

### The Broighter gold boat

The front cover of *The Irish Journal of Psychological Medicine* Vol. 9 No. 2 featured the Gold Boat with its fittings, from the Broighter Gold Hoard, now safely preserved in the National Museum of Ireland. The hoard consists of the little boat which resembles a currach, with oars, boat hook etc., a collar, tubular in structure, and richly ornamented with the bold raised designs of the La Tene Period, together with a bowl, and some slender chains. In 1896, a man ploughing at Broighter turned them up near the corner of a field, on flat ground near the tidal River Roe, the surface being about 4' above high water and the objects had been lying close together, under some 14" of soil (1).

The British Museum acquired them by purchase, but they were then claimed by the Royal Irish Academy, acting on behalf of the Irish government which considered they were treasure trove, that is, precious objects deposited or hidden with the intention of subsequent recovery (2). The British Museum declined to give them up, claiming they constituted a votive offering made when the sea flowed over the site, and thus, deposited from a boat, and abandoned. There then followed a remarkable trial at the Royal Courts of Justice in June 1903, remarkable for the unusual nature of the evidence, which ranged from ploughing, conchology and geology to folklore and mythology. For three days Mr. Justice Farwell listened to an amazing medley of fact and fancy, but his judgement delivered one week later, left little doubt, "the Court has been occupied listening to fanciful suggestions more suited to the poem of a Celtic Bard, than the prose of an English Law Report. The defendants' suggestion is that the articles were thrown into the sea, which they suggest then

covered the spot in question as a votive offering by some Irish Sea King, or Chief to some Irish Sea God, at some period between 300 B.C. and 100 A.D., and for this purpose they ask the Court to infer the existence of the sea on the spot in question, the existence of an Irish Sea God, the existence of a custom to make votive offerings in Ireland during the period suggested, and the existence of kings, or chiefs who would be likely to make such votive offerings. It was perhaps natural that the defendants should grasp at theories which I may say were not invented for the purpose of the defence; but it is really short of extravagant to ask the Court to assume the existence of a votive offering of a sort hitherto unknown, in a land where such offerings are hitherto unknown, in a sea not known to have existed for 2,000 or possibly 4,000 years, to a Sea God by a Chieftian both equally unknown, and to prefer this to the commonplace but natural inference, that these articles were a hoard hidden for safety, in a land disturbed by frequent raids" (3).

In due course the objects took their place in the collection of prehistoric gold in the National Museum.

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#### References

1. Praeger RL. *The Way That I Went*. London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1939.
2. Pim S. Robert Lloyd Praeger. *Irish Times* 1959 Sept 9; 5.
3. Praeger RL. *Miscellanea Journal of Royal Society of Antiquaries in Ireland*. 1942; 72: 29-31.

## BOOK REVIEWS

### BOOKS RECEIVED

**A new home in the community.** (The Sovereign Series: Language beyond words). Sheila Hollins, Deborah Hutchinson. Beth Webb, illustrator. London: St. George's Mental Health Library, 1993. 72pp, £7.50 pb. **A psychology for living: personal construct theory for professionals and clients.** Peggy Dalton, Gavin Dunnett. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 1992. 239 pp, £12.95 pb. **A textbook of psychological medicine.** 3rd rev ed. Brian O'Shea, Jane Falvey. Dublin: Eastern Health Board, 1993. 339pp, 14.00pb. **Affect: psychoanalytic perspectives.** Theodore Shapiro, Robert N Ende, editors. Madison CT: International Universities Press, 1992. 515pp, \$65.00 hb. **Alcoholism and the family.** Satoru Saitoh, MD, Peter Steinglass, MD, Marc A Schuckit, MD, editors. New York: Brunner/Mazel, 1992. Outside US/Canada, distr by Raven Press, New York. 322pp, \$34 pb. **Alcoholism in North America, Europe, and Asia.** John E Helzer, Glorisa J Canino, editors. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992. 345 pp, hb. **Aluminum in biology and medicine.** (Ciba Foundation symposium 169). Derek J Chadwick, Julie Whelan, editors. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 1992. (A Wiley-Interscience Publication). 326pp, £42.50 hb. **Back to the asylum: the future of mental health law and policy in the United States.** John Q La Fond, Mary L Durham. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992. 280 pp, £30.00 hb. **Bob tells all.** (The Sovereign Series: Language beyond words.) Sheila Hollins, Valerie Sinason. Beth Webb, illustrator. London: St. George's Mental Health Library, 1993. 64pp, £7.50 pb. **Brain function and psychotropic drugs.** Heather Ashton. Oxford: Oxford University Press (Oxford Medical Publications), 1992. 436 pp, pb. **Children who soil: assessment and treatment.** Ann Buchanan, in collaboration with Graham Clayden. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 1992.

278 pp, £14.95 pb. **Cognitive neuropsychology in clinical practice.** David Ira Margolin, editor. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992. 560 pp, hb. **Conrad Ferdinand Meyer and Freud: the beginnings of applied psychoanalysis.** Alexander Grinstein, MD. Madison CT: International Universities Press, 1992. 415 pp, \$49.50 hb. **Developmental psychopathology.** Helmut Remschmidt, Martin H Schmidt, editors (Child and youth psychiatry: European perspectives; vol 2.) Lewiston NY: Hogrefe & Huber, 1992. 180 pp, \$64.00 pb. **Early deprivation of empathic care.** John Leopold Weil, MD. Madison Ct: International Universities Press, 1992. 231pp, \$30.00 hb. **Experimental approaches to anxiety and depression.** J Martin Elliott, David J Heal, Charles A Marsden, editors. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 1992. 288 pp, £55 hb. **Family systems therapy: developments in the Milan-systemic therapies.** Elsa Jones. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 1993. 279pp, £19.95 pb. **Family work for schizophrenia: a practical guide.** Liz Kuipers, Julian Leff, Dominic Lam. London: Royal College of Psychiatrists/Gaskell, 1992. 128pp, £10.00 pb. **Fashion and the unconscious.** Edmund Bergler, MD. Madison CT: International Universities Press, 1992. 333 pp, \$24.95 pb. **Fluvoxamine: new perspectives in clinical practice.** J Cobb, editor. (International clinical psychopharmacology 1991 Dec; 6 Suppl 3.) Oxford: CNS (Clinical Neuroscience), 1991. 96pp, pb. **Focus on restraint: guidelines on the use of restraint in the care of older people.** 2nd ed. Royal College of Nursing FOCUS group. London: Royal College of Nursing, 1992. 16 pp, £3.99 pb. **Gender and psychoanalytic treatment.** Morton Kissen, PhD, editor. New York: Brunner/Mazel, 1992. Outside US/Canada distr by Raven Press. (Current issues in psychoanalytic practice: monographs of the Society