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The following paper was read by the author :—

On THREE STONE CIRCLES in CUMBERLAND, with some further observations on the RELATION of STONE CIRCLES to ADJACENT HILLS and OUTLYING STONES. By A. L. LEWIS, F.C.A., M.A.I.

[WITH PLATE XX.]

ABOUT four years ago I had the honour of reading a paper before this Institute on the "Relation of Stone Circles to Outlying Stones or Neighbouring Hills," which was printed in the *Journal* for November, 1882. In that paper I showed, from an examination of eighteen stone circles in England and Wales, and the bearing from them either of single stones or of other circles, or of prominent hills, that there was in that particular a very marked preponderance of relation or reference to the north-east (the quarter in which the sun rises in this country at midsummer); the quarters which took the second and third places, though at a considerable distance, being the south-east and south-west; so that we may take the line south-west to north-east as being specially characteristic of circles, in opposition to the line north-west to south-east, which is most usual in stone chambers and similar purely sepulchral monuments.

Since that paper was published I have visited three well-known circles in Cumberland, and as what I have observed in connection with them, although not precisely what I expected, is even more remarkable than I had anticipated, I propose in the first place to describe those circles and their surroundings to you as briefly as I can, then to group the results obtained from them with those stated in my former paper, and, in conclusion, to make some general observations on the subject.

The largest circle in Cumberland is "Long Meg and her Daughters," about seven miles north-east from Penrith. It consists of about seventy stones of various sizes, of which only twenty-seven are now erect, forming a rather irregular oval, 305 feet from north to south, and 360 feet from east to west, having a clearly marked special entrance to the south-west, indicated by two stones placed outside the others, one on each side of the entrance; this entrance leads directly to the largest stone of the group, "Long Meg" itself, which is 13 feet high, and stands as nearly as possible due south-west from the centre of the ring, about 250 feet from that point, and 80 from the circumference. Although the entrance and outlying stone, which are the most remarkable features of this circle, stand to the south-west, instead of the north-east, they are in the same general line, south-west to north-east, of which I have previously spoken, and there is, I

think, great reason to believe that a stone or stones formerly stood not exactly north-east from the centre of the circle, but about 60 degrees, or two-thirds of the way, north from east. About 1,100 feet from the centre of the circle in this direction I noticed a peculiar projecting angle in a fence which appears to have been run out to that point as though some landmark had formerly stood there, and, at this angle, at the foot of the hedge, was a loose stone, about 3 feet by 2 by 1, while another smaller but considerable fragment was built into a fence close by.

After I had written the sentences I have just read, I was placed in communication with Mr. Jared Turnbull, schoolmaster, of Maughanby, who has kindly made inquiries amongst the oldest inhabitants, and has found two old men who remember the small stone at the angle I have just mentioned from their boyhood, so that it is not a recent deposit. One of these men also remembers a small standing stone close by. Mr. Turnbull has since found other stones close by this spot, some broken and some buried, but whether *in situ* or not is uncertain. These may have formed part of a "circle of twenty stones 50 feet diameter, and at some distance above it a single stone regarding it as Long Meg does her circle," of which Stukeley speaks, but in a manner which would lead to the belief that it was further away from Long Meg; whether, however, it was a circle (and Mr. Turnbull thinks that the one mentioned by Stukeley must have been close by) or whether it were only one or more stones that stood there, the north-easterly position in reference to Long Meg would be the same, and I therefore register Long Meg as showing certain references to the south-west and north-east. I have taken you at some length through the various steps by which I have been able first to suspect, and then to establish, the former existence of these stones, because I think there can be no better proof of the persistence of the north-easterly reference in the circles than that a belief in it should have enabled me to restore the memory of these stones, all knowledge of which would otherwise perhaps have been lost.¹

There may, however, possibly have been another north-easterly reference at Long Meg; 27 degrees north of east, and 638 yards from the centre of that circle (according to Mr. Dymond's measurement), are eleven stones of good size, close to each other, and forming in their present position a sort of horse-shoe, surrounding

¹ Camden says of Long Meg (1557): "Inside the circle are two heaps of stones under which they say the bodies of the slain were buried." These heaps had nearly disappeared in Stukeley's time (1750), and no traces of them are to be found now. It is not unlikely that interments may have been made inside the ring; but I do not for a moment believe that sepulture was its principal object.

a hole which formerly contained a cist. Up to about twenty years ago these stones were almost covered with earth and cobble stones, which were then removed to be put on the surrounding field, the cist being uncovered and destroyed. The Rev. J. Simpson, in describing its discovery to the Society of Antiquaries, in January, 1866, stated that an urn of very coarse material and not ornamented, which fell to pieces, was found in the cist, and was full of burnt bones and charcoal, that the cist also was full of black earth different from that outside, but that nothing else was found. An observation which bears more particularly on the point I have in view I give in his own words: "As most of the large stones forming the circle were covered with earth, and all of them partly so, it is not too much to infer that the circle of stones may first have existed, that the cist was formed and the urn containing burnt bones and charcoal deposited therein, and the cairn over them formed at a later period than when the stones were first placed in the circle." If this were so we should have this little circle about 18 feet in diameter (some of the stones of which, however, would have been 6 feet high), standing 27 degrees north of east from Long Meg, and possibly forming with it and the other circle mentioned by Stukeley, the remains and approximate site of which I have already spoken of, a system of circles somewhat resembling those at Stanton Drew, in Somersetshire, in character, though differing from them considerably in details of arrangement. A circumstance which makes it more probable that this little circle was, as Mr. Simpson suggests, originally uncovered, is that on the stone nearest the north-east are the faint remains of a concentric marking and a spiral marking which would have been less likely to have been cut on a stone which was intended to be buried than on one which was intended to be exposed. There are also concentric markings on "Long Meg" herself. Another point is that, if this circle were originally uncovered and were at a later period thrown down and covered up to form a tomb, its original construction must have been very early, since the interment itself was not of a very late type.¹

The next circle which I have to draw your attention to is a mile and a half east from Keswick. It is known as the "Druids' Temple," and consists at the present time of forty-eight stones; it is about 105 feet in diameter from north to south, by 95 feet from east to west, and it occupies the grandest position in which I have ever seen a circle placed. Standing in the

¹ Mr. Simpson also says: "In an adjoining field nearer to Long Meg there appears to have been another stone circle, but I could not learn whether there had been a cairn, and if so when and by whom it was removed." This was probably Stukeley's circle already mentioned.

centre, and looking northward through what seems to have been the entrance, the visitor sees a gap or valley flanked by Skiddaw on the north-west and by Blencathra on the north-east; these gigantic sentinels being only from three to four miles away, and rising about 2,000 feet above the level of the circle, not only without any intervening hills to dwarf their height, but with an intervening valley to increase it, are by far the most striking objects in the surrounding landscape; their summits are not exactly north-east and north-west from the centre of the circle, but about ten degrees north of those points. Had the circle been placed further north so as to bring those summits to true north-east and north-west it would have stood upon much lower ground, and the view from it in other directions would have been spoiled; still it stands so symmetrically in relation to those two hills that it can hardly be doubted that its builders selected the site with special reference to them. There is, moreover, a stone (7 or 8 feet long by 4 wide) lying prostrate in a lane perhaps 100 feet north-west from the circle: this stone has not, so far as I know, been noticed by any one else, but it no doubt formerly stood erect either at true north-west or in line with the summit of Skiddaw a little north of true north-west. There was most likely a similar stone to the north-east, but I could find no traces of it, so suppose that if it ever existed it has been buried or broken up. The summit to the north-east, Blencathra, it must be remarked, presents a triple peak as seen from the circle; while that to the north-west, Skiddaw, presents only a single peak. The hills in other directions, though inexpressibly beautiful, exhibit no such striking features as those already noticed; they are either lower, or further off and masked by intervening but smaller masses, and often hidden by clouds and mist. The highest stone in the circle ($7\frac{1}{2}$ feet high) stands about as much north from south-east from the centre as Blencathra is north from north-east, and, looking over it, the eye rests upon a summit. There is also a notable summit about true west, one about ten degrees north of east, and another about seven miles due south; but the others, which are many, do not stand at any leading point of the compass. I register this circle, therefore, as exhibiting a special reference to the north-east, north, north-west, and south-east certain, and east, south, and west doubtful. (Plate XX, fig. 1.)

There is a detail of construction in this circle which I have never heard of elsewhere. In that part of it which is between east and south-east from the centre is an oblong enclosure 22 feet by 11, the east end of which is formed by the circle itself, the other stones of which it is composed being only 3 feet high.

I have no evidence as to its purpose, but it suggests an inner court or sanctuary.

At Swinside (or, as it used to be called, Swineshead), about six miles north from Millom, in Cumberland, and four west from Broughton in Furness, is a circle, the last I have to describe, which Gough (Camden's "Britannia," p. 432) says the country people call the "Sunken Kirk," *i.e.*, the church sunk into the earth; a name which, I may point out, suggests a tradition of use for some dead and buried form of public worship. This circle, which is about 90 feet in diameter, has 55 stones remaining, the measurements of which vary from 1 to 8 feet; the entrance, 6 to 7 feet wide, is marked by a second stone placed on each side of it outside the circle, and faces nearly south-east. Gough speaks of some stones sunk in the earth in the centre which are not now visible. I did not find any outlying stones, but there is a very prominent hill almost due south-west from the centre of the circle, and towards the north-east there is a lower group of three summits. I therefore register this circle as having special references to the north-east, south-west, and south-east. (Plate XX, fig. 2.)

It does not appear from the accounts given of these remains by the antiquaries of former generations that they have suffered any great damage during the last hundred years or more, though many unnoted stones near "Long Meg" seem to have been moved and broken within the last thirty years.

Extremely excellent plans and descriptions of the three circles I have just described have been published in the Journal of the British Archæological Association (1878) by Mr. C. W. Dymond, C.E., F.S.A., to which I may confidently refer you for any further or more minute details as to the sizes of the stones, &c. Mr. Dymond points out that the stones of all these circles are set in a slight bank, the banks at Keswick and Swinside being composed of small stones so as to make the larger ones stand more steadily; and that, all three being furnished with specially marked entrances, it is more probable that they were used for processional ceremonies of some kind than that they were, as some would have us believe, places of interment and nothing else. Mr. Dymond, who has also surveyed several other circles in the same minutely accurate manner, says, in a letter to me: "I too have in many instances observed the reference of striking features to a north-east and south-west line, but not with sufficient emphasis or consistency to lead to forming any theory on the subject."

On referring to the annexed table, showing the totals of the previous list of eighteen circles added to the tabulated particulars of the three circles just described, we find a vast preponderance

of striking features towards the north-east in particular, and also in the line north-east to south-west, and on looking more minutely at the details of each case we find some other points worthy of note. Where the ground is comparatively flat we find single outlying stones or other circles, but in very hilly countries the single stones seem to lead the eye up to prominent hill-tops, or even to be altogether superseded by them. I have frequently thought that an objection might fairly be made to the connection of the circles with the hills on account of the distance between them, and I was therefore pleased to find, from Sir Charles Warren's book, "The Temple or the Tomb," that there was an altar on the Mount of Olives to which the High Priest and his assistants went annually in procession from the Temple at Jerusalem, and where they burnt a heifer, and that this altar was due east or slightly north of east from the sanctuary, according to the Talmud, which says, "All the walls were high except the eastern wall, that the priest who burned the heifer might stand on the top of the Mount of Olives and look straight into the door of the sanctuary when he sprinkled the blood." Taking this fact in conjunction with the vision of Ezekiel (viii, 16), in which he saw "at the door of the temple of Jehovah, between the porch and the altar, about five and twenty men, with their backs toward the temple of Jehovah and their faces toward the east" (that is toward the Mount of Olives), worshipping "the sun toward the east," it would seem probable that this annual procession to the Mount of Olives was in some measure a Judaic concession to an earlier sun worship, such as has been frequent in Christian times and countries; nor is it unlikely that that part of the vision of Ezekiel was simply a statement of a very usual occurrence, for, says Captain Conder in his "Heth and Moab"—"The menhir is the emblem of an ancient deity, the circle is a sacred enclosure without which the Arab still stands with his face to the rising sun." My special object, however, in mentioning the Mount of Olives is to show that there is nothing unreasonable in connecting a prominent hill with a sanctuary or circle at a moderate distance from it, and so high a value is attached to anything relating to the temple at Jerusalem that I presume no better instance could be wished for; indeed, I rather fear that this possible similarity may be seized upon by some ingenious people as a 999th identification of the British with the lost tribes, but I would remind any such persons that sun-worship was not so much a Jewish as a Canaanitish practice, or perhaps I should say a practice more or less common to all pagans. An American traveller, Dr. Robinson, says, for instance, of a temple at Baal Hermon, "It fronts directly upon the great chasm, looking up the mighty



FIG. 1.—THE "DRUID STONES" NEAR KESWICK.



FIG. 2.—CIRCLE AT SWINSIDE, CUMBERLAND.

gorge as if to catch the first beams of the morning sun rising over Hermon.”

There is yet another point worth noticing about these outlying hills, which is indeed that which I referred to in the first instance as being particularly remarkable, namely, that on the north-east side of the circle we frequently find a group of three summits instead of a single summit; this is the case at Penmaenmawr, at the Hoar-stone in Shropshire, and at two out of three of the Cumbrian circles I have just described; and it may also be the case elsewhere, without having been noticed even by myself, for it is not until several instances have forced themselves upon one's observation that any importance is attached to them. In other directions than the north-east I have only noticed single summits, and a symbolism of three and one may often be detected in the arrangement of the stones of our rude stone monuments. The Abbé Collet (writing about 1869) says that there is a belief in a certain part of Brittany that the sun rising over the Pic de Malabri presents on Trinity Sunday three discs which afterwards unite in one; here we have the sun and the mountains mixed up with a trinitarian belief in a manner which is doubtless the result of some such ancient superstition or symbolism as I suppose to have influenced the builders of the rude stone monuments. Triple summits, indeed, as, for instance, the Eildon Hills, have always been an object of superstitious traditions, and the life-giving rays of the sun falling into a circle over a triple summit may not unreasonably be regarded as an instance of phallic symbolism.

In the relation between stone circles and adjacent hills and outlying stones, we may therefore find suggestions not only of sun-worship, but of mountain worship and phallic worship, not all of which, however, would necessarily have been any more obvious to every worshipper in the circles than are the emblems which the initiated can trace in the architecture of our own ecclesiastical buildings to every worshipper in them.

Amongst the many curious points connected with this subject of orientation, I must, in conclusion, call your attention to the following:—The sides of all rectangular sacred buildings in Egypt were set north, east, south, and west; but in Chaldea the angles of the sacred buildings, with only one known exception, were set to those points, so that the sides faced north-east, south-east, south-west, and north-west, the north-east side being called the Eastern region (so that the north-east and the east may be regarded as very much the same for all symbolic purposes), the south-east side being called the Southern region, the south-west side the Western region, and the north-west side the Northern region. The Greeks looked on the omens that

appeared to their right as being prosperous, but the Romans looked on those that appeared to their left as being prosperous. Cicero noticed this difference, but I do not know that he or any one else has ever fully explained its cause, which I take to be this:—The Greeks in their augural ceremonies turned their faces to the north, and their right hands to the east, so that the favourable quarter would be in the north-east; but the Romans stood facing the east, so that the north-east or favourable quarter was on their left. We see, then, that both peoples considered the favourable quarter to be the north-east, which is the quarter I have shown to be most favoured by the circle-builders, the south-east aspect being reserved by them for sepulchral chambers and winter altars, even as the statue with a southern aspect at Memphis, which Herodotus speaks of, went by the name of winter, and was entirely neglected, while that which looked to the northward was adored under the name of summer. The small amount of evidence which I have as yet obtained indicates that the Roman temples were placed like those of Egypt, but I am not certain about the Greek buildings; some I know followed the Egyptian rule, but the Lycian tombs, great part of one of which was placed by Sir C. Fellows in the British Museum, followed the Babylonian system. There may even be a certain correlation of the Roman augural position with the Egyptian system of orientation, and of the Greek augural position with the Chaldean system of orientation: for, if a man stood at the north-east or fortunate angle of a square set in the Egyptian manner he might assume either the Greek or the Roman position, probably the latter; but if the square were set in the Chaldean manner, he would almost certainly assume the Greek position. The positions of the outlying stones and hills in reference to the circles seem, however, to be more in accordance with the Chaldean system of orientation than with the Egyptian,¹ nor is this the only thing in which a resemblance may be traced between the customs of Western Europe and Chaldea.² It may be that an indirect Chaldean influence was conveyed in our direction by a Greco-Phœnician channel, and that this question of orientation may hereafter be found to have some small value amongst other things in indicating different lines along which thought and culture have travelled.

¹ The annexed table shows many more references, not only to the north-east, but to the south-west, south-east, and north-west, than to the north, east, south, or west, especially when the proportion between certain and doubtful is taken into account.

² See my paper on "Apparent Coincidences of Custom and Belief among the Ancient Chaldeans and Peoples of Western Europe" in the "Journ. Anthropol. Inst." for 1876.

SECOND LIST OF CIRCLES measured in Southern Britain, showing the nature and direction of any apparent references in them or by external objects, to different points of the compass.¹

Name.	N.	N.E.	E.	S.E.	S.	S.W.	W.	N.W.
<i>Long Meg and her Daughters</i> (near Penrith, Cumberland).	...	Stone or stones, formerly standing 60° N. of E. from centre of circle.	"Long Meg" and entrance S.W. from centre of circle.		
<i>Druid's Temple</i> (Keawick, Cumberland).	Entrance at N.	Triple summit of Blencathra Mountain to N.E.	Doubtful. A hill-top.	Largest stone in circle and hill-top in line. Small enclosure in S.E. quarter of circle. Entrance at S.E.	Doubtful. A hill-top.	...	Doubtful. A hill-top.	Skiddaw Mountain and fallen stone to N.W. ²
<i>Sunken Kirk</i> (Swinside, Cumberland).	...	Three hill-tops to N.E.	Summit of Black-combe due S.W.	...	A high hill, but not standing out so clearly as the others. Doubtful.
Total of second list...	3	3 certain. 15 { 11 certain. 4 doubtful.	1 doubtful. 3 doubtful.	2 certain. 7 { 4 certain. 3 doubtful.	1 doubtful. 4 { 3 certain. 1 doubtful.	2 certain. 6 { 5 certain. 1 doubtful.	1 doubtful. 2 doubtful.	2 { 1 certain. 1 doubtful. 4 { 2 certain. 2 doubtful.
Total of first list ...	18	18 { 14 certain. 4 doubtful.	4 doubtful.	9 { 6 certain. 3 doubtful.	5 { 3 certain. 2 doubtful.	8 { 7 certain. 1 doubtful.	3 doubtful.	6 { 3 certain. 3 doubtful.

¹ First List published in "Journ. Anthropol. Inst.," November, 1882.
² Mr. Dymond has lately suggested to me that this stone may be part of a circle which Stukeley says formerly existed in the next field.

Explanation of Plate XX.

Fig. 1.—Reproduction of part of Sheet 29 (formerly 101, south-east) of the One-inch Ordnance Map of England, showing the relation of the circle near Keswick to Skiddaw and Blencathra.

Fig. 2.—Reproduction of part of Sheet 98, south-west of the One-inch Ordnance Map, showing the position of the Swinside Circle in relation to Blackcombe.

N.B.—In both maps the circles are situated at the junction of the radiating lines, which run due north and south, east and west, north-east and south-west, and north-west and south-east.

DISCUSSION.

Dr. MICHAEL W. TAYLOR, late of Penrith, expressed his estimation of the value of Mr. Lewis' observations on the prehistoric monuments of Cumberland. Probably from not having had his attention directed to the subject, the speaker had failed to observe the point brought forward by the author, of the relation of the principal stones in these circles to the prominent features of the country or to a given direction of the compass. With some of these circles, however, there were connected avenues of stones, notably at Shap, where the direction of the line of stones was from south-east to north-west. On the plateau of Moor Dimmock above Ullswater, he had explored the numerous partially obliterated sepulchral remains which cover that area, and he found cairns and circles connected together by a double line of stones, forming an avenue, extending also in the direction of south-east and north-west. Here also existed the remains of one of the great 100 feet circles, similar to those of Keswick, Eskdale Moor and Gunnerkeld. This, like the above-named circles, contained within the enclosure three or four supplemental cairns or barrows, in this case attached to the inner circumference of the boundary along the northern semicircular segment. In other cases these included cairns lay separate within the area. He referred also to the singular configuration of two cairns existing on Moor Dimmock. From the circumference of these there proceeded three spoke-like projections or pavements of stone, extending radially to a distance of 20 or 30 feet. The directions in which these causeways point are a little to the south of east, to the south, and a little to the north of west. To these he had given the name of "Star-fish cairns." A corroboration of the same formation of structure has been afforded by the discovery lately of a similar cairn at Cláva on Culloden Moor.

Mr. LEWIS said that the cairns and circles connected by a double line of stones and the very curious "Star-fish" cairns which Dr. Taylor had mentioned were no doubt sepulchral, and the direction followed by them was that which he had already pointed out as

belonging to sepulchral monuments rather than to those for worship or assembly, namely, north-west to south-east. He was not surprised that the question of the relation of outlying stones and hills had not attracted Dr. Taylor's attention. If he himself had not first made acquaintance with Stonehenge and the Roll-rich, and been led by a similar position of the "Friar's Heel" and the "Kingstone" respectively, in reference to those circles, to look in other cases for what he could find outside the circles, he would probably not have noticed the peculiarities he had pointed out regarding the circles in Cumberland and elsewhere. A Shropshire archæologist, referring to his paper on Shropshire circles, which was published by the Institute, and illustrated by a reproduction from the Ordnance map, had lately written to him saying: "Mitchell's fold, &c., I have often visited, and am surprised at the accuracy of the bearing of the Hoarstone from it; . . . the line you draw on your map over Stapeley Hill is almost exactly correct for the point of sunrise." This gentleman, like Dr. Taylor, though a constant visitor to the monuments of his own county, had not had his attention called to the question of outlying stones and hills, and for that reason only had not noticed the coincidence. The evidence of the Ordnance map on these matters was very gratifying, since they had been prepared long before he had taken the subject up, and by surveyors whose authority could not be questioned.
