

IV.

NOTICE OF CISTS AND URNS RECENTLY FOUND AT ARDOE, NEAR  
ABERDEEN. IN A LETTER TO JOHN STUART, LL.D., SEC. BY A.  
OGSTON, Esq. OF ARDOE.

Mr Ogston encloses a note from Mr Duguid of Auchlanies, who was  
present at the opening of some of the cists, and adds a few notes himself.

Mr Duguid says: "The cists were discovered in excavating a sandy hillock for the repair of the embankment on the turnpike road.

"I happened to be present only at the opening of the coffin first found; it was from three to four feet long, and lay north and south. The upper stone was within six inches of the surface, and covered the whole. The sides and ends were rough flat stones, and the bottom was paved with pebbles from the river.

"The coffin was filled with fine sand, which had been run in by water—quite compact and firm. On removing the sand carefully, the skull was found perfect, and the ribs could be distinctly traced, but fell down with the sand when touched. The body had been interred doubled up, lying on the right side, the head nearly north, and slightly bent down towards the chest, facing up the river. There was a slight trace of what might have been the lower limbs in front of the body. There were some fragments of a small urn found in the corner in front of the head.

"The other three coffins, in one of which a skull and thigh bones, with a small urn, were found, were also near the surface, but no doubt they had been all originally placed at some depth, as from the position and the nature of the soil it washes away very readily.

"The larger urns were found embedded in the sand near the coffins, and the probability is that this was the place of interment of some native tribe.

"No arrow-heads (which you know are common in this locality), nor implements or ornaments of any kind, were found.

"The only similar objects of interest found in the immediate vicinity were those at Cults, on the other side of the river, and it would be curious to compare the urns to see if any similarity can be traced between them."

Mr Ogston adds: The find was got on the top of an eminence in a field on the estate of Ardoe, adjoining the river Dee, the situation of which is a most picturesque one, and commands an extensive view. The extent of the excavation is an area of about thirty feet diameter. There were only three urns preserved to me, the others having been broken by the workmen. Of the two urns left, one is about three times larger, the other about one-third less, than the one presented to the Museum. There was also found a small half globular bronze vessel much decayed, but so

entire as to show the original size. The skull, I am told by Dr Ogston, is a large and well-developed one ; the bones are those of a large person. These I have sent to the museum at Aberdeen for preservation, as they were much decayed.