

IV.

NOTICE OF FLINT FLAKES FOUND IN THE PARISH OF ABERNETHY, STRATHSPEY. BY ARTHUR MITCHELL, M.D., CORR. MEM. S.A. SCOT.

There are several places in this parish, where, it is well known, any one will find *flint flakes* who digs for them. My attention was directed to this fact by the Rev. Mr Forsyth, with whom I visited one of the localities, where we found, after half an hour's search, the specimens which are now exhibited. The spot alluded to is situated at Clachaig, about a mile and a-half from the manse. It is near the present course of the river Nethy, but still nearer to what is believed to be its old course. The flakes are found below a layer of peat, which is two to three feet thick, which covers a piece of flat land several acres in extent, and which lies on water-worn gravel and sand. Some of them were found immediately below the peat and *on* the gravel, but others were found *in* the gravel at a depth of 4 or 6 inches. Along with these last was found the chip of fir wood, also exhibited, which bears evidence of having being cut with a sharp instrument, and which from the direction of the cut surfaces appears to have been shaped by two such strokes of an axe as are usually given in felling a tree. This chip, as I have said, was found, along with some of the flakes, below the peat and also below some inches of the gravel.

On examining the peat, it was quite clear that it was not in the position of growth. It had at some time or other been broken up and made into a paste by water, from which it had again been deposited. Here and there, at all depths in it, there were streaks of water-worn sand similar to that which was below it. It is possible, therefore, that some flood had carried it down from the immense peat fields which are found higher up the river's course.

None of the flakes found by me were chipped on the edges. It is said, however, that some have been found so chipped, and looking as if there had been an intention to shape them into arrow heads. One well-formed arrow head is said to have been found near the spot we examined, but *this find* is not well authenticated.

The position in which these flakes were discovered, and the presence of the chip of wood among them, indicate that they have been moved by the river from the place they originally occupied.

It is said that a man residing near the diggings at Clachaig, but on the other side of the Nethy, once found a large round unbroken stone, 3 or 4 inches in diameter, which turned out to be flint.

About two miles higher up the Nethy than Clachaig, on the opposite side, there is a place called Lynmagilbert, where a man ploughing turned up a great number of flint flakes. This happened some years ago. They were lying in a heap between two stones. Mr Forsyth has seen some flakes from this place, and says they are in all respects like those we found at Clachaig.

Two or three miles still farther up the Nethy, near its course, but not so nearly on its level, similar flints are also found.