

Bronze Age Boy - 4,000 years ago

It is thought that metal tools first appeared in Wales about 4,500 years ago, initially made of copper followed by bronze. Much of the copper for the production of bronze probably came from the copper mine on the **Great Orme Llandudno**, where prehistoric mining on a very large scale dates largely from the middle Bronze Age.

Tools made in bronze, particularly axeheads, were produced in the Bronze Age and were innovative in both metallurgy and design. They were widely exported, with examples being found along the continental coast from Brittany to north Germany.

Burial practices in the Bronze Age were different from the communal tombs of the Neolithic period. We now see important people being buried in round barrows along with grave goods. Also, inhumation was replaced by cremation and in Wales the cemetery mound with a number of burials had become the standard form by about 2000 BC. One of the most striking finds from Bronze Age Wales was the gold cape found in a tomb at **Bryn yr Ellyllion, Mold, Flintshire** dated to 1900-1600 BC, weighing 560 g and produced from a single gold ingot.

People of this period were also largely responsible for building many famous prehistoric sites, such as the later phases of Stonehenge.

The climate during the Early Bronze Age (c. 2100-1400 BC) is thought to have been warmer than at present, as there are many remains from this period in what are now bleak uplands.

Links

Great Orme

<http://www.greatormemines.info>

Bronze Age Copper Mines of North Wales

University of Sheffield

www.shef.ac.uk/archaeology/research/copper-mines

Early Mines Research Group

<http://www.earlyminesresearchgroup.org.uk/>

Bronze Age burial

BBC News article

http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/wales/south_west/4697748.stm

General

http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ancient/british_prehistory/bronzeage_01.shtml