

ROSCOMMON ARTEFACTS IN THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF IRELAND

Lámhdhéantúsáin Ros Comáin in
Ard-Mhúsaem na hÉireann

A Heritage Trail Exploring the Rich
and varied History of
County Roscommon

Conair Oidreachta a thaiscéalann
stair shaibhir agus ilghnéitheach
Chontae Ros Comáin



County Roscommon Heritage Forum

Please note that the Coggaibeg gold lunula, crescent-shaped collar and two small gold discs have been discovered since this booklet was printed and these are now on display at the National Museum of Ireland on Kildare Street. The hoard of Early Bronze Age goldwork formed part of the contents of a pharmacy safe stolen from Sheehan's Chemists, Strokestown, Co. Roscommon, in March 2009.

Have you ever wondered where all the ancient artefacts found in Roscommon go for safe keeping?

Have you ever wondered where you can go to see them?

The National Museum of Ireland is where you can see many artefacts from Co. Roscommon

Admission is free, so why not visit a branch of the National Museum of Ireland soon

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF IRELAND
ARCHAEOLOGY & HISTORY
Kildare Street, Dublin 2

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF IRELAND
COUNTRY LIFE
Turlough Park, Castlebar, Co. Mayo

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF IRELAND
DECORATIVE ARTS & HISTORY
Collins Barracks, Benburb Street, Dublin 7

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF IRELAND
NATURAL HISTORY
Merrion Street, Dublin 2

INTRODUCTION - RÉAMHRÁ

Co. Roscommon, in terms of heritage, is one of the most important counties in Ireland.

100 kilometres in length and up to 64 kilometres at its widest point. Co. Roscommon is the only county in Connaught without any sea coast, although the mighty river Shannon, the longest river in Ireland, abounds most of the county's western boundary. The Shannon has influenced the the military, social and economic history of the county since time began. The river Suck abounds most of the county in the east, the great loughs of Lough Key, Lough Gara, Lough Boderg and Lough Key form a large part of its landscape and some two thirds of the county are bounded by water. Many of the other numerous lakes would also have been the sites of Crannogs.

Although much of Roscommon is fertile pasture on a limestone plain, one third of the county is still under bog.

This combination of water and bogland along with the rich farming tradition which has survived, particularly on over 100,000 hectares of arable land found mainly in the centre of the county, has ensured that Co. Roscommon has a rich heritage of artefacts. Dating from pre-hisoric times to the present, these have been excavated by archaeologists over the centuries or in more recent years donated by the farming community who wish to see their way of life preserved for future generations.

Roscommon, therefore, is a county characterised not only by its diverse history and heritage but also by the diversity of its landscape. This diversity is reflected in all aspects of The National Museum of Ireland and enables us now to explore the displays found there. It is hoped that this listing will encourage people of all ages, in particular the young, to seek out Co. Roscommon artefacts that we are sure you will find exciting, stimulating and educational and also will give you a great deal of pleasure as you explore your county's heritage trail!

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF IRELAND

ARCHAEOLOGY & HISTORY,

Kildare Street

**Stiúrthóireacht Seandálaíocht agus
Stair**

GROUND FLOOR DISPLAY

SECTION 1

PRE-HISTORIC IRELAND

From the earliest times to the beginning of the Iron Age

This exhibition is intended as an introduction to Ireland's prehistoric past. It has been arranged on a chronological basis to lead the visitor through the major changes and developments of this period. Artefacts have been chosen to highlight particular aspects of each prehistoric era. The display provides a context for the exhibition of prehistoric gold (section 2) and is followed chronologically by the treasury (section 3).

Stone Spearhead

Cloonarragh, Co. Roscommon
4300-3900BC
1908:208

Four Barbed and Tanged Arrowheads

N0.2 Cuilkeel, Co. Roscommon

2500-2200BC

1967-67

Tanged Copper Knife

River Shannon, Jamestown Bridge, Co. Roscommon/Co.
Leitrim

2500-2200BC

W.175

Four Halberds

N0. 4 Ardagheen More Co. Roscommon

2000-1700BC

1934-6049

Ten Rapiers

N0.5 Cloonalough, Lough O'Flynn, Co. Roscommon

1400-900BC

1973-57

Seven Swords

Sword N0.2

Tumna, Co. Roscommon

900-500BC

W72

Chain Link Collar

Roscommon, Co. Roscommon

900-500BC

W1



Wooden Block Wheel

Doogarymore, Co. Roscommon

c.400BC

1969:715

SECTION 2

Ór - IRELAND'S GOLD

Pair of Gold Discs

Co. Roscommon

c.2200-1800BC

W268, P949

Gold Lunala

Near Athlone, Co. Roscommon

c.200BC

W5

Gold Lunala

Near Athlone, Co. Roscommon

c.200BC

1893-4

Gold Torc

Near Athlone, Co. Westmeath/Co. Roscommon
1200-1000BC
1893-5

Two Gold Earrings

Castlerea, Co. Roscommon
1200-100BC
W63, W64

A Hoard of Nine Gold Balls

Tumna
Co. Roscommon
800-700BC
W28, 33A, 1975-231, 1990-81



A Necklace of Gold Beads? (see above)

Perhaps the most mysterious of all the gold ornaments of the later Bronze Age are the hollow gold balls found at Tumna in Co. Roscommon in 1834. 11 balls are said to have been found when a group of men were tilling land near Tumna church. Each gold ball is made in two

sections which are soldered together. They are perforated which suggests that they were intended to be strung together. The graduated size of the balls also suggests that they were strung as beads in a necklace. After the discovery it seems the balls were divided amongst various collectors. Gradually over a period of about 150 years 9 of the original 11 were acquired by the Royal Irish Academy and the National Museum of Ireland. One is in the collection of the British Museum but the whereabouts of the one remaining ball is unknown. Among the noted collectors who at one time owned parts of the find were Dean Dawson, Major Sirr (*sic*), Colonel Clements and the Duke of Northumberland.

Bronze Spearhead

River Shannon, near Athlone, Co. Roscommon
800-700BC
W310

SECTION 3 THE TREASURY

Wood and Metal Altar Cross

"The Tully Lough Cross"
Tully, Co. Roscommon
8th.-9th. century AD
1998-9

Bronze Etruscan Warrior

Co. Roscommon
2nd.-1st. century BC
P755

Gold Torc

Ardnaglug, Co. Roscommon
(previously recorded as from Clonmacnoise, Co. Offaly)
3rd. century BC
W.290

Gold Torc

Ardnaglug, Co. Roscommon
(previously recorded as from Clonmacnoise, Co. Offaly)
3rd. century BC
W.291

Bronze Bucket

Clooneebawn, Co. Roscommon
9th.-10th. century AD
L1966 1

Ridge-Pole from House Shaped Shrine

Co. Roscommon
8th.-9th. century AD
R2952

Silver Embossed Penannular Brooch

No. 20
Drimnagh, Co. Roscommon
Late 9th century - Early 10th. century
1931-14

Hoard of Five Gold Arm Rings

Vesnoy, Co. Roscommon
10th.-11th. century AD
W94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF IRELAND

ARCHAEOLOGY & HISTORY

Kildare Street

Stiurthoireacht Seandalaíocht agus

Stair

UPPER FLOOR DISPLAY

SECTION 5

VIKING IRELAND

Bold type headings indicate relevant cabinets, with numbered contents, within this display

RURAL SETTLEMENT AND ECONOMY

Two Wooden Buckets

Cloonarragh, Co. Roscommon

10th.-11th. century

1985-35-6

Wooden Bowl

Cuillard, Co. Roscommon

8th.-9th. century

1963-42

This bowl contained butter when it was discovered, indicating that the storage of butter in bogs was one way of keeping food (see article in *Archaeology Ireland*)

FINE METALWORKING AND PERSONAL ORNAMENTS 9th. - 10th. CENTURIES

N0. 11. Copper Alloy Strap End

Strokestown Co. Roscommon

X1942

Strap Ends

These small metal mounts were designed to protect the ends of leather straps or belts and were copies of Anglo-Saxon forms. They usually have animal-headed terminals.

N0.14. Copper Alloy Buckle

Lough Nahincha, Co. Roscommon

E499-93

N0. 27. Necklace of Thirteen Blue Glass Beads

Cloonshannagh, Co. Roscommon

1914: 26-38

Glass Beads and Bracelets

The manufacture of multi-coloured glass beads and bracelets is known from Pre-Viking times in Ireland and their use continued into the Viking Age. Some exception pairs of perforations indicate that elaborately strung necklaces of beads were worn.

No. 40. Antler Comb

Ardakillen (sic), Co. Roscommon

W120

N0. 41. Antler Comb

Strokestown, Co. Roscommon

1939-398

WEAPONS AND LUXURY GOODS 11th. to 12th. CENTURIES

N0. 9. Miniature copper Alloy Axehead

Lough O'Flynn, Co. Roscommon
E499 - 216

N0. 10 Copper Alloy Bowl

Cloonfinlough, Co. Roscommon
W28

These (this) shallow bowl comes from a settlement site(s) and represents simple versions of imported table-ware found throughout western Europe in the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

N0.15. Two Bone or Ivory Gaming Pieces

Strokestown, Co. Roscommon
Wk 294, 5105

RELIQUARIES

Cabinet Three

N0.7. Bronze Altar Bell With Chain

Rockville, Co. Roscommon
11th.-12th. centuries
1993-22

Cross of Cong

Cong, Co. Mayo
2nd. quarter, 12th. century
R2833

This processional cross was made to contain a relic of the true cross which was placed behind the polished central rock crystal. It has a wooden core covered with plates of copper alloy. Around the side is a lengthy inscription recording the names of those involved in its manufacture. This indicates that it was made for Turlough O'Conor, King of Connacht, and it is known that he received a relic of the true cross in 1123.

GOLD AND SILVER: INGOTS, HOARDS AND HACK-SILVER 9th.-10th. CENTURIES

N0.25. Folding Beam of Copper Alloy Balance Scales
Strokestown, Co. Roscommon
Wk 145

DAILY LIFE 9th-10th. CENTURIES

The production of wool from sheep and goats was an important activity and tools used in spinning, weaving and sewing are common. Leather and woodworking was equally important especially as kitchen utensils and tableware were made almost entirely of wood and pottery was used only in parts of the north and east of the country. Shed deer antlers were used to make combs and lignite was carved into small rings and bracelets. Ironworking was particularly important as most agricultural implements are represented by various parts of ploughs and harvesting equipment such as billhooks and sickles. Fishing and hunting were also important sources of food.

N0. 2. Iron Shears

Strokestown, Co. Roscommon
W.47

N0. 7. Bone Weaving Tablet

Strokestown, Co. Roscommon
W.22/28
W.47

N0.11. Iron Tongs

Strokestown, Co. Roscommon
W29 W47

N0. 24. Iron Fish Hook

Near Strokestown, Co. Roscommon
Wk 28
W.47

N0.25. Pieces of Cut Antler

Ballinderry, Co. Offaly or Strokestown, Co. Roscommon
Wk, 239, 321, 364, 365 W.47

**VIKING BURIALS AND IMPORTED OBJECTS - 9th.-
10th. CENTURIES**

Apart from large cemeteries at Kilmainham and Islandbridge, Viking graves are not common elsewhere. They consist for the most part of single graves and their small number indicates that Viking settlement in Ireland was never as extensive as in Scotland, England or the Isle of Man.

A small number of single finds of weapons and ornaments of Scandinavian origin is known from sites outside the Viking coastal settlements. Some of these may have

found their way into Irish hands and do not necessarily represent Viking settlement.

No.4. Iron Axehead

Dereen Lough, Co. Roscommon

Wk. 72

W.47

SECTION 6

MEDIEVAL IRELAND 1150 - 1500

Bold type headings indicate relevant cabinets, with numbered contents, within this display

This exhibition explores life in late medieval Ireland. The period saw the arrival of the English (anglo-normans) c.1170 and the rapid expansion of English control over most of the island. After c.1300 it declined. Contacts between the Irish and people of other origins, especially the English, shaped the culture of most parts of Ireland.

THE LORDLY TABLE

Lead Alloy Jug

late 15th./early 16th. century

Lough Ackrick, Co. Roscommon

X4599

Copper Alloy Bowl

12th./13th. century

Cloonfinlough, Co. Roscommon

W28

SPEARS, MACES AND DAGGERS

Besides swords, axes and bows the range of weapons from Medieval Ireland is limited, but several types are known. The most important are spears, maces and daggers.

Copper Alloy Macehead

13th./14th. century

Co. Roscommon

W299

'KNIGHTLY' SWORDS

Iron Sword

13th./14th. century

Bog at Clooncah/Moher Co. Roscommon

Wk 4

The basic form of knightly sword was common to much of Europe. The long flat blades were designed for cutting with the edge, rather than thrusting with the point. These swords could have been used either by English knights or wealthy Irish warriors of the 12th. to 14th. centuries.

CHURCH BUILDINGS

Church Bell

Copper Alloy 13th. century

Ballglass Upper, Co. Roscommon

1958-4

The suspension loops on this heavy cast bell indicate that

it was originally hung in the tower of a church. Most metal bells were melted down after the reformation.

THE IRISH CHURCH

Crosier of St. Berach

Copper Alloy

11th./12th. century

Kilbarry, Co. Roscommon

RI 5611

RHPRAH 0048D

Known as Gearr Bhearaigh 'the short (crozier) of Berach', this crozier is named after the patron saint of the early church of Kilbarry. The head of the community attended the inauguration of the Kings of Connacht.

NEW MONASTIC ORDERS

No.2

Seal Matrix of Holy Trinity Abbey, Lough Key, Co. Roscommon

13th. century, near Oranmore, Co. Galway

1893-41

Seals of abbots and priors

The organisation of the monastery's affairs was in the hands of the abbot or prior who had his own seal. These frequently carried images of the abbot with his emblem of authority, the crozier. Like bishops, some abbots also wore rings as symbols of their office.

THE AUTHORITY OF THE CHURCH

N0.1

Seal Matrix of Thomas Barrett, Bishop of Elphin (1372-1404)

R3058

From the 12th. century a reorganisation of the Irish church brought territorial dioceses, each under the control of a bishop. Church administrators dealt with issues of church law, property and dues.

Bishops Seals

Every bishop possessed his own personal seal that was often destroyed on his death. Early seals usually depict a standing figure of a bishop holding a crozier in his left hand, his right raised in blessing. Later seals are more elaborate.

CARPENTERS

Axes and Adzes

Axes and adzes (a form of axe with a transverse cutting blade) were the carpenter's main tool. They were used at all stages of cutting, shaping and dressing wood. The variety of shapes and sizes reflects this.

Iron 'Bearded' Axe and handle

Garrow, Co. Roscommon

no date

1971-1094

Iron Axehead

Near Strokestown, Co. Roscommon

no date

Wk75:W248-F789

OTHER TOOLS

No.5

Iron Slice

Near Strokestown, Co. Roscommon

no date

Carpenters used augers, gouges and chisels, in various sizes for carving wood. Augers, set in transverse handles for twisting into wood, were the equivalent of the modern drill. Slices (broad chisels) and planes were used to shave and shape wood.

Oak Tool Chest and Tools

(7 tools)

14th./15th. century

Cornnaveagh, Co. Roscommon

1985-130

This chest found in a bog, was the toolbox of a medieval craftsman. Some of his tools such as the spoon bit, are for working with wood but others are for working stone.

FARMERS

The English introduced a new agricultural economy, with crops grown for cash sale. This led to a great increase in the area under tillage.

Wooden Shovel Blade

15th./17th. centuries

Cuibalkeen, Co. Roscommon

M1950-12

Separate Bladed Shovel

These shovels consisted of a shaft inserted at an oblique

angle through the blade and attached to it by wooden pegs and/or cords.

SECTION 8

X TEN YEARS COLLECTING 1990-1999

Stone Cross Slab

Found at Ballinaboy, Co. Roscommon

Early Medieval 8th.-9th. century AD

The presence of this cross inscribed stone with inscription was first recorded in the museum files in 1973. Although efforts were made to acquire the stone for the national collections, the owners of the land felt unable to part with it. In recent years many similar slabs have been stolen from early monastic sites around the country. Although some of these have been recovered, the threat remains, especially at sites which are remote or not well known. In 1998 the land changed hands. The museum approached the new owner and shortly afterwards the cross slab was acquired.

Two Jade Pendants 'Eh Tike'

New Zealand

1500-1800 AD

W.47

In addition to Irish antiquities division includes foreign ethnographical material amongst its collections. Although the museum is no longer actively collecting foreign materials occasionally, objects are offered as donations

The two pendants of polished green stone called jade exhibited here were acquired as part of a small group of objects including Irish bronze ornaments of prehistoric date discovered in County Roscommon Library and transferred to the National Museum for safe-keeping. It is possible that they were brought back to Ireland as souvenirs by someone who visited or worked in New Zealand. The colouring is due to the presence of the minerals jadeite and nephrite.

These pendants were known in the Maori language as 'Hei Tiki' and were worn around the neck suspended on cords. They were worn by men and indicated their rank in society. They were highly prized and kept as heirlooms, being passed from generation to generation.

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF IRELAND

DECORATIVE ARTS & HISTORY

Collins Barracks

**Bailiúcháin, Riaracháin, agus
Seirbhísí Na hEalaíona Maisiúla
agus Stair**

SECTION 13

IRISH COUNTRY FURNITURE

Chair

Derrycahill, Co. Roscommon

F1966.343

A high comb-back chair of pine. Chairs of this style are rare in Ireland and examples are known only in the midlands and eastern counties.

Rush and Candle Holder

Ballaghadereen, Co. Roscommon

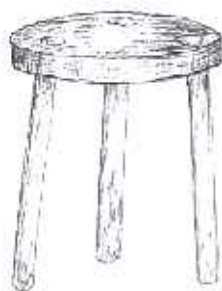


F1965.1199

Two Stools

Made by the carpenter John Gillooly of
Aghmagree, Co. Roscommon

1969



F1969.430-431

St. Brigid Cross

No.8 in Cabinet 1

Cornalee, Co. Roscommon

F1960.150

St. Brigid Cross

In 2nd. Cabinet

Moyne, Co. Roscommon

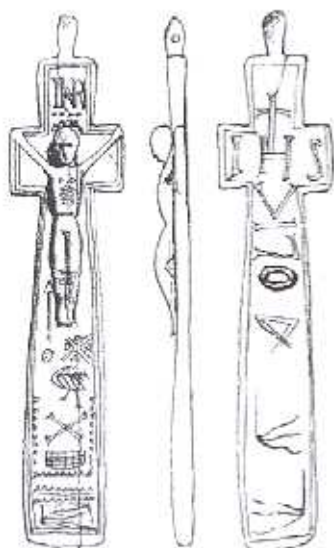
F1942.1887/48

Penal Cross

No.13 in Cabinet

Elphin, Co. Roscommon

F.1961.4



NATIONAL MUSEUM OF IRELAND

COUNTRY LIFE

Turlough Park

Saol na Tuaithe

LEVEL -1 FLOOR DISPLAY

THE NATURAL ENVIROMENT

MAKING THE BEST OF THINGS *(open display)*

People took advantage of local natural materials to make everyday items. As a result, in different parts of the country, similar objects were made with different materials.

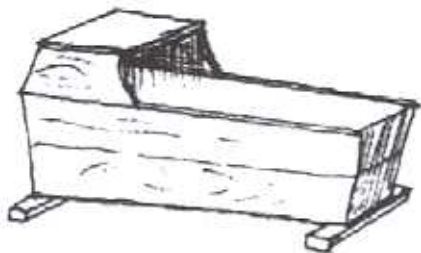
Cradle

Ballymoe

Co. Roscommon

Wood

F1989.330



OBJECTS FOR LIVING (open display)

Rush Raft

Patrick Gately

Dysert

Co, Roscommon

Wood, Rushes and Willow

F1962.124



A RAFT MADE OF RUSH

Rushes from the riverbank - lashed and woven around a timber framework - made an ideal craft for use on the river. This specialised vessel demonstrates how people adapted the natural materials to hand for local needs. People used this traditional type of watercraft on parts of the River Suck in Co. Roscommon.

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF IRELAND

COUNTRY LIFE

Turlough Park

Saol na Tuaithe

LEVEL -2 FLOOR DISPLAY

Level -2

The headings in bold capital text refer to the printed perspex flip boards in front of each open display detailing the numbered artefacts.

WORKING ON THE LAND AND WATER

(open display)

MOVING THE SODS

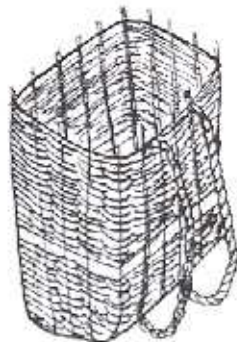
When the turf was dry, the women and children often took on the task of moving it back to the home (which could be several miles away). Of course, the dry peat was now much easier to move than the heavy wet sods of spring

Back Basket

Tulsk

Co. Roscommon

F1951.47



CUTTING THE STALKS

A sharp curved tool was needed to down the crop whose stalks might stand a metre or so high. The sythe was a large heavy implement held with two hands, which cut a swathe of wheat, oats or hay in one sweep. Normally swung by a man, it required both strength and skill to use effectively.

Sythe

Kiltoom

Co. Roscommon

F1973.165

FRESH WATER FISHING

Otter Board

Thomas Kelly

Grange

Co. Roscommon

F1967.157

The otter board was like a miniature boat trailing lines and hooks attached and controlled from the shore by a cord.

CATTLE

MILCH COWS

Almost everyone in the countryside owned a milch cow. Allowed to graze throughout the spring and summer the animal would be given hay in a stall feeder during the worst months of the year. Traditionally, looking after the cow and her calf was woman's work. When the calf was young, the farmer's wife would muzzle the animal to prevent it drinking milk wanted by the family.

Calf Muzzle

Michael Coughlan
Closhatogher
Co. Roscommon
Ballgar
Co. Roscommon
F1960.21

CALVES AND OXEN

Calves were a source of income to the family. Heifers might be sold for breeding, while the surplus bull calves were usually castrated and fattened for sale. These powerful animals might be harnessed to pull agricultural equipment, though in Ireland they were much less common draught animals than horses and donkeys.

Calf Castrators

Patrick Byron
Ballinagare
Co. Roscommon
F1951.74/76

THE HARNESS MAKER (open display)

Since working horses were common in Ireland, harness makers were much in demand. The strength and durability of the harness were important because the farmer depended on the power of horses to perform many everyday tasks. The craft required a high degree of skill and a harness maker could take up to seven years to learn his trade.

CUTTING AND WORKING THE LEATHER

The harness maker used a round knife - a characteristic tool of the trade - for most leather cutting tasks. He would adeptly use

it to pare or skive the leather, shaving edges or cutting wide strips. A gauge knife could be pre-set to cut a narrow leather strip to a specific size. A tool called an edge cut was used to trim rough edges on straps.

PUNCHING AND DECORATING

Holes for buckles or rivets were made using punches. Two punches attached together could make buckle holes a fixed distance apart. Revolving punches were used for the same purpose. To decorate his handiwork the harness maker used a creaser. This blunt tool made indentations in the leather along the edges of the straps. The final stage was to dye the leather

Compass

Roscommon
Co. Roscommon
F1969-350

Edge Cut

Roscommon
Co. Roscommon
F1969.389

Clamp

Roscommon
Co. Roscommon
F1969.300

Mattress Needle

Castlereagh
Co. Roscommon
F1970.209

Creaser

Roscommon

Co. Roscommon

F1969.538

Leather Dye

Roscommon

Co. Roscommon

F1969.557

Eyelet Tool

Roscommon

Co. Roscommon

F1969.379

Palm

Roscommon

Co. Roscommon

F1969.372

The harness maker used a metal palm to protect his hand as he pushed the needle through thick leather.

LIFE IN THE COMMUNITY (open and cabinet displays)

ST. BRIGID'S DAY IN THE COMMUNITY (cabinet)

St. Brigid's Cross with potato Inside

Thomas Dolan

Dysert

Co. Roscommon

F1960.151

In some parts of Ireland a potato was incorporated into the St. Brigid's Cross. The potato (now blessed by St. Brigid) was often the first potato planted for the year.

Brideog

(Doll for St. Brigid's Day)

Ballycreggan

Kiltoom

Co. Roscommon

F1977.44

In most parts of Ireland Biddy Boys went from house to house carrying a Brideog, an effigy of the saint, and collected food and money.

THE WEDDING

STRAW BOYS

One of the highlights of the wedding party was the arrival of the Straw Boys to wish the couple good luck. The Straw Boys were uninvited but nevertheless expected guests - young men of the community who dressed in straw outfits to conceal their identity. They would demand to dance with the bride, enjoy the food and drink and amuse the other guests with their antics. One tradition had it that if they were satisfied with the hospitality extended to them, they would remove the straw outfits and burn them in honour of the bride. If they felt the welcome had been less than whole-hearted they would throw the straw costumes into the branches of nearby trees to rot in reproach at such meanness.

Strawboys Suit (Whelper's suit)

Derry coagh

Kilnamanagh

Frenchpark
Co. Roscommon
F1958.104a

Straw Hat

Derry coagh
Kilnamanagh
Frenchpark
Co. Roscommon
F1958.104b

THE SHOPKEEPER AND HER SHOP

INSIDE THE SHOP

Rural people visited local shops to purchase (either for cash or credit) essential supplies that they could not produce for themselves. The shopkeeper (often a woman) was an important person in the community, both as the source for, mass produced, and as a potential ally for the family in hard times she was also a link to the outside world - not only did she sell newspapers and magazines, but her range of contacts also provided her with news from the whole region. The shopkeeper knew most of her customers by name - many were friends and relatives.

Some of the items people purchased in the shop were stored in bulk and measured out by the shopkeeper. Staples such as corn flour, tea, sugar and salt were transferred into bags or sacks from big containers kept on the floor; small quantities were weighed on scales; larger amounts were scooped into standard-sized bags or sacks. Other food items were prepacked in convenient amounts, part of the growing process of mass-production. Bright labels and printed boxes advertised desirable new food items made elsewhere.

1/2 lb Tea Bags

Ballaghaderreen
Co. Roscommon
F1989.282

1/4 lb Tea Bags

Ballaghaderreen
Co. Roscommon
F1989.283

Weighing Scales and weights

Castlereagh Town
Kilteevin
Co. Roscommon
1969.201

Cantrell & Cochrane's Advertising Mirror

Athlone
Co. Westmeath/Roscommon
F1974.251

LUXURIES

Sweets, stored in glass jars, could be bought in ones or twos (perhaps by a child) or in larger quantities. The adult equivalent was cigarettes, which could also be individually purchased or bought in packets of various sizes.

Sweet jars and boxes

Athlone
Co. Westmeath/Roscommon
F1974.970-972
F1974.966-964
F1994.175, 178, 179

ACTIVITIES IN THE HOME (open and cabinet displays)

CLEAN THE HOUSE, YARD AND BYRE

For general housekeeping, women often used natural materials as cleansers. Scouring was done with a mixture of sand and peck heath (a plant), and soap was made from the ashes of ferns mixed with animal fat. Once a year the house and byre were whitewashed with lime.

Yard or Byre Broom

Tom Kelly

Grange

Curraghboy

Co. Roscommon

F1997.588

HOME IS WHERE THE HEARTH IS (open display)

COOK THE MEALS

Using cooking equipment kept at the hearth the woman of the house boiled, toasted, fried and baked food for the daily meals. She would keep a container water hot throughout the day for making tea and washing up.

Brand

Coolteige

Co. Roscommon

S.A. 91925

Pot Hooks

Carrowduff

Co. Roscommon

F1954.48

FURNITURE (open display)

RELIGIOUS OBJECTS

Most Catholic people display religious objects such as holy pictures, statues and water fonts in their homes. Newlyweds were often given religious items as wedding presents. They revered such objects and believed they helped to protect the household.

'The Child of Prague' Statue

Roscommon

Co. Roscommon

F2000.215

FROM FARM TO HOME (open display)

With little effort the housewife could ensure that the chickens produced more than enough eggs to feed her family. Surplus eggs were sold at the market or preserved for later use. In some households the chickens were kept in the house, either in a hen coop or hen's nest.

Egg Basket

Taghboy

Co. Roscommon

F1961.8

Head Ring

Kiltoom

Co. Roscommon

F1970.38



MAKING THE MEALS PREPARING THE FOOD

CONTAINERS FOR SERVING DRINKS

Earthenware Pitcher

Lisbride

Co. Roscommon

F1993.374

CLOTHING THE FAMILY PROCESSING THE FIBRES

UNDYED WOOL (cabinet)

First the sheep would be shorn (usually by the man of the house) and the fleece washed to remove any dirt. The women separated the different grades of fibre, selecting the wool to be spun or woven.

Undyed White Wool

Ballinlig

Co. Roscommon

F2000.320

Undyed Black Wool

Ballinlig

Co. Roscommon

F2000.507

MAKING CLOTHES AT HOME

Women spent much of their 'free time' in the evening sitting beside the fire doing needlework. The woman of the house (and her older daughters) would not only sew and knit the clothes but often also decorate them. A skilled needlewoman might earn extra money for the family by doing piecework lace and embroidery.

Sprigging Hoop

Castlerea

Co. Roscommon

F1951-59

EMBROIDERY AND DECORATION

The most common form of embroidery in Ireland was 'Sprigging'

Embroidered decoration on white linen. Irish women did sprigging as piecework for English or Scottish wholesalers, being supplied with the undecorated material and the design to be embroidered on to it. The resulting pattern was raised above the surface of the linen, and complimented by the fabric. A skilled sprigger could also embroider other materials such as cotton or silk.

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF IRELAND

COUNTRY LIFE

Turlough Park

Saol na Tuaithe

LEVEL -3 FLOOR DISPLAY

FORCES OF CHANGE

Advertisement Poster

Monica Duff Boots & Shoes

Ballaghaderreen

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF IRELAND

NATURAL HISTORY

Merion Street

Stair an Dúlra

GROUND FLOOR DISPLAY

SECTION 1

Bohemian Pheasant

Roscommon

NMINH:1905.208

Wigeon

Roscommon

NMINH 1904.348?

NOTES - NOTAI

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Chontae Ros Comáin

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Ard-Mhúsaem na hÉireann

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