

II.

HOLIDAY NOTES IN COWAL, ARGYLLSHIRE, AND IN ARRAN, 1888.
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On the hillside above the point of Strone, in Argyllshire, at the foot of Loch Long, there is the site of an ancient Caledonian fort, named in the Ordnance map as "Croc-nam Fiontan" (the Fenians' Knoll). It is 353 feet above the sea, and is circular in form, with a flat top, and traces of a rampart and ditch are still visible at the base of the mound, which is about 30 yards in diameter.

An intelligent native, who had been a herd in the district when a boy, upwards of sixty years ago, remembers that a large flat stone lay near the top, in the centre of which was a large hollow, as he said, "such as one might make in the ground by turning round on the heel," and with several small cups on other parts of the surface. Mr Duncan of Benmore had this stone removed and broken up some years ago, to make room for the erection of a flagstaff, and search was then made for supposed treasure in the neighbourhood of the stone, but without result. The flagstaff was shortly after its erection completely destroyed in a thunderstorm, and has not been replaced. The adjoining field is still called "Auch 'n rath" (the field of the fort), and the neighbourhood is known to have been the scene of a sanguinary conflict between the Campbells and the Lamonts.

At Ardentenny (Ard 'n teine, the height of fire) there is a hill, marked on the Ordnance map "Cnap Reamhar" (the fat or bulky hill), the height of which is 1087 feet. The portion facing the north-west, from a line about 500 feet up to 750 feet, appears to have been fortified. At the lower elevation the ramparts, with the ditches inside, are about 50 yards long, and increase in length as they rise—one near the highest elevation being about 500 yards long, the rampart or dike being in some places about 15 feet above the bottom of the ditch.

Having heard that the late General Sir John Douglas of Glenfinart, and General John Bayley, R.E., had at one time inspected the entrenchments, I wrote to the latter asking his opinion as to their character,

and he wrote to me as follows :—" I have not minutely examined them, but my conviction was that they were prehistoric works of defence, like so many of a similar character on high grounds, with which my connection with the Ordnance Survey of the Kingdom for so many years has made me familiar—further than that we cannot say. Sir John Douglas concurred with me in considering them ancient works, for they would not subserve any modern purpose." Any one seeing these entrenchments would at once be satisfied as to their artificial character, and it is remarkable that the Ordnance Surveyors have neglected to note them on the map, as even if they are not artificial, the prominent place they occupy as a feature of the hill should surely have been noted.

At Sligrachan, two and a half miles up Glenfinart, I was directed to a stone with a large cup cut out on the top of it. It is an oblong block of the coarse granite rock of the district, about 6 feet in length, 3 feet broad, and 3 feet above ground. The cup or basin is near the western extremity, and is 6 or 7 inches in diameter and 3 to 4 inches deep. The basin is not deep enough to have been used as a knocking-stone for barley, but may have been in use as a font in the early days. The stone is near the shepherd's house at Craig Coille ; a considerable hamlet is known to have existed there, and at one time the glen was very populous.

On the farm of Ardenadam, on the south side of the Holy Loch, there is a remarkable dolmen (fig. 1), marked on the Ordnance map as " Adam's Cave," and known in the district by the same name. It is in a field 100 yards east from the farm-house, and is composed of three large flagstones forming the two sides and one end of the chamber, supporting a large flattish stone of irregular shape on the top ; and at the east end, or what might be called the door, there are two upright pillar stones, upwards of 6 feet above ground. The chamber inside is about 4 feet high, 6 feet long, and 3 feet broad. There are no markings whatever upon any of the stones ; and looking to the configuration of the ground, I am of opinion that after the burial took place, it probably was covered with stones or earth, and thus formed a cairn or mound, which in the course of time was exposed and left as it now remains. I can

find no note of when it was opened, or if any indications of a burial were found in the chamber.

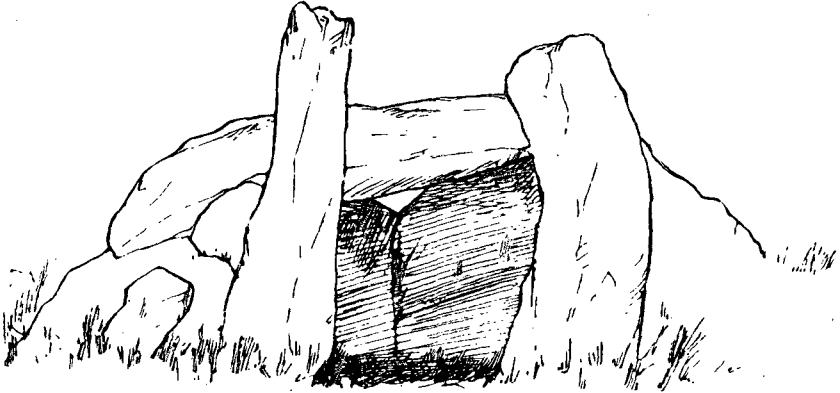


Fig. 1. Dolmen at Ardenadam.

In Arran, on the hillside overlooking Lamlash Bay, there is a sandstone monolith, about 7 feet high, and 4 feet broad by 2 feet thick at the base. On the top, which is 8 inches across, there has been cut out a basin or cup, 3 inches in diameter, and about the same depth. A native of the place remembered that when he was a boy this cup after rain was filled with water, but since then a groove has been cut, which allows the water to run out. The groove is continued down the face of the stone, and gives it the appearance of a cross. There is another large monolith on the same slope of the hill; and at the summit, quite near to a circle or enclosure of four standing stones, there is a similar one. This circle is described by Dr Bryce in his report recorded in the Society's *Proceedings* for 1862, page 499.