was recovered from this pit.

Stone Stockpile: A stockpile of stones which were partially heated were identified during the excavation. They consisted of sandstone with occasional limestone which had been collected for use in the trough.

Finds:

Artefacts: Broken copper alloy swan neck pin of Hallstatt type (600-500 BC)

Ecofacts: Cattle bone was recovered from the fill of trough 1

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (unknown) from basal fill of trough 2 C14 (GrN-25784) 2730±45 BP (943–803 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

Partial excavation of the site revealed two troughs, a possible working surface, a pit and a stockpile of stones. The site was dated to the Late Bronze Age, however trough 1 displayed evidence of being re-cut, therefore several phases of activity could be deduced. This is confirmed by the recovery of an Iron Age swan neck pin. The site can be interpreted as the remains of a pyrolithic water-boiling site and the presence of animal bone from the fill of the trough might imply that this was the case. The troughs filled naturally with water and the presence of a metalled surface suggests that the site was waterlogged during use.

References

Physical Setting: The site was situated in flat well-drained arable land, sloping gently to the western bank of the River Nore. A stream was located 75m south of a small stream.

Cultural Landscape: The site was located close to a cluster of two or possibly three burnt mounds, two possible ring barrows, a ring ditch complex and five enclosures, all within a 1km radius of the site.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the Ballyconra to Baunlusk Gas Pipeline. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations. The site extended beyond the limits of the excavations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a denuded burnt mound, two troughs and a small circular pit.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound was circular in shape and heavily disturbed agricultural processes. It measured 12.5m by 12m with a thickness of 0.1m. It was composed of heat-shattered sandstone with black silty clay and charcoal inclusions.

Trough 1: This trough was heavily truncated. It was sub-circular in shape and measured 2.5m to 3.6m with a depth of 0.75m. The fill consisted of burnt mound material with a high charcoal content.

Trough 2: The second trough identified on site was located in the centre of the site. It was oval in shape with concave sides and a flat base. It measured 1.5m by 1.3m with a depth of 0.3m. The fill consisted of backfilled burnt mound material.

Pit 1: This pit was circular in shape and measured 1m in diameter with a depth of 0.3m. The fill consisted of dark silty clay with heat-shattered stone and charcoal.

Finds:
Artefacts: None
Ecofacts: None

Dating:
Relative dating: None
Absolute dating: Charcoal (unknown) from the fill of trough 2
C14 (GrN-25797) 3220±50 BP (1617–1407 BC)
C14 (GrN-25787) 3270±40 BP (1680–1439 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

Excavation of the site revealed a denuded burnt mound, two troughs and a pit. None of the troughs displayed evidence of being timber-lined however an organic lining may not have survived. The presence of well-defined trough and deposits of waste-firing material suggests that site functioned as a pyrolithic water-boiling location.

References

Location: Parksgrove  
Parish: Aharney  
Barony: Galmoy  
County: Kilkenny

Parish: Aharney  
GR: 243523, 170491  
Altitude: 145m OD

County: Kilkenny

Excavation Details: Project: Ballyconra to Baunlusk Gas Pipeline  
Site Director: Paul Stevens  
Consultants: Margaret Gowen and Company Ltd  
Year: 1999

Physical Setting: The site was situated within the 1.5km south-west of Ballyragget within the western flood-plain of the River Nore. There was no obvious water source in the immediate vicinity of the site.

Cultural Landscape: A cluster of ring-ditches are recorded c. 1km to the south east of the site (KK010-002001-5), while a barrow is recorded the south of the site at roughly the same distance (KK019-026). Several fulachtai fia area recorded within several hundred metres of the excavated site.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the Ballyconra to Baunlusk Gas Pipeline. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations. The site extended beyond the limits of the excavations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed an early iron working site and a burnt mound.

Burnt Mound 1: The burnt mound was revealed as a denuded spread consisting of orange, coarse sand and clay with heat-shattered limestone. This deposit measured 15m by 9m with a maximum thickness of 0.18m. It was situated adjacent to a furnace pit.

Bowl Furnace: This consisted of a circular pit measuring 1.2m in diameter with a depth of 0.3m. It was filled with a stony clay containing iron slag and charcoal.

Burnt Mound 2: 8m north-west of this iron-working site was another burnt mound. The exposed portion measured 2m by 4m with a thickness of 0.5m. It composed of black silty clay and heat-shattered sandstone.

Ditch/Water Channel: A large linear ditch cut this spread and was in turn sealed by sub-circular spread of burnt limestone material.

Finds:

Catalogue No.   KK 06  
RMP No. KK 009-095  
Licence No. 99E0597
Artefacts: Iron nails, hammerscale, burnt clay and iron slag were recovered from the spread.

Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (unknown) from the fill of the furnace pit C14 (GrN-25788) 2360±45 BP (757–261 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

The site displayed three phases of activity, the earliest of which was a partially exposed undated burnt spread. The main focus of the excavations however was on the iron-working activity situated less than eight metres to the south of the burnt mound spread. Charcoal from one of these iron working features was dated to the Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age and it is possibly that this is intrusive charcoal relating to the nearby burnt mound activity. It may also be possible, given similar evidence in other parts of the country that the burnt mound site was re-used during the medieval period for iron working, resulting in earlier material being incorporated into later features.

References

Excavation Details: Project: Ballyconra to Baunlusk Gas Pipeline
Site Director: Paul Stevens
Consultants: Margaret Gowen and Company Ltd
Year: 1999

Physical Setting: The site was situated within the 1.5km south-west of Ballyragget within the western flood-plain of the River Nore. There was no obvious water source in the immediate vicinity of the site.

Cultural Landscape: Several raised mounds in the adjacent field may have represented more fulachtai fia.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the Ballyconra to Baunlusk Gas Pipeline. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations. The site extended beyond the limits of the excavations.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a burnt mound, three troughs and an informal hearth.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound sealed the cut features identified on site and extended beyond the pipeline corridor. It was circular in plan and measured 21m by 11m with a maximum thickness of 0.25m. The mound was composed of black silty clay and heat-shattered sandstone. An informal hearth 3m in diameter was also contained within the mound.

Trough 1: This trough was sub-circular in shape with a concave profile. It measured 2.2m in diameter with a depth of 0.8m. The base of the pit was lined with light grey clay. The pit was filled with burnt mound material. A single stake-hole was revealed immediately east of the pit.

Trough 2: This trough was revealed 1m west of the previous trough. It was sub-circular in shape and measured 1.7m in diameter with a depth of 0.9m. Four stake-holes cut the base of the trough suggesting it was once timber-lined. A single post-hole was also noted east of the pit. The fill of the trough consisted of backfilled burnt mound material.

Trough 3: The third trough on site was rectangular in shape and measured 2.8m by 1.6m with a depth of 0.5m. It contained a truncated lining of grey putty clay which was sealed by backfilled burnt mound material. A small tight cluster
of stake-holes were revealed at the eastern edge of the trough. A small whetstone was recovered from the lower fill of the trough.

**Finds:**

Artefacts: Whetstone from backfill of trough 3

Ecofacts: None

**Dating:**

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (unknown) from the fill of trough 3
C14 (GrN-25789) 2810±40 BP (1049–835 BC)

**Excavation Interpretation:**

Excavation of the site revealed a denuded burnt mound and three possible troughs. A number of the troughs displayed evidence of being timber lined with internal stake-holes evident cut into the base and sites. One of the troughs was possible clay lined suggesting it may have been filled manually from an adjacent water-source. The presence of well-defined troughs and deposits of waste-firing material suggests that site functioned as a pyrolithic water-boiling location.

**References**

Location: Parksgrove  
Parish: Aharney  
Barony: Galmoy  
County: Kilkenny  

Parish: Aharney  
Barony: Galmoy  
County: Kilkenny  

Excavation Details:  
Project: Ballyconra to Baunlusk Gas Pipeline  
Site Director: Paul Stevens  
Consultants: Margaret Gowen and Company Ltd  
Year: 1999  

Physical Setting:  
The site was situated within the 1.5km south-west of Ballyragget within the western flood-plain of the River Nore. It was located in the same field as site (KK06).  

Cultural Landscape:  
Several raised mounds in the adjacent field may have represented more fulachtai fia.  

Adjacent excavated sites: None  

Pre-Excavation features  
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the Ballyconra to Baunlusk Gas Pipeline. There was no surface trace of the site prior to investigations.  

Excavation Record  
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a partially exposed burnt mound.  
Burnt Mound: The burnt mound was only partially exposed. It was semi-circular in shape and measured 8.5m by 6m with a maximum thickness of 0.2m. The deposit was composed of heat-shattered sandstone in a matrix of black silty clay and charcoal.  
Hearths: Two possible hearth features were exposed during the excavation. These were identified as areas of burnt soil east of the mound. One of the hearths was circular in shape and contained tiny fragments of manganese oxide measuring 3.5m by 3m. It also contained several deposit of pink and white ash.  
Finds: None  
Dating: Charcoal (unknown) from the burnt mound  
C14 (GrN-25790) 2520±30 BP (795–522 BC)  

References  
Physical Setting: The site was situated within the borrow area of the mine.

Cultural Landscape: Several other burnt mounds were revealed here during investigations along with an industrial corn-drying kiln.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring associated with the construction of a new tailings pond at Arcon Mines.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a heavily disturbed burnt mound, a trough and several pit features. No finds were recovered.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound was heavily disturbed and survived as a large spread of black silty soil and heat-shattered sandstone. It measured 17m by 10m with a maximum thickness of 0.25m.

Trough: The trough was located to the west of the spread and was sub-rectangular in plan. It measured 1.65m by 1.4m with a maximum depth of 0.75m. Two large angular stones were identified in the north-west and south-west corners of the trough which may have functioned as supports for an internal lining (Coughlan 2001). Two stake-holes also cut the base of the trough in the south-east corner. The trough was filled with black silty clay and heat-shattered stone.

Pit: This pit was situated at the western side of the trough. It was oval in shape and measured 1.25m by 1.1m with a depth of 0.65m. It was filled with similar material to the trough.

Finds: None

Dating: The site is not scientifically dated.

References

Catalogue No. KK 10
RMP No. NA
Licence No. 00E0049

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Excavation Details:
Project: Arcon Mines plant excavations
Site Director: Tim Coughlan
Consultants: Margaret Gowen and Company Ltd
Year: 2000

Physical Setting: The site was situated within the borrow area of the mine

Cultural Landscape: Several other burnt mounds were revealed here during investigations along with an industrial corn-drying kiln.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring associated with the construction of a new tailings pond at Arcon Mines.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a heavily disturbed burnt mound, a trough and several stake-holes.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound was heavily disturbed and survived as a large spread of black silty soil and heat-shattered sandstone. It measured 8m by 10m with a maximum thickness of 0.25m.

Trough: The trough was located centrally in the site and was sub-rectangular in shape. It measured 2.7m by 1.56m with a depth of 0.62m however, a south-western extension to the trough made this end significantly shallower. At the south-western end of the trough there were six stake-holes forming two parallel lines. Two other stake-holes cut the base of the steeper cut while four cut the base of the shallower ledge. The trough was filled with deposits of dark sandy clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Finds: None

Dating: None

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**Excavation Details:**

- **Project:** Arcon Mines plant excavations
- **Site Director:** Tim Coughlan
- **Consultants:** Margaret Gowen and Company Ltd
- **Year:** 2000

**Physical Setting:**

The site was situated within the borrow area of the mine.

**Cultural Landscape:**

Several other burnt mounds were revealed here during investigations along with an industrial corn-drying kiln.

**Adjacent excavated sites:**

None

**Pre-Excavation features**

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring associated with the construction of a new tailings pond at Arcon Mines.

**Excavation Record**

**Summary of Features:**

Excavation of the site revealed a burnt mound, a trough and formal hearth.

**Burnt Mound:**

The burnt mound was heavily disturbed and survived as a large spread of black silty soil and heat-shattered sandstone. It measured 16m by 14m with a maximum thickness of 0.25m.

**Trough:**

The trough was located centrally within the large mound and was sub-rectangular in shape. The full extent of the trough could be determined as it was damaged by later activity. The exposed portion measured 1.5m by 1.5m with a depth of 0.4m. Three stake-holes cut the base of the trough in the south-east end which may suggest the trough was originally timber-lined. The trough was filled with black silty clay, charcoal and burnt stone.

**Hearth:**

The hearth was situated at the south-eastern end of the trough. It was a sub-rectangular area measuring 1.38m by 1m. It consisted of a shallow depression which was heavily scorched and contained ash and charcoal deposits. The hearth may have been delimited by a series of stones due to a number of shallow depressions in the southern end.

**Pit:**

A large oblong shaped pit was revealed to the north-west of the trough. It was irregular in shape and measured 5.3m by 2.3m with a maximum depth of 0.7m. The pit was filled with grey silty clay and heat-shattered stone.

**References**

Excavation Details:  
Project: N25 Waterford Bypass  
Site Director: Angus Stephenson  
Consultants: Archaeological Development Services Ltd  
Year: 2000

Physical Setting:  
The site was situated on a predominantly south facing slope that continued down to the River Suir. The site lay adjacent to a former stream bed.

Cultural Landscape:  
Several other burnt mounds were revealed here during investigations along with an industrial corn-drying kiln.

Adjacent excavated sites:  
Early Bronze Age hearth and numerous stake-holes were excavated south of the fulacht fia.

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N25 Waterford Bypass. No surface remains of the site were evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features:  
Excavation of the site revealed a crescent shaped burnt mound and a number of pits that may have functioned as troughs.

Burnt Mound:  
The burnt mound was crescent shaped and survived as a spread of heat-shattered stone, ash and charcoal. It measured 10m by 10m with a maximum depth of 0.05m.

Trough 1:  
This trough was revealed between the arms of the burnt spread. It was oval in shape and measured 1.68m by 1.08m with a depth of 0.38m. This was filled with burnt mound material.

Trough 2:  
A second trough was identified under the mound material. It was also oval in shape and measured 2.3m by 1.92m with a depth of 0.75m. The fill of the trough consisted of heat-shattered stone and charcoal. An area of burning or scorching was revealed adjacent to the trough and measured 2m by 1.5m.

Trough 3:  
This possible trough was revealed under a more compacted layer of burnt stone. The pit measured 1.75m by 1.67m with a depth of 0.3m. It was filled with burnt mound material.

Trough 4:  
This possible trough was exposed under the same compacted spread of material. It measured 1.5m by 0.9m with a depth of 0.4m. This pit was also filled with heat-shattered stone and charcoal.

Finds:
Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (alder) from the fill of trough 2
C14 (lab codes unknown BP) (1506–1410 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

Excavation of the site revealed a denuded burnt mound and four possible troughs. None of these possible boiling recetacles produced evidence to suggest they were stone or timber-lined, however evidence of the former may not have survived. The presence of well-defined troughs and deposits of waste-firing material suggests that site functioned as a pyrolithic water-boiling location during the Middle Bronze Age.

References

Physical Setting: The main site was located on the side of a low north south ridge, which rises to c.60m OD in the vicinity of Killaspy House c.500m to the east. The ground falls gently towards the confluence of the rivers Blackwater and Suir, c.2.5m to the west.

Cultural Landscape: Several other burnt mounds were revealed here during investigations.

Adjacent excavated sites: Medieval smithy

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N25 Waterford Bypass. No surface remains of the site were evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a large burnt mound with a number of use phases. The site was re-used during the medieval period as a smithy.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound was located on a stone and clay platform within a natural hollow. Some pre-fulacht fia features were cut into this feature and have been dated to the Chalcolithic. Burnt stone debris and charcoal accumulated on the platform to produce the characteristic burnt stone mound. Firespots in the mound were represented by clusters of reddened burnt stone debris and patches of red, sandy silt and shattered stone.

Pits: A number of pits (161, 171 and 217) and amorphous cut features (164, 194, 218 and 255) formed an almost contiguous line along the southern side of the fulacht fia. These appeared to have been excavated, presumably as troughs, but due to the form of local bedrock were found to be unsuitable and immediately backfilled. Some, however, may have functioned as trough as two were clay-lined (218 and 255). Two early pits (070 and 145) appear to have continued to be used as troughs as did some pits to the west. One of these is dated to the Chalcolithic.
Pathway: In the north-east quadrant, a line of compacted stone (272) appeared to form a path or causeway running north-east from the platform (204) to a second smaller platform (222).

Finds:

Artefacts: Two end scrapers were recovered from the site.

Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (hazel) from the fill of pit (085) C14 (UBA-9836) 3861±25 BP (2462–2212 BC) Charcoal (hazel) from the fill of possible trough C14 (UBA-9835) 3861±23 BP (2461–2211 BC) Charcoal (hazel) from the fill of possible trough C14 (UBA-9838) 3851±25 BP (2458–2207 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

The date ranges from the *fulacht fia* are in a tight group suggesting concentrated pyrolithic activity during the Early Copper Age. Estimating the true life-cycle of the site is difficult however and it was clearly used on a number of occasions since the majority of the pits were reused, and some were replaced by others. The lack of silting in the fills indicates that this *fulacht fia* was used fairly continuously.

References

Catalogue No.  KK 14  
RMP No. NA  
Licence No. 03E0865

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Excavation Details:  
Project: N25 Waterford Bypass  
Site Director: Joanna Wren  
Consultants: Archaeological Development Services Ltd  
Year: 2003

Physical Setting: The site was located within a pasture field at the edge of a stream which flowed from north to south.

Cultural Landscape: The site of catstown (KK01) is located nearby.

Adjacent excavated sites:

**Pre-Excavation features**

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N25 Waterford Bypass. No surface remains of the site were evident prior to investigations.

**Excavation Record**

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed two timber trackways overlain by a burnt mound, several troughs and a number of hearths.

Timber Trackways: The trackways were very fragmentary but were constructed with a combination of brushwood, radially split planks and a number of posts and stakes. The timbers use in the trackway were predominantly of alder and the excavator suggest that the structure would have originally been constructed with planks due to the positioning of the stakes. It is postulated that the trackway may have been in use at the early stages of the later fulacht fiadh activity.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound covered both timber tackways (No other information available).

Pit 1: This pit (CO79) was revealed under the burnt mound and was sub-rectangular in plan. It measured 2m by 1.6m with a depth of 0.55m and had gradual sloping sides and a flat base. The feature seems to have been lined with stones and was interpreted as a hearth, although no direct sign of burning was noted in the pit or on the stones. An irregular partially stone-lined feature extended from this pit to the south-east for a distance of 1.9m before it met a larger channel connected it to the stream to the east.

Pit 2: This pit (CO31) seems to have been very similar to the previous example. It was circular in shape and was also stone-lined. This pit was connected to a similar stone-lined drain that connected it to the adjacent stream. The feature was also interpreted as a hearth.
Troughs 1-2: Two conjoined pits (C078a-b) were identified 3m east of the pit C079. Five post-holes were cut along the inner edge of one of these pits suggesting some sort of timber lining.

Pit 3: This pit (C031) was lined with two large slabs set on a foundation of two oak timbers and three post-holes. Twelve stone slabs lined the outer edge of the pit and a stone-lined and partially capped gully extended from it to the adjacent stream.

Finds:

Artefacts: Worked wood

Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (hazel) from the fill of the trough C14 (UBA-9815) 3300±24 BP (1634–1507 BC)
Charcoal (hazel) from a channel under the burnt spread C14 (UBA-9813) 3182±23 BP (1498–1417 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

Drainage work along the banks of the stream resulted in the removal of large amounts of archaeological deposits. The troughs were therefore hard to identify with any certainty. The most likely candidates appeared to be the two severely truncated cuts (078a & b) near the second hearth (031). The remains of the more complete cut (078a). It is possible that the trackways were simple working areas, abandoned as the accumulating debris from the *fulacht fia* provided a solid surface. The settings however, do suggest two deliberate paths one from the dry land which joined a second running along the banks of the stream. The possibility cannot be ignored, that these pathways were constructed prior to initial *fulacht fia* activity and that they represent the first attempts in this area to provide easy solid and regular access to the invaluable water source provided by the stream. The radiocarbon dates suggest that *fulacht fia* activity on this site began at the beginning of the Middle Bronze and then dates from upper deposits of heat shattered stone and charcoal suggest it had reached its peak towards the end of this period sometime around 1400BC.

References

Catalogue No.   KK 15
RMP No. NA
Licence No. 03E0911

Location: Townland: Dunkitt  Six inch map no: 43
Parish: Dunkitt  NGR: 25797, 11634
Barony: Ida  Altitude: 30m OD
County: Kilkenny

Excavation Details: Project: N25 Waterford Bypass
Site Director: Niall Gregory
Consultants: Archaeological Development Services Ltd
Year: 2003

Physical Setting: The site was situated over the summit of a low hill and on its south-facing slope that overlooked the River Blackwater.

Cultural Landscape: The site of catstown (KK01) is located nearby

Adjacent excavated sites: Iron Age pits and kiln

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N25 Waterford Bypass. No surface remains of the site were evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a spread of heat-shattered stone, a trough and a large pit.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound consisted of spread of heat-shattered stone and charcoal rich material that measured 4.6m by 3.2m with a thickness of 0.75m.

Trough: The trough was sub-rectangular in plan and measured 2m by 1.6m with a depth of 0.5m. Eighteen stake-holes, eleven double stake-holes and three triple stake-holes cut the base and sides of the trough suggesting that it was once timber-lined. The basal fill consisted of black silty which was overlain by burnt mound material. This basal layer is dated to the Late Bronze Age.

Pit: A large pit was identified adjacent to the trough. It was circular in shape and measured 3m in diameter with a depth of 1.2m. It contained six fills comprising of various deposits of burnt mound material. A small granite disc was recovered from its secondary fills which is dated to the Middle to Late Bronze Age.

Finds:

Artefacts: A granite stone disc was recovered from the deep well. A similar object was retrieved from a nearby hearth.

Ecofacts: None

Dating:
Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (hazel) from the fill of the trough
C14 (UBA-9817) 2796±22 BP (1010–897 BC)
Charcoal (hazel) from the secondary fill of pit
C14 (UBA-9818) 2908±22 BP (1207–1013 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

The *fulacht fia* at Dunkitt comprised a burnt spread overlying a trough and large pit. The radiocarbon dates gave a date range in the Later Bronze Age. The trough on the site was rectangular, had a capacity of c. 1,600 Litres and stake-holes in its base indicate it was once probably lined. The large pit may have functioned as a water cistern, designed to hold water for the trough. It may have also functioned as an emptying pit used to store the waste water from the higher trough.

References


Fig. 10.74 Trough and lower water-holding pit at Dunkitt, Co. Kilkenny.
The site was located in an agricultural field with a gentle west-facing slope. The field was under pasture at the time of excavation. A stream runs on the southern side of the existing field boundary north of the site, in very close proximity to the burnt mound.

There are no recorded prehistoric monuments in the vicinity of the excavated site however in the field immediately to the north (outside the CPO) two mounds were visible with dark coloured soil exposed. These were situated in low-lying pasture fields and may be the remains of further fulachtai fia. Several other fulachtai fia were exposed in the neighbouring townlands in advance of the N25 Waterford Bypass.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N25 Waterford Bypass. No surface remains of the site were evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a large burnt mound, four troughs, some of which may have been lined, two pits and a possible hearth.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound was irregular in shape and measured 20m by 20m with an average thickness of 0.45m. The upper layers of the mound contained large amount of topsoil deposits due to extensive ploughing damage. A rhyolite nodule came from this deposit along with a burnt water-rolled flint nodule. The body of the mound composed of several layers of black charcoal-rich silty clay and heat-shattered stone. One of these deposits is dated to the Middle Bronze Age.

Possible Revetment: A possible revetment was identified at the south-west edge of the mound. These consisted of a number of medium to large angular stones which were not heat-affected.

Trough 1: This trough (C047) was revealed under the mound material. It was rectangular in plan with vertical sides and a flat base and measured 2.88m by 1.05m with a maximum depth of 0.3. The trough may have been stone-lined as a number of large flat stones were evident at the base of the pit and one
was identified pressed against the northern side. The primary fill of the trough consisted of grey/orange silty clay with charcoal while the upper fill composed of heat-shattered stone and charcoal.

Stake-Holes: Four stake-holes forming an arc were uncovered near the upper break of slope at the south-eastern end of the trough.

Trough 2: Trough (C050) was revealed to the north of the previous pit. It was irregular to oval in shape with steep slopes. The pit measured 1.85m by 0.9m with a depth of 0.44m. Occasional pieces of wood were found at the base of the pit which was filled with black silty clay and heat-shattered stone.

Trough 3: Trough (C033) was rectangular in plan and measured 1.83m by 1.02m with a depth of 0.6m. The pit was filled with black silty clay and heat-shattered stone.

Trough 4: This trough (C030) was oval in shape and was situated to the south-east of the mound material. It measured 1.2m by 0.95m with a depth of 0.41m. Pieces of burnt wood were evident in the base of the feature. Varying deposits of heat-shattered stone and black silty clay filled the pit.

Pit 1: Pit (C023) was situated at the periphery of the site and was oval in plan. It measured 1.09m by 0.67m with a depth of 0.22m. The fill consisted of heat-shattered stone and charcoal-rich material.

Pit 2: A second pit (C027) was located to the south-east. It was circular in plan and measured 0.98m by 0.89m with a depth of 0.25m. The fill consisted of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Finds: A rhyolite nodule and a burnt water-rolled flint nodule were retrieved from the upper layers of the burnt mound.

Dating: Charcoal (unknown) from the burnt mound C14 (UB-6625) 2992±35 BP (1536–1422 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

Excavation revealed a large burnt mound and a number of trough features, some of which produced evidence to suggest they were lined. The specific dump layers within the mound material imply the site was used on a sporadic basis, on a number of different occasions. This is also supported by the number of troughs identified and the different lining methods noted. The site can be interpreted as a pyrolithic water-boiling location.

References


Plate 10.56 Stone-lined trough at Ballymountain 7, Co. Kilkenny.
Excavation Details: Project: N25 Waterford Bypass
Site Director: Linda Hegarty
Consultants: Headland Archaeology Ltd
Year: 2003

Physical Setting: The site was located in a field used for arable farming with a gentle west-facing slope.

Cultural Landscape: There are no recorded prehistoric monuments in the vicinity of the excavated site however a fulacht fia and smithy site were excavated immediately south of the site during the same road project.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N25 Waterford Bypass. No surface remains of the site were evident prior to investigations. The site extended beyond the limits of excavation, therefore the full extent of the site was not revealed.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed the partial remains of a burnt mound, two troughs, stake-holes, a cobbled surface and a number of pits.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound was not fully exposed however the excavated portion measured 10m by 20m with a maximum thickness of 0.4m. It was composed of a number of deposits of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. The upper portion of the spread was damaged by ploughing. The deposit is dated to the Middle to Late Bronze Age.

Trough 1: This trough (C032) was only partially excavated as it lay beyond the limits of excavation. The exposed portion was sub-rectangular in plan and measured 3.1m by 2m with a depth of 0.3m. The base of the feature consisted of natural bedrock. The fill of the feature consisted of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. A lens of re-deposited natural lay to the north of the trough.

Stake-Holes: Three stake-holes were identified along the northern edge of the trough C032.

Cobblestone Platform: A large area of compacted cobblestones lay to the south of the large trough. The surface was irregular in plan and measured 14m by 5.5m and extended beyond the limits of the excavation. The stones extended to the edge of the trough and were not cut by it.
Trough 2: This trough (C042) seemed to be a later addition to the site as it cut into the stone platform. It was circular in plan and measured 1.9m by 1.7m with a depth of 0.15m. It was filled with grey silty clay and burnt mound material.

Finds:

Artefacts: None
Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None
Absolute dating: Charcoal (unknown) from the burnt mound C14 (UB-6495) 2896±38 BP (1213–975 BC)
Charcoal (unknown) from the burnt mound C14 (UB-6496) 2949±39 BP (1221–1114 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

The large partially excavated trough [032] appears to have been a focus of activity with the cobbled surface [040] leading down to it. The trough was cut before the cobbles were laid up to its southern edge. It is impossible to say if this was the primary trough without the excavation of the entire mound. The precise function of the stakes on the northern edge of [032] is unclear; they may have supported a light structure or windbreak, alternatively they may have functioned to suspend something over the trough. The cobbled surface [040] that occupied a large area south and west of trough [032] would have served to raise and stabilise the ground in an area that would have been very wet. This would have made accessing the trough, working and the general movement of people significantly easier.

References


Fig. 10.75 Trough and stone surface at Killaspy, Co. Kilkenny.
Catalogue No.   KK 18
RMP No. NA
Licence No. 04E0298

Location: Townland: Rathpatrick  Six inch map no: 43
Parish: Rathpatrick  NGR: 26427, 15577
Barony: Ida  Altitude: 30m OD
County: Kilkenny

Excavation Details:  Project: N25 Waterford Bypass
Site Director: Joanna Wren
Consultants: Headland Archaeology Ltd
Year: 2004

Physical Setting: The field lies along the edge of a wetland area which extends through Luffany and Rathpatrick townlands. Four burnt mounds were uncovered along the edge of this wetland, which seemed to form the floodplain for a couple of small streams marked on the late eighteenth century map.

Cultural Landscape: Several burnt mound sites were excavated in this townland during road development. A small flat Early Bronze Age cemetery was excavated 245m to the southwest. A burnt mound (03E0861) was excavated in 2003, 745m to the south, in the townland of Kilmurry. In the same townland a cist burial containing a cremation was excavated, 800m south west of the cemetery, in 1959 (KK043-036) and three standing stones, a polygonal cist and a timber circle, were excavated 1km to the west in 2003 (03E716).

Adjacent excavated sites: Mesolithic and Neolithic pits. 42m to the east of the fulacht fia a large pit was excavated contained numerous food vessel sherds. The pit was dated to the Early Bronze Age, contemporary with the burnt mound.

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N25 Waterford Bypass. No surface remains of the site were evident prior to investigations. The full extent of the site was not revealed during excavation as it lay beyond the limits of investigation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a spread of heat-shattered stone, two troughs and a pit.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound (C47) was revealed as a spread of heat-shattered stone and charcoal which measured 12m by 11.5m with a maximum thickness of 0.15m. A barbed and tanged flint arrowhead came from this deposit.

Pit 1: This pit (C57) was irregular in shape and measured 3.18m by 0.3m with a depth of 0.08m. It was revealed below the southern half of the burnt mound spread and was filled with light sandy silt. It contained six fractured pieces of flint, four of which were interpreted as possible blanks for barbed and tanged arrowheads. An end scraper was also found.

Trough 1: This trough (C66) was sub-rectangular in plan with rounded corners and vertical sides. It measured 1.9m by 1.02m with a depth of 0.65m. The base
of the pit was filled with brown silty clay while the next deposit composed of darker silts, charcoal and some heat-shattered stone. The next layer consisted of a lense of charcoal and an intact portion of a burnt plank. A flint flake or blade was recovered from burnt mound material overlying this deposit. The charcoal layer in the trough is dated to the Early Bronze Age.

Trough 2: The second trough (C83) cut the south end of the previous trough C66. It was also rectangular in plan with rounded corners and measured 2.05m by 1.24m with a depth of 0.28m. Twelve stake-holes cut the base of this trough along the inner edge suggesting the pit was once timber-lined. The basal fill of the trough consisted of brown silty sand with charcoal. This is dated to the Early Bronze Age. The upper deposits consisted of black silty sand, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Stone Stockpile: A scatter of unburnt sandstone and quartz was revealed east of the troughs. The deposit measured 3.4m by 2.3m.

Finds:

Artefacts: A flint scraper and four blanks for barbed and tanged arrowheads were recovered from pit (C57). A barbed and tanged arrowhead was retrieved from the burnt mound deposit C47.

Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (pomodiae) from charcoal lining in trough C66
C14 (UB-6631) 3505±37 BP (1931–1740 BC)
Charcoal (hazel) from the fill of trough C83
C14 (UB-6628) 3451±35 BP (1881–1687 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

The main period of use for the site is in the Early Bronze Age when activity here is concentrated on the fulacht fia, part of a wider spread of Early Bronze Age activity in Rathpatrick and Kilmurry townlands. The primary structural features in this monument were the two sub-rectangular troughs. These were dug in the riverine silt within the wetland area itself. When they were in use, these pits probably filled quite easily from natural seepage. The trough exhibited a number of phases of use and this is confirmed by the radiocarbon dates.

References

Fig. 10.76 Burnt spread deposit and two trough phases at Rathpartick 17, Co. Kilkenny.
Physical Setting: The excavations were undertaken on a moderately steep west-facing slope inside the southern boundary of the field toward the edge of an area of wetland. The land was under pasture prior to excavation.

Cultural Landscape: Several sites excavated as part of this contract have revealed evidence for Bronze Age activity in the area. At Site 44, c. 140 m north of Site 40, a small fulacht fia was excavated (04E0318). At Site 17, c. 210 m to the northeast another small burnt mound covering 10 m² was revealed (04E289). At nearby Sites 38 and 39, c. 200m south-southwest of Site 40 a small group of Bronze Age cremation burials was identified (04E0290). In the nearby townland of Killaspy another two fulacht fia were excavated at Sites 41 and 11.

Adjacent excavated sites: No

Pre-Excavation features
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N25 Waterford Bypass. No surface remains of the site were evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a large spread of heat-shattered stone and charcoal, numerous trough pits, one of which was interpreted as a plunge pool that was directly related to a large circular pit or sweatlodge.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound (C003) was revealed as a spread of heat-shattered stone and charcoal which measured 30m by 25m. The deposit covered the entire site and most of the cut features on site. A flint blade and a possibly work piece of chert came from the spread.

Pit/Sweatlodge: This pit (C40) was the largest feature on site and consisted of a sub-circular cut measuring 5m in diameter with a depth of 0.4m. Thirty-six stake-holes cut the base of this pit at regular intervals around the inner edge. Hazel charcoal from one of these stake-holes is dated to the Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age. A small flint flake was also recovered from one of these stake-hole fills. A thin layer of brown sandy clay was excavated in places over the base of the cut. This may have accumulated as a result of leaching through the overlying layers on to the relatively watertight surface of the feature. The remainder of the fill comprised of burnt mound material.
Pit 2 and Channel: This pit (C078) intersected the south-eastern side of the sweatlodge edge. It was circular in shape and measured 1.6m by 1.5m with a depth of 0.6m. The sides of the feature were steep and the base was flat. It was filled with burnt mound material. The pit and the sweatlodge (042) were separated by a low ridge of grey marl. Four stake-holes were revealed inside the western edge of the pit. A possible channel or overflow was identified at the upper section of the northern edge of the pit. This was tunnelled through the natural subsoil between the pit and the large trough (C099). Five further stake-holes were located outside the edge of the pit.

Trough 1: To the north-east of the pit (042) was a large pit of trough (099). This was connected to the sweatlodge by a series of step features. The trough was rectangular in plan with steep sides and a flat base. It measured 2.9m by 1.65m with a maximum depth of 0.55m. The excavator notes that the northern side may have been recut and widened at a later stage (Gleeson 2006, 5). The trough was filled with burnt mound material, similar to the large pit. It was dated to the Late Bronze Age.

Hearth: This hearth (117) was situated on higher ground overlooking the sweatlodge. It was sub-circular in plan and measured 0.9m by 0.95m and consisted of a small area of heavily oxidised clay. A charcoal and ashy fill was recorded along with a series of large stones.

Trough 2: This feature (020) is described as a bath-shaped trough and was located at the eastern extremity of the site. It measured 2.68m by 1.46m with a maximum depth of 0.82m. The feature was filled with a series of clay layers. Fragments of wood were noted mainly close to the edges of the trough which suggests it may have been timber-lined.

Area of burning

Pit 3: This pit (119) was irregular in shape and measured 1.39m by 0.86m with a depth of 0.14m. Some burning was noted at the sides and base of the feature which was filled with burnt mound material.

Pit 4: Pit (060) was revealed south-east of the site and was sub-rectangular in shape. It measured 1.9m by 1.73m with a depth of 0.32m. The base showed evidence of extreme burning. Two stake-holes cut the base of the pit with two further stake-holes at the south-western edge.

Hearth 2: This hearth (045) was located 1.2m south-west of the pit 060. It was a sub-circular pit that measured 0.77m by 0.67m with a depth of 0.67m. A red oxidised clay layer formed the base of the hearth. An ashy deposit overlay this.

Pit 5: This pit (138) was located south-west of the hearth. It was rectangular in shape and measured 1.9m by 0.7m with a depth of 0.25m. The base and sides of the feature were discoloured in areas suggesting some burning had taken place. The fill of the pit consisted of burnt mound material.

Stone Pathway: A possible stone pathway or series of stepping stones led from this area of burning west to the central area of the fulacht fiadh/sweatlodge.

Stone Surface: A possible cobbled surface (101) was exposed at the southern edge of the fulacht fiadh area. This was a metalled and cobbled linear area with an
uneven surface and comprised of compacted small stones set into the subsoil.

**Iron Age Phase**

**Trough 1:** This sub-circular trough (005) was revealed north of the possible sweatlodge. It measured 1.1m by 1.3m with a depth of 0.4m and had vertical sides and a flat base. The fill consisted of burnt mound material and charcoal, similar to the main spread 003. The fill is dated to the Middle Iron Age.

**Trough 2:** This trough (006) was sub-circular in shape and measured 1.3m by 2m with a depth of 0.3m. It had vertical sides, a flat base and was filled with burnt mound material.

**Pit:**

**Pit:** This pit (009) was revealed immediately north-west of the trough 006. It was oblong in shape and measured 0.6m by 1.4m with a depth of 0.32m. The fill consisted of burnt mound material.

**Pit 2:** Pit (010) was identified adjacent to the features above. It was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 1m by 1.2m with a depth of 0.15m. It was also filled with burnt mound material.

**Pit 3:** This pit (047) was revealed a short distance from the trough 006. It measured 1.2m by 0.9m with a maximum depth of 0.4m and was filled with burnt mound material. One small flint blade and another worked piece of flint were recovered from the fill of the pit.

**Pit 4:** Pit (128) was irregular in shape and measured 1.2m by 1.1m with a depth of 0.3. A clay lining was noted at the base and sides of the cut and it was filled with burnt mound material.

**Pit 5:** This pit (061) was circular in shape and measured 0.79m by 0.82m with a depth of 0.23m. A stake-hole was identified in the western side of the cut. Both were filled with burnt mound material.

**Pit 6:** Pit (062) was irregular in shape and measured 1.09m by 0.31m with a maximum depth of 0.29m. The lower fill of the pit contained oxidised soil and heat-shattered stone while the upper deposit consisted of compacted silty clay, oxidised soil and heat-shattered stone.

**Finds:**

**Artefacts:**

A flint scraper and a chert flake were recovered from the burnt mound deposit 003. A struck flint flake was retrieved from the fill of a stake-hole from within the sweatlodge. A flint blade and another worked piece of flint were recovered from the pit 047.

**Ecofacts:**

None

**Dating:**

**Relative dating:** None

**Absolute dating:** Charcoal (hazel) from fill of stake-hole within pit 042 C14 (UB-6612) 2487±34 BP (775–417 BC) Charcoal (oak) from the fill of trough 009 C14 (UB-6613) 2792±32 BP (1014–844 BC)
Excavation Interpretation:

The size of the mound at this site suggests that the monument was either intensively used for a short period or used over a long period of time. It is difficult to establish distinct phases of use at the site as no features were intercut. That said, the features at the northern end of the site were much less complex in construction and did not modify or exploit the properties of the underlying natural soil in the same way as the features to the south, leading to the interpretation that they were in use after the large, more complex features on the site. The form of 042 and its association with both heat-affected stone and features associated with water, suggests the most plausible interpretation of its function is as a sweat lodge. It is postulated that the main structure at this site comprised a domed, circular structure composed of hazel stakes/poles covered with either hides or sod, with an adjacent annex where steam was created by placing hot stones in water.

References

Physical Setting: The site was situated at the eastern boundary of a pasture field at the base of a gentle east-facing slope.

Cultural Landscape: Several sites excavated as part of this contract have revealed evidence for Bronze Age activity in the area. These mainly consist of pyrolithic sites discovered in the nearby townland of Rathpatrick. At nearby Sites 38 and 39, c. 200m south-southwest of Site 40 a small group of Bronze Age cremation burials were identified (04E0290). In the nearby townland of Killaspy another two fulachtai fia were excavated (see above).

Adjacent excavated sites: No

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N25 Waterford Bypass. No surface remains of the site were evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a spread of burnt mound material, two troughs, a water-channel or gully and a series of possible stake-holes.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound (005) consisted of a shallow spread of dark sandy clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. Dimensions of the material are unavailable however from the site plans, we can estimate that the deposit measured c. 10m by 7m.

Trough 1: This trough (007) was rectangular in shape with steeply sloping sides and a flat base. It measured 1.9m by 1.2m with a depth of 0.33m and the sides were lined with clay containing charcoal and burnt stone inclusions. The main fill of the trough consisted of burnt mound material. Charred apple or pear seeds from deposit area dated to the Early to Middle Bronze Age.

Trough 2: Trough (C012) was sub-circular in shape with vertical sides and a concave base. It measured 2.6m by 2m with a maximum depth of 0.6m. Eight stake-holes were revealed at the base of the feature at the eastern side. Further stake-holes were noted at the east and south side of the trough. The lower fill of the pit consisted of black sandy clay with charcoal and small stones. This deposit is dated to the Middle Bronze Age. The remainder of the upper fills composed of silty clays and charcoal with occasional stones.
**Stake-Holes:**
Four possible stake-holes were recorded in a raised area between the two troughs.

**Water Channel:**
A ditch feature or gully (022) ran with the slope on an irregular diagonal southwest-northeast orientation across the site. A channel from this feature ran 3m to the south of these troughs. This was likely to direct water downslope into the trough.

**Finds:**

- **Artefacts:** None
- **Ecofacts:** None

**Dating:**

- **Relative dating:** None
- **Absolute dating:** Seed (pear or apple) from the fill of trough 007 C14 (UB-6614) 3376±34 BP (1749–1536 BC)
  Charcoal (oak) from the fill of the trough 012 C14 (UB-6615) 3013±35 BP (1387–1130 BC)

**Excavation Interpretation:**
The site consisted of a small pyrolithic water-boiling site with at least two phases of use. A large water-channel excavated at the site was interpreted as a water-inlet channel that ran with the slope of the site directing surface water into the lower pits. The channel also functioned as an overflow, brining access water away from the pit, downslope and outside the area of excavation.

**References**
Gleeson, C and Breen, G. 2006. *Archaeological excavations at Killaspy Site 41, Co. Kilkenny*. Final excavation report prepared by Headland Archaeology Ltd.
Location: Townland: Rathpatrick
Parish: Rathpatrick
Barony: Ida
County: Kilkenny

Parish: Rathpatrick
NGR: 26438, 11575
Altitude: NA

County: Kilkenny

Excavation Details: Project: N25 Waterford Bypass
Site Director: Caitríona Gleeson
Consultants: Headland Archaeology Ltd
Year: 2004

Physical Setting: The excavations were undertaken at the base of gentle west-facing slope in the western section of a marshy field. The land was under pasture prior to excavation.

Cultural Landscape: Several sites excavated as part of this contract have revealed evidence for Bronze Age activity in the area. These mainly consist of pyrolithic sites discovered in the nearby townland of Rathpatrick. At nearby Sites 38 and 39, c. 200m south-southwest of Site 40 a small group of Bronze Age cremation burials were identified (04E0290). In the nearby townland of Killaspy another two fulachtai fia were excavated (see above).

Adjacent excavated sites: No

Pre-Excavation features
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N25 Waterford Bypass. No surface remains of the site were evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a spread of burnt mound material and three large troughs and a number of post-holes.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound (005) measured 13m by 5m with a maximum depth of 0.8m and consisted of burnt and heat-shattered stone in a matrix of dark sandy clay and charcoal. The deposit overlay all of the cut features on site. Two portions of a broken flint blade were recovered from the burnt mound material. The deposit was dated to the Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age.

Trough 1: This trough (017) was rectangular in shape with steep sides and a flat base. It measured 2.8m by 2.2m with a depth of 0.7m. Five stake-holes were noted in the south-east corner of the trough along with a small post-hole. A hard compaction of clay was noted on the base and lower sides of the trough which was interpreted as the possible remains of a clay lining (Gleeson 2006, 4). This was dated to the Late Bronze Age. The upper layer of the trough consisted of burnt mound material.

Trough 2: This trough (016) lay adjacent to the previous example. It was rectangular in shape and measured 2.4m by 1.5m with a depth of 0.5m and had vertical
sides and a flat base, similar to the previous trough. Two post-holes cut the base of the trough in two opposing corners. Two small stake-holes were associated with these post-holes also. A similar clay was noted by the excavator in this trough at the base and sides which may have formed a lining. The upper fill of the trough consisted of burnt mound material.

**Pit:**

This large pit (020) was situated adjacent to the troughs. It was irregular in shape and measured 3m by 3.1m with a maximum depth of 0.6m. A small extension or platform to the pit was revealed at the east end. The fill of this large pit was similar to that of the previous troughs, therefore this may have functioned in a similar way.

**Finds:**

**Artefacts:**

Two broken portions of a flint blade were retrieved from the mound material.

**Dating:**

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating:

- Charcoal (oak) from the fill of trough 017 C14 (UB-6616) 2766±33 BP (997–834 BC)
- Charcoal (hazel) from the mound material C14 (UB-6617) 2458±35 BP (756–412 BC)

**Excavation Interpretation:**

Excavation of the site revealed two possible clay-lined troughs and a large associated pit. This may imply that the troughs had to be manually filled from a nearby water-source. It is possible that the adjacent pit could have functioned as a water reservoir for the pit. Alternatively, this pit may have filled natural with water during the Bronze Age and water levels may have significantly altered since then. The site can be interpreted as a pyrolithic water-boiling area possibly for cooking during the Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age.

**References**

Gleeson, C and Breen, G. 2006. *Archaeological excavations at Killaspy Site 7, Co. Kilkenny*. Final excavation report prepared by Headland Archaeology Ltd.
Location: Newrath
Parish: Kilmacow
Barony: Ida
County: Kilkenny

Locality: Townland: Newrath
Six inch map no: 46
NGR: 25915, 11446
Altitude: NA

Excavation Details: Project: N25 Waterford Bypass
Site Director: Brendon Wilkins
Consultants: Headland Archaeology Ltd
Year: 2004

Physical Setting: The burnt mound features were identified situated on a distinct rise of higher land on the eastern margin of the site. A relict streambed/palaeochannel was identified along the southern boundary of the area.

Cultural Landscape: Several sites excavated as part of this contract have revealed evidence for Bronze Age activity in the area. These include burnt mounds, trackways and platforms. Mesolithic activity is also recorded in the area.

Adjacent excavated sites: Charcoal pit and Bronze Age trackways.

Pre-Excavation features
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N25 Waterford Bypass. No surface remains of the site were evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of this area revealed a timber-lined trough and burnt spread.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound was situated on the edge of a palaeochannel. It measured 13m by 9m and was composed of charcoal-enriched material and heat-shattered stone. 22 stake-holes were associated with the burnt mound material on the edge of the palaeochannel. These were arranged in a somewhat linear arrangement and may have served to stop the mound material from slipping into the stream or trough or hearth.

Trough: The trough (1077) was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 1.65m by 0.95m and only survived to a depth of 0.17m. It extended into the palaeochannel presumably so it could fill natural with water. The base of the trough consisted of two large oak planks, the larger of which, was dowelled into position.

Pits: Five pits were revealed that varied in size and shape but were all relatively shallow, extending to approximately 0.2m deep and were filled with black/grey silty clay with charcoal and burnt stone.

References
Excavation Details:  
Project: N25 Waterford Bypass  
Site Director: Tony Cummins  
Consultants: Sheila Lane and Associates  
Year: 2004  

Physical Setting:  
It comprised a wooded area of sloping ground bounded by a laneway and overgrown pasture to the east and drained wetland to the west. A small stream runs westwards through this area and originates from a spring located in the pastureland to the east.

Cultural Landscape:  
Site 34 was located to the west of this area in a low-lying area of wetland at the confluence of the Rivers Suir and its tributary the River Blackwater. There were five main phases of activity: later Mesolithic flint scatters on a dryland surface predating the accumulation of organic peat deposits; Bronze Age trackways and brushwood platforms accessing the river channel from the dry land margin; Bronze Age burnt mound on the eastern shore of the wetlands; Iron Age hurdles crossing tidal creeks; late medieval brushwood structures allowing access across the marsh; and a 19th-century brick kiln.

Adjacent excavated sites: No

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N25 Waterford Bypass. No surface remains of the site were evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a heavily disturbed burnt mound, a trough and a stone setting interpreted as a hearth.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound (C2) was revealed as an irregular spread of heat-shattered stone and black silty clay. It measured 15.5m by 12.5m with a maximum thickness of 1.26m. The deposit was situated in a shallow gully area adjacent to the north bank of the stream. The burnt spread was found to have completely infilled the low-lying area by the stream and, prior to excavation, its surface formed a gentle slope down to the stream bank.

Trough: The trough (C10) was rectangular in shape and measured 1.4m by 2.2m with a depth of 0.3m. It was cut into the subsoil at the base of the slope and had steep sides and a flat base. It was filled with burnt mound material and a spring was noted in the base. The trough was truncated by later drainage ditches.
Hearth: A hearth was uncovered in the area between the north end of the trough and the side of the stream gully. It consisted of an area of flat stones surrounded by an area of oxidised subsoil. These stones formed a rough surface that measured 1.3m east-west by 1.42m north-south and was composed of ten flat, paving-type angular stones. All of the stones were heat-fractured and displayed burn marks on their exposed surfaces. The stones were set into a shallow bowl-shaped cut, which was dug into the subsoil (C12). This cut measured 1.6m east-west by 2.2m north-south and 0.1m deep. The hearth was overlain by charcoal-enriched material.

Finds:
Artefacts: None
Ecofacts: None

Dating:
Relative dating: None
Absolute dating: Charcoal (alder) from the fill of the hearth C14 (GRA-43747) 3075±30 BP (1413–1289 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:
Excavation revealed a badly truncated burnt mound site composed of deposits of heat-shattered stone, a truncated trough and a formal hearth, lined with stone. The site can be interpreted as the remains of a pyrolithic water-boiling area used during the Middle Bronze Age.

References
Location: Townland: Islands  Six inch map no: 12
Parish: Urlingford  NGR: 228125, 164504
228211, 164385
Barony: Galmoy  Altitude: NA
County: Kilkenny
Excavation Details: Project: M8 Cullahill to Cashel Road Improvement
Site Director: Colm Hardy
Consultants: Valerie J. Keeley Ltd
Year: 2006
Physical Setting: The site is located 50m west of the River Goul. The topography and geology of this region is typical of the plain in general, with a gentle undulating landscape. This site lay in a region set within a broad low lying plain with a gradual northeast southwest slope trend. It was also located adjacent to a natural spring.
Cultural Landscape: Prior to this section of road development, there was only one recorded prehistoric site within the vicinity of the site. This was a burnt mound situated in the neighbouring townland of Glashare (KK008-144).
Adjacent excavated sites: No
Pre-Excavation features
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M8 Cullahill to Cashel Road Improvement Scheme. No surface remains of the site were evident prior to investigations.
Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed two burnt mounds that overlay troughs and numerous pits.
Site A
Burnt Mound: The burnt mound (C13) measured 24m by 14.5m with a maximum depth of 0.6m. It consisted of soft mottle black, yellow and white clayey sand with charcoal and heat-shattered stone. It overlay a number of other deposits, all with varying amounts of charcoal and heat-shattered stone.
Possible Platform: This pit (C73) was cut into the upper layers of the burnt mound. It measured 1.44m long with a depth of 0.58m. Seven narrow timbers were positioned at the top of the pit and were poorly preserved. A sample of one of these timbers is dated to the Late Bronze Age.
Trough 1: This trough (C54) was situated under the burnt mound. It was sub-rectangular in shape with rounded corners and measured 2.2m by 1.55m with a depth of 0.34m. The pit was lined with twelve alder planks and pieces of timber. No stakes were present in the corners of the trough. The pit was
filled with black sandy silt, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. A timber from the base of this trough is dated to the Early Bronze Age.

Trough 2: This trough (C85) was located 13m north of the previous trough. It was sub-rectangular in shape with vertical sides and a flat base. It measured 1.35m by 1.3m with a depth of 0.35m and contained three fills consisting of dark silty clays and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 1: Pit (066) was irregular in shape and measured 1.92m by 1.37m with a depth of 0.3m. It was filled with dark silty clay and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 2: Pit (C56) was circular in shape and measured 1.25m by 1.1m with a depth of 0.17m. It was filled with brown sandy clay and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 3: This pit truncated C56. It was rectangular in shape and measured 2.1m by 1.5m with a depth of 0.3m. It had straight sides and a flat base and was filled with burnt mound material.

Pit 4: This pit (C60) was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 3.42m by 1.4m with a depth of 0.22m. The fill consisted of compacted black silty clay and heat-shattered stone.

Site B

Burnt Mound: This burnt mound measured 12.5m by 10m with a thickness of 0.16m. It was composed of light black sandy clay with frequent burnt stone and charcoal.

Trough: The trough (C72) was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 3m by 1.8m with a depth of 0.5m. It had rounded corners which were oxidised, vertical sides and a flat base which also showed evidence of burning. The fill the pit consisted of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. This fill is dated to the Early to Middle Bronze Age.

Pit 1: This pit cut the trough C72. It was circular in shape and measured 1.28m by 1.12m with a depth of 0.45m and was filled with burnt mound material.

Pit 2: The pit (C71) was located to the north of these features. It was oval in shape and measured 1.3m by 1.1m with a depth of 0.4m and was filled with burnt mound material.

Finds:

Artefacts: A leaf-shaped arrowhead was recovered from an unstratified context on site.

Dating:

Absolute dating: Wood (alder) from the trough C54 (Site A)
C14 (Poz-24994) 3605±35 BP (2120–1880 BC)
Wood (alder) from the platform (Site A)
C14 (Poz-24995) 2850±35 BP (1130–910 BC)
Charcoal (alder) from the trough C72
C14 (Poz-26534) 3345±35 BP (1740–1520 BC)

References

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Physical Setting: The site is located 100m west of the River Goul. The topography and geology of this region is typical of the plain in general, with a gentle undulating landscape. This site lay in a region set within a broad low lying plain with a gradual northeast southwest slope trend. It was situated within a marshy field, formerly used for grazing, on the edge of wetlands.

Cultural Landscape: Prior to this section of road development, there was only one recorded prehistoric site within the vicinity of the site. This was a burnt mound situated in the neighbouring townland of Glashare (KK008-144).

Adjacent excavated sites: No

**Pre-Excavation features**

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M8 Cullahill to Cashel Road Improvement Scheme. No surface remains of the site were evident prior to investigations.

**Excavation Record**

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a burnt mound surrounded by three small pits.

**Burnt Mound:**

The burnt mound (C3) measured 15.5m by 17m with a thickness of 0.37m. It was composed of compacted black sandy silt with charcoal and heat-shattered stone. Adjacent to this deposit was a small spread that measured 3.6m by 3m with a thickness of 0.15m. It was composed of similar material. The mound is dated to the Middle Bronze Age.

**Pit 1:**

This pit (C10) was oval in shape and measured 0.9m by 0.65m with a depth of 0.22m. It was filled with black silty clay and heat-shattered stone.

**Pit 2:**

Pit (C12) was sub-circular in shape and measured 0.92m by 0.65m with a depth of 0.18m. It was filled with black silty clay and heat-shattered stone.

**Pit 3:**

This pit (C14) was circular in shape and measured 0.9m by 0.8m with a depth of 0.1m. It was filled with heat-shattered stone and charcoal. A small quantity of unidentified animal bone was also recovered from this pit.
Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: A small quantity of unidentified animal bone was recovered from this pit

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (unknown) from the burnt mound
C14 (Poz-26536) 3290±35 BP (1670–1490 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

Excavation of the site revealed a large burnt mound of heat-shattered stone suggesting the presence of pyrolithic water-boiling location. Only three small pits were identified associated with the deposit ruling out the possibility of a water-boiling activity. That said, a number of drains truncated the site which could have removed an original boiling trough. Alternatively, a portable boiling trough may have been used at the site. The small pits may have been used as roasting pits and this is supported by the recovery of animal bone.

References

Location: Islands
Parish: Urlingford
Barony: Galmoy
County: Kilkenny

Excavation Details:
Project: M8 Cullahill to Cashel Road Improvement
Site Director: Colm Hardy
Consultants: Valerie J. Keeley Ltd
Year: 2006

Physical Setting:
The site is located 50m west of the River Goul. The topography and geology of this region is typical of the plain in general, with a gentle undulating landscape. This site lay in a region set within a broad low lying plain with a gradual northeast southwest slope trend. It was situated within a marshy field, formerly used for grazing, on the edge of wetlands.

Cultural Landscape:
Prior to this section of road development, there was only one recorded prehistoric site within the vicinity of the site. This was a burnt mound situated in the neighbouring townland of Glashare (KK008-144).

Adjacent excavated sites: No

Pre-Excavation features
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M8 Cullahill to Cashel Road Improvement Scheme. No surface remains of the site were evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features:
Excavation of the site revealed two burnt mound sites that sealed a number of troughs, two of which were timber-lined.

Site A
Burnt Mound:
This burnt mound (C4) overlay a timber-lined trough and composed of black charcoal-enriched silty sand with heat-shattered stone. It measured 7m by 5m with a maximum thickness of 0.35m.

Trough:
The trough (C8) was cut into the natural marl and was circular in shape. It measured 1.86m by 1.84m with a depth of 0.4m and was lined with seven degraded timbers at its base, identified as oak. A brown sandy silt underlay these timbers. One of these timbers is dated to the Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age.

Site B
Burnt Mound:
This burnt mound survived as a dispersed spread of black sandy silt with charcoal and heat-shattered stone. It measured 12.05m by 8.6m with a maximum thickness of 0.14m.
Trough 1: This trough (C22) truncated an earlier pit (C69). It was rectangular in plan and measured 1.7m by 1.4m with a depth of 0.24m. It had vertical sides and a flat base and was filled with burnt mound material. The base and sides of the trough were lined with twenty roundwoods consisting mainly of alder. One of these is dated to the Late Bronze Age.

Trough 2: This trough (C24) was located to the west of the previous example. It was oval in shape and measured 2m by 0.8m with a depth of 0.21m. Five pieces of timber were noted at the base of the trough but were not set in position. These were identified as possible planks, one of which seemed to have been worked. The fill of the trough consisted of brown peat with occasional stones.

Pit 1: This pit (C69) was the earliest feature on site and was sub-circular in shape. It measured 1m by 0.6m with a depth of 0.25m. It was filled with black silty clay and heat-shattered stone. The pit was cut by the later trough.

Oval Structure: Located immediately adjacent to the troughs was an oval feature defined by a series of small stake-holes, some with wooden fragments still in situ. The feature measured 1.02m by 0.61m.

Finds: None

Dating: Wood (oak) timber from the trough 1 (Site A) C14 (Poz-24998) 4275±35 BP (3010–2750 BC)
Wood (oak) timber from the trough 1 (Site A) C14 (Poz-25875) 4100±35 BP (2870–2490 BC)
Wood (ash) timber from the trough 1 (Site B) C14 (Poz-24997) 2770±35 BP (1010–830 BC)

References

Fig. 10.79 Burnt mound and round-wood lined trough at Islands Site B, Co. Kilkenny.
Catalogue No.  KK 27
RMP No.  KK008-163
Licence No.  E2389

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Excavation Details: Project: M8 Cullahill to Cashel Road Improvement
Site Director: Colm Hardy
Consultants: Valerie J. Keeley Ltd
Year: 2006

Physical Setting: The site is located 30m west of the River Goul. This site lay in a region set within a broad low lying plain with a gradual northeast southwest slope trend. It was situated within a marshy field.

Cultural Landscape: Prior to this section of road development, there was only one recorded prehistoric site within the vicinity of the site. This was a burnt mound situated in the neighbouring townland of Glashare (KK008-144).

Adjacent excavated sites: No

Pre-Excavation features
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M8 Cullahill to Cashel Road Improvement Scheme. No surface remains of the site were evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a Middle Bronze Age burnt mound and a Late Bronze Age pit.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound (C4) extended beyond the limits of the excavation but the exposed portion was oval in shape. It measured 13.5m by 19m with a maximum thickness of 0.46m. The deposit consisted of black sandy silt, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. It was dated to the Middle Bronze Age.

Pit: This pit (C5) was revealed 2m north of the burnt mound. It was sub-oval in shape with vertical sides and a flat base. It measured 2.35m by 1.81m with a depth of 0.2m. Two stake-holes cut the base of the pit around the inner edge. The pit was filled with black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Finds: None

Dating: Charcoal (buckthorn) from the burnt mound
C14 (Poz-26537) 3210±35 BP (1610–1410 BC)
Charcoal (Pomoideae) from the fill of the pit
C14 (Poz-26538) 2810±35 BP (1060–840 BC)

References
Location: Townland: Warrenstown  Six inch map no: 08
Parish: Urlingford  NGR: 228753, 166446
Barony: Galmoy  Altitude: 113 m OD
County: Kilkenny

Excavation Details: Project: M8 Cullahill to Cashel Road Improvement
Site Director: Colm Hardy
Consultants: Valerie J. Keeley Ltd
Year: 2006

Physical Setting: The site is located 600m east of the River Goul. The topography and geology of this region is typical of the plain in general, with a gentle undulating landscape. This site lay in a region set within a broad low lying plain with a gradual northeast southwest slope trend. It was situated within a marshy field, formerly used for grazing, on the edge of wetlands.

Cultural Landscape: Prior to this section of road development, there was only one recorded prehistoric site within the vicinity of the site. This was a burnt mound situated in the neighbouring townland of Glashare (KK008-144).

Adjacent excavated sites: No

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M8 Cullahill to Cashel Road Improvement Scheme. No surface remains of the site were evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed two burnt mounds, one of which overlay a plank-lined trough.

Site A

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound (C5) was truncated in several places but survived to an extent of 15m by 13m with a maximum thickness of 0.35m. It consisted of black sandy silt, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Trough: This pit (C12) consisted of a shallow sub-circular cut representing the base of a truncated trough. It measured 1.85m by 0.8m with a depth of 0.2m. The feature was lined with five ash planks which was surrounded by eleven wooden pegs or stakes consisting of ash and hazel. One of these hazel pegs is dated to the Early Bronze Age. The fill of the shallow feature consisted of black sandy silt, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Site B

Burnt Mound: This burnt mound (C3) was revealed 12m south of the first site. It measured 10.2m by 8.7m with a maximum thickness of 0.22m. It composed of black
silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. The deposit was dated to Early Bronze Age.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating:
- Wood (hazel) peg from the trough (C12) Site A
  C14 (Poz-24999) 3605±35 BP (2120–1880 BC)
- Charcoal (hazel) from the burnt mound Site B
  C14 (Poz-26539) 3615±35 BP (2130–1880 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

Excavation of the site revealed two burnt mound areas dating to the Early Bronze Age, the larger of which produced a sub-circular plank-lined trough surrounding by eleven stake-holes. This suggests that the trough is either a rare example of a circular plank-lined pit or a wattle-lined example with a plank base. The latter is more likely and can be compared with other wattle-lined troughs in the country which are also dated to this period (see Chapter 5). The second mound may have been a separate phase of burnt mound activity on the site or may have been disturbed material from the larger mound.

References


Fig. 10.80 Burnt mound and circular, plank-lined trough at Warrenstown, Co. Kilkenny.
Physical Setting: The site spanned four fields, each used for pasture, and bisected by a small stream and field boundary hedgerow to the southwest that ran north to join the River Goul. Because the site was excavated during the summer, ground conditions were very dry, however the area was known locally to usually be very wet and waterlogged in places, especially during the winter. A large pond was also excavated in the area.

Cultural Landscape: Prior to this section of road development, there was only one recorded prehistoric site within the vicinity of the site. This was a burnt mound situated in the neighbouring townland of Glashare (KK008-144).

Adjacent excavated sites: No

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M8 Cullahill to Cashel Road Improvement Scheme. No surface remains of the site were evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed several areas of burnt mound activity and numerous pit features.

Site A

Burnt Spread: This spread was interpreted as residual burnt mound material that was very disturbed. It measured 9.2m by 14m with a maximum thickness of 0.2m.

Site B

Burnt Spread: This spread (C14) measured 2.81m by 1.7m with a maximum thickness of 0.08m. It consisted of black silty clay charcoal and heat-shattered stone. This deposit was truncated on its southern side and no cut features were identified.

Site C

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound (C22/51) overlay all the cut features at this site. It measured 23m by 27m with a thickness of 0.3m. It was composed of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.
Trough: The trough (C102) was located in the centre of the site and measured 3.3m by 2.3m with a depth of 0.56m. It had steep sides, a flat base and was filled by a single deposit of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. This deposit also contained burnt animal bone. This trough is dated to the Late Bronze Age.

Well: This large pit (C96) was excavated adjacent to the trough. It was circular in shape and measured 4.7m by 4.6m with a depth of 1.62m. Eight fills were recorded in the pit consisting of silty clays containing charcoal, stones, animal bone, wood fragments, sandy gravel, peat and heat-shattered stone. Charcoal from the lower fill is dated to the Late Bronze Age.

Pit: Pit (C83) was oval in shape and measured 0.87m by 0.52m with a depth of 0.29m. It was filled with dark grey sandy silt with occasional burnt animal bone. This is dated to the Late Bronze Age.

Post-Holes: Two post-holes were excavated in the north-east quadrant of the site.

Site D
Burnt Mound: This deposit (C15) was circular in shape and measured 5.14m in diameter with a thickness of 0.13m. It was composed of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone and was located 5m north of Site C.

Pit: The pit (C32) was sealed by the burnt stone deposit and was oval in shape. It measured 1.62m by 1.23m with a depth of 0.52m. Three fills were recorded in the pit consisting of silty clays, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. It is dated to the Middle Bronze Age.

Site E
Burnt Spread: This spread (C16) was oval in shape and measured 5.75m by 3m with a maximum thickness of 0.2m. It was composed of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Site F
Burnt Spread: A small deposit of heat-shattered stone and charcoal overlay a number of pits. The spread was circular in shape and measured 0.5m in diameter with a depth of 0.05m.

Pit 1: This pit (C31) was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 1.28m by 1.16m with a depth of 0.35m. It contained four fills consisting of dark silty sands, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 2: Pit (C37) was truncated. It was oval in shape with vertical sides and a rounded base. The pit was filled with black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 3: This pit (C42) was irregular in shape and measured 0.72m by 0.7m with a maximum depth of 0.08m. It was filled with loosely compacted black sandy silt with occasional burnt stone and charcoal.

Site G
Burnt Mound: This mound (C63) was truncated by a field boundary and stream. It measured 24m by 32m with a maximum thickness of 0.2m. The deposit was composed of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.
Pit/Trough: This pit (C72) was circular in shape and measured 2.8m by 3.1m with a depth of 0.5m. It was filled with a single deposit of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. Occasional burnt bone was also recovered from this pit. It is dated to the Middle Bronze Age.

Site H

Burnt Mound: This mound (C74) was located in the far west of the excavated area. It measured 3.2m by 4.84m with a thickness of 0.13m and consisted of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. The deposit is dated to the Middle to Late Bronze Age.

Pit: The pit (C88) was located to the north of the spread. It was oval in shape and measured 1.4m by 1m with a depth of 0.2m. The pit was filled with black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: Burnt and unburnt animal bone was recovered from Site D and Site G

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (unknown) from the trough (C102) Site C C14 (Poz-26540) 3025±35 BP (970–810 BC) Charcoal (unknown) from fill of pit (C83) Site C C14 (Poz-26679) 2825±35 BP (1120–890 BC) Charcoal (unknown) from fill of pit (C69) Site C C14 (Poz-26678) 2895±35 BP (1210–970 BC) Charcoal (unknown) from fill of trough (C32) Site D C14 (Poz-26676) 3330±35 BP (1730–1510 BC) Charcoal (unknown) from fill of pit (C72) Site G C14 (Poz-26540) 3025±35 BP (1400–1130 BC) Charcoal (unknown) from fill of pit (C88) Site H C14 (Poz-26541) 2950±35 BP (1300–1040 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

Excavation of this site produced four burnt mounds and four smaller burnt spreads with associated pits and troughs. A range of dates from the Middle to Late Bronze Age were recorded from the associated pits and troughs below these burnt mounds. All of these features were covered within a time span of 1730 – 810 Cal BC indicating the continued use of this site for burnt mound activity for c. 900 yrs. Because the site was excavated during the summer, ground conditions were very dry, however the area was known locally to usually be very wet and waterlogged in places, especially during the winter.

References

Location: Townland: Glashare  Six inch map no: 08
Parish: Glashare  NGR: 232284, 171022
Barony: Galmoy  Altitude: 115 m OD
County: Kilkenny

Excavation Details: Project: M8 Cullahill to Cashel Road Improvement
Site Director: Colm Hardy
Consultants: Valerie J. Keeley Ltd
Year: 2006

 Physical Setting: The site was situated in a level field used for pasture divided by a small stream (and tributary of the River Goul) and adjacent to the existing route of the N8 Dublin to Cork road.

Cultural Landscape: Prior to this section of road development, there was only one recorded prehistoric site within the vicinity of the site. This was a burnt mound situated in the neighbouring townland of Glashare (KK008-144).

Adjacent excavated sites: Iron Age hearth features.

Pre-Excavation features
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M8 Cullahill to Cashel Road Improvement Scheme. No surface remains of the site were evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed three burnt mound sites that overlay a number of troughs.

Site A
Burnt Mound: The mound measured 12.85m by 11.6m with a maximum thickness of 0.42m. It was composed of several layers of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Trough 1: This trough (C26) was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 1.65m by 1.51m with a depth of 0.12m. Three stake-holes cut the base of the trough in the north, south-west and southern corners. The pit was filled with grey silty clay, charcoal and pebble inclusions.

Trough 2: This example (C28) was also sub-rectangular in shape. It measured 1.66m by 1.12m with a depth of 0.14m and was filled with grey sandy silt with charcoal and pebbles.

Trough 3: This trough (C46) was truncated on its southern side. It measured 2.65m by 2m with a depth of 0.19m and was filled with black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. It was dated to the Late Bronze Age.

Site B

1275
Burnt Mound: This mound measured 20m by 12m with a thickness of 0.3m. It was composed of black compacted silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Trough: This trough (C67) was heavily truncated and the excavator states that it was difficult to define the edges as a result. The pit was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 3.7m by 1.4m with a depth of 0.25m. It was filled with the overlying burnt mound material.

Site C

Burnt Mound: This deposit was situated at the southern side of the stream. It was irregular in shape and disturbed by a series of plough furrows. The deposit measured 2.2m by 1.9m with a thickness of 0.1m and composed of black silty sand, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Finds:

Artefacts: Neolithic flint blade from topsoil

Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (Pomoideae) from the trough (C46) Site A C14 (Poz-26543) 2590±35 BP (830–590 BC)

References

Location: Townland: Ballinvally  Six inch map no: 20
Parish: Kilmacahill  NGR: 263258, 157521
Barony: Gowran  Altitude: 78 m OD
County: Kilkenny
Excavation Details: Project: N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford road scheme
Site Director: Emma Devine
Consultants: Irish Archaeological Consultancy
Year: 2008
Physical Setting: This site was located in a flat field of pasture. The surrounding landscape is generally flat and comprises a mixture of pasture and tillage. The Blackstairs Mountains are visible to the east and south-east, Mount Leinster is the most prominent peak of these. Brandon hill is also evident to the south.
Cultural Landscape: There are no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the excavation
Adjacent excavated sites: Iron Age hearth features.

Pre-Excavation features
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford road scheme. No surface remains of the site were evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed two pits, a hearth and numerous stake-holes.

Pit 1
This pit (C10) was oval in shape and measured 0.8m by 0.75m with a depth of 0.23m. Three fills were recorded in the pit consisting of a primary deposit of heat-shattered stone and charcoal. The secondary fill composed of sterile material while the upper deposit consisted of fire-reddened subsoil. The pit is dated to the Early Bronze Age.

Finds:
Artefacts: None

Dating:
Relative dating: None
Absolute dating: Charcoal (ash and hazel) from the pit C14 (UBA-15410) 3496±28 BP (1894–1743 BC)

References
Location: Townland: Ballyquirk Six inch map no: 20
Parish: Gowran NGR: 261531, 156323
Barony: Gowran Altitude: 99 m OD
County: Kilkenny
Excavation Details: Project: N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford road scheme
Site Director: Ruth Elliot
Consultants: Irish Archaeological Consultancy
Year: 2008
Physical Setting: The site was located on a small patch of dry land within a marsh
Cultural Landscape: There are no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the excavation
Adjacent excavated sites:

**Pre-Excavation features**

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford road scheme. No surface remains of the site were evident prior to investigations.

**Excavation Record**

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a single trough filled with heat-shattered stone.

Trough: The trough (C6) was sub-circular in shape and measured 2.24m by 1.1m with a depth of 0.24m. The fill consisted of charcoal-enriched soil, charcoal and heat-shattered sandstone. A fragment of ash from the pit is dated to the Early Bronze Age.

Pit: This shallow pit (C7) cut the trough. It measured 1m by 1.92m with a depth of 0.15m and was filled with grey silty clay.

**Finds:**

Artefacts: None

**Dating:**

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (ash) from the fill of the trough (C6) C14 (UBA-12230) 3795±22 BP (2292–2143 BC)

**References**

Location: Townland: Ballyquirk  Six inch map no: 20
Parish: Gowran  NGR: 262596, 157025
Barony: Gowran  Altitude: 88 m OD
County: Kilkenny

Excavation Details:
Project: N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford road scheme
Site Director: Richard Jennings
Consultants: Irish Archaeological Consultancy
Year: 2008

Physical Setting:
The site was situated on an undulating landscape. The terrain was well drained pastureland. The Blackstairs Mountains were visible to the east and south-east, Mount Leinster was the most prominent peak of these. Brandon Hill was evident to the south. To the east the River Barrow meanders on a north-south axis.

Cultural Landscape:
There are no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the excavation

Adjacent excavated sites:
This site consisted of the remains of a complex of up to five burnt mounds and/or associated features alongside a stream over distance of approximately 120m.

Pre-Excavation features:
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford road scheme. No surface remains of the site were evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features:
Five burnt mounds were excavated along this stretch of river. Excavation of this first site revealed a large, partially stone-lined trough, and three pits.

Burnt Mound:
The burnt mound (C206) measured 17m by 8m with a maximum thickness of 0.14m and continued under the field boundary. It was composed of heat-shattered sandstone, black silty clay and charcoal.

Trough:
The trough (C303) was sub-circular in shape and measured 2.7m by 2.5m with a maximum depth of 0.4m. It had a flat base and steeply sloping sides except for the side nearest the stream which was considerable shallower, possibly to access the stream. Large flat stones were identified at the base of the trough at the southern side. The excavator suggests that they may have formed a step or a platform to access the pit (Jennings 2010, 4). The fill of the trough consisted of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 1:
This pit (C272) was sealed by the burnt mound and was circular in shape. It measured 1.12m by 0.9m with a depth of 0.13m and was filled with grey silty sand.

Pit 2:
Pit (C342) was oval in shape and measured 1.7m by 0.94m with a depth of 0.13m. It was filled with dark silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.
Pit 3: This pit (C346) was irregular in shape and measured 2.8m by 1.3m with a depth of 0.98m. It was filled with grey silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 4: Pit (C4) was revealed west of the burnt mound. It was oval in shape and measured 1m by 0.75m with a depth of 0.3m and was filled with black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 5: Pit (C213) was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 1.04m by 0.65m with a depth of 0.22m and was filled with black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: None

Excavation Interpretation

Partial excavation of the site revealed a large deposit of waste-firing material associated with pyrolithic water-boiling. This is further supported by the identification of a well-defined trough, lined at one end by flat stones. While these stones may represent some kind of step feature to access the pit, it is more likely the remnants of a stone lining, used to facilitate the emptying of the trough of hot stones. The other pits on site may have served a similar function.

References


Plate 10.57 Burnt Mound and possible stone-lined trough at Ballyquirk 4, Co. Kilkenny.
Physical Setting: The site was situated on an undulating landscape. The terrain was well drained pastureland. The Blackstairs Mountains were visible to the east and south-east, Mount Leinster was the most prominent peak of these. Brandon Hill was evident to the south. To the east the River Barrow meanders on a north-south axis.

Cultural Landscape: There are no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the excavation.

Adjacent excavated sites: This site consisted of the remains of a complex of up to five burnt mounds and/or associated features alongside a stream over distance of approximately 120m.

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford road scheme. No surface remains of the site were evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Five burnt mounds were excavated along this stretch of river. This mound was located 45m to the south of Burnt Mound 1 and beside the same stream. Excavation of the site revealed a burnt mound, trough, hearth, a number of pits and a stake-hole cluster.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound (C77) extended beyond the limits of the excavation. The exposed portion measured 18m by 8m with a maximum thickness of 0.3m. The deposit was composed of heat-shattered sandstone in a matrix of black silty clay and charcoal.

Trough: This trough (C301) was sub-circular in shape and measured 2.2m by 1.8m with a depth of 0.58m. A single stake-hole cut the base of the pit. Four fills were identified in the trough with the lower layers consisting of a compact sand with iron panning and a dump of stones. The upper fills composed of burnt mound material. Hazel charcoal from the trough is dated to the Middle Bronze Age.

Pit 1: Pit (C241) was sub-circular in shape and measured 1.68m by 1.3m with a depth of 0.24m. It was located west of the trough and was filled with black silty clay and heat-shattered stone.
Pit 2: Pit (C235) was U-shaped in plan and was located 4m south-west of the trough. It measured 4.3m by 1.7m with a depth of 0.68m and had irregular sides. The pit was filled with burnt mound material.

Pit 3: This pit (C222) was irregular in shape and measured 4.04m by 1.84m with a depth of 0.5m. It contained three archaeologically sterile layers.

Pit 4: This pit (C300) was situated 7m from the trough. It was circular in shape and measured 0.78m in diameter and contained a fill consisting of burnt mound material.

Hearth 1: This feature (C309) was located south-west of the pit C300. It was sub-circular in shape and measured 1.24m by 1.2m with a depth of 0.17m. The sides and base of the shallow feature were heavily scrotched indicating that intense burning had taken place.

Hearth 2: C164 was a shallow square pit that measured 0.4m by 0.38m with a depth of 0.1m. It contained burnt mound material mixed with reddened clay. The excavator suggesting that the fill may have been hearth waste as no in situ burning was noted at the base of the feature.

Post-holes: A group of six post-holes and stake-holes were revealed on site and may have formed a small sub-rectangular structure or platform measuring 1m by 0.5m in size.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (hazel) from the fill of the trough (C301) C14 (UBA-12264) 3402±25 BP (1752–1628 BC)

References

Excavation Details:

**Location:**
- Townland: Ballyquirk
- Parish: Gowran
- Barony: Gowran
- County: Kilkenny

**Parish:**
- Gowran

**NRG:** 262596, 157025

**Altitude:** 88m OD

**Barony:**
- Gowran

**County:**
- Kilkenny

**Excavation Details:**
- **Project:** N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford road scheme
- **Site Director:** Richard Jennings
- **Consultants:** Irish Archaeological Consultancy
- **Year:** 2008

**Physical Setting:**
The site was situated on an undulating landscape. The terrain was well drained pastureland. The Blackstairs Mountains were visible to the east and south-east, Mount Leinster was the most prominent peak of these. Brandon Hill was evident to the south. To the east the River Barrow meanders on a north-south axis.

**Cultural Landscape:**
There are no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the excavation.

**Adjacent excavated sites:**
This site consisted of the remains of a complex of up to five burnt mounds and/or associated features alongside a stream over distance of approximately 120m.

**Pre-Excavation features**
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford road scheme. No surface remains of the site were evident prior to investigations.

**Excavation Record**

**Summary of Features:**
Five burnt mounds were excavated along this stretch of river. This mound was located to the south of Burnt Mound 2 and beside the same stream. Excavation of the site revealed a burnt mound, a possible enclosing palisade, a structure and a hearth.

**Burnt Mound:**
The burnt mound (C71) was roughly rectangular but it extended beyond the limits of the excavation. It measured 10m by 7.5m with a maximum thickness of 0.3m. The deposit consisted of heat-shattered limestone in a black silty clay.

**Hearth:**
This hearth (C329) lay under the southern extent of the mound material almost within the hedgerow. It measured 1.6m by 1.4m with a depth of 0.2m and the base showed signs of scorching suggesting intense heat. The fill consisted of organic material (root disturbance) with charcoal.

**Structure:**
The structure was located 3m north-west of the hearth. It consisted of nine stake-holes arranged in a square plan measuring 1.9m by 1.9m. A quartzite hammer-stone was retrieved from one of these post-holes. A shallow pit was identified within this structure. It was oval in shape and measured 0.8m by 0.7m with a depth of 0.11m and was filled with heat-shattered stone and charcoal, similar to the burnt mound. An unmodified quartz crystal was found in this deposit.
Enclosing palisade: Five post-holes may represent the remains of palisade or boundary fence around the burnt mound. It formed a perfect 10m long straight line orientated north-south.

Finds:

Artefacts: Quartzite hammerstone was retrieved from the fill of the stake-hole in the rectangular structure. A quartz crystal was recovered from the fill of the pit in the interior of this structure.

Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: None

References

Physical Setting: The site was situated on an undulating landscape. The terrain was well drained pastureland. The Blackstairs Mountains were visible to the east and south-east, Mount Leinster was the most prominent peak of these. Brandon Hill was evident to the south. To the east the River Barrow meanders on a north-south axis.

Cultural Landscape: There are no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the excavation.

Adjacent excavated sites: This site consisted of the remains of a complex of up to five burnt mounds and/or associated features alongside a stream over distance of approximately 120m.

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford road scheme. No surface remains of the site were evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Five burnt mounds were excavated along this stretch of river. This mound was located to the south of Burnt Mound 3 and beside the same stream. Excavation of the site revealed a trough, a large pit and numerous stake-holes. No burnt mound was exposed.

Trough: The trough (C354) was located within 1m of the hedgerow that marked the eastern edge of excavation, and was within 5m of the stream that was to the east of the site. It was sub-rectangular in plan and measured 2.4m by 2.10m with a depth of 0.54m. The base of the feature was lined with large flat angular stones. Four stake-holes were also revealed cut into the base of trough, one in each of the four corners. Five fills were identified in the pit consisting of silty clays, charcoal and heat-shattered sandstone.

Pit 1/Trough: This pit (C35) was irregular in shape and measured 3.07m by 2.89 with a depth of 0.24m. A mid-grey silty clay formed on the base and contained occasional heat-shattered sandstone, frequent pieces of limestone and moderate amounts of charcoal chunks. Three possible rubbing stones were found in the deposit. The upper deposits consisted of black silty clay and heat-shattered stone. A chert flake was found in this fill.
Post-Holes: Three post-holes of similar shape and form were revealed in a north-south orientation. The excavated suggests that they may have formed a fence-line similar to the previous burnt mound site (Jennings and Coughlan 2010, 15).

Trough 2: This trough (C42) was revealed south of the other features identified on site. It was oval in shape and measured 3.2m by 1.4m with a depth of 0.5m. A single stake-hole was cut into the eastern side of the cut. A single fill was identified in the feature consisting of heat-shattered sandstone and charcoal. A sample of elm from this fill is dated to the Middle Bronze Age.

Finds:

Artefacts: Three rubbing stones and a quartz flake were retrieved from the pit (C35).

Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (elm) from the fill of the trough (C42) C14 (UBA-12263) 3270±24 BP (1617–1494 BC)

References

Physical Setting: The site was on relatively flat marshy land and was bordered on its eastern edge by a small regulated stream which also delimited the edge of the bogland.

Cultural Landscape: Baysrath 4 was located 250m NNW of another burnt mound at Baysrath 3, and 400m north of a previously identified multi-phased settlement and burial site (Baysrath 1, E2517).

Adjacent excavated sites: Two burnt mounds were excavated in this area.

**Pre-Excavation features**

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford road scheme. No surface remains of the site were evident prior to investigations.

**Excavation Record**

Summary of Features: Excavation of the area revealed two burnt mounds and several pit features.

**Site A**

Burnt Mound: This burnt mound (C3) sealed most of the cut features on site and measured 9.4m by 9m with a thickness of 0.33m. It was composed of dark sandy clay, charcoal and heat-shattered sandstone. Some of the charcoal was vitrified suggesting it was burnt at very high temperatures.

Pit 1: This pit (C35) was sealed by the burnt mound. It was oval in shape and measured 0.8m by 0.5m with a depth of 0.01m. The fill consisted of heat-shattered stone and charcoal-rich material.

Pit 2: This pit (C19) was sealed by the burnt mound. It was irregular in shape and measured 0.72m by 0.47m with a depth of 0.15m. The fill consisted of heat-shattered stone and charcoal-rich material.

Pit 3: Pit (C17) was also irregular in shape and measured 0.55m by 0.4m with a depth of 0.17m. It was filled with dark grey clay and heat-shattered stone.

Post-Hole: A single post-hole was also uncovered here. It is dated to the Early to Middle Bronze Age.
Gully/Slot-Trench: This trench (C36) was defined by an irregular/semi-circular cut. The form of this feature tentatively suggests that it may have been the basis for a structure with this gully forming the foundation trench for upright planks (Walsh 2010, 5). Possible posthole C34 was located immediately east of the eastern end of this gully, and may have been associated with it. The feature measured 3m by 0.6m with a depth of 0.35m.

Site B

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound in this area measured 15m by 10m with a maximum thickness of 0.22m. It was composed of three deposits of black silty clay and heat-shattered sandstone. It was heavily disturbed by modern ploughing.

Pit 1: This pit (C32) was revealed under the burnt spread. It was oval in shape and measured 0.75m by 0.55m with a depth of 0.36m and was filled with charcoal rich material and heat-shattered stone. Charcoal from the fill dated the pit to the Late Bronze Age.

Finds:

Artefacts: Twenty-six fragments of animal bone were recovered from the ditch feature at Site A. These were identified as cow and sheep.

Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (alder/hazel) from the fill of the post-hole (C12) Site A C14 (UBA-10987) 3499±23 BP (1887–1751 BC) Charcoal (ash) from the fill of the pit (C32) Site B C14 (UBA-10988) 2891±30 BP (1207–979 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

Significant evidence of domestic occupation was identified at the multi-period site of Baysrath 1 located just 500m to the south-west and it is possible that this location was the focal point of the Bronze Age communities that carried out the burnt mound activity at Baysrath 4. Broadly contemporary archaeology to Burnt Mound II can be seen immediately to the south of the site at Baysrath 3 at which a later Bronze Age burnt mound was also identified. The site was identified as representing two phases of burnt mound activity dating to the middle and Late Bronze Age. The animal bone recovered from the site is not contemporary with either of the burnt mounds and is from a post-medieval field ditch.

References

Catalogue No.   KK 35
RMP No. KK020-106
Licence No. E3913

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Excavation Details:
- Project: N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford road scheme
- Site Director: Tim Coughlan
- Consultants: Irish Archaeological Consultancy
- Year: 2008

Physical Setting:
This site was located in level ground under low-lying pasture and was formerly used as a football pitch. The main Kilkenny–Dublin road was located to the immediate south of the site on an artificial embankment, and a north–south river was located c. 30m to the east of the site.

Cultural Landscape:
Evidence of burnt mound activity was also recorded at Blanchvillespark 2, located c. 200m south-west of Blanchvillespark 3.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford road scheme. No surface remains of the site were evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features:
Excavation of the area revealed three areas of burnt mound activity, however this activity seems to have focused around one central structure and pond. The other areas contained a number of features possibly relating to burnt mound activity, although these features were ephemeral in nature. The structure identified on the site was interpreted as the remains of a possible sweatlodge (Coughlan and Bailey 2010).

Possible Pond:
This feature (C49) was interpreted as a possible natural feature and was located 3m south of the structure. It measured 10.5m by 6m with a depth of 0.7m. Twelve fills were identified in the feature consisting of silts laid down by water. Burnt mound material composed of heat-shattered stone and charcoal was revealed.

Structure:
This possible structure was formed by eighteen post-holes/slot holes which surrounded a rectangular hollow/ depression which measured 6.5m by 3m with a depth of 0.1m. It may have had a small annex to the eastern end. It is possible that an entrance (0.5m wide) was located along the eastern side, which was defined by slot on the southern wall and two small adjacent pits/postholes located mid-way along the eastern wall. It is also possible that the structure was designed to be linked to the pond via a paleo channel extending from the north-west of the pond C49 (Coughlan 2010, 7). Two of the post/slot holes are dated to the Middle Bronze Age. Two internal pits
were identified within the structure. C72 was oval in shape and measured 1m by 0.82m with a depth of 0.4m. The fill consisted of a grey clay. Pit (C93) was a shallow cut and was irregular in shape. It measured 0.77m by 0.47m with a depth of 0.23m. The fill consisted of dark grey silty clay.

**Hearth:**

The hearth (C34) was identified 2m to the east of the possible structure outside the entrance to it. It consisted of an oval area of fire-reddened subsoil, indicating intense burning. It measured 1.45m by 1.1m with a depth of 0.02m.

**Linear Feature:**

This linear feature (C22) extended from the structure to the pond and seemed to cut the burnt mound material within it. It measured 9.5m by 0.7m with a depth of 0.44m and contained a fill consisting of burnt mound material. The excavator suggests that it may represent a modern cut but equally notes that it may be related to the structure possibly diverting water from the pond (Coughlan 2010, 8).

**Irregular Feature:**

This irregular cut (C91) was located north of the structure. It was irregular in plan and measured 7m by 1.3m with a depth of 0.35m. The fill consisted of brown silty clay. The feature may have been associated with the structure.

**Pit 1:**

This pit (C40) was oval in shape and measured 1.8m by 0.84m with a depth of 0.45m. It was located 12m from the structure and pond. The fill consisted of dark silty clay and stones. Charcoal from this fill is dated to the Middle Bronze Age.

**Pit 2:**

Pit (C109) was irregular in shape and measured 0.74m by 0.73m with a depth of 0.07m. The fill consisted of dark brown silty clay.

**Finds:**

None

**Dating:**

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (spindle) from fill of post-hole of structure C14 (UBA-12225) 3072±26 BP (1412–1269 BC) Charcoal (hazel) from the fill of post-hole of structure C14 (UBA-12226) 3060±21 BP (1400–1268 BC)

**Excavation Interpretation:**

It is felt that this may represent a sweathouse, with heated stones from the hearth being placed into an internal pit to create steam. There is clear evidence of structural elements in the form of slot and post holes representing a north, east and south wall. It is not clear whether there was a west wall or whether no evidence of same survives. An entrance was located in the east wall with a small annex to the main structure located north of the entrance. The entire structure was located within a shallow depression which may have been an opportunistic use of a natural depression or be man-made. To the east of the entrance was a hearth. Internally there were two pit features and one of these is likely to have functioned as a receptacle for hot stones. The location of the activity and structure identified in this area suggests that it was deliberately located to the north of the pond/depression and between the linear channels extending to the north of this.
References


Fig. 10.81 Structure with internal pit and external hearth, connected to pond at Blanchvillespark.
Physical Setting: The site consisted of two small groups of pits spaced 10m apart in a low-lying basin. A natural pond and prehistoric archaeological features were discovered 40m to the south-west at Danesfort 10, AR087.

Cultural Landscape: The site was 150m north-east of a prehistoric structure at Danesfort 9 (E3468), 250m north-east of a prehistoric field system at Danesfort 8 (E3461), 470m north-east of a group of Bronze Age pits at Danesfort 7 (E3537), 600m north-east of a late Bronze Age pit at Danesfort 6 (E3538), and 900m north-east of a middle Bronze Age settlement at Danesfort 5 (E3546).

Adjacent excavated sites: Prehistoric structure 150m to the north-east.

**Pre-Excavation features**

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford road scheme. No surface remains of the site were evident prior to investigations.

**Excavation Record**

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed two troughs, several pits and numerous stake-holes. No burnt mound was revealed.

Trough 1: The trough (C4) was sub-oval in shape and measured 2m by 1.43m with a depth of 0.55m. The base of the feature was cut by six stake-holes surrounding the inner edge suggesting the pit may have been lined. The fill of the trough consisted of black sandy silt, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 1: This pit (C6) was exposed adjacent to the trough C4. It was oval in shape and measured 1m by 0.72m with a depth of 0.11m and contained a fill consisting of black silty sand.

Pit 2: Pit (C8) was sub-oval in shape and measured 1.3m by 0.75m with a depth of 0.07m. The fill consisted of black silty sand.

Pit 3/Possible trough: This pit (C22) may have functioned as a trough. It was oval in shape and measured 1.84m by 1.26m with a depth of 0.26m. Two stake-holes cut the base and the fill of the pit consisted of dark brown silty sand.
Pit 3: Pit (C14) was oval in shape and measured 1m by 0.44 with a depth 0.34m. The fill consisted of dark brown silty clays. The pit is dated to the Early Bronze Age.

Pit 4: Pit (C16) was circular in shape and measured 1.34m by 1.34m with a depth of 0.32m. The fill consisted of light black silt sand.

Finds:

Artefacts: None
Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None
Absolute dating: Charcoal (hazelnut shell) from fill of pit (C14 C14 (UBA-15560) 3893±29 BP (2467–2295 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

The area can be interpreted as a small pyrolithic water-boiling site. This is confirmed by the presence of heat-shattered stone and large pits, one of which may have been wattle-lined originally. Any substantial mound material may have been removed by later activity or by the construction of the road, adjacent to the site.

References


Plate 10.58 Possible temporary boiling pits at Danesfort 11, Co. Kilkenny.
**Location:** Townland: Holdenstown  
Parish: Gowran  
Barony: Dunbell  
County: Kilkenny  

**Six inch map no:** 24  
**NGR:** 256828, 152048  
**Altitude:** 57m OD

**Excavation Details:** Project: N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford road scheme  
Site Director: Yvonne Whitty  
Consultants: Irish Archaeological Consultancy  
Year: 2008

**Physical Setting:**  
The site lay on flat terrain. The surrounding landscape was rolling and nothing was visible on the horizon. To the north there was a small stream running northeast-southwest. The surrounding landscape was arable.

**Cultural Landscape:**  
Holdenstown 3 was visible c. 80m to the west and Holdenstown 2 was located c. 180m to the south. Dunbell Big 1 was located c. 400m to the north-east. There was a church and graveyard (KK024-02001, 2) located c. 150m to the south of this site.

**Adjacent excavated sites:**  
Early Bronze Age pit cluster was excavated adjacent to the burnt mound. These pits were filled with heat-shattered stone and may have been part of a larger site which lay outside the limits of the excavation.

### Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford road scheme. No surface remains of the site were evident prior to investigations.

### Excavation Record

**Summary of Features:**  
Excavation of the site revealed two areas of burnt mound activity. The features sealed by the large burnt mound will be discussed in more detail here as the Early Bronze Age pits are not associated with the mound.

**Burnt Mound:**  
The burnt mound was composed of three deposits (C3, C4 and C7). Overall the material measured 21.5m by 18m with a thickness of 0.25m. The primary deposit consisted of black silty clay and heat-shattered sandstone while the upper layers composed of similar material however it was disturbed and mixed with topsoil. A possible quern stone and two spindle whorls were retrieved from the spread.

**Trough:**  
The trough (C24) was sub-oval in shape with a stepped west side. It measured 3.86m by 2.8m with a depth of 0.22m. Three fills were identified in the trough consisting of black silty sand and heat-shattered stone. Burnt animal bone fragments were recovered from the upper fill of the trough along with flint debitage. A sample of ash charcoal dated this feature to the Early Iron Age.
Pit 1: This pit (C10) was oval in shape and measured 1.56m by 0.94m with a depth of 0.48m. The fill consisted of brown sandy silt. A single post-hole was situated north of this pit.

Pit 2: Pit (C25) was oval in shape and measured 1.05m by 0.8m with a depth of 0.25m. The fill consisted of black sandy silt.

Pit 3: C26 was circular in shape and measured 1.7m by 1.6m with a depth of 0.3m. The fill consisted of black sandy silt.

Pit 4: This pit (C29) was sub-oval in shape and measured 1.5m by 1.18m with a depth of 0.22m.

Finds:

Artefacts: A quern stone and two possible spindle whorls were retrieved from the burnt mound. A flint flake was recovered from the fill of the trough.

Ecofacts: Burnt animal bone was recovered from the fill of the trough.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (ash) from fill of the trough

C14 (UBA-13114) 2477±22 BP (765–420 BC)

References

Location:  Location: Knockadrina  Six inch map no: 31
Parish: Kilree  NGR: 251422, 139420
Barony: Shillelogher  Altitude: 77m OD
County: Kilkenny

Excavation Details: Project: N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford road scheme
Site Director: Ed Lyne
Consultants: Irish Archaeological Consultancy
Year: 2008

Physical Setting: The site was located on low lying pasture with gentle hillside rising up to the east and west.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded sites in the vicinity prior to excavation.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed two possible troughs, ten pits, and several post and stake-holes. No burnt mound was revealed.

Trough 1:  This trough (C16) was located in the southern half of the site. It was sub-circular in shape and measured 1.6m by 1.3m with a depth of 0.52m. The fill consisted of loose black sandy silt, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Trough 2:  This possible trough (C17) was oval in shape and measured 3.5m by 3.5m with a depth of 0.9m. It was filled with light brown silty clay, some charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Pits:  These 10 small pits were recorded and excavated across the site. These were generally sub-circular or oval and single filled with charcoal-flecked silty clay. Pit C51, to the north of the site, varied somewhat in that it was more irregular than the other pits and had two fills, the upper fill being very charcoal-rich. These pits were dispersed, and apart from speculating that they may have functioned as storage or waste pits, little else can be said.

Dating:  Charcoal (ash) from fill of the trough (C16)
C14 (UBA-10989) 3743±24 BP (2272–2039 BC)
Charcoal (hazel) from fill of the trough (C17)
C14 (UBA-10990) 3684±25 BP (2189–1978 BC)

References
Location: Maddockstown Townland: Six inch map no: 20
Parish: Gowran NGR: 256886, 154199
Barony: Blackrath Altitude: 65m OD
County: Kilkenny

Excavation Details: Project: N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford road scheme
Site Director: Przemyslaw Wierzbicki
Consultants: Irish Archaeological Consultancy
Year: 2008

Physical Setting: The site was located on flat land under pasture. There were no open water sources in the vicinity of the site but a few springs which fed several modern drains were identified. The area had been drained in the 1950s; a peat deposit in pit C8 indicates that it had previously been considerably damp.

Cultural Landscape: A burnt mound at Rathgarven/Clifden was excavated c. 150m to the south-east.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford road scheme. No surface remains of the site were evident prior to investigations. The mound extended beyond the limits of the excavation.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a burnt mound, a large pit interpreted as a waterhole, two troughs and a pit.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound was composed of four deposits (C4, C11, C12, C3) of black sandy silt, charcoal and heat-shattered sandstone. In total, the spread material measured 12m by 9.75m with a maximum thickness of 0.3m. The upper deposits were considerably disturbed and mixed with topsoil. The full extent of the spread was not exposed during investigations, as it lay outside the limits of the excavation.

Pit/Waterhole: This pit (C8) was irregular/oval in shape and measured 5.3m by 4.2m with a depth of 1.6m. It was the largest feature on site and was situated adjacent to the troughs. The upper part of pit C8 was roughly oval in shape with sloping sides; however, from about half way into the pit the sides became steeper and the pit was almost circular in plan with a concave base. The primary fill of the pit consisted of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stones. A small amount of disarticulated animal bone was recovered from this deposit. The pit is dated to the Late Bronze Age.

Trough 1: Trough (C5) was located immediately beside the southern edge of the large pit. It was sub-circular in shape with vertical sides and measured 2.29m by
2.18m with a depth of 0.34m. Nine stake-holes cut the base of the trough around the inner edge suggesting it may have been timber-lined. The fill of the trough consisted of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. Charcoal from the fill is dated to the Late Bronze Age.

Trough 2:
This trough (C18) was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 2m by 1.1 with a depth of 0.33m. It had vertical sides and a flat base and was filled with black silty sand and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 2:
A small pit (C13) was identified to the south-west of the trough (C18). It was sub-circular in shape and measured 0.73m by 0.56m with a depth of 0.18m. It was filled with black silty clay and heat-shattered stone.

Finds:
Artefacts: None
Ecofacts: Twenty faunal remains and burnt bone fragments were recovered from the pit. These were identified as cow, sheep/goat, pig and deer.

Dating:
Charcoal (alder) from the fill of the pit C8 C14 (UBA-14056) 2884±23 BP (1189–980 BC)
Charcoal (blackthorn) from fill of the trough C5 C14 (UBA-14055) 2779±23 BP (1000–846 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:
The site can be interpreted as a pyrolithic water-boiling site due to the presence of well-defined troughs, one of which produced evidence to suggest it was lined and a large water-hole used to fill the adjacent trough. The recovery of animal bone may also indicate the site was used for cooking purposes.

References

Catalogue No.   KK 40
RMP No. NA
Licence No. E3859

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Excavation Details: Project: N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford road scheme
Site Director: Tim Coughlan
Consultants: Irish Archaeological Consultancy
Year: 2008

Physical Setting: This site was located in low-lying terrain that sloped gently to the northwest. The surrounding landscape was very gently rolling with low-lying hills to the north. A small stream was located c. 80m to the north.

Cultural Landscape: There are five fulachtai fia (KK020-75–79) sites recorded within 750m of Rathcash 1, the nearest of which is located c. 200m to the north (KK020-075)

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford road scheme. No surface remains of the site were evident prior to investigations. The full extent of the site was not revealed during the excavations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a disturbed burnt mound, a trough, a number of pits and a truncated structure or building.

Burnt Spread: Two small spreads (C10 and C11) were exposed immediately adjacent to the pit (C23). They were composed of grey clay, charcoal and stones. The excavator suggests they may represent the disturbed remains of a small burnt mound truncated by the field boundary.

Possible Trough: This pit (C23) was located adjacent to the spreads and 3.5m north-east of a possible structure. It was oval in shape and measured 2.6m by 1.55m with a depth of 0.35m. A small step feature or annex was revealed on the southern side of the trough. The pit was filled with black, charcoal-rich soil and heat-shattered sandstone. It is dated to the Late Bronze Age.

Pit 1: Pit (C26) was revealed east of the pit C23. It was oval in shape and measured 1m by 0.62m with a depth of 0.26m and was filled with grey silty clay and burnt bone fragments.

Pit 2: This pit (C29) was oval in shape and measured 3.3m by 1.8m with a depth of 0.48m. The pit was filled with charcoal-rich material and heat-shattered stone. It was re-cut by pit C31.
Pit 3: Pit (C31) cut the previous pit. It was oval in shape and measured 3m by 1.7m with a depth of 0.28m. The primary fill consisted of black silty sand while the upper deposit consisted of silty sand.

Structure: This possible sub-rectangular building was defined by a series of post-holes and slot-trenches. The south of this structure was truncated by a later drainage channel which may have removed the post-holes at this end. Elm charcoal from one of the post-holes is dated to the Late Bronze Age.

Finds:

Artefacts: Natural flint chunk from the topsoil

Ecofacts: Animal teeth were recovered from the pit (C26). These were identified as cow and all displayed evidence of rodent gnawing and exposure to heat.

Dating: Charcoal (elm) from the fill of post-hole from structure C14 (UBA-12216) 2839±26 BP (1111–917 BC)
Charcoal (blackthorn) from fill of the trough C5 C14 (UBA-12215) 2860±26 BP (1121–934 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

The site consisted of two pits; a curvilinear arrangement of postholes and four recent agricultural linear drains. The larger of the two pits consisted of a primary pit appears to have been truncated by a second, more irregular cut which was in turn cut by a modern field drain. A semi-circular arrangement of nine postholes may have created a light fence-like structure or windbreak. It is possible that the archaeological remains represent a temporary habitation associated with burnt mound activity. As there was no definitive mound material identified it is possible that the features represent pot-boilers or roasting pits.

References

Location: Townland: Rathcash Six inch map no: 20
Parish: Blanchvilleskill NGR: 258294, 154293
Barony: Gowran Altitude: 70 m OD
County: Kilkenny
Excavation Details: Project: N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford road scheme
Site Director: Tim Coughlan
Consultants: Irish Archaeological Consultancy
Year: 2008
Physical Setting: This site was located in low-lying terrain that sloped gently to the northwest. The surrounding landscape was very gently rolling, with low-lying hills to the north. A small stream was located c. 50m to the north, which also formed a townland boundary.
Cultural Landscape: Rathcash 2 was located c. 110m to the north-east of Rathcash 1 (pits containing burnt mound material) and five RMP sites were recorded within the immediate vicinity of the site (KK020-079, KK020-075, KK020-076, KK020-039, KK020-077), all of which are listed as burnt mounds. The closest of these was KK020-075 which was located to the immediate northwest of Rathcash 2.
Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford road scheme. No surface remains of the site were evident prior to investigations. The full extent of the site was not revealed during the excavations.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed two areas of burnt mound activity both of which contained dispersed spreads of heat-shattered stone and troughs.

Site A
Burnt Spread: Two small burnt spreads were revealed in this area (C6 and C11). One of these spreads lay immediately adjacent to the pit C22. They may represent the truncated remains of a small burnt mound however the excavator suggests that they may have been the result of ploughing where the material from the upper fill of the pit was dispersed next to the pit. The material consisted of black sandy silt, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 1: This pit (C22) was located at the centre of site A. It was oval in shape and measured 2.28m by 1.78m with a depth of 0.5m and contained three fills consisted of dark silty clays, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. The pit may have functioned as a trough and was dated to the Middle Bronze Age.
Pit 2: The pit (C24) was situated immediately north-west of the previous pit. It was sub-rectangular in shape with a flat base and measured 0.8m by 1m with a depth of 0.3m. The fill consisted of dark brown sandy clay with charcoal.

Site B

Burnt Mound: This burnt mound (C18) consisted of a dispersed spread of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. It measured 15m by 6.5m with a thickness of 0.13m. The deposit was situated adjacent to two large pits interpreted as possible troughs.

Trough 1: This possible trough (C25) was circular in shape and measured 1.74m by 1.56m with a depth of 1.2m. The pit contained three sills consisting of dark silty clays, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. The primary fill contained degraded willow rods which the excavator suggests may have been the remains of a degraded wicker lining. No stake-holes however cut the base of the pit. The pit is dated to the Early Bronze Age.

Trough 2: This trough (C20) was sub-oval in plan and measured 1.76m by 1.50m with a depth of 0.17. Three stake-holes cut the base of the pit suggesting some form of internal lining. The fill of this possible trough consisted of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 1: This pit (C32) was located south-west of the possible troughs. It was oval in shape and measured 1.27m by 1.15m with a depth of 0.25m. The fill consisted of black sandy silt, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 2: Pit (C40) was oval in shape and measured 1.11m by 0.86m with a depth of 0.30m. The fill consisted of black sandy clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Phase 2

Pit: This pit (C33) was located within Site B. It was oval in shape and measured 3.38m by 2m with a depth of 1.3m. The possible trough C33 contained a total of nine fills, possibly indicating that it was used for a long period of time or was subject to more activity. Some grey clay was deposited at the base of C33, but the majority of the fills were characterised by the presence of charcoal and heat-affected stones. Degraded wooden rods were also present within the lower fills of this feature, indicating it may have contained a wicker lining.

Finds:

Artefacts: A retouched flint blade and a prehistoric saddle quern were recovered from the topsoil.

Dating:

Absolute dating: Charcoal (alder) from the fill of the trough (C22) Site A C14 (UBA-12217) 3342±28 BP (1727–1530 BC)
Charcoal (ash) from fill of the trough (C25) Site B C14 (UBA-12218) 3586±28 BP (2024–1883 BC)
Charcoal (hazelnut shell) from fill of pit (C33) Site B C14 (UBA-12219) 2125±25 BP (344–55 BC)

References

Excavation Details:  Project: N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford road scheme
Site Director: Tim Coughlan
Consultants: Irish Archaeological Consultancy
Year: 2008

Physical Setting: This site was located in level, low lying ground. Low lying hills were visible to the north but views to the east were restricted by a rise in the immediate landscape. The nearest water course is formed by a small stream located c. 500m to the west of the site. However, the low lying nature of the site meant that waterlogged ground was a characteristic of the area.

Cultural Landscape: Rathcash East 2 was located c. 100m to the west of Rathcash East 1 (ringditch and pit) although the site was not visible from Rathcash East 2. Two RMP sites are recorded within the vicinity of the site (KK020-040–041). These are listed as an enclosure site, linear ditch site and deserted village. Both sites are over 100m to the west and north-west of Rathcash East 2.

Adjacent excavated sites: Ring-ditch

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford road scheme. No surface remains of the site were evident prior to investigations. The full extent of the site was not revealed during the excavations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed dispersed spreads of heat-shattered stone and numbers troughs/pits.

Burnt Spread 1: This deposit (C4a) was located to the south of trough pit (C10). It measured 5.5m by 2m with a thickness of 0.2m and was composed of black silty clay.

Burnt Spread 2: This material (C6) was situated to the west of the main troughs (C9 and C10). It measured 3.55m by 2.45m with a thickness of 0.1m. It was composed of black silty clay.

Burnt Spread 3: This deposit (C7) was situated immediately south of the pit (C17). It measured 4.75m by 1.10m with a thickness of 0.37m and was composed of black silty clay.

Trough 1: Trough (C10) was situated at the centre of the site and was sub-oval in plan. It measured 2.03m by 1.52m with a depth of 0.52m and was filled with two
deposits of dark silts and heat-shattered stone. Charcoal from the fill is dated to the Early Bronze Age.

Pit 4: Pit (C26) cut the trough C10. It was circular in shape and measured 0.7m by 0.7m with a depth of 0.2m. The fill consisted of a large amount of stones which were not heat-affected.

Trough 2: This feature (C9) was the largest on site and was located to the north-east of trough C10. It was circular in shape and measured 1.9m by 1.88m with a depth of 0.88m. The pit filled naturally with water and contained four fills. The lower fills consisted of dark sandy clays while the upper fill contained a deposit of loosely compacted stones which were unburnt. The excavator suggests that this pit may have been re-used as a pit for storing stones (Coughlan 2010, 5).

Pit 1: Pit (C20) was located to the south-east of the spread (C4). It was sub-circular in shape and measured 1.9m by 1.27m with a depth of 0.4m. Three fills were noted in the pit consisting of black silty clay and charcoal.

Pit 2: This pit (C27) was situated close to the deposit C7. It was circular in shape and measured 1.56m by 1.3m with a depth of 0.35m. The fill consisted of black silty clay and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 3: Pit (C24) was sub-oval in shape and measured 1m by 0.77m with a depth of 0.26m. It was filled with grey cley, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (alder) from the fill of the trough (C10)
C14 (UBA-12223) 3755±27 BP (2281–2042 BC)
Charcoal (hazel) from fill of the trough (C9)
C14 (UBA-12222) 3674±24 BP (2138–1976 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

Archaeological remains at this site consisted of two main spreads of burnt material characterised by heat-affected stones and charcoal, and a further smaller spread of burnt mound material indicates that the mound deposits had been substantially disturbed. Four possible troughs and further pits were also identified. The largest trough (1.9m by 1.88m by 0.83m) was circular and contained four fills; the base of the cut was located below the present water table and so naturally filled with water. Although no obvious water supply was noted within the vicinity, the archaeology found at this site is typical of Bronze Age fulacht fia or burnt mound sites.

References

Location: Townland: Rathduff Upper  Six inch map no: 27
Parish: Kells  NGR: 251286, 142167
Barony: Kells  Altitude: 52m OD
County: Kilkenny

Excavation Details: Project: N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford road scheme
Site Director: Ed Lyne
Consultants: Irish Archaeological Consultancy
Year: 2008

Physical Setting: The site was situated on low-lying flat ground by a river. The river runs along the eastern side of the site and is prone to flooding. Beyond this the terrain rises gently. To the west the terrain also rises gently and to the north and south it is rolling. The surrounding area is under tillage and pasture and there are no prominent features in the landscape.

Cultural Landscape: Rathduff Upper 1 is located c. 300m to the north and Stonecarthy West 2 is located c. 200m to the south. An enclosure site (KK027–033) is located c. 1km to the north-west of the site. Furthermore complex of ecclesiastical remains (KK027-046), holy well (KK027-045) and deserted village (KK027-047) are located c. 700m south-west of Rathduff 1.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford road scheme. No surface remains of the site were evident prior to investigations. The full extent of the site was not revealed during the excavations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a disturbed burnt mound which extended beyond the limits of the excavation and a single trough.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound (C11) was partially sealed by riverine deposits. The exposed portion of the mound measured 19.8m by 4.5m with a thickness of 0.48m. It was composed of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered sandstone. A sample of alder from the mound dates this site to the Middle Bronze Age. Two disturbed layers of burnt mound material were also revealed on site.

Trough: The trough (C18) was sealed by the burnt mound material and was oval in shape. It measured 4.84m by 1.84m with a depth of 0.3m and was filled with black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone, similar to the overlying burnt mound. A single intrusive barley grain was retrieved from the trough. A sample of charcoal from the trough dates the feature to the Middle Bronze Age.
Finds:

Artefacts: A burnt flint flake was recovered from the topsoil

Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (alder) from the burnt mound (C11)
C14 (UBA-10994) 3259±22 BP (1610–1460 BC)
Charcoal (Pomoideae) from fill of the trough (C18)
C14 (UBA-10995) 3252±21 BP (1607–1455 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

The site was situated on low ground beside a stream. The stream was prone to flooding and a burnt mound was silted over by sediments originating from different phases of river activity. An elongated, shallow pit lay underneath the burnt mound and was filled with burnt mound material and contained pieces of decayed wood. This has been interpreted as a trough. It is possible, due to the shape of the trough and presence of small stones around its perimeter, that the pit housed a hollowed-out trough or re-used canoe (see Chapter 5).

References


Plate 10.59 Burnt mound in section and excavated trough pit at Rathduff 1, Co. Kilkenny.
**Location:**
Townland: Rathduff Bayley  
Parish: Kells  
Barony: Kells  
County: Kilkenny  
Six inch map no: 20  
NGR: 251005, 143564  
Altitude: 50 m OD

**Excavation Details:**
Project: N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford road scheme  
Site Director: Tim Coughlan  
Consultants: Irish Archaeological Consultancy  
Year: 2008

**Physical Setting:**
The site was situated at the base of a steep slope on the southern bank of the Kings River. To the south of this site the terrain inclined steeply and surface bedrock was visible in places. To the north beyond the river the landscape also inclined and consisted of wet marginal land.

**Cultural Landscape:**
Kellsgrange 2 was located c. 250m to the north and Kellsgrange 1 was located c. 175m to the north-west.

**Adjacent excavated sites:**
None

**Pre-Excavation features**
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford road scheme. No surface remains of the site were evident prior to investigations.

**Excavation Record**

**Summary of Features:**
Excavation of the site revealed a disturbed burnt mound which did not overlay any cut features such as a trough.

**Burnt Mound:**
The burnt mound (C3) measured 15m by 6m with a maximum thickness of 0.8m. It composed of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. The deposit was heavily disturbed by tree roots and river sediments. Charcoal from the deposit dated the burnt mound to the Middle Bronze Age.

**Finds:**

Artefacts: None  
Ecofacts: None

**Dating:**

Absolute dating: Charcoal (Pomoideae) from the burnt mound  
C14 (UBA-15448) 3115±34 BP (1607–1455 BC)

**References**
Excavation Details:

Project: N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford road scheme

Site Director: Ed Lyne

Consultants: Irish Archaeological Consultancy

Year: 2008

Physical Setting: The site was situated on the edge of an area of wetland, at the eastern foot of a very low hill and slopes gently eastwards into the boggy terrain. The terrain rolls gently to the north and south and a low-lying hill is visible on the southern horizon.

Cultural Landscape: Rathduff 1 and Stonecarthy West 2 are located c. 300m and 500m respectively to the south. There are two enclosure sites within proximity to the site located c. 800m north-west (KK027–033) and c. 750m to the NNE (KK027-034).

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford road scheme. No surface remains of the site were evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a disturbed levelled burnt mound which overly a number of pits and possible troughs.

Burnt Spread: Two deposits of black silty sand, charcoal and heat-shattered stone were excavated on site (C4 and C140). Both were heavily truncated by later agricultural activity. C4 measured 16.5m by 11m with a thickness of 0.15m. C140 was situated downslope from this spread and measured 17.5m by 6m with a maximum thickness of 0.25m. This may have originally been part of C4 but was dispersed by agricultural activity.

Trough: This pit (C105) was the largest on site and was sub-oval in plan. It measured 3.3m by 2.9m with a depth of 0.68m. Seven fills were noted in the trough consisting of dark silts, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 1: This linear pit (C21) was sealed by the burnt spread. It measured 1.87m by 1.6m with a depth of 0.5m. It was filled with black silty clay and charcoal.

Pit 2: Pit (C23) was sub-circular in shape and measured 1.55m by 1.42m with a depth of 0.42m. It was filled with black silty clay and charcoal.
Pit 3: Pit (C70) was oval in shape and measured 1.38m by 1.1m with a depth of 0.22m. It was filled with black silty clay and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 4: This pit (C87) was curvilinear in shape and measured 5.18m by 0.45m with a depth of 0.03m. The fill consisted of grey silty clay and stone.

Pit 5: Pit (C89) was linear in shape and measured 5m by 1.5m with a depth of 0.2m. The fill consisted of black silty clay, charcoal and stone.

Pit 6: This pit (C91) was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 1.5m by 1.3m with a depth of 0.2m. The fill consisted of black silty clay and stone.

Pit 7: Pit (C93) was irregular in shape and measured 1.8m by 0.9m with a depth of 0.21m. The fill consisted of grey sandy clay and stone. A flint flake was recovered from this fill.

Pit 8: Pit (C97) was linear in shape and measured 2.12m by 1.25m with a depth of 0.13m. The fill consisted of brown silty clay and stone.

Pits 9-25: These 13 pits of various shapes and sizes were filled by burnt mound type material and sealed by topsoil. Although the precise function of these pits is not discernable, it is likely that they related to the burnt mound activity. A chert chunk was recovered from pit fill C18. It had been burnt and most likely dated to the late Neolithic / early Bronze Age. A limestone hone stone was recovered from pit fill C98. It was smoothened on all sides and most likely dated to the late Neolithic / early Bronze Age. While only one feature was definitively dated to the early Bronze Age period, there was no evidence of Neolithic activity on site or in the immediate vicinity so these artefacts are likely to also be early Bronze Age in date rather than Neolithic.

Finds:

Artefacts: A flint flake was recovered from pit (C93). A burnt chert chunk was retrieved from the pit (C18) while a limestone hone stone was found in the fill of pit (C98).

Dating:

Absolute dating: Charcoal (hazel) from the fill of pit (C21)
C14 (UBA-10996) 3648±30 BP (2134–1937 BC)
Charcoal (blackthorn/cherry) from the fill of pit (C89)
C14 (UBA-10998) 3180±23 BP (1497–1417 BC)
Charcoal (ash) from the fill of pit (C9)
C14 (UBA-10997) 3786±36 BP (2341–2050 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

A number of mostly irregular pits were identified, some of which were sealed by the remainder of the burnt spreads which were much disturbed by post-medieval ploughing. In all cases these features were filled by heat-affected stones and charcoal-rich soil and most likely functioned as water-boiling pits.

References

Catalogue No.  KK 46
RMP No. NA
Licence No. E3760

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Excavation Details:
Project: N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford road scheme
Site Director: Przemyslaw Wierzbicki
Consultants: Irish Archaeological Consultancy
Year: 2008

Physical Setting:
The site was located on flat land under pasture. There were no open water sources in the vicinity of the site but a few springs were identified and these fed a number of modern drains. The land was extensively drained in the 1950s.

Cultural Landscape:
Rathgarvan or Clifden 2 was situated c. 80m to the south-east and Maddockstown 1 was located c. 150m to the north-west. There is a 16/17th century house (KK020-037002) situated c. 350m to the north-east and there is an enclosure (KK020-036) located c. 150m to the east.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford road scheme. No surface remains of the site were evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a large pit/waterhole and a number of pits/post-holes that may have formed a structure.

Burnt Mound:
The burnt mound covered an area measuring 13m by 15m with a maximum thickness of 0.23m. The spread consisted of four varying deposits of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered sandstone. A quartz rubbing stone was recovered from one of the lower deposits and a charcoal sample from this layer is dated to Early Bronze Age.

Pit 1:
This pit (C25) was the largest feature on site and was found beneath the burnt mound deposits. It was oval in shape and measured 2.9m by 2.1m with a depth of 1.02m. The lower fills consisted of black silty clay and heat-shattered stone, while the upper fills consisted of clayey silt and peat deposits. Burnt bone was recovered from the lower deposits of this pit. The pit is dated to the Early Bronze Age.

Possible Structure:
Six pits formed a semi-circular arc to the south-west of the large pit or waterhole. A seventh pit was identified centrally within this possible feature. The possible structure had a diameter of 6.5m. A small amount of burnt bone was recovered from one of these pits.
Pit 2: This pit (C11) was oval in shape and measured 1.87m by 1.14m with a depth of 0.39m. The fill consisted of black silty clay.

Pit 3: Pit (C34) was sub-oval in shape and measured 1.2m by 0.7m with a depth of 0.15m. The fill consisted of dark brown clay and sand.

Finds:

Artefacts: A quartz rubbing stone was recovered from the burnt mound

Ecofacts: Burnt bone was recovered from the large pit (C25) and from one of the structural pits.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (ash) from the fill of pit (C25) C14 (UBA-14054) 3512±34 BP (1927–1746 BC) Charcoal (ash) from the burnt mound deposit (C4) C14 (UBA-14053) 3509±26 BP (1904–1750 BC)

References


Fig. 10.83 Possible structure at Rathgarvan, Co. Kilkenny.
Excavation Details:

Physical Setting:

Cultural Landscape:

Adjacent excavated sites:

Pre-Excavation features

Excavation Record

Summary of Features:

Burnt Mound:

Trough:

Pit 1:

Pit 2:

Pit 3:
Pit 4: C22 was truncated by the pit C17. It was oval in shape and measured 0.3m by 0.26m with a depth of 0.12m. The fill consisted of grey clay and charcoal.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (ash) from the burnt mound
C14 (UBA-14059) 3800±33 BP (2398–2136 BC)
Charcoal (Pomoideae) from the fill of the trough (C10)
C14 (UBA-14058) 3404±25 BP (1755–1627 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

The site produced evidence of burnt mound activity. A large mound of heat-shattered stones and blackened soil sealed a sub-square trough, four pits and two possible pits. One of the pits was cut through another pit and this may be evidence of two separate phases of activity on the site. Radiocarbon dating of samples from the site has provided both an early and a Middle Bronze Age date. This evidence also suggests that there were two phases of activity on the site. The earlier date however is from the overlying burnt mound deposit, which was substantially disturbed and levelled. This early Bronze Age date is therefore not attributable to any specific cut feature so must be interpreted with some caution.

References

Location:  
Townland: Knocktopher Commons  
Parish: Knocktopher  
Barony: Knocktopher  
County: Kilkenny  
Six inch map no: NA  
NGR: 252725, 137311  
Altitude: NA  

Excavation Details:  
Project: N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford road scheme  
Site Director: Graeme Laidlaw  
Consultants: Valerie J. Keeley Ltd  
Year: 2008  

Physical Setting:  
The site was located on the edge of a small wet area of land on the south of the present R699. The small ‘basin’ extends roughly from the western edge of Knocktopher village towards Sheepstown Church along both sides of a small tributary of the little Arrigle River.  

Cultural Landscape:  
There were no prehistoric monuments recorded in the environs of the excavated area however the Early Medieval period is well represented.  

Adjacent excavated sites: None  

Pre-Excavation features  
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford road scheme. No surface remains of the site were evident prior to investigations. The full extent of the site was not revealed during the excavation as it lay beyond the wayleave constraints.  

Excavation Record  
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a levelled burnt mound four troughs and a hearth.  

Burnt Mound: Two separate spreads of burnt mound material were revealed during excavation. The full extent of these deposits were not exposed as they both lay outside the limits of the excavation. The spread (C5) was revealed at the northern edge of the excavation. It was semi-circular in shape and measured 6.5m by 1.6m with a maximum thickness of 0.3m. I consisted of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered sandstone and limestone. Spread (C4) was revealed at the southern limits of the excavation. It was roughly oval in shape and badly disturbed by ploughing. The deposit measured 6.5m by 4.2m with a thickness of 0.2m and was badly truncated by field drains and furrows.  

Trough 1: This trough (C8) was situated west of the possible hearth (C33) and beneath the spread C4. It was sub-rectangular in plan with rounded corners. It measured 2m by 1.4m with a depth of 0.4m and was filled with light grey sand, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. This is dated to the Early Bronze Age.
Possible Hearth: An area of burning (C33) was revealed on the western edge of the trough cut. It was truncated by a possible furrow C17.

Trough 2: This trough (C31) was sub-rectangular/oval in shape and measured 2m by 1.25m with a depth of 0.5m. It had vertical sides which broke sharply at northern and southern edges, and more gradually at eastern and western sides, onto a flat base. A few large stones protruded into the trough from the natural sub-soil. A natural spring was located in the southern edge of the trough, which naturally filled the feature with clean water. The trough was filled with black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Trough 3: Trough (C22) was located beneath the second burnt mound deposit C5. It was rectangular in plan and measured 2m by 1m with a depth of 0.17m. A single post-hole was revealed in each of the four corners suggesting the feature may have been timber-lined. The trough was filled with dark sandy silt and heat-shattered stone. It was dated to the Late Bronze Age.

Trough 4: This trough (C24) was revealed at the southern extent of the excavation trench beneath the burnt mound deposit C4. It was truncated by a field drain and a number of furrows. It was sub-rectangular in plan and measured 2.8m by 0.85m with a depth of 0.15m. The full extent of the feature was not exposed during the excavation. A layer of compact yellow clay covered the entire base of the feature while the upper deposit consisted of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. This context contained a lense of orange oxidised clay, from which a number of cereal grains were retrieved.

Finds:

Artefacts: A flint flake was recovered from the topsoil

Ecofacts: Cereal grains were recovered from trough 4.

Dating:

Absolute dating:
Charcoal (ash) from the trough (C8)
C14 (UBA-14163) 3453±32 BP (1879–1690 BC)
Charcoal (hazel) from the fill of the trough (C22)
C14 (UBA-14164) 2489±31 BP (776–507 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

The radiocarbon determinations seem to indicate that there were at least two distinct phases on the site, during the Early Bronze Age, and the very Late Bronze Age, with the cereal remains also indicating an early medieval, or later use of the site. The two large troughs appear be from the Early Bronze Age phase, with Trough 3 from the Late Bronze Age phase. Trough 4 had been badly disturbed by ploughing and was not deemed suitable for dating but the cereals seem to indicate that this feature dated from no earlier than the Early Medieval Period. It is therefore likely that this feature did not function as a trough but rather served a separate purpose during the early medieval period, unrelated to the use of pyrolithic technology.

References

Physical Setting:
The site was located within an arc of low lying boggy-land which surrounded the south and western side of Tory Hill. The low lying ground to the north-west of the site drained into the Blackwater River whereas the ground to the east tended to drain poorly.

Cultural Landscape:
No other prehistoric sites were recorded in the vicinity of the site prior to excavation.

Adjacent excavated sites:
None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford road scheme. No surface remains of the site were evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features:
Excavation of the site revealed two phases of burnt mound activity situated on opposite sides of a small paleochannel. The earlier site consisted of a thin spread of burnt mound, material, a cobbled surface and two troughs. The later site consisted of large shallow circular pit covered by burnt mound material. This was interpreted as a sweatlodge.

Site A

Burnt Spread:
Two shallow spreads of material were identified in this area. Deposit (C6) measured 2.51m by 0.94m with a thickness of 0.03m. It consisted of dark brown silty clay, heat-shattered stone and charcoal. Spread (C5) measured 4.2m by 2.1m with a thickness of 0.1m. It consisted of black silty sand, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Trough 1:
Trough (C11) was sub-rectangular in shape with vertical sides and a flat base. It measured 1.6m by 1.4m with a depth of 0.3m. The primary fill of the feature consisted of grey silty clay, charcoal and small stones. The upper fill composed of similar material with heat-shattered stone. A sample from this deposit is dated to the Early Bronze Age.

Cobbled Surface:
An area of cobbling (C26) was revealed at the southern edge of the trough C11. It consisted of small rounded pebbles compacted into the natural subsoil. The surface ran from the edge of the trough to the paleochannel.
Pit 1: This pit (C9) was situated 6m from the trough C11. It was sub-oval in shape with sloping sides and an irregular base. It measured 2.3m by 1.5m with a depth of 0.25m. It was filled with black silty sand, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 2: Pit (C18) was circular in shape and measured 1.4m by 1.3m with a depth of 0.07m. It was filled with dark brown sandy clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Site B

Burnt Spread: The burnt spread in this area was roughly horseshoe-shaped in plan and measured 20m in diameter with a maximum thickness of 0.3m. It was composed of four different contexts which consisted of varying deposits of silty clays, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. The differences between the contexts did not appear to have resulted because of different phases of dumping but rather because of later disturbance and truncation.

Trough 1: Trough (C27) was rectangular in plan with vertical sides and a flat base. It measured 2.5m by 1.5m with a depth of 0.38m. A degraded timber lining was noted at the sides and base of the trough. This wood was identified as oak. A light grey course sand was also noted in several crevices in the pit interpreted as debris from the shattered stone fragments. The main fill of the trough consisted of black silty sand, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. It was dated to the Early Bronze Age.

Trough 2: Trough (C36) was located to the west of the previous trough. It was sub-rectangular in plan however the eastern corner had been truncated by a modern field drain. It measured 1.35m by 1.25m with a depth of 0.35m and was filled with black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Pit/Structure: This pit (C33) was located north of the troughs. It was circular in plan with concave sides and a flat base and measured 4.7m by 4.3m with a depth of 0.6m. Six stake-holes cut the base of the feature with most of these located along the inner southern edge. Another was situated centrally within the pit. A possible stone platform was revealed on the base of the feature at the southern edge, near the stake holes. It was composed of five large flat stones which were surrounded by charcoal and badly decomposed pieces of wood. The central post in the pit is dated to the Late Bronze Age. The edge of the pit was lined with dark brown compacted silt. A saddle quern was found in this deposit along with several other large stones. The main fill of the feature consisted of black silty clay and heat-shattered stone. A stone disc was recovered from this fill.

Finds:

Artefacts: A saddle quern was recovered from the fill of C33 along with a stone disc

Ecofacts: None

Dating:
Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (alder) from the trough (C11)
C14 (UBA-8963) 3797±37 BP (2348–2132 BC)
Charcoal (alder) from the fill of the trough (C27)
C14 (UBA-8962) 2713±40 BP (930–802 BC)
Wood (oak) stake from the centre of the pit (C33)
C14 (UBA-8964) 2864±23 BP (1121–974 BC)
Charcoal (alder) from the fill of the pit (C33)
C14 (UBA-8961) 2803±40 BP (1053–838 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

Excavation of the site produced two phases of ‘burnt mound’ activity located on either side of a paleo-channel. The early Bronze Age features were consisted of shallow spreads of burnt mound material, several cut features and a large cobbled area that appeared to provide a link between a trough and the edge of the palaeochannel. The late Bronze Age of features consisted of a spread of burnt mound material associated with a large flat-bottomed circular feature and two troughs. This large circular feature seems unlikely to have functioned as a trough as the amount of stones and charcoal required to heat such a large amount of water would surely be grossly inefficient. It is possible therefore that the feature was used to utilise steam or smoke rather than hot water.

References


Plate 10.60. Possible sweatlodge pit and associated rectangular trough at Ballykeoghan, Co. Kilkenny.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location:</th>
<th>Townland:</th>
<th>Blanchvillespark</th>
<th>Six inch map no: 20</th>
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<td>Site Director:</td>
<td>Tim Coughlan</td>
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<td>Irish Archaeological Consultancy</td>
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<td>2008</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Physical Setting:</td>
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<td>Cultural Landscape:</td>
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<td>Adjacent excavated sites:</td>
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### Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford road scheme. No surface remains of the site were evident prior to investigations.

### Excavation Record

**Summary of Features:** Excavation of the site revealed two separate burnt mound areas with each deposit sealing a number of cut features.

**Burnt Mound:** The burnt mound was located in the east of the site and measured 9m by 5m with a maximum thickness of 0.2m. It was composed of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

**Trough:** This pit (C25) consisted of a large, well-defined, sub-circular cut. It contained charcoal-rich, burnt mound material.

**Pits:** Pits C10, C12 and C28 were located east, south-west and south-east of Trough 1 respectively. Pit C28 was a large, irregular-shaped pit, situated south of Trough 1. It is likely that C28 was associated with Trough 1, perhaps as a waste pit. Pit C12 was sub-oval in shape and contained grey clay. Pit C10 was a medium-sized pit situated east of Trough 1, and contained light brown/grey mottled clayey silt.

**Dating:** Charcoal (alder) from the trough (C11)  
C14 (UBA-8963) 3797±37 BP (2348–2132 BC)

### References

Catalogue No.  KK 51
RMP No.  NA
Licence No.  E3914

Location: Townland: Blanchvillespark  Six inch map no: 20
Parish: Gowran  NGR: 261442, 156269
Barony: Gowran  Altitude: 96m OD
County: Kilkenny

Excavation Details: Project: N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford road scheme
Site Director: Tim Coughlan
Consultants: Irish Archaeological Consultancy
Year: 2008

Physical Setting: The site was situated on flat marginal ground, surrounded by pasture land, and was prone to flooding. The surrounding landscape is gently rolling pasture.

Cultural Landscape: Blanchvillespark/Ballyquirk 1 is located c.50m to the north-east. It is probable that Ballyquirk 1 was also visible to the east.

Adjacent excavated sites: Burnt Mound (KK50: see above)

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford road scheme. No surface remains of the site were evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed two separate burnt mound areas with each deposit sealing a number of cut features.

Burnt Mound: This mound deposit was located in the west and central parts of the site. It measured 16m by 11m with a maximum thickness of 0.1m. The deposit sealed troughs 2 and 3, as well as associated pits. It consisted of charcoal-rich, dark black, stony silt with a high quantity of heat-shattered stones. It is possible that burnt mound 2 consisted of two separate mounds that have merged together over time with one being associated with trough 2 and associated features and the other with the undated trough 3.

Trough 1: (C44) was a large, sub-rectangular trough situated beneath the southern extent of burnt mound 2. It measured 2.8m by 2.03m with a depth of 0.57m. It contained charcoal-rich grey clay, with an abundance of heat-shattered stone and animal bone. It had four postholes positioned at each corner and one possible posthole towards the centre of its base. These postholes suggested the presence of a probable timber lining around the sides of the trough, which had not survived.

Stake-Holes: These 23 stake-holes, C70 and C87–C108, situated along the north-west, north-east and south-east outer edge of trough (C44), represented a possible wattle fence or covering around or over the open trough.
Trough 2: Trough 2 (C36) was a large, sub-circular trough, situated beneath the north-eastern part of the burnt mound. It measured 2.15m by 1.51m with a depth of 0.33m. It contained a charcoal-rich fill with a large quantity of heat-shattered stones and had four stake-holes positioned at the base of the four corners of the trough.

Trough 3: Trough 4 (C16) was a sub-circular pit that possibly functioned as a trough, located along the southern periphery of the burnt mound. It measured 1.4m by 1.4m with a depth of 0.3m. It contained a charcoal rich fill with a moderate quantity of heat-shattered stones. There was no evidence that this trough was lined.

Truncating Pits: This group of eight intercutting and truncating pits was situated in the western part of the site, beneath the burnt mound. They represent possible cisterns, which were truncated, and were truncated by, several smaller pits.

Cisterns: These two large pits, C76 and C80, situated in the eastern part of the site, represented possible cisterns, which were possibly associated with troughs 1, 2 and 3. They have been interpreted as possible cisterns on the basis of their size and depth. Both features were sealed by burnt mound material (C64) and their primary fills were grey mottled clays with slumped fills along the sides of the cuts containing burnt mound material. Animal bone was recovered from one of these pits.

Trough 4: Isolated trough (C9) was situated in the south-west periphery of the site, and south of the burnt mound. It contained four large flagstones, which lined the base of the trough. The flagstones were laid in an interlocking manner, to create a stable base. The trough was filled with a dark brownish grey clayey silt. There were no other features in its immediate vicinity and the trough was undated.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: A total of 442 animal bone and burnt bone fragments were recovered from various features across the site. A total of 29 bone fragments recovered were identified to the species of cow and pig

Dating:


References

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed at least two phases of burnt mound activity.

Burnt Mound: The removal of the soil revealed an irregular shaped mound 13m by 14m that was up to 0.57m deep. No tip lines or multiple phases could be distinguished within the burnt mound even though two phases of activity were recorded. The mound itself had a silty clay matrix with abundant charcoal and heat-shattered sandstones. A few prehistoric finds were recovered from the mound including flint flakes and a possibly later copper-alloy pin. Burnt and unburnt animal bone fragments were recovered from burnt mound spread C3.

Trough 1: The trough, C7, was located in the southern area of the site. It was bowl-shaped with an uneven stony base and measured 4.5m by 2.2m with a depth of 0.75m. The area to the west of the trough consisted of a shallower, sub-rectangular extension to the main bowl shaped trough cut that perhaps functioned as a small step. This fill contained a high ash component while the sides of the hearth were reddened due to the scorching of the earth. The
lower fills of the trough also contained ash but in less substantial quantities. These fills, which had matrices of clay or silt, were dominated by charcoal and small angular fragments of heat-shattered sandstone. There were a number of features in the vicinity of the trough. These were generally shallow and probably not particularly significant. They were probably related to activity associated with the trough but form no particular pattern and contained nothing diagnostic in their fills to suggest a particular function.

**Hearth:**

The trough was adjoined on its eastern (upslope) side by a small hearth C7a. It was defined as a circular area of oxidised soil that measured 1.3m by 1.3m with a depth of 0.2m.

**Waterhole:**

At the north of the excavated area was a large pit which may have functioned as a waterhole/cistern. It was oval in shape and measured 6m by 6m with a depth of 0.75m. This may have utilised the location near the base of the valley to store water during periods of rain when there would be a surplus of surface water available. The waterhole was located away from the main cluster of burnt mound features and was not sealed by the dispersed burnt mound spread. Nevertheless, burnt mound material did find its way into the waterhole. While the waterhole was dated to the early Bronze Age, the calibrated dates suggest that it was not contemporary with Trough 1, being slightly later in date. This may indicate a second phase of early Bronze Age activity on the site.

**Phase 2**

**Trough 2:**

Trough 2 consisted of a large, deep oval pit C128 with a U-shaped profile. It measured 2.25m by 1.6m with a depth of 0.75m. No surviving timbers or stake-holes were found to suggest that it was wooden lined. Its fill of heat-shattered stones differed from that of the overlying burnt mound material in that it contained infrequent medium and large sized stones and was siltier and less clayey than the mound. It has been dated to the early Iron Age.

**Structure 1:**

Seven circular pits formed a horseshoe shaped structure around the trough. These pits contrasted with those of the earlier phase in that they were of consistent size and shape and tended to have steep sides and flat bases. The one characteristic that prevented all of them from being definitively categorised as postholes was their shallowness.

**Structure 2:**

Another possible structure - Structure B - was identified 5.5m east of and upslope of trough 2. It comprised two parallel rows of four near-circular postholes, which were approximately 0.5m apart from each other.

**Pits:**

The pits were concentrated upslope on the eastern side of the trough over a 7m by 5m area. These comprised ten irregular-shaped shallow pits, the largest of which, C57, was 2.4m by 2.2m by 0.3m. All generally contained silty sand burnt mound material and must have performed some function that was related to the nearby trough. None of their bases were scorched to suggest that *in situ* burning took place in them. Perhaps their function was to store some form of organic material that has not survived in the archaeological record. They may also have been the result of some land clearance to facilitate the trough and associated structures.

**Finds:**
Artefacts: The lithic finds from the archaeological excavation at Danesfort 2, Co. Kilkenny are a flint convex end scraper, a quartz crystal scraper and two rubbing stones. A medieval copper-alloy stick pin was also recovered from the burnt mound.

Ecofacts: A total of 51 animal bone and burnt bone fragments were recovered from various features across the site. A total of 9 bone fragments recovered were identified to the species of cow, pig, sheep/goat.

Dating:

Absolute dating: Charcoal (prunus) from the fill of trough 2 (C105)  
C14 (UBA-11000) 2434±20 BP (744–407 BC)  
Charcoal (ash and prunus) from the fill of trough 1 (C54)  
C14 (UBA-12186) 3869±26 BP (2464–2214 BC)  
Charcoal (pomoideae) from the fill of waterhole (C109)  
C14 (UBA-15554) 3619±30 BP (2153–1893 BC)  
Charcoal (cherry) from the fill of structure 2 (C122)  
C14 (UBA-15554) 2571±25 BP (806–595 BC)

References

### Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford road scheme. No surface remains of the site were evident prior to investigations.

### Excavation Record

**Summary of Features:** Excavation of the site revealed multi-phased Bronze Age and Iron Age features. The burnt mound lay adjacent to possible truncated settlement activity that may have been contemporary.

**Site A**

**Well:** At the western edge of the cluster of features associated with the burnt mound was a large, deep sub-oval pit C230. It measured 2.3m by 1.3m with a depth of 0.75m. It is interpreted that this may have functioned as a well or cistern given its size and depth. This well continued to fill with water during the excavation. The north-western edge of the well C230 was less steep than the other sides, most likely to allow ease of access to the water for filling the adjacent troughs. The well then appears to have been re-cut representing a second phase of activity in the well. This was evidenced by the two charcoal rich layers (C195 and C194) being cut by C309. This re-cut appeared to have then been partially backfilled by dumped deposit C28 which was a very dark-coloured soil containing burnt mound debris with heat-cracked stones and charcoal.
Trough: Located immediately to the south of the well, C230, was an east–west sub-rectangular cut C68 which contained four stake-holes in its base. It measured 2.1m by 1m with a depth of 0.4m. The stake-holes most likely represent evidence that the trough was originally lined although no lining survived. The location of the stake-holes possibly indicates a plank lining that was supported in each corner by the vertical stake. Trough 1 was filled with black, clayey sand and stones (C24) and cut pit C103. Two possible hone stones and a stone disc were recovered from the fill of the pit. A small pit, C92, which had a single stake-hole, C254, in its base was located to the east of Trough 1 and Well C230. The pit had been filled with silt/sand layer, C91 and dumped burnt mound material, C89.

Trough 2: A second possible trough was located to the east of trough 1. It measured 1.53m by 0.92m with a depth of 0.51m. This consisted of an oval cut that was filled with a primary layer of silt, C312, before it was backfilled with C23, a deposit of typical burnt mound material comprising heat-cracked stones and charcoal-rich soil. There was no evidence that this trough was lined.

Stake-Holes: Twenty stake-holes were found around the edge of trough 2. Three of the stake-holes (C163–C165) extended in a short east-west line immediately to the south of trough 2 while C264 was located adjacent to the east edge of the trough. The remainder of the stake-holes were located to the west of the trough in several clusters, although any significance or interpretation of these clusters could not be identified.

Site B

Burnt Mound: All that remained of the burnt mound material was a badly disturbed amorphous stain with smaller patches elsewhere on the site. The main concentration, C199, was located north-east of the principal troughs in this area; it was difficult to discern its original extent or morphology due to the post-medieval ploughing in the area. A fragment of a polished stone axe was recovered from the deposit.

Well: One of the largest features in the complex associated with burnt mound activity in the east of this area was Well/Trough C295. It measured 1.9m by 1.43m with a depth of 0.74m. It had a gentle slope on its north-western edge most likely to allow ease of access to the water, the deepest point of the pit being to the east. It had filled with silted deposits, C32 and C327, initially at its western and eastern points, respectively.

Trough 1: This possible trough was a flat-bottomed pit C277, which had been deliberately backfilled with burnt mound material, C241. It was located directly adjacent to the well/trough C295 on its eastern side.

Trough 2: This was a linear pit located 5m west of the well/trough C295 and contained a primary deposit, C306, consistent with other deposits of burnt mound material. The rest of the cut had silted up with C308, representing a period of disuse. A second phase of activity then occurred when circular pit C317 was cut through both of these layers. This pit was also filled with a deposit of burnt mound material (C240).

Pits: Four pits were located just west of possible trough 2. The most southerly pit, C269, was oval in plan, orientated north east-south west with vertical sides
and an uneven base. Two of these pits, C269 and C281, had silted up; pit C280 had been deliberately backfilled with burnt mound material that contained heat-cracked stone and charcoal; and pit C292, was filled with charcoal-rich light grey silt clay. The purpose of these pits is unclear.

Post-Holes: A concentration of postholes was located between the possible troughs and well and the surviving burnt mound deposit. They were arranged roughly in two parallel lines/arcs running north–south. A patch of fire-reddening, C212, was located 5m east of burnt mound residue C199 and west of the posthole lines and therefore it is possible that these postholes may have acted as a windbreak or shelter. None of the postholes or stake-holes seemed large enough to have supported a roofed structure and they may represent a series of temporary structures that were erected and taken down over the course of the occupation of the site.

Finds:

Artefacts: The lithic finds from the archaeological excavation at Danganbeg 1 are sixteen flaked pieces of flint, one modified piece of porcellanite, five modified pieces of limestone, two pieces of utilised sandstone and one natural chunk of chert

Ecofacts: A total of 569 animal bone and burnt bone fragments were recovered from various features across the site. A total of 439 bone fragments recovered were identified to the species of cow, pig, sheep/goat and dog.

Dating:

Absolute dating: Charcoal (hazel) from the fill of pit (C092) C14 (UBA-14023) 3387±20 BP (1740–1630 BC) Charcoal (ash) from the fill of trough (C90) C14 (UBA-14116) 3428±26 BP (1874–1641 BC) Hazelnut (shell) from the fill of stake-hole C211 C14 (UBA-14025) 2471±25 BP (762–416 BC)

References

**Location:**

- **Townland:** Jordanstown
- **Six inch map no:** 24
- **Parish:** Kilree
- **NGR:** 265103, 159227
- **Barony:** Paulstown
- **Altitude:** 69m OD
- **County:** Kilkenny

**Excavation Details:**

- **Project:** N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford road scheme
- **Site Director:** Przemyslaw Wierzbicki
- **Consultants:** Irish Archaeological Consultancy
- **Year:** 2008

**Physical Setting:**

The excavated area was situated on slightly undulating pastureland. There were no rivers or streams in the vicinity but a small natural pool was located c. 100m northwest of the site.

**Cultural Landscape:**

There are no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate area of the excavation.

**Adjacent excavated sites:** None

### Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford road scheme. No surface remains of the site were evident prior to investigations.

### Excavation Record

**Summary of Features:**

Excavation of the site revealed a small burnt spread, a trough and several stake-holes.

**Natural Pool:**

This pool was natural in origin and measured 15m by 10m with a depth of 0.5m. It contained two fills, C33 and C34, which were probably washed into the pool from other areas of the site. The occasional charcoal inclusions most likely originated from the pits located to the west. The pool was similar to that identified at Kellymount 6 located only c. 250m away. This was separate to the larger pool of water located c. 100m north-west of site.

**Burnt Mound:**

A spread of burnt mound material, C5, survived in a short, narrow, kidney-shaped natural depression in the ground. It represented waste material discarded from pits C7, C8, C9, and C30. It may have originally been more substantial but was ploughed out by subsequent agricultural activity.

**Trough:**

Trough C8 consisted of an oval pit that had seven stake-holes, C13, C15, C19, C17, C21, C23 and C37, driven into its base. The position of these stake-holes primarily around the perimeter of the base suggests that they
supported a timber lining, although no lining material was identified in the course of excavation. The lower fills of the trough C11 and C12, consisted of typical burnt mound material (heat-shattered stones in a charcoal-rich matrix) and also contained fragments of burnt bone and flecks of possibly burnt lithic material.

Pits: An oval pit C9 and sub-oval possible pit C30 were located immediately to the east of the pool C35, and to the west of the trough C8. Both pits were joined by a very shallow and short channel C36. The pits appeared too large to have functioned efficiently as troughs but they may represent secondary troughs to the timber lined trough C8. The may also have been used for storage, perhaps of water.

Finds:

Artefacts: Flint debitage and a micro flint scraper were recovered from the fill of the trough.

Ecofacts: A total of 25 animal bone and burnt bone fragments were recovered from various features across the site. Only pig could be identified from the remains.

Dating:

Absolute dating: Charcoal (ash) from the fill of trough (C8)
C14 (UBA-13119) 3838±20 BP (2457–2202 BC)
Charcoal (ash) from the fill of pit (C9)
C14 (UBA-13120) 3820±25 BP (2401–2148 BC)

References

Catalogue No.   KK 55
RMP No. NA
Licence No. E3756

Location: Townland: Kellymount   Six inch map no: 24
Parish: Kilree   NGR: 265250, 159397
Barony: Paulstown   Altitude: 67m OD
County: Kilkenny

Excavation Details: Project: N9/N10 Kilcullen to Wateford road scheme
Site Director: Przemyslaw Wierzbicki
Consultants: Irish Archaeological Consultancy
Year: 2008

Physical Setting: The site was located on low, slightly undulating pastureland with an eastern aspect, in Kellymount townland, beside a railway track.

Cultural Landscape: Kellymount 2 is located c. 15m to the north-west and Kellymount 3 is located c. 250m to the north-east.

Adjacent excavated sites: Burnt mounds (see below).

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford road scheme. No surface remains of the site were evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a pit and a possible hearth.

Pit: A shallow oval pit, C7, contained a frequent amount of stones. It measured 1.14m by 1m with a depth of 0.2m. Some of the stones were heat affected, which suggests that a burnt mound site may have been located in the area or that the feature served as a small temporary earth oven.

Possible Hearth: Pit C3 was cut into tree bole C5. It measured 1.42m by 1.3m with a depth of 0.31m. It contained two lower fills which had evidence for in situ burning, while the top fill, C4, had accumulated due to natural sedimentation when the pit was out of use. It is probable that its location in the area of the tree bole was not coincidental and may have utilised an existing hollow.

Finds: None

Dating: Charcoal (ash) from the fill of pit (C7) C14 (UBA-14039) 3678±25 BP (2140–1966 BC)

References

Catalogue No. KK 56
RMP No. NA
Licence No. E3757

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Excavation Details:
- Project: N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford road scheme
- Site Director: Przemyslaw Wierzbicki
- Consultants: Irish Archaeological Consultancy
- Year: 2008

Physical Setting:
The excavated area was sited on a flat pasture land with a gentle eastern aspect at the back of a deserted modern farmyard. The nearest water source, a pool, was located c. 150–200m to south-west.

Cultural Landscape:
- Kellymount 1 is located c. 15m to the south-east (KK55) and Kellymount 3 is located c. 220m to the north-east (KK57).

Adjacent excavated sites:
- Burnt mound (KK55).

**Pre-Excavation features**

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford road scheme. No surface remains of the site were evident prior to investigations.

**Excavation Record**

Summary of Features:
Excavation of the site revealed a burnt mound and numerous troughs, pits and stake-holes representing at least two phases of activity.

Burnt Mount:
Burnt mound deposits C5 and C6 were irregular in shape and extended beyond the excavation area. Deposit C6 consisted of heat-shattered stones, silty sand and charcoal, while deposit C5 comprised a mixture of topsoil and heat-shattered stones. Both represent waste material associated with the burnt mound complex; deposit C5 was heavily ploughed out. A quartzite rubbing stone was recovered from C6.

Trough 1:
Sub-rectangular trough C86 was located roughly centrally in the excavated area. It measured 2.96m by 1.78m with a depth of 0.8m. It had steep sloping sides and a flat base. Four stake-holes (C188, C190, C194 and C196) were identified in the base, with roughly one in each corner. These provide evidence that the trough was originally lined, although no evidence of this lining survives. The trough was filled with fairly uniform material C88, which only at the northern part was more yellow in colour (C87). It consisted of a high proportion of heat-shattered stones, sandy clay and charcoal.
Stake-Holes: A group of 25 stake-holes was identified along the north side of and beside the northern edge of the trough. The function of these stake-holes was most likely associated with the trough but it is unclear if they were associated with a structure of any form.

Pits: Three pits were recorded, extending in a rough northeast-southwest line from the south of trough C86. They had been substantially truncated by a later very large pit/waterhole C89 or related pit C79. They had all been excavated to a similar depth and were of broadly similar dimensions. As they had been largely truncated, only their primary fills were generally evident and these consisted of burnt mound type deposits.

Trough 2: Oval-shaped pit C99 was associated with shallow feature C208. It had sharp sloping sides, a roughly flat base and was 0.58m deep. Both the pit and the shallow feature were filled with material containing heat-shattered stones and most likely the two features together represent a trough, with the shallower C208 perhaps being a step or shallower ledge adjacent to the main C99 cut. They were truncated by a post-medieval field boundary ditch.

Water-Hole: Large sub-oval pit C89 was located at the centre of the site and was sealed by a thin deposit of burnt mound material. The pit had sharp sloping sides with a rounded base and was up to 1.96m deep. It was the largest feature at the site and seemed to have a focal position. It measured 4.14m by 3.8m. The considerable size of pit C89 suggested that it represented a waterhole or reservoir. It was filled with eight layers of burnt mound material. An amber bead and a small amount of animal bone were found within this context. A Late Iron Age date was returned from a sample of charcoal from the feature.

Trough 3: Large oval pit C79 was adjacent to pit C89. It had gradual sides with pit/posthole C267 cut into its base. It measured 3.18m by 2.08m with a depth of 0.61m. It was filled with burnt mound material.

Structure 1: A group of 25 stake-holes and three possible postholes created a horseshoe-shaped arc which may represent a possible structure. The structure covered an area that measured 6m by 3.5m. It is possible that the postholes (C96, C178 and C202) provided structural elements with the stakes marking the walls/boundary. It is possible that this structure represented a fenced or enclosed area rather than a roofed building. This possible structure extended from the north of the Waterhole C89. There was a possible entrance in the north-west, between stake-holes C67 and C206, where there was a small gap.

Other Features: A number of undated dispersed features were identified across the site consisting of pits, postholes and stake-hole clusters. The precise function or relationships of any of the features cannot be established. A cluster of stake-holes to the north-west of trough C86 could be related with the trough or the later waterhole and may represent the location of a structure but these have been truncated on their west side by a modern field boundary so any further interpretation is inconclusive.

Finds:

Artefacts: A chert flake was recovered from the site along with a possible quartzite rubbing stone. An amber bead was identified from the water-hole.
Ecofacts: A total of 30 animal bone and burnt bone fragments were recovered from various features across the site. Only cow could be identified from the remains consisting mainly of teeth.

Dating:

Absolute dating:
- Charcoal (ash) from the fill of trough (C86) C14 (UBA-14040) 3648±26 BP (2133–1940 BC)
- Charcoal (alder) from the fill of pit (C99) C14 (UBA-14042) 3317±27 BP (1679–1523 BC)
- Charcoal (hazel) from the fill of water-hole (C89) C14 (UBA-14041) 1746±23 BP (AD 236–380 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

It is clear from the radiocarbon dating evidence that there were at least three phases of activity on the site dating from the early and middle Bronze Age and the late Iron Age. It has been interpreted in the excavation results that the three features dated represent activity from that particular period. While this is likely, it should also be noted that earlier mound deposits would potentially be disturbed during later activity. It is possible that later features have been backfilled with material from an earlier mound. In this regard the radiocarbon dates may not reflect the date of the actual occupation associated with any particular dated feature. This must be considered in relation to the early Bronze Age trough, C86, adjacent to which is the large waterhole C89 dated to the late Iron Age. It is possible that given their physical relationship that these two features are directly related and contemporary. A large pit/waterhole was identified immediately to the south of the earlier trough and is primarily interpreted that this large pit possibly acted as a waterhole or cistern for storing water. Adjacent to the south-west of the main waterhole was another large pit C79 although it was substantially smaller than the waterhole. This may have acted as a trough as it appeared to conjoin the waterhole, perhaps with the intention that water would overflow from one to the other.

References


Fig. 10.85 Trough pits and stake-hole structures at Kellymount 2, Co. Kilkenny.
Catalogue No.  KK 57

RMP No. NA

Licence No. E3856

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Excavation Details:

Project: N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford road scheme

Site Director: Przemyslaw Wierzbicki

Consultants: Irish Archaeological Consultancy

Year: 2008

Physical Setting:

The excavated area was sited on flat pasture land with a gentle eastern aspect, beside a railway track. There were no open water sources in the vicinity of the site and the nearest stream was located c. 500m away, adjacent to the site of Kellymount 5.

Cultural Landscape:

Kellymount 1 (KK55) and 2 (KK56) are located c. 220m to the south-west and Kellymount 4 is located c. 200m to the north-east.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford road scheme. No surface remains of the site were evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a burnt mound and numerous troughs along with a large water-hole or well.

Burnt Mount:

Deposit C22 was located at the western part of the burnt mound complex. It measured 8m by 8.1m with a maximum thickness of 0.45m. It sealed trough C19 and the remains of a probable wind break. The deposit partially filled pit C21 and consisted of heat-shattered stones and blackened sandy silt. Peat development and silt accumulation (C23, C24) followed this episode within pit C21.

Trough:

Sub-rectangular trough C39 was located to the north-east of the waterhole C21 and was the earliest feature dated on the site. It had gently sloping sides and a slightly concave base and measured 1.4m by 1.3m with a depth of 0.45m. Three stake-holes were driven into the base and possibly originally supported a timber lining. The trough was filled with two fills, C40 and C69, containing heat-shattered stones. However, the trough was not sealed by the main burnt mound deposits identified on the site.
Trough 2:
Trough C15 was located to the south-west of Trough C39 on the north-east edge of large pit/waterhole C21 (Figure 5). It had well-defined, gently sloping sides and a slightly concave base. There was no evidence for an internal lining. It was filled with three fills. The trough was undated but its proximity to Trough C39 suggests they may have been related. It measured 1.61m by 1.5 with a depth of 0.2m.

Water-Hole:
Large pit/waterhole C21 was the most impressive feature at the site and was located centrally within a cluster of features in the east of the site. As all of the subsequent features within the cluster were generally located around the perimeter of the waterhole, including those dated to the early Bronze Age, the early Iron Age, and the undated features, the waterhole represents a focal point on the site. It is therefore interpreted that this feature may be associated with the primary activity on site and continued in use or was re-used over time. The waterhole/pit measured c. 7m x c. 6.20m at the top. Its sides gradually sloped towards the centre but became vertical about 1.5m below the surface. The cut became circular from that point and measured c. 3m in diameter. The total depth of the pit was c. 6m. The basal fill (C233) of the pit was c. 2m thick and consisted of silty clay with heat-shattered and sub-angular stones. Fill C27 was probably pushed back into the pit when it went out of use. Seven similar fills containing heat-shattered stones overlaid fill C27. This pit was too big to facilitate the heating or boiling of water for cooking and instead it more likely represents a waterhole or reservoir.

Trough 3:
Trough C4 was positioned to the north-west of the main concentration of burnt mound material and the waterhole/pit. It was rectangular with rounded corners and measured 2.38m by 1.56m with a depth of 0.2m. Trough C19 was located to the south-east and the two troughs were separated by a possible windbreak, which was potentially more directly associated with trough C19. Trough C4 was much shallower. Twenty-two stake-holes were found at its base and they may have supported an internal lining. Only one fill, C5, was contained within the trough and this comprised a dark clayey sand.

Trough 4:
Trough C19 was located by the western edge of large pit/waterhole C21. Although it was undated, its proximity to Trough C4 to the north suggests the two were related. The trough was sub-rectangular with steep sides and a flat base. It was filled with two layers (C20, C66) of burnt mound material. Thirty five tightly spaced stake-holes were identified around the perimeter of the base of the trough. They encircled the base and were probably the remains of a wicker/wattle lining.

Trough 5:
A group of nine postholes/stake-holes forming an arc were identified immediately west / north-west of trough C19. The two most substantial postholes/stake-holes, C67 and C81, were located at either end of the arc. It is most likely that these postholes/stake-holes supported a wattle panel or screen which could have protected trough C19 from the wind or served as a fence between it and trough C4.

Pits:
A group of four circular or oval-shaped pits were identified as well as an irregular oblong pit C41. One of these, C28, was partially cut into pit C21. Pits C17, C28 and C30 were sealed by burnt mound deposits C3 and C22. These pits were filled with similar material containing heat-shattered stones. The precise function of these pits is unknown.
Finds:

Artefacts: The lithic finds from Kellymount 3, are a large granite mano and three rectangular, elongated limestone hone stones.

Ecofacts: A total of 28 animal bone and burnt bone fragments were recovered from various features across the site. Eight fragments were identified to species and these include cow, pig, goat and sheep.

Dating:

Absolute dating: Charcoal (alder) from the fill of trough (C39) C14 (UBA-14044) 3824±22 BP (2399–2154 BC)
Charcoal (ash) from the fill of trough (C4) C14 (UBA-14043) 2446±25 BP (751–409 BC)
Charcoal (holly) from the fill of isolated pit (C169) on periphery of site C14 (UBA-14045) 2195±22 BP (362–196 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

The excavation at Kellymount 3 has identified burnt mound activity that has been dated to the early Bronze Age and the early and middle Iron Age. A number of troughs, pits, a large pit/waterhole, stake-holes, as well as isolated features were recorded on the site. Radiocarbon dating evidence suggests that there were at least three phases of activity on the site dating from the early Bronze Age and the early and middle Iron Age. The largest feature identified on the site was a large pit/waterhole located centrally within a cluster of features in the east of the site. As all the other features within the cluster were generally located around the perimeter of the waterhole, including those dated to the early Bronze Age, the early Iron Age, and the undated features, the waterhole represents a focal point on the site. It is therefore interpreted that this feature may be associated with the primary activity on site and continued in use or was re-used over time. A number of lithics recovered from the fill of the waterhole were identified as typologically diagnostic to the Bronze Age, which may indicate that the waterhole was also of this date, although they may be residual from the dated Bronze Age activity within a later feature.

References


Fig. 10.86. Large well, adjacent troughs and outlying pits at Kellymount 3, Co. Kilkenny.
Excavation Details:

Project: N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford road scheme
Site Director: Przemyslaw Wierzbicki
Consultants: Irish Archaeological Consultancy
Year: 2008

Physical Setting:
Two burnt stone spreads spaced 150m apart were found near the top of gently rising field, on both sides of Jordanstown/ Kellymount townland border, and the site was divided into two areas. There were no rivers or streams in the vicinity but a small natural pool was located about half way between the excavated areas.

Cultural Landscape:
Jordanstown 2 is located c. 300m to the south-west and Jordanstown 3 (KK54) is located c. 40m to the south-east.

Adjacent excavated sites: Burnt Mound (KK54)

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford road scheme. No surface remains of the site were evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features:
The excavation identified Burnt Mound type activity in four separate cuttings in two separate fields - A1, A2, A3 and B1. The earliest activity consisted of pits filled with burnt mound deposits in cutting A1. No definitive burnt mound spread was found in association with these pits.

Site A

Pits:
A group of three similar pits, C21, C24 and C27, was located in cutting A1. The pits had a roughly east–west orientation. They were all sub-circular or sub-oval in plan with moderately sloping sides and flat bases. The presence of burnt, fire-cracked stones in the fills of the three pits suggests that their main purpose was related to burnt mound activity.

Natural Depression:
An irregular, kidney-shaped natural depression was located c. 0.8m north-west of the group of pits. It was filled with two deposits, C29 and C30. The lower, C30, consisted of light-grey, silty clay and was overlain with
medium-grey, sandy clay with frequent charcoal flecks, C29. There was no
evidence of in situ burning and therefore the deposits represented waste
material. It is likely that, due to the similarities between the deposits and the
fills of the pits, that they were contemporary.

**Site B**

**Pit:**
A pit, C4, was located in cutting A2. The pit was sub-oval with sloping sides
and a flat–slightly concave base. It contained two fills, C5 and C6, the
primary of which, C6, comprised burnt, fire-cracked stones, dark-grey silt
and frequent amounts of charcoal. The upper silty fill of the pit, C5,
represented material which had accumulated due to natural sedimentation
when the pit was no longer in use.

**Site C**

**Burnt Spread:**
Disturbed deposits C48 and C49 were located in the centre of cutting
A3. They contained blackened soil, charcoal and burnt stones, which
suggested that they were associated with burnt mound activity. A small
spread of burnt mound material, C17, was located in Area A3, 4 m to the
east of the burnt spread C48/C49. It consisted of blackened soil, charcoal
and occasional amounts of burnt stones, which suggested that it was
associated with the burnt mound activity.

**Site D**

**Burnt Spread:**
Burnt spread C50 (approximately 50% burnt stone) was positioned on the
edge a natural pool. It measured 4m by 3.8m with a maximum thickness of
0.3m.

**Trough:**
Trough C45 had a northwest–southeast orientation. It was rectangular in
shape and measured 2.1m by 1.5m with a depth of 0.18. At only 0.18m deep
it was quite shallow and obviously truncated. Nine stake-holes were cut
through the base and sides of trough C45. A pair of stake-holes were located
in each of the trough’s corners with an additional third stake-hole noted in
the north-east corner. These stake-holes most likely held wooden planks or
wickerwork in place to reinforce the sides of the trough. The trough C45 was
filled with a black silt containing charcoal.

**Finds:**

**Artefacts:**
A chert flake was recovered from topsoil deposits

**Dating:**

**Absolute dating:**
Charcoal (alder) from the fill of pit (C22)
C14 (UBA-14037) 3742±26 BP (2273–2038 BC)
Charcoal (ash) from the fill of trough (C45)
C14 (UBA-14038) 2877±25 BP (1187–941 BC)

**References**
Unpublished excavation report prepared by Irish Archaeological Consultancy Ltd.
Physical Setting: Kilree 1 sat in an undulating landscape, in a field that slopes down to the north-east before sloping upwards again beyond the site.

Cultural Landscape: Three enclosures (KK023-049001, 2, 3) are located c. 500m to the west of the site. There are no other recorded prehistoric sites within the excavated area.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford road scheme. No surface remains of the site were evident prior to investigations.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: The prehistoric activity consisted of a sub-rectangular trough with stake-holes in the corners, two hearths and a possible waste pit.

Trough: A sub-rectangular trough, C3, was identified that contained a fill similar to burnt mound material. It measured 1.46m by 1.1m with a depth of 0.22m. A series of stake-holes and a posthole were located in the corners of the trough. These most likely provided support for a timber lining of the trough, although no direct remains of the lining itself were identified during the excavation. The trough was clearly associated with burnt mound activity although there was no evidence on the site for surviving mound material. The fills of the trough consisted of heat-shattered stone within a black charcoal rich silty soil.

Waste Pit: A small possible waste pit, C9, was identified and contained small fragments of burnt bone. It measured 0.62m by 0.36m with a depth of 0.12m. During the topsoil stripping, a saddle quern was found on top of the pit but was not
part of the fills. It is unclear if it location was coincidental although this seems unlikely that it was located directly over a small pit by chance.

**Hearths:**
A hearth, C5, displayed evidence for *in situ* burning and a series of fills, while a second, possible hearth, C11, contained dark-blackish-brown, sandy clay. They were both shallow irregular features.

**Finds:**

**Artefacts:** Saddle quern recovered from top of waste pit

**Ecofacts:** A total of 167 burnt fragments were recovered from the fill of the waste pit. Three fragments were identified as pig.

**Dating:**

**Absolute dating:** Charcoal (hazel) from the fill of trough (C3)
C14 (UBA-13100) 2950±23 BP (1262–1056 BC)
Charcoal (fruitwood) from the fill of pit (C9)
C14 (UBA-13099) 2656±27 BP (894–792 BC)

**References**


Plate 10.61 Trough and saddle quern on top of pit at Kilree 1, Co. Kilkenny.
Location: Townland: Derry Six inch map no: 13
Parish: Dysartenos NGR: 249975, 197539
Barony: Maryborough East Altitude: NA
County: Laois

Excavation Details:
Project: Portlaois Bypass
Site Director: Carmel Duffy
Consultants: Valerie J. Keeley Ltd
Year: 1995

Physical Setting: There is no information available as to the locational setting of the site.

Cultural Landscape: There are no prehistoric sites recorded in the area prior to excavation.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features
The site was identified during archaeological monitoring in advance of the Portlaois Bypass. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: This excavation consisted of three areas of fulacht fiadh material along a 125m stretch of the Portlaoise Bypass. Site 1 consisted of a single trough with stake-holes in each of the corners. It was filled with heat-shattered stone and charcoal-rich material. The pit measured 2.3m by 1.5m with a depth of 0.4m. Site 2 was composed of a circular pit that measured 1.2m in diameter with a depth of 0.2m. It was filled with heat-shattered stone and had an associated spread of similar material. The full extent of this site could not be determined. Site 3 consisted of a spread of burnt mound material that continued outside the area of excavation.

Finds: None

Dating: None

References
Pre-Excavation features

The site was identified during archaeological monitoring in advance of the Portlaois Bypass.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a levelled burnt mound and a trough.

Burnt Mound: The levelling made it impossible to ascertain the original limits of the mound or to determine its orientation with any certainty. The remains of the mound measured 11m north–south, 9m east–west and 50–300mm in thickness. It consisted of burnt sandstone and quartzite with occasional quartz fragments. Only a small amount of charcoal were recovered from the mound, which was located on a slight rise, less than 10m south of a dried-up stream.

Trough: The wooden trough, located near the eastern limit of what remained of the burnt mound, measured 1.72m in length, 1m in width and 0.23m in maximum depth (it was impossible to determine its original depth as no side of the feature was fully intact). It was cut into the natural subsoil, orientated east-south-east/west-north-west, and constructed of eight oak planks, four making up the base and one on each enclosing side. It was filled with mound material, a peat-like fill and a large amount of wood at its base.

Finds: Cow bone was recovered from the basal fill of the timber-lined trough.

Dating: Wood (oak) fragment from plank of trough
Dendro (Q-9398) 961±9 BC
Wood (oak) fragment of plank of trough
Dendro (Q-9399) 1090±9 BC

References

Excavation Details:
Project: Carlow Northern Relief Road
Site Director: Thaddeus Breen
Consultants: Valerie J. Keeley Ltd
Year: 1998

Physical Setting: There is no information available as to the locational setting of the site.

Cultural Landscape: There are no prehistoric sites recorded in the area prior to excavation.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features
The site was identified during archaeological monitoring in advance of the Carlow Northern Relief Road. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a number of burnt mound spreads. No cut features were identified. Sites 1 and 2 were spreads of dark grey-brown soil, with some patches of charcoal, and black, charcoal-rich soil. They were 11m and 8m long, respectively, and at least 4m wide, but each continued beyond the take of the road. Deep ploughing had disturbed both, and Site 1 had been further disturbed by a drain. The only finds were modern bottle glass. Site 3 was a smaller spread of similar material, measuring 1.2m by 0.8m. A fragment of burnt bone was found here.

References
Excavation Details:  
Project: M7 Heath-Mayfield Motorway  
Site Director: Thaddeus Breen  
Consultants: Valerie J. Keeley Ltd  
Year: 2004

Physical Setting:  
There is no information available as to the locational setting of the site.

Cultural Landscape:  
Undated and possible prehistoric settlement activity was identified during the road scheme a few metres from the excavated fulachtai fia. There were no other recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the area prior to excavation.

Adjacent excavated sites:  
Possible habitation site

**Pre-Excavation features**

The site was identified during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M7 Heath-Mayfield Motorway. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

**Excavation Record**

**Summary of Features:** Excavation of the site revealed two burnt mound sites and numerous related features. Each site will be described separately.

**Burnt Mound:**  
The burnt mound consisted of an irregular-shaped spread of charcoal-rich soil and heat-shattered stone. It measured 18m by 15m.

**Trough:**  
The trough was rectangular, 1.54m by 1.17m, with a flat base and stake-holes in the corners. It was 0.34m deep. The timber structure itself did not survive. It was cut into the natural clay, and contained three distinct fills. The main fill was charcoal-rich soil with a large quantity of round stones, burnt but mostly intact, more than half of them at least 0.3m in diameter. There were two stake-holes in each corner suggesting it was originally timber-lined.

**Well 1:**  
The ‘well’, which may have supplied water for the trough, was approximately oval in plan, with a maximum diameter of 5.5m. As the southern half was deeper than the northern, it appeared to have been recut to extend and deepen it. Its maximum depth was 0.9m. The base was below the water table. There were four fills. One of the lowermost was charcoal-rich silty clay with occasional burnt stones.
Well 2: At the northern end of the mound was another deep, irregular pit. It was sub-circular, but there was a shelf halfway down on the northern side, which may have resulted from re-cutting an existing pit. The maximum diameter was 4.5m, and it was up to 1m deep. There were seven fills, mostly silty clay, but with occasional fragments of charcoal and burnt stone. Animal bones and slag were found in some of these layers.

Trough 2: The trough and ‘well’ were not in the centre of the burnt mound but in the southern half. At the centre was a shallow pit. This was a shallow dish-shaped depression, ovoid in plan, with a maximum diameter of 1.83m. It was 0.27m deep and contained four fills, most including some burnt stones. There was a stake-hole on either side and a line of three small stake-holes to the south of it.

Trough 3: Near the eastern edge of the burnt mound was an almost circular pit, 1–1.2m in diameter and 0.28m deep. It had a flat base, in which a number of parallel dark lines could be seen, probably representing the remains of a wicker lining. The main fill was loose grey sandy silt with some charcoal. To the south-west, this feature was cut through by a small circular pit, 0.55m in diameter and 0.43m deep.

Finds: Animal bone was recovered from the well along with possible slag fragments.

Dating: There are no scientific dates available for the site.

Excavation Interpretation

Excavation of the site revealed two separate fulachtai fia. This site was composed of two possible wells and associated troughs used for water-boiling. This is supported by a large spread of waste-firing stone associated with this process. The site can be interpreted as a pyrolithic water-boiling are possibly for cooking meat. The presence of a possible wattle-lining in trough 3 may suggest a Chalcolithic or Early Bronze Age phase as this lining technique is common during this period.

References

Location: Townland: Ballyshaneduff or the Derries Six inch map no: 09 Parish: Dysartgallen NGR: 257404, 206178 Barony: Cullenagh Altitude: NA County: Laois

Excavation Details: Project: M7 Heath-Mayfield Motorway Site Director: Thaddeus Breen Consultants: Valerie J. Keeley Ltd Year: 2004

Physical Setting: There is no information available as to the locational setting of the site.

Cultural Landscape: Undated and possible prehistoric settlement activity was identified during the road scheme a few metres from the excavated fulachtaí fia. There were no other recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the area prior to excavation.

Adjacent excavated sites: Possible habitation site

Pre-Excavation features

The site was identified during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M7 Heath-Mayfield Motorway. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed two burnt mound sites and numerous related features. Each site will be described separately.

Burnt Mound: This deposit consisted of an approximately circular spread of charcoal-rich soil and heat-shattered stone measuring 13m by 1m.

Trough: The trough was slightly bigger than that of the previous site, with an area of 2.19m by 1.37m. However, at 0.23m, it was shallower. Again, no wooden structure survived but corner stake-holes were present suggesting that is was originally lined. There were two fills, both consisting of loose grey soft sandy silt with small pieces of heat-shattered stone. There was a large and a small stake-hole at each corner, except the north-east, where only one was found. Outside the trough at the latter corner was a group of six smaller stake-holes.

Well: Beside the trough was a well, sub-oval in shape, measuring 4.1m long and 1m deep. The sides sloped gently inwards in the upper half, becoming steeper towards the centre. The base was below the water table. The centre was filled with a series of layers of grey gritty sand alternating with dark-brown peaty silt.
Stake-Holes: A number of stake-holes occurred at the northern end of the well and between this and the trough. They may have supported a low platform, or they could be the remains of a pulley for lifting water. There were two groups just inside the well – three at the north-west corner, two at the north-east. At the north-east corner there was a third stake-hole just outside the well. In the area between the well and the trough were a double stake-hole, a single stake-hole and a possible additional single stake-hole. A number of these stake-holes sloped, in different directions, and one ran horizontally into the side of the well.

Finds: None

Dating: There are no scientific dates available for the site.

Excavation Interpretation

Excavation of the site revealed two separate *fulachtai fia*. This site was composed of two possible wells and associated troughs used for water-boiling. This is supported by a large spread of waste-firing stone associated with this process. The site can be interpreted as a pyrolithic water-boiling area possibly for cooking meat.

References

**Pre-Excavation features**

The site was identified during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M7 Heath-Mayfield Motorway. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

**Excavation Record**

**Summary of Features:**

The site was composed primarily of burnt-stone fragments, charcoal and burnt soil/peat. The burnt mound measured approximately 12m (maximum) north–south by 8.5m by 0.3m (maximum) in depth. A series of pits adjacent to the burnt material were uncovered cut within the natural white marl. Two of the pits constituted the trough and the waterhole of the *fulacht fia*. The waterhole was exterior to the area occupied by the burnt mound, while the trough was lying partly beneath the burnt mound and partly outside it. A large wooden pile had been driven into the natural marl at the bottom of the waterhole. It is thought that the pile may constitute the remains of an upright for a wooden platform utilised to facilitate the collection of water from the waterhole. No finds were recorded from the site and it was not scientifically dated.

**References**

Location: Townland: Addergoole  Six inch map no: 28  
Parish: Aghmacart  NGR: 233745, 175509  
Barony: Clarmallagh  Altitude: 88m OD  
County: Laois  

Excavation Details:  
Project: M7 Portlaoise to Castletown-M8 to Cullahill  
Site Director: John Lynch  
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd.  
Year: 2006  

Physical Setting:  
This site was located in low-lying land on the eastern bank of a small stream, a tributary of the River Goul. The underlying geology of the area is carboniferous limestone which covers most of south-west Laois.  

Cultural Landscape:  
Several other burnt mound sites were revealed along the same stream during archaeological testing. There are no other recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of Addergoole, however several *fulachtai fia* and Bronze Age structures were revealed during the road project. Addergoole is located near the River Goul, which would have been a significant landscape feature in the Bronze Age, in terms of transport, deposition and a water source.  

Adjacent excavated sites: *Fulachtai fia* excavated in the neighbouring townland of Aghmacart on western side of the stream.  

Pre-Excavation features  
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.  

Excavation Record  
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed several spreads of burnt mound material and several troughs. Numerous paleochannels were also uncovered.  

Burnt Mound:  
The main mound (F003) was circular in plan and consisted of four deposits of heat-shattered limestone, dark sandy silts and charcoal. It measured 14.25m by 10.25m with a depth of 0.2m. Occasional animal bone was retrieved from the spread which included cattle and deer. The other deposits (F046, F025, F035 and F026) were small spreads located adjacent to the main mound.  

Trough 1:  
Trough (F030) was rectangular in shape with rounded corners, vertical sides and an irregular base. It measured 4.7m by 2.5m with a depth of 0.8m. Seven fills were noted in the trough with one particular deposit of orange-grey clay separating the trough from other deposits, thus dividing the trough into two...
pits. The basal fill consisted of charcoal and heat-shattered stone which was dated to the Early Bronze Age. The most substantial fill in the trough was a deposit similar to the burnt mound material.

Trough 2: Trough (F037) was oval in shape with concave sides and a rounded base. It measured 2.5m by 1.7m with a depth of 0.5m and was interpreted as an unused trough filled with natural silts and alluvial deposits.

Trough 3: F039 was oval in shape and measured 1.56m by 1.5m with a depth of 0.6m. It had a gradual brake of slope leading to an uneven base. The fill consisted of black, charcoal rich material and heat-shattered limestone and charcoal. A Late Bronze Age date was obtained from a charcoal sample.

Burnt Spread: This spread (F005) measured 2.65m by 2m with a thickness of 0.17m. It was truncated by a mechanical digger and consisted of heat-shattered limestone in a matrix of black, charcoal rich material.

Finds: Animal bone was recovered from the burnt mound F003 and from the upper fill of trough F030. These consisted of cattle and deer bones.

Dating: Charcoal (alder) from the fill of the trough (F030) C14 (SUERC-18532) 3535±35 BP (1960–1750 BC) Charcoal (alder) from the fill of the trough (F039) C14 (SUERC-18536) 2785±35 BP (1020–830 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

Through the various stages of archaeological investigation at Addergoole 1, two relatively typical burnt mounds and associated troughs were revealed, dated to two separate periods of the Bronze Age. Trough F030 was dated to Cal BC 1960–1750. A relatively large trough, it was also divided in two by a clay deposit after its initial use. It is possible that the size of F030 was reduced or that both compartments of the trough served different purposes. The easterly compartment was at least partially sealed by the same clay deposit, indicating that it held water. This trough was surrounded by a large thin mound. The Late Bronze Age trough appeared to have been cut too close to paleochannel and was never used.

References


Plate 10.62 Burnt spread and divided trough at Addergoole 1, Co. Laois.
Physical Setting: This site was located in low-lying land on the eastern bank of a small stream, a tributary of the River Goul. The underlying geology of the area is carboniferous limestone which covers most of south-west Laois.

Cultural Landscape: Several other burnt mound sites were revealed along the same stream during archaeological testing. There are no other recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of Addergoole, however several fulachtai fia and Bronze Age structures were revealed during the road project. Addergoole is located near the River Goul, which would have been a significant landscape feature in the Bronze Age, in terms of transport, deposition and a water source.

Adjacent excavated sites: Fulachtai fia excavated in the neighbouring townland of Aghmacart on eastern side of the stream.

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed several spreads of burnt mound material, two troughs and three paleochannels.

Burt Spreads: Seven spreads of heat-shattered stone (mostly limestone) were revealed during excavation located adjacent to the troughs. Each consisted of charcoal and heat-affected stone in a matrix of dark silty clays. F003 measured 2.5m by 2.25m with a thickness of 0.08m. F004 measured 1.5m by 1m with a thickness of 0.12m. F005 measured 4.5m by 2m with a thickness of 0.15m. F007 was the largest deposit and measured 8.5m by 2m with a thickness of 0.05m. F033 measured 1.95m by 0.8m by 0.15m and F032 measured 7.5m by 2.8m with a thickness of 0.2m. F035 measured 2.8m by 2.24m with a thickness of 0.24m. Ash charcoal from this deposit was dated to the Early Bronze Age.
Trough 1: This trough (F021) was sub-rectangular in shape and cut into the eastern bank of a paleochannel. It measured 2m by 1.3m with a depth of 0.85m and had convex sides and a flat base. The trough was filled with two deposits with the primary fill consisting of charcoal rich material and heat-shattered limestone. Overlying this was a deposit of yellow sandy clay interpreted as upcast material from the digging of the trough. This deposit was sealed by alluvial material.

Structure: A series of stake-holes were revealed immediately to the east of the trough F021. Two different types of fill were noted dividing the structure into two elements. No stake-holes were recorded at the eastern end, which was likely to be the entrance to the structure. F049/F051 may have been a small hut adjoining F021 or a formal entrance to the trough.

Trough 2: Trough (F025) consisted of two circular conjoined pits with combined measurements of 4.51m by 2.32m. The northern pit was quite shallow while the southern pit survived to a depth of 0.3m. A shallow depression of 0.66m in length lay between the depressions and may have connected them. The pits were filled with charcoal rich material and heat-shattered sandstone and limestone.

Trough 3: Trough (F045) was oval in shape and measured 1.03m by 0.99m with a depth of 0.28m. The pit lay adjacent to the burnt spread F033. The trough contained three fills consisting of silty sands, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Paleochannels: Several paleochannels were excavated on site, one of which returned a post-medieval date and contained several deer bones.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: Animal bone was recovered from the paleochannel F40. The bone was identified as deer.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (ash) from the burnt spread F035 C14 (SUERC-17990) 3890±35 BP (2480–2280 BC)

References

Location: Townland: Aghmacart Six inch map no: 28
Parish: Aghmacart NGR: 233757, 175866
Barony: Clarmallagh Altitude: 87m OD
County: Laois

Excavation Details:
Project: M7 Portlaoise to Castletown-M8 to Cullahill
Site Director: John Lynch
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd.
Year: 2006

Physical Setting:
This site was located in low-lying land on the eastern bank of a small stream, a tributary of the River Goul. The underlying geology of the area is carboniferous limestone which covers most of south-west Laois.

Cultural Landscape:
Several other burnt mound sites were revealed along the same stream during archaeological testing. There are no other recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of Addergoole, however several fulachtai fia and Bronze Age structures were revealed during the road project. Addergoole is located near the River Goul, which would have been a significant landscape feature in the Bronze Age, in terms of transport, deposition and a water source.

Adjacent excavated sites: Fulachtai fia excavated in the neighbouring townland of Addergoole on western side of the stream.

Pre-Excavation features
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed four burnt mound deposits and a series of paleochannels. Environmental evidence suggests a damp, sheltered environment close to a body of slow moving water.

Burnt Mound 1: Spread (F003) was irregular in plan and measured 3.5m by 2.75m with a maximum thickness of 0.08m. It consisted of black silty sandy, charcoal and heat-shattered limestone/sandstone.

Burnt Mound 2: F004 measured 3.25m by 2.85m with a maximum thickness of 0.1m. This deposit also contained a number of unburnt stones to its southern side however the majority of the spread consisted of charcoal rich material and heat-shattered stone. It was dated to the Late Neolithic period.

Burnt Mound 3: F005 measured 3.65m by 2.25m with a thickness of 0.08m. Towards the centre of the deposit, the stones were mostly angular sandstone while at the
edges, the stones were mainly limestone. A Late Neolithic date was obtained from a charcoal sample.

**Burnt Mound 4:**

F026 measured 4.5m by 3m with a thickness of 0.15m. It consisted of charcoal-rich material and heat-shattered limestone.

**Limestone Deposit:**

F024 was a deposit of well sorted unburnt limestone measuring 1.1m by 1.1m with a thickness of 0.2m. This may possibly represent a stockpile of stones for the heating process.

**Finds:**

**Artefacts:** None

**Ecofacts:** Animal bone was recovered from the paleochannel F008 and F014. It was identified as cattle and deer

**Dating:**

**Relative dating:** None

**Absolute dating:** Charcoal (ash and hazel) from the burnt spread F004 C14 (SUERC-17972) 4080±35 BP (2860–2490 BC)

**Excavation Interpretation**

Aghmacart 1 consisted of four burnt mounds situated amid three paleochannels. Two of the burnt mounds returned dates from the Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age. As all burnt mounds were similar in size, shape and composition and they each lacked associated features, it seems reasonable to assume that they were used contemporaneously. All of the burnt mounds used limestone, which is worth noting as this is uncommon among burnt mound sites along with the absence of troughs. A likely interpretation of Aghmacart 1 is of a series of four approximately contemporary Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age burnt mounds, which may have used a wooden trough. It is possible that this hypothetical trough was used for all four burnt mounds. The cattle and deer bone found in paleochannel F008 may indicate animal husbandry and hunting activities, but as they are not from a secure context this remains a supposition.

**References**

Location: Location: Aghmacart  Six inch map no: 28
Parish: Aghmacart  NGR: 233693, 175533
Barony: Clarmallagh  Altitude: 87m OD
County: Laois
Excavation Details: Project: M7 Portlaoise to Castletown-M8 to Cullahill
Site Director: John Lynch
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd.
Year: 2006

Physical Setting: This site was located in low-lying land on the eastern bank of a small stream, a tributary of the River Goul.

Cultural Landscape: Several other burnt mound sites were revealed along the same stream during archaeological testing. There are no other recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of Addergoole, however several fulachtai fia and Bronze Age structures were revealed during the road project.

Adjacent excavated sites: Fulachtai fia excavated in the neighbouring townland of Addergoole.

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a burnt and a trough.

Burnt Spread: The spread (F003) consisted of black charcoal rich material and heat-shattered sandstone and limestone. It measured 6m by 4.5m with a thickness of 0.1m. A sample of charcoal was dated to the Early Bronze Age.

Trough: The trough (F004) was sub-circular in shape with vertical sides and a flat base. It measured 1.4m by 1.4m with a depth of 0.5m. Five fills were noted in the trough with a basal deposit interpreted as a clay lining. The remaining fills consisted of silty sand, sandy clay and charcoal with frequent amounts of heat-shattered sandstone. The excavator suggests that the clay lining was added after the trough was initially used due to the presence of charcoal and shattered stone beneath it.

Dating: Charcoal (unknown) from the burnt spread F003
C14 (Beta-218619) 3810±40BP (2400–2140 BC)

References

Catalogue No.  LS 11

RMP No. NA

Licence No. E2425

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<th>Six inch map no: 22 and 23</th>
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<th>Excavation Details:</th>
<th>Project:</th>
<th>M7 Portlaoise to Castletown-M8 to Cullahill</th>
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<tr>
<td>Site Director:</td>
<td>Tara O Neill</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultants:</td>
<td>Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year:</td>
<td>2006</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Physical Setting: This site was located in low-lying undulating land 500m west of a tributary of the River Goul. The underlying geology of the area is carboniferous limestone which covers most of south-west Laois.

Cultural Landscape: Several other burnt mound sites were revealed along the same stream during archaeological testing. There are no other recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of Ballycuddahy, however several *fulachtai fia* and Bronze Age structures were revealed during the road project.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

**Pre-Excavation features**

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

**Excavation Record**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary of Features:</th>
<th>Excavation of the site revealed a small burnt mound, several pits and a number of troughs.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Burnt Mound:</td>
<td>The burnt mound (F004) consisted of compacted black silty clay with frequent charcoal and heat-shattered sandstone. It measured 3.1m by 1.06m with a depth of 0.3m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trough 1:</td>
<td>Trough (F007) measured 1.75m by 2.25m with a depth of 0.44m. It had steeply sloping sides and a flat base. Two fills were noted in the trough consisting of silty clays, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. A post medieval furrow cut through this trough.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trough 2:</td>
<td>Trough (F005) was oval in shape and measured 1.14m by 1.75m with a depth of 0.13m. It was filled with grey silty clay, heat-shattered sandstone and charcoal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trough 3:</td>
<td>Pit (F008) was sub-circular in plan with gradual to vertical sides and an undulating base. It measured 1.05m by 0.86m with a depth of 0.3m. Two fills were noted in the trough consisting of silty clays, charcoal and heat-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
shattered sandstone. Charcoal from this trough was dated to the Early Bronze Age.

Pit:
This pit (F003) was oval in shape and measured 1.2m by 1.6m with a depth of 0.45m. It was badly disturbed by root activity but it contained a fill consisting of heat-shattered stone and charcoal.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (ash) from the fill of trough F008 C14 (SUERC-18528) 3885±35BP (2470–2230 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

This site can be interpreted as a *fulacht fia* or burnt mound. It was a small scale site which shows evidence of re-use over a period of time. The manufacture of the trough would have required skill and time suggesting the site was carefully selected to perform its function and was intended for re-use. The burnt mound remains from Ballycuddahy 1 were radiocarbon dated to the Chalcolithic. This early date increases the significance of the site as such an early date for burnt mounds is not common in Ireland. There is a possibility that further archaeological features may exist outside the roadtake at Ballycuddahy 1 considering the scattered nature of the features.

References


Plate 10.63 Excavated troughs at Ballycuddahy 1, Co. Laois
Location: Townland: Ballyhinode Six inch map no: 28
Parish: Aghaboe NGR: 234164, 181868
Barony: Clarmallagh Altitude: 94m OD
County: Laois

Excavation Details:
Project: M7 Portlaoise to Castletown-M8 to Cullahill
Site Director: Eamon Cotter
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd.
Year: 2006

Physical Setting:
It was situated on low-lying land on the south bank of an unnamed stream which flows south-eastwards to the Erkina River.

Cultural Landscape:
A hillfort is situated c.6km to the northeast of Ballyhinode in the townland of Boley Upper. While there is a limited number of prehistoric monuments and sites in the surrounding area, the chance recovery of a number of artefacts (e.g. two bronze axeheads were found at Aghaboe, c.4.5km to the northwest of Ballyhinode) is indicative of prehistoric activity in the region.

Adjacent excavated sites:
None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features:
Excavation of the site revealed several burnt stone spreads and two pits which may have functioned as troughs. No finds were recovered and it was not scientifically dated.

Burnt Spreads:
Excavation of the site revealed several spreads of heat-shattered stone, some of which were found to occupy shallow depressions. The largest deposit (C04) measured 7.75m by 3.7m with a thickness of 0.16m. It consisted of black sandy silt and heat-shattered stone. C06 measured 2.75m by 1m with a thickness of 0.2m. Three other deposits had similar dimensions.

Pits:
Pit (C011) was sub-rectangular in plan and measured 2.87m by 2.12m with a depth of 0.33m. The fill of this pit consisted of dark sandy silt and heat-shattered stone. Pit (C013) was also sub-rectangular in plan and measured 2.32m by 1.68m with a depth of 0.09m. A single stake-hole cut the base of this pit located in the north-west corner.

References

Location: Townland: Ballyhinode  Six inch map no: 28
Parish: Aghaboe  NGR: 234160, 181565
Barony: Clarmallagh  Altitude: 94m OD
County: Laois
Excavation Details: Project: M7 Portlaoise to Castletown-M8 to Cullahill
Site Director: Eamon Cotter
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd.
Year: 2006

Physical Setting: The site was situated on low-lying land between two ridges which projected eastwards into the plain. Land in the immediate vicinity is flat and boggy. A stream was located to the south of the site.

Cultural Landscape: A hillfort is situated c.6km to the northeast of Ballyhinode in the townland of Boley Upper. While there is a limited number of prehistoric monuments and sites in the surrounding area, the chance recovery of a number of diagnostic artefacts (e.g. two bronze axeheads were found at Aghaboe, c.4.5km to the northwest of Ballyhinode) is indicative of prehistoric activity.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a badly disturbed burnt mound which was truncated by a field boundary and a stream, leaving only remnants of the mound in situ. A single pit was interpreted as a possible trough.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound (C08/9) was heavily disturbed by a later field boundary and stream, leaving only remnants of the original mound intact. It survived as a small spread measuring 3m by 1.3m with a thickness of 0.1m. It consisted of black silty sand, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Pit/Trough: This possible trough (C005) was located 6m from the spread material and was oval in plan. It measured 1.1m by 0.9m with a depth of 0.3m. The fill of the pit consisted of material similar to the spread.

References

Location: Townland: Boherard  Six inch map no: 22
Parish: Aghaboe  NGR: 232614, 184601
Barony: Clarmallagh  Altitude: 123m OD
County: Laois

Excavation Details: Project: M7 Portlaoise to Castletown-M8 to Cullahill
Site Director: Ed Danaher
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd.
Year: 2006

Physical Setting: The site was located within a flat low-lying field which rose sharply to the north. A drainage ditch, which may have originally have been a stream was located to the south of the site.

Cultural Landscape: There are no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the excavated area.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed several burnt stone spreads and a number of pits and troughs dating to the Early Bronze Age. Two phases of activity were identified.

Burnt Mound: The excavation revealed several small deposits of heat-shattered stone and charcoal. The largest spread was (F007) which was circular in plan and measured 3.7m by 3.6m with a thickness of 0.8m. It consisted of charcoal rich material and heat-shattered quartzite and sandstone with inclusions of limestone. Six other spreads were excavated on site, some of which were revealed in small natural depressions. Charcoal from the mound material was identified as ash, hazel, willow and elm.

Pit 1: This pit (F018) was revealed 30m east of the main activity. It was sub-rectangular in shape with vertical sides and a flat base. It measured 1.45m by 1.25m with a depth of 0.2m. The fill of the pit consisted of charcoal rich material and heat-shattered stone. Ash charcoal from this pit was dated to the Early Bronze Age. A small spread of heat-shattered stone was revealed 1m west of the pit F018.
Trough 1:  
F003 was oval in shape and measured 1.4m by 0.9m with a depth of 0.34m. It had a sharp break of slope with vertical sides and a flat base. The fill consisted of dark silty sand, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Trough 2:  
Trough (F032) was oval in shape and measured 1.9m by 1.1m with a depth of 0.57m. It had vertical sides and a flat base. The fill consisted of dark silty sand, charcoal and heat-shattered stone which was dated to the latter part of the Early Bronze Age.

Trough 3:  
This pit (F024) was sub-oval in shape and measured 1.45m by 0.97m with a depth of 0.33m. It had vertical sides and an uneven base and was filled with burnt mound material.

Trough 4:  
This trough (F026) lay adjacent to the trough F024. It was circular in shape and measured 1.08m by 1m with a maximum depth of 0.25m. The fill consisted of dark silty sand, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 2:  
This pit (F014) was sub-oval in plan and measured 1.3m by 0.9m with a depth of 0.1m. It was filled with compacted heat-shattered stone and charcoal.

Pit 3:  
The pit (F020) was oval in shape and measured 1.3m by 0.6m with a depth of 0.12. It was filled with heat-shattered stone and charcoal.

Pit 4:  
Pit (F008) was oval in shape and measured 0.65m by 0.6m with a depth of 0.04m. The fill consisted of dark silty sand, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 5:  
This pit (F022) was not fully revealed during the excavation as it lay beyond the limits of the excavation. The exposed portion measured 3.3m by 1.7m with a depth of 0.2m. It had vertical sides leading to a flat base and was filled with compact heat-shattered stone and charcoal.

Finds:  
None

Dating:  
Charcoal (ash) from the fill of pit/trough F018  
C14 (SUERC- 20391) 3810±35BP (2350–2130 BC)  
Charcoal (alder) from the fill of trough F032  
C14 (SUERC- 20390) 3530±30BP (1950–1750 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

The excavations at Boherard 1 exposed the presence of burnt mound activity, which produced two phases of activity within the Early Bronze Age. A number of features associated with burnt mound activity were noted. The largest pit, F032 was identified as a trough. It contained a single deposit of burnt and heat shattered stones. The majority of remaining features on site were filled with similar material to that filling F032, having derived from burnt mound activity. Situated c.30m to the east of the site, two further pits/spreads deriving from burn mound activity (F016, F018) were recorded. A date of Cal BC 2350–2150 from the fill of F018 suggests that they derive from a second phase of activity on site. Altogether, this site is indicative of relatively large scale burnt mound activity. The lack of diagnostic material culture recovered here is typical of such sites.

References

Location: Townland: Boherard  Six inch map no: 22
Parish: Aghaboe  NGR: 232908, 184596
Barony: Clarmallagh  Altitude: 122m OD
County: Laois

Excavation Details:
Project: M7 Portlaoise to Castletown-M8 to Cullahill
Site Director: Ed Danaher
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd.
Year: 2006

Physical Setting: The site was located close to Boherard 3, within a flat low-lying field which rose sharply to the north. A drainage ditch, which may have originally have been a stream was located to the south-west of the site.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the excavated area prior to investigations.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed two separate ploughed out burnt mounds with associated pits. One of these pits contained a sherd of beaker, pottery, a flint blade and a hammerstone.

Site A

Burt Spread: The spread (F023) was oval in shape and occupied a natural hollow which measured 1.97m by 0.83m with a depth of 0.07m. The material consisted of grey-black heat-shattered quartzite, sandstone and occasional limestone with charcoal.

Pit 1: Pit (F019) was oval in shape with concave sides and a rounded base. It measured 2.2m by 1.1m with a depth of 0.25m. The fill consisted of peaty clay/sand and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 2: This pit (F021) was oval in plan and located east of the previous pit. It measured 0.65m by 0.6m with a depth of 0.13m. The fill consisted of grey-black, heat-shattered stone and charcoal.
Pit 3: Pit (F027) was also oval in shape and measured 1.28m by 0.64m with a depth of 0.27m. It had concave to vertical sides and contained a fill consisting of grey-black, heat-shattered stone and charcoal.

Site B

Burnt Spread 1: The spread (F036) was irregular in shape and measured 4.85m by 3.3m with a thickness of 0.05m. The material consisted of grey-black heat-shattered quartzite, sandstone and occasional limestone with charcoal.

Burnt Spread 2: This spread (F040) was the largest on site and measured 17m by 6.8m with a maximum thickness of 0.04m. It consisted of hard, black sandy clay and heat-shattered stone.

Burnt Spread 3: This spread (F041) was irregular in shape and measured 1m by 0.7m with a maximum thickness of 0.08m. It consisted of hard, black sandy clay and heat-shattered stone.

Burnt Spread 4: Spread (F046) was sub-oval in shape and a measured 1.9m by 0.9m with a thickness of 0.05m. It consisted of hard, black sandy clay and heat-shattered stone.

Burnt Spread 5: Spread (F047) was sub-oval in plan and measured 1.5m by 1.35m with a thickness of 0.04m. It consisted of charcoal rich material and heat-shattered stone.

Burnt Spread 6: Spread (F048) measured 6.3m by 4.7m with a thickness of 0.03. It consisted of hard, black sandy clay and heat-shattered stone.

Burnt Spread 7: This spread (F049) was similar to the spread F048. It measured 3.2m by 1.1m with a thickness of 0.03m. It consisted of hard, black sandy clay and heat-shattered stone.

Trough 1: Trough (F053) was sub-rectangular in plan with rounded corners, vertical sides and a flat base. It measured 1.85m by 1.2m with a depth of 0.5m. Badly decomposed timbers were revealed at the base of the trough, while one upright, side timber was revealed on the north-eastern edge. The main fill of the trough consisted of hard, black, sandy clay, heat-shattered stone and charcoal. A sample of ash was dated the Early Bronze Age.

Trough 2: This trough (F065) was situated adjacent to the trough F053. It was sub-rectangular in plan with rounded corners and vertical sides. The pit measured 2m by 1.5m with a depth of 0.45m. The main fill of the trough consisted of hard, black, sandy clay, heat-shattered stone and charcoal. A sample of ash was dated the Early Bronze Age.

Hearth: The hearth (F066) was located between the two troughs (F053 and F065). It consisted of an oval deposit of compacted, red/orange clay and measured 3m by 1.6m with a maximum depth of 0.1m.

Site C
Spread 1: The spread (F007) was oval in plan and measured 3.4m by 3m with a thickness of 0.2m. It consisted of hard, black, sandy clay, heat-shattered stone and charcoal.

Trough: The possible trough (F005) was oval in shape and measured 2.3m by 1.5 with a depth of 0.5m. It had a sharp break of slope, vertical sides and a flat base. The fill consisted of hard, black sandy clay and large heat-shattered stones and charcoal.

Pit 1: Pit (F009) was circular in shape and measured 0.86m by 0.57m with a depth of 0.28m. It had concave-stepped sides and an uneven base. The fill consisted of soft black silty clay and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 2: This pit (F011) was sub-oval in shape with vertical sides and a flat base. It measured 0.83m by 0.62m with a depth of 0.26m. The fill consisted of firm, brown, silty clay with a moderate amount of charcoal and stones. Several finds were retrieved from the pit including a sherd of beaker pottery, a flint scraper and a hammerstone.

Pit 3: Pit (F013) was circular in shape and measured 0.36m by 0.36m with a depth of 0.13m. This pit was interpreted as a possible post-hole and a marker for the pit F011. The fill of this pit consisted of brown silty clay and occasional stones.

Pit 4: Pit (F029) was circular in plan and measured 0.94m by 0.9m with a depth of 0.07m. The pit had concave sides and a flat base and the fill consisted of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 5: Pit (F075) was oval in shape and measured 1.6m by 1.2m with a depth of 0.22m. It had vertical sides and a relatively flat base with a fill consisted of loose, black charcoal rich material and heat-shattered stone.

Hearth: The hearth (F031) was oval in shape and consisted of black-orange, oxidised clay with occasional charcoal and heat-shattered stone. It measured 1.9m by 1.2m with a depth of 0.13m.

Site D

Burnt Spread: This spread consisted of grey-black sandy clay and heat-shattered stone. It measured 2.1m by 0.95m with a thickness of 0.1m. It consisted of heat-shattered stone and charcoal.

Pit 1: This pit (F059) was sub-circular in shape and measured 1.05m by 0.9m with a depth of 0.23m. The fill consisted of charcoal rich material and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 2: This pit (F063) was rectangular in shape with rounded corners and vertical sides. It measured 0.87m by 0.64m with a depth of 0.18m. The fill consisted of dark sandy clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Finds:
Artefacts: A flint scraper, a sherd of beaker potter and a possible hammerstone were recovered from the pit (F011).

Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (ash) from the fill of trough (F053)
C14 (SUERC- 20392) 3630±35BP (2130–2080 BC)
Charcoal (ash) from the fill of trough F065
C14 (SUERC- 20393) 3670±30BP (2140–1950 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

Boherard 2 comprised the remnants of two separate ploughed out fulachta fia with possible associated outlier pits. A potentially earlier and unrelated pit containing sherds of Beaker pottery, flint and a hammerstone was also present within the site. The site was divided into four Zones for ease of recording. The main activity was recorded in Zone B where two large rectangular pits, identified as troughs (F053, F065) were located. Surrounded by a number of related pits and spreads, they were filled with typical material (black, sandy clay, heat shattered stones and charcoal). At the base of F053, the remains of a wooden lining were noted. Further north, a number of pits were noted. Of these, F011 was of most interest. The pit contained the only artefacts on site, despite lacking any burnt mound material. Two sherds of Beaker pottery, a possible flint scraper, flint debitage and a hammerstone were recorded within this pit. With seemingly unconnected spreads of burnt mound material, each zone may have represented a different phase of activity. Altogether, this site is indicative of burnt mound activity spread out across a large area.

References

Location: Townland: Boherard  
Parish: Aghaboe  
Barony: Clarmallagh  
County: Laois  

Parish: Aghaboe  
NGR: 233687, 184939  

Barony: Clarmallagh  
Altitude: 106m OD  

County: Laois  

Excavation Details: Project: M7 Portlaoise to Castletown-M8 to Cullahill  
Site Director: Ed Danaher  
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd.  

Year: 2006  

Physical Setting: The site was located close to Boherard 2, within a flat low-lying field which rose sharply to the north. A stream was located close to the site.  

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the site prior to excavation.  

Adjacent excavated sites: None  

Pre-Excavation features  

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.  

Excavation Record  

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed two separate burnt mounds which were situated on two low natural mounds providing a dry area in an otherwise marshy environment. Each site sealed a number of troughs and pits.  

Site A  

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound survived as a spread (F009) of material which was situated on a natural mound. It consisted of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. It measured 19m by 11.5m with a thickness of 0.04m.  

Trough 1: Trough (F006) was rectangular in plan with rounded corners, vertical sides and a flat base. It measured 2.2m by 1.4m with a depth of 0.27m. The fill of the trough consisted of grey-black clayey silt, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.  

Pit 1: This pit was located at the north-western side of, and partly truncating trough F006. It was sub-circular in plan and measured 1.1m by 1.02m with a depth of 0.13m. The fill of the pit consisted of black peaty clay and heat-shattered stone.  

Trough 2: F008 was rectangular in plan with rounded corners and a flat base. The western extent of the trough was truncated by post-medieval cultivation
furrows while the trough itself was cut into the natural mound which the
burnt spread was situated. The fill of the trough consisted of charcoal rich
material and heat-shattered stone. A sample of charcoal was dated to the
Middle Bronze Age.

Site B

Burnt Mound: As with the burnt mound at Site A, this spread was situated on a natural
platform. Two spreads were identified here with F025 being the larger of the
two, measuring 4.9m by 2.5m with a maximum thickness of 0.1m. F029 was
an oval shaped deposit and measured 2.8m by 1.25m. Both spreads were
composed of dark silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Trough 1: Trough (F019) was sub-rectangular in plan with rounded corners, vertical
sides and a flat base. It measured 2.1m by 1.14m with a depth of 0.29m. The
trough was cut into the natural mound and was filled with hard black silty
clay and heat-shattered stone. A sample of ash was dated to the Early Bronze
Age.

Pit 1: This pit (F021) was circular in plan and was located directly north of the
trough F019. It measured 1.5m by 1.3m with a depth. The pit was heavily
disturbed by root action but contained a fill consisting of black silty sand and
heat-shattered stone.

Pit 2: Pit (F023) was circular in shape with steep sloping sides and an undulating
base. It measured 1.3m by 1.3m with a maximum depth of 0.21m. The pit
was heavily disturbed by root action but contained a fill consisting of black
silty sand and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 3: This possible second trough (F026) was located to the south and was oval in
shape. It measured 2.6m by 1m with a depth of 0.21m. It had gradual brakes
of slope leading to a flat base. The primary fill of the pit was a soft silty sand
or water sorted deposit.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (ash) from the fill of trough (F008) Site A
C14 (SUERC- 20394) 3250±35BP (1620–1440 BC)
Charcoal (ash) from the fill of trough F018 Site B
C14 (SUERC- 20398) 3830±35BP (2460–2190 BC)

References

prepared by Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd.
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<td>Site Director:</td>
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**Physical Setting:**
The site is located in relatively low-lying land with more prominent ground to the east at Knockseera Hill and to the north on the smaller hill at Knockaroe. The nearest part of the River Nore is c.3.5km to the northwest and some narrow tributaries of the Quinn River run to the southwest.

**Cultural Landscape:**
There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the site prior to excavation.

**Adjacent excavated sites:**
None

**Pre-Excavation features**
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

**Excavation Record**

**Summary of Features:**
Excavation of the site revealed the remains of a burnt mound, a trough and two pits. The site was dated to the Early Medieval period.

**Burnt Spread:**
The burnt mound survived as an irregular spread (F502) of dark grey clay, heat-shattered stone and charcoal. It measured 8m by 5m with a maximum thickness of 0.14m.

**Trough/Pit 1:**
This possible trough (F513) was oval in shape and measured 1m by 0.96m with a depth of 0.34m. It had a sharp break of slope, vertical sides and a flat base. The fill consisted of dark gray clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. Some burnt animal bone was also recovered from the fill. Charcoal from the pit was identified as oak, ash, blackthorn, birch and holly and was dated to the Early Medieval period.

**Trough/Pit 2:**
Another possible trough (F515) was oval in plan and measured 1.6m by 1.25m with a depth of 0.44m. The fill consisted of dark silty clay and heat-shattered stone.

**Pit 3:**
Pit (F508) was sub-oval in plan and 0.92m by 0.45m with a depth of 0.12m. The fill consisted of grey sandy clay and heat-shattered stone.
Pit 4: Pit (F516) was sub-oval and measured 1.65m by 0.65m with a depth of 0.25m. It had a gradual break of slope, concave sides and a flat base. The fill consisted of grey sandy clay and heat-shattered stone.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: Burnt animal bone was recovered from the pit/trough F513

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (ash) from the fill of trough/Pit F513
C14 (SUERC- 16949) 1090±35BP (AD 890–1020)

Excavation Interpretation

This site was revealed during archaeological testing in advance of the M7/M8 Portlaois to Cullahill road scheme. It consisted of a spread of heat-shattered stone and charcoal, two troughs and several pits. A single radiocarbon date was retrieved from the site. This was obtained from the fill of one of the troughs, which also contained animal bone. This date must be viewed with caution, as it is the only date obtained from a site that contained multiple cut features and a spread of burnt stone.

References

Catalogue No. LS 18
RMP No. NA
Licence No. E2225

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Excavation Details:
- Project: M7 Portlaoise to Castletown-M8 to Cullahill
- Site Director: Ian Russell
- Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd.
- Year: 2006

Physical Setting:
The site is located in relatively low-lying land with more prominent ground to the east at Knockseera Hill and to the north on the smaller hill at Knockaroe.

Cultural Landscape:
There were are no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the site prior to excavation.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M7 Motorway.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features:
Excavation of the site revealed the remains of a burnt stone spread, two troughs and a deep well.

Burnt Spread:
The burnt mound survived as a small burnt spread deposit of dark sandy silt, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Trough 1:
This pit (F406) was circular in shape with steep sides and a flat base. It measured 2.1m by 0.7m with a depth of 0.29. The fill of the pit consisted of gravely clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Trough 2:
This pit (F413) was sub-rectangular in shape with rounded corners and steep sides. The base of the feature was lined with five degraded planks and was truncated by other features including the well.

Well:
This pit (F05) was the largest feature on site and was oval in shape. It measured 2.8m by 2.4m with a depth of 1.27m. It contained four fills consisting of peat deposits, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Dating:
Charcoal (ash) from the fill of well F405 C14 (SUERC- 18467) 2405±35BP (750–390 BC)

References
**Location:** Bushfield or Mahernaskeagh  
**Parish:** Aghaboe  
**Barony:** Clarmallagh  
**County:** Laois

**Excavation Details:**  
**Project:** M7 Portlaoise to Castletown-M8 to Cullahill  
**Site Director:** Ken Wiggins  
**Consultants:** Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd.  
**Year:** 2006

**Physical Setting:** The site is located in relatively low-lying land with more prominent ground to the east at Knockseera Hill and to the north on the smaller hill at Knockaroe. The nearest part of the River Nore is c.3.5km to the northwest and some narrow tributaries of the Quinn River run to the southwest.

**Cultural Landscape:** There were are no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the site prior to excavation.

**Adjacent excavated sites:** None

### Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

### Excavation Record

**Summary of Features:** Excavation of the site revealed the remains of a burnt stone spread and two troughs dating to the Early Bronze Age. No finds were recovered.

**Burnt Spread:** The burnt mound survived as a small burnt spread deposit of dark sandy silt, charcoal and heat-shattered stone which occupied the western half of the site. The spread of shattered stone was deposited in a number of natural depressions measuring 7.05m-13m by 7-12m with maximum depths of 0.07-0.15m.

**Troughs 1-3:** Each trough was sub-rectangular in shape and filled with black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. They measured 2.3-4m by 1.5-4m with maximum depths of 0.1-0.43m. All of the troughs seemed to fill naturally with water.

**Dating:** Charcoal (hazel) from the fill of the trough  
C14 (SUERC- 18002) 3815±35BP (2460–2130 BC)

### References

Cannonswood

Parish: Aghmacart
NGR: 233672, 176633
Barony: Clarmallagh
Altitude: 83m OD
County: Laois

Project: M7 Portlaoise to Castletown-M8 to Cullahill
Site Director: John Lynch
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd.
Year: 2006

The site is located in an undulating landscape close to the River Goul which passes Cannonswood running from the south in a northeast direction, where it joins the Erkina River, which flows to the north of Cannonswood in an east-west direction. The underlying geology is carboniferous limestone.

The excavations on the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme uncovered in excess of 40 fulachtai fia/burnt mounds/spreads of burnt mound material. There is little direct evidence for Bronze Age settlement in the townlands surrounding Cannonswood. The presence of fulachtai fia can often be used as an indicator of settlement patterns in an area. Bronze Age structures were since excavated during the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme at: Cuffsborough 4; Coolfin 1, Killeany 1 & 2 and at Clonadacasey 2. Other more ephemeral evidence was occupation was uncovered at Cuffsborough 2 and Lismore 2.

Adjacent excavated sites: Late Bronze Age furnace with iron artefacts and Early Medieval charcoal production pits.

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed the remains of a disturbed burnt mound which resulted in several deposits of heat-shattered stone being recorded. Several troughs were also recorded along with numerous pits.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound survived as seven separate deposits of charcoal rich material and heat-shattered stone. Some of these deposits lay in irregular cut features which were not interpreted as troughs and, therefore, may have been natural. Spread (F013) lay to the north-east of trough F057. It measured 1m by 0.9m with a thickness of 0.22m. Spread (F012) measured 1.8m by 1.5m with a thickness of 0.08m and consisted of charcoal rich material and heat-
shattered stones. Spread (F011) was similar to F013 in that it was deposited in a linear feature. It measured 2.7m by 1m with a thickness of 0.19m. This was located to the east of trough F081. Spread (F008) filled another irregular feature and measured 0.86m by 0.85m with a thickness of 0.29m. Deposit (F010) was circular in shape and measured 1.1m by 1.1m with a depth of 0.09m while F015 was irregular and measured 2m by 0.08m with a thickness of 0.13m.

Trough 1:
Trough (F069) was oval in shape with steep sides and a concave base. It measured 2.7m by 1.5m with a depth of 0.5m. Seven fills were noted in the trough, with the basal deposit consisting of charcoal rich material and heat-shattered stone. The other fills were composed of natural silts, peaty material, charcoal, stones and fibrous material.

Trough 2:
This pit (F083) was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 2m by 1.1m with a depth of 0.35m. Two fills were noted in the trough consisting of burnt mound material and peaty material.

Trough 3:
Trough (F074) was curvilinear in plan and measured 2.9m by 1.5m with a depth of 0.15m. It was the most northerly trough of the concentration and had an irregular appearance. It contained two fills consisting of burnt mound material.

Trough 4:
Trough (F075) was oval in shape with gently sloping sides and a concave base. It measured 2.3m by 2.08m with a depth of 0.3m. The fill of the pit consisted of burnt mound material composed of charcoal rich material and heat-shattered stone.

Trough 5:
This trough (F048) was oval in shape and measured 2.03m by 1.75m with a depth 0.55. It contained two burnt mound deposits with a sample of hazel dating to the Early Bronze Age. An oval stake-hole structure lay immediately to the north-east. The trough had sharp, vertical sides leading to a flat base.

Structure:
This possible structure was situated immediately to the north-east of the trough F048. It consisted of a series of stake-holes forming an oval-rectangular structure with a possible entrance in the north-eastern end. This may have been a hut or a formal entrance to the trough (Lynch 2008, 36).

Trough 6:
This trough (F057) was sub-circular in shape with straight sides and a flat base. It measured 1.6m by 1.4m with a depth of 0.3m and was filled with three deposits of burnt mound material and dark silty clays.

Trough 7:
F081 was circular in shape and measured 2.05m by 1.89m with a depth of 0.36m. Ten stake-holes cut the base of the pit forming a sub-circular structure, possibly the remains of a wicker or wattle lining. The trough had vertical sides and a flat base and was filled with burnt mound material. A sample of oak was dated to the Early Bronze Age.

Stake-Holes:
Several stake-holes were recorded adjacent to the trough F081 forming a small circular structure 1.5m in diameter.

Finds:

Artefacts:
None

Ecofacts:
Small fragments of burnt bone was recovered from the burnt mound material.
Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (hazel) from the fill of trough F081
C14 (Beta-218623) 3750±60BP (2330–1970 BC)
Charcoal (oak) from the fill of trough F047
C14 (SUERC-17970) 3580±35BP (1800–1770 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

Situated in a gently undulating landscape, which drained to the east to an un-named tributary of the river Goul, the site consisted of seven troughs and associated burnt mound deposits. Concentrated at the centre of the site, five troughs F081, F057, F048, F075 and F074 were recorded. A burnt mound deposit was visible to the west and south of trough F081 in a series of irregular features and depressions, indicative of depository activity. Situated 16m to the south of this concentration, a further two troughs F083 and F069 were located c.2m apart. Four possible hearths F030, F090, F028 and F059 and two other pits F044 and F080 lay to the north of burnt mound activity. One hearth F101 lay south of the burnt mound. To the northeast of and parallel to F048 lay an oval or possibly rectangular structure F084/F087. There were no stakeholes at the north-eastern terminal, indicative of an entrance. The structure may have been a processional avenue or formal entrance. The site can be interpreted as a pyrolithic site uses extensively during the Early Bronze Age period.

References

Excavation Details: Project: M7 Portlaoise to Castletown-M8 to Cullahill
Site Director: Tara O’Neill
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd.
Year: 2006

Physical Setting: The site was situated over 3.5km to the southeast of Castletown. The site was located in undulating low-lying land with slightly higher ground to the north of the townland. Cappaloughlin was located approximately 1km east of the River Nore. The underlying geology is carboniferous limestone.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the site prior to excavation.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed the remains of three thin spreads of heat-shattered stone, a rectangular trough and a well feature.

Burnt Spread: The burnt mound consisted of three spreads of heat-shattered stone and charcoal rich material. F004 measured 2.6m by 1.3m with a thickness of 0.2m. Spread (F005) was irregular in shape and measured 3.75m by 1.5m with a thickness of 0.33m while the spread (F003) was also irregular and measured 1.62m by 0.98m with a thickness of 0.14m.

Trough: The trough (F007) was rectangular in plan with vertical sides and an uneven base and measured 1.64m by 1.05m with a depth of 0.43m. It was filled with burnt mound material consisting of charcoal rich material and heat-shattered stone. Charcoal from the trough was dated to the Late Bronze Age.

Well: The well (F009) was circular in shape with vertical sides and an uneven base and measured 1.75m by 1.5m with a depth of 1.05m. It was filled with four deposits of clays, charcoal rich material and heat-shattered stone. O’Neill suggests that a basal deposit of re-deposited clay was used to line the pit.
Artefacts: None
Ecofacts: None

Dating:
Relative dating: None
Absolute dating: Charcoal (willow) from the fill of the well
C14 (SUERC-18506) 2865±35BP (1160–920 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

Cappaloughlin 5 contained evidence for burnt mound activity in the form of a trough, a pit and a burnt mound spread. These features have been dated to the Late Bronze Age. The trough was of a simple rectangular form. The pit F009 was deliberately cut into a spring/well which provided water for the adjacent trough. On the basis of this, the site can be interpreted as a pyrolithic water-boiling location where the trough was filled manually.

References


Plate 10.65 Rectangular trough and associated well pit at Cappaloughlin 5, Co. Laois.
Location: Townland: Cappaloughlin Six inch map no: 17
Parish: Clonenagh NGR: 237677, 190184
Barony: Maryborough West Altitude: 91m OD
County: Laois

Excavation Details: Project: M7 Portlaoise to Castletown-M8 to Cullahill
Site Director: Tara O’Neill
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd.
Year: 2006

Physical Setting: Cappaloughlin 6 was situated over 3.5km to the southeast of Castletown. The site was located along a prominent ridge bordering a large expanse of peatland to the east and undulating pasture to the north, south and west. Cappaloughlin was located approximately 1km east of the River Nore and less than 400m from the burnt mound activity at Cappaloughlin 5.

Cultural Landscape: The excavations on the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme uncovered in excess of 40 fulachtai fia/burnt mounds/spreads of burnt mound material. There is little direct evidence for Bronze Age settlement in the townlands surrounding Cannonswood. The presence of fulachtai fia can often be used as an indicator of settlement patterns in an area. Bronze Age structures were since excavated during the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme at: Cuffsborough 4; Coolfin 1, Killeany 1 & 2 and at Clonadacasey 2. Other more ephemeral evidence was occupation was uncovered at Cuffsborough 2 and Lismore 2.

Adjacent excavated sites: Late Bronze Age furnace with iron artefacts and Early Medieval charcoal production pits.

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed three areas of burnt mound activity with each site producing several troughs, pits and spreads.

Site A

Burnt Spread: The spread (F019) was irregular in shape and measured 3.4m by 4m with a thickness of 0.14m. It consisted of firm dark silty sand, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.
Trough 1: Trough (F018) was sub-circular in shape with convex sides and an uneven base. It measured 1.47m by 2.28m with a depth of 0.45m and contained a single fill consisting of black sandy silt, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Trough 2: This trough (F020) was sub-oval in shape with concave sides and a flat base. It measured 1.49m by 1.14m with a depth of 0.35m. Two fills were recorded in the trough with the primary fill consisting of soft, black sandy silt, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. A sample from this fill was dated to the Early Bronze Age.

Trough 3: F025 was sub-circular in shape with concave sides and a flat base. It measured 1.22m by 1.2m with a depth of 0.32m. The fill consisted of black sandy silt, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Stake-Holes: A double stake-hole was situated close to the troughs (F018, F020 and F021).

Pit 1: The pit (F021) was sub-circular in shape and measured 1m by 0.97m with a depth of 0.25m. It was filled with soft silty sand, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 2: Pit (F047) was sub-oval in plan with concave sides and a flat base. It measured 2.87m by 1.84m with a depth of 0.64m. It was filled with dark brown peaty material and occasional heat-shattered stone.

Pit 3: Pit (F032) was sub-circular in shape and measured 1.67m by 1.7m with a depth of 0.48m. It had sloping sides and a flat base and was filled with dark silty sand, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Site B
Burnt Mound: The burnt mound was heavily disturbed and therefore survived as four separate spreads of heat-shattered stone and charcoal rich material. F033 was rectangular in shape and measured 2.4m by 1.4m. Spread (F034) was an irregular shaped deposit and measured 2.3m by 1.7m with a maximum thickness of 0.2m. F035 was also an irregular shaped deposit and measured 1.56m by 1m. The last deposit of burnt mound material was F036 which measured 1.5m by 1.5m and was sub-square in plan.

Trough: Trough (F038) was sub-rectangular in shape with a sharp brake of slope, convex sides and a flat base. It measured 2.18m by 2.6m with a depth of 0.48m. The fill consisted of soft black sandy silt, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Pit: F051 was sub-circular in shape with concave sides and a flat base. It measured 3.64m by 3.28m with a depth of 0.72m. Three fills were recorded in the pit with the primary deposit consisting of light grey/black sandy silt, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. Animal bones were also recovered from this fill which was dated to the Late Bronze Age. The upper fills consisted of peaty material and silty sands with small stones.

Site C
Burnt Mound: The burnt mound was heavily disturbed and therefore survived as three separate spreads of heat-shattered stone and charcoal rich material. F003 was irregular in shape and measured 3.07m by 0.8m with a thickness of 0.18m. F006 was another irregular shaped deposit and measured 4.7m by 3.9m with
a thickness of 0.18m. Spread (F017) was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 2.97m by 2.18m with a thickness of 0.26m.

Trough: The trough (F008) in this area was oval in shape and measured 1.23m by 1.2m with a depth of 0.69m. It had gently sloping sides leading to an uneven base. Six fills were recorded in the trough consisting of dark sandy silts, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Pit: Pit (F005) was sub-circular in shape and measured 1.9m by 1.5m with a depth of 0.17m. It had concave sides leading to a flat base. Four fills were recorded in the pit consisting of dark silty clays, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: Animal bone was recovered from the pit (F051)

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (ash) from the fill of the pit F005 (Site C) C14 (SUERC-18507) 2425±35BP (1830–1620 BC) Charcoal (alder and willow) from the fill of the trough F020 (Site A) C14 (SUERC-18508) 3820±35BP (2180–2140 BC) Charcoal (ash) from the fill of the pit F051 (Site B) C14 (SUERC-18509) 2535±35BP (700–530 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

The excavations at Cappaloughlin 6 exposed the presence of Early and Late Bronze Age activity evident through the occurrence of burnt mound associated features. Initial site use involved the cutting of the troughs and pits. The spreads of burnt mound material were produced as a result of use of the troughs. These spreads would have originally formed a mound of material that was spread out across the site after site abandonment due to truncation by cultivation.

References

Catalogue No. LS 23

RMP No. NA

Licence No. E2260

Location: Townland: Clonadacasey Six inch map no: 17
Parish: Clonenagh NGR: 241519, 195295
Barony: Maryborough West Altitude: 91m OD
County: Laois

Excavation Details:
Project: M7 Portlaoise to Castletown-M8 to Cullahill
Site Director: Tara O’Neill
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd.
Year: 2006

Physical Setting:
The site at Clonadacasey 3 was located on a relatively flat portion of fertile land. Flat dry fertile land surrounded the site to the north, east and south of the site while to the west the land dropped away gradually into a large flat low-lying area of bog. This low-lying area was criss-crossed with small streams that would have provided a good source of local water.

Cultural Landscape:
There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the site prior to excavation.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a single trough filled with heat-shattered stone and charcoal which spread out beyond the cut. It was dated to the Middle Bronze Age.

Trough: This trough (F005) was oval in shape with a sharp brake of slope, vertical sides and a flat base. It measured 2.36m by 2.06m with a maximum depth of 0.45m. The primary fill of the pit consisted of tightly compacted yellow clay which was interpreted as a waterproof lining for the trough. The upper fill of the trough consisted of burnt mound material consisting of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Finds: None

Dating: Charcoal (ash) from the fill of the trough (F005) C14 (SUERC-18516) 3285±35BP (1670–1490 BC)

References


1380
Catalogue No. LS 24 a-c
RMP No. NA
Licence No. E2261

Location: Townland: Clonadacasey Six inch map no: 17
Parish: Clonenagh NGR: 240762, 194389
Barony: Maryborough West Altitude: 91m OD
County: Laois

Excavation Details: Project: M7 Portlaoise to Castletown-M8 to Cullahill
Site Director: Tara O’Neill
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd.
Year: 2006

Physical Setting: The site at Clonadacasey 4 was located close to the base of a slope in undulating territory. Undulating land surrounded the site immediately to the north, south, east and west of the site while further north the land dropped away gradually into a large flat low-lying area of bog and marsh. This low-lying area was criss-crossed with small streams that would have provided a good source of local water.

Cultural Landscape: The excavations on the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme uncovered in excess of 40 *fulacht fiadh*/burnt mounds/spreads of burnt mound material. There is little direct evidence for Bronze Age settlement in the townlands surrounding Cannonswood. Other more ephemeral evidence was occupation was uncovered at Cuffsborough 2 and Lismore 2.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed three areas of burnt mound activity. Features exposed included troughs, pits and a substantial well.

Site A
Burnt Mound: The burnt mound (F003) was irregular in shape and measured 17m by 13.75m with a thickness of 0.33m. It consisted of moderately compacted black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered sandstone.

Trough 1: The trough (F008) was oval in shape with vertical sides and a flat base. It measured 2.6m by 2.23m with a depth of 0.55m. Seven stake-holes cut the base of the trough which were mostly situated in the corners of the pit. Two fills were recorded in the trough with the primary deposit consisting of well compacted clay which was interpreted as a possible lining adjacent. The
secondary fill consisted of black sandy silt, charcoal and heat-shattered stone which contained animal bone. Charcoal was dated to the Late Bronze Age.

Well:
This possible well (F010) was situated adjacent to the trough pit F008. It was sub-circular in shape with vertical sides and a stepped base. It measured 3.86m by 3.78m with a depth of 1.26m and filled naturally with water. Three fills were recorded in the pit with the primary deposit consisting of grey/black clay with frequent charcoal which was dated the Late Bronze Age. The upper fills consisted of silty clays and heat-shattered stone.

Trough 2:
This trough (F014) was circular in shape and measured 1.5m by 1.3m with a depth of 0.32. It had sloping concave sides and a flat base. The fill consisted of loose black clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Site B
Trough:
This trough (F004) was oval in shape with vertical sides and a flat base. It measured 2.17m by 1.48m with a depth of 0.46m and the fill consisted of black sandy silt, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. A sample of charcoal was dated to the Mid-Late Bronze Age.

Site C
Trough:
Trough (F030) was sub-rectangular in shape with vertical sides and an uneven base. Four fills were recorded in the trough with the underlying deposits consisting of silty sands and the upper fill containing burnt mound material which was dated to the Late Bronze Age.

Finds:
Animal bone was recovered from the fill of the trough F008

Dating:
Charcoal (alder) from the fill of the well (Site A)
C14 (SUERC-18520) 2780±35BP (1010–830 BC)
Charcoal (hazel) from the fill of the trough F008 (Site A)
C14 (SUERC-18519) 2600±35BP (840–750 BC)
Charcoal (birch) from the fill of the trough F030 (Site C)
C14 (SUERC-18518) 2800±35BP (1050–840 BC)
Charcoal (ash) from the fill of the trough F004 (Site B)
C14 (SUERC-18517) 2930±35BP (1260–1010 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:
Four troughs, a well, seven stake-holes and one large burnt mound spread were identified in three separate areas of the site. Two troughs F008, F014 and a well F010, were revealed following the removal of a large spread of burnt mound material in Area 1. The proximity of F008 and F010 suggests they worked in conjunction with one another with the well F010 providing a water source for the trough. The depth of F010 along with the high water table provides sufficient evidence of a reservoir. Evidence of a waterproof lining in the form of tightly packed clay was recorded at the base of F008 while seven stakeholes of similar size and shape were also recorded in the base.

References
Location: Townland: Clonboyne  
Parish: Clonenagh  
Barony: Maryborough West  
County: Laois

Parish: Clonenagh  
Barony: Maryborough West  
Altitude: 112m OD

Excavation Details: Project: M7 Portlaoise to Castletown-M8 to Cullahill

Site Director: Deirdre Murphy

Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd.

Year: 2006

Physical Setting: The site was located in a low-lying area of flat pastureland and was not situated near any rivers or mapped streams. The underlying geology of the area is carboniferous limestone.

Cultural Landscape: The excavations on the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme uncovered in excess of 40 fulacht fia/burnt mounds/spreads of burnt mound material. There is little direct evidence for Bronze Age settlement in the townlands surrounding Cannonswood.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a disturbed burnt mound, three pits and a trough.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound survived as three small spreads of charcoal rich material and heat-shattered sandstone. F062 was a circular shaped deposit and measured 2m by 2m with a thickness of 0.2m. F063 was a small oval shaped spread measuring 1.5m by 1m with a thickness of 0.13m. F064 measured 0.75m by 0.75m with a thickness of 0.13m and was circular in plan.

Trough: The trough (F050) was oval in shape with concave sides and a flat base. It measured 1.9m by 1.51m with a depth of 0.32m. The fill consisted of firm black, sandy clay, charcoal and heat-shattered sandstone. A sample of charcoal was dated to the Early Bronze Age.

Pit 1: Pit (F053) was figure-of-eight shaped with concave sides and a rounded base. It measured 1.16m by 0.89m with a maximum depth of 0.26m. The fill consisted of black silty clay and heat-shattered stone.
Pit 2:  F056 was sub-oval in shape with concave sides and a rounded base. It measured 1.5m by 0.75m with a depth of 0.2m. The fill consisted of black silty clay and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 3:  Pit (F058) was oval in shape and measured 1.02m by 0.7m with a depth of 0.32m. The fill consisted of black silty clay and heat-shattered stone. A sample of charcoal was dated to the Early Bronze Age.

Finds:

Artefacts:  A hone stone was recovered from the topsoil

Ecofacts:  None

Dating:

Relative dating:  None

Absolute dating:  Charcoal (oak and elm) from the fill of the trough F050  
C14 (SUERC-16965) 3895±35BP (2480–2280 BC)  
Charcoal (pomoideae) from the fill of the pit F058  
C14 (SUERC-16966) 3800±35BP (2350–2130 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

Four pits and their respective fills, located close together, clearly demonstrate that hot stone technology took place at this site, identified as fulacht fia or burnt mound activity. One main fulacht or burnt spread was also recorded on site, indicating deposition of material following use within the pits. The presence of a number of cultivation furrows indicates that agricultural destruction may have occurred at the site and that the extent of the site may have been originally larger. Two radiocarbon dates were retrieved for the site, placing it firmly in the Early Bronze Age, a date typical for such features.

References

Physical Setting: The site was located on sloping pasture above waterlogged ground. The underlying geology of the area is carboniferous limestone.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the excavated area prior to investigation.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a disturbed burnt mound consisting of irregular spreads. Four large troughs were also uncovered some of which had evidence of timber linings.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound was heavily disturbed but survived as several irregular spreads of heat-shattered stone, charcoal and black silty clay (No other information available).

Troughs 1-4: Four troughs were revealed on site and some of which had timber linings evident at the base. (No other information available).

Finds: None

Dating: Charcoal (hazel) from the fill of the trough C14 (SUERC-18529) 3740±35BP (2280–2030 BC) Charcoal (oak) from the fill of the trough C14 (SUERC-18530) 3020±35BP (1400–1130 BC)

References

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<td>Site Director:</td>
<td>Ed Danaher</td>
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**Physical Setting:** Situated in an area of higher ground overlooking the north and northeast, Coolfin townland would have afforded good views. The area of lower lying ground encompasses a small tributary of the River Gully.

**Cultural Landscape:** While there is definite evidence for prehistoric settlement activity in the vicinity of Coolfin prior to recent excavations we do not know the exact (scientific) nature of this activity or where it was located. A hillfort situated c.1km to the northeast of Coolfin in the townland of Boley Upper. A Bronze Age settlement was discovered in the same townland.

**Adjacent excavated sites:** None

**Pre-Excavation features**

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme.

**Excavation Record**

**Summary of Features:** Excavation of the site revealed four pits containing heat-shattered stone.

**Pits:**

- Pit (F004) was irregular in shape. It measured 1.36m by 0.5m with a depth of 0.17. The pit was filled with a single deposit of dark brown silty clay, charcoal and heat shattered stone. F005 was sub-circular in shape and measured 1.12m by 1.02m with a depth of 0.16m. The pit had vertical sides and an uneven base and was filled with dark brown silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. F006 was circular in shape and measured 0.78m by 0.78m with a depth of 0.15m. Two fills were recorded in the pit consisting of burnt mound material. Pit (F007) was also circular in shape and measured 0.78 by 0.78m with a depth of 0.25m. It contained four fills.

**Dating:** Charcoal (hazel) from the fill of the trough

C14 (Beta-218621) 2570±40BP (810–560 BC)

**References**

Physical Setting: Situated in an area of higher ground overlooking the north and northeast, Coolfin townland would have afforded good views. As there is slightly higher ground less than 1km to the northwest between Cross and Friarsland, the views this direction are more restricted. The area of lower lying ground encompasses a small tributary of the River Gully, located c.3km to the east of Coolfin.

Cultural Landscape: The excavations on the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme uncovered in excess of 40 fulachtai fia/burnt mounds/spreads of burnt mound material. While there is definite evidence for prehistoric settlement activity in the vicinity of Coolfin prior to recent excavations we do not know the exact (scientific) nature of this activity or where it was located. A hillfort situated c.1km to the northeast of Coolfin in the townland of Boley Upper.

Adjacent excavated sites: A Bronze Age settlement was discovered in the same townland during the project.

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a small spread of heat-shattered stone and a substantial pit or well with an associated timber access platform.

Burnt Spread: The burnt spread (F003) was situated in a natural depression and measured 1.97m by 0.87m with a thickness of 0.12m. It was located in the centre of the site and consisted of soft black sandy silt, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Well: The well (F005) was sub-rectangular in shape with rounded corners, vertical sides and a rounded base. It measured 3.7m by 2.4m with a depth of 0.98m and filled naturally with water. The primary fill consisted of black sandy silt and heat-shattered stone which was dated to the Middle Bronze Age. The
secondary fill contained the timber pathway while the later deposits consisted of re-deposited subsoil.

Timber Pathway: The pathway consisted of a number of tangentially split alder planks as well as one radial split oak plank laid one over the other. The laying of these planks one on top of the other was possibly done to provide additional support to the structure. Posts associated with the walkway were also split and were also constructed from alder wood. Two pieces of willow were also identified from the assemblage.

Pit: This pit (F012) was truncated by the linear feature and was circular in plan. It measured 0.65m by 0.65m with a depth of 0.12m and had concave sides and a pointed base. The fill consisted of black sandy silt and heat-shattered stone.

Linear Feature: A linear feature (F007) was revealed in the southern half of the excavated which was 8.5m long. It was partly truncated by a diverted stream but contained three deposits of sandy silt and heat-shattered stone. A sample of charcoal from one of these fills was dated to the Middle Bronze Age.

Finds: None

Dating: Charcoal (oak) from the fill of the well (F005) C14 (SUERC-18468) 3185±35BP (1520–1400 BC) Charcoal (alder) from the fill of the linear feature (F007) C14 (SUERC-18470) 3290±35BP (1670–1490 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:
At Coolfin 3, a large quantity of burnt mound material was present within an east-west 12m long cut, the southern side of which appeared to have been truncated by a stream realigned in recent times. A large sub-rectangular pit situated to the north of this feature may have functioned as a well and contained a timber walkway leading from outside the northern edge to its centre. This timber structure was similar in morphology to the single plank trackways of the Bronze Age. An isolated pocket of peat formed within this pit after it was abandoned preserving the timbers, while a small quantity of burnt mound material sealed the pits southern extent. Much of the southern side of the burnt spread was completely removed by the stream which appeared to have been diverted at some point, possibly removing some features altogether.

References
Location:  Townland: Cooflin  Six inch map no: 22
Parish: Aghaboe  NGR: 234136, 184920
Barony: Clarmallagh  Altitude: 47m OD
County: Laois

Excavation Details: Project: M7 Portlaoise to Castletown-M8 to Cullahill
Site Director: Ed Danaher
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd.
Year: 2006

Physical Setting: Situated in an area of higher ground overlooking the north and northeast, Coolfin townland would have afforded good views. As there is slightly higher ground less than 1km to the northwest between Cross and Friarsland, the views this direction are more restricted. The area of lower lying ground encompasses a small tributary of the River Gully, located c.3km to the east of Coolfin.

Cultural Landscape: The excavations on the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme uncovered in excess of 40 fulachtai fia/burnt mounds/spreads of burnt mound material. While there is definite evidence for prehistoric settlement activity in the vicinity of Coolfin prior to recent excavations we do not know the exact (scientific) nature of this activity or where it was located. A hillfort situated c.1km to the northeast of Coolfin in the townland of Boley Upper.

Adjacent excavated sites: A Bronze Age settlement was discovered in the same townland during the project.

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site a fulacht fia trough filled with burnt mound material. It was dated to the Late Bronze Age.

Trough: The trough (F004) was rectangular in plan with vertical sides and a flat base. It measured 1.6m by 1.05m with a depth of 0.15m. The base of the trough was cut by four stake-holes, one in each corner. The fill of the pit consisted of loose, black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. A sample of charcoal from this deposit was dated to the Middle-Late Bronze Age. The top of the fill was truncated by a later pit which dated to the Early medieval period.
Finds:

Artefacts: None
Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None
Absolute dating:
Charcoal (hazel) from the fill of the trough (F004) C14 (SUERC-18479) 2955±35BP (1300–1040 BC)
Charcoal (oak) from the fill of the trough (F004) C14 (Beta-218617) BP (AD 780–990)

Excavation Interpretation:

The vertical sides, flat base and relatively larger length and width may suggest that the pit was originally deeper and was subsequently truncated. Truncation may also explain the absence of an associated burnt mound spread on site. The presence of a stream recorded close-by provides evidence of a water supply needed for this fulacht fia/burnt mound activity. The medieval date represents later activity/disturbance at the site, unrelated to pyrolithic technology. The Bronze Age date suggests that the trough was prehistoric in origin. This is supported by the occurrence of corner stakes, which are a common feature in troughs of this period.

References


Plate 10.68 Rectangular trough with internal corner posts at Coolfin 4, Co. Laois.
Location: Corraun  Townland: Corraun  Six inch map no: 22
Parish: Aghaboe  NGR: 231967, 184651
Barony: Clarmallagh  Altitude: 125m OD
County: Laois

Excavation Details: Project: M7 Portlaoise to Castletown-M8 to Cullahill
Site Director: Ed Danaher
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd.
Year: 2006

Physical Setting: Corraun 2 was located c.20m to the southeast of Corraun 3. These sites are situated in undulating land on the slopes of a low hill which peaks in Palmershill. There are no streams in the immediate vicinity of the sites, although there is a stream c.600m to the southwest.

Cultural Landscape: The excavations on the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme uncovered in excess of 40 fulachtai fia/burnt mounds/spreads of burnt mound material. While there is definite evidence for prehistoric settlement activity in the vicinity of Coolfin prior to recent excavations we do not know the exact (scientific) nature of this activity or where it was located. A hillfort situated c.1km to the northeast of Coolfin in the townland of Boley Upper.

Adjacent excavated sites: Fulacht fia excavated 20m to the north-west.

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a large burnt mound, four troughs, some of which had preserved timber linings, and several pits and hearths.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound (F003) was irregular in shape and measured 14m by 11m with a thickness of 0.03m. It consisted of compact, black sandy silt, charcoal and heat-shattered sandstone, limestone and quartzite.

Trough 1: Trough (F009) was sub-oval in shape and measured 3.6m by 3m with a depth of 0.54m. It had vertical sides and a flat base which was lined with several degraded timber planks. The pit filled naturally with water. Five fills were noted in the trough consisting of grey-brown sandy/silty clay and peaty clay, containing heat shattered stones, and charcoal. Dominated by secondary fill F006, wood fragments, animal bone and small deposits of cremated bone were also recorded.
Pit 1: This pit (F020) was situated adjacent to the trough F009. It was sub-oval in shape and measured 1.08m by 0.98m with a depth of 0.22m. Two fills were noted in the pit consisting of charcoal rich material and heat-shattered stone.

Trough 2: This trough (F018) was sub-rectangular in shape with vertical sides and a flat base. It measured 2.05m by 1.35m with a depth of 0.2m. Four stake-holes cut the base of the trough, one in each corner. A single fill was noted in the trough consisting of black silty clay and heat-shattered stone.

Hearth Pit 1: This pit (F016) was interpreted as a hearth (Danaher 2008, 11) and was located adjacent to the trough F018. It measured 1m by 0.85m with a maximum depth of 0.2m. The fill of this pit consisted of loose black silty clay, occasional charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Trough 3: Trough (F025) was sub-oval in plan with sloping sides and a rounded base. It measured 2.8m by 2.4m with a depth of 0.35m and cut the watertable. A timber lining was recorded at the base of the pit consisting of posts and several planks. The fill of the trough consisted of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered sandstone.

Hearth Pit 2: This pit (F023) was also interpreted as a hearth pit and was situated adjacent to the trough F025. It was sub-circular and measured 1.22m by 1.18m with a depth of 0.19m. Two fills were noted in the pit consisting of peaty clays, heat-shattered stone and moderate amounts of charcoal.

Trough 4: Trough (F030) was sub-oval in shape with vertical sides and a flat base. It measured 2.08m by 1.52m with a depth of 0.4m. Two fills were noted in the trough consisting of silty clays and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 4: This pit (F046) was sub-circular in shape with a sharp break of slope and an uneven rounded base. It measured 1.2m by 1.16m with a depth 0.4m. Three fills were recorded in the pit consisting of black silty clays and heat-shattered stone.

Shell Deposit: A small isolated spread of loose creamy clay with 30% shell inclusions was recorded east of the trough F025.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: Burnt and unburnt animal bone was recovered from the trough (F009). Several shells were also recovered from the site.

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (hazel) from the fill of the pit F021
C14 (SUERC-18487) 2955±35BP (1300–1040 BC)
Charcoal (ash) from the fill of the pit F023
C14 (SUERC-18488) 2965±35BP (1310–1050 BC)
Charcoal (hazel) from the fill of the pit F023
C14 (SUERC-18489) 2935±35BP (1270–1020 BC)
Charcoal (hazel) from the fill of the trough F018
C14 (SUERC-18490) 2955±35BP (1300–1040 BC)
Excavation Interpretation:

Corraun 2 comprised the remnants of a relatively large *fulacht fia* consisting of a sizeable spread of burnt mound material, three troughs, two of which contained traces of timber lining above the base. These two sub-oval troughs also had hearths located beside them. The third trough was rectangular in shape and contained a posthole in each of its four corners suggesting that it may originally have contained a timber trough. A number of other associated pits were revealed across the sites, some of which may have functioned as ovens alongside the boiling activities. The site can be interpreted as a pyrolithic water-boiling site of the Late Bronze Age, used, possibly for cooking.

References


Fig. 10.87 Plan of burnt stone spread and associated pits at Corraun 2, Co. Laois.
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**Excavation Details:**
- Project: M7 Portlaoise to Castletown-M8 to Cullahill
- Site Director: Ed Danaher
- Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd.
- Year: 2006

**Physical Setting:**
Corraun 3, situated 20m from Corraun 2, was located on the north-eastern slope of a low hill on the periphery of an area of wetland with Palmershill situated upslope to the southwest.

**Cultural Landscape:**
The excavations on the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme uncovered in excess of 40 fulacht fiadhl/burnt mounds/spreads of burnt mound material. While there is definite evidence for prehistoric settlement activity in the vicinity of Coolfin prior to recent excavations we do not know the exact (scientific) nature of this activity or where it was located. A hillfort situated c.1km to the northeast of Coolfin in the townland of Boley Upper.

**Adjacent excavated sites:** *Fulacht fia* excavated 20m to the south-east.

**Pre-Excavation features**
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

**Excavation Record**
- **Summary of Features:** Excavation of the site revealed an extensive burnt stone spread and several pits.
- **Burnt Spread:** The burnt spread (F003) was irregular in shape and measured 15m by 15m with a maximum thickness of 0.25m. It consisted of compact, black clayey silt, charcoal and heat-shattered sandstone, limestone and quartzite. Animal was also recovered from the spread. A sample of oak was dated to the Early Bronze Age.
- **Pit 1:** This pit (F015) was oval in shape with rounded corners and had a flat base. It measured 3.3m by 1.8m with a depth of 0.18m and contained a fill consisting of mottled grey-orange black clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. A sample of charcoal was dated to the Late Neolithic period.
Pit 2: This pit (F009) was sub-circular in shape and measured 1.4m by 1.12m with a depth of 0.38m. It had vertical sides and a relatively flat base and contained a fill consisting of compact grey clay.

Pit 3: Pit (F011) was crescent shaped and measured 4m by 3.6m with a depth of 0.14. It had concave sides and a rounded base and contained a fill consisting of mottled grey-orange black clay. A sample of charcoal was dated to the Early Bronze Age.

Pit 4: Pit (F013) was oval in shape with concave sides and a flat base. It measured 2m by 1.4m with a depth of 0.25m and contained a fill consisting of mottled grey-orange black clay.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: Animal bone was recovered from the fill of the pit F015

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (oak) from the burnt spread F003
               C14 (SUERC-18491) 3620±35BP (2050–1880 BC)
               Charcoal (oak) from the fill of the pit F009
               C14 (SUERC-18492) 3715±35BP (2210–2010 BC)
               Charcoal (oak) from the fill of the pit F015
               C14 (SUERC-18496) 4125±35BP (2880–2570 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

Four pits interpreted as possible troughs were noted in association with a relatively large burnt mound spread. While pits F009 and F013 appear to be the more convincing troughs the function of the other two pits remains unclear. It is possible that they may have been used for dry roasting as outlined in Chapters 5 and 7. The site can be interpreted as a pyrolithic water-boiling site, possibly for cooking. This is supported by the recovery of animal bone from the site.

References

Location: Townland: Cross
Parish: Aghmacart
Barony: Clarmallagh
County: Laois

Excavation Details:
Project: M7 Portlaoise to Castletown-M8 to Cullahill
Site Director: Tara O Neill
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd.
Year: 2006

Physical Setting: The site is located in low-lying undulating pastureland, less than 300m west of a tributary of the River Gully.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the area prior to excavation.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a spread of heat-shattered stone and two trough features, one of which contained a stake-hole at the base.

Burnt Spread: The spread (F003) consisted of compact silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered sandstone. It measured 23.6m by 25.2m with a maximum thickness of 0.24m.

Trough: The trough (F006) was rectangular in plan with vertical sides and a flat base. It measured 1.73m by 1.4m with a maximum depth of 0.35m and contained a fill consisting of compact grey sandy clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. A single stake-hole cut the base of trough.

Pit 1: The pit (F004) was oval in shape with sloping sides and a concave base. It measured 2.21m by 1.64m with a depth of 0.52m and contained a fill consisting of black silty peat, charcoal and heat-shattered sandstone. A Late Bronze Age date was obtained from a sample of charcoal.

Dating: Charcoal (alder) from the fill of the trough F006 C14 (SUERC-18527) 2765±35BP (1000–830 BC)

References

Location: Townland: Cuffsborough Six inch map no: 22
Parish: Aghmacart NGR: 234393, 183130
Barony: Clarmallagh Altitude: 110m OD
County: Laois
Excavation Details: Project: M7 Portlaoise to Castletown-M8 to Cullahill
Site Director: Deirdre Murphy
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd.
Year: 2006
Physical Setting: The site is located in low-lying undulating pastureland, less than 300m west of a tributary of the River Gully.
Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the area prior to excavation. Several, previously unknown sites however were identified during the development.
Adjacent excavated sites: Bronze Age settlement was uncovered in the townland during the same project.

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a burnt spread, well features, troughs, pits and stake-holes.

Burnt Spread: The burnt spread (F005) measured 7m by 5.5m with a maximum thickness of 0.17m. It consisted of heat-shattered limestone and sandstone in a matrix of black gritty sandy clay and charcoal. A smaller spread (F035) was located nearby and measured 1.75m by 1.1m with a depth of 0.05m.

Trough 1: This trough (F009) was located east of the well (F008) and truncated trough (F010). It was sub-rectangular in plan with vertical sides and a flat base. It measured 2.15m by 2m with a depth of 0.27m. Two fills were recorded in the trough consisting of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered limestone and sandstone.

Trough 2: This trough (F010) truncated the trough (F009) and was sub-rectangular in plan with concave sides and a flat base. It measured 2.28m by 1.8m with a depth of 0.24m. Three stake-holes cut the base of the trough in the south-eastern corner. The primary fill of the trough consisted of grey ashy sand which was overlain by burnt mound material.
Well 1: This well pit (F008) was located immediately west of the trough (F009). It was oval in shape with sloping sides and a rounded base. It measured 4.65m by 3.45m with a depth of 1.15m and was filled with five deposits of dark sandy silt, charcoal and heat-shattered stones.

Well 2: This well pit (F011) was sub-circular in shape and was cut below the watertable. It measured 5.95m by 4.37m with a depth of 0.7m and had concave sides leading to a flat base. Occasional pieces of wood were noted in the pit suggesting that it may have originally been lined (Murphy 2008, 13). Four fills were recorded in the pit consisting of black silty sands, charcoal and heat-shattered stones. One piece of antler bone belonging to a male red deer was retrieved from the primary fill.

Water Channel: A Linear feature (F036) or possible water channel was situated between the trough F013 and nearly met the well F011. It measured 4.9m by 0.88m with a depth of 0.19m and contained three fills of burnt mound material. This channel may have connected the well to the various troughs.

Trough 3: Trough (F012) was rectangular in shape with concave sides and a flat base. It measured 2.19m by 1.7m with a depth of 0.2m. Eight stake-holes cut the base of the trough, with the majority occurring in the corners of the pit. The main fill of the trough consisted of black silty sand and heat-shattered stone.

Trough 4: This trough (F013) was situated adjacent to F037 and was rectangular in plan with vertical sides and a flat base. The trough was associated with three post-holes located on the edge of the pit. The trough pit measured 2.92m by 2.05m with a depth of 0.29m and contained a primary fill consisting of black sandy silt, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. Burnt bone was also retrieved from this deposit. The secondary fill was of stones which Murphy suggests may have formed a lining similar to that of F037 (Murphy 2008, 13).

Post-Holes: Three post-holes were recorded on the western edge of the trough F013.

Pit 1: This shallow pit (F037) was situated adjacent to the trough F013 and was circular in shape. It measured 1.75m by 1.44m with a depth of 0.04m. Remnants of stones lined the edges of the pit which was filled with black silty sand and heat-shattered stones.

Slot Trench: A possible slot trench (F014) was situated east of the troughs and was curvilinear in shape. It measured 6.55m by 0.25m with a depth of 0.07m. This was interpreted as a possible foundation trench for a screen or protective structure for the troughs (Murphy 2008, 18).

Pit 2: Pit (F017) was sub-circular in shape with concave sides and a rounded base. It measured 1.79m by 1.4m with a depth of 0.33m and contained two fills consisting of grey silt and occasional heat-shattered stones. It was cut below the watertable.

Pit 3: F038 was sub-circular in shape and measured 1.35m by 1m with a depth of 0.2m. It contained a fill consisting of black sandy silt and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 4: Pit (F043) was sub-circular in shape and measured 1.1m by 0.75m with a depth of 0.1m. It had concave sides and a rounded base and was filled with burnt mound material.
Possible Platform: The remains of a possible burnt platform (F016) was situated at the periphery of the main activity on the site. The charcoal remains of in situ timbers were placed in a shallow pit measuring 3.09m by 2.15m with a depth of 0.08m.

Finds:

Ecofacts: Red deer antler from the well (F011). Burnt animal bone was also recovered from the trough (F013).

Dating:

Absolute dating: Charcoal (ash and hazel) from the burnt spread (F005)  
C14 (SUERC-16950) 2990±35BP (1380–1110 BC)  
Charcoal (alder, ash, hazel) from the fill of the well (F008)  
C14 (SUERC-16951) 2780±35BP (1010–830 BC)  
Charcoal (alder, oak, ash) from the fill of the pit (F037)  
C14 (SUERC-16955) 2740±35BP (980–810 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

A number of troughs, wells and related pits were noted during excavation. This complex arrangement of features provides evidence of Late Bronze Age occupation and advanced activities including a well-managed water system. Other more isolated features that were not mentioned in the discussion may have contributed to this activity. Despite this, there is a marked scarcity of finds which prevents further diagnostic analysis being carried out. A piece of antler bone identified as male red deer with evidence of chop marks may indicate that the processing and cooking of animals took place at the site.

References

Murphy, D. 2008. *Archaeological excavations at Cuffsborough 1, Co. Laois*. Unpublished excavation report prepared by Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd

![Fig. 10.88 Troughs connected to large pit via water-channel at Cuffsborough 1, Co. Laois.](image-url)
Location: Townland: Cuffsborough Six inch map no: 22
Parish: Aghmacart NGR: 234379, 182856
Barony: Clarmallagh Altitude: 109m OD
County: Laois

Excavation Details: Project: M7 Portlaoise to Castletown-M8 to Cullahill
Site Director: Deirdre Murphy
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd.
Year: 2006

Physical Setting: The site is located in low-lying undulating pastureland, less than 300m west of a tributary of the River Gully.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the area prior to excavation. Several, previously unknown sites however were identified during the development.

Adjacent excavated sites: Bronze Age settlement was uncovered in the townland during the same project.

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed two areas of activity with the main area consisting of burnt mound material, two large wells and several pits, including one linear feature.

Pit 1: This pit (F038) was oval in shape with vertical sides and a rounded base. It measured 7m by 5.5m with a depth of 1.5m and contained eight fills consisting of heat-shattered stones, dark sandy silts which produced wood fragments and animal bone.

Gully/Water Channel: This linear feature (F033) was located north-east of the pit cluster and measured 17.8m by 1.2m with a depth of 0.33m.

Well: This pit (F063) truncated the north-east corner of the large pit F038. A spring was located in the base of the feature and it was circular in shape with vertical sides that tapered to the base. It measured 1.8m by 1.68m with a depth of 1.78m. The primary fill consisted of dark brown silty clay that contained animal bone and wood fragments along with iron fragments and a shaped hazel wooden artefact. The secondary fill contained dark brown peat and heat-shattered stone.
Pit 1: Pit (F034) was sub-circular in shape with concave sides and a flat base. It measured 1.64m by 1.42m with a depth of 0.21m. The fill consisted of black sandy clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 2: Pit (F043) was located west of F038 and was irregular in shape. It measured 6.33m by 6.10m with a depth of 0.14m and contained black silty clay and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 3: This pit (F045) was sub-oval in shape with rounded corners, concave sides and an uneven base. It measured 4.96m by 3.88m with a depth of 0.18m. The fill consisted of burnt mound material.

Pit 4: This pit (F046) was irregular in shape with rounded corners, concave sides and an uneven base. It measured 8.62m by 7.5m with a depth of 0.33m and was filled with burnt mound material which was dated to the Late Bronze Age.

Finds:

Artefacts: A worked hazel artefact was also recovered from the well F063 along with intrusive iron artefacts. A flint plano-convex knife was recovered from the topsoil.

Ecofacts: Animal bone was recovered from the pit F038 and the well F063. It consisted of red deer antler, cattle, sheep, horse and pig.

Dating: Charcoal (ash and birch) from the fill of the pit (F038)
C14 (SUERC-17962) 2890±35BP (1210–970 BC)
Charcoal (hazel) from the fill of the pit (F046)
C14 (SUERC-17961) 2830±35BP (1120–900 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:
The pits, trough and linear features at Cuffsborough 3 were generally typical of most fulacht fia sites. However the presence of a deep well that acted as a water source is less common. The presence of animal bone directly within the trough at this site is also significant as it indicates unambiguously that this site did function as a cooking place. The proximity of this site to adjacent burnt mounds at Cuffsborough 1 and 2 and the proximity to the settlement at Cuffsborough 4 highlights the significance of this townland throughout the entire Bronze Age period.

References
Catalogue No. LS 35 a

RMP No. NA

Licence No. E2212

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Physical Setting:
The site is located in low-lying undulating pastureland, less than 300m west of a tributary of the River Gully.

Cultural Landscape:
There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the area prior to excavation. Several, previously unknown sites however were identified during the development.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

**Pre-Excavation features**

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme.

**Excavation Record**

Summary of Features:
Excavation of the site revealed two areas of activity with Site A consisting of a large burnt spread of heat-shattered stone, a well, stake-holes and several pits.

Burnt Mound:
The burnt mound survived as two separate spreads (C004 and C006) of black silty clay and heat-shattered stone. Overall the spread measured 16m by 14m with a thickness of 0.4m.

Well:
This pit (C135) was the largest feature on site and was oval in shape. It measured 3m by 0.8m with a depth of 1m. The pit had sloping sides which were roughly stepped. On the outer surface of the pit and surrounding it, was a slightly lower stonier area which may have been a deliberate attempt to level the area surrounding the pit (Cotter 2008, 24). Three fills were noted in the trough consisting of black silty sand, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Stake-Holes:
Fifteen stake-holes were uncovered to the south of the pit/well (C135). A further twenty-seven stake-holes were revealed further to the south. Both concentrations clusters in one area and no distinct pattern was observed.

Pit 1:
This pit (C151) was rectangular in plan and well defined. It may have functioned as a trough. It measured 2.3m by 1.3m with a depth of 0.2m. It was filled with burnt mound material.
Pit 2: C124 was located 11m north of the well (C135). It measured 2.2m by 1m with a depth of 0.4m. This pit was also filled with burnt mound material.

Pit 3: Pit (C231) was irregular in shape and located to the west of the well. It measured 4.5m by 2m with a depth of 0.4m. It was filled with black silty clay and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 4: Pit (C232) was also irregular in plan and measured 1.4m by 1.1m with a depth of 0.4m. It was filled with material similar to the burnt mound.

Pit 5: C233 was irregular in shape and measured 3m by 1.1m with a depth of 0.4m. Cotter suggests that this pit may relate to later disturbance on the site (Cotter 2008, 24).

Pit 6: This pit (C246) was irregular in plan and measured 1.8m by 1.6m with a depth of 0.4m. It was filled with black clayey silt, heat-shattered stones and pieces of unworked timber.

Pit 7: Pit (C248) was located near the south-west corner of the site and was sub-rectangular in shape. It measured 2.1m by 1.1m with a depth of 0.3m. It was filled with burnt mound material.

Finds:

Artefacts: A flint piece was recovered from the topsoil

Ecofacts: Animal bone was recovered from the well feature (C135)

Dating:

Absolute dating: Animal bone from the fill of the well C135 C14 (SUERC-15857) 2380±40BP (740–380 BC)

Excavation Interpretation

The volume of the burnt mound in area A, when compared with the small volume of the troughs, suggests numerous uses of each trough, perhaps over a long time period. The mixed nature of the fills of some of the features, e.g. C248, suggests much reuse of the troughs over a long period, and perhaps, change of use of some of the features. Change of use is also suggested in Area B, where the hearth, C057, partially overlay the in-filled trough C059. The geochemical analysis carried out on site indicates that features C151, C214, C233 and C246 in Area A, and C014 and C032 in Area B were all troughs. The circular pit C135 showed no evidence of heating. It was noted during the excavation that, once the fills of this feature had been excavated it filled naturally with water to a depth of c. 0.3m. All the evidence therefore points to it being a well.

References

Physical Setting: The site is located in low-lying undulating pastureland, less than 300m west of a tributary of the River Gully.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the area prior to excavation. Several, previously unknown sites however were identified during the development.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed two areas of activity with Site B consisting of numerous troughs, a hearth, several pits and stake-holes.

Hearth: This hearth (C057) was located near the western edge of the area and consisted of a shallow circular pit measuring 0.55m in diameter with a depth of 0.02m. The base and sides of the feature were heavily oxidised suggesting in situ burning.

Stake-Holes: Seven stake-holes were clustered to the west of the hearth C057. They did not form any coherent pattern but seemed to be associated with it (Cotter 2008, 22).

Trough 1: This possible trough (C059) was situated adjacent to the hearth (C057). It was oval in shape and measured 1.9m by 0.8m with a depth of 0.19m. The fill consisted of dark silty clay and heat-shattered stone.

Trough 2: Another possible trough (C014) was situated to the south of the hearth. It was sub-circular in shape and measured 1.35m by 1m with a depth of 0.4m.

Trough 3: This trough (C032) was situated near the northern end of the excavated area. It was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 2.15m by 1.07m with a depth...
of 0.27m. It contained a fill consisting of black sandy silt and heat-shattered stone.

Stake-Holes: Seven stake-holes were revealed immediately to the north of the trough C032.

Site C

Burnt Spread 1: This spread (C239) was revealed in Area C and was irregular in shape. It measured 3.2m by 1.3m with a thickness of 0.08m. It consisted of black silty clay and heat-shattered stone.

Burnt Spread 2: Spread (C242) was revealed in an irregular cut and measured 3.1m by 0.7m with a depth of 0.15m. It consisted of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Finds:

Artefacts: A flint scraper was recovered in one of the modern ditch fills

Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (oak) from the fill of the trough C032
C14 (SUERC-16956) 3915±35BP (2490–2290 BC)
Charcoal (ash) from the fill of the trough C014
C14 (SUERC-16957) 3860±35BP (2470–2200 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

The volume of the burnt mound in area A, when compared with the small volume of the troughs, suggests numerous uses of each trough, perhaps over a long time period. The mixed nature of the fills of some of the features, e.g. C248, suggests much reuse of the troughs over a long period, and perhaps, change of use of some of the features. Change of use is also suggested in Area B, where the hearth, C057, partially overlay the in-filled trough C059. The geochemical analysis carried out on site indicates that features C151, C214, C233 and C246 in Area A, and C014 and C032 in Area B were all troughs. The circular pit C135 showed no evidence of heating. It was noted during the excavation that, once the fills of this feature had been excavated it filled naturally with water to a depth of c. 0.3m. All the evidence therefore points to it being a well.

References

Location: Townland: Curragh  Six inch map no: 28
Parish: Bordwell  NGR: 234435, 180618
Barony: Clarmallagh  Altitude: 90m OD
County: Laois

Excavation Details: Project: M7 Portlaoise to Castletown-M8 to Cullahill
Site Director: Eamonn Cotter
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd.
Year: 2006

Physical Setting: The site at Curragh 2 was located in a narrow valley between two low, localised ridges within this broad low-lying plain.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the area prior to excavation.

Adjacent excavated sites: Bronze Age enclosure 80m to the south in the neighbouring townland of Tintore. Medieval features excavated adjacent to burnt mound.

Pre-Excavation features
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a spread of burnt mound material and a number of pits, some of which may have functioned as troughs.

Burnt Mound: The burnt mound was located in the north-eastern corner of the site. It consisted of a spread of heat-shattered stone and charcoal that measured 15m by 8m with a thickness of up to 0.7m.

Pits: Nine pits were located beneath the spread. These were generally circular in plan and measured 1.5m-2m in diameter and 0.2-0.7m in depth. All were filled with deposits of burnt stone. A quantity of burnt bone was recovered from a pit on the eastern side of the site. Some of these pits may have functioned as troughs. No finds were recovered.

Dating: Charcoal (oak) from the fill of the trough C114 C14 (SUERC-18501) 3870±35BP (2470–2200 BC)

References
**Location:**
- **Townland:** Friarsland
- **Parish:** Bordwell
- **Barony:** Clarmallagh
- **County:** Laois

**Six inch map no:** 22

**NGR:** 233371, 184948

**Altitude:** 109m OD

**Excavation Details:**
- **Project:** M7 Portlaoise to Castletown-M8 to Cullahill
- **Site Director:** Ann Marie Lennon
- **Consultants:** Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd.
- **Year:** 2006

**Physical Setting:**
Situated in an area of higher ground overlooking Coolfin to the east. The area of ground encompasses a small tributary of the River Gully, located c.7km to the east of Friarsland.

**Cultural Landscape:**
There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the area prior to excavation.

**Adjacent excavated sites:** None

### Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

### Excavation Record

**Summary of Features:**
Excavation of the site revealed a relatively substantial spread of heat-shattered stone and charcoal rich material. No cut features were identified.

**Burnt Spread:**
The deposit of burnt mound material (F069) measured 12m by 5m (no thickness recorded) and consisted of black silty clay with heat-shattered sandstone. Lennon notes than the spread was heavily damaged by plough action (Lennon 2008, 7). No finds were recovered and the site was not scientifically dated.

**Finds:**
None

**Dating:**
None

### References

Location: Townland: Gortnagroagh  
Parish: Aghaboe  
Barony: Clarmallagh  
County: Laois  
Excavation Details: 
Project: M7 Portlaoise to Castletown-M8 to Cullahill  
Site Director: Ed Danaher  
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd.  
Year: 2006

Physical Setting: The current landscape is characterised by rolling tracts of fertile land interspersed with pockets of less fertile and more low-lying, wetter and boggier areas. Gortnagroagh 1 was located close to the Coolfin area, which had an undulating landscape and evidence for Bronze Age settlement.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the area prior to excavation.

Adjacent excavated sites: Post-Medieval features.

Pre-Excavation features
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a large pit or cistern, a rectangular trough and a water channel.

Cistern: This pit (F005) was sub-circular in plan with vertical sides and an uneven base. It measured 4m by 3.2m with a depth of 1.42m and the excavator noted a clay lining along the base. It contained two fills, with the primary deposit consisting of grey silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. Cattle horn cores were retrieved from this layer. The secondary deposit consisted of black silty clay with occasional heat-shattered stone. Some iron fragments were recovered from this fill suggesting some level of disturbance in more recent history.

Water Channel: F002 was a linear ditch which measured 12.6m by 2.10m with a depth of 0.3m and extended beyond the area of excavation. The feature terminated at the pit/cistern (F005) and the excavator suggests that it may have fed the pit with water. The fill of the channel consisted of brown silty clay with pebbles.

Trough: The trough (F008) was rectangular in shape with vertical sides and a flat base. It measured 2.4m by 1.2m with a depth of 0.27m. The trough was
situated adjacent to the large pit F005 and was filled with two deposits of black silty clay, heat-shattered stones and cow horns.

**Finds:**

**Artefacts:** None

**Ecofacts:** A substantial amount of cattle horns and horn cores were recovered from the trough (F008) and the pit (F005). Unfortunately, these finds were misplaced during post-excavation and therefore could not be dated.

**Dating:**

**Absolute dating:** Charcoal (ash/alder) from the fill of pit F005 C14 (SUERC-16958) 2925±35BP (1260–1010 BC)

**Excavation Interpretation:**

The trough, cistern and their respective fills clearly demonstrate that pyrolithic technology took place at this location. While the site does not conform to the definition of a *fulacht fia* it is nevertheless likely that it represents the truncated remains of a burnt mound and that similar processes did occur at this site. Interestingly, in this instance these processes may have been industrial in nature, indicated by the presence of considerable cattle horn cores from the trough and large pit, the latter feature producing a Middle Bronze Age radiocarbon date. Both the trough and cistern contained a mix of burnt mound material and clay, while both contained a number of cattle horn cores. More recent activity was also encountered on site including drainage ditches containing sherds of post medieval pottery. At least iron objects were also discovered on site with these being discovered within the upper fills of the middle Bronze Age features, suggesting that considerable disturbance had taken place at the site. Because of this, and the single radiocarbon date from the site, the interpretation of the site as a Bronze Age horn core processing site must remain tentative.

**References**

Physical Setting:
The current landscape is characterised by rolling tracts of fertile land interspersed with pockets of less fertile and more low-lying, wetter and boggier areas. The site at Leap was located in low-lying pastureland.

Cultural Landscape:
There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the area prior to excavation.

Adjacent excavated sites:
None

Pre-Excavation features
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record
Summary of Features:
Excavation of the site revealed a small spread of heat-shattered stone. No cut features were identified.

Burnt Spread:
The shallow spread of burnt mound material measured 4m by 4.2m with a maximum thickness of 0.05m. It consisted of black silty clay with charcoal inclusions and heat-shattered sandstone. No finds were recovered.

Finds:
None

Dating:
Charcoal (alder/hazel) from the burnt stone spread C14 (SUERC-17000) 3745±35BP (2280–2030 BC)

References
Locale:

Townland: Oldglass
Six inch map no: 28
Parish: Aghabo
NGR: 234692, 178700
Barony: Clarmallagh
Altitude: 81m OD
County: Laois

Excavation Details:

Project: M7 Portlaoise to Castletown-M8 to Cullahill
Site Director: Tara O’Neill
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd.
Year: 2006

Physical Setting:
The current landscape is characterised by rolling tracts of fertile land interspersed with pockets of less fertile and more low-lying, wetter and boggier areas. The site at Leap was located in low-lying pastureland north of the River Erkina

Cultural Landscape:
There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the area prior to excavation.

Adjacent excavated sites:
None

Pre-Excavation features
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features:
Excavation of the site revealed two areas of hot-stone activity. Site A consisted of several spreads and a trough filled with heat-shattered stone, while Site B revealed a small spread with no cut features.

Site A

Burnt Spreads 1-5:
Four spreads of burnt mound material were revealed in this area. All of the deposits consisted of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered sandstone. F004 measured 1m by 0.9m with a thickness of 0.1m. Spread (F012) measured 0.9 by 0.57m with a thickness of 0.08m. F005 measured 1.04m by 0.27m by 0.12m while spread (F006) measured 1.01m by 0.4m with a thickness of 0.05m.

Trough:
The trough (F003) was oval in shape with steeply sloping sides and an undulating base. It measured 1.8m by 1.2m with a depth of 0.64m and contained three fills with the primary deposit consisting of light brown sandy silt, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. This was dated to the Middle Bronze Age. The upper deposits consisted of black silty clay and heat-shattered stone.
Site B

Burnt Spread: This was the only deposit revealed in the southern extent of the excavated area. F008 measured 2.42m by 2.68m with a thickness of 0.08m. It consisted of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. A sample of charcoal was dated to the Early Bronze Age.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: None

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (alder) from the burnt stone spread F008
C14 (SUERC-16959) 3560±35BP (2020–1860 BC)
Charcoal (alder and elm) from the fill of the trough F003
C14 (SUERC-16960) 3425±35BP (1830–1620 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

Oldglass 2 provided evidence of burnt mound activity dating to the Early and Middle Bronze Age. The trough was of a simple form with no evidence of stone or timber lining or clay packing. The deposits of burnt mound material represented dumps of used heat-shattered stones. The small size and small number of these spreads suggest that this site was only used for a short period of time. It is probable that these spreads may have originally been larger and could have been ploughed away during agricultural activity.

References

Location: Townland: Oldglass  Six inch map no: 28
Parish: Aghaboe  NGR: 234742, 178800
Barony: Clarmallagh  Altitude: 81m OD
County: Laois

Excavation Details: Project: M7 Portlaoise to Castletown-M8 to Cullahill
Site Director: Tara O’ Neill
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd.
Year: 2006

Physical Setting: The site at Leap was located in low-lying undulating pastureland north of the River Erkina and south-east of Lough Grantstown.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the area prior to excavation.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed two areas of hot-stone activity. Site A consisted of a spread of heat-shattered stone and an associated trough, while Site B revealed several spreads and two troughs, one of which was clay lined.

Site A

Burnt Spread: This spread (F008) was situated adjacent to the trough F009. It consisted of grey silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. It measured 3.1m in diameter with a thickness of 0.1m.

Trough: Trough (F009) was sub-circular in shape with gently sloping sides and an undulating base. It measured 1.7m in diameter with a depth of 0.34m. The pit was truncated by a post-medieval field boundary but the fill consisted of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. Charcoal from the pit was dated to the Middle Bronze Age.

Site B

Burnt Spreads: Several burnt stone spreads were identified in this area which may have originally been part a larger deposit that was dispersed by later agricultural activity. All of the spreads consisted of the material, black silty clay,
charcoal and heat-shattered sandstone. F017 measured 0.45m by 0.60m with a thickness of 0.1m. Spread F020 measured 1.6m by 1.1m with a thickness of 0.2m. No other detail available on other deposits.

Trough 1: Trough (F018) was oval in shape with sharp sides and an undulating base. It measured 1.08m by 0.65m with a depth of 0.43m and contained a fill consisting of black silty sand, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Trough 2: This trough (F019) was sub-oval in shape with gradual sloping sides and an undulating base. It measured 1.19m by 0.77m with a depth of 0.74m. A clay packing was noted at the base and sides of the trough and it was filled with three deposits of black silty sand, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 1: Pit (F021) was circular in shape and measured 0.92m by 0.95m with a depth of 0.32m. Two fills were noted in the pit consisting of dark silty clays, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 2: Pit (F028) was also circular in shape and measured 0.29m by 0.24m with a depth of 0.42m. The pit was filled with grey silty sand, charcoal and heat-shattered sandstone.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: None

Dating: Charcoal (hazel) from the burnt stone spread F008 C14 (SUERC-17994) 3360±35BP (1750–1600 BC) Charcoal (hazel) from the fill of the trough F019 C14 (SUERC-17998) 3605±35BP (2040–1880 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

This site can be interpreted as a burnt mound site. It was a small scale site which shows evidence of re-use over a period of time. Bronze Age activity on this site was represented by the presence of two troughs, pits and burnt mound deposits located in two separate areas (Areas A and B). The features within Area B were radiocarbon dated to the Early Bronze Age. The trough F019 within Area B was of a simple form with evidence of clay packing. The deposits of burnt mound material represented dumps of used heat-shattered stones. The small size of these spreads suggests that this site may have originally been larger and could have been ploughed away during agricultural activity.

References

Location: Shanboe  Six inch map no: 22
Parish: Aghaboe  NGR: 223879, 187154
Barony: Clarmallagh  Altitude: 102m OD
County: Laois

Excavation Details:
Project: M7 Portlaoise to Castletown-M8 to Cullahill
Site Director: Ken Wiggins
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd.
Year: 2006

Physical Setting:
Shanboe 1 is situated on a gentle north-facing slope in the heart of the River Quinn flood plain. It is located at the western end of a low-lying east-west running ridge known as the Timoney ridge.

Cultural Landscape:
There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the area prior to excavation.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features:
Excavation of the site revealed a disturbed burnt stone spread, several troughs, some of which were lined and numerous stake-hole concentrations.

Burnt Spread:
The remains of the burnt mound were heavily disturbed and survived as several deposits of heat-shattered limestone, quartz, sandstone and greywacke. One of the main deposits (F004) measured 24m by 19m with a maximum thickness of 0.4m. It was recorded as the main upper layer of the burnt mound and covered most of the cut features on the site. Situated to the west of this deposit was F003, which consisted of grey silty sand, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. It measured 7.15m by 4.4m with a depth of 0.3m and contained a Neolithic chert arrowhead. F004 was made up of several separate deposits of burnt mound material.

Well/Trough:
This possible well (F010) was the largest feature on site and seemed to be the focal point of the site. It was oval in shape with concave sides and an uneven base. It measured 3.75m by 3.35m with a depth of 1.02m and contained a wood lining consisting of brushwood sallies with bark that were cut flat and interwoven. Thirty-five stake-holes also cut the interior of this pit. A series of flat sandstone slabs formed a step arrangement leading into the pit. Three fills were recorded in the pit with the primary deposit
consisting of yellow sandy clay with stones and wood fragments. The upper fills consisted of dark silty clays, charcoal, wood debris and heat-shattered stone. A sample of wood was dated to the Middle to Late Bronze Age.

**Trough 1:** This trough (F039) was situated immediately south of the trough/well (F010). It was sub-rectangular in shape with gently sloping sides and a flat base. Ten stake-holes cut the base of the pit, located the sides and corners of the trough. The fill of the trough consisted of black silty sand, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

**Trough 2:** This trough (F017) abutted the trough F015 and was sub-rectangular in shape with vertical sides and a flat base. It measured 2.73m by 2.1m with a depth of 0.4m. Sixteen stake-holes cut the base of the pit and were randomly placed. Three fills were recorded in the trough consisting of silty sands, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

**Pit 1:** This pit (F015) abutted the trough F017 and was circular in shape measuring 0.9m by 0.7m with a depth of 0.1m. It was filled with burnt mound material.

**Pit 2:** This pit (F012) was interpreted as a possible roasting trough (Wiggins 2008, 14). It was rectangular in shape and measured 2.3m by 1.35m with a depth of 0.14m. The main fill consisted of soft black sandy silt with heat-shattered sandstone while the upper fill was a deposit of brown-orange silty sand with heat-shattered stone.

**Trough 3:** This trough (F026) was located west of the main activity and was circular in shape with vertical sides and a flat base. It measured 1.65m by 1.63m with a depth of 0.65m. Several sandstone slabs were recorded on top of the pit. The fill of the pit consisted of burnt mound material.

**Trough 4:** This trough (F028) was located east of the well pit/trough (F010). It was sub-oval in plan with concave sides leading to a flat base. It measured 2.2m by 1.2m with a depth of 0.5m and was filled with four deposits of silty clay, organic material, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

**Pit 3:** F035 was oval in shape and measured 1.65m by 1m with a depth of 0.2m. It had concave sides leading to a rounded base and was filled with charcoal rich material and heat-shattered stone.

**Curvilinear Feature:** This feature (F037) was semi-circular in shape and surrounded a deposit of compact orange silty clay (F019). It measured 5.1m by 4.2m and was filled with burnt mound material.

**Pit 4:** Pit (F048) was sub-oval in shape and measured 1.7m by 1.4m with a depth of 0.35m. An unworked timber element was recovered in the base of the pit. The fill consisted of brown silty sand and decayed stone.

**Trough 5?:** This shallow rectangular pit (F051) may represent a truncated trough due to the presence of eleven stake-holes that cut the base, indicating some sort of structure. It measured 1.3m by 0.7m with a depth of 0.08m and was filled with burnt mound material.

**Finds:**

**Artefacts:** Chert hollow based arrowhead was recovered from the burnt spread (F003)

**Ecofacts:** None
Dating:
Relative dating: None
Absolute dating: Charcoal (elm) from the fill of the trough F017
C14 (SUERC-16947) 3160±35BP (1510–1380 BC)
Charcoal (hazel) from the fill of the pit/well F010
C14 (Beta-218630) 2990±40BP (1380–1100 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:
Excavation of Shanboe 1 revealed the remains of fulacht/burnt mound activity, situated on a gentle north facing slope above a boggy plain, dated to the Middle-Late Bronze Age. Comprising a number of deposits, it measured c.25m (east-west) by c.15-19m (north-south) by 0.50m in depth. Once removed, a number of pits were noted. A technical description can be found in the matrix and sequencing above. The largest pit (F010), located to the northeast of the site, was a possible well utilised for the surrounding features. This activity at the site involved heating water (supplied by a well/stream) through ‘hot stone technology’ within a trough or pit provided, in the aim of implementing domestic and other activities.

References

Fig. 10.89 Plan of excated troughs and pits at Shanboe 1, Co. Laois.
Shanboe 4 is situated in the heart of the River Quinn flood plain. It is located at the western end of a low-lying east-west running ridge known as the Timoney ridge.

There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the area prior to excavation.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a disturbed, ploughed-out burnt mound consisting of several small spreads of heat-shattered stone.

Burnt Spreads: Several spreads of heat-shattered stone were identified during excavation, presumably the result of plough action dispersing the material across the site. The largest of the spreads (F004) was situated in a natural depression and measured 6.3m by 3m with a thickness of 0.17m. It consisted of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. A sample of charcoal was dated to the Late Bronze Age. A second spread (F006) also lay in a depression and measured 1m by 0.4 by 0.04m.

Pit: A single pit (F017) was revealed which was irregular in shape with vertical sides and a pointed base. It measured 1.5m by 0.9m with a depth of 0.35m. The fill consisted of dark brown-black silty clay and heat-shattered stone.

Dating: Charcoal (ash) from the burnt spread F004 C14 (SUERC-16946) 2905±35BP (1220–990 BC)

References

Location: Shanboe  
Parish: Aghaboe  
Barony: Clarmallagh  
County: Laois

Excavation Details:  
Project: M7 Portlaoise to Castletown-M8 to Cullahill  
Site Director: Ken Wiggins  
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd.  
Year: 2006

Physical Setting: Shanboe 5 is situated in the heart of the River Quinn flood plain. It is located at the western end of a low-lying east-west running ridge known as the Timoney ridge.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the area prior to excavation.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a burnt spread, several troughs, pits, a hearth and a structure.

Burnt Mound: After the removal of the topsoil, a large crescent shaped deposit of burnt material was revealed. It consisted of three different types of material consisting of black sandy silt, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. Overall the material measured 15m by 8.7m with a maximum thickness of 0.35m. A yellow quartzite hammerstone was recovered from the deposit F004.

Trough 1: Trough (F005) was sub-oval in plan with vertical sides and a flat base. It measured 2.2m by 1.2m with a depth of 0.6m. It was filled with three deposits of dark silty sands and heat-shattered stone. The trough was later re-cut measuring 1.5m by 0.8m with a depth of 0.5m. An oval post-hole cut the base of the pit possibly representing a symbolic act.

Hearth: This hearth (F007) was located north-east of the trough F005. It was oval in shape and measured 1.23m by 0.72m with a depth of 0.02m. The feature was heavily oxidised suggesting intense burning.

Pit 1: This pit (F009) was located north-east of the trough F005. It was sub-oval in plan with concave sides and an uneven base. It measured 1.91m by 0.75m
with a depth of 0.28m and contained two fills consisting of dark silty clays and heat-shattered stone.

**Trough 2:** This trough (F033) was located in the northern half of the site and was sub-circular in shape with vertical sides and a flat base. It measured 2.7m by 2m with a depth of 0.75m. Four fills were recorded in the trough consisting of various dark silty sands and heat-shattered stone. A sample of charcoal from the middle deposit was dated to the Middle Bronze Age.

**Trough 3:** Trough (F035) was sub-circular in shape with vertical sides and an uneven base. It measured 1.6m by 1.4m with a depth of 0.65m. A single stake-hole cut the base of the trough and the pit was filled with two deposits of black silty sand and heat-shattered stone. A single post-hole and a stake-hole were revealed adjacent to this trough.

**Pit/depression 2:** Pit (F012) was sub-circular in shape with concave sides leading to a flat base. It measured 1.57m by 1.15m with a depth of 0.2m. It was filled with light grey silty sand, occasional pebbles and charcoal. The pit was surrounded by sixteen stake-holes.

**Structure:** Sixteen stake-holes were recorded forming a sub-rectangular structure measuring 3.5m by 1.5m. These stake-holes lined the edges of the shallow pit/depression F012. The depression was truncated at the centre by a stake-hole with further stake-holes situated at the sides.

**Roasting Pit:** This pit (F017) was located south of the site and was sub-rectangular in shape with vertical sides and a flat base. It measured 1.7m by 1m with a depth of 0.28m. Three fills were recorded in the pit with a primary deposit consisting of soft black silt and frequent charcoal while the middle fill consisted of red-orange oxidised silty clay with occasional charcoal. The last deposit consisted of brown-yellow silty sand.

**Finds:**

**Artefacts:** Quartzite Hammerstone was recovered from the burnt mound material F004.

**Dating:** Charcoal (ash) from the fill of the trough F033
  C14 (Beta-218633) 3230±40BP (1600–1420 BC)
  Charcoal (alder) from the fill of the pit F017
  C14 (SUERC-16939) 1195±35BP (AD 760–900)

**Excavation Interpretation:**

Excavation of Shanboe 5 revealed the remains of a burnt mound, dated to the Middle Bronze Age. The largest element on site was a crescent-shaped spread of mainly soft, black, sandy silt, with heat shattered sandstones and charcoal. Situated parallel to a small stream, it covered the majority of features on site. A possible sub-rectangular hut structure was also revealed on site. Delineated by a formation of 16 stake-holes, it surrounded a shallow depression or pit (F012). This appeared to be the focal point of activity by which all other major features congregated around. It was possibly used as a sauna or sweathouse. The early medieval pit possibly functioned as a roasting pit, or more likely a charcoal production pit, as its fill contained a large amount of charcoal and no heat-shattered stone. The oxidised soil also suggests a degree of burning, which may further support this interpretation.

**References**

Location: Townland: Springfield  
Parish: Aghaboe  
Barony: Clarmallagh  
County: Laois  
Six inch map no: 29  
NGR: 234509, 184081  
Altitude: 102m OD  

Excavation Details:  
Project: M7 Portlaoise to Castletown-M8 to Cullahill  
Site Director: Ed Danaher  
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd.  
Year: 2006  

Physical Setting: Springfield 2 was located on higher ground overlooking Springfield 3, which was located to the north. It was situated adjacent to a tributary of the River Gully running in a north-south direction past the site. The topography of the Springfield area is one of undulating countryside, well drained by free flowing streams and streamlets. 

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the area prior to excavation.  

Adjacent excavated sites: None  

Pre-Excavation features  
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.  

Excavation Record  
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a small pit filled with heat-shattered stone. No burnt mound or spread was exposed during the excavation.  

Pit: The pit (F004) was sub-circular in shape with concave sides and a flat base. It measured 1.37m by 1m with a depth of 0.15m and contained a fill consisting of dark peat, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.  

Finds: None  

Dating: Charcoal (ash and hazel) from the fill of the pit F004  
C14 (Beta-218616) 3320±40BP (1690–1510 BC)  

References  
Excavation Details: Project: M7 Portlaoise to Castletown-M8 to Cullahill
Site Director: Ed Danaher
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd.
Year: 2006

Physical Setting: The site was situated to the south of where the ground slopes down to lower lying land past Coolfin and into Ballycuddahy and Cross where the tributary of the River Gully forks. One of these forks runs past Springfield c.250m to the northeast. The topography of the Springfield area is one of undulating countryside, well drained by free flowing streams and streamlets.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the area prior to excavation.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a trough and several pits filed with heat-shattered stone.

Trough: This large pit or trough (F006) was sub-circular in shape with vertical sides and a flat base. It measured 2m by 1.3m with a depth of 0.4m and contained three fills consisting of dark sandy silt, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 1: This pit (F004) was sub-rectangular in shape and measured 1.2m by 0.9m with a depth of 0.23m. Two fills were recorded in the pit, consisting of dark silty clays, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 2: Pit (F008) was sub-rectangular in shape with sloping sides and a flat base. It was truncated by an agricultural furrow but contained a fill consisting of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Pit 3: F010 was sub-rectangular in shape with sloping sides and a rounded base. It measured 1.27m by 1.25m with a depth of 0.29m. It contained a fill consisting of dark brown peat, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. A sample of charcoal was dated to the Late Neolithic period.
Pit 4: Pit (F012) was sub-circular in shape with an associated linear channel extending from the eastern side. The pit measured 1.68m by 0.7m with a depth of 0.7m and contained a fill consisting of charcoal and heat-shattered stone. An iron blade fragment was recovered from this deposit.

Pit 5: Pit (F014) was oval in shape with sloping sides and a rounded base. It measured 1.5m by 0.6m with a depth of 0.12. The fill consisted of dark silty peat, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Finds:

Artefacts: None

Ecofacts: Iron blade fragment from the fill of the pit F012

Dating:

Relative dating: None

Absolute dating: Charcoal (ash) from the fill of the pit (F010)
C14 (Beta-218622) 4060±60BP (2870–2460 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

One large pit was identified as a trough (F006) because of its sharp breaks of slope, vertical sides and flat base, inclusions of burnt mound material and size. Surrounding the trough, the five smaller pits all contained burnt mound material and averaged 0.18m in depth. The difference in terms of use between the trough and these pits may be very little in this instance because of their relatively similar size. Generally, pits with a depth of or less than 0.25m are considered to have a more specific role and may sometimes negate the need for water, i.e. dry roasting. Peat was recorded deposited in each of the pits indicating the site had experienced water-logging. No burnt mound spread was recorded, a result of cultivation destruction or natural subsidence, evidence of which can be found in each pit. This material could only have subsided while the pits remained exposed and may suggest that each pit/trough was open contemporaneously. The cultivation furrow F018 that truncated pit F008 implies that any overlying burnt mound/spread would also have been truncated.

References

Excavation Details: Project: M7 Portlaoise to Castletown-M8 to Cullahill  
Site Director: Eamon Cotter  
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd.  
Year: 2006

Physical Setting: The site at Tintore 1 was located in a narrow valley between two low, localised ridges within this broad low-lying plain. It was situated on the south bank of an east-flowing stream, overlooking a narrow east-west band of flat wet land.

Cultural Landscape: There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the area prior to excavation.

Adjacent excavated sites: None

Pre-Excavation features

The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.

Excavation Record

Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed several dispersed spreads of burnt mound material and two troughs.

Burnt Spreads: Six separate spreads of dark silty sand and heat-shattered stone were revealed during excavation dispersed across the site. The largest of these spreads was C024, which measured 3m by 1.7m with a depth of 0.25m.

Trough 1: Trough (C009) was rectangular in plan and measured 2m by 1.3m with a depth of 0.65m. Nine stake-holes cut the base of the trough along the sides, which presumably support some kind of timber lining. The fill of the trough consisted of black silty sand, charcoal and heat-shattered stones. A sample of charcoal was dated to the Early to Middle Bronze Age. A single stake-hole was revealed outside the trough on the western side.

Trough 2: A second trough (C015) was revealed south-west of trough (C009) and was rectangular in plan. It measured 2.1m by 1.3m with a depth of 0.4m. The fill consisted of black silty clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone. A sample of charcoal was dated to the Middle Bronze Age.
Finds:
   Artefacts: None
   Ecofacts: None

Dating:
   Relative dating: None
   Absolute dating: Charcoal (hazel) from the fill of the trough C009
                   C14 (SUERC-17978) 3545±35BP (1980–1750 BC)
                   Charcoal (hazel) from the fill of the trough C015
                   C14 (SUERC-17979) 3345±35BP (1740–1520 BC)

Excavation Interpretation:

The site at Tintore 1 was evidently a small fulacht fia, comprising two small troughs. The limited amount of burnt mound material surviving suggests limited usage of the site. Alternatively, the mound may have been dispersed or removed through later agricultural activity. While there was no direct evidence of lining in either of the troughs, a series of small stake-holes along the western side of the base of trough C009 suggests it may have had a wicker lining.

References


Plate 10.71 Pre-ex shot of site and excavated trough pit at Tintore 1, Co. Laois.
Location: Townland: Tintore  
Parish: Aghaboe  
Barony: Clarmallagh  
County: Laois  

Parish: Aghaboe  
NGR: 234482, 180544  
Barony: Clarmallagh  
Altitude: 92m OD  
County: Laois  

Excavation Details:  
Project: M7 Portlaoise to Castletown-M8 to Cullahill  
Site Director: Eamonn Cotter  
Consultants: Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd.  
Year: 2006  

Physical Setting:  
Tintore 2 was located near the base of a gentle north-facing slope, with a low ridge to the south and a narrow east-west valley to the immediate north, with some bogland.  

Cultural Landscape:  
There were no recorded prehistoric sites in the immediate vicinity of the area prior to excavation.  

Adjacent excavated sites: Cremation pit excavated 7m south of the enclosure  

Pre-Excavation features  
The site was revealed during archaeological monitoring in advance of the M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Scheme. There was no surface trace of the site prior to excavation.  

Excavation Record  
Summary of Features: Excavation of the site revealed a ditched enclosure which encircled a trough and a number of pits filled with burnt mound material.  

Enclosure: The enclosure (C40) was sub-circular in plan and enclosed an area measuring 30m by 33m. It was 2.3m wide and had an average depth of 0.9m with a v-shaped profile and a flat base. Various fills were noted in the ditch, however heat-shattered stone was present along with animal bone. Three small post-holes were recorded outside and to the west of the entrance forming a line parallel with the enclosure ditch. Two larger post-holes were noted within the entrance on the eastern side.  

Trough 1: This trough (C46) was located at the centre of the enclosure and was almost square in plan with rounded corners and vertical sides. It measured 1.8m by 1.8m with a depth of 0.36m and several post-holes were noted cut into the base of the pit, one in each of the corners. The main fill of the trough consisted of black silty sand, heat-shattered and charcoal. Some larger blocks of heat-affected limestone were recorded at the base of the pit. Fragments of animal bone were recovered from the fill of the trough.
Stake-Holes: A total of twelve stake-holes were revealed in the immediate vicinity of the trough C46. The concentration of stake-holes were randomly clustered therefore no structural elements could be made out.

Trough 2: Trough (C48) was situated 2.5m east of the trough C46. It measured 2m by 1.1m with a depth of 0.42m and contained a fill consisting of black silty clay, heat-shattered stone and charcoal. One fragment of animal bone and an animal tooth came from this deposit.

Possible Structure: Possible structural evidence was revealed south and south-east of the trough C46. This consisted of a number of small pits and post-holes forming an arc. One of these features was a possible slot-trench with contained three post-holes.

Trough 3/hearth: This feature along with several other associated stake-holes was situated 7m north of the entrance in the south-eastern quadrant of the enclosure. C295 was a shallow sub-rectangular featured which measured 1.7m by 1.2m with a depth of 0.13m. Oxidisation was noted around the feature suggesting intense in situ burning had occurred in the pit. Three stakes-holes cut the base of the pit while several others lay outside the pit. The fill of the feature consisted of black sandy clay, charcoal and heat-shattered stone.

Stake/Post-Holes: Several stake-holes were revealed in an arc outside the trough (C295). Some of these were set in a possible slot-trench which contained burnt mound material.

Finds:

Artefacts: Hammerstone recovered from enclosure ditch

Ecofacts: Animal bone was recovered from the ditch

Dating:

Charcoal (alder) from the fill of the trough C46 C14 (Beta-218643) 2520±60BP (810–410 BC) C14 (SUERC-17964) 2470±35BP (770–410 BC) Charcoal (blackthorn and ash) from the fill of enclosure ditch C14 (Beta-218644) 2770±40BP (1000–820 BC) C14 (SUERC-17962) 2490±35BP (780–410 BC) Charcoal (blackthorn and ash) from the possible structure C14 (SUERC-17960) 2665±35BP (900–790 BC) Charcoal (birch) from the possible structure C14 (SUERC-17961) 2570±35BP (810–750 BC)

References