

II.

SHORT CISTS AT RUMGALLY, FIFE. BY J. TENNANT
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On 28th April 1931, while workmen were engaged planting potatoes in "The Lodge" field on the farm of Rumgally, parish of Kemback, and about 3 miles from Cupar-Fife, owned and occupied by Mr Charles A. Roger, a driller came in contact with a large stone. Steps were taken to uncover this, but on removing the soil it was found there were other stones forming a cist. The grave was placed on the top of a gravelly knoll on undulating ground, with other knolls in different parts of the field. The site lay 373 yards 89° E. of N. of Rumgally House.

The cist measured internally 3 feet 7 inches long, 21 inches broad at the south end and 30 inches at the north end, its main axis lying about 2° east of true north and west of true south. The slabs were of free-stone, probably brought from the well-known strata at Dura Den, some 800 yards distant. The side stones were in parts 12 inches and 10 inches thick respectively, with a depth of 27 inches and 24 inches, and must have weighed 4 to 5 cwts. each. The stone at the north end was 3½ inches thick and that at the south end 4½ inches. There was no cover on the cist and no stone bottom. The contents were found to be gravel and rough sand. About 18 inches down from the top of the side stones the workman came upon the remains of a human skeleton, consisting of leg and arm bones, parts of the vertebral column, pieces of upper and lower jaws with several teeth, and various fragments of other bones. Portions of a skull were also found; but they crumbled away when handled. On discovering these the workman reported the find to his master, who intimated the fact to the police. A further careful search was made, when an urn (fig. 1) was found embedded in the gravel alongside the bones, and an end scraper of grey flint measuring 1½ inch in length (fig. 2, No. 1). The urn was lying on its side close to the east side of the cist and with its mouth inwards, and was found empty.

The urn, which is of the food-vessel type, is in a perfect state of preservation, and has an unusually long upper part. Formed of brown clay, it has a straight brim and a tapering lower part with a slight moulding at the shoulder. It measures 6 inches in height, 5½ inches in external diameter at the mouth, 6 inches at the shoulder, and 3½ inches across the base. The top of the lip, which is undecorated and measures 5⁄8 inch in breadth, is slightly bevelled towards the inside. The whole of the wall to within a short distance of the base is decorated with

horizontal rows of rouletted and stamped lines, and the outside of the rim and the shoulder by oblique rouletted lines, all impressed while the clay was wet.

Two days later, on 30th April 1931, another cist was found about 6 yards west of the above described. It was lying about south-west by west and north-east by east. There was no stone cover upon it, and the inside measurements were 42 inches in length by 21 inches in width



Fig. 1. Food-vessel found at Rungally, Fife.

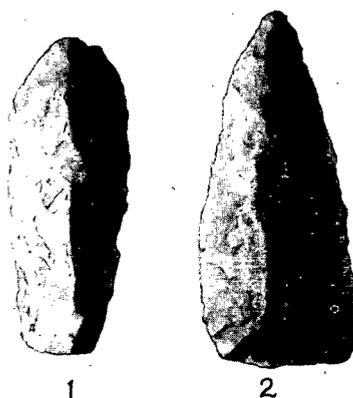


Fig. 2. Flint Scraper and Knife from Cists at Rungally, Fife. (†)

and about 27 inches in depth. The slabs forming the sides of the cist were of freestone, evidently also from Dura Den, and somewhat larger than those in the first cist, the stone on the north side being 14 inches in thickness in parts and 24 inches deep. There were no bones or urns in the grave, but a very fine specimen of a knife of yellow flint finely dressed on one face and plain on the other, measuring $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch in length, was found (fig. 2, No. 2).

Both cists were probed for a considerable distance below the bottom without any sign of further structures being encountered.

It is gratifying to record that Mr Roger has with great goodwill handed over the urn, scraper, and knife to the Society.