

**Film: Iceman
for: The Art of Ireland
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Factsheet

"Iceman" found by couple hiking in Alps in 1992; preserved within glacier ice in Italian Alps;

-with ax with blade and flint knife, marble bead, and small leather pouch;

-flesh was brown and leathery;

-body preliminarily dated to Early Bronze Age of ca. 2000 BCE

-Early Bronze Age of farmers/herders;

Dispute over ownership: Austria vs. Italy; "Iceman" was in Italy by 300 ' (within border posts).

Question about how he remained there:

-glaciers, like rivers, flow; Iceman found at top;

-why hadn't "Iceman" flowed down with the ice?

-body had been found protected in rock depression, between two ridges; ice there was as thick as 100 to 200';

-more artifacts found subsequent to body: short cape (with human hairs), bow and arrows;

-Iceman died of hypothermia, due to cold; snow shielded body from predators.

Portrait of Iceman:

-5 ' 2" tall; 25 to 35 years old; 110 lbs.; wore grass cape; size 6 leather boots with twine inside as sox; finely stitched leather clothing.

Objects found:

-carried tassel of string (inserted through polished marble beads)

-12 1/2 made arrows in leather quiver; 2 flint-tipped arrows ready for shooting;

-wooden bow was unfinished; fire-striker" or flint knife; metal ax;

-birch berries; container with charcoal lumps (for lighting fires); woven grass bag; wood pack frame;

-2 dried mushrooms on leather strap (medicinal quality with antibiotic or curative properties ?);

Botanical Finds: sloe berry (Iceman must have died in autumn when sloe berries ripen)

grass wrapped around shoes to protect him from cold; wheat found on clothes

wood of implements:

viburnum and dogwood for arrows; ax handle and bow of yew

ash for knife handle hazel for backpack

Conservation of Iceman and his Artifacts:

-strengthen wooden items; soften leather; reconstruct clothing to determine the cut of clothes;

Carbon 14 dating (approximate death of objects measured by rate of decay)

-protein taken from his bones to test

-two- to three-week process

Bronze is alloy of copper, hardened with small amounts of tin.

-appeared in Europe 4,500 years ago

-question: was body contemporary to ax

-ax, once examined, was determined to be made of copper and to be over 5000 years old

Body, then, determined to be from ca. 3300 BCE - Neolithic Period (when first copper appeared, often as axheads).

-Tattoos on Iceman: made with charcoal; marks on knees, on back (groups of lines); must have

been made by someone other than himself; ritual meaning? clan status?

-no wisdom teeth; wear on teeth suggest diet of coarse, ground grain.

Neolithic Settlements:

-Iceman from between Milan and Venice, north of W. Switzerland, No. Austria, and So. Germany, where there were many Neolithic settlements;

-all of these Neolithic cultures were built on shores of lakes;

-e.g. excavations at Hornstat Hornle, Stone Age settlement: lake settlement with reconstructed dwelling places, built on piles; walls of mud plaster and lath; roofs of bark; 30 - 4- persons clustered on one site at lake shore; hunters and fishermen;

-growing of crops: grain found within layers of clothing; people used copper;

-flint traded widely by Stone Age travelers

-so. of Alps in No. Italy near Monte Lessini, hills are rich in flint

-Stone Age flint mine excavated in No. Italy; flint is found only in marginal areas of Alps in limestone deposits;

-Iceman's flint probably comes from Monte Lessini

Recently, Neolithic sites uncovered 15 miles from where Iceman died

-near Castel Uval, controls entrance to valley near glacier pass

-Iceman may have been coming from or going to Castel Uval

-People at Castel Uval were farmers

-Iceman: a hunter, trader, explorer?

Excavations, August, 1992: more extensively undertaken; found 400 more items:

-piece of Iceman's shoe sole;

-grass, grain, fruit

-human hair

-more wooden artifacts (part of bow?), remains of fur hat--oldest ever found in Europe

Iceman will be put on display at Bolzano National Archaeological Museum.

Iceman--A Profile:

Lived in lake settlement, north of Alps; member of farming community, working land with stone, wood, and copper implements; would have herded some animals, hunted, and fished.

Perhaps one spring day, he set out on trade missions to south to exchange pottery etc for flint; he began long journey home with approach of winter; he lost way? the weather changed? Hypothermia. . .