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Archaeological Journal

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/raij20>

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Published online: 16 Jul 2014.

To cite this article: A. A. Caruana Director of Education (1896) Further Great Stones, Gozo, Explored in 1893, *Archaeological Journal*, 53:1, 140-143, DOI: [10.1080/00665983.1896.10852705](https://doi.org/10.1080/00665983.1896.10852705)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00665983.1896.10852705>

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FURTHER GREAT STONES, GOZO, EXPLORED IN 1893.

By A. A. CARUANA, Director of Education.

GREAT STONES TAL-QAGHAN.

The vestiges of another Ggantia similar to that of Xaghra have been discovered close by the road leading to Qala, in the territory familiarly known as *tal-Qaghan*, within the area of a large tenement the property of Saura Hospital.

These ruins lie just between the lower extremity of the Nadur Hill and the plain of Ghain-sielem and Qala, the two villages nearest the sea, within fifteen minutes' drive of the little cove and bay of 'Mgar. Their state of preservation is even worse than that of the remains at Cordin Hill, Malta. Until very lately, a considerable use was made of these stones for building small houses in the neighbourhood and for walling in the newly-cultivated lands at Ghain-sielem.

The remains of this cyclopean monument still standing *in situ* consist of seven stones forming a portion, 52 feet in length, of a northern wall marked *a, b*, in Fig. 1. Plate I. This wall formed the eastern half of an exterior boundary which girded a vast interior area, the western portion having been entirely removed. Eight great stones forming the western half, 50 feet long, of the southern wall of the boundary marked *c, d*, are also preserved.

The northern wall *a, b*, on the rocky ridge of a valley to the north, was evidently the rear; and the southern wall *c, d* on the plan, which slopes gently towards Ghain-sielem and Qala, was evidently the front of the enclosure.

The entrance, *e*, to the area enclosed by these great stones was in the middle of the front wall, looking to the sea of 'Mgar.

The preservation of these remains *in situ* assists us in completing the configuration of the whole exterior boundary, shown on the plan by hatching; the western extremity *c, d*, of the southern wall is curved inward in the form of an

GREAT STONES AT QOZO.

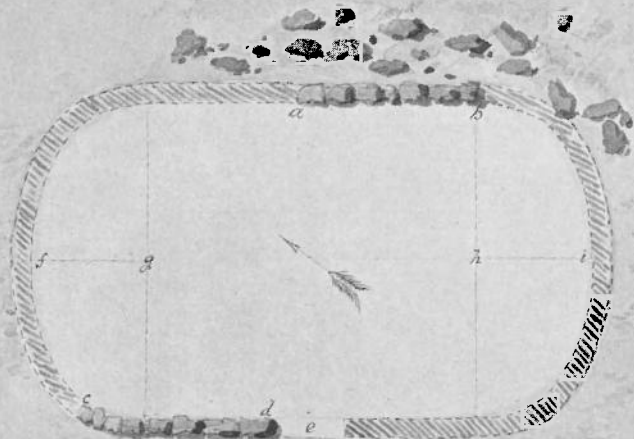


FIG: N° 1.

AT "TAL-KAQHAN."

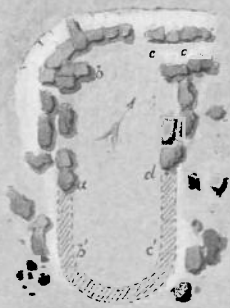


FIG: N° 2.

AT "TA-MREZBIET."

10 20 40 60 80

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apse, and its trend clearly shows its continuation so as to meet the northern wall at *a*. The depth *f*, *g* of this right apse is 33 feet. The apsidal form of the western half and the depth of its apse being once known, the typical configuration of the eastern half and the depth of its apse can be easily obtained. The east end, *b*, of the northern wall marks the beginning of the bend of the eastern apse, which may have had the depth *h*, *i*, of the opposite apse and may have been prolonged to *k*, to enclose the front of the interior area. The extreme length *f*, *i*, of this area, from east to west, including a middle passage between the two opposite and lateral apses, is about 160 feet; its width, from front to rear, is 90 feet; its area about 1,600 square yards, nearly double that of Ggantia.

No traces of the original internal arrangement of the enclosed area have been discovered. From what we know of other similar Maltese great stones, we may presume that several suites of elliptical chambers and recesses in juxtaposition like those of Cordin completed the interior arrangement. The structure, entirely of quasi-rude stones, like those of Ggantia and Cordin, reveals the same primitive age.

In connection with these remains there are three vast natural caverns, probably used as cattle-sheds and sheep-pens; and the remains of another megalithic enclosure in a field close by but about which nothing can be determined. It is probably the remains of a fane collateral with the principal one, like those observed in Ggantia at Xaghra, Gozo; and at Cordin and Hagar-Qim, in Malta.

TA-MREZBIET.

HAGRA WIEQFA AND HAGRA AT SANSUN.

In a tenement called ta-Mrezbiet, by the road Ben-ghasi, within the limits of the same village of Ghain-sielem, at a very short distance from tal Qaghan, another smaller but very interesting megalithic enclosure was discovered. It is more regular in form and nearly complete, but of different construction. The configuration is certainly oval as shown in Fig. 2, Plate I. The tall stones are all erect like those of Hagar-Qim, hence they are called by the

natives *Hagar-Wiegafs*, and form the interior facing to the enclosure. The portion preserved *a, b, c, d*, is the western half of the original structure. The eastern portion *a, b¹, c¹, d*, shown in hatching on the plan, has been entirely removed, but the configuration and dimensions of the whole enclosure are very easily recovered by means of the western half still remaining *in situ*. The length of its internal area, from the western apse to the one opposite, is 70 feet; its width is 24 feet. At the northern extremity of the western apse there is, *e*, what was apparently a passage to another chamber or recess, of which no relics have been found.

Plate II, Fig. 1, represents a rude monolith 12 feet high and 7 feet broad tapering to 3 feet at the top, called *Hagra-wiegfa* by the natives. This monolith stands erect *in situ* in the field ta-Grugna, within the limits of Qala, the property of Mrs. W. Strickland.

Fig. 2 is a drawing of il Hagra ta-Sansun, in the rural tenement ta Ghayn-Xeiba of the district ta Gnien-Mrik, to the north-west of the Ggantia in the Xghara village. It is another single monolith, at present 20 feet long, 14 feet broad, and 7 feet thick, but originally much longer and thicker. It was discovered in August 1893. It was propped at its lower extremity by huge stones when standing erect, but at present is lying down in the above-named field resembling the Kerland demi-dolmen.

These apparent menhirs are not the only great and tall stones hitherto found singly in our islands. They are found scattered in the vast plain and valley of Xgharet Medewiet near the Melkart remains at St. George's Bay. They had led Quintinus Æduus, the Auditor of Grand Master L'Isle Adam in 1532, to believe that the temple of the Tyrian Hercules in that spot had a circuit of three miles.

A great number of these single erect monoliths and ringing stones are also met with in the waste il-Guedi between Mnaidra and Hagar-Qim, and in the inland district surrounding them; on the south coast of Malta in the lands near Ghar Hassan; and in the valley of San Dimitri, Gozo. They resemble so-called druidical stones in appearance, but with such stones our megalithic monuments have no connection whatsoever.

SINGLE ERECT MONOLITHS
GOZO.

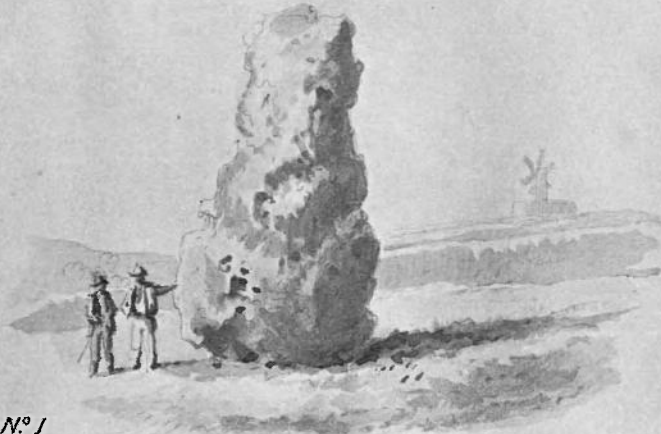


FIG. N° 1

HAGRA WIEKFA.



FIG. N° 2.

HAGRA TA SANSUN.

I surmise that if the lands in the vicinity of these single monoliths were explored, the vestiges of the original enclosures to which they pertain would be met with under the soil. They, in fact, present indications of mason work connected with other buildings which have been destroyed.