

EXPLORING AVEBURY: THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE by Steve Marshall

Page 62 - Inside the Henge

Notes on the individual stones of the Avebury Henge

Stones of the south-west quadrant

Stone 2 SU 10283 69805 51° 25.629'N, 1° 51.209'W (approx.)

Missing. Its former position is now underneath the road of the south entrance.

Stone 3 SU 10272 69803 51° 25.628'N, 1° 51.219'W

Destroyed by fire. A concrete plinth marks its position.

Stone 4 SU 10261 69801 51° 25.627'N, 1° 51.228'W

Found buried in 1938 and re-erected. Rectangular. Outside face has possible polishing areas.

Stone 5 SU 10250 69799 51° 25.626'N, 1° 51.238'W

Found buried in 1938 and re-erected. Rectangular but rounded.

Stone 6 SU 10239 69797 51° 25.625'N, 1° 51.247'W (approx.)

Found buried in 1938 and re-erected. Its socket was destroyed, so position was estimated. Quite rectangular in shape, but rounded. Outside face has a possible polishing area.

Stone 7 SU 10228 69797 51° 25.625'N, 1° 51.257'W

Found partially buried in 1938 and re-erected. Rounded pillar shape, very white. Outside face has a possible polishing area (though considered 'doubtful').

Stone 8 SU 10216 69799 51° 25.626'N, 1° 51.267'W

The only stone of the south-west quadrant left standing in 1938; concrete was used around its base to secure the stone. Square in shape. In plan, it is one of several 'skewed' stones - not mounted in line with its companions (ie its long axis parallel to the ditch) it has been rotated some 45 deg to the east (clockwise). There is a mark inscribed on stone 8 – an upward-pointing arrow formed from three lines. Although it has been claimed that this is "the Awen - ancient druidic symbol of the masculine triad, symbolising the fertilising power of the sun" etc, it may equally be a 'bench mark' as made by the early surveyors of the British Ordnance Survey. If this is the case then the mark is incomplete, as it should have a horizontal line at its top. However, it is also incomplete as an Awen symbol, which should have three dots at the top.

Stone 9 SU 10206 69801 51° 25.627'N, 1° 51.276'W (approx.)

Found buried in 1938 and re-erected. Its socket was destroyed, so the position was estimated. Unusual, asymmetrical shape - known as the 'Barber Stone' (see Page 65 below).

Stone 10 SU 10196 69808 51° 25.631'N, 1° 51.284'W (approx.)

Found buried in 1938 and re-erected. Its socket was destroyed, so position was estimated. Rectangular, but rounded and lumpy.

Stone 11 SU 10186 69818 51° 25.636'N, 1° 51.293'W

Destroyed by fire. A concrete plinth marks its position.

Stone 12 SU 10179 69823 51° 25.639'N, 1° 51.299'W

Found partially buried in 1938 and re-erected. Asymmetrical lozenge shape.

Stone 13 SU 10171 69829 51° 25.642'N, 1° 51.306'W

Destroyed by fire. A concrete plinth marks its position.

Stone 14 SU 10163 69836 51° 25.646'N, 1° 51.313'W

On Stukeley's 1724 plan this stone appears to be leaning. In 1938 it lay fallen and was re-erected. Roughly square in shape.

Stone 15 SU 10153 69844 51° 25.650'N, 1° 51.321'W

Destroyed by fire. A concrete plinth marks its position.

Stone 16 SU 10144 69851 51° 25.654'N, 1° 51.329'W

Found buried in 1938 and re-erected. Roughly square.

Inside face: rough and uneven. Covered with pinholes of various sizes, some inside larger hollows.

Outside face has a possible polishing area (though considered 'doubtful').

Stone 17 SU 10136 69857 51° 25.657'N, 1° 51.336'W

Destroyed by fire. A concrete plinth marks its position.

Stone 18 SU 10128 69864 51° 25.661'N, 1° 51.343'W

Destroyed by fire. A concrete plinth marks its position.

Stone 19 SU 10121 69873 51° 25.666'N, 1° 51.349'W

Found in 1938 to have been buried, but later discovered and destroyed by fire. A concrete plinth marks its position.

Stone 20 SU 10113 69882 51° 25.671'N, 1° 51.356'W

Found in 1938 to have been buried, but later discovered and destroyed by fire. A concrete plinth marks its position.

Stone 21 SU 10107 69888 51° 25.674'N, 1° 51.361'W

Found in 1938 to have been buried, but later discovered and destroyed by fire. A concrete plinth marks its position.

Stone 22 SU 10102 69894 51° 25.677'N, 1° 51.365'W (*approx.*)

Found in 1938 to have been buried, but later discovered and destroyed by fire. A concrete plinth marks its position, accompanied by a small piece of the original stone.

Stone 23 SU 10096 69899 51° 25.680'N, 1° 51.370'W

Found in 1938 to have been buried, but later discovered and destroyed by fire.

Stone 24 SU 10090 69908 51° 25.685'N, 1° 51.376'W (*approx.*)

In 1938 the broken pieces of this stone were found in the foundations of a nearby building which Keiller had demolished. The pieces were re-assembled with cement and the stone erected in its estimated position, as its socket was destroyed. Broken iron wedges can be seen trapped in the stone - see the side facing the road, near the base. There are also prominent polishing marks on the inside face. This stone is something of a mystery, as its (estimated) position suggests it should be the southern portal stone of Avebury's original western entrance. Although re-assembled, much of the stone is still missing: the

original size is uncertain, but it seems to have been significantly smaller than other portal stones. We wonder how Keiller could have been sure that the broken pieces were of stone 24 – the socket had been destroyed, so its shape could be matched; how could even its orientation be known? It is quite possible that the re-assembled pieces may have come from another stone altogether and this is *not* the original stone 24. Polishing areas on inside face.

Stones of the north-west quadrant

William Stukeley believed there to have been a second, concentric stone circle inside the great Outer Circle and indicated what he believed to be stone remnants of it on a plan. In a bid to confirm this, Keiller made a small cutting 80 feet to the east of stones 33 and 34, in a place where Stukeley shows a stone supposedly on the circumference of the second circle. Nothing was found. Stone 46, largest of the north-west quadrant and known as the ‘Swindon Stone’ was still standing and Keiller excavated around its base prior to stabilising the stone with concrete. Here an extra stone-hole was found and designated ‘Stone A’. There was no trace of stone A having been buried or destroyed and as it was so close to stone 46 it seemed likely that stone A had been removed to make way for stone 46. Two more holes, B and C, were found nearby when the causeway area was stripped. As stone-holes A, B and C were considered to be “roughly equidistant” on what was taken to be an arc, they were interpreted as remnants of another inner stone circle, similar in size to the northern and southern circles, and dismantled when the ditch, bank and outer circle were built. The idea of this hypothetical circle was finally dismissed in 1960, when Stuart Piggott made a series of cuttings and failed to find any more stone holes.

A geophysical survey in 1991 confirmed that the A, B and C stones were not part of another circle, but they are certainly a very early feature and may have existed before the henge was even constructed. Another feature of the north-west quadrant may also be very ancient. Only discovered in 1995, there is a mysterious ‘double-ditched sub-rectangular enclosure’ (2) sited west of the northern inner circle, part of it in the garden of The Lodge. The feature first appeared as parchmarks on an aerial photograph and was later confirmed by geophysics. Virtually nothing is known about the enclosure as it has not been excavated. It could be relatively modern (Roman or Saxon) but it does resemble a mid-Neolithic oval barrow at Radley in Oxfordshire, so again, may possibly pre-date the henge.

Part of the northern inner circle is also in the north-west quadrant, although none of its stones survive. This stone circle was actually more ‘egg-shaped’ than circular, with a pronounced bulge to the west (see *Exploring Avebury* page 79). Although the true shape has been confirmed by parchmark photographs and geophysics, most researchers have failed to recognise it as such. Avebury plans from Stukeley’s to Isobel Smith’s in 1965 all show the northern ring as circular: only John Aubrey’s plan of 1663 suggests the true shape, depicting four stones which were still then standing.

Stones of the north-west quadrant

Stone 25 SU 10084 69919 51° 25.691'N, 1° 51.381'W (*estimated*)

Missing. Its original position is estimated by measurement to be under the southern side of Avebury High Street. May likely have been the northern portal stone of the western entrance.

Stone 26 SU 10079 69932 51° 25.698'N, 1° 51.385'W (*estimated*)

Missing – position estimated by measurement.

Stone 27 SU 10077 69945 51° 25.705'N, 1° 51.387'W (*estimated*)

Missing – position estimated by measurement.

Stone 28 SU 10076 69958 51° 25.712'N, 1° 51.388'W (*estimated*)

Missing – position estimated by measurement.

Stone 29 SU 10073 69971 51° 25.719'N, 1° 51.390'W (*estimated*)

Missing – position estimated by measurement.

Stone 30 SU 10077 69984 51° 25.726'N, 1° 51.387'W

Found buried in 1937 and re-erected. Rectangular shape with angled top. Outside face has a natural 'seat'.

Stone 31 SU 10078 69997 51° 25.733'N, 1° 51.386'W

Found buried in 1937 and re-erected. Almost square but rounded. Outside face has a polishing area at its centre.

Stone 32 SU 10080 70007 51° 25.738'N, 1° 51.384'W

Still standing in 1937, its base was stabilised with concrete. Rectangular, rounded. Polishing area on south side.

Stone 33 SU 10084 70018 51° 25.744'N, 1° 51.381'W

Still standing in 1937, its base was stabilised with concrete. Square shape. In plan, this stone is skewed 30 deg to the west (anticlockwise). The socket of stone 33 contained several deposits – a core and several flakes of flint, a fragment of a polished stone axe and a lozenge-shaped piece of sarsen stone that evokes the shape of some Avebury stones thought to be 'female'.

Stone 34 SU 10087 70027 51° 25.749'N, 1° 51.378'W

Found in 1937 as broken fragments in a wall and re-assembled. Lozenge shape. Inside face has a heart-shaped feature at its centre, its shape partly defined by pinholes. It looks very like the hole made by a palm tree (*monocot*) growing in sand.

Stone 35 SU 10089 70036 51° 25.754'N, 1° 51.376'W

Found in 1937 as broken fragments in a wall and re-assembled. Bulbous, lumpy and uneven shape, with marks made by the iron wedge used to break it.

Stone 36 SU 10090 70044 51° 25.758'N, 1° 51.375'W

Found in 1937 as broken fragments in a wall and re-assembled. Lozenge shape with broken off corner, iron wedge marks are still visible.

Stone 37 SU 10095 70053 51° 25.763'N, 1° 51.371'W

Destroyed. A concrete plinth marks its position.

Stone 38 SU 10100 70064 51° 25.769'N, 1° 51.367'W

Destroyed. All that survives is a broken off stump – natural holes were utilised in the destruction. Also has a concrete marker plinth. Very large conical root-hole visible in cross-section on top.

Stone 39 SU 10108 70071 51° 25.773'N, 1° 51.360'W

Destroyed. A concrete plinth marks its position.

Stone 40 SU 10115 70081 51° 25.778'N, 1° 51.354'W

Found intact 1937 in a wall and re-erected. Rounded, almost lozenge-shaped.

Stone 41 SU 10123 70088 51° 25.782'N, 1° 51.347'W

Found in 1937 as a broken fragment in a wall. All that survives is a broken off stump.

Stone 42 SU 10133 70094 51° 25.785'N, 1° 51.338'W

Found in 1937 as broken fragments in a wall and re-assembled. Original shape was probably rectangular. Outside face has heart-shaped depression at its centre.

Stone 43 SU 10142 70101 51° 25.789'N, 1° 51.330'W

Destroyed. A concrete plinth marks its position.

Stone 44 SU 10153 70107 51° 25.792'N, 1° 51.321'W

Still standing in 1937, its base was stabilised with concrete. Huge, rectangular and rounded.

Stone 45 SU 10159 70109 51° 25.793'N, 1° 51.316'W

Destroyed. A concrete plinth marks its position.

Stone 46 SU 10167 70112 51° 25.795'N, 1° 51.309'W

Still standing in 1937, its base was stabilised with concrete. Known as 'The Swindon Stone' – a huge lozenge.

Stukeley's extra stone SU 10103 70024 51°25.747'N, 1°51.364'W (approx)

On his 1724 plan, William Stukeley shows a small standing stone almost hidden amongst some trees, which has never been found. Keiller looked for traces of this stone and made a small cutting (shown as *I* on Smith's 1965 plan) but failed to find a stone socket. It may be that the stone was not part of the original setting, but was erected later for some agricultural purpose – possibly to guide wagons towards the causeway leading into the Great Barn. However, it is probable that Keiller dug in the wrong place and was too far to the east. The above position is where I believe Stukeley showed the stone to be. This was estimated by measuring $\frac{3}{4}$ way from stone 33 to stone 34, then somewhere between 14 and 21m east towards the Cove (which is visible from that area). At that spot is what appears to be a circular, raised mound with a ditch around it, reminiscent of the 'Station Stones' at Stonehenge. If the extra stone was originally set in the centre of that mound, it would have been exactly due west of the Cove and may have had some astronomical significance, as it would mark the position of sunset at the equinoxes, when viewed from the Cove.

Stone A SU 10163 70109 51° 25.793'N, 1° 51.312'W

Socket found 1n 1937, its position marked by a concrete plinth. Thought to have been a standing stone from an earlier phase and removed when the present setting was constructed.

Stone B SU 10156 70118 51° 25.798'N, 1° 51.318'W

Socket found 1n 1937, its position marked by a concrete plinth. Thought to have been a standing stone from an earlier phase and removed when the present setting was constructed.

Stone C SU 10150 70129 51° 25.804'N, 1° 51.323'W

Socket found 1n 1937, its position marked by a concrete plinth. Thought to have been a standing stone from an earlier phase and removed when the present setting was constructed.

Northern Inner Circle

Stone sockets found by aerial photography and confirmed by geophysical survey. The northern inner circle was not strictly circular; this western portion of it is elliptical. Consequently, the four sockets do not match up to Isobel Smith's numbering system, which assumed a circular setting. I have matched the sockets to what we think are Smith's nearest stone numbers, but some correspond poorly and other researchers may not necessarily agree with my choices.

Stone 218? *SU 10201 69996 51° 25.732'N, 1° 51.280'W*

Stone 219? *SU 10195 70005 51° 25.737'N, 1° 51.285'W*

Stone 220? *SU 10194 70016 51° 25.743'N, 1° 51.286'W*

Stone 221? *SU 10199 70027 51° 25.749'N, 1° 51.281'W*

Stones of the north-east quadrant

Stone 50 *SU 10211 70125 51° 25.802'N, 1° 51.271'W*

Square, but mounted part-way to being lozenge-shaped.

Stone 68 *SU 10385 70083 51° 25.779'N, 1° 51.121'W*

Part-rectangular, with a triangular top. Skewed approx. 30 deg to the east (clockwise). Very white. Possible polishing area on north-west side.

Stone 73 *SU 10414 70035 51° 25.753'N, 1° 51.096'W*

Fallen. Huge and rectangular. It is likely that when this stone was standing, the face now uppermost was to the inside of the setting. Lower face (only partly visible) has a natural 'seat' very similar to that of stone 1. It is thought to have originally faced outwards.

Stones of the Northern Inner Circle:

Stone 201 *SU 10269 70064 51° 25.769'N, 1° 51.221'W*

Red staining at base on both sides. Possible polishing area on eastern side, at ground level.

Stone 206 *SU 10299 70020 51° 25.745'N, 1° 51.195'W*

Two highly unusual possible polishing marks on the south side – highly-polished protruding lumps.

Stone 207 *SU 10300 70009 51° 25.739'N, 1° 51.194'W*

Fallen, broken.

Stone 210 *SU 10286 69981 51° 25.724'N, 1° 51.206'W*

Fallen, rectangular; only one face is visible.

Cove I *SU 10250 70018 51° 25.744'N, 1° 51.237'W*

Circular feature on southern side that was likely made by a tree growing through the original layer of sand. At the centre of this is a smaller circle. The tree may have been a Swamp Cypress (see *Exploring Avebury* page 19) which is renowned for rotting and hollowing at its centre.

Cove II SU 10243 70020 51° 25.745'N, 1° 51.243'W

Tallest surviving stone of the Avebury henge. The eastern side is covered with linear depressions - perhaps made by fallen branches as the sarsen was forming?

Cove III SU 10245 70027 51° 25.749'N, 1° 51.242'W (approx)

Destroyed after falling in 1713. Described to Stukeley as having been "full seven yards long, of the same shape as its opposite, tall and narrow." A geophysical anomaly and parchmark mark the site, but both are very large, so the exact position is impossible to determine.

Stone E SU 10261 70020 51° 25.745'N, 1° 51.228'W

Usually described as three pieces of sarsen just protruding from the ground, but only two pieces can currently be seen. No outstanding features. AC Smith and Cunnington dug around it, followed by Gray in 1935, who recorded finding three pieces of sarsen buried in the solid chalk and covering a length of 16.5 ft. Gray believed the pieces to be parts of a single broken stone; Smith in 1965 reinterpreted them as three smaller, unrelated stones buried in the same pit.

Stone F SU 10267 70038 51° 25.755'N, 1° 51.223'W (approx.)

A geophysical anomaly and parchmark that may correspond to a stone marked on the 1812 survey. Isobel Smith notes that an 1825 watercolour of it standing, with the Cove behind, was published by Gray in 1935. According to AC Smith it was "broken up by means of gunpowder".

Stone G SU 10241 70035 51° 25.753'N, 1° 51.245'W (approx.)

A possible buried stone – one of several discovered by Reverends WC Lukis and AC Smith by probing the ground in 1881. This position is shown as no. 18 on AC Smith's map; it corresponds with a geophysical anomaly and parchmark.

Stone H SU 10182 70122 51° 25.800'N, 1° 51.296'W (approx.)

Stukeley drew a small stone just east of the Swindon road at the northern entrance and sited on the inner edge of the ditch. The 1812 plan shows two fallen stones at around this spot: if one was stone 47, the other may have been stone H. Piggott made a small cutting in 1960 but found nothing; however this was not surprising, as the area has been badly disturbed by quarrying.

Stones of the south-east quadrant

Stone 77 SU 10420 69994 51°25.731'N, 1°51.091'W

Broadly rectangular stump barely visible above the ground. Appears smooth.

Stone 78 SU 09920 67170 51°24.208'N, 1°51.527'W

Fallen, rectangular.

Stone 98 SU 10305 69814 51° 25.634'N, 1° 51.190'W

Huge, rectangular, tilted slightly.

Stone 1 SU 10295 69809 51° 25.631'N, 1° 51.199'W

Huge, square, tilted slightly. Southern face has a natural seat known as 'The Devil's Chair' with a vertical shaft above it, open to the sky.

Stones of the Southern Inner Circle:

Stone 101 SU 10237 69915 51° 25.655'N, 1° 51.204'W

Still standing in 1939 so unrestored by Keiller. Rectangular with angled top.

Stone 102 SU 10278 69855 51° 25.656'N, 1° 51.213'W

Probably toppled around 1700, it was re-erected 1939. Lozenge-shaped.

Stone 103 SU 10268 69859 51° 25.658'N, 1° 51.222'W

Still standing in 1939 so unrestored by Keiller. Rectangular.

Stone 104 SU 10260 69864 51° 25.661'N, 1° 51.229'W

Destroyed, probably around 1700. A concrete plinth marks its former position.

Stone 105 SU 10251 69872 51° 25.665'N, 1° 51.237'W

Probably toppled around 1700, it was re-erected 1939. Near-lozenge.

Stone 106 SU 10245 69881 51° 25.670'N, 1° 51.242'W

Broke into several pieces when toppled (probably around 1700) and was re-assembled and erected in 1939. Its distinctive shape and markings have led to its being dubbed “the vulva stone” by Terence Meaden (*Secrets of the Avebury Stones*, 2000). Several long, narrow strips of cement hide the supports used to re-assemble the broken pieces.

Stone 107 SU 10238 69890 51° 25.675'N, 1° 51.248'W

Destroyed, probably around 1700. A concrete plinth marks its former position.

Stone 108 SU 10238 69901 51° 25.681'N, 1° 51.248'W

Destroyed, probably around 1700. A concrete plinth marks its former position.

Stone 109 SU 10238 69912 51° 25.687'N, 1° 51.248'W

Destroyed, probably around 1700. A concrete plinth marks its former position.

Ring-stone SU 10306 69836 51° 25.646'N, 1° 51.189'W

Drawn and described by Stukeley, then destroyed sometime after 1724. The stone appears to have been less than 1.5m square and pierced near its centre by a large, natural hole, which Stukeley believed was used for tying sacrificial victims to. In 1939 Keiller excavated its broken stump, which was later positioned above the original stone-hole. Previously considered only as a single stone, a parchmark was seen in 1996 around 20m to the west, suggesting that the Ring-stone may once have had a partner. Keiller’s excavation just missed this position. Some Neo-pagans claim that that the stone was used for ‘handfasting’ with bride and groom placing their hands through the hole. There is no evidence for this and the hole was likely only 0.7m above the ground.

The Obelisk SU 10290 69903 51° 25.682'N, 1° 51.203'W

Once marking the centre of the southern inner circle, this huge stone was of a height and shape quite unique among the Avebury stones. Stukeley describes it as being 21 ft long by 8.75 ft in diameter and “of a circular form at base”, though it had fallen or been toppled long before he came to Avebury. It is often suggested that the stone’s phallic shape defined the southern circle as ‘masculine’, conforming (according to anthropologists) with Stukeley’s view that it was the “Temple of the Sun”. It has been suggested that the 5m high Obelisk may have functioned as the gnomon of a gigantic sundial, which is not implausible. Keiller excavated a long line of burning pits in 1939, where the Obelisk had been

broken up; the overall length confirmed Stukeley's stated dimensions. Keiller marked the former position of the Obelisk with a special cruciform concrete plinth.

Stone D *SU 10273 69868* $51^{\circ} 25.663'N, 1^{\circ} 51.218'W$

Destroyed, probably around 1700. A concrete plinth marks its former position.

The Z Feature

Stukeley believed that the southern inner circle originally had another concentric circle within it. Keiller in 1939 excavated a large enough area to disprove this, but was surprised to find a previously unknown setting of 12 small stones west of the Obelisk, in a 31m line running approximately north-south. Although Keiller refers to this as 'The Z feature' in his notes, that name was not used by Isobel Smith in her final report. Six of the stones (iii to viii) had been buried in the mediaeval period and were found intact; stones i, ii, ix, x and xi had been buried at the same time, but were later discovered and destroyed by fire. Sherds of mediaeval pottery under the disturbed packing material of stone xii indicated that it had been toppled and left on the ground, but it too has gone. Some of the original stone holes, those of stones i to v, viii, xi and xii, were undamaged, but only small portions of stone holes vi, vii and x survived, as the burial pits cut into them. Stone hole ix was completely destroyed but its position estimated to near the north end of its burial pit. The six surviving stones were re-erected in their original positions and the rest marked with concrete plinths. The spacing of the stones varies, between 8.9 and 19.8 ft. Keiller, and later Smith, thought that the 12 stones may have been part of a larger, possibly rectangular feature but geophysical surveys have not yet produced any indications of this.

Two "substantial" prehistoric stake-holes were found, spaced 102.5ft apart - one at stone ii and another at stone x. These have been thought to hold a rope used in marking out the original setting, but as the line of stones is far from being straight, this seems rather doubtful.

Stone i *SU 10275 69916* $51^{\circ} 25.689'N, 1^{\circ} 51.216'W$

Toppled in the mediaeval period and buried; later discovered and destroyed by fire. Its former position is marked by a concrete plinth.

Stone ii *SU 10271 69914* $51^{\circ} 25.688'N, 1^{\circ} 51.219'W$

Toppled in the mediaeval period and buried; later discovered and destroyed by fire. Its former position is marked by a concrete plinth.

Stone iii *SU 10271 69909* $51^{\circ} 25.685'N, 1^{\circ} 51.219'W$

Toppled in the mediaeval period and buried; re-erected in 1939 by Keiller.

Stone iv *SU 10273 69905* $51^{\circ} 25.683'N, 1^{\circ} 51.218'W$

Toppled in the mediaeval period and buried; re-erected in 1939 by Keiller.

Stone v *SU 10273 69901* $51^{\circ} 25.681'N, 1^{\circ} 51.218'W$

Toppled in the mediaeval period and buried; re-erected in 1939 by Keiller.

Stone vi *SU 10274 69898* $51^{\circ} 25.679'N, 1^{\circ} 51.217'W$

Toppled in the mediaeval period and buried; re-erected in 1939 by Keiller.

Stone vii *SU 10275 69896* $51^{\circ} 25.678'N, 1^{\circ} 51.216'W$

Toppled in the mediaeval period and buried; re-erected in 1939 by Keiller.

Stone viii SU 10275 69892 51° 25.676'N, 1° 51.216'W

Toppled in the mediaeval period and buried; re-erected in 1939 by Keiller.

Stone ix SU 10276 69888 51° 25.674'N, 1° 51.215'W (approx.)

Toppled in the mediaeval period and buried; later discovered and destroyed by fire. The stone-hole was also destroyed, but its former estimated position is marked by a concrete plinth.

Stone x SU 10276 69885 51° 25.672'N, 1° 51.215'W

Toppled in the mediaeval period and buried; later discovered and destroyed by fire. Its former position is marked by a concrete plinth.

Stone xi SU 10283 69886 51° 25.673'N, 1° 51.209'W

Toppled in the mediaeval period and buried; later discovered and destroyed by fire. Its former position is marked by a concrete plinth.

Stone xii SU 10289 69892 51° 25.676'N, 1° 51.204'W

Toppled in the mediaeval period and left lying on the ground - later removed. Its former position is marked by a concrete plinth.

Post hole

Near the southern entrance, on the *berm*, or flat area between the bank and ditch, Keiller found a very large post-hole, thought to be prehistoric. Gillings and Pollard regard this as significant, for good reason. Smith records the hole's dimensions as 5.3 ft in diameter at the top, 3.3 by 3.6 ft at the bottom and dug 3.4 ft below the surface of the Coombe Rock. In the bottom of the hole were the dark remains of decayed wood, surrounded by chalk packing, suggesting that the hole had once supported a single, massive post around 2 ft in diameter. This corresponds closely with three large post-holes found during the construction of the car park at Stonehenge in 1966: pine charcoal in the holes was carbon-dated to the Mesolithic period, around 8,000 BC. Pines were the only trees to have survived through the Ice Age. The Avebury post-hole's position, unrelated to other features, suggests that it may pre-date the henge: there is also the possibility that it may actually be Mesolithic, and therefore Avebury's oldest feature by far. It may have stood as a single 'totem pole' or perhaps as one of an undiscovered line of posts, as have been found elsewhere. Only further excavation will tell.

Pits

Just to the north of the Obelisk, Keiller uncovered four prehistoric pits which were labelled A to D and their positions marked with oval concrete markers flush with the ground surface. Isobel Smith notes that pits A and C were partly destroyed by more recent square post-holes, but the original pits could be distinguished by their oval shape and smoothly rounded sides. The intact pits B and D measured 1.5 by 1.0 ft and 1.4 by 0.9 ft across; they were dug 1.5 and 1.6 ft into the Coombe Rock. The pits contained nothing apart from fine dark brown soil. In this same area were a possible cremation burial and several more recent holes – some had been used to erect flagpoles for village fetes, others for maypoles. Smith notes that in the 1930s the oldest inhabitants of Avebury could remember dancing around a maypole in this spot.