

KITCHEN MIDDENS—CO. CLARE.

By MISS KNOWLES.

On the 13th July a party, consisting of the Misses Marshall, Ambleside, Mr. E. T. England and Miss England, Manchester, my two sisters, and myself, joined some members of the Limerick Field, for a week's archæological work in County Clare. In September, 1898, I had received from Mr. R. D. O'Brien some flakes, cores, broken bones, shells, etc., which he had found in a kitchen midden at Carrowmore Point. I showed these to my father, who considered them very interesting, and thought that the place should be visited and reported on. Traces of the occupation of the sand-hills along the west coast of Ireland by pre-historic man had been found as far south as Galway, and he thought it would be a useful piece of work to explore the coast of Clare, and see if that occupation had extended southwards. It was with this object in view that I joined the expedition. The first place we decided to visit was Carrowmore Point, the place where Mr. O'Brien had found his flakes, and cores, etc. To do so we were obliged to spend a night at the Atlantic Hotel, Spanish Point. Close to this hotel there is a stretch of sand-hills, and, having an hour to spare before dinner, we took a run over them, and found the remains of what must have been an extensive settlement. I counted more than ten hearths, and found a very nice anvil-stone and a hammer-stone close to one of them. The whole place was strewn with flakes, cores, and chips of the rock of the neighbourhood, and there were large heaps of shells, chiefly of the limpet, in many places. Unfortunately, our time was short, and we were not able to do any digging here.

The next day we drove to Carrowmore Point, which also seems to have been an important settlement. We had more time here, and so did some digging and investigating of the old surface or black layers. We dug out large flakes, cores, split and broken bones, shells, and some

very fine hammer-stones. Most of the hammer-stones were too large and heavy to bring away. I brought one of the smaller ones with me, and it weighs over $6\frac{1}{4}$ pounds. Mr. England also brought one about the same size. Photographs of the place were taken by Miss Cordelia Marshall. We found no flint or pottery here, but we got some clay, which might have been used for making pottery, in the black layer. Amongst the bones which have been identified from this place are those of pig, horse, cow, and deer. As at Spanish Point, the flakes and cores are all of native rock, so far as we could make out.

The next place we went to was Fanore, about seven miles southwest of Ballyvaughan, and here we found traces of four or five sites. In many ways this was the most interesting place we visited. We found both flint and pottery here, and also a chip of a polished stone celt. In one pit I picked up two beautifully worked little scrapers of flint, which were lying on the surface, glistening in the sun, with their worked faces downwards. Mr O'Brien and Dr. George Fogerty also found flakes and a small core of the same material in another pit, and Dr. Fogerty found a piece of what must have been a very nice anvil-stone, and several pieces of chert dressed along the edge. By digging in the black layer we got a small hammer-stone and a piece of pottery, besides shells of various kinds—limpets, mussels, periwinkles, etc. This is the only place where we found either flint or pottery. The pottery is that coarse, hand-made kind, similar to that which has been found associated with flint cores, flakes, scrapers, etc., in the kitchen middens of the counties of Antrim, Down, Derry, and Donegal. We found a small heap of the dog whelk in one of the pits, split in the same way as those found at Dog's Bay, Roundstone, and close to it another small heap of limpets. We did not notice any of the shells of the dog whelk among those that we dug out of the old surface.

The distances we had to drive to these places were so long that we had not as much time for work as we would have liked. However, we saw enough in the time at our disposal to convince us that pre-historic man had lived along the coast of Clare, and that the kitchen middens are well worth a systematic and scientific investigation.