

##### 5. A CIST CONTAINING SKELETAL REMAINS AT BONHILL, DUNBARTONSHIRE.

In the winter of 1940 a mechanical excavator, working at night, dislodged a stone cist from the top of the working face of the Strathleven Sand and Gravel Quarry at Bonhill. Immediately the discovery was reported the site was visited. It was found that the skeletal remains had been retained at the quarry by the Alexandra Transport Company, while three stone slabs of the cist had been removed to Strathleven Mains Farm.

Owing to the kindness of Mr Humphrey Ewing Crum Ewing, Strathleven House, the skeletal remains were removed to the Glasgow Art Gallery and Museum (Reg. No. 40-25).

The stone slabs of the cist are of brownish-yellow sandstone, probably from the local Old Red Sandstone. The largest, which was probably the cover-stone, measured 5 feet 5 inches in length and 3 feet at the widest part. The thickness of the slab was 7 inches. The other two stones, from their size and appearance, were probably end stones.

From the report given by the operator of the mechanical excavator it seems that the cist lay a foot or so below the surface. The stone slabs and the skeletal remains were recovered from the foot of the working face of the quarry. As in the case of the later discovery, described by Miss Anne S. Robertson,<sup>1</sup> it is probable that this was a flat grave with no marking by a mound or cairn. The exact geographical location of the discovery here described and of the 1943 discovery is shown on the plan given in Miss Robertson's paper.

*Skeletal Remains.*—A very careful search was made by the author and his technical assistant, Mr J. Brolly, to retrieve as much as possible of the skeletal remains, and sufficient was discovered to allow a fairly accurate description to be given. It is estimated that they belong to a man about forty years of age, and about 5 feet 6 inches in height. The parts retrieved consist of skull, fragments of

<sup>1</sup> Robertson, *Proc. Soc. Ant. Scot.*, vol. lxxviii. (1943-44), p. 128.

ulna, right humerus and radius, two metacarpals, four fragments of vertebræ, ten right and two left ribs, damaged pelvis, right femur, right and left tibiæ, right fibula, left calcaneum and left talus.

The following are the measurements of the skull:—

	millimetres		millimetres
Glabello-occipital length . . .	195	Occipito-frontal arc . . .	410
Maximum breadth . . .	140	Antero-posterior diameter of	
Glabello-nasal length . . .	192	foramen magnum . . .	35
Basi-bregmatic height . . .	132	Basi-alveolar length . . .	96
Orbital width, L. . . . .	38		
Orbital height, L. . . . .	33·5	Cephalic Index . . . . .	71·79
Ophyro-occipital length . . .	190	Vertical „ . . . . .	67·6
Nasion-opisthion length . . .	139	Orbital „ . . . . .	88·1
Nasi-alveolar height . . . . .	73	Gnathic „ . . . . .	83·5
Basi-nasal length . . . . .	103	Nasal „ . . . . .	51·8
Horizontal circumference of		Dental „ . . . . .	43·69
cranium . . . . .	540 ap.		

The appearance of the skull being greater in length than in breadth is confirmed by the measurements which give a cephalic index of 71·79, indicating the skull to be dolichocephalic. Thus this Strathleven burial is another example from the west of Scotland of a dolichocephalic skull in a Bronze Age short cist. It was pointed out by Professor T. H. Bryce that although the skulls of the short cist people are generally brachycephalic, some dolichocephalic crania do occur. In explanation of this admixture of the two types, Professor Bryce states that it “may indicate either that the skull form of the new race was not uniform but predominantly brachycephalic, or that there was a fusion of the new race with the earlier dolichocephalic inhabitants.”<sup>1</sup>

A full list of the other measurements has been deposited with the Society.

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