

I.

NOTICE OF THE DISCOVERY OF TWO SCULPTURED STONES, WITH SYMBOLS, AT RHYNIE, ABERDEENSHIRE. BY MISS C. MACLAGAN, LADY ASSOCIATE.

Having been informed that certain ancient sculptured stones had been dug up from the foundations of the old parish church of Rhyne in the summer of 1878, I visited the place with the intention of making sketches of them ; but on arriving I was disappointed to find that of the two sculptured stones only one was then above ground, the other having been taken by a mason who was employed to build a wall around the churchyard, and had used it as a foundation for a gate-pillar. I was further informed that that stone was not only buried, but was broken up, and that part of it had been made into road metal.

Notwithstanding all these discouragements, I still entertained a strong desire to see so much as remained of this stone, and determined to make an effort in that direction.

His Grace the Duke of Richmond and Gordon being the lord of the soil (and so far as I know sole heritor of the parish), the offending gate-pillar could not be touched without his permission. This my friend Mr Murrie, banker in Stirling, kindly offered to request of His Grace, and he in the most prompt manner granted it, and wrote to his factor, Mr Wilson, Huntly, to render me whatever assistance was in his power.

Mr Wilson at once arranged for me to meet the same mason who had built the gate-post over the sculptured stone.

I accordingly met this man on the 24th of June, and with the assistance of a blacksmith the pillar was taken to pieces, and the coveted relic of antiquity rescued from its grave. The stone proved to be of granite, and the remaining portion is only 3 feet in length and $10\frac{1}{2}$ inches in breadth (the thickness being less than 1 foot), but the mason confessed to having broken off from its length about other 3 feet, and this at the end where most of the sculpturing stood.

The accompanying woodcut (fig. 1), from a drawing of the stone, will be its best description.

The figures cut on it are of the usual symbolic forms, and are deeply incised excepting one (the sceptre head unattached to the rod), which, apparently, the artist had seen to be badly placed, and so left it unfinished, and probably in its stead sculptured the one on the right hand.

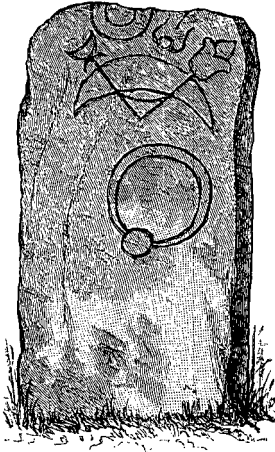


Fig 1.

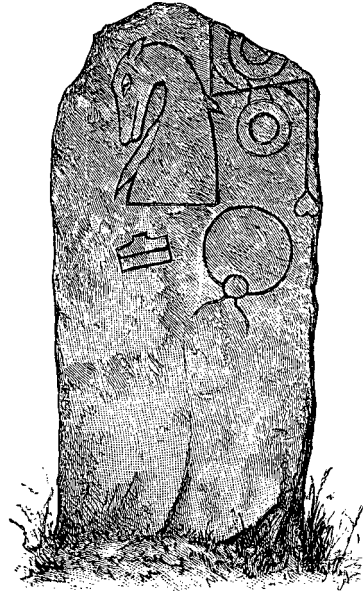


Fig. 2.

Sculptured Stones found at Rhyndie, Aberdeenshire.

Along with the drawing of this stone I send that of its fellow (fig. 2). It is of basalt, and is about 5 feet 4 inches in height. Its sculptured surface appears as if some smoothing friction had been applied before the cuttings had been made.

The incised lines are rather broad, and are not deep, but are in perfect preservation.

It will be seen that it too is shorn of its original proportions. Along with these two sculptured stones were dug up a number of other large stones, but it is doubtful if there is any connection between these and the former.