

III.

NOTES ON BRONZE WEAPONS AND OTHER REMAINS FOUND NEAR
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The shores of the beautiful Loch Maree and Loch Ewe seem to have been long inhabited both in prehistoric and historic times, as proved by the numerous finds of articles of human workmanship and use obtained there at different times. These have occurred in various parts, but chiefly round the lower end of Loch Maree and along the banks of the River Ewe, which drains the lake into Loch Ewe, and at the mouth of which stands the village of Poolewe. Here an ancient sea terrace skirts both sides of the Loch Ewe and runs up along the river to Loch Maree. On this terrace, and on some of the enclosing eminences above it, certain interesting and important discoveries have lately been made, which are described in this paper. The most of these are now in the possession of

Sir Kenneth Mackenzie of Gairloch, who is greatly interested, not only in all matters connected with the welfare of the present inhabitants of the district, but in all evidences of the life and habits of its ancient peoples, and has kindly lent the objects for exhibition and description. It is to be hoped that he will complete his good offices by presenting the whole, or at least the rarer specimens, to the Society's Museum.

(1.) In May 1877, several Bronzes were come upon, on the high ground overlooking the River Ewe on the north side, some distance beyond the Public School, by a labourer, named Hector M'Iver, while engaged in digging peats. They were found 6 feet below the surface, all in one spot. They are as follows:—

No. 1. A bronze Socketed Celt, with loop, $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches long, $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches across the cutting face; socket circular, $1\frac{1}{4}$ inch in diameter; exterior plain. It is interesting as retaining part of the handle in the socket.

No. 2. A bronze Socketed Celt, with loop, $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches long, $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches across cutting face. The socket is circular, and is $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch in diameter. The exterior is ornamented on the sides by three perpendicular lines, parallel to each other and terminating in circles.

No. 3. A fragment of a bronze Socketed Celt, consisting of part of the cutting face only.

No. 4. A similar, but larger, fragment.

No. 5. A small bronze Socketed Celt, with loop, $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches in length, $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch across the cutting face, which is entire. The socketed part is broken, and the whole of one side is wanting.

No. 6. is a hollow Ring of bronze, almost 2 inches in diameter, and $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch internally. It is pierced by a roughly-cut hole, about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch long and $\frac{1}{8}$ inch wide. Use unknown.

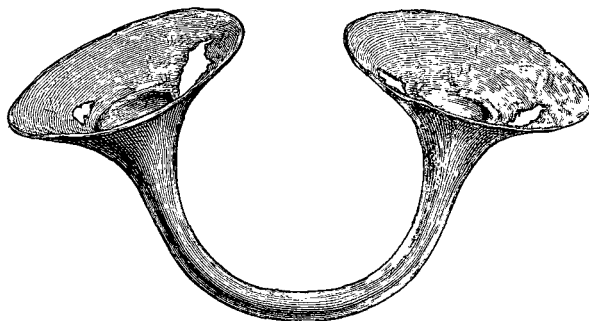
No. 7. A Ring of bronze, T-shaped in cross section, of $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches external and $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches internal diameter. This is of the usual form of cauldron rings, and, if it belonged to a cauldron, the bronzes were probably in it.

Another Bronze Ring similar to these was found in peat at the same place, and is now in the possession of Mr M'Iver, the discoverer of the find.

No. 8. A Penannular Ring of bronze with expanded ends. The ring

is solid, $\frac{3}{8}$ ths of an inch thick, slightly flattened, opening to $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches wide, and terminating in circular hollow trumpet-shaped ends 2 inches in diameter. The type is rare in Scotland, but common in Ireland. No specimen exists in the National Museum, and it is hoped that Sir Kenneth will deposit this one there, as the sole example of its type.

(2.) On the other or south side of the River Ewe, the sea terrace becomes a broad flat plain, chiefly covered with moss 5 or 6 feet deep, formerly more or less wooded. On this flat, which was then used as a



No. 8. Penannular Ring of Bronze ($\frac{3}{8}$).

common, a large market was held for generations, known as the Feil Judha, or Ewe Market, so called from the river near which it took place, not from the animal. This was frequented by the people of the neighbouring region, and very largely by the Lewsmen, as being then the nearest and most convenient spot in which to dispose of their cattle and other produce on the mainland, taking back other articles for consumption. The last of these markets was held so far back as 160 years ago, when it is said that the Lewsmen, while returning home in the usual open boats of the West Coast, were overtaken by a violent storm in the Minch, and all or most of them lost. Traces of this old market have frequently turned up while cutting peats, in the form of bundles of *cabors*, or sticks tied up with withes, as brought from the wood ready for exportation; moulds of some fatty substance, either butter or tallow; and a rounded block of wood 14 inches in diameter, found ten or twelve years ago, probably

prepared for being converted into one of the wooden bickers or plates very common in the Highlands fifty years ago.¹

Near the site of this market, bronze weapons have been found; whether connected with the market or not, or more probably with the same people as forged the other bronzes found on the opposite side of the Ewe, and elsewhere in the district, is a question.

Here a bronze Flanged Celt was lately found, $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches long, narrow for its length, of the usual form, but considerably worn.

In May last, a long spear was obtained about 3 feet deep in the moss, at a point opposite the site of the large bronze find got on the north side of the river. It is 14 inches long, $1\frac{1}{8}$ inches broad at the base, expanding to $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch, 1 inch upwards, and gradually tapering thence to the point which is pointed and perfect. The double edges are fine and sharp, and not indented in any way, showing that the weapon had been very little if at all used. A thicker ridge runs along the centre of the blade on both sides, gently sloping to the edges. At the base are two opposite openings in the blade close to the socket. It has been cast of the same bronze as the others.

(3.) Near the mansion of Inverewe, close by Poolewe, on the north side of Loch Ewe, a small bronze spear head was found sometime ago while cutting peats, some 3 feet below the surface. It is $3\frac{3}{4}$ inches long, $\frac{3}{4}$ ths of an inch broad at the bladed head, which is $1\frac{3}{4}$ inch long, and tapering to a point that has been blunted. Below this it forms a hollow tapering cylinder for a wooden handle, with an eyelet on each side, 1 inch from the base. It is in the possession of Mr O. H. Mackenzie of Inverewe. The following year a stag's horn was found almost at the same spot.

(4.) A Stone Celt was found at Cove, near Rhu Ruadh, a cape that forms the western entrance to Loch Ewe. It consists, perhaps, of some

¹ For the above particulars regarding the Ewe Market, I am indebted to Mr Mackintosh, Poolewe, Postmaster, there. The date of the last market was fixed by the fact that an old man named Finlay Maclellan, who died fifty-four years ago, at the reputed age of 109, and whose grandchildren are still living at Poolewe, was born on the very day of the last market.

variety of trap, polished. It is $4\frac{1}{2}$ by $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches, oval in cross section. It is a common form.

(5.) A Spear head was found near Talladale, on the south side of Loch Maree, near where the present handsome hotel stands. It is of the ordinary type, $5\frac{1}{4}$ inches long, socket $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch, blade $3\frac{3}{4}$ inches long, $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch wide at widest part, which is within $\frac{1}{2}$ an inch of the base. The socket has two rivet holes broken. The bronze is heavier and harder than that of the others, and is evidently of a different amalgam.

The neighbourhood of Poolewe appears to be unusually rich in ancient remains, as many other things have been obtained there at different times, and in the large and fertile island of Eilan Ewe, which lies in the middle of Loch Ewe. The district also shows abundant evidences of prehistoric habitation, in the shape of numerous examples of the usual hut circles, in two of which, near Tunnag, between Poolewe and Aultbea, some steatite whorls, ashes, and other remains were found in trenching, an admirable example of these circles, with unusually high and perfect walls standing on a grassy eminence to the east of the road between Poolewe and Tunnag; and also in the common artificial islands, one of which exists in Loch Cairnsery, between Poolewe and the wild Fionn Loch. It is to be hoped that a more careful and systematic search for ancient remains will be made in this old inhabited region.