

## II.

NOTES NEAR ST FILLANS: CUP-MARKED STONES, OLD BURYING GROUNDS AT KINDROCHET AND DRUMNAKILL, CURING STONE OR CHARM, AND NOTICE OF A FLINT KNIFE FOUND ON THE FARM OF NORTH PET, TARLAND, ABERDEENSHIRE. BY JAMES MACKINTOSH GOW, F.S.A. Scot.

I expected the district of St Fillans to be rich in cup-marked stones, but was disappointed, as any which may have been on the low grounds were no doubt utilised for building purposes, when the present village was formed about seventy years ago; and, as I have usually found to be the case elsewhere, the old people had never seen or heard of such things as cup marks. Being in Comrie, however, for a day, a local antiquary there directed me to a stone with cups, on the hill above the mansion-house of Dunira, and on going to the spot, about a hundred yards east from the shepherd's house at Drumnakill, I came upon a group of seven stones, none of them standing. They may at one time have formed an enclosure of some kind, and, on the stone second from the eastmost of the group, there are eleven beautifully formed cups, varying from  $2\frac{1}{4}$  to 4 inches in diameter and from half an inch to an inch in depth; they are the deepest and best formed cups I have yet met on one stone; it is a large water-worn block of coarse whinstone, 5 feet 9 inches long, 5 feet broad, and 3 feet above ground pointing eastwards. The cups are grouped as in the sketch No. 2, the largest cup, 4 inches in diameter, being in the centre; and the extreme length of the group of cups is 2 feet 4 inches.

West from this group of stones, and nearer to the cottage, there is a raised enclosure 25 to 30 feet in diameter, with a turf-covered wall or rampart 3 or 4 feet high surrounding it, which in former times was used as a burying ground for unbaptised infants, and no doubt gave the name of "Druim na Cille" (the ridge of the burying ground) to the place. It is within living memory that a burial took place here, and the tradition is that people came to bury the "wee unchristened bairns" from long distances, such as Loch Tayside, Glendochart, Balquhidder, and Strathyre.

These burial places are common in the south-west of Ireland, and are called Kill and Killeens; but in Scotland we have been in the habit of associating the word Kil or Cille with a cell or chapel. There is no evidence to mark that there had been any such near this spot, so that the conclusion is, that the term Kil in Scotland may also have been applied to a burying ground, as it is in Ireland.

About a mile south from the bridge over the Earn at Comrie, on the moor of Dalginross, and on the left hand side of the road going to Glenartney and Braco, there is a well-known standing stone, popularly named after Samson. It is one of a group of three; the other two are lying to the east, and on the upper side of the eastmost one there are twenty-six cup marks. The stone is partly buried, and slants upwards from west to east, where it reaches 18 inches above ground. It is of a coarse granitic rock, with masses of quartz at the east end, and has a thin vein of quartz running across it from north to south. The stone is a travelled boulder, 5 feet 3 inches long by 4 feet broad, and by exposure to the weather and passers-by, the cups are very shallow, but perfectly distinguishable as artificial; they vary in size from about 2 to 3 inches in diameter.

About 500 yards south-west from the farm-house of Kindrochet, on the south side of the Earn, and about 2 miles from St Fillans, there is a disused burying ground of an oblong form, enclosed in a rough way, with several large trees standing in it. This is duly marked on the Ordnance map, but without any name. It is simply known as "The old burying ground at Kindrochet." There are a few rude head-stones still remaining upright. The enclosure is 65 paces in length by 30 paces broad, and more than one tomb or cist is exposed, bearing evidence of having been opened—one especially, formed of two large flags of unhewn stones for the sides, and two for the ends. It measures 5 feet long inside, by 2 feet 3 inches broad, and the large stone, 6 feet long, which formed the cover, lies at the side. This grave is of the same construction as those noticed in the paper by Mr Beveridge, in the last volume of the Society's *Proceedings*, relating to two ancient burying grounds of the Pagan period, at Pitreavie.

I regret to say that this ancient burying place has been for a long time a receptacle for the stones and rubbish gathered from the adjoining

fields, and unless steps are taken to prevent the vandalism and desecration, all trace of the place, and that at no distant date, will be obliterated.

A chapel might have stood at one time within the enclosure, but it is difficult in its present condition to trace any foundations, and tradition as well as "place names" are equally silent on the subject.

An oval water-worn stone of white quartz (now exhibited and presented to the Museum) was used as a charm to resist the evil eye. It was kept over the lintel of the byre door at the small croft of Cachladhu, a mile east from St Fillans, on the south side of the Earn. The croft was merged in the adjoining farm some twenty years ago, and the buildings were cleared away. The charm stone had been in the family for generations to protect cattle from all kinds of trouble; other appliances, however, had to be resorted to. When the cow was ill, she had to be supplied with water from a stream that was commonly crossed by the living and the dead, and two or three pieces of silver money were put in the coggie, and the water was taken from the burn or river, usually under a bridge,

"in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," repeated in Gaelic, and then given to the cow, which sometimes got better and sometimes it did not, but faith in the stone was never lost. I was told that it is still a custom in the district to place a branch of the mountain ash or rowan tree over the byre doors, to keep the cattle free of disease.

The flint knife (fig. 1) now exhibited and presented to the Museum, was found in June 1887 on the farm of North Pet, Tarland, Aberdeen-

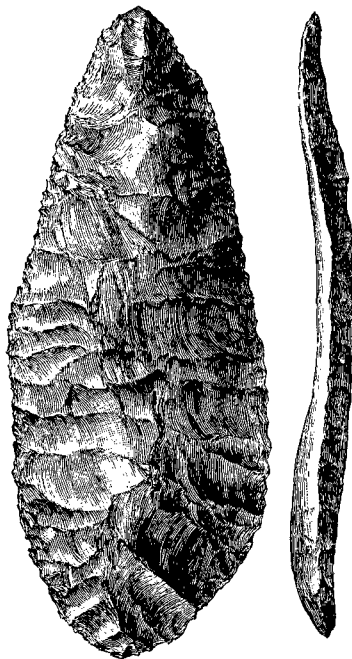


Fig. 1. Flint Knife from Tarland  
(actual size).

shire, where a great number of stone and flint implements have been picked up from time to time.

This is an interesting example, as being one of the largest and most characteristic specimens of the knife made from a leaf-shaped flake, hitherto found in Scotland, where the flints are usually small in size, and, as a rule, were only used for making arrow-heads. The concave side of the knife is the natural smooth side of the fracture of the flake from which it is made, but the outside or convex part is nicely chipped and worked.