NOTE—The authors of the various papers are solely responsible for the views expressed therein.

The Golden Bog of Cullen.

By J. N. A. WALLACE.

The "Catalogue of Irish Gold Ornaments" (1) in the National Museum, Dublin, contains not only an illustrated list of all gold objects in that Museum to the date of publication (1920), but is prefaced by an invaluable introduction by the late E. C. R. Armstrong, at one time Keeper of Irish Antiquities. This introduction describes some of the most important associated finds of gold, such as the "Great Clare Find" at Moghnan in 1854, and the "Broighter Find" in Co. Londonderry in 1896 (2). But one of the most important and prolific sites—that of Cullen bog in Co. Tipperary—finds no mention.

Unfortunately, none of the many objects of gold and bronze from this site, of which a few are known to have escaped the melting pot, can be traced, and if by chance they are represented in the various museums of Great Britain and Ireland, they are among those objects to which no locality can be assigned. We are, however, fortunate in being in possession of lists of some of the objects from Cullen, and although the description given of them is in most cases vague and puzzling, many of the objects mentioned may be to some extent recognised.

Cullen is situated in Co. Tipperary, on the border of Co. Limerick, and was formerly a market town, but is now an insignificant village (Co. Tipp. O. S., 6" Map, sheet 58). The site of the bog is about half a mile south of the present small village. It is surrounded on the north, west and south-west by a group of volcanic hills; the hill to the north rising steeply from the bog. On the hill-top to the south-west is a remarkable ring barrow, with a large monolith standing in the centre (3). This barrow is nearly circular and measures two hundred and eight feet over all. The monolith, which now leans considerably to the east, is approximately ten feet in height, and rectangular in plan (3' by 2'). The accompanying section (Fig. 1) gives a good idea of the features and dimensions of the monument. There are, as far as I am aware, no other ancient sites close to Cullen, but there are a series of tumuli at Damerville on the Emily to Tipperary road, about three miles to the south and an earthen ring fort, Rathard, on a hill, a mile to the north west.

[Fig 1. Section through ring barrow, Cullen, Co. Tipperary.]

Anciently it was situated in the territory of Ui Cuanach, which included the present Barony of Coonagh, Co. Limerick, and extended as far eastwards as Crota Cliath (the Galty Mountains).

We first hear of Cullen, as a find spot for gold and bronze antiquities, from Dr.

1. This Catalogue is quoted throughout the paper as Gold Catalogue.
2. The largest collection of bronze antiquities found in Ireland, known as the Dowris Hoard, is described in the Journal Roy. Soc. Antiquaries, Vol. 54, p. 1 (1925), by E. R. C. Armstrong; he gives references to other papers on this find.
Sylvestor O’Halloran(4), a well known Limerick Physician. He states: — “In the year 1744 Mr. Joseph Kinshallow, a jeweller of Limerick, bought of John Clery, a shopkeeper, still living at Cullen in the County Tipperary, a golden crown weighing 6 ounces; this he melted, and he affirmed it had the least alloy of any gold he ever met with; it was found in the bog of Cullen, where so many other curiosities have been discovered, particularly some gorgets of gold, and gold-handled swords, for which reason it goes under the name of the ‘Golden Bog.’”

Cullen next comes into prominence in the year 1773, when Governor Pownell exhibited two bronze swords and an irregular cone-like object of gold—which he stated to be part of the breast of a wooden idol—to the Society of Antiquities of London. The following year he read a paper on the objects which was afterwards published, with an illustration in Archaeologia(5). To this paper he appended a list of finds between the years 1731 and 1773. This list had been sent to Governor Pownell by the Rev. Mr. Armstrong(6), curate of Tipperary at the time. The first part of this list had been compiled by a Mr. Nash of Cullen; who is described by Mr. Armstrong as “a young man who went to the College of Dublin in the year 1754 and died soon afterwards.” He continues—“Mr. Nash found many of the things himself and was very careful and exact in weighing them.” This part of the list covers the years 1731 to 1753, and besides being full of detail is a very human document. Its continuation was compiled by a Mr. Cleary—perhaps the same man who is said by Dr. O’Halloran, to have sold the golden crown in Limerick in 1744, it is not so detailed or so interesting a record.

In 1778 we again hear of Cullen, this time in Mr. Thomas Campbell’s publication(7), which contains the result of his observations while on tour in the country. In an appendix to the tour he gives a list of Cullen finds similar, but somewhat abbreviated, to that published in Archaeologia and states, “I send you as exact a drawing as I could make, of a brass sword, found in a bog near Cullen, which is twenty-six inches in length and weighs near two pounds.”

Mr. Armstrong, he says—“has seen twenty-two others of nearly the same construction, found in the same place. The catalogue, to which I have referred you, mentions that above 300 have, from time to time, been found in this quarter.”

It is not until the year 1859 that we again read of Cullen. In that year, Eugene O’Curry delivered a series of lectures in the Catholic University of Ireland, which were afterwards edited by Dr. W. K. O’Sullivan(8) and published in 1873. He says: “from time immemorial gold has been found in all conditions of preparation, from the primitive ore to the most beautiful of fashioned ornament, nay, even the very crucibles—small bronze saucepans, with gold arrested in its process of smelting or boiling—have been found in this bog and its neighbourhood. Within the last fourteen years I have myself seen two bars of pure gold turned up out of this bog and its neighbourhood; the finders are not anxious to enlighten one much as to which. One of these bars was about five inches in length, an inch and a half in breadth, and more than half an inch in thickness. The other was somewhat smaller, but being plain bars without any artistic feature, they were not, unfortunately, secured by the Royal Irish Academy, and consequently passed into the hands of a goldsmith, who, of course, has long since melted them down.”

W. R. Wilde(9) adds nothing to one’s knowledge of the Cullen finds, giving only very short extracts from Archaeologia with reference to a bronze sword from Co. Limerick which when found had a portion of gold mounting attached to the hilt.

This concludes all important notices of Cullen and its finds down to the middle of the last century. There is a considerable interval, one of seventy-two years, between the last finds listed by Cleary in 1773 and the ingots seen by O’Curry about 1845. I have so far failed to come across any mention of finds of gold or bronze from Cullen between these years, although, doubtless, some must have occurred. Mr. Armstrong, in his letter

4. O’Halloran, Sylvestor. Introduction to the History and Antiquities of Ireland. (Dublin, 1772). p. 147. A short account of the life of Dr. O’Halloran is given in the current number of our Journal by Dr. R. Hayes.
to Pownell, remarks that many objects besides those in the lists were found at Cullen, and that, although he offered the highest price for them, “yet they carry them privately to Limerick.” Perhaps the difference between Mr. Armstrong’s “highest price” and that given by the Limerick jewellers, showed a balance in favour of the latter. This circumstance would arouse the reticence of the finders concerning all local enquiries with regard to their discoveries, which reticence seems to have lasted down to the days of O’Curry. This would account for the lack of information during this period, for the jewellers would promptly throw into the melting pot all objects purchased by them and were little concerned with what the objects were or where they originated. Let us now examine in some detail the various notices:—

Dr. O’Halloran’s list consists of a gold crown, gorgets of gold and gold handled swords. The whole subject of the existence of a gold head dress is one of doubt and difficulty. The first mention of such an object is the now famous Comerford Crown (Fig. 2), which is given in “O’Connor’s preface to Keating’s History of Ireland with a woodcut illustration: it is said to have been found near the Devil’s Bit (Barna Eile), Co. Tipperary, in the year 1692, by men digging in a bog, and that it weighed six ounces. It was purchased by Mr. Joseph Comerford and taken to the Chateau d’Anglure in Champagne, France, where his family went to reside. So far all further attempts to trace its wanderings have failed.

![Fig. 2. The Comerford “Crown,” Devil’s Bit, Co. Tipperary.](image)

Dr. O’Halloran’s Cullen Crown is the next notice of a specimen of this elusive type. He gives it a weight of 6 ounces, and it is quite clear from the context that he is not confusing it with such an object as a gorget, which in a bent and damaged condition might quite easily be mistaken for some form of head dress. This notice of O’Halloran of “Gorget of Gold” in 1773 is the earliest record of those elaborate neck ornaments which I have come across.

Our third reference to a Crown is from Fitzgerald and McGregor(10): “In the summer of 1821 a peasant whilst trenching potatoes on the lands of Kilpeacon, found a golden crown, in the form of a large oyster-shell. It weighed 5½ ounces and was sold to a goldsmith in Dublin by Mr. Villiers (the local landlord) for sixteen pounds sterling, which he gave to the poor man.” The above description, “the form of a large oyster-shell,” may to some extent suggest a gorget.

Another notice on the subject is contained in a paper on “Some unrecorded finds of Gold Ornaments,” by George Scott(11), and reads as follows: — “Gold Cap, Helmet or Crown (in all probability found in the district). It was first heard of from a working jeweller in Limerick, through whose hands it had passed to the melting pot. He describes it as being of very fine gold, and although in a very battered and broken state when offered for sale, its likeness to that found in Co. Tipperary, at Barananel, was unmistakable. On being shown an illustration of above crown, he said it might pass for a picture of the one he melted, only the crown was bulged in and the rim bent down, so that it resembled two ear pieces, the ornamentation, so far as he could remember was of the same character, consisting of concentric circles and lines, straight and zig-zag. This ornament was punched not engraved. It weighed between 5 and 6 ounces and was quite large enough to fit on a man’s head. It had what has never been noticed on any other,

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hooks or catches which were turned up inside, springing from the inner edge. The thinness of the article renders it extremely probable that it had some kind of lining, either of wood or leather, and these would just suit to hold the gold covering on its wood or leather foundation.\(^{(12)}\)

Scott states in same paper: “it is an undoubted fact that six of these objects were found in the district.” We have so far only traced four; perhaps the other two may be accounted for by the items in Nash’s list, one at the date April 10th, 1752, and the other at the date June, 30th, 1753, when “two thin leaves of gold were found folded together in each other, like children’s hats”; but which may, I think, be taken to be the terminal disc or discs of a gorget.

Our last reference to these objects is by Armstrong\(^{(13)}\) and reads as follows: “An incomplete object of gold, which has been in the National Collection for many years, was described by Wilde as “the anterior disc of the lateral boss of a diadem, much larger than any other in the Collection.” It is a saucer-shaped object, made of a thin gold plate, ornamented with concentric circles and encircling lines; probably it is the base of a bowl-shaped vessel similar in type to those that have been found in Scandinavia. The so-called crown, discovered in a bog at the Devil’s Bit, Co. Tipperary, in 1692, resembles in form the object in the National Collection. Wilde suggested in 1882 that this was probably a vessel. Wood-Martin also held the same view. More recently Dr. Kossinna has eminicated the same opinion; he does not think it was a native production, but an importation into Ireland from the North Sea Coast.”

That a gold object like the “Comerford Crown” existed there can be no doubt, and we may take the illustration published by O’Connor to be on the whole a true representation of its main features. Dr. O’Halloran’s “Cullen Crown” also seems to stand on fairly sure ground, for in his History of Ireland, Vo. 2, p. 92, he states that he saw the object, and he must also have been acquainted with the illustration of the Comerford Crown. The Kilpeacon specimen may be classed as doubtful, although the weight given as 5½ ounces is similar in amount to the previous ones. It is described as like a large oyster shell, which description would apply more to a gorget than a crown-like object. Our next described “crown,” that written of by Scott, seems on the whole to follow closely the type of the “Comerford Crown.” Bayly, although an old man when I knew him, was still a very intelligent workman and not of that type that would allow a description of an object to be put into his mouth.

The fragment of gold (No. 375) in the National Museum, is in the opinion of Armstrong and the other authorities which he quotes, part of a bowl. Dr. Macalister states that the Comerford “Crown” is a bowl,\(^{(14)}\) but gives no reason for doing so, save the implied one, that the term “Old Irish Crown” is absurd. On the whole the evidence points to the existence of these cap or bowl-shaped objects, but to what use they were put it is impossible to say until by some happy chance the spade or plough brings another of them to light.

It is quite outside the scope of this paper; which is primarily intended to bring together the lost and forgotten finds, from what I may call the region of the Lower Shannon; to discuss the cultural relationship of these objects with European Art in the late Bronze Age.

The accompanying Map (Fig 3) shows the distribution of the Gorgets and the so-called “Crowns.” It will be seen that the distribution of these objects, with the exception of outliers at Ballycotton, Longford, and Armagh, is confined to those counties surrounding the Lower Shannon, namely, Limerick, Tipperary and Clare, and also that the reported finds of cap or bowl-shaped objects are from those places at which gorgets have been found.

\(^{(12)}\) The working jeweller who melted this object was John Bayly, who came to Messrs. R. Wallace, Jewellers, Limerick, in the year 1837, and died in their employ in 1901. George Scott, the writer of above paper was a watch maker, also in employment of the same firm and deeply interested in Irish Antiquities.

He had a large collection of Stone and Bronze Objects which passed into the Dunraven Collection through the late Rev. T. Lee, P.P., Croom. Scott also compiled a Ms. Catalogue of the Dunraven Collection of Irish Antiquities. The Dunraven Collection is exhibited on loan in the Carnegie Museum, Limerick, and contains many objects found locally.


\(^{(14)}\) Macalister, R. A. S. Ireland in Pre-Christian Times, p. 188.
IRELAND

Distribution of
GORGETS & "CROWNS"

County Boundaries

Rivers; approximate length shown
Lakes; larger only

Area over 600 acres

GORGETS
"CROWNS"

GORGETS:—(1) Ardcrony, Co. Tipperary; (2) Borsisnoe Bog, Co. Tipperary; (3) Tory Hill, Co. Limerick; (4) Co. Longford (?) ; (5) Co. Clare; (6) Co. Armagh; (7) Shannon Grove, Co. Limerick; (8) Ballycotton, Co. Cork; (9) Cullen, Co. Limerick; (10) Gleninsheen, Co. Clare.

We now come to Governor Pownell’s Exhibition in London of two swords and a gold fragment found at Cullen. (Plate XIX). The two swords seem somewhat similar to the usual forms. The gold object is shaped like an irregular cone, four and one-sixth inches at the base, rising to an apex about one and a half inches in height. The base is decorated with concentric rings, the inner one supporting a circle of zig-zag ornament, which is not completed the whole way round. The apex has a similar circle with zig-zag lines, pointing to the base of the cone. The space between these is ornamented with concentric grooves, which are not complete on the steeper part of the ornament. These grooves I at first took to be conventional shading on the part of the draughtsman, as shown on the two swords, but a bronze disc coated with gold leaf is illustrated by Childe from a late Bronze Age find from Mull, and shows similar concentric grooves between two bands of small circles. This removes any doubt as to the decoration on the Cullen object.

This gold ornament seems to be one of the terminals of a large “dress-fastener” (fibula), similar decoration as seen round the base, is shown on a fragment in the Gold Catalogue (Plate 15, No. 282). The illustration in Archaeologia, which one may take to be an ideal reconstruction of a much battered piece of gold, would, in all probability, be drawn by Govnr Pownell or his draughtsman to fit in with his theory that it once formed part of the breast of a wooden idol which was said to have been found at Cullen some sixty years before. Thus the apex of the ornament is drawn entire and undamaged and not shown as broken and ragged, as it would be, if my suggestion is correct, that it is one of the cup-shaped terminals torn off from the crescent-shaped “handle.” Somewhat similar decoration as that shown on the apex of the fragment is seen on a bracelet illustrated in the Gold Catalogue (Plate 16, No. 313). A description of the wooden idol forms a large part of Governor Pownell’s paper; this description is largely a creation of his imagination and the curious may turn to the pages of Archaeologia to be entertained with the Governor’s conclusions. The Rev. Mr. Armstrong in a letter to Pownell states all that could be gleaned at the time about the figure, and writes as follows: “As to the image said to have been found there, I only heard of it in conversation with the late most worthy Mr. Damer, who told me that his neighbour, Mr. William Chadwick, who then rented the lands about Cullen of Lord Thomond, informed him, that a long time before (above sixty years ago) a large wooden image was found in a part of the bog, and that little pins or pegs were stuck in different parts of it, and that Mr. Damer imagined that the little gold plates found there, one of which I saw with him, were suspended by these pegs in different parts of that image, Mr. Chadwick, who was not curious in such things, told Mr. Damer that he made a gate-post of it. I have made the most careful enquiry about it amongst the oldest persons in the neighbourhood, and cannot hear the least account of it.”

We now come to the lists compiled by Messrs. Nash and Cleary, and as it is over a century and a half since they first appeared in Archaeologia and as only short extracts from them have from time to time appeared in various archeological works, it is perhaps now desirable to reprint them in full.


17. Macalister. Op. Cit., p. 142. Illustrates the gold disc and states that the apex has a small hole. In Archaeology of Ireland, p. 52, here repeats the statement, and adds, “It may be conjectured that the object was one of a pair, and that they were secured together by means of a cord, not by the usual metal bow.” In Pownell’s description of the disc there is no mention of the perforation of the apex, but his illustration may, perhaps, suggest one. (See Plate No. XIX.).


19. A wooden figure (now in National Museum) was found in a bog at Ralahnan, Co. Cavan. See Antiquity, IV., p. 467 (illustrated), and Macalister, Ancient Ireland, p. 114, Fig. 22. A wooden figure was also recently found at Lagore by H. O’N. Hociken, publication of which has not yet appeared.

20. Joseph Damer, created Baron Milton of Shronehill in the Co. Tipperary, in 1762, and Viscount Milton and Earl of Dorchester in 1792. The title became extinct on the death of the second Earl in 1808. John, second Earl of Portarlington, in 1808 succeeded to the estates of George, second and last Earl of Dorchester. There is a remote chance that some of the gold objects known to have been in the possession of George Damer may now be held by Lord Portarlington.
AN ACCOUNT OF SOME ANTIQUE CURiosITIES, FOUND IN A SMALL BOG NEAR
CULLEN, IN THE CO. TIPPERARY.

(MR NASH'S LIST). (21)

In digging away the bog, about six feet deep, as far as it extended, there was
nothing found only trunks of trees, all rotten except the oak and fir, which are for the
most part found, and some horns, large enough to have a circle of about three feet in
diameter described on each palm.

1731. (1). In the second cutting was found a brazen vessel, containing two gallons and
a half, which had four legs, a broad bumped bottom, growing narrower at the
neck, from which it was wider towards the brim, and weighed nineteen pounds.

1732. (2). A poor woman, taking up black slimy stuff, which lies very deep, to die
wool, found three pieces of bright metal of equal size and shape in the form of
heaters used in smoothing; which weighed seven pounds and a half, she sold them
as brass.

(3). The same year, a labourer found a piece of gold, like the frustum of a
spheroid, less than half a small egg, which weighed three ounces, four pennyweights,
seven grains.

1738. (4). In the turf mould were found seven things of shining metal, about five inches
long each, two inches of which formed a socket, of three quarters of an inch in di-
ameter, in each of which was a shaft of rotten wood about 9 inches long; from
the socket each of them was two edged, and tapered to a point; on either side
was a beard an inch and a half long from the point, with the edge turning out, as
to have formed a cross.

(5). There were also at the same time, and of the same metal, thirteen more
found, each ten inches long, four inches of which formed a socket about one inch
and three quarters in diameter at the entrance of the handle, from which to the
blade it gradually lessened; the handles were of quartered ash, and each about six
feet long, which seemed sound, but on taking them up they soon mouldered away;
the blades were broad on either side near the sockets, but gradually more acute
towards the point; these they now judge to be arrows, those spears; for they were
sold the same day to a pedlar as brass; all of them weighed six pounds and a
half.

1739. (6). A boy found a circular plate of beaten gold, about eight inches in diameter,
which, lapped up in the form of a triangle, enclosed three ingots of gold, which
they say could not weigh less than a pound; for the boy no sooner brought them
home than his mother, a poor woman, gave them to a merchant on whose land she
had a cabin, as brass to make weights.

1742. (7). A child found on the brink of a hole a thin plate of gold in the form of an
ellipsis, the transverse diameter as if it were about two inches and a quarter
long, and the conjugate less than an inch, weighing eighteen pennyweights,
fifteen grains.

1744. (8). A poor woman found a small gold cup, almost in the form of a wine-glass,
the handle of which was hollow, and about one inch and a half from the bottom
to the cup, which was chased, and contained as much as a small thimble; the
bottom was as broad as a silver sixpence, and flat; the handle was as thick as a
large goose-quill and which weighed twenty-one pennyweights, twelve grains.
About the same time, a man found a tube about four inches long, and as thick as
the stem of a tobacco pipe; which weighed one ounce, seven pennyweights, twenty
grains.

1745. (9). Two women found a quadrangular vessel of a bright yellow metal, each side
of which was about ten inches long at the brim, and eight inches from the brim
to the bottom outside, five inches from the brim towards the bottom was entirely

21. The sub-titles and figures in brackets are not in the original.
flat both within and without, the remaining part, convex and concave was semi-globular; on either side was a handle in the form of those on common pots. This they kept for two years (for they were sisters and lived together) and then gave it to a tinker for thirteen pence and the mending of an old pot; they say it could not have weighed less than forty pounds.

1747. (10). A girl found in the turf-dust a thin plate of gold, rolled on another, which when extended was fourteen inches long, and about a quarter of an inch broad, of which a fellow standing by took above half from her: what he left weighed six pennyweights, thirteen grains.

(11). Soon after, an apprentice-girl found one ounce five pennyweights of the same kind, rolled after the same manner, in a sod of turf, as she made a fire.

1748. (12). A man found a brass weapon, two feet seven inches long, which was two-edged, and tapered from the hilt to the point; these edges very much resembled the fin which spreads out on both sides of an eel from the navel to the top of the tail; it seemed to be cast in that form, and never whetted; and the rest of the blade between both edges was not unlike the part of an eel's tail between both fins, but it was not so substantial. It was one inch three quarters broad near the hilt, from which it gradually grew narrower four inches towards the point to one inch one quarter from which to the middle it increased to one inch one seventh; from the middle it grew narrower till it terminated to an acute point. The blade was near half an inch thick from the hilt to the middle, from which it grew less substantial to the point. The part taken for the hilt was about five inches long, near an inch broad in the middle, and not so much near the blade, or the place of the pommel, on either side of which it spread out about one-quarter of an inch; it was about one-eight of an inch thick, and in it were six rivets, viz: two at the end, two in the middle and two near the blade, with two more about one quarter of an inch from the hilt, near the edges; each rivet was about three quarters of an inch long, an equal part of which stood out on either side of the hilt, and on one of them hung a thin piece of gold, which weighed twelve pennyweight nine grains.

1749. (13). A man found some gold, part of which he sold from time to time, and which, he says, was of the same piece with part of a plate which he sold last September, and which I saw at the same time. The plate from which it was broken was round, and no less than ten inches in diameter; there was a gold wire inlaid round the rim; and about three inches toward the centre there was a gold twist sewed in and out, which was broken because of taking a plate about four inches in diameter out of the large one to which it was sewed with the twist; for that which was ten inches in diameter had a hole in the middle, wherein one of four inches would fit, and be concentric to the first. This part of the plate, with three or four broken pieces which were like the barrels of large quills cut off and split open, and about the same length, weighed two ounces, two pennyweights, ten grains. I am informed he has part of it yet.

1750. (14). A man found a small plate of gold, in the form of an equilateral triangle, each side about an inch three-quarters long, which he sold without weighing to a pedlar for £2 12s.

(15). The same man's wife soon after found in a sod of turf a piece of gold, which weighed eleven pennyweights, sixteen grains.

(16). The same year, a fool, cutting turf, found three rings like ring-dials; one of which he put on the end of a walking staff, whereon it remained until his father found it was gold, and took it from him. He hid the other two, cannot recollect where; and now they cannot be found.

(17). He says, he also at the same time found a lump in the form of a large egg, with a chain hanging from one end of it; which he either lost, or had it stolen out of his pocket by one of the labourers.

1751. (18). A man found such another weapon as that found 1748 on the rivets of which was a plate of gold, which covered one side of that wherein the rivets stood, at the end of which was a thing like a pommel of a small sword, with three links of a chain hanging out of it; all weighed three ounces, three pennyweights, eleven grains.
1752. (19). April 10th—As some boys, who played on a hill at one side of the bog, were going home, one of them, thirteen years of age, being out before the rest, leaped over a small trench, which divides the bog, before the others came up; and turning about to see them leap after him, saw a broad shining thing jutting out of the opposite bank, at which being somewhat surprised, he cried out: "I see two rabbits" and on a sudden looking towards the hill, and running as fast as he could, continued to cry, "I see two rabbits," on which all the rest of the boys followed him; and he led them home another way, and then he and his mother went back, and found a plate of gold, five inches broad at one end, four at the other, and almost six long, which was beautifully chased and engraved. The goldsmith to whom it was sold said he supposed it to be part of a crown. It weighed one ounce, twenty pennyweights, sixteen grains.

1753. (20). April 17th, there was found a piece of hollow brass, in the form of a semi-circle, of about three inches in diameter, two inches of the periphery being left, from each side of which two similar secants, falling on the diameter, cut off from both ends so much as left three quarters of an inch on either side of the centre, where it was open, and near half an inch wide; but that which represents the rim was more capacious and wider than it was at the diameter. At the opposite extremes, near the periphery, were two holes, which went through both sides, each of them large enough for the rivets which were in the hilt before mentioned, on the end of which it fitted; which made some think it was the pommel of one of them. It contained less than half a noggin, and weighed less than an ounce.

1753. (21). May 23rd, a man found a piece of hollow gold, in the form of the point of a scabbard of a small sword; which weighed one ounce, twenty-three pennyweights, seventeen grains.

(22). May 26th, was found a weapon of the same form with that found in 1748, but the metal of this was more refined; and a goldsmith upon trial found there was some gold in it. Close to the hilt, on the thick part, was engraved an oblong square, about half an inch long, a quarter broad and about one-sixth of an inch deep, wherein was inlaid a piece of pewter, which just filled it, with four channels cut in it, in each of which was laid a thin bit of fine copper, so that they resembled four figures of I. The blade weighed two pounds five ounces.

(23). June 12th, there was a small hollow piece of brass found, about two inches and a half long, of a cylindrical form, open at one end, and about three-quarters of an inch in diameter; the other end resembled the instrument used by cooper in cleaving twigs.

(24). June, 25th, was found a gold vessel much in the form of our chalice, except that the handle was curved; the cup was bulged and cracked, but, opened to its full capacity, would contain almost a pint. The handle and cup were chased and engraved, and weighed ten ounces, twelve pennyweights, twenty-three grains. The bottom was broken off, and not found.

1753. (25). June, 30th, two thin leaves of gold were found folded in each other, like children's hats, each about three inches in diameter. The crown of one of them was in the form of a cone, and smooth, and contained less than a thimble: the crown of the other was broken off, and the leaf was broken and cracked in many different places. The people who found them, being very poor, John Damer, of Shronehill, Esq., the proprietor of the land, gave them the weight in gold coin for them, viz.:—a guinea and a half.

(26). July, 17th, was found a piece of gold almost in the form of a large scollop-shell. For the reason before given, the same Mr. Damer gave the weight as before, viz.:—fourteen guineas and a half.

(27). July, 21st, a man found two pieces of gold, the one almost in the form of a man's thumb, and hollow at one end; the other was an oblong square, about three inches long, about an inch broad, and as thick as a guinea: both weighed three ounces, nine pennyweights, twenty-one grains.

(28). At the same time, he found a lump of coarse brass, which weighed above a pound, and seemed to have remained in the ladle after casting something.

(29). There was the same day found about two grains weight of gold twist.

(30). August, 12th, a boy found a bit of gold two inches long, as thick as a child's
finger, that seemed to have been cut off a larger piece on the edge of an anvil; for, from the small end to where it was cut it increased in thickness and weighed one ounce, seven grains.

(31). October, 7th, a man found something in the form of a bow, about six inches long, which to appearance seems coalblack polished wood; but it is very heavy, and grates like a stone, half of it is semi-circular, and very smooth; the inside and other quarter are each flat, and form a right-angle triangle; about an inch of its length is three quarter of an inch solid. On either end was a thin plate of gold, which entirely covered about half an inch of it, quite through which on either end went a small screw, so as to have bound the plate fast to it and fastened a chain, which hung between both ends. This little chain, which was gold and the plates, he broke off, and sold without weighing for £2 7s. 0d. The wood is in the possession of Mr. Damér.

(32). From the 25th May, 1753, to the 12th September, were found thirteen whole blades of the same make and form of that found 1748; some of these were above two feet long, some less, and three not above fourteen inches. Most of them were hacked and notched from the strokes of other weapons. Those that were not so long were not so broad or substantial as the longest; for they decreased in all dimensions as well as in length: but the hilts of the shortest were as long as these of the longest.

(33). There were also found five more, so bent, that the part called the handle (though they are not handles, only those things on which the handles were fastened by the rivets) almost touched the points.

(34). There were also found fortythree pieces of those parts of the swords wherein the swords stood; some more, some less in proportion, than half the length of the blades: and twenty-nine of the parts with points, after the same manner, some more, some less; but there were very few of the pieces with points and hilts which entirely fitted each other. All these things of which a description has been attempted, were found in different parts of the bog; but most of them about the centre, where they lay very deep.

(MR. CLEARY'S LIST).

1760. (35). A woman making a fire of turf, found in one of the sods which she broke a thin plate of beaten gold, with five small square ingots which weighed two ounces, four pennyweights, three grains, and were sold in Limerick for four guineas and a half.

1762. (36). A man found something in the form of a triangle, one side of it about one inch and a quarter in length, the other about two inches; with seven small ingots of gold inclosed in it, much in the form of grains used in weighing gold coin, but thicker in proportion than a guinea; which he sold without weighing for six pounds five shillings.

1763. (37). In June, in digging turf there were found at the bottom of the holes several skulls of men surprisingly thick and round.

1764. (38). A man found, on the east side of the bog, an uncommon piece of gold, larger than a French crown, which weighed one ounce three grains.

1765. (39). A man found a handful of gold, in small bits not much thicker than a straw, and about a quarter of an inch long. All weighed two ounces some grains.

1769. (40). A man passing by a stack of turf, saw a thing plate jutting out of one of the sods, which weighed two ounces and a half and eleven pennyweights.

1771. (41). A boy found in the border of the bog, a piece of gold about six inches long, much like the pipe of a trumpet, hollow in the middle; which weighed three ounces, fifteen pennyweights, twenty-one grains.

1773. (42). A man found in digging the bog, a skull, with two horns shaped like those on Kerry sheep, but longer. No person who has seen it can tell to what beast the skull belonged.

Between the years 1751 and 1773 we have in these lists a large and varied number of gold and bronze objects, to which must be added the "gold crown" noted by O'Halloran, some antiquities in the possession of Mr. Stamer and the Rev. Mr.
Armstrong (for Campbell states that Armstrong "had some antique curiosities found in the neighbouring bog"); these, with O'Curry's two gold ingots, complete the recorded material at our disposal. In passing I may remark that nothing has been found and reported on from Cullen or the immediate neighbourhood in recent years; in fact, since the ingots seen by O'Curry round about the year 1835.

There is little to be gained by stressing vain regrets that such a site as Cullen should have come to light at a period when archaeological science was quite unknown in the country, and when the intrinsic value in the objects found only hastened their destruction in the melting-pot or their seclusion in the cabinets of collectors, there to be forgotten and dissociated from their place of origin. In attempting to elucidate and identify the various objects mentioned in the lists, one must remember that such identifications as are offered are more or less conjectural, especially where gold ornaments are concerned, for the fragments which have been found can with some degree of probability be identified as parts of totally different ornaments.

The first item on our list may be identified as a bronze cauldron, although the statement that it had four legs presents an unusual feature; this may be accounted for by the fact that the writer, Nash, could only have been a child when it was discovered in 1731, and that he was describing it from hearsay. The large hanging pot used in cooking at that time (1775) had three or four legs, and so in talking of the vessel the narrator of the find in after years added the four legs to it. No. 9 was a four-sided bowl or basin, with a round bottom. One pities the poor owners who were forced to part with it for the mending of an old pot and thirteen pence.

No. 2 must have been some type of axe heads. It is remarkable that this is the only mention in the lists of a find that can be classed as axe heads.

Nos. 4 and 5 are spear-heads of two different sizes, but from the measurements given it is impossible to be sure to what type they belong. The record of these finds is important. From the description given by Nash, if we are to depend upon his accuracy, one gathers the impression that the finders had come upon the site of the work-shop of a smith, who confined his activities in spear making to weapons of two sizes and patterns only. These objects thus dug up formed part of his stock in trade, ready mounted for sale or barter to warrior or huntsman.

Nos. 12, 18, 22, 32, 33, 34, are records of bronze leaf-shaped swords, of which some sixty-three are listed. The first two (12, 18) are important as showing evidence of having their hilts covered with gold plates, while one of them (No. 18) had a pommel attached to the hilt with three links of chain hanging out of it. No. 22 is decorated on the thick portion of the blade, just below the hilt, a rectangular design being sunk into it, which was filled with a white metal, called in the report pewter; in this metal was inlaid four pieces of copper, like four figures "1." Nos. 32 and 33 record some eighteen complete swords, some with their edges hacked and notched and from fourteen to twenty-four inches long, and others bent nearly in two. No. 34 is a collection of fragments of swords, forty-three of which were parts with hilts and twenty-nine with points. Nash notices that of these sword fragments very few of the parts with hilts and points fitted together; he also remarks that of the complete swords, the hilts of the shortest swords were as long as those of the longest.

Of item No. 20 the finders were of the opinion that it was the pommel of a sword, but the description given of it is obscured by the use of many geometrical terms.

No. 23 is, perhaps, a socketed gouge, while No. 28 may be taken to be an anvil.

The first gold find is recorded in item No. 3 under the year 1732. As this is one of the early finds, the same remarks apply to it as to the cauldron in item No. 1. The description does not seem to fit in with any known gold ornament.

No. 6 is stated to be a plate of beaten gold, eight inches in diameter; this seems large for a "sun-disc," of which there are a number in the National Museum, but the largest there—that found at Lattoon(22) has only a diameter of four and half inches.

No. 7 may be an ear-ring, similar to No. 348-9 in Gold Catalogue (Plate XVIII.

423-4), but the weight of the Cullen object is much greater than the Museum specimens. A similar ear-ring is illustrated by Childe(24) in Prehistory of Scotland, and called a “basket-shaped” ear-ring, which demonstrates the manner in which such an ornament was worn. This was found in a cist grave in Scotland and is attributed by Childe to the Early Bronze Age. The Dublin examples have no details recorded as to their finding; so there is some doubt as to what period they belong; in all probability they conform in date with the example from Scotland. For this reason our identification of the Cullen elliptical plates as ear-rings must be doubtful, as all the objects found there belong to a very late phase of the Bronze Age.

No. 8 is without doubt a portion of a penannular ring similar to Nos. 182-3-4 in Gold Catalogue (Plate XVI, 310-13-14), and items 10 and 11 are finds of narrow gold ribbon, similar to No. 397 in Gold Catalogue (Plate X., 48).

The details given of No. 13 clearly indicate that the ornament is a gorget with a diameter of ten inches. The finder evidently broke it up and sold it bit by bit; the terminal disc which he took off had a diameter of four inches, and was stitched on the collar with twisted gold wire. Nash describes the unornamented raised ribs on the collar as “like the barrels of large quills cut off and split open.” The find given at No. 19—the “cute boy’s find”—is also a portion of a gorget, and No. 25, said to be “like children’s hats,” with a diameter of three inches, and the crown of one of them in the form of a cone, represents the terminal disc of a gorget, which was composed of two thin plates of gold lapped together by turning the rim of one of them over the other. A plain conical ornament in the centre of these terminal discs is a characteristic feature of nearly all the gorgets. No. 26 is again part of a gorget, the term like a “scalloped-shell” would very accurately describe half a gorget without its terminal disc, and the price given for it, namely fourteen and a half guineas, would represent a weight of about four ounces, which is about half the weight of such a gorget as that found at Gleaninsheen, Co. Clare(25) a few years ago. These records give us four objects which represent gorgets, and thus confirms Dr. O’ Halloran’s statement that such objects were found at Cullen.

No. 21 is described as hollow and in the form of the point of the scabbard of a small sword. Perhaps it was the chape of a scabbard, but, on the other hand, its form reminds one of the Bulle in the National Museum.

No. 24 must have been an extremely fine “dress fastener” (fibula), very like and quite as large as No. 155 Gold Catalogue (Plate XV. 279), only the bow and one terminal was found, both of which were ornamented.

The articles mentioned in No. 27 we shall have to pass over, as I have been unable to identify them, but the gold twist reported in No. 29 may be some of the wire used in attaching the terminal disc to the gorgets. No. 30 is an ingot.

Nos. 35, 36, 38, 39, 40 and 41, all from the list furnished by Cleary do not contain any details which help in their identification, but twelve small ingots are included in the first two of these items.

This completes the gold and bronze objects recorded and leaves only a few omissions to be dealt with. No. 31 is some form of jet ornament with gold mounts and a gold chain attached; the details given are obscure and do not help in elucidating the problem. Finally, Nos. 37 and 34 record the finding of some human skulls and the skull of a horned animal.

At the end of his list Mr. Nash states “all these things (namely items 1 to 34) of which a description has been attempted, were found in different parts of the bog, but the most of them about the centre, where they lay very deep.” It should be noted that practically all the objects in the lists of Nash and Cleary which allow of identification as belonging to a definitely prehistoric period, can be placed in the late Bronze Age. This is well in keeping with what we know of the sudden increase of art and civilization in the lower region of the Shannon at the end of the Bronze Age, as exemplified by the “Great Clare Find” at Moynane; the numerous bronzes from Lough Gur, the hoard lately discovered at Boobybrien, Co. Clare, and many other isolated finds. Had we here at Cullen a family of smiths working in gold and bronze, as the condition and number of finds would lead one to suspect.

Perhaps the appearance of this paper may stimulate others to solve the problems presented by the reported finds and thus establish at Cullen a cultural complex which may help in the identification of those people who introduced into the country lying about Shannon basin in Counties Limerick, Clare and Tipperary, a new technique and style in gold workmanship, as represented by the gold gorgets and "crowns" (25). It is only in the last few years that systematic excavation has been carried out in any of counties mentioned, and then only to a limited extent. The sites dealt with were—Cush and Lough Gur, in Co. Limerick; Poulawack Cairn, (27) Cahercommaun Fort (28) and Knocknallappa Crannóg, (29) in Co. Clare; but none of these sites have so far been helpful in furthering a solution of the problem. More excavation is needed, and what is of equal importance a reliable regional survey of existing antiquarian remains should be at once undertaken, for some of the smaller and less noticeable remains are bound to suffer with the increase of tillage, while the larger and more spectacular structures, as for example the stone forts in Co. Clare, are day by day being overturned and their features destroyed by boys and others hunting rabbits. Perhaps the intensified publicity given to antiquarian remains in the daily Press and in wireless programmes may help to stimulate a pride amongst the inhabitants of our countryside in the relics of their forefathers, and so assist their conservation.

25. Gogan, L. S. *Journal Cork Arch. & Hist. Society*, Vol. 38; p. 87. This paper, entitled *The Ballygotten Gold Collar*, deals with all existing Gold Gorgets to the date of its publication, and contains suggestions for the identification of their users.


29. The results of excavations at Cush and Lough Gur by Dr. S. P. Ó Ríordáin, and at Knocknallappa, by J. Raftary, M.A., have not yet been published.