

III.

NOTICE OF THE DISCOVERY OF A STONE CIST, CONTAINING AN UNBURNT BURIAL AND AN URN OF THE DRINKING-CUP TYPE, AT WELLGROVE, LOCHEE, NEAR DUNDEE. BY WILLIAM REID, F.S.A. Scot.

During the month of June 1904, while excavating to make a new road, prior to the erection of new buildings at Wellgrove, Lochee, near Dundee, a stone cist was discovered, containing unburnt bones and an urn of the drinking-cup type. As comparatively few discoveries of the kind have been made in this district of recent times, it may be of importance to place the particulars on record.

Wellgrove is a district to the south-west of Lochee, in the combined parishes of Liff and Benvie, distant some three miles from the Town Hall of Dundee, and quite close to Lochee West Station on the Caledonian Railway line between Dundee and Blairgowrie.

During the afternoon of 8th June, while workmen were engaged levelling down a grassy knoll in a meadow at a point 27 yards to the north from the centre of the South Road, they struck upon the lid or covering of a stone cist, $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet from the surface. Mr Charles Johnstone, who had the work in hand, was absent at the time of the discovery, whereupon the digging was discontinued at that point until instructions should be given as to how to proceed with the unearthing of the cist. At an early hour the following morning the lid of the cist was removed, which was found to be made up of three grey slabs of irregular form, varying from 1 inch to $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches in thickness, with no markings of any kind, and measured roughly $5\frac{1}{2}$ feet by 3 feet.

The depth from the surface to the bottom of the cist measured 5 feet, the soil being a shallow seam of black loam, then red and yellow sand above the rock, which is the Old Red Sandstone, splintered and much decayed.

The cist itself was formed of seven rude, undressed slabs of grey

whinstone, 2 inches thick. It lay due east and west, and measured 3 feet 10 inches long by 2 feet broad and $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet deep, and was partly filled with a fine red sand similar to the soil around it. The stones were laid aside for some days, and ultimately broken up by the workmen to make a road bed.

The cist was by no means air- or water-tight; the large bones found



Fig. 1. Urn of Drinking-cup type found in the Cist at Wellgrove. ($\frac{1}{3}$.)

were very much decayed, and crumbled down when touched. There was no appearance of a skull, but the jawbone was noticed to contain seven teeth. Only one of these teeth has been preserved. It is an upper bicuspid, not very much worn, and probably belonged to a young person.

The urn (fig. 1) is of red burnt clay, $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick, fairly regular in form and well fired; in its present broken condition it measures $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches high by $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide. When first discovered it was intact and filled with

finely-powdered red sand, and had at least measured $7\frac{1}{2}$ or 8 inches high. In their haste to ascertain the contents, the urn was handed from one workman to another, who surmised it to contain coins or other treasure, and when being emptied it was accidentally let fall to the ground and broken, the bottom being so much destroyed that it was found impossible to piece it together. The broken parts, being very much splintered, were unfortunately not preserved.

The meadow through which the new road was made, and where the cist was discovered, has for 75 yards a sloping decline from south to north, where it meets the level, and extends for some distance north as pasture. The highest point of the meadow reaches the same level as the South Road, where for 32 yards it is continued east and west, at which distance from the new road it is cut by a stone wall, and presently forms the kitchen gardens to four cottages. This new road has opened up a serviceable thoroughfare between the South Road on the south, and Liff Road on the north, and since then has been named Wellburn Street.

Mr Charles Johnstone, contractor, Lochee, who retained possession of the urn since its discovery, has expressed a desire that it should be presented to the Museum, and on his behalf I have now the pleasure of making the presentation.