



## Stars and Stones : Megalithic Alignments

Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2026

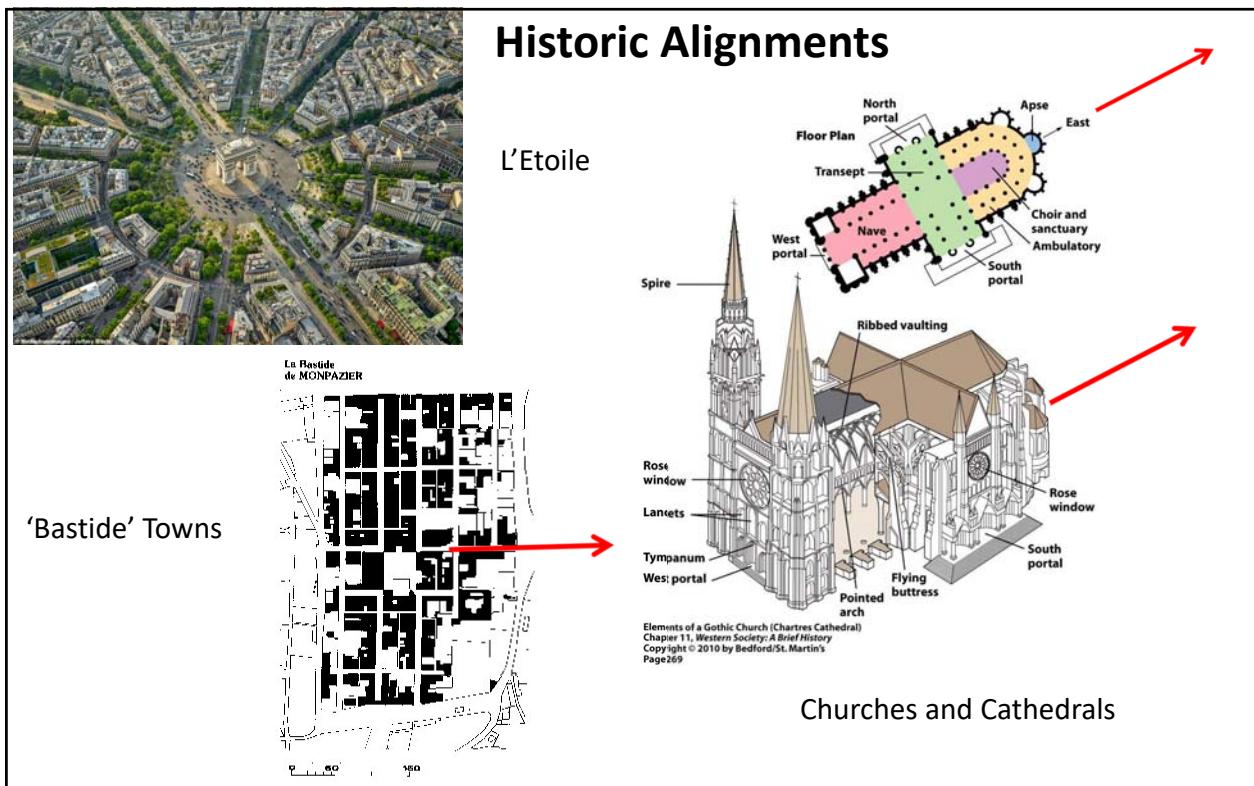
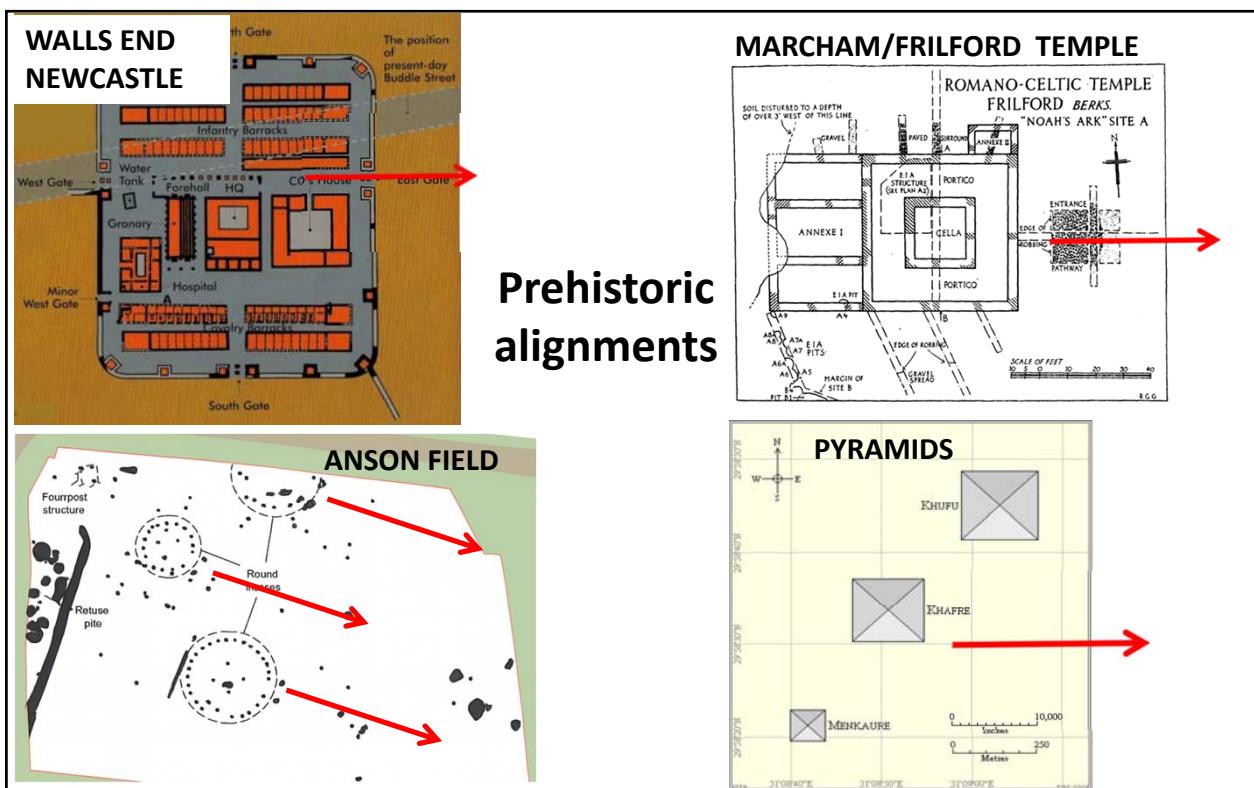




FIGURE 10.4. Maya astronomical alignments of the Caracol Observatory, Chichen Itza.



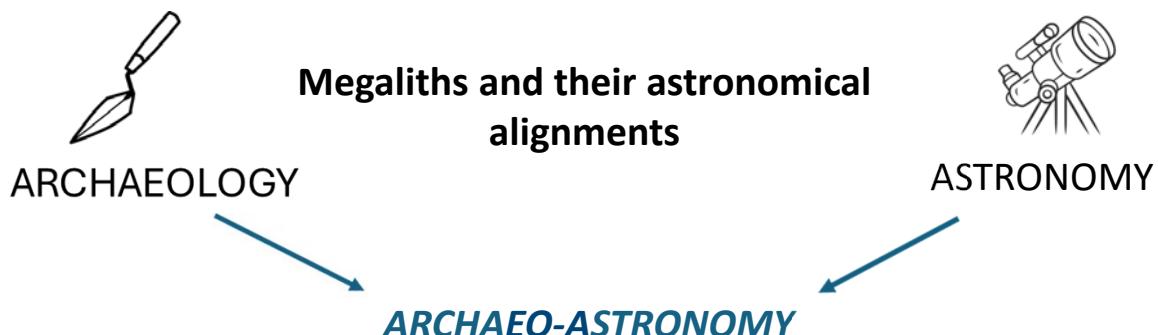
Prehistoric  
alignments



## The definition and distribution of Megaliths

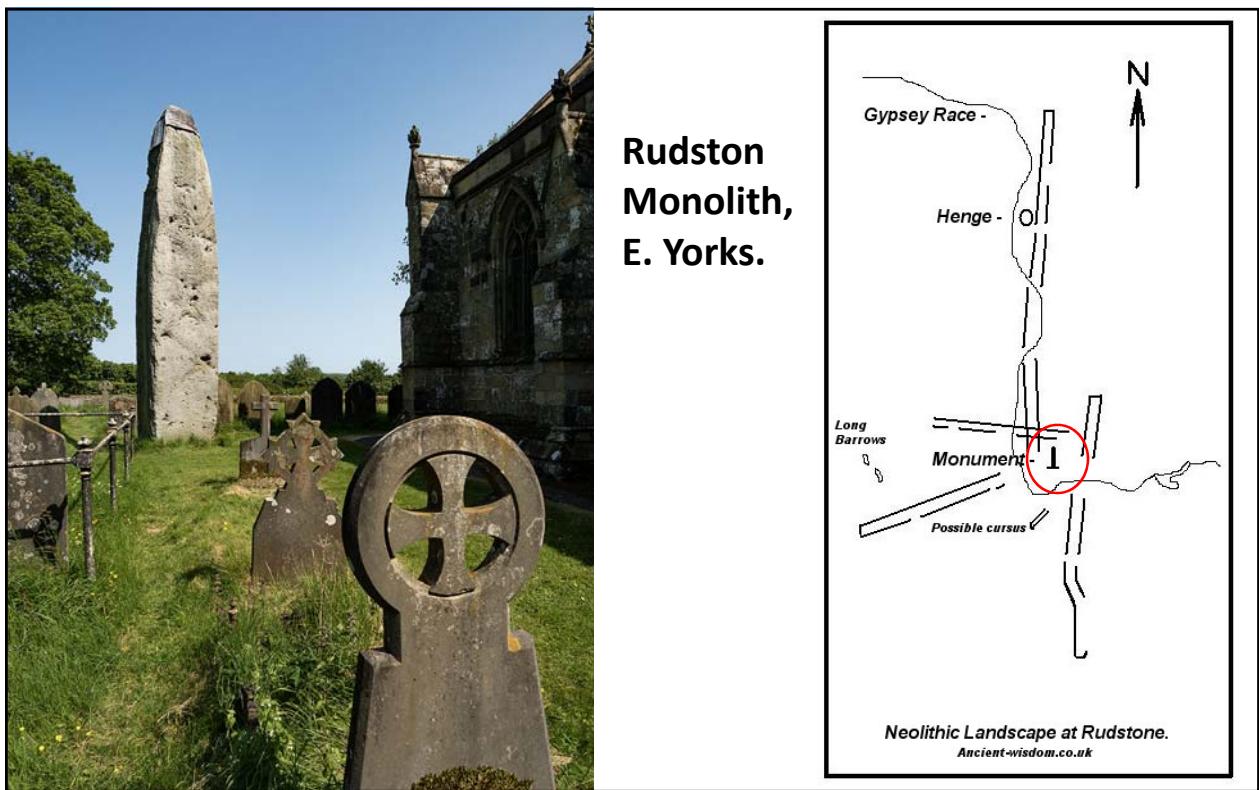


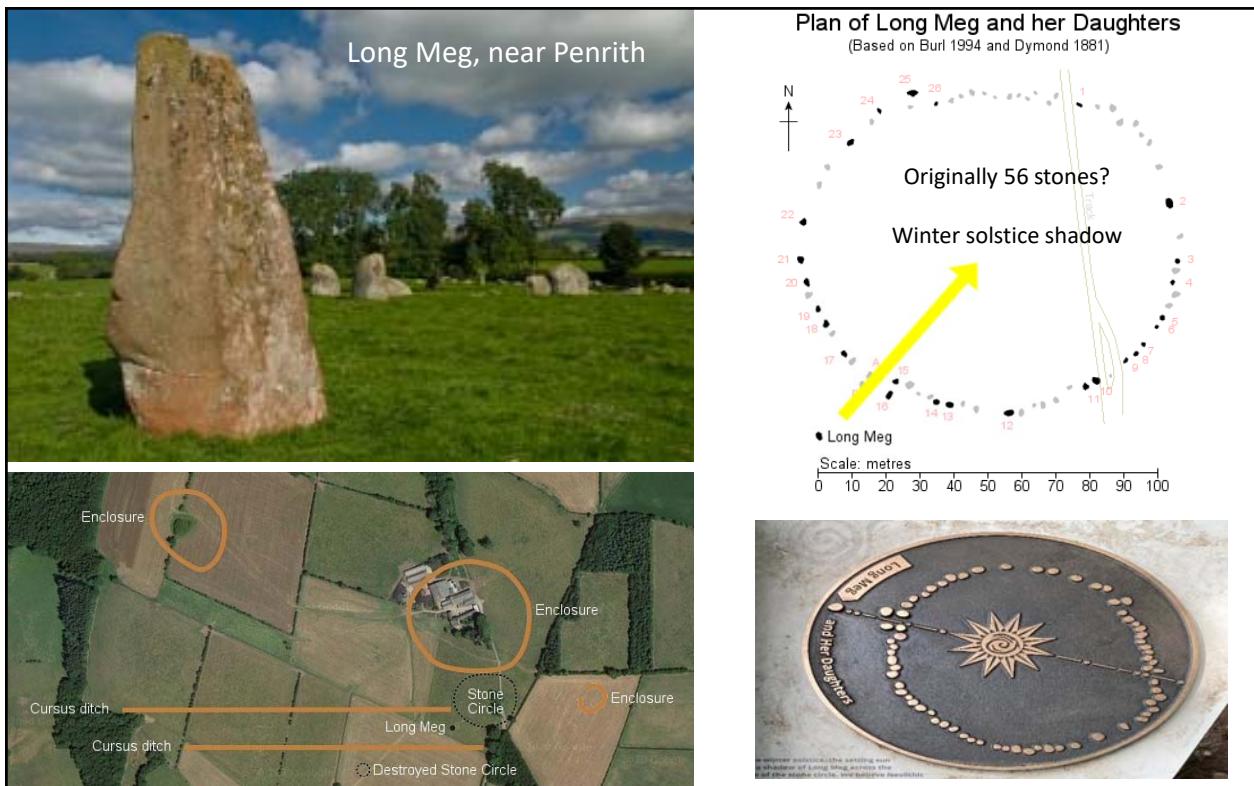
FIG. 2 Distribution map of megalithic monuments in Western Europe

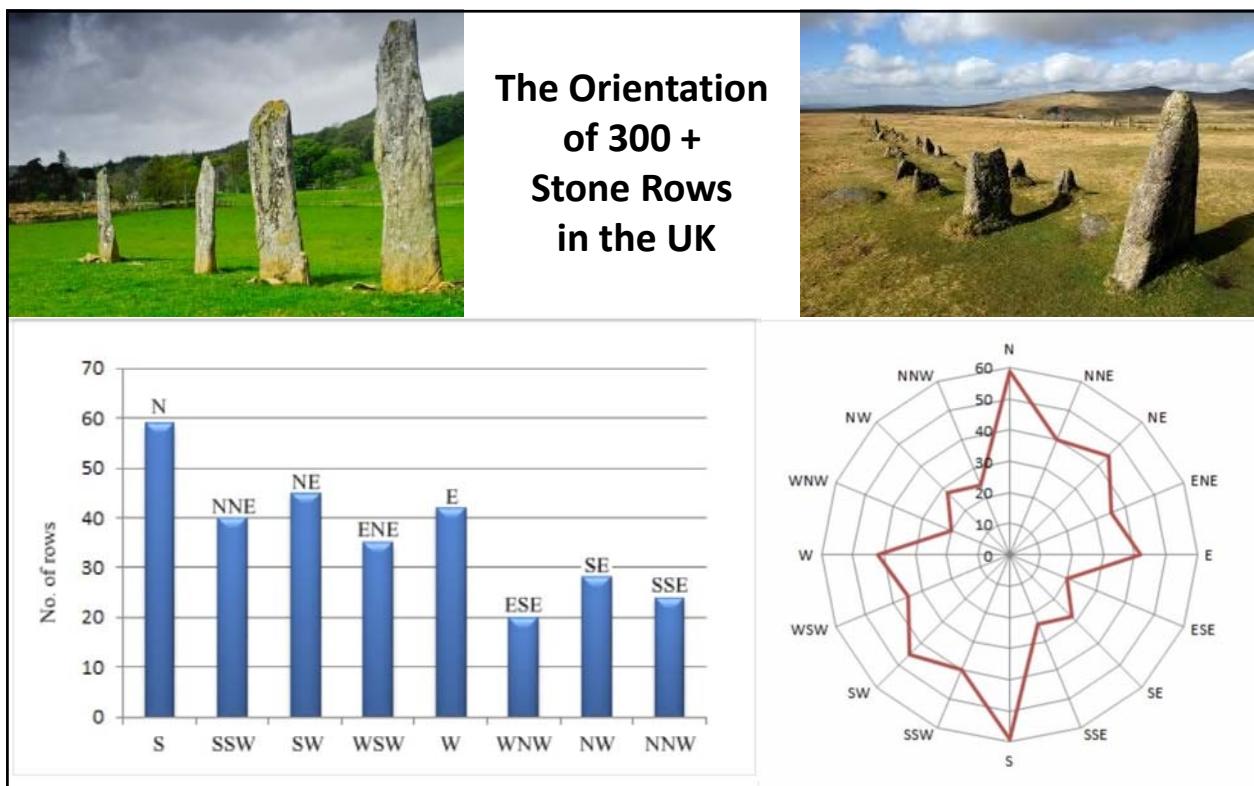


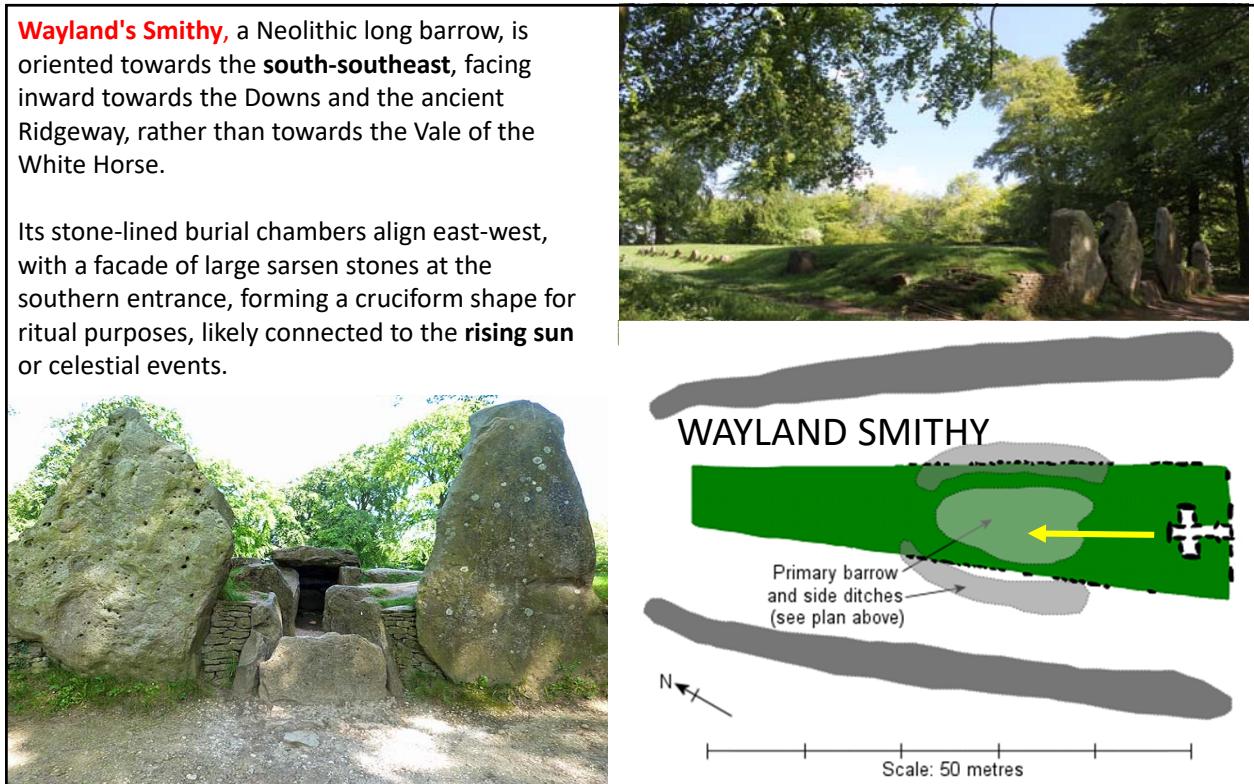
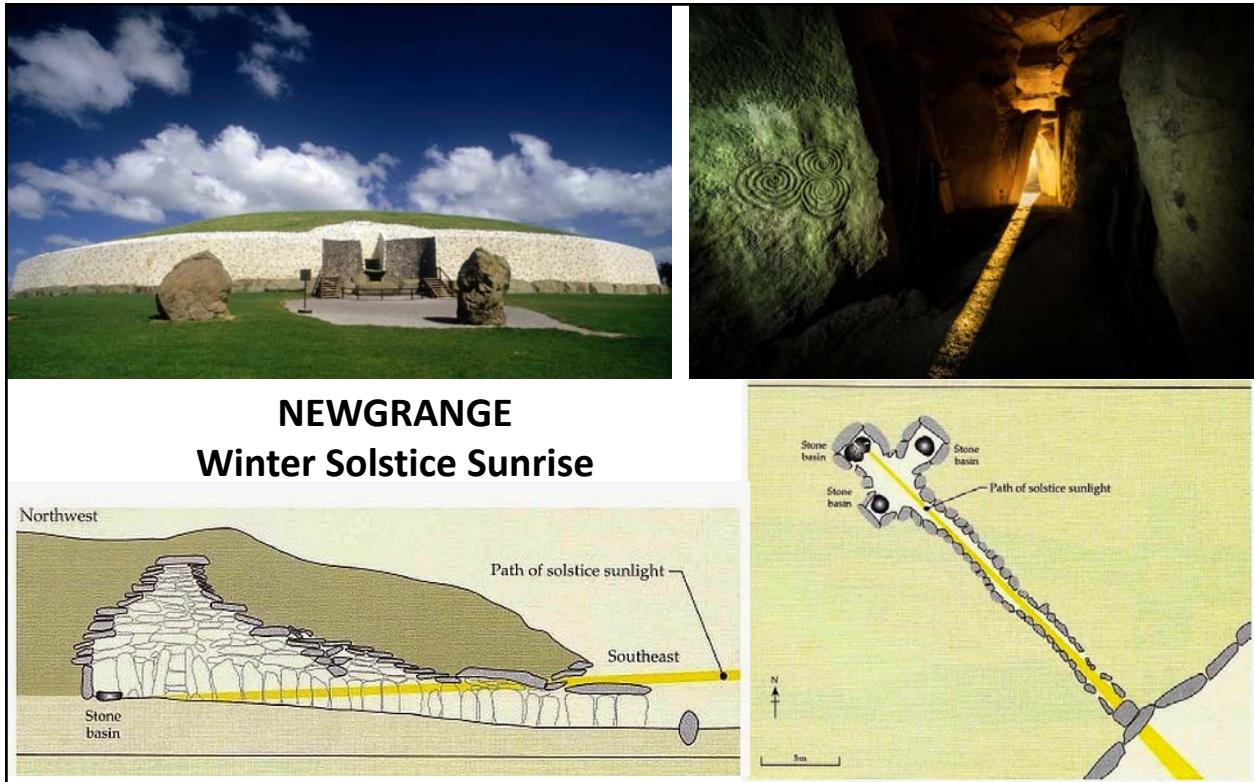
### Difficulties:

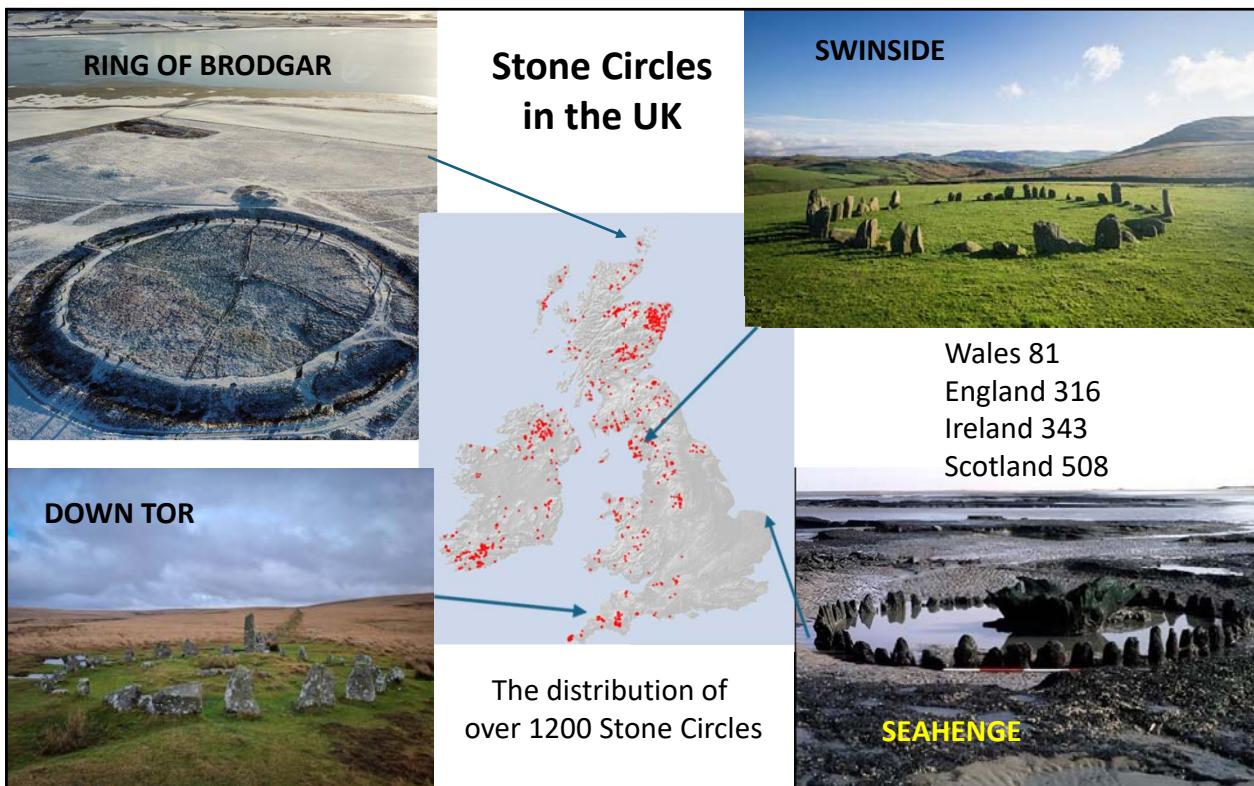
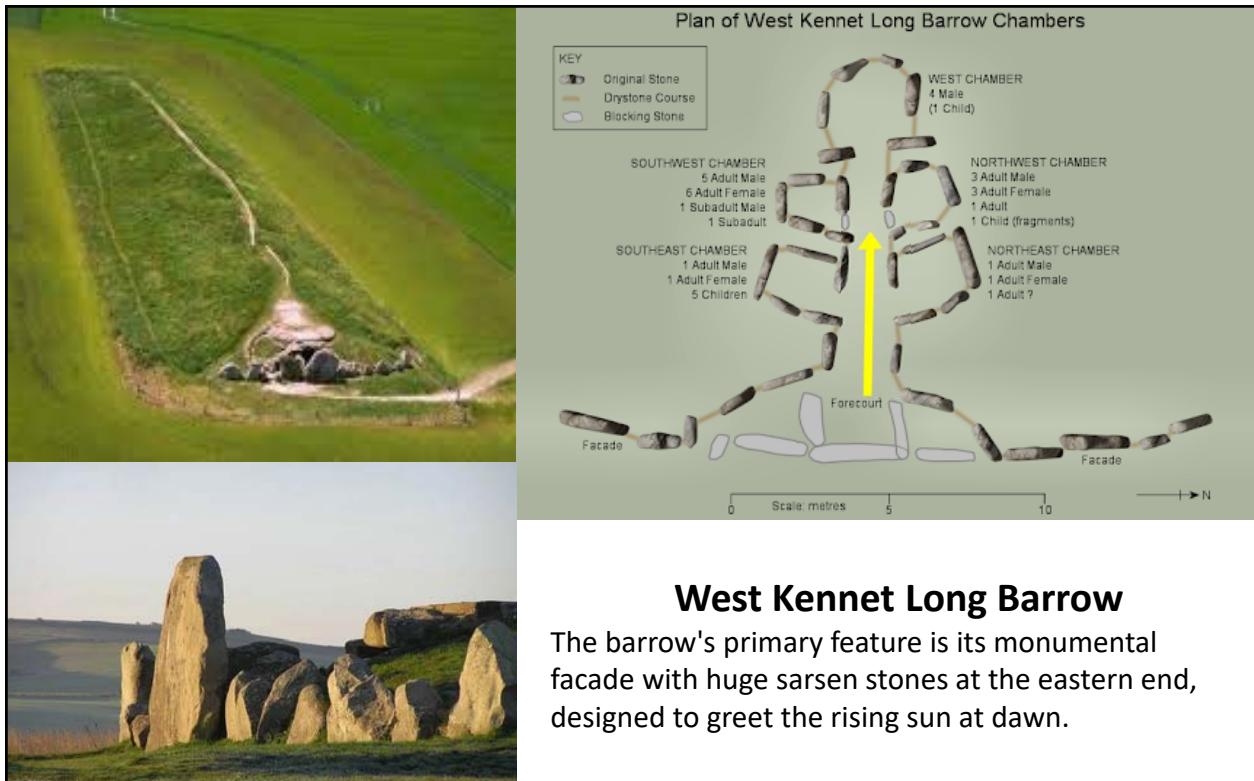
- 1) Shortage of written evidence (*Diodorus, Strabo, Hecataeus*)
- 2) Destruction / adaption of original sites (*Christians, Farmers, Builders*)
- 3) Changing position of stars and planets (*Stellarium, SkySafari, Skychart*)
- 4) The evolving attitude to the abilities of primitive man (*Bible, Darwinism.....*)

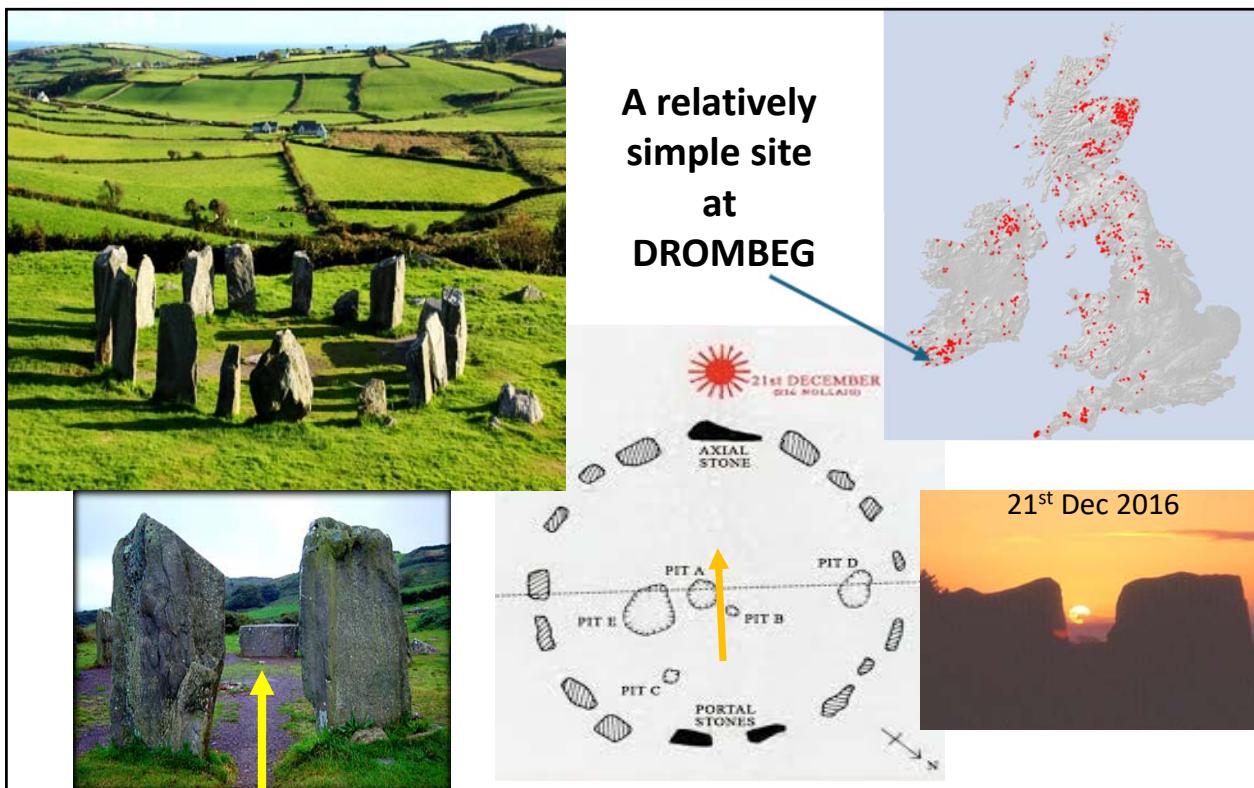
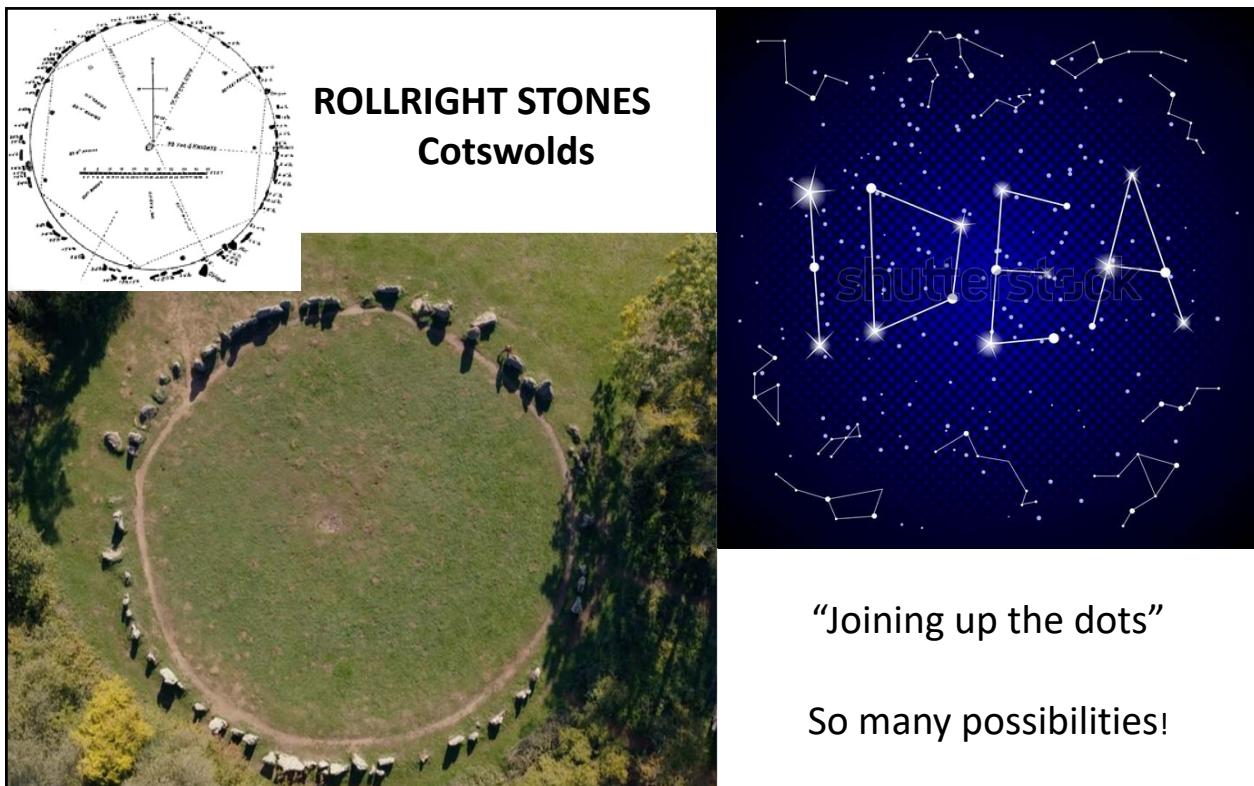


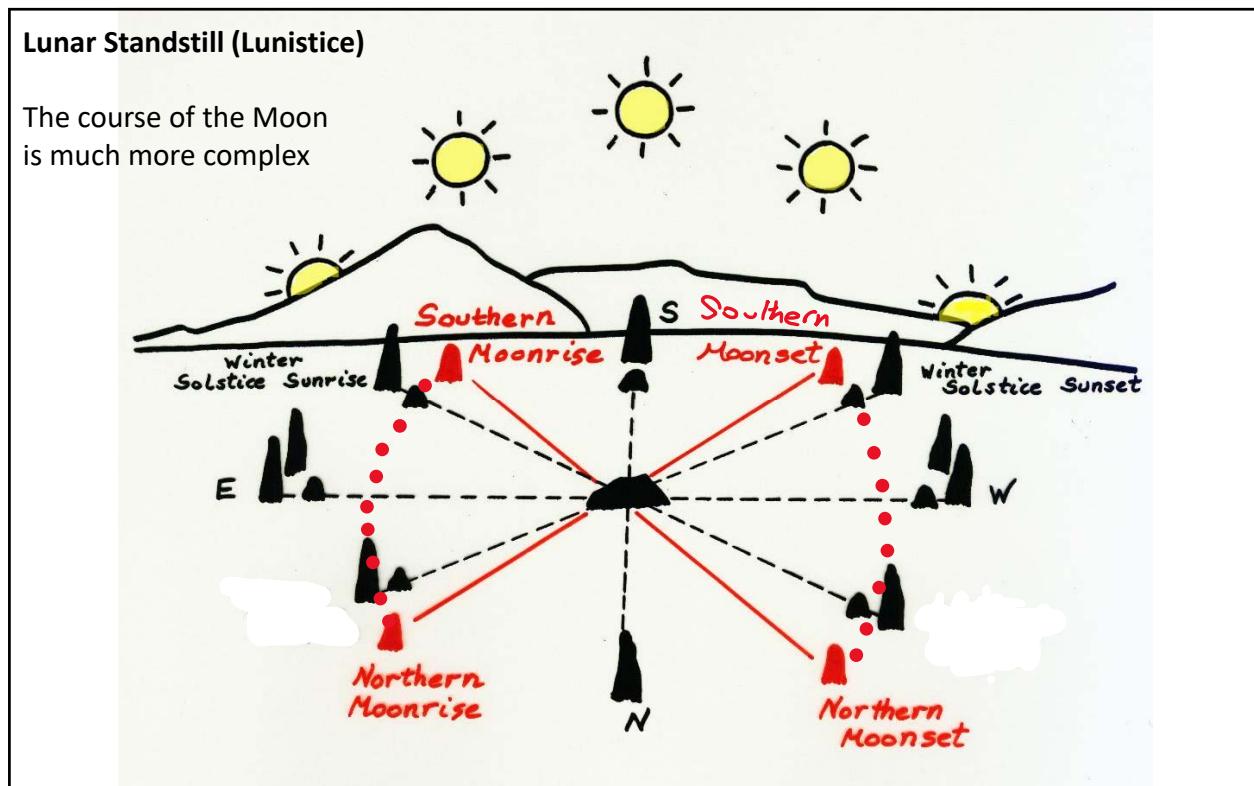
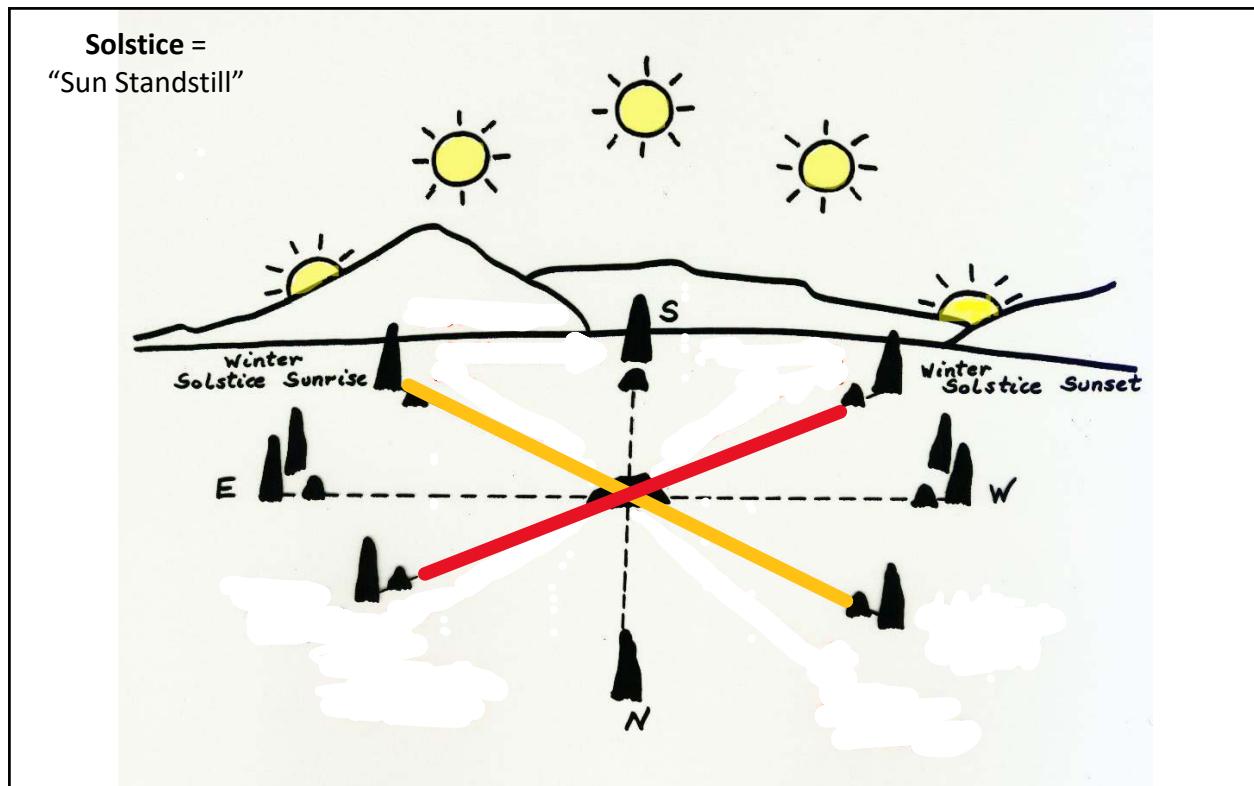


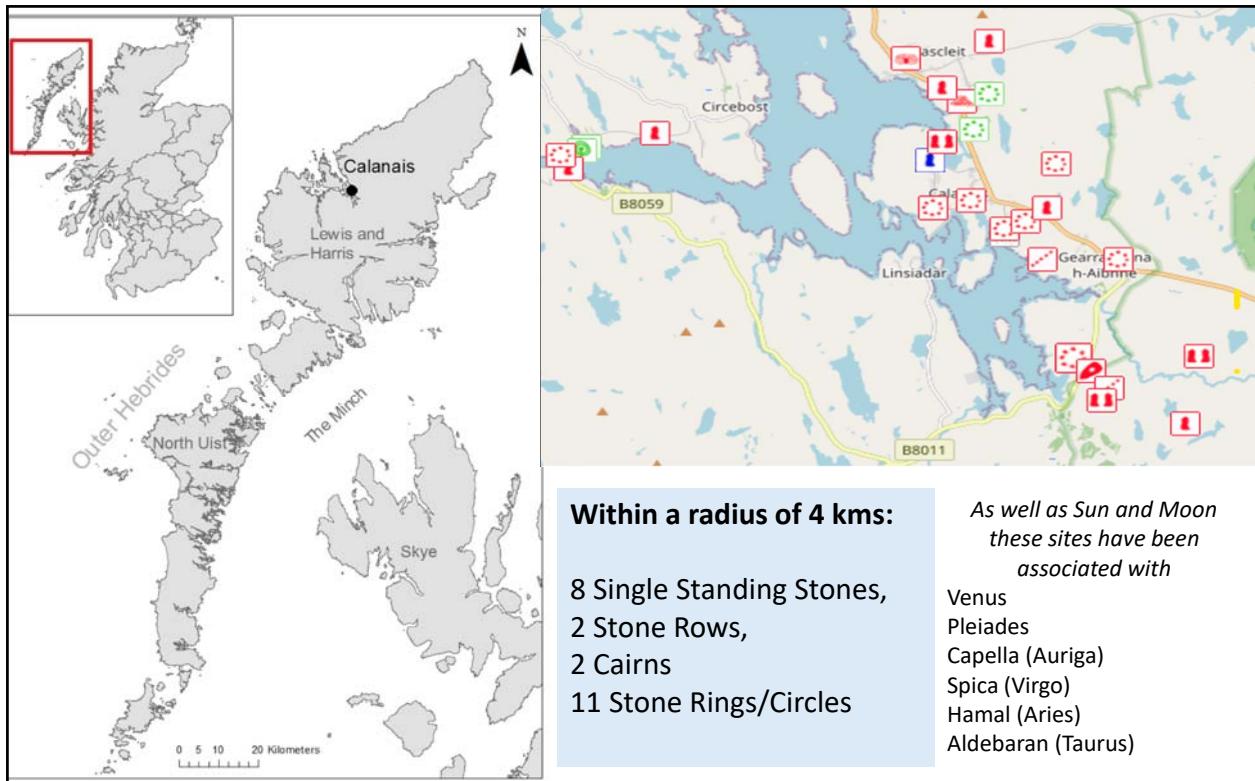


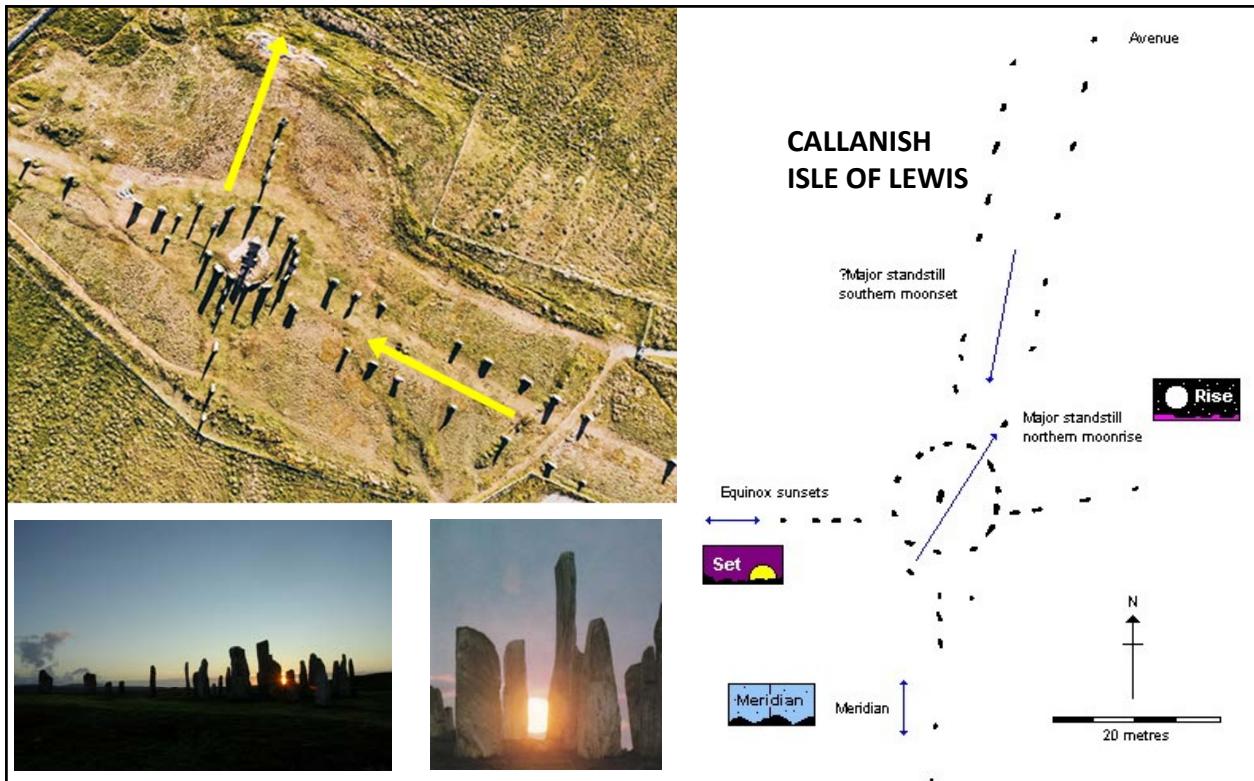












### Diodorus Siculus on the 'Celtic Temple of Apollo'

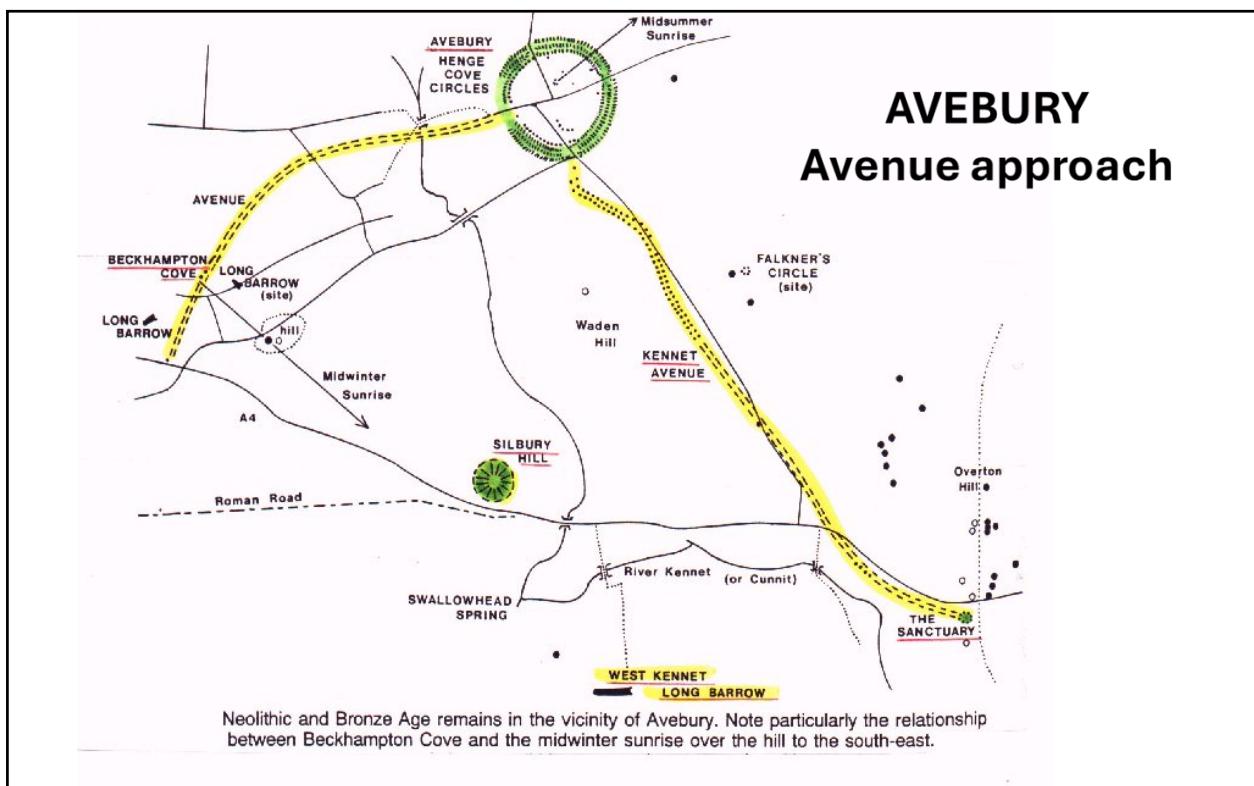
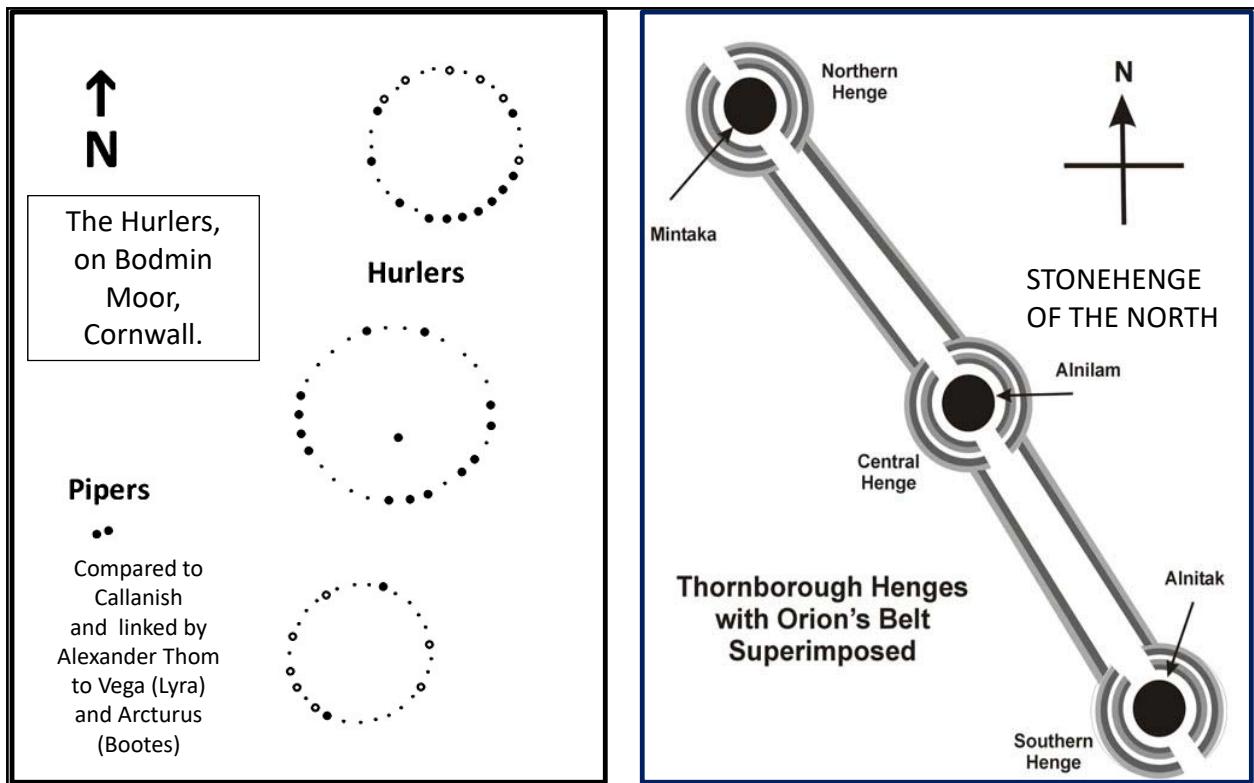
Book 2 chapter 47 - written in 1<sup>st</sup> Century bc

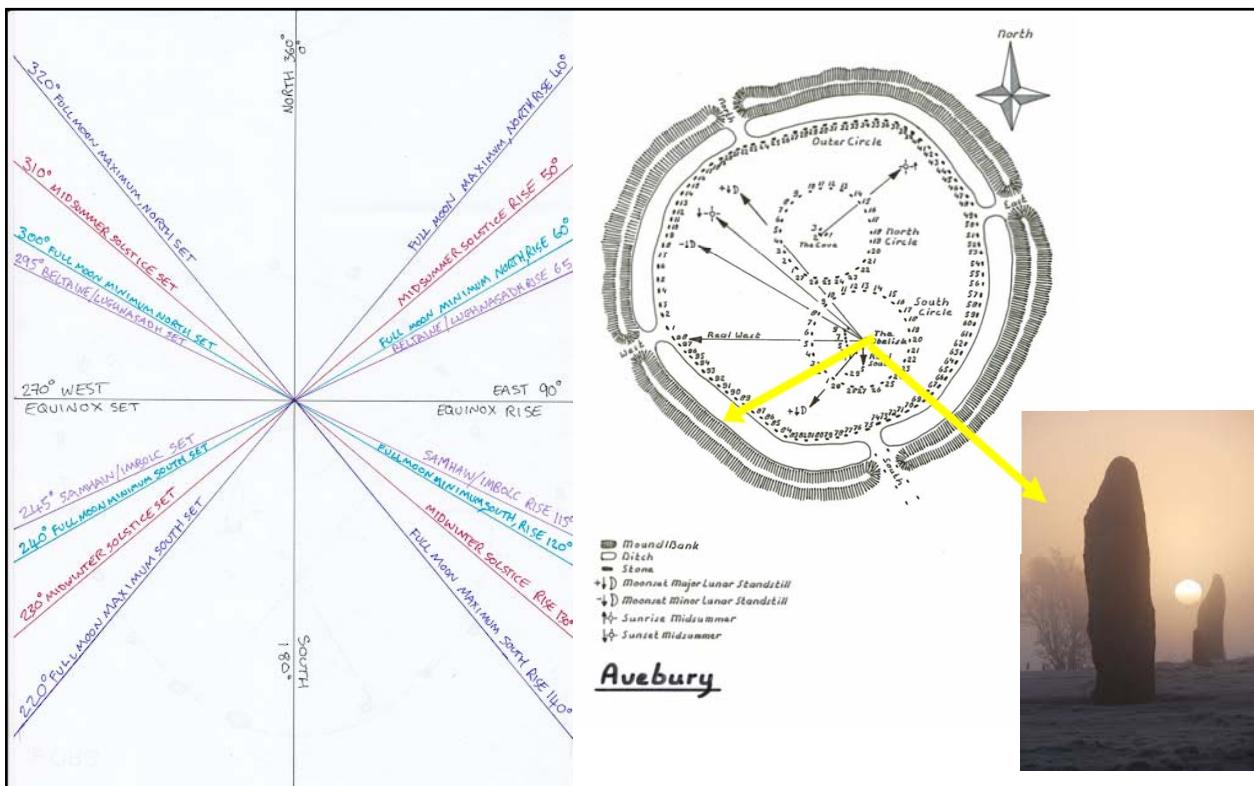
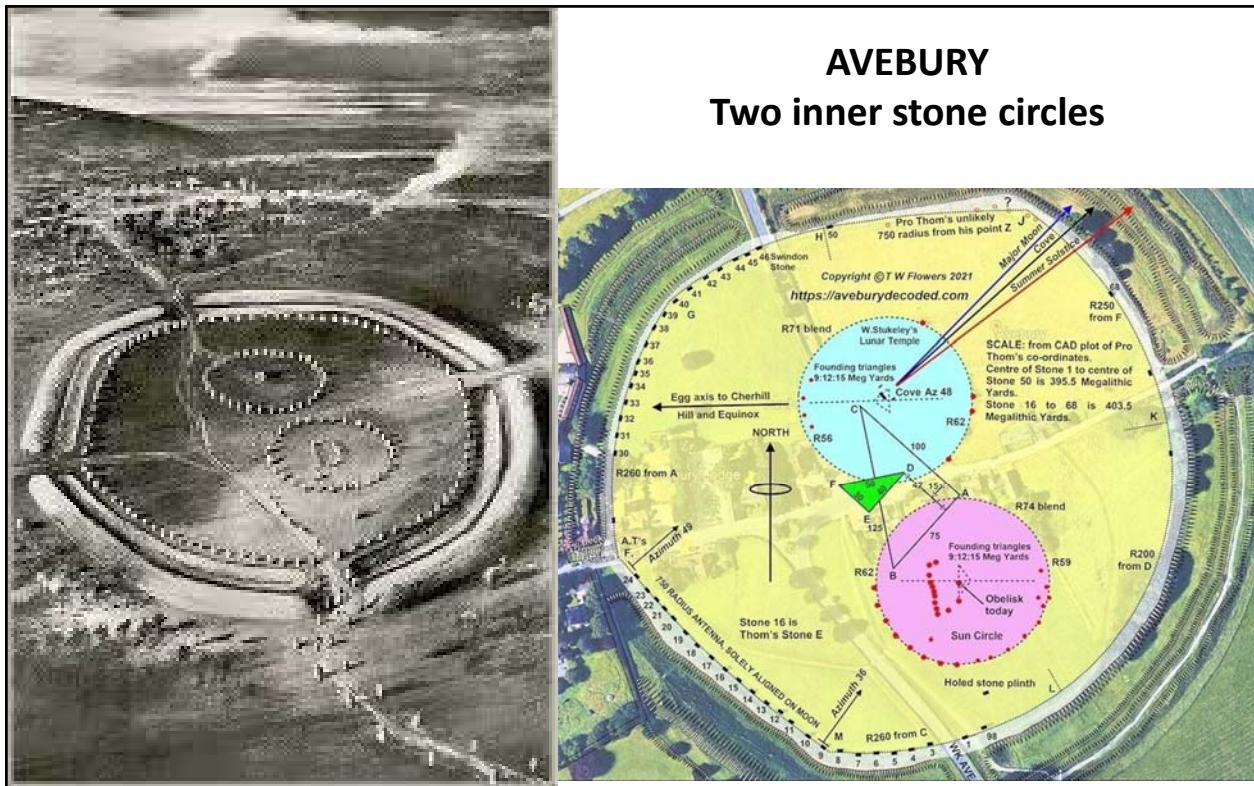
**This island, the account continues, is situated in the north and is inhabited by the Hyperboreans, who are called by that name because their home is beyond the point whence the north wind (Boreas) blows; and the island is both fertile and productive of every crop, and since it has an unusually temperate climate it produces two harvests each year.**

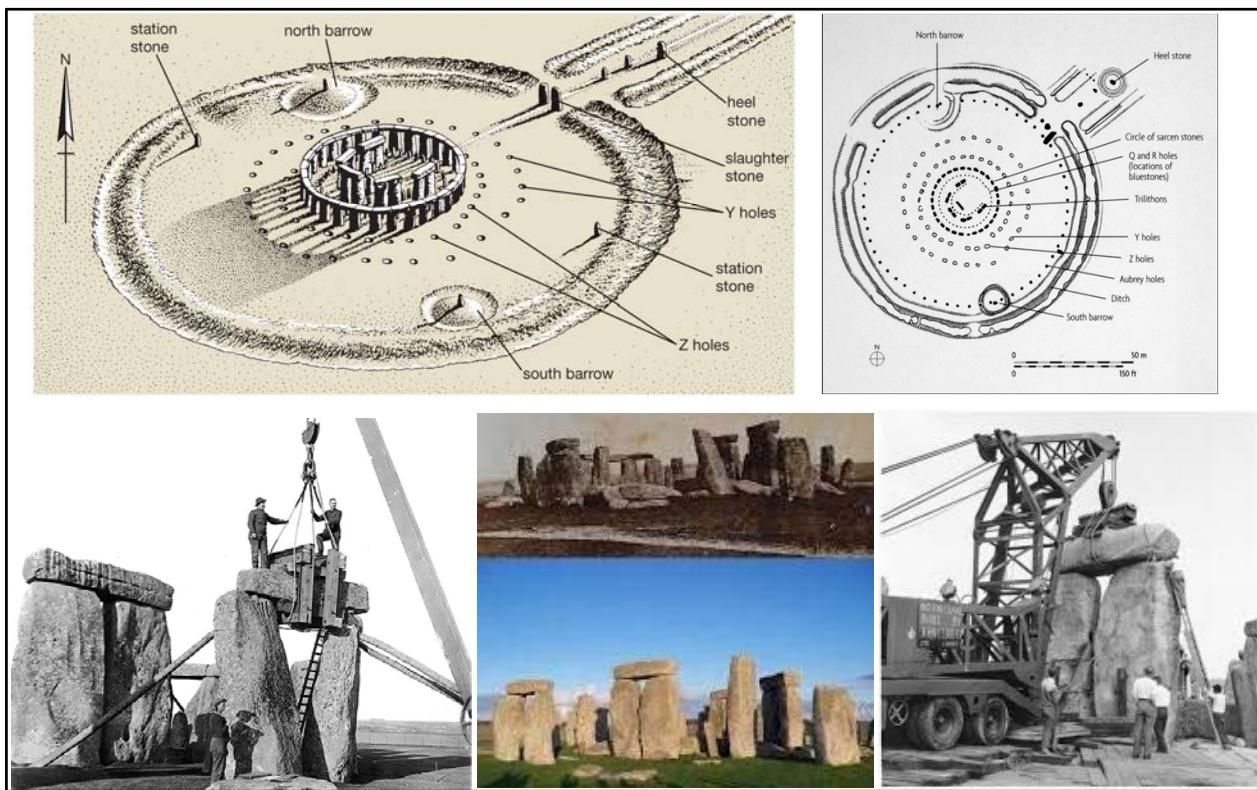
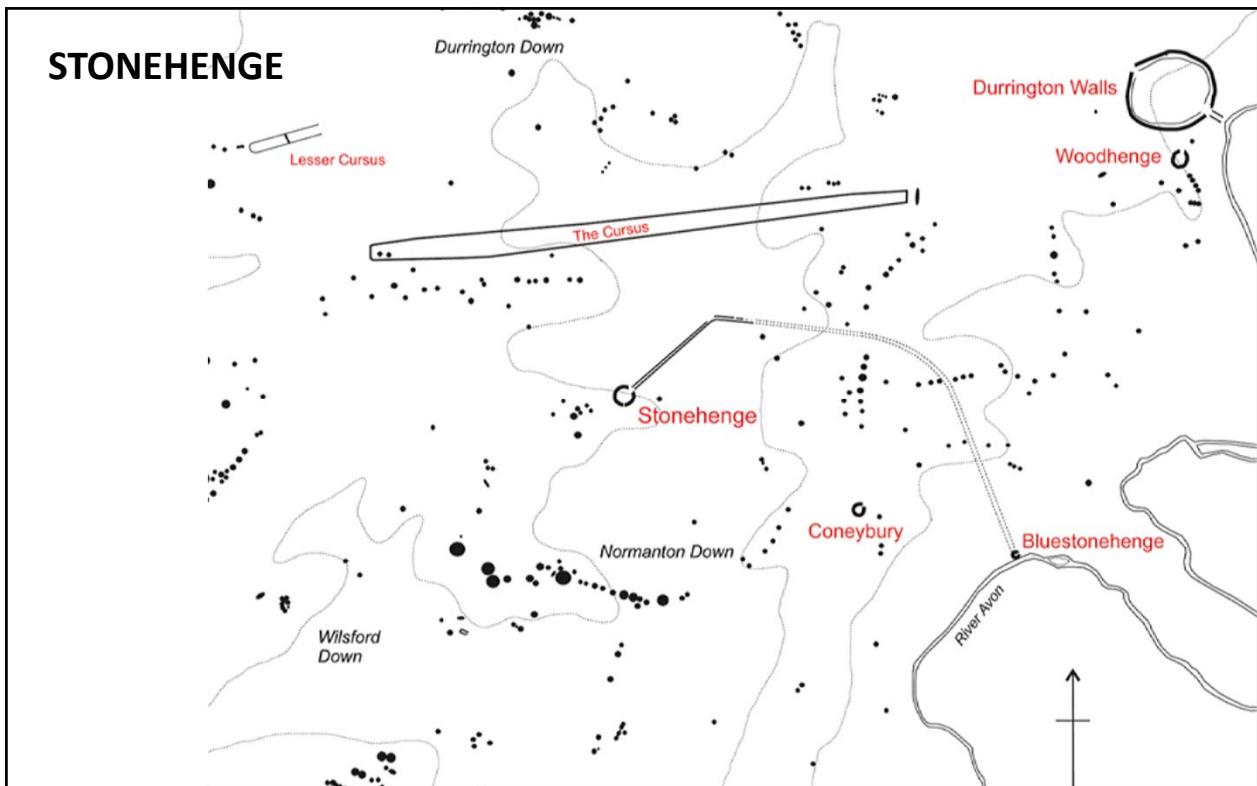
Moreover, the following legend is told concerning it: Leto was born on this island, and for that reason Apollo is honoured among them above all other gods; and the inhabitants are looked upon as priests of Apollo, after a manner, since daily they praise this god continuously in song and honour him exceedingly. **And there is also on the island both a magnificent sacred precinct of Apollo and a notable temple which is adorned with many votive offerings and is spherical in shape.**

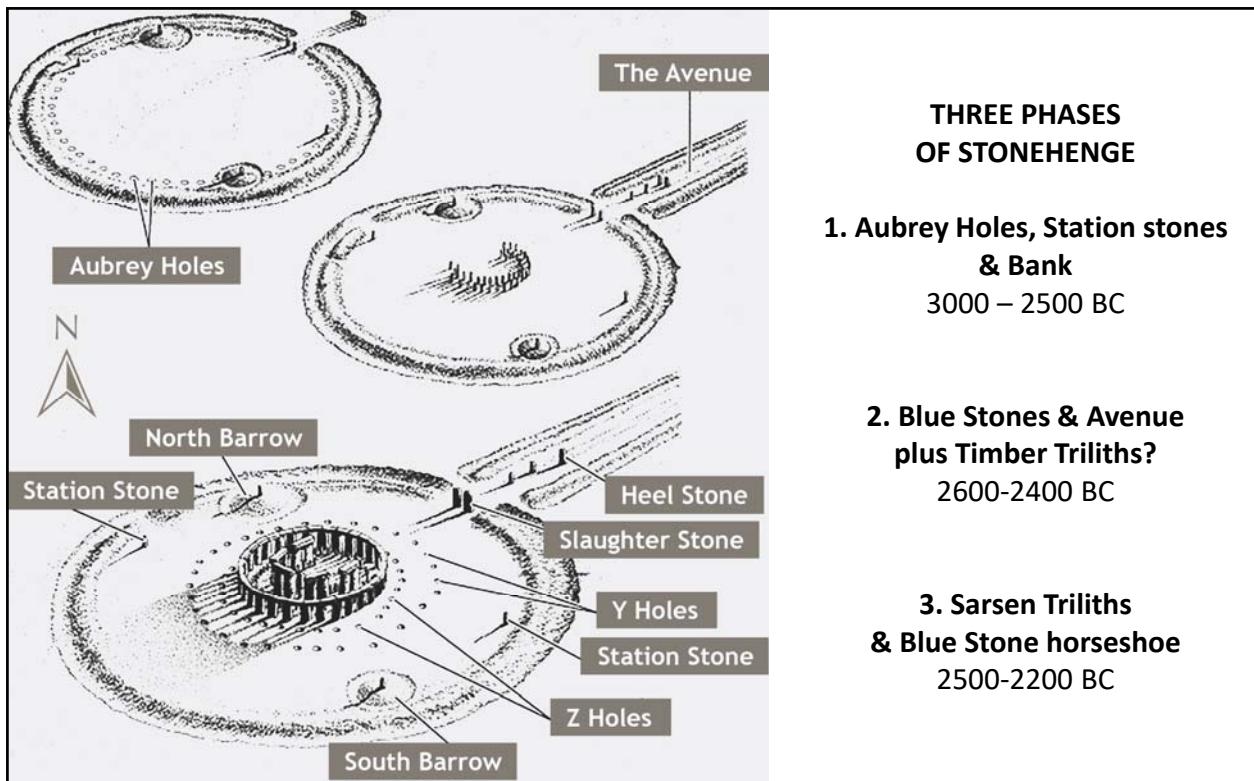
They say also that the Moon, as viewed from this island, appears to be but a little distance from the earth and to have upon it prominences, like those of the earth, which are visible to the eye.

The account is also given that the god visits the island every nineteen years, the period in which the return of the stars to the same place in the heavens is accomplished; and for this reason the nineteen-year period is called by the Greeks the "Year of Meton."

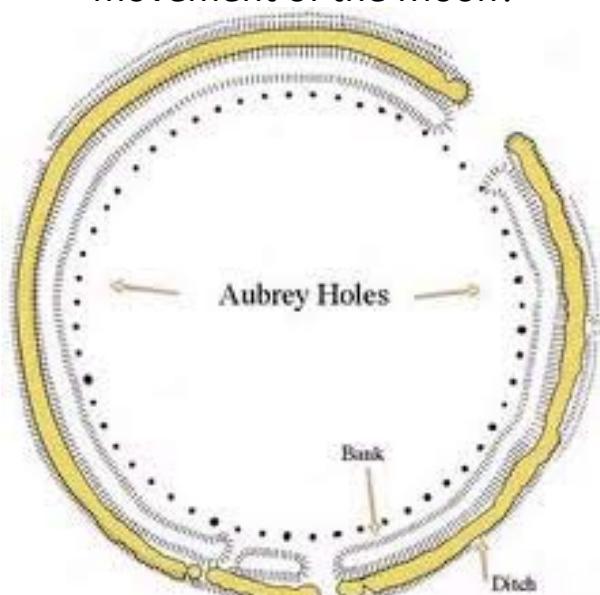








**The 56 Aubrey Holes**  
Created to track the movement of the Moon?



**John Aubrey (1666):** early phase of construction

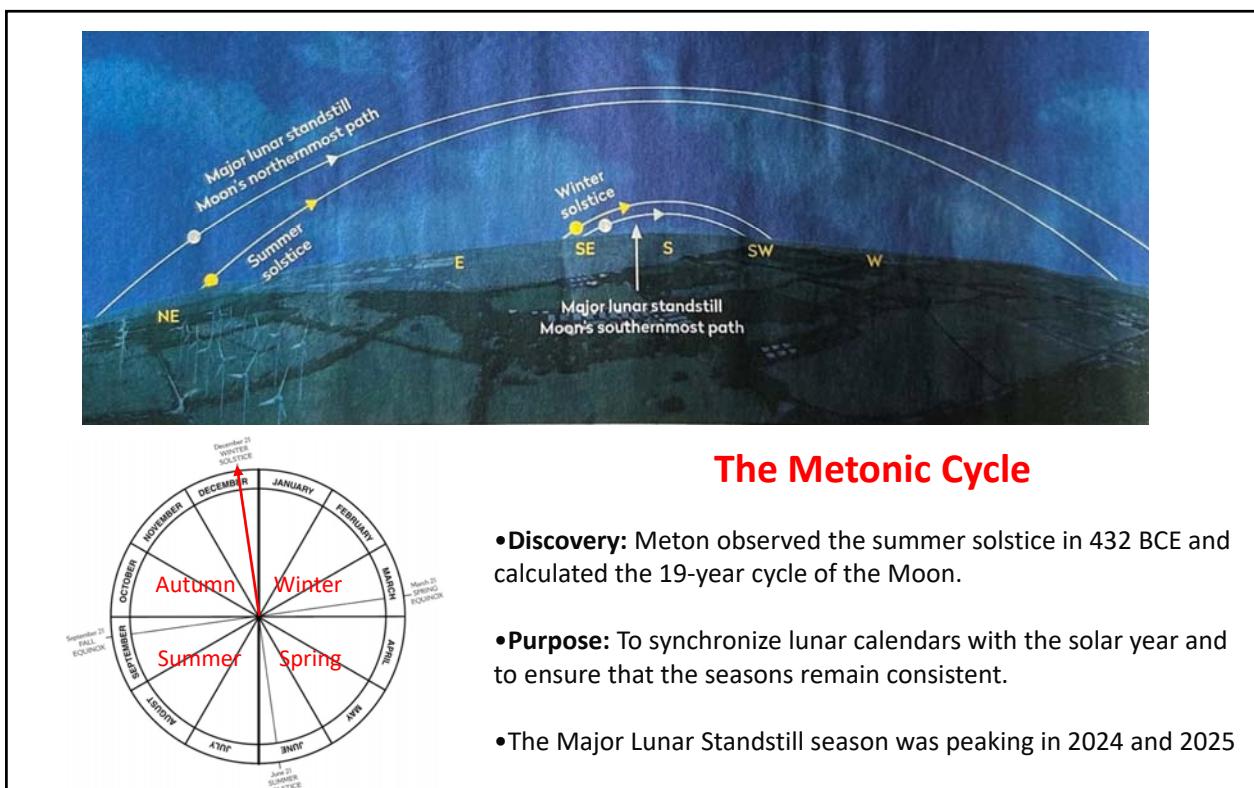
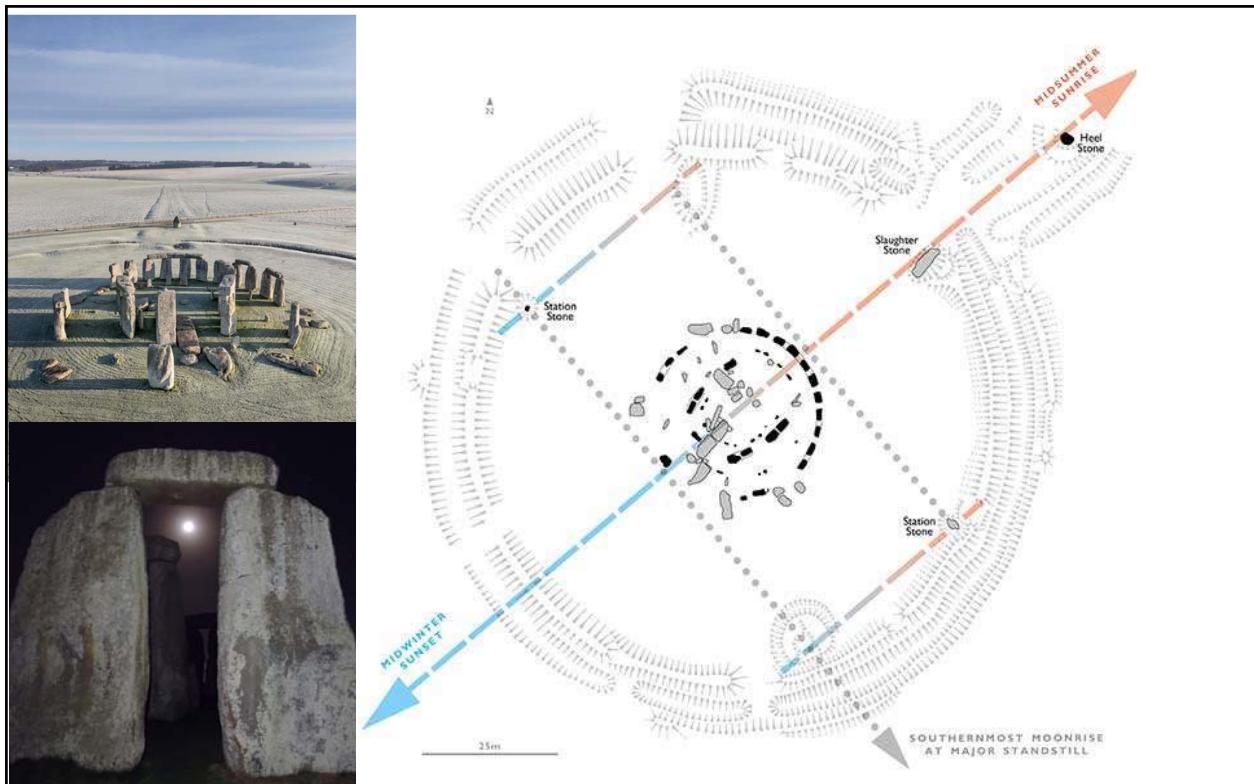
**Gerald Hawkins (1963) & Fred Hoyle (1966) :** Lunar Cycles and Eclipses

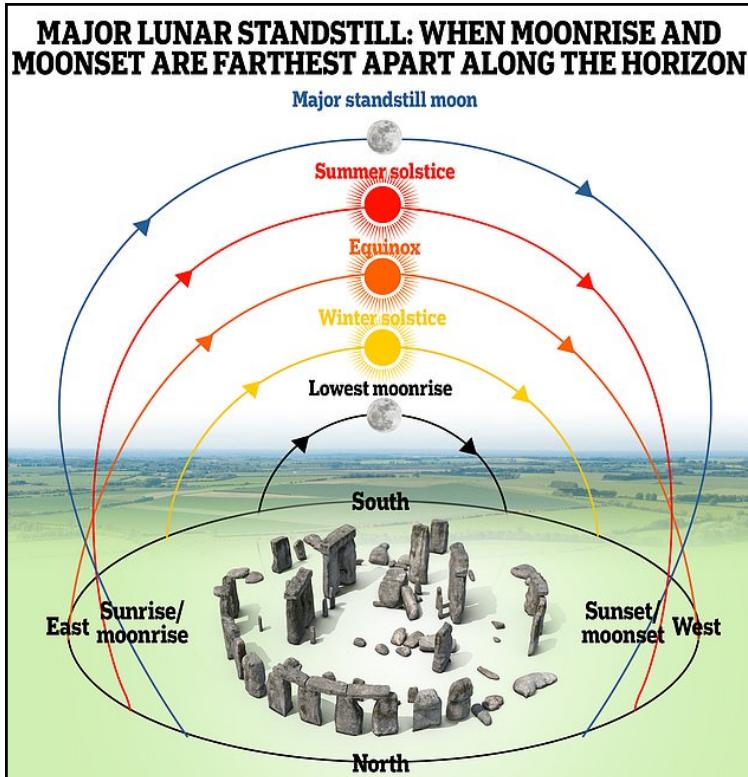
Two times 28 lunar days or three times x 18.6 years of the lunar standstill cycle = 56 holes

**Richard Atkinson (1966) "Moonshine on Stonehenge" - Ritual Plts**

**Lloyd Matthews and Joan Rankin (2015) :** Daily solar calendar

**Mike Parker Pearson (2017) Blue stones**



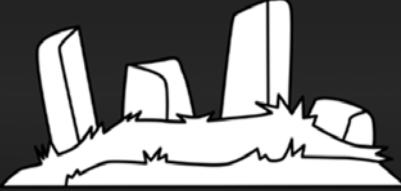


During 2025 English Heritage have been teaming up with experts from Oxford, Leicester and Bournemouth Universities and the Royal Astronomical Society to investigate the alignment of the ancient stones with the moonrise and moonset.

The four Station Stones at Stonehenge align with two of the Moon's extreme positions, and there is much debate as to whether this was deliberate, and if so, what might have been the purpose.

A team of archaeoastronomers have been exploring the complex relationship between the landscape, stones and the Moon over the course of the standstill.

*The attitudes to the 'primitive minds' have changed - we are starting to admire them!*

 Solstice Sunset Sunrise Equinox		 Moon Standstill Annual Calendar Four Seasons Metonic Cycle
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**ANY CONCLUSIONS  
ON MEGLITHIC ALIGNMENTS?**

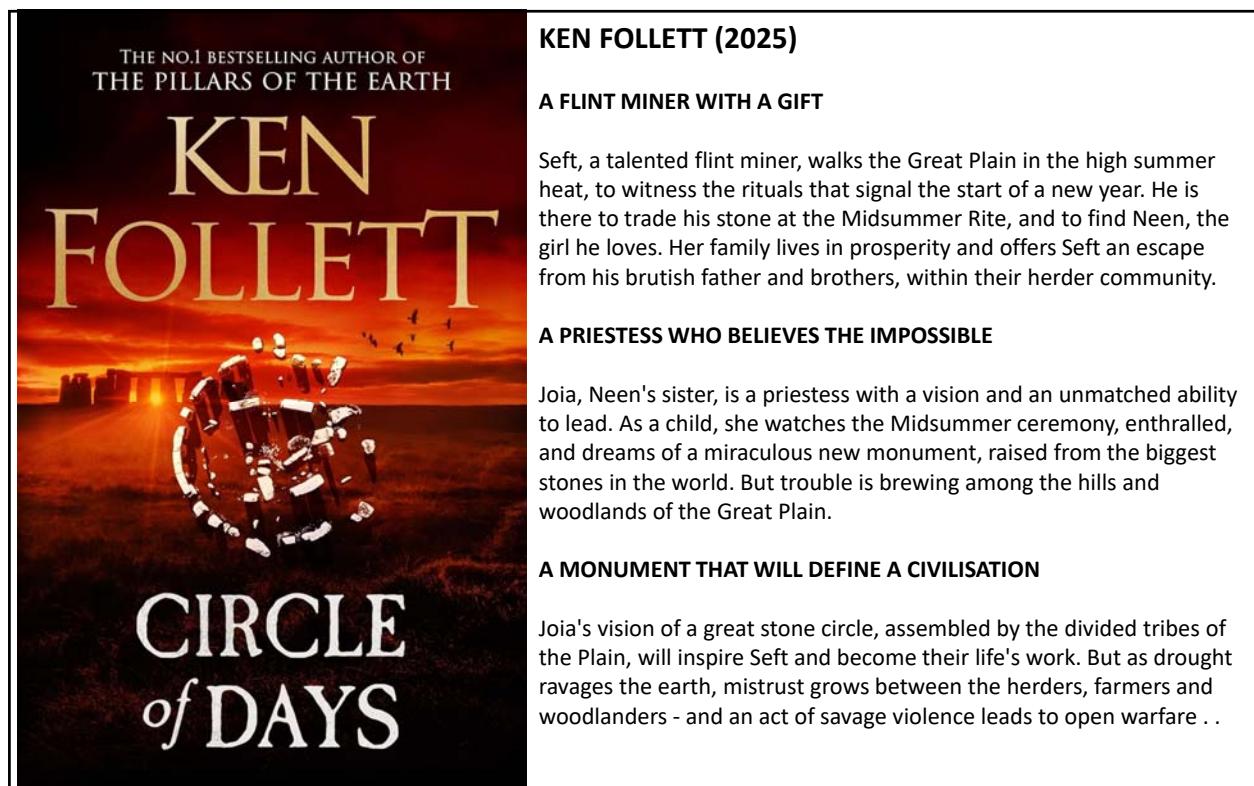
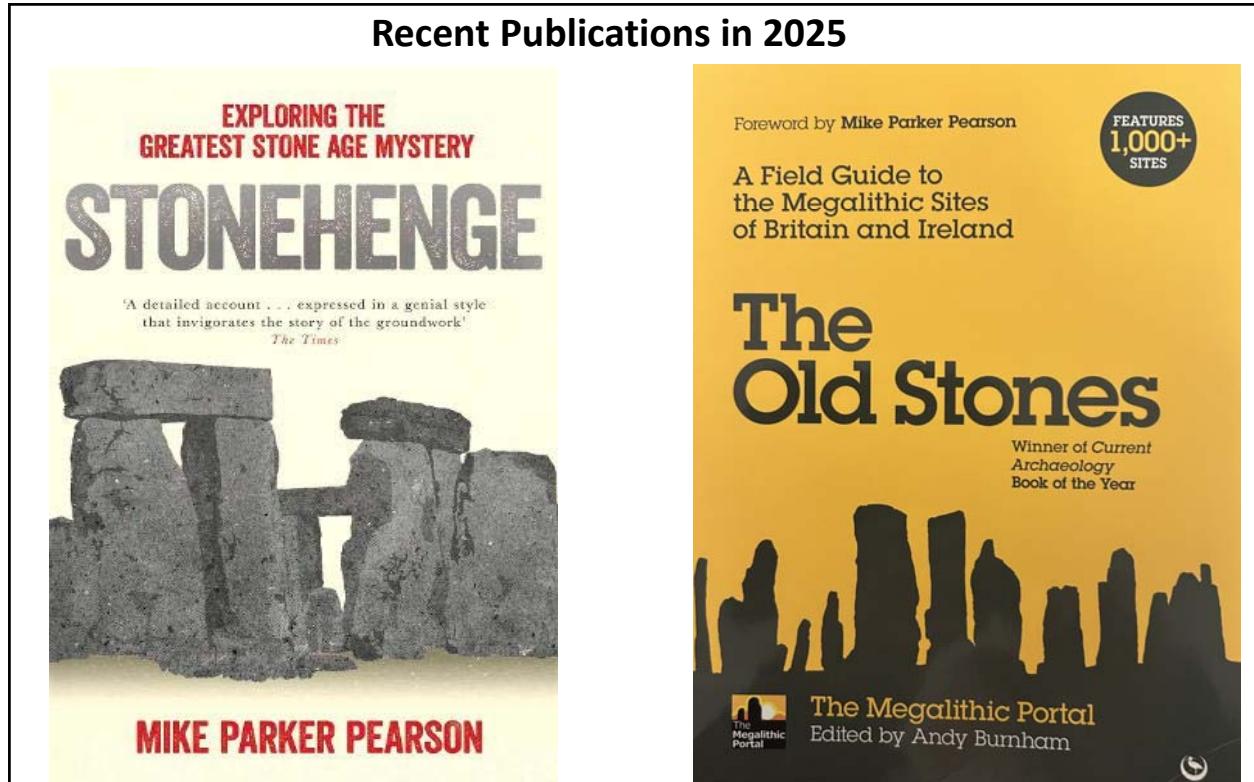
**1 Standing Stones**

**2 Stone Rows**

**3 Long Barrows**

**4 Stone Circles**

## Recent Publications in 2025





**ADDITIONAL REFERENCES  
AND INFORMATION**

## ARCHAEO-ASTRONOMY

*Changing attitudes to the 'primitive prehistoric mind'*

**1740** : "Stonehenge : A Temple Restored to the British Druids" **William Stukeley** (antiquarian & reverend)

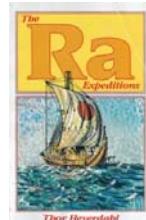
**1909**: "Stonehenge and other British Stone Monuments Astronomically Considered" **Norman Lockyer** (astronomer and scientist)

**1923**: "Instances of orientation in prehistoric monuments" **Henry B Somerville** (naval officer & surveyor)

**1966**: "Stonehenge Decoded" **Gerald Hawkins** (astronomer) "Moonshine on Stonehenge" **Richard Atkinson** (archaeologist)

**1971**: "Megalithic Observatories" **Alexander Thom** (engineer) "Megaliths in History" **Glyn Daniels** (archaeologist)

### 1972: THE PLACE OF ASTRONOMY IN THE ANCIENT WORLD Royal Society & British Academy Symposium



**1999**: "Astronomy in Prehistoric Britain and Ireland" **Clive Ruggles** (astronomer & archaeologist)

**2015**: "Archaeo-astronomy. Introduction to the science of stars and stones." **Giulio Magli** (astrophysicist & astronomer)

