

IV.

NOTICE OF THE DISCOVERY OF TWO CISTS WITH URNS OF STEATITE,
 IN THE PARISH OF SANDWICK, ORKNEY. BY WM. G. T. WATT,
 OF SKAILL, ORKNEY.

In the summer of 1883 a steatite urn was discovered by a herd boy digging to get at a "bee's byke" in the centre of a tumulus on Gyron Hill, Sandwick. It was not disturbed until I was present. A flat stone lay on the ground, and the urn stood on it mouth upwards. It was built round about with stones, and across the top of the building and over the urn was laid a heavy flag cover. Clay had been packed above and around the outside of the cist. The urn was filled to within two inches of its brim with calcined bones. The contents were carefully examined, but nothing was found among the bones. The urn is 16 inches across the mouth one way and 15 inches the other, and stands 11 inches high. Underneath the rim it has two incised lines drawn round the outside by way of ornamentation. A neatly prepared slate stone, 10 inches by 8 inches, and oval in shape, forms the bottom of the urn, and rests on a narrow ledge or groove running round the inside.

The only implement found about the mound was a rude stone, 19 inches long, 4 inches broad, and about 2 inches thick, made sharp and slightly polished at the end. Mr Robert Stewart Clouston, who was with me when taking the urn out, drew my attention to this stone, it being like some among his interesting collection of rude stone implements found in this parish.

I may mention that within 50 yards there are several other mounds.

Last month, January 1885, the tenant of South Scatter brought me a small steatite urn, in fine preservation, which had been found in a cist on Gyron Hill, Sandwick, and not far from where the one just described was got. The cist in this case is placed in a low natural knowe or rising ground of stiff clay, and from the general appearance of the soil I am of opinion that no mound had ever been erected over it. The sides and ends of the cist were formed by four carefully dressed flags resting on a

large flat stone, and the cover was a neatly fitting slab, above which about 2 inches of clay was well packed. The grave, which is 28 inches in length, lies south-east and north-west. The south-east end is 15 inches and the north-west end $17\frac{1}{2}$ inches in width, and the depth is 22 inches. It contained a few burnt bones, a small quantity of earth, and the urn, which was found in the north-west corner. The dimensions of the urn are 5 inches across the mouth in the longest diameter, and in the shortest $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and 3 inches high. It measures across the bottom 4 inches by 3 inches. Immediately below the rim is a flat incised band running round the exterior. This urn is smaller, but in general appearance very like the one found in 1874 in Fair Isle.

Both the urns I have now described are in my collection at Skail House.

MONDAY, 13th April 1885.

SIR W. FETTES DOUGLAS, LL.D., P.R.S.A., Vice-President,
in the Chair.

A Ballot having been taken, the following Gentlemen were duly elected Fellows :—

P. J. ANDERSON, M.A., LL.B., Chairman of Scottish Training College,
Aberdeen.
ALEXANDER B. ARMITAGE, Accountant, 14 Dick Place.
Major FRANCIS BALFOUR of Fernie Castle, Cupar-Fife.
JAMES M'CALL, 6 St John's Terrace, Hillhead, Glasgow.
CHARLES ARUNDEL PARKER, M.D., Gosforth, Cumberland.
CHARLES ROBERTSON, Redfern, Colinton Road.
ANDREW ROSS, S.S.C., 4 Warrender Park Terrace.
RANDOLPH ERSKINE WEMYSS of Wemyss Castle and Torrie.

The following Donations to the Museum and Library were laid on the table, and thanks voted to the Donors :—

(1) By WILLIAM ROBERTSON, 13 Pitt Street, Leith.

Axe of granitic stone, $8\frac{1}{2}$ inches in length, quadrangular in the cross section in the middle of its length, irregularly rounded towards the butt, and slightly hollowed as if for tying on to the shaft. The locality is unknown, but probably from British North America.

(2) By Rev. ALEXANDER GORDON, LL.D., Oaklands Grove, Shepherd's Bush, London.

Collection of 112 Flint Flakes, and broken and splintered nodules of flint, of which a number exhibit secondary working, found in the Cabrach, Banffshire.

Spherical Hammer-stone of quartz, from the Cabrach, Banffshire.

One of the halves of a Bullet-Mould of claystone, from the Cabrach, Banffshire.

Upper stone of a Pot Quern of sandstone, $8\frac{1}{2}$ inches diameter and 3 inches in thickness, with a pivot hole in the centre, and a semi-circular indentation in the margin, from Strathpeffer, Ross-shire.

Flat oval Pebble of schist, indented on both sides, from Rhynie, Aberdeenshire.

Portion of a Sculptured Slab of reddish sandstone, 17 inches in length by 10 inches in breadth, bearing on one side two contiguous rows of incised diagonal fretwork, from Drainie, Elginshire.

(3) By DAVID GREIG, 14 Greenhill Park.

Mounting of bronze, consisting of a bar, 4 inches in length, with masks at the terminations, and with a side bar attached, which is bent into a semicircular form, with a diameter of 2 inches. On this semicircular projection rest the hind legs of two leopards, whose fore legs are disposed so that the right paw rests on the top of the mask, and the left on a raised portion of the bar immediately beneath it, the backs of the animals leaning inwards towards each other, and the heads turned outwards and looking in opposite ways. The spots on their skins are rendered in niello. The derivation and purpose of the mounting are

unknown. It was rescued by Mr Greig from amongst a quantity of old brass that was about to be consigned to the melting pot.

(4) By W. SCOTT ELLIOT, Arkleton, Langholm.

Bronze Palstave or Flanged Celt, $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches in length, the flanges expanding in a triangular form and slightly bent over, the cutting edge almost semicircular, the peaked ends broken off, as is also a portion of the butt at one side. There is no stop-ridge. This specimen (fig. 1) was found in Canonbie, Dumfriesshire, by Mr Thomas Telfer, by whom



Figs. 1, 2. Flanged Celts, found at Canonbie, Dumfriesshire, and at Watten, Caithness.

it was given to the donor. It belongs to a well-marked variety of the general type of flanged celts or axe-heads of bronze, which have been found nearly all over Scotland; but it is the first specimen of the variety which the Society has been able to obtain from that part of Dumfriesshire. For the sake of comparison, a somewhat more perfect specimen of the same form, found in the parish of Watten, Caithness, is also here engraved. It differs from the Dumfriesshire example only in having a well-defined stop-ridge. It measures $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches in length

and $2\frac{1}{4}$ in greatest width across the cutting face. This characteristic specimen was presented to the Museum in 1871 by Captain Alexander Gunn of Braehour, Caithness.

(5) By ROBERT CARFRAE, F.S.A. Scot., Curator of the Museum.

Bracelet of bronze, hollow, and of one and a half twists, the ends overlapping, and ornamented with bands of engraved lines, from Fiesole, Italy.

(6) By FRANCIS WHELAN, through R. CARFRAE, F.S.A. Scot.

War Medal of Silver, Abyssinian Campaign, 1871.

(7) By MESSRS MACKAY & CHISHOLM, Jewellers, 57 Princes Street.

Case of Balance Covers (thirty-five specimens), taken from old Verge Watches, eighteenth century.

(8) By Sir ARTHUR HALKETT, F.S.A. Scot.

Tattooed Head of a New Zealand Chief, brought home about the year 1818, by Captain Halkett, E.I.C.S.

(9) By Professor DUNS, D.D., F.S.A. Scot.

Diploma of the Revolution Club in favour of Mr Gilbert Burd, Writer in Edinburgh, 3rd June 1755.

(10) By ALEXANDER J. WARDEN, F.S.A. Scot., the Author.

Angus or Forfarshire, the Land and People, Descriptive and Historical. Vols. IV. and V. 4to. 1885.

(11) By the LORDS COMMISSIONERS OF H.M. TREASURY, through the CONTROLLER OF H.M. STATIONERY OFFICE.

Publications of the Record Commission, viz. :—

Rotulorum Abbrevatio. Ed. III. Edited by H. Playford. Vol. II. Folio.

Domesday Book, Indices and Addit. Edited by Ellis. Vols. III. and IV. Folio. 1816.

Calendars of Proceedings in Chancery. Ric. II. and Eliz. Edited by J. Bayly. Vol. III. Folio. 1832.

Excerpta e Rotulis in Turri, Hen. III. Edited by C. Roberts. Vol. II. Royal 8vo. 1836.

Calendars and Inventories of Exchequer. Edited by Sir F. Palgrave. 3 Vols. Royal 8vo. 1836.

Rot. Chart. in Turri, 1199-1216. Edited by T. Duffus Hardy. Folio. 1837.

Record of Caernarvon. Edited by Sir H. Ellis. Folio. 1838.

Ancient Laws and Institutes of Wales. Edited by Aneurin Owen. 2 Vols. Royal 8vo. 1841.

Rot. de Liberate, &c. Reg. Johanne. Edited by T. Duffus Hardy. Royal 8vo. 1844.

Great Rolls of the Pipe. Edited by Rev. J. Hunter. Royal 8vo. 1844.

Modus Tenendi Parliamentum. Edited by T. Duffus Hardy. 8vo. 1846.

Issue Roll of Treasury Payments, 44 Ed. III. 1370. Edited by F. Devon. Royal 8vo. 1835.

Issues of Exchequer, Hen. III.-Hen. VI. Edited by F. Devon. Royal 8vo. 1837.

Handbook to the Public Records. By F. S. Thomas. Royal 8vo. 1853.

State Papers, Reign of Henry VIII. 11 vols. 4to. 1830-1852.

The following Communications were read:—