

Stonehenge Past and present . Ed J. Burrow & Co Cheltenham & London,
booklet . Maryhill museum, D.B. Hill signature in it. (Notes from , for
Stonehenge background, as Hill must have studied this in constructing
his replica at Maryhill)

The size of Stonehenge and the mystery surrounding its origin seldom
fail to exert a fascination upon all who see it for the first time.

Although it was reared before the dawn of history in these islands, the
massive construction of this primitive work will it may safely be
predicted, ensure its remaining a a mighty memorial of the past when
many of the proud buildings of the present day have ~~xxx~~ mouldered in
decay.

The men who built this huge structure, being without graven or written
speech, have left no record of their day or generations. That they possessed
energy , ambition and perseverance, allied to engineering skill of no mean
order, is as evident as that they were men of thew and sinew.

How long a time elapsed in the history of the human race before the erecti
of Stonehenge, from the days when the first pioneer settlers crossed
to this land from the Continent and fought for a place in the sun with the
wild beasts of the swamps and forests will probably never be known.

It seems reasonable to suppose that Stonehenge was built during a
time of peace and prosperity, and that it formed the central shrine of a
powerful early race. Its builders passed away to be forgotten as a dream--
their burial mounds lie around on the plain and beyond it in almost uncounted
numbers--but while its gaunt ribs remain men will continue to speculate
upon the origin and purpose of the great circle of stones which prehistoric
inhabitants of Britain set up and made the riddle of the centuries.

(end foreword*)

Stonehenge: Opens on every day of the year at 9 a.m. and closes at
8 p.m. in summer and 5 p.m. in winter. Admission sixpence.

Stonehenge is on the direct road to Taunton, 80 miles from Hyde Park

Corner, through Staines, Dasingstroke and Andover, where the Exeter road is left. From Bath it is 36 miles, from Bristol 48 1/2. The nearest station is Amesbury, 2 miles, which is about 2 1/2 hours and 80 miles from London. ...

Stonehenge to-day

A circular bank one hundred yards in diameter, originally broken only on the north east by the entrance of the Avenue surrounds the principal remains.

In the fairway of the banked Avenue stands a stone, the Hele Stone long thought to point to the sunrise on the longest day in the year. Inside the circle on the northwest and southeast are two other stones which mark, intentionally or not, the sunset at the summer and sunrise at the winter solstice. These are the only three unhewn stones; all are sarsens (or blocks of the local sandstone which once overlay the chalk), the name derived from Saracen, being attributable to their pagan associations.

Half buried at the entrance of the avenue lies the Slaughtering Stone (said to have been once upright) which remains a riddle. It is, like all the trilithons (i.e. groups composed of two uprights supporting a horizontal impost or capstone), a carefully tooled Sarsen.

Stonehenge is the only prehistoric monument having stones dressed in this manner.

Inside the bank are remains of three or four circles of Aubrey holes, in which stones are known to have once stood and at one time there were tumuli inside the bank NNW and SSE of the center. The second of these is still plainly discernible.

The outer Circle of Stonehenge, diameter 108 feet, consists of thirty uprights, 16 feet high, each having on top two knobs, tenons, which fit into corresponding hollows, mortices, in the thirty imposts they supported. These imposts are themselves dressed to fit as segments of a circle and their ends are in the same way dovetailed

into one another by toggle joints.

Nine feet within stood the circle of "foreign stones" (their heights (6 feet) being only one-third of that of the outer circle capstones. Only seven remain upright and nine fallen, out of thirty or forty. Their composition is very varied. Most are syenites, known as ophitic diabase, but fragments of five other kinds have been found, some only obtainable on the Continent. Lying almost across the axis of Stonehenge is the large foreigner with two hollows, the object of which is still unexplained.

Within this circle stood a horseshoe of five gigantic trilithons (Sarsen) the gap facing north-east. Two are intact. Being unconnected, these needed only one tenon on each upright; that on the remaining upright of the Great Trilithon (leaning till 1901) the second largest monolith in England (Budston, E. Yorks, is the largest) is very conspicuous. The precise situation of Stonehenge may have been settled by the proximity of two or three of these huge, almost immovable Sarsens.

Within this mighty horseshoe was a second, formed of more bluestone menhirs (Celtic, High Stones), either fifteen or perhaps nineteen in number, averaging about eight feet in height.

The innermost of all is the Altar Stone, fifteen feet long, the only one of micaceous sandstone and largest of the foreign stones half hidden under the wreck of the Great Trilithon. All reconstructions represent this stone in its present state just like a Christian altar but Mr. Engleheart of the Society of Antiquaries says of it, "We need not... invest it with exceptional sanctity. There is no doubt that it is simply a fallen upright." If this is so the reconstructions are at fault in a very important detail, that it is unique in its composition (micaceous sandstone) among all the stones present, and that its foundation resembles that of the famous Coronation Stone in Westminster Abbey, all give some ~~supper~~ supposition of its greater sanctity.

Tools found here have all been stone of the roughest description--flint axes, hammerstones up to six and a half pounds, and mauls, 40-64 pounds of Sarsen--except a few trench digging picks of reindeer horns. Only the merest trace of metal, perhaps of later date, has been found.

The Great Trilithon in the centre consisted of an impost 15 feet long, its flat top raised twenty-five feet above the ground on two unequal uprights. This trilithon must have presented the greatest problem of all for the builders. Quite apart from the herculean task of setting both on end, one of the monoliths was twenty-nine feet eight inches long, and the other only twenty-five feet. Prehistoric mathematics were called in, and it was decided that for safety's sake a height of twenty-one feet above ground for each must be the limit. Pits were dug, one four and the other eight feet deep, three of the sides being vertical but the other sloping. Into these the great stones were slid and then pulled with ropes of hide and levered with tree trunks till they became perpendicular, when the slanting sides were securely filled up with wedged stones. To give greater stability the shorter was left a broader base than the longer.

It has been conjectured that the massive imposts were then laboriously raised by levering up each end alternately and inserting timber wedges till the top level was reached, or that after the erection of the uprights soil was banked up around them to the top and the imposts brought up the inclined plane so formed and placed in position.

Stonehenge In History

The earliest known writing possibly referring to Stonehenge is the 40 volume History of the World, by Diodorus Siculus (c.44 B.C.) He says: Hecataeus and some others tell us that opposite the land of the Celts there exists in the Ocean an island not smaller than Sicily... inhabited by the Hyperboreans, so called because they live beyond the point from which the North wind blows...the inhabitants honour Apollo

more than any other diety. A sacred enclosure (Avebury?) is dedicated to him on the island as well as a magnificent circular temple adorned with many rich offerings."

Who this Hecataeus was is not certain; he may have been the friend of Alexander the Great, as Sir Norman Lockyer thought, or the better known Hecataeus of Miletus, a famous globe trobber of the late sixth century b.c.

"Nennius," a credulous Welsh historian of the ninth century, mentions Stonehenge, but the first Englishman who has ayttying to say on the subject is Henry of Huntingdon (c. 1084-1155) who calls it Stanenges" He is followed by a pack of garrulous twelfth-century chroniclers, chief among them being Geoffrey of Momouth and Giraldus Cambrensis, who died more than seven hundred years ago.

How far decay has gone in these early times cannot be ascertained but certainly if the barbarous "Middle Ages had wrought asmuch havoc ss their more enlightened successors from the Reformation down to this present hour, we should have been spared the trouble of having any Stonehenge to speculate over.

The mighty central trilithon fell in ~~xxx~~ 1620, apparently owing to investigations conducted in the cause of science by t e Duke of Buckingham, while James I was staying at "ilton. In its fall it broke the so-called altar stone.

The men of science in 1797 emulated in their destructive operations by some ignorant gipsies, who having at least the excuse that they needed shelter, dug a hole under another upright which collapsed as a result.

In the footsteps of these pioneers followed a motley multitude of vandals, farmers who broke up the stones for road making, drivers who brought their conveyances across the ~~xxx~~ vallum, thus in time nearly obliterating it, and tourists in search of souvenirs, ably seconded by the host of a leading hotel of the neighborhood, who provided a large

geological hammer for anyone visiting Stonehenge.

Nor can we ourselves afford to smile or condemn for in this present century much that was invaluable of the surrounding earthworks and especially of the "Avenue" and the Cursus has been altogether destroyed.

On the last day of the nineteenth century another stone collapsed. Its fall ~~stems~~ seems to have focussed attention upon the neglect from which this prehistoric monument was suffering, and in the next year (1901) great activity ensued in measures to preserve this national possession. The huge leaning stone was placed upright, and a careful investigation gave us some of our real knowledge of Stonehenge.

In 1904 Sir Edmund Antrobus surrounded the place with barbed wire and charged 1/ for admission. The rights and wrongs of the question have been most exhaustively discussed, the judge who tried the matter deciding for the owner. It may at least be said that the deed was done at the suggestions of the "Wiltshire Archaeological Society, and that some strong measures were absolutely necessary to preserve the relic.

... Stonehenge in Theory and Legend

.... The Views of Nennius (c. 810 A.D.) are a mixture of both legends for he states that the stones were erected in memory of four hundred and sixty British nobles here massacred by Saxon Hengist in the fifth century.

They were put up, he states, by Aurelius Ambrosius (481 a.m.) last British king and possibly a son of Arthur (500-532 A.D.) who gave his name to Amesbury (Ambrosebury) This massacre, suggestively called "The Treachery of Long Knives," probably did take place here, though the temple was then much older than any English cathedral is at present.

Polydore Vergil (1525) ~~himself~~ ~~thought~~ ~~Stonehenge~~ ~~a~~ ~~memorial~~ ~~to~~ ~~Ambrosius~~ ~~himself~~; some writers attributed it to the magician Merlin, while others thought it Broadicea's burial-place.

The Middle Ages produced the famous legend regarding the stone known as Friar's Heel, properly Hele Stone (Anglo-Saxon helan, to hide,

because it hides the sunrise on the Longest Day (?). According to this story the Devil after dropping the 400 ton Agglestone by Poole Harbour on his way to destroy Salisbury Cathedral with it, apparently gave up that idea. , but Puck-like, at once found some fresh mischief. His new intention was to transport some huge stones from Ireland, to the great stoneless waste of Salisbury Plain, and having brought over the old woman in whose garden they were, he flew off with them to England. . Slung over his back by a rope, they soon began to cut into his shoulder, and in trying to shift their position he dropped one into the Avon at Bulford, above Amesbury, where it is still to be seen. He turned and alighted at Stonehenge , where he arranged his mysterious stone in a mysterious way so as to puzzle posterity and divert their attention from holier things. When more than half had been placed upright he was interrupted by a passing Friar, who, suddenly recognizing the enemy of souls, took to his heels. To silence this unwelcome witness of his work , the Devil flung after him a great stone which struck him on the heel. Far from hurting the holy man, however, the stone itself was injured and the mark of his heel-print can even yet be seen on the Friar's Heel. As usual Dawn, the Devil's invariable frustrator came and spoilt things, causing him to leave the work only half finished, thus accounting for so many of the stones being left prostrate. ...

... "The imaginative Stuckley (c.1723) originated the notorious Druid theory, which was responsible for much squandering of precious sentimentally in the nineteenth century.... We admit nowadays that our knowledge of the Druids is hazy , and know also that Stonehenge was in their day nearly half as old as it is now, though quite probably the spot was found useful by them in their religious ceremonies.

pre ent day theories

The famous astronomical theory was launched by the late Sir Norman Lockyer after complicated scientific investigations during the year

1901. Sir Norman viewed Stonehenge from the standpoint of one who believed that many ancient buildings around the Mediterranean were orientated to face the point of sunrise at some particular season of the year. To the superficial eye the arrangement of Stonehenge, the obvious approach and so-called avenue, all indicate that the structure is set to face the north-east, or, more exactly, that point on the horizon at which the sun rises on the longest day of the year. From this inkling of Stonehenge with what a e generally presumed to be sun temple of the east and its structure in relation to the sun many people seemed immediately to assume that Stonehenge was erected as a temple for sun worship. But Sir Norman Lockyer did not carry his theory so far as this, and indeed there seems no excuse for so popular an assumption, for no one of authority, so far as we know, has expressed such a view; there is indeed, no evidence that Stonehenge or any other stone circle in Britain was even built as a place of public worship.

Sir Norman Lockyer wrote: "It was absolutely essential for early man to know something about the proper time for performing agricultural operations;" and his theory is based on his belief that Stonehenge was a solstitial temple.