

I.

NOTICES—(1) OF A POTTERY CHURN FROM THE ISLAND OF COLL, WITH REMARKS ON HEBRIDEAN POTTERY; AND (2) OF A WORKSHOP FOR FLINT IMPLEMENTS IN WIGTOWNSHIRE. BY LUDOVIC M'LELLAN MANN, F.S.A. Scot.

The hand-made pottery vessel of the Hebrides was used for most domestic purposes, but its employment as a churn has scarcely ever been referred to.

I believe there are only two pottery churns surviving. One of the



Fig. 1. Group of Craggans and Churn.

examples I have lost trace of in recent years; the other, a specimen from the remote hamlet of Bousd, Island of Coll, is shown in the group of Hebridean craggans in fig. 1. It is the largest vessel in the group, measuring 14 inches in height by 13 in greatest diameter. The churn was an ordinary "craggan," with a single, carefully made perforation, about $\frac{3}{4}$ inch in diameter, in the side of the vessel, 3 or 4 inches from the rim.

After having been partially filled with milk, a cloth was tied tightly

over the mouth of the vessel, which was then rocked backwards and forwards until the butter was made. A song often relieved the monotony of this work.

To many with whom I have discussed the matter, the purpose of the perforation was not clear. I am assured, however, by a maker of modern dairy machinery, that the perforation is necessary in a closed churn if good butter is to be made. The gases generated soon after the



Fig. 2. Decorated Craggan from Tiree.

churning begins would burst an ordinary craggan if hermetically sealed. The modern machine churn is fitted either with automatically opening plugs or with ordinary plugs, which the butter-maker takes good care to open occasionally during the churning. The perforation in the pottery churn was also, no doubt, plugged and opened occasionally.

The method of churning in closed skins which is common in the East, results in the production of an oily fluid unlike our solid butter. These skins can withstand great internal pressure.

Several ordinary "craggans" exhibited in the same group are mostly of early nineteenth century. A decorated vessel (fig. 2) is, however, much older. It was got in a shell-heap at Kilkenneth, Tiree. The top of the rim and the walls have rows of little circular markings, produced by pressing the cut end of a hollow reed into the clay before firing. Similar pottery, fragmentary, I got in Coll.



Fig. 3. Large clay Vessel from Tiree.

Of an earlier period still is a tall, handsome, cylindrical vessel (fig. 3) which I dug up at Balavullin Sands, Tiree. Near the same place were other similar vessels in fragments. Broken bones of the lower animals were closely associated with some of the fragments.

From many sites in Coll and Tiree I have obtained fragments of the familiar thin-walled, reddish ware. It seems in the islands to be

associated with domestic and not with sepulchral sites. It is nearly always found with relics of an early period, such as worked flints. The decoration is often very carefully done, and many fragments with different patterns are exhibited.

(2) A FLINT WORKSHOP AT CULMORE, WIGTOWNSHIRE.

On a slight ridge in a large field at Culmore, Wigtownshire, it was observed during farming work that in one part many flint chippings turned up. Careful search resulted in the recovery, over a space of a few square yards, of over 636 chippings and cores of flint. The flint-workers had fires, as some of the flints were fire-injured. Ten unbroken flint nodules were found, evidently brought in to be manipulated. Four hammer-stones, of quartz and quartzite and a rubbing stone of red sandstone were also discovered. These are now shown, with specimens of the soil from the centre of the place containing minute flakings of flint. No structural features and no pottery, jet, bone, or horn fragments were noticed.

The most important objects got were flint implements, of which there are about eighty good specimens.

About thirty other pieces were probably used as implements, but the secondary working is slight.

As has been noticed in other instances, a few—but a very few—of the flint implements bear traces of having been trimmed at different times.

Some pieces, often heavily patinated, and probably older than the period of the occupation of this site, have been picked up, brought into the settlement, and retrimmed. The reworked portions are less thickly patinated than any other worked portion of the surface of the flint.

Among the implements are saws, borers, knives, arrow-points, and many kinds of scrapers.