

III.

EXCAVATION OF THREE LONG CISTS AT GLADHOUSE RESERVOIR, MIDLOTHIAN. BY THE HON. JOHN ABERCROMBY, *Secretary.*

In the month of June 1903, Mr George Forrest, Linden Cottage, Loanhead, brought some human bones to Dr Joseph Anderson at the Museum of National Antiquities. He reported that he had found them in a cist, the end of which projected from a bank on the edge of the Gladhouse Reservoir, and that there were two other cists beside it.

After obtaining permission from the Chairman of the Water Trust to make a closer investigation of the cists, a permission which was very readily granted, I proceeded on 23rd June with Mr Forrest to the reservoir.

The site where the cists were found lies on the south side of the reservoir, and consists of a slight eminence near the edge of the water. This small natural hillock has fallen in on the west side, and so presents a gravelly face running north and south. Its height may be about 15 feet above the ordinary level of the reservoir. Close to the summit Mr Forrest pointed out the ends of three stone cists, the westerly heads of which had been broken away.

We began operations by digging out Cist No. 1, which lay farthest to the south. The cover-stone lay about a foot below the surface of the

turf, and was directed 70° east of the magnetic north. Allowing 20° for the variation of the compass, the stone coffin was laid due east and west. Its greatest length on the top was 4 feet 7 inches, the west end having broken away. Its width, measured also on the outside, was 2 feet 1 inch, and its depth 10 inches. The cover-stones measured 1 foot 3 inches by 1 foot 1 inch, and 1 foot 5 inches by 1 foot 2 inches. The longest stone at the south side was 2 feet 9 inches by 9 inches by $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches thick, on the north side 1 foot 10 inches by 10 inches by 3 inches thick. The top stones seemed to have fallen in or to have been laid very irregularly and carelessly in the first instance. The skeleton was greatly decayed, but four ribs and the right arm were found in position, and seemed to show that the body had been laid on its back or a little on the left side. The cist was full of gravel, which was carefully riddled with a small-mesh riddle, but no relic of any kind was brought to light.

Cist No. 2 lay 5 feet 4 inches to the north of the last, measuring from centre to centre, and had the same direction. Its outside measurement was 6 feet by 2 feet 4 inches, and 1 foot 4 inches wide at the east end. The northern side was composed of four stones, 12 inches deep; on the south side there were three stones, and one closed the east end. The west end was open and truncated, and at this end the cover was broken in. The skeleton measured 1 foot 8 inches from the shoulder to the top of the thigh, and lay on its back, with the head to the west. The shoulder-blade, part of the left arm and thigh bone, and a portion of the pelvis were in position. The hands were stretched down, with the fingers behind the thigh. The bones of the two legs and ankles were about 5 inches apart. Though the skull was missing, three teeth were picked out of the contents of the cist.

Cist No. 3 lay between 4 feet and 5 feet to the north of No. 2. The length and breadth, measured on the outside, was 5 feet 3 inches by 1 foot 10 inches, and the west end had broken away. This cist was smaller and damper than the others, so that the skeleton, with the exception of a few pieces of bone, had completely disappeared. The ankle-bones found side by side at the east end showed that the body

had been laid on its back with the head to the west. The east end of the cist was so narrow that there was only sufficient room to receive the feet.

In no case was the bottom of the cist paved, and the body had been laid on the natural gravel. The cists seem to have been filled with gravel before laying on the cover-stones. Although the contents of the cists were carefully passed through a riddle with $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch mesh, nothing was found. In spite of the absence of any direct proof, there is reason to believe that interments of this description belong to a late period, possibly as late as the Christian period.

MONDAY, 11th January 1904.

ROBERT MUNRO, M.A., M.D., LL.D.,
Vice-President, in the Chair.

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

EDMUND EUSTACE DYER, M.B., C.M., Mar Place House, Alloa.

Sir JAMES GUTHRIE, President of the Royal Scottish Academy, 41 Moray Place, Edinburgh.

MACKENZIE MACBRIDE, Editor of the *London Scotsman*, Lyndhurst, Chelsham Road, South Croydon.

JAMES WHITE, St Winnin's, Bearsden, Dumbartonshire.

The following Donations by bequest were exhibited:—

(1) By the late Mr WILLIAM BOYD, M.A., F.S.A. Scot., 56 Palmerston Place, Edinburgh.

A Collection of Antiquities, 395 in number, chiefly from the Buchan district in Aberdeenshire, comprising:—

Stone Implements.—Seventeen Arrow-heads of flint, with barbs and stems, thirty leaf-shaped, and ten imperfectly finished or broken.

Forty Scrapers of flint, including five of large size, one circular, and one hollow scraper.

Seventy-seven Flakes of flint, about twenty of which show secondary working.

Thirteen flint Cores and one flint Disc, $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches in diameter, which was used as a charm against diseases of cattle in a byre in Slains.

One Fabricator of reddish-brown flint, $3\frac{3}{8}$ inches in length by 1 inch in greatest breadth.

Two knife-like Tools of flint, one very finely worked; and one flint Saw, 2 inches in length along the cutting face.

Twenty-one polished Stone Axes, of granite, greenstone, or clay-slate, varying from 3 inches to $11\frac{7}{8}$ inches in length.

Five Anvil-stones of granite or greenstone, and six Hammer-stones or Pounding-stones.

An oval Sink-stone of granite, $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches in length by $1\frac{3}{4}$ inches in breadth, with a groove round the middle.

A carved stone Ball of reddish granite, $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches in diameter, with six projecting discs; another of greenstone, $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches in diameter, with six projecting discs; and a third, also of greenstone, $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches in diameter, with six projecting discs, from Brae of Biffie.

Ball of reddish granitic sandstone, $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter, having a large spiral incised on its periphery. This example does not possess the usual characteristics of the typical varieties of these stone balls, the spiral resembling that on the bronze ball from Walton, Lanarkshire.

Two oval and seven circular Balls of different varieties of stone, with plain surfaces, varying from about 3 inches to 2 inches in diameter.

Seven perforated Discs of stone, some rather irregularly shaped, the perforations countersunk and placed nearly in the centre.

Eight stone Whorls, from 1 to $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter, more or less ornamented; eleven plain Whorls, from $2\frac{1}{4}$ to $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches in diameter, and one Whorl of clay, semi-globular, $1\frac{1}{8}$ inches in diameter.

Seven small flat Rings of stone, from half an inch to about an inch in diameter; half of a flat Ring of stone, $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches in diameter, and an unperforated Disc of thin slaty stone, $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches in diameter.

Six Rubbing or Polishing Stones, two being oval oblong pebbles of greyish quartzite, $5\frac{1}{4}$ and $4\frac{1}{8}$ inches in length, each with a curved indentation at one end; one of greenstone, flattish, with rounded edges and ends, $5\frac{1}{4}$ inches in length by $1\frac{3}{8}$ inches in breadth; one of greyish quartzite, $4\frac{3}{4}$ inches in length by $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches in breadth, pointed at one end; one of brownish quartzite, rather wedge-shaped, 3 inches in length; and one of reddish quartzite, $2\frac{5}{8}$ inches in length, with the broad end rubbed flat.

Stone Mould of slaty stone, $4\frac{1}{4}$ inches in length by $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches in breadth, with moulds apparently for buttons on both sides; and a smaller stone Mould, also of slaty stone, $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches by $2\frac{3}{8}$ inches, having on one face an imperfect mould apparently for a button, and on the other side moulds for two rings, one within the other.

Lighting Appliances.—Three iron Crusies and Bottle of Whale-oil; one iron combined Candlestick and Rush-holder, on stand; one tinned-iron Tinder-box, with flint, steel, and tinder, and Candleholder on top; one triangular wooden Rush-holder; one small Peerman for fir candles, and bunch of Fir Candles, and Gully-knife for splitting fir candles; one large “Fleerish,” or steel strike-light.

Miscellaneous.—Nine pairs of old Spectacles; five pairs of Shoe-buckles of steel; small hank of two-ply hand-spun worsted Yarn, found in the Moss of Lochlundie, Slains; two Snuff-mulls of horn, with Snuff-spoon; one oval Tobacco-box, made of wooden staves, feathered and hooped; one Ale-cap, made of staves, with iron hoops; two horn Spoons, with whistles; one horn Tumbler; one double Egg-cup of turned wood; one Bread-spade of iron; one Bottle-stamp, “Invergie”; one iron Hammer for marking the tails of dried fish; a silver-mounted Baton of a messenger-at-Arms; four old Almanacs; a Chap-book, Thomas the Rymer’s Prophecies; eighteen copper Trade Tokens, English, and ten Scottish.

Foreign.—One Patu-Patu, from New Zealand; one Quiver of skin, from the Niger; one Eskimo Bow of bone, in its case, with four Arrows; a small Arrow-head of slate, from Cumberland Gulf; four pieces of Pottery, from excavations at Polis, and twelve from Salamis, Cyprus.

(2) By the late Mr JOHN SHEDDEN DOBIE, F.S.A. Scot., of Morishill, Beith.

Manuscript in small folio, 172 pages, with Map and Drawings, entitled "Fragments of Perambulations in Kintyre in the Summer of 1833," by William Dobie, of Grangevale, Beith.

It is a neatly written account of the author's tour in Kintyre, containing many interesting descriptions and observations. Tombstones received much attention, their emblems and motives being described, and many inscriptions given in full, among which there are several in the Gaelic language. Old sculptured grave-slabs of the usual West Highland type and fragments of old Celtic crosses are also described, and in several cases he has taken much pains to give accurate drawings of them. He gives details of the condition of many old and ruined churches, and describes with much care and fulness the old castles of Saddle and Skipness. He also gives a drawing of the curious carved stone which still lies at the Well of St Kieran, in the entrance to St Kieran's Cave; speaks of the vitrified forts at Carradale and Dunskeig; refers to circular duns at Rannachan and Dunskeig; and describes a solid stone coffin at Kilchouslan. He saw a wattled partition-wall in a house at Southend; speaks of disused salt-pans at Machrihanish; tells of water from Barbreck's Well having been sent to Glasgow; and states that the Relief Seceders at Campbeltown bury their dead in a cemetery apart. The drawings in pen-and-ink and sketches in water-colour are eighteen in number, all very cleverly executed.

A volume entitled "Examination of the Claim of John Lindsay Crawford to the Title and Estates of Lindsay and Crawford," etc., 1851, by the late Mr James Dobie, Writer, Beith, in which are bound letters

received from many of the nobility and gentry with reference to the work and its subject-matter.

(3) By the late Mr G. H. M. THOMS, F.S.A. Scot., Sheriff of Caithness, Orkney, and Shetland.

Large brass Knocker, formerly belonging to the Office of the Northern Lighthouses.

The following Communications were read :—