

KENTISH MEGALITH TYPES

JOHN H. EVANS, F.S.A., F.R.G.S.

ONLY a small remnant survives of what was once an important Neolithic megalithic necropolis occupying an area in the middle Medway Valley. The necropolis falls into two groups ; that at the western end of the area comprises the Coldrum Monument and the two partly destroyed megaliths in Addington Park, and the other, at the eastern end, is centred around the famous Kits Coty House. As regards the western group we have not even vague hints of other structures, although there are several other collections of sarzen stones in the vicinity of Coldrum. The Harvel (Cockadamshaw) group of sarzens may safely be disregarded for they were dragged off the adjoining fields and dumped into the hollow in which they now lie. The farmer here described to Mr. R. F. Jessup and the writer how this was done, and is sometimes done to-day. The case is far different in the eastern group, for although only one structure now stands, that of Kits Coty House, we know that at least two other megaliths once existed, those of Smythe's Megalith and The Lower Kits Coty, while we have many hints of other structures to the remains of which names and legends have become attached. In 1868 Fergusson talked with a stonemason at Aylesford who had spent a long life cutting up sarzen stones in this area, and this, with reports of huge stones blown up to clear the fields should emphasize the destruction which has gone on around Kits Coty House ; indeed, the House itself barely escaped this fate.

Outside the Medway Valley proper we only have two alleged megaliths to consider, those of Cobham and Horsted ; the latter may be dismissed at once, for there never was a scintilla of evidence that the " tomb of Horsa " was a megalithic structure. This brief catalogue will serve to introduce the more detailed consideration of the state and type of each megalith.

KITS COTY HOUSE

Kits Coty House is a burial chamber which once stood at the end of a Long Barrow, the remains of which were in evidence at the beginning of the eighteenth century, and whose outline, according to Mr. R. F. Jessup, can still be seen from the air ; we also have an account of this monument which suggests the existence of the enclosure of stones or

KENTISH MEGALITH TYPES

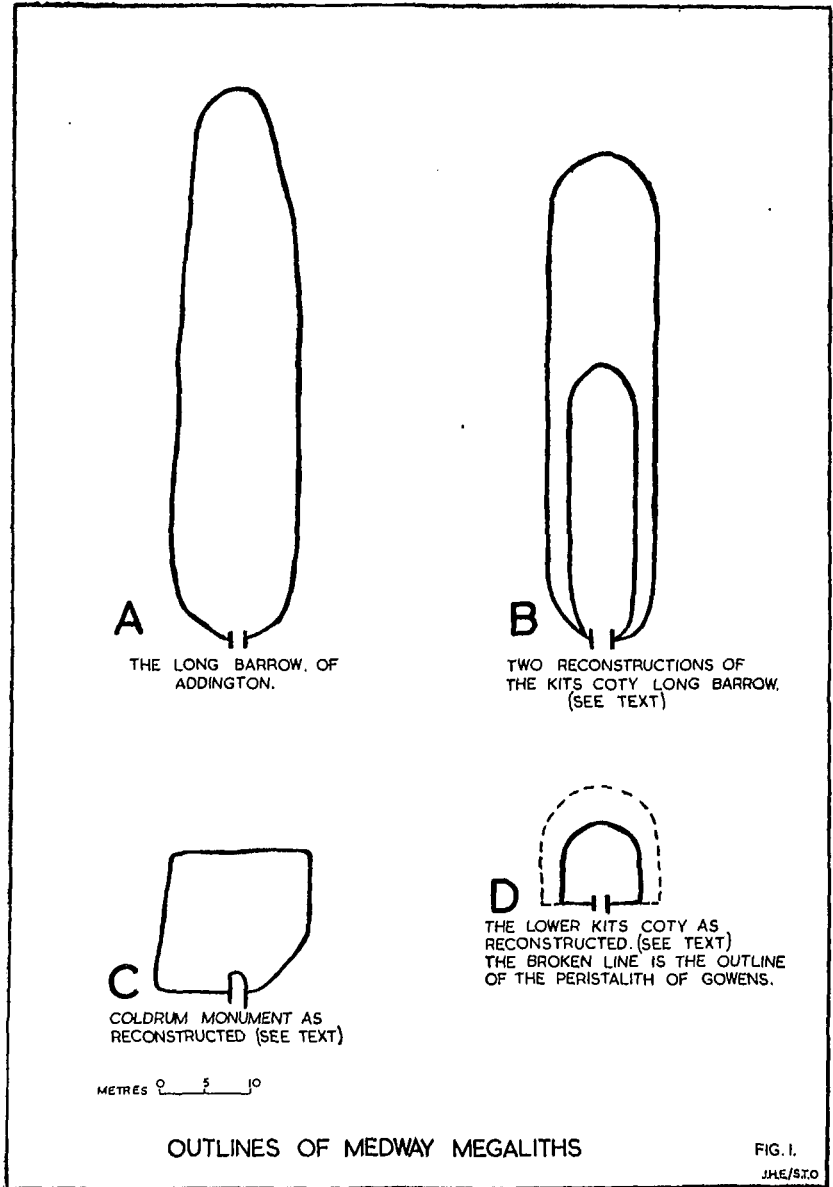


FIG. 1. Outlines of Medway Megaliths

KENTISH MEGALITH TYPES

peristalith.¹ Douglas² dug within the interior but found nothing, which is not surprising when we consider that the chamber had been open at least since the time of Elizabeth, and probably for long before. Its prominent position and visibility at the end of its mound would invite interference. The length of the Kits Coty barrow is somewhat difficult to determine. So far as one can judge from Stukeley's sketch³ he represents it to be about 100 feet long, and this is shown as the shorter of the two outlines in Fig. 1B. Now there lay at the N.W. end of the mound a huge monolith called "The General's Tombstone," and in several accounts it is said to have been 70 to 80 yards from the chamber, and since Stukeley, in the same sketch, shows it to be quite near the W. end of the mound, it is difficult to estimate the length of the barrow by this method at less than 60 yards, and this is shown also on Fig. 1B as the larger outline. A low level aerial photograph could decide this point.

THE GENERAL'S TOMBSTONE

This was the huge sarzen near Kits Coty House, as mentioned above. The literary legend, started by Lambarde, that Kits Coty House was the tomb of Categern, has given this stone its name, for the "General" is undoubtedly the British prince. It was destroyed in 1867 by being blown to pieces by powder.

THE COFFIN STONES

A little N. of Tottington Spring-head, by the side of a lane, there exists to-day a huge monolith, called the "Coffin Stone" but in Fergusson's time it had a companion whose dimensions could only be ascertained by probing, as it was then half buried. In 1836 a considerable quantity of human bones were found near these stones, including at least two skulls; Beale Poste speaks of a sackful of bones being removed. This circumstance, together with the name which had become attached to the stones, strongly suggests a destroyed megalithic structure, but that is all that can be said.

THE ORIGINAL WHITE HORSE STONE

This lay in the N.W. angle of the Pilgrims' Road and the Rochester-Maidstone Road, and was broken up sometime before 1834. The literary legend connects it with the Battle of Aylesford of c. 455.

THE SUCCESSOR WHITE HORSE STONE

This is a large upright sarzen standing in the opposite angle of the two roads mentioned above, and it has inherited both the name and

¹ Hercules Ayleway to Stukeley *Dr. Stukeley's Diaries*, Surtees Soc. 76. p. 226.

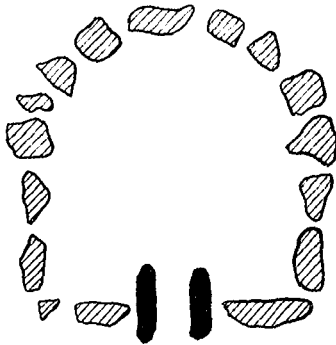
² James Douglas, *Nenia Britannica*, 1793. 181.

³ Stukeley, *Iter. Cur.*, 2nd ed., 1776. Plate 32.



A.

Stukeley's Plan of the Lower Kits Coty



B.

Reconstruction of the Lower Kits Coty
as suggested in the Text

FIG. 2.



FIG. 2. The Lower Kits Coty

tradition of the original White Horse Stone, a fact which is not generally recognized. As it stands upright it is very reminiscent of a chamber wallstone, like those of *Kits Coty House* and *Coldrum*. There are many other stones in the immediate vicinity.

THE LOWER KITS COTY

In a field about 500 yards S. of *Kits Coty House* lie a group of 19 or 20 sarzen stones generally called "The Countless Stones" or "The Numbers;" these represent (or partly represent) a megalithic structure destroyed about 1690. In 1722 *Hercules Ayleway* of *Mereworth Castle* wrote a letter to *Stukeley*¹ in which he describes the form of this monument as given him by one who remembered it standing. From this description *Stukeley* made the reconstruction, the plan of which is reproduced here as *Fig. 2A*.² The structure is that of a portal chamber with a small peristalith behind it. The sketch which accompanied *Stukeley*'s plan shows a chamber with a sort of courtyard behind it made up of square stones standing on edge; if it really was like this it would have constituted an unique megalith of original form, but we may doubt if this was really the case, for the existing stones do not provide such a group of matched rectangular wall stones. Generally the wall-stones of a chamber were carefully chosen by the builders so that they would stand upright and bear cap-stones in a reasonably safe, horizontal manner, but the stones of the peristalith were of all shapes and sizes since they only had to lean inwards against the mound. But if the very formal and uniform appearance of *Stukeley*'s plan and sketch must be modified we need not accept the same view about the chamber. For while the peristalith as shown is quite unlike anything else known, the chamber is very similar to others in this area, especially that of *Smythe's Megalith* to which it bears a marked resemblance as regards proportions. Now the wall-stones of *Kits Coty House* are between 6 feet and 7 feet long, those of *Smythe* between 7 feet and 7 feet 6 inches long, while the shorter wall-stone at *Coldrum* is 8 feet long. We have some confidence therefore in assuming that the two wall-stones in *Stukeley*'s plan are 7 feet and 8 feet long respectively, and these figures have been adopted to bring *Fig. 2* to scale, and also to show the comparative size of the reconstructions in *Fig. 1*. By this estimate the size of the whole monument was about 18 feet by 18 feet. However, another consideration arises when dealing with *Stukeley*'s peristalith, and that is that only 11 stones are used in his reconstruction, 4 comprising the chamber and 7 only the enclosure of stones; yet the group of stones remaining to-day number about 20, and there are hints that more once existed for it was proposed at one time to cut them up to

¹ *Ayleway-Stukeley, op. cit., 226.*

² *Stukeley, op. cit., Plate 32.*

KENTISH MEGALITH TYPES

pave Sheerness Dockyard, and only the growth of a local legend that successive tenants of the land were ruined through interfering with such stones prevented their further destruction. But if at least 20 stones made up the monument then a larger peristalith must be envisaged. Indeed, Ayleway himself states in his letter to Stukeley that the length of the ruined monument was 28 feet and that it nearly approached a square in shape. Stukeley's reconstruction cannot represent a monument of this size for it would call for stones up to 12 feet long, and we know that stones of this extraordinary size are not available. It is clear that not enough stones were used to reconstruct the peristalith. Now at Coldrum the enclosure of 36 stones fills a circuit of 210 feet, excluding the width of the chamber, and proportionately 16 stones would give a circuit of 95 feet ; such a reconstructed Lower Kits Coty is shown as Fig. 2B. The shape of the peristalith has been followed and also the size and position of the chamber, but a larger monument emerges occupying a space just over 30 feet square ; even so it is much below Coldrum in magnitude, and may well have been larger. Stukeley has thus produced a reconstruction at third hand, and from a thirty years recollection, which is reminiscent of Coldrum, of which they knew nothing, but was very unlike the monument which they did know, that is, Kits Coty House standing at the end of the remains of its long barrow. Moreover, the proportions of the chamber are different from those of the upper monument, but are very similar to those of a chamber uncovered 100 years later. These considerations lend authority to Stukeley's reconstruction, and all the revised reconstruction involves is an enlargement of the peristalith to use all the stones attributed to this monument. These stones are so confused and half buried that it is impossible to ascertain their sizes and shapes. Hence in Fig. 2B stones from Coldrum have been used to form the peristalith ; they have been tilted to lean inwards against a low mound, which was probably the original condition. There have been the usual vague rumours that human remains were found at this site, but they lack definite confirmation.

SMYTHE'S MEGALITH

As the discovery of this chamber was dealt with in *Arch. Cant.*, LXI, p. 135, there is no need to repeat the matter here, except to remark that it consisted of a single chamber, without capstone, and below ground. From it was taken the remains of two individuals and a small fragment of pottery.

SARZEN GROUPS

Groups of sarzen stones occur in several places around the lower slopes of Bluebell Hill, and according to all accounts they were once

much more plentiful. There is a large group in Westfield Wood, and another behind the Lower Bell Inn. A large number of stones, many of them of huge size, are scattered around Tottington spring-head ; two in particular lying side by side look like a collapsed chamber. Another similar group around Cossington spring-head once existed but have been removed. This whole area is very rich in sandstone boulders but as there is no evidence that any particular group once formed a structure they cannot be considered here. They may be in their natural geological positions, and where gathered in a group merely represent the efforts of a local farmer to clear his fields.

THE RECONSTRUCTION OF COLDRUM MONUMENT

Coldrum Monument, which stands about half a mile to the E. of Trottescliffe Church, is one of the finest, and certainly the most complete of all the Kentish Megaliths, and its original form and typical affinities have been the subject of some debate. It consists to-day of a massive burial chamber, associated with the remnants of a square-shaped peristalith enclosing a low mound. The chamber measures 13 feet long by 5 feet wide, and is made up of 4 massive sandstone blocks ; it stands in an imposing position on the very edge of a terrace which is 17 feet high immediately in front of the chamber. On the level top of the terrace, behind and to the W. of the chamber, lie in a rough square of 50 feet some 24 stones of the peristalith which are all either in their original positions or very nearly so. Below the chamber and lying at the foot of the slope are a dozen more stones, and on the slope, in the S.E. corner, 5 more remain. The stone bearing the Memorial Tablet to the late Benjamin Harrison does not belong to Coldrum. (Fig. 3.)

The Rev. Mark Noble is reported to have been the first to re-discover this monument in the first years of the nineteenth century, but the description and plan which he is supposed to have contributed to the "Gentleman's Magazine" cannot be traced. In 1808 Brayley merely mentions¹ that there were stones here, and it was left to Edward Pretty in 1841 to attempt a detailed examination of them. Beale Poste² made visits in 1842 and 1844 and has left invaluable drawings and plans which still await publication. The discovery of these MS. notes and plans, which we owe to Mr. L. R. A. Grove of Maidstone Museum, has settled at once many questions as to the previous condition of the monument, for they quite clearly show the chamber as it is to-day, without capstones, while the peristalith is less complete than to-day because the turf covered many of the stones.

¹ Brayley, *Beauties of England and Wales*, VIII., 1339.

² Beale Poste MSS III., 174. (Maidstone Museum.)

Beale Poste's evidence no longer renders it necessary to discuss the plans of Flinders Petrie, 1878,¹ and Payne, 1893² nor the numerous visits of antiquaries who loaded these inoffensive stones with their various theories. A rich harvest of human bones has been recovered from Coldrum, for as early as 1804 Beale Post records the unearthing of a skull in the terrace near the chamber, and he has marked the position of another similarly found in 1825. About 1856 L. B. Larking also discovered human remains here, and sometime before 1893 unknown persons took away a complete skeleton which afterwards received burial in Meopham Churchyard, a rare and vaguely pleasing act. But it was in 1910 that the full examination of the chamber at the hands of F. J. Bennett produced the remains of 22 individuals,³ and it is understood that since then further bones have been found. In contrast with this wealth of palæontological evidence the archaeological finds, as usual with all the Kentish megaliths, are meagre in the extreme. Bennett found a flint saw, and a fragment of an urn showing rim and bulge; the latter is a puzzling intrusion for it seems to be of Iron Age type.

With this brief introduction we can now turn to the consideration of the structure itself and in this regard I am deeply indebted to my friend Mr. W. G. Gitsam for the very careful Survey of Coldrum which he has made for this Paper (Fig. 3). Not only is it more complete in plan than any hitherto published but three level sections have been taken through the monument in order to illustrate, and, it is hoped, to illuminate the problem of the terrace. For it is upon this question that not only the original position of the E. wall of the peristalith hangs, but also the affinities of the restored monument for the unusual, perhaps unique, siting of the structure makes it imperative to consider its intimate topography as well as its plan.

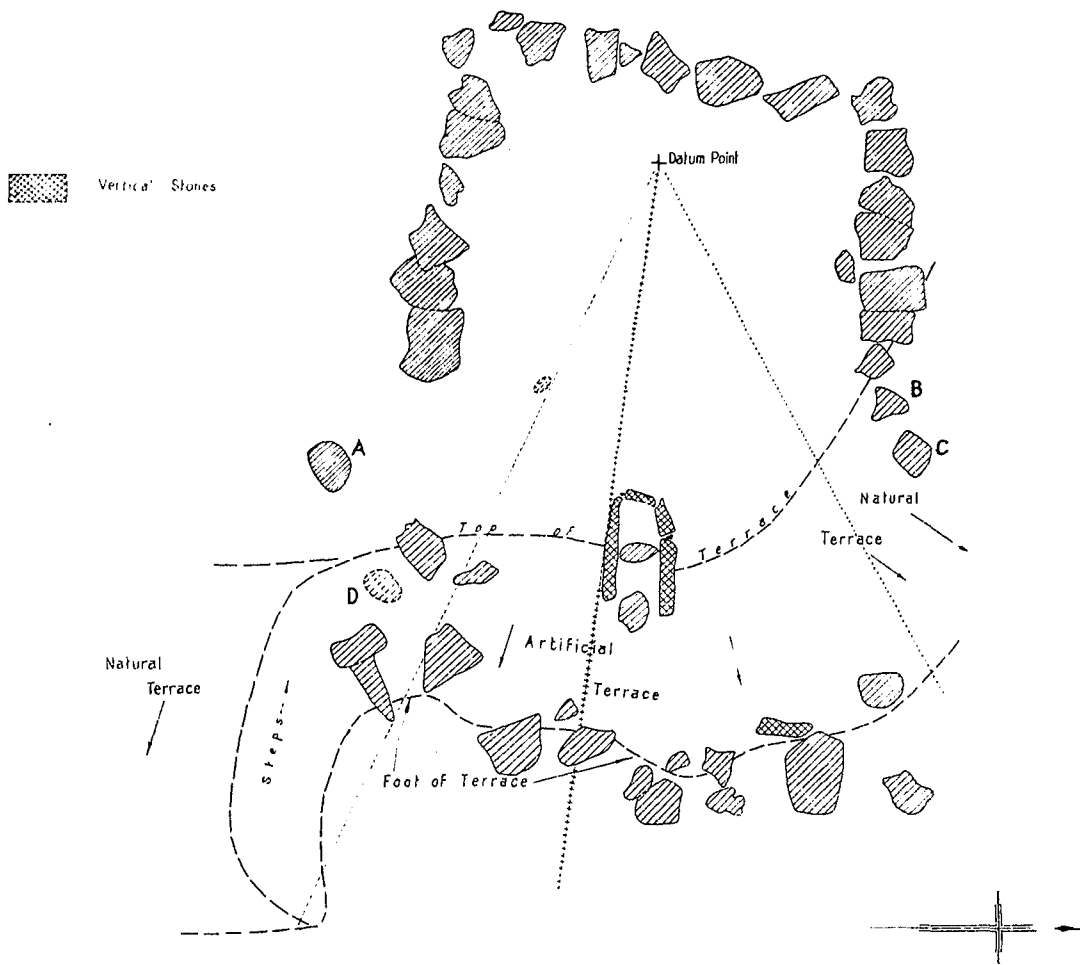
It must be said at once that the terrace upon which it stands is of natural formation, for it is the edge of a platform of chalk which projects out over the Gault clay from the foot of the chalk North Downs some 600 yards away to the North. The brow of the terrace, here the 300 feet contour line, passes in a natural manner through the N. wall of the peristalith, through the burial chamber, and so on to its declension to the S. near Coldrum Lodge; all that we can allow here is that it may have been receded a little through the centuries by natural erosion. But as regards the foot of the terrace there has been an artificial modification, for at some time its lower slope has been dug into at the S.E. section of the site, forming a triangular level space or "arena"; the limits of this "arena" are clearly shown in Fig. 3, and

¹ Petrie, *Arch. Cant.*, XIII, 1878, p. 14.

² Payne, *Coll. Cant.*, 1893, p. 173.

³ Bennett and Keith, *J.R.A.I.*, XLIII, 1913, p. 76.

COLDRUM MEGALITH



LEVEL SECTIONS

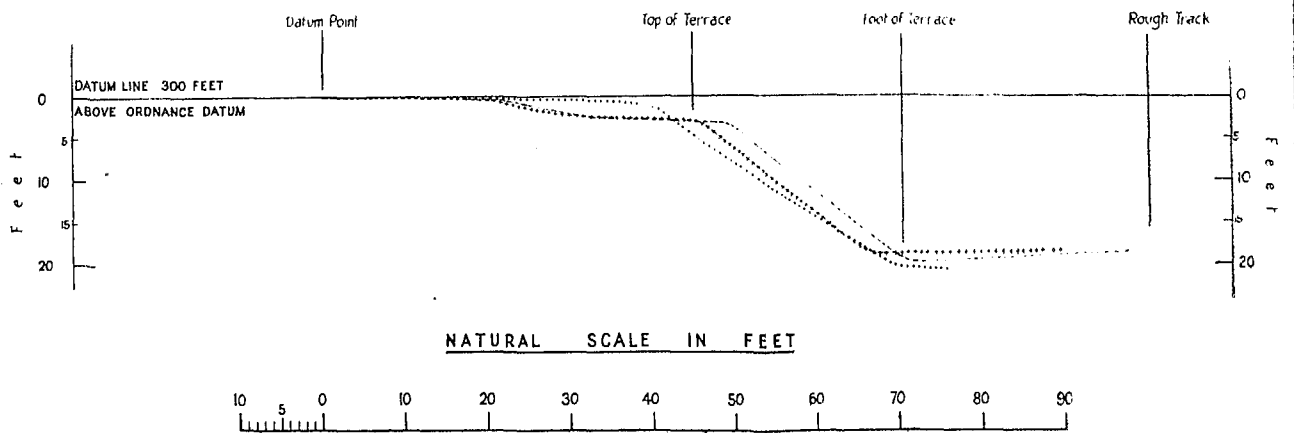


FIG. 3.

SURVEYED AND DRAWN
W. G. GITSHAM 1949.

Fig. 3. The Survey of Coldrum, 1949

KENTISH MEGALITH TYPES

it measures some 70 feet wide (N. to S.) and is 28 feet at its deepest penetration (E. to W.). It should also be noted that the effect of this operation has been to maintain the slope of the terrace which otherwise would have been much less steep in the S.E. corner than on the N. side. This will be seen from the Level Sections of Fig. 3. The earlier antiquaries not only believed that the excavation referred to was of recent date but some of them obviously thought that the terrace itself was in part artificial. Beale Poste writes¹ "The digging of chalk and earth by the country people to mix up with dung heaps and other purposes has made a kind of cliff which immediately faces the spectator on arriving, and the remains of the principal Cromlech, which is of the Kistvæn class, are seen to great advantage," and in 1863 a C. M. Jackson, who accompanied a party led by Roach Smith, writes,² "They (the Coldrum Remains) are situated on the top of rising ground cut away in part to form the road by which you approach and further excavated for chalk by which one of the finest Celtic monuments in Kent has been almost destroyed." The first statement seems to limit the modern excavation to the formation of the "arena" but the second definitely indicates a belief that the whole terrace had been artificially cut away, not only at the monument but along the road which passes it. This belief has no basis in fact for the artificial work, whether ancient or modern, is confined to that which forms the "arena" and it is clear that it could only have affected a few stones in the S.E. corner of the site. Beale Poste does not state the source of his information, and if true the excavation must have taken place long before his time for he shows the site very much overgrown, and with a saw-pit between the road and the "arena." It is at least permissible to suggest that he thought that the "cliff" was artificial, or that his informants thought so. Thus Jackson's evidence is valueless since it is merely a repetition of a story set going by Poste or an unknown predecessor. However, it has been repeated often since then by persons who have taken no trouble to trace its origin. The belief that the "arena" had been formed in recent times and even that the terrace itself was partly artificial suited the older antiquaries well enough, for they were obsessed with the current views as to "circles" with central chambers and they naturally sought to reconstruct the E. wall of the peristalith at some distance E. of the chamber. But we may fitly ask why eighteenth or nineteenth century farmers should undertake the dangerous task of digging at the foot of a slope upon which were poised several large boulders when chalk in unlimited quantities was available all around and obtainable much easier. Consideration of the Level Sections of Fig. 3 will demonstrate that the effect of the digging into the gentler slope has been to

¹ Beale Poste MSS., 3, p. 176.

² Jackson, *Gents. Mag. Lib. Arch.*, I, p. 113.

maintain the degree of slope which obtains on the N. side, thus making the terrace a constant shape in the vicinity of the monument. The imposing chamber has also been brought "square" with the visitor approaching from the east. There would thus seem to be some virtue in the view expressed by the late W. H. Cook that the "arena" was prepared by the original builders in order to lend distinction to the central chamber, and to "square" the orientation. It is estimated that some 350 cubic yards of earth had to be removed to form the "arena" and this was well within the capacity of the builders; while if the excavation is of comparatively recent date it is certainly curious that its effect has been as described above.

No modern archæologist would suggest that the terrace itself extended further to the eastwards, and thus recent reconstructions of the structure and comparisons with other megaliths assume that the monument was built at two levels, and that the N. and S. walls of the peristalith marched downhill to meet an eastern wall at the foot of the terrace. Such a monument would have been strange enough and *without parallel elsewhere*, but, even so, other suggestions as to the original form are more remarkable still. For Sir A. Keith,¹ Professor V. Gordon Childe² and John Ward³ all compare Coldrum to a type of tomb where the N. and S. walls of the peristalith are carried past the chamber, and then are swept back to it in the form of two horns, the space between forming a sort of forecourt. It is difficult to imagine such a structure at Coldrum, for the two "horns" would have had to descend steeply some 17 feet and then climb back the same height to the chamber; it would certainly have been difficult to construct. More recently Professor Stuart Piggott has compared⁴ Coldrum to two Danish megaliths Valdygaard, in the island of Zealand (Sjælland) and Pederstrup in the island of Lolland (Laaland). Valdygaard consists of a long rectangular peristalith with two separate burial chambers in the centre, while Pederstrup has a more square peristalith with one compound chamber within it. Obviously these comparisons with Coldrum are only permissible if we assume that the chamber was well within the enclosing wall of stones.

We suggest that this was never the case at Coldrum and that this monument agrees with the Upper and Lower Kits Cotys, and with the Addington Long Barrow in that its chamber formed part of the E. wall of the peristalith. Such an arrangement suits the topography of Coldrum excellently, and confirms the most casual observation on the

¹ Keith, *The Antiquity of Man*, 1925, I, p. 19.

² V. Gordon Childe, *Dawn of European Civilisation*, 1927, p. 287.

³ Ward, *Arch. Camb.*, XVI (6th Ser.), p. 239.

⁴ Stuart Piggott, *Proc. Prehist. Soc.*, Paper No. 10, 1935, p. 120.

COLDRUM MEGALITH RECONSTRUCTED

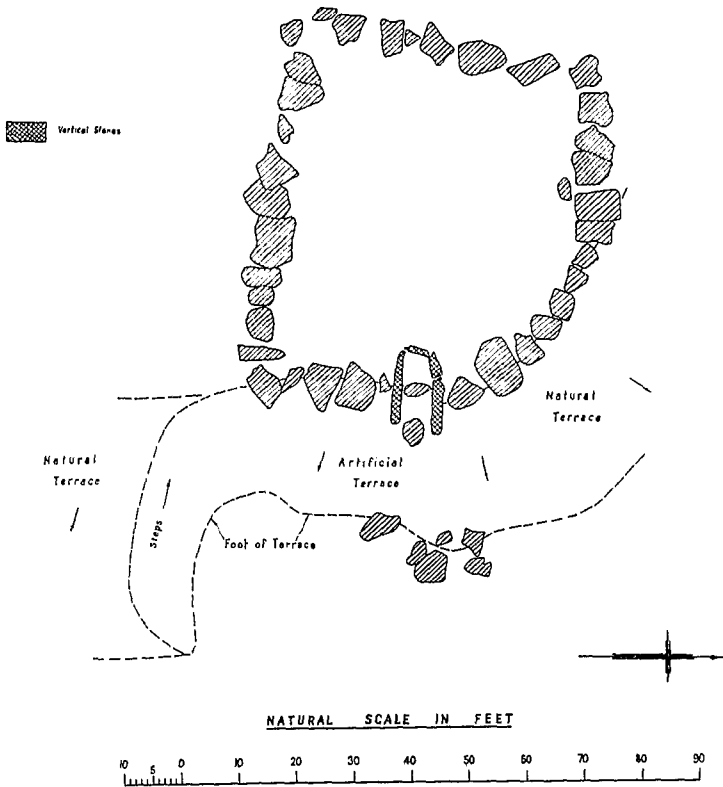


FIG. 4.

J.H. EVANS, F.S.A.

Fig. 4. Suggested reconstruction of Coldrum

KENTISH MEGALITH TYPES

spot that many of the stones at the foot of the terrace have slipped there from their positions along the brow above.

Fig. 4 presents a reconstruction of Coldrum carried out on these simple lines. Four stones only are required to complete the S. wall; stone A (Fig. 3) has been turned over from its original position which is still clearly discernible, while the other three are surely those on the terrace face in the S.E. corner. We know that an entrance into the enclosure was made to allow farm wagons to dump rubbish therein, and in order to do this stone A was turned over, and the other three dragged to the edge of the terrace down which they have slipped to a greater or less degree. Beale Poste does not show these stones in their present positions on any of his drawings. The replacing of the stones of the eastern wall presents no great difficulties for not only is it possible to determine the positions from which they have slipped but also to understand how they have turned in their doubtless long journey downhill. Stones B and C are obviously tending to slip further downwards now. Thus Coldrum appears as a Portal Chamber type of megalith with a squarish peristalith with one corner cut off, an asymmetrical arrangement made necessary by the nature of the site. The builders seem to have been most concerned in placing the great chamber in a commanding position, while the form of the peristalith was a secondary consideration. It will be seen from Fig. 4 that 3 medium-sized and 3 small stones remain at the foot of the terrace in front of the chamber. They may have been connected with it, or were intended to be connected with it, for the great number of burials within the chamber indicate that it remained unroofed for a long time during the lifetime of the community which raised it, doubtless to receive the bodies of the Chiefly family. The presence of the pottery fragment and of human remains outside the chamber suggest later secondary uses of the structure either for burial or for religious rites, and so the chamber may never have been roofed or it may have been unroofed at a very early date. It will be recalled that Smythe's Chamber had no capstone when unearthed, and as regards the secondary uses of megaliths Johnson¹ has recorded that as late as the eighth century human sacrifices were made in Holland upon megaliths. Thus it may be that Coldrum received religious attention for a very long period of time after its initial use.

THE ADDINGTON LONG BARROW

Two destroyed megaliths are to be found in Addington Park. The first is undoubtedly a Long Barrow of well-known type, and similar to the Upper Kits Coty. It consists to-day of 22 stones, 8 of which occur in the N.E. end and represent the fallen portal burial

¹ Johnson, *Folk Memory*, 1908, p. 139.

chamber, while the remainder show the original outline of the long mound. The barrow, whose outline is shown as Fig. 1A, was of immense size being 200 feet long, and when complete it must have been a most imposing structure. Traces of the mound still persist in the N.E. end, but the barrow has been largely destroyed by the making of the park road which passes through it. It has little history, and seems to have been first noticed by Harris¹ when it was in the same condition as now. Colebrooke's² description and drawings are almost completely worthless, for he has turned this very long barrow into a circle. L. B. Larking is reported to have found pottery fragments here.

THE CHESTNUTS GROUP, ADDINGTON

A little to the N. of the preceding there is gathered a group of very large stones which have long been thought to be the remains of a megalith, although there is no direct evidence of this. There are 14 stones here, and the indirect evidence is that they are so disposed and tilted against each other as to suggest a collapsed chamber. The older antiquaries were thus able to let their fancies loose as to the original form of this structure, and modern archæologists have sometimes also allowed themselves a good deal of latitude in this respect. The eminent Dutch authority on Continental megaliths, Professor A. E. van Giffen, recently accompanied me to the site and made as thorough an examination of the stones as their overgrown condition allowed, but decided that it was impossible to suggest a reconstruction from their present disposition. With this view all reasonable people will agree.

THE COBHAM MEGALITH

Near the charming village of Cobham, where Mr. Pickwick in his day did some antiquarian research, in an orchard off Battle Street, there remains to-day one sarzen of the megalith reputed to have been here. That there once existed a large group of stones here is certain for Payne gives extracts from the diary of the farmer who carted many of them away in the years 1770-3, while the remainder were finally removed in 1842. The possibility that a megalithic structure once stood here seems first to have been started by Lucas in 1854,³ who tells us that a certain John Gill said that the lane leading to his cottage had a strange name, Battle Street, and was said to lead to "The Warrior's Grave." Coming here in 1878⁴ Flinders Petrie could find no local knowledge of either megalith or its name, yet in 1893 Payne⁵ repeats

¹ Harris, *Hist. of Kent*, 1719, p. 23.

² Colebrooke, *Archæologia*, II, 1773, p. 23.

³ Lucas, *Journ. Arch. Assn.*, IX, 1854, p. 427.

⁴ Petrie, *loc. cit.*

⁵ Payne, *op. cit.*, p. 153.

KENTISH MEGALITH TYPES

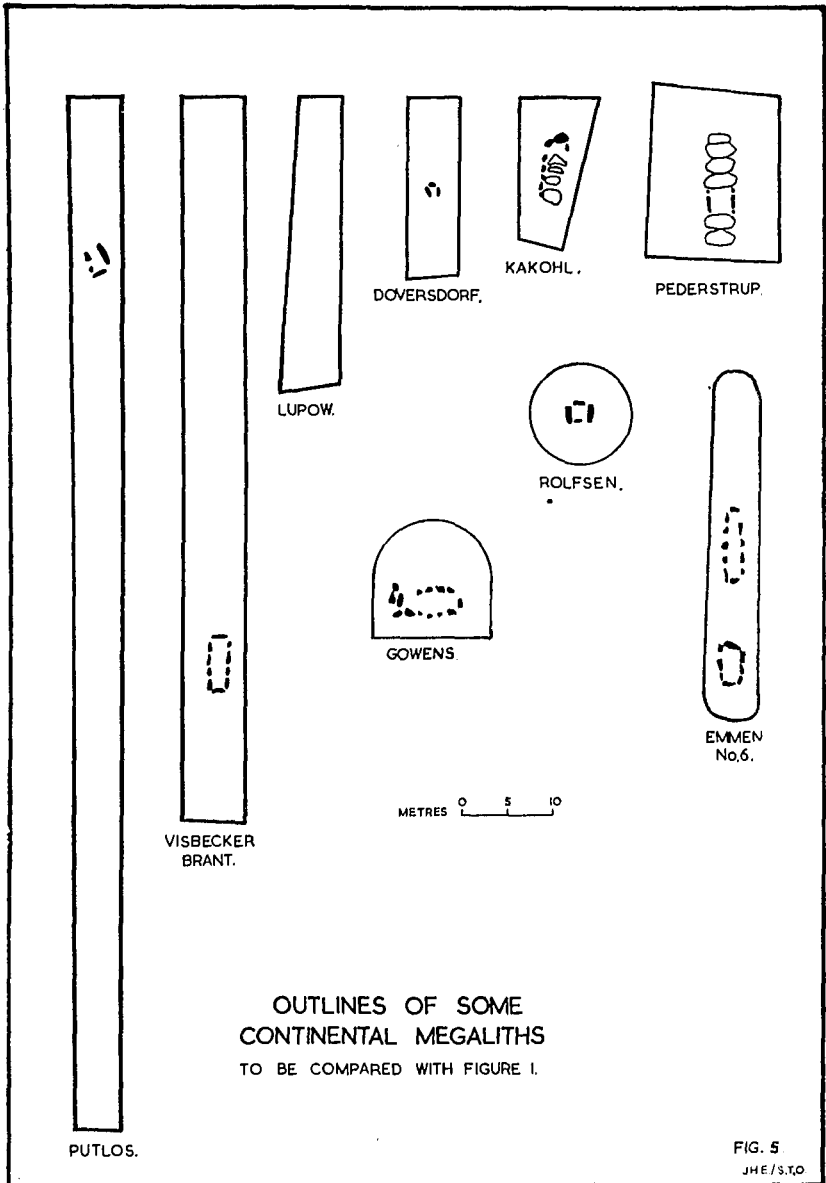


Fig. 5. Outlines of some Continental Megaliths

the story. It will be noted that Gill's story was told some 70 years after the destruction of the supposed tomb, and two years after the final disappearance of the stones. The evidence is thus very weak, and in any case we know nothing of the form of the megalith, the story of which may have evolved from a group of sarzens, coupled with the street name.

DISCUSSION AND SUMMARY

Fig. 1 shows the comparative shapes and sizes of such of the Kentish Megaliths as we have sufficient information, with the exception of Smythe's Megalith, which was a single chamber. For the associated Chambers the reader is referred to *Arch. Cant.*, LXI, p. 139, Fig. 2, where the plans of three are shown, that of the Lower Kits Coty being omitted for the reasons stated (p. 140) but it was very similar to Smythe's in shape and probably in size. The four outlines of Fig. 1 clearly show that the megaliths fall into two well defined groups as regards the size and shape of the peristaliths; the huge Long Barrow of Addington is matched with that of the Upper Kits Coty, which may have been very near it in size, and these chambered Long Barrows are in marked contrast with the smaller works of Coldrum and the Lower Kits Coty, which had peristaliths of a squarish shape. The one common feature is the portal burial chamber; there is no doubt that the two Kits Cotys and Addington have or had such chambers, and the most reasonable reconstruction of Coldrum incorporates this feature. These portal chambers were true tombs and not dummy portals, for there is not a shred of evidence that any of our Kentish monuments had central burial chambers. Little attention has hitherto been given to Stukeley's drawing of the Lower Kits Coty, yet it seems quite clearly associated with Coldrum in type, a point which appears only to have been noted by Mr. R. F. Jessup.¹

As regards the analogues to our megaliths we can first deal with Smythe's Chamber. It is extraordinarily like the chamber of Rolfsen Kr. Winsen, Germany, Fig. 5² being of the same proportions and almost the same size. Like Smythe it is composed of four stones and lacks a capstone, but was covered with a low mound of 36 feet diameter with a peristalith. This Rolfsen Barrow was much like that of Nemerow b. Neubrandenburg,³ except that the latter had a much larger mound. The arrangements at Rolfsen exactly suit the circumstances of Smythe, and throw light on how this came to be gradually demolished. The stones of the peristalith would first have been noticed by the farmer and dragged off the field, most probably into the

¹ Jessup, *Archaeology of Kent*, 1930, p. 80.

² Sprockhoff, *Die Nordische Megalithkultur*, 1938, p. 21.

³ Sprockhoff, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

adjoining Westfield Wood, where there is a large sarzen group; then the low mound would have been ploughed down until in course of time the tops of the wall-stones were struck by the plough, as described, leading to the final destruction of the monument. Smythe's Chamber is also much like other German examples, such as that of Hohenweischendorf Kr. Winsen; indeed there seems to be a type of these smallish chambers which fall between the stone cists and the great compound chambers.

The Addington Long Barrow has been compared¹ with the only Dutch Long Barrow, that of Emmen No. 6 (D. XLIII) which is 128 feet long by an average width of 18 feet 9 inches, thus the length-breadth ratio is 5·7 : 1. It has two huge central tomb chambers with side entrances, and no portal. Addington is 200 feet long with an average breadth of 46 feet giving a ratio of 4·3 : 1, had no central chamber but did possess a portal tomb chamber. Some of the German Riesensteingraber (Giants' Stone Tombs) are nearer the length-breadth ratio of Addington, as Panker, 4·25 : 1, Rothensande 4·16 : 1, Futterscamp 4·7 : 1, and Lupow 4·7 : 1.² All these again have or had central chambers, but no portals; furthermore, they are all wedge shape in plan, whereas so far as we can judge, Addington and Kits Coty were more like elongated ovals or pears. Both our Long Barrows are more reminiscent of some British types both as regards the shape of the mound and in the possession of portal chambers, although it is difficult to find another British Barrow having the same length-breadth proportions of Addington, for they are generally comparatively broader. Also few reach, and fewer still exceed, the great length of Addington. The typical British Long Barrow is wedge shape with one end of the mound higher than the other, and the majority are between 120 feet and 150 feet long. Mr. O. G. S. Crawford has listed examples of native Long Barrows with portal chambers only, two of which at least contained burials.³

There need be little doubt that the Addington and Kits Coty Long Barrows are insular in type; Professor Piggott⁴ and Dr. Hawkes,⁵ believe that the British Long Barrow was originally introduced from Brittany, while Professor Gordon Childe argues⁶ that both the long mound and the long cist came from the S. of France; certainly our Medway specimens seem to have little affinity with the like monuments of Northern Europe.

¹ Stuart Piggott, *loc. cit.*, p. 123.

² See Sprockhoff, *op. cit.*

³ Crawford, *The Long Barrows of the Cotswolds*, 1925, p. 25.

⁴ Piggott, *Antiquity*, XI, p. 441.

⁵ Hawkes, *Prehistoric Foundations of Europe*, 1940, p. 175.

⁶ Gordon Childe, *Prehistoric Communities of the British Isles*, 1947, p. 50.

The Kits Coty Chamber can easily be matched elsewhere ; it is very like the false portal of Belas Knap, a Cotswold Long Barrow, and also the dolmen of the Four Maols, Ballina, Ireland. But if the Addington and Kits Coty monuments conform to a well-known type the case is far different as regards Coldrum and the Lower Coty. It was in 1916¹ that Coldrum was first compared with the Hunbeds of Holland and N.W. Germany, and this alleged affinity has often been asserted since. Now the Hunebedden of Holland are really great passage graves, few have peristaliths and, when they have, the proportions between the great chambers and their peristaliths are entirely different from that of Coldrum ; moreover, the enclosures are oval, and not square, there being no corners to the few Dutch peristalith monuments. There is nothing to remind us of Coldrum in such Dutch peristalith megaliths as Assen 1, Borger 2, Borger 8, Sleen 2 and Havelte 1.² The Hunbeds and Giants' Graves (*Riesensteingrab*) of Germany present more types than the Dutch passage grave with its small peristalith laid close to the chamber, for here we find monuments with rectangular and wedge-shaped enclosures, some with single chambers within them. The typical German *Riesensteingrab*³ is an oblong low mound containing one or more chambers, generally placed on the line of the long axis, and never as portals ; the peristalith consists of upright stones set in the ground close together, and thus adequately supporting the low mound with short upright sides which is battered inwards above the tops of the peristalith stones. Their resemblance to a bed is obvious. Their length-breadth ratios vary considerably, some, like Kakohl (1·8 : 1) Birkenmoor (2·9 : 1) and Doversdorf (3·3 : 1) are short and broad, while others are longer, such as the second Birkenmoor (3·68 : 1) Rothensande (4·16 : 1) Panker (4·25 : 1) and Lupow (4·7 : 1). We then pass to the exaggerated monuments with long, narrow closed corridors for peristaliths, such as Visbecker Braut (11 : 1) and Putlos (22·4 : 1), Fig. 5. There are also the round mounds with single chambers like Rolfsen and Hohenweischendorf already mentioned. Coldrum as reconstructed here has a ratio of 1 : 1, i.e. it occupies a square, and even if the E. wall of the peristalith is placed along the foot of the terrace it will not be more than 1·33 : 1. But there is in Germany one monument whose peristalith occupies a square and almost exactly corresponds to that of the Lower Kits Coty both as reconstructed by Stukeley and in this Paper. This is the megalith of Gowens Kr. Plon⁴ the line of whose peristalith is shown on Fig. 1D outside that of the Lower Coty ; it occupies a square of 40 feet as against our 28 feet for

¹ Ward, *loc. cit.*

² Consult *De Hunebedden in Nederland*, Atlas. van Giffen.

³ Consult Sprockhoff, *op. cit.*

⁴ Sprockhoff, *op. cit.*, p. 25. Fig. 26.

the Lower Coty, and 50 feet for Coldrum. In this particular the resemblance is very striking, but as usual in these comparisons the similarity breaks down when we compare the size and position of the tomb chambers, for Gowens contains a large chamber of the passage grave type.

A small point of difference between the Medway monuments and many Continental examples which will strike an observer who sees them in the field is that whereas in the former the stones of the peristaliths lay flat or inclined against the remnants of the mound, in the latter these are often quite upright, although the mounds may have disappeared. To illustrate this point see Pl. 15 of Sprockhoff's book and Pl. III of *Antiquity*, XI, p. 447. It suggests that the stones were firmly bedded in holes in the Continental cases, but only laid against the mounds of the Medway megaliths.

Mr. O. G. S. Crawford has an interesting note in his book *Long Barrows of the Cotswolds* (p. 13) on the practice of Secondary Burial, with a bone-breaking rite. There can be little doubt that this obtained at Coldrum, for although the remains of 25 individuals have been removed from the Chamber here, they were all very incomplete and broken. The record of skulls and bones found outside the Chamber also suggest the custom and the rite. It is understood that, generally speaking, complete skeletons are found in many of the megaliths of N. Europe, and it may be that the discontinuance of burial in favour of Secondary Burial, with or without the bone-breaking rite, made the construction of huge compound chambers unnecessary, and that only the entry passage was preserved, turned into a portal burial chamber.

We suggest that in the remnants of the Kentish megalithic group three types can be recognized :

- A. Long Barrow with peristalith and portal tomb chamber only. Mound long, and, it is inferred, somewhat low. Affinities, British. Examples : Addington and Upper Kits Coty.
- B. Square type Barrow with peristalith and portal tomb chamber only. Difficult to match elsewhere but as regards peristalith Gowens in Germany is of the same shape. Examples : Coldrum and Lower Kits Coty. As noted by Professor Stuart Piggott, King Sven's Mound at Pederstrup in the Danish island of Laaland has a squarish peristalith (ratio 1.23 : 1).¹
- C. Low round mound with peristalith and single burial chamber. There are good grounds for believing that Smythe's Megalith was of this type, and compares with German examples.

As regards A, there seems no reason to doubt their insular type and origin, but B and C seem to have N. European affinities, except as

¹ Nordman, *The Megalithic Culture of Northern Europe*, 1935, p. 124. Fig. 57.

KENTISH MEGALITH TYPES

regards the position of the chamber. There would thus have been a complete dichotomy between A and B if it were not that they are related locally by the common feature of the portal tomb chamber. Since the A Long Barrows are complete in themselves and can be matched elsewhere in this country, whereas the square type B seem to have adopted the portal chamber into a Continental type, the inference would seem to be that type A is earlier in date, and was succeeded by types B and C ; and into type B was incorporated the portal chamber of the earlier Long Barrow. Thus, a mixture of Western (insular) and Eastern (overseas) features is suggested by the facts and inferences.

The observations made in this Paper are suggestive and not assertive ; it is hoped that they will lead to a more proper appreciation of our Kentish megalith types, about which the most diverse views have been expressed.

(The blocks which illustrate this Paper have been loaned by the writer.)