

## VI.

### NOTICE OF STONE CISTS, ETC., FOUND ON BARNHILL LINKS, NEAR BROUGHTY-FERRY. BY A. J. WARDEN, Esq., F.S.A., Scot.

While forming a new street on the Links of Barnhill, to the north of the public road which leads from Broughty-Ferry to Monifieth, in March 1875, the workmen came accidentally upon a cist, which was about four feet below the surface, and composed of four stone slabs set on end, with a cover over the whole. This cist was about 3 feet 4 inches long, 2 feet wide, and 3 feet 4 inches in length. It contained a skull and other human bones, also an urn. The skull, which was pretty entire, measured 22 inches round the frontal bone.

A second cist, found to the east of the former, appeared to be divided into two compartments. It was 3 feet 4 inches long, 3 feet wide, and 2 feet high; the sides and ends were formed of rough slabs, and a slab of the same sort was placed in the centre by way of division. One slab (3 feet 2 by 4 feet), somewhat lozenge-shaped, covered this double cist. It was 3 feet 6 inches below the surface: and while one of the divisions was empty, the other contained an urn, a human skull, and other bones. This skull was about half an inch less in circumference than the one

above noticed. In both cases the urns were in the west end of the cists; and in the latter cist was found a small flint, with sharp circular edge. One of the urns is of coarse clay, half-inch thick, 5 inches high, 17 inches in circumference at the top, and 14 at the bottom, but without ornament. The other, which is ornamented with the dog-tooth pattern, &c., is 5 inches high, and  $21\frac{1}{2}$  inches in circumference at the widest part.

A third cist, 2 feet 2 inches long, 1 foot 2 inches wide, and  $1\frac{1}{2}$  foot high, about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  feet below the surface, was found to the south-west of the last mentioned, but contained no remains. A fourth, which was upwards of 3 feet below the surface, lay to the north of the other. It measured 3 feet 8 in length, 2 feet 1 in width, and 2 feet 4 in height; was covered with a large flag,  $4\frac{1}{2}$  inches thick. It contained a skeleton, lying upon its left side, with face to the north, and the lower extremities were doubled up towards the breast. The right thigh and right arm bones were uppermost, and each at first sight seemed to be closely tied or wound round by some fibrous substance somewhat resembling a tarred hemp string. There was a circular hole in the back of the skull, about an inch in diameter. In the particular of the apparent tying of the forearm and thigh bones, "the find" is possibly unique, and the cause of this, as well as the hole in the skull, are open to conjecture. This skeleton, which is certainly an object of more than common interest, was removed *in situ* from the cist; and this was effected by pushing a sheet of iron below the skeleton, an appliance which was kindly furnished by Mr James F. Low of the Monifieth Foundry. The skeleton is thus preserved in the Museum of the Albert Institute of Dundee; also the urns, &c.

But apart from these relics of the past, another interesting object was discovered in an adjoining cairn, to the immediate east of the new roadway. The cairn, which is about 7 feet in height and about 45 feet in circumference at the base, was excavated about the same time as the cists were discovered. It was found to be composed of earth and loose stones; and near the middle of it, about 3 feet below the surface, was found a stone coffin, shaped pretty like the coffins of the present day. It was about  $6\frac{1}{2}$  feet long, from 1 foot 8 to 2 feet wide, and 1 foot 4 inches deep. The covering and sides had fallen in, and the coffin, which contained a human skeleton in a much disturbed and distorted condition, was filled with earth. It had possibly been disturbed at some previous date.

The property upon which these discoveries were made belongs to the Earl of Dalhousie, and the excavations were conducted in the presence of members of the Society of Antiquaries and others. Photographs of the urns, and the cists containing the skeleton, were made at the cost of the Society, and were forwarded along with this paper.

These discoveries were made upon a rising ground about 400 yards from the River Tay, and notices of the early history of the locality are given in Proceedings, Vol. II. p. 442.

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This being the concluding meeting of the Session, thanks were given to the Office-Bearers, and the Society then adjourned to the commencement of next Session, on St Andrew's Day, 30th November 1875.