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Later Prehistoric Finds Group

Issue 10 Winter 2017

Welcome to the latest edition of the LPFG Newsletter. This issue includes two very different but equally fascinating discussions of current research into Iron Age torcs, and introduces readers to a beautiful Middle Bronze Age pin of the 'Picardy' type recently found in Suffolk.

LPFG social media secretary Matthew Knight shares with us some highlights from the Bronze Age Forum held in University College, Cork, in November, and also reviews the Prehistoric Society's Europa Conference held in Southampton last July. One of the key themes to emerge from that event was the importance in later prehistory of wider, or "global" networks of influence alongside local cultural developments; in keeping with this idea, the LPFG is inviting papers on the theme of *Outside Influences* for our session at the Annual Meeting of the European Association of Archaeologists, to take place in Barcelona next September —see page 21 for details. See page 22 for details of the session being co-organised by LPFG datasheet editor Sophia Adams, *Towards an Archaeology of Making*.

In this issue we also hear from LPFG membership secretary Yvonne Inall about her path into archaeology, which eventually brought her face to face with the speared corpse burial from Pocklington. We provide an update on our series of datasheets, introducing the latest to be published: *Early and Middle Bronze Age Spearheads*, by Richard Davis. Finally we review Richard Bradley's new work, *A Geography of Offerings*.

The Freckenham pin. Image courtesy PAS/Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service (SCCAS). Read more on page 3

Welcome

The Later Prehistoric Finds Group was established in 2013, and welcomes anyone with an interest in prehistoric artefacts, especially small finds from the Bronze and Iron Ages. We hold regular conferences and produce two newsletters a year. Membership is currently free; if you would like to join the group, please e-mail LaterPrehistoricFindsGroup@gmail.com.

We are a new group, and we are hoping that more researchers interested in prehistoric artefacts will want to join us. The group has opted for a loose committee structure that is not binding, and a list of those on the steering committee, along with contact details, can be found on our website: https://sites.google.com/site/laterprehistoricfindsgroup/home. Anna Booth is the current Chair and Dot Boughton is Deputy.

If you would be interested in helping to run the group, we would love to have you on the steering committee. It is open to anyone who would like to be involved. If you are interested, please e-mail us at the address given above.

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The LPFG newsletter is published twice a year. To submit articles, notes or announcements for inclusion, please e-mail Anna Lewis at lpfgnews@outlook.com. Guidelines are available on the website, but please feel free to e-mail with any questions.

A new Middle Bronze Age pin of the 'Picardy' type from Freckenham, Suffolk

Alex Bliss

An extremely well preserved so-called Picardy pin (**Fig. 1**) recently reported to the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) in Suffolk and recorded on the database as SF-109C22 is a recent find of significance. Dating to the Middle Bronze Age, it can be broadly attributed to the Ornament Horizon of around 1400-1200 BC (see Roberts 2007 and Smith 1959 for discussion of this). The find was originally made in 2014 by a metal detectorist, though not brought to wider attention until September of this year.

Fig. 1: The Freckenham pin. Image courtesy PAS/Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service (SCCAS)

The Freckenham pin is of copper-alloy, demonstrating a high-sided cup-shaped head with a deep internal recess probably intended to accommodate an insert, perhaps of amber. The neck of the pin is heavily swollen, decorated (**Fig. 2**) with a progression of five panels delineated by engraved transverse grooves and collars that encircle its entire circumference. Each panel demonstrates a different pattern of incised geometric decoration, comprising single chevrons, double chevrons and diagonal hachuring. Additionally, the neck demonstrates a small projecting side-loop; this may be functional or otherwise purely decorative. Though preserved in extremely good condition, the mid-section of the shank has suffered an abrupt bend that now leaves it in a 'U' shape, with further distortion to the tip also evident. Matt Knight (pers. comm, 2017) has confirmed that this is almost certainly intentional, and probably represents the deliberate de-commissioning of the object prior to its deposition.

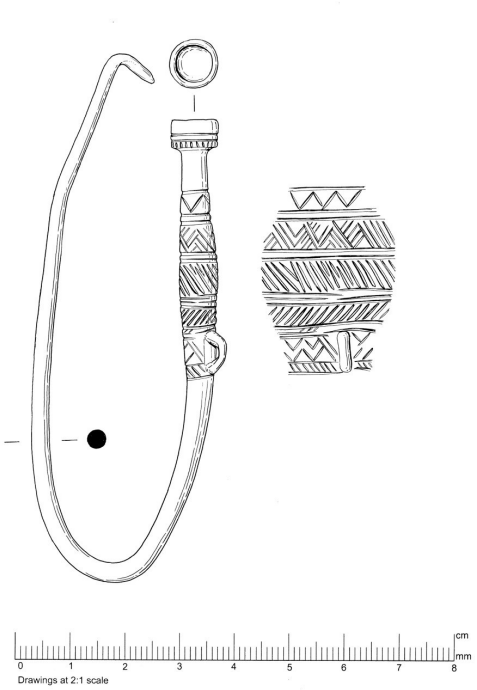

Fig.2: Drawing of the Freckenham pin showing unfolded view of decoration. Illustration by Donna Wreathall (SCCAS)

Fig.3: Distribution of swollen necked/Picardy pins in England and Wales where findspot is known. The red dots refer to finds made in the course of archaeological excavation or chance antiquarian finds, the blue to objects recorded by the PAS. Map by Angie Bolton

This pin is the third known example of this broad type from the county, the first from Hadleigh being discovered in 1978 (Pendleton 1999; O'Connor 1980, 458; Lawson 1979), and another recorded from Mildenhall parish in December of 2006 (PAS record FASW-5C5522). Within this area of Suffolk itself, the pins from Freckenham and Mildenhall sit within a landscape that contains a wide range of deposited Bronze Age metalwork, ranging from late Early Bronze Age flanged axeheads to a Late Bronze Age penannular ring. With reference to the Middle Bronze Age, these include rapier fragments (see Suffolk HER record SHER FRK 014 and PAS records SF-E05916, SF-E07087, SF-1D7484/SF-C1F194), a basal looped spearhead (SF-54C472) and a quoit-headed pin (SF-54D866).

Across Britain there are around twenty-five examples of these pins known, with slightly over half of those recorded by PAS and the rest originating either from modern archaeological work or via antiquarian discoveries. Their distribution is relatively wide (**Fig. 3**), with notable concentrations in East Anglia and central Southern England. Their name results from an initial paper published by Hawkes regarding the deposit of three such pins from Ramsgate (1942), who suggested that these were specifically manufactured in the Picardy region of northern France and subsequently imported to Britain. However, it is now considered that they are not exclusively of Continental origin, with current evidence suggesting strongly that they were manufactured on both sides of the Channel (Ben Roberts pers. comm, 2017). The majority are single finds, although there are examples found within larger 'landscape assemblages' as well as being deposited in hoards alongside other contemporary metalwork. However, a residual example is known from the Salisbury hoard (deposited c. 200 BC).

In addition to the name 'Picardy' being somewhat misleading in terms of their proposed place of manufacture, the question of what exactly makes a Picardy Pin is also complex. This is

largely due to the name being ascribed as an umbrella term. O'Connor (1980) has made inroads into the debate by distinguishing between 'Picardy' and 'Disc headed' pins, though these two 'types' demonstrate a number of shared features, namely swollen necks and incised geometric decoration. In contrast to this, Hawkes (1942) broadly groups a large number of British and Continental finds with a comparably high degree of variation under the 'Picardy' label. Based on this, it has become clear (Ben Roberts pers. comm, 2017) that a systematic review of the current typological system for classifying these objects is needed. It may, arguably, be more correct from a classificatory point of view to refer broadly to the group as 'swollen-necked pins' as with Reinecke's original central European typology (Hawkes 1942, 31), the latter being the single shared feature which ties together the mainstay of examples from Britain and northern France.

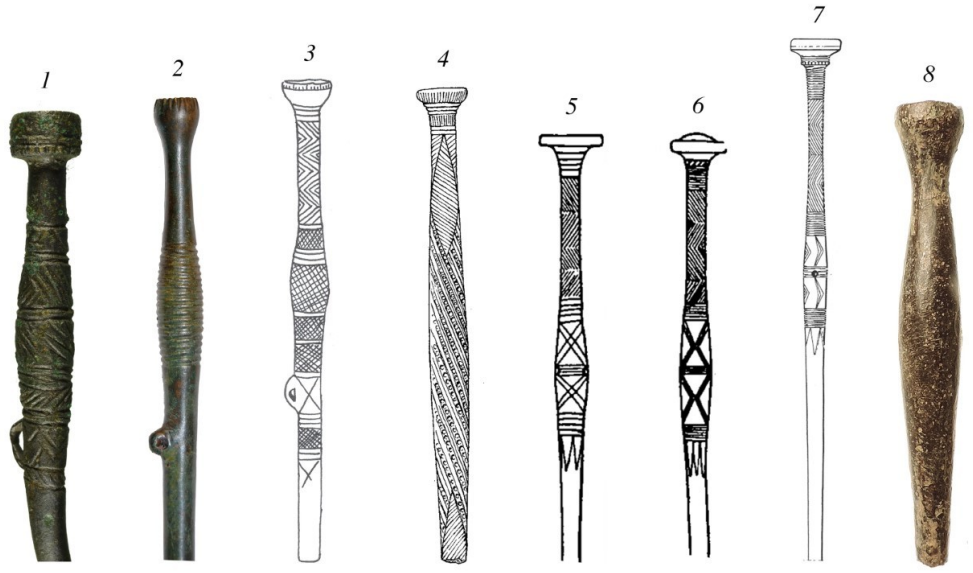

Fig. 4: A selection of 'Picardy' pin heads showing the range of different forms and decorative styles, comparing both British and Continental finds. Images courtesy PAS unless stated otherwise. From left to right: 1. SF-109C22 (Freckenham, Suffolk), 2. GLO-439E61 (Portbury, North Somerset), 3. BERK-2E4E35 (Aston Tirrold, Oxfordshire), 4. FASW-5C5522 (Mildenhall, Suffolk), 5-6. Ramsgate, Kent (adapted after Hawkes 1942, 28, fig. 2, nos. 2-3), 7. Caix, Northern France (adapted after Audozé and Gaucher 1981, 55, fig.1, no. 1), 8. IOW-357A7A (Isle of Wight)

Variability within the corpus of such pins with swollen necks (see **Fig. 4**) is generally discerned from the form of the head, the most commonly encountered being cup-shaped or alternatively disc-shaped with a projecting sub-conical boss. However, differences are also apparent in ascertaining whether there is a transverse perforation or side-loop on the neck (or neither), and in the nature of decoration on the neck- which is usually incised and geometric in style, but can also take the form of closely-spaced moulded ribbed collars or alternatively be completely absent, in some cases. As Worrell states in her record (FASW-5C5522) of the example from Mildenhall, Suffolk: '*…. all exhibit decorative features that are not completely identical, suggesting that although the dataset with which to seek parallels is small, there appears to be a degree of individuality in the decorative design*'. Strong parallels can be drawn between the geometric decoration on swollen-necked pins and that on other contemporary artefacts such as Liss type bracelets, which significantly (along with their related forms) also demonstrate a southern British distribution in addition to being a component of contemporary Continental metalworking traditions, perhaps inferring modes of

cross-Channel contact and influence that may be equally applicable to pins (see Nordez 2015 for discussion of this).

In summation, this pin represents one of the best examples discovered to date from Britain and is an important addition to the national corpus. The fact that it has also been deliberately damaged adds to its significance, suggesting a complex ending to its Bronze Age life. Based on the above, its status as a find of note on at least the regional level is assured.

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Alex Bliss *is one of the two Finds Liaison Officers for Suffolk, based in Bury St Edmunds. He has varied interests in a diverse range of archaeological small finds, as well in as the utilisation and function of prehistoric burnt mound sites (on which he wrote his undergraduate dissertation).*

An Overview of the Bronze Age Forum, 10-12th November 2017, University College Cork

Matthew G. Knight

From 10th-12th November, the tenth Bronze Age Forum was held at University College Cork. An astonishing 43 papers were presented over the two and a half days, covering not only Britain and Ireland, but also vast swathes of mainland Europe. The papers tackled everything from neuroscience to farming, and from contemporary art sculptures to field systems. Experimentalists from the universities of Leiden, Newcastle and Leicester (and yours truly from Exeter), were out in full force with combat, use, and destruction experiments into how bronze shields, axes, and swords might have been used and treated. David Bell, however, presented a cautionary paper on a number of Middle Bronze Age rapiers that had been reused in the Irish rebellion in the late 18th century to contest how careful our interpretations of use-wear must be. Amber Roy represented the non-metal contingent with her paper reconsidering the use one might see on Early Bronze Age perforated stone axes and how this might be aligned with our current typological understanding.

Fig. 1: Experiments into the destruction of Bronze Age metalwork were presented by Matt Knight

Throughout the weekend, papers focused on a variety of case studies, presenting new research on recent finds and excavations, including an Early-Middle Bronze Age rapier from Scotland, the Late Bronze Age hoards from Gilmonby and St Michael's Mount, a Middle Bronze Age occupation area on Achill Hill in Ireland, the Salcombe Bay shipwreck, and the eponymous Must Farm settlement. It is clear that the overall quantity of material being recovered across all sites, as well as the approaches taken towards the objects, is steadily changing how we understand Bronze Age societal practices.

Much work was presented on how we might interpret the 'Beaker phenomenon' and the spread of people, innovations, and ideas. Approaches included traditional landscape studies and comparisons between French and Irish megalithic monuments, as well as scientific analyses of osteological, faunal, and ceramic remains. Neil Carlin offered a particularly thought-provoking paper in reaction to the recent media presentation of the reinvigorated Beaker invasion hypothesis. This led to a discussion about how archaeologists might better understand, interpret, and engage with aDNA analyses in the future.

Other papers included a look at the development of Early Bronze Age houses in Norway, as well as a reassessment of Irish cremation practices and two landscape studies in Ireland. As in Britain, developer-funded archaeology is radically impacting our understanding of Bronze Age Ireland and its activity areas.

New approaches to funerary material and reassessments of practices also dominated many of the papers. Typical macro-scale approaches to monuments and practices were applied, as well as recent work on osteological remains from a variety of sites. Isotopic analyses, funerary taphonomy, micro-CT scans and statistical modelling were all applied to a range of case studies, showing the potential for such work.

Theoretical analysis of finds similarly contributed a wide range of papers. Rob Wiseman drew on neuroscience to re-examine how we might view pits in the Bronze Age, while Mark Haughton argued for the importance of localised analysis of burial sites for gender studies, rather than simply a general overview approach. Dot Boughton and I contributed a paper on the mnemonic potential of metalwork, and Joanna Lawrence delved into themes of sexualisation and fertility in Swedish rock art. Leah Powell offered a particularly engaging talk on the organisation of grave goods as a way to reinterpret the traditional way we look at burials.

New research in the Rother Valley (Hampshire/West Sussex), farming landscapes in Ireland, and the Stonehenge landscape, demonstrated the advantage of looking at trends on a regional scale. Meanwhile, several presenters delivered papers on widescale analyses of data. Sophia Adams treated us to an overview of metalworking material in Bronze Age Britain, and Arjan Louwen presented a huge volume of data so far collected from urnfield graves in the Low Countries. By far one of the most enjoyable talks came from Anwen Cooper and Catriona Gibson, who not only presented their latest data, but also introduced the audience to a "Snog, Marry, Avoid" approach to understanding regional trends in pottery! The largest scale analysis was no doubt presented by Steven Matthews, covering over 1000 swords from across western Europe to assess changing patterns in weapon technologies.

Needless to say, this conference was a whirlwind of ideas, people and all things Bronze Age that certainly left this author stimulated with a multitude of ideas and questions. It remains only to highlight that Dr Katharina Becker, Professor William O'Brien, and the department of Archaeology at Cork were truly fantastic hosts. On top of not one, but two receptions(!), we were also treated to a thoroughly entertaining live performance of replicas of Bronze Age bronze horns and an Iron Age carnyx by Ancient Music Ireland. You can't ask for more than that!

Fig. 2: Replica Iron Age carnyx, Ancient Music Ireland

Matthew G. Knight is *a PhD candidate at the University of Exeter. He blogs at https://alifeinfragments.wordpress.com/. For further information about each of the talks from the Bronze Age Forum, please search* ***#baf2017*** *on Twitter.*

Meet the committee

In this issue of the LPFG Newsletter we hear from Yvonne Inall, LPFG membership secretary, about her route into archaeology and the journey that brought her from Sydney to East Yorkshire.

Growing up in Sydney, Australia, I always had an interest and history and archaeology, but for a long time I didn't think it was something you could actually do as a job. I used to play 'archaeologist', digging up the back yard with my brothers and sister! When I grew up and finally figured out it was possible to have a career as an archaeologist I decided to go to university. I did a Bachelor of Arts at the University of Sydney majoring in archaeology. I studied Classical and Near Eastern archaeology and ancient history. The physical artefacts were always most fascinating to me and I spent endless hours in the University's Nicholson Museum. Finds seemed a way of genuinely engaging with the past: holding in your hand the same object someone had made and used thousands of years ago felt like the most direct link to the past. For me, that potent sense has never gone away.

My fascination slowly narrowed down to an interest in weaponry and I undertook a Masters degree by research at the University of Sydney analysing spearheads and swords from Southern Italy from the 9th to the 4th centuries BC. After completing my Masters, I presented my research into spearheads at a conference in Italy. One of the other speakers was Dr Peter Halkon, who mentioned the 'speared-corpse' ritual of Iron Age East Yorkshire. I thought that was, frankly, the freakiest thing I had ever heard of and I had to know more. That led me to change the direction of my research focus. I moved to Britain and completed a PhD at the University of Hull which centred on Iron Age spearheads in Britain, creating a new typology and assessing the contexts in which they have been found.

Since completing my PhD I have had the tremendous fortune to continue working in archaeology, and have had the opportunity to see the 'speared-corpse' burial at Pocklington, while under excavation by MAP archaeology. Getting to handle those weapons, and write up the report on them, has been the realisation of a dream.

Yvonne Inall's *account of the Pocklington speared-corpse burial can be read on the* ***Remember Me*** *blog at https://remembermeproject.wordpress.com/2016/09/30/the-speared-corpse-burials-of-iron-age-east-yorkshire.*

The Leekfrith Torcs

Julia Farley, Teresa Gilmore, Zoe Sutherland, Deb Klemperer

On Sunday 11th December 2016 two metal-detectorists, Mark Hambleton and Joe Kania, unearthed three gold torcs and a gold bracelet in the parish of Leekfrith in Staffordshire Moorlands. A full publication of the hoard will be submitted to the *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society* in due course. This short interim note is intended to raise awareness of this exciting new Iron Age find.

Hambleton and Kania uncovered the hoard while metal-detecting on top of a rise in a hilly field which is under pasture. During this first session of detecting they uncovered two complete torcs (find nos. 1 and 2), the bracelet (no. 3) and part of a third torc (no. 4). They made the discoveries separately, each around 1m apart and about 15cm below the ground surface.

The Leekfrith torcs. Image from www.stokemuseums.org.uk

The finds were reported the following day to the local Portable Antiquities Scheme Finds Liaison Officer, Teresa Gilmore, during a Finds Day at the Potteries Museum and Art Gallery. Subsequently, in January 2017, a small-scale excavation trench was opened at the site, covering all the findspots and a buffer zone of around 1m on all sides. The excavation was carried out by Zoe Sutherland (Stoke-on-Trent Archaeology Service) and Alison Nicholls (Assistant Curator of Local History, Potteries Museum and Art Gallery). Whilst the holes dug by the detectorists to retrieve the torcs could easily be located, it was not possible to identify any original context for the finds. However, plough marks were visible extending roughly north-east to south-west down the hillside. These were made during the last (and potentially only) episode of ploughing in recent times, which occurred in 1987. It is likely that this ploughing event disturbed the finds from their original context, depositing them at intervals down the slope, with the smallest pieces travelling the furthest.

The two finders returned to the field on Sunday 26th February, and uncovered the second half of torc no. 4. They handed this additional piece into the Potteries Museum and Art Gallery the

following day, and the whole group was declared Treasure by Ian Smith (Senior Coroner for North Staffordshire) on Tuesday 28th February. The Potteries Museum and Art Gallery hope to acquire the find.

The objects were examined by Dr Julia Farley (Curator of British and European Iron Age collections, British Museum) for the purposes of writing up the Treasure report. They were also tested using non-destructive X-ray Fluorescence. This analysis was carried out at Birmingham Museums Conservation Laboratory by Pieta Greaves (Drakon Heritage and Conservation), assisted by Teresa Gilmore (Birmingham Museums). The results showed a relatively consistent surface composition across all four objects of 74-78% gold, 18-22% silver, 2 -3% copper, with small amounts of iron (0.3-1.5%), which may be from the soil. These are preliminary results which reflect only the surface composition of the objects. The surface composition of ancient gold is not necessarily representative of the original alloy used; it may be heavily influenced by surface-enrichment due to manufacturing processes or corrosion. Nevertheless, these findings are consistent with Middle to Late Iron Age gold objects from continental Europe, and are similar to the composition of some natural European golds (Northover 1992, 241).

Two of the torcs (nos. 1 and 4) are relatively plain thistle-terminal types, with no. 1 being more robust in form than the more delicate no. 4. Both have a plain circular-sectioned neck-ring, expanding towards the terminals. Each terminal consists of a circular 'bead', narrowing towards a slimmer waist and then flaring out to a trumpet-shaped head with slightly concave circular face. No. 4 is undecorated aside from polygonal indentations on the inside of the circular face of each trumpet-head. No. 1 is decorated with concentric lines around either side of the 'bead' and the wide external edge of the 'trumpet'. It also has stamped decoration in the form of small triple-circle motifs where each end of the neck-ring meets its terminal: three sets on one side, and four on the other.

Torc no. 2 is a more unusual form. It consists of a pair of gold wires twisted around one another. At either end, the two wires are hammered/soldered together to form a single rod, which is bent back on itself in a hair-pin bend. The two ends are hooked together to form a simple clasp. Each clasp terminates in a small trumpet-shaped knob with concave circular face.

The bracelet (no. 3) is the most ornate and perhaps the most important find of the group. The terminals are a variant of the thistle-type, with smaller and simpler buffer ends, though with the same concave circular face. The outside of each terminal is decorated with three pelta-shaped loops of gold wire, overlaying chased or engraved decoration. This is an unusual design, but may be connected to Early Style traditions of Celtic art, referencing Mediterranean motifs such as the Greek palmette. The body of the bracelet is made from four twisted 'wires'. Two are thick, hollow, folded strips extending from the terminals. The other pair, which spiral around the central join between the larger two, are thin lengths of square-sectioned wire which have been tightly twisted on themselves to give a rope-like effect.

All the objects exhibit damage in the form of bending and twisting, caused by being struck by the plough. It is possible to arrange the three torcs in a nested set, with torc 4 at the bottom, torc 1 in the middle and torc 2 at the top, showing how the distortion of each piece might have been caused by the entire group being struck and dragged by the plough, crushing them against one another. The bracelet fits into the middle of this hypothetical nested arrangement, and shows evidence of having one of its terminals struck and pulled backwards by the plough.

All three torcs also show evidence of wear. On nos. 1 and 4, the terminals are noticeably worn on one side, showing where they rubbed against the neck of the wearer. The same is true of the clasp on no. 2. In each case, the more worn underside also appears to have been the underside as deposited (showing scratching and abrasion where it had been dragged by the plough). This suggests that the objects were carefully placed into the ground the 'right' way up.

The closest parallels for the group, certainly for the two thistle-terminal torcs (1 and 4) and the bracelet (3), come from continental Europe. Although two thistle-terminal torcs are known from Britain (a bronze example from Medway in Kent - Jope 2000, Pl. 32a-b—and a fragmentary gold piece from Caistor in Lincolnshire - NLM-605352; 2013 T130; Joy 2015, 151), the predominant distribution of these finds is across central and eastern France and into western Germany (Hautenauve 2005). The dating of these types varies between authors from the 5th to early 3rd century BC (Stead and Rigby 1999, 67-8; Eluère 1987, 28; Hautenauve 2005, 67-70; Echt et al 2011, 44). The bracelet, no. 3, resembles in form (though not in the style of decoration) aspects of the three bracelets from the rich female chariot burial at Waldalgesheim in Germany, dated to around 300-340 BC (Joachim 1995). These parallels would tend to suggest a date range for the manufacture of the Leekfrith hoard of around 400–250 BC. If the decoration on the terminals of bracelet 3 is indeed a rare example of Early Style Celtic art from Britain, then a 4th century BC date may be most likely.

In summary, this find represents an unusual Middle Iron Age group of imported continental gold jewellery. Based on continental grave finds, these objects may have been worn by influential and well-connected women. Imports from this period are rare in Britain (Joy 2015). The objects could have arrived as gifts or trade goods, or been brought over by their owners. At some point, probably in the Middle to Late Iron Age, these objects were carefully placed into the ground, perhaps as an offering. They were buried just off the top of the slope of a low hill, on the spring line, almost certainly in a single nested deposit. The group was disturbed and damaged by ploughing in around 1987, before finally being rediscovered in 2016. These objects may represent some of the earliest Iron Age gold from Britain, and perhaps also some of the earliest Celtic art. Whilst much research remains to be done, this important find encourages us to rethink the importance of the West Midlands in the Middle to Late Iron Age, including potential continental connections.

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Up close and personal with Iron Age torcs!

Tess Machling with Roland Williamson

Roland and I have been working together for a couple of years now, making replicas for museums and others. In recent years Roland has made Sussex Loops, a copy of the Oxborough dirk, and the South Cave sword, amongst many other things. We started thinking about Iron Age torcs two years ago when we were looking into replicating the Newark torc (**Fig.1**), found by a detectorist in 2005, and now housed in the National Civil War Museum, Newark. We never intended it to be anything more than a replication, but it has become a growing research project, which has overturned much of the assumed knowledge regarding these items.

Fig. 1: The Newark (left) and Netherurd (right) torcs. Images used with permission of Newark National Civil War Museum and the National Museum of Scotland

One of the first things you have to do when you want to replicate something is work out exactly how it was made and, after hitting the books, we realised that the established theory was that the hollow terminals of this type of torc were made using the lost wax method where a clay doughnut shape was formed over the ends of the wire neck ring before being covered in wax which was then carved with the basic decorative details, and then covered in yet more clay. The wax was then heated out, the molten gold was poured through and allowed to cool and the exterior clay was chipped off revealing the gold terminal within.

However, to Roland, this seemed an extremely risky enterprise as any fault or leakage in the casting would result in a damaged terminal and potential damage to many metres of hand-hammered gold wires. Even allowing for a bit of skilled showing-off by the Iron Age craftsperson, it seemed a crazy idea. And in literature searches we could find no justification for the lost wax theory: it was just assumed to be.

So from this, we started wondering if maybe the terminals were cast separately then attached. However, we had no evidence and so we set off to look at as many torcs as we could find. What we really needed was a torc we could see inside and, after a bit of online searching, a photo of the Netherurd terminal (Fig. 1) popped up. Found near Edinburgh in 1806, this torc had been found as a terminal, apparently detached from its wires prior to deposition.

As independent, and entirely self-funded, researchers we could not afford to try many of the expensive scientific techniques open to larger research projects: but we had eyes, a good macro lens, a cheap endoscope that fitted a mobile phone and a dogged determination to get to the bottom of this issue. So armed with our 'kit' we went off to the National Museum of Scotland to look at the Netherurd terminal.

Seeing that torc was our Eureka moment. We looked inside, expecting to see casting evidence: dendrites, dribbles, perhaps even the remains of the clay core, etc. But what we saw that day was a complete revelation: even just looking at it, it was obvious that there was no casting evidence but instead the interior was covered in many tiny hammer marks, seams where the gold had been joined together and indents matching the relief decoration of the exterior. This torc had not been cast: it was made of gold sheet, constructed in at least three parts (**Fig. 2**) – a doughnut, core and collar – and decorated with high relief repousse.

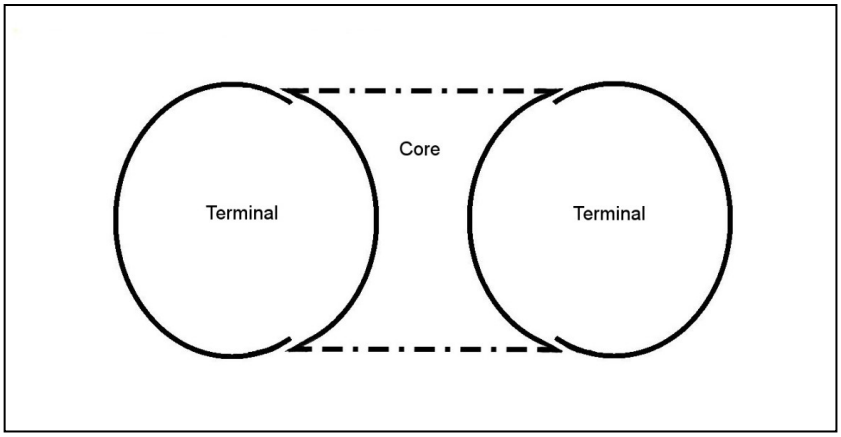


Fig. 2: Cross-section through terminal showing sheet-work doughnut and core

OK, so Netherurd was sheet. Did this mean Newark was too? And floating in the back of our minds was yet another possibility: the Big Daddy of Iron Age torcs, the Snettisham Great torc, was not dissimilar to the Netherurd terminal. If Netherurd was sheet, could that mean the Great torc was too?

We needed more evidence and through a friend of a friend, managed to obtain the services of a horse vet to x-ray the torc, in a café, in Newark. Sadly, the x-ray was not powerful enough but it gave us an idea of what we needed. A chat with a friend led to a message: he thought he'd found us some kit we could use, and he'd get back to us. This kit turned out to be no less than the full resources and co-operation of the Materials group at the National Physical Laboratory…and all for free! So one cold day in March we took the Newark torc to Teddington where it spent a day being bombarded by all kinds of scientific gizmos (**Fig. 3**): XCT, XRF, 3D-microscopes, ultra-fast cameras to map wire movements, etc, etc.

The result was that we managed to see enough of the insides of the Newark torc to say pretty positively that it too was made of sheet gold. Two torus torcs down…. now just the Snettisham Great torc and the Sedgeford torc remained. A quick look at the Sedgeford torc confirmed it was cast: bubbly, cracked and completely different from both Newark and Netherurd. So what about the Great torc?

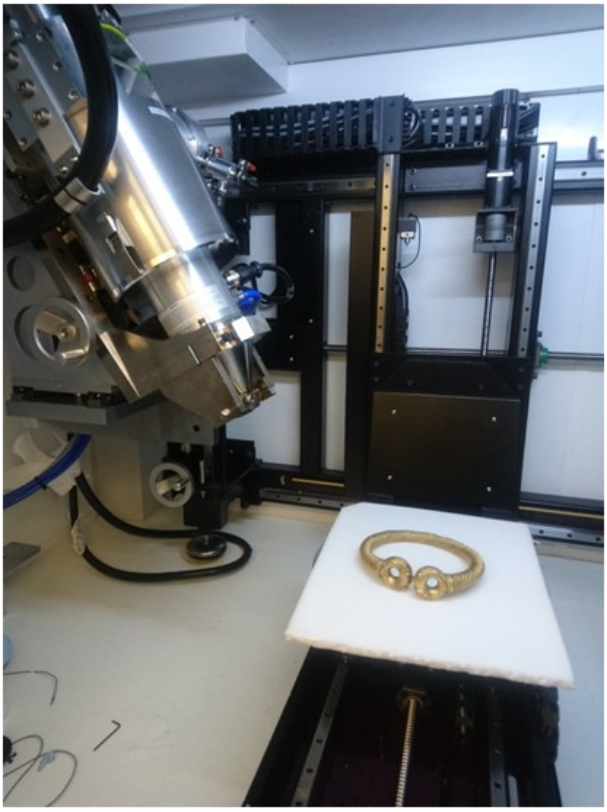


Fig. 3: The Newark torc in the XCT machine at NPL

Meanwhile, we spent a long time hunting the internet for images of torcs, reading everything we could find, and leaving nose marks on museum cases as we squinted at torcs. We were getting a feel for these objects. We also started looking at their decoration: at the many tiny tooled marks all over the terminals. We started noticing patterns: the marks on Netherurd and Newark were more fluid than those of the East Anglian torcs. The latter displayed proper 'basketwork' tooled in regular perpendicular blocks of three or four lines.

Fig. 4: The Newark (left) and Netherurd (right) roundels showing similar patterning. Images used with permission of Newark National Civil War Museum and the National Museum of Scotland

But Newark and Netherurd were different. More irregular, less ordered. But there was a pattern nonetheless (**Fig. 4**). And we kept seeing it time and time again on both torcs: a distinct pattern at a scale of tenths of millimetres which convinced us, along with other evidence of design layout, technique and construction, that these two torcs were made or finished by the same person. And yet found 200 miles apart. And well away from East Anglia.

Suddenly we had stumbled into the territory of trade and exchange: two torcs, by apparently the same maker, made using a gold working technique more associated with northern and western Britain and *found* in northern and western Britain. The assumed models of southern-northern distribution from an East Anglian manufacturing centre became difficult to support. The last piece of the puzzle finally fell into place a few months ago when the British Museum kindly agreed to x-ray the Great torc. Sure enough, as expected, the Great torc was sheet-work and the x-rays clearly showed the doughnut and core construction method and evidence of repousse. We are now starting to wonder if the Great torc may be an outlier: the perfectly made anomaly in hoards of poorly cast hollow torcs which themselves *may* be copies of the northern and western sheet-worked examples.

So where next? Currently we have a paper written and several other papers in preparation. We are also working with goldsmiths and jewellers whose insights into the precise manufacture of these torcs are proving to be invaluable. We have more work planned at NPL and we continue to explore different elements of these amazing objects. It feels like the start of many more years of research. And, who knows, one day, we may even get to replicate the Newark torc……

Dr Tess Machling *is a self-employed archaeologist and researcher and, when not working for the Prehistoric Society as their Membership Secretary, works with Roland Williamson, researching artefacts so that their replication can be better understood.* ***Roland Williamson*** *is a museum replica maker of over 30 years' experience, specialising in producing museum-quality replicas in a number of different materials. When not replicating artefacts, Roland is Business Manager of Regia Anglorum, the leading Anglo Saxon re-enactment group.*

The Bronze Age as Pre-Modern Globalisation – The Prehistoric Society Europa Conference 2017

Matthew G. Knight

On 23rd-24th July 2017, the University of Southampton hosted the annual Prehistoric Society Europa Conference, this year honouring the work of Professor Helle Vandkilde and celebrating her contributions to European prehistory. A phenomenal fifteen papers were presented by academics from across Europe, concluding in a keynote by Professor Vandkilde.

Talks on the first day were wide-ranging. The creation of identity during the Chalcolithic and Bronze Age periods was a key focus, with examinations of Beaker archery equipment (by Thor McVeigh) and Nuragic architecture on Sardinia (by Cezary Namirski). Furthermore, many of the papers used studies of material culture, cosmological indicators, and scientific analyses to demonstrate emerging localised traditions and the movement of individuals and populations. Regions covered in these papers included southern Britain (Claire Copper), Central Europe (Phillip Stockhammer), Scandinavia (Karin Margareta Frei, and Johan Ling with Lene Melheim) and the Carpathian Basin (Mateusz Jaeger). Such studies increasingly help us create narratives for prehistoric societies and it is clear to see that while broad trends were presented across Europe, local interpretations of material were every bit as important.

The importance of understanding the spread of metallurgical innovations and techniques from the Eurasian Steppe was considered by Miljana Radivojević, whose paper was complimented the following day by Ben Roberts's global analysis of the innovation of copper alloys. These studies highlighted the various factors that influenced the production and movement of materials, including not only access to resources, but also preferences in colours.

Kristian Kristiansen opened the second day with a characteristically engaging talk on new research into trade of materials in Middle Bronze Age Denmark, while Alex Gibson explored the reappropriation and resurgence of Middle Neolithic ideologies in the Early Bronze Age, particularly evident in the grooved pottery and monuments that were produced. Meanwhile, Marie Louise Stig Sørenson presented work on a curious object type known as a 'belt box' from south Scandinavia and northern Germany to consider the complexities of female identities. The focus remained on Bronze Age metalwork as Svend Hansen discussed the developments in weapons and the need for martial equipment in different regions as an influence in the globalisation of material culture. Finally, Catherine Frieman offered some thoughts about how we may view innovation and the spread of ideas through an analysis of Neolithic and Early Bronze Age flint daggers.

The conference concluded with a keynote presentation from Helle Vandkilde, who explored the micro- and macro-scale of Bronze Age globalisation, drawing on research conducted in Papua New Guinea alongside an investigation of the Pile hoard from Sania, Sweden. By analysing the origins of the various objects in the hoard (which ranged from Central Europe to Britain), as well as the immediate context and parallels elsewhere, Vandkilde demonstrated the complexities involved in assembling this deposit and the ongoing interconnectivity. The emergence of bronze, it was argued, forced people to travel and cross-cultural boundaries for access to resources establishing widespread, sustained networks.

Overall this conference provided a stimulus for how we should now be engaging with the archaeology available to us, allowing us to explore not only the local impacts, but also the contribution of new discoveries to a more global set of interactions.

Matthew G. Knight is *a PhD candidate at the University of Exeter. He blogs at https:/alifeinfragments.wordpress.com/.*

Call for papers: LPFG session at the European Association of Archaeologists: *Outside Influences*

Matthew G. Knight

The 24th Annual Meeting of the European Association of Archaeologists will be taking place next year from 5th-8th September in Barcelona (https://www.e-a-a.org/eaa2018). A session has been accepted representing the Later Prehistoric Finds Group entitled: *Outside Influences*. This session will examine how portable material culture can inform us about regional and supra-regional links across Europe. The Call for Papers for the EAA will be open from **15th December-15th February**, and I've included the session abstract below to get you all thinking!

Outside Influences: Expressions through portable material culture in later prehistory

Session Organisers: *Matthew G. Knight – Later Prehistoric Finds Group; Dr Oliver Dietrich – German Archaeological Institute (Deutsches Archäologisches Institut) Orient Department (Orient-Abteilung); Dr Dot Boughton – University of Central Lancashire.*

It is widely accepted there was a greater movement of people and transmission of ideas and traditions in later prehistoric Europe (i.e. the Bronze and Iron Ages), as is increasingly evidenced by the most recent surge in scientific analyses, for instance of isotopes and DNA. The evidence provided by these techniques, however, can be enhanced by our main source material: portable material culture. Objects offer a physical representation of inherent concepts of form, manufacture skills and techniques, as well as the opportunities for material analyses to determine origins. Furthermore, the practices attributed to these objects, including the use, treatment, and deposition of objects can demonstrate how certain traditions transformed across different regions.

The aim of this session is to bring together a spread of case studies from across Europe during the Bronze and Iron Ages that enables insights into where and how regional and supra-regional links and networks were formed through the trade and exchange of materials and ideas.

We invite papers that look at traditions in the production, use and deposition of objects and how these may express influences and connections with other areas. This may include discussions around typologies and distribution patterns; production methods; origins of materials; depositional practices; and post-use treatments (e.g. reworking; fragmentation); as well as the impact these external influences had on the local communities.

If anyone is interested in contributing or has any questions, please do not hesitate to get in contact with me (mknight21@hotmail.co.uk).

Call for papers: European Association of Archaeologists 2018: *Towards an Archaeology of Making*

Sophia Adams

Towards an Archaeology of Making (EAA 2018 Session 499) is a short paper and discussion session I am organising with Emily Miller Bonney (California State University Fullerton) designed to create a supportive environment in which we can debate an alternative archaeology of making. Researchers are invited to deliver 6-minute papers with 6 slides to set the foundation for the discussion. We are exploring avenues for a publication built around this session: a publication that critiques the current approach to prehistoric craft that is very much material-based, e.g. ceramics or metals or textiles, and examines the possibility of taking a skill-based approach that enables us to cross traditional craft boundaries. Is the focus on the way finds specialists divide up the material culture evidence into discreet categories causing us to misinterpret or misunderstand production in a prehistoric context? Or are those divisions a valid reflection of the separation of production tasks in prehistory? We are looking for presenters who want to debate these questions, or who feel the evidence they are studying has a bearing on the validity of a specific approach to studying craft. The session abstract is given below and will appear on the EAA website from 15th December: https://www.e-a-a.org/eaa2018.
If you wish to discuss your abstract prior to submission, please do e-mail me at sophia.adams@glasgow.ac.uk.

Towards an Archaeology of Making

Scholars see evidence for specialist skills in a broad array of prehistoric artefacts from around the world. Such identifications rest on the assumption that the dominant material from which an object is made (metal, clay, wood, plant fibres, etc.) defines the skills the artisan needs. Although this link between specialist, object and materials is widely accepted there is little site-based evidence for such full-time specialists. Recent discussions of prehistoric artisanal skillsets have highlighted both the breadth of skills required to make specific objects and the considerable overlap across seemingly different crafts. This session will explore the evidence for a redefinition of the specialist that does not depend primarily on the dominant material. Do specific sites or artefacts indicate the presence of cross-craft activities with people specialising in certain ways of making, for example the controlled use of heat or carving different substances? Can we identify the knowledge that transcends traditionally defined craft boundaries? Physical craft skills may be learnt through the manipulation of materials and tools, do these in turn have a role in shaping what a craftsperson does? Are specialists defined by the type of artefact produced rather than the materials or methods? The aim of this session is to test ideas, compare evidence and debate a revised approach to studying and discussing production activities in prehistoric contexts. Participants are asked to present short papers (up to 6 minutes in length) focussing on specific archaeological sites or artefact assemblages or practical craft experience that explores an alternative archaeology of making. The remaining time will be devoted to discussion and debate.

New Datasheet takes our collection back to the Early Bronze Age

Sophia Adams

Announcing the fifth in our series of LPFG short guides on later prehistoric artefacts: **Early and Middle Bronze Age Spearheads.**

Dr Richard Davis has produced a clear illustrated summary of Early and Middle Bronze Age spearheads from England, Scotland, Wales and the Isle of Man. This compliments his datasheet on Late Bronze Age spearheads (Datasheet 3). We are grateful to Richard for condensing his immense knowledge of these artefacts into a handy guide. Those wishing to find out more are encouraged to explore Richard's detailed studies published in the Prähistorische Bronzefunde series:

- Davis, R. 2012. The Early and Middle Bronze Age spearheads of Britain. PBF V.5. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner
- Davis, R. 2015. The Late Bronze Age spearheads of Britain. PBF V.7. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner

The LPFG datasheets are peer-reviewed specialist reports available for free on our website. They provide a two-page illustrated summary of the objects including information about materials, distribution, dating and typology.

Artefacts covered so far:

1. Early to Middle Iron Age Bow Brooches (Sophia Adams)
2. Early Iron Age Socketed Axes (Dot Boughton)
3. Late Bronze Age Spearheads (Richard Davis)
4. Iron Age Glass Beads (Elizabeth Foulds)
5. Early and Middle Bronze Age Spearheads (Richard Davis)

Up to now, inadvertently, the focus of the datasheets has been on evidence from England, Scotland and Wales but we are happy to produce datasheets on material from Ireland and the rest of Europe. If you would like to write a datasheet please do contact our datasheet editor Sophia Adams (University of Glasgow) who will be happy to provide you with a template, guidelines and assistance with maps and illustrations.

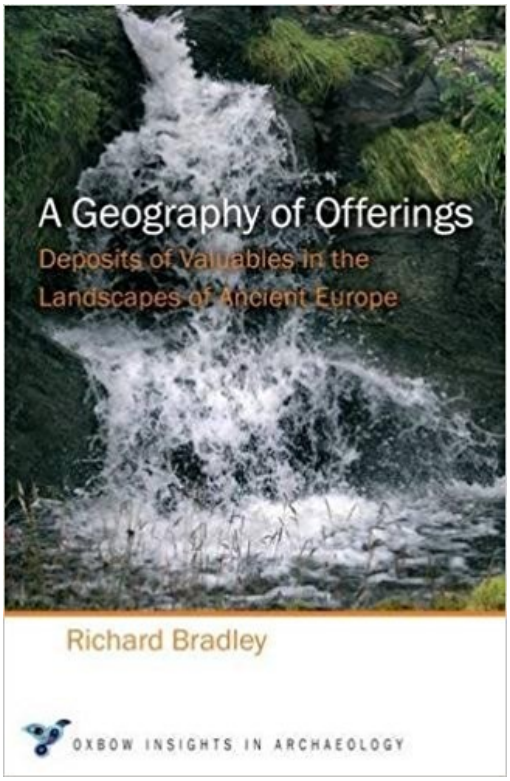
Thank you to Richard and all authors who have written and volunteered datasheets.

Sophia Adams *is the LPFG's Datasheet Editor.* *sophia.adams@glasgow.ac.uk*

Richard Bradley's *A Geography of Offerings*: A review and personal reflection

Peter Reavill

A Geography of Offerings – Deposits of Valuables in the Landscapes of Ancient Europe by Richard Bradley (2017, Oxbow)



To begin this review I need to make a confession – my name is Peter and I am a Bradley-ite. His books have been my touchstones, my way-markers, and Richard Bradley has had more of an impact on my own way of thinking about prehistory than almost any other archaeological author. Therefore, I jumped (rather nervously) to review this new volume recently released in the excellent *Oxbow Insights in Archaeology* series.

The book is small, a mere 198 pages of text and figures, but to my mind it bulges with ideas. It is arranged over ten short chapters, each an essay delivered in a lecture style, all of which address or develop a theme around the hoarding and structured deposition of artefacts in the past. These chapters can be read individually but their summaries build cumulatively into a crescendo; in fact at times it reads more like a manifesto for change than a 'traditional' prehistoric text. As in many of his previous works Bradley uses a format where he explores each theme through a number of key case studies or type sites; these vignettes are mostly well-argued and focussed, using well-known internationally and nationally important assemblages as well as lesser-known finds to make strategic points. The development of each case study and theme are very carefully aligned adding weight and thought to the discussion. All of these are looked at with a revisionist's eye, critiquing the approaches taken and exploring what a 'traditional methodology' might have missed. These core case studies / site assemblages step beyond the usual sphere of later prehistory and beyond the shores of the British Isles to include sites from Mastermyr, Gotland (Viking); Roekillorna, Sweden (IA); Flag Fen; Peterborough (BA-IA); Oberdola, Germany (IA – Roman); Wartu, Swiss Alps (IA) and Manching, Bavaria (IA) to name but a few. Most importantly for me he tries to move away from a period-focussed specialism preferring a holistic approach to the landscapes of locales.

Bradley's first line in his preface rings out: *Be warned. This is an extended essay and not a work of synthesis.* This is very true, the overall feel of the book is fresh, conversational, and at times deeply persuasive. You have to read with a belief and passion, skimming over the parts that jar, or could maybe do with a deeper explanation and more comprehensive analysis of the issues at hand. The core themes build upon much of Bradley's previous work, but they are not a mere repetition of those arguments – they are more nuanced mainly because they are focussed on the topic of the deposition of material culture. This material culture encompasses all finds, not just precious metalwork; he looks at the different types of material encountered (or sometimes avoided) at certain sites. This includes ceramics, stone tools, objects made of animal bones, human remains, as well as natural 'unworked' pieces, and also the remains of feasting. Much of this material is overlooked in traditional approaches or appears in footnotes of 'high status' metalwork finds. Likewise, Bradley addresses the potential meaning of these 'non-treasured' finds – do they have the same cultural importance as the metalwork, or could they represent the same types of event? Do they fit within the ritualised use of landscape or say something previously unheard about the people who lived within it? At the same time as looking at this material, he also examines the permanence of place, the fact that repeated actions happen not just within one period but can span millennia. He develops this by looking at whether peoples engage in the same acts for the same reasons over time, or undertake different acts but at the same important places – and if it is the latter, how can we tell with the approaches we use?

For me one of the key parts of this work is the proposal that we should move our focus and fascination away from assemblages and instead apply the same complex arguments to single items. This is hugely important for me as an archaeological practitioner working daily with recently discovered finds (with the Portable Antiquities Scheme). I have often considered single finds placed within interesting places as important and 'hoard-like' rather than examples of chance losses. If we were not so het up about size, value and importance, I wonder how many more of these nuanced objects we would see and what patterns they would make. Likewise, Bradley complains about the lack of investigation of hoards and important finds. Their excavation (in Britain) is usually focussed solely on their recovery and immediate physical contexts, but little wider study of the direct hinterland is undertaken – what is it that we are missing?

This brings me onto the 'landscape settings' which are central to much of the book: the differences between wet and dry sites, natural places such as mounds and streams and constructed ones such as hill top enclosures or shrines, and their positions within the landscape and the politics behind their use . These considerations are fundamental to our understanding of the importance of landscape, of place and of locale. With this discussion, there is a fundamental shift forward in thinking from *Passage of* Arms (1990 / 1998) which was more focussed on the wet/dry dichotomy. It is this theme that is addressed in the final two chapters. In many ways (although he does not explicitly mention it) Bradley is concerned

with the liminality of place, the areas where things change: wet vs dry, farmed vs wild, sky vs ground, sea vs land, marsh vs causeway. It is at these places that danger lurked and protection was needed, where the rules changed and where people needed 'other' support. It is also at these places that transitions happen, between stages of life, death, childhood, identity. Finally, it is at these constructed or deconstructed places within the physical landscape and the geographies of the mind where we can get closest to the archaeology of the past. Unfortunately, it is these places which are the furthest points away from the empirical archaeologist, the places impossible to measure with callipers or weigh on scales, assign to a complex association chart or link to a chronological typology. Some would argue that it isn't an archaeologist's place to go to this area of conjecture or speculation. However, it is only in these precise places that we get close to *a truth* about the past and that archaeology can unlock the geographies of offerings.

In short, this book is meant to be one of ideas: a clarion or manifesto to better and deeper thinking, to looking over our own professionally-devised subject specialisms and self-imposed segregation. Again, Bradley recognises the state of the profession and calls the book "a work of advocacy". It is a challenge to all archaeologists to use the evidence in front of us better – to think harder. So, for the cover price of £15.99 – go and buy this book, read it, enjoy it, reflect on it – and let it influence you in your study of prehistory and the work you undertake. You do not need to believe in everything, but let it be a whisper in your ear: that not everything needs to be the same and that by understanding some of the themes and discussions, the prehistoric world might become nearer and slightly more real than we thought.

Peter Reavill *is employed by Birmingham Museums Trust as the Finds Liaison Officer for Shropshire and Herefordshire, working for the British Museum's Portable Antiquities Scheme.* peter.reavill@shropshire.gov.uk

Announcements

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of a very valued colleague and dear friend, David Williams, Finds Liaison Officer for Surrey and East Berkshire.
David passed away suddenly, after a short illness, on the 9th December. David's expertise lay in medieval metalwork and he was extremely knowledgeable in earlier medieval and post-medieval artefacts, especially stirrups, mounts and other horse harness fittings, and purse frames. Having worked for the Portable Antiquities Scheme since 2003, David always had an open ear for his FLO colleagues and tried to help where he could, either by attending metal-detecting rallies on rainy weekends or helping to excavate chance finds such as, very recently, the Watlington Hoard. He will be hugely missed by family, friends, colleagues and finders.

Dot Boughton

*

The LPFG will hold a committee meeting on Friday 2nd February 2018 in London. All members are welcome to attend, but please note that this is not a conference event: it is an opportunity to hand over committee roles and help plan the next phase of the Group's future. If you would like to come along, or have any questions, please contact laterprehistoricfindsgroup@gmail.com for full details.

*

It was decided this year that the Later Prehistoric Finds Group would sponsor a paper at the 2017 IARSS (Iron Age Research Student Symposium), in the form of a £150 bursary. We are pleased to announce that the bursary was awarded to Rachel Wilkinson for her paper *Thinking around the box: what can containers add to our understanding of hoarding*?
More details to follow in a future edition of the Newsletter. Congratulations Rachel!

*

The 42nd annual colloquium of L'Association Française pour l'étude de l'âge du Fer will take place in Prague from 10th—13th May 2018, and will be on the theme of "Unity and diversity in the Celtic world". For details, see http://afeaf.hypotheses.org/984

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