

## VII.

NOTE OF A BONE CAVE AT DUNTROON. BY REV. REGINALD J. MAPLETON, KILMARTIN (DIOCESE OF ARGYLL AND THE ISLES), CORR. MEM. S.A. SCOT.

The cave, or rather the overhanging ledge of trap rock, in which human and other remains were found in 1862, at Duntroon, in Argyllshire, is about 23 feet above the level of the present high water-mark, and 186 feet distant from the same; but, as much of the shingle has been removed, it was probably about 25 feet above high-water level. The rocks show evident marks of being much water-worn, and the bottom of the cave is shingle. It is situated at one corner of what was once a bay, which extended 60 feet further inland. While the field in which it is situated and the adjoining field were being drained, I had the opportunity of ascertaining this. Sand and shingle, and below these the same white clay that now underlies the sand between high and low water, occur at various depths. Throughout this field we found extensive layers of charcoal in various places, lying beneath the soil or peat, and upon the shingle; a few flint chips, mostly burnt, were found among them. The shingle was about the same level as the bottom of the cave, and covered with about 2 or 3 feet of loam, or gravelly soil, or peat.

The cave is in trap rock, but a thin vein of schist, that has been displaced by the trap, forms the upper and longer end of the cave. Numerous small fissures occur in the rock, through which water, strongly impregnated with lime, is still trickling, and has left a deposit of lime in some places a foot in thickness. The whole cave seems to be white-washed. The extreme length is 28 feet; the height 11 feet, shallowing down to 3 feet; the width, 10 feet, narrowing to 3 feet. The whole cave (except a small triangular space of about 2 feet in height) was filled with lumps of trap, mostly very small, and often cemented by lime. The front of the cave was blocked up by large masses of rock, covered with soil and stones, and overgrown with grass. The remains were in the first instance discovered by some workmen, who were breaking the stones in front of the cave for roads. On removing one large piece, a triangular

space was seen, and in it a human skull and a few loose bones. On my arrival at the spot, we proceeded to examine this, and found that the man had been buried up to his shoulders by loose stones falling in upon him; nearly all the bones of this skeleton were found almost in their proper places, and it was evident that he was in a sitting posture at the time of his death. He was sitting upon a heap of stones, about 7 or 8 feet high, as the skull was not more than 15 inches from the highest point of the cave.

Immediately under this skeleton, which appeared to be that of a man, and about 1 foot lower, in an angle of the cave, we found the bones of a woman and an infant. The greater part of these bones were cemented into a mass by the lime water—some were perfectly petrified. The teeth of the first skull were very perfect, and had evidently been more used for *grinding* than tearing, as they were much worn away, leaving the outer edge unworn. At the bottom of the cave, under the mass of broken rock, we found portions of the bones and skulls of probably six more individuals, very much scattered and dislocated. I mention the number six, as it was evident from the size and thickness of the bones of the skulls, the appearance of the teeth, and the number of the same parts of the skull (say the occipital bone), that there must have been at least that number. They were of all ages—an infant, a child who had not cut the second teeth, a young person who had not cut the “wisdom” teeth, full grown—mature and old, with a very thick skull.

On the shingle at the bottom of the cave, and about the centre of it, we found a round flat stone, embedded in ash and charcoal, and much burnt at the edges. This had most clearly been the hearthstone; close to this was the leg-bone of a red deer, charred at one end. Throughout the mass of stones were found great quantities of periwinkle and limpet shells, often embedded in lime, and just outside and in front there was a very great quantity of these shells, mostly broken. A few oyster shells, two scallops, a few mussel, cockle, and one or two other shells, were found among them. Almost the entire skeleton of a red deer was found, but not together; the greater part was found outside the cave, among the shells, and dislocated; but a portion was lying together in one corner of the cave, as though it had not been eaten. A few bones of some large sea bird were also found.

The only implements were two flint scrapers, and a block of flint. The scrapers were of different shapes. A third was brought to me, but as I did not see it found, I cannot vouch for it. It appeared from the situation of the skeletons as though the debris had fallen in a second time, and thus dislocated all the skeletons, except those of the first man discovered, and the mother and child, who were lying at the highest corner of the cave, and somewhat protected by the overhanging roof.