ON THE DISCOVERY OF A CIST AT INNERTOWN.

III.

NOTICE OF THE DISCOVERY OF A CIST, WITH THREE SKELETONS,
AT INNERTOWN, NEAR STROMNESS. BY W. G. T. WATT, ESQ.,
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On the 24th April last, while cutting a boundary ditch between the farms
of Westerlea and Kingshouse, the drainer came upon a stone cist eighteen
inches from the surface, and which was placed in the centre of a mound
about 12 feet deep, through which he had to cut. The cist was 4 feet 1
inch in length, 2 feet 5 inches in breadth, 2 feet 10 inches in depth, and
lay due east and west. The sides and ends were of particularly fine slabs,
in excellent preservation, of 2½ inches in thickness, evidently taken from
the sea-shore, which is distant from the spot about half-a mile.

The flags had been carefully shaped and set on their edges. The covering
was a flag fitting closely, as also did the one at the bottom; thus forming
a very complete and neatly constructed cist. The slab on the south side
of the grave was supported by placing a flag of equal length against it,
about half way up at an angle of 45 degrees.

The grave contained nothing but the bones of three skeletons of full-
grown people. It may, therefore, be supposed from the length and size of
the grave, that they had been placed in it in a crouching position, and one
might also infer that the three bodies had been interred at the same
time. Two of the skulls lay in the east end, one in each of the corners,
the third in the north-west corner; all the other bones were together in the
centre.

Notwithstanding that the mound is of loose sand, none had found its
way into the grave. The mound stands on a gentle slope of a hill run-
ning toward the sea-shore, but from its general appearance it is difficult to
say whether it is an artificial or natural mound, though it is considered to
be the latter.

It is believed that there are a number of graves in the immediate neigh-
bourood, because, from time to time, people ploughing have come upon
what they took to be graves, but which were never examined.

It may here be interesting to mention that an old man, who was present
at the opening of the grave, told the writer that a number of years ago he
found, a few hundred yards from the place, a half of a highly polished granite hammer-head, which he gave to the late Mr William Watt. This hammer-head is at Skaill House, among the collection of implements of stone and bone, &c., formed by Mr Watt, and derived principally from the curious group of underground houses at Skaill.