

IV.

NOTICE OF A CIST CONTAINING AN URN FOUND NEAR ECKFORD IN FEBRUARY 1889. BY JOHN G. WINNING.

The parish of Eckford, in the county of Roxburgh, lies between the base of the Cheviots and the River Teviot. Geologically it is interesting from the number of upper drift deposits of sand and gravel within its bounds. These deposits form mounds or rounded banks, and are chiefly situated within the triangle formed by the junction of Kale Water with the Teviot near Eckford village.

Whether owing to this district having been thickly populated in early times, or that the dryness of these banks and the easiness of their excavation formed an inducement towards their selection as places of burial, there appears to be hardly a prominence in this part of the parish which has not been used for ancient interments. The Statistical Account of the Parish states that stone coffins had been frequently found, and particular mention is made of one found in Priestcrown field¹ in 1831.

The cist to which this paper applies was found in February 1889 in the field adjoining Priestcrown on the west. The field is numbered 429 on the Ordnance Survey, and its local name is "Blackman's" field. This is the third cist found in the locality since 1885. It, like the others, was brought to light by the plough, and was opened by Mr Purdom, the

¹ See Dr Hardy's notes regarding this cist in vol. xi. p. 178 of *The Berwickshire Naturalists' Club Transactions*.

tenant of Easter Wooden Farm, on 5th February. He found it filled with sand, probably caused by the displacement of the cover. Some fragments of an urn were obtained, and these were handed to me by Mr Purdom when I visited the place on the 9th. I found the cist had been roughly cleared out, but the ground was frozen too hard to admit of a satisfactory re-examination. Further pieces of the urn, however, were found. No charred remains were visible.

The cist is placed on the ridge of the field, lying east and west, the length at top being 33 inches, width 20 inches, and depth of 18 inches. The side-stones inclined towards each other at the top, and the inside bottom measurements were 41 inches by 25 inches. It is constructed with 6 rough slabs of red sandstone, two forming the bottom, and the others the sides and ends. The cover (of the same material) was in three pieces, and had been packed round the edges with small stones.

There was nothing to indicate the position of the urn in the cist. By careful drying and cementing, the parts of the urn have been put together so as to enable a photograph to be taken (fig. 1). Fully half of the urn has been recovered. It is formed of a reddish-brown clay, is of the "drinking-cup" type, and finely ornamented.

The outline is elegant, narrowing from the mouth to slightly above the middle, then gradually swelling, and again narrowing towards the base.

The ornamentation consists of bands of incised lines enclosing hatched or notched bands, and the spaces between these bands are filled in with herring-bone ornament in triangular form. The bands are artistically placed with regard to the shape of the urn. The bottom is also ornamented with chevrony lines. Instances of bottom ornamenta-



Fig. 1. Urn found at Eckford
(8½ inches in height).

tion are now and then found on "food vessels," but Canon Greenwell says he met with only one case of a drinking-cup being so treated.¹

[This handsome urn has since been presented to the National Museum by Mr Winning. Its dimensions are—height $8\frac{1}{4}$ inches, diameter at mouth 5 inches, and at base $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches.]