

## NOTES.

## 1. TWO CISTS AT LUNANHEAD, FORFAR.

While excavating material from the sand-pit at Lunanhead, locally known as "The Dog's Knowe," on the Carse Gray estate, on Thursday, 4th September 1941, for the construction of a new aerodrome, the mechanical digger unearthed what afterwards proved to be a short cist of the Bronze Age. In spite of this being the site of other Bronze Age burials,<sup>1</sup> and of repeated requests to look out for similar discoveries, the importance of this find was not realised by those who happened to be in charge at the moment, so that the cist was broken up and the slabs dispatched to the aerodrome without examination of any kind. As an afterthought, however, the contents of the cist, consisting of the bones of a skeleton and some fragments of an urn, were collected and laid aside. The urn fragments, however, were abstracted, and a public appeal which I made for their return was, unfortunately, unsuccessful.

On hearing of this find, and the discovery of a second cist the following afternoon, I hastened to the site and arranged for the soil being cleared away and the cist carefully preserved, untouched, until the arrival of H.M. Inspector of Ancient Monuments, with whom I communicated at once. The soil surrounding the cist was carefully removed and the site cleared on Saturday, and steps were taken to preserve this second cist, but, on the arrival of Mr Richardson on Monday morning, we found that, in spite of all precautions, the cist had been interfered with during the temporary absence of the men, the front stone broken, the skull of the skeleton smashed, the bones disarranged, and the teeth removed. The teeth, however, were subsequently recovered with the aid of the police.

The contents of this second cist, as we found them, were carefully examined, and the fragments of the urn, and the skeleton which it contained, were removed for further examination, when it was found that the floor of the tomb had been laid with selected pebbles, methodically arranged, a somewhat unusual feature in Bronze Age burials. It is unfortunate that the destruction and removal of the first cist, without any opportunity of examining it, prevented our determining whether it was similarly floored. The failure to recover any portion of the urn in the first cist also prevents any comparison of the two urns.

The photographs of the second cist, which were kindly taken by Mr Moir, Agent of the Bank of Scotland, Forfar, show the arrangement of the pebble flooring of the cist, with the fractured slab lying in front of it. The photographs also show an indication of a circle, about 7 inches in diameter, on the back slab, but this may be a natural mark on the stone (Pl. XXIX, 2). The fractured slab in the foreground is the front slab of the cist, which was broken when the grave was interfered with, and damaged the skeleton in its fall. Fortunately, I had removed the fragments of the urn when the cist was first uncovered, and these were practically complete. They were reassembled by Mr Edwards, Director of the Museum, who favours me with the accompanying photograph of the completed urn (Pl. XXX, 1) and the following Report: "The beaker urn, which is made of a reddish-coloured clay, measures  $8\frac{1}{4}$  inches in height,  $6\frac{1}{2}$  inches in external diameter across the mouth, 6 inches in width at the bulge,

<sup>1</sup> *Proc. Soc. Ant. Scot.*, vol. xii. (1876-77) pp. 288-300.



1. Roman Oven at Mumrills.

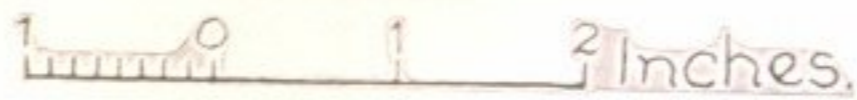
A. S. ROBERTSON.



2. Cist II at Lunanhead.

JOHN T. EWEN.

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1. The Beaker.



2

2. Skull from Cist I, restored, showing ulcer in frontal bone.



3

3. Right maxillary alveolar margin of jaw from Cist II, showing recession (pyorrhea) and abscess cavities at apices of roots of first molar.

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and  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches in diameter at the base. The urn is decorated with three zones of impressed ornament, with plain zones between." The urn has been presented to the Museum by Mrs Gray Cheape of Carse Gray, Forfar, on whose ground it was found.

This second cist measured 3 feet 10 inches by 2 feet 8 inches outside, and 3 feet 3 inches by 2 feet 5 inches and 1 foot 6 inches inside, the longer sides lying north-east and south-west. The cover-stone, somewhat irregular in shape, is of great size and weight, measuring roughly 5 feet in length, by 2 feet 10 inches broad, and from 3 inches to 9 inches thick. It presented quite a problem in transport to its new position.

The skeleton which we found in this cist—that of a male adult, according to Professor Waterston—lay on the right side, in a "hunkering" position, with the knees towards the chest. The skull was near the east corner, and the beaker urn opposite it, in the north.

The stone slabs of this cist were carefully marked for position before their removal, and, instead of their being broken up like those of the former cist, Mr Laird, the lessee of "The Dog's Knowe," was good enough to let me have them, and to transport them, along with the heavy cover-stone, to Pitscandly, where the grave has been reconstructed within half a mile of its former site, with the cover-stone by its side. The original pebble flooring (the pebbles having been kindly collected for me) has been relaid in the cist, with the probable date of the burial, 1500? B.C., interpolated in white pebbles for the information of visitors to the cist in its new position.

The wonderfully complete set of bones which survived the demolition of the first discovered cist, and the less well-preserved skeleton which, under Mr Richardson's guidance and direction, we recovered from Cist No. 2, were forwarded to Professor Waterston, Bute Medical School, St Andrews University, who had kindly consented to examine and report upon them. Professor Waterston's interesting and valuable Report, embodying the results of his expert examination of the two skeletons, accompanies this account of the discoveries.

JOHN T. EWEN.