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# THE STATUS OF CHILDREN IN A SAMPLE OF BRONZE AGE BURIALS CONTAINING PYGMY CUPS

B. Ó DONNABHÁIN AND A.L. BRINDLEY

## INTRODUCTION

Some recent excavations in the Netherlands have drawn attention to the practice of depositing miniatures as gifts in the graves of infants and young children. A preliminary paper survey of available analyses of the human remains in Bronze Age burials which included pygmy cups suggested that this might have occurred in Ireland also. Of the five published and two unpublished analyses, six produced the cremated remains of an infant or young child while one contained the unburnt remains of a young adult male (Davies and Paterson 1936-37; Hawkes 1941; Herring 1949; Twohig 1976; Ó Donnabháin 1985a; Doody 1988, Wiggins, forthcoming). A study of all available human remains associated with pygmy cups was therefore undertaken in order to ascertain if these could be specific children's grave goods.

## MATERIALS

A shortlist of thirty-nine burials with pygmy cups was compiled from available data (Twohig 1976; Kavanagh 1977, Cleary 1985). Human remains were available for examination from twenty of these. However, two of the pygmy cups came from disturbed contexts and the material was therefore not suitable for inclusion in this study - Clontygora, Co. Armagh (Davies and Paterson 1936-37) and Kilmore, Co. Westmeath (Prendergast 1960). The human remains from the remaining eighteen burials were examined. These are:-

Knockoneill, Co. Derry  
Drumhagart, Co. Donegal  
Drung, Co. Donegal  
Ballyhanwood, Co. Down  
Maze Course, Co. Down  
Portaferry, Co. Down  
Cabinteely, Co. Dublin  
Edmondstown, Co. Dublin (Burial 2)  
Edmondstown, Co. Dublin (Burial 6)  
Athenry, Co. Galway  
Pound, Co. Kerry  
Letterkeen, Co. Mayo  
Grange, Co. Roscommon  
Glenacunna, Co. Tipperary  
Clogherny, Co. Tyrone  
Harristown, Co. Waterford  
Aughrim, Co. Wicklow  
Clonshannon, Co. Wicklow

Skeletal material was not available for inspection from the remaining nineteen burials. Three of these latter were excavated in the 1930's and 40's - Ballynahow, Co. Cork (O'Kelly 1946), Corkragh, Co. Tyrone (Evans and Paterson 1939) and Loughash, Co. Tyrone (Davies and Mullin 1940). However, the human remains appear not to have been curated. The burial at Ballynahow had been disturbed some years prior to excavation; the human remains were removed from the cist and scattered and all that remained was 'little more than a matchbox-full, all of the fragments so finely comminuted that they were quite useless for identification purposes' (O'Kelly 1946, 84). The pygmy cup from Loughash was not actually found during excavation; it was found in a cist nearby, sometime earlier. The remains found with the vessel from Corkragh were analysed by Professor Walmsley of Q.U.B. Their present whereabouts are not known.

In most of the remaining cases the pygmy cups were old finds where the presence of human remains was noted but not apparently collected.

The nineteen burials from which human remains were recorded but are not available for inspection are:-

| Site                      | Find Date |
|---------------------------|-----------|
| Knockboy, Co. Antrim      | 1927      |
| Bagnelstown, Co. Carlow   | pre 1857  |
| Ballynahow, Co. Cork      | 1946      |
| Castle Martyr, Co. Cork   | pre 1910  |
| Cumberclady, Co. Derry    | pre 1890  |
| Dromara, Co. Down         | pre 1922  |
| Glenville, Co. Down       | ?         |
| Newry, Co. Down           | ?         |
| Greenhills, Co. Dublin    | 1898      |
| Annaghkeen, Co. Galway    | 1908      |
| Castlecomer, Co. Kilkenny | pre 1949  |
| Broughderg, Co. Tyrone    | 1882      |
| Drumnakilly, Co. Tyrone   | 1870      |
| Loughash, Co. Tyrone      | 1940      |
| Sixmilecross, Co. Tyrone  | 1883      |
| Kilmuckridge, Co. Wexford | pre 1887  |
| Misterin, Co. Wexford     | pre 1889  |
| Crehelp, Co. Wicklow      | 1929      |
| Kilmacanogue, Co. Wicklow | 1941      |

In addition, unpublished data from Rathlin Island, Co. Antrim (Wiggins, forthcoming) were made available and are included in the results discussed below as are the data from Walmsley's analysis of the skeletal material from Corkragh, Co. Tyrone (Evans and Paterson 1939).

The inventory includes a description of the human remains found in association with each of the pygmy cups.

## RESULTS

Table 1 summarises the results of the analysis. While recognising the limitations of such a small sample, some general trends can be noted. The ages of those buried with pygmy cups form three broad groups:

- about 5 years;
- adolescents;
- younger adults.

There is a roughly equal distribution of individuals between these groups.

It is clear from Table 1 that pygmy cups are not specific children's grave gifts but occur quite frequently in graves containing only adult remains. In fact, children younger than c. 12-14 years of age either were not normally buried with gifts, or more probably, were not accorded full burial status, unless an adult was being buried at the same time. In all but apparently one case, children and juveniles were buried with adults; the single exception, Rathlin Island, is unusual in another respect, in that the individual was inhumed. However, from the age of about 14 years, individuals were given grave gifts and apparently buried *in the same way as adults, as individuals in their own right*. This probably reflects a change in status from dependant to contributor within society. However, in view of the small number of burials involved in this survey, this interpretation should be investigated more fully.

All but three of the adults for whom age estimates could be made were younger adults, probably aged between 18 and 30 years. This may be a reflection of the low life expectancy obtaining among most early population groups rather than being due to any cultural bias. Table 2 shows the percentages of younger adult deaths from three recently excavated cemeteries. All show a high rate of mortality in the third decade of life. It is not unexpected that a Bronze Age sample should show similar trends.

**Table 1: Demographic details of the burials associated with pygmy cups.**

| Site           | Juv | Age                | Adult | Sex    | Age          | Urn          | Notes                         |
|----------------|-----|--------------------|-------|--------|--------------|--------------|-------------------------------|
| Rathlin Island | X   | c.6                |       |        |              | X VU         | Inhumation                    |
| Knockoneill    | X   | c.5                | X     | ?      | ?            |              |                               |
| Portaferry     | X   | c.5                | X     | ?      | MA           |              |                               |
| Pound          | X   | 5-7                | X     | ?      | 20-25        |              |                               |
| Letterkeen     | X   | 12-15              | X     | ?      | 20-25        |              |                               |
| Ballyveelish   | X3  | c.1<br>5-6<br>c.14 | X2    | M<br>F | ?<br>?       | X EnU        |                               |
| Glenacunna     | X   | 14-18              |       |        |              | X EnU        |                               |
| Harristown     | X   | 15-16              |       |        |              | X CrU        |                               |
| Clonshannon    | X   | 14-16              |       |        |              | X VU         |                               |
| Drumhaggart    |     |                    | X     | F      | YA           |              | Antler fragment<br>Inhumation |
| Drung          |     |                    | X     | F      | 21-25        |              |                               |
| Ballyhanwood   |     |                    | X     | ?      | 15-30        |              | Flint Flake                   |
| Cabinteely     |     |                    | X     | ?M     | ?            |              |                               |
| Edmondstown 2  |     |                    | X     | ?      | ?            |              |                               |
| Edmondstown 6  |     |                    | X     | M      | YA           | X VFV        |                               |
| Grange         |     |                    | X     | M      | Y/MA         | X VU         |                               |
| Clogherny      |     |                    | X     | ?M     | ?            |              |                               |
| Corkragh       |     |                    | X2    | M<br>F | 30-35<br>40+ | X EnU<br>2FV |                               |
| Aughrim        |     |                    | ?X    | ?      | ?            |              |                               |
| Maze Course    | ?   |                    | ?     |        |              | X CU         |                               |
| Athenry        | ?   |                    | ?     |        |              |              |                               |

Key: YA ..... Young adult  
MA ..... Middle aged adult  
M ..... Male  
F ..... Female  
CU ..... Collared Urn  
CrU ..... Cordoned Urn  
FV ..... Vase Food Vessel  
VU ..... Vase Urn  
EnU ..... Encrusted Urn

**Table 2: Percentages of younger adult deaths from three recently excavated Irish cemeteries.**

| Site                       |   | Date         | nA | %    |
|----------------------------|---|--------------|----|------|
| Millockstown, Co. Louth    | 1 | E. Christian | 8  | 75.0 |
| Dunmisk, Co. Tyrone        | 2 | E. Christian | 62 | 46.7 |
| Tintern Abbey, Co. Wexford | 3 | 16th Century | 46 | 58.7 |

Key: nA = Number of adults of known age  
% = Percentage of adults of known age dying between ages 18-33 years.  
1. Ó Donnabháin, 1986  
2. Ó Donnabháin, in press  
3. Ó Donnabháin, 1985b

## INVENTORY

Description of the remains associated with the pygmy cups:

### 1. Rathlin Island, Co. Antrim

Context: Pygmy cup found in the NE corner of a cist (Grave 3) that contained human remains (Wiggins, forthcoming).

The human remains were analysed by V. Higgins of the University of Sheffield. The skeleton recovered is that of a juvenile, aged about 6 years.

Conclusion: Juvenile, c. 6 years.

### 2. Knockoneill, Co. Derry

Context: Two secondary pits were found in the forecourt of this court tomb. One contained cremated bone and charcoal while the second contained the pygmy cup covered by an inverted urn. Some of the bone from the urn had spilled into the pygmy cup and the pit (Herring 1949).

The contents of the pygmy cup consist of a small amount (<50g) of small stones, soil, charcoal, bone meal and ten small fragments of cremated bone. None of the ten fragments is identifiable though their general appearance and thickness suggest that they belong to an adult.

The contents of the urn consist of about 400g of well-burnt bone. The fragments are generally small (longest 61 mm, average 20 mm) and contain the remains of at least two individuals. One is an adult of unknown sex while the other is a juvenile. The juvenile is represented by the petrous portions of both temporals, the right zygomatic process of the frontal and a small fragment of skull vault. An age estimate for this individual is made with diffidence as the size of the fragments is the only criterion on which this is made. It would appear that this child was aged about 5 years at the time of death.

The adult remains include fragments from all major body parts; long bones, skull, vertebrae and innominates. All of the remains have been efficiently cremated and it seems likely that they were crushed thereafter.

Unfortunately, it is not possible to make a more precise estimate of the age of this adult.

Conclusion: Adult, age and sex unknown

Juvenile c. 5 yrs.

### 3. Drumhaggart, Co. Donegal

Context: The pygmy cup was found in association with cremated bone in a sandpit. Several other cists are said to have been noted nearby (unpublished note in NMI index).

The remains accompanying this vessel consist of about 275g of well-incinerated human bone and one unburnt fragment of antler. The bone fragments are generally relatively large with the longest piece measuring 70.2 mm. The remains are those of an adult. Despite the fact that this is such a small collection of bone, most body parts are represented with relatively large fragments of cranium, the facial skeleton, vertebrae and long bones present. The general size and gracility of the remains are suggestive of a female. The state of the coronal suture and the absence of Degenerative Joint Disease in the surviving vertebrae may indicate that this is a younger adult.

These remains have been efficiently cremated and do not appear to have been crushed. If this deposit represents all of the remains from the pit then it would appear to be a token collection of larger fragments rather than a comprehensive collection of all of the burnt remains. This recovery bias favouring larger fragments may have occurred in the Early Bronze Age or at the time of discovery.

Conclusion: Younger adult female.

### 4. Drung, Co. Donegal

Context: In one of 2 cist graves discovered in the course of gravel-digging. The pygmy cup was found in Cist A with a crouched inhumation (identified as a male - Kavanagh 1977, 82).

The skeleton from Cist A is mostly complete and moderately well preserved. Some of the morphological features of the skull are indeed suggestive of a male individual. The supraorbital ridges of mastoid processes are relatively large although the nuchal crest is not particularly rugose. However, sex differences in skull morphology vary between populations and sexual dimorphism is more marked among some groups than others. The pelvis provides more accurate data for sex determination. In the case of the skeleton from Cist A, the pelvis is suggestive of a female. Despite the absence of pre-auricular sulci and the ambiguous shape of the sciatic notch, the shape of the pubes and obturator foramen indicate this is a female. The general gracility of the bones support this conclusion. Furthermore, the vertical diameter of the femoral head and the bicondylar width of the femur fall within the female ranges established by Pearson (1919).

A combination of dental, epiphyseal, sutural and pubic symphyseal evidence suggest this individual was aged between 21 and 25 years at the time of death.

The burial has a number of interesting skeletal anomalies and pathological conditions. In the dentition, there is excessive attrition of the anterior teeth and <sup>2</sup> was absent congenitally or had failed to erupt. The right humerus has a septal aperture and 'squatting facets' occur alterally on both tibiae. These are normal skeletal variations.

Schmorl's nodes occur on the inferior side of the centrum of the first lumbar vertebra and on the superior side of the second lumbar. These nodes are the result of strain on the lower back caused by compressive forces. This was probably due to lifting heavy loads.

This individual has a mild/moderate case of cribra orbitalia. This occurs bilaterally. The aetiology of this condition remains obscure but most writers favour dietary deficiencies as the main causative factor.

Neither of these pathological conditions is unusual in prehistoric skeletal material.

Conclusion: Probably female, 21-25 yrs.

### 5. Ballyhanwood, Co. Down

Context: The label on this pygmy cup reads:

"Urn (sic) with bones dug up at Ballyhanwood. Presented by Mr. A. Hill 1834" (Ulster Museum label).

The pygmy cup contains 25g of cremated bone and 50g of soil, a small piece of flint, seven small fragments of the pot itself, a small piece of pumice, roots, grass, a few flecks of charcoal, a modern plastic bead and two wood shavings!

The 48 fragments of bone are all calcined and are indicative of an efficient firing process. It was possible to identify cranial, vertebral and long bone fragments along with hand phalanges and a right scaphoid of the wrist.

Unfortunately, the fragments are all very small (largest - 27mm long) and diagnosis of age is difficult. The scaphoid reaches its full size (as this one had done) at about 15 years. The two fragments of cranial suture are probably from a young adult or sub-adult. It seems likely that the individual from whom this very small collection of bone fragments came was aged between 15 and 30 years. It is not possible to determine the sex of this individual.

Conclusion: Adult or sub adult, 15-30 years.

### 6. Maze Course, Co. Down

Context: "Pygmy cup found apparently together with a cinerary urn of O.H.R. type and cremated

remains under a small mound at Maze Course, Co. Down. Found in 1850" (index card NMI).

The pygmy cup contains a single fragment of bone. The cremated remains recorded do not appear to have been curated.

The single fragment of calcined bone is an endocranial fragment of the occipital cruciate eminence, 33mm long.  
Conclusion: Probably human, of unknown age and sex.

**7. Portaferry, Co. Down**

Context: "Found in a gravel pit. Said to have contained burnt bones" (Kavanagh 1977, 83).

The pygmy cup contains 45 fragments (50g) of bone, most of which are 20-30mm in length, while the largest is 47mm long. Many of these pieces of bone are identifiable and the cremation contains the remains of two individuals, an adult and a juvenile.

The adult is represented by portions of the cranium, the vertebrae, the legs, hands and feet. It is not possible to determine the sex of this individual but the presence of evidence of severe Degenerative Joint Disease in a lumbar vertebrae may indicate a middle aged or older adult (>30 years).

The juvenile is represented by only six fragments, two of which came from the cranium and six fragments of juvenile ribs. The thickness of cranial fragments and size of the rib fragments may suggest that this child was under 5 years at the time of death.

Conclusion: Adult, middle aged or older  
Juvenile <5 yrs.

**8. Cabinteely, Co. Dublin**

Context: "Found in a cist grave with a cremation. No associated pottery" (NMI label).

The pygmy cup contains only six small fragments (longest 35mm) of cremated bone weighing 10.4g. The cremation referred to on the label appears not to have been curated.

Four of the fragments are identifiable and all are portions of the skull of an adult. The bones have a robust appearance (the maximum thickness of one parietal fragment is 7.6mm) and may have come from a male.

Conclusion: Adult, possible male.

**9,10. Edmonstown, Co. Dublin**

Context: Two pygmy cups were found during rescue excavations (unpublished) carried out by the NMI in 1950/51. The site contained a cemetery of unprotected cremations, along with unprotected urn burials, three burials in stone cists, each accompanied by food vessels. Two of the cists contained inhumations while the third held a cremation.

One complete pygmy cup and a sherd of a second were found. The complete vessel was found with Burial 2 - a cremation in a small pit SE of Cist I. A flint scraper and three stone beads may also have been associated with this burial.

The fragment of the second pygmy cup was found among sherds of a food vessel and urn with Burial 6 (unpublished file in NMI).

**Burial 2:**

This burial contains only 45 fragments (102.2 g) of cremated bone. The pieces are mostly small, averaging 20-30mm in size (the largest fragment is 54.4mm long). It is possible to identify 33 fragments. Thirty-two of these are definitely the remains of an adult. Remains of the cranium, facial skeleton, long bones and one cervical vertebra are present.

It is not possible to determine the sex of this individual or to be more precise about age.

The one remaining fragment is a very thin portion of skull bone. It is 26mm long and it has a maximum

thickness of 2.8mm. It may be a piece of the skull of a juvenile.

Conclusion: Adult

? Juvenile.

**Burial 6:**

This is a very much larger collection (559.0 g) of cremated bone than Burial 2. The average fragment size is 30mm, the longest fragment is 77mm long. The remains appear to be of one individual. All body parts are represented. The nuchal crest is very pronounced. This and the shape of the mandible suggest that this is a male. From sutural and epiphyseal evidence, it would appear that this person was aged between 15 and 25 years at the time of death.

Porotic hyperostosis occurs on two unisided fragments of parietal along the coronal suture. This condition is not uncommon in skeletal material of archaeological origin and may have been due to some nutritional deficiency.  
Conclusion: Younger adult male.

**11. Athenry, Co. Galway**

Context: Found in 1848 (NMI label)

"said to have contained fragments of cremated bones" (Kavanagh 1977, 85-86)

This vessel contains 23 fragments (10.8 g) of burnt bone most of which are very small. The largest piece measures 28.7mm. It is not possible to determine the age or sex (or indeed species) of the individual represented by these scanty remains.

Conclusion: ?

**12. Pound, Co. Kerry**

Context: The base of a pygmy cup was recovered from a cist grave that was disturbed during field clearance. Only 20 fragments of the larger fragments of cremated bone were recovered (Cleary 1985).

The 20 fragments (62.2 g) were all well-incinerated. The remains of two individuals were identified: an adult aged 20-25 years and a juvenile aged 5-7 years.

The adult is represented by fragments of the skull, vertebrae, innominates and long bones. The age estimate is based on the fact that an epiphyseal plate of a vertebral centrum had not totally fused at the time of death. It was not possible to determine the sex of this individual.

The juvenile is represented by fragments of the skull and a rib. The age estimate is based on the state of development of the frontal sinuses and on the general size of the bones.

Conclusion: Adult, 20-25 years  
Juvenile, 5-7 years.

**13. Letterkeen, Co. Mayo**

Context: The pygmy cup accompanied an unprotected cremation in Burial 4 (Ó Riordáin and MacDermott 1952).

Note: The excavation report includes anatomical reports by Keenan and by Gejvall. The skeletal material from Burial 4 appears to have been analysed by Keenan who decided that "the burial represents the remains of one human adult; it is impossible to identify age or sex" (Ó Riordáin and MacDermott 1952, 95).

Burial 4 contains a large collection (1402.5g) of calcined bone. The average fragment size is about 30mm though the largest piece has a maximum length of 89mm. These bones appear not to have been crushed prior to deposition. Contrary to the published account, the remains of at least two individuals appear to be present, one an adult probably aged between 20 and 25 years, the other a juvenile aged between 12 and 15 years.

The adult is represented by a comprehensive collection of all body parts with a meticulous recovery of



most body parts. The age estimation is based on the state of fusion of the endocranial sutures and the presence of an epiphyseal line on the head of the rib.

Most of the juvenile remains consist of skull fragments. The only post-cranial elements recognised are fragments of both ilia. Fortunately, some alveolar bone and tooth fragments are present. These enable the age estimate of 12-15 years be reached with confidence.

Conclusion: Adult, 20-25 yrs  
Juvenile, 12-15 yrs.

**14. Grange, Co. Roscommon**

Context: The pygmy cup was found in association with a Vase Urn and cremated bone in Grave 6 (unpublished file in NMI).

All of the fragments in this small collection of bone (476.7g) have been calcined. The deposit consists mostly of long bone fragments although some fragments of the skull and scapula are also present. Most of the fragments are between 10 and 20mm in length (the longest is 62mm). This small fragment size suggests that the remains were deliberately crushed to facilitate their storage in the urn.

The remains seem to represent one individual - a male. This sex determination is based on the presence of a prominent nuchal crest on the occipital and the generally robust nature of the long bone fragments. The convolutions of the endo-cranial sutures suggest that this individual was a younger or middle aged adult (<40 yrs) at the time of death.

The preponderance of long bone and cranial fragments in this small deposit of bone may suggest that it represents the collection of the larger fragments left after cremation, which were then crushed.

Conclusion: Younger or middle aged adult male.

**15. Ballyveelish, Co. Tipperary**

Context: Two pygmy cups were recovered from a polygonal cist which also contained an Encrusted Urn. The fill of the cist consisted of a mixture of stones, oxidised soil, charcoal and cremated bone. (Doody 1987).

The cremated remains were analysed by V.R. O'Sullivan, J.P. Fraher, G.F. Kaar and M.P. O'Sullivan of the Dept. of Anatomy, U.C.C.

The cremation consisted of the remains of at least five individuals - an adult male, an adult female and three juveniles aged about 14 years, 5-6 years and about 1 year at their times of death.

Conclusion: Adult male  
Adult female  
Juvenile, c. 14 years  
Juvenile, 5-6 years  
Juvenile, 1 year.

**16. Glenacunna, Co. Tipperary**

Context: Pygmy cup recovered from an Encrusted Urn in cist A (Twohig 1976).

This contained a small collection (458.1g) of calcined bones. The fragments are mostly quite small with an average size of 20mm. The longest fragment measures 59mm. It seems likely that the remains had been crushed before deposition in the urn.

The remains are those of one individual - a sub-adult. The state of epiphyseal fusion and of dental development suggest that this person was aged between 14 and 18 years at the time of death.

Despite the small size of this cremation deposit, most body parts are represented in the remains.

Conclusion: Sub-adult, 14-18 years.

**17. Corkragh, Co. Tyrone**

Context: Pygmy cup found in an Encrusted Urn which was accompanied in a cist by two Food Vessels (Evans and Patterson 1939).

The present provenance of the remains is not known.

The bones from the Encrusted Urn and one of the Food Vessels were mixed after excavation. These were subsequently analysed by Professor Walmsley of Queens University, Belfast who reported that the remains were those of two adults - a male aged between 30 and 35 years and a female aged between 40 and 50 years.

Conclusion: Adult male, 30-35 years  
Adult female, 40+ years.

**18. Nr. Clogherny Glebe, Co. Tyrone**

Context: "Cremated bone and flint flake associated with vessel" (Kavanagh 1977, 87).

The cremation deposit associated with the pygmy cup consists of sixteen fragments (38.5g) of well-incinerated bone. The largest fragment has a maximum length of 83mm although the average fragment size is 40mm.

It was possible to identify nine of the fragments. These are the remains of an adult. A fragment of the mastoid process of the left temporal is suggestive of a male. It is not possible to determine the age of this individual.

Conclusion: Adult, probably male.

**19. Harristown, Co. Waterford**

Context: Pygmy cup recovered from Urn 5 (Cordoned Urn) (Hawkes 1941).

The cremation deposit contains 88g of well burnt bone. Most of the fragments are about 15mm in length. There is only one large fragment and that has a maximum length of 88mm. Again, it seems likely that the post-crematory processing of the remains involved the crushing of the bone fragments, as the cremation episode would not reduce the bones to the standard size encountered here.

The fragments appear to be the remains of one individual - a juvenile or sub-adult. Some of the long bone fragments are of adult or sub-adult size, though the skull fragments are quite thin and re reminiscent of a juvenile. A number of tooth roots are present (incisors, premolars and molars) and in each case, the roots are complete. An unfused proximal epiphysis of a hand phalange is present. These epiphyses usually fuse between the ages of 14 and 21 years. Given the general size of the long bone fragments and the epiphyseal and dental evidence mentioned above, an age estimate of about 15 or 16 years seems more likely than the age range of 8-12 years mentioned by Hawkes (1941). However, in view of the crushed and generally defective nature of the remains, this age estimate is made with some diffidence.

Conclusion: Juvenile, c. 15-16 years.

**20. Aughrim, Co. Wicklow**

Context: "Found in a sandpit near Aughrim, along with some fragments of cremated bone. Other sherds of pottery, probably food vessel, were subsequently recovered ...." (Kavanagh 1977, 90).

The cremation deposit associated with the pygmy cup consists of a small collection (30.75g) of calcined bone. Most of the fragments are very small (10-15mm), the largest piece of bone having a maximum length of 56.8mm.

It was possible to identify only 20 of the 52 fragments. These represent portions of the cranium, hip bones, ribs and long bones.

The remains appear to be those of one individual. The general size of the bones are suggestive of an adult. It is not possible to determine the sex of this person or make any closer approximation of age.

Conclusion: Probably adult.

**21. Clonshannon, Co. Wicklow**

Context: Pygmy cup found with cremated bone in Burial 3 - in Vase Urn. (Mahr and Price 1932).

In Mahr's report, the remains were identified by Prof. Shea, Anatomy Dept. U.C.G. as those of a juvenile aged 5-6 years at the time of death.

The burial deposit consists of 676g of calcined bone. Some of the fragments are relatively large with an average size of about 35mm. It seems most likely that these fragments were not crushed during the post crematory processing of the remains.

The remains are those of one individual, a juvenile. All body parts are represented. The epiphyseal and dental evidence is indicative of an age-at-death of 14-16 years. The age quoted by Mahr (1932) is incorrect - this may have been arrived at by confusing the permanent and deciduous dentitions.

Conclusion: Juvenile, 14-16 years.

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