

Fact or Myth: Is America's Stonehenge Restored Beyond Study?

By

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Abstract

This article explores the common belief the archaeological site known as America's Stonehenge has been restored to the point it can not be studied. To find out if the belief was factual or a myth the author sought out firsthand and period information on the subject. Surprisingly, there was a significant quantity. The written information was used in conjunction with photographs from circa 1915 through 2020. Some of these photographs provided glimpses into the site prior to restoration. Yes, many of the structures have had partial restoration. But as before restoration photographs of the Mensal Stone Chamber and East-West Chamber show neither Goodwin nor anyone else rebuilt any of these stone structures from scratch. They had "foundations" which were used to guide the reconstruction.

Introduction

"The fascinating thing about the situation is the observation that myths do not necessarily take hundreds or even thousands of years to develop." Richard V. Humphrey, Archaeologist¹

When a statement is repeatedly repeated over many years it becomes fact. People take the statement for granted and accept it without reservation or investigation. This is what has taken place with the America's Stonehenge site in North Salem, New Hampshire. A recent example is presented: "[Goodwin] is documented as having 'rearranged' many of the stones on the property, so that it is not possible now to know what is original – if anything – and what is the result of Goodwin's work," says Curtis Runnels, a professor of archaeology, anthropology and classical studies at Boston University."² Stephen George, *Discover Magazine's* Editor-in-Chief visited the site during the Covid 19 pandemic and wrote an article in February 2021 for *Discover's* on-line version in which he expounded upon Runnels statement. George states, "He [Goodwin] was so convinced of this 'fact' [Irish Monks built the site] that he made alterations to the site to suit his theory." George is an influential person being the editor-in-chief of a popular, reputable, science based magazine. People believe what he says without questioning it.

Runnels statement is based on the fact the site was partially restored by Goodwin. What he failed to note is the fact that five of the chambers were never restored by Goodwin. Of those structures restored under Goodwin, two of the three tall walls were rebuilt based on their foundations and stones within three feet of them while the third wall had only its top one third restored. That gave the restorers an example to go by in their restoration work on the other two tall walls. Only a small portion of the East-West chamber was restored without altering its layout. The famous Oracle Chamber was not restored by Goodwin. Its layout and features are in situ. Needless to say the amount of restoration thought to have taken place is incorrect.

Historic statements by William Goodwin, Roscoe Whitney who managed the restoration, 1938 detailed field sketches by Arthur Carey (figs.1 & 2), followed up by Professor of Architecture (Notre Dame University) V. F. Fagan's 1944 professional illustration of the site (fig.3) and augmented by pre-

¹ Humphrey 1980, 80. He received his degree in archaeology from the University of California, Santa Barbara.

² George 2021.

Goodwin historic photographs, Goodwin before restoration photographs and after restoration photographs made a study possible. Restoration post Goodwin has been written up in various sources. There is good knowledge of what has been restored, to what degree a structure has been restored and what is original. And yes, remarkably there are parts of this site that are still in their original state.

The fact is this site had more than sufficient data to conduct a study of its stone structures that was published in the book, *The Architecture of America's Stonehenge*.³ This article details the restoration work on the individual stone structures.

What has been restored?

Goodwin Era Restoration

Notation: A few of the stone structures at first were given names such as the Sola, Y Chamber and Watch House Chamber. By 1955 the structures had been assigned a Roman numeral and where necessary a letter. Later the structures were renamed with the exception of the Watch House Chamber which retained its original name. Both the structure's common name and number are included along with a map of the complex showing their locations. (fig.4)

From Goodwin:

“I then engaged Roscoe J. Whitney of Leominster, to superintend the work of cleaning up the site and restoring such of the stone work as we could, with due understanding that *no changes in shape of the buildings and walls was to be contemplated.*

In this work we were guided by the size, weight and vicinity of any stone debris immediately adjacent (within 3 feet) to existing ruins. In this Harry Abbotson showed a high degree of intelligence in moving stones up to 850 pounds in weight. We can consciously say that this restricted method of restoring any wall proved that all stones lying within a yard of any given wall had fallen from that wall. So on being placed on top of such walls brought them to their original height, leaving no debris below. It was extremely slow work but it was thoroughly and consistently undertaken.”⁴ (Italic emphasis added)

From Vescelius:

Gary S. Vescelius (1930 – 1982) was a Yale University trained professional archaeologist hired to conduct excavations at the America's Stonehenge site in the summer of 1955. Vescelius wrote a manuscript detailing his findings from the excavations. The report was not published until 1982 and appeared in New England Antiquities Research Association's *NEARA Journal* with article title “*The Antiquity of Pattee's Caves.*”

According to the report Roscoe Whitney, who managed the reconstruction/restoration of the stone structures visited the site while Vescelius was conducting excavations in 1955 and explained what had been restored.⁵ Vescelius summarizes what he was told and appears to have interjected his own comments.

“In rebuilding the Ramp and the other structures which border the ‘Plaza’, Goodwin substantially altered their appearance. The east wall [facing Grooved Stone] of the Ramp was almost completely rebuilt, and

³ Gage 2021.

⁴ Goodwin 1946, 31-32.

⁵ Vescelius 1982, 16 see footnote 42.

the Ramp itself was partially filled. Earth was removed from beneath the Grooved Stone. The south wall [refers to the attached East-West Chamber] of the Ramp was restored, and the impressive east wall of the Plaza – Structure VIII – was almost totally reconstructed by piling atop one another all of the large stone lying within a yard of the vestigial wall [Tall Wall]. A large feathermarked stone, which has elicited comment from Goodwin and others, was incorporated by him within one of the lower courses of this wall. The walls of Structure III [sic IIIA or IIIB?] were built up; rocks were, for example, piled atop the capstone of Structure IIIB so as to significantly change its appearance. The low wall which runs between Structure XIA and Structure VII[I] (Fig. 3, E) may have been completely ‘rebuilt’.⁶ The foundations of most, if not all, of the present structures did, indeed, exist prior to the inception of Goodwin’s work; but it would be difficult to say that he was completely justified in reconstructing the buildings as he did. It should be emphasized, however, that Goodwin did not evidently alter the appearance of the remainder of the site in any untoward manner; the most important structures – the Y [Oracle] Cavern and the Cellar [Sunken Courtyard] – were partially excavated and, where necessary, stabilized, but they were not actually rebuilt.”⁷

The rebuilt structures Vescelius wrote about were the Tall Wall (VIII), a short low wall between the Collapsed Chamber & Enclosure (XIA & XIB) and Tall Wall, Ramp, and area labeled IIIA with Mensal Stone Chamber, niche on end of wall behind the chamber and Unnamed Chamber (IIIB). These structures are situated around an open area in the center of the hilltop complex called the “Plaza”.

(1) Ramp’s East Wall

Two different versions of the repair to the Ramp were found.

Goodwin:

“... the graded way back of the line of huts [V Hut & East-West Chamber] on the north side of the plaza was an earthen ramp with a great retaining wall of stone facing the other street and facing the 15-ton grooved sacrificial stone. This stone wall had bulged out of the perpendicular to an alarming extent.

The remedy applied by Abbotson and Whitney was first to insert chinking stones and then ram them home with a heavy tree trunk. Under this pressure the wall not only straightened up but became even more solid than before. The ramp has a drain of its own ...”⁸

Vescelius via Whitney (Of note Vescelius does not quote Whitney. He summarizes Whitney) “The east wall of the Ramp was almost completely rebuilt and the Ramp was partially filled.”⁹

A before restoration photograph of the front east edge of the Ramp and Grooved Stone area show a lot of loose stone on the bedrock. (fig.5) Another pre-restoration photo seems to show the east wall of the Ramp intact. (fig.6) The statement the “Ramp itself was partially filled” appears accurate as loose stone in front of it was replaced on top. (fig.7) As for the restoration Goodwin was specific about the repair to the east wall whereas Vescelius is vague. It does not seem plausible the east wall totally collapsed after it was “straightened up” and made “even more solid than before”. Furthermore, even if the wall was “completely rebuilt” its appearance, length and height would not have been altered due to the fact the

⁶ According to Vescelius, “Roscoe Whitney, the man who supervised the reconstruction, visited the site during the course of our work, and testified to have made these changes; old photographs serve to support his testimony.” (Vescelius 1982 see footnote 42).

⁷ Vescelius 1982, 13.

⁸ Goodwin 1946, 58.

⁹ Vescelius 1982, 13.

same stones would have been put back in place. Vescelius appears to have made an attempt to mislead his readers.

Under the Ramp Goodwin documented a covered drain. “Before he [original builder] started to fill in this ramp and while he was building its retaining wall, he provided what seems to be a stone drain with a linteled opening at the bottom of his wall.”¹⁰ Goodwin is referring to the lintel covered double-channeled exit of the stone covered drain under the Ramp located on the extreme northeast end of the retaining wall. This is proof the drain was in existence and left unaltered by Goodwin thus making it a studyable feature.

Recent photographs of the retaining wall’s extension on the north side corner show a very different construction style to the wall. It does not fit with any other wall construction style on site. This may be what Whitney was referring to with the comment “completely rebuilt”.¹¹

(2) Ramp “partially filled”

As noted above the ramp was in existence when Goodwin purchased the site. Its top surface was covered with earth and had a large tree growing out of it. Originally it was thought to be of earth but later it was discovered it contained stones. The exterior retaining wall denoted the length and height of the Ramp. The height is the same as the height of the East-West Chamber attached to its south wall. The entrance to the stone lined drain on its west side determined its width. Although some stone was added the ramp was not altered in its overall size, or shape of configuration. The loose stone used to refill the ramp is seen in the photograph on page 91 in Goodwin’s book. (see fig.5) The addition of the loose stone did not alter the drain’s entrance or exit. The architecture of this structure is studyable.

(3) “The south wall of Ramp was restored”

This statement leads readers to think the south wall of the Ramp was exposed as well as restored. Vescelius makes no attempt to clarify he is referring to the chambers attached to the Ramp’s south wall which he writes about in another section of his report. “Along the southern face of this structure [Ramp] lie a number of stone-walled cells ...”¹² Attached to the Ramp’s south wall are the “cells” today known as the East-West Chamber (VIIB), V Hut (VIIA) and Sundeck Chamber (VIID).

V Hut – Structure VIIA

The V Hut is original it has never been altered. It is a simple, low, open-fronted chamber with a V shape. It is actually beyond the back end of the Ramp and is attached to the west end of the East-West Chamber.

Sundeck Chamber – Structure VIID

The chamber was previously called the “Sola” or “double solar” due to the fact it had an open-topped structure on top that created two structures-in-one with its upper structure open to the sun. The lower structure is a nearly walk-in height, open-fronted chamber with a square interior on the southeast corner of the Ramp.

Upper Structure: According to Goodwin, “In the case of the upper room of the double solar, the three or four huge slabs that formed its sides and roof are all down but still intact.” (p.181) “... the entry to this

¹⁰ Goodwin 1946, 201.

¹¹ Gage 2021, 157.

¹² Vescelius 1982, 11.

upper story to be by ladder, or from the top of the ramp itself. This upper room is completely fallen, but all the four large stones lie on or adjacent to it, so that it can ultimately be restored.” (p.201) In this paragraph the “large stones lie on or adjacent to it.” Goodwin found three of the stone slabs lying on top of the chamber. A fourth slab was “adjacent” being on the bedrock below it and leaning against the ramp’s east wall. This is seen in a photograph on page 83 of Goodwin’s book. (fig.6) It is the fourth slab he referred to. That slab is still in place today. Glimpses of the three slabs on top show up in the photographs on pages 83 (fig.6) and 92 (fig.7). The slabs were placed upright and with the upper section of the ramp’s wall formed a four-sided shaft. As can be seen in the photographs the only way to enter the shaft is from the top with a ladder inside to climb down into it.

Chamber: A photograph of the outer thin side wall of the chamber appears in the frontispiece of Goodwin’s book. (fig.8) The wall is one stone wide with a tall triangular slab just inside that reaches up to the underside of the chamber’s roof slab. A small opening (not visible) in the rear of the side wall is evidenced by sunlight coming into the interior. The thin wall and standing stone support the five and half foot by five foot by one foot thick roof slab. In this photograph is the original side wall and its features. The thin side wall has been completely rebuilt, see current photograph. (fig.9) The rebuilding of the side wall maintained the small opening in the wall’s southwest corner. However, the standing stone has been removed. Its location is unknown. Using the old photograph in conjunction with the current state the chamber is in made it possible to study.

East-West Chamber – Structure VIIB

Three “before” photographs of the East-West Chamber with stone scattered about on the bedrock between them show the entire exterior of the structure. (figs.10, 11 & 13) The west end with the entrance has not been altered. The middle section is overgrown with vines and young trees. The east end is intact. Augmenting the photographs are A. Carey’s two field sketches drawn a month apart in October and November of 1938. (figs.1 & 2) His November sketch is quite revealing as it shows details of the this structure with its four rooms. The photograph on page 79 shows three upright slabs and loose stone scattered about showing it is a before photograph. (fig.10) Two large upright slabs flank the entrance. A third slab is visible inside with a smaller secondary roof covering the small interior room. The photograph on page 68 shows the east end with a large upright slab adjacent to a narrow slotted opening. (fig.11) An undated before restoration photograph taken from the east side facing west shows the narrow slot into the small room on the east end. (fig.13) The photograph on page 80 shows the restored structure with the same stone slab in place on the east end along with the narrow slot opening into the small room on that end. (fig.12) Whitney followed Goodwin’s instructions to make “no changes in shape of the buildings and walls”. He kept the stone slab in place that was there when the site was opened up by Goodwin.

The middle section was completely destroyed. Directly south about four feet away are three quarry crane socket holes in a line east to west. They face the middle section and east end of the chamber. It is logical to deduct the men responsible for removing stone from the site removed a large stone slab from the middle section of the exterior wall. It is also logical to deduct the stone removal stopped at that point as none of the other stone slabs in the chamber were taken away. The only other stone slabs found to be missing from the site are the two halves of the split-off slabs in the Tall Wall. The stone removal took place in the mid to late 1800s when superior stone was being quarried from deep pit quarries. The stone slabs on this site are from the surface and have multiple fractures making them extremely poor quality which is why they were rejected. Rejection would be the only reason to stop such an easy source of stone removal. Stop and count the number of stone slabs still on site. There are at least twenty large stone slabs left in place. This cross-check confirms there was a very limited quantity of stone slabs

removed. The men even left the exposed roof slab of the Unnamed Chamber that was in easy access. They left the large 5' x 5' Sundeck roof slab attached to the east end of the East-West Chamber another easy access stone slab with a quarry crane socket hole in close proximity. The three tall, thick walls that were either partially or almost totally dismantled each had a large stone slab within them of which none were removed except half of the two in the Tall Wall Chamber. The evidence proves this site was not destroyed to the point it can not be studied.

During Goodwin's era restoration, only the middle section of the East-West Chamber was filled in with stone. (fig.12) That changed later. A comparison of the stone slab in the east end was made with an undated photograph in a 1958 publication *The North Salem Mystery*.¹³ (figs.14, 15 & 16) The slab in place in 1958 appears to have a vertical ridge on its face casting a shadow the same ridge as on the stone currently in place. That indicates the original stone slab Goodwin's crew kept in the chamber had been replaced. Attached to the east end of the East-West Chamber is the Sundeck Chamber. Goodwin found three large stone slabs on top of the Sundeck Chamber. Today, there are two on top and in a totally different configuration than Goodwin had found them. There is a high probability the current stone slab in the east end of the East-West Chamber came from the top of the Sundeck.

According to J. Lambert who wrote *America's Stonehenge an Interpretive Guide* (1996), more restoration took place with this chamber in 1978, 1979, 1980. Using historic photographs and historic drawings makes study of the East-West Chamber possible with great accuracy in light of the restoration.

(4) Tall Wall – Structure VIII

Vescelius - "Structure VIII was almost totally reconstructed by piling atop one another all of the large stone lying within a yard [three feet] of the vestigial wall. A large feathermarked stone, which has elicited comment from Goodwin and others, was incorporated by him within one of the lower courses of this wall."¹⁴

A before restoration photograph taken from the east side of the Tall Wall structure shows its foundation. (Fig.13) Vescelius stated, "The foundations of most, if not all, of the present structures did, indeed, exist prior to the inception of Goodwin's work." The before restoration photograph concurs with Vescelius' statement. In the photograph the dismantled wall stones are seen next to the wall's foundation. Although the wall was "totally reconstructed" its length and width were known by its "foundation". The one unknown was its height which was achieved by using only the stone within three feet of it in the restoration. The stone beside the wall dictated the type and size of stone. Across the plaza from the Tall Wall is the Mensal Stone Chamber another structure with a tall wall. Its lower two thirds was intact when Goodwin acquired the site. That chamber's tall wall had the same type and size of stone as was next to the Tall Wall. Goodwin's crew therefore had a partially intact wall as an example of the construction style used by the original builders. His crew were astute observers. They noticed two large slabs had quarry marks left from the slabs being split in half. (fig.19) Of the two slabs one had "feathermarked" half holes. Unbeknown to anyone assisting Goodwin these were trapezoid holes used with the flat-wedge method that date from 1800 to 1870s. The other slab had half-round holes used with the plug n' feather method that dates from the early 1820s to 2021.¹⁵ The workers correctly placed the slabs so the half-holes were at the top edge and facing outward. In addition, they noticed an abraded slot on the end of the slab with the half-round holes. This slab they set in place so the slot faced outward. The only unknown factor is at what height was this slab originally. This is a minor factor in the overall

¹³ Photo is labeled "Part of Plaza" in the book (no page number).

¹⁴ Vescelius 1982, 13.

¹⁵ Gage & Gage 2005.

scheme of the restoration. These slabs were found on the wall's north end and hence placed back there. If you'll notice they are one on top of another. An example of placing a large slab on top of another large slab is seen in the before restoration photograph of the east end of the East-West Chamber. So there again, the workers had an intact example to guide them.

One other factor, in the stone rubble on the east side of the Tall Wall but out further than the three foot radius, another important stone was found. This slab had its edge worked so that it formed a lip jutting out from one side. It has become known as the "sill" stone. (fig.17) The quarried stone slabs are the width of the wall indicating they originally jugged out the side. When reconstructed on paper in conjunction with the sill stone all indications are there was a secondary wall across from the quarried stone slabs. The secondary wall supported the lower stone slab creating a chamber. The full name of the Tall Wall should be the Tall Wall Chamber.

The evidence indicates the restoration of the Tall Wall closely resembles the construction style of the original builders and therefore makes it studyable.

(5) Mensal Stone Chamber and Niche in-Wall – Structure III

Vescelius via Whitney said the structure's walls "were built up". Structure III includes two low walls of which one contains a large niche, enclosing an area behind structure IIIA (Mensal Stone Chamber) and an adjoining chamber IIIB (Unnamed Chamber). A before restoration photograph of structure IIIA shows the lower two thirds containing the chamber was intact and in its original state. (fig.20) Only, the upper one third was restored. (fig.21) Goodwin's crew had the advantage of studying the thick wall's style of construction from the lower two thirds. In doing so, they were able to reconstruct the upper one third to match the lower section. This could only be done due to the fact the stones within the three feet radius were similar to the ones in the lower section.

(6) Unnamed Chamber – Structure IIIB

Vescelius via Whitney said, "rocks were, for example, piled atop the capstone of Structure IIIB so as to significantly change its appearance." The capstone shows the chamber was intact and that its tall, thick wall was rebuilt. (fig.22) Here again, Goodwin's crew used only the stones within three feet of the chamber. These stones were similar in size and shape to the stones in the Tall Wall and Mensal Stone Chambers tall walls. Therefore the workers restoring the tall wall did not "change the appearance" of the structure as Vescelius said.

Vescelius felt Goodwin had made a major mistake in putting the stones within three feet back on top of the chamber's roof slab. Under Structure IIIA (page 12) he makes an odd comment, "... Structure IIIB. This shelter resembles Structure VIIA [V Hut]." The V Hut is an open-fronted low chamber without a stone wall above the chamber. The Unnamed Chamber is not similar in anyway. Its entrance is on the extreme end. The chamber is enclosed on four sides. It is a foot lower in height than the other chamber. It has a rectangular shape. And it had a lot of loose stone next to it.

The fact is the stones in the tall wall above the Unnamed Chamber were taken down to the chamber's roof slab by the men removing stone from the site. This was probably done for two reasons: (1) the tall wall above the chamber likely interfered with the stones being moved from the plaza up to the upper area to be loaded onto wagons. That is a narrow area to move the slabs through. (2) The roof slab was probably slated to be removed from the site. Vescelius thought the chamber was in its original state and supposed it resembled the V Hut a chamber without a wall above it. He erred when he did not take into

consideration the stones within three feet of the Unnamed Chamber that were the same as those used in the other two tall wall chambers. It was Vesceilius who was wrong in his analysis.

It is interesting to note the wall construction style of the Unnamed Chamber (IIIB) matches that of Mensal Stone Chamber (IIIA) and Tall Wall (VIII). This could only occur if the type and size of stone on the bedrock next to each structure was the same. What it shows is the Unnamed Chamber originally had a tall, thick wall above the chamber. Another factor, the height of all three tall walls is similar 5' to 6' high. This is not coincidental. It shows a consistency by the original builders. All three tall wall chambers are studyable.

(7) Low wall across the passageway between Collapsed Chamber (XIA) and Tall Wall (VIII)

Vesceilius stated it “may have been completely ‘rebuilt’.” There is no evidence to confirm this was or was not an intentional wall. It has since been removed. It is shown on Carey’s 1938 map. In the greater scheme of the site it is inconsequential.

(8) Half-Circle Enclosure (a.k.a. Pulpit) – Structure II

There is no reference to the enclosure regarding restoration. (figs.23 & 24) However, rumors say part of the enclosure’s thick wall was rebuilt by Goodwin’s crew. This is potentially true in regards to its northwest corner across from the dismantled Unnamed Chamber. In the bedrock there are two quarry crane holes in close proximity designed to hold the crane used to move stone slabs up to the level area behind (west side) of the enclosure for transport off site. Dismantling the top of the wall would have made it easier to maneuver the crane.

What was not disturbed was the lower section with the covered drain. (fig.25) Its similarity to the covered drain exit in the Ramp indicates it is in its original state and has never been altered.

(9) Oracle Chamber (no structure number assigned)

Vesceilius stated, “the Y [Oracle] Cavern and the Cellar [Sunken Courtyard] – were partially excavated and, where necessary, stabilized, but they were not actually rebuilt.” For safety purposes Goodwin had metal bars inserted at ceiling level to insure the roof slabs would not collapse. He also had the build-up of dirt cleaned out of the east wing. And he had two small stone slabs removed. “Phil, one of our most observing workers, made two outstanding discoveries in the second summer.” He discovered the drain at the end of the east wing and the speaking tube had been sealed up with small, thin stone slabs. These he pried loose to reveal the features hidden behind them.” (Goodwin, 1946, 59)

Pre-Goodwin Alteration

(10) Alcove of Oracle Chamber

Goodwin included two circa 1915 photographs of the intact entrance to the Oracle Chamber. (figs. 26 & 27) Each photograph is from a different angle. One is a straight-on frontal view. The second is a view from the side showing the standing stone at the entrance to the Grooved Stone with the chamber’s entrance on the right. The side view of the entrance proves the standing stone at the entrance to the Grooved Stone is original and in situ. The frontal view shows the alcove was built up to walk-in height, fully enclosed by a stone wall and capped with large roof slabs. Graffiti in the form of initials and the year 1915 can be seen painted on the front edge of the roof slab. The two photographs reveal stone bars

were used in the upper part of the alcove's wall. A photograph in the 1958 publication *The North Salem Mystery* shows the upper part of the alcove wall had been dismantled by the time Goodwin took ownership.¹⁶ One roof slab was left in place and at a severely slanted down angle resting on the top of the bottom half of the wall. Goodwin had to remove the slab in the alcove to make it safe to enter the chamber. Lambert noted in her guide that in 1977 while debris was being cleaned off the chamber's roof the chamber's entrance wall collapsed. David Stewart-Smith restored the wall the following year. "His mason's mark is seen to the left of the entrance." More restoration was needed in 1983 on the chamber's entrance and at this time to the alcove wall.¹⁷

The circa 1915 photograph showing the intact alcove completes the data set needed to study the Oracle Chamber that was intact when Goodwin acquired the site.

Post-Goodwin Restoration

(11) Outer area attached to the Oracle Chamber's alcove

Today the outer area attached to the Oracle Chamber's alcove is walled-in. The wall was added/constructed post 1983 after the alcove was restored. A photograph in the 1958 publication *The North Salem Mystery* shows a view looking east from the V Hut down along the length of the East-West Chamber on the left side, and the north ends of the Mensal Stone Chamber and Tall Wall Chamber on the right side through to the chain link fence. In the area of the Oracle Chamber's alcove entrance there is no stone wall.¹⁸

(12) Watch House Chamber

This chamber's southeast interior front side wall next to the passageway was restored in 1978. The stone mason's mark indicates the restoration work.¹⁹ That work did not disturb any of the features in the back wall: a stone with two white protrusions, a triangular shaped white stone, a stone with a rust colored band, and the banded lintel over the "V" shaped opening at ground level in the northwest corner. These features needed to study this chamber were left in situ.

(13) South Facing Chamber – Structure I

According to Lambert the chamber's outer wall was restored in 1982 ("The stone mason's mark is visible on the outer wall.") and again in 1992.²⁰ The left side of the entrance and its thin east side wall are vulnerable to earthquakes known on the hill. The restoration although it altered the original builder's construction style of the outer walls it did not alter the architecture of the chamber or its interior features.

(14) Sunken Courtyard – Structure X

This structure from archaeological excavations was confirmed to have been used for the foundation of Jonathan Pattee's house. Household related artifacts from the 1800s verified the presence of a house.²¹

¹⁶ Holden 1958.

¹⁷ Lambert 1996, 35.

¹⁸ Holden, 1958.

¹⁹ Lambert 1996, 4.

²⁰ Lambert 1996, 21.

²¹ Vescelius 1982, 28-30.

The excavation results are augmented by the interior walls of the chamber partially covered with white plaster. Another historic era clue is a stone in the upper level near the ceiling with a blast hole. A second stone with a blast hole in the upper level was located in a second unfinished chamber opposite the first. These two stones with blast holes appear to have been used to effect repairs.

A stonewall midway between two parallel walls forming an enclosure with the chambers is intrusive. That is its ends do not interlock with the side walls indicating it was added after the side walls were built. This is thought to have been built by Pattee to support his house. There is a general and accepted consensus based on the physical evidence the structure although not a normal house foundation layout was used as a foundation for a house.

What has been overlooked is the fact there are oddities. The chamber with the plaster has a half of a drain going into it. The other half of the covered drain goes behind the chamber down hill to a stone lined sump pit. This is not a feature found in any historic house cellar. House cellar's were designed to be dry. The unfinished chamber on the southeast corner retains one roof stone slab in place and another adjacent on the ground. The slab on the ground has a finely abraded deep groove indicative of Native American activity. Plus, another slab on top beside the unfinished chamber with a stone pecked grooved circle.

In the northwest corner there is an extra large stone slab in an upright position leaning against the end of a low stonewall. Across from the slab is a well built stone niche facing the slab. It does not face into the enclosure. The niche was built up against an upright stone slab built on a large flat topped slab. Pattee did not to disturb these features. He was careful to build his house in such a way as to avoid them.

There are known examples of people coming into possession of properties with unusual features/structures which they preserve as is. This appears to be the case here. Pattee was followed by Goodwin, who was followed by the Stone family. Together they have saved this site from destruction and through their conservative stewardship kept it in a state that can be studied.

Restoration

For many years the chamber in the Sunken Courtyard had a wooden scaffold in its entrance and plastic tarp covering the roof. There are no noticeable changes to the chamber since it was taken down. The exact nature of the restoration is not known but whatever, it was it did not disturb the integrity of the chamber. The work was likely done on the roof.

(15) Collapsed Chamber – Structure XIB

The Collapsed Chamber was an unaltered structure. In 2017 its interior west wall began to bulge out. It was repaired by Peter Wiggin who dismantled the wall stone by stone and re-built it placing the stones back in place where he had taken them out. This restoration project was meticulously and correctly done and did not alter the structure in any way. (Personal communication with Peter Wiggin) During the summer of 2021 the thin east wall collapsed. It has not yet been restored. There are before collapse photographs for study purposes.

(16) Grooved Stone & Speaking Tube

Goodwin's cleaning out underneath the Grooved Stone discovered it was set up on four stone pillars.

In 2019 the Grooved Stone was nearly destroyed by vandalism when a saw was used to cut symbols into it. During the repair of the Grooved Stone the cuts were filled using stone dust from the damaged stone mixed with an adhering agent. (Peter Wiggin) During the restoration the speaking tube that had previously partially collapsed was also restored by Wiggin. The work was fully documented. Today the Grooved Stone looks as it did prior to the vandalism.

(17) Standing Stones at Summer Solstice Sunrise Alignment Stone

Four chunky standing stones originally stood upright on the south side of the alignment stone. These were documented by the author in the early 2000s. All four have been knocked down and currently lie prone on the ground.

(18) Split Glacial Boulder with Attached Niche next to Equinox Sunrise Alignment Stone

When this boulder was photographed and documented in the early 2000s there were no stones inside the split. Since then visitors have placed stones inside altering this feature.

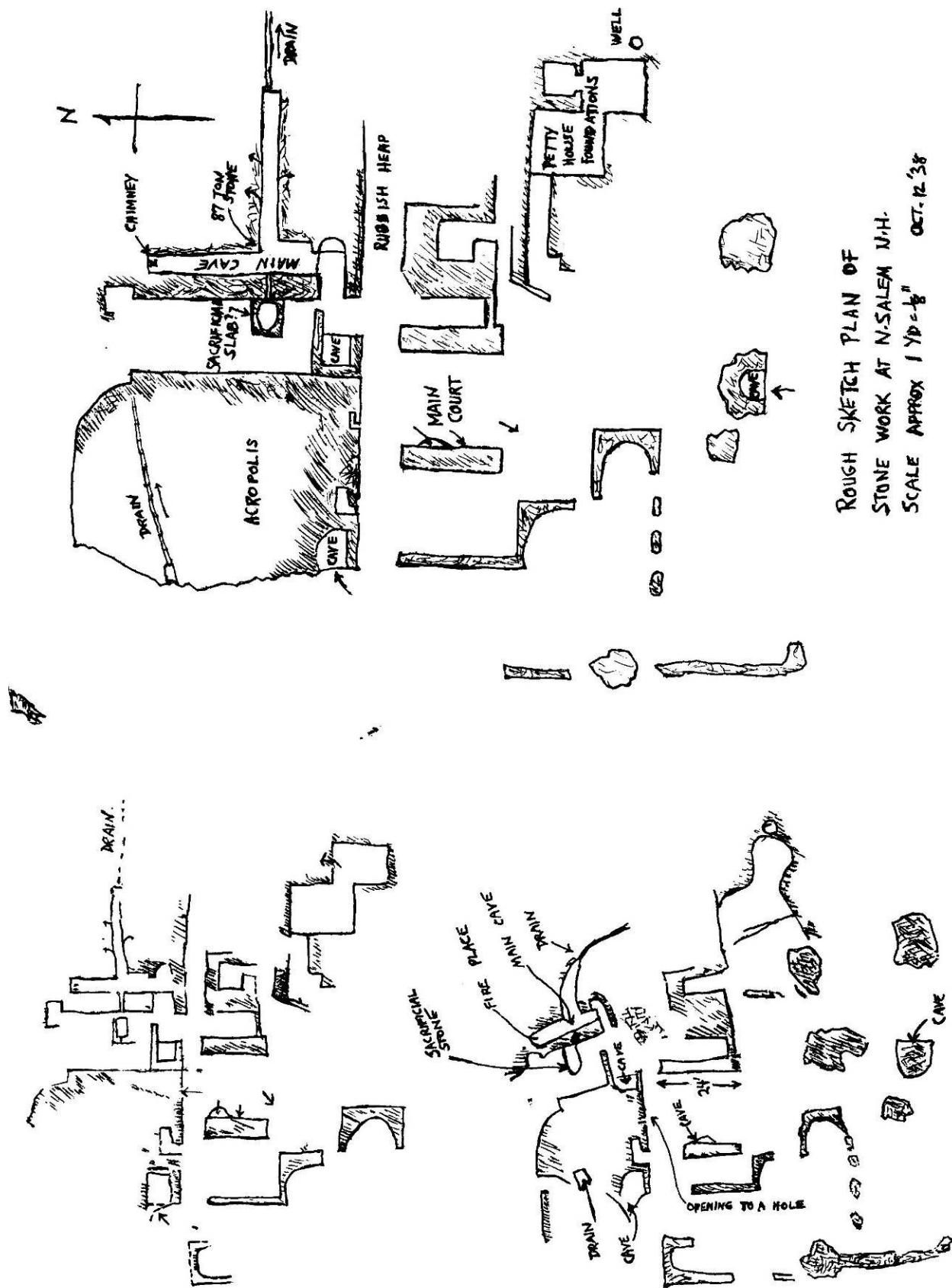
(19) Niche in wall behind Mensal Stone Chamber

When the niche was photographed and documented in the early 2000s there were no stones inside the niche. Since then visitors have placed stones inside altering this feature.

Conclusion

Knowing what has been altered is as important as knowing what has not been altered. Photographs dating to various time periods along with written documentation aided greatly in understanding a site. Like an old house with years of renovations clues to its original construction and style remain to be found if you dig deep enough.

The architectural clues uncovered about the America's Stonehenge site permitted it to be studied and reconstructed on paper. The publication of the clues creates a historical record of what has taken place in the past and makes them available to anyone interested in doing future research on the site.



ROUGH SKETCH PLAN OF
 STONE WORK AT N-SALEM N.H.
 SCALE APPROX 1 YD = 1" OCT. 12 '38

Figure 1 – October 1938 rough sketch maps of the main complex by Arthur G. Carey

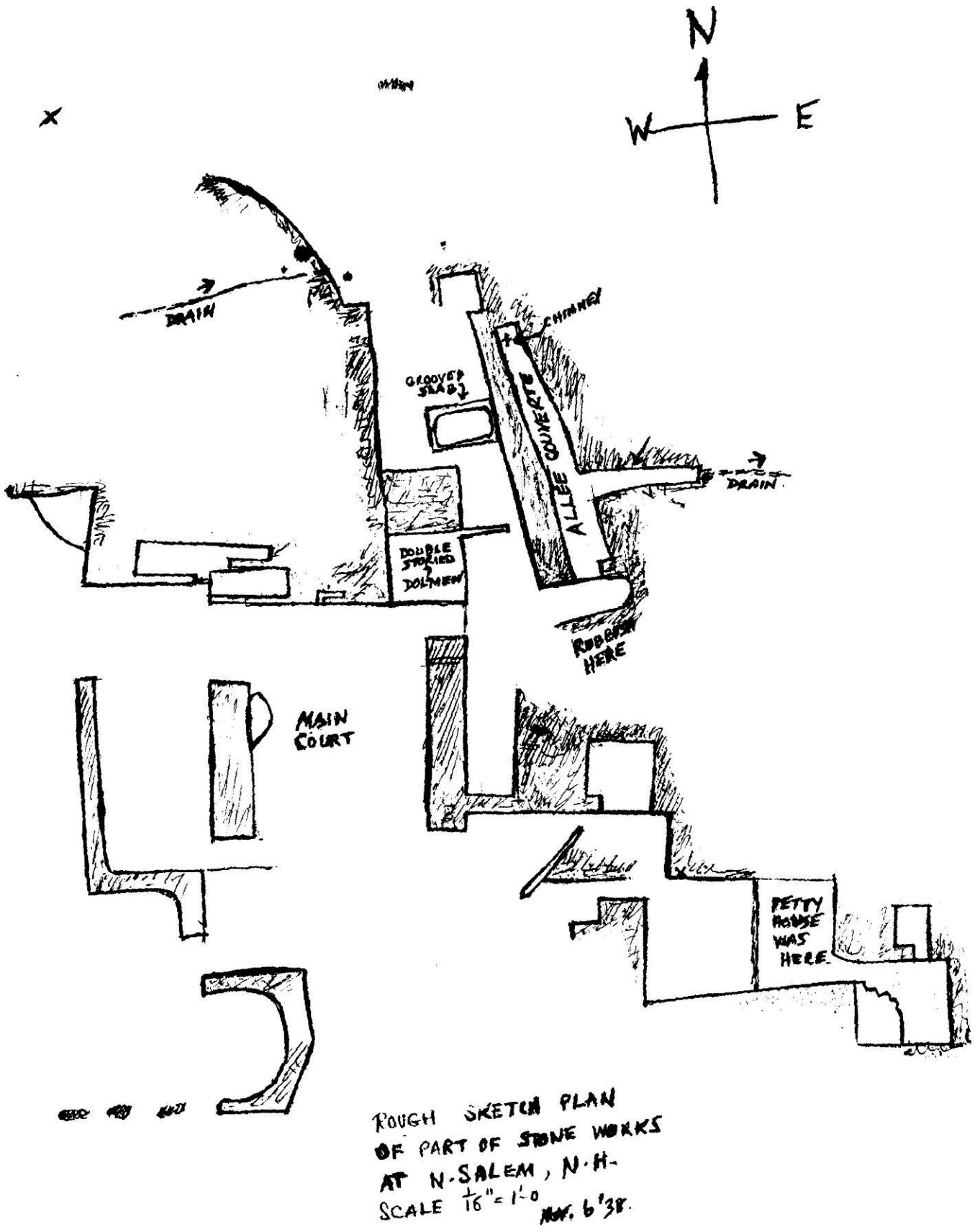


Figure 2 – November 1938 rough sketch map of the main complex by Arthur G. Carey

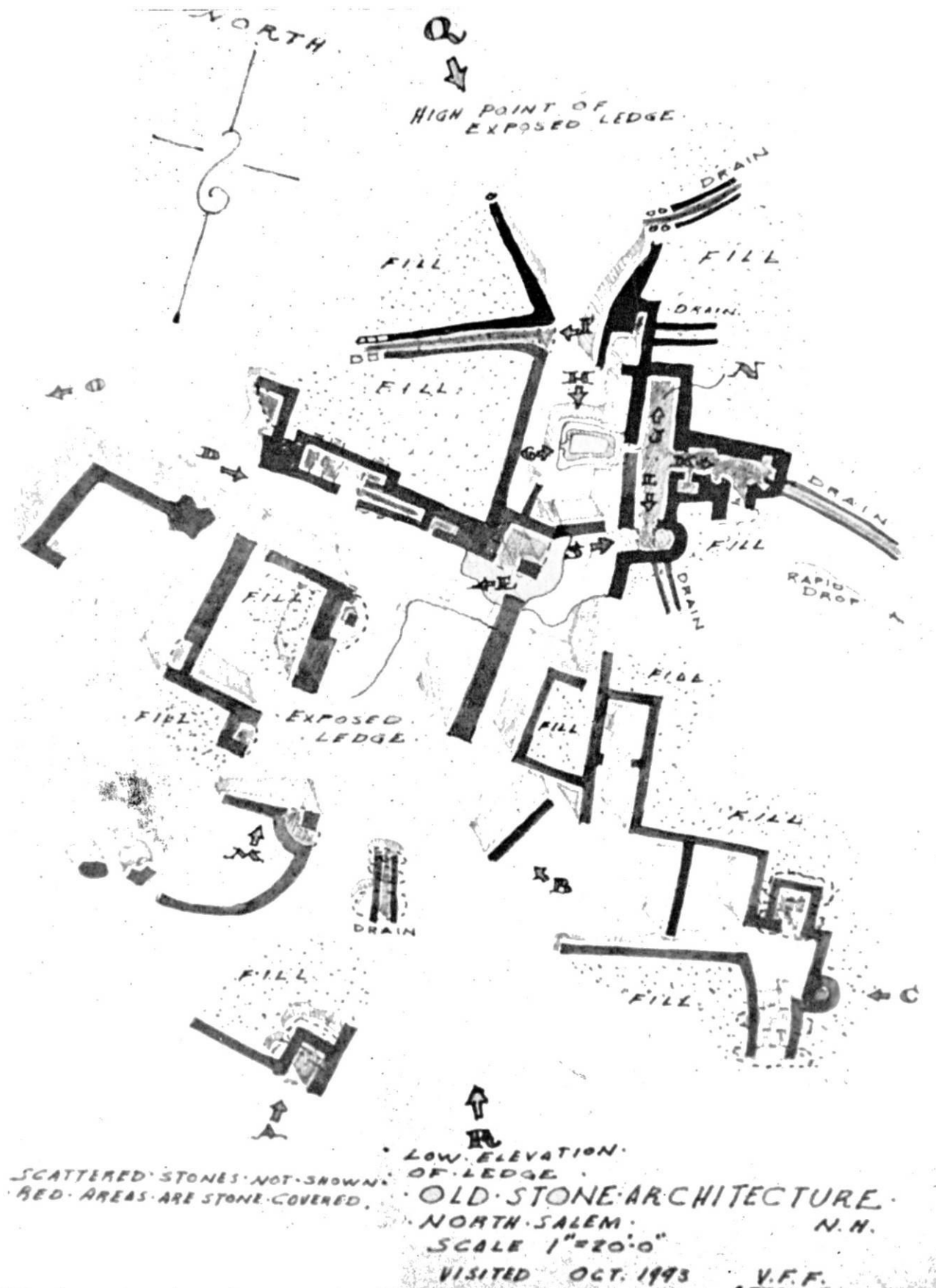


Figure 3 – Professor V. F. Fagan’s 1943 sketch map from William Goodwin’s Book.

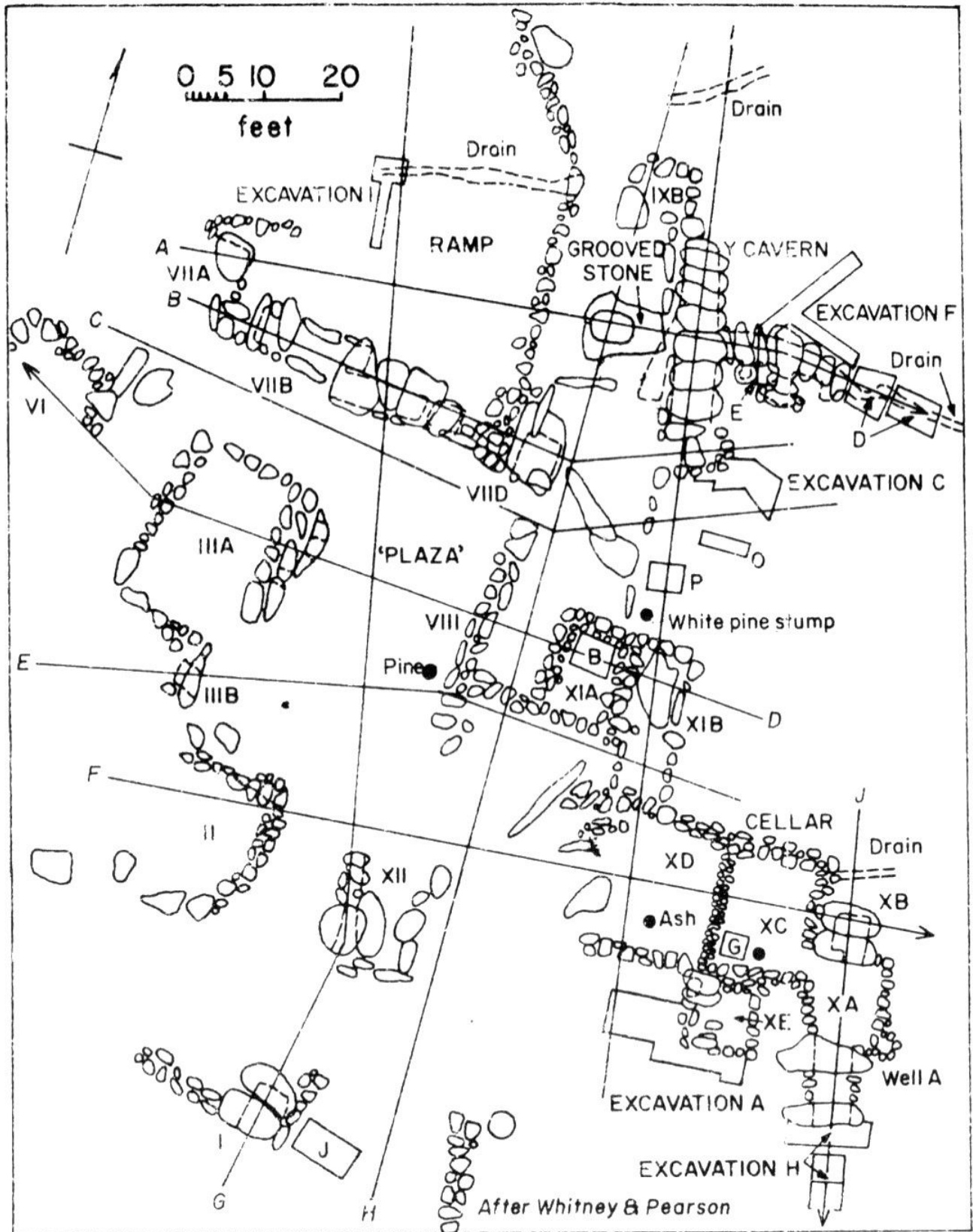


Figure 4 – Map of the main complex by Gary Vescelius with his structure numbering system

Key to the Map in Figure 4

- I – South Facing Chamber
- II – Half-Circle Enclosure (a/k/a The Pulpit)
- IIIA – Mensal Stone Chamber and Wall with Niche
- IIIB – Unnamed Chamber
- IV – not assigned
- V – Remains of a structure (not show on this map)
- VI – Enclosure
- VIIA – V-Hut [chamber]
- VIIB – East-West Chamber
- VIIC – not assigned
- VIID – Sundeck Chamber
- VIII – Tall Wall
- IXA – Grooved Stone²²
- IXB – An enclosed area with two niches to the north of the Grooved Stone
- X – Sunken Courtyard (XA ... XE)
- XIA – A currently backfilled enclosure integrated into the Collapsed Chamber unit.
- XIB – Collapsed Chamber
- Ramp – Ramp
- “Y Cavern” – Oracle Chamber

²² Vesceilius produces two maps. His map of the overall site assigned IXA to the Grooved Stone. On this map he dropped the Roman numerals and spelled the name out.



Figure 5 – Pre-restoration photo c.1938 of the ramp (left side-covered with vegetation), grooved stone (center) and Oracle Chamber (right of Grooved Stone). An archeological excavation is in progress near the top center of the photo. (Photo by Malcolm Pearson from Goodwin 1946, 91)



Figure 6 – Pre-restoration photo circa 1937 or 1938 showing William Goodwin behind the Grooved Stone. The upper structure of the Sundeck Chamber is visible in the photo (indicated by arrow). Also note that the east wall of the ramp is visible on the right side of photo. It is bulging outward but intact. (Photo by Malcolm Pearson from Goodwin 1946, 83)



Figure 7 – Photo during restoration. Stones on the bedrock around the Grooved Stone have been placed on top of the Ramp. The upper structure of the Sundeck Chamber is shown (indicated by arrow). (Photo by Malcolm Pearson from Goodwin 1946, 92)

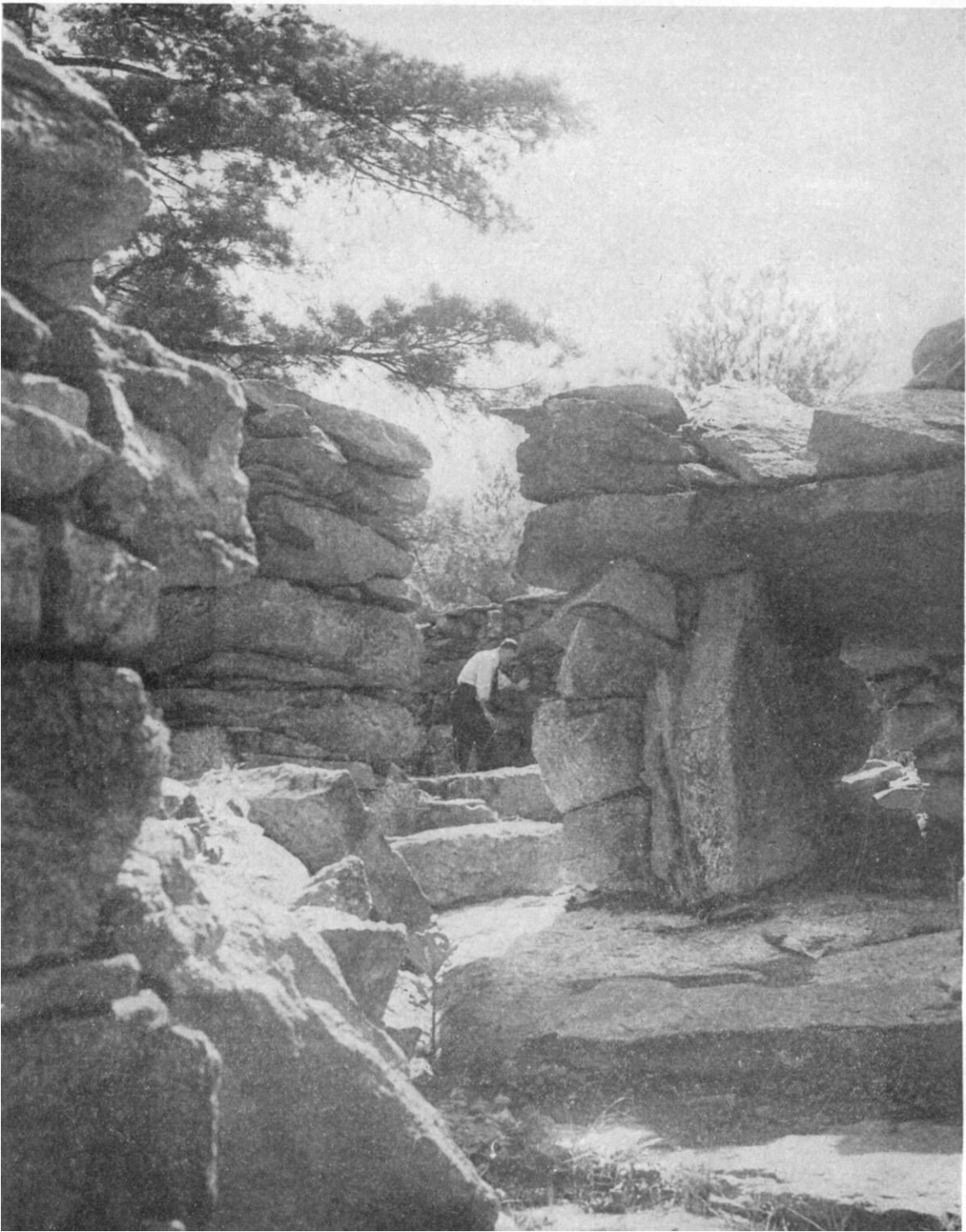


Figure 8 – View of the lower structure of the Sundeck Chamber circa early 1940s. Photo taken from alcove of the Oracle Chamber. Photo shows the one stone wide support wall and triangular stone. The triangular stone is now missing and the wall rebuilt. Photo allows for evaluation of the structure prior to later repairs. (Photo by Malcolm Pearson from Goodwin 1946, frontis)



Figure 9 – Sundeck Chamber as it looks today. The left hand support wall has been altered and completely rebuilt. The stones on the upper structure have been re-arranged and does not reflect its original configuration. (Photograph by James Gage)

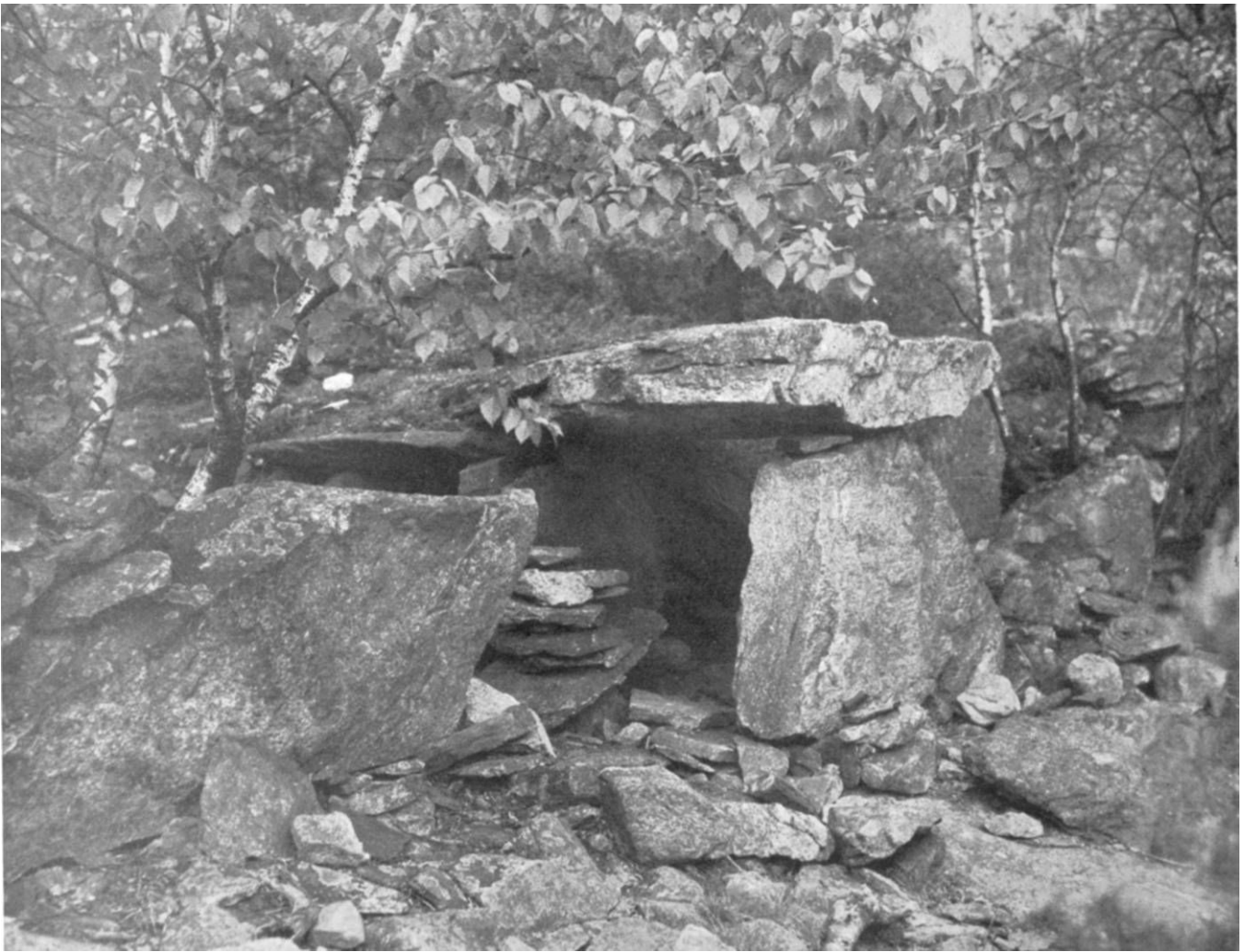


Figure 10 – Undated pre-restoration of the East-West Chamber (Photo by Malcolm Pearson? from Goodwin 1946, 79)



Figure 11 – Undated pre-restoration photo of the East-West Chamber (Photographer Malcolm Pearson? from Goodwin 1946, 68)



Figure 12 – Post-restoration photo of East-West Chamber circa early 1940s. Middle section rebuilt by Goodwin’s crew. (Photo by Malcolm Pearson from Goodwin 1946, 80)

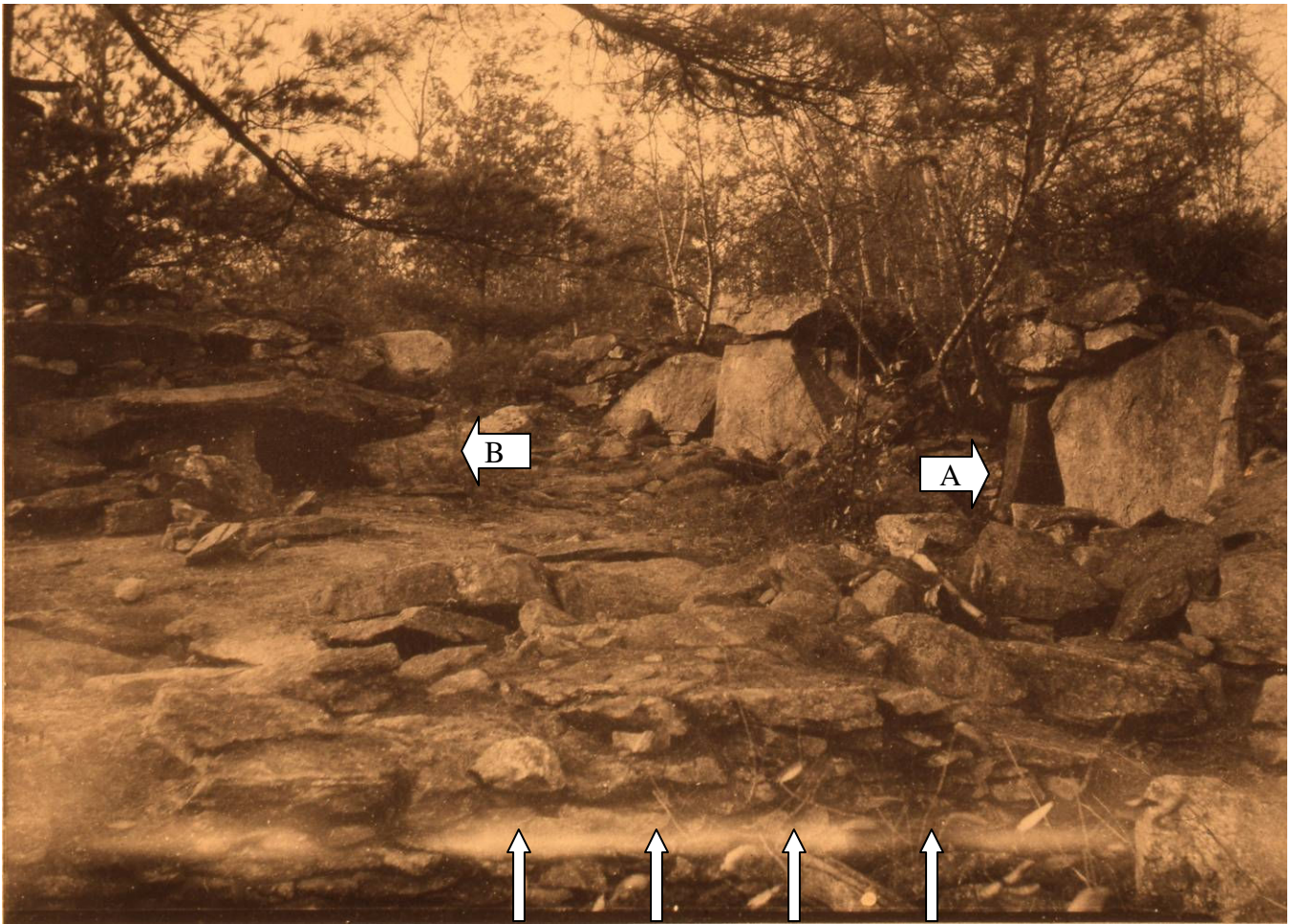


Figure 13 – Undated pre-restoration photo taken from the east side looking westerly showing the foundation of the Tall Wall (indicated by arrows at bottom), the narrow slot into the small room in East-West Chamber (“A”), and Mensal Stone chamber (“B”). (Photo courtesy of the NEARA Archives.)



Figure 14 – East-West Chamber as it looks today. (Photograph by James Gage)

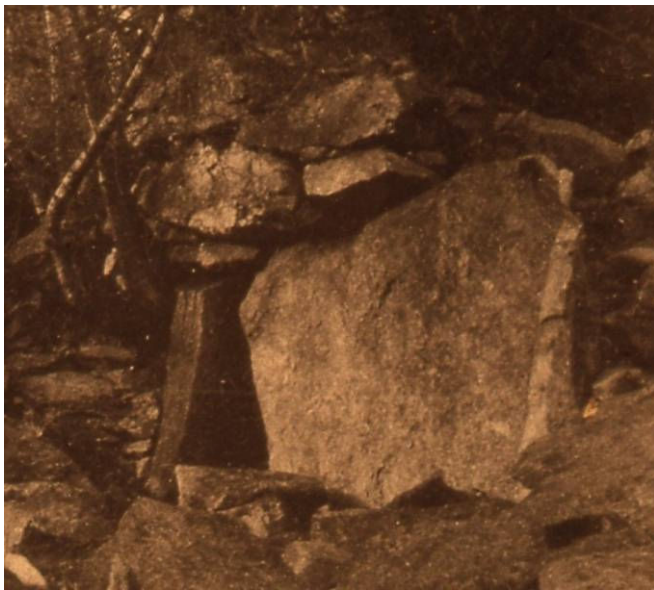


Figure 15 - Comparison of pre-restoration photo of eastern most stone slab of East-West Chamber to a current photo. Although somewhat similar both stones have different shapes. The original slab was replaced by current slab sometime between 1946 and 1958. Arrow indicates vertical ridge in stone – see next figure.



Figure 16 – Undated post-restoration photo. (Photographer Malcolm Pearson? From Holden 1958)
(A) The wall to the right of the entrance of Oracle Chamber was added sometime after 1858 when this photo was published, the wall is not in this photo.
(B) The shadow indicates a vertical ridge on this stone slab, the same ridge on the current stone. (see figure 15)



Figure 17 – Current photograph of the Tall Wall’s east side. (Photograph by James Gage)



Figure 18 – Current photograph of the Tall Wall’s west side. (Photograph by James Gage)

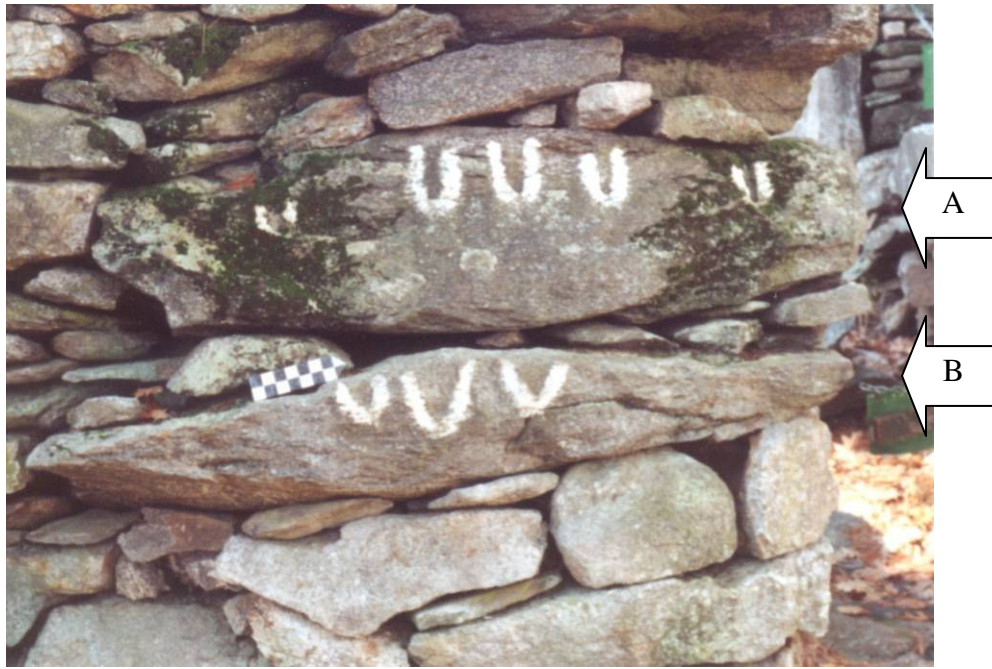


Figure 19 – (A) Half round drill marks from the plug and feather method (1820-present)
(B) Trapezoid marks from the flat wedge method (1800-1870)
(Photo by Mary Gage)



Figure 20 – Undated pre-restoration photo of the Mensal Stone Chamber showing only the upper one third of the structure was restored. (Photographer unknown from Vesce Luis 1983)

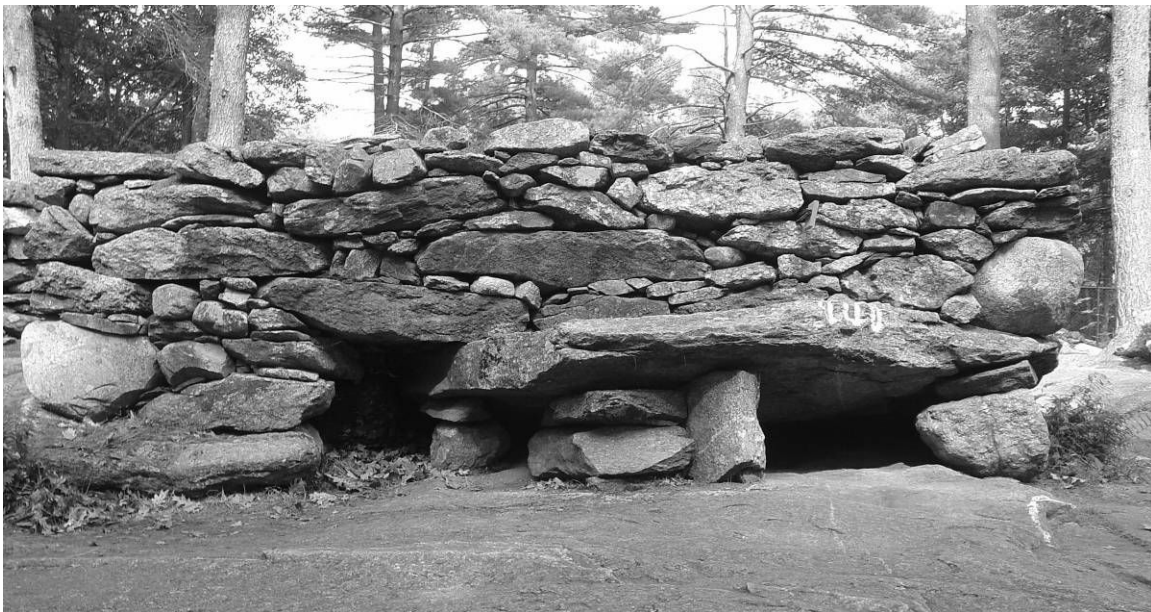


Figure 21 – Current photo for comparison. (Photograph by James Gage)



Figure 22 – Current photo of Unnamed Chamber. The section above the roof slab was restored.
(Photograph by James Gage)



Figure 23 – Current photo of the east side (exterior) of Half-Circle Enclosure (a/k/a The Pulpit)
(Photograph by James Gage)



Figure 24 – Current photo of the west side (interior) of Half-Circle Enclosure (a/k/a The Pulpit)
(Photograph by James Gage)



Figure 25 – Close-up of the drain exit under the Half-Circle Enclosure.
(Photograph by Mary Gage)



Figure 26 – Circa 1915 pre-Goodwin era photograph. This is a straight on view of the Oracle Chamber entrance. The date “1915” is painted on the roof stone above the entrance. Note there is no wall to the right of the entrance. (Photographer unknown from Goodwin 1946, 82)



Figure 27 – Circa 1915 pre-Goodwin era photograph. View showing the standing stone at the entrance into the Grooved Stone area. Entrance to the Oracle chamber is on the right. The date “1915” is painted on the roof stone of Oracle Chamber entrance (arrow). (Photographer unknown from Goodwin 1946, 82)



Figure 28 – Current photo of the entrance (alcove) of the Oracle Chamber. The roof stones are missing.
(Photograph by James Gage)

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