

III.

NOTICE OF A STONE CIST OF UNUSUAL TYPE FOUND AT CRANTIT NEAR KIRKWALL. BY JAMES W. CURSITER, F.S.A. Scot.

On 20th October last information was sent to me by Mr Nicolson of Crantit farm near Kirkwall of the discovery of a stone cist there. I at once proceeded to Crantit, and was accompanied to the spot by Mr Walter Nicolson, who discovered it and gave me a very intelligent account of its excavation. In June of last year, in the course of laying down turnips, one of the horse's feet went down in a hole to the depth of his leg; the spot was marked, and on the evening preceding my visit, accompanied by some others, Mr Nicolson commenced excavation by the light of lanterns.

After removing earth to a depth of about 2 feet a heavy flat slab of stone about 2 feet 9 inches long and nearly 2 feet broad was discovered lying east and west; this slab was overlapped on its south side by two longer stones about 1 foot wide, each overlapping each other, and these were overlapped by two shorter ones lying end to end.

On removing these it was discovered that the ends of these slabs had been supported on masonry, leaving a space of about 1 foot deep and 2 feet long, the bottom of which was quite empty. On clearing away this masonry from both ends, the flagstone forming the bottom of the space was found to be a fine large slab over 6 feet in length and 2 inches thick. In attempting to raise it a long wedge-shaped portion of it broke off, affording a view of a lower compartment (fig. 1) constructed of stones set on edge, to which the large slab had served as a

cover. The sides and ends of this compartment consisted of a single stone each, and its bottom had evidently consisted of a single stone originally, which was now cracked across about the middle. The covering slab had been luted to the upper edge of the cist with fine clay, but there were no traces of any on the corners. The cist measured 3 feet 1 inch in length, 2 feet 2 inches in width, and 1 foot 9 inches in depth. Towards each end there was a pile of calcined human bones of mixed yellow, white, and pale-blue colours, while there was a considerable deposit of carbonate of lime over a goodly portion of the bottom

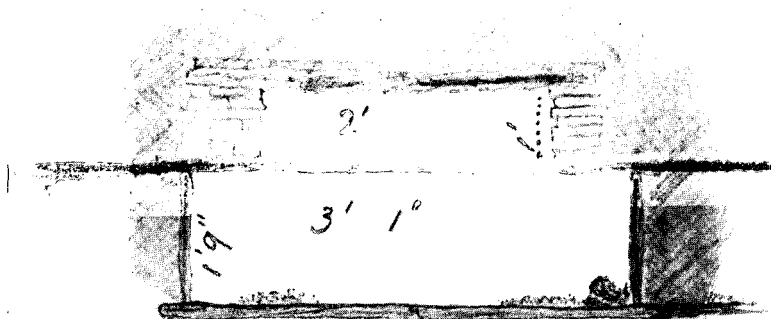


Fig. 1. Section of the Double Cist at Crantit.

of the cist from infiltration. At the east end of the cist, and partially over the pile of burnt bones in this end, lying across the end of the cist, was the skeleton of a young person in a flexed position, with the feet drawn up behind. It was lying on its right side with the head to the north. The skull, which was almost entire, was very frail and so much decomposed that there were several holes in it; indicated an individual of about fifteen years of age; the frontal suture was ossified, but the wisdom teeth had not emerged from their sockets. The femur measured only 11 inches and the tibia 9 inches.

At the back of the skeleton, supported by the bones and the end of the

cist, there was found an implement of deer's horn (fig. 2), oval in section, 4 inches long, $1\frac{1}{8}$ inch broad, one end squared off, the other ground diagonally to an edge. A circular hole half an inch in diameter had been drilled transversely through it towards the butt end, so that the implement has the appearance of a hammer-head.

The field in which the cist was discovered is the nearest one on Crantit to the road leading to the old cottage of Tofts and the new house of Orquil. To the north of that road and west of the road to Scapa the

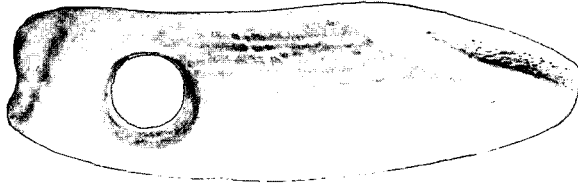


Fig. 2. Implement of Deer-horn found in the lower compartment of the Cist. ($\frac{2}{3}$.)

cist is 54 feet from the Tofts road and 156 yards or thereby from the Scapa road, on the shoulder of a rising ground in the field. It may be interesting to note that this burial is situated about 22 chains east-south-east of the burial cist at Newbigging described in Vol. VI. of the Society's *Proceedings*, p. 411, by the late Mr Petrie, which it very much resembles in construction as well as in the method of disposing of the dead. In both instances the upper chambers were not found to contain any remains, and the lower ones contained traces of interment after cremation as well as of inhumation.

MONDAY, 14th March 1910.

MR THOMAS ROSS, Vice-President, in the Chair.

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

JOHN ASHER, Bowerbank, Abbey Road, Scone.

WILLIAM JOHN BEATTIE, Dineiddwg, Milngavie, Stirlingshire.

FRANCIS C. BUCHANAN, Clarinish, Row, Dumbartonshire.

RONALD AUDREY MARTINEAU DIXON, F.G.S., F.R.G.S., 46 Marlborough Avenue, Hull.

CHARLES KER, M.A., C.A., Easterton, Milngavie, Stirlingshire.

The Rev. GEORGE FREDERICK TERRY, F.S.A., F.R.Hist.Soc., Rector of St John's Episcopal Church, 10 Learmonth Terrace.

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

(1) By J. GRAHAM CALLANDER, F.S.A. Scot.

Brass Matrix of the Commissariat Seal of Moray, circular, $1\frac{3}{8}$ inches in diameter, bearing in the centre a thistle-head crowned, between the initials C. R., for Charles Rex, and round the margin S-OFFICII-COISSARIAT-MORAVIE. On the back is soldered a semicircular handle-plate having a small hole in the upper part for a cord.

(2) By F. T. MACLEOD, F.S.A. Scot.

Jar of light-glazed Stoneware, 8 inches in height, with loop handle attached to the bottle-shaped neck, and a spreading base surrounded with thumb-markings, found three feet deep in peat, in Glendale, Skye.

(3) By the Rev. Canon MACKINTOSH, through JOHN BRUCE, F.S.A. Scot.

Brooch of Brass, composed of a circular flat band about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch in width and $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches in diameter, faintly ornamented on the upper face with incised lines, from the Island of Barra.

Brooch of Brass, composed of a circular flat band slightly bevelled, and plain, $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches in diameter, pin wanting, from the Island of Eriska, S. Uist.

Brooch of Brass, $1\frac{3}{4}$ inches in diameter, composed of a circular flat band ornamented with straight lines across the band in relief, from the Island of Eriska, S. Uist.

(4) By the PROVOST AND MAGISTRATES OF STROMNESS.

An Official Guide to Stromness.

(5) By RICHARD QUICK, the Author.

Catalogue (with illustrations) of the Bowles Collection of Tokens, Coins, Medals, etc., in the Bristol Art Gallery and Museum.

(6) By the ARCHÆOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA.

Annual Reports of the Archæological Survey of India, 1905-06, Part 2, and 1906-07.

(7) By R. COLTMAN CLEPHANE, F.S.A. Scot., the Author.

An Outline of the History of Gunpowder and the Hand-Gun to the End of the 15th Century.

(8) By His Grace the DUKE OF HAMILTON, through the Rev. COLIN CAMPBELL, M.A., D.D.

The Sarcophagus of Pabassa in Hamilton Palace, described by the Rev. Dr COLIN CAMPBELL. 4to. 1910.

(9) By the MASTER OF THE ROLLS.

Calendar of Patent Rolls, Richard II., 1396-99; Henry IV., vol. iv., 1408-13; Henry VI., vol. v., 1446-52; Calendar of State Papers, Domestic, 1676-77; Calendar of State Papers, Venetian, 1617-19; Calendar of Close Rolls, Edward III., vol. xi., 1360-64.

There were exhibited:—

- (1) By Mr JAMES ISLES, Blairgowrie, through Mr THOMAS ROSS,
Vice-President.

A circular Cup of steatitic stone (fig. 1), $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches in height and $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches in diameter at the lip, which has a thickness of rather more than half an inch, and is broken away on one side; the hollow of the cup, which is approximately hemispherical, measures $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches in diameter and $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches in depth, the sides slightly bulging on the exterior, and

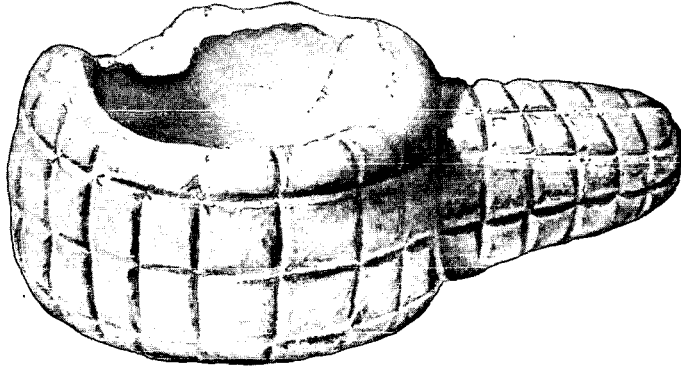


Fig. 1. Stone Cup found at Inchtuthil, Perthshire. ($\frac{3}{8}$).

the bottom flat. At one side is a conical projecting handle, 2 inches in length and about $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches in diameter at its junction with the cup, tapering slightly to the further end. The exterior is marked by a series of deeply incised lines, three of which, running horizontally round the bowl of the cup about $\frac{3}{4}$ inch apart, are continued along the handle, and are crossed at intervals varying from $\frac{3}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch by vertical lines, dividing the exterior surface into a series of panels rather irregular in size. It was found at Inchtuthil, where there is an ancient native promontory fort in close proximity to the Roman Camp the excavation of which is described in the *Proceedings*, vol. xxxvi. p. 230.

[The cup has since been acquired for the Museum.]

(2) By Mr JOHN R. KER, through Mr J. G. ROBERTSON.

Stirrup of Bronze, $5\frac{1}{4}$ inches in length, the opening at widest $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches, ornamented with a trefoil 1 inch in length and $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch in breadth, turned over outwardly from the circular centre of the foot-plate, and on the sides with a series of dotted chevrons, found many years ago when draining a bog in the vicinity of Hawick, Roxburghshire.

The following communications were read :—