

V.

NOTE ON A CIST AND URN FOUND AT GLASTERBERRY, NEAR  
PETERCULTER, ABERDEENSHIRE. BY F. C. EELES, CORR. MEM.  
S.A. SCOT.

In February 1899 some men who were digging for sand in a gravel pit on the farm of Glasterberry, in the parish of Peterculter, Aberdeenshire, came upon a short cist made of rough boulders of gneiss, and containing an urn, a skull and a few bones. Owing to the great weight of the cover stone the cist collapsed almost as soon as it was found, and the urn was broken in several pieces.

The gravel pit which contained the cist was in a kind of low mound of natural formation, on the south-west slope of a field adjacent to the south side of the Deeside section of the Great North of Scotland Railway, and immediately on the east side of a small burn which passes under the railway in a culvert a few hundred yards to the east of Milltimber station, and about half a mile north of the river Dee.

The cist (fig. 1) was constructed of large flat boulders, and was in the form of a parallelogram with its ends east and west, about 3 feet long, 2 feet broad, and a little more than 1 foot high, as nearly as could be judged. The stone forming the north side was roughly triangular, about 3 feet 7 inches by 2 feet 3 inches, and about 7 to 9 inches thick. That forming the south side was about 3 feet by 2 feet 2 inches, and was from 2 to 5 inches in thickness. A smaller stone about 2 feet by 1 foot formed the east end, and that which formed the west end had disappeared. The cover was about 3 feet 10 inches by 4 feet 10 inches, and was 9 inches thick. The top of the cist was said to have been within a few inches of the surface on the south-west side of the mound, and that part of it which was nearest to the centre of the mound was at least 5 feet from the surface at the summit.

One of the men saw inside the cist before it collapsed, and informed the writer that the floor of it was carefully paved with small round

pebbles packed in clay, that the urn was resting on its side near the east end with its mouth towards the west, and that the skull was lying on its right side with the crown to the south underneath the urn. The skull appeared to be of the type usually found in cists of this kind in Aberdeenshire, and it seemed to have received a heavy blow on one side. One or two fragments of the leg bones were all that was left besides the skull. The urn was badly broken, and it was difficult to

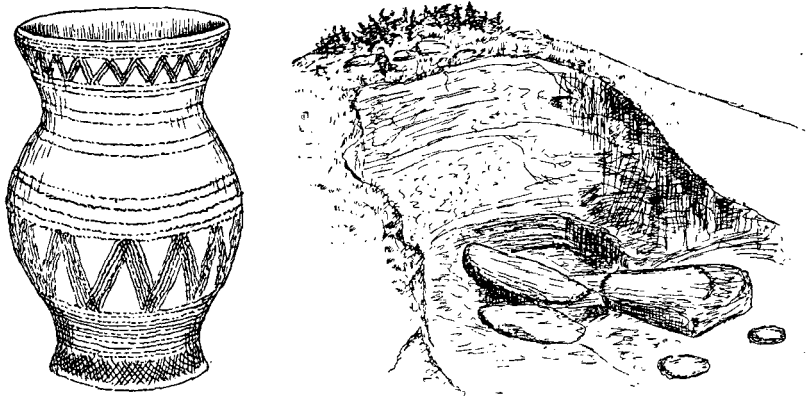


Fig. 1. View of Cist and sketch of Urn found at Glasterbury.

obtain accurate measurements. It was an unusually graceful and rather large example of the "drinking cup" type,  $8\frac{1}{2}$  inches high,  $3\frac{5}{8}$  inches across the base, and seemed to have been about 5 inches across the mouth.

Mr Alexander Skene, a tea merchant at Aberdeen, and tenant of the neighbouring house of Avondow, for whom the sand was being obtained, immediately took possession of the remains of the urn and bones, which, we believe, are still in his hands.