

TREGESEAL STONE CIRCLE

SW 3866 3238 [OS Maps Explorer 102; Landranger 203]

LOCATION

Tregeseal Stone Circle lies on Truthwall Common near to St. Just. It is located on the southern fringe of the West Penwith moors, which at this point are dominated by the natural outcrop of Carn Kenidjack.

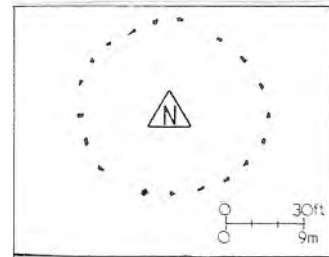


ACCESS

There are several ways of reaching the circle from St. Just. Take the B3306 road from St. Just towards St. Ives. Just outside St. Just at the bottom of Nancherrow Hill, there is a two way right-hand turning. You may park here and walk up No-Go-By hill until you reach a right hand track (Kenython Lane). Walk up this track which will take you on to the moors and down to the stone circle. Alternatively, when you turn right at the bottom of Nancherrow Hill, continue driving for about half a mile, then take a left hand turn beside some houses and drive on for about a mile until you reach a small parking area (room for 2 cars) with a signpost to the circle. Follow the track and at a junction take the left hand fork which goes through a farm, and then on to the moors and to the circle.

DESCRIPTION

The site dates from the late Neolithic-early Bronze Age (approx. 2500-1500 BC) and consists of a slightly-flattened circle of 19 stones, ranging in height from 0.8m (2½ft) to 1.5m (5ft). A number of stones have fallen over the years and been re-erected again, and there are also a number of other stones lying about. There was originally a second circle in the adjoining field to the west, some stones from which can be found in the hedge. There may also have been a third circle in the same alignment a few yards further west (identified from crop markings) but equally this may have been the remains of a cairn (burial) circle.



[c] Craig Weatherhill

FOLKLORE & LEGEND

This area of Truthwall Common is rich with legends of the Otherworld: fairy folk, demons and devils. One story tells of how a local miner chanced upon a Fairy Feast at the circle and was bound in gossamer thread and left there all night; another tells of an encounter with the Devil himself on Carn Kenidjack, which dominates the horizon from the circle; and yet another tells of Pee Tregear who was piskey-led here and encountered the little folk. All these stories may be memories of the ancestors and spirits of the dead, for this whole area was formerly covered with prehistoric barrows, burial mounds and megalithic monuments.

PURPOSE AND MEANING

It seems likely that Tregeseal Circle, along with other stone circles in the area, was a place of ceremony and ritual. Together with its twin (or triple) circles, it was probably originally the centre of a whole area of ritual monuments, perhaps all focussed on the distinctive shape of Carn Kenidjack that overlooks the moor. It is known that Carn Kenidjack was a Tor Enclosure, which means that it was used as well, perhaps as a separate sacred area. It was probably thought of as the dwelling place of the ancestors or the Gods/Goddesses, and there may have been a ceremonial path from the circle(s) to the Tor Enclosure on Carn Kenidjack.

Go to page 2 for details of other sites in the area.

PLEASE TREAT THIS SITE WITH RESPECT & LEAVE NO LITTER OR OFFERINGS.

IF YOU FIND ANY DAMAGE OR VANDALISM PLEASE PHONE 01736-787186 OR 787522

OTHER SITES NEAR TO TREGESEAL CIRCLE

TREGESEAL BARROWS SW 3874 3259/ 3887 3252/ 3891 3258

LOCATION & ACCESS North of the stone circle there are a number of round barrows, which can be found by taking the path from the stone circle towards Carn Kenidjack and after about 100 yards bearing right (NE) along a smaller path. The barrows will be visible ahead, and the path runs between two of the best preserved of them.

DESCRIPTION & MEANING The two best preserved barrows are 12.2m (40ft) & 14m (46ft) in diameter, and both about 1.5m (5ft) high. One of them has part of its kerb remaining and may have held a cist (burial urn). The other still has the remains of a stone chamber, which may have been an entrance grave. There is also another well-preserved barrow to the south at Hailglower Farm (SW 3852 3210). All these barrows were part of a funerary complex, and probably held the remains of the dead ancestors of the people who built the stone circle(s).

TREGESEAL HOLED STONES SW 3895 3255

LOCATION & ACCESS Continue along this minor path past the barrows and after a few yards you will come to the Tregeseal Holed Stones.

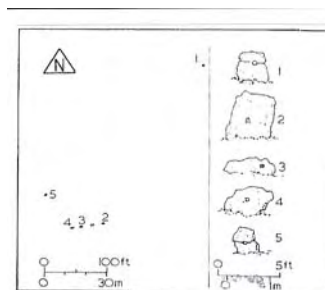
DESCRIPTION & MEANING These stones are something of an enigma. It is presumed that they are contemporary (late Neolithic-early Bronze Age) with all the other monuments in the area, such as the stone circle(s) and barrows, but their function and purpose is not clear. There have been re-erected within living memory and may not now be in their original positions, nor have they all been

re-erected the correct way round. They are all about 0.8m (2½ft) to 1.2m (4ft) high, and all have holes of varying diameters, but mostly quite small. There are three of them standing (plus a fragment of one fallen) in a line, marked as nos. 2, 3 & 4 on the above plan. No.2 (*photo right above*) has the largest hole, being 9cm (3½in) in diameter, large enough to pass a hand through. No.3 has fallen, and no.4 (*photo right below*) has been put back up at right angles. About 20 yds to the NW is another one (no.5 on the plan) which has been fractured horizontally, and is not in a very stable situation in the ground. Finally, about 100 yds up the hillside to the NE is another one, which has fallen. It may not belong to the same sequence as the others, though its proximity to them is curious to say the least.

One may speculate as to their meaning: perhaps they were originally aligned to view a significant feature (e.g barrow or tor) on the horizon, or perhaps to view the moon at a significant phase of its rising or setting.

Within recorded times stone no.2 has been used for 'handfasting' ceremonies (betrothals).

**PLEASE TREAT THESE SITES WITH RESPECT & LEAVE NO LITTER OR OFFERINGS.
IF YOU FIND ANY DAMAGE OR VANDALISM PLEASE PHONE 01736-787186 OR 787522**



[c] Craig Weatherhill

