

Cinerary urn found at Howford Farm, Strichen, Aberdeenshire

by R D Lockhart

A cinerary urn was found in an embankment behind Howford Farm, near Strichen, Aberdeenshire (NGR NJ 95385472), on 18th March 1970 by Mr G Coutts. The discovery was reported to Mr Bandeen, the librarian at Strichen, whose interest in the find led to the information being forwarded to the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland by Professor R D Lockhart of the University of Aberdeen; the following note has been prepared by the Editor from that information.

The urn was found in an inverted position about 3 ft below the present ground surface of the embankment, but its original depth was probably only 1-1½ ft below ground surface. Erosion of the embankment led to the exposure and recovery of the urn.

The urn belongs to the collared class of cinerary urn, and is decorated with twisted cord impressions in a simple design on the upper part of the pot and on the internal rim bevel (pl 40). The vessel measures 24.9 cm in height, with a maximum body diameter of 19.5 cm, maximum outer rim diameter of 18.3 cm and maximum base diameter of 9.8 cm.

It contained the calcined remains of more than two individuals, which were examined by Professor Lockhart who has contributed the following identification. 'The bones were extremely comminuted, but I can determine from the lowest fragment of an ulna that the age of one person represented must have been over 20 years. However, the calcined remains of approximately 20 teeth represent an infant of 2 years, but other pieces of skull bones represent intervening ages.'

The urn and the skeletal remains have been deposited in the Anthropological Museum of the University of Aberdeen.



Collared urn from Howford Farm (2:5; copyright Anthropological Museum, University of Aberdeen)