

## 5. EXCAVATION OF KALEMOUTH CAIRN, ROXBURGHSHIRE.

The hoard of socketed bronze axes described in *P.S.A.S.*, LXVI, 422-4, was found by Mrs Cochran of Kalemouth House in February 1932, owing to a number of stones like an old wall being exposed at the top of the steep left bank of the Briton Sike, just where it joins the Kale Water from the north. The top of the bank, which is wooded, is some 30 ft. above the water. The spot is about 250 yds. from where the Kale Water flows into the Teviot (O.S. 6-inch map (1924), Roxburghshire, N. XIV). A subsequent examination suggested that the stones among which the axes lay formed part of a very low grass-covered cairn. We therefore undertook the excavation of the site in November 1932 through the courtesy of the Earl of Dalkeith (now Duke of Buccleuch), who further assisted the work by the loan of two labourers.

The cairn was oval, approximately 21 ft. across the narrow diameter and probably some 25 ft. along the longer axis which ran from SE. to NW. (fig. 10). The NW. end was incomplete owing to the erosion of the steep bank of the burn, to which also the exposure of the axes was due. A ring of boulders, of which the largest was 2 ft. long, lay round the perimeter of the cairn, buried up to 2 ft. deep by subsequent accumulation of earth.

A couple of feet SW. of the centre there was a rhomboidal cist measuring internally at most  $2\frac{1}{2}$  by 2 ft. and formed by slabs on three sides and stones on the fourth. A food-vessel urn lay in its SW. corner. The cover-slab rested on the surface of the ground below the cairn stones, while a number of horizontal slabs lay at a higher level, both over and alongside the cist.

Close inside the perimeter at the SE. end we found a second, empty, cist almost 2 by 4 ft. internally, the long sides formed of several stones. There were two irregular cover-slabs.

Some 3 ft. from where the axes were discovered, and immediately below the earth which covered the cairn, a stone was found incised with a roughly star-like arrangement of a few lines.

The food-vessel is 6 ins. across at the mouth. Its surface is rather rough and its colouring uneven, varying from dull red to grey. The decoration consists of short whipped-cord impressions running in five rows round the vessel. Two inches below the rim there is a low raised moulding. Longer whipped-cord impressions form a zigzag on the hollow bevel of the rim. The interior is grey and sooty. His Grace the Duke of Buccleuch presented the urn to the Museum in 1947.

JAMES S. RICHARDSON.  
IAN G. LINDSAY.

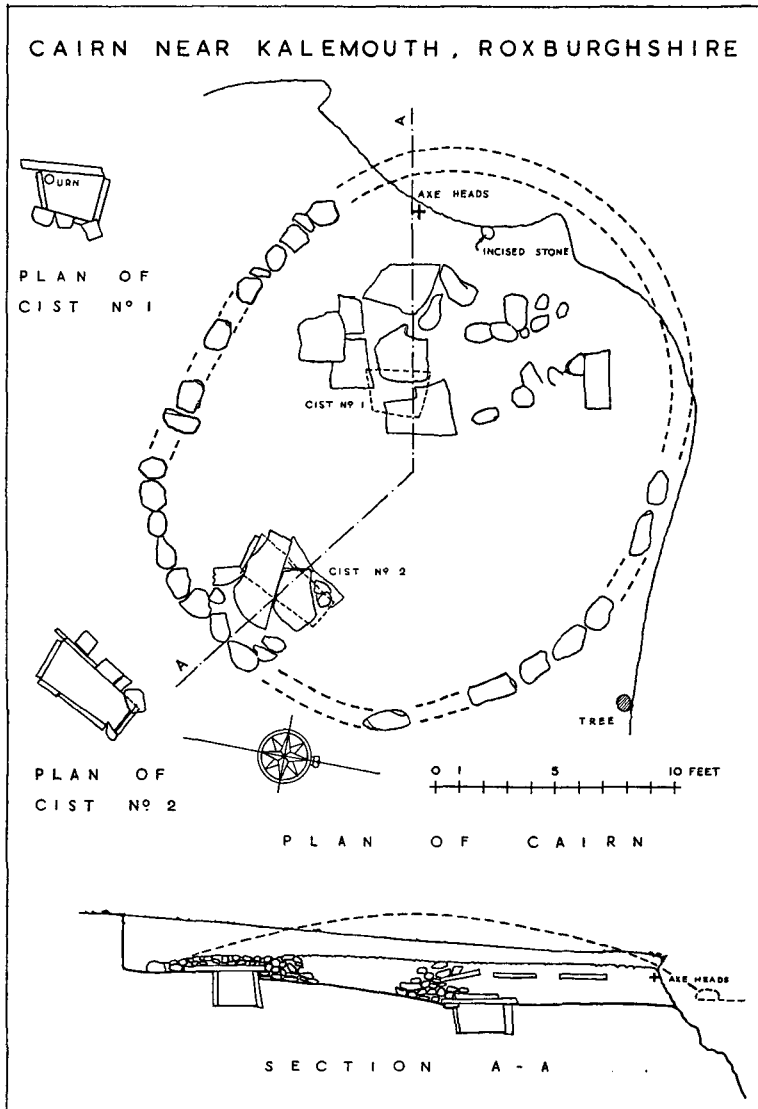


Fig. 10.