

Shining Land

The Ancient Sites of West Penwith

and what they tell us about megalithic civilisation

Palden Jenkins

Summer 2026 revision, v16

For maps, pictures, appendices, links and extras:

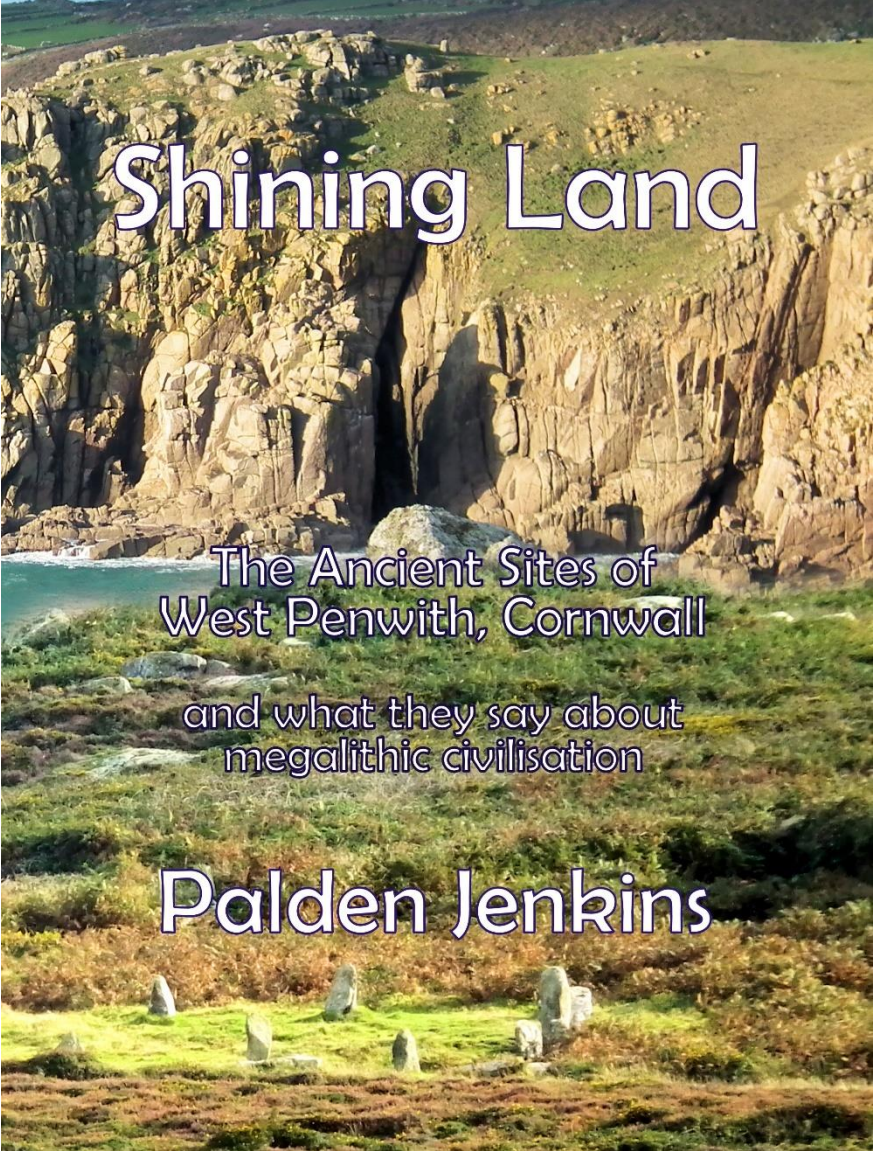
www.palden.co.uk/shiningland

*If learned critics publicly deride my work,
Then let them.*

Not for them I wrought.

*One day a soul shall live to share my thought:
for time is endless and the world is wide.*

– Bhavabhuti, Indian mathematician and philosopher, 700s CE.



Shining Land

The Ancient Sites of
West Penwith, Cornwall

and what they say about
megalithic civilisation

Palden Jenkins

Contents

Introduction

Part One | Megalithic Sites

1. About West Penwith
2. Energy Fields and Alignments
3. Why were Megaliths Built?
4. Starting Propositions

Part Two | Sacred Places, Holy Landscape

5. Ancient Sites in West Penwith
6. Central Places in a Wildscape | Neolithic Tor Enclosures
7. Peering over the Rolling Seas | Cliff Sanctuaries
8. Capping Energy Wells | The Quoits of Penwith
9. Adapting Geology | Propped, Placed and Oriented Stones
10. A Variety of Holy Bumps | Cairns, Barrows and Tumuli
11. Landscape Inoculation Technology | Standing Stones
12. Cathedrals of the Bronze Age | Stone Circles
13. Gathering Places | Hill Camps and Enclosures
14. Desirable Residences | Settlements and Homesteads
15. Subterranean Mysteries | Fogous, Springs and Holy Wells

Part Three | Neighbours

16. Cornwall's Ancient Regions
17. Scillina | The Isles of Scilly

Part Four | Megalithic Geoengineering

- 18. Alignments
- 19. Power Points
- 20. Reality Fields
- 21. Psycho-geoengineering
- 22. Rural Civilisation
- 23. The Heart of the World

Appendices

- 1. The Ancient Sites of West Penwith
- 2. About the Making of the Maps
- 3. Prehistorians – Archaeologists, Antiquarians and Geomancers

Website

www.palden.co.uk/shiningland

[A History of Penwith's Prehistory](#) – audiobook or download

[Appendices](#), supplementary material and footnote links

[Lists of sites and alignments](#) in West Penwith

[Maps](#) | Prehistoric Cornwall from Scilly to the Tamar

[Picture Tour](#) | Ancient Sites in West Penwith

Introduction

Shining Land is a result of fiftyish years of exploration of ancient sites in Orkney, Wales, Somerset, Wiltshire, Cornwall, Sweden, Greece and Palestine. It started when, as a hippy student at the London School of Economics around 1970, I hitch-hiked out of London to escape the student protests and find some clarity. I was rather burned out. I landed up on Orkney, of all places.

It was a nice summer's night and, *wow*, perchance I found an enormous stone circle – the Ring of Brodgar. Innocently I got out my sleeping bag and slept in the middle of it. During the night I dreamt of hordes of ancients dressed in clothes that definitely weren't from Marks and Spencer, dancing, chanting and stomping rhythmically around the circle in a deeply stirring way.

One of them came to me, reaching out and saying, *come and join us*. I did. A long path started there which I've found has a strange way of never ending. Half a century later I landed up writing this book of ideas, leading on from that initial defining experience. Diagnosis with an incurable blood cancer in 2019 made me think about what in life I was happy with and what I could not yet put to rest. It came up to write down all I understand about prehistory here in Cornwall, just for the record, and this book is it.

Throughout my life I've been more a geomancer than an archaeologist, though there's a bit of both in me, and at times it has been challenging to reconcile the two. Over time I've been a strange polymathic combination of historian, antiquarian, astrologer, geopolitics buff, crop circle researcher, social activist and humanitarian – to some, a full-on weirdo. My adult life started in swinging 1960s Liverpool, progressing to the revolution at LSE. I've matured a bit since then (some would disagree), coming to understand that while revolution does make a splash in history, it doesn't necessarily bring really full-spectrum change, which is deeper and includes *everything*. The shifting of historic beliefs and megatrends takes time. More than we often would prefer.

This book concerns *ways of seeing things* and what we start seeing when we look at things in another way. It is a book of ideas that might or might not stand the test of time or majority agreement, but I hope the discussion is widened and deepened hereby. It's all a question of interpretation. What do we choose to see as evidence? What does that evidence *really* show us?

For prehistorians of all kinds, understanding the ancients involves a lot of guesswork based on patchy evidence with an abundance of holes and gaps. We don't know what went on in the heads of the megalith builders but they left clues. Sometimes a little intuition, empathic logic and free-thinking help a lot with interpretation. We need to stand in the ancients' shoes to see how things looked from there. They occupied another world and saw life very differently. It's important to move our understanding toward theirs rather than to attempt to fit their world into ours. This is a big challenge.

So do enjoy the ride. It might be a bit bumpy to some readers. The idea is to shake things around and see what emerges. The primary research behind this book takes the form of the author's online maps of Cornwall, found here:

www.palden.co.uk/shiningland/maps.html

Palden Jenkins

Grumbla, Pennwydh, Kernow, 2026

Part One | Megalithic Sites

1. About West Penwith

Let me introduce you to West Penwith and explain why it's a surprisingly important area for megalithic sites. Pennwydh or Belerion is the toe at the far western end of Cornwall in Britain's South West. Dense with ancient sites, the achievements of Britain's megalithic civilisation are well demonstrated on this rather remote peninsula. In the Bronze Age it was a source of quality tin, a key ingredient in forging bronze, and it was not remote at all, but quite central in the Atlantic European maritime culture of ancient times.

Map of West Penwith's ancient sites:

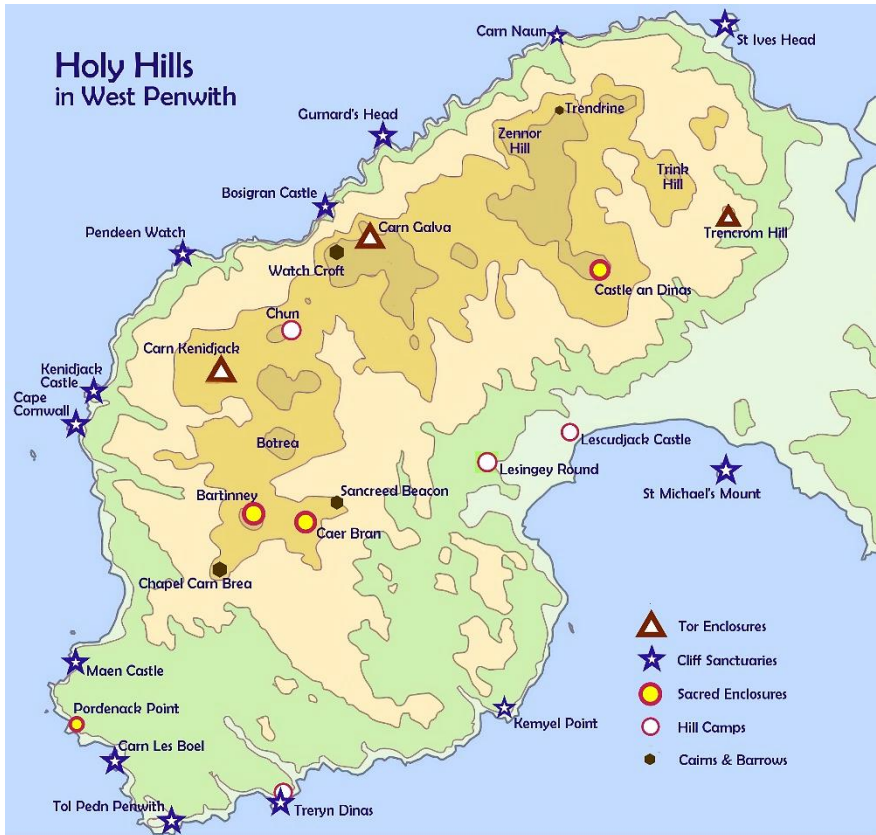
www.palden.co.uk/shiningland/map-sites-penwith.html

West Penwith is a good place to research ancient sites. It is a concise area, distinct in size, roughly 16×12 km (10×8 miles). Originally it had over 700 ancient sites, big and small. Many are now destroyed or melted into the ground, though lots remain.

These include Neolithic tor enclosures, cliff sanctuaries and quoits from around 5,700 years ago; Bronze Age stone circles, menhirs, cairns and barrows from around 4,000 years ago; then there are Iron Age fogous, hill camps and rounds, from around 2,000-3,000 years old, together with early Christian holy wells, crosses and churches, a mere millennium or more old.

There was *system* to the way Penwith's megalithic sites were located. They knitted into an integrated network covering the peninsula. This proposition is explored in this book, and it suggests a purpose greater than the erection of individual megalithic sites for

simple reasons. The book suggests why the ancients went to such trouble humping around earth and stones – big investments from which they no doubt sought a favourable return, however they saw that. They put more inspiration and perspiration into their sacred sites than into their homes, villages and material wealth.



West Penwith is almost but not quite an island, defined by cliffs on its three seaward sides and by a landward threshold formed by three hills – St Michael's Mount, Trencrom Hill and St Ives Head. It has an end-of-the-world character. Many who live in or visit Penwith are interested in prehistory, so over time there has been quite a lot of attention given to it. Here, you don't have to hike too far or burn up too much fuel to pursue this particular form of madness.

The peninsula has a rather special magical atmosphere – you can *feel* it. Its captivating landscapes, cliffscapes and seascapes are uplifting and spectacular. It has one of the highest densities of ancient sites in Europe – strange for such a small area, stuck out in the middle of nowhere. Orkney is comparable, at the other end of the isles of Britain – equally strange.

In ancient times Penwith was a hub for seafaring traffic across the megalithic world and it wasn't as peripheral as it is nowadays. Europe's megalithic culture stretched along the Atlantic seaboard from present day Portugal and Galicia (NW Spain) to Brittany, Ireland, Britain and southern Scandinavia, also affecting parts of France, Germany, the Low Countries, Sardinia and Malta.¹

In Cornwall things hotted up with the building of the first megalithic sites around 3700 BCE. With ups and downs, this period of construction and cultural development continued for two millennia until around 1200 BCE. 2,500 years is a *very long time*.



Trencrom Hill with Carn Brea in the distance
– two Neolithic tor enclosures

By comparison, our modern urban-industrial civilisation has lasted 2-3 centuries, now finding itself rather in jeopardy. The British-Irish Neolithic and Bronze Age cultures ran in parallel with advanced Old World cultures of the time in Crete, Greece, Mesopotamia, Egypt, Harappa (Pakistan) and China. Cornwall's tin, copper and gold were traded as far away as Germany, Spain and Syria.

¹ Cunliffe, Barry, *Britain Begins*, OUP, 2012. Also: Paulsson, B Schulz, Radiocarbon dates and Bayesian modelling support maritime diffusion model for megaliths in Europe, *PNAS*, 2019. www.pnas.org/content/116/9/3460

Knowledge and protocols established in the megalithic era were later on known and emulated in the Iron Age – in Cornwall the Iron Age lasted around a thousand years from roughly 800 BCE onward – and these principles, mainly mathematical and geomantic, were much later incorporated into the building of medieval churches and cathedrals up to the 1300s CE, vestiges of this knowhow surviving only amongst philosophers, esotericists, freemasons and oddbods in the centuries that followed after that.

In its heyday, West Penwith had up to ten stone circles, of which five survive. Many of its menhirs have been destroyed by farmers, landowners and miners, and half of its quoits are nowadays in a poor state. Many cairns and barrows have subsided through weather erosion, ploughing or removal by landowners. However, cliff sanctuaries, hilltop enclosures and hill camps are all still there, protected by the wilder remoteness of their locations.



Even so, Penwith has around 250 cairns and barrows, nearly 200 known or suspected menhirs and stones (roughly half of them gone) and about 250 other sites. Those that survive are well worth a visit. If you like walking, several can be covered in one hike, and if you're not so good at walking, some can be visited with but a little legwork, although wheelchair access is difficult since there are stiles to climb, rough ground to cross and muddy patches in wet weather. Amenable sites for less-abled people who can manage 200 metres are the Merry Maidens stone circle, Ballowall Barrow, Lanyon Quoit, Cape Cornwall, Pendeen Watch, Carn Euny, St Ives Head and St Michael's Mount, plus a few menhirs.

Megalithic Penwith

The megalithic era in West Penwith and across Britain spanned a hundred generations. The longest-lasting civilisation Britain has seen, it comprised two main periods of development. The first, during the Neolithic, lasted five centuries from about 3700 to 3200 BCE. The second, through much of the Bronze Age, lasted over a millennium from around 2500 to 1200 BCE. These two phases were quite different yet they had a certain continuity.

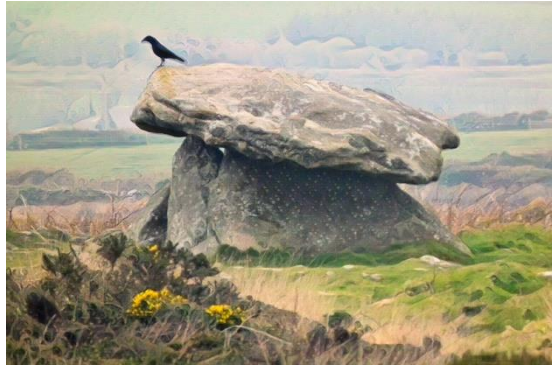
Before 3700 natural power places will have been revered by the people of the early Neolithic and the preceding Mesolithic, and some of these sites may have had wooden poles or structures, but building megaliths from 3700ish onwards was a new development, marking a shift from revering power points to building temples.

It started with the hilltop *tor enclosures*, the first constructed sites in Penwith, at St Michael's Mount, Trencrom Hill, Carn Galva and Carn Kenidjack. These four granite tors were enclosed with banks of rock, stone and earth around the summit. The first tor enclosure identified in Cornwall was Carn Brea above Redruth, east of Penwith though in sight of it. More in chapter six.

Almost equally important to Neolithic people were the *cliff sanctuaries* (cliff castles). These natural promontories around the peninsula were special, sanctified and used for a variety of purposes. They are normally dated to the Iron Age around 400 BCE to 100 CE, but I urge reconsideration and will present good reasons later, in chapter seven.

The most remarkable constructions of this time were the *quoits* (cromlechs or dolmens) in the northern uplands of Penwith, which was then the centre of activity. One, Chûn, is intact, a few of them are semi-intact and the others are damaged and much reduced – but then, it's remarkable that they have survived for 5,500 or so years.

They were built above energy-vortices to cap them, and aligned astronomically and terrestrially, demonstrating that the principles of megalithic science were in use around this time, or brought by incomers whose arrival sparked quoit construction.



Chûn Quoit

There's more about quoits in chapter eight.

The 3000s also saw the erection of *placed, propped and oriented stones*. Some of these are a bit like art installations, but there were geomantic reasons for their erection. Often these rocks were moved only short distances or just slightly repositioned.

There are quite a few placed and propped stones on Zennor Hill and Carn Galva – it helps to have a 'magical eye' to see them.



Oriented stones are mostly found around the coast of Penwith, pointing toward a distant hill or headland. They have not been noticed by archaeologists. There's more about all these in chapter nine.

Things then went quiet in Penwith for around 700 years after 3200 BCE. From around 2500 BCE a new Bronze Age culture developed innovative ideas and a new kind of ancient sites gradually appeared. Ideas and people, the 'Beaker influx', entered Cornwall from Brittany and Iberia around 2500-2200, bringing with them

more advanced knowledge and life-ways and a capability in working in copper and, later, bronze.

Even so, many Bronze Age megalithic trends in Britain had been developed by the locals a century or two before the incomers came. The incomers seemed to give it further impetus. The Bronze Age lifted off. Over the centuries a profusion of stone circles, menhirs, cairns and barrows, sacred enclosures and other sites appeared. These are all examined in chapters ten to twelve.



Whole complexes of megaliths were built and the land of Penwith was incrementally knitted into a complete sacred landscape. The inventive zenith of the megalithic era was around 2200-1800 BCE,

when Britain had a high culture and it was a *de facto* nation of sorts, a cultural exporter and the most advanced part of NW Europe. Neolithic principles were taken much further during the Bronze Age, with more science and system involved.

The megalithic era ended around 1200 BCE. A fundamental social and cultural change followed in Britain and across Europe, lasting 400ish years. By about 800 BCE the new culture of the Iron Age and the so-called Celts began to dawn.

Welcome to Belerion – *the shining land* – a name noted by the Greek-Sicilian historian Diodorus Siculus in 60 BCE, and still pertinent today. It's the earliest recorded place-name in Britain, recorded by an outsider far away who never even visited the place – though it was known of in the Mediterranean.

The Cornish name of *Penwith* means 'far end' or 'the end of the beyond', and Penwith certainly is *at the very end*. In a way it is Cornwall's heartland, where Cornish ways have lasted long – though heartlands are usually found around the centre of a land.

2. Energy Fields and Alignments

This book is about energy fields and alignments and the way the ancients worked with them. These were central to the working of megalithic technology. If you think about it, the matter of energy-fields is also possibly the key reason why you're smitten with visiting ancient sites, whether or not you know it.



I like visiting ancient sites because they affect my feelings and mood in remarkable ways. Often I come away with my view of life

subtly reset and a smile on my face, feeling different and at times coming out shining. This is a key issue. Something about these places is special, distinct in tone and atmosphere, even when compared with other special places out in nature. Do you find that?

Here's a proposition. ***When we visit ancient sites, we enter a multidimensional energy field.*** It's heretical to say this, sadly. The evidence lies in observing our feelings, registering those feelings and taking them seriously. Somehow the depth and significance of our experience is magnified at ancient sites. When you leave, it's worth noting what has changed between the time you entered and the time you left. What is different in your state, mood and optic?

The character and feeling of this experience depends on several factors, contingent on the time you visit, your motivation and respect, who you're with, how openly you and the place interact and how the place is feeling at the time, what you do and what you don't do, and there's also a mysterious 'factor X', a magical concatenation of inner and outer conditions that makes some visits extra memorable.

These variables affect the character of our experience of ancient sites, and perhaps their experience of us. This is a consciousness effect, and we don't understand how it works, but it does. Simply visit some ancient sites and give it a little attention. The principle here is that *containing, fixing and enhancing energy fields and their consciousness effects seems to be a key reason for building ancient sites*, and for designing and locating them as they are. These energy fields are neither easy to measure nor to understand rationally, and this presents a dilemma.

It isn't difficult to feel or sense subtle energy, even if only semi-consciously. If you can feel love, you're capable of feeling energy, and this capability we are born with. But it is more difficult to square this with our overlaid, educated rationality which, together with deep-seated fears, conditioning and emotional armouring, tends to edit, doubt, obstruct, corrupt and suppress our sensitivities.

Scientifically, it's difficult to develop instrumentation to register and measure the full range of frequencies involved, and this is

where things get stuck. But that is a problem with concepts and instrumentation, not with energy and ancient sites. We tend to want to quantify and classify everything, seeking to understand ancient sites and their builders on *our* terms, as if our current evidential systems and worldview were the only valid perspectives available. But prehistoric sites exist on terms of their own.

A classic example of these conceptual issues is the rationale that was used to discard the stone circle and astronomical surveying work of Prof Alexander Thom in the 1940s-70s. A pioneer, he studied design patterns and astronomical factors in stone circles. Archaeologists such as Aubrey Burl and Clive Ruggles rejected much of his work, insisting that astronomical orientations from ancient sites *must* point toward a visible man-made object such as a menhir, and not toward a natural feature on the horizon. Burl wrote, *“a tempting notch in a hillside is unacceptable because it cannot be proved to have mattered to the builders of a megalithic ring”*.²

This, despite large quantities of evidence and common knowledge that, at many ancient sites around Britain, including in Penwith, landscape features on the horizon clearly and repeatedly mark out astronomical orientations. Their objection conveniently dismissed a lot of evidence, and for reasons that weren't entirely rational – in other words, it was debunking. What sounded like a rational objection actually imposed an ideological precondition and bias. Remarkably, such work was commonly accepted and drawn on by many archaeologists, creating problems which continue today.

So, unless archaeoastronomical evidence conforms to the requirements of the modern mindset, it cannot be accepted, even if the evidence suggests otherwise. Yet orientations toward distant notches, peaks and slopes on the horizon are far more accurate than orientations to standing stones which are less accurate to use for astronomical readings. Megalith builders weren't fools, and they didn't build holy sites to please the sceptics of 4,000 years in the future. Meanwhile, some modern thinkers find the idea that the

² Burl, Aubrey, *A Guide to the Stone Circles of Britain, Ireland and Brittany*, Yale Univ, 1995 & 2005, p18.

ancients could take really accurate astronomical readings to be unconvincing if not abhorrent.

The premise that ancient sites exist on their own terms is an awkward issue, so it is mostly disregarded, and many good theories and observations are thus rejected. But it's a key issue.

Another is the concept of earth energies. Here lies a key problem: ***ancient sites cannot be understood without recognising and giving attention to their subtle-energy fields.***

Shamanic Culture

The ancients' perception of life and the world around them was *shamanic* or magical. This is crucial to our understanding of the megalithic era. Each tribe and locality had its culture and shamanic ways, evolved from localised experience, ancestral inheritance, collective imagination and the daily facts of life. Shamanic culture is by nature non-institutional, there's no scripture and it isn't a religion. It is an indigenous, naturalesque, home-grown and magical approach to life and spirit, born and bred where it stands, rooted in inner experience and in what are now called meditation, channelling, altered states, spiritual healing and earth healing.

As is the case in music and the arts, anyone could practice it to an extent, yet some were naturals, brilliant, gifted and ahead of others. People of that time were naturally attuned to instinct and intuition, which had not been trained out of them or psychologically suppressed as they are for us in the modern world.

A shaman is a knowledge-holder, healer, counsellor, magician, teacher and pastoral carer who can use trance, meditation, psychic capabilities and mind-medicines to enter deeper realms, talk with the wind and engage face-to-face with deeper forces or entities that affect the community and its world. A person became a shaman through innate character and aptitude, through selection or self-selection, or through inheritance. Individuals were frequently identified early in life and then trained up at length. There would be lineages through which the ways, insights and practices were

transmitted from mentor to neophyte, and some of that training would have been in isolation since spiritual skills had to be developed within through experiential, not doctrinal learning.

People sought to get to grips with the subtleties, parameters, periodicities and laws of heaven and earth, and with the invisible realms, forces and beings within and around them. We don't know how they framed their seeing of this, yet there are signs in the megalithic remains that they had a certain clarity and consistency of worldview over time. The wider tribe needed contact with the otherworlds through their natural psychics, intuitives, seers, shamans and medicine-people, and some were probably the autistics of the community. Even so, in the Neolithic this wasn't a formalised priesthood. The ancestors, guardians and deities involved in the life of the tribe were part of the tribe, and those best at keeping contact with them served as the shamans.

By the Bronze Age, things had moved on from a 'tribal shaman' stage to a more organised priesthood of what in the Iron Age became known as druids. Their knowledge spanned engineering, astronomy, astrology, surveying, logistics, geometry, metrology (measurement systems), psychology, medicine, esoterics, jurisprudence and leadership, and they took it to an advanced level, with quite a lot of skill-specialisation. Some were geomancers, knowledgeable in the location and design of sacred sites and the subtle-energy technologies that made them work. They sought to engineer the intelligence and consciousness within nature, creating sacred spaces in which shamanic inner work could be cranked up. That's a key theme of this book – *the engineering of consciousness*.

Geomancers of old had far more advanced sensitivities, less of a left-right brain divide and more head-heart integration than we have. With an apprenticeship lasting years, probably involving considerable solitude, this sensitivity would become fine-tuned. Ancient Britons demonstrably knew how to align sites *exactly*, even over long distances – this much we know from the evidence. But *how* they did this we do not know – to our rational satisfaction, at least. The astronomical, mathematical and energy properties of

many sites point to a culture with a remarkably advanced megalithic science. Their observational sensitivities were their main scientific instruments – apart from the odd dowsing rod, rope and measuring stick.

This was a society dealing with practical, economic, ecological, psycho-social and esoteric issues rolled into one. This kind of idea is coming into a new focus today with current concerns about sustainability and resilience – issues that go deeper than we'd like to believe, to a subtle-energy level. Our world is in trouble, not only environmentally, economically, technologically, politically and socially, but also *psycho-spiritually*. Studying ancient sites is therefore not just a matter of fascination with the past: it has something to do with the present and the future.

Alignments – how it all started

So, what *is* all this about alignments? Criticised, disregarded and discredited, this phenomenon, dubbed 'leylines' and popularised in the late 1960s, is not just a fancy or spurious idea. Alignments came to many people's attention through John Michell's seminal 1969 book *View over Atlantis*.³ It was a visionary, pioneering, broad-brush book, elements of which even he later questioned, publishing a revised edition in the 1980s, *A New View Over Atlantis*.⁴ Yet his work presented bundles of discoveries and an entrancing picture of megalithic times, sparking an earth mysteries movement and a stream of thought that has unfolded ever since.

To illustrate his point about leylines, Michell chose West Penwith for systematic study, which he wrote about in his 1974 book *The Old Stones of Land's End*.⁵ In the 1970s-80s ley-hunting flourished as a layperson's line of research, while being firmly rejected and

³ Michell, John, *The View over Atlantis*. <http://docshare01.docshare.tips/files/12580/125800820.pdf> for a PDF version.

⁴ <https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-d&q=new+view+over+atlantis> for the printed book and <https://archive.org/details/viewoveratlantis0000john/page/n9/mode/2up> for a PDF.

⁵ Video lecture: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GTYZ7Jds5zU>. The book is out of print: <https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-d&q=the+old+stones+of+lands+end>. For a comprehensive list of alignments in West Penwith: www.palden.co.uk/shiningland/lists.html

discredited by the archaeological establishment. Yet the idea lives on because it remains rich in incontrovertible evidence.⁶

The first known mention of alignments was by archaeologist and archivist William Henry Black in 1870. Astronomer and scientist Sir Norman Lockyer, active between 1860 and 1910 and founder of the scientific journal *Nature*, identified astronomical alignments in his seminal archaeoastronomical work, including at Boscawen-ûn.⁷

Alignments then came to wider attention around 1921 with antiquarian Alfred Watkins' books *Early British Trackways*⁸ and *The Old Straight Track*.⁹ Watkins provided a lot of field evidence of leys, taking out parties of people to explore and examine them. He opened a can of worms and started something big. He's the man who started it, and the failure of archaeologists to treat this subject seriously is in the end to their own loss.

Pioneers cannot be right in every detail, and one mistake he made was to associate alignments with trackways – something that is partially true in his home county of Herefordshire, but it is neither universal nor a defining factor. This association has distorted many people's thinking about alignments ever since, making them believe they are trackways. In most cases, this is not so.

Alignments – what they are (and aren't)

Detailed map of alignments in Penwith:

www.palden.co.uk/shiningland/map-alignments-penwith.html

Alignments are not pathways or trackways – certainly not in Cornwall. Across Britain, an alignment *can* be a trackway or a road in some areas, but in most cases it is not. In Penwith, ancient

⁶ An interesting statistical analysis from 1976 by Gadsby and Squire:

www.cantab.net/users/michael.behrend/repubs/gadsby_hs/pages/main.html

⁷ Lockyer, Sir Norman, *Stonehenge and Other British Stone Monuments Astronomically Considered*, 1909. www.sacred-texts.com/neu/eng/sac/index.htm

⁸ Watkins, Alfred, *Early British Trackways, Moats, Mounds, Camps and Sites*, Hereford, The Watkins Meter Co., 1922, full digital text www.sacred-texts.com/neu/eng/cbt/index.htm

⁹ Watkins, Alfred, *The Old Straight Track: Its Mounds, Beacons, Moats, Sites and Mark Stones*, 1925, Methuen & Co. Ltd. London, 1933 (2nd edition), full digital text www.ancient-wisdom.com/alfredwatkinslecture.pdf

trackways are neither straight nor do they follow alignments – they follow topography and natural landscape features, reflecting where people needed to walk. In only some cases are sites even visible from other sites with which they are aligned, so most sites cannot be interpreted as trackway markers.

Many menhirs in the south of Penwith are intervisible, but generally they did not mark tracks. The ancient trackways of Penwith were mostly not marked out with menhirs or cairns, though they did evolve to go past some of them since they were hubs and landmarks, and while some did go to and from major centres such as stone circles, they didn't follow alignments.

Ancient sites are located where they are for a range of reasons, and one key determining factor is their alignment with other sites.

An alignment is simply a series of three or more sites exactly aligned with each other, like a number of objects lined up across a table. They are not connected by a line, but they line up. What's important here is not *lines*, but the fact that sites are *aligned*.

Alignments are not the same as energy lines, energy leys or straight 'overgrounds' that dowsers pick up, though these sometimes do coincide. More research needs to be done to find out the extent to which this overlapping happens, though it is likely only in a minority of cases. Alignments and energy-lines are separate yet interlocking systems, both contributing to the geomantic wholeness of the Penwith landscape, and both playing a part in determining the location and character of ancient sites. As an analogy, a building has separate electricity and gas pipes powering it.

All of the alignments marked on the maps presented in this research, with some exceptions detailed later, are accurate to within just three metres or ten feet, even though alignments sometimes stretch a long way. They are easy to check and solidly evidential. Their crucial importance in the design and location of ancient sites is grossly overlooked, and their capacity to shed light on the purpose and meaning of megalithic sites is enormous.

The ancients didn't align every site to every other site, instead aligning them selectively, for specific reasons, and it was important that such alignments were *exact*. Alignments are *not* actual lines across the landscape: the lines we draw are mapping devices showing where ancient sites are aligned with one another. We mark alignments as lines to indicate their presence and to test their accuracy. Aligned sites are like objects spaced in a precise row with nothing connecting them.

Alignments often stretch between sites that have some sort of connection with each other, when judged by type of site, age of construction or other commonalities. With some alignments, certain kinds of structures such as menhirs or barrows predominate. In some cases it is also clear that newer sites, built in the late Bronze or the Iron Age or even the Christian era, were deliberately located on pre-existing alignments.

I am surprised and bewildered at the number of alignments that have appeared in this research. I started by mapping alignments found by preceding researchers and, in the process, found many more. These are not manufactured. Quite a few inaccurate or weak alignments have been rejected and, if further rigorous checking were done, only a few would legitimately be removed. This leaves lots of remaining, evidentially-sound alignments.

The evidence suggests that the foundation of the alignments network was laid down in the mid-Neolithic around 3700 BCE and, from the very beginning, the ancients seem to have been thinking big, at an early stage establishing backbone alignments over quite long distances. The system evolved over time, but the principles were applied quite consistently from the beginning. The first alignments were based on landscape features such as hills, carns and headlands.

How they worked out these alignments over longer distances is anybody's guess. Backbone alignments (yellow on the maps), many miles in length, signify a burst of genius, suggesting that there was a caucus of brainy people working on this idea. Neolithic backbone alignments formed a substructure onto which the more

complex Bronze Age system was later grafted. Most Bronze Age sites were placed on an ever more complex array of local alignments (marked on the maps in red), extrapolated from the backbone alignments on what seems to have been an *ad hoc* basis, yet following consistent key principles.

In the Bronze Age, geomancers applied a more sophisticated kind of science than in the Neolithic, building sites such as menhirs or cairns not solely because of the perceived significance the place itself – its *spirit of place* – but also because these sites networked well with others. Sites were built for more calculated reasons, with mathematical, geometric, astronomical or subtle-energy principles behind them. Quite a lot of work on this subject has been done by researchers over the decades and there is far more to find out.

How Alignments Work

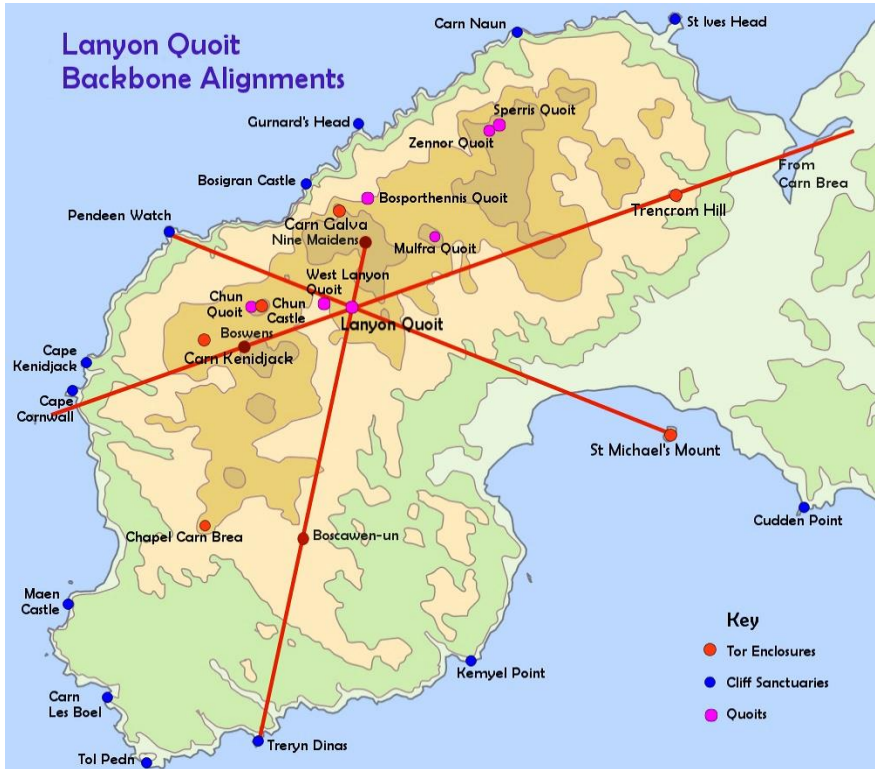
The location of Chûn Quoit on the slope below Chûn Castle makes little logical sense when you first see it, yet it was placed on top of the upwelling vortex of a blind spring (water dome) – and this is one key reason for its location. It was also positioned so that the winter solstice sun set neatly behind a nick in the outline of Carn Kenidjack a mile away, as seen from the quoit. Brilliant.

Additionally, it was aligned with quite a few natural power points such as St Ives Head, Bosigran Castle and Carn Galva, and also with Zennor Quoit and Lanyon Quoit, built around the same time as Chûn, and Bosiliack Barrow and Carfury menhir, built much later. This is a good example of the way ancient sites are located in a fascinating multiplicity of ways.

These sites were aligned for good reasons. We must assume this.

To demonstrate how alignments determine the location of ancient sites, let's look at three alignments passing through Lanyon Quoit, shown on the map above. These three alignments each help define the positions of Lanyon Quoit, Boscawen-ûn and the Nine Maidens – three key sites.

Staking down these alignments are two cliff sanctuaries, Treryn Dinas and Pendeen Watch, plus three tor enclosures, St Michael's Mount, Trencrom Hill and Carn Brea (off the upper right of the map). Without being aligned with these Neolithic 'base sites', Lanyon Quoit could not have been located where it was. Lanyon Quoit was built around 3700 BCE, at the very beginning of the megalithic era.



These alignments demonstrate that cliff sanctuaries were Neolithic in first use, from at least 3700 BCE. The three backbone alignments on the map, plus others like them, involve a combination of cliff sanctuaries and tor enclosures, thus associating each with one another.

The importance in the 3000s of these two kinds of sites was this: Britain was mostly covered in pretty endless forest and, in Penwith, these were places where people could emerge from the wildwood to get some space – thus they were important at that time. These places were *different*. They became centres, places with a view.

The alignments define the position of Lanyon Quoit. Thus, first use of the cliff sanctuaries must be of similar or greater antiquity to Lanyon Quoit, since their location defines its position. While stone circles were built later, around 2500-2200 BCE, these alignments suggest that their sites might well have been known in the Neolithic, a thousand years earlier. Whether or not this is so, *the Bronze Age stone circles are positioned in relation to the Neolithic tor enclosures and cliff sanctuaries*. Clearly, it was important to the Bronzies that stone circles were associated with Neolithic sites of much greater antiquity and primacy.

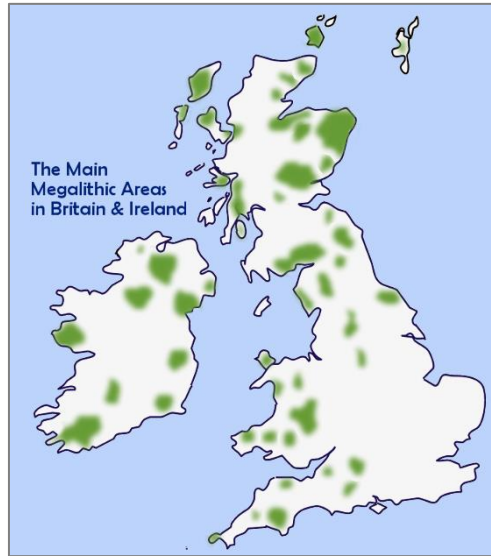
Backbone alignments are demonstrated to be Neolithic in origin, and Lanyon Quoit's location verifies this. The backbone alignments are anchored in the cliff sanctuaries – so it follows they too are Neolithic. The implications of this are rather big.

The alignments shown on the map demonstrate there is no way that they can be accidental, as sceptics might assert. They involve key sites in Penwith, and the chances of their being *accidentally* aligned with each other in multiple cases demands an overdose of imagination. These alignments are deliberately built, accurate, verifiable and solidly evidential.

Nationality

The discovery of an integrated system covering Penwith has implications for our understanding of ancient sites across Britain, since similar systems presumably existed in other regions. West Penwith has a concentration of sites of a kind found in about fifteen comparable areas across Britain: two neighbouring concentrations are on Bodmin Moor and Dartmoor. Most of these core areas are located in the west and north of Britain, as well as across Ireland.

Although each area would have been enhanced and upgraded by such landscape-engineering work, it was also part of a network of megalithic regions – the technical similarities between sites across Britain indicate this – and there would have been a purpose to all this. Yet as a national project and cultural trend with commonalities across the country, it had many unique local variations.



This suggests that a caucus of knowledge-holders and artisans travelled the land sharing their specialist expertise. The sophistication of the mathematics, astronomy and locational knowhow that was involved implies that megalithic knowledge could not simply have been passed around amongst ordinary laypeople. The existence of this mendicant caucus suggests a level of connectivity that rendered Britain, Ireland and Brittany into one culture-zone, welding Britain into a loose proto-nation, albeit with regional differences.

We shall next look at the reasons why the ancients built their megalithic sites. Or at least, those reasons that are identifiable in our time, with our current knowledge.

3. Why were Megaliths Built?

Ah, this is the big question. In the megalithic era people were thoroughly dependent on nature and its cycles. Their beliefs involved a sympathetic magic that sought to engage with hidden forces in nature and the invisible world. This way of seeing things will have formed the basis of a rather advanced grasp on reality.

We cannot know how they saw things, though we can deduce a tentative picture from ancient remains of what they were getting at and trying to do. They were well enough organised to carry out considerable engineering works, and knowledgeable enough to incorporate astronomy, mathematics and ancient sciences into these works. This shamanic culture was rural and relatively uncomplicated yet it was pretty sophisticated.

The megalith-builders lived fairly simply, materially speaking. Their biggest investments of effort seemed to go into megalithic sites. They lived comfortably enough – otherwise they would not have had time and capacity to build megalithic sites. Initially, in the Neolithic, Penwithians had impacted minimally on the landscape – they were far outsized by it and their ecological impacts were small-scale. But in the Bronze Age things changed and impacts escalated, though people still had a sympathetic and collaborative approach to nature, using only hand tools and muscles, not tractors, chainsaws and dynamite. Their megalithic constructions were placed in remarkable locations with amazing settings and vistas, and with artistry, love and magical intent. Stone circles and menhirs were not just *monuments*: a lot of sophisticated thought went into them and, in their way, they were *holy power stations*.

Evidential Issues

One of archaeology's difficulties is that much of the evidence used in radiocarbon dating and other research is biodegradable. So over

the centuries it has dissolved in the rainily acid soils of Cornwall. Today's instruments meanwhile don't do well with dating stones. So, there is a dating problem. This can be dealt with by using date-dowsing, which can also deliver more detailed dates, but this, of course, would not be acceptable to archaeologists.

Another difficulty is the secular nature of archaeology, weak in inherent understanding of shamanic and prehistoric perceptions, knowledge and practices. The depth and profundity of human reverence for nature has largely been missed. This reverence was a big driver for ancient peoples.

One way to overcome this evidential problem is through experimental archaeology, and the irony here is that some of the most advanced researchers in this subject area are a bunch of dirty hippies living in benders and tipis. Living outside under rain and stars in improvised, lightweight dwellings, baking flatbreads on a fire, getting a damp ass, learning how to squat without using toilet paper and having insects crawl over you in your sleep, all of these experiences reveal things about the daily-life realities of Penwithians four to six millennia ago.

Using some of the mind-medicines the ancients used would add to the picture, revealing more of the depth and perception of this culture. Such experimentation can help in understanding what this lightweight, shamanic lifestyle really involved and, as a result, quite a few archaeological questions can be sorted out with the application of a little real-life experience, commonsense and imagination. This has a lot to do with worldviews, and what is accepted as admissible evidence, and how it is interpreted, and *by whom it is judged*.

Archaeology's weakness lies in biases of interpretation that sometimes make it resemble the pseudo-science that archaeologists accuse geomancers of practising. If Neolithic and Bronze Age people were alive today, archaeologists could legitimately be accused of harbouring attitudes of cultural superiority and racism toward them. Defensive and funerary purposes are ascribed to far more of Penwith's ancient sites than is warranted – such biases

began two or three centuries ago and remain largely uncorrected. The elephant in the room is geomancy, which can throw much light on our understanding of prehistoric sites.

There is virtue in widening the evidential spectrum. Here's an example. A local archaeologist discovered a menhir (now dubbed the Seal Stone at Bosistow, SW 3653 2338), but he wasn't sure about it – plenty of stones in Penwith could be menhirs but they are not. This was an unusually-shaped stone, uncannily resembling a seal – but then, close by, seal caves lie under Carn Barra and the stone points straight toward them. *Ahem*. Here, a magical approach comes in useful.

After a little research, I found that the stone lies at the exact intersection of two alignments, both of which extended to significant sites across Penwith such as Bartinney Castle, Boscawen-ûn and Trencrom Hill. The chances of this being



The Bosistow Seal Stone

accidental and accurate to within three metres are slim, so this evidence verifies the authenticity of the stone. The Seal Stone can be recognised as a legitimate menhir sitting in its proper location.

Thus, 'inadmissible' evidence provided by geomancy can add evidential value to an archaeological discovery. Without it, this menhir would fail to have been recognised as genuine, or we would remain unsure.

Frequencies

The earth is a pulsing energy-resonator with its overriding frequency vibrating at around 7.83 Hertz (around eight cycles per

second), the Schumann Resonance,¹⁰ and this wavers marginally over time. This fluctuation has a measurable, proven effect on bioregulation and human psychology.¹¹ This is but one frequency of interest, and there are others. Modern instrumentation can measure magnetic and radiation anomalies, infrared, infrasound and ultrasonic effects, electronic charge, heat and other frequencies, but not the full spectrum and range that dowsers and sensitives seem to pick up – rather inadequately called *earth energy*.¹² Earth energy also causes observable secondary effects, but those effects are not in themselves earth energy.

The grinding of the earth's inner core with its outer shell generates planetary-scale energy fields that organise themselves on the surface into distributive arteries, capillaries and nodes, more concentrated in some locations than others. West Penwith sits on a granite raft pushing deeper into the earth's crust than we see in many other places, and deep underground it is the hottest place in Europe, a massive (and largely untapped) geothermal generator.

The roots of such rafts go deep – the weight of a mountain needs several times its depth of crust to support it – and in volcanic areas the roots of a granitic batholith such as Penwith go very deep. Penwith's geological taproots are deepest at tors and carns, which make these outcrops natural energy centres. They are tors and carns *because* of this too – it's all in the variable consistency of granite and how it originally formed.

The crystalline structure of Penwith's granite raft resonates at frequencies not found everywhere. Quartz, feldspar and mica, around 20% of granite's composition, act like a transistor, an information and memory processor or a transformer. Quartz emits a coherent and stable signal when a current is passed through it – hence that it is used in quartz clocks. So when energy passes

¹⁰ Schumann Resonances. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Schumann_resonances

¹¹ Schumann Resonances and their Effect on Human Bioregulation, Bioregulatory Medicine Inst, 2019. www.brmi.online/post/2019/09/20/schumann-resonances-and-their-effect-on-human-bioregulation

¹² The Dragon Project and the Talking Stones, Don Robins, *New Scientist*, 21 Oct 1982. Online republication: www.cantab.net/users/michael.behrend/repubs/ns_robins/pages/main.html

through quartz, it is resolved into clear, consistent frequencies. It's not too difficult to *feel* that this is a component of the rather special energy-field in Penwith – something about the subtle magic of the peninsula is not easily felt elsewhere, and it's not just the scenery.

Penwith is dense in earth energy. This loose term covers a range of frequencies that are unsatisfactorily described by other means. The frequencies that dowsers pick up transmit easiest through water, a relatively good energy-conductor compared with rock, and also through veins of metal and quartz and fault lines. Rock itself varies in its conductivity and resistance. These millivolt frequencies, perpetually resonating and fluctuating, concentrate in places where underground water-flow conditions are right, or the right geological and geoelectrical conditions exist. Penwith has plenty of both, and many ancient sites are associated with them.

Underground Water

It all centres around blind springs (water domes). These are upward-moving seepages or flows of *primary water* – a by-product of electrochemical reactions and grinding power generation deep within the earth. This water has neither seen the light of day nor has it been part of the rainfall cycle. These flows carry up nutrients and charged geo-electromagnetic and subtle energies.¹³ When they meet relatively impervious layers of rock, they are forced to splay out into roughly radial underground streamlets or seepages moving more horizontally – wherever the rock strata guide it. While the water is dispersed sideways, carrying energy with it, a vertical riser of subtle energy rises to the surface (there are also sinks), radiating as a vortex or whorl of subtle energy at the surface. This is a *blind spring* – it's an energy spring or vortex, not a water spring.

So, at blind springs two kinds of energy-pattern are picked up by dowsers and sensitives: the vertical vortex and the sideways-

¹³ Brooker, Charles, Magnetism and the Standing Stones, *New Scientist*, 13 Jan 1983. See also, Gawn, Billy, *Up & Down & Round & Round*, Mid-Atlantic Geomancy, 1996.
www.geomancy.org/index.php/mag-e-zine/mag-e-zine-1996/no-4-winter-solstice/up-down-round-round

splaying patterns of streamlets and seepages, registering at the surface as energy lines, spirals and other patterns. Different dowsers pick up different things, but the general gist of what they pick up is similar. Blind springs were crucial in determining the location of key ancient sites such as stone circles, which seem always to be located on top of them. The existence of a blind spring is probably the key reason why stone circles sit where they do.

Primary water is not the same as *secondary water* derived from the rainfall cycle. Secondary water is recycled while primary water is newly created, a by-product of deep geochemical processes. Rain falls to earth, soaks into the soil, forms flows and seepages, and it is released through springs, streams, underground rivers, evaporation and plant evapotranspiration, to be recycled into the atmosphere, the sea or underground aquifers. Primary water, pressurised and pushed up from below, becomes energy-charged and it rises, often to mix with secondary water underground. Going far back in geological time to the beginning of life on earth, primary water is probably the source of much of the water on our planet.¹⁴

Primary water veins form what, on the surface, appear as subtle-energy lines, radiating out across the ground from blind springs, emanating energy radiations that can be dowsed. A blind spring creates an energy vortex, rising into the air like a plasmic bubble or cupola, a concentrated energy field or gusher that can be captured and entrained. To add spice to the formula, straight energy leys (overgrounds) connect these vortices into an uncanny latticework across the landscape – and this is remarkable. In Penwith these have not been mapped – it's a big project.

Sinuuous underground lines can be regarded as negatively-charged or *yin*, while straight overgrounds can be regarded as positively-charged or *yang*, and this dual circuitry is interactive. However, as already mentioned, these energy lines are different from ancient site alignments.

¹⁴ About primary water: https://akvopedia.org/wiki/Primary_water and www.primarywaterinstitute.org

A blind spring can rise underground to a level that is nevertheless quite deep down, but those under stone circles and certain other sites seem to come higher up – and this fires up their energy fields at the surface. The level and strength of this emanation can vary over time, depending on such things as the phases of the moon, or seasonal changes and fluxes connected with the solar cycle and planetary motions and line-ups.

Appreciating this much about blind springs is crucial to understanding stone circles, which can thus be seen to act as focused, concentrated resonators, containers and amplifiers, enhancing and fixing the energy fields that are present there. As you might find when visiting a stone circle, the influence of a blind spring affects your state of mind and your spirits. This psychoactive effect is important – it might even be *the* most important issue.

Meanwhile, underground water veins can mosey on for some distance. Sometimes two will cross at different levels, while flowing through different strata – an energy vortex forms at ground level over that crossing point. These have less intensity than blind springs, but the ancients were interested in them, often locating menhirs, cairns and barrows on top. Such a vortex seems to have an alternating up-down directionality, pulsing in tune with the cycles and configurations of the moon, sun and planets. This periodicity has not been fully and systematically studied in the field (another enormous task), but we don't know for sure what the patterns and cycles are, or how much they vary from site to site. Though this has been studied patchily and observably it does happen – you can feel it, dowse it or muscle-test it, if you visit a site repeatedly over time to monitor its periodicities and variations.

Astronomical Periodicities

The up-down movement of such a vortex seems to reverse on roughly the sixth day after a new or fullmoon, just before the waxing or waning halfmoons – according to dowser Tom Graves in

his seminal 1970s book *Needles of Stone*.¹⁵ The maximum upward motion, he observed, is in the two days before fullmoon, and the maximum downward motion is in the two days before newmoon, before they peak and trough respectively during the lunar cycle.

This fluctuation is emphasised at eclipses. Lunar eclipses are super-fullmoons and solar eclipses super-newmoons, when the lining up of sun, earth and moon is more exact than at most new and full moons. By observing eclipses, the ancients could fix their measurement of solar and lunar cycles, gaining accurate readings that otherwise were not possible. They could guide and advise people about the best actions and strategies to follow, in light of these critical moments. Total eclipses occur only when the line-up is precise since, amazingly, the sun and moon are both roughly the same size in the sky, and it's quite a feat to line them up exactly.

The moon and sun also move slightly closer to and further from the earth, making them look slightly bigger or smaller at different times, and this makes eclipses vary in nature. They are special, portentous and uncannily magical moments when the doors of perception open, the atmosphere can turn poignant or weird, or intense events or defining moments can take place, and things begin, shift, climax, fall over or end. They are potent switch-points in the behaviour of energy and its effect on nature and humans.

Planetary line-ups are also important. Each planet is a thrumming energy-resonator, as is earth, with radiating energy fields spreading along the plane of the solar system, pulsating and causing complex reverberations as their energy fields interact with those of other planets. Planets out there don't influence us as if we were puppets a string; instead they hum and cross-resonate, affecting the earth's own frequency patterns, which in turn affect us. We don't live *on* earth but we're immersed *in* it and affected by it, whether or not we are aware of this. It presents a choice: we may act as aware actors in the movement of time and energy, or we can live at its effect and be taken wherever the winds of fate propel us.

¹⁵ Graves, Tom, *Needles of Stone*, Turnstone Books, 1978, Grey House in the Woods, 2008.

Over many generations our ancestors studied and worked out the periodicities of time and subtle energy and their relationship with soil fertility, weather, tides, rainfall, river flows, bird migration, psycho-social dynamics and consciousness states. This came naturally to them and they didn't have the same intellectual blockages as we have over the idea that something larger than themselves affected them and that they depended on it.

Psycho-energetic Lenses

Energy follows the path of least resistance, and fluctuations in *energy-weather* are funnelled and reverberate through power points in the landscape, since they are centres of connectivity and energy-throughput. Energy-weather affects all living systems, especially during surges, extremes, turbulence or energy-storms. In doing so, it winkles out vulnerabilities, taking the form of events, traffic flows, hospital A&E admissions, financial market fluctuations, insect swarms, virus outbreaks or anything. The critical challenge for megalith-builders was to engineer energy-transducers, to smooth out spikes and surges and to harness energy-tides.

As with the wind when sailing, they had to catch the breeze when it was blowing. At ancient sites one has to catch the available energy fluxes to get the best results, and the ancients learned how to predict forthcoming conditions. This periodicity is why, when you visit Boscawen-ûn or any other site on multiple occasions, some visits will be pleasant though unremarkable, while others can be really special and memorable. It has a lot to do with the overall time-energy configuration and your own state of being at that time.

At vortex locations the ancients built mounds and quoits, stone circles and menhirs. They probably also planted special trees, now long gone. The Algonquin people of New England planted 'talking trees', training tree branches into unusual shapes. They would hang offerings and totems in the trees. These trees *spoke*, and they were situated in places where you could *get the message*.

If you hang out at ancient sites – some are better than others, and everyone has their preferences – they will talk to you in their

wordless language. To hear and understand at least a few whispers, relax, give it time, set aside brain-chattering, let your psyche freewheel and see what comes up. *Just be*. Whatever comes up – impressions, images, ideas or feelings – might not make immediate sense, or you might understand it later. Or subsequent experiences or events might make things *click*. It might concern personal issues, seemingly random impressions, feelings about the place, or occasional blitzing insights and, in some way, everything is relevant. This is intuitive archaeology or *psychometry*. Hold a pebble or sit by a stone and see what it says to you.

Reality Fields

There is a connection between underground water, concentrated subtle-energy vortices and consciousness, and the ancients sought to make use of this connection.

At an ancient site, it is not unusual to notice a change in your mood, thoughts, understanding and state of being while you are there. If you practice meditation or other ways of entering altered states, you will discover properties of such heightened energies or frequencies that are not present elsewhere. They aren't even the same as what you might feel at other inspiring places such as a beauty spot or a cathedral.

These properties might include an unusual capacity to feel your way imaginally to the centre of the earth, or up to the far reaches of the universe, or horizontally toward distant people and places. You might experience healing or the resolution or easing of issues that trouble you. You might go back in time, or perceive possibilities you hadn't seen before. You might think of someone you haven't thought of for ages. You might see something in your mind's eye.

You might believe nothing special is happening, or that you're utterly useless at it, but try not to be harsh in self-judgement. Look further: something is happening, even if it is just a necessary rest. Wait for it. It will come through your thoughts and feelings, or 'day signs' (omens), or funny things that happen while you're there, or overflying birds, offstage noises or weather behaviour.

It's not uncommon to meet interesting people at such sites – this too is one of their mysterious properties. Or, when you arrive, people are leaving, and when you leave, someone else arrives – as if the site has a will of its own and we're pawns in its visitor-management process. You might have time-warps, or hear strange sounds, or see something out of the side of your eye. You might sense presences or see someone else's energy field, or experience peace, openness or uplift. Serendipities are amplified.

There's more to this. By containing and funnelling energy in stone circles, sacred enclosures or kerbed cairns, the subtle-energy connectivity between earth and the heavens is enhanced, becoming increasingly psychoactive. A super-concentrated *reality-field* or reality-bubble is created within and around these energy-containers, where the rules and the way things work operate rather differently. There's a sense of magnified intensity, *hereness* or focality at ancient sites that isn't only psychological but it's also psycho-geographic. That is, it affects not only our space-time perception but also it can affect the landscape or the weather itself.

Hmm, now that's a stretch, but wait: here are a few anecdotes that might help you remember similar experiences you too might have had, concerning reality-fields.

Around 1990, our group of 80ish people performed a ceremony drawn from the oldest recorded ceremony known, a Roman invocation of Venus, translated from Latin and brought to us by an academic historian who conducted the ceremony. It even involved blood sacrifice – each of us pricking a finger to extract a drop to add to a bowl. Later, the blood was buried ceremonially. It was a deeply moving experience and, at the end, we all were suitably transmogrified – that 'incredible lightness of being' feeling. It had been persistently cloudy and chilly but, as the ceremony ended, the skies suddenly cleared. Guess what, unexpectedly, in the west a beautiful conjunction of the moon and Venus emerged, with Venus positioned exactly between the outstretched arms of the crescent moon. Spellbinding. *Yeah, pure coincidence, of course.* Even the professor was gobsmacked. Some were moved to shed a tear.

On another occasion in 1985, at the end of a conference I ran in Glastonbury, a hundred or so of us trooped up the Tor, sang, wove round the top in human chains and landed up chanting in a big group hug that went on for ages. Then someone said, “Look!” There above us was a big, bright rainbow.

In another instance I spoke from the main stage at Glastonbury Festival. It had been cloudy, dull and rainy for a long while. I asked the sea of faces, 50,000 or so strong, to raise their hands, yell and ask for a hole to appear in the clouds. They did so. We waited. Nothing happened. Oh well. Rather embarrassed, I finished the proceedings and went offstage. Then, suddenly, out came the sun – and with it, an enormous roar from the crowd. The next band, ready to roll, were looking at me, as if thinking, “*Shit, who is this guy?*”. This could be called a psycho-climatic phenomenon, and there is something in this that deserves attention.

Want more? In Bethlehem in Palestine, where I was sitting working on a report at my computer, a racket started up. I soon learned on the grapevine that an Islamic Jihad fighter was being chased. Israeli army vehicles were pouring into the city and helicopters were menacing overhead. It had been a bright, sunny day in the sweltering thirties. Suddenly, out of nowhere, and *very* unusually, clouds came in off the Judean Desert (yes, off a desert) and, even more unusually, they shrouded the rather magic hilltop town of Bethlehem in mist, forcing the helicopters to retreat – and the ground forces, having lost their cover, had to retreat too.

Alhamdulillah (thanks be to God) said my workmate, and we got back to our computers. Well, magic does happen.

Or try this. I started the Hundredth Monkey Project in the mid-1990s.¹⁶ We ran spiritual camping retreats for 120ish people, to work in meditation and group process with the geopolitical and humanitarian issues of the day. One year, we gave attention to forest fires that were happening at the time in the Amazon basin. We worked on it for hours, using meditation and group techniques – a powerful experience for everyone, and hard work too. Next day,

¹⁶ The Hundred Monkey Project: <http://palden.co.uk/m100.html>

on the news, we heard that rain had fallen and the fires were damping down. Gosh. But then rain came in torrents and several people were killed in floods. Oh no. This was sobering – we debated it at length. *Be careful what you pray for.* The following year there were fires in Indonesia. This time we visualised gradual, lasting, consistent drizzle. The fires were gone in a fortnight.

We cannot claim to have created this outcome in a simple cause-and-effect sense, and it is unwise to make such claims. But we *can* say that we worked on these issues at the very time that something critical shifted, and the synchronicity was significant. Believe me, it was profound and moving stuff. When we were on form, we visualised things so strongly that, in a way, *we were there*. To sceptics this is plain nuts, wishful thinking or even dangerous – and yes, so it seems, when seen from a sceptical viewpoint. But such things have been done over time by many people in many parts of the world and they still are being done today. This isn't a new phenomenon. At times it felt like tedious hard work, all for nothing, yet it is important to continue without seeking prescribed results.

The idea for that project started ten years earlier. In spring 1986 I was running an earth mysteries camp for about 200 people. On arrival day participants came with news, heard on their car radios, that a reactor at Chernobyl had melted down. OMG. End-of-the-world feelings came over us. We dwelled on this intensely for several days. Tears were cried, angst was gone through. At one point we did a big group meditation, imaginally joining hands to fly together to Chernobyl to cover the reactor with our bodies. Phew, that was strong, and everyone felt it. But we didn't actually expect outcomes. Next day on the news, a person at the camp heard that engineers in Ukraine had started to regain control of the disaster at the same time as we had covered the reactor. It brought up joy, relief and a sobering sense of responsibility – this was a critical moment in everyone's lives.

The point behind these anecdotes is to show instances of the connection between consciousness, particularly *consciousness-work*, and the unfolding of tangible events and trends in the wider

world, affecting even the weather. This grates badly with modern rationality. So badly that some interests try to stop it happening. Yet *everyone* has experiences like these sometime in their life, even if forgotten or explained away. This sounds tautological, but magical experiences make more sense when one steps into a liminal realm where such things do make sense. We tend to remember such experiences only when we're relaxed, in a magic state or at a magic place. Our rationality and everyday consciousness tend not to register or recall them.



The Mên an Tol, once a stone circle

Bending Reality

Back to ancient sites. Menhirs seem to act as vertical conductors that smooth out fluctuating energy-charges, potentials and tensions building up between earth and sky. Thunderstorms are an extreme example of such discharges, but what we're looking at here is a more continuous process of multi-frequency interaction between earth, ionosphere and cosmos. Weather patterns are bio-electromagnetically generated and, when it rains, that's because

energy conditions in the clouds and between the clouds and earth wringing the rain out of the clouds electronically and through pressure, temperature and turbulence.

Inserting a standing stone into an underground water system can thus influence weather by moderating the buildup of energy-charges and thus of weather extremes. Underground water absorbs, conducts and discharges the charge. This has a cumulative effect over time, reducing weather extremes. It is extremes – floods, drought, storms – that do the most damage, bringing decisive and longterm effects to people and ecosystems. In modern parlance, this concerns *climate control* through *megalithic geoengineering*.

It has been argued that barrows and cairns, some of them built with alternating layers of organic (soil) and inorganic (stone) materials, some with a stone kerb around them or a stone cist or chamber inside, act as accumulators, batteries or buffers – akin to what scientist Wilhelm Reich called *orgone accumulators*. These act as energy-insulators, batteries or buffers, building up charge and releasing it over time. Inside chambered cairns, items, samples, herbs, relics and people could be treated in a kind of energy-bath. In cairns containing cists, urns, relics, grave goods, bones or corpses, such remains were used to add blessings or energy-qualities to that cairn and its location.¹⁷ Tibetans do this with *chörtens* – their equivalent of a cairn – inside which they put scriptures, relics, the hairs of enlightened beings and offerings.

Many mounds sit on energy vortices arising from underground streams, and it can be construed that they were thus built to accumulate, contain, store and distribute that energy. Nowadays we'd call it battery technology, but there's more to this than electric power. *Orgone* was Reich's word for life-force or life-energy. Traditionally, the Chinese call it *ch'i* and Indians call it *prāṇa*.

¹⁷ Yuksel, Serdar & Eroğlu, Özgür, *The Role of Orgone Accumulators and Electromagnetic Waves in Plant Development*, 2019.

www.researchgate.net/publication/337679695_The_Role_Of_Orgone_Accumulators_And_Electromagnetic_Waves_In_Plant_Development | Blasband, R A, The Orgone Energy Accumulator in the Treatment of Cancer in Mice, *J Subtle Energies and Energy Medicine*, Vol 2, 2, <https://journals.sfu.ca/seemj/index.php/seemj/article/view/435>

Western science is reluctant to consider it, disapprovingly calling this way of thinking *vitalism* – supposedly discredited over a century ago. But it's still here.

Ancient sites operate not only with vertically-oriented energy motions but also horizontally, a bit like directional transmitter aerials, using overground energy-leys to radiate and receive energy and/or information, and forming a network of energy centres acting as one integrated, interactive system. Such integration seems not to be so marked in neighbouring parts of Cornwall except on Bodmin Moor and Scilly. While it is probably not unique across the megalithic world, it is marked in West Penwith.

Chambers also function like a Faraday Cage, insulating the inner space from outside influences and energy-noise. They are places of sensory deprivation and sixth-sense attenuation – artificial caves. Some chambered cairns are oriented toward the rising points of sun or moon at certain times of year so that external light enters the chamber, engineered to illuminate the dark, charged atmosphere inside it, rather like power lighting up neon when switched on.

The orientation of the chamber highlights a time-point in the year, capturing its qualities of light and energy. The chambers gather up-welling energy from a blind spring (in the case of quoits) or a water-line intersection (with chambered cairns) below them. This influences the subtle atomic structure and frequency-resonance of objects placed inside them, or of the subtle-energy bodies and the consciousness of a person. Thus, chambered cairns and quoits can serve as supercharged energy concentrators, such that items or a person inside them are subjected to a focused, intense energy field – tranquil yet highly charged and naturally-powered.

This leads us to dimensions where our normal perceptual sense of location *here in this place* and *now in this time* dissolves. In such a consciousness-field we can access wider dimensions of space-time and awareness, even if only momentarily. You don't have to be advanced in meditation or psychic work to do this: simply give yourself permission to relax and float off unselfconsciously, allowing things to come up whilst observing what goes on in your

psyche. It gets better with practice. Analyse and review the experience afterwards, not during. Keep notes.

This concerns an energy technology that entrains the natural forces in the earth and sky, focusing and making use of it. When scaled up landscape-wide, it gets serious. It turns a place like West Penwith into a large-scale energy-engineering project. Ultimately, the aim would have been to benefit human contentment, natural bio-productivity and weather, and to create a sense of connection with other realms. If this idea is correct, it constitutes an important matter for today, since our planet is in trouble. We are also in trouble with our worldviews and beliefs, and our current global situation pushes us to change our way of seeing things.

Geomantic Engineering

Underground water and its associated energy fields are not all there is to the location of ancient sites. Remarkably, a number of factors or principles seem to coincide magically at each energy centre. How this was achieved, we can only guess. But a fortuitous coincidence of three or more contributory locational factors seems to come together at ancient sites, such as these:

- **ancient site alignments;**
- **astronomical orientations;**
- **underground water flows;**
- **subtle-energy patterns and lines;**
- **intervisibility between sites;**
- **landscape topography and artistry;**
- **mathematics, proportion and geometry;**
- **sagas, narratives and myths; and**
- **spirit of place or *genius loci*.**

This combination of factors defies modern logic, yet it all adds together to build an energy field that is detectable and observable. At many sites it feels as if there is a presence, an intelligence, a numinosity or a beingness with a certain *personality*, the nature and

character of which is not solely defined by the physical situation and landscape. It reveals itself at auspicious moments in time, and at numinous moments such as dawn and dusk.

Genius loci magnetically attracts us toward ancient sites. That's why we like them. There's a strange sense of familiarity, of *coming home*, of *alrightness*. These places are beings, and if you possess sufficient madness to talk to your cat or your plants, then you're capable of dialogue with the guardian presences at ancient sites. The psychological impact of spending time at ancient sites is a key factor that deserves far more attention than it gets. Some say they feel nothing but, in my experience with hundreds of people, the issue here is simply whether we experience such things awarely, semi-consciously or unconsciously. It's a matter of *giving permission to ourselves to feel and to register whatever we feel*.

The notion of *genius loci* helps us understand why quoits, stone circles, menhirs and mounds were built, and why they are located where they are, in the form that they took. It concerns building spaces to affect our psycho-spiritual state and modify the subtle conditions of the world around us – *consciousness engineering*. Without understanding or accepting principles such as this, we are left with little understanding of ancient sites and their *raison d'être*. That's a wee bit problematic.

4. Starting Propositions

Here are some observations and background ideas concerning West Penwith's ancient sites, to establish a few foundations before we progress further.

Clustering

West Penwith's ancient sites are conglomerated in two areas, in the north and south, with a noticeable gap between them running along an east-west corridor from St Michael's Mount to Cape Cornwall, passing through Botrea Barrows – the A3071 road from Penzance to St Just roughly follows it.

There are differences between the two halves. The north is an upland area with tors, quoits and more chambered cairns than there are in the south, while the south is a gently rolling lowland plateau with far more menhirs and fewer cairns than in the north, and it has a different style and feeling to its ancient sites.

In the Neolithic 3000s, most people lived in and around the northern uplands. The climate, warmer than now, made upland living sensible, and the lowlands were densely wooded – useful to live in during winter, but not in summer. Few things happened in the south in the 3000s but in the 2000s things changed as woodland clearance gained momentum. An incremental southward expansion occurred around 2000 BCE as new land was opened up.

There is an added question concerning areas relatively empty of ancient sites. One such area is in the far southwest between St Buryan and Tol Pedn. Another is south and east of St Just, and a third area is near St Ives. While some ancient sites might have been removed here, accounting for some spaces, it's possible these gaps were wildwood areas since, by 1800 BCE, woodland cover was by then around 50%.



Meanwhile, Penzance has few ancient sites: possibly some were removed during development of the town, but the coast of Mount's Bay is notably sparse in ancient sites apart from St Michael's Mount and the Holy Headland, Pen Sans, at the seaward end of Chapel Street. It is probably so because much of Penzance, like East Penwith, sits on Devonian sedimentary rock, not granite.

These relatively empty areas are significant, though the reason why this is so remains open to question. In East Penwith, as soon as we cross the north-south boundary of the peninsula formed by St Michael's Mount, Trencrom Hill and St Ives Head, the density of ancient sites thins considerably, all the way to Bodmin Moor. In the

Neolithic, West Penwith, Bodmin Moor and Dartmoor were islands of activity in a vastness of wildwood.

Walking from Penwith to Bodmin Moor might have taken 3-5 days, trekking along forest tracks, one of which followed parts of today's A30 road (then under bazillions of trees). With some exceptions, most sites lying between West Penwith and Bodmin Moor derive from the Bronze and Iron Ages, but Penwith and the Moor have deeper, Neolithic roots. Neolithic people liked granitic areas. There was something about granitelands that appealed to them.

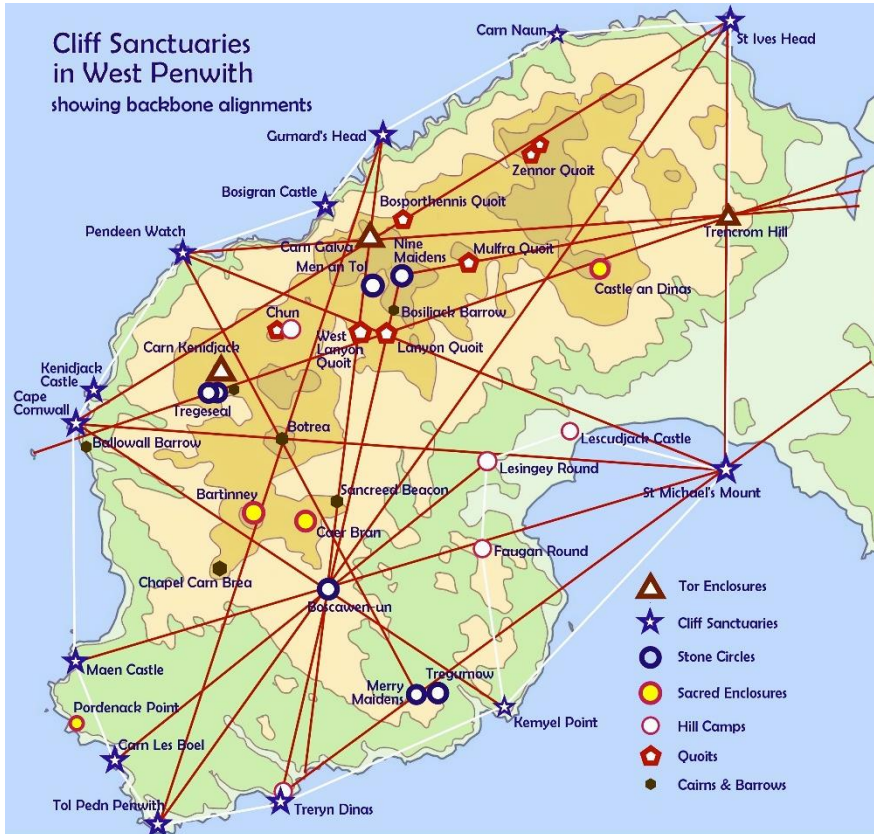
Cliff Sanctuaries

The necklace of cliff sanctuaries (cliff castles) bounding Penwith's coast is more important than has been understood. They are *special places*, visually and in their atmosphere. Their headlands are in many cases prominent and, by dint of this, they will have been frequented since the earliest times, when the first people arrived in Cornwall. The cliff sanctuaries are inspiring, liminal places – great places to *get some space*, both in the past and today.

Most man-made remains on cliff sanctuaries – boundary banks and sometimes roundhuts – are understood to be Iron Age in origin, built around 400-100 BCE. But this is unlikely to have been the first period of use of cliff sanctuaries. Artefacts from former ages are found here too, yet they tend to be rated as accidents of antiquity.

The importance of cliff sanctuaries in Neolithic times is demonstrated by the existence of the backbone alignments. They formed a framework of alignments pinned down by the cliff sanctuaries and tors, extrapolated over time to determine the location of the key Bronze Age sites of Penwith, knitting them into an integrated system. However, most cliff sanctuaries, except Maen Castle and Gurnard's Head, have not been thoroughly examined archaeologically. Neolithic artefacts have been found at Carn Lês Boel, Treryn Dinas¹⁸ and St Michael's Mount but this has not jogged archaeologists sufficiently to modify their dating.

¹⁸ Sharp, Adam, Treryn Dinas – cliff castles reconsidered, *Cornish Archaeology*, 31, pp65-68, 1992.



The ancients didn't build much on the cliff sanctuaries – though there are placed and aligned stones at some of them (Kenidjack Castle, Bosigran Castle and Treryn Dinas), one or two logan stones (Treryn Dinas and Bosigran), roundhuts on Gurnard's Head and Kenidjack Castle, and boundary banks such as at Carn Lês Boel that go back to the Bronze Age and further.

Oh, and largely *they weren't defensive sites* – as in 'cliff castles'. That discussion comes later. The main point here is that *cliff sanctuaries are older and more crucial sites than they are usually taken to be*.

The Megalithic Intermezzo

This is not new information but it deserves more attention. Around 3200 BCE something went wrong. Neolithic culture took a nosedive and megalith building in Penwith and elsewhere stopped for centuries. There are three main theories why this happened: one is a plague originating in the Caucasus that was brought in by incomers, wiping out many Britons, who perhaps lacked immunity.

The second theory is a climatic shock. A climate downturn, the *Piora Oscillation*, first identified in Italy, occurred in the three or so centuries after 3200 BCE. This was probably caused by an influx of dust into the atmosphere from a super-volcanic explosion somewhere in the world (such as Indonesia), cooling temperatures and shifting global weather patterns. It is not clear whether or to what extent this would have affected Cornwall but, given that signs exist globally, the idea can be entertained that it did, since Cornwall went quiet around this time.¹⁹

The third is a possible meteorite strike in the East Mediterranean around 3150 BCE, introducing a spike in the earth's magnetic field, jolting and destabilising the world's climate for a period.²⁰

Whatever the cause, this was likely a big setback for Penwithians, locking them into survival mode. They stopped leaving significant traces and building monuments. Times were probably hard, bringing depopulation or emigration. There is a rather suspect 700-year gap in Penwith's archaeological record between 3200 and 2500 BCE.²¹

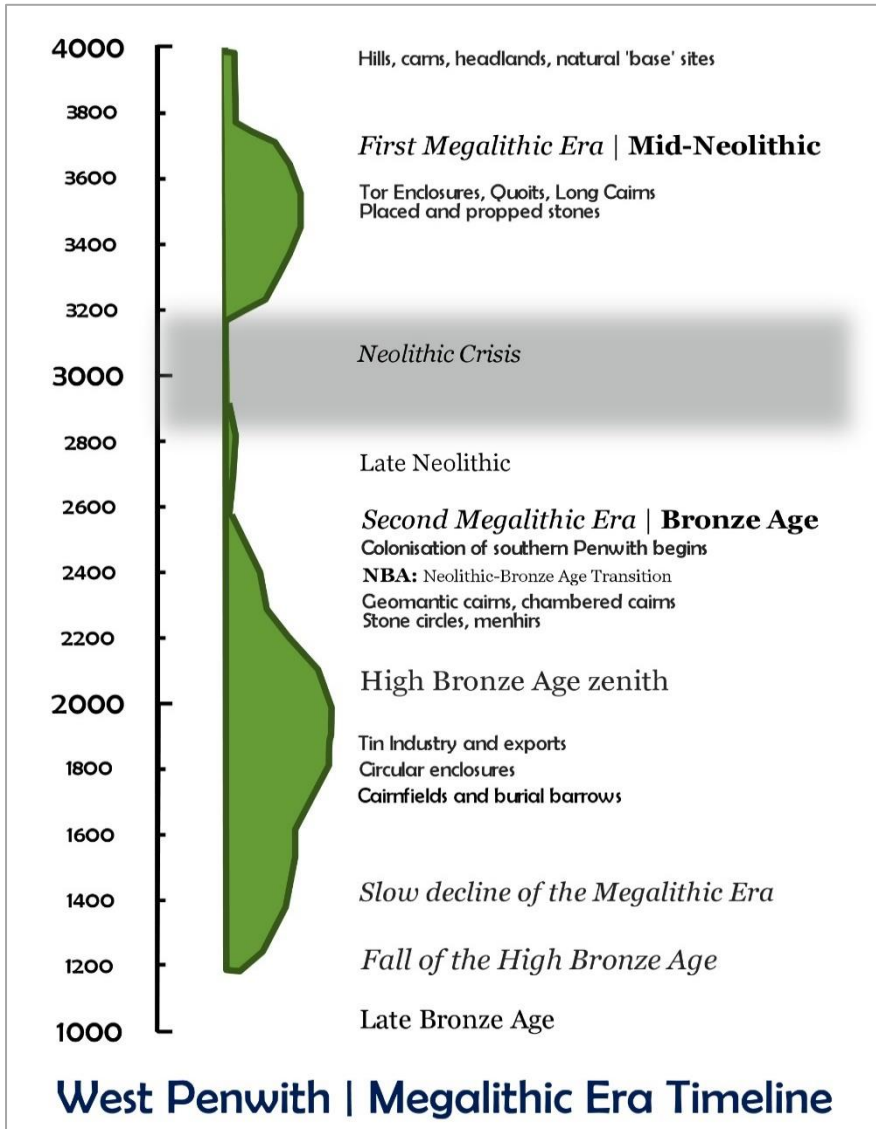
Some construction started in Wiltshire, Ireland, the Hebrides and Orkney, mostly after 2900, but nothing is known in Penwith. So is this a case of *evidence of absence* or of *absence of evidence*? Some prehistorians half-recognise this downturn without fully mentioning

¹⁹ Bevan, A *et al*, Holocene fluctuations in human population demonstrate links to food production & climate, *PNAS*, 2018. www.pnas.org/content/pnas/114/49/E10524.full.pdf See also: www.sis-group.org.uk/news/piora-oscillation.htm

²⁰ Knight, C, and Lomas, R, *Uriel's Machine – the ancient origins of science*, 1999.

²¹ <https://community.mytrueancestry.com/neolithic-population-turnover-and-the-end-of-megalith-building-in-the-paris-basin/>

it or looking at the possible scale, consequences and reasons for this yawning archaeological gap.



A second megalithic period slowly incubated in the mid-2000s as society revived, rising to a crescendo around 2200-1800. While the

Bronze Age was not as equable as the Neolithic, the climate up to 1500ish BCE was better than today, with drier, clearer, continental high-pressure weather, warmer summers and crisper winters. There were fewer jetstream-driven, rainy, windy Atlantic depressions than we see today – these went north of Britain.

Whether we're talking of a plague, a climate crisis or something else, a shocking downturn such as this places a marker in folk-memory: the need to *do something* to avoid future catastrophes.²² The people of the time wouldn't have known about distant volcanoes, meteor strikes or a pandemic, but they are likely to have thought 'never again', perhaps believing they had got something wrong. It could have given rise to an impetus to address what had happened by developing deep-ecological megalithic technology. This is but an hypothesis, but it's interesting and plausible.

Neolithic and Bronze Age Dating

Whatever was the deciding factor, the development of megalithic engineering took a long pause before the age of the stone circle builders gathered steam. This interlude, the reason for which is inconclusive, divides the megalithic era into two phases that do not match the normal archaeological delineation of a Neolithic and a Bronze Age. From this viewpoint, it would be more appropriate to couple the late Neolithic between 3000 and 2500ish with the Bronze Age that followed, as they form more of a continuity, from a megalithic viewpoint.

As far as megalith building is concerned, the great divide seems to be the period between 3200 and 2900 BCE. In Penwith and elsewhere, ancient sites built before and after this time differ noticeably. In Cornwall, before the lull we have quoits, placed and propped stones, tor enclosures, cliff sanctuaries and cairns. After it

²² Bradley, R and Sanjuán, LG, *Sudden time? Natural disasters as a stimulus to monument building, from Silbury Hill (Great Britain) to Antequera (Spain)*, [www.academia.edu/33384673/ Sudden Time Natural disasters as a stimulus to monument building From Silbury Hill Great Britain to Antequera Spain](http://www.academia.edu/33384673/Sudden_Time_Natural_disasters_as_a_stimulus_to_monument_building_From_Silbury_Hill_Great_Britain_to_Antequera_Spain)

come cairns, barrows and chambered cairns, menhirs, stone circles and sacred enclosures.

In the Neolithic mid-3000s, the main concentration of Penwithians in the northern highlands might have numbered several hundred. Most lived higher up where there were fewer flies, brambles, wolves, boars and bears, less mud and mould, and better views. Higher up, trees were fewer, easier to thin out, and there was a ‘top of the world’ feeling, overlooking the wildwood. Zennor Hill, Carn Galva, Chûn Castle, Carn Kenidjack, Chapel Carn Brea, Trencrom Hill and St Michael’s Mount were their special places.

In the late 2000s, the southern half of Penwith grew in importance as forest clearance started altering the visual landscape. Stone circles were built and menhirs erected as part of this colonisation from around 2400 or 2300 onward.

The Neolithic and Bronze Ages are so named because of the stone or bronze materials used for the tools of the time. This interests archaeologists, but ancient sites and their sequence and timing are different. So using standard archaeological time-periods is not entirely helpful to us – they are useful when looking at the development of material conditions, not ancient sites.

So, we can identify two distinct megalithic periods: the first of 500-odd years in the Neolithic, between 3700ish and 3200ish, and the second of, all told, 1,300ish years, from 2500ish to around 1200, with its zenith around 2200-1800 BCE.

Similarly, following the end of the megalithic period, the late Bronze Age from 1200 to 800 BCE bevels better with the Iron Age that followed than with the early-to-mid Bronze Age, the megalithic era. The late Bronze and the Iron Age form a phased continuity stretching, in Cornwall, from 1200 BCE to around CE 300 (the Roman period had only marginal effects here). Around 1200 BCE the climate had deteriorated, becoming wetter, windier and more like today. The prehistoric culture of earlier times had gone.

Quantum Entanglement

This is either a working hypothesis, an inspired hunch or a useful analogy, and it's worth contemplating. If these propositions are incorrect, they're still helpful. Let's start with an observation: ***there seem to be two energy systems running separately and in parallel.*** One is made up of the energy patterns connected with underground water and earth energy (dowsers' stuff) and the other is the alignments system (ley-hunters' stuff).

Alignments do not operate like wires or pipes for transmitting energy. On the other hand, the energy lines that dowsers pick up in the landscape do transmit energy, with observable energy flows that directionally alternate over time. While these are separate energy systems, there is some overlap whenever an energy line coincides with an alignment, since both are anchored and plugged into the same power points across the landscape. As yet, no dowsers have comprehensively mapped Penwith's energy lines (a big project, with methodological problems),²³ so we cannot know the extent to which alignments and energy lines do actually coincide. At a guess it might be 20-30% – a minority of cases.

Alignments are *not* like pipes. Aligning ancient sites represents a completely different way of relating them to each other. This works on the principle that aligned sites are programmed with an inherent co-resonance that needs no actual connection or 'pipe' between them. They operate separately yet they use the same inherent algorithms and data. We could say that alignments share *information*, even *instructions*, more than they share energy.

Here comes a challenging concept: the alignments system could be seen to conform with what Einstein called 'spooky action at a distance', known in physics as *non-local quantum entanglement*.²⁴ That is, two separate entities can co-resonate simultaneously, operating in sync even though no energy or information passes between them, and even when they are far apart and inaccessible to

²³ Sig Lonegren, *The Role Of Dowsing*, 2004.

²⁴ Quantum Entanglement. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quantum_entanglement

each other. I suggest that this happens between ancient sites in the landscape, only some of which are intervisible because hills or other features stand in the way.

To use an analogy, if you flip two coins at the same time, the result for one coin has no logical connection with the result of the other one. When two particles are entangled they are attuned to each other, even if they're separate, distant and have no connection. Thus, if one comes up heads, the other one will also come up heads. Such sites can thus be construed to operate according to the same pattern, timing and algorithm.

Quantum entanglement was first observed in physics with particles resulting from smashing the atom, shooting off in different directions and dimensions, yet subsequently behaving similarly even when they had no visible way of operating together.

A further analogy is one of human twins parted at birth, growing up separately without knowing they have a twin. Sharing uncanny characteristics, their lives often take on similar patterns, turns and timings of events. Whether shared genetic patterning or what scientists call 'pseudo-telepathy' is responsible, this has been studied comprehensively. Further studies in biology and neuroscience regarding plant and animal behaviour and brain function have identified similar behavioural traits.

What is proposed here is the idea that *aligning specific ancient sites attunes them to each other so that they co-resonate remotely*.

Penwith's ancient sites evolved as an integral organism, with each site being plugged into a complex, co-resonant, interactive system.

Alignments and energy lines thus signify different kinds of 'circuitries', and while they are complementary they should not be confused with one another.

This makes things more complex, yet it is also rather an elegant and plausible theory, pointing to a sophistication in the way ancient sites were located, particularly during the Bronze Age when the megalithic system grew more sophisticated and the number of sites grew significantly. Quantum entanglement is a useful working hypothesis until or unless something better emerges.

The concept of alignment is enigmatic, yet it cannot be dismissed simply because we don't understand it or it gives us indigestion. Ancient sites were clearly aligned, both with each other and in many instances with natural landscape features. Obviously, this was done for good reasons – our task is to try to find out what those reasons were.

Advanced Culture

This raises questions about the surveying methods used by ancient peoples. Somehow, they could accurately establish aligned sites over a significant distance without satellite photography or theodolites, and even without intervisibility



Carn Galva as seen from Caer Brân

between sites. A few researchers have proposed ways in which this could have been done using relatively simple yet advanced and accurate surveying techniques,²⁵ and more work is needed on this. One problem here is that many thinkers outside the field of geomancy avoid stretching beyond the bounds of what they believe to be possible, though such stretching might now be necessary.²⁶

It is possible that ancient geomancers had a kind of intuitive GPS capacity for identifying exact locations without the benefit of today's surveying techniques – probably involving dowsing, remote viewing or plain old instinct. Intuitive GPS may sound far-fetched but it cannot be ruled out, especially since the training of

²⁵ Heath, Robin, *New Evidence for Megalithic Surveying*, 2012.

²⁶ For some insights, try this 90-min video by Knights Rose, *The Spirit of the Serpent*, featuring Hamish Miller and other leading dowisers: <https://youtu.be/Kyv6gFL-Lmk>

geomancers is likely to have been rigorous and lengthy. Such intuitive skills are demonstrated today by fishermen, farmers, prospectors, doctors and even scientists, in the application of their own skills. *Somehow* the ancients did it, and their capacity to do it is demonstrated in the exactly aligned positioning of ancient sites.

Up to about 1500 BCE Penwithians seemed content to live a relatively simple, comfortable, sufficiency-level, community-based life, following a transhumant round of stopover places and shelters throughout the year. This is observable in a relative lack of evidence of permanent dwellings, fixed boundaries and, except for ancient sites, other enduring capital projects until after 1500 or 1200. Such evidence of permanent settlement starts appearing as the megalithic era declined in the late 1000s BCE.

Penwithians were not early adopters of bronze smelting and crafting like the Bretons or the Irish, though they exported tin from about 2000 BCE onwards. They seemed to want to keep things simple. This might have been a cultural consensus or perhaps it was easier to exchange imported metalwork for tin ingots than to make the metalwork themselves.

For some centuries bronze items – adornments, household items, tools and crafts – were imported, while tin and smaller amounts of copper and gold were exported. Tin being valuable, Penwithians probably did well from it. Smelting and craftwork began in Penwith around 1800 BCE, and adoption of bronze forging over the following centuries coincided with the slow decline of the megalithic age – it might or might not have been a contributory factor to it. The fuel needs of foundry fires would have impacted heavily on Penwith's woodlands.

Bronze enabled a gradual shift toward an increasingly growth-based economy, by the standards of the time, and a fundamental shift of attitude came with it. Using bronze, people could raise their productivity, felling trees, fashioning items, digging the ground, amassing storable wealth and adorning themselves. They could stamp their mark on the world, not just as guests.

Britons started to make weapons after about 1500 BCE – a sign of growing social stress and insecurity. While these seem mostly to have served ritual, not warring purposes, a mindset of heroism, warlords, protection rackets, battle and men strutting their stuff was emerging, signifying a deep cultural change. Up to that time there were no major signs of conflict in Britain. But in the late 1000s BCE things were changing. It became less about *us together* for the good of the tribe and more about *might over right*.

With this fundamental cultural change came a profound psycho-social shift that contributed arguably to the decline of the megalithic period. After 1500 BCE, few sacred sites were built except for funerary barrows and cairns, built mainly to memorialise people with status. Earlier Bronze Age cairns, built before 2000 BCE, were built mostly for geomantic, territorial, astronomical and magical purposes, while later cairns were built more for funerary, memorialisation purposes. Antiquarians and archaeologists like finding artefacts buried in cairns, thus focusing more on the funerary aspects of cairns and barrows while counting geomantic cairns, sometimes with burials and artefacts and sometimes not, as less significant – this is a belief-based bias.

Later funerary practices suggest an increasing investment of importance in high-born and prominent people as the Bronze Age progressed. We see creeping social stratification and investment of energy in permanent settlements and farming – signs of a more materially-oriented age where farm produce overtook the foregoing mixture of foraged, hunted and grown food. Health standards and life expectancy declined, owing to deteriorating climate, soil-fertility loss, infection from farm animals, weakening tribal support systems and a weakening culture.

Penwithians' ancient sites were relatively simple and undramatic compared with Stonehenge, Avebury, Carnac in Brittany and the Boyne valley in Ireland. Yet, by examining the alignment patterns they established, much more consideration and calculation clearly went on than first meets the eye. This was probably driven by a

group of advanced thinkers with a pool of inherited knowledge, who knew how to make megalithic technology work.

It helps to look at the whole peninsula-wide megalithic system as one big ancient site.

The five surviving stone circles each had a unique purpose within the Penwith system, judging by their design, setting and surrounding complexes. Each had nineteen stones (though the Nine Maidens are in question, currently with eleven), yet the circles are not uniform, implying that they took on different roles within the system, as part of something bigger and more organised, not just stone edifices for the uses of a local clan.

Turning the Wheel of Time

Turning the wheel of time (as Tibetans call it) was a key ingredient in ancient Penwithians' inner life. This is demonstrated by the placing, design and orientation of some sites to highlight the motions of the sun, moon and wider cosmos. They pinned down and staked out time in physical space. Astronomer-astrologers, they were interested in interpreting the movement of time, change and season, and pitching their responses to it.

Time lies at the heart of the matter. Building megalithic sites was not just a question of 'glorifying God': the ancients were building holy energy machines to enhance nature, the cosmos and the world of humans through working with time, periodicity and subtle energy. Since megalithic civilisation lasted so long, there must have been something to it that was very right – in modern terminology, it was energy-efficient and sustainable. Were it not, surely it would not have survived as long as it did.

They worked with a European shamanic variant of Taoism, seeking to bring heaven, earth and humanity into harmony, a few millennia before the Chinese sage Lao Tzu came along to articulate such a philosophy in writing. It had practical outcomes in terms of climate regulation, land fertility, cultivation, maritime journeying, energetic upgrading of seeds, improving the lives of people and interacting

with the intelligences within nature. Shamans would not just talk to the forces and powers involved: they would work themselves into a state where they *became* them, operating within unseen realities, fetching back insights, knowledge, transmissions and blessings. Well, when they could.

The technologies of the megalith-builders arguably increased natural capital and sustainability, using spiritual, subtle and physical means, driven by an underlying sense of love and care. They saw little innate difference between the worlds of spirit and physical life, and subtle energy was the interface between them. This wasn't heaven on earth and the ancients weren't angels – it was hard work and not always successful. Like us, at times they were surely faced with issues where they felt out of their depth, not knowing what to do – moral dilemmas too.

To quote the Seneca Wolf Clan Mother, Twylah Nitsch: *We seek not to emulate the ancient ones – we seek what they sought.*²⁷ This isn't a matter of building new stone circles and quoits. It's a matter of learning how to work with similar kinds of energies that the ancients harnessed, building integrity and balance into the design of civilisation, to enhance the values and norms of our societies.

The Milton Keynes shopping mall is aligned to the summer solstice sunrise – and apparently it seems to work. But this is about more than shopping malls. Humanity may not yet be ready, yet there is a certain inevitability to its eventual development as a core factor in the design of future civilisation.

Still, there is good cause to do the research, learn more about megalithic geoengineering and the way it can work today, and develop what we can for the future, laying tracks for a coming time. This concerns the step-after-next in the evolution of human society: a time when we are seriously and comprehensively correcting the deeper aspects of what's not right in our world.

²⁷ Oft quoted by dowser Sig Lonegren – Twylah Nitsch was one of his teachers. The Seneca are part of the Algonquin nation of NE Turtle Island (North America).

Part Two

Sacred Places, Holy Landscape

5. Ancient Sites in Penwith

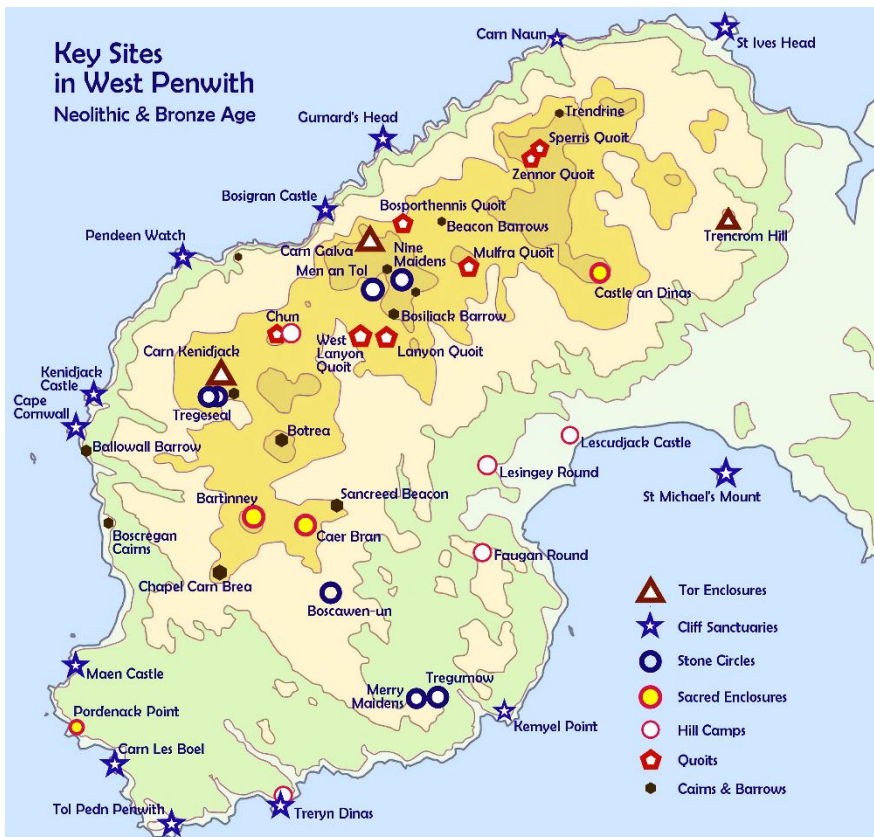
Here we shall explore the different kinds of prehistoric sites in Penwith, starting with the oldest first. This is not a systematic, site-by-site guide. Available guides are listed at the back of the book, and the maps on this book's website give copious links to online material on each of the ancient sites marked on the maps.

Many local sites are cared for by CASPN, the Cornish Ancient Sites Protection Network (cornishancientsites.com), a volunteer group. The situation in West Penwith is quite unique: in most areas historic monuments are managed by charities and organisations such as the National Trust or English Heritage, but in Penwith many sites are cared for by the locals. Some sites are owned by the Cornwall Heritage Trust (cornwallheritagetrust.org).

Layers upon Layers

People first arrived in Cornwall around 8000 BCE when it was tundra, suitable for summer hunting visits or toughing it out through an arctic winter, in the style of Sámi or Inuit peoples. As the post-glacial climate warmed up, around 6200 sea levels rose dramatically and Britain separated from Europe – though even then people were capable of sailing the seas and migration. Broad-leafed forests established themselves and by the 4000s the climate in Britain was much warmer than today's.

It took until 3700ish before megalith building started. Before then, archaeologists can work only with evidence at findspots of dropped and discarded flints, bone items and other objects, plus middens (waste dumps) at occupation sites, which reveal a lot about foods eaten and daily life. People did not impact greatly on the land. The arrival of the megaliths in the 3000s signified a breakthrough in thinking and capability amongst the Neolithics, and that's where things get interesting for our purposes.



Penwith's megalithic prehistory is multi-layered: the Isles of Scilly, the Lizard and mid-Cornwall were active mainly in the Bronze and Iron Ages from the mid-2000s onwards, but Penwith goes back to the Neolithic 3000s. Bodmin Moor was active in both the Neolithic

and Bronze Ages, but climatic changes around 1200 BCE led to a move downhill, so Bodmin Moor doesn't have as much Iron Age and subsequent activity as is the case in Penwith. Penwith has seen activity in all three periods.

Nowadays, West Penwith sits at the end of the road, far from metropolitan England, but in ancient times it was a central marine node on the Atlantic seaboard. This involved cultural interchange, trade, travel and migration. Long-distance travel and goods transport were best by sea and along navigable rivers, since much of Britain was wooded, and tracks would get worn and muddy. In Britain, horses weren't used for transport until after 1500 BCE.

Penwith was a hub for boats travelling between Brittany, the English Channel, the Severn Sea and the Irish Sea. Its main harbours were at St Michael's Mount, St Ives and the Hayle estuary, with landing beaches at Porthcurno, Sennen, Priest's Cove and Porth Ledden. Deposits of tin, gold and copper brought advantage to Penwith, extending its connections through chains of traders as far as Orkney, Germany and the eastern Mediterranean. They had something that everyone wanted.

From ancient times Penwith will have had a gradual trickle of interesting foreign visitors, only one or two of whom we know of – every generation has had its quirky, restless explorers who head for far horizons. There were migrations too, though it was periodic boatloads more than waves of people, and with them came ideas, skills and knowhow. Penwith was an ideal crucible for the meeting of local and wider influences – well-connected by sea yet living in a world of its own.

Much later, following the Roman occupation of Britannia in CE 43, through the Saxon, Viking and Norman invasions and up to the Middle Ages, Cornwall was neither Romanised nor Anglicised as early or as much as what is now England. Neither was Cornwall subjected to quite the same oppressions that the Welsh, Irish and Scots experienced from the English over the centuries, though there certainly have been pain and problems, and these continue today.

However, Cornish peripherality gave it a certain cultural uniqueness and protection, and this persists in our time.

Types of Ancient Sites in Penwith

These are the kinds of sites that interest us here:

- Hills, headlands and carns (rock outcrops)
- Tor enclosures
- Cliff sanctuaries (cliff castles)
- Quoits
- Placed, propped and aligned stones
- Cairns, barrows, longbarrows and chambered cairns
- Stone circles
- Menhirs
- Sacred enclosures
- Hill camps (hillforts)
- Iron age rounds
- Springs and holy wells
- Fogous
- Settlements
- Inscribed stones (Roman and Celtic)
- Early Christian crosses, chapels and churches.

Next we shall go into the various kinds of sites in Penwith, one by one, starting with Neolithic tor enclosures.

If you don't know Penwith well, or you aren't so interested in the specifics of its ancient sites, and you're more interested in geomancy, then you might wish to jump to Part Three.

6. Central Places in a Wildscape

Neolithic Tor Enclosures

Here, the long story of the megalithic era in West Penwith begins. When Neolithic Penwithians first developed an urge to move earth and rocks to build sacred sites, they worked with a wildscape canvas that as yet was largely unmodified by humans, except for worn paths and inhabited clearings. Dominating their landscape were features such as granite tors and hills, carns (outcrops) and headlands. These were the outstanding features or ‘base sites’ of the area and Penwithians knew them well.

If you wish to scope out an area, the best thing to do is climb a hill. The high granite tors of the peninsula were centres of activity in the Neolithic 3000s and probably from the time when the very first humans were here. Around 3700 BCE Neolithic Penwithians started modifying them, building tor enclosures.

Prominent hills and rock outcrops (carns) were important to the Neolithics. Together with cliff sanctuaries, great trees, wildwood glades now long gone, springs and caves, these were the special places where people would gravitate as they endowed significance and *placeness* to their wildwood stamping grounds.

Everyone knew the tors, key places in Neolithic people’s mental maps – which, for most people then, extended only as far as a few days’ walk. Mostly the tors were not permanently occupied, only perhaps for summer or special fullmoon nights, or for periodic short stays. Dwellings have been found around Carn Kenidjack and Carn Galva, and it is likely that people lived at least part of the year on Trencrom Hill and the sides of St Michael’s Mount. But residence was not their key purpose.

They were sacred, magical gathering places. In a forest milieu where human life was swamped by greenery, such special localities gave a *sense of place* and *centrality*. People could get above the woods to gain a sense of perspective. These were like the city squares and landmarks of today – everyone knew them, and you could meet other folks there.

Penwith's Tor Enclosures

The four known tor enclosures in Penwith are Carn Galva, Trencrom Hill, Carn Kenidjack and St Michael's Mount. Within sight of Penwith and east of it is Carn Brea, a tor enclosure dated to around 3900-3600 BCE – the first to be identified as a tor enclosure. They are unique to the granitic highlands of southwest Britain.

(By the way, *Carn Brea* and *Chapel Carn Brea* are two different hills, the first being near Redruth and the second is west of Penzance. Chapel Carn Brea is not a tor enclosure, though the Neolithics liked it, as the first and last hill in Britain.)

Tor enclosures are roughly equivalent to Neolithic causewayed enclosures upcountry, or to hill camps of the late Bronze and Iron Ages – chosen hilltops enclosed to sanctify the space and make it special, distinct and human, giving it centrality, and hosting a separate reality within it. It is questionable to assume defensive purposes as a default interpretation of Neolithic tor enclosures, or to assume that defensive needs were the same here as upcountry.

Various other hills in Penwith were significant to the Neolithics, though they were not tors: Chûn Castle, Chapel Carn Brea, Zennor Hill, Lesingey Round, Bartinney Castle and, in East Penwith, Godolphin and Tregonning Hills. By dint of their prominence in the landscape, they had to be important. They were the best places to hang out, and to use as trackway nodes or gathering places.

Carn Brea (SW 686 408)

Overlooking Redruth (it looms over the A30), Carn Brea stands out in the visual landscape of West Penwith even though it is well

outside it, marking the eastern end of East Penwith. It was a high, prominent tor enclosure, serving as a geomantic centre – indicated by a profusion of alignments going to and through it. It was a trading place connecting Scilly, Penwith and the Lizard with the lands upcountry, and it served as a local central place. The Lizard, Mount's Bay and other locations had valuable stone factories for making tools which, as items exchanged through Carn Brea, could travel a long way – for example, to Yorkshire.

It is commonly thought that Carn Brea, occupied for three centuries by roughly 100 people, came to a violent end with fighting and burning. This is inconclusive.²⁸

Its walls, water sources and numerous gateways were weak as defence assets, and an attack scenario, though

possible, is not entirely plausible. A catastrophic burning event caused by attack has been assumed. Signs of burning and the large number of arrowheads found, some of them charred, do suggest attack, but since 98% of the discovered arrowheads were broken this suggests their rejection in crafting or trade as much as it confirms conflict.

The finding of arrowheads close to the enclosure's gateways suggests they had been traded there, not necessarily used in offence. The burning can also imply magical rites or a closedown incineration (a kind of shamanic demolition and withdrawal). It could have been an accident on a dry year, though the burning was indeed comprehensive. Regarding Carn Brea as a fortress is a little



Carn Brea as seen from Botrea Hill
(20m/30km distant – telephoto shot)

²⁸ Davies, Simon R, *The Early Neolithic Tor Enclosures of Southwest Britain*, Univ Birmingham, p169ff, https://etheses.bham.ac.uk/1141/1/Davies_S_10_PhD.pdf

implausible, since the enclosing banks stretched more than one kilometre, requiring a large defence force, and they would lack access to water or supplies if under siege. More likely, it was a good place to live in the warm climate of the mid-Neolithic.

Whatever is the case, Carn Brea demonstrates how interpretation of ancient remains can vary according to the predisposition of the interpreter. I too might be guilty of interpretative bias, and time will tell, but it is always worth examining alternatives since accepted interpretations often originate from an authority holding the view-point of a particular time and generation, and ideas can become embedded in ways that don't always turn out to be correct.

Carn Brea is a prominent node exactly on the Michael Line, a long-distance alignment crossing southern Britain. It passes from Carn Lês Boel through Carn Brea and Helman Tor (near Lostwithiel), to the Hurlers stone circle in East Cornwall, then to Glastonbury Tor, Avebury and Hopton-on-Sea in Norfolk.

Carn Brea is also a major node for backbone alignments stretching across Cornwall: one goes to Roundwood Fort near Truro, then Dodman Point cliff sanctuary, and as far as Start Point in Devon. The people of Carn Brea seemed to understand its axial power and eminence. In those days the tor hill would have been more green and pleasant, less stark and bleak than it is now – the climate was more equable then.

Trencrom Hill *Tor Crom* (SW 517 362)

On the eastern edge of the Penwith peninsula, Trencrom Hill has spectacular views over both the north and south coasts. When standing on the hill our attention is drawn eastward, with a fine view toward Carn Brea. Imposing when seen from the east as you approach Hayle on the A30, Trencrom Hill acts as a guardian hill for Penwith, together with St Michael's Mount and St Ives Head. All three had defensive qualities, though there is no evidence of their being involved in conflict in ancient times. Mysteriously, these commanding places, all of them major power points, align with each other, forming Penwith's threshold. There is a detectable

energy shift when you cross the alignment stretching between them. It crosses the A30 at the village shop at Crowlas.

Trencrom would be a lovely summer residence for a tribe of 30-40 people. It has a flattish top for dwellings (the remains of Iron Age roundhuts are visible), plus a hilltop spring and fine views over Godrevy Head, St Agnes



Trencrom Hill from Hayle Towans

Beacon, Carn Brea,

Godolphin and Tregonning Hills, Castle-an-Dinas and St Michael's Mount. A benign hilltop, it was reoccupied in the Iron Age when many of its Neolithic remains, by then three millennia old, would have been upcycled. A trackway from Carn Brea, a full day's walk away, would have branched at Trencrom, north toward the Zennor uplands, west to Castle-an-Dinas and south to Mount's Bay.

Arguably it was not, or hardly ever, a defensive site (though Trencrom has better defensive qualities than Carn Brea), but it was a proud *stronghold*, endowing a sense of territorial proprietorship of the surrounding domain. People there got a feeling for their land and its place under the heavens – not exactly in the sense of *owning* it, but it was their home turf. In a way, it owned them.

If you draw a straight line from Carn Brea to Trencrom Hill, progressing it onwards, it passes through Carfury menhir, Lanyon Quoit and Boswens menhir (part of the Tregeseal complex).

Another alignment passes from the Nine Maidens stone circle through Mulfra Quoit and Trencrom Hill to Roundwood Fort near Truro (another Neolithic site usually regarded as Iron Age).

Another alignment goes from Pendeen Watch over Carn Galva and Trencrom Hill to the Wendron Nine Maidens stone circles in Kerrier, and eventually to Nare Head in Roseland.

These are classic backbone alignments, and Trencrom Hill has four (that's a lot) – the fourth being the nearly N-S alignment of St Michael's Mount, Trencrom Hill and St Ives Head. Some of the sites on these backbones – stone circles and menhirs – were built in the Bronze Age but, be not deceived, many or all of these sites might well have been known in the Neolithic, even if they took the form of groves or clearings or they were marked only with a pole.

Trencrom is worth a climb on a nice day, though best avoided when it's windy. On a warm spring or summer's day it's a wee slice of paradise, and its psychoactive energy has a way of tweaking our perceptions to make it feel especially so. Try finding the elusive spring below the summit on the NW side – keep your antennae up for a nice feminine presence there. Try figuring out where the two main energy-centres are on the top of the hill.

St Michael's Mount

Carrek los y'n cos or 'grey rock in the wood' (SW 514 298)

With its mythic outline, this is one of Cornwall's most charismatic sites, packed with archetypal symbolism. Today, topped by a medieval castle started in the 1100s CE, the Mount guards Mount's Bay and it is visible from



many places around the bay, including the Lizard. Geologically a tourmaline granite intrusion, in ancient times it was a significant trading place, harbour and meeting point for people visiting Cornwall from continental Europe. It has a long, varied history, as a Neolithic tor enclosure and cliff sanctuary, an Iron Age and medieval trading place, a monastery, fortress, stately home and now a National Trust property.

In Neolithic times it was not an island – its original name being *carrek los y'n cos* or ‘grey rock in the wood’. The coast was a mile or so out to sea and the Mount was surrounded by woods. The remains of a submerged forest on nearby Marazion beach are sometimes revealed during beach-stripping storms such as those in early 2014. It became an island during the Bronze Age around 1700 BCE, according to radiocarbon dating of tree-stumps. This might have happened with the help of a tsunami from Portugal or the Azores (from which direction Mount’s Bay is vulnerable).

Legend has it that Joseph of Arimathaea and his nephew Jesus visited here (and Crewkerne, Culbone, Glastonbury, Priddy and other places), when Jesus was a young man. Before that it was visited by a Greek explorer, Pytheas, around 325 BCE. In the Neolithic it was an upstanding tor that was special to the locals – dramatic and impressive.

The Mount is an important and focal alignment centre, with at least ten major alignments passing through it, putting it into a national league. Draw a straight line from Carn Brea to St Michael’s Mount and progress it onwards, and it hits Treen Circle at Treryn Dinas cliff sanctuary. Lo behold, the Merry Maidens stone circle was built to sit exactly on that alignment.

Progress a line from the Mount to Pendennis Point (*Pen Dynas*), a cliff sanctuary at Falmouth, and it lands up at Start Point in Devon. Other alignments go to the Trippet Stones on Bodmin Moor and to the Merryvale complex on Dartmoor and, in the other direction, to Samson Hill on Bryher in the Scillies. In Penwith, the Mount acts as one of the peninsula’s most important alignment centres.

Carn Galva Lookout Carn (SW 426 364)

This multi-bump dragon-tor, with fine views from its summits, acted as an *axis mundi* or a perceived axle of Neolithic Penwith.²⁹ The ancients loved central places, and so do we (we call them *cities* or *attractions*). Carn Galva, Zennor Hill and Bosporthenis valley

²⁹ Michell, John, *The Sacred Center – the ancient art of locating sanctuaries*, Inner Traditions, 2009.

served as the Neolithic hub of Penwith's world – 'Metro Penwith'. It loomed over Gurnard's Head and Bosigran Castle on the north coast, forming a backdrop to them – they were all part of the same territory.

Carn Galva has a few peaks when seen side-on. Seen end-on from the south, from the Nine Maidens stone circle, it looks like a rounded pyramid. Quite a few propped and placed stones are found on this hill, presumably put there around the



time of the building of the tor enclosure in the mid-3000s. In its heyday it probably looked less stark than it does today, hovering as it did above the treescape like a beacon over the wildwoods.

Carn Galva looks and feels more prominent than it actually is, and it is surprisingly visible from many parts of Penwith. While neighbouring Watch Croft, Penwith's highest hill, is a little higher and bulkier, Carn Galva has perceptual prominence – your eye is magnetically drawn to it as if it were a centre of gravity, a magic mountain with a numinous presence. Its reality-field generates this perceptual exaggeration of height and greatness. This psycho-geographic quality of a holy hill was an element that interested ancient people. They didn't measure and map the land as we do: their perceived landscape was subtly-toned, meaning-rich, myth-imbued and magical.

Carn Kenidjack *Carn Ujek, Howling Tor (SW 388 329)*

Carn Kenidjack or the Hooting Tor, so named because of wind effects during gales sounding out on forbidding nights, is both daunting and characterful. It is not very high but it is visible from many places – again, a magic mountain – presenting a broody,

mysterious, jagged, remote character. Its shape *says* something, bringing a strangely familiar yet indistinct message from the great beyond, and that's its mystique. Its rocky, granitic outline, including two zoöomorphic-shaped rocks and a few placed stones, is strikingly archetypal in form and not entirely of this earth.

It looks westwards and is visible from Scilly.

Eastwards, Chûn Castle, Watch Croft and Carn Galva stand out. The summer solstice sun rises over Chûn when seen from Carn Kenidjack. The carn hovered atmospherically over



the stone circles at Tregeseal, as did Carn Galva over the Nine Maidens. The carns play a dominant role in these stone circles' visual landscapes, both of them built when the centre of activity moved down from the tors to the stone circles in the Bronze Age. Kenidjack would originally have loomed out of the trees, acting as a definite landmark, with a complex of stone circles and cairns in its lap. It's a classic Neolithic tor.

Zennor Hill (SW 464 381)

This is a granitic massif with two upstanding tors, one looking over the north coast and the other looking more south, east and west. It is not a tor enclosure, but it was significant at the time, so it is worth mentioning here. Quite a few people lived on the plateau stretching from Zennor Hill to the Trendrine Cairns.

It had its own rocking logan stone, with propped stones dotted around in a number of places.

At a time when it was warm and equable in Cornwall, Zennor Hill would have been friendly, a grassy refuge from the dank woodlands, but nowadays it has a rather bleak, quirky, eerie atmosphere. If you visit, it is easy to



get pisky-led and befogged, so keep your antennae tuned for deteriorating weather. Zennor and Sperris Quits are found on the massif of Zennor Hill (though Sperris Quoit is on Sperris Croft).

Friends in High Places

The ancients liked high places, and the northern highlands, stretching from Carn Kenidjack in the west to Rosewall Hill in the east, suited them well. It is littered with early ancient sites and signs of settlement. The warm climate made hanging out on the hills sensible and desirable. When necessary, people would move lower down to the shelter of the woods, retreating into winter huts. Today, the tors look rugged, bleak and lonely but, in Neolithic times, hovering over the seemingly endless woodlands, they would have been more enticing and captivating. These central places people could call *our space*, even if they stayed there only periodically or for special occasions, get-togethers or ceremonies. Everywhere else was nature's space, where humans were guests.

It is crucial to understand the psychological effect of living in almost endless woodland with a sparse population – you were more likely to meet animals than humans. It's very different to the farming landscape, roads and dense population we are accustomed to today. In dense woodland, visibility is short-distance. One mile is a long way, five miles is a long trek, and the forest goes on forever. Your universe is shrouded by the canopy of the trees.

There are obstacles and dangers. You can get lost. It can be claustrophobic at times. Getting lost in the forest is something we read about in children's books but it was a very real issue for pre-historic people.

Woodland has its virtues, being rich in timber and food sources. In winter, with the leaves off the trees, the woods are lighter and yet still sheltering. In summer it was best to spend time on the hills and near the coasts. Getting above or beyond the trees served as a breakout from this enveloping wooded reality, especially when the canopy of leaves made woodlands shady, even steamy in summer.

Hills were important for observing approaching weather systems, looking around for campfire smoke to see where your relatives were, watching the movements of birds, seeking omens and signs in the clouds, and observing the rising and setting of sun, moon and stars. Up on high you could feel more free, above it all.

To call together everyone in the neighbourhood, you could light a smoky beacon fire, sound a horn or bang drums from a tor top, and the message would get around. People were happy to wait around a few days to meet up with their friends or family – timetables and the need for them were a thing of the future. The importance of signalling in a sparsely-peopled world shouldn't be underestimated. In the Carpathians in eastern Europe, back in the mists of time, they developed forms of loud back-of-the-throat power-singing that could be heard over quite a distance, conveying fairly complex sung codes and messages.

For Neolithic people these places were like the centre of town, where they met up and *things happened*. They were *definite places*, permanent fixtures. The panoramas from the tors and hills allowed people to look out beyond their own little world, over the landscape toward the far horizon. The tors, rooted deep in the earth's crust, draw up strong energy fields that give them the magic atmosphere, making times spent in these places rather special.

Being transhumant, following a round of seasonal residences, people were often on the move. At fullmoons, equinoxes and solstices they would gravitate to the tor enclosures to mark special

occasions, catch the latest gossip, have a clan feast and meet relatives and visitors. Meeting others, assembling for summer fullmoons and communing with the stars were special events in people's lives. They probably imbibed mind-medicines round the fire under a fullmoon and had *a good think* and *a good talk*.

Abodes of Giants

Local traditions tell of giants occupying the tor enclosures, engaging in throwing rocks at each other – hence that the tors are covered with strewn boulders. These tales derive from creation myths describing the formation of the landscape, referring back to the mysterious great beings of a primeval time long gone.

Tor enclosures were the first *constructed* sacred sites in Cornwall. Archaeologists reckon the tors were first discernibly used around 3800 or 3700 BCE, then to be enclosed with stone-and-earth banks built between granite boulders and outcrops around the sides of the tor hills. The timing of this implies that inward migrants from the south, arriving around that time, stimulated this interest in enclosing tors – or perhaps the incomers brought the idea of moving stones around and building a separated, consecrated space. The ancients have loved hills since they first trod these shores, and the hilltop habit surely prevailed in the Mesolithic era too.

Some archaeologists rather unimaginatively interpret the banks as defensive. It is more likely that the enclosing banks were built to draw a protective or magic circle around the summit. This was sacred space and the banks made a statement that the hill was consecrated, hallowed and running by human-defined rules.

Carn Galva and Trencrom Hill are noted for a preponderance of placed and propped stones – big, interestingly-shaped granite boulders, deliberately placed or propped on smaller stones. What their exact purpose was, and the geomantic cosmology behind them, is yet to emerge. Geomantic alignments stretching across the landscape from placed and propped stones on Carn Galva have been discovered by Kenny Price, including sitting places made for

viewing certain landscape and astronomical phenomena.³⁰ Placed stones, as precursors to menhirs, established the principle of erecting stones to enhance landscapes, giving added magical significance, energy and narrative to specific locations.

Enclosure

At first the tors were probably open-access, though when the enclosing banks were built, sometime around 3700-3500 BCE, a higher level of specialisation and selectivity were creeping in. This epitomised a gradually stratifying society in which those with special skills – knowledge-holders, shamans, wise-women, chiefs, elders, healers and artisans – gained in standing. The tor enclosures might have been reserved for initiates, students, invitees and for special uses and occasions only.

Society was developing and social specialisation was part of that. This wasn't the kind of hierarchical stratification that came later, driven by force and inheritance. This was based more on aptitude, gifts, content of character and personal power – what the Maori call *mana*. Skills and knowledge advance as a society develops, and specialisation increases. Yet these people were tribal, mostly related. Relationships were person-sized and society was neither as alienated nor as competitive nor as territorial as it was to become many centuries later. Population was too sparse and people were quite mobile. Even so, the tors will have held a higher perceived value than other places, and there is a possibility there was conflict over them, but the only visible sign of this is at Carn Brea, as many archaeologists believe, and that's debateable.

All members of a clan probably went to the tors at special times – for ceremonies, moots, rites of passage, education, healing or stargazing – but such spaces were increasingly reserved for particular people and occasions. Here lie the roots of a conceptual division of the spiritual and material, heaven and earth, giving rise

³⁰ See <https://ancientwhisperspenwith.blogspot.com/2020/03/carn-galver-propped-stone-structure.html>

to the notion of sacred enclosures, temples and churches – consecrated spaces that are decidedly not part of ordinary reality.

A sophisticated culture does not have to be materially driven. Material sophistication involves a lot of work with building, clearance, development, maintenance and chores – the proliferation of *stuff*. But there is *cultural* sophistication too. The workload of transhumant people of the 3000s BCE was much less onerous than that of late Bronze Age farmers after 1200 BCE. Without domesticated animals the Neolithics were free of the poxes, flu and colds that were later acquired from close contact with farm animals. The relatively lightweight Neolithic life was easier than what came two millennia later.

Living on a mixture of gathered, fished, hunted and cultivated foods, the Neolithics' diet was healthier than that of later farmers and even of well-fed moderns. Resources were plentiful much of the time. The seas had more fish, seals, dolphins and whales than today. One seal can provide a fullmoon feast for fifty people.

Things changed with a climatic downturn, plague or social breakdown around 3200-2900 BCE. No more tor building went on, and the Neolithics had to hunker down. Then, after a few centuries, circumstances eased, populations began reviving, forest clearings grew and, after further centuries, newbuilt stone circles on lower land became the centre of attention. The tors probably remained places of initiation or retreat but they lost their primacy.

So, in the 3000s BCE the tors, with their enclosures, were pretty much the most important places in Penwith, together with the cliff sanctuaries. The human sense of geom mythology, an endowing or projection of mythos, cosmology and memory upon the landscape, centred around the tors. This led the later megalith builders of the Bronze Age to base their geomantic system of Penwith upon the existing tors and cliff sanctuaries, utilising backbone alignments to determine where many of their sites were to be located. They drew on a legacy system inherited from an era long gone.

In a way, the alignments *created themselves*, since they linked natural power points that were already to some extent aligned,

whether or not they had constructed sites on them. This is remarkable enough, suggestive of an inherent order in nature, an implicit energy system that we do not see or understand, or perhaps want to see. It suggests that the energy-fields of the earth play a part in the geological sculpting of the landscape.

The Neolithics discovered the principles behind these alignments and used them as the basis for creating and enhancing the backbone alignments system. In a sense, Neolithic tors and cliff sanctuaries hold primacy over all other sites in Cornwall. However, we do tend to get more excited about quoits and stone circles.

7. Peering over the Rolling Seas

Cliff Sanctuaries

Customarily called cliff castles, this is a misnomer. They were sanctuaries and gathering places more than defensive sites. Usually not highly rated as ancient sites, these coast-hugging places had a range of purposes and they are of great importance. Normally classed as Iron Age and reckoned to be in use mainly around 400ish BCE to CE 100ish, evidence provided by backbone alignments suggests they were important long before then. This implies a change in the way we understand West Penwith's pre-history, backdating a bundle of sites to the Neolithic and almost doubling the number of Neolithic sites in Penwith.

To Neolithic people, these coastal headlands were as important as tors and hilltops. Places of awe and power located in the liminal zone on the edge of the land, protruding into the vastness of the ocean, they were places for looking out toward the far rim of the world. The elemental drama and vastness of the seas off Cornwall are emphatic and stirring – its great asset.

The southwest of Britain has around sixty, of which forty are in Cornwall. They were intended neither as castles nor as defensive sites. If they were fought over, of which there are no signs in Penwith, it would have been because they were key clan assets, but there is no evidence of such activity.

The geomantic framework of Penwith is anchored by the tors and cliff sanctuaries. Cliff sanctuaries can be backdated to the Neolithic 3000s since Lanyon Quoit, dated around 3600 BCE, is located at the exact intersection of three backbone alignments, all involving cliff sanctuaries and Neolithic tors. It could not have been accurately situated where it is were this not so.

Purposes

In Neolithic times people developed a need to claim areas of land as *human space*. After all, there were no roads, towns and villages, just trees, greenery and endless landscape.

Travelling a long distance wasn't easy and getting lost wasn't difficult.

There were wildwood hazards such as wolves, bears, boars, brambles and bogs. Neolithics were engulfed in nature and had to respect it. Even so, increasingly people saw themselves as a distinct species, feeling a growing need to claim land in special places, quite often sectioned off with rocks and boulders. This was *our* patch, where human rules pertained – the rest, out there, was the domain of nature, wild animals and things that go bump in the night. This nascent territoriality represented a quest for human sovereignty in an oversized world with a fair measure of survival challenges and threats. It had a magical dimension too, staking out a space where the humans held sway.

Power and atmosphere suffuse the cliff sanctuaries, and no doubt they fulfilled a number of needs in ancient times. On a lovely summer's day they can be atmospheric patches of heaven on earth, and Neolithic gatherings on balmy days are highly imaginable. Just as we go to cafes, town squares or parks today, people would have gone to cliff sanctuaries and hilltops.

Perhaps some cliff sanctuaries functioned at different times as places of counsel, assembly, judgement of disputes, or for events and meetings. Some may have been places of retreat, teaching, healing and initiation, used as natural temples for ceremonies or



Treryn Dinas, 15 miles away, seen across Mount's Bay from Trewavas Head

rites of passage, or for safe storage of tribal valuables, assets and offerings. At times some of them might have been elemental places for being alone, for quiet reflection, to convalesce or to die in peace. Some might have been hangouts for the eccentrics, shamans, wise-women or hermits. Ultimately, they were places where people could commune with the vastness of all things.

They would have had practical uses for watching the weather, tides and omens, keeping watch over the ocean and tracking the stars. Some cliff sanctuaries were probably lookouts for boat traffic and tracking fish shoals, seals, dolphins and whales, and some might on occasions have served as coastal beacon sites – the prehistoric equivalent of lighthouses.

The usage and character of each was unique, and you can sense this variety of possibilities if you visit them today – why not make it a summertime project to visit them all? These are inspiring places.

Hot Property

Cliff sanctuaries were Neolithic, possibly Mesolithic in first use. Iron Age evidence found at many of them – boundary banks, artefacts and a few signs of settlement – does not indicate first use, but it does indicate upcycling of an existing site. In Iron Age times cliff sanctuaries already held the place-memory of the past and its ancient traditions.

Every clan will have treasured its landscape assets, and many Penwith clans would have had a stretch of coast. Cliff sanctuaries staked out the peninsula's peripheral bounds, spaced roughly evenly around the peninsula. They would have been valued places of space, wonder and power, natural temples where gatherings, ceremonies and rites of passage might have been held.

Some are defensible, but most are too easy to lay siege to and too difficult to escape from in a leather, wood-framed boat on a choppy sea. Conceivably a cliff sanctuary could be used for an heroic last stand, but this is unlikely and there is no evidence of it. Their defensive function is questionable in all but a few cases. Yes, they

were strongholds and places of power, though a wise military strategist would not choose many of them for making a stand. If the clan were under threat, they would be good places for concealing valuables, magical objects and children, however, while the threat was tactically diverted elsewhere.

There are hardly any signs of conflict in Penwith in ancient times, although in the Iron Age there are more signs upcountry in areas of England and also in Brittany. Occasionally the peninsula might have been liable to attack from the sea, though only some cliff sanctuaries would have been of value in guarding landing beaches except for St Ives Head, St Michael's Mount and Cape Cornwall. Treryn Dinas is a little far from Porthcurno to defend its beach. If Penwith were threatened, landing beaches would need defending, yet no cliff castle overlooks Sennen beach and Whitesands Bay – Penwith's best landing place apart from St Ives and Mount's Bay. So really, perhaps we are talking here of more of a magical than a defensive kind of power.

If the ancients saw Penwith as a magical landscape, then the cliff sanctuaries geomantically *held* and protected the peninsula. By sanctifying cliff sanctuaries, the health and wellbeing of the peninsula would be spiritually enhanced and upgraded. This is a fundamental principle of geomancy: *if the subtle-energy patterns of the land are vitalised and in balance, all will be well in heaven, on earth and in the human realm*. Cynics might snootily pronounce that such beliefs do not prevent bullets flying, but the peacemaking principle here is that those who seek conflict and who fire bullets will tend to get deflected elsewhere, tie themselves in a knot or get caught in a storm. It just so happens that, throughout history, Penwith has done pretty well in avoiding attack, even in Viking times or World War Two.

In this way of looking at things, immunity to mishap rests on *holding the light*, maintaining the atmosphere, balances and subtle conditions of the area. The ancient name for Penwith, *Belerion*, means 'shining land'. A key intention behind any geomantic system was thus arguably to enhance the indwelling spirit of the

land, raise its energy and fertility, to improve its fortunes and the overall wellbeing of nature, elementals and people.

Archaeologists recognise a ‘cliff castle’ by its Iron Age ‘defensive ramparts’. However, the possibilities are wider, and this becomes clear by visiting some of the bold headlands of the area.

The geographical spacing of cliff sanctuaries in Penwith suggests that three further as yet unrecognised cliff sanctuaries are possible. They could be called ‘type two’, having an upper area that in many cases could accommodate a crowd of people, and then a lower outcrop sticking out into the sea: one example is at Carn Naun in the north (where an outcrop and flat area above it could qualify); a second is at Tol Pedn Penwith, involving a flat area stretching down to Hella Point; and the third is at Kemyel Point above Lamorna harbour, with Carn Du below.

In other parts of Cornwall a ‘type three’ cliff sanctuary can be suggested too – a prominent promontory with a feeling of power but with neither rampart nor lower outcrop. Examples are Predannack Head, Pendennis Castle and Rame Head. Conceivably, Cape Cornwall, St Ives Head and St Michael’s Mount could be ‘type three’ cliff sanctuaries.

Faugan Round and Lescudjack hillfort could qualify as part of the peripheral energy-system of Penwith, though they were hill camps, not cliff sanctuaries. The straight, almost due south-north alignment from St Michael’s Mount to Trencrom Hill and St Ives Head acted as Penwith’s landward energy boundary. The peninsula was thus ring-fenced, ‘held in light’.

These sites are arguably as important as stone circles and Neolithic tors, though many experts would disagree. They are well worth visiting.

On the Edge around the cliff sanctuaries

Treryn Dinas

Logan Rock or *Castel Tredhyn*, castle of Tredyn (SW 3972 2198)

With a daunting magic and brooding mystery hovering around it, Treryn Dinas is a fascinating place, though not to be messed with. Enter with respect or the Cosmic Trickster might knobble you with a dash of un-solicited



reality. You get the feeling *odd things* might have happened here.

It's a place of mystery, power, sorcery and truth. It is impressive in its strong underlying feeling of power. In folklore it was the home of giants. On the *dinas* itself there are no easy assembly places or comfortable places to hang out – precarious scrambling is involved. Something about this and its obstacular nature gives the *dinas* its character. It's *strong*, and worth visiting to feel the brooding, enigmatic character of the place.

The headland has two parts, the rocky *dinas* itself and a large encampment to its landward side called Treen Circle, allegedly built in the Iron Age – and the high banks on its landward side probably were. However, its first use would have been in the Neolithic, if not earlier, even if little or nothing was built there then. Neolithic artefacts and relics have been found on the *dinas* – items and offerings hidden in the rocks.

How otherwise can we say it's Neolithic? First, the *dinas* is so prominent and rich in character that it *must* have been important then. Second, Treen Circle lies exactly on a backbone alignment (108) through the Merry Maidens, St Michael's Mount and Carn Brea – an alignment of three natural features with a Bronze Age stone circle dropped onto it. Treen Circle is where people would hang out and camp at the *dinas*. Antiquarians once thought there was a stone circle in here, but this is improbable.

It was the most inhabited of the cliff sanctuaries except perhaps St Michael's Mount. Treen Circle camp could have hosted some pretty big gatherings and, in the Iron Age, quite a few people, living in roundhouses or sod huts. This would have been a summer residence – in winter it is rather exposed.

It was strategically placed, not far from Porthcurno, one of Penwith's prime landing beaches. But still, it's a bit far away for defence of the beach, if such were necessary, so a defensive purpose to the *dinas* is questionable, even though Treen Circle is separated from the surrounding landscape by a significant Iron Age rampart and ditch. Just outside it, a strongly aligned Bronze Age menhir has recently been rediscovered and re-erected.

Unlike many cliff sanctuaries, Treryn Dinas had practical value, with good farmland and fishing grounds, situated in a commanding position that is a twenty minute trot from Porthcurno. One wonders whether rocking the logan rock at Treryn Dinas was done to make sound and rhythm for geomantic reasons, to pulse the earth, or even as an ancient kind of foghorn, sounding out a slow drumbeat to warn boats when sea mists were down. The rather unique upstanding stone at its summit gives Treryn Dinas a special character – it might have been placed there.

Another backbone alignment runs from Treryn Dinas to Boscawen-ûn, Lanyon Quoit, Bosiliack Barrow and the Nine Maidens. So, three of Penwith's stone circles are linked with Treryn Dinas – that's significant. But no alignment has been found with Tregeseal.

Tol Pedn Penwith

Headland of the Hole, Gwennap Head or Dinnas Cliff (SW 3672 2180)

No recognised cliff sanctuary exists here, yet as the south-westernmost point of Britain it might be expected that *something* would be here.

There are scanty records of a cliff sanctuary noted by antiquarian Vivien Russell, citing the 18th



Century antiquarian Borlase and other sources.³¹ There is a viable location too – a flattish area next to the coastwatch road, stretching down toward Hella Point, a classic power outcrop. Hella Point is a characteristic carn for a type two cliff sanctuary – one with a flattish region higher up, perhaps with a community function, and an energetic rock outcrop lower down, protruding into the sea, perhaps with more of a magical function.

Tol Pedn has no ‘defensive ramparts’, though the whole plateau that forms the headland is protected, should it need protecting, by the steep-sided valley just above Porthgwarra, demarcating the headland. In the classic definition of a cliff castle, it does not qualify. But perhaps the definition needs to be modified to recognise different types of cliff sanctuary.

Tol Pedn Penwith was renamed Gwennap Head in the 1880s (the name is used in the BBC shipping forecast). It would be a fine place for summertime residence in ancient times, or perhaps for fairs, ceilidhs or ceremonies. In winter it would allow a good view of the winter solstice sunset on the ocean horizon. However, it is

³¹ Brief biographies of Penwith’s main antiquarians:
<http://ancientpenwith.org/menhirs/antiquarians.html>

completely unsheltered in high winds, so as a permanent residential site it is not advised – try somewhere else.

It has a cove on each side – Porth Gwarra and Porth Loe – both of them later being smugglers’ coves. Tol Pedn is a funny place, slightly bleak and mysterious, with fascinating granitic rock-beings (simulacra) dotted around, a few possible placed stones and a part-collapsed cave (hence *tol* or ‘hole’). As the southwestern endpoint of the isles of Britain it is a special place, exactly aligned with St Michael’s Mount and the Hurlers stone circles on Bodmin Moor.

A mile offshore is a submerged reef, the Runnel Stone, that in ancient times rose above the water. It was significant to the ancients, as were other offshore rocks and reefs. We can tell because there are three alignments going to it, and this also happens with some other offshore rocks. On the plateau at Tol Pedn two peculiar modern objects stick up. If you’re in a boat, positioning yourself where these two line up, you’re exactly above the reef and about to strike the rocks – and you won’t be the first to sink there.

Carn Lês Boel

Carn of the Court of the Axe (SW 3571 2325)

Never inhabited – it wouldn’t be suitable – Carn Lês Boel seems to me to have been reserved for *singular, special occasions*. It has a dramatic solitude to it. An energetic place with a wide-open character, it is exposed to winds and



gales – not a good place to live. But it is *special* and *strong* – one of the most sanctified and powerful of the cliff sanctuaries of Penwith, with a deep and spacious feeling to it. It feels as if it served as a place for seers, holy people and their trainees. Ovates (counsellors

and judges) could have held court here, or druids might have held special rites on chosen occasions. This is distinctly a sacred place, with a steady, uplifting majesty, like a launchpad to the far beyond. With its two guardian gateway stones (one of them now fallen), it feels distinctly consecrated – not a place for everyone, anytime. To enter, you had to pass through the gateway, an energy threshold it is easy to *feel* – so pause there and ask to enter. Most walkers on the nearby coast path tend to walk on by without noticing the carn, so perhaps its psychic protection still holds today. It is prominent and hallowed yet veiled.

There were two thresholds to cross when entering the carn. The first was a ditch near the coast path, demarcating the headland and, underneath, the landward walls of two seal caves, and the second was the two gateway stones. One of these stones is a classic propped stone, raised slightly above the ground on a few small rocks. Why this was done we do not know, but presumably it gave significance or power to the rock.

On the summit is a flattish rock platform where there is a strong energy vortex. If you visit, see if you can intuit the spot and stand on it awhile. You might find yourself swaying around, and not just in response to buffeting wind. A menhir-like rock, now tipped over the side of the platform, might originally have stood on top of this vortex and platform. Along the carn are two more vortices: one at an upstanding, bulgy, earthfast rock and another at a rock platform further down. See if you can find them.

Carn Lês Boel means *headland-court-axe* – court as in ‘royal court’. The axe could, at a stretch, symbolise cutting through life’s confusions, like a judge’s gavel, signifying a final decision made. Though it can mean ‘axe-shaped’ too, which it is when seen from above. The carn has a strong sense of the presence of primeval beings. It is otherworldly, deep and dimensional, with a profound sense of interiority.

This hits you when you enter – a sense of *presence*, elevation, far horizons and detachment from normal life. It feels connected with the ‘great, wide and wonderful’: Africa and the Americas are just

over the horizon. It's worth settling down, closing your eyes and spending time *just being* there. The carn is welcoming if you are open to it. Gulls and peregrine falcons wheel around, soaring on the updraughts. Below are caves in which seals take shelter to rest and give birth to their young.

Carn Lês Boel is aligned with Carn Brea, the Hurlers stone circle in East Cornwall, Glastonbury Tor and Avebury on the Michael Line. Progress that alignment the other way, southwest over the ocean along the arc of a great circle, and you'll come to the Maya lands of Yucatan, Mexico, 4,000 miles away.

I go there when I need to hear the still, small voice within, to step out of my everyday world. It pulls me into a deep, timeless state. It has been a place of memorable moments and punctuation-points in life. So, stay awhile and you might find that you receive a gift of grace in your heart and soul. The carn, together with the inspiring walk from Porthgwarra or Land's End, has a cleansing, clearing, uplifting effect. The Atlantic rollers coming in from the west can sometimes be thunderous and mighty, as they approach the bays to the north and south of the carn.

On the north side is a collapsed cavern – now a big gash as seen from Nanjizal Bay. It is thought that this fell in sometime in the last 2,000 years – so it was likely a cave, not a gash, when the carn was in use in ancient times. The presence of caverns somehow influence the carn's qualities. Seal caves were significant to the ancients: a menhir at Higher Bosistow, the Seal Stone, a short distance away, is shaped literally like a seal looking toward the caves.

Maen Castle

‘Stone castle’, near Sennen (SW 3476 2576)

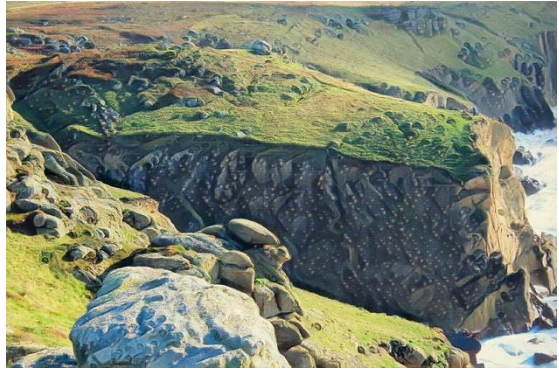
This was home to the mythic giant Myên Du – quite a nice home, with plenteous air conditioning. Maen Castle³² seems quite functional as a space to stay or to live, sporting good views, though

³² *Mên*, *maen* and the variations you see in this paragraph are pronounced *mayn*, meaning ‘stone’. It's *maen* in Welsh. Unlike Welsh, Cornish spelling and its anglicisation have not been standardised.

it doesn't have a wide panorama – not the best place for a lookout or for monitoring boats coming to Sennen beach. Nearby Mayon Cliff, Pedn-mên-du, nearer Sennen, would be better for that.

Iron age pottery sherds found at Maen Castle are interpreted as signs of occupation, though they also suggest feasting and periodic summer residency.

Though exposed to westerly winds, field systems can be seen on the slopes nearby –



an indicator that the climate was more favourable then. Viable as a gathering place, a three-day Bronze Age summer party would be just great here. At times it has a rarefied, spacious, wide-open atmosphere. Sometimes it gets lost in the fog.

Aligned with Boscawen-ûn and St Michael's Mount in one direction and South Hill on Bryher in the Scillies in the other, it is geomantically prominent even though, in the immediate landscape, it isn't topographically so. This major backbone alignment suggests a key reason why the cliff sanctuary is at Maen Castle rather than up on Mayon Cliff, just a five minute jog away. Mayon Cliff has interesting cairns, overlooking the coast up to Cape Cornwall, and it was significant in its own right, but not as a cliff sanctuary.

One mysterious question is this: Maen Castle is not the most prominent headland in the vicinity, yet it definitely *is* a type one cliff sanctuary, proven by the Iron Age remains and artefacts found there. Pedn-mên-du to the north and Dr Syntax's Head to the south are far more prominent. Maen Castle is withdrawn and low, its view along the coast is not far-reaching, and its defensive qualities aren't good since defenders would face attackers uphill – a distinct disadvantage. It would also be useless for defending Sennen beach, one of Penwith's key landing places.

So why is it here? One reason must be the above-mentioned alignment. Choosing Maen Castle instead of another nearby headland suggests that the ancients considered alignments a deciding factor in selecting cliff sanctuaries, even if their visible landscape qualities might be relatively unspectacular. This is also the case on the Lizard and in Kerrier, where equally unspectacular cliff sanctuaries such as Gunwalloe, Tubby's Head and Crane Castle are located. All of them, nevertheless, are aligned with Carn Brea, the alignments clearly being one key reason they exist.³³

Archaeologists believe Maen Castle to be the oldest of the cliff sanctuaries. Well, perhaps. It might have the oldest Iron Age remains (though dating has not systematically been done at cliff sanctuaries), but this was clearly not its first use, and the backbone alignment that it sits on – probably established in the 3000s – suggests this. It is also likely that *all* cliff sanctuaries, each a major topographical numinosity, were revered by the ancients at more or less the same time. After all, Penwith is not huge, and its early inhabitants will have ranged around all of it.

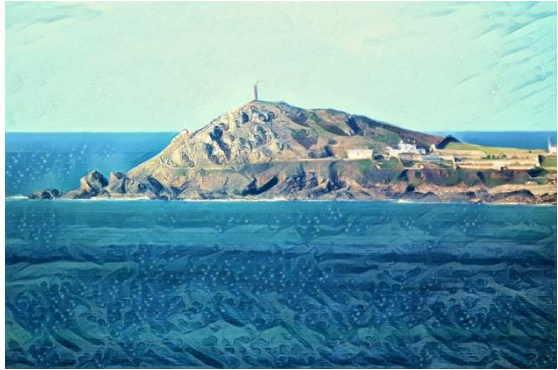
Cape Cornwall

Kilgooth Ust, 'Gooseback of St Just' (SW 350 319)

Kilgwdh or Kilgooth Ust (pron: *east*) has been blighted by the tin industry in recent centuries, the surviving chimney on the top being a remnant. There are no visible ancient remains on the cape – all were presumably destroyed – though there are records of cairns on the neck of the headland. But it was a cliff sanctuary, arguably type three. It can't *not* be a cliff sanctuary, because of its prominence and the sheer number of alignments passing through it. It aligns with Zennor Hill, St Ives Head and St Agnes Beacon, and a direct alignment goes from here to St Michael's Mount, others to Scilly. Proud and upstanding, it is easily seen from Scilly and from far out to sea, and used as a maritime landmark. The clan who had this headland had a major asset.

³³ Map of Carn Brea radials: www.palden.co.uk/shiningland/map-carnbrea-radials.html

Prominent and strategic, with a harbour cove on either side, in the Bronze Age it was close to early tin-streaming workings up and down the nearby coasts at Nancherrow, Cot Valley and Botallack.



Early on, there was gold in the vicinity. With the Cape being visible from Scilly, *Porth Ust* (Priest's Cove), immediately to the south, served as a landing place for Scillonians. Porth Ledden, immediately north, was engaged in the tin trade, with valuable arsenic-rich tin sources close by in Kenidjack valley and at Botallack. Sea levels were around 10-12ft (3-4m) lower in the Bronze Age, so the sandy beach in both coves would then have stretched further out.

In the Neolithic, before the tin trade came along, the mystic qualities of Cape Cornwall probably felt stronger – the mining has somehow exorcised the spirits from it by industrially violating its earth energy. It still has a feeling of 'the far beyond' though, as it looks out over the vastness of infinity.

Kilgooth Ust was hot property. It makes a bold statement, being a source of pride to the local clan, whose patch probably stretched inland to the Tregeseal stone circle. It's a place for witnessing the setting sun. It is not dissimilar in shape and structure to St Michael's Mount and St Ives Head. A near right-angled triangle formed by these three conical cliff sanctuaries has some significance in Penwith's overall layout as a sacred landscape.

Ballowall Barrow, a large, unique chambered cairn, is just southwards on neighbouring Carn Glouce or Gluze. The Brisons, the double island just off the Cape, was not an island in Neolithic times when sea levels were lower. Three backbone alignments pass to or through the right-hand hummock of the Brisons, while Cape

Cornwall has four: one to Boscawen-ûn and Kemyel Point, one to Botrea Barrows and St Michael's Mount, one passing through it from Godrevy Head to Scilly, and one to St Ives Head, St Agnes Beacon and the Stripple Stones on Bodmin Moor.

Cape Cornwall was once thought of as the land's end and its shape and prominence do suggest it, even though today's Land's End is a tad further west – this was discovered by Victorian surveyors. It's an *axis mundi* around which the world revolves. St Michael's Mount and Carn Galva act similarly. The Cape is easily visited by car (parking charges apply) and there's a small café. On the neck of the headland are remnants of St Helen's Chapel, an early Christian oratory. (Gurnard's Head also has an oratory.)

This is a cliff sanctuary for which there is little archaeological evidence – in this case due to industrial and farming damage. But if you look at the prominence of Kilgooth Ust, at the prehistoric mining and population activity nearby, at Ballowall Barrow and the Tregeseal complex not far away, and at the alignments going to and through Cape Cornwall, it is difficult to believe that little happened here. If we apply a widened definition of cliff sanctuaries, as sanctified power-promontories on the edge of the land, most of them strongly aligned to other sites, then Cape Cornwall qualifies.

Kenidjack Castle or Cape Kenidjack

Castel Cunyjek, 'Castle abundant in fuel' (SW 355 327)

At first this cliff sanctuary looks unimpressive but, if you spend time there, it has a calm, clear, contemplative and reflective feeling – if, that is, it isn't blowing a hoolie at the time. There are lovely views of the coastline toward Botallack and Cape Cornwall, Scilly and the wide ocean.

It has triple stone-built banks sectioning it off from the slopes above, still partially visible and originally probably not very high – so it is accepted as a type one cliff sanctuary. A few huts sat on the spine leading to the main part of the castle, leaving no trace now. It must have been draughty here, and hopefully the occupants had good ways of keeping the thatch on the roof – or perhaps these

were sod huts. The ‘ramparts’, facing up a steep hill, wouldn’t be at all useful for defence, though there’s a possibility that they gave more of a ‘bank vault’ kind of security if valuables connected with the metals trade were kept inside. Or they acted as magical thresholds demarcating the cape – this is more likely.

Immediately above, at the top of the slope, were two well-placed cairns, vaguely visible today but standing up boldly and acting as visible marker bumps when seen from out to sea. They are at the northernmost end of a string of clifftop cairns



stretching from Mayon Cliff, including the Boscregan cairns, and clearly all of them were built to be seen from the sea.

Cape Kenidjack³⁴ stands at one end of Porth Ledden, a rocky beach enclosed at the other end by Cape Cornwall, one of the early tin-exporting beaches in Penwith. Kenidjack or Nancherrow valley, leading up from the *porth*, offered easy tin-streaming opportunities. Arsenic-rich tin as well as copper and gold were mined nearby. This cliff sanctuary was connected with trading and crafts, so it had economic value – though it also had its virtues as a sacred place by dint of its rather captivating atmosphere and oceanic panorama. There is evidence that in the Neolithic it was a stone axe factory, the hangout of skilled artisans.

An interesting upright earthfast stone exists on the spine, standing alone. Its flattish right side, as seen from the path close by, is oriented toward White Island, the northernmost isle of Scilly. Unusually, only two known alignments lead to Kenidjack Castle:

³⁴ Kenidjack Castle or Cape Kenidjack is no relation to Carn Kenidjack inland – their names have different sources but they segued together in times past. See Craig Weatherhill’s *Place Names of the Land’s End Peninsula*, Penwith Press, 2017.

one from Pordenack Point and Maen Castle, and the other from Lesingey Round and Pen Sans – Cape Cornwall vacuums up all the alignments in the area. Perhaps Kenidjack is a kind of twin sanctuary to Cape Cornwall.

Pendeen Watch

***Pen Dinas*, ‘headland fort’ (SW 379 359)**

This is not commonly known as a cliff sanctuary, though its name, *Pen Dinas* (headland stronghold), betrays its purpose. It has several important alignments leading to it, a further sign of its significance. One goes through Carn Galva,



Trencrom Hill and the Wendron Nine Maidens stone circles in Kerrier to Nare Head cliff sanctuary on the Roseland peninsula. Another goes through Lanyon Quoit to St Michael’s Mount. Another goes through the *dinas* from Gurnard’s Head, finishing at Peninnis Point on St Mary’s in the Scillies. Yet another goes through Chûn Castle and Lesingey Round, both Neolithic sites, as far as Lizard Point. That’s a lot of significant alignments.

Judging by the positions of the alignments, the *dinas* had two conceivable energy-centres, one on the rocky slopes NE of the lighthouse, the other underneath the house on the hillbrow SE of it. With a commanding view, this headland is excellent for witnessing the summer solstice sunset. Its topographical prominence is a sure sign of its being a cliff sanctuary – a very distinct headland at a corner of Penwith, watching over the Celtic Sea toward Wales, Ireland and the realm of the setting sun, where souls fly free when they pass away. This is likely a type three cliff sanctuary.

There are no archaeological traces of a cliff sanctuary. Just rocks. It has been much changed by relatively recent building works: the building of the lighthouse and its entry road around 1890, and of the house in the 1940s, both of which flattened and obliterated whatever was there. But it's a cliff sanctuary by dint of its name, prominence and alignments.

Bosigran Castle

Bos chy carn, 'home house crag', or Ygraine's home (SW 4169 3688)

This is one of my favourites. There's a story that it was the home of a queen – *Bosigran* is sometimes read as 'Ygraine's home', after King Arthur's mythic mother, but it has other possible meanings too. It has a



hospitable, sociable feeling to it. So, this queen, whoever she was, might well have been a great lady, leaving a strong imprint.

Today, it attracts lots of rock climbers – avid Bristolians in VW vans. You'd be sitting there listening to the waves, looking wistfully over the sea toward Ireland, when a clinking starts up and, sooner or later, a helmeted climber appears over the parapet, trailing ropes and looking pleased. On one occasion a school of minke whales cruised past and the climbers were spellbound, frozen to the spot, hanging in weird positions off the cliff. I was moved too, preoccupied as I had been with my prehistoric ponderings and my customary flask of Anthropocene tea.

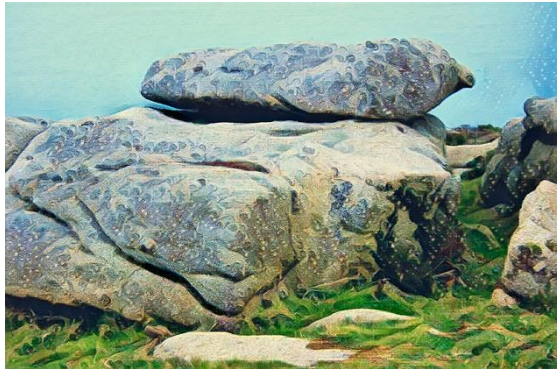
Bosigran has a happy, light, pleasantly healing feeling – inspiring though not occultish like Gurnard's Head next door, or like Treryn Dinas. Bosigran is good for spending time when the weather is pleasant, and a great place for picnics, Neolithic or modern. It could

accommodate 200 people for gatherings, though there is only circumstantial evidence of this and little likelihood of permanent occupation. Summer nights spent around a campfire would have been wonderful. Lying below Carn Galva, the magic mountain above and the cliff sanctuary below had strong visual connections. Perhaps the clan that ‘owned’ Bosigran Castle lived around Carn Galva, coming down to Bosigran for special occasions.

There is a rocky Iron Age rampart sectioning it off from the surrounding land, though defence is only one possible reason it is there. More likely it was simply an energy-threshold, since when you cross it you get a feeling you’re coming into or leaving a special space. So pause when you enter, and try clocking the difference between inside and outside by stepping in and out a couple of times.

The circumstantial evidence... There are several distinct areas on top of Bosigran, each with rock platforms that could serve as ‘rooms’ – so it’s a place where a number of things could happen at the same time. One of these areas hosts a throne-like rock where a chief, wise-woman or druid might have sat, with their flock arrayed around them.

The top of Bosigran is littered with earthfast rocks and, apart from the boundary rampart, there are few signs of rock-moving or the placing of stones, except in two cases.



First, there is a logan or rocking stone on the top, near the ‘throne’ (see picture). Logan stones are flattish granite boulders balanced in such a way that they could be rocked. It’s possible they were natural, or placed there or adjusted slightly to make them rock. What the purpose of logan stones was, we do

not know, but the ancients clearly thought them special. Perhaps these were the bass drums of the Neolithic era.

It's a good movement-meditation to get this logan rock rocking and to keep it going rhythmically for some time. If you try it, get a good rocking motion going and note the vibrations of the rock and your feelings while you're doing it. Try not to be frivolous or insensitive while doing this, and please do take care of the rock: it's the *quality* of the rocking that is important, together with a calm awareness that is needed to find a resonant rhythm. Perhaps people drummed along to the rocking, building up a stirring, thumping beat.

Second, further along the left side of the headland and down a bit, there is a sunken, west-facing area with an array of rocks which suggest a 'council circle', as if it were a place for discussions. A line of three rocks have lined-up edges oriented toward Pendeen Watch, at the point where it meets the water. These are (I think) deliberately oriented stones intended to highlight the relationship between the two cliff sanctuaries (more in chapter nine).

A few of the cliff sanctuaries will have been connected with trade but this is unlikely at Bosigran. This was a place for gatherings and events. It's a pleasant half-mile walk down from the road, and it's worth going down into the *zawn* (inlet) on the western side too, to watch the seabirds, waves and climbers. There are interesting tin-mining remains in the valley, with signs of tin-streaming methods having been used in centuries past.

Gurnard's Head

Ynnyal, 'desolate' (SW 432 386)

This cliff sanctuary has a mysterious feeling of shrouded depth, as if it's a portal to the underworld. There's something intensely gentle, still and immovably abiding about it – a kind of quiet darkness with a steady light hidden within. There's something daunting about it as well: fiercely elemental, in a gale you'd have to hang on tight. It's a powerful place with a feeling of deep interiority – a place of truth and veracity for vision-questing or retreat purposes. Sometimes the crashing waves are stirring to

watch. The ‘darkness’ here is not negative but otherworldly, raw, elemental and indrawn, proffering its secrets slowly. It’s a wistful, truth-seeking place – to me, at least.

Gurnard’s Head was occupied during the Iron Age at least seasonally, but it’s exposed to northerly winds so winter occupation could be more a penance than a pleasure. It is not as high as most cliff sanctuaries – when approaching, you walk



Gurnard’s Head from Carn Naun
with Pendeen Watch behind

down to it – yet it definitely stands out from the surrounding coastline. On the right-hand slope when looking at it from inland, the remains of sixteen huts have been found. Life here was probably spartan and solitary. It would not be a useful living place for farmers, fishers, sealers or whalers – other nearby places would be better. It would be a good lookout though.

The people who stayed or lived here possibly did so for reasons of retreat or training. One could imagine it as the abode of an oracle, of a few hermits or druids, or of oddbods or misfits, or a place where people might stay as a kind of rite of passage. It could be a good place to lay oneself down to die. Perhaps two or three people lived there through the winter and visitors came in summer.

This is more a place of quietism than a social place, with little space for gatherings – neighbouring Bosigran Castle is far better. Both cliff sanctuaries are likely to have been held by the same clan, who also held Carn Galva and the Nine Maidens – this was probably a key tribal domain in Penwith and a landscape temple with a variety of sacred environments in it.

Gurnard’s Head is made of metamorphic Devonian greenstone, not granite. These sedimentary rocks were cooked hard on the edge of

the granitic extrusion that is Penwith, and they are less crystalline than granite. Gurnard's Head is geologically and vibrationally different from other Penwith cliff sanctuaries – hence its darker look and feel.

It's worth a visit. The path can sometimes be muddy in places. Occasionally the interiority of the place can take the strength out of your legs, and unfortunately it's uphill on the way back.

St Ives Head

Pen Dinas, 'headland fort'; *Dinas Ia*, 'Ia's citadel' (SW 5208 4115)

Locally called The Island, it is actually a promontory. It is not usually thought of as a cliff sanctuary yet it's a classic, not unlike Cape Cornwall and St Michael's Mount in shape, and directly connected to both by alignment. Like Cape Cornwall, any remains



of its ancient history have been obliterated by subsequent events, in this case from the early Christian period and more recent times. It is connected with the local cult of St Ia, a christianised druidess-healer from Ireland who reputedly sailed in on a leaf to inspire, or perhaps browbeat, the locals some 1,500 years ago, in the days of the Celtic saints. Clearly, she made a big impression.

The headland overlooks Porthmeor beach to the west and the majestic sweep of St Ives Bay to the east. At the eastern end of St Ives Bay is Godrevy Head with its offshore island bearing a 19th Century lighthouse, warning of the nearby semi-submerged Godrevy Rocks. An alignment from Cape Cornwall through St Ives Head to the Stripple Stones on Bodmin Moor intersects this reef, which would have stood above the water in ancient times. Godrevy,

surprisingly, is not a cliff sanctuary, though it shares some of their characteristics. Topped by a Bronze Age cairn, finds in the Godrevy area go right back to the Mesolithic.

A considerable alignment node, there seem to be two centres to St Ives Head: one where the chapel lies (possibly a cairn or rock in former times), and one where the coastwatch station stands. The headland guarded a sheltered landing beach for boats from the Irish and Severn Seas at the current St Ives' harbour. From here metals found inland were exported, with goods and travellers from Europe brought from St Michael's Mount for forwarding northwards.

In medieval times it was linked to St Michael's Mount by a path, now called St Michael's Way, for pilgrims from Wales and Ireland heading to Santiago de Compostela in northern Spain, or Rome or Jerusalem. So at times over the millennia, the harbour will have been busy with visitors. This is still the case today, in these wondrous times of fish and chips (seagull food), ice creams (seagull dessert) and motor cars (canvases for seagull artistry).

The prehistory of the town of St Ives is obscure, but St Ives Head is clearly a key cliff sanctuary, staking out one of the Penwith peninsula's corners. So this likely makes St Ives an ancient settlement going back to the earliest time of settlement in the area.

St Michael's Mount

Carrek los y'n cos, 'grey rock in the wood' (SW 5143 2984)

The Mount could be classed as a tor enclosure or a cliff sanctuary. Either way, both date from the Neolithic 3000s. This is a special, striking, archetype-rich island, very much the focal point and energy-axe of Mount's Bay, and known for its long involvement in the tin trade and for visits by foreigners over the ages.

The Greek traveller Pytheas, who circumnavigated Britain by boat sometime around 325 BCE in Alexander the Great's time, visited here. Back in the Greek world he left accurate descriptions of his travels, including plausible references to St Michael's Mount, transmitted to us in the later writings of Diodorus Siculus and

others. There is a chance that this is the tin port of Ictis mentioned by Posidonius, a Greek geographer from Rhodes. In the Neolithic and early Bronze Age it was not an island but a mount, itself a geological anomaly and an outstanding landmark looming out of woodland. It became a tidal island around 1700 BCE, 1,400 years before Pytheas came along.

Power places are suffused with earth energy and natural power, and they are also pervaded with *place-memory* – like a recorded imprint of what has happened there over time. Much has happened at St Michael's Mount over



at least six millennia, and its atmosphere is thus flavoured by those events, many of them long gone and forgotten.

As a Neolithic site it was probably idyllic, with the equable climate of the time. It has hosted a small village for millennia – a good place for fishing, trading, retreat and servicing the monastery or castle, at different times. Marazion was busy up to the development of Penzance after the arrival of the railway in the 1860s.

The Mount is a veritable alignments node. Even its minor alignments are interesting, of which here are some examples: alignment **75** goes from the Mount to a line of three menhirs at Chyenhal (only one of which survives today) aligned exactly on the Mount, further proceeding through Bojewans Carn to the now removed Trevorian menhir – it's a Bronze Age alignment. Alignment **164** passes through Lesingey Round to Ballowall Barrow. Alignment **81** passes from Cudden Point cliff sanctuary through the Mount to Gulval churchyard (formerly an Iron Age round) to the Nine Maidens stone circle and the Four Parishes Stone. This raises the question of whether Gulval Round and the

Four Parishes Stone are more ancient than the Christian period and Iron Age respectively, or whether these sites were placed on a pre-existing Bronze Age alignment.

St Michael's Mount is a national node. Backbone alignments go to:

- Carn Brea, the Merry Maidens and Treryn Dinas **(108)**,
- Boscawen-ûn, Maen Castle and Samson Hill on Bryher, Scilly **(78)**;
- Pordenack Point and Pig Rock on St Mary's, Scilly **(196)**;
- Cape Cornwall via Botrea Barrows **(77)**;
- Pendeen Watch via Lanyon Quoit **(103)**;
- Bosigran Castle via Carn Galva **(107)**;
- Trencrom Hill and St Ives Head **(59)**;
- the Trippet Stones on Bodmin Moor **(211)**
- and even Start Point in Devon **(207)**.

Finally, the Apollo line, tracked by Hamish Miller and Paul Broadhurst from Skellig Michael in Ireland to Megiddo, Israel,³⁵ passes over Watch Croft in one direction and the geomantically nodal Pedngwinian Barrow on the Lizard in the other.

There are no signs of prehistoric warfare at the island except for a hoard of copper weapons from the late Bronze Age found nearby at Marazion. These could be ceremonial, since copper looks nice but it is too pliable for weaponry – one hard impact and your sword-blade is bent. Bronze was good and iron better still. In more recent times, the castle and monastery were fought over on a few occasions between 1193 and 1646. It was defensible for sure and not easy to attack.

St Michael's Mount is a special place, though nowadays it has been rather sanitised by National Trust tourist provisions. Best visited outside the main tourist season, you can walk across at low tide or catch a boat from Marazion. Throughout history, the Mount has possibly been the most visited place in Penwith.

³⁵ Broadhurst, Paul, Miller, Hamish & Shanley, Vivienne, *The Dance of the Dragon*, Pendragon Partnership, 2000.

The Michael Line

While we're here, let's sort out a few confusions about the Michael Line. Made famous by John Michell, this is a straight alignment of major sites across southern Britain's widest land axis, from Cornwall to Norfolk. Later, Hamish Miller and Paul Broadhurst came along, discovering through dowsing that two sinuous male and female energy currents meander either side of this line, calling them Michael and Mary, and documenting the story in their inspiring book, *The Sun and the Serpent*.³⁶ Where these meandering serpent lines crossed were node points or power centres. At the Mount both the sinuous Michael and Mary and the Apollo and Athena lines cross.

This route or corridor, passing through or very near ancient sites including Brent Tor, Burrowbridge Mump, Glastonbury Tor, Avebury, Royston and Bury St Edmunds Abbey, has in recent decades been followed, in part or in its entirety, by many pilgrims, with a view to enhancing the earth energies and understanding our interaction with them – and it's good for the soul.

Here's the first confusion. Many people believe that the straight long-distance alignment passes through St Michael's Mount. This is incorrect. It passes nearby, 1.6 km or one mile away, onshore at the car park by the old Marazion railway station. Yet the meandering currents, separately from the straight alignment, do visit and cross at St Michael's Mount. Other points on the straight Michael Line in Cornwall include Carn Lês Boel, Carn Brea, Helman Tor and The Hurlers stone circle on Bodmin Moor.

Here's the second misperception. Unfortunately, Hamish and Paul named the sinuous currents they had discovered Michael and Mary. This introduced a confusion with the straight Michael Line that the currents follow. The two currents and the straight alignment are components of the same thing. It is best to look on the sinuous currents as currents, not as lines.

³⁶ Broadhurst, Paul, & Miller, Hamish, *The Sun and the Serpent*, Mythos, 1990.

Here is the third confusion. The Michael Line is often said to be aligned to the Beltane sunrise, generally taken to be on 1st May. This is inaccurate: the sun's rising point on this date is at 64.4° and the Michael Line is oriented to 60.5° . However, the *true* cross-quarter point of Beltane, the midpoint between spring equinox and summer solstice when the sun is at 15° Taurus, is around 5th-6th May. At this time the sun rises at 60.5° . Thus, the Michael Line aligns to the rising sun at the *true* solar Beltane, not today's accepted calendrical Beltane on 1st May.

The Michael alignment has been found to continue as a great circle line passing around the world through Russia, Tibet, Cambodia, Australia and southern Mexico.³⁷ (A great circle line is like a slice of the earth right through its centre. On flat world maps it looks curvy but on a globe it is straight, bisecting the earth.)

On the ground it can be regarded as a corridor at least a few miles wide since, on a global scale, a distance of 1.6 km or one mile (the distance between Long Rock and the Mount) is peanuts. Thus, though it comes only to within a short distance of Glastonbury Tor or St Michael's Mount, such inaccuracy is acceptable when the global length of the alignment and the magnitude of the Michael Line are taken into account.

³⁷ Walsh, Terry, *Global Sacred Alignments*, Library of Avalon, Glastonbury, 1996.

8. Capping Energy Wells

The Quoits of Penwith

Quoits, elsewhere known as cromlechs or dolmens, are impressive, mysterious structures. Variations are found across the whole of Eurasia. Simply transporting an enormous capstone to the site of a quoit was a big challenge, and construction would have involved serious teamwork. These were the first known megalithic edifices in Cornwall. Quoits were sophisticated megalithic engineering projects with no local precursors.

A Slowly Lapsing Explanation

Quoits are often described as tombs, part-covered by a mound of earth that somehow has eroded away, revealing the stones underneath. This idea is a leftover of rather obsolete antiquarian ideas: in the absence of other explanations, quoits



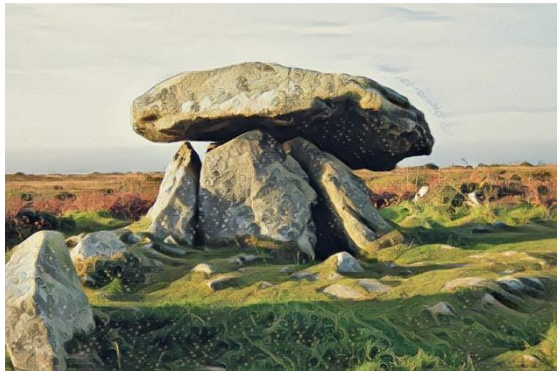
Lanyon Quoit as seen from Bosiliack Barrow

were seen as burial chambers. The presence of bones or an urn of ashes were interpreted to indicate burial when they more likely suggest shamanic or oracular practices, ancestor reverence or a quest for mystical truths beyond life and death.

This burial idea continues to prevail today, yet the matter of quoits being covered with earth is debatable. A few quoits upcountry have had earth covers, and West Lanyon Quoit is said to have been

under an enormous mound. Archaeological consensus has it that they were earth-covered, some say up to but not over the level of the capstone. But the evidence is thin, and this does not mean that all quoits were covered. In Cornwall, hardly any quoits are even half-eroded today. There are anecdotes about farmers removing the soil, but this looks more like fitting evidence around a theory. Even in the case of Lanyon Quoit, which stood at the north end of a Neolithic longbarrow that is believed to have covered the quoit, the evidence is inconclusive and, in my view, unlikely. I think the longbarrow was adjacent, backing onto it, leaving the quoit open.

Chambered cairns, younger than quoits by a millennium, don't generally erode in the way that quoits are alleged to have eroded. Chûn Quoit is the only intact quoit in Penwith today and it does not look as if it was built to be covered over – most



Chûn Quoit, the only intact quoit in Penwith

quoits were probably built uncovered to stand as stone structures. Some quoits indeed are built on or close to a low mound or platform. If quoits were mostly buried in soil, they would need stonework to fill the gaps between the orthostat verticals to prevent soil falling inwards, and there is little sign of tight-fitting stonework. I suggest these gaps or spaces were intentional.

Quoits are often linked with funerary rites, which has a grain of truth. Sky-burials on the capstone and other death rites might have taken place, but I don't think this was the quoits' primary purpose. Cornwall Council Historic Environment Service says this:

No artefacts or human remains have been found at Chûn Quoit, and finds generally from these kinds of monuments are almost unknown in Cornwall due to the acidity of the moorland soils.

Comparison with similar monuments elsewhere suggests that they functioned as repositories for safeguarding ancestral remains. There is some evidence – from Neolithic tombs in Wessex for example – that bones were periodically removed and returned or re-arranged. The bones may have featured in ceremonies associated with an ancestor cult; communities at this time were becoming increasingly settled and stable and such rites are thought to represent the attempt to establish hereditary ‘ownership’ of a territory and to develop a communal or tribal identity.

While this interpretation is close to the mark, something crucial has been missed.

Energy

While older than standing stones and stone circles by over a thousand years, quoits are, engineeringwise, perhaps the most advanced edifices of the whole megalithic period in Cornwall. They are built with large, tons-heavy capstones placed on



Zennor Quoit, with its capstone leaning to one side

top of several vertical stones (orthostats), usually with a gap at one end of the chamber and a solid blocking stone at the other. Here come a few propositions that archaeologists find difficult.

Some dowsers see quoits and dolmens as devices whereby an upwelling vortical energy stream, emerging from a blind spring deep within the earth, is capped and entrained. The upwelling energy stream is bent by the capstone, bounced against the blocking stone and sent out through the main gap in the vertical stones. Seen another way, the quoit captures energy from an energy-line crossing the landscape, where it terminates and is sent downward,

to ground the captured energy, terminate a line and presumably fertilise or energise the earth. This will have been done for reasons akin to earth-acupuncture.

Here we are talking about funnelling subtle energy, containing and enhancing it. This, I'd suggest, is the aim of quoits: to capture and entrain energy in an energy chamber, thus fulfilling the quoit's core purpose of generating an intensified energy-field out of a natural earth-energy vortex.

The logistics involved in transporting and raising a multi-ton capstone undamaged means that quoits were certainly built neither for fickle nor fanciful reasons. There was clearly a highly-valued perceived function to them, justifying such effort.



What's left of West Lanyon Quoit

The normal archaeological theory that they act as denuded graves doesn't really stack up since, from an engineering viewpoint, graves could easily perform their intended function in far more economical ways – ordinary cairns performed this function well in the Bronze Age. In many cases contemporaneous Neolithic longbarrows (only three exist in Penwith) contained burials though.

Quoits were probably multi-purpose and, while their purposes remain an open question, the energy hypothesis outlined above is highly plausible since it is based on observation and dowsing evidence. Inside a quoit a concentrated energy field can be built up, irradiating any items placed within or any people who enter. Conceivably quoits were used as concentrated energy chambers inside which illnesses could be treated, seeds upgraded,³⁸ sacred

³⁸ www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/apr/05/smarty-plants-are-our-vegetable-cousins-more-intelligent-than-we-realise | www.academia.edu/search?utf8=%E2%9C%93&q=plant+neurobiology

items and medicines potentised and also conceivably for spiritual initiations or solitary retreats.³⁹

This said, it is not clear whether they were built for humans to spend time inside, or whether they served mostly as repositories. There was a geomantic purpose to them: the Neolithics seemingly felt that the earth needed infusing with light and the landscape needed infusing with underworld influences. Quoits served as a technology whereby such an energy exchange was possible.

With the scanty archaeological evidence we have, it is valuable to entertain a range of interpretative options, and quoits present a classic case in point. For burial purposes, they would not have needed to be built as high and big as they are. The size of their capstones suggests a function different from the roofing stones we see in Bronze Age chambered cairns, where the interior stonework fits together to seal the chamber. With quoits such a tight fit is not apparent, suggesting that they were built to be left open rather than covering the stonework. Neither do they appear like good structures for interring human remains for more than a relatively short time, perhaps like an energy-charged morgue for after-death treatment of corpses or perhaps to help a soul leave its body.

The Location of Quoits

Quoits exist only in the northern upland half of the peninsula. Grumbla Quoit – called a quoit but not conclusively identified as one – lies further south, is a distance away from the others. All quoits are mutually linked by alignments involving two quoits and an additional site, often of similar age. Grumbla Quoit does not conform to this pattern. Nowadays it is but a pile of rocks, from which it is difficult to tell whether or not it is truly a quoit.

Some quoits have a visible relationship with tors or hills. St Michael's Mount is prominent from Mulfra Quoit (SW 4518 3536), Carn Kenidjack from Chûn Quoit (SW 4023 3396) and Carn Galva from Lanyon Quoit (SW 4298 3369). Not all quoits have the same

³⁹ www.academia.edu/Documents/in/Pyramidology

relationship: Zennor Quoit (SW 4688 3802) and Sperris Quoit (SW 4709 3826) have no such panoramas, being on a plateau, and Bosporthennis (*Bosphrennis*) Quoit (SW 4356 3654) sits on a slope under Carn Galva, which is invisible from it. This suggests that visibility of prominent tors and hills is not a deciding factor.

Some are located in decidedly odd places. While Chûn is on the side of a hill, Zennor, Sperris, West Lanyon and Bosporthennis Quoits are hidden in places that are not prominent. Mulfra and Lanyon Quoits have fine vistas and well-placed locations, while



The leftovers of Sperris Quoit

Zennor and Sperris Quoits, lacking panoramic sweeps, are situated on a plateau that was home to quite a few Neolithics and sit in what at the time was a pleasant environment and micro-climate.

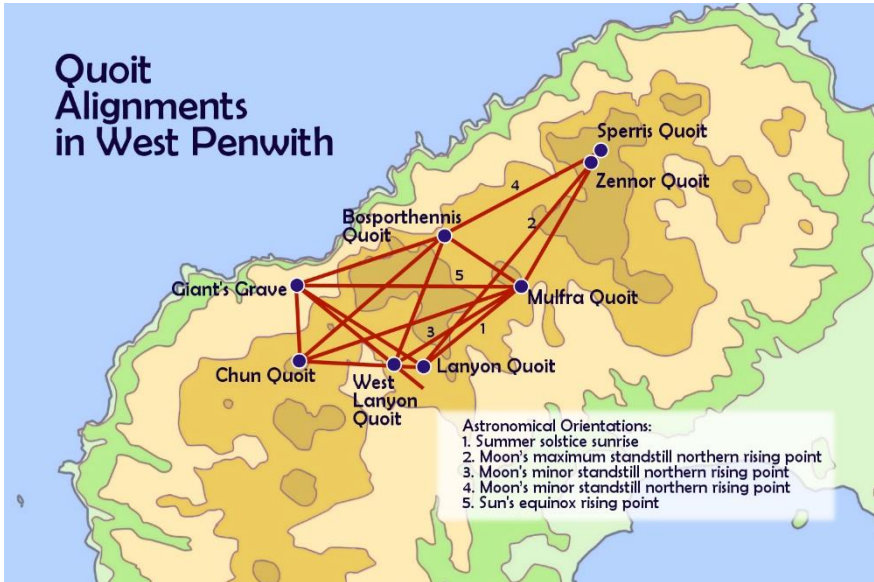
Anthropologist Christopher Tilley proposed that quoits acted as artificial tors.⁴⁰ This is a viable idea, though a rock-pile could equally serve this purpose unless chambers were regarded as an irreplaceable ingredient, which they obviously were. While Tilley was not referring to earth energies, structures such as tors and quoits both act as sinks or risers for energies deep in the earth.

Lanyon Quoit, judging by the major backbone alignments slicing through it, is geomantically a key site, standing in a class of its own amongst local quoits. Its precise location is defined by long backbone alignments passing through it, accurate to within but a few yards. Uniquely, Sperris and Zennor quoits are aligned to it – and this is the only three-quoit alignment in Penwith.

⁴⁰ Tilley, C and Bennett, W, An Archaeology of Supernatural Places – the case of West Penwith, *J Royal Anthropological Inst*, vol 7, 2, 2001. Tilley, Christopher & Bennett, Wayne, The Archaeology of Supernatural Places, *J Royal Anthropological Inst*, Vol 7, No 2, 2001, pp335-362.

Astronomical Alignments

When seen from Chûn Quoit, the winter solstice sun sets over the Carn Kenidjack. Mulfra Quoit's orientation from Lanyon Quoit



(49.9°), points toward the summer solstice sunrise (48.8° in 3500 BCE). As seen from Lanyon Quoit, the alignment with Zennor and Sperris Quoits (39.0°) is oriented toward the moon's maximum northern rising point (38.4° in 3500 BCE).

An alignment between West Lanyon and Mulfra Quoits (58.2°) is oriented toward the lunar minor standstill northern rising point (58.1° in 3500 BCE). A further astronomical alignment runs from Bosporthenis to Sperris (61.2°), aligned to the moon's minor standstill northern rising point (58.1°). These alignments have a higher azimuth than the named rising points because they look slightly uphill, which moves the rising points rightwards and the setting points leftwards on the local visible horizon.

The quoits' astronomical relationships and their visual connection with natural features on local horizons have not yet been fully

investigated. But the orientations given above show that the people of the Neolithic were interested in soli-lunar cycles and eclipses. They used the same astronomical principles as the stone circle builders a millennium later, but they marked astronomical orientations differently. Stone circles were distinct hubs in a large system, with orbital sites surrounding them, while quoits were an early attempt at building a simple geomantic network of sites in the northern upland region. The Neolithics' was a 'version one' network while the Bronzies developed a 'version two'.

In the Neolithic 3000s, Penwith's population was lower than in the Bronze Age, and many Penwithians lived in the upland area between Zennor Hill and Carn Kenidjack, where the quoits were built. They were weighty edifices, yet they were not too many in number and not very far in spread, so it was possible to build all of the quoits over, say, a thirty year period, if the whole network was set up as one big project – a plausible scenario. Bronze Age ideas were more ambitious, the population being larger, and more cleared land was available: so the Bronzies built an integrated, scaled-up megalithic system covering the whole peninsula. Their ideas and protocols, based on well-worn terrestrial and astronomical factors, were nevertheless trialled by the Neolithic quoit builders.

Ravages of Time

Two sites regarded as quoits are not conclusively so, being so ruined that it is difficult to tell. These include Grumbla Quoit and Giant's Grave near Morvah (SW 4026 3560). The former is accepted as a quoit since the name *Grumbla* means 'dolmen' or 'quoit'.



Mulfra Quoit, with Ding Dong mine behind

This may, however, be an acquired label, while Neolithic megalith builders might have had other ideas. Today it is but a ruined pile of stones, and unremarkably located. Judging by its lack of alignment connection with other quoits, Grumbla Quoit might have been something else – though *what* is anyone's guess. There are more 'something else' sites in Penwith than we often acknowledge.

Damaged quoits such as Giant's Grave, Bosporthennis, Sperris and West Lanyon are linked to other quoits by alignment, and this verifies their status as quoits. These are not, however, backbone alignments like those defining the position of Lanyon Quoit. These are *quoit alignments*, quite unique, most having three points only, involving only Neolithic sites, and in many cases astronomically aligned. That is to say, it looks as if their building was coordinated.

Most quoits are nowadays ruined or altered except for Chûn Quoit, which is in fine form, though its landscape context has changed. Mulfra, Lanyon and Zennor Quoits are worth visiting, though others are sad reflections of their former selves, nowadays taking the form of humiliated rock-piles.

With the exception of Chûn Quoit and perhaps others now too ruined to tell, it is possible some quoits were *decommissioned*. The capstone was lifted off and leaned to one side, with one vertical stone completely removed (such as at Mulfra), presumably to make re-erection difficult. This looks deliberate – otherwise, the capstone might have been taken away, broken up or re-used elsewhere.

At Mulfra and Zennor Quoits the capstones are displaced similarly to each other, with a corner cleanly broken off, as if done with respect and according to a method. If, for whatever reason, quoits indeed were decommissioned, then perhaps the removed vertical stone was taken away to make sure that anyone rebuilding it knew exactly what they were doing, and that the quoit would not achieve full power without such knowhow. If one accepts that quoits had an energy-related purpose, then presumably the people who decommissioned them believed it to be unwise for them to be left unattended or uncared for. Perhaps the knowledge and manpower for maintaining their energetic condition was dwindling.

Lanyon Quoit was inaccurately reconstructed by an enthusiastic antiquarian, Captain Giddy, in 1824, after it was damaged in a violent storm. The capstone fell off, shattering one or two of the uprights. This quoit no longer resembles its original height, design and proportions, though it is accessible to visitors and the location is still alive. (It was Giddy who rearranged the Mên an Tol too.)

Impressive in their engineering, quoits were built in the mid-3000s BCE. Cremated bones found at Sperris Quoit have been dated archaeologically to 3600-3300, and at Zennor to 3300-3000 – though this dates the relics, not the quoits. The quoits might all have been built within a few generations in the 3700s-3500s – earlier than the dates derived from the cremated bones.

West Lanyon Quoit, like nearby Lanyon Quoit, is a node for multiple alignments. However, Lanyon Quoit takes longer-distance alignments, whereas West Lanyon takes local alignments. These two quoits seem to act as a pair or polarity, and their respective purposes seem to complement one another.

A number of questions remain open, not helped by the quoits' ruined state. Yet geomancy, dowsing and archaeoastronomy give substantial clues. The conclusion appears to be that quoits were built for energy-enhancing purposes, located on blind springs to cap energies and terminate energy-leys crossing the landscape. They were linked into the cosmos through astronomical alignments and linked to each other to form a complete system. They seemed to act mainly as repositories and energy-crucibles. These factors evidently were important the Neolithics, given that they went to such great lengths to build quoits in the form and size that they did.

Quoits are impressive, energetic and well worth a visit. The best are Chûn (fully intact, half a mile rough walk), Lanyon (quite easily accessible) and Mulfra (quite intact, in a good position, up to a mile walk). Sit and stay awhile, let the feeling of the place seep in. Then ask yourself what *you* feel is their reason for being.

9. Adapting Geology

Propped, Placed and Oriented Stones

This is an area of growing attention for antiquarians and archaeologists – relocated stones. It is difficult to say when the intentional moving of rocks and stones began. Likely it started during the early-to-mid 3000s – the presence of many placed stones close to Sperris Quoit are a clue, and some propped stones are like mini-quoits. Propping and placing stones continued into the Bronze Age – some menhirs are propped menhirs.

The menhir-building period started during the early Bronze Age. But long before then, precursor principles were established in the Neolithic with the idea of moving stones and rocks around and placing them in new and purposeful positions.

There was a quality of spontaneous artistry to this, enhancing the character of local environments and probably reflecting magical narratives about the landscapes that Neolithics lived in. Like wild gardening, most rocks remained natural and unchanged, but tweaks and adjustments were made here and there. There was some science to it too. David Giddings, Kenny Price,⁴¹ Carolyn Kennett,⁴² and others have been researching propped stones on Carn Galva and elsewhere, finding some to be aligned with Neolithic sites, or having sightlines or astronomical orientations.

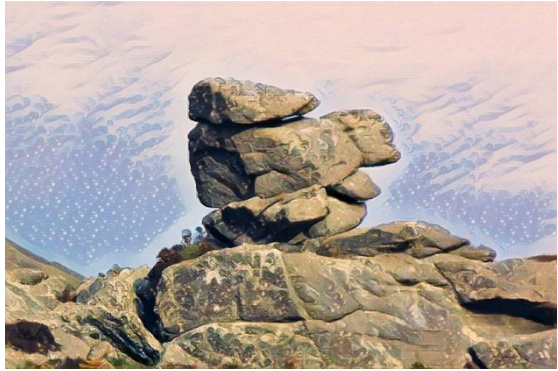
The Neolithics did not build on every hilltop or carn, though they will have recognised many places as special by dint of their natural, energetic or scenic qualities. Bartinney Castle is a case in point, a Bronze Age site that the Neolithics are sure to have visited and held to be special, even if they built nothing there that we know of – and this is likely the case with quite a few sites.

⁴¹ Kenny Price's blog: <https://ancientwhisperspenwith.blogspot.com>

⁴² Carolyn Kennett's blog: <https://archaeoastronomycornwall.com/2019/05/17/propped-stone-pseudo-quoit-at-carn-kenidjack/>

Shifting Stones

Some stones are placed in interesting positions, seemingly to add character to the scene. Others are propped on smaller stones, or carefully balanced to create or improve logan or rocking stones. Some flatter stones they inserted vertically into the ground, as oriented stones pointing toward other sites.



Simulacrum at Carn Kenidjack:
natural, adjusted or constructed?

Sometimes a placed stone seems to have been moved only a short distance, metres only. Some may have been humped further. A large number of *simulacra* – natural zoöomorphic rocks looking like beings – exist in Penwith, geologically formed and themselves a veritable wonder of nature, and a few might have been tweaked (such as on Carn Kenidjack – see picture). Their suggestive symbolism, presence and character would have been significant to the Neolithics. The best place for natural simulacra lies between Pordenack Point and Carn Boel, south of Land's End. Whole crowds of rock-beings are there, looking out to sea, conducting long discussions between themselves – magical geology.⁴³

Carns

A carn is a natural rock-pile, outcrop or tor, markedly sticking up or projecting out. Many have a natural energy and prominence, and some play a significant role in the alignment system. Granite lends itself well to the uncanny geological appearance of many carn.

⁴³ Photos of Penwithian simulacra: www.palden.co.uk/photos/simulacra.html

The term *carn* can apply to a headland, a high hill or an outcrop. Carns were anciently revered as special places.

Here are four examples:

Bojewans Carn (SW 4320 2682), SE of Boscawen-ûn, is an alignment intersection. Align Chapel Carn Brea with Boscawen-ûn, and the other end hits Bojewans Carn (alignment **145**). The carn sits on an alignment between Trelew and Redhouse NE menhirs (**24**), and another from Sheffield menhir to Trevorgans menhir (**52**). As a natural rock that was there long before anything else, it helped position four menhirs and the Boscawen-ûn stone circle.

Carn Cravah (SW 3540 2380), on the cliffside path above Nanjizal Bay, south of Land's End, is a magical spot, especially if seals are around in the sea below. It is on a crossing-point of two alignments. One (**116**) follows the coast from



the offshore Runnel Stone, through two headlands, Carn Guthensbras and Carn Barra, to one of the cairns at Carn Lês Boel, then to Carn Cravah and eventually to Maen Castle cliff sanctuary.

The other (**85**) goes from the Wolf Rock to Carn Cravah, then to Chapel Carn Brea, Bartinney Castle and Boskednan southern cairn (part of the Nine Maidens complex). Wolf Rock nowadays hosts a lighthouse, 12 miles out to sea, built in the 1860s, although lower ancient sea levels made the rock higher above the sea than it is today. Wolf Rock is aligned with two of Penwith's holy hills and one stone circle complex. Amazing.

Boswarva Carn (SW 4294 3322) is aligned with two quoits – Giant's Grave and West Lanyon Quoit. It is a classic quoit alignment (**150**), typically with two quoits and another Neolithic site.

It has a propped rock balancing on the earthfast boulders of Boswarva Carn. Near Lanyon Quoit it is best seen from Bosiliack Barrow (take binoculars). The propped stone and Lanyon Quoit are from the Neolithic 3000s and Bosiliack Barrow is Bronze Age.



Carn Vrês (SW 3868 3233) is a likeable and rarely visited low carn close to and immediately south of the Tregeseal stone circle. Walk up from the stone circle, 150m away from it in the next field, put your antennae up, look around, and you'll get a sense of the carn's axial place in the Tregeseal complex of sites – it's quite energetic. There's a small spring there too.

Carns seem to have served as primeval markers of *placeness*, playing a significant part in forming the prehistoric character of Penwith. People walked everywhere and they knew every part of the landscape: its lay, stories, history, personality and its *vibe*. A Neolithic would navigate the largely wooded landscape on foot, orientating on the carn's and other high points. Travelling in cars tends not to help our sense of the carn's landscape significance.

Placed Stones

Ancient Penwithians certainly seemed to like placing rocks in chosen places, as if to augment the artistry of nature and mark special magic spots. Placed stones are found on Zennor Hill and Carn Galva, Carn Kenidjack, Trencrom Hill, Pordenack Point, Nanquidno and other locations. Even the protruding rock atop Treryn Dinas is suspect as a placed rock.

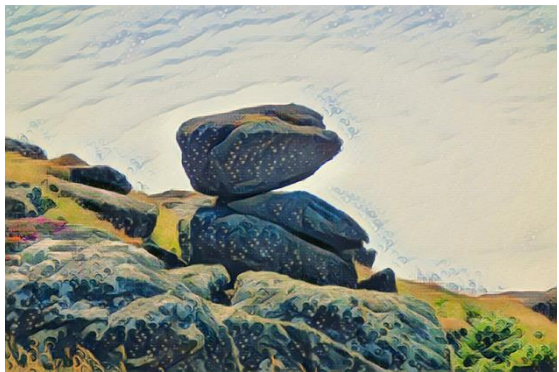
A bulky stone at Higher Bosistow (SW 3664 2338) near Carn Lês Boel, probably Bronze Age, has two alignments passing through it. One, a backbone alignment (123) from the Merry Maidens, passes through this stone and over Carn Lês Boel, across the sea to three



The Bosistow Stone
– the hedge and gate were built later

cairns on St Martins on Scilly, including Knackyboy cairn, ending at a chambered cairn on Gweal Hill, Bryher. The other (194) passes from the Trevean 1 propped menhir (mentioned soon) through a nearby ploughed-down barrow at Parc an Griggan and the Bosistow Stone to Brane chambered cairn and finally to Caer Brân.

In many cases it is difficult to tell whether placed stones are quirky feats of nature or the work of humans. This is a matter of debate: even though Penwith has plenty of odd natural rocks and boulders, there might be more placed stones spread around the



Is this rock near Carn Barra natural or placed?

landscape than we currently recognise. There is a tendency to view such stones conservatively, assuming they are natural unless distinctly proven otherwise. Some, such as King Arthur's Stone near Sennen, are recognised archaeologically, while others are more debatable and need further study.

It is clear, by looking at them with an astute eye, that some stones indeed could be placed rocks, but it can be difficult to prove, especially since some are located among chaotic rock-fields, such as those on the sides of Carn Galva, or the placed and propped stones Kenny Price has discovered at Nanquidno.⁴⁴ Elsewhere, it can be difficult to judge if they are man-made or simply remarkable feats of nature – such as the Giant’s Rock at Zennor.

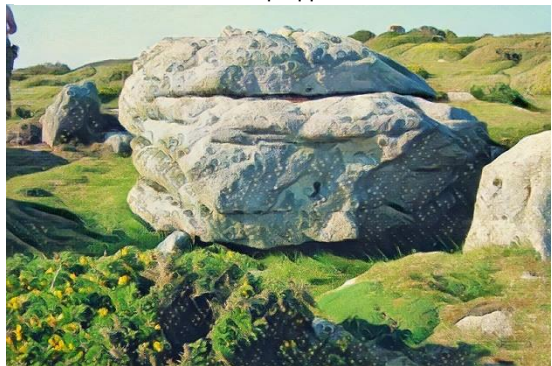
While there is undoubtedly a magical landscape-artistry element, why did people do this? What remains unavailable to us are the thoughts, the stories, the landscape narratives, that made people in ancient times see their environment as they did, inspiring them to tweak nature by moving rocks around.

Whether and in what ways such rocks were perceived to have geomantic purposes is a question yet to receive answers. Yet some stones, such as the Bosistow Stone and a few markstones south of St Buryan, conform to the same geomantic principles as menhirs. They might have been precursors or supplemental to them. To understand more about these rocks, it helps to see them as magical entities or *rock-presences* sitting in a wider setting, not just as random chunks of geology.

Propped Stones

These stones are propped on top of smaller stones so that they are raised above the ground, partially or wholly, at one or both ends. Why this was done is unknown but, in the eyes of the ancients, presumably it energised or empowered the stones, giving them special qualities or

Carn Creis propped boulder



⁴⁴ Kenny Price’s blog: <https://ancientwhisperspenwith.blogspot.com/2020/08/nanjulian-cove-nanquidno-cove-enclosure.html>

significance. Raising stones off the ground might insulate them from terrestrial earth energy, or it might somehow enhance the stone's energy-field by setting up a resonance or a thrum in the gap created under the stone. Clearly there was a function, but we are yet to know what it was.

Bronze Age propped stones seem to act similarly to standing stones, though their verticality isn't emphatic. This is the case with a rather unique propped boulder inside a cairn or stone setting at Carn Creis, Boscregan (SW 3576 2966) on the clifftops near Nanquidno, which is wider than it is high. The Boscregan cairns clearly had some relation to Scilly since the islands are very visible from there, and vice versa. This, plus all of the clifftop cairns as far down as Mayon Cliff, have Chapel Carn Brea, Britain's last hill, in sight – so, in some way they were an integrated cairn system.⁴⁵

This big, low boulder, ringed by a kerb of rocks, is unusual. It would be tempting to interpret it as a kerbed cairn which somehow lost its earth covering, but it doesn't look like that, and the propped stone in the centre shows no sign of this – it looks more like a rather unique propped stone surrounded with a high kerb.

Further south along the coast, the propped gateway stone at the entrance to Carn Lês Boel is quite unique in its size and its hulking shape, being quite tactile and almost huggable, with interesting lichens attached. It was probably erected during the Bronze Age menhir-building period. It had a partner stone that looks as if it was not propped, now lying half-buried on



Propped gateway menhir at Carn Lês Boel,
raised just a few inches off the ground

⁴⁵ Bonnington, Paul, Chapel Carn Brea and the Nanjulian Barrows, *Meyn Mamvro* 57, Summer 2005.

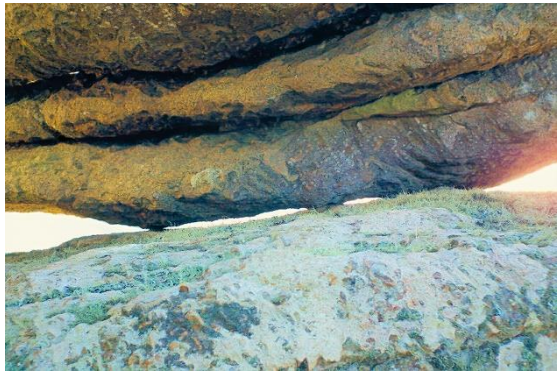
its side to the right of the path leading onto the carn. These two stones acted as a threshold gateway to the carn.

A matching propped menhir, Trevean 1 (SW 3632 2296), is not far away, incorporated into a field hedge that was created long after the erection of the menhir. Not dissimilar in shape and hulkiness to the propped menhir on Carn Lês Boel, perhaps they were erected around the same time and by the same people.

Two alignments begin at Trevean 1: one (192) goes to Bartinney Castle and Botrea Barrows, and the other (194) goes to the Brane chambered cairn and Caer Brân. The first passes through the nearby Bosistow Seal menhir and the second through the Higher Bosistow Stone. Since Bartinney and Caer Brân are related, as adjacent enclosures, the connection of this menhir to both is significant.

Another alignment (193) goes from the nearby Trevean 2 menhir, through Trevean 1 and a cairn at Carn Lês Boel, to the power rock (SW 3228 2501) on the Longships Rocks – the high rock to the left of the lighthouse rock when seen from Land's End.

One rock (SW 3488 2403), looking a bit like an ET and situated between Pordenack Point and Carn Boel, is finely placed on three nobbles on its underside so that the rock on top touches the supporting rock in a delicate, almost calculated way. This



Delicately balanced boulder near Pordenack Point

has possibly been placed, and it might well be Neolithic, though proving this is difficult. Unlike the two Bronze Age propped stones mentioned above, it is not a menhir but a boulder and, if it has been moved, it is likely to have been moved but a short distance.

There are quite a few Neolithic propped and placed stones on Carn Galva and Zennor Hill. A conglomeration of them close to Sperris

Quoit is likely to be of the same vintage as the quoit – if you stand at the quoit, they are visible close by. In its heyday, the area formed by the quoit and the stones, a kind of stone garden or temple space, would have been delightful.

More and more propped and placed stones are being discovered. The problem is that many are difficult to determine conclusively. Some on Zennor Hill and Sperris Croft are safe to class as propped stones but others elsewhere are not so obvious, especially given the geology of Penwith and the weird shapes that granite creates.

Here we should mention *viewboxes* or *view-frames*. These rocks have been deliberately propped to create a gap through which a prominent feature such as a hill can be viewed, or to highlight the rising or setting point of the sun or moon at a certain time of year. One of these viewbox features can be seen at Little Galva (SW 4329 3603), highlighting a particular view of Carn Galva at an elevated point on the tor where the summer solstice sun sets. Another is nearby at Bodrifty (SW 4449 3544) with a groove pointing toward Little Galva cairn, in the direction of Carn Galva.

Oriented Stones

The people of the mid- or late Neolithic developed a form of oriented stone dug firmly into the ground to stand vertically. These are rocks with one or both sides roughly flat, oriented toward a distant landscape feature.



Oriented stone at Carn Vellan, below Trewellard

Those found thus far are located mainly around Penwith's coast, aligned to features such as cliff sanctuaries, offshore rocks or Scillonian islands.

Oriented stones are a new discovery, and thirteen examples have been found thus far. They don't seem to align with other sites in the way that menhirs do, instead being oriented toward a single topographical feature or a power point. These stones embody the principle of *orientation* but not that of alignment, as generally they don't align with multiple sites. Many have characteristic shapes, and some are loosely oblong when seen side-on.

A stone at Bosiliack (SW 4373 3421), near a cattle rubbing stone and easily confused with one, is oriented SE toward Godolphin Hill some ten miles (16km) away. It is distinctly oblong in side-profile and quite thin and upright when viewed along its axis toward its highlighted landmark.

A pair of stones on Chapel Carn Brea (SW 3863 2812) down from the summit near the main path are oriented in marginally different directions, one pointing toward Cape Cornwall and the other toward Carn Bosavern.⁴⁶ A small pair of stones near Carn Barra (SW 3608 2277) is oriented to the highest point on Carn Lês Boel.

Some oriented stones can be bulky and less slim in shape, with one straightish edge aligned to a distant point, such as the line of three stones at the 'council circle' at Bosigran Castle (SW 4156 3704), oriented toward Pendeen Watch. A stone on the neck of Kenidjack Castle (SW 3554 3256) has its flatter face oriented to White Island, the northernmost Scillonian isle.

Why did they install these oriented stones? To highlight certain topographical features by pointing at them, and to create a psycho-geographic attention-relationship between the two places – this much we can say. Their builders sought to connect and integrate the landscape in a visual and magical sense by orienting awareness toward one site from another. One banal, uniquely Penwithian purpose was perhaps to be able to see the direction of distant landmarks in the mist and fog!

⁴⁶ Source: Tim Stevens, personal communication. For which, thanks.

Three stones at Greeb (SW 3448 2479), just south of Land's End, oriented toward the Longships Rocks, were reported by Graham Hill in a PhD dissertation.⁴⁷



One of the oriented stones at Greeb, near Land's End

An aligned stone in a small valley (SW 3991 2240) separating Cribba Head and Treryn Dinas is oriented toward the peak of the *dinas*. Another at Carn Vellan (SW 3650 3417) on the coast below Trewellard, is oriented to the Brisons rocks in one direction and Watch Croft in the other.

The five holed stones at Tregeseal (SW 3901 3261) might also be oriented similarly, though it is difficult to tell since the stones fell down and were later restored, and it is uncertain whether they are exactly in their correct positions and orientations.

There are probably more oriented stones to be discovered. They are generally too low to be cattle rubbing stones, too 'of a kind' to be natural and coincidental, and they're distinctly oriented toward landscape features. They might be an early precursor to the classic Bronze Age menhir, embodying only the principle of orientation, though not of alignment.

Markstones

Another kind of placed stone is the *markstone*. In the lowlands south of St Buryan, at Sparnon, Selena, Treen and Chapel Curno, a number of markstones seem to function similarly to menhirs, judging by the alignments passing through them. They are large, low stones, not menhirs, embedded in or sitting on the ground, probably Bronze Age in origin and unique to the St Buryan area.

⁴⁷ www.scribd.com/document/106457807/Three-Megalithic-Alignments-at-Lands-End

Some of the stones in the Lamorna plateau complex are also more like markstones than classic menhirs.

Boundary Stones

A variety of menhir-like stones around Carn Galva and Bodrifty mark the boundaries of parishes. But which came first, the stones or the boundaries? If the stones came first, parish boundaries will have formed around them, and there's a possibility the stones come from the Bronze Age since early Christians weren't in the habit of erecting aligned stones, unless perhaps they were trying to convert existing pre-Christian stones. If the stones were erected for the purpose of marking parish boundaries, then they will be medieval in origin. One of these boundary stones is the fallen Four Parishes Stone (SW 4298 3540) on the path between the Nine Maidens and Mên an Tol, sitting at the meeting point of four parishes and two old trackways. Another, north of New Mill, is known as the Bishop's Head and Foot Stone (SW 4638 3623).

Fifty years ago, John Michell discovered these boundary stones to be aligned.⁴⁸ Critics disapproved of stones of a younger age being counted as validating sites on alignments but, irrespective of this, many boundary stones do align with Bronze Age sites – this cannot be just a chance occurrence. Either those who erected the stones in the Christian era knew about the alignments system, or these boundary stones are older than is reckoned, coming most likely from the Bronze Age.

Solution Basins

These are natural holes in rocks, and the ancients endowed them with significance. Some tors, cliff sanctuaries and carns have them. Solution basins are formed by chemical dissolution of feldspar in granite, though this can happen only in those places where the rock and other conditions are right. Pools form in the basins from rain or

⁴⁸ Michell, John, *Old Stones of Land's End*, Garnstone Press Ltd., 1974.

dew that has not otherwise touched the ground. Well, that's the geological explanation.

The Austrian water scientist Viktor Schauberger, had he studied them, might well have identified these basins as places where water droplets actually *form*, producing new or juvenile water.⁴⁹ Their connection with



Solution basins at Creeg Tol, Boscawen-ûn

ancient sites suggests that solution basins were part of Neolithic and Bronze Age ritual and cosmology. Perhaps they were regarded as natural fonts containing holy water.

Solution basins are found at Trevalgan Hill (2), Rosewall Hill (9), Trink Hill (1), Trencrom Hill (30ish), Trendrine Hill (5), Zennor Hill (40+), Trewey Hill (1), Carn Galva (8), Hannibal's Carn (9), Watch Croft (5) and Chapel Carn Brea (1).

Carns and rocks with solution basins include Creeg Tol (8) at Boscawen-ûn, Tom Thumb Rock (2) and Bosworlas (11) near St Just, the Giant's Stone (3) at Zennor, Higher Tregerthen (17), Trengwainton Carn (3) and Carn Downs (7).⁵⁰ Amongst cliff sanctuaries, Bosigran Castle has over thirty solution basins, and Treryn Dinas has quite a few.

Ian McNeil Cooke has plausibly suggested that the holed stone of Mên an Tol originated as a rock with a solution basin that broke through and was finished off by man-made crafting.⁵¹

⁴⁹ Coats, Callum, *The Water Wizard: The Extraordinary Properties of Natural Water*, Gateway Books, 1998.

⁵⁰ Tilley, C. and Bennett, W, An Archaeology of Supernatural Places: The Case of West Penwith, *J Royal Anthropological Inst*, v7, 2, 2001. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/2661226

⁵¹ Cooke, Ian, *Journey to the Stones*, Mên an Tol Studio, 1996.

Finally...

The stones highlighted above were precursors to Bronze Age menhirs, but only loosely so. To morph into menhirs, they would have to await new ideas that gave menhirs their characteristic upstanding shape, functionality and visibility. Menhirs represent a different concept – the idea of aligned acupuncture needles in the land, acting as nodes in a wider system – and behind them lies a far more sophisticated megalithic science.

Next, we move on to cairns and barrows – another form of ancient site that might perhaps have begun earlier than the Bronze Age (though there is little evidence for this). As with placed stones, heaping earth and stone into mounds is not a complex idea, requiring only moderate knowledge, skill and effort. Longbarrows were built in the Neolithic, so it is not impossible that a number of round barrows and cairns might have had earlier origins than are usually ascribed to them – especially those that are geomantically placed. It isn't actually known when the building of cairns and barrows started in Penwith, but the majority of them come from the Bronze Age, from around 2200 to the late 1000s BCE.

10. A Variety of Holy Bumps

Cairns, Barrows and Tumuli

Mounds of varying kinds and sizes are the most common form of ancient site in West Penwith – there are around 250 of them. Big concentrations are found in Scilly and on the Lizard too. Some have chambers, some have cists (stone boxes for remains or relics), and most are solid, with little left that is detectable – remains have dissolved away or been robbed, or perhaps the primary purpose of the mound was not burial or deposition.

Mysterious Mounds

Many barrows and cairns are nowadays a mere bump in the heather, eroded by three to five millennia of Cornish weather. Others have been damaged, ploughed down or removed by antiquarians, looters, farmers, miners, property owners and developers. Only some of these destroyed mounds do we have records of. Even so, some remaining mounds are worth visiting.



Carn Mên Ellas on Mayon Cliff, Sennen,
a wrecked chambered cairn

A *cairn* is made of stones, rocks and earth, while a *barrow* is made mainly of earth – though to add a nice timbre of confusion, this is not always the case. Often, they're called cairns in upland areas and barrows lower down, but not always. A *tumulus* is a catch-all term used on Ordnance Survey maps, covering both cairns and barrows.

There are inherent problems with understanding cairns and barrows. Many are their different types, not only in shape and size but also in purpose – only some of which can nowadays be deduced, inferred or imagined. So, the first problem is that we don't know what was going on in the thoughts and intentions of their builders, thus much guesswork is involved.

The second problem is that barrows and cairns have not been fully and systematically investigated, either by modern excavation or by less intrusive means. Part of the reason is slim archaeological budgets and Cornwall's geographical marginality, and part is perhaps a lack of interest. Excavations in other parts of Cornwall have been more comprehensive than in Penwith.

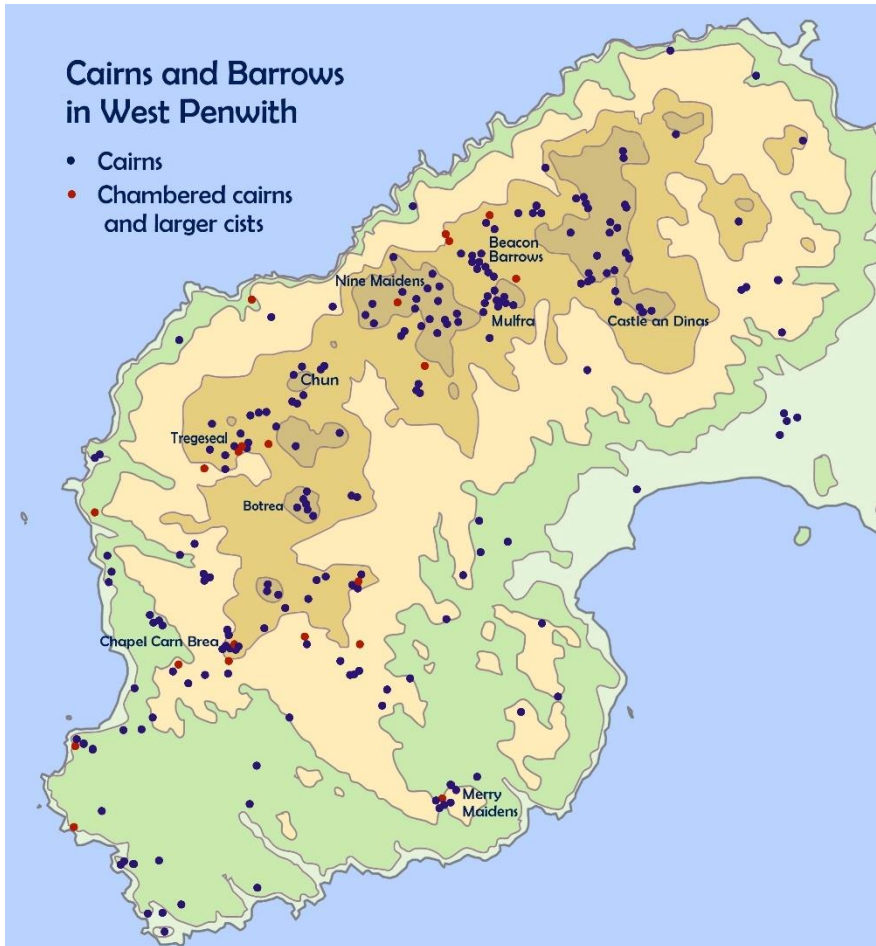
The third problem is that archaeologists are customarily fixated on the idea of mounds serving burial and funerary purposes, and for memorialising high-status individuals, preferably with interesting grave goods buried with them. This is only partially the case, creating a bias in interpretation that is often perpetuated in the literature or in learned discussion despite a paucity of evidence. In Cornwall 45% of excavated barrows contain burials,⁵² and many of these will have been chosen for excavation seeking burials, so this funerary bias tends to obscure research into the full range of the possible purposes of mounds.

In the absence of evidence of burials, it is assumed by default that the mound was, nonetheless, made for burial. Underneath this lies an assumption that the megalith builders were incapable of more sophisticated forms of cultural evolution than funerary rites – insufficiently brainy to entertain greater intentions.

Bones, cremation remains and grave goods are found at quite a few mounds, though not always at the centre, where one might expect them to be if burial were the primary purpose behind building a mound. These deposits are often found at the edges of mounds,

⁵² Bonnington, Paul, Chapel Carn Brea – a ceremonial centre, *Meyn Mamvro* 53, 2004.
<https://meynmamvro.co.uk/archive/mm53-winter-2004.html>

suggesting that burial was a secondary purpose, an addendum or footnote to a primary purpose for cairns.



In many instances during the earlier Bronze Age, bone chips of *many* people are packed together in urns, then buried in mounds, cists or chambers. This was not whole-body burial, instead involving small amounts of the remains of many people – members of a clan – not of individuals.⁵³ These were ancestral relics with

⁵³ Sanchez-Quinto, Federico *et al*, Megalithic tombs in Western and Northern Europe were linked to a kindred society, *PNAS*, 2019. www.pnas.org/content/116/19/9469

oracular or mystical purposes. They were like the keys to the soul of the tribe and its ancestral heart and heritage. In later times, ascendant aristocracies required personal memorialisation, and such status-based funerary practices increased as the Bronze Age wore on. It suggests a growing feeling of individuality dawning in the culture, at least among its grandees.

The big question here is whether or to what extent burial is a primary or a secondary issue. It would have been secondary if the cairn or barrow was built for reasons of functionality, geomantic impact or as a shrine – it might be significant for a person to be buried there because it was special for other reasons. Or perhaps a burial served as a way of consecrating the mound or blessing the surrounding area, even if burial was not its core purpose. Urns, cups and other objects, plus distinct layers of earth, sand and ashes have been found in some mounds, but not universally.

Death rites in the Bronze Age were multifaceted and non-standard. There was much cremation of bodies, and ashes would then be scattered, buried in different places or placed in urns before being buried, and some urns were seemingly deliberately smashed – symbolic perhaps of breaking ties with the past or with the body and its attachments. Burial of bones took place in pits, even under homesteads, under or near standing stones or in the nooks and crannies of tors and cliff sanctuaries. In some cases, burial of bones was incomplete or they lacked heads.

Whole-body memorialisation increased as the Bronze Age went on. This might only partially be a sign of growing privilege: it could also be a sign of elite *service*, whereby certain buried people were seen to act as ancestors or guardians, for the benefit or protection of the living – especially if such people were revered as tribal leaders, healers or holy people.

Mounds have at least three further clear purposes, often underrated. The first is *the simple marking of special places* – some were built to emphasise and highlight outcrops or clifftops such as Boscregan, Kenidjack Castle or Godrevy Head, or hilltops like Watch Croft, Botrea Barrows or Chapel Carn Brea. Some are in the vicinity of

Neolithic tors such as Carn Galva and Carn Kenidjack, though usually not *on* them – Bronze Age cairns were built around them, since tor enclosures were by then already heritage sites. Some cairns are buried in what today is open moorland but at the time they might have been glades of trees or open parklands. It is likely that, when a cairn or barrow was built, its surrounds were suitably landscaped to create vistas, visual enhancements and, if necessary, visibility corridors amongst the trees.

The practice of marking special spots and establishing viewpoints goes back a long way. There is reason to surmise that a certain amount of cairn-building for such purposes might have gone on earlier in the Bronze Age. There is also an assumption that, since most excavated cairns and barrows are dated to the Bronze Age, all of them must do so. This might not be so.

The second purpose behind mounds is *the entraining of energy fields associated with underground water and subtle landscape energy*. It is common for cairns and barrows to be situated on top of energy vortices. The primary purpose was to harness subtle energy by building a mound on top of a vortex to act as an energy buffer, accumulator or distributor of that energy. This would then play a part in the operation of the overall Penwith system.

What's remarkable here is that, even if a cairn is located on top of a vortex for energy-entraining reasons, there will usually be other reasons for its construction, such as site intervisibility, astronomical factors or a particular landscape perspective. Cases of ancient sites with a single purpose or characteristic seem to be rare – most are multi-purpose, even if one function seems to predominate.

The third purpose of cairns and barrows we could call *geomantic*. *They are positioned to act as a node or key marker in a wider system*, or within a stone circle complex. This is indicated through dowsing, examining alignments and astronomical orientations, looking at the wider relationship of a cairn with other visible sites, or through the simple application of an expert or *seeing* eye.

Likely instances of geomantic cairns have been marked as red dots on the ancient sites maps of Cornwall (contrasting the yellow dots

of other cairns). Geomantic cairns have been selected using the following conjectural criteria:

- they are built on hilltops, brows and prominent points;
- they might act as a prominent ‘false horizon’ marker when seen from certain other places only;
- they are located at the intersections of two or more alignments;
- they mark the rising or setting points of the sun or moon as seen from another place (acting as a foresight);
- they can also act as a backsight – a place to stand on to view vistas or astronomical rising and setting points on the horizon, or to see other specific sites or views;
- they are unusually large or they have complex designs, suggesting that they were built as special cairns and barrows.

Today, some of the large cairns with a geomantic purpose have been diminished by ploughing, roadbuilding, mining or housing development, so their size and impact is not as evident as it would have been four millennia ago. Some have gone forever.

Instances have been found where a cairn was covered with a layer of white clay, dark peaty soil, quartz pebbles or well-placed rocks to make it stand out. The planting of selected species of flora on the mound might have done so too. It is likely that barrows were cultivated and landscaped to highlight their presence in the landscape or simply because they were *loved*.

Today, we are accustomed to seeing sanitised, sterile, preserved or half-wrecked sites, but this is a modern-day perception. As gardeners love their gardens, the ancients loved their ancient sites and no doubt gardened and landscaped them. They would have managed tree-distance, vistas and other features in order to emphasise setting and context. The soil in barrows is often more fertile than the surrounding soil, hence farmers have sometimes dug them out to acquire topsoil. This suggests a subsidiary ecological purpose behind many barrows and cairns, as biotic generators and pollen-dispersal points for the area surrounding them.

Of those mounds placed in such a way that they stand out on the horizon when seen from afar, good examples are the cairns on top of Chapel Carn Brea and Sancreed Beacon, or cairns seen from the sea such as Chy Praze near Morvah, Cape Kenidjack and Boscregan Cairns. Others of significance are those at Botrea Barrows and Carn Bean, situated on top of hills. Some mounds incorporate earthfast rocks or carns, buried or visible, enhancing these ‘grounders’ by being built around them. Others are distinctly placed on alignments and/or at alignment intersections.

Thus, many mounds were intended for wider purposes than funereal ones, serving as shrines or depositories, or fulfilling territorial, geomantic, earth-energy and other purposes, or marking and enhancing special places. As at later Christian churches, where graveyards were an add-on to their primary purpose as ‘houses of God’, so also, at cairns and barrows, burial or funerary concerns were often addenda to their main purpose.

Yet some cairns indeed were for burial. This is the case in cairnfields and barrowfields, which were dedicated cemeteries. There are only a few in Penwith, such as at Mulfra and on Botrea Hill. This is mysterious since Penwith had a reasonably high population, so more would be expected. Better examples exist on the Lizard and Scilly, and along certain ridges in East Cornwall.

Barrows and cairns, while looking similar in shape and form, were built for a variety of purposes. They do different things. This variation needs proper recognition.

Chambered Cairns

The terms *entrance graves* or *chambered tombs* confuse things since they prejudice our understanding of chambered cairns.

West Penwith and Scilly host a unique kind of cairn known as Scillonian chambered cairns – *Scillonian* because the Isles of Scilly are littered with them (see chapter 17). However, the archaeological consensus suggests that they were first built in Penwith, then to spread to Scilly.

Some chambered cairns in Penwith pre-date the first permanent colonisation of Scilly, estimated to be around 2250 BCE, though seasonal or sporadic colonisation had happened earlier. There is a small chance that this kind of cairn originated in Scilly, since its accepted colonisation date is but a qualified estimate. A diffusion of ideas, people and megalithic ideas moving each way is to be expected. However, Scilly was an island culture with its own momentum and uniqueness, both homegrown and influenced by visitors from Brittany, Ireland, Wales and elsewhere.

Chambers weren't big. In Penwith, in most cases, the chamber is a metre or not much more in height and width (3-4ft), and around 2-3 metres in length (6-10ft), with inner walls of vertically-placed stones or laid stones, capped with roofing slabs,



Chambered cairn at Brane, near Carn Euny – with hair-do

many with a characteristic bevelled 'pillow' shape. This stone structure is then buried under a mound of earth and stones. These chambers have tight-fitting stonework to stop earth and stones falling in, unlike the quoits of a millennium earlier. Around many of these cairns is a kerb, sometimes of quite substantial stones, edging the mound's perimeter. The kerb stones likely had an energy-containing and concentrating function.

When chambered cairns were built, one of their uses is likely to have been as a retreat. Chambers were presumably made for lying in or placing objects inside, since in many cases they are not high enough for sitting. Only one person at a time would easily fit inside. Some chambers might have been bigger, such as the two now-denuded kerbed cairns NW and SE of the Nine Maidens stone circle, and at Ballowall Barrow, but most were smallish and low. Some cairns on Scilly had larger chambers, allowing standing and

multiple occupants, suggesting a more communal function. The key thing was the empty, insulated yet energised space inside – its architecture was designed to optimise this.

Surviving examples of chambered cairns in Penwith are found at Brane near Sancreed, Tregiffian near the Merry Maidens, Tregiffian Vean near Land's End airport, Pordenack Point and the summit cairn on Chapel Carn Brea. One or two are found near Tregeseal stone circle, at Pennance near Zennor, and two are at Treen near Morvah. They are not as prominently placed as cairns and barrows can be, though the Chapel Carn Brea summit cairn is a notable exception. Most chambered cairns in Penwith date from roughly 2500 BCE onwards – they have not been properly dated. Precise dating is tricky since many cairns were re-used and modified over several centuries.

An exceptional and unique chambered cairn in a dramatic clifftop location is found at Ballowall Barrow on Carn Glouce, near St Just (disabled people can visit it by car). Ballowall is unique in its construction and location, far more complex than any other chambered cairn and sitting in a class of its own. It was built in stages over a long period, starting in the late Neolithic and continuing through the Bronze Age. Unfortunately, antiquarians of recent centuries, including Borlase, did some reconstruction of parts of the cairn – the passage around the central mound and the central space – affecting much valuable evidence.

The oldest, late Neolithic part of Ballowall Barrow is a pit near the centre that was later surrounded by a number of cists, then covered with stones. Further cists were added around this, and during the Bronze Age the whole lot was covered with a kerbed platform, together with an extra chamber added. The cairn's maritime panorama is spectacular, looking out over Longships Rocks and the Isles of Scilly, 25ish miles westward toward the edge of the world.

Why Build Chambered Cairns?

Chambered cairns in West Penwith are sometimes oriented toward points on the local horizon that mark the rising and setting of the

sun at critical times of year or, less frequently, lunar standstills. They mainly face in variations of an easterly direction, and summer solstice orientations are quite common. Some were oriented not astronomically but to landscape vistas – so astronomical orientation is not the rule. On Scilly, chambered cairns were oriented in a wide variety of directions, including due north and in various odd, non-astronomical directions – many to make the most of the view.

So while there is astronomical significance to many chambers' orientation, it was not useful for calendrical measurement because other methods would be better. So this was astronomical

mysticism more than science at work – with

special effects added. The builders sought to capture light at chosen times of year, drawing light into the dark. They sought to capture particular qualities of light and energy, using such cairns as subtle-energy batteries or crucibles. Anything placed inside them would absorb the light or energy inherent in the time highlighted by the orientation of the chamber, potentiated by the interior subtle-energy field of the chamber when its entrance is closed.

Chambered cairns were built for repository, geomantic, initiatory, contemplative and other purposes, even for conscious dying.

Trainee Kogi Mamas (shamans in Colombia) lived underground for years in caves and chambers to become sensitised to subtle energy, developing a deep sense of timelessness, away from the buzz of human activity and stretching beyond the cycles of day, night and season. Long periods of sensory deprivation awakened the Mamas' spiritual, healing and shamanistic capacities. They would emerge only when deemed ready, often after 10-20 years. Similarly,



CASPN doing a clear-up at Treen chambered cairn

Tibetan Lamas were bricked up in caves or cells for years. Early Christian hermits spent time in isolated cells and oratories for similar purposes.

Contemplation and spiritual training is likely to be one purpose of chambered cairns, though in the Cornwall of 4,000 years ago, people probably retreated into cairns for a period of days or a lunar cycle more than for years. For those in shamanic training it might have been longer. Native Americans call this *vision questing*, where a person at a critical stage in life, or undergoing a rite of passage, is sent to be alone to face themselves and to seek a guiding vision. Or if a person was deemed to have erred, a prescribed retreat inside a cairn would be a means of self-examination and self-correction, perhaps supervised by an elder. It is also imaginable that old people might have spent time there to help them transition to elderhood or to move through the portal of death.

Chambered cairns indeed were likely to be places to die in peace. This might have been one of their main purposes. Nowadays we fear death, seeing it as a loss and a matter of regret, as if thrust upon us. In the megalithic period, death was seen as a return to the spirit world, the ancestors and the ones who are yet to come. The Sámi say that the living and the dead are simply two halves of the same family. A peaceful death allows us to resolve and release the outstanding issues of our lives so that we can undergo a smooth transition into the otherworld. Death is a key moment for change, and our capacity to handle change during our lives affects the manner of our dying and, to Tibetans, our rebirth.

One interesting archaeological theory mentions molecular transfer between stones and bones inside chambers, making bones more like stone and infusing the stones with the molecular essence of the bones of those who have died.⁵⁴

Chambered cairns may also have been places for women marking their menstruation, menopause or other key phases of life. Perhaps, for purposes of conception, a woman might spend time in the

⁵⁴ <https://harcruins.wixsite.com/ruinationanddecay/post/decaying-flesh-and-instability-of-substances-rethinking-Neolithic-chambered-tombs>

chamber to ‘call in a soul’. Doing this at summer solstice would create a child in springtime – just the right time to be born. Some chambers might have been for women only, or mainly so, or looked after by them. There is no evidence for this, but these are plausible hypotheses that are worth chewing over.

These are conjectural purposes for chambered cairns. Though solitary quietude is rather alien to us in our coffee-driven world, we should not underestimate its importance in ancient times. It is possible the ancients built these chambers to listen to life’s subtle undercurrents, and simply for that reason.

This leaves a question. Many chambered cairns were built close to agricultural fields – which are not the most secluded of places for retreat. This adds weight to their likely use as *repositories*. Their use for retreat cannot be ruled out, and such retreats might have been considered a form of blessing the land. If you have ever sat near a meditating person, or someone falling asleep, or dying, a timeless reality-field can build up, making the experience special. So, if doing inner work inside a cairn was done to benefit nature and farming, then being located close to field systems makes some sense. Though a question remains: were cairns built to augment productivity in the fields, or were fields established around the cairns because someone discovered that this was beneficial?

Repositories

Cairns’ use as repositories is backed up by finds discovered inside some chambers, such as samples of soil, ash, sand, organic material or offerings. These could be potentised in the energy-field inside a chamber, then scattered on the surrounding land or used for raising biotic energy, rather similarly to the way that holy water was scattered on the land in medieval times.

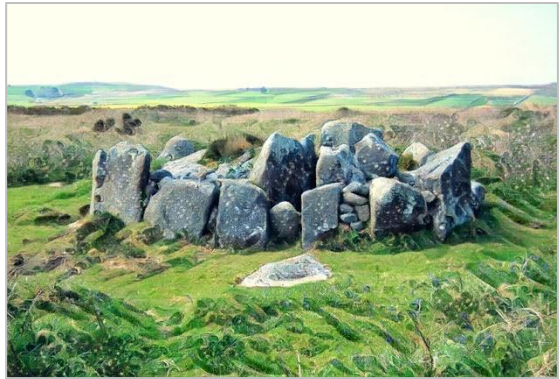
Another use of chambered cairns can be for the improvement of seeds, the potentisation of herbal medicines and psychoactive elixirs, or the application of energy treatments to help in the storage of food and overwintering and upgrading of seeds and roots. This

isn't storage – this is *treatment*. If such treatments were carried out, it would be, say, for a lunar cycle, not for months or all winter.

This proposition may sound extreme, though it might also be surprisingly close to the truth. In the 1970s experiments were carried out putting seeds inside pyramids, then planting the seeds in controlled trials. Remarkable results in productivity and health were observed in seeds potentised in the pyramid. Similar potency results have been seen with seeds taken from crop circles, or treated by prayer. Razor blades have been sharpened inside pyramids, demonstrating that even inorganic materials can be modified by such treatment. There is something about the energetics created inside a rarefied, energised space that alters the nature and vitality of seeds, food or other items, even metals. Tools, valuables, elixirs and sacred objects can thus be enhanced.

The space inside chambered cairns was charged with negative ions and subtle energy, located as they were over energy vortices. A stone at Bosiliack Barrow has even been found to be radioactive.⁵⁵ The energy capture and amplification element of the chambers is crucial here. The connection between subtle energy, consciousness and paranormal phenomena creates reality fields that can be valuable for psycho-spiritual development and for subtle manipulation of physical processes.

It's worth sitting inside a chambered cairn and letting yourself be still for some time, to feel this quiet subtle-energy field – try Bosiliack Barrow, the Treen barrows, Pennance Barrow or Brane cairn. They are vibrationally insulated



Bosiliack Barrow,
an exposed, excavated, chambered cairn

⁵⁵ Discovered by local researcher Lucas Nott, who produced an online [radiation map of sites](#).

spaces. *Nothing happens* – and that’s important. It is tranquil, yet energy-intensity is present too.

Then there are the ancestors, whose most enduring relics were their bones or ashes. These relics gave access as power objects to the ancestors’ guidance, protection and healing. They gave people a sense of roots, heritage, continuity, legitimacy and counsel. The presence of the bones of respected or beatified predecessors would uplift the soul of the tribe. It is therefore conceivable that these cairns were dedicated to the ancestors, to clan members living on the other side, beyond time. But they weren’t exactly tombs.

Dating

The available evidence points to barrows and cairns being built between 2500 and 1500 BCE, with a peak between 2000 and 1600. They were in use up to at least 1100 BCE. However, a lack of comprehensive dating leaves question marks. Much dating research relies on comparison with other regions, or it rests on deduction, assumption or inadequate sampling. Surviving remains found in mounds date the remains, not the cairn or barrow itself, and it’s often discovered to be the case that buried items were buried some time after the cairn was built.

But let’s go back further. Neolithic longbarrows were built far back in the 3000s BCE. There are three examples in Penwith, two of them assured and one possible. On Chapel Carn Brea a Neolithic longbarrow sits on a



Neolithic longbarrow on Chapel Carn Brea

prominent outcrop, just SW of the summit. Drive east along the A30 from Sennen and it can be seen on the right of the summit, sticking out. At Lanyon Quoit the remains of a longbarrow adjoin

the quoit, now just a low bump. The unsafe instance, close to the Brane chambered cairn and not far from Carn Euny, is a hump that is suspected to be a longbarrow, but this is inconclusive, and it has not been excavated. No known alignments intersect with it.

But why did the Neolithics not build more mounds, especially since mounds are quite simple structures? Following the building of the longbarrows there was a period of at least 800 years up to about 2500 BCE, during which, seemingly, no mounds were built. Or at least, mounds have not been dated to that period. This raises an eyebrow. While there is no existing evidence of cairns and barrows being built before 2500, some may perhaps be older.

Cairnfields and Barrowfields

Scilly and the Lizard had far more cairnfields and barrowfields than West Penwith. This gives rise to a tradition that the Scillies were the ‘isles of the dead’ – isles to which mainlanders were taken to be buried. This could apply equally to the Lizard, considering the sheer number of barrows there. Some Scillonian cairnfields are enormous and, as graveyards, they would have held a considerable number of deceased people. The Shipman Head cairnfield on Bryher has at least 106 cairns, many of them quite extensive platform cairns, broad and flattish. Why are there no similarly large cairnfields or barrowfields in West Penwith? Its few cairnfields have just 5-10 cairns or barrows. So what was so special about Scilly and the Lizard?

Bronze Age Britain was a *kind of* nation, not just a sundry collection of tribes, and the promontory geography of the Lizard and island geography of Scilly, at Britain’s southwestern extremity, is significant. It is possible that people came here to die or that corpses were brought from afar for burial – this would explain the size of the Scilly cairnfields and the sheer number of clustered barrows on the Lizard. But there is no proof of this. And this does not explain why Penwith lacks similar large cemeteries.

Katharine Sawyer, a Scillonian archaeologist, believes that Scilly’s cairnfields served multiple generations of deceased Scillonians

only, since urns found there are in a local style only. But if this is the case, why were things done differently in West Penwith? It is difficult to believe that neighbouring areas would have such differing funereal practices, unless Scilly and the Lizard specialised in welcoming incomers to die (on Scilly) or to be buried on the Lizard. This matter remains unresolved, seeking further evidence.

Penwith's cairnfields are: Beacon Barrows (10 barrows) and Mulfra cairnfield (12 barrows); Botrea Barrows (6-8 barrows); Chapel Carn Brea (16 cairns); and Foage (6 barrows); with several conglomerations of 3-6 barrows or cairns in the area of Carn Galva, and at Trewey, Bartinney Castle, Numphra, Boscregan Cairns, Truthwall Common (Tregeseal), Mayon Cliff, the Merry Maidens (mostly ploughed under), Sancreed Beacon, Lady Downs and Bowgyheere (Varfell). These are smaller in size and number than we see on Scilly and the Lizard.

Solid Barrows and Cairns

The majority of mounds had no chambers. A number of them contain buried bones, urns, stones, grave goods or other items, and many do not. The presence of such artefacts doesn't indicate that a barrows' *primary* purpose was burial, since artefacts can be buried to bless the items themselves, or to bless and empower the site, or for some reason now long forgotten.

This brings us to the idea that many barrows served as shrines and geomantic nodes, located over the intersections of underground streams, sitting on top of a vortex, energy-bubble or imprint of subtle energy emanating from the earth. The



Botallack Common cairn, Tregeseal

mound would buffer, fix or concentrate energy, storing it and trickling it out in phase with the tides of time. With geomantic cairns, items or bones would be buried to augment the cairn's energy-field. Some would be at key places such as hilltops.

Some archaeologists suggest that barrows containing funereal remains were built for protection and demarcation of a tribe's territory. This is a viable idea, though many barrows are located in places that feel central more than peripheral, so protection might be more valid than demarcation. Building mounds can be a form of empowerment and improvement of the land – dressing it up with cairns as landmark features and shrines at pathway meeting places, viewing spots and energy centres. But this property management function could be just one of many possible multi-functional purposes for barrows and cairns.

Many mounds lie on alignments and intersections. In some cases, alignments pass through their centre, and in others they tangent their edges. Dowsters have found that a tangential intersection can create an energy-spin around the mound, insulating it and concentrating its energy field. This question needs more attention.

In a more prosaic way, barrows could serve simply as good places to sit and rest – Bronze Age park benches. People did a lot of walking, so barrows could serve as stopping and orientation places. Rarely did the ancients do things for a single purpose.

Energy Working

Those who omit to include earth energies in their understanding of prehistory miss a big trick. It's rather like failing to understand how money makes an economy work. Some barrows and cairns sit atop blind springs with energy up-flows, sinks and vortices. Most seem to be located at the intersections of underground water veins or over geological faults or magnetic anomalies. Such conditions create altered reality fields that permit phenomena such as time-warps, altered states, healings, insights and an uncanny sense of centrality, of *hereness* and *nowness*. The building of a mound

would be to cap, contain, concentrate or entrain these energies, or to act as batteries or buffers for smoothing energy fluctuations.

Here we enter borderland science realms, as propounded by thinkers such as Viktor Schauberger with his work on energy, water, biomagnetism, gravity and levity, or Sigmund Freud with his book *Civilisation and its Discontents*.⁵⁶ One theory has it that many barrows were built in the fashion of Wilhelm Reich's orgone accumulators, with alternating layers of organic (turf or soil) and inorganic matter (rocks and stones) laid down to accumulate subtle energy. Irrespective of any theories, it is not difficult to feel that there is an energy-field, a special stillness and atmosphere that occupies many cairns and barrows – this is our bottom-line evidence concerning their core purposes.

In Penwith, time and soil-creep have obscured distinct layers, if they existed. Yet some are built over or around rock outcrops and some have stone chambers, cists and kerbs, alternating earth and stone. The purpose would have been to generate what Reich called *orgone*, akin to what Schauberger regarded as *levity* – uplifting, anti-gravitational force – or what others might see as the activating component of life-force. This vitalist way of seeing things is usually regarded as hocus-pocus. But, without it, a key *raison d'être* of barrows and cairns is lost.

The four large platform barrows on top of Botrea Hill are imaginable as stages on which to enact ceremonies, sacred dances or the ancients equivalent of mummers' plays. Sitting atop a plateau with a wide panorama, these platform barrows would have been an inspiring location for spectacles, chorales, chanting or rhythmic drumming. They are energetic too, and sitting on one for an hour is rather like a revitalising energy-bath.

Just over the valley, Caer Brân was a possible parliament and moot site for Penwith, and uphill from there, Bartinney Castle served ceremonial and magical purposes. It looks as if Caer Brân, Botrea

⁵⁶ Freud, Sigmund, *Civilisation and its Discontents*, London, 1930. <https://www.stephenhicks.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/FreudS-CIVILIZATION-AND-ITS-DISCONTENTS-text-final.pdf>

Barrows, Sancreed Beacon and Bartinney Castle formed a framework of sites for get-togethers for the tribes of Belerion.

These plausible conjectures give hints of the possible range of purposes and usages of cairns and barrows around four millennia ago. There are so many mounds that they deserve more attention, especially since nowadays we have a wide range of available investigative means including satellites, geophys, metal detectors, pendulums and psychometry. Widening the spectrum of data collection and interpretative perceptions would help considerably.

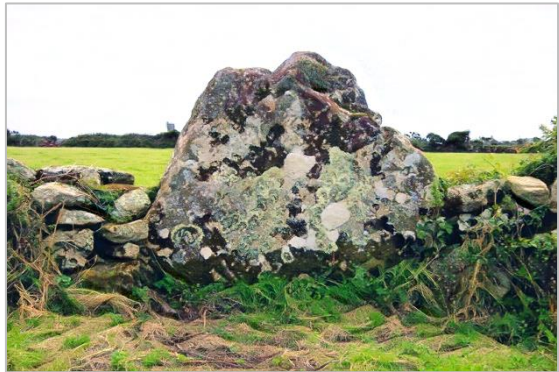
11. Landscape Inoculation Technology

Standing Stones

Menhirs were made to be seen from a distance, marking an exact spot more pinpoint-specifically than cairns. About one third of their full height is underground. The word menhir is Cornish for 'long stone' – mên or meyn means stone, hir means high or long.

Ancient Multiculturalism

The early Bronze Age upswing that brought the menhirs and stone circles had its roots both in indigenous and incoming Beaker influences. In the case of Cornwall, Beaker influences came up the Atlantic seaboard from Brittany and Iberia, while in eastern Britain they came over the Channel from central Europe.



Banns Farm menhir, relatively recently identified

The first henge (bank and ditch) stage of Stonehenge was built by indigenous Neolithics around 2900 BCE and the second stage, the sarsen stones, arrived later around 2500. Both came *before* the Beaker influx. Megalithic building styles and technology were also evolving elsewhere – Callanish was built around 2800. Incoming Beaker people grafted their own inputs onto this existing knowhow.

Dating estimates for early Bronze Age sites in West Penwith tend to be set around 2500-2200 BCE – quite a broad timescale. The beginning of the Bronze Age is often assumed to fall *after* the Beaker influx or to have arisen because of it, and this notion needs review. The Beaker influx did bring bronze technology, but what we refer to as Bronze Age, in terms of megalithic architecture, pre-existed the Beaker influx by around a century. This is important because it could settle an outstanding question about the extent to which the building of Penwith’s menhirs and stone circles was initiated by resident Britons and how much by incomers.

While it can take but one or a few boatloads of migrants to transplant ideas to a new place, initiating a megalithic project is unlikely to be the first thing immigrants would think of doing soon after arrival. The initiative is likely to have been indigenous, though it is possible that ideas came from abroad before people came. It looks as if Beaker influences might simply have added to the project. Beaker migrants might even have come to Britain because megalithic activities taking place here attracted them.

Ancient sites in Portugal and Brittany are generally older than Cornish sites, suggesting that they are likely to be the source of Cornish megalithic ideas. But Brittany does not have the stone circles found in Cornwall, and many structures such as the enormous stone rows of Carnac were not copied here. So, while they shared a broadly common culture, only some influences came from the south while many were already here.

Our understanding of the Neolithic-Bronze Age transitional period (NBA) is hazy. It makes the precise dating and sequencing of the construction of sites an important issue. The Beaker influx seemed to accelerate but not necessarily to *cause* the megalithic upswing.

Although common patterns of design and construction were widespread across Britain and Ireland, each area had its own distinct style, geology and landscape. In this pre-literate society, drawn architects’ plans did not exist – literacy encourages standardisation and conformity while orally-conveyed ideas

produce varied interpretations and results. Principles were locally applied according to the ways of people in different parts.

Early megalith builders in Neolithic Cornwall in the 3000s built sacred sites in places where, intuitively, it felt right to do so. They had the skills of dowsing or they were natural sensitives, they had a sense of landscape artistry and they had science too, as shown in the way Lanyon Quoit was located at the intersection of a number of backbone alignments, and the way that astronomical orientations determined the locations of the quoits.

For Bronze Age menhir-builders, locational considerations became intellectually more intricate as sites proliferated and stone circle complexes developed. This was an outcome of evolving ideas in megalithic science, mathematics, astronomy and geomancy, amped up with Beaker ideas, as well as the effects of population growth and growing colonisation of the land – particularly the south.

Longstones

Not long ago, in a Facebook discussion group, the following statement whizzed past: ‘The purpose of menhirs remains unclear. Most archaeologists today accept that they had a wide range of functions: marking the boundaries of territory; meeting points; grave markers or fulfilling a religious and ceremonial role’. Well, you could indeed say that, but it isn’t very evidential. According to this, menhirs were mainly just markers.



Trelew menhir, with St Buryan church behind

By dint of their shape and standing, menhirs were masculine objects, intended to fecundate the earth, the feminine. The sperm was cosmic energy from above, interacting with earth’s energy

field, the egg. Energy (sky) met form and substance (earth). A menhir was an interface connecting them. Energy follows the path of least resistance, so by inserting a vertical menhir into an energy vortex, like an acupuncture needle, a concentrated and amplified energy flow arises, facilitating that earth-sky connection and opening up overground and underground terrestrial energy meridians, or creating new ones.

Some dowsers find a seven-turn energy vortex around menhirs, with roughly four turns above the surface, one around the surface and two below. Smaller stones might involve five turns. To some extent, a menhir is analogous to a lightning conductor, being plugged into the energy-vortices of underground water and thus able to ground or release energy to neutralise extremes of charge between earth and sky. This analogy shouldn't be taken too far since menhirs aren't exactly lightning-conductors, instead tending to reduce the likelihood or intensity of lightning occurring by relieving charge potentials before they build up. This bioelectric influencing of charge-potentials suggests how menhirs were used to influence weather and climate.

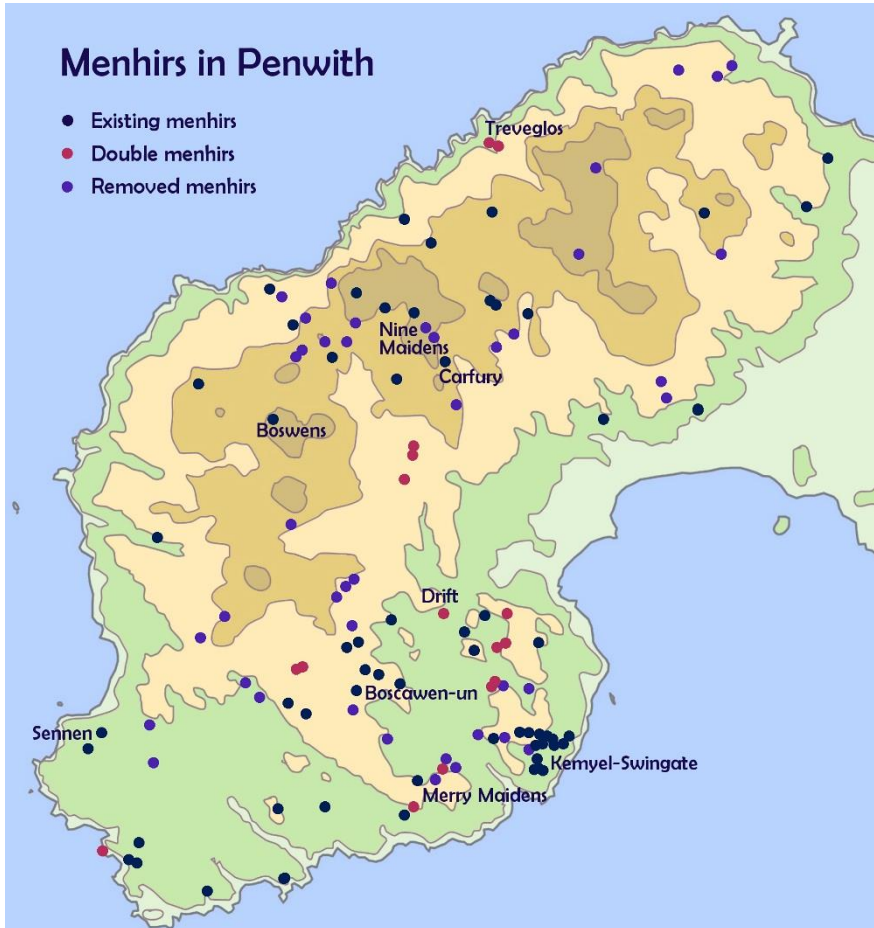
Cairns and barrows contrast in nature and purpose to menhirs. Menhirs are connectors, but mounds are accumulators, batteries and trickle-distributors. Menhirs are hardly ever found on top of mounds – they would probably cancel each other out, or it might be done only in very special cases. In a few instances an adjacent menhir and barrow are connected by an underground energy line – an example being the menhir and nearby cairn atop Watch Croft, Penwith's highest hill.

Menhirs have two subtle-energy orientations:

- *horizontal fields* in the form of sinuous water lines and energy spirals underground, together with straight overground energy-lines, splaying out across the landscape; and
- *vertical fields* moving between earth and heaven, interfacing terrestrial, atmospheric and cosmic forces.

The horizontal component is partially demonstrated by the height of standing stones, often intended to be seen from a distance.

Menhirs were unlikely to be built as boundary markers, even though boundaries later sometimes affixed themselves to them – boundaries weren't important in the Bronze Age. They would have been suitably cared for, yet they were unlikely to be ceremonial sites except for some blessing or energy-maintenance work.



They were technical instruments, network connectors, and some were geomantic hubs. They existed to back up other sites and help integrate the geomantic system of West Penwith. Ancient sites are not individual and separate but components of a bigger system, and menhirs, together with geomantic cairns and barrows, were vital

feeders and conveyance mechanisms supporting key sites and the connectivity of the system as a whole.

West Penwith's Menhirs

In West Penwith there are 75 in existence, with around 50 more recorded but now moved or destroyed.⁵⁷ So there were 120-150 in total, erected during likely Bronze Age flurries of activity, inspired by periodic upturns of enthusiasm, fortunes and leadership.

It wasn't just a matter of putting up a stone. Surveying, quarrying, dressing, transporting and landscaping were involved, together with necessary logistical and support systems – food, time, tools, ropes, rollers, workers and motivation, and normal life had to keep going back home too. Quarrying and transport were demanding and time-consuming. They might have needed people to build tracks, fords and bridges for stone transport. The menhir builders chose stones carefully, not necessarily from the nearest or easiest source – they had some pretty good consultant geologists.

Since no stone exists in isolation and menhirs are aligned as part of a larger system, they are unlikely to have been erected singly but instead in numbers, sets and strings. Bronze Age people were *building infrastructure*, not just a disparate assortment of menhirs. This was landscape transformation and it meant a lot of practical planning and execution. Menhir building probably followed soon after clearance and opening up of the land, especially in the south. By 1800 BCE up to half of Penwith was cleared of trees – it was a new man-made landscape with a new psycho-geography.

Building 120ish menhirs involves finding a lot of suitably shaped rocks, quarrying, preparing and fashioning them – not a simple, quick task. Sometimes stones were kept in their natural, original shape and sometimes they were modified, dressed and finished. In Penwith, menhirs are of locally sourced granite, though few obvious quarry sources have been found. Many were transported one or a few miles – a big effort with lots of logistical challenges.

⁵⁷ Meyn Mamvro Archive: www.meynmamvro.co.uk/archive/standing-stones.html

In the case of enormous stones such as Carfury or the two Pipers menhirs, they would be easy to damage during transport and erection. In the south of the peninsula the builders probably had to transport stones further than in the north. They're likely to have had their fair share of logistical and engineering failures in the form of chipped, cracked and broken stones – or bones.

Menhirs are located in two distinct areas in the north and south of the peninsula, and the south looks far more planned out than the north. Their distribution suggests where the main open spaces were at the time of their erection, particularly in the south where menhirs would have acted as a key factor in land colonisation.

While the main energy centres of Penwith took the form of stone circles, hilltops and cliff sanctuaries, supportive instruments such as menhirs and mounds were inserted to increase the density and intricacy of the interconnected energy system. Standing



Carfury menhir

stones are usually found at the intersection of underground water lines, overgrounds and alignments.

Mostly, menhirs were not inserted into backbone alignments – more often they were used for relatively local alignments and stone circle radials. But there are exceptions – for example the now-destroyed Bunker's Hill double menhirs west of Boscawen-ûn, staking out a backbone alignment (78) from St Michael's Mount to Bryher, Scilly. The Rissick menhir, west of Boscawen-ûn and also gone, lies on a 73km backbone alignment (97) from Godolphin Hill to Boscawen-ûn, and over to the Castle Downs and Shipman Head cairnfields in the Scillies.

Some menhirs act as distinct focal points, with four or more alignments intersecting them, such as Carfury (10), Boswens (4), Ennis Farm (6), Tresvennack Pillar (4), Drift double menhirs (7), Redhouse double menhirs (6), and the NE Piper menhir (6). These can be called *relay* and *hub* menhirs (more in chapter 18).

Before menhirs were built, key base sites in the system were situated at energy centres such as tors or upwelling blind springs. Menhirs were plugged into lesser power points, and it is difficult to say whether these power points existed *before* the menhirs came along, and how much they were migrated toward standing stones or even partially created by them. This is a big question, given that menhirs represent a cultural shift from *enhancing* power points in the Neolithic toward *creating* them in the Bronze Age.

There is a trade-off between letting nature do its thing and intervening in it. The conquest of nature was still sympathetic even if increasingly interventionist and intensive – unsympathetic exploitation of nature came in later millennia. Subtle energy is not depleted by utilising it – if anything it multiplies – but it can be obstructed and weakened by accidental or intentional abuse or misuse. The megalith builders got something more or less right in their tech development and there is much to learn from them.

Geomancy

Penwith granite is crystalline, made of feldspar, quartz and mica (about 20%), with kaolinite, minerals and other traces. Crystals and small concentrations of metals in the rock give granite much of its subtle microvolt conductivity – conductive on a photon level, with storage capacity as much for information and memory as for energy. This confounds those educated in physical sciences since rocks such as granite are not regarded as good conductors. But this concerns wide-spectrum frequencies at the photon level, where principles of conductivity operate differently.

Electromagnetism and other measurable forces have narrow frequency ranges, and the wide spectrum that dowsers register has differing properties. Earth energy is difficult to define in scientific

terms and this is problematic. But squeezing a broad-spectrum frequency range into a narrower, measurable range, then rejecting the existence of earth energy on the basis that it cannot properly be measured, is not the best way to go about this issue.

It would be more productive to give attention to the findings of dowisers and geomancers and to examine them seriously, even if they cannot at present be explained. The *results* need testing rather than getting snagged up in methodological debates. Without such an approach, ancient sites will not be properly understood since the vital factor of earth energy is overlooked and denied.

Dowser Patrick MacManaway defines geomancy as, “*the study of the dynamic and interwoven relationship between human consciousness and its subtle energetic matrix with the consciousness and subtle energetic matrix of the earth*”. Thus human consciousness affects the earth’s energy matrix, and vice versa. This can be instantaneous: the energy field of an ancient site can start expanding or contracting as soon as people approach, depending on their energy-state and vibe – it’s a direct response, and the energy fields of those people will often expand too. (However, if you enter an ancient site with a mobile phone other things can happen, since you are overriding your own energy-field with artificial, overriding frequencies, and the site’s own energy-field will be agitated too.⁵⁸)

Naturally arising power points do in some cases organise themselves to align with each other, when we would expect their location to be determined by geological factors such as rock consistency and fissuring. Why and how this happens, no one has yet been able to figure out. It hints at an underlying hidden order within nature: there are signs of a patterned and possibly quite complex neural circuitry in nature that we are only scratching the surface of understanding. During the Bronze Age each menhir was set up to operate in relationship with other sites as part of a bigger

⁵⁸ In rural areas where the signal is low, the search signal from your phone is broadcast extra strongly, seeking a transmitter to handshake with. Similarly, ongoing data transfers are broadcast stronger. So, paradoxically, the toxic effects of phones can be greater in rural than in urban areas.

system, and perhaps the ancients sensed a bigger energy-network in operation before they started erecting menhirs.

Bronze Age geomancers were skilled at subtle-energy engineering. They learned that it was possible to enhance, channel and even move power points when conditions allowed, setting up patterns that weren't previously there or that might have been weaker or different in character. The theory goes that, if you build a megalithic structure correctly and at the right place, an energy vortex can be amplified or a nearby vortex can be migrated, though probably only a small distance. This has been observed by a number of dowsers and modern-day builders of stone circles, labyrinths or medicine wheels (such as old friends Sig Lonegren⁵⁹ and Ivan McBeth⁶⁰). Whether this is an actual migration of underground water (geologically questionable) or a stretching of their energy fields as if to embrace a site, is difficult to say.

A standing stone is a precise ancient site, specifically pinpointing a location. Meanwhile, cairns, enclosures and stone circles enclose an area – you can go inside them. You can't with a menhir. Ancient sites that enclose space served as key structures while menhirs were auxiliaries in the megalithic system. That doesn't make them less important – in an integrated system, everything is important.

Penwith's stone circles have complexes of menhirs and cairns around them – Boscawen-ûn and the Merry Maidens have mainly menhirs, while Tregeseal, the Nine Maidens and Mên an Tol have mainly cairns. Complexes stretch a mile or two from a stone circle, which acts as an axle or gravity centre to that complex.

Some orientations in these complexes are astronomically aligned, though many are terrestrial, relating to other sites or landscape features. Most complexes are served by nearby proxy menhirs, which seem to act as sub-processors to the stone circle – the Pipers, Carfury and Boswens menhirs being good examples. Looking at a stone circle in isolation misses important clues as to why it is there

⁵⁹ See article by Sig Lonegren: www.geomancy.org/index.php/mag-e-zine/mag-e-zine-1996/no-4-winter-solstice/the-gathering-earth-energies

⁶⁰ The Magical World of Ivan McBeth: www.ivanmcbeth.com

and how it operates: the radial alignments emanating from it, together with standing stones and cairns forming the surrounding complexes, are integral to its operation.

Astronomical Alignments

Some, though only some, menhirs mark astronomical alignments. For these purposes, menhirs are more likely to act as foresights – locations to look *toward* – than backsights – locations to take a sighting from. Astronomically-sited menhirs are yet to be fully and comprehensively studied in Penwith, but some progress has been made by archaeoastronomer Carolyn Kennett and others.⁶¹

A century ago the astronomer and antiquarian Sir Norman Lockyer found a classic case when he was examining Boscawen-ûn. The Toldavas alignment (30), goes from Boscawen-ûn through three menhirs at Chyangwens, Trelew and Toldavas, before proceeding to Castallack menhir above Lamorna. The alignment marks the sun's rising point at (true) Samhain around 5th November and (true) Imbolc around 5th February. These two cross-quarter points mark the end and beginning of the year's growth cycle.

When looking from Boscawen-ûn, the winter solstice sun rises over Kemyel Point, a type two cliff sanctuary. This alignment stretches back in the other direction to Cape Cornwall. Here we have an instance of the way a stone circle's positioning is defined by two cliff sanctuaries while also, amazingly, being plopped on a fortuitous solstice alignment between them.

There are quite a few astronomical orientations in Penwith – known, suspected and as yet undiscovered – involving quoits, cairns, menhirs, stone circles and landscape features. There is further to go in studying them, and it takes time, resources and sandwiches. Perhaps a coherent pattern of astronomical alignments exists in Penwith, but there is work to do before it can be uncovered – if indeed such a pattern exists.

⁶¹ See Kennett, Caroline and Straffon, Cheryll, [*Watching the Sun*](#), booklet and download.

Double Menhirs

In Cornwall, double menhirs are found in West Penwith, on Bodmin Moor and Trehudreth Downs. Otherwise, elsewhere they are found only in Dyfed, SW Wales. Presumably, an innovative megalith builder in Cornwall or Dyfed travelling between the two set off this trend.



The Pipers, double menhirs at the Merry Maidens

Double menhirs are usually between 10 and 150 metres apart. Their relative position presumably has some significance, though no astronomical orientations have been identified. Orienting double menhirs with other sites seems to be less common than one might expect, with a few exceptions. One is the three adjacent Chyenhal menhirs (two of them now destroyed) aligned on St Michael's Mount. The Bunker's Hill double menhirs, now gone, were aligned on Boscawen-ûn, and while the Pipers were aligned on the Merry Maidens, the Boscawen Rô's double menhirs on the other side of the Merry Maidens complex were not. Apart from these, the orientation of double menhirs seems to relate more to earth energy patterns in the complexes and localities they serve.

Seven sets of double or triple menhirs are marked in purple on the ancient site maps: at Redhouse, Drift, the Faugan Stones and Chyenhal (originally triple), the Pipers (possibly triple) and Boscawen Rô's in the Merry Maidens complex, and Bunker's Hill (destroyed). Carfury menhir was possibly a double menhir – a suspected sister stone lies on its side not far downhill.

In some cases, one of the menhirs seems to take longer-distance alignments while the other takes more localised ones – acting as a polarity. Expanding on the polarity theme, the Boscawen Rô's

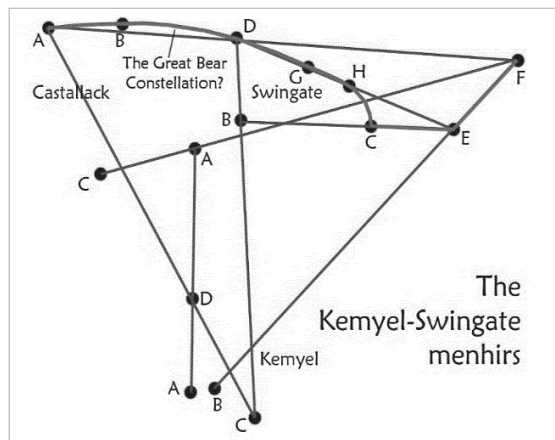
menhirs each align separately with the Pipers menhirs on the other side of the Merry Maidens circle: the western menhir's alignment goes through the centre of the Merry Maidens stone circle while the eastern menhir's alignment tangents the circle on its SE side.

Expanding further on the polarity theme, in some cases alignments pass obliquely *between* double menhirs without touching either. If the menhirs form a shared energy field embracing both stones, then an alignment passing between them would clearly pass through that energy field without needing to intersect one of the menhirs.

This brings us back to the subtle-energy aspect of this study: although alignments are clearly meant to be exact, it is the energy fields that matter, not specifically the stones. While an alignment to a single menhir goes straight through it, since the menhir stands at the centre of its energy-field, the centre of the energy-field involving double menhirs will lie between them. Thus it makes sense for an alignment to pass through a bipolar field.

Kemyel-Swingate

The Kemyel-Swingate complex is a pattern of menhirs and stones, some of them quite low, presumably intended for seeing only within the complex. Situated on a plateau on the NE side of the Lamorna valley, not far from the Merry Maidens and probably an annex to it, the



complex has been robbed of context by relatively modern field hedges. It is built as a system of its own, clearly for a purpose, made up of menhirs aligned in three-point alignments. Two are near-parallel, though evidently not intended to be precisely parallel.

What was this complex for? Judging by its uniqueness it had a specialised function, perhaps experimental or for training purposes. The orientation of some pairs of stones could be astronomical, though most alignments are not. The pattern of menhirs suggests a stellar constellation, and the northern menhirs at Kemyel appear to have a pattern resembling the Plough (*Ursa Major*), but we do not know how the ancients perceived constellations and mapped their sky, so this theory remains conjectural. The Kemyel-Swingate complex needs a mathematician's attention – an interesting stab at it has been made by Sam Goodwin, a Bodmin Moor geomancer, who identified the Plough pattern at Kemyel.⁶²

Nearby Castallack menhir offers a clue: it acts as a junction box for the Kemyel-Swingate complex, with an astronomical alignment coming in from Boscawen-ûn and a long alignment from Gurnard's Head. There are hints of a geomantic system at Kemyel-Swingate that remain tantalising.

Hedge Menhirs

Some hedge stones behave like menhirs. They were set presumably in the Bronze Age and the hedges were built around them much later. When visiting a hedge menhir, it is necessary to imagine it without the adjoining wall. It can, however, be tricky to distinguish a hedge menhir from a big hedge stone, though the former is likely to be upright while the latter is more likely to be horizontal. To confuse things, some stones have been moved and built into walls. The remains of Tregeseal West stone circle are built into a nearby hedge, and the same is the case with the stones of possible stone circles at Higher Trevorian and Rosemergy.

The main ways of identifying or confirming a hedge menhir are dowsing and checking alignments. The menhir at Banns Farm, SW of Boscawen-ûn, was confirmed by this means. The Trevean 1 menhir, identified in 2017, initially betrayed itself by being propped and standing upright when, from a wall-builder's

⁶² Goodwin, Sam, An Interpretation of Kemyel-Swingate:
www.facebook.com/page/1583797115241600/search?q=castallack

viewpoint, it would have been better laid on its side. Alignments were checked and a new menhir was thereby confirmed.

Stone Rows and Holed Stones

There are plenty of stone rows on Dartmoor and Bodmin Moor but only one, or at a stretch two or three, have been identified in West Penwith, at Treveglos near Zennor Head, Kenidjack Common near Tregeseal, and the Merry Maidens. The classification of all of them as stone rows is debated. The Merry Maidens case is usually thought of as an array of holed stones more than a stone row.

In the case of Treveglos, four upright stones stand in a line 117 metres (128 yds) long, oriented to an azimuth of 107.5°, a little south of east. The largest stone at the SE end, 2.8 metres (9ft) high, is damaged and may have been taller. The NW stone, 2.37 metres (7ft 8in) high, has a prehistoric lynchet around it. A leading stone row researcher reckons that only two of the stones are from the prehistoric period, and he identifies one stone as an earthfast natural stone.⁶³ While he does not diagnose Treveglos as a genuine stone row, other archaeologists and antiquarians think of it as a stone row with unique characteristics, not exactly like those of Bodmin and Dartmoor though operating according to similar principles. The jury is out, but majority opinion in West Cornwall considers Treveglos as a stone row. If it isn't, then something still needs explaining here.

The two further collections of aligned *holed* stones are in the Merry Maidens complex and the Tregeseal complex – though most people tend not to think of them as classic stone rows. A few singleton holed stones are also dotted around elsewhere around Penwith, some of them documented though destroyed. On the online maps holed stones are marked as pink diamonds.

Four of the Merry Maidens holed stones were located in a straight line (alignment **50**), oriented to an azimuth of 50°, toward the midsummer sunrise. These stones, with their long axes at a right-

⁶³ <https://stonerows.wordpress.com/gazetteer/region/rest-of-england/treveglos-zennor/>

angle to the direction of the alignment, might have been precisely aligned so that the holes, just a handwidth wide, let light through to give an accurate reading of a solstice sunrise for calendrical purposes – necessary since the rising and setting azimuths of the sun do not change at this time. This alignment cannot now be seen because it is obscured by hedges and is slightly misaligned.

The Kenidjack Common (Tregeseal) holed stones are different. Having fallen, they were re-erected in the 1980s. We cannot know for sure whether they are in their true positions, though the restorer said they are. However, 19th Century reports say that the stones were even then all recumbent, so their current positions cannot be relied on to be accurate.

The orientation of the alignment as a whole is approximately 67° and the long axes of the upright stones are aligned to 52° , 35° , 45° , with the outlier at 60° . One might have its long axis oriented toward the tip of Boswens menhir (out of sight), and others might have been oriented toward Scilly, which is visible from the stones. Their current alignment is slightly curved and uneven. Dr Sandy Gerrard, a leading stone row researcher, reckons these stones do form a stone row.⁶⁴ One distinguishing sign of this is his observation that a large number of stone rows across Britain are sited at the far inland limit of visibility to the sea before the sea disappears from view, and this is the case here.

The holes in the Tregeseal stones are about 6in or 15cm wide, placed around the middle, not at the top, of each stone, so it's unlikely that they were made for looking through – too low. No one can figure out a plausible reason for the holes, unless they had an obscure purpose such as a sonic or energetic tuning device. The rigours of time have taken their toll, and we are left with a mystery. But they could constitute a stone row.

Then we have that famous holed stone at Mên an Tol, utterly unique and difficult to interpret, not least because the stone and its two neighbours were set in their current place in Victorian times by

⁶⁴ See: <https://stonerows.wordpress.com/2018/06/04/featured-row-kenidjack-common/>

our old friend Captain Giddy, the restorer of Lanyon Quoit. They have no known megalithic significance to their current layout. But he did manage to turn this into an iconic site. It was originally a stone circle, and some of its stones are still there. Where the holed stone fitted into the circle, no one knows – it might have been located off-centre, or it might have been part of the circle of stones.

Little for sure can be said about this stone, even though it is so well-known. Tradition has it that climbing through the hole heals diseases such as rickets. It's a really nice, well-crafted stone. Carving out and smoothing the sizeable hole would have taken work of immense patience unless, as Ian McNeil Cooke has suggested, it was a solution basin that was then finished into the form the stone has today.⁶⁵

Possibly Boscawen-ûn and Mên an Tol were a paired polarity of stone circles, as suggested by their unique stones, one male and one female. Also, it is

thought that the

Mên an Tol – stone of the hole

neighbouring Nine Maidens, uphill, served as a sun circle and Mên an Tol as a moon circle.

There are a few other holed stones around Penwith, at Drift, Mên Frith, Redhouse and Trelew. Clearly there was a purpose to their holes, the most obvious being for looking through or to empower the stone in some way. There's something to the tradition of touching hands through the hole as a form of bonding. Rather like propped stones, we don't know the rationale behind them in the minds of the megalith-builders.

Recent Times

In Penwith, not all menhir-like stones actually are menhirs. Over time, plenty of gateposts and cattle rubbing stones have been set up by farmers, often looking misleadingly like menhirs. Generally, a rubbing stone is roughly the height of a cow, while many menhirs are higher or lower. Another check for a genuine menhir is to

⁶⁵ Cooke, Ian McNeil, *Journey to the Stones*, Men-an-Tol Studio, Cornwall, 1987, p83.

dowse it, testing whether it is on a blind spring or water-line intersection, perhaps with an overground energy ley or two. Alignments are worth checking – if these are inaccurate or lacking, chances are that it's a rubbing post.

Since the advent of tractors and an increased penchant for ploughing in straight lines, menhirs have stood in the way of the relentless march of progress. Thus, some menhirs have been moved by landowners, reincorporated as gateposts or re-erected in a convenient place, as if moving them made no difference to their properties. Other menhirs have been destroyed out of thoughtlessness or malintent. Their original locations are usually found through examination of antiquarians' records, the testimony of elderly locals, field names, archaeological judgement or dowsing.

Then there's the question of *landscape setting*. Modern field patterns and man-made features distort our perception of the original visual setting of menhirs, which have become decontextualised. Some are in hedges while others sit in fields – and either location distorts our perception of the stone.

We can only imagine what their original Bronze Age environs looked like – climate, greenery and woodland cover were very different. When you visit menhirs and other sites, try to visualise the original setting. It is difficult to know what role trees played in the visual landscape, and it will have changed during the millennium-long Bronze Age, but it is likely that most menhirs had vistas around them, and that some landscaping went on. There was no bracken cover then – the Romans later brought bracken, which they used as horse-bedding.

Megalithic Engineering

Transportation of menhirs from source to intended location, even if only for half a mile, would not have been easy, especially with big stones. It involved manual labour, teamwork, logistics, engineering aptitude, background support and a psycho-spiritual or paranormal twist. I participated in experiments conducted in the 1990s by a modern stone circle builder, the late Ivan McBeth, in which full-

size multi-ton stones were moved some distance by a combination of engineering – ropes, rollers and boards acting as sleds for the stones – and synergistic teamwork, involving coordinated effort, meditation, singing and group energy-raising, and 10-12 people.

You have to *love* a stone, get it on your side – this sounds mad, but it works. You need to calculate and set up the engineering aspect of the operation then get the group humming as a team, working single-mindedly toward one objective. Many, but not too many, hands make lighter work.

Inner activity gave our team focus and, it was hoped, infused the physical structure of the rock in such a way that feats of stone-moving became more feasible. The secret lies in careful preparation and raising the spirits of the group – we found that the stone would move far more easily when this was applied. Indeed, we proved to our satisfaction that such feats were virtually impossible *without* such practices, since we just weren't strong enough as a team. There were times when it felt that the rock was lighter and more obliging – it moved well, and things happened as intended – but only when the group was working well together, synergistically.

When it worked, the feeling was remarkable and progress was significant. When it went badly it was difficult, annoying, emotional, time-consuming and dangerous – thankfully we sustained no injuries. The group's collective discipline, focus and mood were critical. Actions had to be carefully planned, holes dug and adjusted and the route and log-rollers prepared (it took ages) but, once everything was in place, the group prepared for the main operation. This process involved chanting, meditation, energy-raising, discussion and... the holy Brythonic rite of drinking tea.

When we were ready, the operation moved quite quickly. It was proven that a stone of 5-10 tons could be moved 300 metres by ten people and tipped straight into its socket. Here is an answer to the question of how megaliths were built. However, the ancients undoubtedly had more skill, experience and aptitude than we. Eventually, being volunteers, we ran out of time, and the remaining

stones had to be put in place by an Anthropocene JCB. Sorry about that – we live in modern times.

In the Bronze Age it might have involved a team of ten fit people with a support group of five, working for a whole summer over a few years, during which they might quarry, transport, dress and erect two to five stones. The big challenge was quarrying and transportation. We did it by truck, from a roadstone quarry – the quarrymen were fascinated with this particular quarystone order, and they visited the stone circle when it was complete. The stone circle was built in memory of the late musician Joe Strummer at his home in the Quantock Hills, Somerset.

This concerns *synergy*, the sum being greater than its parts. These experiences were put to good use in later years. Africans have been singing work-songs for centuries, and military marching songs exist in Western culture – this isn't new.

12. Cathedrals of the Bronze Age

Stone Circles

Stone circles represent the zenith of the megalithic era. Archaeologists variously date them between 2500 and 1800 BCE. In Penwith I would date them more closely, around 2400-2200. They might have been built within just decades of each other. Megalith building probably went in bursts and phases when energy, leadership, resources, need and time were there.

West Penwith has five surviving stone circles, although originally there were eight to ten. The survivors are at Tregeseal, the Nine Maidens and Mên an Tol in the north, and Boscawen-ûn and the Merry Maidens in the south.⁶⁶ These contrast one another in character and setting. Tregeseal and the Merry Maidens originally had two stone circles each. Trevorian and Rosmergy are candidates. So this adds four extras to the five that survive today. Further potential cases are reviewed at the end of this chapter.

Tregeseal and the Nine Maidens in the north are each overshadowed by a Neolithic tor – Carn Kenidjack and Carn Galva respectively. Boscawen-ûn and the Merry Maidens in the south are situated on lower rolling (what is now) farmland, once upon a time mainly wooded. However, a significant Neolithic hill is distantly visible from each – Chapel Carn Brea from Boscawen-ûn and Carn Galva and a sweep of hills from the Merry Maidens.

All of these stone circles have a complex of orbital sites around them made up of menhirs, barrows and stones. Stone circles stand at the hubs of these complexes, each wrapped in an enveloping landscape setting. Tregeseal and the Merry Maidens are now rather

⁶⁶ Meyn Mamvro Archive: www.meynmamvro.co.uk/archive/stonecircles.html

lop-sided and diminished energywise, thanks to the loss of one stone circle each, but they're still functioning.

These complexes, each forming a 'solar system', are integral to stone circles. Their landscape settings are more appreciable nowadays in the two northern circles, located on open moorland, while the southern circles have farmland obstructions affecting their look and feel. The moorland does not, however, represent the environment of four millennia ago, which was more verdant, leafy, grassy, green and probably thoughtfully landscaped.

The Appliance of Megalithic Science

The positioning of stone circles offers clues about their purpose and role. They are located where they stand thanks to carefully thought out megalithic considerations.⁶⁷ Many archaeologists dislike the notion of megalithic science, yet it's important. It reveals why stone circles exist, why they were located where they were, how they were designed and what their purpose was – questions that archaeology fails to answer. This said, we understand only snippets of megalithic science.

The megalith builders utilised advanced mathematics, astronomy, geometry and proportion – the Golden Mean, Platonic spheres, Pythagorean and Euclidian geometry. They understood the dimensions of the earth, the periodicity of the planets, eclipse cycles, the precession of the equinoxes and the vibrational and deeper aspects of acoustics – this has been demonstrated in much of the literature on stone circles. They embodied these principles in the design, size and shape of stone circles, planning megalithic layouts to reflect the cosmos as seen from their location on earth.

Bronze Age peoples plugged their technological inventions into a natural network, to generate a subtle upstepping and consecration of sites by coupling them by alignment with sites of more ancient heritage. The stone circles became key nodes in a wider system.

⁶⁷ A good starter on this is *Alexander Thom – Cracking the Stone Age Code* by Robin Heath, Bluestone Press, 2007.

But there is more. There are astronomical, underground water and subtle-energy considerations, and the stone circle builders used a variety of these in their choices of location and design. Such factors are remarkable in the way they variously combine, making one wonder how the ancients figured all this out. But they did.

Examining positioning reveals important clues. The location of stone circles in West Penwith is determined in large part by backbone alignments established in the Neolithic 3000s, long before the stone circles were built. Stone circles are aligned with Neolithic tor enclosures and cliff sanctuaries, key landscape sites of the Neolithic, giving the stone circles a certain sense of heritage and derivative legitimacy.

Getting there

Tregeseal (SW 3866 3237) is tricky to find (take a map), demanding a bit of a walk but it is well worth it. You can walk from near Hailglower Farm, up a narrow road leading from Tregeseal village, or you can walk past Carn Kenidjack from the car park on the B3318 North Road at the Trewellard road junction (take an OS map first time, and check out Portheras Common cairn and the Boslow Stone on the way).

The Merry Maidens (SW 4326 2458) is the most accessible stone circle, close to the B3315 from Newlyn to Porthcurno, with nearby parking. Manageable for people with slight disabilities who can walk 200 metres and clamber over a stone stile. Check out the two nearby Pipers menhirs too.

Boscawen-ûn (SW 4122 2736) is more difficult to find. There's an inconspicuous, unsigned lay-by on the A30 to Land's End with a kissing gate, followed by a 350 metre path to the stone circle. Boscawen-ûn is secluded and usually a good place to spend some quiet time. It's worth visiting Creeg Tol on the way to the circle (turn right part way along the path from the road). It's a place where you can slow down before entering the circle.

The Nine Maidens (SW 4342 3513) require a longer walk from Bosiliack or Dingdong Mine, or from Bosulow on the Penzance to Morvah road. It's a mile or so from either across roughish terrain, though it's a good walk. From Bosulow you also pass Mên an Tol, Mên Scryfa and the Four Parishes Stone. From Ding Dong you get a good sense of the wider landscape.

When you visit a stone circle, slow down beforehand, quieten yourself and then ask permission to enter and enter mindfully when you get there. Be aware of how it might be perceiving you and interacting with you. Chat with it. Examine it and its setting and details. Then settle down somewhere, set aside your thoughts and let your mind freewheel.

Feel the atmosphere, character and current energy-conditions that are present. Be aware of your thoughts and feelings. Pay attention and listen to whatever comes up. See if you can gain impressions of people at the site back in the Bronze Age. Get a sense of things that might have happened there over time – even before the stone circle was built. You might gain useful impressions or information.

This is a valid part of the spectrum of ancient site research. It can also have a positive and changeful effect on your life. When you leave, give thanks, and note any difference in your state of being, compared with when you arrived. You might feel better or clearer.

Surviving Stone Circles

Tregeseal

Situated on alignment **80** from Carn Brea, the complex is aligned with Lanyon Quoit, Trencrom Hill and Carn Brea – three Neolithic sites. The contact point for this alignment is not the stone circle but Truthwall Common C barrow, 250 metres ENE of the circle – a proxy barrow.

By Alexander Thom's reckoning, Tregeseal is a Type A flattened circle with a diameter of about 21 metres.⁶⁸ One half of this kind of circle was flattened to adjust the mathematical relationship between each half's circumference, to make it into a significant astronomical proportion reflecting the length of day and night at the two solstices at this latitude. This created a vibrational resonance locking time into the layout of the circle, integrating time and space. Time is the trajectory along which life evolves, and space is the medium through which it does so.

Tregeseal is the eastern of two originally adjacent circles, the other having been destroyed by landowners around 1950, and some of its stones are laid horizontally in the hedge next to the surviving circle. A 19th Century record



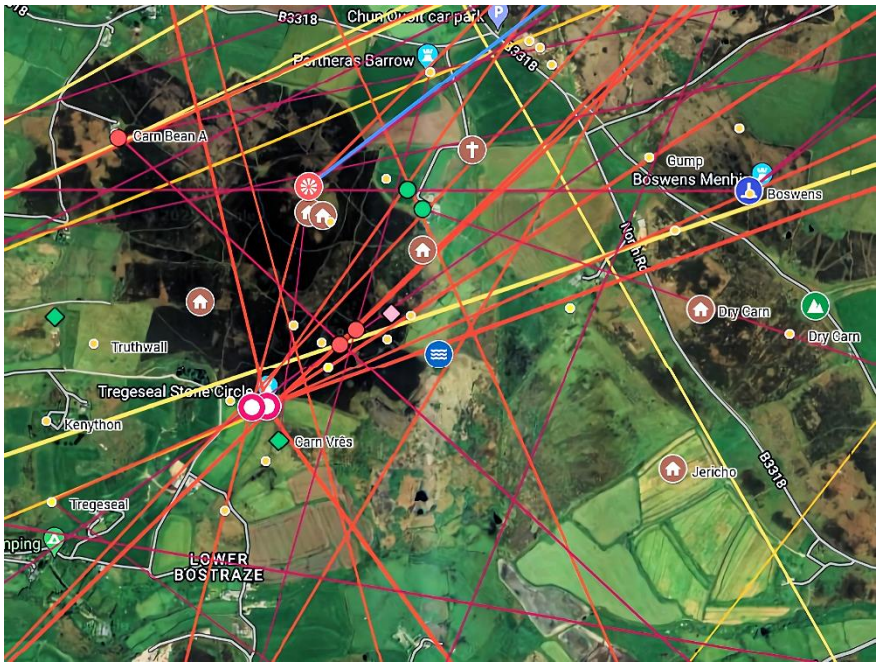
Tregeseal from Carn Kenidjack, with Carn Vrês behind

suggested that a third circle existed just west of the western circle, but this is now agreed to have been a ceremonial roundhouse or a kerbed platform cairn. It leaves no visible remains except circular crop marks that show up in aerial photos during droughts.

Tregeseal is overlit by Carn Kenidjack, set in a bowl or apron beneath it, with several cairns and holed stones nearby. The array includes Carn Vrês, a small cairn immediately SE of the circle (worth a visit), plus two menhirs further away: Boswens, ENE of Tregeseal, and Carn Eanes northwards, out of sight. The stone wall to the west of the remaining circle obscures an important visual connection with Scilly and the ocean. This visual relationship with Scilly and the setting sun is a key part of its *raison d'être*.

⁶⁸ There are several types of flattened and egg-shaped circles, first identified by Prof Alexander Thom. Thom, A, *Megalithic Sites in Britain*, Oxford, 1971. PDF: www.spirasolaris.ca/sbb8a.pdf

In their heyday, these two circles, surrounded by numerous sub-sites, would have formed an impressive presence – a magical park oriented in the direction of Scilly, over which the winter solstice sun sets. It included the stone circles, the cairns and Boswens menhir, the holed stones, Carn Kenidjack and Carn Bean, with other hills forming a landscape bowl around the complex. A processional way would have led down from Carn Kenidjack to the holed stones, then to the cairns and the stone circles, perhaps leading to Cape Cornwall – there's no proof of this, but it is likely.



The Tregeseal complex is localised and influenced by its surrounding topography, following an elongated axis with a similar orientation to the Merry Maidens, WSW-ENE. Like the Merry Maidens it is linked by a backbone alignment to Carn Brea. Nowadays it is in a poor state – many cairns are eroded and damaged, one stone circle has been removed, and it lies today on a rather barren moorland – though CASPN, Save Penwith Moors and the locals look after it. Originally, with its two stone circles, twelve

cairns and five holed stones, plus two outlying menhirs and a sweeping view of the ocean, the Scillies and the neighbouring hills, this complex would have comprised a complete and impressive parkland landscape temple.

It differs from the Merry Maidens inasmuch as it is cradled by Carn Kenidjack, and its peripheral features are cairns rather than menhirs. Carn Vrês counterweights Carn Kenidjack in the local geomantic setting. As seen from the stone circle, a wide bowl of hills surrounds the complex.

Two simulacra sit on Carn Kenidjack. In ancient times the carn would have hovered above the grassland and trees, boldly displaying its archetypal tor profile.

An interesting alignment runs from Carn Kenidjack through the western Tregeseal circle to a cairn near Carn Lês Boel (SW 3578 2331), six miles away. Carn Lês Boel cannot be seen from Carn Kenidjack but, from this cairn at Carn Lês Boel, and only from that spot, Carn Kenidjack can be seen in the far distance. Both carns are prominently visible from the Isles of Scilly.

Inside the surviving eastern stone circle, six intersecting underground streams meet at different levels with a blind spring beneath them (according to Lucas Nott). Natural background radiation inside the circle is significantly lower than outside. A number of cairns lie to the ENE of the circle. Possibly older than the stone circle, the cairns are mostly in a poor state. One is kerbed and another has a chamber or cist. Another chambered cairn lies 650 metres WSW of the stone circle, aligned with the circle and with Boswens menhir and West Lanyon Quoit. Boswens is the only menhir just about visible from the circle, to the ENE.

The Merry Maidens

The Merry Maidens stand on alignment **112** between Carn Brea, St Michael's Mount and Treryn Dinas – three Neolithic sites. This would give the stone circle a sense of primacy, rooted in antiquity, as seen in Bronze Age times. Exactly circular (only some stone

circles are), 24 metres in diameter and in a good state of preservation, its energy field can at times be uncannily vibrant.

Being close to a road, it attracts more visitors than other circles, so those who meditate have to take their chances but, on the right day, or at dawn or dusk, it hums and resonates well. Perhaps it enjoys human attention.

One or two nearby stone circles have been destroyed by farmers – the last stones of Tregurnow, not far east of the Merry Maidens on a slight hill brow and quite prominent, were removed only in the 1990s. A further possible circle, Boleigh, to the southwest, is much debated. Reported by 19th Century antiquarians, there is little corroborating evidence today except cropmarks seen once in the 1980s. This might have been a stone setting rather than a stone circle – interesting in itself.

The Merry Maidens stone circle is well placed, with a sweeping view of the hills northwards, including Chapel Carn Brea, Bartinney Castle, Sancreed Beacon and Carn Galva. On a north-facing slope, there's

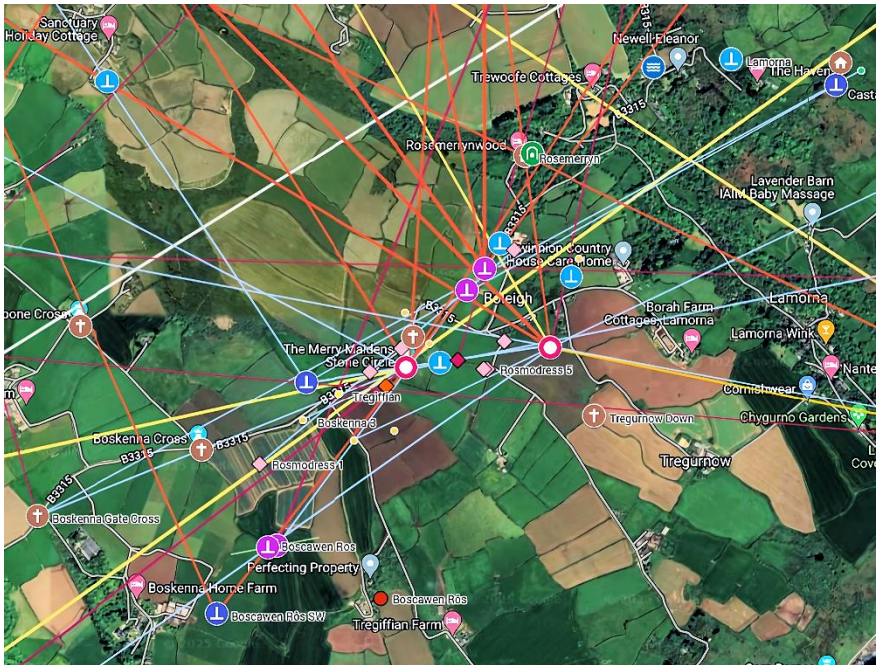


little sense of the nearby sea but neighbouring Tregurnow circle would have enjoyed a wide panorama over the hills to the north, and Kemyel Point overlooking Lamorna, and the Lizard peninsula. A processional way would have proceeded from Gûn Rith standing stone to the Merry Maidens, then to Tregurnow, the highest site in the complex, following a key axis of alignment of the complex.

The Merry Maidens complex is concentrated and localised, following a WSW-ENE axis along the backbone alignment from Carn Brea through St Michael's Mount to Treryn Dinas. A sub-axis follows the short internal alignment from Gûn Rith through the

Merry Maidens to a now fallen menhir, then a hedge menhir and the disappeared Tregurnow stone circle. Another axis goes SW-NE from the Boscawen Rô's double menhirs to the Pipers.

In its heyday the complex had a range of features: at least two stone circles, a stone setting, menhirs, holed stones, cairns and, later, even crosses. Owing to the loss of the Tregurnow stone circle, the complex has lost its relationship with the Lamorna valley and the sea, tilting the balance of the complex. The sweep of hills to the north now form its main psycho-geographic backdrop, whereas originally its visual range was wider, encompassing the sea and spanning a 360° panorama, as seen from Tregurnow. Beyond the complex but related to it is the group of Kemyel-Swingate menhirs on the other side of the Lamorna valley.



In the northeast of the complex, the Pipers act as a pair of menhirs – there might also have been a third Piper. The SW Piper, closer to the Merry Maidens, handles alignments within the complex while the NE Piper takes alignments from further away. One example is

alignment **10** from the NE Piper to Trelew menhir, Caer Brân, Grumbla Quoit and Tregeseal stone circle.

At the other end of the complex, the western stone of the pair of Boscawen Rô's menhirs is aligned with the centre of the Merry Maidens and then with the Pipers, while the eastern one aligns with the SE edge of the stone circle, and then the Pipers. The head-scratcher is, what was the thinking behind this?

Alignment **123** from the Merry Maidens goes to Carn Lês Boel, then to the Scillies at Knackyboy cairn on St Martin's, ending at a kerbed cairn on Gweal Hill, Bryher. Another alignment (**154**) goes from Tregurnow to Sancreed Beacon, through the Botrea Barrows to Pendeen Watch.

A comprehensive multi-disciplinary survey of the Merry Maidens complex would be useful. Visually, the complex is affected by today's road, hedges and fields, which in its heyday would have been an open parkland with clearer vistas than today – and without today's overhead wires and telegraph poles. In recent years, a planned mobile phone tower overlooking the circle had to be fought off – a transmitter would jam the signal of the stone circle.

Boscawen-ûn

Boscawen-ûn (pr: *Boscaw-noon*) is modest in size, well-known, intact, homely and vibrationally strong. Six backbone alignments meet here, each connected with a cliff sanctuary, linking it with major sites such as Godolphin



Hill, St Michael's Mount, Lesingey Round, Stannon Circle on Bodmin Moor, Gurnard's Head, the Nine Maidens, Lanyon Quoit, Cape Cornwall, Maen Castle, Carn Lês Boel, and White Island

cairn and South Hill on Scilly. That's serious, carefully devised connectivity of a kind you don't often see.

Its decontextualised placing in today's farming landscape is, on first impression, not too prominent or inspiring. One would be forgiven for wondering why it is where it is. But its intricate alignment positioning suggests not only definite reasons but also it highlights the remarkable way it all fits together geomantically.

It is precisely positioned so that Chapel Carn Brea with its hilltop cairns is framed between two gentle slopes, and a gap in the stones highlights the hill. The sea is just about visible southwards at Boscawen Cliff (SSE) in a narrow window that becomes invisible if you move just slightly away, as also is the case with an almost imperceptible view of the Pipers menhirs and the Merry Maidens – both best seen in winter and with binoculars.

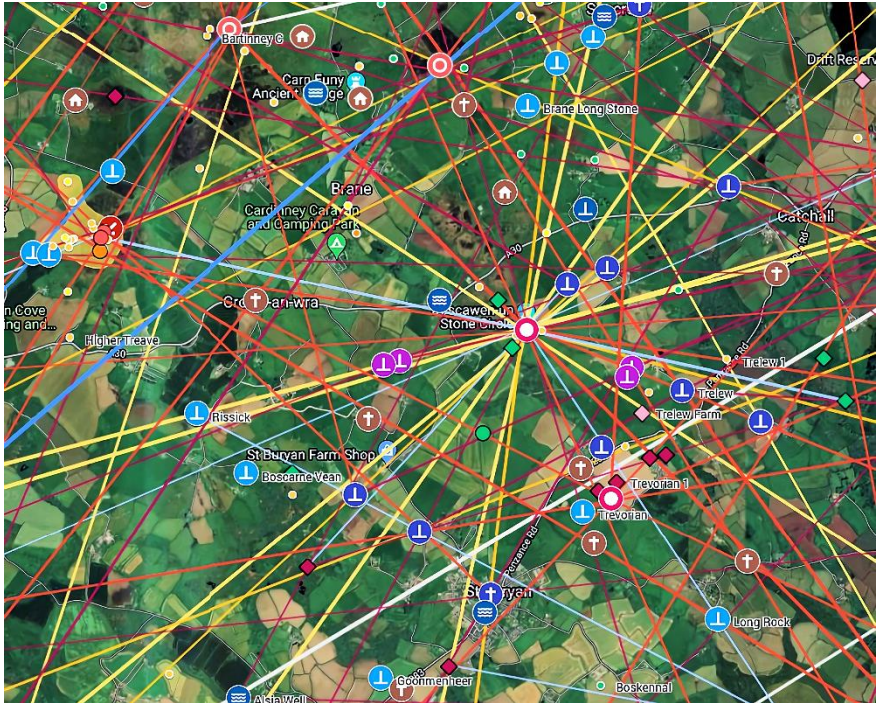
Boscawen-ûn was classified by Prof Thom as a Type B flattened circle, 24.9 metres by 21.9 metres in diameter – a proportion worth investigating – though he was incorrect. Actually it is an unusual elliptical or oval shape, oriented NW-SE to the winter solstice newmoon rising point and the summer solstice fullmoon setting point at the time of the lunar maximum (every 19ish years – when it's super-low in the sky).

Two rare features are a friendly quartz stone on the circle's perimeter (nice to sit by) and the tall, inclined stone located off-centre inside the circle. Some argue that this stone leans accidentally, which is incorrect. Although such a leaning stone is rare, it is intentionally inclined with the power centre of the circle directly under the tip of the stone. Stand on this vortex with your head under the tip and you might find yourself involuntarily swaying or feeling a swirling, spinning, massaging motion.

On this stone are a number of rock carvings, not easy to see, one representing either two axe heads or two feet that become visible at summer solstice sunrise, and two indistinct circular features are

visible higher up.⁶⁹ Such carvings on menhirs and stone circles are rare (or perhaps yet to be discovered).

The stone has further significance. It points up the peninsula of the SW of Britain at an azimuth of 53° in the local-horizon direction of the summer solstice sunrise. It's as if this circle stakes down the national energy field of Britain at one of its corners.



Just above the stone circle, 150 metres NW of Boscawen-ûn, is an ancient, energy-soaked natural rock outcrop called Creeg Tol (turn right part way along the path when coming from the A30 layby). It's a natural carn of granite rocks, studded with solution basins, probably older as a sacred site than the stone circle.

The granite hulks and solution basins of Creeg Tol, the Neolithic precursor to the stone circle, are remarkable – one can imagine

⁶⁹ Goskar, Tom, Neolithic Breton-style Rock-art at Boscawen-un stone circle, 2015.

<https://tom.goskar.com/archaeology/Neolithic-breton-style-rock-art-at-boscawen-un-stone-circle/>

prehistoric baptisms taking place here. It lies on the alignment from Tregurnow to Boscawen-ûn and Bartinney Castle, uniting various ceremonial sites. It's good to go there on your way to Boscawen-ûn in order to slow down, take in the view of the circle and see whether anyone else is there – if necessary, approach quietly or wait for them to leave.

Boscawen-ûn was the first ancient site in Britain to be intentionally preserved, as a result of an initiative by Miss Elizabeth Carne from Penzance in the 1860s, who bought it when she heard it was to be demolished by a local farmer. Up till then, the circle had a wall built right through it, so she had the wall demolished, and the enclosing wall that we see today was built around the circle. Good old Miss Carne, a Victorian protector-goddess with foresight.

The Boscawen-ûn complex is relatively round, shaped by a constellation of menhirs, plus some cairns, many but not all of which were visible from the circle in former days – now they are obscured by hedges. Quite evenly arrayed around the circle, some were astronomically and some terrestrially aligned.

Here, the wider landscape asserts less of a presence than at the other circles – Boscawen-ûn is low and its surrounding landscape doesn't shout as loud as it does at the other circles. Of the four circles, only Boscawen-ûn was a single circle, though the possible Higher Trevorian stone circle, nearly a mile away and now destroyed, might have added its own footnote.

Boscawen-ûn complex is more spread out and radial than the Merry Maidens complex, with a group of menhirs arrayed all the way around the stone circle. It was a central geomantic hub at the south-centre of Penwith, with radial alignments reaching out to several cliff sanctuaries: Carn Lês Boel, Treryn Dinas, Cape Cornwall, Gurnard's Head, Maen Castle and St Michael's Mount. It is an inland stone circle connected to the sea in all directions. The relative angles of these alignments might be significant.

More study is needed of the various orientations of Boscawen-ûn's surrounding menhirs as seen from the circle, and of their inter-visibility in the days before today's farming activities altered the

landscape, since evidently they constitute one integrated constellation. Notable is the orientation of Chapel Carn Brea, which is visible WNW through a gap in the circle, forming a raised local horizon over which the summer solstice sun sets.

The elliptical shape of the circle, oriented to the lunar maximum SE rising point, and the leaning central stone oriented to the local summer solstice rising point of the sun – these represent a marrying of the solar and lunar calendars through positioning and shaping the circle to integrate both calendars into the structure of its design.

Boscawen-ûn is fondly regarded by many people – it’s a safe stone circle where you can spend time quietly and alone. It is a little tricky to find first time, but that makes it more tranquil. It is intact and a classic, with the uncanny symptoms of a stone circle that is alive and sparking – those time-warps, odd experiences, altered states and apparent coincidences that are not uncommon at stone circles that are in good health and spirits.

The Nine Maidens

The Nine Maidens or Boskednan stone circle is aligned with Mulfra Quoit, Cape Cornwall, Bosiliack Barrow, Lanyon Quoit, Boscawen-ûn, Treryn Dinas and, on Scilly, Bonfire Carn and Knackyboy Cairn

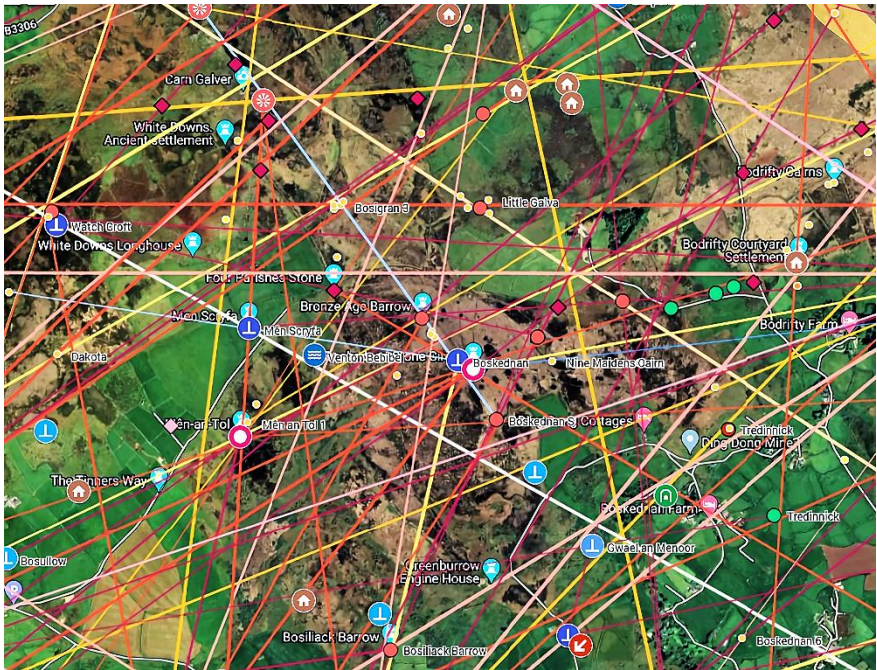


– a fine array of sites to be aligned with.

That’s not all: it also stands at the terminus of two major backbone alignments. Alignment **38** passes from Treryn Dinas to Boscawen-ûn, Lanyon Quoit and Bosiliack Barrow, then to the Nine Maidens – to a menhir, nowadays a broken stub, 20 paces NW of the circle, a proxy menhir for the circle. Alignment **96** goes from Rame Head

near Plymouth through Roundwood Fort, Truro, to Trencrom Hill and then the centre of the Nine Maidens circle.

This is the most damaged of the circles (in this case mainly by miners), yet its location on a high moorland saddle under Carn Galva, overlooking a broad landscape, is the most inspiring of all of them. Like the Merry Maidens, the Nine Maidens is circular, with a diameter around 22 metres (though that's uncertain because of soil creep, missing stones and tampering). As with Tregeseal under Carn Kenidjack, the building of the Nine Maidens represented a significant move downhill from a Neolithic tor, Carn Galva, to a sacred site of a different era.



The Mên an Tol stone circle half a mile downhill was part of the Nine Maidens' complex, together with Bosiliack Barrow and several other cairns and stones, as well as Carn Galva and Watch Croft. Carn Galva has a pyramidal hulk shape when seen from the Nine Maidens. The stone circle has a fine panorama of key hills around Penwith, east and west. It was located to be intervisible with

Mulfra Quoit, seen eastwards, a small bump on a ridgetop horizon, the older site of the two. Such intervisibilities demonstrate that people of the Bronze Age, lacking binoculars, had good eyesight. This is a good example of the way they liked to reference their sacred sites to even more ancient ones.

Two kerbed cairns on either side of the circle, around 200 metres to the SE and NW, would once have been large and noticeable, part of the Nine Maidens' magical setting. There was likely a processional way leading from the SE cairn to the stone circle, then to the NW cairn and finally up Carn Galva, following a bendy corridor.

This is the bleakest of the four circles yet it is lovable, a specially nice place to relax and imbibe the atmosphere. Sometimes it can be windy and cold, so dress up, or choose a good day. In wet weather, the circle gets waterlogged. In a mist it can be magical.

The Nine Maidens complex has many cairns that nowadays are eroded and melted away. With its sister circle down at Mên an Tol, the Nine Maidens stand at the centre of an extensive array of sites. In ancient times this was 'Metro Penwith', with a relatively dense population, living within the area between Chûn Castle and Zennor Hill. A guesstimate population of this area is 500 at the peak of the Neolithic and 2,500 at the peak of the Bronze Age. In the Neolithic this area was centred on Carn Galva, but in the Bronze Age the centre moved down to the Nine Maidens. The wide landscape panorama plays a big role in the character of this complex.

The Nine Maidens sit on a ridge passing SSE from Carn Galva. In the Neolithic the tor rose out of the trees, acting as an *axis mundi* or gravity centre for the peninsula. Woodland clearance denuded the ridge, making space for the stone circle and its complex. The ridge would have been sweeter, less bleak and peaty in the early-to-mid Bronze Age, a warmer and more equable time than now. Around the circle is a group of barrows which, though mostly robbed, nevertheless have a strong feeling – more cairns and barrows are visible in the tufty heather.

The complex follows the ridge from a large kerbed cairn SE of the stone circle to the large, kerbed Boskednan cairn. These two orbital

cairns were impressive, with a fine ceremonial plaza stretching between them, with the stone circle as its focus.

Following the track down toward Mên an Tol, there is the toppled Four Parishes Stone, a parish boundary marker which, in its heyday, was possibly a menhir. Further down the hill are Mên Scryfa, a rare inscribed stone taken to be from the Romano-British period but more like a Bronze Age menhir that was later carved on, and then the Mên an Tol, formerly a stone circle, now much reduced and changed in shape and form. The two stone circles, one higher, one lower, were complementary.

Overlooking the area is Carn Galva, Penwith's magic mountain and one of its most important Neolithic sites, together with Watch Croft. Carn Galva's prominence shows how a hill imbued with energy and *presence* can affect our perception, making it appear to tower over its higher and bulkier neighbour. Watch Croft has one or two barrows on its summit and, a little way downhill, a menhir – it's natural to wonder why the menhir is where it is, down below the summit of the hill. However, when seen from Mên Scryfa and Mên an Tol, the menhir stands out on a 'false horizon', and this highlighting of the menhir is intentional.

Mên an Tol

This is an iconic site with its unique holed stone but it is not what it once was. The two stones and the holed stone making up today's Mên an Tol were so erected in the 19th Century, using stones from the stone circle.



The site now has three standing and six recumbent stones, plus one possible extra stone, a cairn and the famous holed stone. Formerly it probably had nineteen stones and was around 18 metres in

diameter. The energy-field here is quite strong, in character resembling that of a stone circle. A twin to the nearby Nine Maidens, overlooked by Carn Galva and Watch Croft, with Mên Scryfa, Bosiliack Barrow and other nearby features, they all formed a local complex or landscape temple.

Spinning the Wheel of Time

The ancients weren't fixated on calendrical dates and clock times. That kind of ticktock time didn't interest them as much as *perceptual* or *experiential* time which, relative to ticktock time, can stretch and compress. Sometimes it goes by in a flash and at times it's an eternity. They had a vital interest in understanding nature's rhythmic and mysterious cycles, for practical purposes such as planting and harvesting and the timing of festivals and rites.

But there was a deeper dimension that nowadays is overlooked, owing to today's taboos against astrology and the idea that we, as autonomous individuals, are somehow exempt from being influenced by anything at all, except perhaps marketing, viruses, interest rates and government decisions. This deeper aspect is about interpreting the nature of the times and understanding the energy-patterns that unfold through time. Incorrect estimates, unsound plans and decisions, clunky systems and waste were not luxuries the ancients could indulge in.

Weather-patterns and changes in nature tend to shift at fullmoons and newmoons, and that is one reason the ancients were interested in lunar cycles. But far more than this they observed the moon's phases since aspects of human behaviour and affairs move in accord with the same rhythms, and observably so. People felt they were proactive, magical participants in the process, feeling a responsibility to help it along.

Time has character, quality, meaning and potency.⁷⁰ Working with time and season to tap into the energy available at any moment lay

⁷⁰ Jenkins, Palden, *Power Points in Time – and how time passes*, Penwith Press, 2015.
www.penwithpress.co.uk. An astrologer on the nature of time, its cycles and patterns.

at the core of the megalith builders' aims. They sought to utilise peak periods – *power points in time* – when critical pattern-shifts were known to occur. To them, astronomy (observation) and astrology (interpretation) were intertwined. Sacred sites were built to embody principles observed in nature and developed by encapsulating such principles in the mathematics, geometry and design of stone circles.

Design variations suggest that stone circles were built to serve differing functions, reverberating according to certain chosen frequency patterns that the ancients considered important. Their placing, layout, mathematics and orientation were calculated to encompass the eclipse cycle, the solstices and cross-quarters, lunar phases, dimensions of the earth and even the sidereal and synodic cycles of the planets (their motions around the zodiac and their cycles of relationship with each other).⁷¹ But we're only a small way into deciphering this.

The ancients sought to penetrate the hidden secrets of nature, and geneticists, physicists and neuroscientists of today attempt to gain similar knowledge, though with a more material approach. To the ancients, failure could mean that things would deteriorate or go wrong. If they wanted a good summer, they needed to deserve it and create good energy-conditions for it. This might seem superstitious except that, in our day, the cycles, fluctuations and seasons of the biosphere and climate are going wrong, and we know it, so perhaps there's a lesson here.

They weren't seeking solely to calibrate their calendars, as many archaeologists believe. Their calendars were living, breathing, life-determining, magically-scientific things, not just day-counters. They ran two calendars alongside one another – solar and lunar – enabling them to study the complex relationships between them, in order to identify eclipses, longterm time-cycles and power points in time. This way, they could adjust the patterns of their lives to the patterns of the cosmos, to participate proactively in the process. They will have known from experience that there are things you

⁷¹ Heath, Richard, *Sacred Number and the Lords of Time*, Inner Traditions, 2014.

can change and things you can't, and no doubt they sought to develop the wisdom to know the difference.

Solar and Lunar Calendars

The solar calendar was anchored in the solstices and equinoxes and divided into eight and sixteen periods – each quarter of the year being divided into two and then four segments. The lunar calendar was anchored in the lunar phases, of which there are around 12½ cycles per solar year, each of them 28ish days long. A solar month, eight in a year, was 40ish days long. The lunar and solar years are out of sync by eleven days per annum, synchronising once every 19 years – this is the multi-faceted and rather elegant *Metonic Cycle*.

The *solar cycle* relates to the seasons of the year and cycles of warmth and light, while the *lunar cycle* relates to tides, water levels, rainfall, moonlight and fertility. While the turning of the seasons is determined overall by the movement of the sun, visible changes such as the blossoming of flowers or the leaves falling off the trees, the migrations of birds or turns in the weather, are timed by the moon and its phases. Around new and fullmoons, many patterns and trends shift. So the solar cycle, like the hour hand of a clock, determines the general seasonal trend, and the lunar cycle, like a minute hand, determines the necessary details.

A nineteen-stone circle embodies the integration of solar and lunar cycles. This interested the ancients since eclipses could thereby be predicted. At the 1999 solar eclipse in Cornwall, a team of dowsers including Sig Lonegren and Billy Gawn found that, at the precise time of the eclipse, the energy lines literally rolled up and disappeared, only to roll back to full strength as the eclipse ended.⁷² It was as if the eclipse re-booted the energy lines.

That gives us a clue about the importance of eclipses as potent power points. For the duration of an eclipse (longer for lunar eclipses at fullmoon than for solar eclipses at newmoon) there can

⁷² Gawn, Billy, *The Eclipse in Cornwall*, BSD, 1999. <http://britishdowsing.net/the-eclipse-in-cornwall/>

be a pregnant stillness, a timelessness within which time seems to warp, stretch and intensify in potency. Whatever comes up – as an inner process or as visible events that *say* something – can be uncannily oracular. Sometimes deep underlying decisions can be made at eclipses, or defining events occur or facts have to be faced. This is not a fully conscious process, and the implications over time of such portentous moments can be considerable.

Eclipses are flip-junctures, turnings in the path, endings and beginnings, breakthroughs, transitions or breakdowns. The ancients saw eclipses as inflection points, moments of potency and of potential when people can lose or gain control of events, or they might perceive the meaning of events differently. Most eclipses are inaccurate, causing a discolouration of the moon or a chunk to be bitten out of the side of the sun, but some are total. Eclipses come in twos or threes at opposite times of year, with one of them being the most accurate, and these eclipse periods rotate backwards around the zodiac on an 18.6 year cycle (the cycle of the moon's nodes). As super-concentrated turning-points, accurate eclipses can sometimes bring a soulquake, a watershed in the drift of events.

Stones in a stone circle were used in counting and calculating, but they had further astronomical virtues. A neophyte would have to learn exactly which stones lined up with which other stones at the other side of the circle to track the varying rising and setting points of the sun, moon and stars, as seen at that location. From one stone it is possible to take a sightline to at least seven stones on the other side, and to at least three positions on each stone (left, centre and right) – so, there are at least 21 sightline variables to play with, as viewed from any stone. Other sites and horizon features in the surrounding stone circle complex would similarly serve as orientation and alignment points. Distant carns, rocks, menhirs and landscape features provided accurate sightlines for getting an exact calendrical reading.

Bronze age people left no instruction manuals. Their knowledge was passed through whispered lineages – a heritage sustained by the druids of the Iron Age. While we don't understand the full

extent of design principles involved in building stone circles and their purpose, clues are provided by modern-day researchers. Prof Thom, active in the 1940s-70s, noticed that stone circles had a range of different shapes. In his surveys, he identified instances of two types of flattened circle and two egg-shaped designs, plus ovals and true circles, all of which were replicated in various locations. These involved complex geometries that were mathematically sophisticated enough for most archaeologists to find themselves out of their depth when Thom proposed them. They believed it was impossible that the ancients could be so advanced because, quite simply, they believed they weren't and they couldn't have been.⁷³

Surveying hundreds of circles, especially in Scotland, Thom discovered principles in stone circle design that hold true and consistently across Britain and Ireland, involving astronomical alignments, geometrical proportions and a complex measuring system, the megalithic yard.⁷⁴ His work was much criticised and sidelined. It was ahead of its time. Metrology, the ancient science of measurement, is indeed complex, yet its formulations provide one of the most detailed clues to understanding the megalithic mind and the advanced nature of its science.⁷⁵

Thus, stone circles were more sophisticated than we think. They embodied cosmic laws through geometry, measure and proportion. The ancients sought to bring heaven, earth and humans into harmony through building devices such as these. This was John Michell's underlying message when he drew public awareness to ancient geometries, metrology and geomancy in his seminal book *View over Atlantis*.⁷⁶

⁷³ Heath, Robin, *Cracking the Stone Age Code*, Bluestone Press, 2007.

⁷⁴ Knight and Lomas have proposed that the megalithic yard is based on the orbit of the earth round the sun, and the rotation and mass of the earth. Knight, Christopher & Lomas, Robert, *Uriel's Machine – the ancient origins of science*, Arrow, 2000. See also: www.robertlomas.com/megyard/

⁷⁵ Neal, John (Noshier), *All Done with Mirrors*, Wooden Books, 2016.

⁷⁶ Michell, John, *View over Atlantis*, Garnstone Press, 1969.

Stone Circle Design

All four surviving stone circles in Penwith contained nineteen stones. This number represents two important cycles, the *Metonic cycle*, uniting the varying cycles of the sun and moon,⁷⁷ and the *Saros eclipse cycle*. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* defines the Metonic cycle as:

...in chronology, a period of 19 years in which there are 235 lunations or synodic months, after which the moon's phases recur on the same days of the solar year. The cycle was discovered by Meton (floriat 432 BCE), an Athenian astronomer.

Notably, while Meton gained the credit, the megalith builders knew this two millennia earlier. Don't tell anyone.

The Metonic period of 6,939.6 days, almost exactly 19 years, is equivalent to:

- **19 solar years;**
- **20 eclipse years** (cycles of eclipse positions in the zodiac);
- **235 synodic months** (cycles of lunar phases);
- **254 sidereal months** (lunar orbits of the earth); and
- **255 draconic months** (lunar conjunctions with its north node).

The Metonic Cycle represented one human generation in those times. If a fullmoon occurred on the solstice, it would take 19 years before it happened again. The cycle is accurate to the extent that it needs one day's adjustment (a leap day) only once every 219 years, once every eight or so generations.

The Saros cycle is rather different. *Eclipse seasons* take place twice every year, and during each season there can be one accurate eclipse and one or two inaccurate ones, at neighbouring full or new moons, and at opposite times of year. These periods, lasting two or four weeks, can be rather bumpy, weird and definitive. Each year their positions in the zodiac move roughly half a sign backwards

⁷⁷ Video explanation: www.youtube.com/watch?v=0BVP4EcDvFg and see also Heath, Robin, *The Moon and Ancient Calendars*, www.skyscript.co.uk/moonheath.html

through the zodiac and, after nineteen years, the cycle repeats, and eclipses take place in approximately the same positions as the preceding cycle. So one Saros or eclipse cycle is:

- **19 eclipse years** (38 eclipse seasons);
- **18.03 solar years**
- **223 synodic months**
- **242 draconic months**
- **6,585 days**

You don't need to remember all this! The main point here is that they are sophisticated, remarkable cycles that integrate the solar and lunar calendars. Using these, eclipses and their accuracy can be predicted. All eclipses are significant, but some, total eclipses, are super-portentous. At these times, the energy-fields of sun, earth and moon are exactly aligned, co-resonating with each other.

What mattered to the ancients was *working with energy and time*. Periodic rites and ceremonies would be carried out to mark the movement of time and the seasons, encouraging the optimum conditions for life. This explains why there was a calendrical, time-counting function to stone circles, whereby objects could be moved from stone to stone as the years went by and moons progressed. Archaeological objects for this purpose have not been found – markers made of organic materials (wood or bone) would have long since decomposed – or perhaps the process was carried out through memorisation. But clearly it was carried out.

Ancient calendars had no start point like ours. Time cycles were counted in terms of generations or long planetary cycles such as multiples of Metonic cycles or of the Great Mutation, a 60-year cycle of three Jupiter-Saturn conjunctions.⁷⁸ Every third Jupiter-Saturn conjunction takes place in the same position as 60 years before, plus a few degrees. Successive 20-year conjunctions occur in zodiac signs of the same element, and they shift element every 240 years. They used an eightfold, not a twelvefold zodiac as we do, but similar patterns would appear. This feeds into a larger

⁷⁸ About Great Mutations: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_conjunction

mutation cycle of 40 conjunctions: every 800 years conjunctions would return to *exactly* the same zodiac degree as 800 years earlier. This kind of cycle provided the basis of a long-count calendar. Where we might say ‘14th century’, the ancients might say, ‘the third Great Mutation of four Grand Cycles’. There are other ways of measuring longterm cycles too.

The twelve zodiac signs we recognise today were developed in Mesopotamia during the 3000s and 2000s BCE, later imported to Britain in Roman and medieval times. The Britons had an eightfold calendar of solar months and a lunar calendar of moon phases. The twelve zodiac signs were developed in metropolitan Sumer while megalithic calendars reflected the rural reality in Britain, where seasonal differences in daylight and darkness are emphatic.

Subtle Energy

Penwith’s stone circles quite often have flatter surfaces on the inward side of the stones and rounder on the outer side, reflecting and focusing energy inwards. You can feel the energy shift between inner and outer if, on arrival, you pause outside the circle, note your state, then slowly enter, again noting your state when inside the circle. Then step outside again. Try standing on the boundary. Try crossing back and forth with your eyes closed. See what happens.

A stone circle is a resonator and amplifier, an energy concentrator that at times is strong and vibrant and at other times is quiet and calm. Choosing their timing carefully and working magically or ceremonially, the ancients would build up the energy field to enhance its effects on awareness and on the wider environment. At auspicious moments esoteric activities could be carried out to help resolve community issues, enchant the landscape, perform healings, connect psychically with faraway people or turn the wheels of time and season.⁷⁹ Bronze Age sages – the knowledge professionals of their time – knew what they were doing.

⁷⁹ A broad claim too big to examine here, but here’s a parapsychology reading list compiled by CIA researchers: www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP96-00788R002000240008-7.pdf | See also: Sheldrake, Rupert, Can Morphic Fields Help Explain Telepathy and the Sense of Being Stared

Some dowers note a spinning element at stone circles – what Tom Graves calls a *cyclotron effect*, drawing an analogy from a particle accelerator.⁸⁰ If a spin is amplified by visualisation, rhythmic dance, music and chant at an auspicious moment, it could create a strong reality-field within which to do consciousness-work. People would have encircled and circumambulated the circle, in silence or chanting, dancing and raising energy for those inside, who would carry out a healing, rite or other work.

Some alignments and energy lines are observed to tangent circles rather than bisecting the centre, and this conceivably adds to this spin effect. Spinning is natural: if you are reading this book at the latitude of Cornwall you are spinning at 667mph (1,073kph) on a crazily rotating planet travelling round the sun at 67,000mph (107,826kph) – so hang on tight.

Stone circles are normally placed above blind springs. This contains and funnels a vortex that is focused and amplified by the stones. The fluctuating energy flow emitted by a blind spring is concentrated and funnelled according to the cycles of the moon and season. It is entrained through the contained space inside the circle and through the upright conducting stones, which themselves inwardly focus the energy-field. This engineered resonance field develops a presence and responds intelligently to stimuli and vibe. It meets and greets you personally, though the extent to which you *feel* this depends on you.

The capacity for consciousness-shift interested the ancients, and the amplified energy fields of underground water, tapped into at propitious times, helped them achieve such shifts. For evidence, simply spend a few hours quietly at a stone circle, letting the atmosphere of the place seep into you. Note the result. *Et voilà*. Then go back at another time and notice the difference again. Choose your moment for visiting, pause before entering and give

At?, *Mindfield* 11, 1, 2019. www.sheldrake.org/files/pdfs/papers/Can-Morphic-Fields-Help-Explain-Telepathy-and-the-Sense-of-Being-Stared-At.pdf

⁸⁰ Graves, Tom, *Needles of Stone*, Grey House in the Woods, 2008.

thanks when it's time to go. You have been blessed, bathed in an energy-field and witnessed by a presence.

No one has managed to properly study the temporal patterns of these changes at ancient sites – that's a big, longterm study. Yet it needs doing. Observing the motions of the sun and the phases of the moon is crucial to understanding ancient sites and our own lives, though to do so requires stepping over an ideological taboo by which modern society disregards such things.

Circles that Disappeared or Never Were

Quite a few stone circles in Penwith have been destroyed. Some didn't exist. Or they might be something else. Those we know about are these:

Boleigh (SW 4314 2444) over which there is some discussion. It was part of the Merry Maidens complex, west of today's stone circle by only 200-300 metres. It had seven stones and was thirty paces across, according to Borlase in 1740. It was destroyed in the late 1800s. Boleigh might or might not have been a stone circle, but otherwise it was a stone setting of some kind. See also *Tregurnow* and *Boscawen Rô's*.

Boscawen Rô's (SW 4315 2375) 900m SW of the Merry Maidens. There is but one reference to it by Borlase, and no sign of it. Doubtful as a stone circle.

Bosiliack (SW 440 320 approx) was noted as a 'Druidical circle' by antiquarians, but no signs have been found. At times, they mistook the circular stone remains of hut circles (roundhuts) or kerbed cairns for stone circles, and this might be the case here.

Botallack (SW 3669 3311) was a rather unique multi-circled site, and there is no sign of it nowadays. It might not have been a classic stone circle, and too little is known to judge. Borlase wrote:

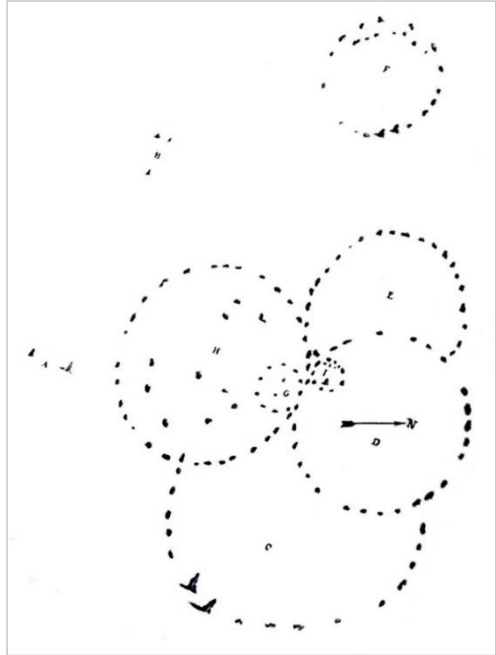
"Fronting the gate of Botalac town place there is a most remarkable miz maze, if I may so term it, of stones set on end, which if Ducaleon himself had thrown behind his back could not sufficiently be stood up in greater disorder than they at present

appear, but viewing them diligently this March 6th, 1737, I find the largest circle monument there of any I yet have met with, with several subordinate circles, some touching the circumferences, some breaking within it; together with two large erected stones, not many paces from the principal ring.”

The stones were taken away for tin mine construction in the 1800s. While this might not have been a stone circle, it was certainly an interesting structure. Very few alignments lead to it, suggesting that it isn't a classic megalithic site, and possibly it was built in later times. A magical function is possible. Implausible attempts have been made to explain the circles as sheep pens.

Higher Trevorian (SW 4169 2627) was marked on old Ordnance Survey maps from 1887 and 1908 and

identified as a stone circle by antiquarians such as W C Borlase. It has since been removed from maps and little is known about it.⁸¹ Now completely ploughed over, it has been considered an Iron Age round or a Bronze Age enclosure, and it could have been a stone circle. A number of large stones in nearby hedges could be remnants. It has at least five alignments passing through it, so in some way this was a significant site. Amongst local prehistorians it is thought likely to be a stone circle, but this cannot be confirmed.



Botallack Circles, from a drawing by Borlase

⁸¹ See *Meyn Mamvro* 74 and 93.

Redhouse (SW 4481 2622) or Trevelloe stone circle was recorded by the antiquarian Halliwell and there is no trace or memory of it, except some stones in a nearby hedge that might or might not have been taken from the circle. The site has two major alignments passing through it, one being an exact long-distance alignment from the Hurlers on Bodmin Moor to St Michael's Mount and then to Tol Pedn Penwith, and the other going from Boscawen-ûn stone circle to Lankidden cliff sanctuary in the Lizard. These two alignments add interest value, but there is neither trace nor tradition of this alleged stone circle's existence.

Rosemergy (SW 4178 3647) is a special site, though nothing remains of this possible stone circle near Morvah, below Carn Galva and close to Bosigran Castle, except some stones removed to the hedge. The site was visited by *Meyn Mamvro* in 2015 and its exact position found by dowsing. Some doubt that it was a stone circle, but it was definitely *something*. Its location close to the sea is interesting – stone circles aren't often close to the sea (though the sea can be seen from Tregeseal). Rosemergy lies precisely aligned with Gurnard's Head and Chûn Quoit, and with Bosigran Castle and Watch Croft. It played a part in a wider complex of sites in the locality, including Bosigran Castle and Gurnard's Head, plus Bosporthennis Quoit and Porthmeor menhir, all overlooked by Carn Galva. It was either a stone circle or something else.

Treen Common Circle (SW 4445 3665) is on Gear Hill, uphill from Morvah. This circle has everyone flummoxed. It could be a late Neolithic henge, an unusual Bronze Age stone circle or an Iron Age or even a medieval enclosure, though it doesn't fit easily into any of these categories and it has never been excavated. It abuts the Bronze Age Beacon Barrows barrowfield. It has a few ancient site alignments, including one from Gurnard's Head to Mulfra Quoit, suggesting the circle might have a Neolithic or Bronze Age origin, but they are not the kind of alignments that tend to converge on stone circles. The stones lack the presence and shape of stone circles, so it is not a classic. But it does have energy inside the circle. It's another *something*.

Tregeseal (SW 3866 3237) originally had two adjacent stone circles, lying below the primordial hulk of Carn Kenidjack. The surviving east circle has nineteen stones and is in good condition, though the stones on its western side might have been moved slightly following restoration, owing to tin prospecting there.

The western circle has been obliterated – its final remains were built into the nearby wall after being removed by a farmer in 1961 (look for some very large stones lying recumbent in the wall). Borlase in the 1700s noted ten upright and four fallen stones in the western circle. Note the sea view in the picture here.



Tregeseal West,
etching by the antiquarian Cotton, 1826.

Tregurnow (SW 4375 2455) was part of the Merry Maidens complex, a few hundred yards SE of the Merry Maidens. Its last two stones were broken up only in 2006 (the farmer has since recognised his error – too late). Presumably, it also had nineteen stones. Tregurnow might have been more important or even older than the Merry Maidens, if its position on the brow of the hill overlooking Lamorna and the wider landscape is anything to go by, but certainly it was a twin circle to the Merry Maidens. We know little more than this. Tregurnow is a major loss. The site needs close investigation by dowzers and with geophysics equipment.

Finally...

The stone circles' role as amplified energy fields and crucibles for consciousness work is one of their key geomantic qualities. They also modulated the energy conditions of land and sky on an ongoing basis. The stone circles fixed heaven's time into earthly

space, serving as shrines for communal bonding and ceremonial spectacle, for spiritual and shamanic working and healing.

Modern people's enthusiasm for performing ceremonies, gatherings and meditations at stone circles derives from a remembering, a response to the subtle energetics of stone circles that evokes a resonance from deep down. They're like wormholes sluicing messages to us through time, talking in a language we hazily sense but we cannot easily decipher. It calls us to come half way.

Our urge to meditate and perform ceremony at sacred sites comes from an intuition that such activities are necessary for wider benefit in troubled times. Even if the rites performed in our day are creatively conceived with no direct knowledge of Bronze Age practices, it's the motivation and intent that count – and a dose of heartfelt sincerity. Stone circles, when viewed as *intelligences* or as *presences*, seem to enjoy the attention they receive.

It is regrettable that only some of the stone circles are alive and present in the Penwith landscape today. We know little about the disappeared or uncertain circles. Even now, there are periodic battles to keep existing circles in good health, with threats from transmitter masts, English Nature's and National Trust land management policies, landowners, trampling and detectorists.

Sadly, even the authorities cannot be relied upon to fully understand or protect Penwith's ancient sites, tempted as they can be by shorter-term considerations, or holding questionable views of ancient site and landscape management, or simply being too far from the scene to know what's really needed.

The Save Penwith Moors campaign, led by Ian McNeil Cooke, has done heroic work over the years, reclaiming common land on the moors in the north. Elsewhere, if there is damage or risk to ancient sites, letters and e-mails usually start pouring in to the relevant authorities, or people sort things out on the ground.

These complexes are not just historic monuments. They are sacred devices with a value and significance that is becoming more apparent to us as ideas evolve and as we confront the enormous questions of the 21st Century. Stone circles and other megalithic

sites can give us some clues as to how this might be done. They aren't just monuments and tourist assets, but living entities playing an important role in our and the landscape's wellbeing – even affecting climate. Now that's a thought.

13. Gathering Places

Hill Camps and Enclosures

Hills, outcrops and promontories have been important ever since the first people arrived in Britain – it all started with natural sites, long before the time when people started building anything. Then, the Neolithics created tor enclosures in the 3000s BCE. Circular enclosures came around 1800 in the Bronze Age, and Iron Age hill camps came between 1000 BCE and (in Cornwall) CE 200ish.

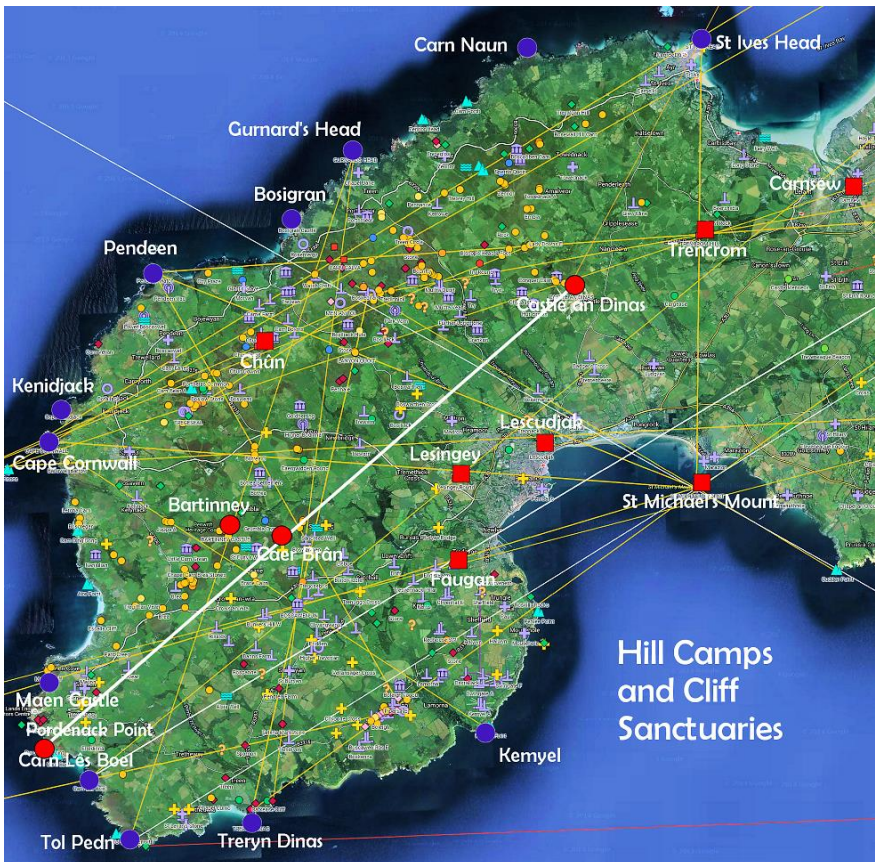
Archaeologists call them ‘hillforts’. Yet according to a recent survey,⁸² only 10% of hillforts across Britain show signs of armed activity – most were gathering places. But, for some reason, the survey still uses the term ‘hillfort’. Old ideas die hard.

If you’re a hillfort hunter, West Penwith is not a good place to start. There aren’t many, and this wasn’t a turbulent area. Hill camps could be defended if the need arose, though there was little need since Penwith is defended by its geography and historically it has tended not to attract threats. Strongholds they were but, in our day, so are banks, warehouses and hospitals. Hill camps were hot property in the Iron Age – secure, yes, but forts, not really.

It all started with tor enclosures, back in the Neolithic mid-3000s. As elevated locations the tors naturally attracted attention, and if you were alive in the heavily-wooded Neolithic, you too would have gravitated there. Tor enclosures – Carn Galva, Carn Kenidjack, Trencrom Hill and St Michael’s Mount – and prominent hilltop sites – Chûn Castle, Castle an Dinas, Chapel Carn Brea, Bartinney Castle and Zennor Hill – were important to the Neolithics. A long tradition of reverence for hilltops had started long before.

⁸² Lock, G, and Ralston, I, *Atlas of Hillforts of Britain and Ireland*, Oxford Univ, 2017: <https://hillforts.arch.ox.ac.uk>

Many hill camps date from the late Bronze Age and the Iron Age, after 1200 BCE and particularly from the 500s BCE. Some (such as Chûn Castle, Lesingey Round or Trencrom Hill) were upcycled in the Iron Age from earlier sites. Some started afresh (such as Lescudjack Castle or Faugan Round), originally well-frequented hilltops that later were engineered into enclosed camps. These are not the same as Mid-Bronze Age circular enclosures, even though both are usually lumped into the ‘hillfort’ category.



In the middle Bronze Age four significant circular enclosures were built with a social and religious purpose in mind, for gatherings, moots and fairs. They were people places, obeying geomantic rules of their own. They reflected a cultural change that had stimulated

trade, politics and social interaction in Penwith, yet they served also to enchant the land, playing a role in the integrated magic landscape that was being created across Belerion.

Bronze Age Circular Enclosures

Around 1800 BCE came the *circular enclosure*, an architectural magic circle. Four of them exist in Penwith: Bartinney Castle, Caer Brân, Castle an Dinas and Pordenack Point. The first three are big. All are exactly circular, implying a purpose as social and ceremonial sites. The big three contain Bronze Age cairns and other features surrounded by a round banked enclosure, and all have impressive wide-angle panoramas – a crucial factor.

Castle an Dinas and Caer Brân clearly had social-religious purposes by dint of their circularity, hosting gatherings where there would be bartering, celebration, discussions, arbitration, socialising and ceremony, lasting perhaps a few days under the auspices of a fullmoon. Both sites could host hundreds of people, and both were within a day's walk of most parts of Penwith. Bartinney and Pordenack seem to have been more religiously important – not so much for gatherings as for performing rites.

Interestingly, these circular enclosures are not major alignment centres – they do have alignments, but not many and not major ones. It is their panoramas and the other major, particularly Neolithic, sites that can be seen from them that are the main factor that places them where they are.

There is more. Three of the four – Pordenack Point, Caer Brân and Castle an Dinas – are located in an exact straight line, oriented toward the summer solstice sunrise. This was discovered relatively recently as a result of a LIDAR (radar) survey of Penwith, leading to the discovery of an otherwise invisible circular enclosure at Pordenack Point – it has been worn away through erosion and trampling, and part of it has disappeared into the sea in a rock-fall. Its discovery revealed the solstice alignment, adding extra significance to these sites.

They were built around 1800 BCE at the end of the zenith of the Bronze Age around 2200-1800, and after the building of most of Penwith's stone circles, menhirs and other sites of the time. The three inland enclosures all have cairns or hut circles inside them, dating back a few centuries earlier – the enclosures were later built around them.



Castle an Dinas from above

Why were these enclosures built? The clue lies in their societal function: they were *gathering sites*. Around 1800 population had multiplied, the south of Penwith had been cleared, colonised and settled (shifting population southwards from its former northerly concentration), and the tin industry had by then grown to become a factor in trade, both regional and international.

These developments stimulated a change in Penwithian society, probably brought on by younger generations needing to spread their wings beyond the scope of settled tradition. The building of the enclosures reflected this change. Penwith was raising its game around 1800, and it needed new infrastructure to match.

My feeling is that each enclosure had a specific function:

- *Castle an Dinas* was primarily for trading and social fairs – it was close to St Michael’s Mount and accessible along trackways coming from upcountry;
- *Caer Brân* was a political centre, a kind of parliament site, placed at the geographic centre of the peninsula, with two stone circles southward and two northward (as hubs of activity);
- *Bartinney Castle* was an elevated spiritual-magical hilltop site with a remarkable panorama and a big sky, and
- *Pordenack Point*, though smaller, fit for 30-50 people, stood in a dramatic clifftop location overlooking the ocean, hosting a unique collection of simulacra (rock beings) and serving as an inspiring magical centre of a different kind to Martinney.

They were all connected in purpose while serving different functions. Probably built around the same time, I believe they did not belong to specific clans, instead representing clan-neutral, Penwith-scale projects benefiting people across the peninsula.

There is more. The banks around an enclosure or a hill camp act like a container enclosing an energy-bubble or reality-field. There is a metaphysical purpose to the building of circular banks – it’s a simple, pure, sophisticated shape, an ideal crucible for energy-processing, both magically and socially.

It is not difficult to feel the energy difference between inside and outside when you enter or leave. The space inside is insulated from its surrounds and shaped in a fashion such that the circular shape renders everyone more equal, and thus emotionally closer. The removal by the enclosing banks of awareness of the surrounding landscape increases awareness of the heavens above. Practically, the banks might even have helped as a windbreak, creating an aerodynamic bubble over these quite exposed sites.

Some dowsers detect a *cyclotron effect* at circular sites, where an energy-spin was engineered, to generate a rarefied consciousness field for utilisation in social processing and magical rites.⁸³ Some

⁸³ Graves, Tom, *Needles of Stone*, 1978, 1986, 2008, 2014, p72.

site alignments and energy-lines pass through the centre of circular sites, while others they deliberately tangent them, suggesting that they might amplify the spin or also feed off it. The spin creates a psychic vacuum and energised force field, raising reality-levels within, a bit like a cauldron for cooking consciousness. This field would be cranked up with visualisation, meditation, dance, music, chant and getting into an out-of-this-world state. The interiority, the visual insulation and the upward connection with the heavens would add to this magic process.

This is not as fanciful as it might sound. It happens at special occasions during concerts, sports events, religious services and portentous moments in our day, and it is possible to cultivate it, not least by carefully designing the site that hosts the event.

Arguably, the banks of these ancient enclosures thus operated like a kind of Faraday cage, filtering out energy-noise from the world around. Insulating the space from its environment enables a screening out of interfering jangle and noise. This effect is also found in caves, chambers and crypts, where there is near-zero noise or energy interference. Such places are deeply quiet, in terms of sound and vibration, allowing an openness in which long-distance inner communication, healing, stillness, and oracular and shamanic work can be enhanced.⁸⁴

This was part of the purpose and design of these round quasi-henges, built so that the inner space was separated from the outside world, energetically and perceptually. The surrounding banks contained a reality-field. The purpose was to create a charged space, a special place for happenings and workings, for the purpose of entering other worlds. Just like medieval abbeys and cathedrals.

Caer Brân (SW 4075 2903, pronounced *care brain*) was a gathering and moot site, an intertribal meeting space and, I think, the parliament site for the people of Penwith. It had more of a societal function than Bartinney Castle, a mile away up the hill, which had more sacred, high-level purposes. Central and reachable from all

⁸⁴ Prayer and Health Review: <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10865-007-9106-7>

parts of the peninsula, *Caer Brân* sat just above *Brane Cross*, where a highland track from *Carn Galva* to *Boscawen-ûn* meets one from *Sennen* (for *Scilly*) to *Madron* and all stops upcountry.

Inside, one is visually insulated from the surrounding landscape, even though *Caer Brân* sits in a panoramic location. This sealed-off micro-world draws attention inward or upward but not outward, unless you're on the perimeter looking out. It was intentionally demarcated from its surrounds and dedicated as neutral space, the domain of no particular tribe. It could host 300 people – good for fairs, moots and colourful events. Yet it is out of this world too, a separate reality.

Caer Brân from above



Its location and circular design don't make a lot of defensive sense even though it is officially designated a 'defended settlement'. It

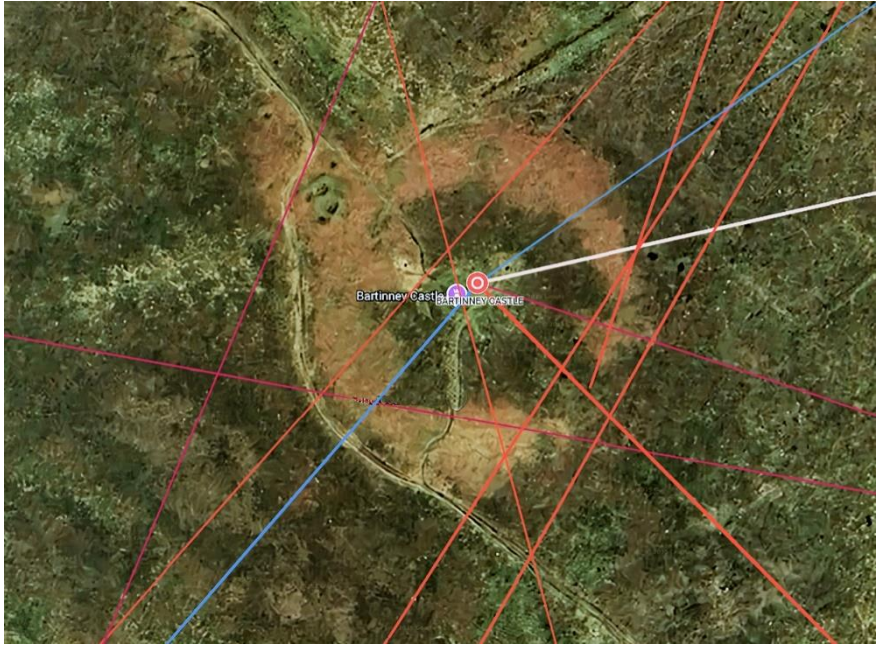
deliberate, geomantic ploy, and that *Caer Brân* was in use for many centuries (not abandoned, as the signboard downhill suggests).

It had two roundhuts – one at the centre and one at the alignment intersection at the bottom-left of the aerial photo above – and three rather mysterious Bronze Age rings of smallish stones inside, two of which were quite large, and the purpose of which is difficult to identify. These ‘ring cairns’ were built some centuries before the enclosure (perhaps around 2200 BCE). They may have been cairns and the burial places of special personages, but it isn’t clear whether they actually were cairns. They might have been meeting, activity or ceremonial spaces within the enclosure.

Built in the Bronze Age, the inner enclosing bank of that time, lying slightly inside the current Iron Age banks, is no longer visible – it was cannibalised for the building of the larger outer bank. *Caer Brân*’s usage changed between the Bronze and the Iron Ages with the building of the higher, wider Iron Age banks. It probably shifted by degrees from a magical toward a more social function.

Caer Brân has been acquired by the Cornwall Heritage Trust and is better cared for than it was. It is worth a visit – best in late winter or in spring before the bracken comes up. While there isn’t a lot to see there except for the circular banks, it has an inspiring view of Mount’s Bay, the Scillies and surrounding hills. It’s worth sitting there a while to see if you can sense something of what went on there in the past.

Bartinney Castle (SW 3944 2932). Social use is less likely with *Bartinney* (properly spelt *Bartiné*), which seems more sanctified in purpose, perhaps for initiates only – its location suggests this. It is the highest of three neighbouring sites that form a processional path from *Sancreed Beacon* to *Caer Brân*, then ascending to *Bartinney*, with *Chapel Carn Brea* not far away. It has a remarkable panorama, topping the big, concave hulk of its hill. There’s a distinctly elevated, high-level feeling here, even though the site today at times feels a bit sad and lonely.



Bartinney from above

Its round bank is roughly the same size as the Bronze Age bank at Caer Brân, but it was not high, serving more as a marker than an obstruction. Bartinney has eight cairns, three of them kerbed ring cairns or stone rings (as at Caer Brân and Castle an Dinas), and quite close together. Also, amazingly, like Chûn Castle and Tren crom Hill, it has a hilltop well – the existence of which defies rational explanation.

There's an air of quiet mystery to Bartinney, yet it is calm, abiding, tranquil, and it does what holy hills do... there's a feeling of vastness and infinity there, not just prompted by the wide panorama. Tradition has it that, inside the enclosure, evil cannot touch you. It is a great place to visit around sunset during a summer fullmoon. If you were visiting earth in an enormous mothership, Bartinney would be a good place to land – and, with the rare existence of a hilltop well, you could charge up your anti-gravity batteries and fill the kettle too.

Castle an Dinas (SW 485 350) had a similar insulated character. Like *Caer Brân* it lies on a relatively flattish plateau overlooking Mount's Bay, with a wonderful view. It is not as attractive today as once it would have been – greener and friendlier, not moorland – and nowadays it is encroached upon by a big roadstone quarry. Its circularity suggests esoteric, magical and ceremonial purposes in the Bronze Age, becoming more of a fair and trading site in the Iron Age. It was place of power, as indicated by two astronomical alignments from its centre toward *Trencrom Hill* (sunrise) and *Conquer Cairn* (sunset) at *Beltane* and *Lammas*. It is also on the summer solstice alignment with *Caer Brân* and *Pordenack Point*.

It isn't difficult to imagine seasonal fairs and gatherings of the clans, to perform the necessary functions of a society in such a contained area as *Penwith* – meetings, celebrations, mingling, chat, ceremony, performances, arguments, marriages, pacts, parties and just getting away from home for a few days for a good old shindig.

There are no archaeological signs of military activity, and it would not be a good place to defend – *Trencrom Hill* or *Lescudjack Castle* would be better. The few artefacts found there suggest trading and social activity. It had four concentric circular banks and an outer ditch. Had this been for defence, there would be strategic features to the banks, with steeper downslopes below. It would work well as a trading and market place, where *Penwithians* could meet outsiders from upcountry and foreigners landing at Mount's Bay.

Castle an Dinas was involved in the tin trade, lying between *Ding Dong mine* and *St Michael's Mount* – it might be the place where much of the buying and selling of tin went on. The enclosure's uses will have varied over time: with a lifespan of over a millennium, a lot can happen. *Castle an Dinas*, like so many ancient sites, went through many chapters in its long history, and a variety of times, generations, customs, social needs and imperatives were accommodated within its enclosing banks over many centuries.

Pordenack Point

(*Pen dinek* or ‘fortified headland’, SW 347 243).

Just up the coast from Carn Lês Boel and south of Land’s End, Pordenack Point is not a cliff sanctuary though it has some of their characteristics. It had an unusual circular



cliff-top enclosure, nowadays invisible, and a dramatic cliff-top platform which will have been part of the sacred space of this headland. It is aligned with *Caer Brân* and *Castle an Dinas*, indicating a clear connection with them.

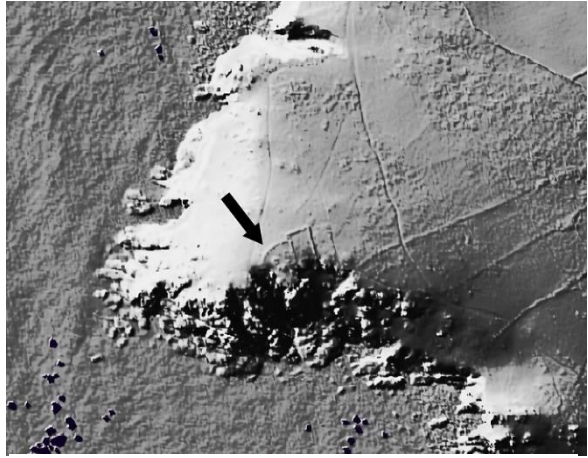
It has a friendly, happy, likeable feeling, as if social gatherings and celebrations once took place here on fine summer days. Impressive, lofty and surrounded by cliffs and rock islands, the granite platform on top could easily have accommodated fifty people. Once, when I was here, I had a sense of a choir singing to the wind – and choral traditions in Britain go back a long way. The headland is an inspiring place to get married or to celebrate the passing of a loved one – a place of honouring, witnessed by the Atlantic vastness.

Pordenack Point has a remarkable collection of *simulacra* or zoö-morphic rocks close by, like a massed assembly of rock-beings or a gallery of fantastical geological artistry.⁸⁶ To a rationalist these are just interesting rock-formations of granite inexplicably evolved into strange shapes, but look closely – many of the rocks take on the form of beings, choirs and assemblages of magical rock-people who seem to act as guardian protectors of the isles of Britain.

Pordenack means ‘fortified headland’, and this refers to the bold, vertical, castellated rocks forming its cliffs – a daunting, seemingly unassailable cliff that nowadays is a demanding climb for the best of rock-climbers.

⁸⁶ Photos of simulacra: www.palden.co.uk/shiningland/pictures-simulacra.html

It's the site of a circular enclosure, now invisible, and three cairns, one of them a chambered cairn, located on an alignment between Carn Lês Boel and Maen Castle. It has an adjacent field system, though my feeling is that this might have been a kind of landscape



LIDAR survey of Pordenack Point

garden or sanctum. It is likely the ancients gardened their sites far more than we reckon – nowadays we are used to seeing them bare, trampled, sanitised or museified.

The rock giants at Pordenack Point, staring out over the Atlantic Ocean, ward off the assaulting waves and storm gods, holding Britain in place and protecting it. On a fine summer's day, Pordenack Point is a slice of greatness, beauty and glory. If you walk to Carn Lês Boel from Land's End you'll pass this headland. If you can't walk far, it might be manageable to walk the half mile from Land's End car park to Pordenack Point, and the inspiring cliffscapes will uplift you and power you on your way.

Hill Camps

Some hill camps are genuine Iron Age hillforts. An example is Carnsew by the Hayle estuary, a secure trading and transit depot for tin and other goods being shipped northward over the Celtic and Severn Seas. Trencrom Hill and St Michael's Mount could have served as forts, guarding the peninsula from incursions from the east, but in the Iron Age these were more like chieftains' manors. Yes, you had to get past Trencrom and the Mount to enter Penwith, and these two hill camps probably did guard valuable assets, but

that's not why they were built. The only evidence we have of fighting comes from much later at St Michael's Mount, during the English Civil War. Chûn Castle was fortified in the Iron Age for security purposes – as a tin and metalcraft centre, where high-value goods were made and stored – but it wasn't exactly a hillfort.

Customarily, hill camps are seen as defensive locations. Some were located in poor positions for this. The 'fort' idea was built up by an archaeological orthodoxy framed during Britain's imperial days. The concept needs a thorough update.

It is true that, in East Cornwall, upcountry in England and across much of Celtic Europe, thousands of hillforts were built during the periodically turbulent Iron Age. They were defensible, periodically fought over and raiding wasn't uncommon but, as the Oxford survey found, they were in most cases grand statements of power and strength in a heroic, warrior-dominated society, more akin to fortified stately homes, trading places and social centres.

Often they hosted settlements, serving as gathering, judicial and market places and fair sites, some with religious connotations, with craftspeople, traders, doctors and specialists available, as well as the chief and his or her circle. They were tribal power centres. In Cornwall there were no doubt feuds, duels and displays of male testosterone (there is not a lot of evidence but it is likely), but that was feuding and scrapping, not warring. There are no signs of war or invasion until the Saxons reached the Tamar many centuries later in the 900s CE – and they stopped there.

Penwith was too remote to be affected by upcountry turbulence unless attacked from the sea, but this was rare. Possibly in the later Iron Age there were a few raids from Ireland but, again, there is little or no evidence, and there are no known fortifications at Sennen, the most vulnerable place for such attacks. Cornwall avoided many of the restive periods that other regions experienced over time. The Cornish were good at deal-making with the Romans, Saxons and Vikings, and the Normans didn't conquer Cornwall (though they did infiltrate it). Living in a relatively

isolated region and avoiding disturbing others, the Cornish escaped attack – except for the Corsair pirate raids of the 1600s CE.

Hill camps and cliff sanctuaries were valued assets, as cherished and protected sites with a heritage. Penwith's remoteness, cliff-bound coast, distinct identity and mysterious magic seemed to do the job of protecting the peninsula. People weren't angels, but escalation into war requires a traumatised, threatened or aggressive mindset that hits boiling point, and the Cornish didn't seem to have enough of it in ancient times, or today. People with ambitions to become rich and mighty do better upcountry.

Had it been necessary to defend Penwith from attack from the sea, there would have been hillforts at Sennen, Porthcurno and around the towans (dunes) on St Ives Bay, where raiders or an army can easily land. But there are no defensive sites – though Mount's Bay was guarded by St Michael's Mount and Lescudjack Castle. Most hill and headland camps are located in beautiful, magical places – and that was the priority. In the Iron Age they were commanding gated communities and hubs for the powerful and their circles.

By the time of the Iron Age, society was more splintered, tribalised, hierarchical and, at times, insecure than it had been in earlier times. People had developed stronger patterns of competition, hierarchy, territoriality and status than their ancestors, and at times tribes upcountry bickered and quarrelled, but it was quieter in Cornwall. Tribes drew lines around their key assets, staking out their patch, and the growing population increasingly filled up marginal, emptier spaces. Hill camps were protected, for a wide range of reasons.

Encircling hill camps are earth and stone banks, walls and ditches with well-designed entrances. Some had wooden stockades or hedges. There were practical reasons for building enclosing banks at hill camps: protection against wolves, bears and boars, keeping children and livestock contained, providing wind protection and serving defensive purposes if needed. The banks were symptoms of pride and status, serving as the headquarters or summer residences of clan chiefs, their entourages and valuables. Around and below

them lived the crofters and farmers who benefited from the facilities, markets and protection provided.

Many camps were atmospheric – leaders drew a ring or magic circle around themselves to ward off spirits, animals and strangers, and to mark out a dedicated, safe space. This is *ours*, and our rules hold here. Territory, resources, people and their wellbeing were the clan's wealth. You get a distinct feeling of crossing a threshold when you enter – it's a space made to feel special. Trencrom Hill, Chûn Castle, Faugan Round or Lescudjack Castle were hot properties with panoramic views. Since the Bronze Age heyday, while Britons had become more territorial and hierarchical, they still loved and cared for the land they occupied.

Round the Hill Camps

Chûn Castle (SW 4051 3395) was a security-oriented stronghold. It was circular, which isn't the best of shapes for defence, though it was much more defensible than other circular structures in Penwith, with quite high banks



and steepish slopes below it. Even so, it was a stronghold more than a fort, and its earlier heritage as a Neolithic sacred site was possibly what made it circular in design – there was a magical undertone to its bold landscape placing and its design.

Since this hill camp was in use for many centuries, its usage will have changed over time, perhaps beginning with a ceremonial-magical and residential purpose (hence its circularity), later to shift toward a more artisanal use later in the Iron Age. Becoming a tin-industry centre, with stores, forges and workshops, Chûn was

wealthy, powerful and worth protecting. There is a feeling here of the presence of a strong leader at some point in its history, who caused the buildings and surrounding banks to be built.

Metalworking was a magical-artisanal, not just an industrial, activity. High-value metals, jewels and specialist tools were kept, crafted and stored here. It's a prominent eyrie with a 360° panorama, perhaps the domain of a grandiose, patrician chief whom everyone knew was boss. Like Bartinney, it had a well inside its summit enclosure.

Even at its peak in the later Iron Age, Chûn had a long heritage, having started as a Neolithic hill camp three millennia earlier, with its accompanying quoit just downhill. For the Neolithics this was simply a great place to live, with a wonderful panorama. It will have been used through the Bronze Age because of its prominence, though there are few remains of building during this time. The centre of the Neolithic and the Iron Age enclosures are slightly different, so the later rebuild was quite a fundamental rebuild.

Downhill, close by to the northeast, is Bosullow Trehyllis, an Iron Age settlement that existed to service the camp – many of the craftspeople probably lived here. These three sites – the castle, the quoit and the village – are well worth a visit, their shared history spanning 3,000 years.

Trencrom Hill (SW 5172 3625), or *Tor Crom*, is a veritable delight and definitely desirable as a residence – at least, in summer and in good weather. It is defensible, with steep, rocky slopes below it, remarkable panoramas, a flattish top and its



own smartly concealed hilltop springwater source. Fiftyish people could comfortably live on top of the hill.

Together with Chûn Castle, it's the only hill camp in Penwith from which you can see both the north and south coasts of Penwith. Further away, Godolphin Hill, the Lizard and the Carnmenellis uplands are visible, as is the north coast as far as Pentire Point and Hartland Point (on a clear day).

In the Neolithic it was a tor enclosure, from which two other tor enclosures, Carn Brea and St Michael's Mount, were easily seen. There are no signs of Bronze Age use, but it is sure to have been used somehow, simply because it is an important and useful hill. In the Iron Age it was probably a summer residence for a chief's inner circle, with a fine view of their domain.

One problem with multi-period sites like this is that their earlier remains were often recycled for later use, so earlier evidence of occupation was often destroyed or re-used by later residents, or buried under their roundhuts.

Trencrom was a beacon hill, in sight of Carn Brea eastwards, Castle an Dinas westwards, south to St Michael's Mount and southeast to Godolphin Hill – well connected on the signalling circuit. There are remains of roundhuts on top, and a number of (probably Neolithic) placed stones on its slopes, including the massive Twelve O'Clock Rock on the way up from the car park. It's a magical place. If you visit, go on a balmy and calm, not a windy day, and take a picnic. Get a sense of what it was like living there.

Faugan Round (SW 4517 2821), above Newlyn and near Paul, is more of a camp, a small village, than a round. It's an Iron Age grange and, in ancient times, a local centre, probably twinned with Newlyn, downhill.



Gateway menhirs at Faugan Round

It had two near-circular surrounding banks, not very high, not good for defence and not built for it. On a gentle convex hillbrow on the edge of a plateau, it held a commanding position overlooking Mount's Bay. It would be a lovely living place for 50-100 people, perhaps a Bronze Age community that developed into the domain of a clan chief in the Iron Age, and a fine venue for neighbourhood fairs and moots.

It has a pleasant, benign feeling. Hedges and trees nowadays obscure its rather axial landscape position. There are two menhirs normally described as an Iron Age gateway leading into the round. This might be so, but they look suspiciously like a classic Bronze Age double menhir. There might have been a geomantic purpose to these two stones since, looking east, they frame a view of Mount's Bay and St Michael's Mount (now obscured by greenery). A fine sweep of hills lies to the north: Chapel Carn Brea, Bartinney Castle and Botrea Hill. Faugan Round exemplifies a place where its landscape setting, though not bold and prominent, is key to its placing and to the very existence of the site.

Lescudjack Castle (SW 475 310) overlooks Mount's Bay, with a panorama of the Lizard. It is now incorporated into built-up Penzance, home to gardeners' allotments and surrounded by a housing estate, and unfortunately these have obscured, covered and destroyed its remains. Its purpose and function is thus not very clear, except that it stands on a prominent hill. Lescudjack was probably a local trading place – Penzance's out-of-town supermarkets lie just to the east, as if to demonstrate the point.

Both Faugan Round and Lescudjack Castle were more likely prime properties than forts. But Lescudjack did have defensive merits, being on top of a steepish hill, overlooking a strategic valley (along which the Penzance by-pass now runs), and with its panorama over Mount's Bay. Of all the hill camps in Penwith, this one might have seen action – though again there are no signs. Close to Lesingey Round, it is likely they operated together or belonged to the same clan. In its day, the town of Penzance was not there. The main sea harbours on Mount's Bay would have been at Newlyn and

Marazion, so Lescudjack would have been something of an outlier of a site and even rather quiet.

Lesingey Round (SW 454 304) is an ancient, multi-period site, with found artefacts going back to the Mesolithic 4000s BCE. Reshaped and reoccupied in the Iron Age, it was probably important in the Bronze Age. It's not a round – more a hill camp.

Today it is wooded, surrounded by open fields, and worth visiting in spring at bluebell time, but in ancient times it would have been a cleared site surrounded by fields and woods – so, visualising its prehistoric character demands some imagination.

Situated between Mount's Bay and the Penwith highlands, Lesingey possibly housed fiftyish people. A considerable alignment centre, it is aligned with Pendeen Watch, Bartinney Castle, Ballowall Barrow, St Michaels Mount, Carn Lês Boel, Lizard Point, Dodman Point, Stannon Circle and even Berry Head near Torquay. Its power centre is on the SE edge, on a bump there.

This was a special place – not an ordinary village. Ordinary villages do not have so many alignments passing through – they tend instead to be on relatively energy-neutral sites, chosen for their setting or water-sources, trackways or good soil.



The dense and significant alignments of Lesingey create a strong energy-field which is not ideal for living in. This suggests it had a specialist purpose as a power-place or as the residence of people who might seek such conditions – such as healers, shaman-priests, artisans and soothsayers.

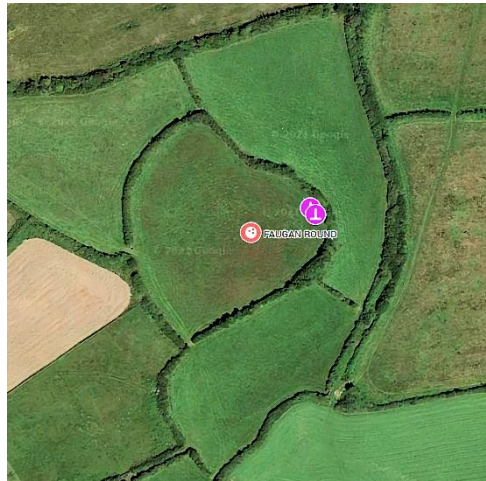
Carnsew (SW 5564 3713), near the railway viaduct at Hayle, has a railway cutting slicing through it and houses built on and around it, so it is hardly visible today. It was a trading site and storage place for tin, crafts and other imports and exports, just above the Hayle river estuary – so it had a practical more than a geomantic-magical purpose. Together with Lelant and St Ives, it was ideal as a harbour for trading boats coming from the Celtic, Irish and Severn Seas. People travelling from Wales, Ireland, the Isle of Man or Scotland, upon disembarking, would walk down to St Michael’s Mount to continue to Brittany or the English south coast. Carnsew and St Ives probably belonged to two different clans.

Rounds

Rounds are roughly circular banked enclosures, mostly found in lowland settings, not very large, and often containing the remains of settlements. They were mostly the homesteads of prosperous farming families, serving as enclosed granges – the ‘big house’ of the area.

Some had other purposes such as for corralling animals, storing items or providing services (such as milling, toolmaking or midwifery), and some were used for local gatherings. Some sites that are called rounds were there for geomantic reasons, having been camps or enclosures built for purposes that evade us today – and some were not rounds at all, though over time they have acquired such a name owing to their rounded shapes.

Nowadays many rounds have been ploughed over, appearing as a slightly raised circular bank or visible as crop marks in aerial



Faugan Round

photos. Quite often, field hedges follow a round's boundaries – Faugan Round (above) being a good example (even though it is not actually a round). Lesingey Round and Faugan Round are hill camps, not rounds.

Some sites that are definitely *roundish* in shape are located on major alignments, such as Chygwydden Round and Faugan Round, suggesting there is more to them than just farming strongholds and granges – there was sacred or geomantic thinking behind the design of some rounds. Kaer Round near St Erth Praze, in East Penwith, is on two significant alignments, suggesting it is more than a customary round and probably older. These have a 'relay' function to them. The position of some rounds on alignments connecting with much older sites suggests that they might be older than we think, or that their builders decided to plug into older alignment systems, to give a sense of ancestral and magical heritage.

Several churches sit on rounds, including Gulval, St Erth and St Buryan, having co-opted older sites for Christian purposes. In St Just, the Plein an Gwarry, a medieval site for performances and gatherings near the square, was likely an Iron Age round. It was part of a larger Iron Age complex, made up of a spring, a *lann* (sacred enclosure) on which the church now sits, and a space between them where the village square now sits.

Most rounds were only mildly defensible, nevertheless offering some protection to a hamlet or farm, keeping stock and children in, and wild animals, unwanted people and ghouls out. Living within a surrounding bank or stockade would create a secure feeling, and a good residential setting for over-wintering.

At times in the Iron Age, raiding and feuding were common – by this means some clans and families could raise their game, wealth and status. Such things might perhaps have affected Penwith at times, but there is little evidence of it – a raiding economy was more typical of eastern Britain. Yet any family with wealth and valuables, such as equipment, pedigree animals, food stocks or luxury items, would naturally seek to protect them.

We are back to the magic circle idea, staking out *our world* – a statement of possession and control, pulling up the drawbridge. Wind protection is a bigger factor than is often recognised – many rounds would have been winter residences and, of course, one of West Penwith's great natural gifts is its wind and gales.

Most rounds were built between 200 BCE and CE 100, though some have earlier origins, since the idea of living inside surrounding banks was not new at that time. A few rounds might be recycled Bronze Age enclosures. As settlements, some might have been homes to specialists such as druids, craftspeople, smiths, tin-miners and healers. A few might have functioned as hostelrys. Others might have had farming purposes, such as for penning up animals, as slaughter-places, or even as 'walled gardens'.

There was something deliberate in the circularity of some rounds, with a *feng shui* aspect to it, even in the case of quite utilitarian rounds. Magically, the circle represents wholeness and coherence, giving protection in the world of spirits on creepy, winter dark-moon nights. The principles of Bronze Age geomancy were alive and well in the Iron Age, even if inherited, derivative and applied differently – a bit watered down.

14. Desirable Residences

Settlements and Homesteads

During the Neolithic and early Bronze Ages people moved around their clan patches and there was plenty of timber for construction. As a result, few settlement sites from that time are visible now, being made mostly of organic and perishable materials. People lived in log and sod buildings, some of them communal, and in bivouacs, shelters and tipi-like structures, and the climate was generally favourable. In the later Bronze Age the climate deteriorated, population grew and woodland felling reached a pitch where a form of building was needed that used less wood. Thus came a new kind of dwelling that left more permanent remains – the roundhut or ‘hut circle’.

Roundhuts

In the mid-to-late Bronze Age a new kind of dwelling emerged. Roundhuts became the common standard. Made of a low circular stone wall on top of which were stacked poles in a conical shape, with a thatched roof, they're often called *hut circles* because their remains leave a circle of stones.



Reconstructed iron age roundhut at Bodrifty

But these were somebody's home, and some bigger roundhuts had internal alcoves serving as sectioned-off rooms. With a central fire, the thatch would let smoke out while rain would roll down the thatch, hitting the ground outside. In the wetter climate of the Iron

Age, this mattered – dampness had by now become a problem, and wooden buildings were not the best solution. Thatch would rot, but it would be replaced once every seven years or so.

Reconstructions have been made, such as at Bodrifty, where the hut is quite big and could comfortably house a sizeable family.

Roundhuts sometimes stood alone or in settlements, of which there are around forty known examples in Penwith.

Some of the best existing examples are found at Bodrifty, Bosulow Trehyllis, Bosporthenis, Goldherring, Lanyon, Sperris and Wicca (Zennor), Nanjulian, Carnaquidden Downs and Trencrom Hill.⁸⁷



Bosulow Trehyllis

Some have fogous nearby. Most appear as

piles of stones that get lost in the bracken in summer, but two, at Carn Euny and Chysauster, are preserved and open to the public.

It is worth finding some of these settlements and spending time there. Most are in well-chosen locations with pleasant surrounds, a good view and a nearby water source. Some have quite a happy feeling and it's possible to get a sense of daily life going on, with children playing, people going about their tasks and grandparents tending the fire... and the passing of the generations.

Courtyard Houses

Bigger than roundhuts were courtyard houses, an oval compound enclosing an open, partly-roofed or covered courtyard, surrounded by several residential and storage rooms with doors facing into the courtyard, including a main large roundhut opposite the main

⁸⁷ *Meyn Mamvro* Archive: www.meynmamvro.co.uk/archive/settlements.html

entrance, built into the courtyard structure. This was a roundhut with extensions, annexes and an enclosed yard.

Most courtyard houses were built around CE 100-300 during what upcountry was the Roman occupation. Dumnonia (Cornwall and much of Devon) was independent though influenced by *Romanitas* and the Roman market economy upcountry. Penwith was still in the Iron Age but Roman influences seeped in, and money was made from the Romans in the tin trade, crafts and woollen textiles.

Courtyard houses had paved or cobbled floors, drains, stone partitions, thick walls, and fields and gardens nearby. They reflected the styles and prosperity that had come, at least to some of the Cornish, during the Roman occupation.

Archaeologist Jacqui Wood suggests that courtyard houses were fully roofed, with the courtyard serving as a central hall and the round room used as sleeping quarters.⁸⁸

That's a viable idea.

Courtyard houses were a sign of relative affluence, for some.

They were unique to West Penwith (with just one on Scilly and some possible ones in Mid-Cornwall), and they were also clearly a response to necessity, being built to withstand the weather and winds – many were in exposed locations.

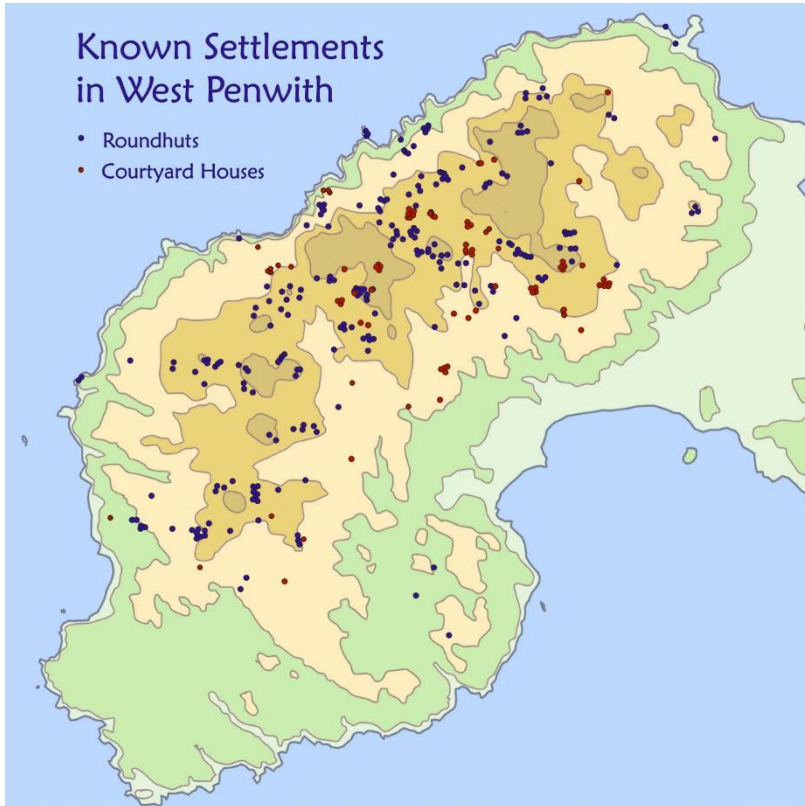
There are 53 known courtyard houses, 48 of which have their main entrances facing away from the prevailing wind. Carn Euny and Chysauster were courtyard house villages, and there are other sites where courtyard houses sat amongst roundhouses, such as at



Courtyard House on Botrea Hill

⁸⁸ Wood, Jacqui, A New Perspective on West Cornwall Courtyard Houses, *Cornish Archaeology*, 36, 1997. www.archaeologyonline.org/Courtyard%20Houses/Courtyard%20Main%20Page.htm

Bosullow Trehyllys, Mulfra Vean, Goldherring, Boswarva, Crankan, Nanjulian, Bosporthennis, Croftoe and Porthmeor.



Fields and Hedges

Building stone walls is a way of usefully dumping stones when clearing fields, for enclosing them. The earliest fields of the Neolithic were small and generally roundish or odd shapes following the natural contours, and generally not walled. Since working the land involved tools not unlike spades and hoes, people of the Neolithic were gardeners and smallholders more than farmers, growing foods such as cereals and vegetables to supplement their largely wild-sourced diet – fruits, nuts, herbs,

seafoods and domesticated, trapped and hunted animals. These fields were good for the overnighting of animals.

Land was held by the community and there would have been sharing of resources and labour. People's diets were more varied in the Neolithic than later, when farmers specialised in and depended on a smaller variety of cultivated food crops. There wasn't great energy invested in wall-building and field clearance during the Neolithic since fertility would be lost within some years and cultivation would need to move on. But wicker and wood fences might have been used to protect gardens.

By the Bronze Age the plough had entered the equation, with bronze-tipped ploughs, sickles and hoes that changed food production considerably, creating sufficient surpluses for people to give more of their time and energy to megalith-building and other activities. More fields could be tended and better cereal growing increased the calorific output of each patch of land – new seed strains, domesticated animal pedigrees and hybridisation methods had been brought by Beaker settlers.

Rotation systems improved and field systems gradually grew larger and more extensive during the middle-Bronze Age and, by 1200 BCE and the climatic changes of the time, farming had become more serious, settled, capital-intensive and permanent. Population had grown denser in the mid-Bronze Age, with settlements in places only a half mile apart. Good land was growing more scarce.

For timber and firewood, increasingly they had to plant and coppice patches of woodland, especially since tin-smelting consumed a lot of fuel. The introduction of ox- and horse-drawn ploughs in the late Bronze Age meant that fields became straighter, longer and thinner, to suit ploughing. By this time too, fields were less stony as a result of former clearance and, though stones continually rise to the surface, it slows over time as stones are picked out and added to surrounding walls. This, with new composting and land fertilising methods, improved the productivity of farmland.

As climate deteriorated around 1200 BCE, upland pastures grew poor, turning into peatlands, and available fertile land decreased,

demanding ever more sophisticated ways of fertilisation and renewal, not only through crop rotation and animal grazing but also through adding nutritive organic matter such as seaweed, or using crops as mulch and compost. Population declined, taking pressure off available land and allowing less fertile or more exposed parts of Penwith to re-wild themselves as moorland.

When the Iron Age arrived, growing needs for firewood and materials meant that the wildwoods were eaten into, generation by generation and tree by tree. Iron tools were better than bronze for felling trees and digging earth. Virgin woods were cleared and colonised, and Britain's characteristic landscape of fields, hedges, farms, woodlands and copses began to take shape. Climate slowly improved and, by 100 BCE, vines could be grown in Cornwall.

Life in West Penwith seems to have worked out quite well for its residents. It had good resources on land and in the sea, and it was stable, generally out of the way and able to get on with its life without undue interference. Penwithians did well in the tin trade, having a valued commodity that was easy to exchange for a variety of goods and favours.

Penwith was part of the Atlantic zone of Europe, which was relatively stable compared to the much more turbulent central European zone eastwards – invaders and raiders tended not to come from places like Brittany, Wales or Ireland, while southeast England and the Rhineland were relatively unstable. Proper defensive hillforts were required there. Since English academic archaeology has always been concentrated in the southeast of England, the turbulence visible there was taken as standard when, from the perspective of Britons in the west and north, such a picture is inaccurate. In ancient times and up to the creation of England in the Saxon period, the big cultural divide in Britain was not north-south – it was east-west.

15. Subterranean Mysteries

Fogous, Springs and Holy Wells

The underworld is accessed through caves, chambers, wells, springs and secluded valleys. Surrounded by ocean and a big, wide sky, West Penwith has an overriding sense of light and space, so darker, shadier confines were important in contrast. Fogous are unique to Iron Age West Cornwall, and holy wells hold a key place in Cornish tradition dating from that time.

Fogous

Fogous, unique to West Cornwall and built from around 500 BCE onwards, are rather a mystery.⁸⁹

They are stone-built, man-made tunnel chambers, often curved, between five and twenty metres long, and sometimes



Boscaswell Fogou

with a side-chamber called a creep. They represent a similar idea to souterrains found in Brittany and Ireland, but they are insufficiently similar to draw exact parallels.

There is a tranquil atmosphere inside the surviving fogous. Often they are built as part of an Iron Age settlement or round, though in some cases they might have been built before the settlements. At Carn Euny a sizeable and unique round chamber, entered through the fogou, predated the fogou itself by some centuries.

⁸⁹ Fogous in the *Maen Mamvro* Archive: www.meynmamvro.co.uk/archive/fogous.html

The big questions are *why* and *what for* – and it’s complicated since each fogou is pretty unique and variable in design. Answers range from initiatory and ceremonial chambers to storehouses and hideaways. There are almost no useful records or passed-down folk-tales offering clues.

The historian Diodorus Siculus noted that the British stored their grains in underground repositories, though actually foods were usually stored in covered pits or above-ground dry-stores, not in fogous. Foodstuffs in common use at the time, for which a fogou might be useful, would be cheeses, meats, sourdoughs, mead and beer – foods needing curing or special treatment.⁹⁰

The spiritual-ceremonial aspect makes a lot of sense. Ian McNeil Cooke plausibly suggested that, since most fogous are oriented roughly NE-SW, facing the midsummer sunrise or the midwinter sunset, it represented a way of bonding heaven, the sun’s rays, with the earth and the underworld space of the fogou, permitting sunlight to enter only at certain times of year.⁹¹

However, for such a cosmological purpose, one wonders why fogous were generally built inside or close to villages. One highly likely reason is that they were specifically places for women, for quiet women’s moments, rites of passage, ritual and retreat. So, while fogous were secluded spaces, perhaps closeness to home was important, compared to a more male tendency to locate sites at more dramatic locations further afield.

There have been other, more mundane explanations. As hideaways they would be a death trap compared with a hideaway further from the village or up in the hills, and none of the fogous were completely concealed. So that’s unlikely. As food and drink cellars they could work if they were less damp than many are today – which perhaps originally they were, not only for architectural reasons now long lost and forgotten but also because, if modern-day dowers can remove dampness from buildings through earth

⁹⁰ Maclean, Rachel, The Fogou – an investigation of function, *Cornish Archaeology*, 31, pp41-64, 1992.

⁹¹ Cooke, Ian McNeil, *Mother and Sun: the Cornish Fogou*, Men an Tol Studio, 1993.

energy work, Iron Age Cornish could likely do so too. The coolness and energy-qualities of fogous would be sought here.

Their use for maturing high-value foods such as meats, sourdoughs, cheeses, alcoholic drinks, cordials and tinctures cannot be ruled out, and such usage could have been regarded as sacred – not the utilitarian food-preparation functions



Carn Euny fogou

of today. Fogous' use for

storage doesn't feel right, but for treatment, preserving and processing, it's more likely. However, their use for storage, even of tin, gold and valuables, might not have been as profane as we might nowadays think – these were magical items given by the gods or the ancestors, deserving the best care and conditions.

Many fogou entrances were small, obliging anyone entering to get down on their knees to make their way inside. This could be to oblige the humbling of the entrant, or it could simply be a way of maintaining cooler temperatures and shading inside. It could, nonetheless, be a sign that fogous were indeed a ceremonial site for women, representing crawling into a womb-space.

Radiation levels inside fogous have been found to be around double those outside, so there is certainly something special about their energy and atmosphere. Compare this with stone circles, where background radiation levels are generally lower than outside.

Few remains have been found in fogous, and few traditions or clues are associated with them. One line of enquiry that hasn't been explored is that they might act as a form of subtle-energy technology, akin to the chambered cairns of a former age, for upgrading seeds, sharpening tools and preserving foods. This is not

such a way-out idea as many might think. There is something rather special about the energy-atmosphere inside fogous.

It is ironic that these relatively recent Iron Age remains are pretty much the least explicable of ancient sites. Fogous were not just functional tunnels for utilitarian usage since the likelihood is that they had multiple purposes, involving anything from healing and quiet stillness to curing herbs and potentising herbal remedies. But it is highly likely they were used for magical and ritual purposes, especially for women. And certain uses which today we would consider utilitarian, at the time may have been sacred.

Eleven fogous survive in West Cornwall, with up to 25 further possible ones, including those at Higher Bodinnar, Porthmeor, Castallack, Treveneague and at Peninnis on St Mary's, Scilly. Those most accessible or in the best condition can be found at Carn Euny, Boleigh and Pendeen Vau in Penwith, and Halligye and Trewardreva at the Lizard. Permission is needed to visit all fogous except Carn Euny.

Springs and Holy Wells

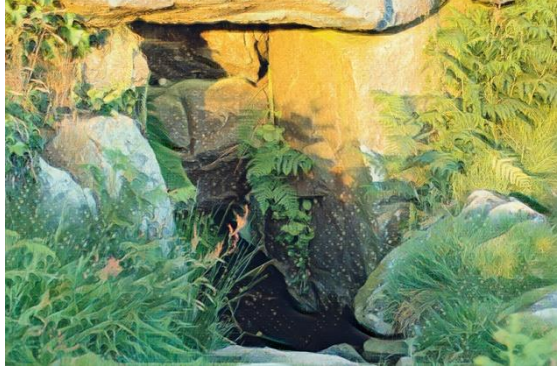
The Cornish word for a spring is *Venton* or *Fenten*. Most Cornish holy wells were dug and built in medieval times, as far as we know, sometimes at the site of a spring or by digging down to a water vein. But many existed before that, whether naturally or modified by humans. Ancient water sources were to play an important role in the early Christian period of Cornish saints, who perpetuated a holy well tradition going right back to the earliest times.⁹² One problem is that some ancient wells and springs were upcycled in medieval and later times, obliterating evidence from earlier periods of use.

In our day, we run chlorinated water from a tap and routinely pay a bill for the privilege, acknowledging the value of water mainly when we lack it. The notion that springwater has special properties that heal and bring blessing is regarded by many as charmingly

⁹² [Cornish Ancient and Holy Wells Map](#) | [Folklore of Cornish Holy Wells](#) | [Cornish Holy Wells](#) | [Holy Wells in West Penwith](#) | [Meyn Mamvro: Holy Wells](#) |

superstitious – it's just H₂O after all. We generally ignore the minerals, biochemicals, microvolt bioelectronic charge and the magic factor-X that give some waters their special properties, tastes and therapeutic virtues. Since we 'treat' water to remove many such properties, we work on the basis that they do not exist.

The ancients valued springs, locating settlements nearby – quality water is a key resource, and through much of the Bronze Age Penwith was marginally drier than today. The early Christian use of holy wells has its roots in the



The ancient well on Tren crom Hill

Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Ages – baptismal variants such as immersion or sprinkling with holy water, symbolising healing and rebirth, go back as far as humans do.

Springs, as water-sources at the head of river valleys, harboured a different kind of holiness to the hilltops, clifftops and moors – a quieter, more personal kind of sacredness for which springs, pools, caves, special trees, nooks and crannies were the natural altars and temples. In the early days when much of Penwith was wooded, this was important. Springs and their issue were a gift of the Great Mother. A good spring was a key asset in any patch of land.

Water is energetically at its most potent around 4°C – it is stickiest (with the strongest surface tension) at that temperature, maximally retaining minerals and energy. Temperature and pressure differentials within the earth make water move underground and even seep upwards, defying gravity, using surface tension as a way of slowly pulling itself upwards – hence it is possible to have hilltop wells when conditions are right. As rainfall seeps through the soil it cools to 4°C, densifying as it sinks – though forest clearance and agriculture remove shading and expose the land to

higher temperatures, disturbing this process. This densification increases the suction capacity of water, permitting it to seep upwards, sucked by the temperature gradients inside the hill when the soil cools at night and in winter.

Rainfall is *secondary water*. It percolates into the soil to meet *primary water* derived from deep geochemical reactions lower down. Primary water is pushed up by pressure from below, cooling as it does so. The downward motion of secondary water and the upward motion of primary water create a pressure that makes underground seepages flow – springs are a manifestation of this. At points determined by rock geology and the underground temperature gradient, springs occur. Where land is cooled by the shade of trees and undergrowth, springs and the water table rise higher, but if it is exposed to the sun, allowing the land to warm, water tables sink and springs retreat and dry up.

Thus, it is possible to have a well on top of Bartinney Castle and Chûn Castle or a spring on Trencrom Hill, when conditions are right. The reason why these are drier now is not due to rainfall levels but to changes in plant cover, causing the earth to warm and the water table to be driven downwards. Improving the life-force of springs tends to raise the wellbeing of whole river systems downstream – especially if, by shading streams with overhanging trees, cool riverine temperature gradients are maintained and the sinuous flow of rivers is not disturbed or channelled.

A natural vortex effect lay behind the thinking of one of the great geniuses of the 20th Century, Austrian forester and scientist Viktor Schauberger, who identified two counterbalancing, equal and opposite forces, *gravity* and *levity*. When developing water flumes for transporting logs downhill, he discovered that if the levitational force in water was activated by making it flow in a double-spiral pattern (a ‘cycloid spiral space-curve’) it would lift logs higher in the water, allowing flotation with far less water usage.

When asked to demonstrate the law of levity by physicist Niels Bohr, Schauberger simply said “Trees grow upwards”. If they didn’t utilise the law of levity, they would creep along the ground.

A mature tree can raise up to sixty tons of water per day through its trunk by suction, stimulated by evapotranspiration and driven by levitational force.

He discovered levity when studying the ascent of salmon and trout up waterfalls, the hovering of raptors and the flight of moths and bumblebees, realising that they could harness levity through the manner of their swimming or flying.



Sancreed Well

Inventing the jet engine before Whittle, he later rejected the idea, saying that machines should be propelled by suction, not by thrust. This is not only counterintuitive but additionally it breaks the sacrosanct laws of thermodynamics – this is one reason why Schauburger's work is little known today.⁹³ He was a century ahead of his time. His motto was *Observe and copy nature*.

This is also a psycho-spiritual issue. When we feel *down*, giving attention to life's difficulties, we feel literally weighed down. When we feel happy and inspired, on top of things, we are more able to support our weight. Depression is caused by weighty thoughts and feelings. Levity and gravity have a relationship with thought and consciousness. As a disabled person walking with sticks, I find it easier walking the rough coast path at Carn Barra than the smooth platform of Penzance railway station, since the first is uplifting while the second is functional, and my psyche responds.

Water emanating from springs is not just (in most cases) good quality water, it is also uplifting because it is infused with a levitational charge, providing a positive psycho-spiritual effect

⁹³ Bartholomew, Alick, *Hidden Nature*, Floris Books, 2003. Coats, Callum, *The Water Wizard*, Gateway Books, 1995, [available as a PDF](#).

when we drink it or wash in it. This charge could be called bioelectronic, but it is more, since it contains the creative force that enlivens and lifts things up. This is where the notions of holy water and baptism come from. Bathing our feet in springwater, as Arabs do before prayer, is therapeutic since it treats the whole body-mind through the meridians coming up from our feet.

Maintaining temperature gradients within hills by shading with vegetation, permitting hilltop springs to occur, is the mechanism by which underground water becomes energised. In optimum conditions around 4°C it not only absorbs minerals and biochemicals but it is also optimally charged with subtle energy. This is why rewilding and reforestation are important, not just to absorb CO₂ but also to purify and energise water systems and whole river basins, and to cool underground temperatures and energy conditions. This rekindles the levitational force within ecosystems and the soil. Thus will deserts one day be made green, floods regulated, water tables maintained and rainfall improved.

Ancient people sensed this, venerating springs that issued energy-charged water. Most revered were springs issuing primary water from deep within the earth. I know of no surface primary water springs in Cornwall, although Penwith has its fair share of holy wells, held to be special.⁹⁴ Famous primary water springs are found at Glastonbury's Chalice Well, at Lourdes, under the Haram al Sharif in Jerusalem's Old City, and under the Qa'aba in Mecca – all of them major holy sites.

Penwith's best known holy wells are at Sancreed, Madron, St Euny's Well near Carn Euny and Ailsa Well. Some are hidden away and long forgotten – Rory Te Tigo has unearthed a number of them around St Just.⁹⁵ On the farm where I live, I discovered a spring in a boggy, overgrown patch that has now been cleared and opened up. Just 250 yards downhill from the medieval Bosence Chapel, it was probably a hermit's water source.

⁹⁴ See: <https://meynmamvro.co.uk/archive/holy-wells.html>

⁹⁵ Te Tigo, Rory, Venton East, *Meyn Mamvro* 53, <https://meynmamvro.co.uk/archive/mmm53-winter-2004.html>

Springs have been key water sources for centuries, not just for clean and fresh water but also because the water is charged and the atmosphere around a spring is often rather special, holy. To the ancients, water was really important – without it there is no life. Early Christians who created many holy wells simply adopted customs from earlier times. Their work in sanctifying holy wells has come through to us today as an example of what we ourselves need to do – to revive springs and holy wells so they can play their part not only in human healing and blessing but also in healing the land of the damage it has sustained from human impacts.

Here ends Part Two. Part Three concerns other prehistoric regions in Cornwall – neighbouring areas to Penwith.

Part Three | Neighbours

16. Cornwall's Ancient Regions

Cornwall has several distinct prehistoric areas, each in a world of its own: the Isles of Scilly, West Penwith, the Lizard, Bodmin Moor, the coastline and the Killas (the lowland areas of Mid- and East Cornwall). They differ greatly in archaeology, geomantics, landscape, history and feeling – remarkable, considering these neighbours obviously had close contact with each other.

Map of Cornwall's prehistoric sites:

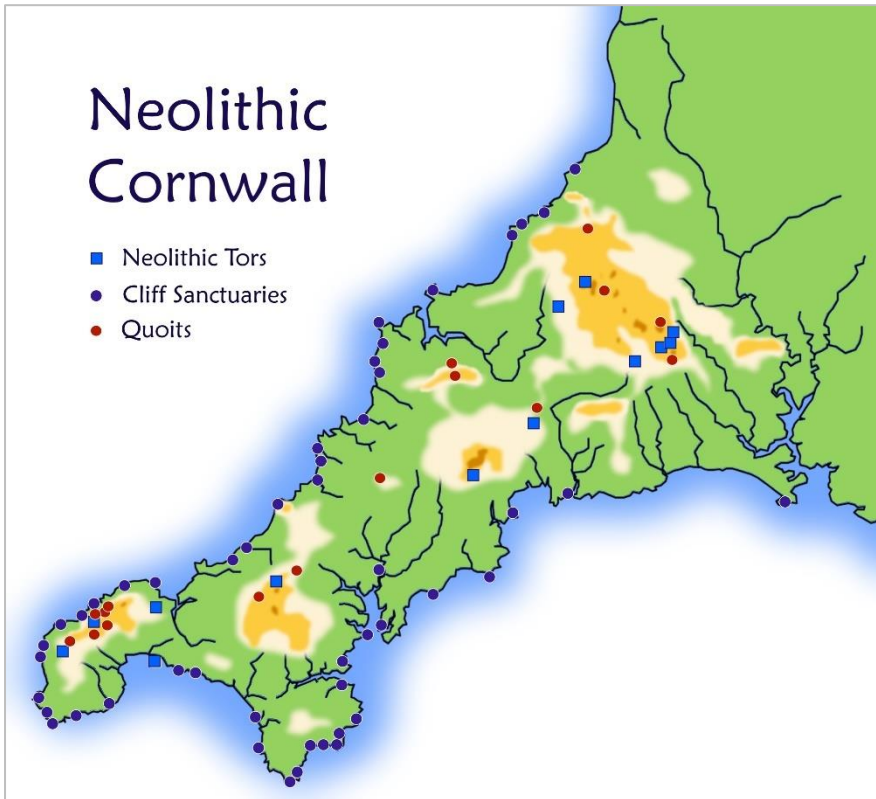
www.palden.co.uk/shiningland/map-ancientsites-cornwall.html

The wooded, rolling, largely non-granitic lowlands of the Cornish *Killas* stretch from East Penwith to the River Tamar. In megalithic terms it resembles many areas across Britain, with a smattering of ancient sites but not the same concentration, scale or variety as Bodmin Moor, the Lizard, West Penwith or Scilly, all of which are high-intensity megalithic areas.

Cornwall is bound and contained by its coastline, with its cliffs, bays, dunes and estuaries, and with characteristic ancient sites such as cliff sanctuaries and clifftop cairns. A long, thin region roughly 425 miles or 700km long, the coastal area stretches mostly just a mile or two inland. In ancient days the towns and villages we now know so well were not there.

Except in lower parts of the south coast of Cornwall, the coastline was relatively free of wildwood in the 3000s and earlier 2000s BCE, when forest was a dominant factor inland. Largely transhumant, the ancient Cornish will have taken advantage of the variety of coastal, inland and upland environments in their domains. The sea, bays and estuaries were rich sources of food.

If concentration of ancient sites is any indication of prehistoric population density, then in the Neolithic 3000s and early 2000s, the wooded Killas was more thinly populated than West Penwith and Bodmin Moor – which today are quite remote areas. Much of the Killas was sparsely inhabited except for two concentrations: the tor enclosure of Carn Brea and the north coast from Newquay to Pentire Point. Otherwise, local tribal groups were thin on the ground, though they still left their traces.



When the Bronze Age came along, wildwood felling gathered pace, driven by population growth and the use of metal tools. New lowland sites appeared, such as barrows along the low ridges of the Killas, and a cluster of sites in the granitic Carnmenellis uplands just west of Truro. Carnmenellis hosted three stone circles – at

Crowan Ridge, Carncrees (no longer there) and a double circle at Wendron Nine Maidens – plus a number of menhirs. The area was opened up and, together with the trade hub of Carn Brea, it became a geomantic bridging zone between east and west Cornwall.

Bronze Age barrows in the Killas (yellow points on the online maps) are mostly located on hillbrows in clusters and strings, many of them being burial barrows and some being positioned for geomantic reasons. Examples of geomantic barrows sit atop St Agnes Beacon, between Three Burrows and Carland Cross on the A30 (once an ancient trackway), Council Barrow NE of Bodmin, Hensbarrow NW of St Austell, or High Burrow NE of Camelford. Some lowland ridge brows had collections of burial barrows spread along them, amongst which one or two geomantic barrows were often placed – marked as red points on the maps.

Except in the case of Carn Brea's radial alignments (examined soon), lowland sites show few signs of integration into larger geomantic systems, in the manner that is visible in West Penwith, Bodmin Moor or on Scilly.

A geographer's eye immediately spots the way that sites on Bodmin Moor form a broad ring or circle formed by Neolithic tor enclosures, with a relatively empty centre. This ring has an off-centre axle to it in the form of four stone circles (two of them now remaining) near Dozmary Pool. The whole structure of Bodmin Moor is reminiscent of a large radio telescope. There is a hint of an organic coherence or design to it.

Just outside, below and around the Moor a gap exists where Bronze Age sites are thin on the ground – suggesting that the Moor was surrounded by forest in the Neolithic and Bronze Ages and that the people of Bodmin Moor chose not to fell it. Somehow it suited them to be surrounded by a sea of green below the moor. It also suggests a separation between the people of the Moor and those of the lowlands, whose barrows followed different locational patterns, also being built later than the major sites of the Moor.

Around 1200 BCE in the late Bronze Age this separation changed. The Moor dwellers were obliged to move downhill as the climate

grew colder, wetter and stormier, with upland soils losing their fertility and upland life losing its advantages. In the Iron Age most activity happened *around* the Moor, not *on* it – a ring of hill camps surrounds Bodmin Moor, many of them built in the late Bronze or the Iron Age, acting as gathering places, manors and tribal centres.

In between the lowland Bronze Age barrow clusters are gaps occupied mainly by Iron Age rounds (green points on the map), most of which arrived a millennium or more after the barrows. The rounds were a means by which virgin lands were colonised in the Iron Age. These gaps indicate areas where the wildwood survived during the Bronze Age barrow-building phase (2500-1500 BCE), later to be cleared and occupied in the Iron Age.

In the mid-Bronze Age, wildwood cover was probably around 50-70%, with more woodland in the lowlands and less on the Moor. People of the time preferred high places – the wildwoods could be boggy in winter, shady and steamy in summer, and boars and bears meant risks for the children and animals. In parts the wildwood was deep and thick: around Liskeard, Lostwithiel and in other patches there are hardly any Bronze Age sites.

Population and megalithic culture declined and climate deteriorated around 1200. When the Iron Age arrived some centuries later, increased needs for firewood and materials meant that the woods were eaten into over the generations. Virgin woodlands were cleared and colonised. Britain's characteristic landscape of fields, hedges, farms, woodlands and copses was starting to take shape.

In West Penwith there are patches relatively empty of Bronze Age sites, probably wooded until the Iron Age and later. However, since Penwith was not as high as Bodmin Moor, and it had a variety of landscape localities, the downhill movement of people wasn't as marked as on the Moor. Thus there was more continuity in Penwith between Bronze and Iron Age sites.

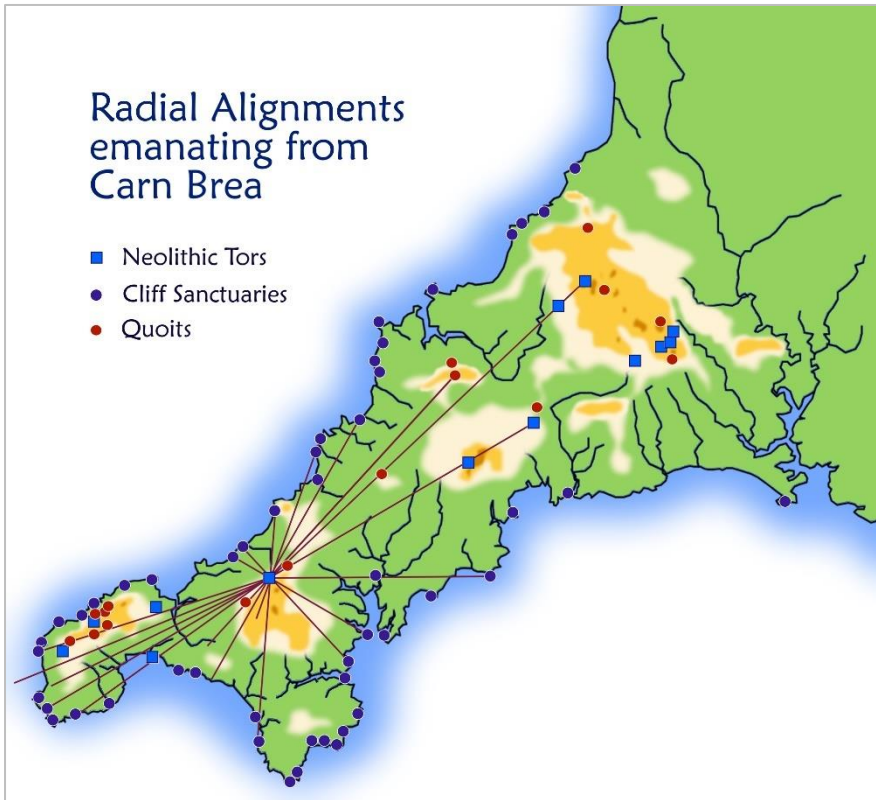
Neolithic Tors and Cliff Sanctuaries

Now we come to Carn Brea and its interesting relationship with coastal cliff sanctuaries arrayed around it. In the Neolithic 3000s, tor enclosures and cliff sanctuaries were key sites – stone circles and menhirs hadn't yet been invented. Carn Brea, a prominent tor enclosure, acted as a geomantic axle for Mid-Cornwall, over-lighting the area. Other nearby prominent hills such as Godolphin and Tregonning Hills, though they had their topographic and geomantic assets, do not share Carn Brea's pre-eminence.

Tor enclosures were the Neolithics' town squares and cliff sanctuaries were their parks. These were the main temples of the Neolithic, to which quoits were added. Backbone alignments were anchored to the tors and cliff sanctuaries, and this geomantic substructure provided the framework that affected the subsequent positioning of everything else.

Now here comes the amazing bit. In mid-Cornwall, many cliff sanctuaries are radially aligned with Carn Brea – itself quite a feat, considering they are natural sites. Uncannily, in four cases cliff sanctuaries exist at *both* ends of these alignments, and exactly so (alignments **201**, **203**, **204** and **MC23**). Other alignments passing through Carn Brea go to cliff sanctuaries in one direction and Bronze Age stone circles, menhirs or hilltops in the other – suggesting that the Bronze Age sites were deliberately located to align with Carn Brea and the cliff sanctuary behind it. If this is merely serendipitous, then this serendipity needs examining.

Here arises a common quirk of cliff sanctuaries. It seems they were chosen not so much because they were dominant headlands (though some are) but because they were aligned with other cliff sanctuaries and Neolithic sites (which most seem to be). Some dominant headlands are not cliff sanctuaries (Halzephron Cliff, Godrevy Head and St Agnes Head) and some cliff sanctuaries are not dominant headlands (Gunwalloe, Little Dennis or Kilcobben Cove in the Lizard, or Maen Castle in West Penwith).



For a more detailed map: www.palden.co.uk/shiningland/map-carnbrea-radials.html

A headland's prominence didn't automatically make it into a cliff sanctuary. They were selected for (amongst other things) their alignment properties. In terms of *feeling* too, cliff sanctuaries seem to have a distinctly *consecrated* atmosphere that other headlands don't share. To run a test, compare the feeling at Bosigran Castle, a cliff sanctuary, with that at nearby Zennor Head, a headland.

Archaeologists customarily identify 'cliff castles' by the presence of Iron Age 'defensive ramparts'. This is based on the assumption that cliff sanctuaries acted as fortified defensive sites, which mostly they did not. But they are proud strongholds, and they do have a feeling of enhanced natural power.

There is only some plausible strategic value to cliff sanctuaries. Quite a few are not easily defensible. If they were primarily defensive, they would be close to prominent landing beaches – but this is uncommon. If we look at factors such as *feeling*, positioning, shape, topography and alignments, the purpose of cliff sanctuaries starts making more sense. Valid, as yet unrecognised, cliff sanctuaries start to appear: Trewavas Head and Cudden Point on the east coast of Mount's Bay and, in West Penwith, Kemyel Point, Tol Pedn Penwith and Carn Naun.

None of these have visible ramparts but they are meaningfully located as clifftop power-places. I call them *type two* cliff sanctuaries, many of which have a two-level format with an upper platform area, in some cases suitable for gatherings, and then a lower level, often an outcropping rock extending into the sea, serving as a special power-place. This is the case at Cudden Point, Lizard Point, Tol Pedn Penwith, Carn Naun and Kemyel Point.

Predannack Head is rather different. A commanding headland with an outcrop of rocks overlooking Mount's Bay, it's like a seat of power fit for a monarch or archdruid, with a throne-like positioning that suggests it was a



special place. It looks as if some rocks are natural and some erected. From there you can see St Michael's Mount, Treryn Dinas, Tol Pedn Penwith, Tregonning Hill and Watch Croft. When seen from St Michael's Mount, the winter solstice sun rises over Predannack Head. It's like a control tower overlooking Mount's Bay and well worth a visit – best on a calm day.

Predannack Head doesn't conform to type two specifications but it's a special clifftop *something*. There is a case for a *type three* cliff

sanctuary – and Rame Head near Plymouth, Nare Head in Roseland and Cape Cornwall in Penwith, prominent yet conforming neither to type one nor to type two specs, might join Predannack Head on that list. So perhaps we need to think in terms of three different types of cliff sanctuaries.

They served as gathering places and sanctified magical centres interfacing land and sea. Some were good for trading (St Michael's Mount, St Ives Head, Trevelgue Head), or seasonal residence (Treryn Dinas, Gurnard's Head and Pentire Point), and many helped with observation of weather, waves, omens, shoals, pods of cetaceans and coastwatching. Considering the special role that the sea plays in the life of Cornwall, it is odd that cliff sanctuaries are given less recognition than they deserve.

There was a *kind* of defensive purpose to them inasmuch as a sanctified, enchanted and 'energy-held' landscape would have been seen to be naturally safe, productive, blessed and harmonious. The cliff sanctuaries, as shrines, ring-fence the land. If the subtle energies of the land were cultivated and cared for, the 'mandate of heaven' would be upheld and an area such as Penwith or the Lizard would be protected by the coherence and radiance of its energy-field, repelling or deflecting any malintent coming from outsiders. Or, if incursions came and boundaries were breached, the invaders would find themselves strangely out of their depth, befogged, hit by bad weather or somehow at a disadvantage.

Cliff sanctuaries formed a necklace of hallowed places on Cornwall's edge, holding it in a ring of luminosity. In our day, the development of landscape energy-cultivation perhaps represents the next step beyond achieving ecological biosustainability. It involves a re-enchantment of the land – *loving* and *singing* the world back to health, energywise – and changing human behaviour so that we act as the guests on our planet that we truly are. Compulsive sceptics will have difficulty with this notion of re-enchantment – it's a stretch. But then, nowadays, we're all being stretched.

West Penwith

West Penwith is the most complex, varied and chronologically layered area in Cornwall. It formed a complete, self-contained, peninsular landscape, one of Britain's megalithic hotspots. Scilly and much of the rest of Cornwall were underactive in the Neolithic compared with West Penwith and Bodmin Moor. This changed in the Bronze Age as population grew and new lands were colonised across Cornwall. Later, as climate deteriorated, Moor people moved downhill and Bodmin Moor turned relatively fallow. But Penwith was pretty consistent through the three ages (as it goes).

With sea cliffs on three sides, Penwith has an end-of-the-world character. Rather like islands such as Anglesey, the Isle of Man, Arran, Lewis and Orkney, it was insulated from many of the events and complexities in other parts of Britain, and maritime contact was crucial. This shielding is noticeable on Penwith's landward side: there's a shift as you cross the energy-threshold while driving along the A30 at Crowlas, between Hayle and Penzance, at the traffic lights near the village shop. Here you are crossing the alignment between St Michael's Mount, Trencrom Hill and St Ives Head, the energy-boundary of the peninsula.

Penwith is one enormous cliff sanctuary functioning as an integrated megalithic system. This is a core proposition of this book. Backbone alignments, based on the shape and the lay of key elements in the landscape such as hilltops and headlands, determine the positions of Penwith's stone circle complexes and many other key sites – and the whole system extrapolates from there.

Boscawen-ûn has six backbone alignments passing through it, Lanyon Quoit has three, Trencrom Hill four, Botrea Barrows four, St Michael's Mount four, Cape Cornwall four, Pendeen Watch three, Treryn Dinas three, Merry Maidens three, Nine Maidens two and Lesingey Round three. How on earth did the ancients figure out this peninsula-wide system, and what drove them to do it?

West Penwith was big and focal enough in maritime terms to be noteworthy in the megalithic world, yet not so big that it became

grandiose in its megalithic style. Its sites are modestly scaled, yet as a magical landscape they form a complete system, held together by significant power points and encircled by cliff sanctuaries – all of them together constituting one big ancient site of 100 square miles. Beyond that, the ocean. Beat that, Stonehenge.

The Isles of Scilly

<http://www.palden.co.uk/shiningland/map-alignments-scilly.html>

In megalithic times Scilly had just two main islands, St Mary's and St Agnes, apart from offshore rocks to the west and what's now the Seven Stones Reef to the NE. The land has sunk and the sea has risen since then. It is commonly understood that Scilly was permanently settled around 2300 BCE during the Bronze Age ascendancy, and early finds from the Neolithic and Mesolithic seem to derive from seasonal visitors.

Yet it looks as if Scilly could have been thinly occupied in the Neolithic 3000s. There are centres of activity at Pig Rock and Salakee Down on St Mary's and others on St Martin's, Samson, Bryher and St Agnes, showing life-signs from the Neolithic.⁹⁶ Pig Rock is reminiscent of Neolithic placed and propped stones on Zennor Hill in Penwith.⁹⁷

Focusing on placed stones and tors in Scilly might yield further evidence of pre-Bronze Age settlement, even if such settlement lasted only a few generations – it doesn't make a lot of sense that the Pig Rock complex would be built by short-term visitors. But Neolithic settlement also looks as if it came to a close.

Scilly's Bronze Age sites are mainly cairns, with some menhirs and the largest number of chambered cairns anywhere. The cairns are concentrated around the east and south coast of St Mary's, and on what are now the other larger islands, most cairns being close to the coastline, while most menhirs are on hilltops and slopes, inland in

⁹⁶ *Isles of Scilly Historic Environment Research Framework, Updated Resource Assessment and Research Agenda 2019*, Cornwall Archaeological Unit, www.cau.org.uk

⁹⁷ *Meyn Mamvro* 84, pp18-20.

the northern part of St Mary's and on St Martin's and Gugh. There are also the cairnfields of Scilly, about which more later.



Scilly has a visibly integrated system of sites demonstrated in its pattern of alignments, which have an high level of structure, with many near-parallel alignments and a coherent, slightly diamantine overall shape. It suggests that Bronze Age Scillonians started with a relatively blank slate, building sites from scratch, uninfluenced by an existing megalithic heritage. Penwithians, meanwhile, with their inheritance of Neolithic sites, had a pre-existing framework onto which to bolt their Bronze Age creations. The tracks had already

been laid in Penwith in the Neolithic, while Scilly was relatively virgin territory.

I did not expect to find alignments stretching between Penwith and Scilly, but an accidental discovery of convincingly accurate multiple alignments between them put an end to that. It happened while examining alignment **78** between St Michael's Mount, Boscawen-ûn and Maen Castle which, to my surprise, pointed to one of Scilly's highest and oldest sites, Samson Hill on Bryher. Further alignments emerged, such as one (**123**) from the Merry Maidens and Carn Lês Boel to Knackyboy cairn and Gweal Hill on Bryher, and another (**94**) from Godrevy Head and Cape Cornwall to Pig Rock on St Mary's and Obadiah's Barrow on Gugh.

Certain sites are thus emphasised by sitting on alignments coming from Penwith: examples are Knackboy Cairn on St Martin's, Samson Hill and Shipman Head on Bryher, White Island, Salakee Down on St Mary's and Obadiah's Barrow on Gugh. Perhaps some of these places were known to the Neolithics, since they are connected by alignment with multiple Neolithic sites in Penwith.

Scilly has many near-parallel alignments – usually just 1-2° divergent from each other in orientation. Only a few seem to have astronomical properties. Perhaps Scillonians sought some sort of coherent order in an otherwise rather fluid maritime world, not least since many sites in Scilly were built to be seen from the sea. Or perhaps the system's designers simply had their own ideas about megalithic site-placing, thus creating quite a few near-parallel.

Then we come to the much-debated matter of Scilly as the Isle of the Dead. But first we must look at the Lizard.

The Lizard

Ptolemy, a geographer in Alexandria, Egypt, in the 130s CE, called it *Promontorium Dumnonium*, headland of the Dumnonii. 'Lizard' comes from Cornish *lys ardh*, 'court on the promontory'. Another name was *Predannec*, or 'British', used by Pytheas the Greek.

Thanks to its height and southerliness, the Lizard was the first land to appear on the horizon when sailing north from Brittany – hence that it was well known abroad. If you head for the Lizard and then sail along its west coast, you'll reach St Michael's Mount.



Like Penwith, the Lizard is a cliff-bound peninsula. It is not granitic like West Penwith – much of the Lizard is ancient pre-Cambrian metamorphic serpentine, with a less crystalline structure to its geology. Actually, this rock is raised from the earth's mantle, the layer below its crust, making it rather unique geologically. Most rocks come from the crust, including those in the rest of the SW peninsula, but these come from deeper down in the mantle. Around Coverack were deposits of gabbroic clay, a variant of serpentine,

used for pottery and exported from Neolithic times onwards, much of it traded through Carn Brea.

Much of the Lizard forms a relatively flat, high plateau yet it is dense with barrows, and part of it is one big barrowfield. The barrows seem not to be geomantically located, for alignment, astronomical or landscape-positioning purposes. They are arranged in a different way, lacking credible alignments. Meanwhile, menhirs on the Lizard are clearly and intentionally aligned, and the alignment principle holds true for these. So the principle of alignment was known in the Lizard yet its barrows were not located using the logic of alignments.

Alignments between the Lizard's barrows are tricky to find and unconvincing. This shows how an area dense with barrows does not guarantee that it's easy to find a large number of alignments. There is however a flowing coherence to the location of the barrows. A curvy, clustered corridor runs north from Lizard Point to Goonhilly Downs, branching west toward Predannack Head and east toward Crousa (see map). It looks as if barrow building might have started in the south, moving northward. Does this mean that the ancients gave special importance to Lizard Point, or did deceased bodies arrive by sea at Lizard Point? Or did this pattern evolve hapwise from the south, in a simple and unplanned way?

Why were the people of the Lizard seemingly so mad about burial and ancestry? The Scillonians were similar. Penwith probably had a higher population than either, yet its cairnfields are small and not a major feature. It is either the case that funerary practices in the Lizard and Scilly were significantly different to those in Penwith, or that people went there specifically to die, or that bodies were brought there to be buried, or that it was simply a local obsession. But why were such practices not uniform across Cornwall?

Scilly has a profusion of chambered cairns while the Lizard has only one (possibly). Chambered cairns had a number of purposes but it is unlikely that burial was a primary objective. They were more likely for retreat, conscious dying, relic repository or as energy-chambers for the potentisation of medical tinctures, soils or

seed stocks. Urns found in chambered cairns usually contain bone fragments from many people, suggesting ancestral and oracular, not burial purposes.

This doesn't help us understand the Lizard. But look at its position: it forms the southernmost tip of mainland Britain. This is significant – if, that is, the profusion of barrows means that people or corpses came from afar to be buried there.

Why should an isolated area on Britain's southern extreme be named *Predannack*? Here's an idea. Britain was tribal yet also it had an informal, organic, *de facto* nationhood. This is demonstrated in the commonalities between ancient sites from Orkney to Cornwall, in signs of long-distance trade and mobility across Britain and in the pan-tribal traditions of later Iron Age bards, ovates and druids in holding Britain's peoples together, probably continuing a tradition from the Bronze Age.

In this light, burial in the Lizard might have been significant to Britons because of its far-south position. To stretch this idea, the Lizard *might* have been a national graveyard for Britain's grandees, or at least those of the southwest, like a prehistoric Westminster Abbey, as if to seal a multi-generational web of inter-tribal pacts. It would make such multilateral pacts unbreakable and eternal, if grandees from each clan were buried together. In later times, agreements and treaties were guaranteed by the exchange of high-born hostages or by intermarriage. In the Bronze Age there would be pan-tribal pacts, and the collective burial of grandees from different tribes or nations would give longterm magical and political weight to it. It would seal a multilateral pact between Britain's tribes, or at least those of the region.

Whether or not this is correct, building these barrows took a lot of work over many generations and it was not done lightly. Penwith had magical metals – a high-value business. It makes one wonder whether Scilly and the Lizard provided ancestral services, receiving honoured seniors for excarnation and/or burial. This is an imaginative speculation, but plausible. If it is incorrect, some other explanation for these large cairnfields needs finding!

Scilly has long been known as the Isle of the Dead, and this does give reason to its profusion of cairnfields. But some believe that Scillonian cairnfields served the island's needs only. If this is correct, we must then figure out why there was such a radical cultural difference between Scillonians and mainlanders, causing Scillonians to build so many cairns – and each cairn probably served as the final resting place of multiple souls. Scilly's many chambered cairns suggest that Scilly could have been a place to go *actually to die* – perhaps for mainland notables or druids.

Conscious dying is foreign to most of us since in our culture we believe we have only one life and that everything shuts down at death. A short-term attitude and time-horizon accompanies this belief and the consequences are global and serious. In other cultures conduct was more restrained and actions were carried out not only for longterm benefit or for future generations, but also to generate merit for the afterlife, for future incarnations, or for the tribe's ancestral benefit, or even for the general good of everything.

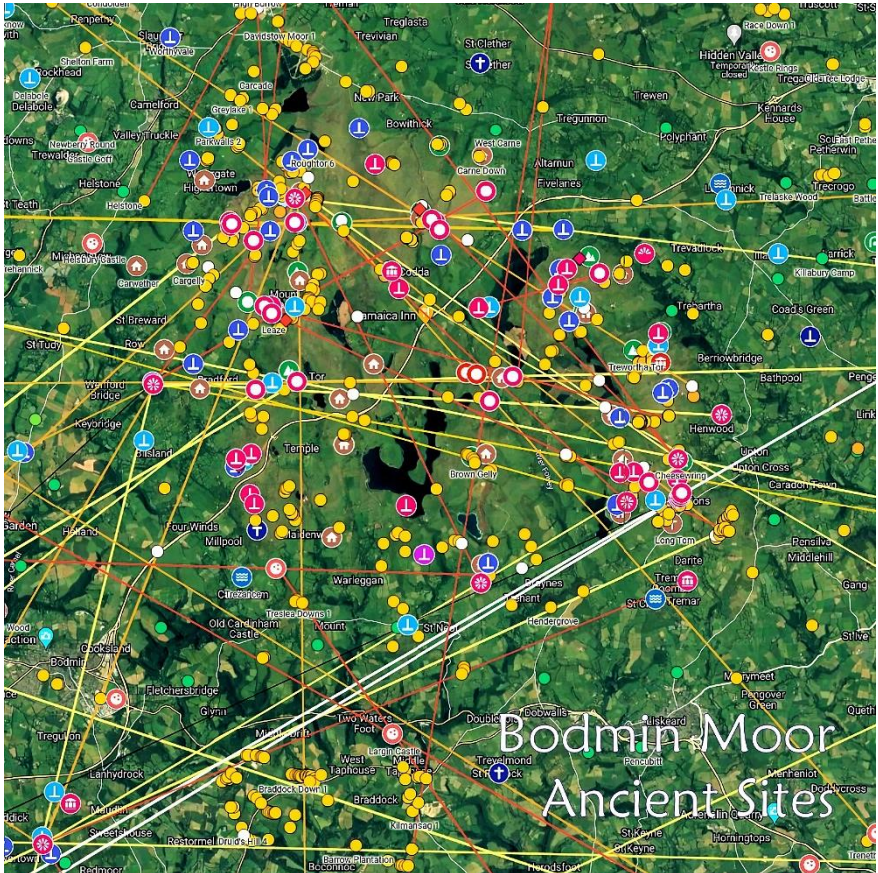
Scilly's profusion of chambered cairns and cairnfields suggests that the island might not exactly have been an Isle of the Dead but an island for *actually dying*, for exarnation – at least for some. It was close to the realm where souls were believed to go, over the Great Ocean to the Land of the Setting Sun.

The proliferation of cairns in Scilly and barrows on the Lizard is remarkable, and it stretches plausibility that they served local needs only, unless far-flung Scilly and the Lizard had very different funerary practices to those of virtually everyone else in Britain. And why did Penwith and other megalithic core areas of Britain lack cairnfields on this scale?

The cairnfields were concentrated mostly in the north of Scilly, on what are now the islands of Tresco, Bryher and St Martin's, suggesting a separation of burial areas from the lives of most islanders. Perhaps bodies buried there were not Scillonian, and for this reason they were buried in the remote parts of the islands. Or perhaps Scillonians simply reserved their remoter, higher places for their dead. We'll look at Scilly again in the next chapter.

Bodmin Moor

Bodmin Moor deserves a book of its own and I am not the one to write it. It is a unique granitic upland area akin to Dartmoor. In those days neither were moorland, both being greener and more fertile than now, each of them capable of supporting a few thousand people at their Bronze Age peak.



Peaty moors formed on them from 1200 BCE onwards as wetter and cooler weather set in. Both had been activity hubs in the Neolithic and Bronze Ages, with populations that built many and various ancient sites, showing advanced thinking and skills in the process.

Bodmin Moor in those times was in a world of its own, blessed with a good climate and surrounded by wildwood, with views to the north and south coasts, of Dartmoor and over the Cornish *Killas*. It will have depended on its hinterland for fish, timber, hunted and foraged food, and trade moved high-value items a long way from there. It was a magical landscape marked out by tors and enhanced with a large number of stone circles, stone rows, menhirs and cairns, suggesting that quite complex ideas were applied to its overall design and a lot of work was invested in megalithic landscape management.

Here cliff sanctuaries were not present, and the tors acted as the primary determinants of the geomantic patterns that were established. Tor enclosures define the edges of the moor, the key ones being Rough Tor, De Lank, Berry Castle and Stowe's Pound. As major landmarks, Fox Tor, Leskernick Hill, Hawk's Tor and Brown Willy (*Bronn Wennili*) and Brown Gelly (*Bronn Geliow*) are worth mentioning here too.

Bodmin Moor was somewhat bowl-shaped, turning in toward its centre, with no major site, tor or feature to mark the centre. This said, if the size of stone circles reflects their importance, then three stand out: Stannon and Fernacre (both aligned on *Bronn Wennili*, with Fernacre being due south of Rough Tor) and Louden Hill, which forms a triangle to them. This bowl-like kind of structure is not unknown in megalithic landscapes across Britain.

At some sites (such as at Tregeseal or Lanyon Quoit in Penwith, or Scorhill on Dartmoor), if you swing round with your eye on the horizon there is a sense of containment within a bowl of hills as seen from that spot. This psycho-geographic bowl-like effect tends to increase the sense of interiority of a place or area, within its own local world, emphasising inward and upward perspectives, and making use of the containing ridges, tors and hills and a visible circle of the horizon. This kind of psycho-spatial subtlety is quite remarkable, many sites being positioned, sometimes specifically, to create such a sense of positioning.

Many stone rows on Bodmin Moor and Dartmoor are sited at the furthest points inland from which the sea can be seen, and pointing at the sea, to create a 'reveal' of the sea as progress is made walking along the stone row.⁹⁸ This will have been bound into rites and ceremonies and it will also have had a geomantic energy-effect, linking the granite uplands to their marine surrounds. It creates the opposite effect to the bowl effect mentioned above, by psycho-geographically linking the upland world to the wider world and to Dumnonia's enveloping seas. Some stone rows also perform this reveal with tors and key hills. Only some stone rows are astronomically aligned, and a proportion are oriented north-south, so astronomical alignments seem not to be a key issue here even if a few stone rows are so aligned.

Stone rows were a device that was not used in West Penwith – perhaps there was less need for similar geomantic landscape engineering in comparison with Bodmin Moor or Dartmoor, for linking high places to the sea. However, the holed stones near Tregeseal do have that 'reveal' feature. In Penwith, connection with the sea is not such a big issue, since it is closely surrounded by it and its high places have clear sea views.

Significant sites in West Penwith and Bodmin Moor are aligned along the long axis of Cornwall. Some examples are:

- alignment **54** from Cape Cornwall over Carn Galva, through St Ives Head and eventually to the Stripple Stones stone circle on Bodmin Moor;
- alignment **55** from Carn Lês Boel to Stannon Circle, through Boscawen-ûn and Lesingey Round, Piran's Round and Mên Gurta menhir;
- and **211** from St Michael's Mount to the Trippet Stones stone circle, passing through Kaer Round, Tresawsen hill camp and numerous cairns.

The Michael Line follows the general direction of the SW peninsula of Britain, passing through the Hurlers stone circles, then

⁹⁸ See: <https://stonerows.wordpress.com/research/sea-views/>

Helman Tor, then Carn Brea, then close to St Michael's Mount and ending up at Carn Lês Boel. A branch of the Michael Line goes from The Hurlers, exactly through St Michael's Mount to Tol Pedn Penwith, the southwesternmost point of Britain.

Land of the Promontory Welsh

Cornwall was separated from Devon only just over a thousand years ago when the Saxons took Devon, which subsequently underwent a major cultural conversion and ethnic cleansing. It is likely that a proportion of the Dumnonii moved west into Cornwall. The Tamar, stretching from the south coast to within a few miles of the north coast, serves as a definitive boundary that even the weather seems to recognise.

Since Cornwall is long and thin, the Lizard, West Penwith and Scilly are each linked to one neighbouring region only. This makes them distinctive geomantically, in comparison to many other megalithic regions in Britain. From a landlubber's viewpoint these Cornish extremities are marginal, but their maritime connections made them well-connected. Cultural and migratory movements from Brittany and Iberia reached The Lizard, Penwith and wider Cornwall before passing on further into Britain and Ireland.

Cornwall is a world with a number of contrasting worlds within it – since each sub-region indeed was a world in itself. In the days when everyone walked, paddled or sailed, thirty miles was a long way, so Cornwall was then perceptually bigger than it is now. Tribal domains gave each area a localised culture and autonomy, yet all of the tribes of Cornwall will have been related, however distantly, since tribes arranged marriages and other connections to build bridges, maintain agreements and avoid unwanted trouble.

Early trade was driven by gifting, not for gain or profit but to maintain good relations with other clans and tribes. It was also a good way of getting rid of surpluses and exchanging local specialisms with goods and services that others were better at providing. It does not seem to have been the habit of the Cornish to squabble amongst themselves to the degree that is more visible

17. Scillina | the Isles of Scilly

Four millennia ago, Scilly comprised one big and one smaller island, St Agnes, with offshore rocks and islets. It was a viable place to live, bigger than today, and the climate was fairer and less wild, though Scilly was still exposed to oceanic weather. A small world, it had a summer of contact with the wider world and a winter of isolation and self-sufficiency.



Scilly constituted a separate and, to mainlanders, mysterious world, traditionally reputed to be the Isle of the Dead. Certainly, this is suggested by the sheer number of burial cairns and cairnfields on Scilly. ‘Isle of the Dead’ could also imply a realm beyond time, the land of the unborn and undying. In ancient times the souls of the dead went to the land of the setting sun across the western ocean. The tradition of a sunken landmass, Lyonesse, referring perhaps to

part of Scilly or to a landmass between Scilly and the mainland, or to something else, adds to this mystique.⁹⁹

Scilly is dense with Bronze Age sites and notable for its extensive cairnfields, together with 83 chambered cairns (the largest number anywhere), numerous solid cairns, about fifteen menhirs and seven cliff sanctuaries. Most cairns were situated on higher ground, many of them located to be seen from the sea.¹⁰⁰

It is commonly understood amongst archaeologists that Scilly was settled around 2300 BCE during the Bronze Age ascendancy, and that earlier Neolithic and Mesolithic finds derive from seasonal visitors. This is based on old assumptions and more evidence has emerged since then. Scilly was thinly occupied in the Mesolithic 4000s and the Neolithic 3000s BCE, and visiting was sufficiently frequent for people to leave significant remains. It is likely they overwintered on the island in favourable periods, and settlement could have lasted from a few years to a few decades.

Excavations at Old Quay, St Martin's, have revealed Mesolithic microliths (chipped stones) fashioned not in the neighbouring Cornish style but in one from Belgium, indicating long-distance travel and cultural influence even then.¹⁰¹ Presumably the Belgians moved onward or back home when they left Scilly. Unless they had bad luck, they would not have starved since Scilly had enough seafood and landfood to support a tribe of souls.

Later, in the Neolithic, centres of activity existed at Pig Rock and Salakee Down, now on the south coast of St Mary's, in sight of the Penwith mainland, and others were on Samson, Bryher and St Agnes, showing life-signs from the mid-Neolithic (around 3500) or late Neolithic (around 2700-2400).¹⁰²

Pig Rock, mysterious and possibly a more important site than is normally thought, is reminiscent of the Neolithic placed and

⁹⁹ Pennick, Nigel, Lyonesse – the Legend and the Land, *Meyn Mamvro* 8, Spring 1989.

¹⁰⁰ See <https://intarch.ac.uk/journal/issue34/2/9-2.html> in *A Sea of Small Boats* by Gary Robinson.

¹⁰¹ Anderson-Whymark, Hugo, *et al*, *Microliths and maritime mobility: a continental European-style Late Mesolithic flint assemblage from the Isles of Scilly*, Antiquity Publications, 2015.

¹⁰² *Isles of Scilly Historic Environment Research Framework, Updated Resource Assessment and Research Agenda 2019*, Cornwall Archaeological Unit, www.cau.org.uk

propped stones on Penwith's Zennor Hill. It is aligned with Pordenack Point and St Michael's Mount.

Giving greater attention to placed stones and tors in Scilly might yield further evidence of pre-Bronze Age settlement, even if it lasted only a few generations. It doesn't quite add up that the Pig Rock complex was built by short-term visitors staying for single summers only – unless perhaps they had a burst of enthusiasm while staying, then to fail to return another year.

Cairnfields

The main cairnfields are on Gugh, at Wingletang Down on St Agnes, Shipman Head Down on Bryher, Castle Down on Treseco and Chapel Down on St Martin's – all on the seaward periphery of the islands, on higher ground and, except for St Agnes and Gugh, all on one island at the time they were built. Alignments don't feature strongly in their design – as also is the case on the Lizard.

Shipman Head contains over 130 mostly flat, low, wide platform cairns containing burials of whole groups or families. Each will have taken a lot of work to build. The cairns are not uniform: they include humped round cairns, flatter, wider platform cairns, a few D-shaped and oval cairns and some ring cairns, some built around natural boulders or with a rock at one end, or dug into a slope, some with kerbs and some not. Nowadays they are much eroded, lower than they once were, and picked over by antiquarians, robbers and rabbits.

In the large cairnfields in the north of Bryher and Treseco, there are a few chambered cairns amongst a large number of solid, mostly platform cairns. Chambered cairns tend to be solitary, away from the cairnfields, suggesting they were not closely connected with burial. The orientation of their chambers toward a variety of directions on the horizon is significant – the only problem being that we don't know what that significance was, especially since there is a wide variety of orientations. It's doubtful that these were merely haphazard, and the topographical positioning of each chambered cairn and the view from there are a visible factor. In

some cases the chambers, long, thin and sometimes low, were oriented to points such as solstice sunrises and sunsets, but many were oriented in a range of other directions, even nearly due north.

Chambered cairns were unlikely to be built for burial – many have been found empty of bones or grave goods while others contain only bone segments, not whole bodies, suggesting shamanic use. The contents were often rearranged over time. Solid, not chambered, cairns were used for burial. Chambered cairns could have been for meditation, initiation or ritual, a place for conscious dying or for use as repositories. The case for repository usage is weaker here than in Penwith, since there are far more chambered cairns than would be necessary for the local population's use.

There's a sense of pattern to the distribution of cairns within some cairnfields – they aren't randomly placed or in lines or rows, instead forming curvy lines and clusters, not unlike the patterns seen on the Lizard. They could represent lines of descent and extended families.

The patterns suggest that there is more to these cairnfields than the simple burial of the dead. In the Shipman Head cairnfield on Bryher there are only two chambered cairns, both on the south end of the hill – all the rest are solid, mostly platform cairns, made of soil and stones, or rocks with earth as an infill.

Concentrating so many deceased souls in cairnfields will have generated a very strong reality-field – a convocation of ancestors, a consciousness-field of power, heritage and the group souls of tribes. If the cairns were built as orgone accumulators, with alternating layers of organic and inorganic matter, then these cairnfields will have been like subtle-energy nuke stations.

It is slightly surprising that major alignments are not a prevalent feature of cairnfields. But there are a few alignments, such as backbone alignment **94** from Obadiah's Barrow and the cairnfield on Gugh, passing through Salakee Down cairnfield, Cape Cornwall, Carn Galva and Rosewall Hill in Penwith on the way to Godrevy Head (a true Beltane/Lammas sunrise orientation). Or there's alignment **97** from Shipman Head to Castle Down, through

Mayon Cliff, Boscawen-ûn and Faugan Round to Godolphin Hill. These two go through West Penwith and east of it.

The islands are named after the goddess *Scillina* (also associated with *Aquae Sulis*, the city of Bath) – that’s the consensus. Burial in the Scillies might have been regarded as a return to the embracing arms of the goddess. But death is part of life and ancestors live on in spirit, so if people from the mainland were buried here in large numbers, this will have created a metaphysical connection between tribes far away and these holy isles. They might have gone to Scilly not just to be buried, but to have ‘a good death’.

Some believe that the cairnfields served the islands’ needs only.¹⁰³

The reasoning is that the pottery found there was Scillonian in style, while cremated ashes being brought to Scilly would be contained in urns made in styles deriving from further away – of which there is only a little evidence. Yes, true. But if people came to Scilly actually to die, urns from elsewhere would not be needed.

If these cairns were used by Scillonians only, then we must try to figure out why there was such a radical cultural difference between Scillonians and mainlanders in their funerary practices, causing Scillonians to build so many cairns – especially when each cairn probably served as the final resting place for multiple souls.

If the cairnfields served only local funerary needs, then the Scillonians had a very unique set of beliefs and practices around dying that was not emulated by or drawn from other regions. There are more miles to walk on this question.

It is possible that many of the cairns host the remains of people from mainland Cornwall, many of whom were at least distantly related to Scillonians through clan ties, migration, travel and natural interaction. Or possibly they came from further afield, being given the privilege by dint of descent, reputation, achievement or reverence.

¹⁰³ Sawyer, Katharine, *Isles of the Dead?*, Archaeopress, 2015, p118.

Maritime Culture

Culturally Scilly was closely connected with West Penwith – particularly with those living on the west coast around Sennen, Nanquidno and Cape Cornwall. Whatever happened in one generally happened in the other, as evidenced by the chambered cairns, menhirs and cairns in both places – though Scilly had no stone circles. Chambered cairns are called *Scillonian* but their construction seems to have started in Penwith in the late Neolithic or the NBA, then to spread to Scilly in the Bronze Age. Scilly has two kinds of chambered cairn: larger, which can be entered by a number of people; and smaller, suitable for one person, more like Penwith's chambered cairns, and often quite squat for sitting in.

There were differences between Scilly and Penwith: the islanders were isolated during winter months and the summertime journey to the mainland wasn't easy either, so a separate culture developed on Scilly, even though many of its settlers probably originated in Penwith. There will also have been incomers from elsewhere – Scilly was a stopover between Brittany and Ireland, so the island will have had a perennial trickle of visitors from many parts. It served as a shelter in adverse weather and from the strong tides and waves around Penwith. Maritime contact stretching from Iberia to Britain and Ireland had started way back in the Mesolithic. People, seeds, stocks, ideas and influences moved up and down this oceanic coastal axis.

Further differences are the profusion of menhirs in Penwith and the number and size of cairnfields in Scilly. Scilly does not have the same 'necklace' of cliff sanctuaries as Penwith – though this might simply be because Scilly was not constantly settled at the time Penwith's cliff sanctuaries were established in the Neolithic 3000s. Scilly does have a few cliff sanctuaries but they appear not to be as important a feature as they are in Penwith.

In good weather the Scillies and Penwith are intervisible – the journey between them could be done in a day, on a good day, using sail and paddle from Ganilly to Sennen, Porthcurno or Porth Ust

(Priest's Cove). This was summertime traffic: in winter, whoever was on the islands stayed there.

With small and fragile boats, sailors had to await the weather and tides before sailing, applying sea dogs' intuition and maritime skills. The ancients were steadfast mariners, using log, plank-built and skin-covered boats. They managed to take animals with them, and there are signs of Scilly being stocked with sheep, cattle and deer from elsewhere. They probably had to sedate animals and tie them up, since boats weren't large and could be damaged or rocked by a panicking animal. The important thing was to transport breeders from which herds could be built up on the islands.

Permanent settlement involved establishing a few core bases on Scilly where farming, fishing and the means of survival were started – this would take several years – and then satellite settlements would be extended from there. Island self-sufficiency was imperative. Fish, seals, dolphins, whales and sea products such as shellfish would have been key food sources, with farm products added as time went on.

Before the sinking of Scilly there was a wide sweep of dry land where the flooded shallows of The Road now separate the islands. Ganilly and Nornour are now islands, but in the Bronze Age they were part of the main island, serving as its main landing places.

The presence of beacon sites on both sides of the sound separating the islands and the mainland suggest a signalling system was used, probably for both magical and practical reasons.

For sailors voyaging from the Scillies to the mainland, to sail to Sennen, the best landing beach, it was a matter of taking a fix on Cape Cornwall and Carn Lês Boel. Sail toward a point halfway between them and you'll come to Sennen beach. Similarly, sailing the other way, keep these two headlands equidistant behind you and you'll reach the islands. Crossing to the islands is tricky since, when in a small boat, they are visible only five or so miles away, even though they can be seen from atop the clifftops of Penwith – this is an earth-curvature issue. However, at times, due to atmospheric light-bending, and at low tide, the islands sometimes

appear to rise hovering out of the sea when seen from Penwith's cliffs, adding to their ethereal mystique.

Land and Sea Levels

On Scilly, the land has sunk and the sea has risen by about five metres or 15ft since the early Bronze Age. This is made up of a two metre or 6ft rise in sea level and a three metre or 9ft post-glacial sinking of the land. Penwith has had a similar sea-level change but, being higher, this has had less effect, except for St Michael's Mount and the Brisons, which became islands, and the reduction of beaches. Some sites on Scilly, especially settlements and field systems, now lie underwater, though the ancients had a fortuitous habit of locating sacred sites on higher ground.

During the ice age the Scillies and Cornwall, cold but not ice-covered, rose to compensate for the glacial weighing-down of landmasses further north (such as in Scotland). When the ice receded, the land in the north rose when freed of its weight, and Scilly and Cornwall sank relatively to counterbalance it. Hence the dramatic change of sea levels in Scilly, which continue today – the sea has risen and the land has sunk at the same time.

A richly suggestive mythic tradition, the legend of Lyonesse, reputedly located between Scilly and Penwith and said to have sunk suddenly and catastrophically in a single night in the 1200s CE, is difficult to justify geologically or archaeologically. Perhaps it is a romanticisation and extrapolation of the sinking of the Scillies between the Bronze Age and now, affecting now-sunken reefs in the sound between Scilly and Penwith. Or perhaps there is something about the geology of this area that we do not know. However, tsunamis from the Azores in the south or from a high underwater continental shelf cliff west of Ireland, might have helped create that legend.

The Seven Stones Reef, northeast of Scilly and west of Penwith (site of the 1967 Torrey Canyon disaster), is roughly two miles by one, and in the past it was not submerged, so it could qualify as Lyonesse, but it is hardly sufficient in size to accommodate the

several towns and 140 churches Lyonesse was said to have had. It is difficult therefore to form a sound conclusion on this matter. The Lyonesse tradition remains steadfastly in the realm of myth. Perhaps it is excessively dismissed by many archaeologists and over-believed in by many believers. It stays in an ‘open questions’ category for now.

A mythic land to the west is not an uncommon theme up and down the European Atlantic coast. Whether Lyonesse was an actuality or a metaphor, it certainly is true that, sometimes, when seen from the mainland, the Scillies seem to hover above the water. Looking at them from a Penwith clifftop, they can have an aura of charismatic enchantment – even from Penwith’s own mystique-rich viewpoint.

Alignments on Scilly

To do justice to Scilly’s alignments, the normal geomancers’ four or five site rule that is used to confirm an alignment has been reduced to three – otherwise, too much is lost and many alignments disappear. This might not satisfy leyline sceptics, but just look at the patterns that emerge (see map below). Some alignments have only three points though most have four or five.

Alignments on Scilly come in two main forms: those local to the islands and those spanning the sound to the Penwith mainland. The violet and blue alignments are Scilly alignments, the blue being near-parallel – just one degree or less from exactly parallel. The overall pattern of Scillonian alignments slightly resembles a ‘cat’s cradle’ with three predominant components: orientations NE-SW across St Mary’s, roughly east-west across the northern isles, and a north-south axis between Bryher, Samson and St Agnes.

Several incoming backbone alignments (yellow on the online map), with other long-distance alignments (orange), come from the mainland, each of them striking two or three sites on Scilly before ending in the west of the islands. These highlight Samson Hill on Bryher, Knackyboy cairn on St Martin’s, Obadiah’s Barrow on Gugh, the Castle Down cairnfield on Tresco and Salakee Down on St Mary’s. Two of these alignments come from Boscawen-ûn

(starting at Godolphin Hill and St Michael's Mount). One comes from the Merry Maidens and Carn Lês Boel and one from Cape Cornwall, St Ives Head and further upcountry.



For a full map: www.palden.co.uk/shiningland/map-alignments-scilly.html

These power points on the mainland were thus geomantically linked with sites on Scilly. In addition, one exactly east-west alignment passes through three sites on Scilly eastwards to Wolf

Rock, ten miles over the sea. Alignments go from Scilly to Penwithian cliff sanctuaries such as Cape Cornwall, Maen Castle, Pendeen Watch and Carn Lês Boel, and to hills including Chapel Carn Brea. One goes as far as Carn Brea in East Penwith.

Note two ‘radiation points’ on Scilly where alignments fan out at a series of close angles, at the Chapel Downs cairns on the east end of St Martin’s, and at South Hill on Bryher.

Scilly has a visibly integrated system of sites demonstrated in its alignments, which have an unusually high level of structure, with many near-parallel alignments and a coherent overall shape. This suggests that early Scillonians who, unlike Penwithians with their Neolithic inheritance, started with a relatively blank slate. Even so, it seems that it was important to align certain Scillonian sites with major sites on the mainland, many of them Neolithic.

The fact that near-parallels on Scilly are less than one degree out of true might be either intentional or fortuitous, but they are worth observing. Only some are aligned to solstice or lunar maxima and minima points, so the near-parallels seem to be terrestrially more than astronomically oriented. Though inexact, they are numerous enough not to be accidental – they had a purpose, but what was it?

Scillonians and Penwithians

Some might question the validity of finding alignments crossing from Penwith to Scilly, because of their length and the absence of verifying sites in the sea – the distance is about 25 miles or 40km. From an accuracy viewpoint it’s a head-scratcher. The standard rules of geomancers, keeping alignment criteria tight, give cause for quandary about the verifiability of long-distance alignments, and about map-projection issues regarding earth-curvature.

Such map-projection issues are true if paper-printed Ordnance Survey maps are used. However, online satellite-based maps such as Google and Bing treat the centre of the map as the key reference point, bending maps slightly toward the edge of the screen to account for earth curvature. So, when looking onscreen at a Google

map, one is looking at the impression of a curved, not a flat surface. Thus tracking long-distance alignments works differently on online maps than it does on printed maps.

On examination, quite a few sites on the Isles of Scilly were found to be specifically, exactly and not just loosely aligned to major mainland sites such as Cape Cornwall, Chapel Carn Brea, Maen Castle and Carn Lês Boel – all prominent mainland bumps as seen from Scilly. Things got more interesting as more alignments were detected. What made this significant was the sites that were linked. As an example, Samson Hill on Bryher receives two significant alignments: one (78) from St Michael's Mount, Boscawen-ûn and Maen Castle; the other (95) from Cape Cornwall, Chûn Castle and other sites, including Knackyboy cairn on Tresco. All these sites were, we could say, programmed to co-resonate with each other, even over such a distance.

The ancients were travellers and mariners more than is commonly realised. Boat traffic across the 25-mile strait did not involve regular commuting but, over time, there will have been substantial traffic and trade. Ancient site alignments connecting the two thus make some sense.

Many of the people of Penwith and Scilly were probably related by intermarriage and origin, sharing a similar culture. They *held* the SW corner of the isles of Britain. Yet both magical realms, Scilly and Penwith, contrasted each other too.

Part Four

Megalithic Geoengineering

18. Alignments

Alignments are awkward. They don't make sense to our modern way of thinking. Yet they exist and they can't be got rid of. Here we'll look into what alignments are and what they do, and at examples of different kinds of alignments.

If the validity and acceptability of alignments concerns you, see [Geomancers and Archaeologists](#) on the book's website.

Alignments map of West Penwith:

www.palden.co.uk/shiningland/map-alignments-penwith.html

*Ancient sites are located where they are for a range of reasons, and one determining factor is their alignment with each other. An alignment is simply a series of four or more sites aligned with each other, like a number of objects lined up across a table. What's important here is not the lines but the fact that sites are *exactly aligned* with each other. This sounds like a subtle distinction but it is important.*

Alignments are different from dowsable energy-lines, though they sometimes coincide and we need to find out how much this actually happens. They are separate yet interlocking systems, both contributing to the geomantic wholeness of Penwith as one enormous cliff sanctuary, and both playing a part in determining the location and character of ancient sites. Alignments and energy-lines, though different, zero in on the same power points. They are complementary aspects of the same geomantic power system – a bit like parallel gas and electricity networks, both providing energy to the same places, but in a different way.

Ancient site alignments were decidedly accurate and intentionally so. All of the alignments on the online maps of Cornwall are accurate to within just three metres or ten feet. There are, however, problems in identifying the complete system because some sites have been damaged or destroyed, menhirs have been moved and removed or sites have suffered soil-creep, or loss of context owing to considerable agricultural and environmental change.

So, some alignments that might have existed in the past cannot today be identified – these are a ‘known unknown’ that we must accept. But still, whenever a ‘new’ site is found in the field (such as a menhir discovered at Tregaminion in 2019, or the recently re-erected menhir at Treryn Dinas in 2018), it is not unusual to find that it lies exactly on an existing alignment, and classic dowsable patterns will probably be present too.

Identifying alignments has its quandaries. An example is alignment **80**, starting at Carn Brea and passing through Trencrom Hill to reach the Tregeseal stone circle complex. This alignment can be taken two ways: by very slightly altering the orientation of the alignment, one option goes exactly through Carfury menhir, Lanyon and Boswens menhirs to the Truthwall Common B cairn at Tregeseal. The other doesn’t intersect these menhirs exactly (though it comes near), instead passing through Lanyon Quoit and the Truthwall Common C cairn at Tregeseal, eventually hitting the Brisons Rocks off Cape Cornwall. Both are technically valid alignments, but how should we treat them? Were both set in place by the megalith-builders? Or was one the intended alignment? If so, which one? Mercifully, such dilemmas are not too common.

Alignments, not Lines

This book is all about alignments, not energy-lines that dowsers and sensitives pick up. However, they interweave. What’s needed is for dowsers and sensitives to carry out a survey of Penwith’s energy-patterns (at, say, fortyish major sites) to complement the alignments maps and find out more about how they interact.

There can be some operational and conceptual problems to this, since different dowzers perceive things differently. One solution is to take a two-pronged research approach: *first*, establish common aims and definitions so that diverse dowzers and sensitives can cooperate to survey and map the same agreed things, as much as they are able; and, *second*, permit and include individual and divergent perceptions and measurements, which can be collected and compared, to identify common factors or trends that might nevertheless arise. This would encompass dowzers' and sensitives' individual gifts and idiosyncrasies while hopefully yielding some consistent, agreed results.

We draw lines across maps to indicate alignments, but these are not actual lines in the landscape. Drawing lines is simply a way of checking accuracy and marking an alignment's existence on a map. Ancient sites are carefully positioned points and the accuracy of their location is important. It's essential to focus on the *aligned points*, not the lines, since drawing an alignment on a map is but figurative and representative.

The ancients, who didn't use maps, invested a lot of energy in precise location of sites, and there was surely rhyme and reason to this. It has something to do with *energy-resonance*, setting stones and mounds so that they interact and co-resonate as a network.

Yet with alignments there is no connecting medium such as an energy-line or energy-ley: most dowzers generally don't pick up alignments as they do energy lines, except perhaps where an alignment and an overground energy-line coincide. Some dowzers speak of *thought lines* or *consciousness lines*, and there is something to this: there seems to be quite focused and accurate *intent* behind site alignments, and it could be that there is more of an *informational* than an *energetic* relationship between aligned sites – a relationship of programming more than of energy.

Some ley-hunters, not least Alfred Watkins himself, have reported visionary experiences in which a line of light is seen passing along an alignment. This might be allegorical or suggestive rather than literal, but such experiences are nevertheless significant and valid

when they happen repeatedly and separately to a variety of people. But most dowzers I have known seem not to detect alignments or even to look for them, identifying energy-lines instead.

Reading tip: the next bit is detailed. Some readers might prefer to skip through it to catch the essentials, then to move on.

Types of Alignments

While making the maps of Cornwall, I grouped alignments into types to render some coherence to what otherwise looks like a chaotic and overloaded alignments system. The ancients no doubt had their own ideas and logic concerning types of alignments and their relative importance, but that remains a mystery. Classifying everything was a disease the ancients didn't suffer – their thinking was more naturalesque and organic. These are my own considered groupings, derived from sorting through the data, identifying patterns and using a cartographer's judgement. Here are the groupings, and the details follow, with examples:

- **National and international alignments** (whitish)
- **Backbone alignments** crossing Cornwall and beyond (yellow);
- **Significant longer alignments** across Cornwall (orange);
- **Significant local alignments** (red);
- **Other local alignments** (dark red);
- **Near-parallel alignments** (straw yellow);
- **Quoit alignments** (pink, linking quoits);
- **Scilly alignments** (violet, with near-parallels in light blue);
- **Kemyel-Swingate alignments** (violet, Lamorna plateau only);
- **Lizard barrow alignments** (pink, in the Lizard only);
- **Stone circle radial alignments** (light blue).

Backbone Alignments

National-scale alignments across Britain (of which the Michael Line is one – see lower down) have been discovered by various researchers. But, to my knowledge, comparable networks of regional, or what I call *backbone*, alignments have not been found on the same scale as here in Cornwall.

Backbones, marked on the maps in light grey (very long distance) or in yellow (most of them), cover distances at a regional scale, forming a framework for the southwest peninsula of Britain. The backbone system seems to have been laid down in the Neolithic around 3700 BCE, then extended and elaborated in the Bronze Age.

Backbones are selected on a basis of careful judgement and the way they chime with the overall system. *Each backbone alignment must contain two or more Neolithic cliff sanctuaries or tor enclosures, plus other key sites, and it needs to possess an arterial quality.* Otherwise, they are classed as a ‘significant longer alignment’.

- **Alignment 77, St Michael’s Mount to Cape Cornwall**, passes through Botrea Barrows and Chygwydden Round. Since Botrea Barrows stand on the brow of a high hill with an impressive panorama embracing many other Neolithic sites, there is a chance that, while these platform barrows were likely built in the Bronze Age, the site was known in the Neolithic, due to its position on a direct alignment between two Neolithic cliff sanctuaries. Chygwydden Round was probably added to the alignment later, though its antiquity is inconclusive. It is recorded as a banked enclosure with two periods of construction. Borlase recorded an Iron Age courtyard house and fogou there. It could be Bronze Age, upcycled to an Iron Age site.
- **Alignment 108, Treryn Dinas to Carn Brea**, passes through the Merry Maidens, St Michael’s Mount, Gear Round and finally Carn Brea – involving two Neolithic tors and one cliff sanctuary. It raises the question of whether the site of the Bronze Age Merry Maidens was known a millennium earlier in the Neolithic. Gear Round in Kerrier, of geomantic nodal significance, appears to be more than a simple Iron Age round – judging by the *seven* alignments passing to or through it – suggesting that it is older and more important than ordinary rounds.

- **Alignment 209, Treryn Dinas to Berry Head**, goes from Treryn Dinas in Penwith to Trewavas Head, then to Pendennis Point, and eventually to Berry Head, Torbay, Devon – four aligned cliff sanctuaries along a 100 mile (158km) alignment.

Significant Longer Alignments

Marked on the maps in orange, these alignments cross between different parts of Cornwall, though some exist solely within each part. They cover some distance, linking significant sites that are often noteworthy but not as crucial as those connected by backbone alignments. Thus these alignments do not qualify as backbones.

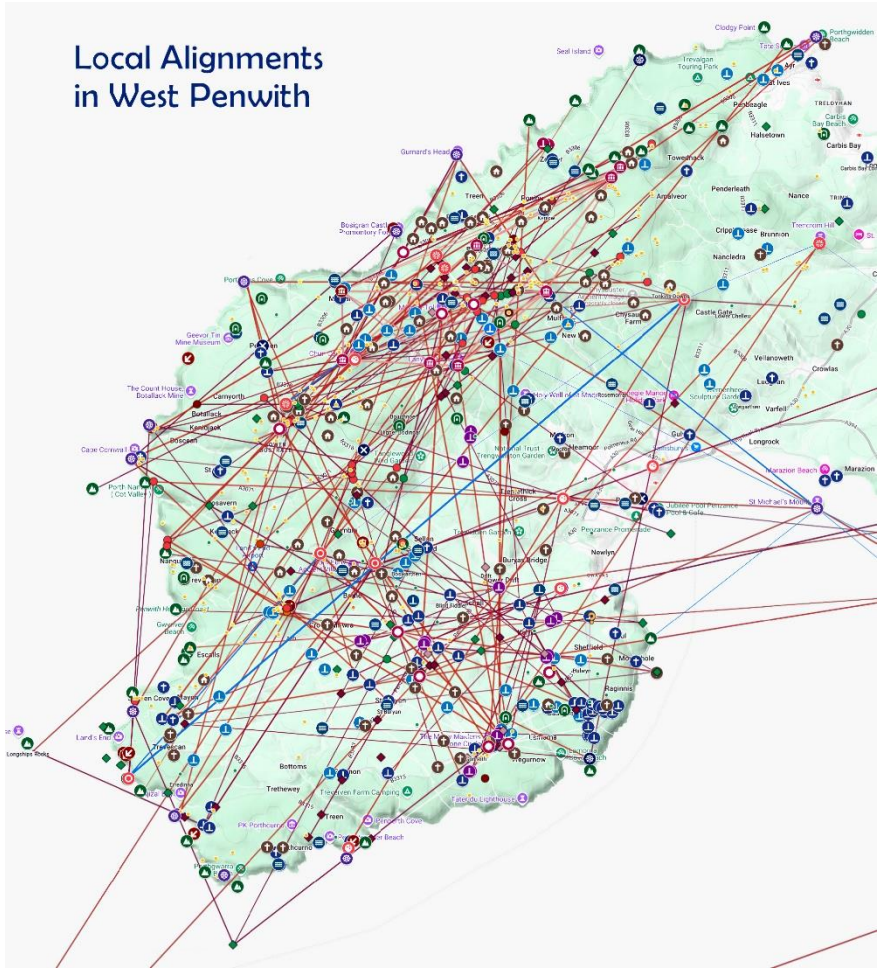
- **Alignment 125, Chapel Carn Brea to Bryher, Scilly**. Starting at the summit cairn on Chapel Carn Brea, the alignment passes through Tregiffian Vean chambered cairn, heads across the sea to Burnt Hill cliff camp on St Martin's, then to Castle Down chambered cairn on Tresco and finally to Bryher cairnfield. Chapel Carn Brea was a beacon hill used for communications with Scilly, whence it is very visible. There's something here about connecting the cairnfield on Bryher with that on Chapel Carn Brea, with two chambered cairns on the alignment – was this a kind of pathway of the dead?

Significant Local Alignments

Marked in bright red, these alignments stretch up to ten miles or so and are mostly internal to each of the individual areas of Cornwall. They connect sites such as stone circles, menhirs, enclosures and cairns. We could look on them as the main local network.

- **Alignment 16, Sennen hedge menhir to the Nine Maidens stone circle**. A significant John Michell alignment within West Penwith, this visits Tregiffian Vean cairn, Botrea Barrows, West Lanyon Quoit and the Nine Maidens stone circle, plus two other points. It links the Neolithic heart of Penwith at the Nine Maidens with the Land's End area near Pordenack Point, though it is not significant enough to be regarded as a backbone alignment.
- **Alignment 114, Gurnard's Head to Kemyel Point**. This goes from Gurnard's Head in the north, passing through Bosporthenis Quoit,

Local Alignments in West Penwith



Carfury menhir, Chyenhal East menhir and then Castallack menhir, ending at Kemyel Point in the south. This alignment adds to the evidence gained from alignments, astronomy and topography that Kemyel Point, with Carn Du below it, is likely to be a type two cliff sanctuary. This could qualify as a backbone alignment but it was relegated to 'significant local' because it is shorter and it doesn't pass through a stone circle or similar key site. Castallack seems to be a relay menhir for the Kemyel and Swingate menhir group (see below), making it, like Carfury, a focal menhir.

Lesser Local Alignments

Marked in dark red, these alignments, relatively short in distance, link sites such as cairns, menhirs, crosses, and some wells and settlements. Crosses and settlements originate from a later time and were sometimes sited on existing alignments. Wells and springs do not, however, seem to register strongly in the alignments system. When walking around the landscape, these local alignments make more sense than they do when you see them on a map.

- **Alignment 8, Numphra to Drift.** This goes from Lower Numphra cairn to a cairn on the western slope of Bartinney Castle, tangential to the enclosure ring at Bartinney, then passing through Caer Brân, ending at Drift north menhir (one of a pair, the Drift menhirs).
- **Alignment 4, the Brisons to Noon Veor.** This one of John Michell's alignments, visiting Chûn Castle, Bosulow Trehyllis settlement, Mên-an-Tol stone circle, a boundary stone and Try chambered cairn before reaching Noon Veor tumulus near Towednack. The settlement and boundary stone come from a later time, though if they were removed the alignment would still be viable. This is a classic leyline, but it is not as significant as those examined earlier.
- **Alignment 28, Carfury menhir to the NE Piper.** Another of John Michell's alignments, this passes from Carfury through one of the Drift menhirs, then to a hedge stone, and finally to the NE Piper in the Merry Maidens complex – a menhir-only alignment with two or three double menhirs (possibly including Carfury, which might be a former double menhir).

Near-Parallel Alignments

These are fascinating. They're a series of near-parallel alignments, marked on the maps in straw-yellow, of which quite a few pass from the Lizard to Penwith. They are parallel within a range of 1-3° – so they are only *near*-parallel – yet the number of alignments involved is uncanny and clearly this is not a result of chance, especially when one considers that many cliff sanctuaries and Neolithic tors are involved in these alignments.



See map in detail: www.palden.co.uk/shiningland/map-parallels.html

The azimuths of each alignment reduce slightly and consecutively, west-to-east. There are also patterns to various of the alignments, which pass through different kinds of sites:

- **157** links rounds and cliff headlands;
- **107** links two Neolithic tor enclosures;
- **117** links two cliff sanctuaries; and
- **126** links prominent hills.

Numerous cliff sanctuaries, tors and hill camps are involved in these alignments, many of them Neolithic. Some sites, such as Trevarnon Round and Castle an Dinas, are Bronze-to-Iron Age sites but they could be older, since they are aligned with Neolithic sites of antiquity. Equally, they could have been plugged into existing alignments between older sites.

Key: | ^ Neolithic Tor | * Cliff Sanctuary |

- **123.0°.** Cape Cornwall* - Boscawen-ûn stone circle - Kemyel Point* (79)
- **124.0°.** Pendeen Watch* - Chûn Castle - Lesingey Round - Lizard Point*. (157)
- **123.5°.** Bosigran Castle* - Carn Galva^ - St Michael's Mount^ - Pollurian Head*. (107)
- **122.0°.** Gurnard's Head* - Castle an Dinas enclosure - Porthleven Head - Carrick Lûz*. (117)
- **121.5°.** Trendrine Cairns - Trencrom Hill^ - Godolphin Hill - Three Brothers of Grugwith quoit. (126)
- **121.3°.** Carnsew hillfort - (two barrows) - Bonallack Barton - Tremayne Barrow - Dean Point*. (KE18)
- **119.5°.** St Ives Head* - (a succession of seven barrows). (KE23)
- **118.2°.** Trevarnon Round - Maen Tol stone - Rosemullion Head*. (KE2)
- **120.0°.** Crane Castle* - Carn Brea^ - Stithians Moor menhir - Pendennis Point*. (201)

Why these particular azimuth orientations? Here is a possible clue: the alignments are oriented to azimuths around the moon's southern lunar minimum rising point (119.1° in 2500 BCE) and the rising point of Sirius (122.7°). So there is a *possibility* of an astronomical purpose. Terrestrially, there's clearly an intention to connect the Lizard with Penwith, but this is not the case with all of the alignments, so it is probably not the primary intention. Natural sites such as cliff sanctuaries, tor and hilltop enclosures are prominent, suggesting a geological patterning here along a narrow $124\text{--}118^\circ$ range of orientations.

If these alignments are astronomical, their apparent inaccuracies might be explained by differences in elevation of the horizon as seen from a chosen backsight on each alignment – the place from which the azimuth is measured. To prove this, a backsight needs to be identified on each alignment, and it might or might not be a site at either end of the alignment. Were these alignments established from the NW looking toward rising points in the SE, or from the SE direction looking at setting points in the NW?

Generally, for rising points, if the elevation of the horizon is higher than the backsight, then the rising point moves rightwards, and for setting points it moves leftwards on the horizon by a few degrees.

- **Alignment 126, Trendrine Hills to the Three Brothers of Grugwith.** This starts at the cairns on Trendrine Hill, at the eastern end of the Zennor Hill massif and worth a visit, passing through Trink Hill cairn, Trencrom Hill and Godolphin Hill to the Three Brothers of Grugwith quoit on the Lizard – this quoit or quoit-like structure is unique in the Lizard. Trencrom Hill is a Neolithic tor enclosure and Iron Age hill camp, and Godolphin Hill, while it has not had major visible prehistoric works, is a significant hill, prominent as seen from Trencrom Hill and east-facing areas of Penwith.

Why are there no comparable multiple parallels in any other direction? There are a couple of near-parallel pairs of alignments, such as the almost east-west backbone alignments **124**, Pendeen Watch to Nare Head, and **90**, from the Brisons to Pendennis Point, oriented to 86° and 87° respectively, but no multiple parallels like those run obliquely across the peninsula. So, this question sits on the shelf labelled ‘outstanding issues’, awaiting answers.

Quoit Alignments

These are marked in pink. Quoit alignments are three-point alignments directly linking the quoits in the northern hills of Penwith. They usually have two quoits and one other Neolithic site, but one alignment (**142**) has three quoits. One or two sites on these alignments, such as Bosiliack menhir, are younger than the quoits.

Quoits are among the oldest constructed remains in Penwith, so it looks as if these alignments acted as early experiments in aligning sites. They are three-point alignments, yet repeatedly and consistently so, and this suggests intentionality. Some are astronomical alignments. Quoit alignments are worth noting, since quoits are important early sites. There are seven such alignments, though one is part of the longer alignment **101**. Examples:

- **Alignment 113** from Mulfra Quoit through Bosiliack menhir to Lanyon Quoit, azimuth 49.9° , is aligned to the summer solstice sunrise (48.8° in 3500 BCE);

- **Alignment 138** from Mulfra Quoit to Bosiliack Barrow (a chambered cairn) to West Lanyon Quoit, 58.2° , aligned to the moon's northern minor standstill rising point (58.6° in 3500 BCE);
- **Alignment 142** links Sperris Quoit and Zennor Quoit with Lanyon Quoit – the only quoit alignment that involves three quoits. Azimuth 39.0° . Aligned with the moon's northern major standstill rising point at 38.4° in 3500 BCE.

Thus, there was system to the placing of quoits, in terms of alignment and astronomy, and this was clearly important to the quoit-builders – otherwise they would not have gone to the trouble of complex quoit-locational engineering. They weren't just building quoits in any old suitable place, and this looks as if it was a prototype integrated system of ancient sites.

Scilly Alignments

These are marked in violet, with near-parallels in light blue. Local to Scilly, some are three-point alignments, mainly because the islands are not large enough to generate numerous alignments with four or more points, though many indeed are four- or five-point alignments.

- **Alignment SC03, Chapel Downs to Castle Down.** This goes from a cairn on Chapel Downs to the important Knackyboy cairn, both on St Martin's, to Castle Down cairnfield on Tresco.
- **Alignment SC10, Obadiah's Barrow on Gugh to Great Ganilly** goes through Buzza Hill cairn on St Mary's, then to the Middle Arthur cairns, and finally reaching the cairns on Great Ganilly. This is a four-point alignment.

Kemyel-Swingate Alignments

These mostly three-point alignments are limited to the Lamorna plateau, marked in violet. Two parallel alignments amongst these are aligned to the winter solstice sunrise. This strange configuration of menhirs above Lamorna is a sub-system on its own, the precise purpose of which is difficult to guess, but this is a formation of stones that was clearly built and designed for a purpose. My best

guess is that this was a place for geomantic training and research. The menhirs are mutually aligned to each other in threes, and their configuration is a bit like a constellation.

Stone Circle Radial Alignments

Marked in light blue. These are short alignments within stone circle complexes, passing through stone circles and a standing stone, cairn or holed stone on either side of the stone circle. Those that don't pass through the stone circle are nevertheless part of its complex of sites.

- **Alignment 51, Gûn Rith menhir to Tregurnow stone circle.** This is just 800 metres long, passing from Gûn Rith through the Merry Maidens stone circle, then a to hedge stone and finally to the site of the now-destroyed Tregurnow stone circle.

Lizard Barrow Alignments

These alignments involve barrows on the Lizard, and they are marked in pink. The Lizard barrows are generally not aligned – they obey a different locational principle, for reasons unknown. Some are aligned, often inaccurately, and this group of alignments marks them, but they are not entirely convincing as alignments.

- **Alignment LZ12, between Penare and Pedngwinian barrows.** This passes from the east to the west coast of the Lizard, through or tangential to four barrows.

National and International Alignments

Three important well-known alignments pass through West Penwith (there might be more), and they are shown on the map in white. It is not the purpose of my research to study this scale of alignments, since it's a big area that requires special attention.

The Michael Line spans southern Britain from Cornwall to Norfolk, along the longest east-west axis of the British landmass, following the rising point of the sun at (true) Beltane and the setting point at (true) Lammas. Its Cornish section goes from the

Hurlers in East Cornwall, over Helman Tor to Carn Brea and then to Carn Lês Boel, passing not far from St Michael's Mount at Long Rock. It does not pass exactly through St Michael's Mount.

This is the Michael alignment made famous by John Michell, not the sinuous Michael and Mary lines identified in the 1980s by Hamish Miller and Paul Broadhurst, which meander around it.¹⁰⁴ Here we have a variant of the two kinds of energy mentioned earlier in the book, demonstrating how the straight Michael alignment and the sinuous Michael and Mary energy lines act as distinct yet interdependent sub-systems working together.

What is significant here is that they all meet at Carn Lês Boel, as they do at certain other places on the alignment including The Hurlers, Glastonbury and Avebury. Taking a straight alignment from Avebury to Carn Lês Boel, it passes 160 metres from the top of Glastonbury Tor, 240 metres from Burrowbridge Mump, 1.6 km from St Michael's Church on Brentor in Devon, exactly through the northern stone circle of the Hurlers, exactly through Carn Brea and 1.6 km from St Michael's Mount – remarkably accurate for such a long-distance alignment.

This alignment was calculated by the late Terry Walsh to pass right round the world as a great circle line, through Russia, Tibet, Cambodia, Australia, New Zealand and Mexico.¹⁰⁵ Even though it does not pass exactly through St Michael's Mount, for a 40,000 km corridor spanning the earth it is acceptably close. This said, there is a subset of the Michael line from the Hurlers that passes exactly through St Michael's Mount to reach Tol Pedn Penwith, the south-westernmost point of Britain – itself an amazing alignment.

The Apollo Line goes NW-SE from the holy isle of Skellig Michael off Ireland to at least Megiddo in northern Israel. I think it continues through the ancient Citadel in Amman, Jordan and probably on to India through Iran. It was identified, tracked and mapped by Hamish and Paul in the 1990s through Europe, going as

¹⁰⁴ Broadhurst, Paul & Miller, Hamish, *The Sun and the Serpent*, Penwith Press/Mythos, 1990.

¹⁰⁵ Walsh, Terry, *Global Sacred Alignments*, Library of Avalon, Glastonbury, 1996.

far as Megiddo.¹⁰⁶ The sinuous Apollo and Athena energy-currents meet at St Michael's Mount, and the Michael and the Apollo alignments cross at Long Rock (on the beach, just below today's high tide level). The straight alignment between St Michael's Mount and Skellig Michael passes across the summit of Watch Croft, West Penwith's highest hill.

These are wide *corridors* more than precise alignments, and they tend not to touch many local ancient sites. Their defining points are limited to major national-scale sites. Much research yet needs to be done regarding long-distance alignments such as these, which individuals such as Gary Biltcliffe and others are doing. For Cornwall, it is worth looking at alignments passing up the SW peninsula of Britain, and across the sea to Wales and Ireland, extending in the other direction to France and beyond.

¹⁰⁶ Broadhurst, Paul and Miller, Hamish, *The Dance of the Dragon*, Penwith Press/Mythos, 2000.

19. Power Points

Power points lie at the heart of the matter. Most ancient sites, dead, alive, intact, damaged, big, small, antiquated or younger, are power points of some kind. They have differing magnitudes, characters, settings, feelings, reasons for being, and each has its own presence. This chapter examines different kinds of power points and how alignments shed light on their character.

This map is useful:

www.palden.co.uk/shiningland/map-alignments-penwith.html

A power point is a concentrated subtle-energy field with paranormal, psychoactive, societal and environmental effects. It is not too difficult to *feel* it. It is a gravity-centre of consciousness that creates a reality-field distortion, altering and bending the normal rules of reality-perception, making a location feel central and axial in the psycho-geography of any neighbourhood. There's an intensified *hereness* to such places.

There are *power points in time* (peak moments and periods) and *power points in space* (sacred sites), and the ancients harnessed both. This would double-boost opportunities to shift awareness- and reality-levels to realms where operational laws operate differently, permitting the laws of more ordinary levels of reality to be modified or overridden – circumstances and times permitting.

Power points in time are moments of concentrated potency when the overall pattern and direction of events can inflect and change, affecting the course of subsequent events and giving new meaning to preceding events, defining the nature of the times by creating energy-conditions and contexts within which people and all things function and have their experience.

Astrologically, these power points are fullmoons and newmoons, eclipses, quarters and cross-quarters of the year, and planetary line-ups and configurations. Some temporal power points affect

timescales of hours, days and weeks, some of months, some of years and some of generations. They have substance, shape, character and narrative, and strong power points in time can be game-changing moments.¹⁰⁷

Power points in space, meanwhile, are geographic locations with a distinct and special *feeling* to them, a sense of super-localisation. The ancients put a lot of energy into identifying these and entraining the energy fields that are present. If you spend time in a stone circle under a fullmoon or at a peak moment in time, you are doing as they did and it could well be a memorable experience.

This concerns the significance we invest in specific places and times, but it is not just about *belief* since we are affected by power points whether or not we are aware of them – just as you can have a sleepless night without knowing it's fullmoon. We enter an altered state in a stone circle, whether or not we are conscious of it.

Crises break out and the drift of events can change during a planetary line-up.¹⁰⁸ The fall of the Berlin Wall on a Saturn-Neptune conjunction in 1989, the birth of the internet on a Uranus-Neptune conjunction in 1993 or the outbreak of Covid-19 on a Saturn-Pluto conjunction in January 2020 are but a few examples.

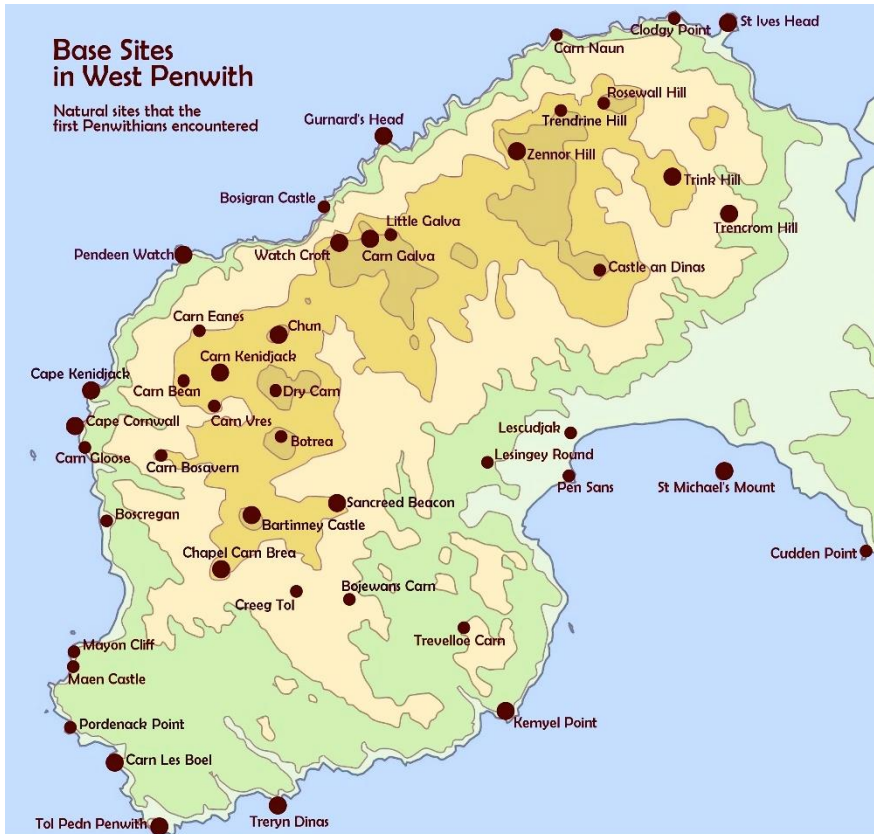
Sequence and Purpose

There are differing types of power points in space. Problem is, attempting to classify ancient sites clatters badly on the cobblestones of reality – each site has multiple purposes and placing a site in one category obscures its full spectrum of characteristics. That's the wonder of them. Yet it is useful to identify certain functions and qualities of power points, to try to identify their purposes in Penwith's megalithic system and to understand more about the possible sequence by which they were laid down.

¹⁰⁷ Identification of such peak times, astrologically at least, is detailed in *Power Points in Time*, Palden Jenkins, [Penwith Press](#), 2015.

¹⁰⁸ See [The Historical Ephemeris](#) which demonstrates how historical events and megatrends go hand in hand with major configurations of the outer planets of our solar system.

Most power points have ancient sites built on them, and most ancient sites are power points. Burial cairns are an example of sites that in many cases are not necessarily placed on power points – though just to confuse things, some are, especially if they are geomantically located, probably to bless the land by burying a revered person in a prominent place.



It all started with what we can call *base sites*. These were sites that people first gravitated to in the Mesolithic and early Neolithic. Imagine arriving in a pristine Mesolithic Penwith, 6000 BCE, looking for interesting places and noting the places where it feels special. You'd look for natural sites that stand out in the landscape,

such as tors, carns, hilltops, headlands and rocks, especially those where you sense pronounced earth energy and *presence*.

From these places the attention you give to the wider landscape would extend outwards. You would build your psycho-geographic perceptions and mental maps from there. These were the centres, the power points from which the process of building a megalithic system began. Examples are St Michael's Mount, Trencrom Hill, Carn Galva, Chapel Carn Brea or any cliff sanctuary.

Then there were *secondary base sites* with natural earth energy, such as blind springs, certain placements in the landscape, or carns or natural features – Creeg Tol near Boscawen-ûn, Carn Vrês near Tregeseal, Lesingey Round, Botrea Barrows, Bojewans Carn, the Runnel Stone or Carn Eanes are examples. These are the kinds of sites you'd find later, when you get to know the area better. Every site is unique in its qualities, yet these two kinds of natural site were there before people came along. They had a zizzle, mystique, character and charm that was noticed, and they were the first human-selected sites to be recognised and established.

Then there were *geomantic sites* that were powerful because they had a subtle specialness to them that was amplified and modified by the building of an ancient site. Humans gave them an upgrade. Their positioning was calculated on the basis of sophisticated thinking and the application of megalithic science, paying attention to terrestrial alignments, astronomical factors, landscape positioning, underground water patterns and overall feeling. They were energy-tweaked geomantically, amped up by the building of a cairn, menhir or other megalithic structure. Examples are Boscawen-ûn stone circle, Pedn Mên Du cairn on Mayon Cliff, Ballowall Barrow on Carn Gloose, Caer Brân or Castle an Dinas.

Then there were *proxy sites* and *relay sites*. Both of these exist to assist other sites, to support the network as a whole and to connect sites into the overall network and to each other.

In the case of a *proxy site*, if an ancient site such as a stone circle has many alignments crossing it, one of which does not exactly intersect the site itself, a cairn or menhir intercepts that alignment.

There is a proxy menhir, now just a sad stub, close to the Nine Maidens, acting as the terminus of alignment **38** from Treryn Dinas, Boscawen-ûn and Lanyon Quoit, and without it the alignment would miss the circle by a short but critical distance, creating an energy-field dissonance. The Pipers menhirs do the same thing for the Merry Maidens, acting as collector-distributors for the whole complex, and also, between themselves, covering different kinds of alignments. The same is the case with a couple of the cairns close to Tregeseal on Botallack Common.

A *relay site* – usually a menhir or a cairn – plays a role as a connector in the wider network. Quite a few of the menhirs in the south of Penwith act like this, by marking out a significant alignment and acting as a localised sub-station along it, also building up a circuitry of sites in the area.

Some can be called *hub sites* if they have many alignments intersecting them: Carfury menhir, with at least nine alignments, acts as a connector and hub for the Nine Maidens complex just northwards. Boswens menhir is a kind of junction box for the Tregeseal complex, with one or two crucial alignments passing through it. Bosiliack Barrow stands at the intersection of four interesting alignments and it sits on top of an energy-vortex, its chamber aligned to the sun's winter solstice rising point.

We could also posit the notion of *contributor sites*, built to augment other sites – examples of which are the menhirs and cairns that make up stone circle complexes – they exist to enhance the functionality of the stone circle and the whole complex. Other examples are the cairns on Chapel Carn Brea or on Watch Croft, supplementing the power of the hills themselves.

Then there are *terminal sites*, built to act as alignment terminals – Conquer Cairn will soon be mentioned, and further examples are at the Nine Maidens (the stub menhir mentioned above), at the propped Trevean 1 menhir near Carn Lês Boel, terminating alignments **192** and **194**, or at The Bishop's Head and Foot stone, terminating alignment **95** from Scilly.

Case Studies

Here we shall look at a variety of ancient sites and at alignments passing through them, and what this suggests about these sites.

Chy Praze cairn

House on the Meadow, near Portheras Cove (SW 3929 3588)

This solitary kerbed cairn with cist (a stone burial or repository box) sits on a clifftop plateau, in a lovely oceanscape position. On a clear day the northern isles of the Scillies can be seen and, if one moves but a short distance away, they disappear. That's classic.



Lucas Nott has found four dowsable energy-leys passing through the cairn, suggesting that it sits atop a reasonably strong energy vortex. This cairn was meant to be seen from the sea, and it has a wide-open, spacious feeling to its placing. It's a geomantic cairn – indicated by its location and the presence of a cist inside it, for the burial of power objects or the remains of a revered person.

Chy Praze is on one significant alignment only (**190**), between Pendeen Watch cliff sanctuary and Conquer Cairn near Castle an Dinas, passing through multiple cairns and barrows along the way. Unusually, this is an exact east-west alignment. Conquer Cairn is a proxy cairn for Castle an Dinas, sitting WNW of it on a hill brow on Carnaquidden Downs.

When the Tregaminion menhir was unearthed and re-erected in 2019, I was asked to check whether it sat on any alignments. It sat *exactly* on this alignment, being the next site east of Chy Praze. The

alignment then passes over Watch Croft, Penwith's highest hill, passing twenty metres north of its stone-built summit cairn. These cairns can't therefore be counted as determining sites on this alignment, but their proximity is worth noting, and this alignment does go over the top of Watch Croft – which is significant in itself. It passes through an intersection of four alignments just 25 metres NNW of the stony cairn, where there is no known stone or cairn. That's suspect, and it needs investigating, to see if something unknown lies there. There are a number of multiple intersections like this around Penwith, each of which needs checking in the field. Next, the alignment passes through a gaggle of four cairns lying on the southern slopes of Carn Galva between it and the Nine Maidens stone circle. It tangents the north side of one of these, Bosigran 2. Some dowzers explain this tangenting as a way of creating or reinforcing an energy-spin around the cairn.

The alignment next visits three cairns at Little Galva, an outcrop just SE of Carn Galva, tangenting the north edge of Little Galva A cairn, before continuing to the Mulfra barrowfield, NW of Mulfra Quoit, where it passes through the centre of two barrows, Mulfra E and Mulfra F.

Then it passes close to but not straight through two settlements at Trye and Carnaquidden Downs before ending at Conquer Cairn. Trye is a courtyard settlement from the Romano-British period, pre-dated by other sites on the alignment by at least 1,500 years. Carnaquidden Downs is Bronze Age, built perhaps a few centuries after the Bronze Age cairns on this alignment. But it is not exactly *on* the alignment, so the alignment is probably not the reason it was located there.

While some settlements around Penwith do sit on alignments, it does not look as if many of them were intentionally placed there for deliberate geomantic reasons. The large area of a settlement increases the chances of its being crossed by alignments, so counting a settlement as a validating point on an alignment is in many cases inadvisable unless there are signs suggesting otherwise.

Conquer Cairn, at the far end of the alignment, standing alone, is located where it is for quite specific reasons: as a proxy cairn and part of a complex around Castle an Dinas, it acts as the terminal to the alignment and is astronomically placed. That is, when seen from the centre of Castle an Dinas, not far away, it stands at an azimuth of 295° , the setting point of the sun at true Beltane and Lammas around 2500 BCE. Meanwhile, Trencrom Hill, when adjustments are made for its elevation, is at the true Beltane-Lammas rising point, with an azimuth of 63° . So, Beltane and Lammas might have been important times at Castle an Dinas.

What light does this alignment throw on Chy Praze cairn? It demonstrates that this is not as isolated a cairn as it first appears to be, sitting alone on its clifftop. The alignment associates the cairn with Pendeen Watch, Watch Croft, a good number of burial cairns and a barrowfield – so there is a burial theme with this alignment.

All sites on this alignment, mainly cairns, date from the Bronze Age except for Pendeen Watch, a Neolithic cliff sanctuary. The two base sites on the alignment are Pendeen Watch and Watch Croft – Watch Croft will have been held to be important in the Neolithic simply because of its height, though its summit cairns were built in the Bronze Age (we assume).

Associating Pendeen Watch and Watch Croft with Castle an Dinas was arguably an objective behind this alignment. So Chy Praze, with its oceanic panorama, plays a part in a larger context: this alignment suggests that Chy Praze is not just a mere footnote in Penwith's alignments system. Even so, it has only one known alignment passing through it. It is worth a visit, best outside bracken season.

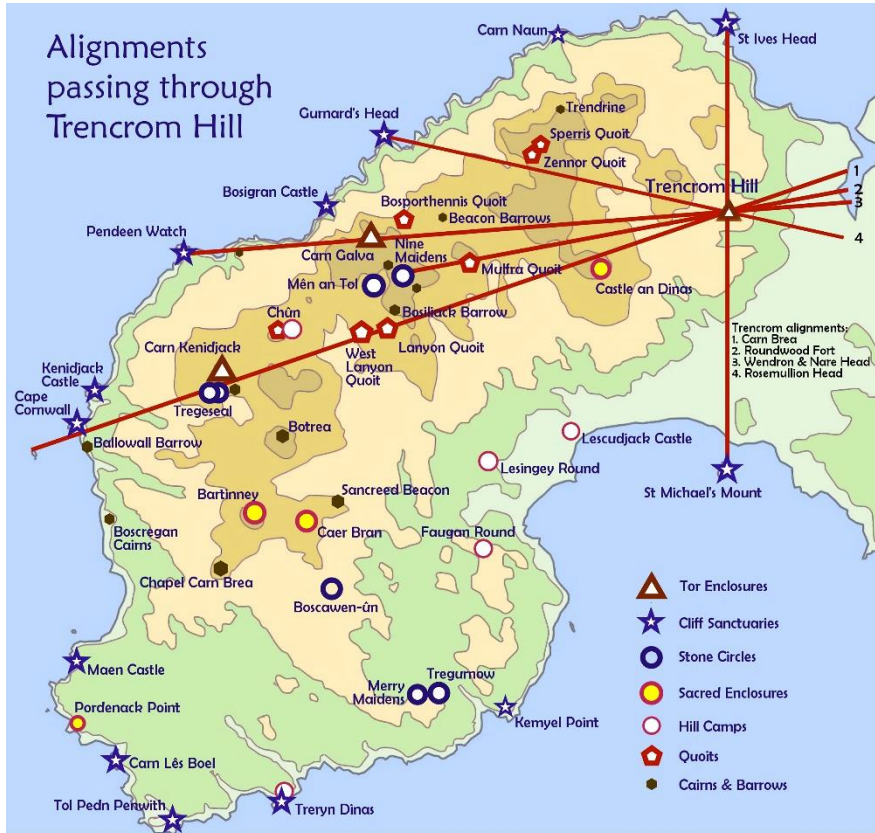
Trencrom Hill

Tor Crom, Crooked or Hunched Tor, above Lelant Downs (SW 517 362)

Trencrom Hill, a Neolithic tor, an Iron Age hill camp and a focal site on the edge of Penwith, is the axis for six major alignments. It's a base site, holding a strategic, geomantically significant position at the eastern threshold of the peninsula, marked by a

nearly north-south backbone alignment (0.7° E of N) from St Michael's Mount to Trencrom and St Ives Head. Remarkably, these three natural hills are aligned.

Penwith has three more natural hill alignments: Treryn Dinas, St Michael's Mount and Carn Brea (exact); Cape Cornwall, Zennor Hill and St Ives Head (exact); and Carn Lês Boel, Chapel Carn Brea and Bartinney Castle (80 metres inexact).



Three roughly east-west backbone alignments pass through Trencrom Hill:

- **80** from Carn Brea to the Tregeseal complex and The Brisons, visits Trencrom Hill, Carfury menhir, Lanyon Quoit and Boswens menhir (Carfury and Boswens are both stone circle relay menhirs);
- **92** from Roundwood Fort, a cliff sanctuary south of Truro above the River Fal, passes through Trencrom Hill and Mulfra Quoit, ending at the Nine Maidens stone circle;
- **124** comes from Nare Head, a type three cliff sanctuary in Roseland, through Stithians Moor menhir in Carnmenellis, the Wendron Nine Maidens stone circles and Gear Round in Kerrier, over Trencrom Hill to Carn Galva and Pendeen Watch cliff sanctuary.

Four further alignments are present at Trencrom:

- **152** from Gurnard's Head through Trencrom to Rosemullion Head on the Lizard, associating two cliff sanctuaries;
- **126** from Trendrine cairns above St Ives to Trencrom Hill, Godolphin Hill and the Three Brothers of Grugwith near Coverack – one of the near-parallel Lizard-to-Penwith alignments mentioned earlier;
- **104** from Trencrom Hill to the Merry Maidens through the Redhouse NE menhir;
- **105** from Trencrom Hill through the Drift NW menhir to Tol Pedn Penwith, then to Wolf Rock eleven miles offshore.

Trencrom Hill thus acts as a key hub site, an axis or a fulcrum on Penwith's eastern threshold. The Mount shares this quality: both are gateway nodes between Penwith and the upcountry world – they regulate connectivity into and out of West Penwith.

Carfury Menhir

Tor of the Sages, on a slope south of Ding Dong Mine (SW 4400 3399)

This menhir stands on the side (not the top) of a ridge, in a place where one wouldn't expect a strategically placed menhir. A little tricky to find, it seems to have been put there for no visible reason. But there indeed are reasons.

There's a chance it was a double menhir – a recumbent stone lies in the hedge below, which could be its partner. Carfury menhir stands 25 metres away from backbone alignment **80**, from The Brisons to Carn Brea, and I'd wager that the possible second menhir was

located on this alignment, where it crosses alignment **114**, which stretches from Gurnard's Head to Kemyel Point.

Carfury is on *nine* local alignments, some passing through it and some terminating there – so it is a hub, a relay and a terminus, but not a base site – it was placed there for distinctly geomantic reasons to augment the wider system as a whole. It is a classic proxy menhir, serving the Nine Maidens and Carn Galva, northwards.



Its position on the side of a hill is peculiar except for this: St Michael's Mount is very visible from the menhir, with Cudden Point cliff sanctuary right behind it, oriented to the Beltane-Lammas sunrise point as seen from Carfury. So while this menhir clearly is put there as a spatial stake-out and a geomantic nexus, it has an astronomical placing too.

Botrea Barrows

House in the Clearing (or Cutting), on Botrea Hill (SW 403 313)

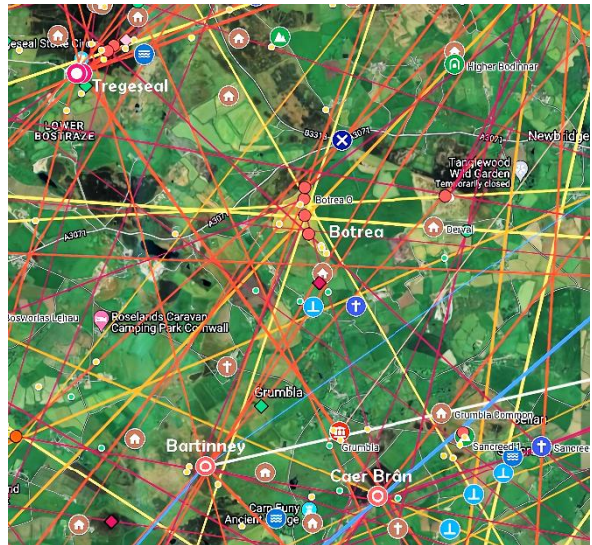
These four large, flat-topped Bronze Age platform barrows, surrounded by a modest cairnfield of smaller barrows, are more significant than they first appear. The boggy, furzy moorland scene atop Botrea Hill is not the parkland it was in the Bronze Age (Cornish *parc* = grassland). With a remarkably wide panorama, the Botrea Barrows are intervisible with a large number of quite distant sites, including St Michael's Mount, Carn Brea, and most of the tors and major hills in Penwith except Trencrom, obscured by Castle an Dinas.

In terms of alignments, the Botrea Barrows are one of the more important sites in Penwith.¹⁰⁹ This is a focal site, a secondary base site with geomantic significance. Many noteworthy alignments between base sites around Penwith pass through the barrows.



The placement of the barrows between St Michael's Mount and Cape Cornwall, on a ridgetop watershed, is amplified by further major alignments. One goes from Tol Pedn Penwith to Watch Croft and Gurnard's Head (**155**), one from Pendeen Watch to Kemyel Point (**154**), and another from the Brisons and Ballowall Barrow through Botrea Barrows and Godolphin Hill (**90**), leading eventually to Pendennis Point, a big cliff sanctuary in Falmouth.

Botrea Barrows act as a hinge between the two main clusters of sites in the north and the south of Penwith. Central in the peninsula, they lie on an ancient trackway¹¹⁰ leading



¹⁰⁹ For a podcast about Botrea Barrows: <http://palden.co.uk/pod-notes-3.html>

¹¹⁰ [Penwith Trackways online map.](#)

from the Nine Maidens, Chûn and Tregeseal to Caer Brân, Boscawen-ûn and the Merry Maidens.

Though I'm biased because I live just down the hill, I still wouldn't call Botrea Hill a primary base site comparable with Chapel Carn Brea, Carn Kenidjack or Chûn Castle. It is a secondary base site, with a strong geomantic positioning that makes the barrows a hub site for major alignments linking cliff sanctuaries within the peninsula. Spend an hour lolling on one of them and you'll find they definitely have *energy*. But go on a balmy, windless day.

Caer Brân

Brân's Fort (SW 407 290)

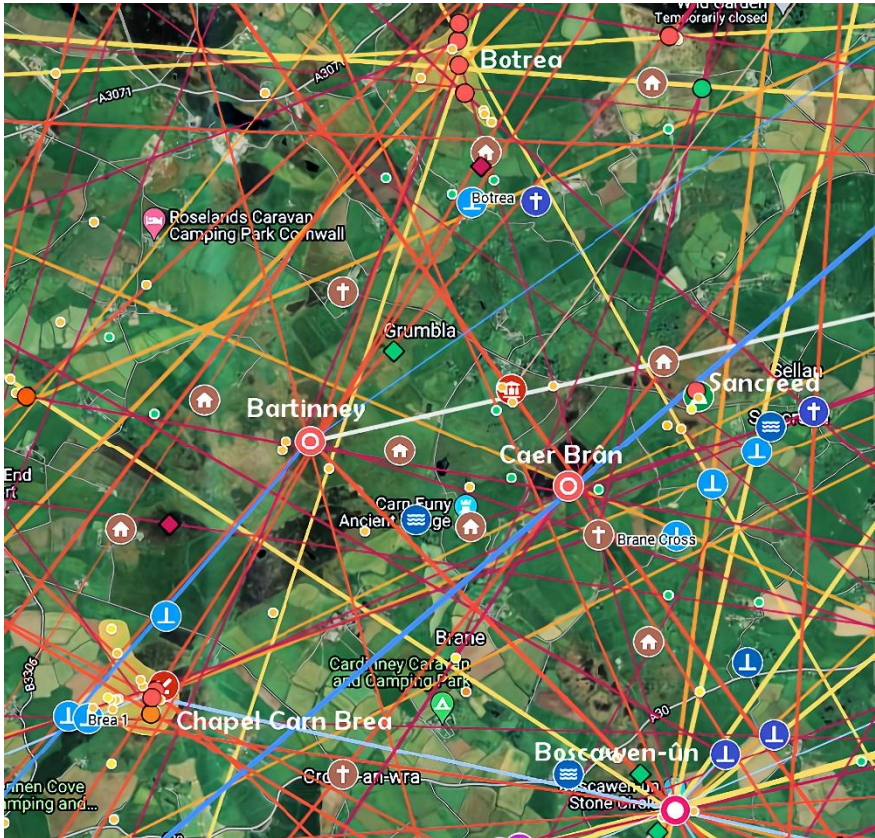
Looking just over the valley from Botrea, Caer Brân sits on the opposite skyline. It lies centrally in the Penwith peninsula on the above-mentioned hinge, accessible along a trackway between the highland and lowland areas of Penwith. Below it is Brane Cross, where the track meets one from Sennen (for Scilly) leading east to Madron and all stops upcountry. A visible ancient track over the valley between Botrea Barrows and Caer Brân suggests that these two sites are connected in purpose, not just in proximity. Their location and design – the platform barrows on Botrea Hill, like performance stages, and Caer Brân acting as a moot place and an energy-containing enclosure – suggest complementarity.

There is a feeling of being enclosed in a sealed-off space inside Caer Brân's banks, insulated from the surrounding landscape. When one stands on the banks the panorama is spectacular but inside them the landscape almost disappears from view. This effect highlights the far horizon, removing the intervening landscape from view. In former times, if the banks were a little higher or a stockade were built on them, the view would disappear altogether. The banks, originally faced with stones, have been robbed of them by farmers and miners ever since.

The focus of attention inside Caer Brân moves one's awareness inwards and upwards, since it is intentionally sealed off from the landscape. Perhaps it was a neutral space where nobody could see

anyone else's territories, where all clans were equal as part of the wider Penwith tribe.

Five alignments pass through the centre of **Caer Brân** and four tangent its edge. The alignments are not major but they are interesting. Three alignments terminate at **Caer Brân**:



- **194** to Brane cairn and the Trevean 1 propped menhir,
- **88** to the Merry Maidens and
- **162** to Treveneague Beacon in Kerrier via Lesingey Round and Luscudjack Castle.

Two pass through the centre:

- **89** goes from Carn Lês Boel to Carrick Du rock outcrop near St Ives, through Caer Brân, Try menhir and Rosewall Hill;

- **199** goes from Predannack Head on the Lizard to Cape Cornwall

Tangenting the circle are these:

- **10** from Tregeseal stone circle to the NE Piper menhir at the Merry Maidens, linking two stone circle complexes;
- **84**, a minor alignment from Numphra cairn to the Drift menhirs, tangenting the south side of both Bartinney Castle and Caer Brân;
- **83** goes from Chapel Carn Brea to St Erth to Carn Brea, and
- **11** goes from Botrea Barrows through Caer Brân to Boscawen-ûn, then to Boskenna Gate Cross in the Merry Maidens complex (suggesting that the cross sits on a more ancient location).

There's more. Penwith has four circular enclosures of Bronze Age origin, at Bartinney Castle, Castle an Dinas, Caer Brân and Pordenack Point. The last three are all exactly aligned with each other – and that is clearly intentional. The alignment (49.6°) is a summer solstice rising point alignment (50.6°). There's more: an alignment from Pordenack Point to Bartinney Castle (40.8°) points to the lunar maximum north rising point (40.6° in 2000 BCE). Something is very significant about this, though we cannot raid the brains of their builders to find out precisely what.

Caer Brân plays a part in a localised ritual landscape involving Sancreed Beacon and Bartinney Castle, lying between them. Though the presence of three cairns inside Caer Brân suggests a magical significance, its siting downhill from



The Lamorna Gap as seen from Caer Brân

Bartinney Castle suggests it served as a human gathering enclosure more than a strongly magical site – this magical-spiritual function was served by nearby Bartinney Castle. The three cairns inside Caer Brân are older than it is, and the site had a previous lease of

life before the first enclosure was built around 1800 BCE. Slightly larger enclosure banks were added in the Iron Age.

Sancreed Beacon stands out more prominently in the landscape than Caer Brân, even though it is lower in height. It possesses a calmly brooding, watching, waiting magic of its own. Bartinney Castle, atop its roundish convex hill and uphill from Caer Brân, is a wide-open circular ritual enclosure with a dramatic 360° panorama, stretching from the Scillies westward and as far east as Carn Brea.

Caer Brân is not a base site – it came relatively late. Although it has quite a few alignments passing through it, it isn't really a hub site, neither is it a relay nor a proxy site. It exists for itself, at the centre of things. When seen from other places, it does not stand out.

Perhaps geomantic power was not the aim – perhaps its role was to be geographically well-connected as a gathering place. The need for this arose as the southern half of Penwith was opened up in the Bronze Age, making Caer Brân the peninsula's new societal centre – while the centre in Neolithic times had been around Carn Galva.

Lesingey Round

***Iunci's Court* – take Lesingey Lane off the A3071 (SW 454 304)**

Many assume that, since this site is called a 'round', it must be a round. It is more or less round, though not circular, and it is neither a round nor is it a hillfort. It's a banked settlement, raised on its own hill and flattened somewhat inside, and



while it could be defended it's unlikely it was intended as a fort. It is likely to have been a ceremonial and a village site, perhaps a local social hub, at different times in its long history.

Lesingey is quite a happy place, special and rather unique, and worth visiting in May during bluebell time. The trees obscure the settlement's extent and layout but they lend a leafy character to the place. I find it's not difficult to *feel* the people who lived here 2-5 millennia ago – it was good for a village of fiftyish people. Its inhabitants were probably connected with those on Leskudjack Castle, not far away. Though standardly attributed to the Iron Age, in the Neolithic I suspect it was a ceremonial and geomantic centre, and the village was probably established in the Bronze Age.



This camp has a lot of alignments passing through and tangential to it, some longer and some shorter. Two long backbone alignments pass through its centre: **208** from Bartinney Castle goes as far as a cliff sanctuary at Berry Head, Torbay, in Devon; **55** passes from Carn Lês Boel as far as Stannon Circle on Bodmin Moor.

Other significant alignments include **157** from Pendeen Watch to Lizard Point; **161** from Chapel Carn Brea to Kaer Round in Kerrier; and **158** from Maen Castle to Carn Brea – the last two tangent the edge of Lesingey.

What's interesting here is Lesingey's connections with sites quite far afield outside West Penwith – its energy-connections with faraway sites suggests it served a special role in Penwith's overall geomantic system.

As an alignment centre with a very ancient origin, I have wondered whether it was an ordinary village or something rather different. It's unusual for settlements to have so many alignments – especially major ones. Subjectively, I get the feeling that councils sat here, or someone special or influential lived here, or there was some special function to the village.

This gives rise to a number of questions. Who was Iunci, after whose court the place is apparently named, and what was he remembered for? Perhaps he was the founder not only of the village but also of a lineage of specialists who lived and worked here, and perhaps it was some kind of centre of activity. Was this where the doctors lived? Did people bring issues here for adjudication and counsel? Did they come to have knives sharpened or talismans blessed? Was it a place for midwifery or divination?

Having lived in energy-charged places like Glastonbury and Bethlehem, I know that, while such places are not necessarily easy and comfortable places to live, they can be stimulating. Lesingey, a strong alignments centre, was no ordinary settlement, and it's unlikely that ordinary people lived here for ordinary reasons.

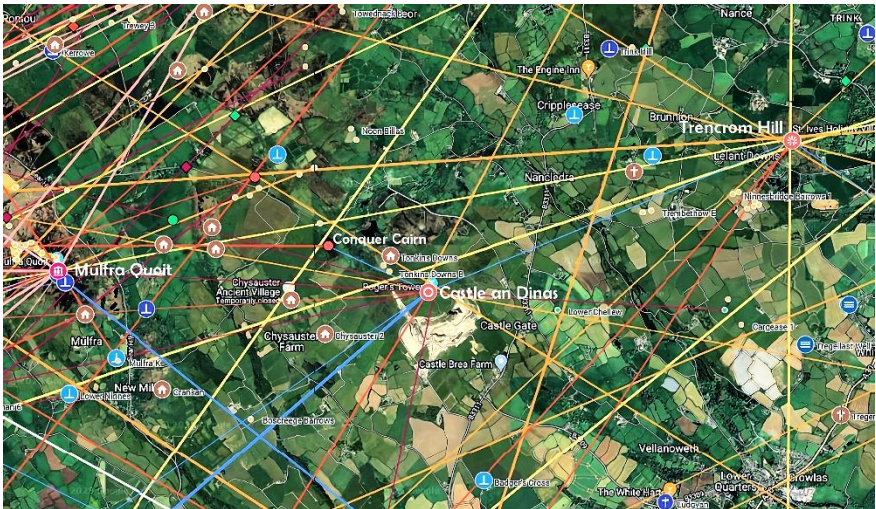
Castle an Dinas

Castle Fort, on the uplands above Gulval (SW 485 350)

Not to be confused with another Castle an Dinas near St Columb Major in mid-Cornwall, Penwith's version is a circular ceremonial-magical structure of Bronze and Iron Age antiquity. It has four concentric encircling banks, the inside one being Bronze Age,

augmented in the Iron Age by the three outer ones. It is big, around 140 metres (440ft) in diameter, with two Bronze Age barrows and a few hut circles inside. Two stone measuring weights, a sword and a ring have been found at the site, suggesting trade and visitations by strangers. It has a Victorian folly, Roger's Tower, built of stones sadly cannibalised from the encircling banks. Carn Galva, St Michael's Mount and Trencrom Hill are visible from there.

It was first built in the Bronze Age as a ceremonial place, coming into more mixed use in the Iron Age, and it would have been a magnet for gatherings. It was large enough to contain much of the population of Penwith for a seasonal festival. The circularity of its banks imply it is primarily geomantic, social and ceremonial, not defensive – a purpose for which it would be unsuitable since it is big, vulnerable and, as a circular site, difficult to defend. As an Iron Age general, I'd retreat to Trencrom Hill pretty quickish, and set up furtive guerrilla ambushes from there instead.



If the cyclotron theory mentioned earlier in the book is correct, then a large-scale spin or reality-field could be created for magical rites, with significant societal consciousness effects. This hints at a design difference between stone circles and enclosures of this kind: perhaps stone circles were for the druids with the people gathered

around outside, while at an enclosure like Castle an Dinas, everyone was inside.

Situated on what is today a bleakish moorland, Castle an Dinas has a wistful feeling, perhaps an unhappy place-memory. To me, there is a strange, rather stark atmosphere to the place, suggesting that something unusual or regrettable might have gone on there, leaving a shadow in terms of place-memory. Castle an Dinas is not, in my assessment, in a negative state, though it feels rather unhappy and world-weary. The desecration and deterioration of the site by folly-building and by nearby quarrying have certainly affected things. The *dinas* needs some corrective work, and I'm sure it would be happy for it. Archaeologists would balk at this, but a few well-run modern festivals might help in bringing life back to the place and reviving the infused energy of the gathering of clans.

Visible from here are St Michael's Mount, Carn Galva, Rosewall Hill, Godolphin Hill and a wide sweep of the landscape and Mount's Bay. Castle an Dinas is not a major alignment centre, but its alignments are interesting, showing that it is associated with some important sites, including cliff sanctuaries and tor enclosures, anchoring it to a Neolithic heritage:

- **117**, a near-parallel alignment, tangents its NE edge, passing from Gurnard's Head to Lankidden cliff sanctuary on the Lizard;
- Just NW of the *dinas* is Trenowin, a proxy cairn, where alignments **117** and **80** cross each other – alignment 80 passes through the Tregeseal complex, Lanyon Quoit and Trencrom Hill to Carn Brea.
- **156** passes through the *dinas*, linking Carn Galva and Rosemullion Head cliff sanctuary south of Falmouth.
- **165** goes to Lesingey Round and Treryn Dinas;
- **172** to Lescudjack Castle and Kemyel Point cliff sanctuary;
- **3** goes to Mên an Tol stone circle and
- **71** goes to Mulfra Quoit and Watch Croft.

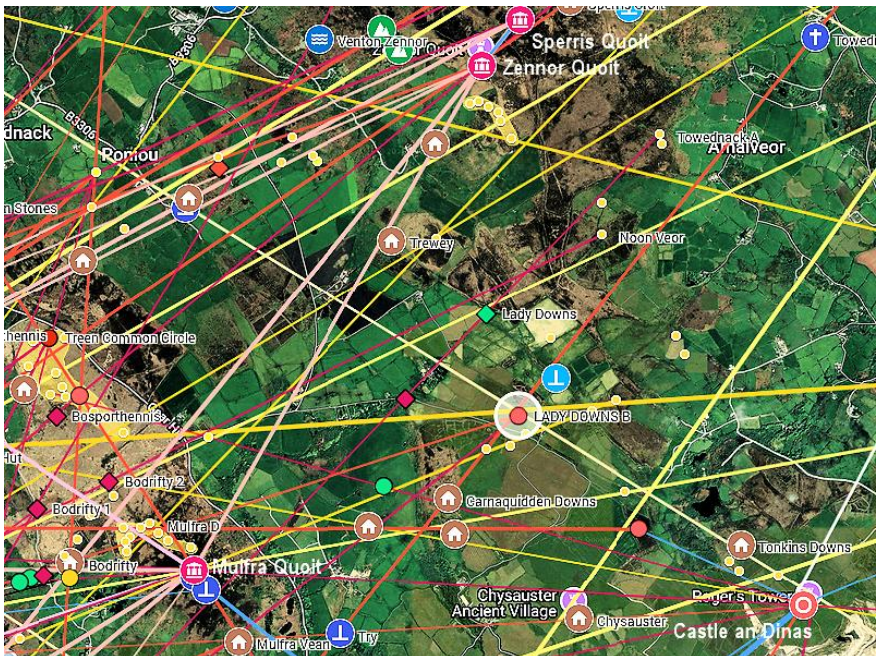
The layout of these alignments and the way they connect with Neolithic sites is noticeable: although Castle an Dinas was first built around 1800 BCE it is connected with sites far more ancient. So, it was either a late-megalithic site plugged into a more ancient

heritage, or some elements of the site must date back further than the enclosure itself. The summer solstice alignment of this site with Caer Brân and Pordenack Point suggests there was a key geomantic idea lying behind the location of these three circular sites.

Lady Downs B

Dairy or Milking Downs, N of Chysauster (SW 4699 3610)

This inconspicuous and rather damaged Bronze Age hillbrow barrow is part of a small barrowfield. Animal bones, a firelighting flint and signs of fire were found in it. It sits at the intersection of *five* alignments:



- one backbone - **124** from Pendeen Watch to Nare Head;
- one near-parallel between Penwith and the Lizard - **117** from Gurnard's Head to Carrick Luz, tangential to Castle an Dinas;
- and three local alignments: **177** to the Nine Maidens stone circle and Carn Eanes, **32** to Botrea Barrows and **89** from Carn Lês Boel and Caer Brân to Carrick Du (St Ives).

Four of the five alignments meeting this cairn tangent its edge, mainly the NW edge. Its neighbouring barrows lack such alignments, so this is a good example of a barrow that is clearly geomantic in purpose, and more important than it looks today. As a geomantic barrow it might have been built earlier than the neighbouring barrows.

Boscawen-ûn

Elder House on the Downs, SW 4122 2736.

Boscawen-ûn stone circle, or *Dons Meyn*, Dance of the Stones, is perhaps the greatest alignment centre in Penwith except for St Michael's Mount – though that's no big surprise. It has five backbone alignments passing through it.

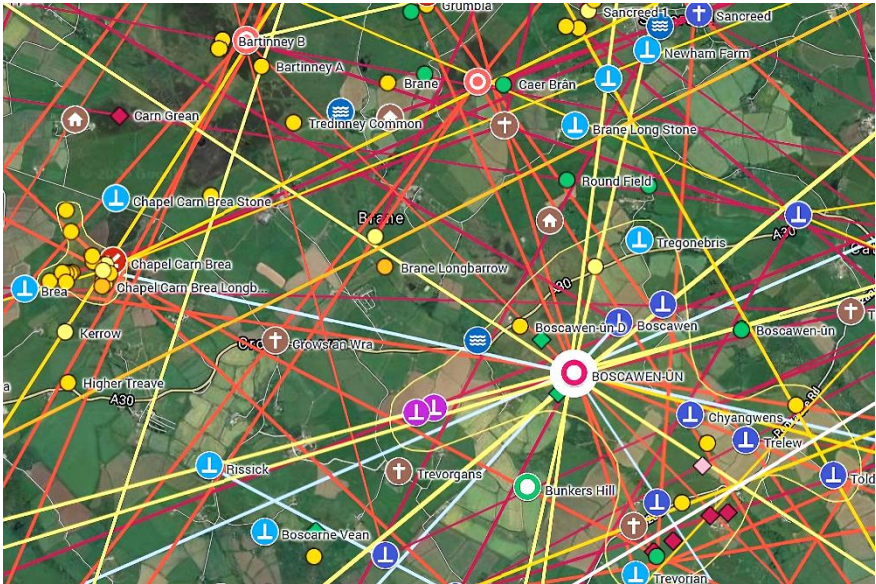
One, **55**, comes very close, hitting a nearby proxy cairn and the nearby Money Rock, on its way from Carn Lês Boel, through Boscawen-ûn, to Lesingey Round, Trevarnon Round and eventually Stannon stone circle on Bodmin Moor. Two backbones go to Scilly: one, **78**, from St Michael's Mount, through Boscawen-ûn to Maen Castle cliff sanctuary, then to Samson Hill at the south end of Bryher, and the other, **97**, from Godolphin Hill and Faugan Round, through Boscawen-ûn to Mayon Cliff near Sennen, and ending at the Shipman Head cliff sanctuary at the north end of Bryher. So Bryher, Boscawen-ûn and the two hills are clearly connected, and Boscawen-ûn, man-made, is placed between the anchoring base sites at each end of these alignments.

What's interesting is the way the stone circle sits at the hub of a number of key alignments within Penwith:

- **220** from Tol Pedn Penwith to St Ives Head, the two cliff sanctuaries at the extremities of the peninsula – it's the long axis of Penwith;
- **79** from Cape Cornwall to Kemyel Point, a winter solstice sunrise alignment;
- **55** from Carn Lês Boel to Lesingey Round and eventually Stannon Circle on Bodmin Moor, a summer solstice sunrise alignment;

- **93** from Gurnard's Head, Carn Galva and West Lanyon Quoit, through Boscawen-ûn to St Buryan church (a former round) and Cribba Head (by Treryn Dinas); and
- **37** from Treryn Dinas, through Boscawen-ûn to Lanyon Quoit, Bosiliack Barrow and the proxy menhir at the Nine Maidens.

So the stone circle sits at a hub that unites and integrates many Penwithian cliff sanctuaries and Neolithic sites.



There are six more local alignments and four radials that operate within the Boscawen-ûn complex, involving mainly menhirs. These and other alignments interlock remarkably with further factors, terrestrial, astronomical and more, to determine Boscawen-ûn's position – it sits on top of a blind spring too.

Boscawen-ûn has several reasons for being where it is – energetic, astronomical, topographical and mathematical. It is an example of the subtle and remarkable interlocking of many seemingly disparate factors to determine ancient site positioning and design, including landscape-aesthetic ones. The circumference of this oval-shaped stone circle is exactly three times its short-axis radius, so there is meaning even in its shape.

Then there's the remarkable way this stone circle is aligned with cliff sanctuaries and other major sites. Today we can see this easily with satellite photography, but how they worked this all out is remarkable and a mystery.

A lot of thought went into locating Boscawen-ûn: *it is a master-stroke in geomantic positioning*. Many of these alignments are not solely man-made, since they pass between natural cliff sanctuaries, so there was something special about this spot long before humans came along to harness it with a stone circle.

As a stone circle it looks quite simple, but concealed within its design and location lies much information and subtle-energy patterning. In sacred geometry, the full geometric and mathematical picture is rarely fully marked out in ancient site design. Instead, geometric allusions are made which, when extrapolated and completed, demonstrate an integrated pattern, the energy-values of which were sought after.

This says something about power points. They seem to arrange themselves into patterns that can be detected by looking at their alignments, and the way this fits together is astonishing. It does not conform to a modern-human type of logic but there is coherence to it, and the siting of Boscawen-ûn, emphatically geomantic, is an example of the amazing way it works.

The big question we cannot answer at this time is simply: *how did they do this?* Without maps, theodolites, satellites and GPS, how did they accurately figure out how to organise a sophisticated geomantic system like this?

While we're thinking about power points and energy, here's another small matter. **When visiting ancient sites, please switch off your mobile phone.** Their search signals, emitted to find and stay logged on to transmitters, are extra strong in remote areas where the signal is weak. They damage, distort and overpower the energy fields present at ancient sites – rather like heavy metal music overriding the tinkling of a mountain stream.

Opening yourself to subtle energies while a phone is irradiating you can be dangerous. Harming your energy field and dulling your sixth sense is your own choice but irradiating an ancient site or other people in it creates a dissonance and energy violation that should be considered.

The cancer I have (myeloma) is caused by radiation exposure, so I'm conscious of this issue. If I am in a stone circle and someone walks in with a mobile phone, I definitely feel it, and it has a dissonant effect in stone circle. The strength of a mobile phone signal is, in effect, an assault on the energy field of a stone circle. If this is done repeatedly over time, it could modify or harm energy fields longterm.

This concerns energy-sensitivity and the frequency-tuning of ancient sites. *Please be mindful and considerate* – try to avoid weakening, polluting and destroying subtle-energy fields and energy-evidence that might become important archaeologically in a later time.

20. Reality Fields

Ancient sites are located where they are because of the inherent, inbuilt, archaic subtle-energy qualities of that place. Many are atmospheric, varying greatly in character, tone and personality. There's something wonderful about the charismatic moods, feeling tones and associations that different sites can possess. This ambience relates to the nature, setting and innate energy fields of a site, as well as to traces of place memory. It's worth treating an ancient site as a living being and conducting your relationship with it accordingly.

Power places were there long before humans came along. They follow their own pattern and logic.

Spirit of place or *genius loci* is difficult to define – it arises from the land and the hidden inner spirit of a place, conglomerating



Boscawen-ûn, lost in the mist

around any energy-field that is present there. It can, however, be enhanced, and that's what the ancients did. There's more to spirit of place than the visual form, shape and setting of a site – it's a subtle atmosphere, a *presence* and a *vibe*, an energy-field. This modulates with season, moonphase and *energy-weather*. Sometimes it's best to catch these atmospherics at dawn, dusk or on a fullmoon night, when they can be more emphatic – though much depends on your own state, mood, sensitivity, approach... and company.

Picking up on these innate qualities requires *listening* and *hearing*, watching and observing, both from an enquiring and from an openly empathic perspective – ‘second attention’, or attention to what is intuited, sensed and *felt*.

Hints of *genius loci* can be sensed by examining a site, dowsing its energy patterns, examining alignments, looking for geomantic features on the horizon and intervisibility with other sites, the arrangement of stones and banks, and so forth. Ultimately, it’s the *look* and the *feel* that matter, and here we’re talking about the *feel*.

One can sometimes sense a presence occupying, protecting or overlighting a site. We might even experience interactions with such a presence in a semi-conscious dialogue beyond words. Whether we regard it as a guardian, an imaginal archetype, a vague feeling or an interesting hypothetical, there is value in getting to know it. Try to develop your capacity to *sense* things.

Yes, this is subjective. It’s a matter of gaining experience and building trust in our feelings and intuitions with neither prejudice nor naïveté – and learning from those times when we get things wrong. It’s like riding a bike: others can offer riding tips but, ultimately, you just have to learn how to balance and ride and you do get better at it. After a while it comes naturally.

Current research is beginning to acknowledge the medical value of *grounding* – standing on the earth in bare feet. It has the effect of calming, defragmenting, earthing, restoring and harmonising our energy-field and thus our body. This has some relevance here. To quote a paper on the subject:

Multi-disciplinary research has revealed that electrically conductive contact of the human body with the surface of the earth (grounding or earthing) produces intriguing effects on physiology and health. Such effects relate to inflammation, immune responses, wound healing and prevention and treatment of chronic inflammatory and autoimmune diseases... Specifically, grounding an organism produces measurable differences in the concentrations of white blood cells, cytokines and other molecules involved in the inflammatory response. Grounding reduces pain and alters the

*numbers of circulating neutrophils and lymphocytes, and also affects various circulating chemical factors related to inflammation.*¹¹¹

This may sound a little academic until one realises that reducing inflammation is a key to reducing the impact of many diseases and wounds that exist and trouble us. Meanwhile, in the absence of proper research on the effects of spending time at ancient sites, drawing instead on readers' personal experiences, it is possible to build a symptomatic picture of how this works.

Many occasions have been documented of substantial healings or perceptual turning-points at ancient sites. Sometimes such experiences occur subtly without being fully recognised or appreciated. Often, we simply feel a lightening of spirits, or we have a lightbulb moment. It is fair to propose that energy-fields at ancient sites have a super-grounding effect, affecting the energy fields of our psyches and bodies – our cellular structure, immune system and the healing of wounds and ailments. And, guess what, there's no charge for the service (except at Stonehenge).

We could therefore assume that in ancient times such enclosed places as stone circles, chambered cairns and fogous served partially as intensive care units and operating theatres. As psycho-spiritual crucibles and energy-abundant temple spaces for awakening the spirit, these are key ingredients in healing.

Stones and cairns were built to enhance, entrain and harness the qualities of energy-intensified space. This is a core hypothesis in geomancy. We cannot perform controlled experiments to find the difference that megalithic constructions made when they were built, but the ancients nevertheless seem to have worked intentionally with shaping energy, and they had good reasons for doing so.

Energy-containment is a key issue here – it concerns reality-field buildup and maintenance. The inward-facing sides of the stones in

¹¹¹ Oschman, James L Oschman *et al*, The effects of grounding (earthing) on inflammation, the immune response, wound healing, and prevention and treatment of chronic inflammatory and autoimmune diseases, *J Inflamm Res.* 2015; 8: 83–96.

Penwith's stone circles, flatter on the inside than on their rounder outward faces, concentrates energy inside the circle.

At Bartinney Castle, Pordenack Point, Caer Brân and Castle an Dinas, the exact circularity of these four enclosures serves little practical function – they were built in this way for esoteric, energy-based reasons. Enclosures built for more practical purposes, such as Iron Age hill camps, usually followed the shape and contours of the hill they occupied – they were intended for living, gathering, trading or defensive purposes, not primarily for ceremony. Hill camps still had an energy-containing effect – their enclosing banks weren't solely defensive. But many, if not all, megalithic sites of the Neolithic and Bronze Ages, particularly those that contain space, were built with subtle-energy engineering in mind.

Place Memory

Then we come to *place memory* – the memory-traces of events that have taken place at or around an ancient site. These are memory-deposits of people who have imprinted their presence or their actions on the place. They leave feeling-traces and whispers, patches of light and patches of shadow, deposited over time, and often unconsciously. Former battlefields are not usually very happy places, even when one doesn't know they had been a battlefield. But at many ancient sites, the energy-infusion was intentional, and benign memory-traces can have a surreptitiously uplifting effect.

Most sites in Penwith were in use for many centuries, with a total history spanning four or five millennia since they were built. Place memory, imprinted particularly at critical, charged or peak moments in a site's history, affects its atmosphere and the veiled storyline, emotions and atmospherics embedded in its energy field.

Hints and glimpses of this can be picked up by anyone who is intuitively attentive. Today, at sites popular with visitors, place-memory is still being accumulated – this is one of the virtues of ceremonies, meditations and happy times spent there in our day, encouraging an energy buildup, making a site happier or truer to

itself. But the sanitising and exorcising effect of relentless tourism and unintuitive, official conservation methods also leaves its mark.

Place memory has its complexities, particularly when a site has several phases or layers of history. Getting a clear read-out from early churches that are built on pre-Christian sites, or from Iron Age sites with Bronze Age or Neolithic remains underneath can be tricky – we need to gain a sense of the contrasts between different cultural layers, weeding out traces of subsequent times and events to uncover what’s underneath. This can involve some focus or study, and it isn’t necessarily dug up in twenty minutes.

I’ve experienced this in Greece, where Minoan sites are often overlaid with Classical Greek, Byzantine and relatively modern remains. The glories of Classical and Byzantine Greece obscure and influence perceptions of what went on earlier on, with no lack of patriarchal judgements being imposed on a pre-patriarchal culture such as that of the Minoans. Similarly, in the Middle East, sites can go back 7-10,000 years, each with ten or more archaeological horizons. The Citadel, towering over the old centre of Amman in Jordan, even has an early 20th Century British colonial layer (layer fifteen of sixteen).

Psychometrics

Each of us has our own way of sensing things empathically, though if you don’t feel good at it, here are some tips. To undertake inner work or psychometry of this kind at an ancient site, find a good place to sit or lie, then spend time relaxing and shifting yourself into a receptive, listening mode, however you do that. Try to clear yourself of preconceptions and expectations: this is about *being*, *allowing* and *receiving*.

Some people visualise their way into it by imagining going down steps or through gateways, to reach a space or starting place where they begin their innerwork or base themselves in the inner realms, returning to it at the end. Or they call on an inner guide who can act as a catalyst, monitor or adviser. For others, the experience is not so

visual – it's more a case of *sensing* and *feeling*, a bit like feeling your way in the dark.

Then it is necessary to ask whether we *may* and whether we *can* probe the site at this time. If the response is positive, go ahead. If it is hesitant or negative, ask whether it's a question of timing, of approach, or whether something else needs to come first. In a sense, it's a negotiation. You are, after all, stepping into someone's home, where they have lived for a very long time.

Having cleared your psyche as much as you are able (perfectionism isn't needed), open yourself up to let impressions form inside you – a feeling, a sensing, a colour, an image – and explore its shape, texture, detail, nuances and feeling-tone. Let images and feeling-tones take shape, bit by bit. Don't judge its relevance or whether you're doing things 'right' – just let things unfold. Some people are better at sensing or hearing things and some at seeing things. I started out sensing things and, over time, trained myself to use my inner-visual capacities more than before.

Observe the scene that emerges, and any beings or situations you might meet up with. You might even dialogue with them. There's a difference between open reception of impressions and prejudicial imposition of imagery from ourselves, steered by our beliefs – this is about genuine open-mindedness and trusting in our perceptions, though not uncritically. The intuitive world has its own quality-controls – something *feels right*, or it does not – and it isn't necessary at this stage to resort to the critical thinking mind.

I find that this process of reception is not to be controlled – larger issues are at stake than what I can see or understand. Sometimes I am given significant impressions or 'downloads' and at other times I am not. At its best, it comes in bundles. Even so, at other times I might come away with a trace of a clue, a tip, that starts developing over time. So this is a process.

With sites that I visit repeatedly over time, it unfolds bit by bit. There are three sites in Penwith that I visit repeatedly because I find they help my reception of clues, information or impressions.

Perhaps I've built up a relationship with the overlighting beings of those places, and we like each other.

Progress at your own speed. Start a dialogue, using thoughts, sensings or visualisation, and engage with the situation, going as far as you can with whatever develops, following the thread until the process reaches some sort of completion. Sit with that awhile. See whether there's anything more to look into. Then round it out, give thanks and come back slowly.

It's good to note down anything that came up without seeking to analyse or explain it. Sometimes I have a sound recorder running, recording whatever comes up, as it happens. I also have a special notebook for this kind of work (nowadays a bit dog-eared and rain-bespattered).

Try not to come to conclusions or interpretations at this stage since layers and subtleties can thereby become re-edited, overlooked or buried, or important clues can be missed. Interpretation or debriefing needs to happen afterwards, and without haste – it's a matter of translation into our own terms and words, and much can be lost in the process if pre-existing ideas or preferences are able to creep in, seeking to nudge or censor things in their own direction. The biggest errors can arise in interpretation, not necessarily in the inner experiences themselves. Give it time. It's a process.

Sometimes I combine the above practice with using a pendulum. While following a visualisation or a thread, I keep my pendulum swinging, asking it to indicate *right track*, or *blind alley*, or *off-track*. I'm not asking questions: I am simply asking it to monitor my process and prompt me if I'm losing my way. It's a reality-checker, and very useful.

If a question comes up, needing an answer, I slip into questioning mode, by asking a question framed to receive a straight *Yes* or *No* reply (such as, 'Was Chûn Castle used for year-round residential use in the Neolithic?'). Be careful to ask unambiguous, clear questions, and be methodical.

When the question is answered, I return to following the thread as before, and I flip, when necessary, between one mode and the

other. Keep your preferences, predispositions and existing knowledge out of the way – if they interfere, take three deep breaths to clear your psyche, rewind a bit and try again.

This is a way of developing a kind of *objective subjectivity* – one where you are staying open to whatever arises, yet you are self-monitoring at the same time. Using a pendulum can give added focus, engaging the left, questioning brain, and the right, intuitive brain in dialogue with each other, feeding back and forth. This might sound difficult, but you get used to it. Cooking food or driving a car is complex too, but you can do it.

At times the left and right brain hemispheres differ in opinion, you're given a conundrum, or a clear answer doesn't come, or you see an answer but you can't articulate it: it's important to be happy to live with open, unresolved questions. Answers come in their own time, though not necessarily in the way we might expect or with explanations that sound logical or realistic at the time.

Sometimes we discover that our question was void, or that we needed to ask in a different way. Or perhaps answers are kept from us until we're ready to deal with their implications, or with our own reluctance to take them on. 'Right' and 'wrong' change, and they need temporary suspension when carrying out exercises like this. In some cases it can be valuable to return to a site another time to follow up on earlier work or to re-examine details.

One of the ways I discern the difference between valuable and less valuable information, especially when it doesn't necessarily make sense at the time, is this: *if it wasn't useful or correct, I usually forget it, and if it's genuine and valuable, it stays with me*. This is useful, though I don't know if this works for everyone. There's a certain calm steadiness and equanimity to a genuine intuition – it *feels* different. It is not insistent, opinionated or contrived – there is a calm certainty to it. It just *knows*.

But at times I still make mistakes and have to learn from them. Wishful thinking, groupthink and habituated orthodoxy can get in the way. Some intuitions make no sense at the time, but that doesn't make them incorrect, and clarification may come at some

point, even if much later – in one case, it took 16 years, long after having given up trying to find out.

Some intuited or ‘downloaded’ information can be *symbolically true* or cryptic but not factually accurate, while some can be uncannily factual and accurate – this can be logically problematic, but stay with the process, as time will sort out many questions. The more you practice, the better it works.

A valid kind of research would be to collate the subjective impressions of larger numbers of people, concerning selected prehistoric sites, issues and questions, to see if there are common threads, themes, snippets or imagery that come up. Such accrued information cannot be taken as *fact*, but shared impressions can be significant, providing clues, insights, linkages and avenues of enquiry that are worth following, or perhaps they help fill gaps in the jigsaw.

Inherence and Intervention

Now comes a big chicken-and-egg question: *if an alignment has four, five or six sites on it, does this mean that, as power points, they were already arranged in a straight line **before** humans came along?* Is this an inherent pattern of nature or do man-made sites attract and draw to them the accessible energy fields in a locality, thereby creating a man-made alignment of power points that was not originally, or exactly, there before?

Somewhat awkwardly, both cases could be true, and in varying ways. Some sites (tors, hilltops, carns and cliff sanctuaries) *are* natural energy centres, and the principle of alignment applies to them in many but not all cases.

Similarly, some man-



Carn Kenidjack, a classic base site

made sites are placed at fortuitous multiple intersections of alignments between natural base sites – examples are Boscawen-ûn, Lanyon Quoit and Botrea Barrows.

Meanwhile, further sites (mounds, quoits, placed rocks, stone circles and menhirs) are either man-made or they are built on natural sites that have been upgraded and amped up by humans. The distinction between natural and man-made is not clear cut and there will be a gradation of possibilities – the builders did whatever was best at each site, using established protocols, materials and designs according to need. This was an organic, intuitive process adjusted to every natural setting.

However, it does seem to be the case that *an energy centre cannot be created from nothing, though an existing one can be magnified, shifted, tuned and modified.*

Craig Weatherhill discovered something interesting at Chûn Castle. The Iron Age hill camp was centred and located differently to the earlier Neolithic enclosure on top of the hill, in order to alter its intervisibility with Caer Brân. Caer Brân was built around 1800 BCE, around the same time as Iron Age Chûn Castle II, which was moved slightly to make Caer Brân visible between two framing hills. Chûn I (Neolithic) and II (Iron Age) had different, overlapping centres, about 50 metres apart. This concerned, amongst other things, signalling and also magical intervisibility between Chûn and Caer Brân in the Iron Age.¹¹² It also suggests that, while Chûn was important in the Neolithic, Caer Brân was not. Caer Brân became important during the Bronze Age colonisation of the south.

A site can be tuned and amped up by inserting a menhir, stone, mound or other structure with geological, positional, proportional,

¹¹² Craig Weatherhill reported this in a post on the CASPN Facebook page in July 2018. On its slight relocation in the Iron Age, he said: “Had it been built concentrically [in the Neolithic position], you could not have seen Caer Bran in the shallow saddle between Dry Carn and Tregerest Hills to the south, but built where it actually is, you can see it – so intervisibility of the two forts, where a signal from one could be seen from the other, was an essential requirement”. This suggests that Chûn’s original purpose, before it became a metalworking stronghold in the Iron Age, might have been more social and ceremonial, and the relocation was strategic.

geometrical, design or acoustic properties.¹¹³ It may be oriented astronomically or associated with other sites by aligning them, or by repeatedly imprinting and charging it ceremonially with particular thoughts and intents.

This idea of programming sites with intent and coding is an accepted practice in modern-day earth-healing work, though in ancient times such a rhythmic and algorithmic process would have been repeatedly reinforced over and over, consistently through time and at well-chosen moments, by people far better trained and focused than we moderns, thus embedding the coding soundly and permanently.

It might be true that, in the case of sites with an inherently strong, natural energy field, there is an intrinsic geographical coherence to their locations. Nature uses the *phi* ratio, fractals and complex mathematics in the formation of shapes, forms and distributions.¹¹⁴

There might be an inherent order and pattern to geological and topographical phenomena, but this notion is well off the rationality-map for most people. Yet there are cases of natural alignment between some of the hills of West Penwith, and if this is simply chance and happenstance, then we need to look into what ‘chance’ really means.

Some sites, mainly menhirs and cairns, have clearly been planted to align with natural sites and to act as relays, feeders and network-reinforcers, by forming complexes or creating connections between sites. Their importance lies in their placing, and their software setup or programming was adjusted accordingly. The megalith builders seemed to like sites where existing energy vortices could be amplified or, if necessary, where the energy-fields of nearby vortices could be migrated or re-trained over a short distance.

New sacred sites being established in our day need building and locating sensitively, according to similar rules that the ancient megalith-builders used, plus a good dose of intuition. Like water,

¹¹³ Acoustic properties of Stonehenge: <https://hub.salford.ac.uk/sirc-acoustics/architecture-and-building-acoustics/acoustics-of-stonehenge/>

¹¹⁴ Heath, Richard, *Sacred Number and the Lords of Time*, Inner Traditions, 2014.

energy doesn't always *obey* humans but, if we get things right, it follows a path of least resistance and can be channelled.

One locational problem faced by modern geomancers is that they are restricted to building new sites in locations determined by modern-day property divisions – new stone circles have been built on land whose owners have requested, sponsored or permitted it. As a result the full extent of geomantic possibilities of a new site can't always be realised. Even so, modern stone circles such as that at Treviscoe under Trencom Hill, built by Hamish and Ba Miller, or the Glastonbury Festival stone circle built by Ivan McBeth, both have energy and atmosphere, accumulated over several decades of use and love by many people.

It is likely that major, focal sites such as quoits and stone circles were able to be successfully located *only* on naturally strong energy centres such as blind springs, while barrows and menhirs, though best located over water vortices, can be placed according to other principles, drawing energy from their surroundings or forming a node in the bigger circuitry of a megalithic network.

The fundamental point here is that *ancient sites are established in order to plug into localised concentrations of subtle energy*.

Without considering this, few plausible reasons can be found to explain why the ancients went to so much trouble to build them, unless perhaps they were simply bonkers or deluded by elaborate fantasies. If this is so, however mistaken or delusory they might have been, in the Bronze Age they managed to sustain this fallacy for a whole millennium and seemed to make quite a success of it.

New, less intrusive technologies than excavation give us a capacity to map subterranean patterns of magnetism and conductivity, but it is necessary also to widen the scope of measurement and of what is accepted as viable evidence. The work of dowsers, sensitives, geomancers and psychometrists, and the ideas they have developed over time, need serious and unbiased review.

A fundamental working principle in geomancy involves embracing subtle energy, dimensions of reality, consciousness and the intelligence within nature. Without this understanding, dialogue on

the meaning and purpose of ancient sites cannot progress beyond physical description of them, taped together with speculations that sometimes point in the right direction and at other times are way off the mark.

Laying Down the Geomantic System

Natural power places – base sites – serve as anchors for the alignments system, forming the basis for other sacred sites to be located and built.

Back in the Neolithic 3000s, the future locations of sites such as stone circles, located on backbone alignments connected with Neolithic sites, were possibly already known, even if they were only informally identified. Many of the backbones were identified in the Neolithic 3000s – Lanyon Quoit provides the proof of this, since the quoit cannot have been located where it was without such knowledge. Then in the 2000s BCE the backbone system was extrapolated by building an increasingly complex derivative network, vastly increasing the number of sites and network permutations in Penwith.

Mounds and menhirs helped establish new alignments or they augmented and strengthened existing ones, and in many cases the sites along each alignment will probably have been built in roughly the same time-period. This can help with dating or sequencing sites, also raising questions about the first use of some sites and whether they may have been remodelled from earlier sites.

In many instances the *need for an alignment* will have arisen first, as a way of associating two or more base sites. To create and fix that alignment, mounds, menhirs and other sites were built along it, creating a thrum that feeds back to the base sites. The intention would have been to amplify the reality-fields of base sites by creating a more powered-up circuitry. A complex, tentacular system gradually incorporated all parts of the Penwith peninsula into an interactive system.

They would not necessarily have planned the whole system from the beginning, but the protocols they used were expandable. Similarly, in our day, early internet pioneers could not anticipate what the internet was to become, though the protocols they established have generally worked, with adaptations, as the system and its capabilities have grown.

It would be interesting to identify the sequences by which ancient sites were built and alignments were laid down – a tricky task that might be possible only with *some* sites and alignments. This would allow us to gain a picture of the way the system as a whole evolved. It would have started with natural base sites such as the Neolithic tors, cliff sanctuaries and, judging by their alignment centrality, certain key places such as Lanyon Quoit, Lesingey Round, Chapel Carn Brea, Chûn Castle and Bartinney Castle.

Then secondary key sites were established – notably the stone circles, Lesingey Round or Botrea Barrows. As new alignments were created, new nodal and key sites appeared such as Carfury, Boswens and Castallack menhirs, the Pipers, and enclosures such as Castle an Dinas and Caer Brân.

From these, many linking sites were developed – menhirs or cairns with only one or two alignments passing through them. This is a likely general pattern and sequence of evolutionary developments, though it is difficult to assign dates and details to it.

Megalithic Quantum Entanglement

Let us return to *non-locality*, mentioned early in the book. Here, two entities are observed to co-resonate at a distance, sharing periodicities, behaviours or qualities, even when there is no connecting medium between them. They do this instantaneously and simultaneously, not in sequence or response. Einstein, the discoverer of non-locality, called this ‘spooky action at a distance’.

At the quantum level, there is no such thing as place, duration or distance, so particles operate on the basis of what physicists call *quantum entanglement*, behaving as if they are connected while

actually they are not so, and existing both inside and outside time and space.

The suggestion here is that aligned ancient sites behave likewise. Whether or not this is true remains to be seen, but it is a useful notion, worth exploring.

Neuroscience has found that the human brain works non-locally: connections between the left and right hemispheres are insufficient in capacity to handle the amount of data they share. In cases where the nerve tract between hemispheres has been medically cut, the interfunctionality of both hemispheres continues. This implies a non-local relationship – something operating beyond the scope of the identifiable circuitry of the brain. Put another way, the mind and consciousness are not limited to the containing architecture of the brain. There's more going on.

On those occasions when you think of someone and, suddenly, they phone or message you, you are experiencing a form of non-local contact, irrespective of distance. Momentarily, you *are together*, sharing thoughts, feelings or imagery, on some level of your being. You are co-resonating inside and outside time and space – that is, you are in Britain and your friend is in Singapore, but you're together in that moment – a feeling that often doesn't last long but it can sometimes be strong and immediate.

Here we come to long-distance psychic communication using stone circles and cairn chambers. This is not just woo-woo stuff – there is something in it. To achieve a good non-local psychic-intuitive connection, ambient noise and frequency-jangle need to be screened out to help a deep inner connection to be established, focused and turbo-charged. It involves moving into a 'quantum state' where time and distance no longer operate.

This can be done in chambers, caves and crypts, particularly. Interestingly, inside Penwith's stone circles, background radiation or noise is found to be noticeably lower than outside – with the effect of increasing psychic outreach and reception. It is not too difficult to test this out today.

Yet paradoxically, though the space inside a stone circle or a chamber is calm and relatively empty of jangle, it is common to experience a charged-up feeling when inside. I suggest that psychic communication was an important factor in the use of stone circles and other space-enclosing sites. This is not about overcoming the limitations of distance, but about penetrating to a reality-level where distance or duration are no longer important, creating optimum conditions for a non-local kind of contact to come about.

This is not as peculiar or esoteric as it sounds, since many of us experience similar interactions whether or not we recognise it at the time. When I heard of the death of archaeologist Craig Weatherhill, who lived not far from me, some days after his passing in 2020, I was stunned, not because it was a surprise but because *I knew on the day he had died*. On some level beyond words, he and I were having a discussion on that day. Something in me knew he was dying but my brain didn't register it, so when I heard the news later, something in me went, *Ping, I already knew that*. You've probably had experiences like this too.

This 'beyond words' business is interesting. In my twenties I lived for some time in an isolated place and wondered whether I was missing out on important things going on in the world. When later I emerged from there, I found I hadn't really missed a thing. Something in my psyche was going through my own version of what was going on in the wider world. This is a kind of imperceptible unconscious osmosis. We are all cells in a larger collective psyche and reality-field. Going into altered states at power places thus can attune and amplify this process.

If we consider the principle of quantum entanglement as a working hypothesis applicable to alignments, then it follows that ancient sites were aligned to create non-local associations between them. Sites are linked outside time and space by *association* and *innate relationship*, operating autonomously and simultaneously, running on similar algorithms.

Yet when they are connected by an energy-line that can be dowsed, there is a directional energy connection and a sequentiality to the

patterns of its flow. From this we can conjecture that sites interact in two ways: through an *energy line*, a pipe with directionality and sequence to its flow, and through an *alignment* with no such connection, operating simultaneously and non-locally.

An energy line can be considered to function within the realm of time, space and sequence, or at least around its subtle-energy borders. It is activated by energies coursing through the line and through the connected underground water systems it is plugged into, fluxing in response to the earth's energy-field. Earth's field is itself strummed by our planet's ever-changing energy-relationships with the sun, moon and planets. In contrast, by aligning sites, they are tuned to a co-resonant frequency. They are compatibly coded. Two aligned sites, separated in space, stand together beyond space and time. It doesn't stop there: a little more mind-bending follows.

Amplified Hereness

Our sense of being *here* means we are *not there*. This sounds obvious but it's important. While living our lives, we create a mental map to locate ourselves in time and space, anchored to the place where we are in this very moment.



Chapel Carn Brea, the first and last hill in Britain

We agree this mapped sense of relative location and timing with each other, forming a pooled, implicit and unspoken agreement to see, experience and describe things in similar ways – this is our conditioning, education and socialisation. Our perception of a place or phenomenon relies on adopting frames of reference such as ‘here’, ‘there’, ‘then’, ‘now’, ‘Cornwall’ or ‘2500 BCE’. You can touch and witness ‘here’ but you can only imagine ‘there’ or ‘then’.

Life is not only about *what's happening* – events or objective reality – but also *how we experience and feel about it* – perception, interpretation or subjective reality. Our perception of anything, such as ‘Penzance’, ‘next year’ or ‘the Bronze Age’ varies with our mood, intent, anticipations, memory, associations and awareness at any given time. If you are not in Penzance, ‘Penzance’ is an idea, a remembering, a possibility or an imagining.

Young children and most animals are *here*, this is *now* and, to them, that's what matters. A strengthening sense of *there* arises in later childhood and youth as a young person maps out, expands into and makes sense of their world. Our sense of ‘thereness’ has nowadays been inflated by media and screen-time to provide a surrogate experience that is so apparently real that, much of the time, we aren't *present* when we're *here* yet neither are we geographically *there*. As we have modernised we have retreated into a human-defined, on-screen domain of self-made constructs.

There's more to this *presence* business. At some ancient sites there is an uncanny sense of *concentrated hereness* or *hyper-presence*. We could say that the reality-fields generated at the site wrap themselves around us, enveloping us in a mystery-field of altered awareness. We can feel this if we stop, relax, disengage awhile from our rattling minds and allow ourselves to *just be*, to be fully present at that place and time. There's a feeling that we're at the centre of the universe, *right here* and *right now*. This sense of centrality, of right-hereness, as if nowhere else matters, is a special quality of many ancient sites, an imprint of the concentrated reality-fields that were built up thousands of years ago.

A variant of this happens when we stand at a site such as Sancreed Beacon, Chapel Carn Brea, Trencrom Hill or Chûn Castle, with a panoramic view: there's a feeling that you're at the hub of things and everything rotates around that place. It's a ‘magic mountain’ characteristic. This perceptual twist and sense of centrality is an effect of *concentrated hereness* – a shift in psycho-geographic awareness wherein our perceptions are altered by a prehistoric

reality-field. Our right-brained, intuitive awareness comes forward and our left-brained, relativistic awareness recedes.

In this reality-field our sense of time-space and the wavelengths of our thought patterns and inner states become changed. We find ourselves resolving issues, releasing concerns, seeing things afresh, having a brainwave or a noteworthy conversation, or simply feeling better or clearer. Sometimes it comes surreptitiously. Time can expand or contract. Funny things happen. Whether or not we notice these changes at the time, when later we re-enter the ‘real world’, at times we find ourselves wondering how real it really is.

Some people, when visiting ancient sites, feel they have *come home*, perceiving that their normal everyday reality has become foreign and strange, at least at that moment. Our sense of duration, geography and the coordinates of defined reality are warped and bent. That’s the reality-field at work.

We experience prehistoric sites as special places because they are psycho-geographic gravity centres in which reality’s nature and its accepted rules become changed. There is something familiar, rooted and safe there, something indefinable about it that we nevertheless deeply remember, somewhere deep down, buried in our psyches. Ancient sites are nodes of *upgraded presence*.

Straddling the Worlds

So are we humans having spiritual experiences, or spirits having a human experience?

Shamanic work involves entering into deep states, in order to function and move within those worlds by *becoming* the underlying laws, dynamics, forces and presences that exist in that realm, within all things. This involves giving oneself over to it fully and completely – something that only some souls can do. In that place, the direction of events can be influenced or tweaked by being and operating *inside* them. If this is done by large numbers of people, syncing their psyches through shared feeling and vision, using

ritual, dance and music, it scales up the possibilities, especially when done at power points in both space and time.

A change or a shift in the inner components of the dance of life – our thoughts, feelings, beliefs and issues – can have a game-changing effect on life’s outer, ‘real’ circumstances. It involves building up a reality-field that becomes strong enough to affect, repair or replace the conventional or current reality-field. So, if rain is needed, a deal needs making with the forces that provide rain and those that prevent rain. This is the essence of magical work.

This isn’t as exotic as it sounds – it applies to our own lives, whether or not we see it from a shamanic viewpoint. If we have issues to resolve and if we’re willing to re-examine our ways of dealing with them, from a perspective of relative equanimity, not only do we loosen up our thoughts and feelings, and thus our behaviour and responses to life, but also the reality around us can magically change.

I had an instance of this while working on this book: my neighbour’s loud music was disturbing me but, after a while, I came to acknowledge that, even without the music, I wouldn’t have been making much progress anyway – it wasn’t a good day. So I stopped worrying about it. Guess what? Almost immediately he switched off the music. In any conflict it *always* takes two to tango, and by changing my own dance-steps my neighbour changed his. Until that moment we were locked in a mutually reinforcing unconscious behavioural loop. Or was all this *just coincidence*?

Cranking up the intensity of altered states was a key outcome sought. Some sacred sites were built to act as pressure cookers and crucibles within which to *do something* with consciousness, to put it to work. This included moderating the weather, enhancing the natural environment, aligning with higher powers, performing healings, communicating with people at a distance, connecting with the ancestors and blessing crops, items, tools, people and ventures. It was done by altering and pumping up reality-fields.

Here’s an example of unconscious weather modification. Years ago, we had a wake for a friend who had committed suicide – a

popular man whom everyone knew. In the sharing process, people talked of his role in their lives and how they regretted his passing. When it came to me, spontaneously I was moved to speak firmly and directly, addressing him personally. “While I respect your choice, Justin, it frustrates me because you gave up on yourself, rejecting your friends and acting rashly amidst the darkness of your feelings.” It was a truth I knew I was not alone in feeling. Some people were shocked, others were pensive and some were relieved. There was a protracted silence. Suddenly, lightning flashed outside, followed by an immediate, window-rattling thunderclap close by. *Boom*. Rain drummed on the roof, drowning out all other sounds. We were all agog.

This offstage special effect wasn’t planned or foreseen but *nevertheless it occurred at that very moment*. One can of course drag out the ‘chance’ rationale but that is a weak explanation – over a lifetime, it is possible to have quite a few such experiences. It was a form of unplanned weather modification, arguably charged up by the power of the moment, the poignancy of the situation and unseen atmospheric conditions outside. *Magic does happen* – it gets forgotten, explained away or suppressed – but *it does happen*. Nonetheless, much focus, training, care, discipline and effort would be needed to carry out *intentional* weather modification.

In the 1980s-90s I organised holistic educational camps. Over the course of a week, a strong energy field would be built up in our circle of a hundred or more people. At the end, when we ‘closed the circle’, the ambient noise of traffic, tractors and aeroplanes around us would suddenly increase whilst, during the week, it had been hardly perceptible. We had been inside a reality-bubble.

Whether this was a function of our awareness or of the laws of physics, or a combination of both, *it still happened*, and it was noticeable. We had created an energy field of *concentrated hereness* and, when we closed down that ‘magic circle’, the normal rules of reality kicked back in, bringing its ambient noise with it.

We are privileged to be living in a time when it is possible to run apparently contradictory mindsets and realities in parallel. If we

cannot reconcile our logical, educated understandings with our more magical-intuitive side, or the archaeological with the geomantic mindsets, then it is still possible to work with them separately and in parallel until they start cross-communicating.

These worlds identify and accomplish different things, but they can work together – and so too do our left and right feet when we ask them to carry us around. Cross-communication of conflicting mindsets and cultural viewpoints is one of the great challenges of the 21st Century.

21. Psycho-geoengineering

A key proposition here is that West Penwith constitutes an integrated system of megalithic sites, created to enhance the magical-spiritual power of the land. Secondly, certain key sites act as the main network nodes of this system, the remaining sites playing significant roles as feeders, relays, grounders and stabilisers. While certain sites act as energy containers, their power is affected by their relationship with other sites – they work together as a complete system.

The logic behind this rested on creating energy-spaces in which inner work could be cranked up to a higher level than otherwise would be possible. These key sites were the labs, reactors and space capsules of ancient times and, just as we invest heavily in pure research, high technology and space exploration today, so did they, in their way.

Locational Paraphysics

A stone circle or enclosure might be only 20 or 40 metres across and a cairn's chamber only a few metres long but, when we enter a deeper reality in such spaces, especially with eyes closed, a Tardis effect kicks in – it becomes spacious, a separate



Carn Galva, from the Nine Maidens stone circle

reality inhabiting a different psycho-spatial dimension. Nowadays, while many ancient sites are weakened, damaged or neglected from an energy-maintenance perspective and their effect is somewhat

diluted, their energy fields are still *there*. That is what pulls us towards them, fascinating us on a deep level.

Amplifying the energy characteristics of a site requires a build-up of input and focus over time, and today these sites need love, care and attention, plus some restoration of their inherent energy-enhancing factors, to restore their potency. The whole system would need reactivating.

This would have its complexities and consequences, taking more time, consensus-building and effort than many might imagine. It cannot be done without public comprehension and support, and the world isn't ready yet for this kind of thing. There are also legitimate concerns about tampering with archaeological remains, changing the archaeological record. It is still, nevertheless, worth studying the matter.

Let's now examine ways in which the ancients added power to energy-fields. Ancient sites are located where they are for a range of reasons (outlined in chapter 3), and what is most remarkable is the way that these different reasons coincide and interact. These factors apply in unique combinations at different places. Generally, two, three or more factors are observable at any one site. How they manifest is a matter of wonder and a subject for further research. Broadly, the placing of significant sites was worked out in terms of four dimensions:

- **astronomical** – the rising and setting points of the sun, moon and some planets and stars;
- **terrestrial** – alignments, overground energy lines, site intervisibility and topography;
- **subterranean** – underground earth energies; and,
- **cosmological** – the psycho-spiritual states and dimensions that become available when magical space is intensified.

Archaeoastronomy

In the northern hemisphere, where the annual seasonal variation in light becomes more emphatic as we move northwards, the rising

and setting points of the sun and moon were important to communities living outdoors and dependent on nature. In Cornwall we're at 50 degrees north, just over half way up the planet. These rising and setting points acted as markers of time and as cyclical crux-points in the year. The periodicities of the visible planets were also watched closely – the 'wandering stars' follow roughly the same course as the sun and moon along the *ecliptic* or the plane of earth's orbit around the sun.

Only bright stars could be observed rising or setting, since few are actually visible when close to the horizon at Cornwall's latitude of 50°N, even on a good day – their light is diminished by the sky's brightness at dawn and dusk, and by the sheer amount of our planet's atmosphere through which starlight has to travel when stars are on the horizon, at this latitude. This stellar 'extinction' doesn't happen as much at latitudes nearer the equator, such as in Egypt. The further north we go, the longer and slower dawn and dusk become, because the sun rises and sets more and more obliquely as we move further north. Atmospheric issues can also make the setting or rising sun or moon look larger, or coloured or misshapen. Well, that's the rational explanation, though it's an amazingly magical phenomenon.

There is sufficient evidence of stellar tracking at ancient sites to confirm that the stars indeed were watched. Ancient skies in Cornwall were marginally clearer and the weather largely drier than now, and early astronomers could afford to wait for exceptional days and nights for observing stars – they spent their time outdoors a lot anyway. They had stargazing tricks that we have forgotten. The ecliptic royal stars, Antares, Regulus, Aldebaran and Fomalhaut, regarded as guardians of the sky, would have been watched, amongst other reasons for measuring the orbital (sidereal) periods of the movement of other planets.

Bright stars such as Sirius, Spica, Rigel, Castor and Pollux would also have been important. The rising point of the Pleiades (at 94.3° azimuth in 2500 BCE) would be less easy to figure out because they are not bright, but longterm observation, careful estimation and

repeated checking would have made azimuth measurements pretty accurate. High stars such as Capella and Vega were not useful for astronomical observation since they do not rise or set, though they probably still had mythic significance.

At crucial moments in time such as solstices or lunar maxima and minima, the sun and moon rise and set at certain known points on the horizon. These are measured in terms of *azimuth*, the number of degrees from north, measured clockwise along the horizon: north is 0°, east 90°, south 180° and west 270°. The variation in rising and setting points increases as one moves northwards, so it is quite different in Orkney, at around 60°N, than in West Penwith, at 50°N.

At Penwith's latitude, the summer solstice sun rose at 49.5° in the northeast, setting at 310.5° in the northwest, in 2500 BCE. At winter solstice it rose at 127.9° in the southeast and set at 232.1° in the southwest. The solstices are the anchor-points of the solar year.

Lunar maxima and minima are trickier to explain, but the extremes of the lunar maximum rising points are at 39.3° and 137.6° – roughly 10° further along the horizon than the sun's solstice points at this latitude. The moon reaches these points once every 18.6 years, and a lunar minimum occurs nine years after the lunar maximum, rising at 58.6° and 119.1°. ¹¹⁵

The importance of lunar maxima and minima lies in the calculation of eclipses and the tracking of the Metonic cycle. The ancient Britons had two parallel calendars, solar and lunar, and this cycle synchronises them. The solar calendar had eightfold and sixteenfold subdivisions, pegged down by the solstices and equinoxes. The lunar calendar of phases, from newmoon to newmoon, was 29 days and 12 hours long, with about 12½ cycles every solar year – in some years twelve and in other years thirteen. Its subdivisions were the phases of the moon, brought about by the relative positioning of moon and sun as time goes on.

¹¹⁵ For a good explanation of lunar maxima and minima, see Irigaray, Christian, [*From Thales to Stonehenge: how eclipses were predicted in prehistory by 3100 BCE*](#).

The Metonic cycle brings together the solar and lunar calendars, which coincide once every nineteen years – specifically every 6,939.6 days. Amazingly, this is very closely equivalent to:

- **19 solar years,**
- **20 eclipse years** (cycles of eclipses),
- **235 synodic lunar months** (cycles of lunar phases),
- **254 sidereal lunar months** (lunar orbits of the heavens), and
- **255 draconic months** (conjunctions of the sun with the moon's north node – an eclipse-related cycle).

The ancients found this out and gave great weight to it. In those days nineteen years represented one human generation.

There's a remarkable natural magic to some astronomical placings. To give an example, the setting summer solstice sun rolls down the slope of Trink Hill, the leftward slope on the picture here, as seen from the top of Trencrom Hill. It sets at the point where Trink



Summer solstice sunset as seen from Trencrom Hill

Hill's slope meets the slope of Rosewall Hill behind, on the right.

Neither Trencrom Hill nor this horizon is man-made or modified, so this is remarkable. It isn't uncommon to see such phenomena at ancient sites, and this is part of their magic. At Trencrom Hill, the summer solstice sun rises over St Agnes Beacon to the northeast, and the winter solstice sun rises southeast between Godolphin and Tregonning Hills. Amazing. *Someone* or *Something* did a remarkable landscape design job, long before humans came along.

Astronomically oriented and designed man-made sites were made to capture time, imprinting time in space and nailing down the time qualities of critical occasions such as solstices or lunar maxima and minima. Understanding the seasons and the phases of the moon was

vital, and identifying temporal power points for magical and consciousness work was a critical facet of the culture and technology of the time. Building a temporal power point into the design of a spatial power point maximises the energy-potentials of specific kinds of magical-spiritual work.

When observing the rising and setting of the sun or moon, the horizon is often higher or lower in elevation (height) than the place of observation. The sun or moon will then rise at a slightly different degree or azimuth than if the horizon were level. For this reason, the azimuth of the summer solstice sunrise point can be different at different sites, depending on the relative elevation of the local visible horizon. With the rising sun or moon on the eastern horizon, if the horizon's elevation is higher, they will rise further to the right, or southwards. With the setting sun or moon in the west, they move further to the left – also southwards.

So, the two big variables here are *azimuth* (direction on the horizon) and *elevation* (its relative height). Azimuth is the number of degrees rightwards along the horizon from true north. Elevation is the vertical height of any point on the horizon relative to the place of observation – usually just one or two degrees up or down, though it makes a difference to the rising or setting point. In deep valleys, the horizon can be high – at the Mên an Tol the eastern horizon is elevated at 5-10°, so the rising points of the sun and moon appear much further to the right when seen from there.

If today we were seeking to mark out summer solstice alignments, we would tend to have a standard, agreed azimuth applied equally across the landscape of Penwith, but the ancient way was to judge the rising or setting point by the local horizon at each place. This leads to a (to us) irrational situation where such alignments vary from site to site, even if they are neighbouring sites. At some sites it might be 48°, at others 53° azimuth, because the alignments were established not so much for astronomical as for ceremonial purposes, magical spectacle and visual impact.

The megalith builders were not preoccupied with counting time and dates as we do, as in '4pm on 15th June 2027'. Being astronomers

and astrologers, they sought to understand the nature of the seasons and the meaning of the times, shaping their activities accordingly. Their fortunes were connected with the fluctuations of time and their responses to it – what they gained, what they could contribute and what problems they could avoid incurring.

Time, through which thought, energy and potential manifest in the physical, *is what prevents everything happening at once*. This stringing-out of events and experiences is what characterises life on this rotating, orbiting, wobbling planet of ours.

The ancients wanted to maximise the available qualities of time. The relationship between the heavens, earth and humanity needed to be in harmony. Time was fixed by creating astronomical alignments and orientations and through embodying number symbolism, geometry, mathematics and proportion in the design of stone circles and other sites.

Different sites in the landscape would have their own designed-in times of use. Assemblies and ceremonies to mark the seasons would take place at differing sites around the year.

Good work has been done in Cornwall by Caroline Kennett¹¹⁶ and others on the archaeoastronomy of specific sites, and there's further to go. Perhaps a coordinated, systematic group survey of fortyish significant sites could be done to identify a larger range of astronomical orientations in Penwith to determine whether there is any overall coherence across Penwith.

The importance of this lies in the suggestion that the peninsula is one single, enormous ancient site. Thus there might have been some sort of pattern to the way that astronomical orientations were set up. The quoits, with a noticeable number of astronomical orientations between them, provide a clue, and this Neolithic pattern was extrapolated and expanded in the Bronze Age.

¹¹⁶ See Caroline's blog at <https://archaeoastronomycornwall.com> and the booklet *Watching the Sun*, available at www.creativechallenge.org.uk/watching-the-sun-booklet/

Intervisibility

Some sites are built with intervisibility in mind. Chûn Quoit is markedly visible from Boswens menhir, highlighted on the horizon (it's called a *reveal*), but the reverse is not the case: from Chûn Quoit you have to look hard to see Boswens.



Chûn Quoit from Boswens menhir

Since Chûn came first by a millennium, Boswens was built partially to serve as a sighting place for the quoit. Boswens also acts as a critical relay menhir for the Tregeseal stone circle complex. This is an example of the uncanny kinds of combinations of geomantic factors that can happen.

Botrea Barrows possess a remarkable panorama with a wide sweep of other sites visible, many of them Neolithic. While Botrea Hill is visible from most of them, it neither stands out nor does it draw attention. This is another case of one-way intervisibility. Botrea is a place for looking out from, not for being seen.

On the other hand, Lanyon Quoit and Bosiliack Barrow are intervisible in both directions. Mulfra Quoit and the Nine Maidens are mutually intervisible, each neatly placed on the horizon to be seen from the other (but take binoculars).

Meanwhile, at some sites intervisibility is not a factor. Treryn Dinas has near-zero intervisibility with other sites, except on a clear day when it is seen from the Lizard, far away over Mount's Bay. From Trewavas Head the distance is 15 miles or 23km.

In some cases a particular view is visible only from a specific location and at a certain height: a small cairn near Carn Lês Boel raises the viewer a little higher to see the distant Carn Kenidjack (6

miles or 10km away) – the cairn is visible *only* from that spot, and move a few yards away and it's gone.

Similarly, a site might be placed to be visible on the horizon as seen from a specific site, even though it's not on the summit of a hill. An example is the menhir on Watch Croft, which stands out on a 'false horizon' when seen from Mên Scryfa.



Kernyel Point, Tater Du lighthouse and Treryn Dinas – telephoto shot from Trewavas Head on the Lizard

There is an artistic elegance to the chosen locality of sites like these.

So when you go to an ancient site, scan around the horizon to see which other sites you can see. Look carefully and take an OS map to help identify other features – check how it fits visually into the landscape, its psycho-geographic setting. Some sites have distinctly wide-sweep horizons, and the angles that many sites form to each other can be significant.

An intervisibility survey is needed of major sites in Penwith, to see whether geographical or other patterns emerge. Intervisibility is part of the wondrous natural magic of site location.

The megalith builders didn't simply impose their plans on the landscape – they fitted their sites into it with a variety of considerations in mind and with the creativity of artists or scenic landscape gardeners. Without using bulldozers and dynamite.

Consciousness Engineering

Of all orientations found at Penwith's ancient sites, one of the most important is *upwards-downwards*. Menhirs and stone circles are there to connect the heavens with earth. Energy flowing through the stones spirals upward and downward, fluctuating and twanging

according to the energy-weather patterns of the time. If you stand close to a standing stone or hug it, it's an interesting exercise to let your awareness go up through the top of your head and down through your feet, to feel this vertical interaction.

It could be argued that certain *propped* Bronze Age menhirs (such as Trevean 1 or the gateway menhir at Carn Lês Boel) were set up to receive and transmit energies from and to the heavens but not necessarily to conduct them into the earth, unlike normal menhirs with about one-third of their length buried in the earth. Or perhaps the gap under the stone somehow generates a concentrated resonance field, rather like the mechanism of a laser, for wider dispersal or for charging the area.

Hill camps, cliff sanctuaries and enclosures don't fulfil the same function as menhirs – they act as *containing spaces*, as do stone circles. There is something special about being inside these spaces that one doesn't experience when outside. Our awareness is drawn *inward*, *outward* or *upward* – and this might vary at different times. At Caer Brân or Castle an Dinas the surrounding circular bank would hide the surrounding landscape from view while leaving the skyscape wide open, emphasising the *hereness* and the vertical axis of the place, guiding attention *inwards* and *upwards*.

Meanwhile springs, wells and fogous lead our attention *downwards* and *inwards*. Their purpose is to collect or contain darkness, shade and cool, inducing an internalised, *yin* kind of feeling that is apparent when the senses are deprived of input and one is bathed in the subtle negative ions pervading such places. Sometimes, when I need to cry tears, a holy well is just the right place.

Many wells are situated close to hills (such as at Sancreed, Chapel Euny and Madron) such that, ceremonially, the contrasting wide-open feelings experienced on the hill could be combined in ceremonial occasions with the drawn-in feelings at the well.

Chambered cairns, with their horizontal and oriented chambers, evoke an *inward-outward* form of attention. They let in direct light at sunrise at a key time of year. When the entrance is blocked, interiority and sensory deprivation are induced – it is deeply

tranquil and intensely dark in chambers like these. When the entrance is opened, light floods in, bringing revelation and rebirth to a person or a relic inside.

These are places of *enhanced stillness* – places to stow yourself away to go through an initiation, to take a retreat, to convalesce or to die gracefully and in peace.

Inside quoits a super-charged interiority occurs. It is not clear whether quoits were intended for sitting inside or if they were built mainly to serve as energy-charged repositories for treating objects.



Looking out from a chambered cairn at Treen

There was likely more sunlight inside quoits than in chambered cairns, but energy, not light, was the main issue. Quoits, with their heavy capstones, capture energy from inside the earth and filter it out through the gaps between the verticals. The focus was *energy* – up-down energy from a vortex that was redirected outwards horizontally in a specific direction.

Energy could also be captured from an energy line: when one gap is bigger and a blocking stone placed opposite, incoming energy received through that gap is reflected up to the roof and then forced downwards. Unfortunately, many quoits are too ruined to see clearly what originally they were like in their prime.

Different kinds of sites are thus concerned with fostering different kinds of consciousness – up, down, in, out, broad and narrow, and perhaps also *informational* and *energetic*. This was a matter of significance in megalithic engineering. These places were both inside and outside time, where the veils between this world and the otherworld were permeable. Different types of sites were built to

provide different kinds of awareness, to *engineer consciousness*. A hilltop site generates a very different subjective feeling to a fogou.

I learned a lot about this when visiting the Asklepeion on the island of Kos, an inspiring classical Greek hospital where Hippocrates worked in the late 400s BCE. Hippocrates clearly knew a thing or two about the role of consciousness in medicine. The Asklepeion is temple-like, built on the side of a hill in classical style on three levels, with a panorama over the sea and distant mountains. If you were ill, you'd start feeling better with that view alone.

On the first level, with alcove-rooms and beds, and looking like a hospital, patients would stay for rest, bathing, detox and medical treatment; on the second level they would go through a deep dreaming initiation (a vision quest), induced through deep relaxation, hypnosis and mind medicines, with counselling and interpretation to follow; on the third level they would go through spiritual rites, blessing and rebirth at the end of their treatment or at key moments, to seal the healing and mark the start of a new life.

This was multilevel holistic medicine, drawing on earth and cosmic energies, medical knowledge and gifts of the gods – an advanced shamanic approach. I suggest that similar healing practices were carried out at some of the ancient sites in West Penwith.

Spiritus Mundi

Our forebears had a sense of an afterlife and a deep feeling that the ancestors, living in a parallel world, held the tribe safe, stable and protected. The living carried the ancestral genes, gifts, identity and legacy of the tribe and its history. Life had a pan-generational continuity, seen as a circulation of souls between this and the other side of reality. Souls were understood to reincarnate back into the same clan or tribe, so caring for the ancestors had an element of caring for the tribe's and one's own future too. The wellbeing of the tribe involved a three-way pact between humans, ancestors and the world of spirit.

The bones of the deceased, or at least of respected and revered ones, were stripped of flesh in a sky-burial, where a corpse was left for scavenging birds to pick apart, leaving just the bones, in the likely belief that this would aid a departing soul in fully releasing its body in order to migrate to higher realms. Raptors and crows might also have been seen as sacred birds or protectors worthy of offerings. Or sometimes people manually scraped bones clean. The bones were used in ceremonies and for oracular and meditative purposes, stored in cairns and special places, or perhaps planted out as an act of stewardship, to bless the landscape.

This wasn't a morbid or sentimental preoccupation with mortality so much as an expression of a sense of posterity, continuity and heritage, a reminder that life is given and also taken away. Selected bones were kept, symbolising enduring verities and alluding to a more everlasting world where moth and rust do not eat. The tribe's lineage and soul were strengthened and would thereby endure. Bones were the tribal archives, memory-sticks and relics of the genetic, cultural and spiritual inheritance of the people.

What is often underestimated and ignored is the role in humanity's cultural evolution of psychoactive mind-medicines, used in rites, healing, creativity, intellectual and social development, such as psilocybin, opium, hemp, *amanita muscaria*, the nightshades, Henbane, St John's Wort, Belladonna and Mandrake.

These were not 'drugs' in today's pejorative sense, and people then did not have the fear of altered states of consciousness that many modern people have – they had more neurodiverse attitudes than we, untainted by the institutional, religious and secular beliefs and fears we nowadays carry on our shoulders. Mind-medicines were gifts of the deities, given to aid access to the inner worlds.

Cultural enrichment arose from a flowering of imagination, mental and emotional capacities that arose when mind medicines were used in spiritual practice. With hallucinogens one does not become anything different from what one already is – one becomes *oneself*, yet a deeper self. Differing solitary, ceremonial and social settings for this each have their value, and in some cases mind medicines

served in healing by helping a person alter the fundamentals within them, in order to shift unhelpful psycho-spiritual patterns that lie at the root of illnesses. Yet one person's illness is a community matter too – that person's illness or misfortune can also represent or channel something bigger or deeper that affects the whole community. So this can become a matter of social healing too.

Certain plants and concoctions had long been identified as cultural catalysts, keys to the doors of perception, for metaphysical and philosophical exploration and for magical-spiritual work. This went back to the Mesolithic and further. They gave people an expanded capacity for profound thought and originality through inner journeying in the imaginal and luminary realms. They allowed quantum leaps in energy-sensitivity, ingenuity and dealing with life and its hurdles. Tribal problems could be resolved, answers found, knowledge gained, riddles deciphered and prayers made. Many ideas and innovations were born thus and many solutions were found – including solutions in megalithic science, with its complex geometries and mathematics.

But then, we see similar in our time: modern discoveries with computers, astronomy, internet, genetics, psychotherapy, art, music, literature, design, quantum mechanics and many other areas owe a lot to mind-medicines, even though this is rarely mentioned.

Spirits of Place and Space

It was not the stones of a stone circle, the boundary banks of a cliff sanctuary or the orthostats of a chamber that were the primary focus, but *the space contained within*. The full magic of ancient sites lay in their usage, their *charge*: this involved assembling people, generating energy and spectacle, to create an enchantment through song, dance and innerwork that became so strong that a new reality-field was conjured up. The necessary innerwork could then be done and the hoped-for results might come to pass.

Charged up with megalithically-engineered energies, rites and rituals, and the remarkable artistry of site positioning, spirit of place was built up. A continuity was developed over many

generations until sacred sites became imbued with a deep and lasting consciousness-field that we can still sense today. Each major site, an intelligence in itself, had a *presence*, a guardian protector with a will of its own.

Humanity has long endowed places with significance. It can be visually based, for example in the case of a site from which the sun can be seen to rise over a bump on the horizon, or where it is placed in a fortuitous landscape position. Sometimes it is subjective, incorporating myths of giants and their exploits, or the association of certain places with Celtic saints or folk tales of events that happened long ago. Sometimes there is a particular magic to the place.

Sadly, many of these layers of meaning have been diluted by the relentless passage of time, human amnesia and the exorcising effect of deforestation, farming, roads, houses, overflying planes, noise and radiation, together with a changed landscape context and consequent loss of magical potency.

Place memory, imprinted long ago, can only partially be accessed today. Or perhaps it is still there but it needs coaxing out of hiding. We need to become multi-level guardians of a new kind, not just preserving archaeological sites but also looking after the needs and wishes of their resident intelligences.

Each ancient site is like a person with character, personality and personal preferences. To interact with it we need to understand and respect its needs, interests, rights and predilections as a being. Try imagining what it is like to be that menhir, mound or cliff sanctuary, how it felt in its heyday, how it feels now – and also how it felt to that site when you arrived there.

The spirit that is *you* and the spirit of the place have something to exchange. It's a dialogue, and if you make yourself interesting to the spirits of place, they will find you interesting, give you their attention and talk to you in wordless ways.

22. Rural Civilisation

Megalithic geoengineering is a wild proposition, but sufficient evidence points toward it to justify proper consideration. We're challenged to overcome a deep-set belief that prehistoric people were somehow primitive. No, they were advanced in a different way than we. Coming to understand the nature of the ancients' advancement is important for us today.

Here are some propositions that might help us visualise what life was like in the megalithic era, and what preoccupied the thoughts and beliefs of its inhabitants.

On the question of human advancement, a professor at Oxford would reach a different conclusion about the current state of the world to one from the former Al Azhar University in the five-millennia old city of Gaza. Reality varies widely for different people. Incidentally, Al Azhar had samples of Bronze Age Cornish tin which now have been bombed to bits.

Modern civilisation has crucial weaknesses: unsustainable in multiple arenas, its costs and benefits are unevenly spread, it creates a lot of damage and pain and it defiles its own nest.

Meanwhile, the megalithic period in Britain seems to have been surprisingly stable. No doubt life had its changes and hard aspects, and there were up times and down times and rights and wrongs, but there are few signs of strife, oppression, degeneracy or discontent in the Neolithic and early-to-middle Bronze Ages – nothing like what we came to see in later times of history.

The decline of the first megalithic era in the Neolithic 3000s seems to have arisen from externalities such as climate or pandemic rather than from its own inherent weaknesses, though there is insufficient evidence to form a safe conclusion.

While it's arguable from a shamanic perspective that we are all involved unconsciously in the attraction and development even of externalities, since everything is interconnected, it is not an inherent gift of humans to have ultimate control over everything, and the hand of God moves in strange ways. With what little we know, it does not look as if the phase-one megalithic culture of the Neolithic 3000s ended as a result of its own inherent weaknesses.

After a multi-century pause came a revival in the NBA and the Bronze Age, revitalising and reworking ancient principles. This is interesting since recent genetic studies suggest a large-scale genetic change in Britain in the 2300s-2100s, yet there was a megalithic continuity with few signs of significant philosophical or cultural change. There was expansion and development but no great change of style, or of the megalithic science that was in use before the Beaker influx arrived.

The second megalithic period lasted over a millennium. Something must have been going right for it to last so long. Bronze Age culture came to an end around 1200 BCE seemingly as a result of ossification and obsolescence more than error, disaster or fundamental collapse – though the jury is out on that question.

Perhaps the decline of 1500-1200 BCE arose by omission and cultural conservatism more than by perpetration or error. Circumstances were changing. Socio-economic shifts and factors such as climate and declining upland land fertility turned down the screws, obliging response and change.

Bronze Age civilisation seemed unable to respond in a way that would regenerate it and help it survive. There was a distinct loss of interest in megalithic ways in Britain by 1200 BCE, yet there are no signs of desecration or demolition of megalithic sites – merely of quiet abandonment, with no signs of an iconoclastic wish to destroy the vestiges of the past. Time just walked on by.

Bronze Age sites later survived and remained in use through the Iron Age. They neither went to ruin, nor were there many modifications to them, though there are signs that they continued to be used and respected. Although megalithic civilisation had come

to an end, failing somehow to encompass changing times, something nevertheless had succeeded, relatively, as things go: megalithic civilisation had lasted a very long time – far longer in duration than subsequent phases of human history.

Civilisations often fall because of warfare, ecological destruction, over-farming, invasion, top-heavy elites (such as priesthoods) or decadence, but signs of these are not present in late-megalithic Britain. Aristocracies and oligarchies were on the rise around this time though, in the late Bronze Age after 1200 BCE. Long-distance trade breakdown, land abandonment, population decline, climate change and socio-political change were all creeping in.

The Rise and Fall of Civilisations

Many people believe that civilisation in Britain started with the Romans, because ‘civilisation’ involves towns, roads and cash. Anything less is regarded as uncivilised and underdeveloped. But the ancient Britons understood Euclidean and Pythagorean geometry three millennia before Euclid and Pythagoras ever came along. So a different kind of advancement was going on in the megalithic era, amongst the Brits.

Historian Arnold Toynbee had a lot to say about the rise and fall of civilisations.¹¹⁷ His work has been unpopular amongst historians, many of whom have an allergy to the idea of cyclic patterns in history. Toynbee, a learned professor active in the 1930s-60s, noted something about the fall of civilisations: *they decline if they omit to revise their purpose and reorient their direction at the time when they achieve their zenith.*

At this peak point it’s a question of utilising the abundance, achievements and advantages of what has been developed and making something of it – and this gives a civilisation or culture new purpose. However, civilisations and their people tend to sit back, enjoying the fruits of the successful formula they have

¹¹⁷ Toynbee, A J, *A Study of History*, abridged version, various editions 1957-1972. [Online PDF](#). The essence of Toynbee’s theory of history is briefly [explained here](#).

evolved, singing all the hymns because that's what everyone does, and seeking to preserve or expand what has been developed. Yet, in actuality, they slowly settle into a groove, losing initiative and vitality, ossifying, gradually becoming outdated and eventually declining or being overtaken by events.

What follows is educated guesswork. At the end of Penwith's Bronze Age zenith around 1700, population and socio-economic systems had grown, the positive effects of megalithic culture were being enjoyed, and things were going pretty well. But two trends or systems were at work that, over the following centuries, eventually came into conflict, prompted by changing circumstances.

One was the by now traditional megalithic culture, over 500 years old, oriented toward sacredness, cooperation, mutuality and relative sustainability, and the other was an incrementally rising trend toward material growth, social stratification and relative inequality of wealth and power. A cultural compromise emerged, fuelled by the growth of the tin trade and all that went with it.

Broadly, a tension was escalating from around 1500 onwards between community interests and private, aristocratic interests – a perennial issue that divides the world today. This had begun in the late 2000s BCE with the Beaker influx. There was substantial genetic replacement at that time, yet the incomers largely adopted indigenous, megalithic ways, leading to a visible cultural continuity. Those megalithic ways were possibly what attracted them to Britain – perhaps a feeling of ascendancy and excitement. It led to a cultural zenith around 2000-1800.

The tin export trade started lifting off around 1800-1700, leading to increasing overseas contact and the arrival of goods, luxuries and ideas previously unknown in Cornwall. It was an exchange, not a money economy, and Penwithians no doubt did well from it since they had a desirable product – quality tin for making bronze. Some Penwithians did better than others. Otherwise indestructible metals gave a way of storing wealth longterm, allowing for the rise of heritable wealth and aristocratic dynasty-building. This was small-scale, but a trend was gathering pace.

Penwith settled into a comfortable groove. By 1500 BCE the compromise became a stalemate in which each interest group subtly undermined the other – a comparison might be found today in the seemingly irreconcilable global conflict between business and power interests on one side and those of social justice, cooperation and ecological repair on the other. Each side becomes hamstrung by the other, and society finds itself unable or unwilling to decide on which option to prioritise. While sympathising with wise, longterm-oriented ideas, the majority still chooses a comfortable avoidance, preferring not to look at the question and hoping it will go away. In the mid-Bronze Age after 1500 BCE, as material growth, competition, land ownership and social stratification were on the rise, what was gradually dying was a relatively steady-state, sustainable, magically-oriented culture.

By then, interest in advanced megalithic geoengineering projects had declined but sacred sites, now centuries old, were still central to the culture. The main building projects around 1500 and after were burial mounds, gathering places, settlements and hill camps, with less esoteric intent behind them.

In previous chapters I proposed that, with geomantically-purposed cairns built in the early Bronze Age, if burials were included, burial was not the primary purpose for building the cairn. Later cairns and cairnfields, built from 1600 or so onwards, were increasingly purposed for memorialising the great and good. This is a sign of social change. Gathering and trading places and local oligarchies were growing too – centres of power, often called ‘hillforts’.

This cairn-building shift originated in the Beaker influx, with the Beaker people’s interest in burial cairns or *kurgans*, brought mainly by those from central Europe who entered eastern Britain. They also brought a formative ethic of individualism, contributing to a rise in prosperity and social specialisation. While the ideas of earlier times were largely indigenously driven and adopted by the incomers, the core priorities of the incomers and their descendants slowly swung things in another direction. Early principles and traditions were not abandoned, but their emphasis shifted.

Migrants and settlers bring their own cultural overlay. In Cornwall, indigenous and incoming cultures melded over the generations, creating a new cultural impetus, but perhaps these two streams also formed lasting interest groups with contrasting aims (a bit like the left and right in politics today). Conceivably the Beaker-based body of opinion developed a more material approach to things, later leading to the gradual waning of megalithic culture after 1500 BCE.

A Toynbeeian possibility is that, once it had achieved its zenith, Bronze Age megalithic culture trundled along happily for some centuries, but after 1800 BCE the days of building ambitious stone circle complexes and large-scale geoengineering projects had passed and, after 1500, megalithic culture started ossifying, failing to renew itself in the face of new challenges.

Successful cultures become hubristic, seeing no need for change and observing custom to what can become a stifling degree. A point arises where a crisis tips the balance and change ensues, often brought on by younger generations or by a crisis. By the 1200s, a period of crisis arose for *all* existing civilisations of the Old World, bringing their near-simultaneous downfall and the end of an era.

This might have been the mechanism and process by which megalithic civilisation dwindled in the 1500s-1200s. It wasn't just politics but the grinding and grating of two historic mindsets. This was happening across the world in a variety of ways, leading eventually to the Axial Age between 1000 and the 200s BCE, a cultural paradigm shift leading to the rise of new religions, philosophies, societies and classical civilisation. The old magical order was subsumed and sidelined, though it never completely died.

Ancient Britons neither built great cities nor were they empire-builders. Their living conditions were relatively simple, yet on the whole they seem to have lived well. They had the time, brains and motivation to devote themselves to sophisticated megalith building and to the ideas and cultural beliefs that lay behind it. They created Britain's most advanced culture (though Victorian Britain is also a contender) with a sophisticated underlying logic behind it.

In Penwith people had created an extensive system of megalithic sites covering the entire peninsula, constituting *one big sacred site*. What difference would this overarching system make to the peninsula? We cannot experimentally re-run this scenario to examine the before-and-after situation. The criteria with which we might judge any potential differences would need settling first, and geomancers would come up with different ideas to archaeologists.

Without acknowledging the principles of earth energy and geomancy, archaeologists would likely conclude that megalith building made little difference to life and the world, except that interesting monuments were built, perhaps for superstitious or quaintly religious reasons, reflecting rather peculiar prehistoric beliefs from which we moderns have now thankfully emerged.

Megalithic civilisation operated according to fundamentally different principles to ours. Jaded moderns cannot easily believe this to be likely, probable or possible – it's merely a golden-age fantasy held by idealists who need to get real and take a look at the evidence. Well, geomancers have a wee bit of evidence, including alignments, archaeoastronomy, geometry, proportion, metrology, earth-energy patterns and psychometrics – all of which, except for aspects of archaeoastronomy in recent years, have been flatly rejected by most archaeologists. These add up to provide a body of evidence of an advanced civilisation with sophisticated ideas and abilities – and a pretty sustainable one too, given its duration.

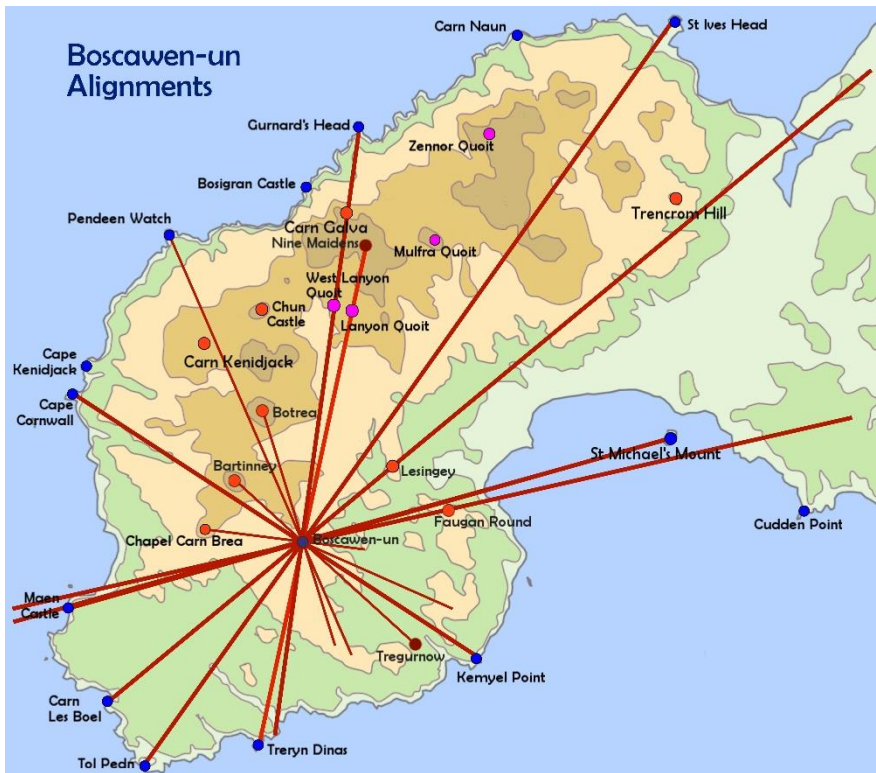
Natural and Artificial Sites

To geomancers, the critical issue rests on the degree to which the building of megalithic sites affected the overall earth energy patterns and resonant enchantment of the landscape. Here, we can distinguish two main groups of ancient sites: *natural power points* (base sites) and *relatively artificial, constructed sites* (proxy, relay, hub, feeder and supporting sites). This binary distinction is an oversimplification but it is useful.

Alignments and other locational factors played a key role in creating and integrating Penwith's peninsular megalithic system.

But the question is, to what extent were power points naturally aligned *before* the megalithic period, and to what degree were they intentionally aligned and set in place by the megalith builders at specific places of their own devising?

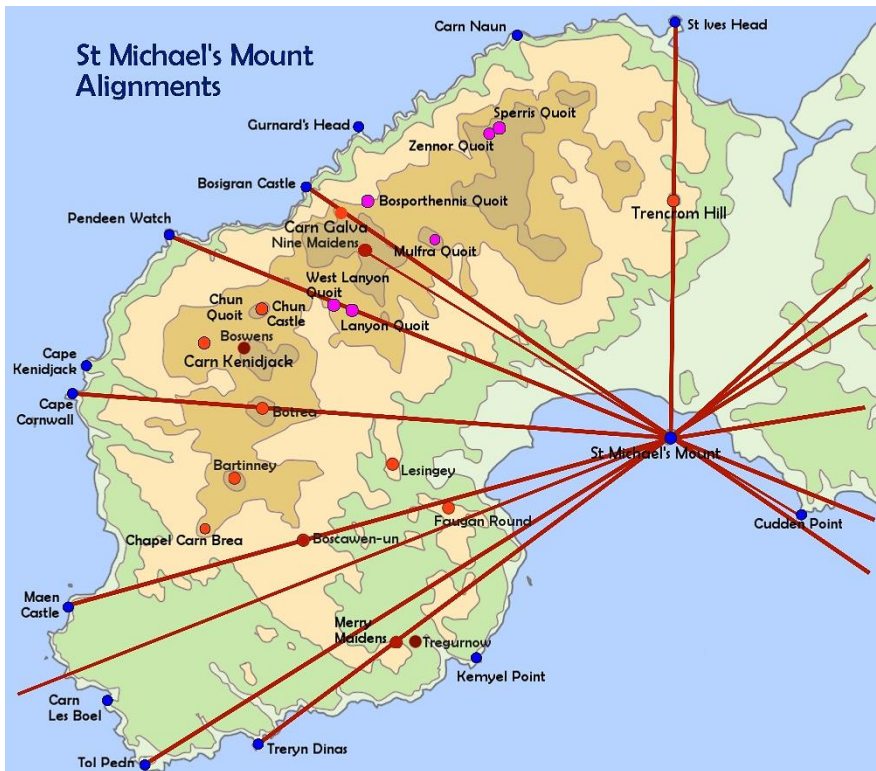
While this is difficult to answer, whichever is the case, the implications are huge: if they are naturally aligned, there is something about the geophysics of this planet that we do not yet know, and it could fundamentally affect our understanding of the earth sciences; and if some power points were artificially migrated into exact alignment, there is something important to learn about how and why the ancients did this.



Some ancient sites do seem to be human-contrived. Boscawen-ûn is an example of a megalithic bulls-eye of this kind: a stone circle was

placed in an exceptional geomantically sensitive spot that doesn't stand out in the landscape, where it would nevertheless help to integrate and light up the whole system. In terms of geomantic thinking, its placing is brilliant, and it shows signs of being put there by utilising multiple megalithic principles.

At other sites, panoramas, underground water, astronomicals or intervisibility are predominant siting factors, and this is also true at Boscawen-ûn. But there is something more here: a geomantic master-stroke energising the Penwith megalithic system as a whole. It was a feat of genius or remarkable intuition. Boscawen-ûn is placed so that it aligns with six cliff sanctuaries – this on its own is remarkable and a feat both of natural order and of human ingenuity.



Let's take a look at another power point, St Michael's Mount, because there is again something masterly to its placing. This time it is definitely a *natural* base site. This hints at a need to research an innate order to the way that natural power points and geological features arrange themselves in the landscape.

Notice how major backbone alignments connect with at least seven cliff sanctuaries around Penwith's coast, and with three significant hills (Trencrom, Carn Galva and Botrea), three stone circles (Nine Maidens, Boscawen-ûn and the Merry Maidens), plus Lanyon Quoit. Four of these sites are constructed and ten are natural.

There's a certain beauty to this, suggesting that natural power points and artificial or constructed sites are not as distinct as one might think, and that man-made sites are not exclusively artificial. It shows how the principle of alignment is not wholly human-devised – it was derived from observation of nature, or the idea was developed interactively with nature.

Both maps show a coherent system with a visible order to it. Someone back in the Neolithic 3000s figured out that *the whole is greater than the sum of its parts*. This principle was applied early on, since the first major constructed sites, the quoits, were built to form a connected system covering the main occupied area of Penwith at that time. Were the quoits a prototype testing the viability of alignment and astronomical orientation as principles?

A millennium later in the Bronze Age, as population grew, land was cleared and ideas grew more sophisticated, the system was extrapolated, and this gave us hundreds of stone circles, mounds and menhirs. By the time of the megalithic zenith around 2200-1800 BCE, a level of intricacy and integration was reached whereby energy levels in the system as a whole must have gone through a critical quantum shift in magnitude and voltage. Penwith achieved a landscape-wide geomantic lift-off. Something clicked together to give the whole peninsula an energy-upgrade – an upgrade that still can be felt today.

The ancients clearly perceived that there were benefits to building such an enormous, peninsula-wide system, given the investment of

time, energy and effort needed. Even if such effort was spread over a long time, it represents a remarkable consistency of magical infrastructure-building, sparking an exponential leap in culture and technological sophistication. It is likely to have come in bursts, during growth times and when the impetus was there.

This raises an interesting dilemma. Starting assumptions and protocols in any newly-evolving system can contain small errors, simply because we cannot know how the system will evolve as it grows bigger. Such errors inevitably replicate as the system develops, introducing weaknesses and glitches which then need to be corrected with bug fixes. But these fixes themselves introduce new layers of complexity, since it is difficult to fundamentally rewrite and test a system's basic coding and structure while it's in use. Thus, convolutions can be perpetuated because the system itself has an embedded potential for complexity.

Is this complexity visible in the Penwith alignments system? Yes, it shows itself in the intricacy of alignments on the maps, creating quite a tangle in the overall patterning of the system. If one were to develop a new master plan from scratch, it would probably be designed more simply and coherently.

This is possibly what happened with the alignments system on Scilly, which had quite a clean start when the islands were permanently settled in the early Bronze Age – there is more order and coherence on Scilly than in the Penwithian system, established a millennium earlier.

Penwith's megalithic system evolved over many generations. Each generation will have done what it thought best, while staying true to protocols established long before. All this was done toward a clear aim: *to engage in a kind of megalithic geoengineering*. But before going further, let's look at a few critical aspects of life in Penwith which had an effect on the evolution of this system.

Wildwoods

Around 4000 BCE Penwith was covered with pretty endless forest, with clearer areas in patches in the highlands and around the coasts. People were rather overwhelmed by trees – they could make clearings and burn down patches, but it would simply re-grow if unmanaged. The Neolithics had not learned enough about re-fertilising the soil to have permanent fields for growing food. They didn't want to be entirely sedentary.



As population grew and agriculture developed during the 3000s, clearings grew larger. The highlands where most people lived were

clearer than lower down but, when the Neolithic Crisis arrived around 3200 BCE, leading to depopulation, the forest grew back.

Things changed in the Bronze Age after 2500 BCE. Over the subsequent centuries, Penwith's population grew and metal tools came into use, enabling more clearance, farming and human influence on the landscape. Man-made scenery started evolving such that, by 1800ish BCE, wildwood cover was around 50% in Penwith. There were areas of man-made landscape and areas of wildscape. This was new. And this was of people's own making.

I started looking at areas that were relatively devoid of ancient sites – such as west and south of St Buryan, in an area comparatively empty of sites. Then there were areas around Penzance and St Ives and other, smaller patches. I worked on a reasonable assumption that areas lacking ancient sites were forested, producing a conjectural map to show those areas.

The virtue of this map is to help us imagine life and how things looked in Penwith around 1800 BCE – to gain more of a real-life picture. As you can see on the map, land use had resolved into a series of cleared areas, focused particularly around the stone circle complexes, which arguably were the main centres of activity.

One thing I would love to learn, though it is impossible, is the way that the ancients chose to shape the landscape. It is clear that they kept certain vistas open, since the lay of the land is an integral part of the visual setting of stone circles and other key sites. Chapel Carn Brea is an important part of Boscawen-ûn's landscape setting, and the ocean and the Scillies were part of Tregeseal's. It would be essential to see Carn Galva from Lanyon Quoit or St Michael's Mount from Carfury menhir.

Thus the ancients took an active role in selective landscaping – thoughtfully felling trees to create vistas – since this was a key ingredient in megalithic landscape design. This is a sign of a pretty sustainable civilisation: while altering the face of the land, people took a nature-sympathetic approach. They knew that overriding the preferences of nature, the spirits and ecological good sense would charge its price.

Perhaps there was a folk-memory of the Neolithic Crisis when everything went wrong. They most likely didn't know its cause, but they probably surmised that their ancestors had somehow erred, and this should not be repeated. Clearance and land-management involved hard, physical work too: tractors, chainsaws, herbicides and resource-exploitation were far in the future.

Transport Infrastructure

How did people get around? Quite simply, *walking*. There were no roads, and common use of beasts of burden for riding and carrying loads came later, around the end of the megalithic period. But people did get around, and Penwith was a nicely-sized, varied landscape for doing so – not too big and not too small. Bigger and lesser trackways developed from early in the Mesolithic onwards, along routes that evolved through the simple trampling of feet.



For me, this line of research began while walking near the farm where I live. There is an old wall-lined, straightish footpath (SW 405 303) that is clearly centuries old. One day I noticed that it was aligned between Caer Brân in one direction and Botrea Barrows in the other. This implied that the path was not just centuries old – it probably went back to the time when Caer Brân was built, around 1800 BCE. It comes from Chûn Castle and Carn Galva to Caer Brân, proceeding then to Boscawen-ûn and the Merry Maidens. This was a major trackway linking important parts of Penwith.

I started looking in the field, in map-work, from records and by deduction at other parts of Penwith, building up a picture of the main trackways, eventually coming up with a conjectural map of the main tracks in the mid-Bronze Age. It is speculative but I have 80% confidence in its usefulness.

One well known trackway is the Tinner's Way¹¹⁸ from Cape Cornwall, past Carn Galva and the Nine Maidens to St Ives – though its precise path is unknown in a few parts. Another path, the Coffin or Churchway Path,¹¹⁹ followed a lower, parallel route close to the north coast, via Zennor. Then there is the Giants' Way¹²⁰ (now St Michael's Way) from St Ives and Lelant, past Trencrom Hill to St Michael's Mount – a track is known to have been there, but time has obscured much of it.

Other old trackways in Penwith are less well known. One is the coastal path from Porthcurno to Cape Cornwall, past Tol Pedn, Carn Lês Boel, Mayon Cliff, Sennen and the Boscregan Cairns, which might have been a Bronze Age pilgrimage path with a number of remarkable stations along it. Others take the form of short stretches here and there, many of them being medieval.

Landscape Temples

The notion of landscape temples cropped up in John Michell's work in the 1960s-70s – the idea that ancient sites conglomerated

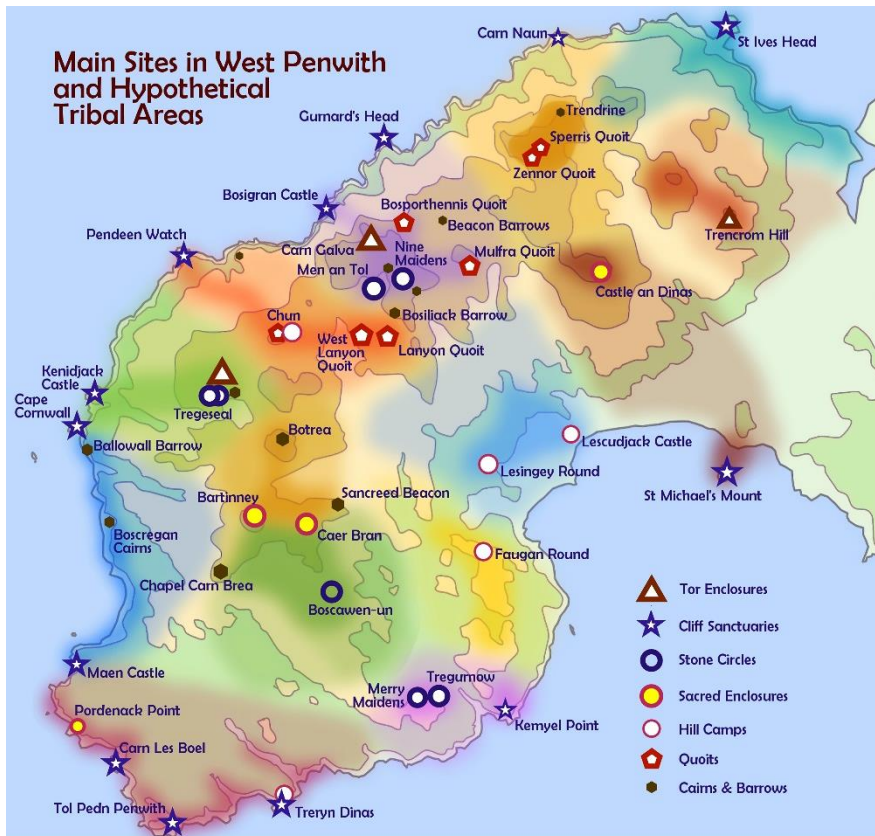
¹¹⁸ The Tinnars' Way <https://meynmamvro.co.uk/archive/mm09-summer-1989.html> pp18-19

¹¹⁹ Churchway Path <https://meynmamvro.co.uk/archive/mm59-winter-2006.html> pp20-21

¹²⁰ The Giant's Way <https://meynmamvro.co.uk/archive/mm98-spring-2019.html> p12.

into landscape areas, stretched around the lay of the land and the array of sites located there. It introduced the idea that ancient sites existed not in isolation but in a wider context, operating as a megalithic system. However, this has not been studied in depth. Penwith is useful in this regard inasmuch as it has clear boundaries with a distinct identity and character. It is a big landscape temple.

Penwith's population was made up of clans and large extended families, each of which occupied its own part of the peninsula. To a great extent these areas will have reflected Penwith's perceptual landscape – its hills, valleys and geographical features. It will have evolved that way in the early Neolithic when clans settled after being nomadic. They became transhumant – occupying a territory and wandering around it in an annual round.



Around the end of the megalithic period, around 1200, another change came when communally-organised clans disintegrated and families settled in farms with more permanent, stone-built fields and buildings. Climate deteriorated, upland areas became peaty and infertile, and people relied increasingly on farmed rather than collected, hunted and fished foods. The north coast between Morvah and St Ives with its small, ancient walled fields is often quoted as an area typifying this new agricultural situation.

This map, though speculative, is carefully considered, reflecting the shape of the landscape and the distribution of settlements and ancient sites around the zenith of the Bronze Age in Penwith.

The size of each landscape temple or clan territory does not reflect a clan's influence: the clan areas around the Merry Maidens and Tregeseal were relatively small, yet these two clans were probably very influential. The Tregeseal people had a stone circle complex, Cape Cornwall and a tin export trade through Porth Nanven and Porth Ledden. The people of the Merry Maidens had a substantial double stone circle complex and good farmland, while the presence of the nearby Kemyel complex suggests they might have hosted a kind of geomantic and druidic college.

The clan around Carn Galva will have had tradition on their side because, back in the Neolithic, they lived at the centre of things – they might have been the chief or capital clan. They had two stone circles (Nine Maidens and Mên an Tol), one or two cliff sanctuaries (Bosigran and Gurnard's Head), and Carn Galva.

The clan occupying the coast between Cape Cornwall, Sennen and Maen Castle, west of Chapel Carn Brea, were probably related to Scillonians – they will have been involved with them since Sennen beach was the main landing place for Scillonian boats.

The Boscawen-ûn clan or caucus were probably quite central in the Penwith social constellation, and with the Merry Maidens clan it probably hosted quite a few druids and people of knowledge, some coming from elsewhere. The St Michael's Mount clan were probably quite cosmopolitan by dint of the trading taking place at the Mount with foreigners and travellers from upcountry.

The southwestern clan held some important cliff sanctuaries (Carn Lês Boel, Tol Pedn and Treryn Dinas) though they were probably small in number, living out at the far edge of Penwith, yet in charge of an uplifting, holy part of Penwith's coast.

Over the course of the megalithic millennium of the Bronze Age, things changed and evolved, probably several times. Population growth and the colonisation of the south around 2200-1800 will have birthed new offshoot clans in the south, gaining in stature as time went on and shifting Penwith's centre of gravity southwards to roughly the position of Caer Brân. Life became more complex, more was at stake, and a socio-political development wave will have arisen, leaving signs in the newbuilt infrastructure of circular gathering sites such as Castle an Dinas and Caer Brân.

All of the clans of Penwith will somehow have been related, by dint of shared origins back in time or through intermarriage. They also played a part in the larger confederacy of the Dumnonii, the people of Britain's southwestern peninsula. Penwith is the sort of area that naturally cultivates a sense of innate solidarity amongst its occupants, even today. Each clan area will have had its assets and deficiencies, its specialisms, character and contribution to make, with much trade, exchange and social interaction between clans.

Tribal Penwithians

In archaeology there is a presumption of competitiveness and violence in ancient times, a retrojection on the past of the collective psychology of today, as if this were the only mode of social operation that *can* exist. This bias goes critical in regions like Cornwall, where violence and competition have not prevailed in prehistory and history – and this is still the case today. The Cornish are not a strident lot.

Cornwall has had less invasion and external threat than other parts of Britain or western Europe. The Romans and Vikings didn't bother, the Saxons took a long time and failed to pass the Tamar, and the Normans didn't forcefully invade Cornwall as they did Wales and Ireland – instead they infiltrated it over time, by elite

subterfuge. If Napoleon or the Nazis had invaded Britain they would not have done it through Cornwall.

The Cornish have long had a cultural norm which is less combative and more collaborative than other peoples. Great Cornish warrior-heroes are hardly remembered while Cornish saints are famous. Archaeological evidence of conflict, even from the heroic and at times troubled Iron Age, is thin, and this evidence is also subject to interpretative bias.

An example is the deep-set belief that hill camps and cliff sanctuaries were primarily defensive in nature and purpose. In Penwith they were not, and elsewhere in Cornwall they served mainly as aristocratic or clan manors, and as trading and gathering places. They did protect assets and could be defended, but this was not their reason for being and we should not tilt our thinking that way. In modern times, malls, banks and hospitals have security guards, but this does not make them into fortresses.

England, from which such an interpretative consensus largely emanates, was founded by Germanic warrior peoples and invaders. Even in earlier ancient times there was a cultural divide between the west and the east of Britain, with inward migrants from Atlantic Europe in the west and from Central Europe in the east.

Competition is in the cultural DNA of the English, born out of an innate sense of individualism that the people of the west do not share. So it is inappropriate to judge Cornish ancient sites on the same basis as those in what is now England.

Ancient Penwithians were not angels and no doubt had their faults, arguments and problems, and a diversity of interests will have developed as population increased, land use changed and time went on. But the Dumnonii as a whole were not strident people. The Penwithians, a sub-tribe, seem to have been even less so – their friendliness was noted by Pytheas the Greek in the 330s BCE.

Some cultures regard conflict as a moral failure, a waste and a cause of inevitable further problems. Or they have ritualised ways of dealing with disputes or building consensus to resolve them. Or they simply have not experienced sufficient social pain and damage

to cause them to want to fight. Or their own or their leaders' moral codes discourage aggression.

This seems to be the case in West Penwith. Throughout time it has been relatively peaceable. One reason might well be the resonant energy-signals inherent in its geology and location, upstepped and strengthened by esoteric geoengineering and consciousness work done over many centuries in Penwith, a consecrated peninsular landscape temple at the southwestern end of the islands of Britain.

23. The Heart of the World

The ancients were not just shamans playing magical games. There was a serious, thought-through spiritual and esoteric core to their beliefs and worldview. They set out to solve real life issues in a magical way, using a deep-level philosophy of enhancing nature and human life. Their approach was esoterically, socially and environmentally more advanced, sustainable and civilised than we care to believe. They were in the business of a kind of geoengineering, tinkering with fundamentals.

Geoengineering

Modern geoengineering is ‘deliberate large-scale intervention in the earth’s natural systems to counteract climate change’.¹²¹ Proposed geoengineering methods, intended to mitigate climatic extremes, take two main forms: CO₂ reduction and solar radiation management (SRM).

CO₂ reduction sets out to reduce emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases, by natural and/or artificial means. SRM involves tweaking the incoming heat of the sun and its capacity to warm the planet, mainly by spreading particles, chemicals and electromagnetic pulses in the atmosphere and oceans to induce cloud cover or change earth’s reflectivity.

However, additional actions are possible such as changing the reflectivity of buildings (painting them white), protecting snow-covered areas from melting, reducing air pollution, changes of land use and rewilding, to name a few. CO₂ reduction is slower and relatively safer while SRM is riskier but potentially quicker.

The safest and most eco-friendly methods of CO₂ reduction involve reafforestation, conversion to ecological land-use practices, environmental clean-up, technological change, consumption reduction (in Britain to roughly 1960 levels) and urban and

¹²¹ [Oxford Geoengineering Programme](#).

industrial redesign. This takes time and we aren't going fast enough – we needed to start this in the 1970s. The situation pushes us toward using faster SRM techniques.

Meanwhile, SRM has never been done before at any scale, and we don't know how much intervention is enough, since results take time, and we don't know the longterm and wider effects of different SRM techniques.

And... *who decides?* Governments, billionaires, scientists, or the UN? If SRM benefits USA or China while diverting the East African monsoon, what happens? If a billionaire or a government secretly funds an SRM project, who has the controls?

Will SRM actually work as planned? This tilts us back toward CO₂ reduction, the safer option. We will at least have to research SRM methods, though in both cases there should be global consensus, monitoring and control – and that's a geopolitical, legal, economic and technical minefield. So, both options have problems.

There is potentially a third way, widening the options and offering at least a partial solution. It involves working with subtle energy, energy fields and human consciousness. The third option would not be easy: there is much to research, develop and test, together with social acceptance and conceptual obstacles to navigate. Much research and trialling would be needed. In the modern world, experiments have been made in this field, including Psi experiments in Soviet Russia, though they are not widely known, so there is an element of starting from scratch.¹²²

We encountered this issue in the 1990s with the Hundredth Monkey Project, in which we did large-group consciousness work with world events, seeking to contribute toward their resolution. It involved a hundred or so participants taking part in a focused, intensive week-long retreat, once a year for three years. We worked on remote conflict-resolution, psychic disaster response, and the ecological and hot-potato global issues of the time. We found, when focusing on forest fires, the ozone layer and other

¹²² McTaggart, Lynne, *The Field: the Quest for the Secret Force of the Universe*, Element, 2003.

environmental issues, that such things as weather conditions sometimes changed around the time we worked on them – though not always, and this was clearly not a mechanical process.

Largely it went well but we found that, given the prevailing values of society at the time, we were beginning to run ahead of what was societally viable and doable. The wider implications were large too. Finding unconditional, well-motivated funding was difficult, there was a risk of harmful interventions from the authorities and media, there were adjustment problems for participants when they went home, and there were deep moral choices to be made in the work we had taken on. These and other issues suggested that the project was sadly premature and unsustainable. It was duly closed down and a smaller group, the Flying Squad, continued with this kind of work for twenty further years. But smaller numbers, though more discreet and focused, did not have the same effect.¹²³

Such consciousness work is likely to be a longterm, ‘phase two’ kind of strategy, perhaps speeding up as new generations become more ready for it.

The key issue is that there are 8-9 billion souls on earth having a life-experience. Most people are not at ease with themselves or with life, if truth be known, and our societies are stressed, hyperactive and riddled with contradiction, discordance and pain.

This causes an enormous psychic churning. The most malleable, adaptable aspect of our planet is its atmosphere and climate. So the global climate responds to the churning, swinging increasingly between increasingly dramatic extremes. Dissonance lies at the root of so many of today’s global and local problems. To address this situation we need to re-resonate earth and humanity, to restore vibrational order.

Megalithic geoengineering is, theoretically, a way of influencing the global situation while reducing the risks inherent in the kind of geoengineering projects that otherwise are being proposed. It works by enhancement and encouragement rather than by force. It

¹²³ About the aims and methods of the Flying Squad: www.flyingsquad.org.uk

addresses a full and wide spectrum of climatic, environmental and human issues woven together, while modern proposals tend to address climate only. But the deeper and wider roots of the climatic and environmental crises lie in society and human politics.

This is new territory and the efficacy of geoengineering methods of *any* kind can neither easily be trialled in a laboratory nor in the field and at scale. Enormous social, political and other issues are bound up with any approach. But *something* needs doing, so we cannot evade this question. Actually, we need a miracle.

By its very nature, megalithic-style geoengineering is adaptogenic – acting when and where necessary, doing only what is required. It entrains and reprocesses available energy like sails catching the wind. The problem with modern geoengineering methods such as SRM is that they can increase environmental imbalance and toxicity, causing widespread damage and secondary consequences. A megalithic-style approach might help accelerate natural restorative processes. This said, humanity hasn't done this at scale in recent millennia, so *we don't actually know*.

Thus, such a suggestion at this stage can only be tentative. The main point here is that a subtle-energy approach could be safer, sounder and more all-encompassing, and *it is worth researching*. Not least because it can address the laws of nature from a deeper level, *within* the structure of nature.

We don't need to build new stone circles or modify existing ones, but we do need to develop ways of seeking what the ancients sought. This means re-examining the relationship between consciousness, energy and matter. It involves a paradigm shift that normally would be considered impossible, but crisis demands extraordinary measures. It would be necessary to research ideas and methods that in today's world are considered unacceptable.

Authorities and the public are unlikely in the foreseeable future to be persuaded to adopt radical alternatives such as the subtle-energy methods proposed here. Yet it is worth doing some groundlaying and experimentation in preparation for possible future acceptance. We need to think longterm.

Earth Acupuncture

Subtle-energy environmental management encompasses the ecological, climatic, geo-electromagnetic, psycho-emotional and esoteric influences that affect natural systems and human society.



Carn Kenidjack from the gateway to Chûn Castle

It concerns life-energy.

Using a *vitalist* viewpoint, recognising a life-force and intelligence that powers and regulates all living things – as with James Lovelock’s 1970s Gaia hypothesis¹²⁴ – it is conceivable to engage with nature’s morphogenetic programming from the inside, using the mechanisms by which all things take shape and behave.

In megalithic times this was done through consciousness work carried out at power points in space and time. This influenced the fundamental processes at work in nature and society. Reality-fields, generated on a local and a larger scale, can nudge, modify or supplant existing reality-fields lying behind today’s environmental and other global problems.

A principle at work here is *earth acupuncture*. Jiggle energy-nodes and whole landscapes can be affected through their alignments and energy-currents. It’s a core principle in dowsing and earth healing. By skilfully energising earth energy systems, the self-correcting and restorative capacities of those systems are encouraged. Earth acupuncture techniques can be applied at nodal power points, or by working with energy-fields and energy-currents, or by inserting thought and spirit into the system through inner work.

Power points act like control centres, servers or hubs for the eco-climatological energy system. Enhancing and tweaking them can

¹²⁴ Lovelock’s Gaia hypothesis: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gaia_hypothesis

bring widespread results in terms of harvests, weather, ecological balance and social wellbeing. This is not just an abstract theory, since many dowzers and earth healers have obtained good results working with houses, parcels of land and localities, correcting unhelpful energy issues and other demonstrable, multi-faceted benefits. Their techniques are well demonstrated and developed, though not widely known.¹²⁵

Earth acupuncture was a core objective behind the building of megalithic sites. It was not necessary for the whole country to be covered with them: concentrations in areas such as West Penwith, Bodmin Moor and Dartmoor, where conditions were optimal, served far wider areas.

Magical-Spiritual Working

Spiritual and magical work can create intensified reality-fields. Crucial here are the kinds of ancient sites that act as energy containers. We need to study the energy-properties of these sites so that we can reproduce and further develop them.



Summer solstice sunset from Woon Gumpus

Intensified reality-fields become portals, magnifiers and processors through which ideas, initiatives, solutions and resolutions can emerge. They act as energy crucibles in which advanced consciousness states can be generated for a range of problem-solving purposes. The subtle relief, revelation and uplift that we tend to experience when visiting ancient sites provide evidence of

¹²⁵ Try: Procter, Roy and Ann, *Healing Sick Houses*, Penwith Press, 2021.

this, allowing us traces and whiffs of the inner states that the ancients entered into in former times.

Here comes a challenging proposition. Magical work done in ancient times operated at a level higher than we understand today, penetrating the spirit and intelligence of nature as a whole and working to *maintain the world*. This function was alluded to in a moving message given to the world by shamans from northern Colombia, the Kogi Mamas, in about 1989. It went like this:

We are the Elder Brothers. We have not forgotten the old ways... We still know how to dance. We have forgotten nothing. We know how to call the rain. If it rains too hard we know how to stop it. We call the summer. We know how to bless the world and make it flourish.

But now they are killing the Mother. The Younger Brother, all he thinks about is plunder. The Mother looks after him but he does not think. He is cutting into her flesh. He is cutting into her arms. He is cutting off her breasts. He takes out her heart. He is killing the heart of the world...

*If all we Mamas died and there was no one doing our work, well, the rain wouldn't fall from the sky. It would get hotter from the sky and the trees wouldn't grow, the crops wouldn't grow...*¹²⁶

Strong stuff. When describing cutting into her flesh, arms and breasts, the Mamas refer to mining, oil extraction, environmental destruction, deforestation and damage to river systems. In their shamanic practices, the Mamas talk of *making payment* on behalf of humanity – the ‘younger brother’ – and, on a deep level, out of generosity, care and love. They work to pay forward to nature, through their environmental and farming practices, to build up natural capital and credit, and to address the contentment of the world itself, *Gaia*, in its heart.

¹²⁶ Ereira, Alan, *The Heart of the World*, Jonathan Cape, London, 1990.

To do this they enter into lengthy, profound thought and consciousness work to uplift nature, counteract negativity and care for the spirit and soul of the Mother.¹²⁷

The Mamas engaged in *deep thought* – consciousness work – to care for and aid the world as a living being. They would sit together for hours and days, in silence, reflecting, focusing, discussing and inwardly penetrating and processing the matter, intensifying the focus until a breakthrough point would come. They talk of *entering the heart of the world*, the soul of the planet on which we live.

In the Flying Squad we called this *circle working*. We would work on an issue, first silently meditating on it, then passing a talking stick around the circle to allow all of the issues that were pertinent to come up and out. This could take time and it could go deep. Sometimes we would pause for insight, or enter into a group process such as a role-play enactment of the situation we were addressing, or we would do a group visualisation, or we would erupt into spontaneous processes no one had expected. We would continue ‘pressure-cooking’ until the matter came to some sort of a resolution. Even our fireside chats over food in the evenings were relevant, informally wrapping up the matter and checking whether there remained any outstanding issues.

Moving into the heart of the world, we can help the world fulfil its own reason for being. We play a proactive part in the world process. A Tibetan lama, Orgyen Trinley Dorje, the 17th Karmapa, teaches this with his modern perspective on the traditional Buddhist philosophy of ‘non-duality’: *the world around us is a reflection of the world within us, and vice versa, since they are interactive aspects of one and the same thing*.

Environmental depletion, climatic turbulence, toxicity and species extinction mirror these traits within ourselves: we are the proud owners of defiled, distorted, toxified, hurt psyches, and this affects our behaviour and life-choices, individually and as a mass. Feeling insecure and ill at ease as a society, we consume far more than we

¹²⁷ See Alan Ereira’s film [Aluna – there is no life without thought](#).

need, gaining diminishing returns the more we do it. We are conflicted within ourselves and between each other. This creates a global dissonance that is harmful, anxious, disturbed and insensitive. Thus it is necessary to improve conditions in both the inner and outer spheres, on the basis that they mirror each other. Mental health issues and environmental degradation are related.

Rebalancing the climate and environment goes hand in hand with healing people and society. Climate is where human commotion and tension easily dump their psychic fallout, and it responds with turbulence, storms and weather extremes. It's all about how we *see* things and how we build up momentum to create the beginning of a virtuous cycle of environmental repair and psycho-social healing.

Megalithic sites were built to engineer conditions in which consciousness work could be done. They were the temples, reactors and crucibles of their day, permitting shamanic engagement with the deeper mechanics of the world process. Maintaining the world, caring for the productivity and spirit of the land and the welfare of tribes, healing sick and injured people... these were the kind of aims the ancients would have had.

This is in our DNA and traditions. Many readers will at times of need have prayed for peace, for the sick, the suffering, the downtrodden or for themselves. Older readers might remember the Silent Minute, a mass-consciousness event organised by Wellesley Tudor Pole, the occultist Dion Fortune and others.¹²⁸ For one minute at 9pm, BBC radio and the nation went quiet. This continued from WW2 until the 1960s, when it was dropped. These kinds of practices are not foreign to us. Even magic moments at the Olympic Games, or a concert, or during a speech, or events in the news, can generate an intensity of collective feeling that can occasionally be transformative.

World-maintenance work of this kind is still done today by shamans and priests of certain original and first-nation peoples, as well as by people of faith worldwide and, in recent decades, by

¹²⁸ The Silent Minute: <https://chalicewell.org.uk/the-origins-of-the-silent-minute-2/>

meditation and healing groups, collective prayer and committed individuals in all corners of the globe. This remains a minority activity, unacknowledged by conventional global culture. But it is happening, and it's free to join. The necessary knowledge and experience for doing this is present with us, and people are chipping away at things as we speak.

Social Synergy

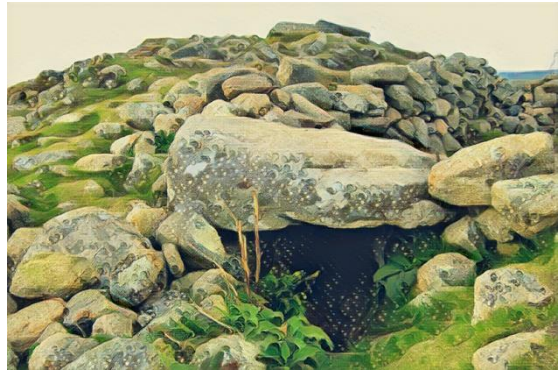
One of the best ways to unify and strengthen society is for people to work toward a common aim. Such a dynamic often emerges in wars, crises, mass events, uprisings, poignant incidents, celebrations and moments of social bonding. In such instances of heightened power and possibility the rules of the game of life come into fresh focus, becoming subject to change from within.

A 'ring of power' of innate trust and solidarity helps a society function fruitfully, and social alienation and disaffection tend to weaken it. Moments of social crisis, togetherness and awakening, even when suppressed by authorities, move things forward – socially shared ideas, values and behaviour change.

We are entering a time when, in coming decades, the world's multifarious pending issues could amass into a series of cascading perfect storms coming at us in rapid succession, prompting accelerated change.

Avalanches of events have a pressure-

cooking effect and, at some point, humanity could achieve an intensity of feeling and focus in response that resembles the essence of what the ancients themselves sought to generate – the creation of reality-fields that create a fundamentally new normal.



Chambered cairn atop Chapel Carn Brea

This potential is amplified by the sheer number of souls alive today, and by the intensity, poignancy and nightmarishness of events occurring globally and rapidly shared through the media. With this intensification, a growing need arises to resolve the dissonances and conflicts of interest that have thus far held the world back, and to address their fundamental causes.

To get through the 21st Century, we humans are obliged by circumstance to cooperate. We need to rebuild sufficient trust and cooperation to carry out the crucial project of planetary-scale environmental, climatic and psycho-social repair. On a deep level, this references back to early times in human history, to times before many of today's problems began developing. In Britain, this was the Mesolithic, Neolithic and the Bronze Age up to 1200 BCE.

In ancient times, building quoits and stone circles gave people a way of working together on an overarching project. It required knowledge, planning, teamwork, support systems, logistics, social consent and collective effort. This says something about the leadership of the time, in managing and mobilising people, and in the confidence and involvement of ordinary people in a megalithic vision and strategy that lasted many generations.

If a society produces more than it needs, it can go beyond basic living into cultural florescence. In Neolithic and Bronze Age Cornwall, there were clearly periods of plenty, permitting quoits, stone circle complexes and other sites to be built.

Necessity is a driver of change and collaboration. A sense of necessity can be generated by force of circumstance or driven by upwelling social sentiments or despair, and these are rarely separate. What necessity pushed the ancients? Earlier in this book it was suggested that megalith building in the early Bronze Age might have arisen from a kind of 'never again' eco-religiosity – a psycho-spiritual response to a deep memory of the crisis that occurred around 3200-2900 BCE, many generations earlier. We cannot know, but this is possible.

The megalithic project was big, ongoing, and it lasted centuries. Ascendancies like this gain momentum by building up a virtuous

cycle of belief, creativity and work. After the peak of the Bronze Age, people were surrounded by ancient sites and customs that slowly, over the centuries, lost their energy and heart. It might even be that a comfortable social conservatism constrained progress: *this is the way we've always done things, so why change?*

Land-fertilisation and soil-improvement methods (composting, rotation, drainage and so on) were at times stretched in the Bronze Age, especially with a growing population. Local archaeologist David Giddings has found signs of agricultural terracing on the ocean-facing cliff slopes at Nanquidno,¹²⁹ suggesting a shortage of land.

Plausibly, the ancients resorted to metaphysical means to improve their life situation and, judging by the longevity of the megalithic era, something about it must have worked sufficiently well to achieve such longterm continuity.

Re-enchanting the World

Nature is happy when it is loved, protected and nurtured – as demonstrated today in gardens and nature reserves. Humans are happy when out in nature. This is a matter of energy-resonance, the modulation of frequencies and connections between all things, the way they interact, and their psychoactive and bioregulatory effects on each other. In other words, it's not difficult to attract fairies to your garden.

Sound and music go far back into prehistory, and techniques developed to build and refine musical instruments have stood at the cutting edge of craft and technology development. Nature makes its music, speaking through the wind, waves, birdsong or the wailing of the Hooting Tor on a dark, forbidding night. Working with sound and vibration gave the ancients a key to comprehending energy and vibration and their behaviour and permutations. Growing archaeo-acoustical evidence shows that some ancient sites

¹²⁹ Verbally communicated during a field tour at the CASPN Pathways to the Past weekend, 2017.

and stones were built to resonate musically or subsonically when struck, or in response to chant, horns or drumming.¹³⁰

Around 1970, when John Michell talked of re-enchanting the land, it rang a bell for many people. Three strands of re-enchantment are worth looking at:

- restoration of a sense of wonder, magic, sparkle and nuance in the natural world;
- sound, music, song and chant for creating resonance and tuning into frequencies for their vibrational and emotional effects on people, the environment and the world of spirit;
- re-harmonisation and enhancement of the homoeostatic or self-repairing capacities of earth systems by upstepping the resonance-levels in nature and in human relations.

This relates to the Kogi notion of paying forward and energy-maintenance – keeping the heart of the world happy – and Lovelock’s *Gaia* hypothesis, which looks on our planet as a self-regulating, multilevel, conscious being, with its own intelligence, life-purpose, agenda and design.

We are affected by nature’s vitality and, while we might omit to value its full effects on our spirits, these energies exert subliminal effects anyway, however conscious we are of it. When I took my elderly mother to visit Castle Rigg stone circle in Cumbria, she sat there on a stone for ages, very quietly. Eventually coming to, blinking, she muttered, “*Oh, I was far away with the fairies...*”. Precisely. She was. It was a special moment, spirit-blest.

When people raise their sense of magical wonder, belief and enchantment, it elicits a positive response in nature, strengthening an interactive dialogue that is emotional, aesthetic, intellectual, intuitive, mystical and reciprocal. This can be detected through dowsing. The response is up-stepped enormously when done in groups of people synergising with each other. This is not just a

¹³⁰ Debertolis, P & Bisconti, N, [Archaeoacoustics in Ancient Sites](#), SB Research. Cook, Ian A, *et al*, [Ancient Architectural Acoustic Resonance Patterns and Regional Brain Activity](#), *Time & Mind*, 2008.; Till, Rupert, [Songs of the Stones – the acoustic culture of Stonehenge](#), *J Intl Assn for the Study of Popular Music*, 2010.

matter of perception: it becomes an objective, functional reality with its own laws of operation.

Innerwork, ceremony, spectacle, song and chant create coherent resonances, building up a vibrational reality-field. When a tribe spanning several generations, who have sung together since the dawn of days, begin a swaying, rhythmic chant, building up over many hours under a bright moon, a quantum resonance locks in.

A vibrational field is created that multiplies in potency. Group activity such as this moves everyone's awareness to another level, activating their cells, making the mountains hum and the streams tinkle brightly. If one could *see* the psychic effects of this it would probably emanate colourful, filigree waves of light and vibration far beyond its immediate locality.

This concerns singing up the power points to activate and re-resonance them, to clean them out, rebalancing and restoring the coherency of their reality-fields, assisting them in serving their purpose. This point has not been lost on those who in recent decades have gone into earth healing: singing, chanting, laughter, bagpipes, drums, even rock bands jiggle, awaken and seem to please power points, and this then radiates out across the land.

Having visited ancient sites for over half a century, I think it is safe to say that the growing love and attention given to them by increasing numbers of people has brought observable benefit.¹³¹

There has been a lighting up of ancient sites – and of people who visit them. This has highlighted a dilemma, a battle over mindsets: a magical-spiritual worldview that sees ancient sites as sacred landscape temples, versus a materialist one that sees them as monuments with heritage, dollar value and zero magic.

This is a national security issue concerning the *true* defence of the realm – as much from itself as from external threats. It's also an important part of building a socially and environmentally just and sustainable world. Re-enchantment of the land is not just a fanciful,

¹³¹ An interesting account of such modern magical interaction in West Penwith: Rupert White, *The Re-Enchanted Landscape – earth mysteries, paganism and art in Cornwall 1950-2000*, Antenna Press, 2017.

romantic idea. It concerns vibrational reorientation of the land and the creation of new social, economic and ecological practices going far beyond organic farming, circular economics, eco-sustainability and sensible resource management.

The Nub of It All

Ancient sites seem to demonstrate that the people of the Neolithic and the Bronze Age knew something that we don't. They knew how to work with subtle energy and the inherent patterning within all things. They understood that consciousness or



Bronze age cairn atop Sancreed Beacon

intelligence lie at the heart of reality, and that our own consciousness is part of it, participating in the fundamental processes that create and regulate all things. They discovered how to engineer conditions in which advanced states of consciousness could be generated.

To do this they created crucibles, energy-spaces – stone circles, chambers, quoits, enclosures and modified or consecrated natural locations. The builders of churches, temples, mosques and other aesthetic and hallowed spaces in other times and places throughout history have done so too, but the ancients understood some things that later were lost or weakened.

They connected these locations into underground energy-fields, creating terrestrial networks and interactive arrays of sacred sites, and hooking them into the movements and dynamics of the solar system and cosmos. They worked on these places, consecrating them, building up energy-fields in and around them, performing rites, processes, healings and workings over many centuries. These

all added up to build a strong presence, an altered reality that could be activated and ramped up as and when needed. It's still there.

They didn't see themselves as autonomous individuals in the same way as we do. They lived in community, dependent on nature, subject to its ways and laws and totally involved with it. They made their own shoes. If they injured themselves, no ambulance came. Their street lighting was the moon, for half of the month. Yet they evolved too, and while the Bronze Age was more sophisticated than the Neolithic, these two ages formed a cultural continuity.

Subtle energy is a key element both in our ancient history and in our future. In our time we have focused on splitting the atom, editing genes, space exploration and cancer research, but there is a deeper layer concerning the mind, the heart and the intelligence within all life. Some of our inventions and initiatives are brilliant while others are questionable, and our relentless grasping for growth and gain stops us addressing two very major challenges: *our relationship with our planetary environment* and *our relationships with ourselves*. These are now priority issues.

In archaeology, incorporating the idea of subtle energy or of morphogenetic informational fields involves an enormous paradigm shift. It has worldview implications that the funding systems currently supporting archaeology and academia would tend not to prioritise or approve. But it needs to happen.

Megalithic sites cannot be understood unless subtle energy is acknowledged as a key factor in their construction and reason for being. They are wellsprings giving access to the heart of the world. They are remnants of a technology we need now to investigate for use in coming times.

Gateways to the Otherworld

One of my favourite sites in West Penwith is Bosiliack Barrow. Many visitors stride up to this chambered cairn, take a look, take a photo and mosey off. Yet I find the guardian of the place seems to be generous and communicative – quite friendly. Whenever I seek

clarification in my antiquarian enquiries, this is where I go, with tea flask, often returning home with a few new clues and sometimes with a quantum shift in my thinking.

While Bosiliack Barrow seems very much alive, it has been thoroughly picked apart, tidied up and reconstructed by archaeologists.¹³² This goes to show that, when respectfully done, the spirit of a place is neither necessarily exorcised nor dismayed.



Bosiliack Barrow, from Lanyon Quoit direction

In the case of the guardian at Bosiliack, perhaps the experience familiarised it with modern humans and our thought-patterns, waking it up and making it more possible for it to convey something to us. Yet while it seems communicative, our capacity to commune with it or with the spirits at any site hangs around our willingness to stop, listen and *hear*.

The essence of my observations of ancient sites boils down to this: ***it is not the stones, banks and features of ancient sites that lie at the heart of the matter, but the space-generation created within them or supported by them.***

I have broken accepted objective evidential rules by asking you to refer to the evidence of your own experience when you visit ancient sites. The success or failure of my key arguments rests upon this: *are the special experiences that you have at ancient sites mere imagination, or are they genuinely to be accepted as reliable, meaningful and useful sources of archaeological evidence?* In this book I do not claim to be correct on all points, and I don't ask you to agree with me. But the book hangs around that question.

¹³² Jones, Andy M, 'Archaeological Excavations at Bosiliack, Cornwall', *Cornish Archaeology* 52, 2013. www.academia.edu/10493376/Archaeological_excavations_at_Bosiliack_Madron_Cornwall

It was dodgy living in the Neolithic. You could get charged at by an angry auroch. Your coracle could be tipped over by a tricky Cornish wave. A proportion of your kids would die in their first year, and at times the rain didn't fall and everyone went hungry. It's likely that people were killed while constructing quoits, and there was probably good business for bone-setters.

People who live precarious lives tend to sense an afterlife, an invisible realm or a divine power, and they tend also to be spiritually less complacent than we. Now we have entered precarious times.

We moderns are splattered with a bewildering array of beliefs and influences, yet there's one grounding mechanism we sit upon – our landscape and its power points. It presents us with gifts of spirit, to help us become better versions of ourselves.

In West Penwith those gifts present themselves through the glowing mosses at Sancreed Well, the spriggan mists of Zennor Hill and the rumbling rollers of Nanjizal Bay. Gifts of spirit glisten in the morning dew; they reverberate in the eerie cry of choughs; they sit transfixed in the great granite hulks, watching and waiting; and spirit howls eerily in the ocean winds as they batter the unmoving granite cliffs.

West Penwith's ancient sites are portals for accessing the heart of the world. It is by no means the only place where this happens or where this is possible, but Penwith does have qualities that make it rather special. This granitic mass, *Belerion*, stuck out in the Atlantic winds and waves, secretly shines from its crystalline foundations.

The contents of this book are what it said to me. I hope at least some of these ideas prove useful to you. Now it's your turn, and *good luck*.

Further Reading about Cornwall

The Ancient Sites in West Penwith, Cheryl Straffon, Meyn Mamvro, 1992-2015.

Cornovia – the ancient sites of Cornwall and Scilly, Craig Weatherhill, Halsgrove, 2009.

Belerion – the ancient sites of Land's End, Craig Weatherhill, Alison Hodge, 1981-89.

Journey to the Stones, Ian McNeil Cooke, Men-an-Tol Studio, 1996.

The Romance of the Stones, Robin Payne & Rosemarie Lewsey, Alexander Associates, 1999.

Place Names of the Land's End Peninsula, Craig Weatherhill, Penwith Press, 2017.

Place Names in Cornwall and Scilly, Craig Weatherhill, Wessex Books, 2005.

Archaeology and Landscape at the Land's End, Cornwall, Cornwall Archaeological Unit, 2016.

The Old Stones of Land's End, John Michell, Garnstone Press, 1974.

Meyn Mamvro online archive, 2020, www.meymamvro.co.uk/archive

Ancient Penwith website, www.ancientpenwith.org

Online maps of Ancient Cornwall, www.palden.co.uk/shiningland/maps.html

Online Material

www.palden.co.uk/shiningland/

Audiobook

Colour pictures and enlarged maps from the book

Detailed online maps of ancient sites and alignments in Cornwall

Ancient site and alignment lists for West Penwith

Picture tours of Penwith's ancient sites

Map-making and alignments – more details

Megalithic Astronomy – the basics

Resources, downloads, links to useful websites

Acknowledgements

John Michell, Tom Graves, Sig Lonegren and Hamish Miller – key mentors in this work.

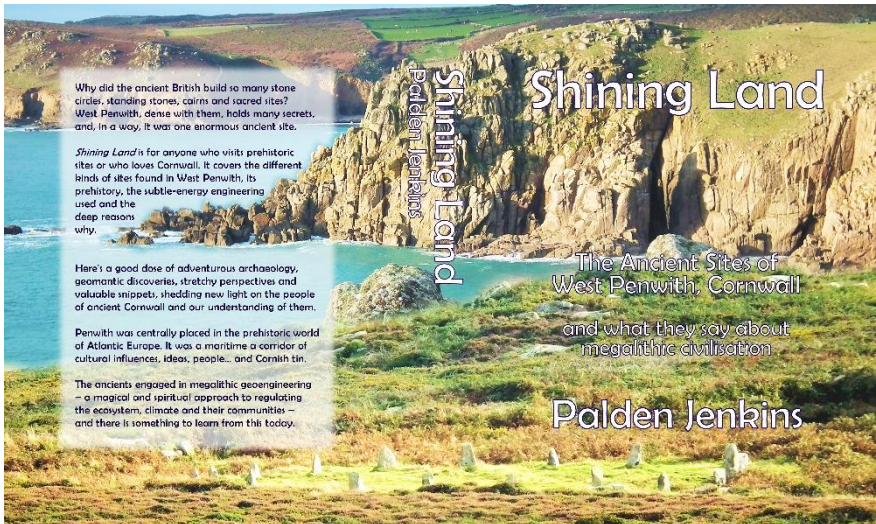
John Riley, Cheryl Traffon, Nick Bradford and others for reading, checking and feedback. Raymond Cox for collaboration on the online maps. Bruce Garrard of Unique Publications, Glastonbury, Roma Harding and Christine Rhone for various forms of support.

Lynne Speight for standing alongside in times ancient and modern, and for company, love, insights, ears and picnics.

Hamish and Ba Miller, Faith Warn, Jo May, Annie Spencer and the Tobin family for unwittingly magicking me to Penwith.

Gyalwa Karmapa XVI and the Nine, who laid the tracks.

Google Maps, for use of their satellite maps in some of the maps.



Appendix One

Ancient Sites in West Penwith

List of selected surviving ancient sites in West Penwith

Extracted from: www.ancientpenwith.org/map-penwith-sites.html

Go to the map for full list, more details and links to online references for each site.

Stone Circles	Existing or destroyed and verified stone circles, Bronze Age.
BOSCAWEN-ÛN	Stone circle, well preserved, centrally placed in the peninsula and of national significance. Inclined near-central stone. Quartz stone. Oval in shape. SW 4122 2736. 50.089857 -5.619272.
MËN AN TOL	Formerly a stone circle. Includes an iconic holed stone, three standing stones, six recumbent, one possible stone and a possible cairn. The holed stone might have been located off-centre inside the stone circle, or as part of its perimeter. SW 4264 3493. 50.158134 -5.605106.
MERRY MAIDENS	Stone circle, intact, aka Dawns Men. SW 4326 2458. 50.065789 -5.588945.
NINE MAIDENS	Boskednan or Nine Maidens stone circle. Damaged, most stones remaining, with inspiring upland location. Overlooked by Carn Galva. SW 4342 3513. 50.160582 -5.593765.
TREGESEAL	Tregeseal East stone circle. Intact, originally one of two. Enclosing wall obscures its view of Scilly. Overlooked by Carn Kenidjack, the earliest site of this complex. SW 3866 3237. 50.133703 -5.658415.
Tregeseal W	Tregeseal W stone circle, destroyed. Originally the larger of the two. A third possible circle, visible as crop marks, is reckoned to be a large kerbed cairn or a ceremonial hut circle. Many stones from this circle now lie recumbent in the field hedge. SW 3860 3237. 50.13369 -5.65911.
Tregurnow	Destroyed stone circle - last remnants removed in 2006. Might have been large. Located on brow of hill overlooking Lamorna valley. Part of Merry Maidens complex. SW 4375 2455. 50.065732 -5.5820923.
Quoits	Neolithic quoits (cromlechs or dolmens).
BOSPORTH-ENNIS	Small Neolithic quoit or large cist, damaged. SW 4356 3654. 50.173271 -5.5927983.
CHÛN	Quoit, intact and well preserved. Clearly related to Chûn Castle, another Neolithic site. SW 4023 3396. 50.1486 -5.63771.
LANYON	Lanyon Quoit, with two nearby cairns, one a Neolithic longbarrow. Quoit was incorrectly restored over a century ago by Capt Giddy after damage by a storm. Accessible from the road (not wheelchairs). SW 4298 3369. 50.147438 -5.59898.

MULFRA	Damaged or deliberately decommissioned quoit, with a panoramic location with St Michael's Mount prominent. Worth visiting. SW 4518 3536. 50.163378 -5.569367.
SPERRIS	Damaged quoit, difficult to find. Paired with neighbouring Zennor Quoit. SW 4709 3826. 50.190227 -5.544605.
WEST LANYON	Damaged quoit. According to tradition, covered with an earthen barrow, removed in 1803 to reveal a chamber containing a broken urn, ashes and some human bones. SW 4231 3378. 50.14798 -5.60837.
ZENNOR	Damaged or decommissioned quoit, still reasonably intact and worth a visit. SW 4688 3802. 50.187984 -5.547368.

Enclosures **Bronze age circular enclosures built for ceremonial purposes or as moot places.**

BARTINNEY CASTLE	Hilltop circular sacred enclosure with cairns and well. Panorama over the sea and the Scillies. SW 3944 2932. 50.106715 -5.6453807. 'The Hill of Fires' - Lake, 1868. Legend has it that evil cannot reach you within the enclosing ring.
CAER BRÂN	Sacred enclosure with three Bronze Age ring cairns and an exactly round enclosing bank. Might have been a moot and gathering site for Penwith. SW 4075 2903. 50.104642 -5.6269622.
CASTLE AN DINAS	Circular hilltop enclosure (officially an Iron Age multivallate hillfort), probably ceremonial or serving social purposes as a moot and market place. SW 485 350. 50.161584 -5.5229297.
PORDENACK POINT	Cliff-top ceremonial place. Remains of circular enclosure 90m in diameter, with barrows inside. Probably Bronze Age. Many rock simulacra nearby. SW 346 241. 50.058426 -5.7091432.

Tor Enclosures **Neolithic hilltop tor enclosures built around 3700-3500 BCE.**

CARN GALVA	Prominent two-peaked granite outcrop and Neolithic hilltop enclosure (c3700 BCE), aka Carn Galver. With rock platforms and placed and propped stones. SW 4256 3639. 50.171456 -5.6067374.
CARN KENIDJACK	Carn Kenidjack, aka the Hooting Tor. Neolithic tor enclosure and the oldest site in the Tregeseal complex. SW 3879 3297. 50.139141 -5.6569923.
TRENCROM HILL	Neolithic tor enclosure and Iron Age hill camp, with holy well. SW 5172 3625. 50.174144 -5.478555.
ST MICHAEL'S MOUNT	An island since 1700 BCE only – before that it was a mile or so from the coast. Major node on the Michael and Apollo lines, and a remarkable place. Neolithic tor enclosure and cliff sanctuary, with multiple historic layers. Managed by National Trust. SW 5143 2984. 50.117048 -5.477489.

Hill Camps **Hill camps (hillforts) serving as gathering places or granges with defensive or security qualities.**

CHÚN CASTLE	Hill camp and stronghold, Neolithic, Bronze and Iron Age. Involved in the tin trade and crafts. A well is inside the camp. SW 4051 3395. 50.148671 -5.6337195.
--------------------	--

LESINGEY ROUND	Hill camp (not a round). More interesting than reported in archaeological records. Earliest finds go back to the Mesolithic. This is a major alignment node. SW 454 304. 50.118951 -5.56298.
FAUGAN ROUND	Faugan Round, enclosure or hill camp (hillfort) with double banks and also two enclosures within the main enclosure. Probably related to the coastal cliff castles around Penwith. Likely to be a site for social gatherings. There is a suggestion it might have been a henge, but this would be unusual for this area. SW 4517 2821. 50.099230 -5.5647009.
LESCUDJACK CASTLE	Lescudjack hillfort. Hill camp in a strategic position. Reputedly the stronghold of a Cornish princess. SW 475 310. 50.125645 -5.5334616.
Treen Circle	Large camp and settlement, aka promontory fort, certainly Iron Age and possibly Neolithic, protecting the cliff sanctuary of Treryn Dinas. SW 397 222 50.042879 -5.63696

Cliff Sanctuaries Sanctified coastal cliff headland sanctuaries (cliff castles), often ascribed to the Iron Age but actually going back to the Neolithic (3000s BCE).

BOSIGRAN CASTLE	Cliff sanctuary, with logan rock, oriented stones (pointing to Pendeen Watch) and other features. SW 4169 3688. 50.175510 -5.619163.
CAPE CORNWALL	Headland with destroyed cliff sanctuary going back to the Bronze Age. Also known as Kulgyth Ust or Kilgoth Ust (St Just's goose-back) or Penkurnow. Once thought of as Cornwall's most westerly point - the original Land's End. SW 350 319. 50.127, -5.706.
CARN LÊS BOEL	Cliff sanctuary with gateway menhirs and tumuli. Dramatic. Seal caves underneath. Western end of the Michael Line. SW 3567 2323. 50.050357 -5.6938421.
GURNARD'S HEAD	Gurnard's Head, aka Trereen Dinas cliff sanctuary. SW 432 386. 50.191605 -5.599221.
KENIDJACK CASTLE	Cliff sanctuary with hut circles. SW 355 326. 50.134367 -5.702697.
MAEN CASTLE	Cliff sanctuary - one of the oldest in Cornwall. Thought of as Iron Age, it's probably Neolithic in origin. SW 3476 2576. 50.072649 -5.70828.
PENDEEN WATCH	Pen Dyn cliff sanctuary (destroyed by the building of lighthouse). SW 3797 3590. 50.165081 -5.6704773.
ST IVES HEAD	Pen Dinas, aka St Ives Island. SW 5208 4115. 50.218326 -5.4766763.
TOL PEDN PENWITH	Gwennap Head/Tol Pedn Penwith cliff sanctuary, located on Britain's southwesternmost point. SW 3672 2180. 50.03798 -5.67821. Hella Point: cliff promontory with simulacra, part of cliff sanctuary. SW 3707 2144. 50.034911 -5.6731067
TRERYN DINAS	Logan rock and promontory with cliff sanctuary, also with upper gathering area called Treen Circle. SW 3972 2198. 50.040937 -5.6365979.

Cairnfields A grouping and concentration of cairns and barrows, mainly for burials.

Beacon Barrows	Cairnfield barrow group, aka Treen Common. SW 445 364. 50.1724 -5.5795.
-----------------------	---

Botrea cairnfield	Six cairns, including four platform barrows, on ancient trackway from Chun Castle to Boscawen-un. SW 4025 3120. 50.125091 -5.6347407.
Chapel Carn Brea	Cairnfield on summit and sides of hill, Neolithic to Bronze Age. SW 3858 2806. 50.094985 -5.6565808.
Foage cairnfield	Six Bronze Age barrows on side of Zennor Hill. SW 469 377. 50.1856 -5.54623.
Mulfra barrowfield	Barrowfield NW of Mulfra Quoit. SW 450 355. 50.165186 -5.5720228.
Cairns & Barrows	A selection. Bronze age barrows, tumuli and cairns - solid, sometimes with urns or cists inside, sometimes kerbed with stones, or chambered, 2500-1100 BCE. Also Neolithic longbarrows.
Ballowall Barrow	At Carn Gloose. Complex late Neolithic/Bronze Age chambered cairn in a dramatic clifftop location, built and modified in several stages. SW 3552 3125. 50.122261 -5.7014816.
Boscregan Cairns	Three clifftop cairns, the southern being kerbed. SW 3579 2983. 50.109636 -5.6967298. See also Carn Creis.
Bosiliack Barrow	Late Neolithic chambered round barrow, excavated and reconstructed. SW 4311 3421. 50.152162 -5.597515.
Boskednan N	Large Bronze Age kerbed cairn, NW of Nine Maidens. SW 4324 3530. 50.162011 -5.596155.
Boskednan S	Boskednan southern cairn, SE of Nine Maidens. SW 4350 3495. 50.158973 -5.592565.
Botallack Common	Botallack Common barrow. One of several cairns in the Tregeseal complex. SW 3906 3260. 50.135944 -5.6529871.
Botrea Barrows	Four Bronze Age platform barrows with panorama. SW 4033 3107. 50.122821 -5.6342901.
Brane Cairn	Chambered cairn, intact. SW 4013 2818. 50.096767 -5.6350595.
Brane Longbarrow	Neolithic long barrow – indistinct, unexcavated. SW 4018 2801. 50.095238 -5.6342231.
Carn Bean	Two hilltop barrows on Carn Bean, part of Tregeseal complex. SW 3827 3314. 50.140443 -5.6643893.
Carn Creis	Two clifftop barrows. One a denuded cairn with cist, the other with a propped central boulder and large kerb. SW 3577 2969. 50.108473 -5.6965.
Carn Lês Boel	Cairn, Carn Lês Boel. Part of a possible complex of rock and cairn features. SW 3571 2325. 50.050583 -5.6932442.
Carn Lês Boel	Carn Lês Boel barrow. Carn Kenidjack visible from the cairn, six miles away. SW 3578 2331. 50.051115 -5.6923656.
Chapel Carn Brea 2	Scillonian Chambered Cairn. SW 3860 2810. 50.095353 -5.6563291.
Chapel Carn Brea Longbarrow	Neolithic hilltop long cairn. SW 3857 2799. 50.094352 -5.6566724.
Chy Praz	Chy Praz or Carn Clough clifftop kerbed cairn with cist or chamber. SW 3929 3588. 50.165484 -5.6520199.

Conquer Cairn	Bronze age cairn, aka Little Carnaquidden. Astronomically aligned to Beltane sunset, as seen from Castle an Dinas. SW 4761 3546. 50.165316 -5.5354771.
Escalls Cliff	Escalls Cliff cairn. SW 3622 2722. 50.086214 -5.689192.
Gundry Cave	Gundry Cave kerbed cairn. SW 4582 3767. 50.184388 -5.5619672.
Hannibal's Carn	Cairn. SW 4330 3590. 50.167414 -5.5960003.
Joppa	Two barrows, one a ring barrow, aka Numphra. SW 3796 2964. 50.108983 -5.6663216.
LADY DOWNS B	Bronze age barrow, aka Conquer Downs. SW 4699 3610. 50.170797 - 5.5445666.
Lanyon Longbarrow	Neolithic long barrow. Alleged to have originally covered Lanyon Quoit, but more likely to have simply adjoined it. SW 4297 3367. 50.147255 - 5.5991067.
Letcha Cairn	Cliff-top kerbed cairn. SW 3570 3025. 50.113366 -5.6982765.
MAYON CLIFF 1	Round chambered cairn or cairn with cist, aka Carn Men Ellas. SW 3481 2602. 50.075005 -5.707763.
Nine Maidens Downs	Nine Maidens Downs cairn, aka Tuban Broze, large and dilapidated. SW 4365 3521 50.161372 -5.5906447.
Pedn Men Du	Pedn Men Du tumulus. SW 3486 2607. 50.075477 -5.7071004.
Pennance 1	Giant's Craw. Late Neolithic chambered cairn, quite intact. SW 4476 3753. 50.182423 -5.576112.
Pordenack	Kerbed, cliff-top chambered or cist cairn, Bronze Age, damaged. SW 3468 2418. 50.058344 -5.7082937.
Portheras Common	Kerbed round barrow with cist. SW 3914 3327. 50.141993 -5.6523284.
Rosewall Hill	Two Bronze Age kerbed cairns. SW 4922 3917. 50.199520 -5.517122.
SANCREED BEACON	Sancreed Beacon round barrows. SW 4143 2947. 50.108887 -5.61777.
Treen	Two Scillonian chambered cairns. SW 4380 3715. 50.178858 - 5.589575. SW 4384 3710. 50.178418 -5.589262.
Tregeseal	Chambered Cairn. SW 3805 3213. 50.131281 -5.6667678.
Tregiffian	Scillonian chambered cairn. Late Neolithic, re-modelled in the Bronze Age. Part of Merry Maidens complex. SW 4304 2443. 50.064336 - 5.5919434.
Tregiffian Vean	Scillonian chambered cairn, in poor condition. SW 3725 2773. 50.091436 -5.67491.
Trendrine	Trendrine Cairns. Fine panorama. SW 4787 3875. 50.194959 - 5.5340247.
Treway 1	Likely late-Neolithic chambered cairn. SW 4596 3754. 50.183281 - 5.5599232.
TRUTHWALL COMMON	Bronze age chambered cairn, plus three barrows, some with cists. Part of Tregeseal complex. SW 3891 3258. 50.135699 -5.6550680.
WATCH CROFT	Watch Croft cairn, built of stones. SW 4206 3572. 50.165213 - 5.6132149.
Watch Croft	Watch Croft cairn. SW 4204 3569. 50.164982 -5.6134778. West Penwith's highest point.

Menhirs	Selected visitable menhirs only. Many no longer exist, or are mentioned in old records, or have been destroyed or moved and of uncertain original location. There are also double menhirs, built as a pair (or with the Chyenhal menhirs, a triple menhir).
Banns Farm	Banns Farm menhir. Built into a hedge. SW 4010 2638. 50.080572 - 5.634231.
Beersheba	Beersheba menhir. SW 5252 3713. 50.182358 -5.468.
Blind Fiddler	Menhir, aka Trenuggo Longstone. SW 4252 2818. 50.097876 -5.601555.
Boscawen Rôs	Double menhirs. Part of Merry Maidens complex. SW 4282 2394. 50.059743 -5.5947905. SW 4277 2393. 50.059743 -5.5953414.
Boscawen-ûn Hedge Menhir	Boscawen-ûn hedge menhir. SW 4174 2772. 50.093278 -5.6122722.
Bosiliack	Hedge menhir by the side of a track to Ding Dong mine. SW 4369 3423. 50.152613 -5.5893725.
Bosistow Seal Stone	Hedge menhir, Higher Bosistow. Seal profile, pointing toward nearby seal caves. SW 3653 2338. 50.052121 -5.6819630.
Boskednan	Boskednan menhir, aka Nine Maidens NW. Stump of menhir. Proxy menhir. SW 4338 3518. 50.160807 -5.5943835.
Boswens	Boswens Menhir, a relay or proxy menhir for the Tregeseal complex. SW 4001 3290. 50.139054 -5.6399257.
Carbis Bay Longstone	Menhir by bus stop, Carbis Bay. SW 5304 3821. 50.192298 -5.461406.
Carfury	Carfury menhir, a major hub relay menhir. Major alignment node. SW 4400 3399. 50.150603 -5.5849444.
Carn Eanes	Carn Eanes menhir. SW 3840 3374. 50.145885 -5.6629856. Menhir re-erected 1985.
Carn Lês Boel	Gateway menhirs. Fallen menhir and intact propped menhir, serving as gateway stones at the entrance to the carn. SW 3569 2325. 50.050525 -5.6935417.
Castallack Carn	Menhir. SW 4474 2537. 50.073518 -5.5688338.
Chyangwens	Chyangwens menhir, in hedge. SW 4186 2709. 50.087712 -5.610161.
Chyenhal E	Chyenhal East menhir. One of originally three menhirs aligned on St Michael's Mount. SW 4506 2750. 50.092799 -5.5658353.
Drift menhirs	Drift, aka the Sisters, double menhir. SW 4371 2831. 50.099464 -5.58517.
Ennis Farm	Ennis Farm menhir. SW 4475 2821. 50.099015 -5.5705902.
Faugan Stones	Faugan Stones. Double menhirs at Faugan Round, could be Bronze or Iron Age. SW452282. 50.099117 -5.564304.
Gûn Rith	Gûn Rith menhir. SW 4294 2447. 50.064663 -5.593334. Part of Merry Maidens complex.
KEMYEL-SWINGATE	Collection of varying menhirs on Lamorna plateau. SW 4587 2458. 50.066910 -5.552549.
Kerris	Kerris menhir. SW 4439 2742. 50.091768 -5.575085.
Kerrow Bosulow	Menhir in wall. SW 4145 3425. 50.151800 -5.6207315.
Kerrowe	Menhir, with two nearby round huts. SW 4523 3732. 50.180992 -5.569981.
Mayon	Menhir, Sennen. SW 3578 2595. 50.074775 -5.6941520.

Mên Scryfa	Inscribed standing stone, likely a Bronze Age menhir carved upon in Iron Age times. SW 4269 3529. 50.161732 -5.6041035.
Pipers	Double menhir (might have been triple). NE menhir is the largest extant menhir in Cornwall. Part of Merry Maidens complex. SW 4355 2482. 50.067867 -5.585746.
Pridden	The Pridden Stone, menhir. SW 4165 2660. 50.083455 -5.6121518.
Redhouse NE	Double menhir. SW 4480 2663. 50.084854 -5.5688376. SW 4476 2658. 50.084584 -5.56881.
St Levan's Stone	Menhir in churchyard. SW 3803 2219. 50.042057 -5.660237.
Toldavas	Menhir. SW 4266 2671. 50.084648 -5.598745.
Tregaminion	Menhir, fallen, discovered and re-erected in 2019 excavations. SW 4012 3583. 50.165411 -5.6403331.
Trelew	Trelew Longstone, menhir. SW 4217 2691. 50.086411 -5.605728.
Tremenheere	Menhir, re-erected. SW 4901 3296. 50.143370 -5.5143290.
Treryn Dinas	Menhir, recently restored, reported to be at exact correct location. SW 3985 2241, 50.04472 -5.63518.
Tresvannack Pillar	Menhir. SW 4418 2787. 50.095717 -5.578317.
Trevean 1	Propped menhir in hedge/wall. SW 3632 2296. 50.04822 -5.68452.
Trevean 2	Likely menhir, near springs. SW 3646 2289. 50.047657 -5.6826022.
Treverven	Menhir. SW 4082 2399. 50.059516 -5.622855.
Trevorgans	Menhir, fractured at the top, suggesting it was formerly higher. SW 4049 2613. 50.078517 -5.628623.
Trink Hill	Giew Mine menhir, aka Trink Hill menhir. SW 502 3714. 50.181135 -5.500359.
Try	Menhir. SW 4597 3498. 50.160307 -5.5580744.
Watch Croft	Menhir. SW 4207 3568. 50.164905 -5.613039.

Stone Row **Row of menhirs. Only one known case exists in West Penwith.**

Treveglos	Treveglos stone row, Zennor. SW 4539 3888 to SW 4528 3891. 50.195050 -5.5686756 to 50.195287 -5.5703470. A row of four upright stones, orientated 107.5 degrees. The largest stone at the SE end, 2.8m high, damaged by splitting and may have exceeded 3.0m – now serves as a gatepost. The NW stone has a prehistoric lynchet built up around it, height of 2.37m. The row is 117m long. Other stones possibly existed but have been robbed for use in the field hedges or as gateposts. The only known stone row in West Cornwall. Its classification as a stone row is disputed but the consensus in Penwith is favourable.
------------------	---

Holed Stones **Bronze age stones with holes bored through.**

Mên an Tol	Holed stone, near Mên an Tol. Iconic. Originally part of a stone circle at the site. SW 4242 3499. 50.158864 -5.6076817.
Redhouse	Holed stone. SW 4473 2668. 50.085272 -5.5698475.
Rosmodress	Six holed stones, two of them documented and now missing. Part of Merry Maidens complex. SW 42772421. 50.062257 -5.5955295 (in hedge). SW 4315 2450. 50.065024 -5.5904255. SW 4326 2457. 50.065700 -5.5889386. SW 4365 2489. 50.068740 -5.5837145 (in farm

Tregeseal	wall). SW 4354 2449. 50.065103 -5.5849805 (reported by Borlase). SW 4353 2449. 50.065098 -5.5851200 (reported by Russell in 1971). Five holed stones with holes central in flattish oblong stones. Not clear whether they are in their original precise locations. Their purpose is a debate and mystery. Might have been a stone row. SW 3901 3261. 50.136012 -5.6536922.
Trelew Farm	Holed stone. SW 41922680. 50.085135 -5.609128.

Placed Stones	Stones and rocks intentionally placed in certain locations in the Neolithic and Bronze Ages, and ancient boundary stones.
Bishop's Head & Foot	'Bishop's Head and Foot' parish boundary stone. SW 4638 3623. 50.171703 -5.5531784.
Bosistow	Ancient stone on alignment crossing, probably Bronze Age. SW 3664 2338. 50.05213 -5.6804.
Carn Galva	Propped stones on ridge between the two summits of Carn Galva. SW 4269 3617. 50.169573 -5.6047070. Also at SW 4279 3598. 50.167911 -5.6031811.
Castallack	Hedge stone. SW 4542 2530. 50.073181 -5.5593031.
Chapel Curno	Stone near Chapel Kernow. SW 3883 2255. 50.045641 -5.6493326.
Cribba Head	Stone structure, unexplained, variously called an entrance grave or cist. SW 4032 2245. 50.045395 -5.6284971.
Four Parishes Stone	Four Parishes Stone, at meeting point of trackways below Carn Galva. SW 4298 3540. 50.162788 -5.6001344.
Table Maen	Placed rock with likely cupmarks, aka King Arthur's Table. SW 3599 2540. 50.069966 -5.6908794.
Lanyon	Stone in hedge. SW 4270 3395. 50.149651 -5.6030671.
Merry Maidens	Merry Maidens hedge stone. SW 4343 2452. 50.065324 -5.5865345.
Rosemergy	Placed stone. SW 4275 3582. 50.166458 -5.6036319.
Selena Markstone	SW 4068 2438. 50.062875 -5.6247859.
Sparnon	Markstone at Sparnon. SW 3970 2390. 50.058000 -5.6379369.
Trevelloe	Placed stone. SW 4510 2597. 50.079058 -5.5642126.
Treen	Stone at Treen. SW 3916 2307. 50.050453 -5.6450871.
Treen Circle	Placed stones in camp at Treryn Dinas. Once thought to be a stone circle, but unlikely. SW 3976 2226. 50.043445 -5.6361734.

Oriented Stones	Flattish rocks set vertically and oriented toward prominent landmarks, probably Neolithic.
Bosigran Castle	Three adjacent oriented stones, aligned with one side pointing at the sea end of Pendeen Watch. SW 4156 3704. 50.17694, -5.62076.
Bosiliack	Oriented stone, oriented on Godolphin Hill. SW 4373 3421. 50.152438 -5.5889195.
Carn Barra	Oriented stones, pointing toward Carn Les Boel. SW 3608 2277. 50.04638 -5.68778.
Carn Vellan	Oriented stone below Trewellard. SW 3650 3417. 50.14895 -5.68979.
Chapel Carn Brea	Two oriented stones, one oriented toward Carn Bosavern, the other toward Cape Cornwall. SW 3864 2812. 50.095527 -5.6558284.

Cribba	Oriented stone, oriented on Treryn Dinas. Near coast path. SW 39906 22402. 50.04478 -5.63424.
Greeb	Three aligned stones (aligned on the Armed Knight and Longships Rocks). SW 3448 2479. 50.063839 -5.7114713. SW 3454 2473. 50.063318 -5.7105785. SW 3461 2479. 50.063852 -5.7096414.
Kenidjack Castle	Oriented stone, one side aligned on northernmost point of the Isles of Scilly. SW 3554 3256. 50.133994 -5.7020634.

Settlements Prehistoric settlements, mostly late Bronze Age, Iron Age and Roman period - collections of roundhuts (hut circles) and courtyard houses. Individual hut circles mostly not included.

Beehive Hut	Bosporthenis beehive hut, aka. The Crellas. Believed to be an above-ground fogou. Purpose as yet uncertain. SW 4378 3605. 50.168958 -5.5894349.
Bodrifty	Iron Age Settlement. Reconstructed roundhut nearby. SW 445 354. 50.163444 -5.578896.
Bosigran 1	Bosigran late Bronze Age settlement. SW 4205 3677. 50.174679 -5.614057.]
Bosigran 4	Courtyard settlement with fogou. SW 4276 3712. 50.178130 -5.6043710.
Bosiliack Huts	Late Bronze Age village, aka Lanyon. Fourteen roundhuts. SW 4283 3440. 50.153746 -5.601555.
Bosporthenis	One of many settlements at Bosporthenis. Two courtyard houses with other and field systems roundhuts nearby. Iron age with medieval modifications. SW 4379 3599. 50.168433 -5.589213.
Bosullow Trehyllis	Iron age courtyard house settlement, with well at SW 4087 3430. SW 4091 3422. 50.152009 -5.6284484.
Boswarva Carn	Iron age settlement. SW 429 329. 50.140313 -5.599565.
Botrea	Courtyard house, Iron Age. SW 4042 3076. 50.120026 -5.6327436.
Carnaquidden Downs	Four Bronze Age hut circles. SW 4658 3568. 50.166851 -5.5500170.
Carn Euny	Iron age settlement with fogou and nearby wells, restored. SW 4024 2885. 50.102804 -5.6339570.
Chysauster	Ancient village, Romano-British period, with earlier origins. SW 472 350. 50.161012 -5.5409011.
Chysauster 2	Hut circles. SW 476346. 50.157592 -5.5350467.
Foage	Courtyard house settlement with fogou. SW 4660 3760. 50.184094 -5.5510164.
Goldherring	Ancient settlement, probably for artisan. SW 4105 2813. 50.096694 -5.622166. Ancient well at SW 4117 2823. 50.097645 -5.6205589.
Higher Bodinnar	Courtyard house settlement. SW 4111 2821. 50.135217 -5.6187783.
Mulfra Vean	Settlement. SW 454 349. 50.159344 -5.5659852.
Nanjulian	Ancient courtyard house settlement. SW 3615 2888. 50.101270 -5.691049.
Nanquidno Downs	Hut circle settlement. SW 3673 2882. 50.100989 -5.6829151.
Porthmeor	Settlement complex with fogou. SW 4341 3703. 50.177604 -5.595225.
Sperris Croft	Ancient village. SW 4729 3841. 50.191574 -5.5417623.
Treen	Courtyard house settlement, well preserved. SW 4373 3721. 50.179359 -5.5908737.
Trevean 1	Ancient settlement. SW 414 353. 50.161203 -5.6221429.

Trewey	Bronze age settlement. SW 4634 3709. 50.179405 -5.5543109.
Wicca Round	Ancient settlement. SW 473 386. 50.193370 -5.5418953.

Holy Wells

Prehistoric and Christian holy wells. Most early Christian holy wells are prehistoric.

Alsia	Holy Well. SW 3929 2513. 50.068733 -5.644518.
Alverton Old Well	Present structure dates from 1825, but the well is much older. SW 4683 3018. 50.117588 -5.5428701.
Baptistry Well	Nanquidno. Well near old cross. SW 3623 2925. 50.104627 -5.6901887.
Boscaswell	Holy well. Still functioning and well cared for by locals. SW 3768 3472. 50.154363 -5.6737163.
Bosporthennis	A once-famous well, now forgotten but still extant. SW 4396 3633. 50.171559 -5.5870666.
Carn Boscubben	Prehistoric well under Boscubben Carn. SW 4763 3859. 50.193421 -5.5372744.
Carn Kizzie	Ancient well by footpath near Pedn Vounder. SW 3908 2240. 50.044404 -5.6457460.
Carnyorth Common	Ancient well with stone surround and legendary associations. Possibly Old Moll's Well. SW 3913 3249. 50.135006 -5.6519357.
Castle Horneck	Holy well. SW 4609 3018. 50.117272 -5.5532007.
Collorian	Collorian holy well. Healing well. SW 5224 3472. 50.160627 -5.4702905.
Fairy Well	Lelant Fairy Well. SW 536 386. 50.196025 -5.453799.
Fenton Saurus	Stonework dated 1612 but probably older. SW 5417 3685. 50.180552 -5.4446961.
Keigwin	Stone-built well of unknown antiquity. SW 3969 3453. 50.153486 -5.6455091.
Kelynack	Kelynack roadside well, recently restored. SW 3712 2996. 50.111394 -5.6782579.
Lower Leah	Ancient well with an underground chamber. SW 4068 2757. 50.091507 -5.6269482.
Madron Well	Madron Well, baptistry nearby. SW 4456 3275. 50.139674 -5.5763075.
Newlyn	Newlyn doll-blessing well. SW 4649 2813. 50.099042 -5.5462557.
Porthmeor	At least early medieval, could be earlier. SW 4307 3719. 50.179154 -5.6001636.
Rosemorran	Sunken stone structure. SW 4665 3306. 50.143363 -5.5472960.
Sancreed Well	Holy well and chapel, aka Chapel Downs Well. SW 4178 2928. 50.107335 -5.6127570.
St Anne's Well	Trewoofe. Healing well, recently rediscovered. SW 4414 2546. 50.074068 -5.5772622.
St Buryan	Ancient well in well house, now dry, beside road. SW 4087 2561. 50.073998 -5.6229694.
St Euny's Well	St Euny's chapel and holy wells. SW 3997 2889. 50.103100 -5.6377126.
St Levan's Well	St Levan. Medieval or ancient. Modernised. SW 3808 2193. 50.039746 -5.6593623.
Tregaminion	Medieval holy well. SW 4013 3588. 50.166019 -5.640716.
Tregellast Well	Cockwells. Well of unknown antiquity. SW 5183 3438. 50.157473 -5.4757038.
Treveglos Well	Near Zennor church. Probably prehistoric. SW 4550 3844. 50.191162 -5.5669561.

Trevessa Well	Prehistoric and medieval. SW 4812 3962. 50.202875 -5.5311057.
Venton Bebibel	Source of the Newlyn River under Carn Galva, 'well of the little people'. SW 429 352. 50.160957 -5.601117.
Venton East	St Just. Name comes from Ust or St Just. Now defunct. SW 3728 3165. 50.126632 -5.6771882.
Venton Ia	Holy well dedicated to Irish St Ia. SW 5150 4074. 50.214358 -5.4845661.
Venton Zennor	Venton Zennor holy well. SW 460 382. 50.189222 -5.559805.

Fogous **Iron age underground chambers and tunnels, unique to West Cornwall.**

Boleigh	Well preserved fogou (on private property). SW 4372 2519. 50.071463 - 5.5829392.
Carbis Bay	Iron age fogou. SW 5204 3882. 50.197349 -5.4757581.
East Bosporthennis	Fogou. SW 4372 3671. 50.174866 -5.5906767.
Higher Bodinnar	Giant's Holt or Higher Bodinnar fogou. Damaged. SW 4150 3230. 50.134320 -5.6187105.
Keigwyn	Destroyed fogou. SW 3976 3447. 50.153035 -5.6444891.
Lower Boscaswell	Lower Boscaswell Fogou. SW 3767 3484 50.155435 -5.6739387.
Park Vorn	Fogou. SW 4404 3467. 50.156693 -5.584832.
Pendeen Vau	Pendeen Vau Fogou. In farmyard. SW 38365 35533. 50.161961 - 5.664706.

Carns, Rocks, Hills and Headlands **Prominent tor rocks, hills and coastal features.**

Aire Point	Natural headland north of Sennen. SW 358 282. 50.094859 -5.6934719.
Armed Knight	Stack or outcrop. SW 3408 2469. 50.062759 -5.7170491.
Bojewans Carn	Inland outcrop. SW 4308 2710. 50.088339 -5.592869.
Boscobben Carn	Natural carn, cup marks in rocks. SW 4763 3862. 50.193537 -5.5373949.
Boswarva Carn	Natural carn with a placed, balanced rock on it. SW 4294 3322. 50.143195 -5.5991796.
Bosworlas Leha	The Giant's Quoits. SW 378 305. 50.116540 -5.669138.
Brisons	The Brisons, prominent offshore rocks (from <i>Brisant</i> = reef, French). SW 3407 3110. 50.12039 -5.72229.
Carn Boel	Prominent headland. Many rock simulacra nearby. SW 348 238. 50.055723 -5.7057236.
Carn Cravah	Rock outcrop. SW 3540 2380. 50.055329 -5.6980348.
Carn Du	Prominent rock carn at head of Kemyel Point. With Kemyel Point, a probably cliff castle. SW 456 238. 50.059993 -5.5546519.
Carn Glaze	Natural carn. SW 3990 2977. 50.110921 -5.6393288.
Carn Gloose	Carn Gluz. Prominent rock carn or outcrop. SW 3534 3126. 50.122303 - 5.7040052.

Carn Guthensbras	NW end of Tol Pedn peninsula at Gwennap Head. SW 3590 2260. 50.044856 -5.6901727.
Carn Naun	Rock outcrop. Suspected cliff castle. SW 4769 4103. 50.215307 - 5.5380583.
Carn Stabba	Natural carn with logan stone, solution basins and interesting rocks, in sight of Trencrom Hill. SW 5066 3906. 50.198923 -5.495214.
Carn Vres	Significant outcrop overlooking the Tregeseal stone circles. SW 386 322. 50.132705 -5.6581553.
Carrick Du	Rock outcrop. SW 5119 4103. 50.216822 -5.4891075.
Creeg Tol	Noteworthy rock outcrop with solution basins, overlooking Boscawen-ûn and probably in use before it was built. SW 4104 2755. 50.091484 - 5.621912.
Gear Rock	Offshore rocks off Penzance Jubilee Pool. Stone arrowhead factory in Mesolithic times. SW 479 294. 50.111042 -5.5274172.
Giant's Rock	Reputedly a rocking stone or logan rock. SW 455 388. 50.194393 - 5.567197.
Hella Point	Prominent rock outcrop, Porthgwarra. SW 37075 21445. 50.034954 - 5.6730355.
Lady Downs	Lady Downs stone (outcrop). SW 4684 3666. 50.175759 -5.5470356.
Longships Rocks	SW 3215 2507. 50.065288 -5.7441919. Prominent rocks off Land's End (now hosting a lighthouse).
Peal, The	The Peal, offshore rocks, Land's End. SW 3405 2543. 50.06949 - 5.71831.
Rosewall Hill Carn	Natural hilltop carn. SW 4876 3913. 50.198626 -5.5213017..
Roskilly Rocks	SW 4721 2728. 50.091698 -5.5356970..
Runnel Stone	Submerged rock, formerly visible above water level, now invisible and marked by a buoy. SW 369 200. 50.021904 -5.674482
Sperris Carn	Prominent rock. SW 4698 3850. 50.19234 -5.54627.
St Clement's Isle	Off Mousehole. Once home of a Christian hermit. SW 474 261. 50.081207 -5.5322151.
Tom Thumb Rock	Natural rock, with local folklore traditions. SW 3684 3061. 50.117103 - 5.6826138.
Treryn Dinas	Logan rock, Treryn Dinas. SW 3971 2202. 50.041269 -5.6367073.
Trevelloe Carn	Aka Trevella Carn and Giant's Rock. Natural rock feature. SW 445 261. 50.079967 -5.5726687.
Twelve O'Clock Rock	Natural rock outcrop on side of Trink Hill. SW 5053 3708. 50.181095 - 5.4957327.
Wolf Rock	Rock outcrop in the ocean, now hosting a lighthouse. SW 2688 1196. 49.945316 -5.808333.
Zennor Head	Headland. SW 4498 3937. 50.199278 -5.5748452.
Zennor Hill	Logan rock, Zennor Hill. SW 4631 3818. 50.189176 -5.5554575.

Queried Sites

Existing sites with unknown or questioned purpose and documented sites no longer in existence.

Boleigh

Possible stone circle (disappeared - existence disputed). Might have been a stone setting. Seven stones, as reported by antiquarians, removed in late 19th C. | SW 4320 2445. | 50.064597 -5.5896948.

Botallack Rings	Triple stone rings, destroyed. Not a classic stone circle. Unlikely also to be hut circles. Reported by Borlase. SW 3669 3311. 50.139474 - 5.6864331.
Carn Naun	Suspected type two cliff sanctuary, with flat area above and rock outcrop below. SW 476 408. 50.21327 -5.53793.
Higher Trevorian	Possible stone circle (marked on old OS maps and mentioned by Borlase). Also identified as an Iron Age round or possibly a Bronze Age stone enclosure. SW 4169 2627. 50.080331 -5.6119757.
Giant's Grave	Possible quoit/cromlech, destroyed. Does not conform to alignment patterns usually found at quoits. SW 4026 3560. 50.163397 -5.6382752.
Grumbla Cromlech	Destroyed, with a few traces left. Suggested as a quoit (on the basis of the Grumbla place name) but uncertain - could be a chambered cairn or stone setting. SW 4049 2954. 50.109072 -5.6309872.
Kemyel Point	Headland - likely type two cliff sanctuary. SW 4570 2411. 50.06254 - 5.55474.
Redhouse	Alleged Bronze Age stone circle, as described by Halliwell. No trace, though possible stones are built into a nearby hedge. Significant alignment centre. SW 4481 2622. 50.081178 -5.5684245.
Rosemergy	Possible stone circle, destroyed. No sign of it at its location, though some stones are in neighbouring stone hedges. Ask for permission to enter. SW 4179 3646. 50.171785 -5.6174528.
Treen Common Circle	Incomplete circle of stones, not a classic stone circle. Aka Porthmeor Circle. Could be Neolithic or Bronze Age. Likely to be a ritual site because of proximity of Beacon Barrows cairnfield. SW 4445 3665. 50.17464254 -5.580433538.

Appendix Two

About the Making of the Maps

www.palden.co.uk/shiningland/maps.html

Researching alignments is not as easy as it might appear, though occasionally an alignment pops out easily on a hunch. Not very often, you can find five in twenty minutes. Sometimes one is spotted but then it proves to be inaccurate, after all possible fits and permutations have been tried - it is important to avoid forcing, fiddling or falsifying alignments since sooner or later they will prove problematic, and they are open for checking by anyone.

There are complexities too: a site's position might not be clear, either on the ground or in aerial photos, or slightly differing map references might be given by different sources, or the nature of the site might be unclear or disputed – in each of these cases careful judgement must be applied.

The maps of Cornwall were made using the satellite photography of Google Maps – this is much more useful for examining the precise location of sites than customary printed Ordnance Survey maps, where map-symbols used can actually stretch 30-50 metres across the ground. Satellite maps are more accurate for our purposes. Also they do not suffer the map-projection problems in Ordnance Survey and other paper maps because online maps factor in earth curvature without the distortions paper maps suffer over longer distances (over 50ish miles).

The first task was to populate the base map with prehistoric sites – a lengthy task taking a few years, using sources ranging from Heritage Gateway, Pastscape and the Megalithic Portal to *Meyn Mamvro*, books and personal communications. Existing alignments found by earlier researchers (particularly John Michell) and catalogued by Raymond Cox of *Meyn Mamvro* were checked and entered on the map. In doing so, further alignments were discovered.

A digital working map showing all known sites in Cornwall was created – arranged in seven layers, each with its own separate database from which the map is drawn when it is called up on-screen. It is a vector map – its information is stored as data, not as a map image – and when the map is

called up it is drawn there and then from the data, the crucial data being the longitude-latitude coordinates of all points on the map.

Then alignments were researched and added – themselves in three layers. The layered data was then transferred into a range of public maps highlighting areas such as Scilly or the Lizard, or featuring certain factors such as stone circles or backbone alignments, or matters of interest such as near-parallel alignments or Carn Brea’s radial alignments.

In compiling ancient site alignments on the maps a three-metre (9ft) accuracy rule was observed, with an occasional five-metre (15ft) leeway for big sites. This is a tight accuracy standard, though it allows for soil-creep and other disturbances that have occurred over time. In cases where an alignment passes *close* to an important site, say 10-50 metres (30-150ft) away, without touching or tangenting it exactly, the site is noted in parentheses in the alignment listings though it is not itself counted as an alignment-determining site.

One evening early in 2015, on a hunch, a new type of alignment, the backbones, was unearthed. This was rather a *eureka* moment. I was contemplating St Michael’s Mount and Cape Cornwall, two similarly-shaped cliff sanctuaries, only to find that a straight line I drew between them went right through the platform barrows on Botrea Hill, just above my house. Those barrows had always struck me as more important than they seemed to be, and here was a pointer to the evidence. I had spent a lot of time at the barrows and, while they command a remarkable panorama including every Neolithic tor enclosure in the area except one, they had not appeared to be a really major site – visually, they are not impressive, sitting on a fuzzy moor that few people visit. Later, on further investigation, the barrows proved to be a major node involving more such alignments: they sit at the crossing point of alignments passing, astonishingly, between three pairs of cliff sanctuaries – St Michael’s Mount and Cape Cornwall, Pendeen Watch and Kemyel Point, and Gurnard’s Head and Tol Pedn Penwith.

Seeking further alignments radiating from St Michael’s Mount, I quickly found several: the Mount, Lanyon Quoit and Pendeen Watch were aligned, as were the Mount, Boscawen-ûn and Maen Castle, or the Mount, the Merry Maidens and Treryn Dinas. It all snowballed from there, with findings duly checked by Cheryl Traffon and Raymond Cox, catalogued by Ray, made available on the Ancient Penwith and *Meyn Mamvro* websites and ongoingly updated ever since.

Arguably, backbone and long-distance alignments can be permitted a little more inexactness than local, shorter alignments, by dint of their length and magnitude – their magnitude being judged by the importance of the sites they connect. Even so, most backbone alignments on the maps are surprisingly exact, though in few cases they pass close to sites without exactly touching them. To give an example of one of these, at Boscawen-ûn, one backbone alignment passes just 20 metres (60ft) from the circle – yet it is 95km long, stretching from Carn Lês Boel to Stannon Circle on Bodmin Moor. Yes, the alignment is technically inaccurate at Boscawen-ûn but, at that distance, despite the inaccuracy, it is significant that the alignment comes *that* close to the stone circle. Actually, it hits a nearby, now-removed boulder cairn called the Money Rock, close to Boscawen-ûn and part of its complex – so the Money Rock acts as a proxy for the stone circle. This is quite common with stone circles and other key sites – they can have outlier menhirs or cairns that act as proxies or relays. Some alignments strike the main site and some go to a proxy.

Just because many barrows *look* similar, this does not mean all barrows are similar in purpose. For some barrows, no alignments can be found. Some lie on one detectable alignment while others are at intersections of multiple alignments, suggesting that these serve a distinct geomantic purpose as focal or nodal sites. Many burial barrows and cairns lie on no alignments at all. Each barrow thus has a unique character. The same applies to menhirs and other sites, which are also variable in geomantic purpose, and this purpose can be detected by examining other sites that they are aligned with and by looking at other locational factors. *A site's role in the whole system is defined by the site itself* (its look, feel and location), *and by its relationships with other sites* (intervisibility, alignments and energy-lines).

The maps are regularly reviewed and updated as new information comes in or as new ideas are tested. The mapping process started with West Penwith in 2014-5, then Scilly in 2016, then East Penwith, Kerrier and Carrick in 2019 and East Cornwall in 2021. The most accurate and up-to-date versions are the online Google maps. JPG image maps are taken from these, but these are updated once every two years (or so) only. They do not contain the same reference information that is built into the Google maps of Cornwall.

Appendix Three

Prehistorians

Let me clarify what I mean by *antiquarian*, *archaeologist* and *geomancer*, since all three represent approaches to our shared subject that need to work together more than we currently do.

An *antiquarian* has a fascination with ancient times, taking a generalist or a specialist approach. Some antiquarians have had crazy ideas and some have hit the nail right on the head. Some were the forerunners of archaeologists and some are never accepted by them. Some have contributed key pieces to the puzzle, even if their ideas take time to seep into the mainstream. A century or two ago, they were our archaeologists. Many people fascinated with ancient sites today would qualify as modern antiquarians.

An *archaeologist*, professional, academic and pursuing a mainly left-brained approach to prehistory, cleaves to a methodology that explores many worthy details, closely examining the physical evidence they see to be relevant. In so doing they contribute to much of the heavy lifting in field investigation, research and explanation, though there's a difficulty in interpreting ancient sites owing to conceptual problems that we soon shall come upon. Archaeologists have the good fortune to be eligible for mainstream public respect, grants, posts, book sales and media access.

Technological advances have brought an unfolding revolution in archaeology. A new generation of archaeologists has emerged who are stretchier in viewpoint than their predecessors. Regrettably, in recent decades archaeology has been subject to paradigm limitations and denial of certain kinds of evidence, and this has had big consequences. Even so, both archaeologists and antiquarians have done admirable work in Penwith, gathering and interpreting field data. However, much of the prehistory of Penwith, an under-researched part of the world, has relied on comparison with sites elsewhere and on judgements rooted in ideas formed elsewhere.

A *geomancer* studies ancient sites and whole landscapes from an earth energy viewpoint, using dowsing, sacred geometry, alignments, archaeoastronomy and cosmology, utilising a more right-brained,

intuitive logic usually regarded as countercultural, therefore deemed baseless, eccentric and unfounded. Practiced by a loose caucus of freethinkers, geomantic ideas can be variegated, at times wildly imaginative and at times seriously technical, though it can be refreshingly commonsensical too – perhaps I’m guilty of all three. Geomancers are adventurous, sometimes ahead of their time and sometimes going off at a tangent, yet this cutting-edge zone provides a wealth of ideas, holding fundamental keys to understanding ancient cultures.

Archaeologists tend not to consider the full range of available evidence. Much is rejected because it does not fit today’s academic framework or current groupthink, though this filtration is a human condition that is not unique to them. So we get skewed research results and interpretative problems, sometimes tilting toward fitting evidence around current theories and biases. Geomancers tend to understand and accept archaeology more than archaeologists understand or accept geomancy. Archaeologists with an eye and an intuition for ancient sites do brilliant work, yet at times their best hunches and theories are kept quiet for fear of misjudgement or disadvantage, and this is problematic.

I encourage readers to adopt an inclusive position. I learned this in my humanitarian work, dealing with freedom fighters, Israeli settlers, soldiers, aggrieved women and frustrated teenage Arabs: everyone has a slice of truth, this is an ongoing process, everyone has something to contribute and everything is worth considering – even when some of it turns out to be incorrect or only partially correct. All of us need to widen our spectrum of admissible evidence, willing to adjust our viewpoints. Astrologer friends of mine helped NASA save a Mars lander by providing them with corrected planetary motion calculations, and Albert Einstein was a dowser. It’s doable.

Index

- 1200 BCE, 55, 245, 274
 1500 BCE, 59
 2300 BCE, 125, 266
 3200 BCE, **51**
 Agriculture, 244
 Alignments, **21**, 56, **292**,
 343, 427
 Apollo Line, 307
 as trackways, 21
 astronomical, 112, 120,
 171, 176, 302, 303
 backbone, 25, **296**,
 316, 428
 Carn Brea radials, 260
 double menhirs, 173
 geomantic sites, 311
 great circle lines, 112
 Great Circle Lines, 306
 history, 19
 Kemyel-Swingate, 304
 Lizard, 270
 local, 300
 Michael Line, 71, 94,
 110, 276, 306
 national and global,
 305
 near-parallel, 268, 290,
 300
 proxy sites, 312, 319
 quoits, 128, 303
 radial, 305
 relay sites, 312
 Scilly, 268, 287, 304
 settlements, 315
 significant local, 298
 significant long, 297
 terminal sites, 313
 thought lines, 294
 Toldavas, 171
 types of alignments,
 295
 Ancestors, 153, 369
 Ancient Sites, **64**
 artificial sites, 381
 gardened and
 landscaped, 145
 intervisibility, 364
 types of sites, 67
 Antiquarians, 431
 Black, William Henry,
 20
 Carne, Miss Elizabeth,
 195
 Giddy, Capt, 123
 Lockyer, Sir Norman,
 171
 Apollo Line, 110
 Archaeoastronomers
 Kennett, Carolyn, 125,
 171, 363
 Lockyer, Sir Norman,
 20
 Ruggles, Clive, 16
 Thom, Prof Alexander,
 16, 193, 204
 Archaeoastronomy, **358**
 azimuth and elevation,
 362
 backsights, 302
 foresights, 145, 171
 stars, 359
 Archaeologists, 431
 Burl, Aubrey, 16
 Gerrard, Dr Sandy, 177
 Giddings, David, 125
 Sawyer, Katharine,
 156
 Tilley, Christopher,
 119
 Weatherhill, Craig,
 223, 344, 350
 Wood, Jacqui, 242
 Archaeology
 bias in, 16, 17, 29, 60,
 141, 229, 262
 experimental, 29
 Arsenic, 98
 Asklepeion, 368
 Astrology, 35, 200, 363
 Atlantic Zone, 246
 contact, 285
 Atmospheres, 38
 Axis Mundi, 75, 99, 198
 Ballowall Barrow. *See*
 Cairns
 Barrowfields and
 Cairnfields, 155, 156,
 270, 281
 Barrows. *See* Cairns
 Bartinney Castle, 323
 Base Sites. *See* Alignments
 Beaker Influx, 160, 377
 Belerion, 13
 Beltane, 112
 Blind Springs, 32, 34, 209
 Bodmin Moor, 49, **273**
 Bojewans Carn, 127
 Boswarva Carn, 128
 Botallack Circles, 210
 Botrea Barrows. *See* Cairns
 Boundary Stones. *See*
 Stones
 Brisons, The, 99, 300
 Britain
 as a nation, 155, 271
 Brittany, 161, 269
 Bronze, 59
 Bronze Age, 55, 374
 culture, 59
 late, 55
 Burial Chambers, 113
 Burials, 141, 156, 270, 282
 Caer Brân. *See* Enclosures
 Cairns, **140**

- Ballowall Barrow, 98, 148
 Bosiliack Barrow, 153, 312, 409
 Boskednan, 128, 199
 Botrea Barrows, 47, 159, **319**, 364, 428
 Carland Cross, 258
 Carn Creis, 131
 Carn Mên Ellas, 96, 283
 Chy Praze, 313
 Conquer Cairn, 315
 Council Barrow, 258
 dating of, 154
 funerary purposes of, 141
 geomantic cairns, **144**, 258
 Hensbarrow, 258
 High Burrow, 258
 Lady Downs B, 330
 Neolithic longbarrows, 114, **154**
 orgone accumulators, 43, 158, 282
 Pedn-mên-du, 95, 311, 331
 purposes of, 143
 solid cairns, 156
 Three Burrows, 258
 Calendars, 202, 207
 Carn Brea, **70**, 71, **260**
 radial alignments, 260
 Carn Cravah, 127
 Carn Galva, **75**, 129, 198, 199
 Carn Gloose, 148
 Carn Kenidjack, **76**, 188, 365
 Carn Vellan, 136
 Carn Vres, 128, 188
 Carnmenellis, 257
 Carns, **127**
 Castle an Dinas, 323, *See* Enclosures
 Ceremony, 39, 214, 406
 Chambered Cairns, **147**, 367
 as repositories, 152
 for dying, 150
 for retreat, 148, 150
 for women, 151
 orientation of, 149
 Scilly, 271
 surviving chambered cairns, 148
 Chapel Carn Brea, 154, 297
 Chûn Castle
 well, 225
 Chûn Quoit. *See* Quoits
 Churches
 located on rounds, 238
 Civilisations, 375
 Cliff Sanctuaries, 49, **84**, 260
 backbone alignments, 25
 Bosigran Castle, **102**, 135
 Cape Cornwall, **97**
 Carn Lês Boel, **93**, 127, 132, 306, 365
 Carn Naun, 262
 Cudden Point, 262
 defensive purposes, 87, 264
 Gurnard's Head, **105**, 298
 Kemyel Point, 88, 262
 Kenidjack Castle, **99**, 135
 Maen Castle, **95**
 Neolithic dating of, 25, 86
 Pendeen Watch, 73, **101**
 Predannack Head, 263, 270
 purposes of, 85
 Rame Head, 263
 Roundwood Fort, 73
 Shipman Head, 281
 St Ives Head, 99
 St Michael's Mount.
 See St Michael's Mount
 Tol Pedn Penwith, 88, **91**, 276
 Treryn Dinas, **89**, 136
 Trewavas Head, 262, 365
 type three, 263
 type two, 262
 Climate, 54
 control, 355, 393
 downturns, 51, 245
 Clustering, 47
 Complexes
 Boscawen-ûn, 195
 Kemyel-Swingate, 174
 Merry Maidens, 173, 190
 Nine Maidens, 198
 Tregeseal, 187
Consciousness, 15, 38, 46, 169, 185, 336, 339, 351, 355, 400
 Consciousness Engineering, 18, 366, 371
 Consciousness Work, 40, 44, 213, 395
 Cornwall, **256**, 277
 coast, 49, 84, 256
 Killas, 256
 Courtyard Houses, 242
 Creeg Tol, 194
 Cromlechs. *See* Quoits
 Crowlas, 265
 Cyclotron Effect. *See* Geomancy
 Dating, Archaeological, 29, 55
 Death and Dying, 150, 155, 272
 Diodorus Siculus, 13, 108, 248
 Dolmens. *See* Quoits
 Dowsers, 33, 116, 163, 293
 Gawn, Billy, 203
 Graves, Tom, 35, 208

- Lonegren, Sig, 170, 203
 MacManaway, Patrick, 169
 Miller, Hamish, 111, 306
 Dowsing, 341, 397
 Druids
 proto-Druids, 18
 Dumnonii, 268, 277
 Earth Acupuncture, 397
 Earth Energy, 32, **158**, 163, 311, 368, 397
 and menhirs, 168
 at stone circles, 208
 barrows and cairns, 144
 chambers, 116
 systems, 56
 vortices, 33, 35, 43
 Eclipses, 35, 201, **203**
 Enclosures, 338
 Bartinney Castle, 125, 128, 132, 159, 216, **218**, 224
 Caer Brân, 218, **222**, 225, **321**, 344
 Castle an Dinas, 218, **226**, **327**
 Pordenack Point, 129, 133, **227**
 Energy Fields, **14**, 31
 Energy Frequencies, 32
 Energy Lines or Leys, 22
 Energy-weather, 37, 42
 Entrance Graves. *See* Chambered Cairns
 Evidence
 archaeological, 29
 geomantic, 30
 Excarnation, 272
 Faraday Cages, 44, 221
 Field Systems, 244
 Fogous, **247**, 367
 Four Parishes Stone. *See* Stones
 Funerary Practices, 60, 156, 270, 282, 369
 Gaia, 397
 Gateposts, 178
 Gear Round, 297
 Genius Loci, 46, 310, 335, 352, 371
 Geoengineering, 393
 Geomancers, 18, 431
 Broadhurst, Paul, 110, 111, 306
 Cooke, Ian McNeil, 248
 Goodwin, Sam, 174
 McBeth, Ivan, 170, 179
 Michell, John, 19, 137, 405
 Miller, Hamish, 110
 Price, Kenny, 81, 130
 Tigo, Rory Te, 255
 Walsh, Terry, 306
 Watkins, Alfred, 20
 Geomancy, 169, 183, 337
 cyclotron effect, 208, 328
 Geomantic Engineering, **45**, 347, 358, **373**
 Glastonbury, 39, 306
 Glastonbury Tor, 71, 94, 111
 Godolphin Hill, 135, 260
 Granite, 31, 168
 Greeb, 136
 Greece, 339, 368
 Greenstone, 106
 Grounding, 336
 Gulval, 238
 Gwennap Head. *See* Tol Pedn Penwith
 Heart of the World, 399
 Hedges, 244
 Hereness, 351
 Hill Camps, **216**
 Carnsew, 229, 236
 Chûn Castle, **232**, 344
 Faugan Round, 234
 for defence, 229
 Lescudjack Castle, 235
 Lesingey Round, 235, 324
 Trencrom Hill, 233
 Hippocrates, 368
 Holed Stones
 Mên an Tol, 177
 Merry Maidens, 176
 Tregeseal, 136, 176
 Holy Wells, **250**
 Hundredth Monkey Project, 40
 Hut Circles. *See* Roundhuts
 Iberia, 161
 Ictis, 108
 Inner Work, 37, 40
 Intervisibility. *See* Ancient Sites
 Iron Age
 dating, 55
 Jesus of Nazareth, 74
 Joseph of Arimathea, 74
 Jupiter
 Great Mutation, 207
 Karmapa, 400
 Kemyol Point, 298
 Kilgooth Ust. *See* Cape Cornwall
 Kogi Mamas, 150, 399
 Landscape Setting, 179
 Landscape temples, 388
 Ley-hunting, 20
 Lightning Conductors, 163
 Lizard, **268**
 alignments on, 305
 barrowfields, 155, 271
 Locational Factors, **45**, 118, 346, 358, 381
 Longships Rocks, 136
 Longstones. *See* Menhirs
 Lyonesse, 286
 Maoris, 81
 Maps, **427**
 accuracy, 428
 map projections, 290
 Maritime Culture
 Scilly, 284
 Mayon Cliff, 95, 96, 156
 Medicines

- treatment of in cairns, 152
- Meditation, 38
- Megalith Builders, 28, 161, 363
- Megalithic engineering, **28**, 179, 395
- era, 10
- periods, 55
- regions, 26
- system, 166, 265, 267, 290, 348, 374, 382, 429
- Megalithic Era, 373
- Megalithic Science, 18, 183
- Mên an Tol, 177, 199
- Menhirs, 42, **160**, 166
- Bishop's Head and Foot, 313
- Boscawen Rô's, 173, 191
- Boswens, 312, 364
- Bunker's Hill, 167
- Carfury, 73, 300, 312, **318**
- Carn Lês Boel, 132
- Castallack, 171, 175
- construction of, 166
- distribution of, 167
- double menhirs, **172**, 191, 318
- energy fields, 164
- Gûn Rith, 190
- hedge menhirs, 175
- hub menhirs, 168
- Kemyel-Swingate, 174, 304
- location of, 169
- Mên Scryfa, 199, 365
- Pipers, The, 173, 191, 300
- propped menhirs, 129, 132, 175, 366
- relay menhirs, 168
- Rissick, 167
- Seal Stone, 30
- Tregaminion, 293, 314
- Treryn Dinas, 293
- Trevean 1, 132, 313
- Watch Croft, 199
- Metonic Cycle, 205, 361
- Mica, 32
- Michael Line. *See* Alignments
- Migration, 161, 378
- Mind Medicines, 152, 369
- Moon, 201, 358
- eclipses, 35, 203
- lunar calendars, 202
- lunar cycles, 35, 202, 209
- maxima and minima, 120, 196, 302, 360
- newmoons and fullmoons, 79, 201
- Mounds. *See* Cairns
- Nanquidno, 129, 131
- NBA, 161
- Neolithic, 55
- crisis, 51
- culture, 51, 82
- dating, 55
- hills, 216
- late Neolithic, 160
- longbarrows, 154
- tor enclosures, **68**, 260, 275
- Neolithic/Bronze Age Transition. *See* NBA
- Nitsch, Twylah, 62
- Non-Duality, 400
- Orgone Accumulators, 43, 158, 282
- Oriented Stones. *See* Stones
- Pandemics, 82
- Penwithians, 61, 226, 290
- Neolithic, 28, 51, 55, 68, 121
- Periodicity, 35, 359
- Piora Oscillation, 51
- Place Memory, 328, **338**, 371
- Placed Stones. *See* Stones
- Placeness, 68, 371
- Planets
- Jupiter, 207
- line-ups and configurations, 36
- Saturn, 207
- Venus, 39
- Pordenack Point, 323
- Porth Ledden, 98, 100
- Power Points, 168, **308**, 398
- base sites, 310, 315, 347, 382
- Botrea Barrows, 319
- case studies, 313
- geomantic sites, 311
- hubs, 312, 331
- in space*, 309
- in time, 203, 308
- Lady Downs B, 330
- Lesingey Round, 324
- Priest's Cove, 98
- Propped Stones. *See* Stones
- Psychic Communication, 349
- Psychoactive Plants. *See* Mind Medicines
- Psychogeoengineering, **357**
- Psychogeography, 275
- Psychometry, 37, **339**
- Ptolemy, 268
- Pytheas, 269
- Quantum Entanglement, 56, **348**
- Quartz, 32, 168
- Quoits, 44, **113**, 260, 367
- Bosporthenis, 118
- Chûn, 23, 114, 118, 122, 212, 364
- covered quoits, 114
- decommissioned quoits, 123
- Giant's Grave, 122, 128
- Grumbla, 118, 122
- Lanyon, 24, 114, 123, 332
- location of, 118
- Mulfra, 120
- Sperris, 123, 133

- West Lanyon, 122,
123, 128, 331
Reality Fields, 39, **335**, 355,
357, 406
Repositories, 115, 152
Ring of Power, 402
Rosemergy, 212
Rough Tor, 275
Roundhuts, 240
Rounds, **237**, 259
 Chygwiddden, 237, 296
 Faugan Round, 237
Rubbing Posts, 178
Runnell Stone, 92, 127
Sámi, 151
Saros Cycle, 206
Schumann Resonance, 31
Scientific Instrumentation,
 16, 31, 168
Scientists
 Einstein, Alfred, 57,
 349
 Freud, Sigmund, 158
 Lovelock, James, 397
 Reich, Wilhelm, 43
 Schauberger, Viktor,
 138, 158, 252
Scillonian Chambered
 Cairns. *See* Chambered
 Cairns
Scillonians, 290
Scilly, **265**, **279**
 alignments on, 287,
 304
 cairnfields, 155, **281**
 Isle of the Dead, 272
 Mesolithic, 280
 Neolithic, 266
 Pig Rock, 266, 280
 settlement of, 280
 Shipman Head, 155,
 281
Sea Levels
 Scilly, 286
Sennen, 285
Serpentine, 269
Settlements, **240**
 Bodrift, 134, 241
 Bosulow Trehyllis,
 233, 241
 Carn Euny, 241, 247,
 254
 Carnaquidden Downs,
 241
 Chysauster, 241
 Lesingey Round, 324
 Nanjulian, 241
Shamanic Culture, 17, 354,
 399
Simulacra. See Stones
Solution Basins, 138
Spirit of Place. *See* Genius
 Loci
Springs, **250**, 367
St Buryan, 137, 238
St Erth, 238
St Just, 238
St Michael's Mount, **74**,
 108, 276, 382
Standing Stones. *See*
 Menhirs
Stone Circle Complexes.
 See Complexes
Stone Circles, **182**
 Avebury, 71, 94, 111
 blind springs, 209
 Boleigh, 210
 Boscawen-ûn, 171,
 192, 195, **331**, 381
 Carnmenellis, 258
 design, 201, **205**
 destroyed, 210
 feeling them, 185
 getting there, 184
 Higher Trevorian, 211
 Hurlers, The, 71, 94,
 276, 306
 Mên an Tol, 199
 Merry Maidens, **188**,
 190
 modern, 179
 Nine Maidens, **196**,
 198, 298
 Redhouse, 211
 Rosemergy, 212
 Stonehenge, 160
 Stripple Stones, 99
 Tregeseal, 128, **185**,
 187
 Tregeseal West, 213
 Tregurnow, 189, 190,
 213
 Wendron Nine
 Maidens, 73, 258
Stone Rows, 275
Trevelglos, 175
Stone Settings, 210, 212
Stonehenge. *See* Stone
 Circles
Stones, **125**
 Bishop's Head and
 Foot Stone, 137
 Bosistow, Higher, 129,
 130, 133
 boundary, **137**, 164
 Four Parishes Stone,
 137, 199
 logan stones, 104
 markstones, 136
 oriented, 11, 101, 104,
 134, 176
 placed, 92
 placed stones, 81, **129**,
 133, 234, 266
 propped stones, 11, 76,
 80, 125, 128, **131**
 simulacra, 126
Stowe's Pound, 275
Subtle Energy, 15, 38, 308
Surveying, 58
Talking Trees (Algonquin),
 37
Tibetans, 61, 150, 400
Time, 61, 200
 Metonic Cycle, 205
 Saros Cycle, 206
Tin, 226
 export, 59, 98, 108
 streaming, 100
Tol Pedn Penwith. *See* Cliff
 Sanctuaries
Tombs, 113
Tor Enclosures. *See*
 Neolithic

- Tors, 68
- Toynbee, Arnold, 375
- Trackways
 - Tinner's Way, 387
- Trade, 66, 70, 98, 108, 226, 270, 277, 375
- Treen Circle, 89
- Treen Common Circle, 212
- Trencrom Hill, **72**, 73, 316, 361
- Treryn Dinas. *See* Cliff Sanctuaries
- Trevorian, Higher, 211
- Tsunamis, 74
- Viewboxes, 134
- Visualisation, 40
- Vortices. *See* Earth Energy Vortices
- Watch Croft, 76, 199, 314, 365
- Water, 251
 - primary, 32, 254
 - secondary, 33
 - underground, 32, 38
 - water lines, 169
- Weather, 42
- West Penwith, **6**, **264**
 - ancient sites, **64**
- barrowfields and cairnfields, 156
- clustering of ancient sites, 47
- earliest settlement, 64
- eastern threshold, 48
- empty areas, 47
- northern highlands, 78
- stone circles, 182
- Wildwood, 78, 259, 384
 - clearance, 252, 257
- Wolf Rock, 128, 289
- Zennor Hill, 77, 129
- Zoöomorphic rocks, 126

About the Author

I was involved in flower power and student activism (LSE) in the 1960s, and this was a life-changer. Since then, I have been obsessed with prehistory and history, social-cultural change and global megatrends. Through my adult life I have also worked in counselling, holistic education, event organisation, humanitarian work, book editing and publishing.

I've been into community-building, internet activism and peacemaking. I've written fifteen books, built several big resource websites and started various organisations and initiatives. An archive of my work is on my website.

A polymath, I'm good at joining the dots between a wide range of ideas and perspectives. Growing up in 1950s Wales and 1960s Liverpool, I later lived in North Wales, Sweden, Glastonbury, Bethlehem and now Cornwall. I have four grown-up children, seven grandchildren and two adopted grandchildren. Nowadays I'm a blogger and podcaster.

Recent decades have been a time of germination of new ideas and discoveries with an enormous influence on the future. It has been a privilege to be part of that. When in late life I went down with cancer (Multiple Myeloma) in 2019, I felt a need to record things I'd learned in life through writing and podcasts, for future benefit.

In *Shining Land* I share my understanding of the ancient history of Cornwall and what can be construed to have been one of the greatest periods in British history – the megalithic period of the Neolithic and Bronze Age, of which Cornwall was one of its centres.



palden.co.uk | ancientpenwith.org | palden.co.uk/shiningland

About this Book

West Penwith in the far west of Cornwall was called *Belerion* in ancient times – the radiant land. *Shining Land* explores the reasons why the people of the Neolithic and Bronze Ages built stone circles, standing stones, hill camps, cairns and other sacred sites, using the example of Penwith to show how it all knitted together in a real landscape. Penwith is dense with ancient sites, and they form a whole system that covers the entire peninsula.

The ancients engaged in *megalithic geoengineering* – a magical and spiritual approach to regulating the ecosystem, climate and their communities – and there is something we can learn from this. Those who omit or refuse to include earth energies in their understanding of prehistory miss a trick. It's rather like failing to understand how money makes an economy work.

Shining Land will interest anyone who loves Cornwall and who is interested in ancient megalithic sites. It guides the reader through the different kinds of ancient sites found in West Penwith, and through its prehistory, giving a good feel of what lies beneath Cornwall's special magic. It's not just the scenery – it's the energy and atmosphere. You can *feel* it.

This is a feast of ideas you don't have to agree with, though they might well stimulate your own thinking. It's a good dose of alternative archaeology, geomantic evidence, stretchy perspectives and bits of information, shedding new light on the early life of the ancients of Cornwall. Cornwall was centrally placed in the megalithic world of Atlantic Europe – a crucial trading route carrying cultural influences, ideas, people... and Cornish tin.