

An East Cork Bronze Age Part 1...and a Waterford coastline copper source i.e. the Copper Coast of County Waterford?

In Progress:

Step 1: Pilmore Harbour, the Womanagh River ...and Bronze Age activity in South East Cork?

Step 2: Search for Early Copper working or any Bronze Age artefacts found and inland river connections along County Waterford's 'Copper Coastline'.

Step 2a: How might the Bronze Age urn (of local clay?) burial (M.J. O'Kelly 1968 JCHAS) from Castlerichard townland (Ightermurragh, Castlemartyr locality) which abuts the Womanagh River just west of where the Dissour river (tributary of the Womanagh) joins it to the south of Killeagh village, and the discovery of a Bronze Age leaf shaped sword in the Womanagh river by Creighmore townland (Barry 1883, Jrnl. Hist. and Arch. Assoc. Ireland. Now in the Nat. Mus. Irel. collection) speak of the Womanagh as an inland highway from Pilmore harbour (and the Celtic Sea) during the Bronze Age; especially in the context of forest clearance along the river plain (resulting in silt carried from the deforested river plain being slowly deposited over many centuries at the mouth of the Womanagh and eventually clogging the harbour?) for agriculture and cattle farming settlements leading to the creation of a 'cemetery of mounds' as suggested by some archaeologists as lying in the landscape between Castlemartyr and Killeagh? And within that locality also (at Knockane townland) a burial 'cave ' containing a skeleton, an amber necklace, a gold plated 'mitre like' crown and a cloak or curass of gold plates held together by gold wire, discovered accidentally in the early 19th century and largely dispersed before local antiquarians knew or wrote about it?

In Munster Gaelic the Womanagh River is known as the Uaimneach. One of the etymological explanations for this word is that it is a derivation from Fuaimneach i.e. a noisy place..... furnaces roaring, anvils ringing [tongue in cheek!]. The actually townland name most referred to for the Castlemartyr locality is Ballyvoughtera (but the 17th century Downe Survey suggests that the place-name was actually BallyVoughtera which would translate as either the home-place of burnt / burning (mhucht pronounced vucht) land (terra), or as the home-place of the furnaces). Within the townland is the site of an early medieval church which is sited within the remnants of a somewhat oval bank and ditch enclosure which served as a graveyard...one portion of the church structure appears somewhat older and so was it originally a pre-12th century hermitage, a Cill or Cluain and might the original enclosure have been older than an ecclesiastical use of the site? [The placename Castlemartyr appears to refer to the large medieval / post-medieval castle / 'Big House' and demesne (now a hotel) which still stands there; its landlord village outside the main gates... but what the 'Martyr' element of the place-name refers to seems uncertain...does it refer to some 'martyrdom event' or is it a corruption through anglicisation of a local Gaelic word which referred to something totally different?

If my memory serves me correctly - as I do not have a copy of Charles Smith 1750 AD history of County Cork to hand - Charles Smith mentions a memory of bronze (?) as well as iron working in the locality? During the 19th century a Parliamentary Gazetteer of Ireland mentions a tradition of iron working in the locality (check this and whatever information source is given for the reference, if any). I have not looked at the folklore record or at any early documentary sources to see if any information exists on record to elaborate on these references.

If there was some sort of memory of bronze working and of furnaces in Ballyvoughtera then how old was the memory and how did it come to be e.g. were more Womanagh associated Bronze Age items found in the 18th century, and earlier perhaps, leading to such an antiquarian assumption that there was ancient bronze working in the locality? Or was there some long standing 'hereditary Gaelic antiquarian' awareness in some literary source or local oral tradition... e.g. dindshenchas or any other place lore sources?

The Womanagh River is closely connected to the Maighe (Má) Dhíle (the pleasant (?) plain, Mogeely in English). It is a large plain which appears to sweep eastward from the western side of Castlemartyr / Ballyvoughtera (Ballyvoughtera). Another name for the Castlemartyr area in Imogeely...which means?? Iar Mogeely...west side of the plain?? What was the original size of

this plain, this plain connected to the Womanagh and to its northern tributaries the Dissour and the Kilttha, to the land area between these two rivers and to land areas stretching both eastward (toward Youghal) and westward (toward Midleton) beyond them?

Step 3: Who were the tribes and clans of these localities and what were their genealogies and possible ethnogenecities?

Step 4: What were the names and approximate locations - and extents - of the 'plains lands' connected to these rivers i.e. represented by a variety of written word forms derived from Maighe as Má or Maighe or Maige or Mhai (pronounced Vee) plus any other variants or corruptions or pronunciation spellings....such as Maighe Dhíle (the local placename Mogeely) ...also watch out for the word **curragh** or variants such as **curra** or perhaps even cora i.e. a marsh of sometime also a plain e.g. a water meadow by a river though also called an Inch / Inse ...if travel inland during the Bronze and Iron Ages was largely into a very dense landscape of natural woodland of oak and with some clearings near river banks for settlements and associated agriculture and grazing of livestock, was this activity and the human geography which developed from it one which also used the ridges of the Armorican Ridge and Valley province which is the basis of the South Munster landscape geomorphology? If so then do ridge and river valley inland travel routes dictate the pattern of creating human landscape of agriculture and livestock grazing from the natural world? Over time do large accumulations of river carried muds dislodge as a result of forestry clearance end up clogging the estuaries of such rivers before they are eventually closed off due to sand bank formation due to sea deposits and sea current directional change...to what extent were the estuaries of rivers like the the Lee, the Ownacurra heavily landscapes before a 9th century AD flood which created Cork Harbour...what impact further up along the Lee in creating the drowned primeval forest known as the Gearagh (Macroom locality) ...

Step 5: To what extent do the Maighe placenames preserve a memory of Bronze Age / Iron Age landscape geographies of a strong cattle rearing community and the agriculture required for the dietary needs of associated settlements?...Was Maighe Dhíle (pleasant sweet plain) i.e. Mogeely in its original geographic extent - whatever that was, the product of a Bronze Age / Iron Age community which left a 'bronze age cemetery' of barrows / mounds, a high status burial in a 'cave' dressed in a cloak or curass of gold plating wearing a crown and a necklace of amber beads situated in the locality of these mounds (Knockane townland, see surviving gold piece at NMI), a bronze Age burial urn made of local clay and a Bronze Age sword both from sites associated with the Womanagh River whose two northern tributaries the Kilttha (by Castlemartyr town) and the Dissour (by the village of Killeagh) roughly frame / define the location of this Bronze Age 'cemetery' area and the Womaanagh connects them to the Celtic Sea at Pilmore Harbour (**Pil** / Poill / Puill, is a word used for a harbour and **mór** means big in the Gaelic language. ... situated along the coast westward beyond Youghal town, Cork).

Maghreb (NW Africa, Barbary)

• from what?

- Ma(?)

+

- greb(?)

• Greb

= Western(?)

• Ma or Mā(?)

= Land(?)

= a land e.g. a fertile land?

= a piece of land?

= a place?

= a place of land of a particular type?

= a plain? (a plain for cattle, livestock, settlement)

• a plain in Gaelic landscape (South)

= Mā, Ma, Maigh, Maighe,

but also pronounced vee i.e. as in

Knockshanawee Proc Shana Hkeois
or Canovee / Ceann an Mhái

with
different
pronunciation?

Thu Fri Sat Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat Sun Mon

6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31