

## IV.

NOTICE OF A STONE, APPARENTLY A SINKER, WITH INCISED FIGURES OF ANIMALS, FROM A TUMULUS AT BRIDGE OF BROGAR, STENNIS, ORKNEY. BY JAMES NOBLE.

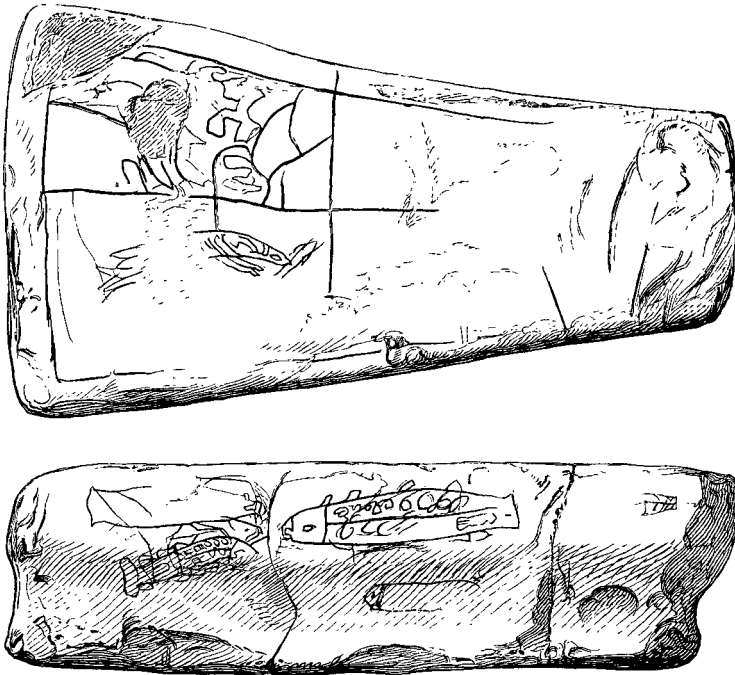
The stone now exhibited—presumably a sinker—which is the subject of the present notice, was found at a tumulus situated close to the Bridge of Brogar, Stennis, Orkney.

The tumulus impinged upon the corner of a field, and the edge of it next the field was being cut off, apparently for the purpose of enlarging the field. A considerable portion of the tumulus had thus been removed; the depth of the section up to where the workmen had cut would be from 3 to 4 feet. The stones found in the soil, which were numerous, were thrown back on the top of the tumulus, and it was amongst this heap that the sinker was found. There could be no doubt that it had been dug from the tumulus, but at what depth it was lying when unearthed I am unable to state.

It may be mentioned that a flint arrow-head and a flint scraper were found some years ago at the same tumulus.

The stone (fig. 1) is of oblong shape, tapered slightly at one end, and grooved round the sides. It is a slightly water or weather worn boulder of the sandstone common to the Mainland of Orkney and the north of Scotland. It is possible that it may have been picked off the beach of the neighbouring loch of Stennis in the form in which it now is, selected for its adaptability as a sinker, and the groove made round it (if it be not also due to weathering) in which to adjust the fishing line. Then the possessor added in some leisure hour the figures cut upon it (figs. 1 and 2), which consist of two fishes and a seal (?) on the narrow side, and further decorated the flat side by cutting a line round the edges, and one from top to bottom, and another across, thus obtaining four divisions upon which some other devices have been made, but are now unfortunately defaced beyond definite recognition. The two fishes and seal (?), however, depicted on the side are well preserved; they are wonderfully well

drawn, the manipulation indicating that the artist must have possessed considerable intelligence—the form, at any rate, is well developed. The scales on the two larger fishes are indicated by little curled scribbles, which, however, fail to give the idea of the overlapping of the scales,



Figs. 1, 2. Stone with incised Figures, found near Bridge of Brogar ( $7\frac{1}{2}$  inches in length).

and it is possible he may not have given the attention necessary to this portion of his subject. An outline of what has been doubtless intended for a fish is also shown, but this he seems to have left unfinished as a failure, the form not satisfying his conceptions. The cutting seems to have been done with a sharp flat instrument.