

VIII.—A PRE-HISTORIC BURIAL AT THE SNEEP, NORTH TYNEDALE.

BY R. C. HEDLEY.

[Read on the 27th November, 1889.]

THE discovery of this burial, which possesses many features of interest, was made by the wearing away of the east side of a small hill of sand and drift gravel by the Tarret Burn, which flows past its base. It is fortunate that it occurred on the property of Mr. J. R. D. Lynn, and that a knowledge of the find came immediately before the notice of Mr. W. L. Charlton, both of whom took steps to preserve the remains discovered in the cist.

The burial was by inhumation in a cist,¹ lying north-west and south-east, formed by four side stones and a cover of unwrought sandstone. The cist was three feet nine inches long, two feet eleven inches wide at the west end, one foot eleven inches at the east end, and one foot nine inches deep. It was placed in an excavation of the gravel, at a depth of four feet beneath the surface. No additional material had been placed over the sites of the burial.²

Within the cist, and placed upon the ordinary material of the hill, was the skeleton of a female laid in a contracted position on the right side, with the head to the north-west. Behind the shoulder was a 'drinking cup' lying on its side with the mouth to the east, and immediately in front of it seven flints, showing more or less signs of having been shaped by flaking.

Burial in a contracted or sitting position seems to have been the rule amongst races in a primitive state.³ Out of 301 burials by inhumation Canon Greenwell found the body extended in four

¹ Cists are frequently found in burial mounds in North America, burials by cremation seem there, as in Britain, to have been contemporaneous with those by inhumation. Nadaillac's *Pre-historic America*, pp. 114, 115, 117, and 121. Cist burial was common throughout Britain, also in Greece and Rome, Greenwell's *British Barrows*, p. 458, *et sub* p. 18 f.n. p. 19 f.n.

Greenwell in *Bern. Nat. Field Club Trans.* vol. iv. p. 390, and in the *Arch. Jour.* vol. xxii. p. 249 f.n. 258 f.n.

² Canon Greenwell refers burials without attendant mounds to the later pre-Roman period.—*Trans. of the Bern. Nat. Field Club*, vol. v. 204 f.n.

³ Lubbock's *Pre-historic Times*, pp. 346, 409, 369, 424, etc. Stephen's *Flint Chips*, p. 411, *et sub*.

instances.⁴ Burial in an extended position seems to have been the rule during the iron age. In twenty-four cases recorded by Mr. Bateman in which the body was extended, fourteen had iron implements associated with them,⁵ five had bronze, and only two had stone. Sir R. C. Hoare records thirteen cases in which the body was extended, and of these seven had iron associated with them, two bronze, and one stone; whereas⁶ only in two cases of association with iron was the body found in a contracted position.

The skeleton was placed on its right side, with the head to the west, thus facing the sun, which seems to have been the usual position, though many exceptions are found. The hands were placed at the knee. The drinking cup was behind the shoulder, and lay on its side. Everything which the cist contained lay upon and not in the sand.

Of the seven chipped flints found, two are of the class known as scrapers, and one is almost identical with that figured by Dr. Evans,⁷ found near Bridlington. The others appear to be waste flakes. Large quantities of flint chips are sometimes found with interments.⁸ In later times the casting of shards and flints upon a grave is mentioned by Shakespeare and quoted by Canon Greenwell,⁹ who points out that it is a possible persistence of a custom from pre-historic times.

Mr. Bateman¹⁰ records 297 interments, 100 of which were destitute of implements; Sir R. C. Hoare¹¹ records 267, 184 of which had no implements; and Canon Greenwell,¹² out of 379 burials which he examined, found only 94 had any deposit with the body.

THE DRINKING CUP¹³

is made of well-tempered clay, without admixture of sand or crushed stones; it is slightly stained with iron from infiltrated water, and

⁴ *British Barrows*, p. 20.

⁵ *Bateman's Vestiges, etc.*, and *Ten Years' Diggings in Celtic and Saxon Grave Hills*.

⁶ *Ancient Wiltshire*, quoted in *Pre-historic Times*, p. 132.

⁷ *Stone Implements*, F. 119.

⁸ *Brit. Bar.* pp. 11, 11 n. and 166; *Horae Ferales*, p. 75.

⁹ *Brit. Bar.* p. 12.

'Her death was doubtful;
And, but that great command o'ersways the order,
She should in ground unsanctified have lodg'd
Till the last trumpet; for charitable prayers,
Shards, flints, and pebbles, should be thrown on her.'

—*Hamlet*, Act V. Scene I.

¹⁰ *Ten Years' Diggings*. ¹¹ *Ancient Wiltshire*. ¹² *British Barrows*.

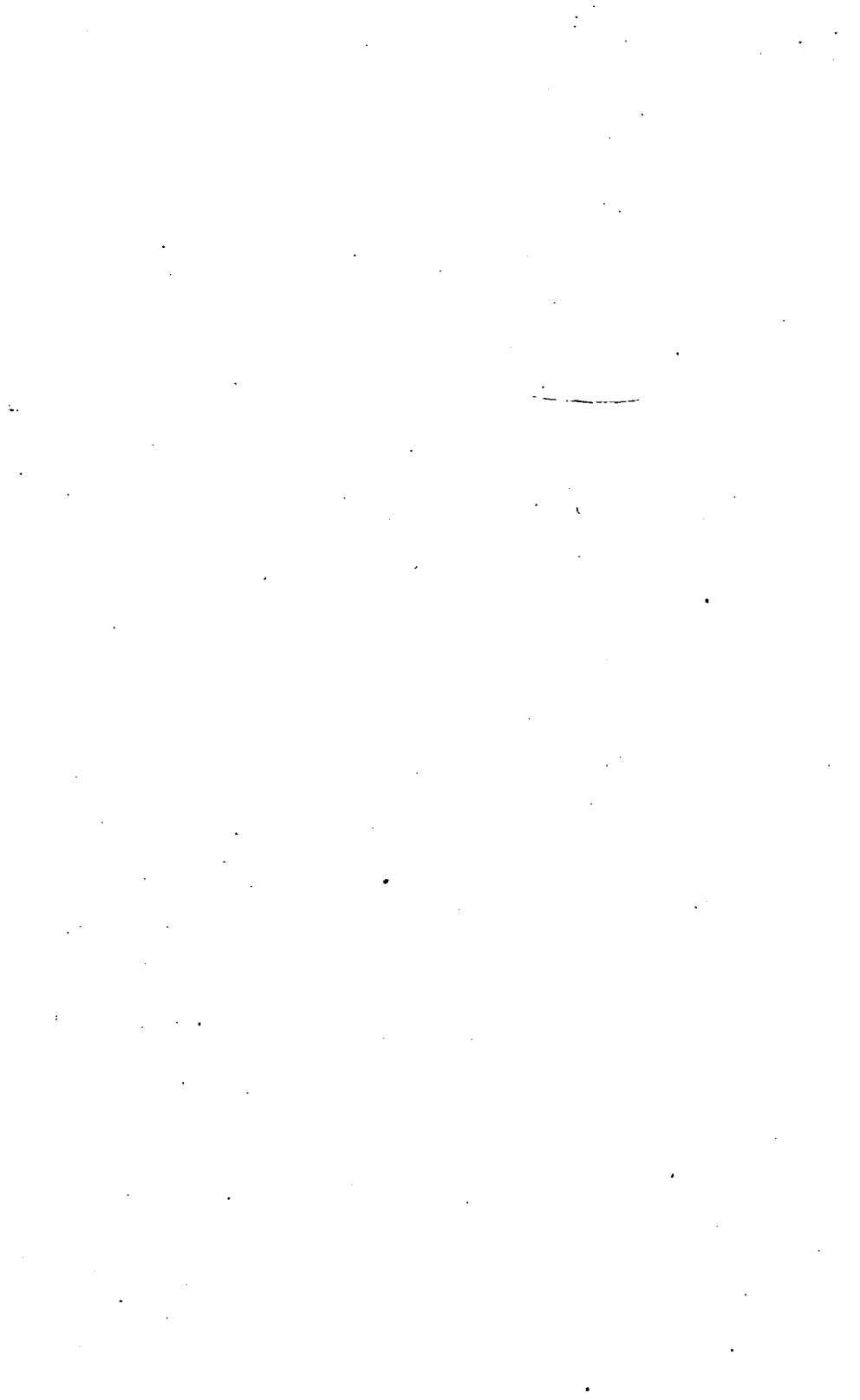
¹³ See middle urn on opposite plate for a representation of this.



J. P. Gibson, Photo.

ANCIENT BRITISH URNS.

1 from Ryehill, near Chollerford. 2 from the Tarret Burn.
1 and 3 in the Museum of J. Clayton, Esq., V.P., at Chesters.
(This Plate presented by Mr. Clayton.)



bears evidence of unequal firing. The height of the cup is $7\frac{1}{4}$ inches, diameter at the top $5\frac{3}{8}$ inches, at the neck $1\frac{3}{4}$ inch, below the top the diameter is $4\frac{3}{4}$ inches, from the neck it swells convexly for $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches to a diameter of $5\frac{5}{8}$ inches, and contracts convexly to the base, which is $3\frac{1}{8}$ inches in diameter. Beginning at the top the ornamentation is first a belt of lattice pattern, three-eighths of an inch wide, made with a slightly convex-edged, dentated implement, five-eighths of an inch wide. Next is an unornamented band, one inch wide. Below this a repetition of No. 1; next a plain band, a quarter of an inch wide, between two narrow, indented lines, one-eighth of an inch apart, formed by an implement slightly dentate. Next is a plain band between indented lines, and a band of lattice pattern as before. This last series of ornament is repeated at the greatest diameter of the cup, and again midway between this and the base. The thickness of material varies from a quarter to three-eighths of an inch, its shape is graceful, and thickness well graduated. The cup contained a small portion of black coloured stuff.

IX.—NOTES ON THE TARRET BURN SKELETON.

BY DR. R. LAING.

MEASUREMENTS OF CALVARIA.

	In.
Extreme length	7·0
Fronto-inial length	6·8
Extreme breadth, approximately	5·5
Vertical height	5·5
Absolute height	5·1
Basi-cranial axis... ..	3·8
Circumference, approximately	20·0
Frontal arc	5·1
Parietal arc	5·0
Occipital arc	4·0
Minimum frontal width	3·8
Maximum frontal width	4·7