

# THE DISCOVERY OF THE ISLANDS IN THE ATLANTIC

(Stone C8, Cairn T, Loughcrew, Ireland, c.3200 BC)

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## Summary

The megalithic complex of Loughcrew is located at the Boyne River in County Meath, Ireland. On top of the central hill is the most important passage grave inside the large Cairn T. On the westernmost Stone C8 of this grave are deeply carved, famous petroglyphs. The images are a unique form of picture writing, and are the most historically important and most beautiful megalithic petroglyphs of Europe. They describe the discoveries of the islands in the North Atlantic Ocean, including the dates of discovery. The petroglyphs were carved c.3200 BC, when the megalith builders gave up their efforts to cross Davis Strait, on the west side of Greenland.

## Introduction

Our initial work on the C8 stone of Loughcrew started with a single page drafted by Dr. De Jonge ten years ago. Our book with a chapter about the site was published in 2002, and that same year, an article appeared in the Journal "Migration and Diffusion" under the title "The Discovery of the Atlantic Islands" (Ref.4). A photo of Dr. De Jonge explaining the site to a visitor is shown on the front cover of our book (Ref.1), and a photo of the best C8 glyphs is shown on the back cover, both in color. In the articles, our decipherment of the petroglyphs was supported by sensible decodings of more petroglyphs across the roofstone of the same chamber using the same methodology. We have made further progress in recent years, producing new articles while working on sites in Sweden ("The Passage Grave of Karleby", and "The Monument of Ales Stenar"), and near the Orkneys ("The Rings of Stenness, Brodgar, and Bookan", and "The Stone Rows of Tormsdale"). What we have learned from recent work has led us to revisit the Loughcrew material, and brought some new insights, which are presented in this article.

The megalithic complex of Loughcrew (Sliabh na Caillighe) is located at the Boyne River in County Meath, about 40 miles (60km) from the east coast of Ireland (Fig.1) (Refs.5-7). The oblong complex is spread over three hills, and extends from east to west over about 3 miles. Each of the hills has an altitude of c.800 meters. On their tops are a total of about 30 passage graves, which are situated inside separate cairns. They contain a total of 120 decorated stones. These cairns consist of mounds of smaller stones, which protect the more important passage graves. Loughcrew is situated at 54°N, 25 miles west of the famous complex of Newgrange of about the same age, which also comprises the cairns of Knowth and Dowth (Refs.8,9).

Megalithic monuments always have religious and geographic meanings (Refs.1-4). The passage graves of Loughcrew are "churches" of the SunGod Religion, which is known to have developed by the beginning of the Old Kingdom in Egypt (c.3200 BC). The round cairns represent the round Sun, symbol of the SunGod Ra (Fig.2). They also resemble the "wheel of the law". For that reason they are also dedicated to Maat, the goddess of law

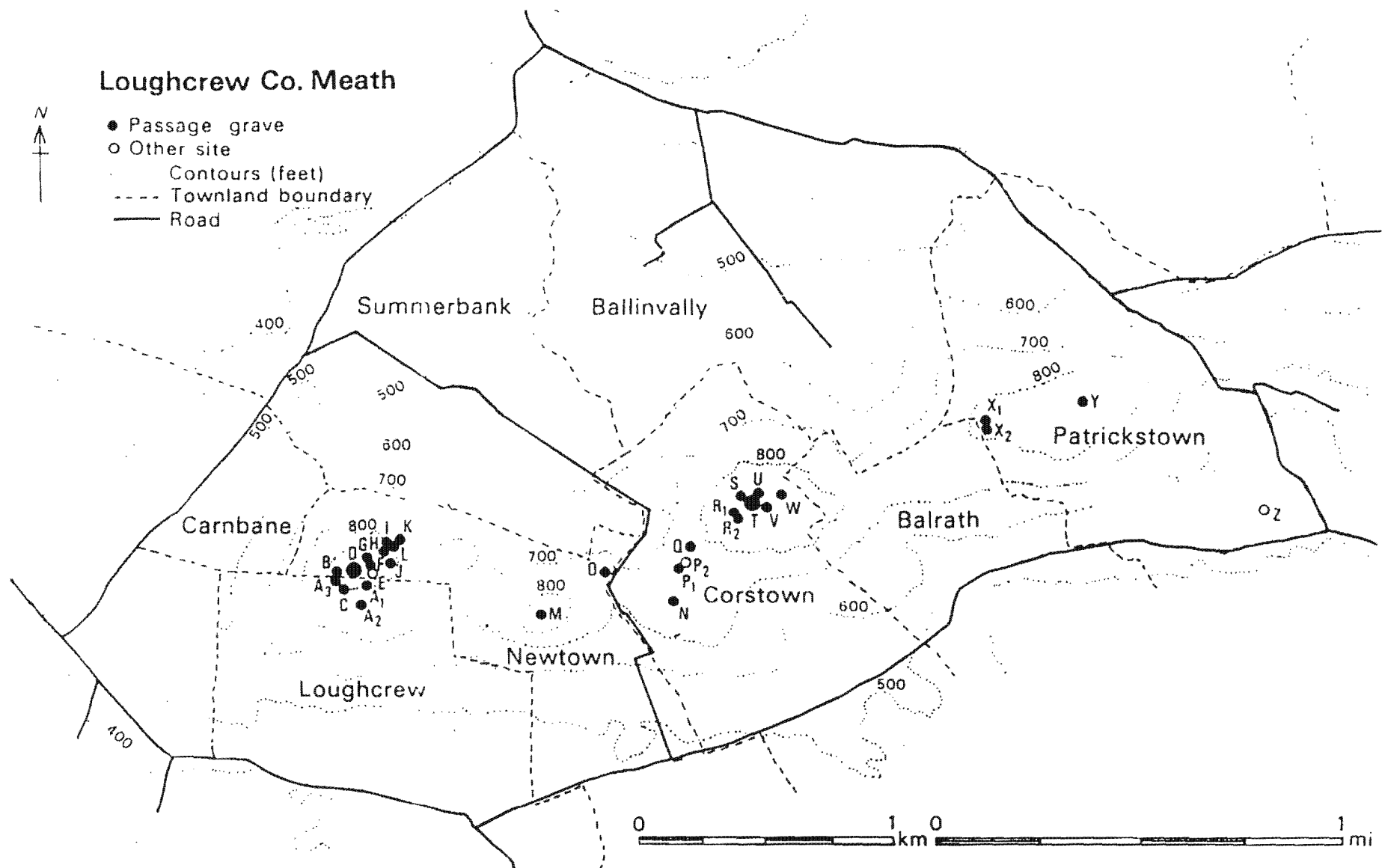


**Fig.1** Map of the monument-complex of Loughcrew, Co. Meath, Ireland (3600-3100 BC) (Ref.5). The passage graves (cairns) lie on the tops of three hills, which resemble the East, the Central, and the West Azores, but also Cape Farvel, the SW Cape, and the West Coast of Greenland at 62°N.

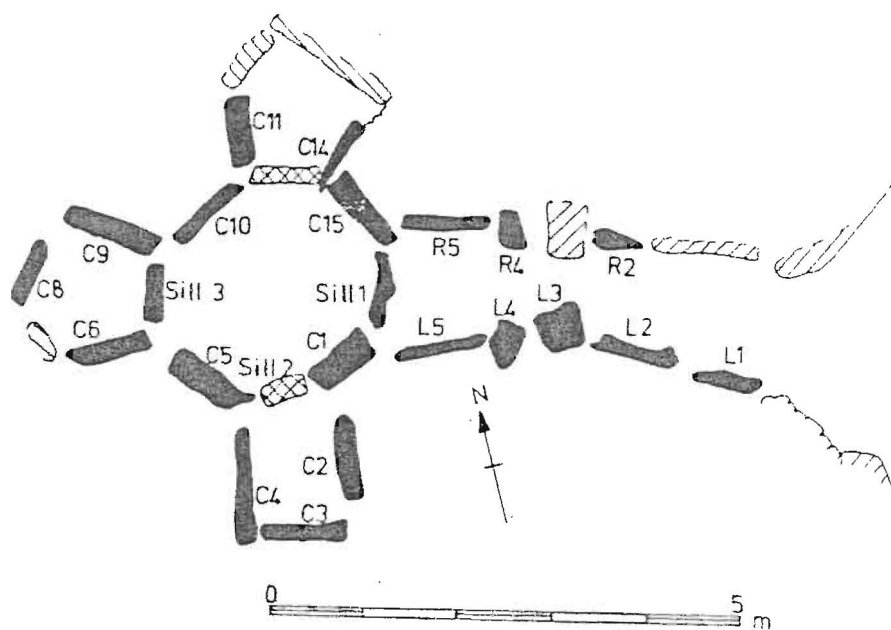
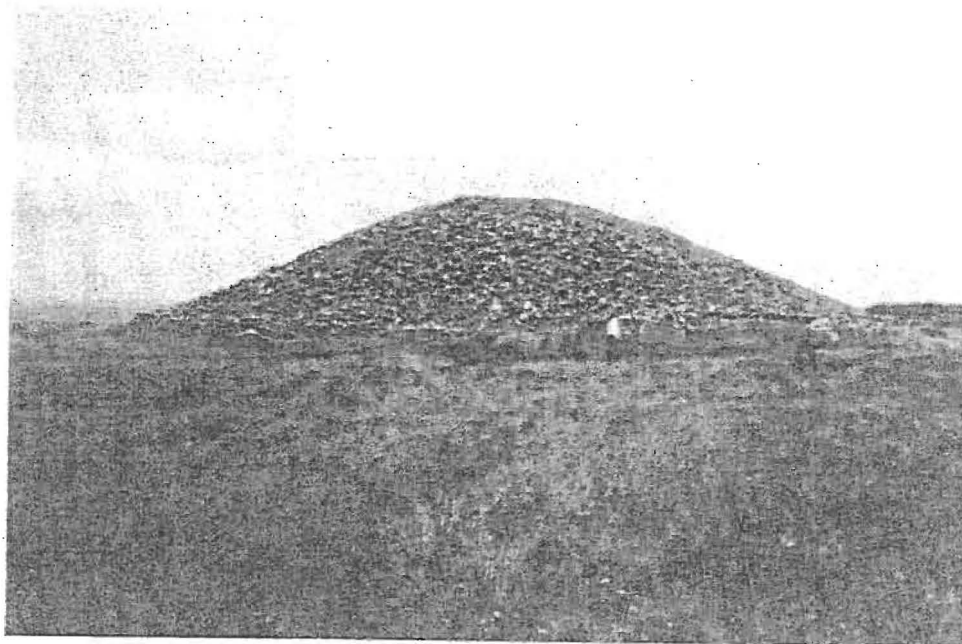


**Fig.2** Photo of Cairn T, on the central hill of Loughcrew (Summer 1998), and groundplan of the passage grave in this Cairn (c.3200 BC) (Ref.5).

and order in the universe. People wanted to spread this religion to the unknown back side of the planet Earth. That is why these constructions are located along the West Coast of Western Europe, not far from the Ocean. The round cairns also represent the round Earth. Important passage graves with large cairns are found on both the central and western hills of Loughcrew. These graves point with their important burial chambers to the west.

### **The Azores**

The 3 hills of Loughcrew represent the 3 island groups of the Azores (Refs.1,2). The eastern hill symbolizes the East Azores, 1 degree of latitude above the Strait of Gibraltar, at  $36+1=37^{\circ}\text{N}$ . The central hill represents the Central Azores,  $2^{\circ}$  above Gibraltar, at  $36+2=38^{\circ}\text{N}$ . And the western hill is the West Azores,  $3^{\circ}$  above Gibraltar, at  $36+3=39^{\circ}\text{N}$ . Loughcrew itself is situated at the complementary latitude of the Strait of Gibraltar, at  $90-36=54^{\circ}\text{N}$ .

The famous passage grave of Gavrinis in Brittany shows the Azores were discovered c.3600 BC (Refs.1-4,14,15). All carbon-dates of the Loughcrew-complex point to values in the second half of the 4th millennium BC, which is just after this date (Refs.2,10). The number of cairns on top of the hills increase from east to west, emphasizing the western orientation. The western hill possesses a very big passage grave to emphasize the importance of the West Azores. For 300 years the Azores were the westernmost islands of the then known world.

### **South Greenland**

The 3 hills of Loughcrew also represent the 3 important latitudes of South Greenland (Ref.13). The eastern hill symbolizes Cape Farvel, the south point of Greenland, 1 degree of latitude above the Orkney Islands, at  $59+1=60^{\circ}\text{N}$ . The central hill represents the SW Cape of Greenland,  $2^{\circ}$  above the Orkneys, at  $59+2=61^{\circ}\text{N}$ . And the western hill is the West Coast of Greenland,  $3^{\circ}$  above the Orkney Islands, at  $59+3=62^{\circ}\text{N}$ . The Orkneys, in the north of the British Isles, are situated at the complementary latitude of the northern Nile Delta, at  $90-31=59^{\circ}\text{N}$ .

Cape Farvel and the SW Cape are discovered c.3250 BC (Refs.1-4). The central hill possesses an important passage grave in the large Cairn T, to emphasize the importance of the SW Cape of Greenland. From this Cape people thought they had the best chance to reach the unknown land at the back side of the Earth. The western hill has most of the passage graves to emphasize the important west coast of Greenland. On that location, at  $62^{\circ}\text{N}$ , people had to give up their efforts to cross Davis Strait. This information was also used in the design of the monument of Stonehenge I, in South England, of the same date (Refs.1-5,10,16,17). These monuments show that the prime social concern across the British Isles in 3200 BC was about the discovery of new lands to the west, and the question of what might be on the other side of the Earth.

### **Cairn T**

The round Cairn T has a base diameter of 26 meters, and a height of almost 6 meters (Fig.2). It contains the most important passage grave of Loughcrew. The groundplan resembles the figure of a man lying on the ground: the SunGod (Fig.2). The 6 rooms of the grave encode Cape Farvel, the south point of Greenland,  $6^{\circ}$  above Loughcrew, at



**Fig.3** The petroglyphs on Stone C8, with author's labels, geographic names, and corresponding numbers. The first glyph A is one of the oldest images of an ocean going sailing boat in the world. The last glyph P is a man, telling us that the megalith builders gave up their efforts to cross Davis Strait. (Cairn T, Loughcrew, Ireland, c.3200 BC) (Ref.5)

C8



# Megalithic Explorations, Atlantic

**Fig.4** Map of the North Atlantic Ocean, showing the megalithic discoveries, and the identifying glyphs from Stone C8. (Cairn T, Loughcrew, Ireland, c.3200 BC) (Ref.21)

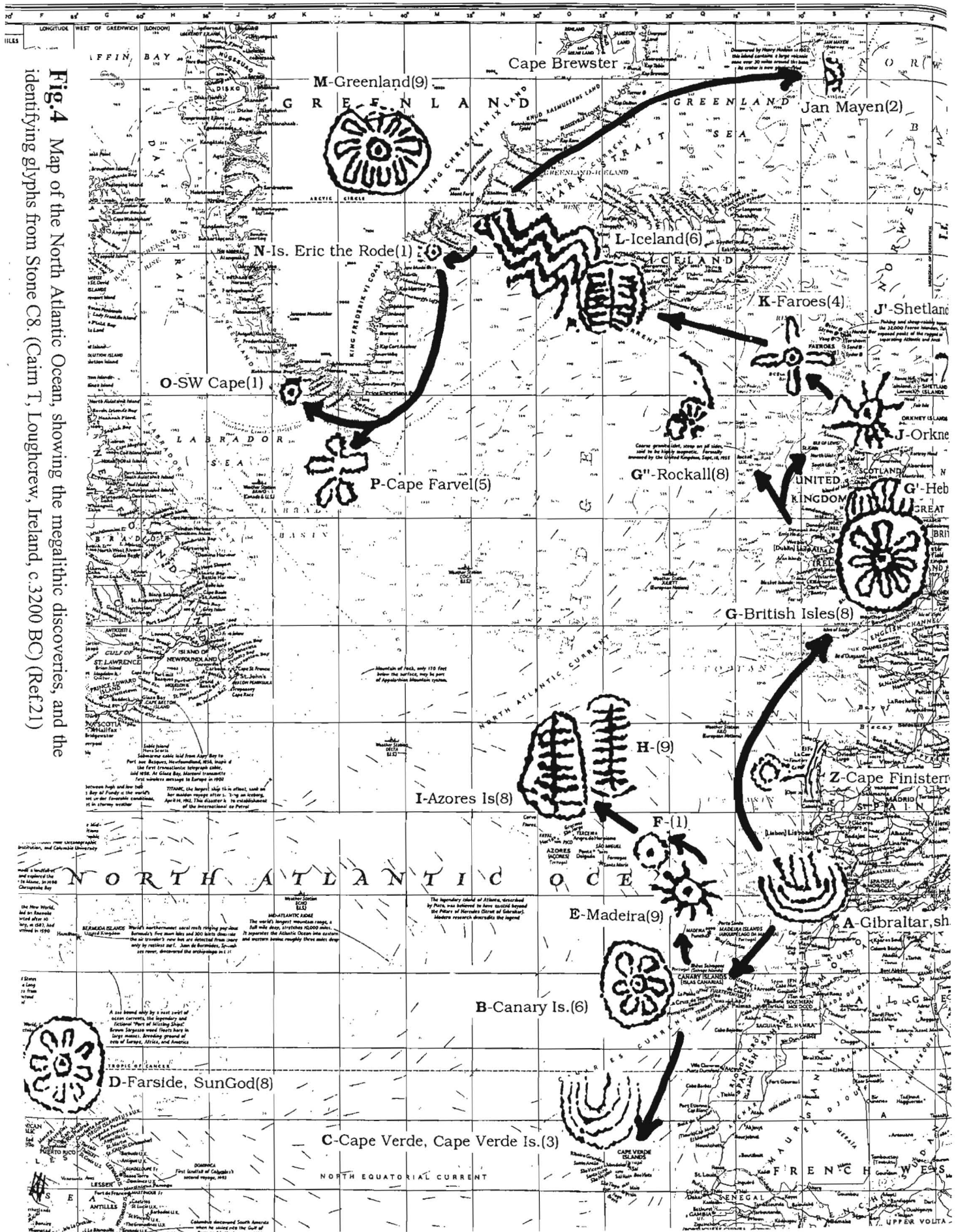




**Photo 1** Dr. Reinoud de Jonge explaining the “Story of Loughcrew” inscription, July 8, 1998. The flashlight points to the discovery of the Azores in the middle of the Atlantic (c.3600 BC). This was the starting signal for the building of the monument-complex of Loughcrew, Co. Meath, Ireland.

$54+6= 60^{\circ}\text{N}$ . The grave is built of walls of 30 upright stones, which confirm the complementary latitude, at  $90-30= 60^{\circ}\text{N}$ . The tomb is oriented to the west, and the westernmost chamber will be the most important one. And of course, within this chamber, the westernmost Stone C8 will be of special importance. In accord with this statement, the endstone C8 has been engraved in a surprisingly beautiful fashion (Fig.3) (Refs.6-10).

This is a story in ideograms, a quantitative picture writing, actually the oldest written history on Earth. It is the story of the attempts to reach the other side of the world - that is, to cross the Ocean (c.3200 BC). These images are a unique form of picture writing, and are the most historically important and most beautiful megalithic inscriptions of Europe (Photo 1). As in many other examples of cave and stone art, the natural shape of the stone has been used as part of the work, the surface of the stone being an endless sea that is now called the North Atlantic Ocean. As drawn in detail in Fig.3, note the coast of Europe on the right, Greenland in the north, and the other, unknown side of the Ocean on the left. The proof of the story lies in the inscriptions themselves. Each figure has a number. In some figures, you count the petals of the “daisies”, while in others, you count the waves, or the spaces between the lines. By adding the numbers, the actual and true degrees of latitude of the discovered landpoints are obtained, and all, except the oldest ones, are in historical order!

### The Discovery of the Islands in the Ocean

This is the decipherment and translation of the “Story of Loughcrew”, as it appears on Stone C8 in Cairn T, dated c.3200 BC (Figs.3,4):

“A very long time ago, we travelled with a **sailing boat (A)** from the **Strait of Gibraltar (A)** along the coast to the south, and we discovered the **Canary Islands (B)**, at  $28^{\circ}\text{N}$  ( $A+B+G+G'= 6+6+8+8= 28$ ). At about the same time we discovered near **Great Britain (G+G')**, the **Scilly Isles (G)** near Cornwall, at  $50^{\circ}\text{N}$  ( $A-H= 50$ ), and due north of Loughcrew, in the west of Scotland, the **Outer Hebrides (G')**, at  $58^{\circ}\text{N}$  ( $A-H+G'= 50+8= 58$ ).”

“Slightly later, we discovered at the latitude of the Outer Hebrides (G'),  $4^{\circ}$  (G'b) above **Loughcrew (G'a)**, at  $54^{\circ}\text{N}$  ( $A-H+G'a= 50+4= 54$ ), the islets of **St. Kilda (G'b)**, at  $58^{\circ}\text{N}$  ( $A-H+G'a+G'b= 50+8= 58$ ). At the same time, we discovered from the **Orkney Islands (J)**, at  $59^{\circ}\text{N}$  ( $A-H+J= 50+9= 59$ ), the **Shetland Islands (J')**,  $1^{\circ}$  ( $J'= 1$ ) above them, at  $60^{\circ}\text{N}$  ( $59+1= 60$ ). This archipelago belongs to the British Isles (J' points to G+G'). In all cases discussed so far the sailing distances were less than 1 Egyptian Moira=  $1^{\circ}= 60$  Nautical Miles ( $J'= 1$ ).”

“The 3 **Western Canary Islands (Z'= 3)**, at  $28^{\circ}\text{N}$  ( $A+B+C+Z'+E+F= 6+6+3+3+9+1= 28$ ), are located just below the **Eastern Canary Islands (B)**, at  $29^{\circ}\text{N}$  ( $A+B+D+E= 6+6+8+9= 29$ ). Later, people also discovered the small **Selvagens Islets (Z)**,  $2^{\circ}$  ( $Z= 2$ ) above the Western Canaries (Z'), at  $30^{\circ}\text{N}$  ( $28+2= 30$ ). The sailing distance was 2 Moiras=  $2^{\circ}= 120$  NM ( $Z= 2$ ).” (Z and Z' were later carved: notice that they are oddly fitted into the layout, and more lightly carved, at a somewhat larger scale.)

“Later, we sailed from the **Canary Islands (B)** to **Cape Verde (C)** at  $15^{\circ}\text{N}$  ( $A+B+C=$

6+6+3= 15), and further south to the Bissagos Islands (also C), at 11°N (C+D= 3+8= 11). We wanted to cross the North Atlantic Ocean (the surface area of the stone) at the latitude of the holy Tropic of Cancer, at 23°N (A+B+C+D= 6+6+3+8= 23), in honor of the **SunGod Ra (D)**, but we were not able to do so. This is the latitude of the Southern Egyptian Empire, the center of the Sunreligion, at 23°N. However, from Cape Verde we discovered the **Cape Verde Islands (also C)** at 15°N, 16°N, and 17°N (B+D+C1,2,3= 6+8+1+1+1). The sailing distance was 6 Moiras= 6°= 360 NM (previous glyph B= 6). But still we were not able to cross the Ocean.”

“Later, we discovered from the Canary Islands (B), the two **Islands of Madeira (E and F)** at 33°N (A-F= 33). At about the same time we discovered from the British Isles (G), west of Scotland and its Outer Hebrides (G'), the islet of **Rockall (G'')**, at 57°N (A-G+G'+G''= 41+8+8= 57). In both cases the sailing distances were 4 Moiras= 4°= 240 NM (previous glyphs G'a= G'b= 4). These islands gave a little bit hope that more land would be found (E and G'' are stars).”

“Then, after some time we discovered from **Madeira (E)** the three island groups of the **Azores (F, H, and I)** at 37°N, 38°N, and 39°N (Aa1,2,3+Ab+B+E+F+H+I= 1+1+1+3+6+9+1+9+8= 39= 1+1+1+36) (F has double meanings.) The sailing distance was 8 Moiras= 8°= 480 NM (previous glyph G= 8). The Azores consist of 9 islands (H= 9). We believe these islands must lie in the middle of the Ocean (H and I are glyphs of the Ocean with latitude lines, and vertical lines in the middle of them). But still we were not able to cross the Ocean!”

“Finally, we discovered from the **Orkneys (J)** at 59°N (A-H+J= 50+9= 59) the **Faroes (K)** at 62°N (A-I+K= 58+4= 62), and from the Faroes we reached the **SE coast of Iceland (L)** at 64°N (A-I+L= 58+6= 64) (Figs.3,4). Both sailing distances are 4 Moiras= 4°= 240 NM (G'a= G'b= 4). **Iceland (L)** lies like the Azores (H and I) in the middle of the Ocean (L resembles H and I). When we sailed around Iceland to its **NW peninsula (L')**, the edge of L) at 66°N (64+L'= 64+2= 66), we reached a more western position than Rockall (the line from L' to G'').”

“Thanks to the SunGod (M resembles D), we discovered from the **NW peninsula of Iceland (L')**, at 66°N, **Cape Holm (M)** at the SE coast of Greenland, which lies on the holy **Arctic Circle (M)**, at 67°N (A-I+M= 58+9= 67). This is the northernmost line the Sun still shines at midwinter day. The sailing distance is 5 Moiras= 5°= 300 NM (the waves go up and down 5 times). We also reached Cape Brewster, the east cape of Greenland, 3° (the 3 waves) above Cape Holm (M), at 70°N (67+3= 70). Cape Holm (M) can be reached from **Cape Raven (M')**, the 2 marks of M), at 69°N (67+2= 69), in the easiest way. The sailing distance from Iceland (L) to Cape Raven (M') is only 4 Moiras (the lowest wave goes up and down 4 times).”

“The islet of **Jan Mayen** (on top of the stone) is located 2° (**JM**= 2) above Cape Raven (M'), at 71°N (69+2= 71). It can be reached from Cape Brewster, at 70°N (the highest wave, near the edge), by sailing a distance of 4 Moiras= 4°= 240 NM (3+1= 4 spacings along the edge).” (JM and the different “Oot” glyph were carved 250 years later, as will be discussed below.)

“From Cape Holm (M) we went 1° (N= 1) to the south, to the **Eric the Rode Island (N)**, at 66°N (67-1= 66). Next we went 6° (O+P= 1+5= 6) to the south to **Cape Farvel (P)**, the south cape of Greenland, at 60°N (66-6= 60). From there we went 1° (O= 1) to the north (P, head) to the **SW Cape (O)** at 61°N (60+O= 60+1= 61). But at these places we gave up (**P, the little man**). We did not explore the west coast of Greenland above the latitude of the Faroes (K), at 62°N.”

### Dates of Discovery

Stone C8 also provides the dates of the discoveries in the Ocean (Figs.3-5). The methodology used for date encoding turns out to be similar to date encodings first noticed at the Karleby Passage Grave in Sweden (Refs.11,12). Here at Loughcrew, we find similar results if each important petroglyph represents a century, or 100 years. To find these dates, we have to go back in time from Cape Farvel (P, the little man glyph in Fig.3). The waves on top of the stone do not count, because these represent water, and the little circles N and O (and also J') are too small. The vague inscriptions Z and Z' do not count either, because these glyphs were carved into the stone at a later date.

We start with the most recent discovery, shown at the top of the table in Fig.5. Looking back at the glyphs of Fig.3, notice that above the big daisy SunGod symbol for Cape Holm (M), there are the three “Oot” dotted glyphs, referred to earlier. We think the two circles represent the cycles of full centuries, and the horizontal stroke cut in half represents half a century, showing that the small islet of Jan Mayen (JM), situated above Iceland (L), was discovered 2½ centuries after the construction of this passage grave, so 250 years after c.3200 BC, which is c.2950 BC (Refs.11-13). This interpretation is supported by a similar date for this discovery from Karleby (Ref.11).

Carbon-dates indicate, both this passage grave of Loughcrew and Stonehenge I were built c.3200 BC (Refs.10,16,17), because at Cape Farvel, the south point of Greenland, (P), people gave up their efforts to cross the Ocean (Refs.1-4,18-20). A century earlier (M), c.3300 BC, Greenland was discovered at Cape Holm (M). Another century earlier (L), c.3400 BC, Iceland (L) had been discovered. A century prior to that (one glyph, K), c.3500 BC, the Faroes (K) were discovered. The late discovery of the Faroes, only 4 Moiras from the Orkneys, and located due north of Loughcrew, was caused by their northern, remote situation.

In the glyph of the Faroes (K), the NS and EW directions are carved in an unusually clear manner (see Fig.3). This may indicate that the Faroes were the first islands discovered with the aid of a magnetic compass (c.3500 BC). Megalithic petroglyphs of Chao Redondo (Portugal) and Liverpool (England) prove the use of such a device as early as c.2200 BC, and c.2700 BC, respectively (Ref.1).

Finally, another century earlier (I), c.3600 BC, the West Azores (I) were discovered (Refs.1-4). The passage grave of Gavrinis, in Brittany (c.3500 BC), through archaeological dating, as well as its design characteristics and petroglyphs, confirms the discovery of the Azores, one century earlier (Refs.5,14,15). It appears that the Gavrinis passage grave was built a century after the discovery, following careful exploration of all the coastal waters surrounding the islands, as illustrated in the petroglyphs.

Fig.5

# Date Table: The Discovery of the Islands of the Atlantic Ocean

(Stone C8, Cairn T, Loughcrew, Ireland, c.3200 BC)

| kind of<br>time glyphs  | number of<br>time<br>glyphs | correspon-<br>ding<br>number of<br>years | correspon-<br>ding<br>geographic<br>glyph | island or<br>location                      | date of<br>discovery | comment                      |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|
| "Oot"                   | 2.5                         | +250                                     | JM                                        | Jan Mayen                                  | c.2950 BC            | carved 250<br>years<br>later |
| P & O                   | reference                   | reference                                | P & O                                     | S & SW Capes<br>of Greenland               | c.3200 BC            | date of the<br>monument      |
| M                       | 1                           | -100                                     | M                                         | Cape Holm,<br>Greenland                    | c.3300 BC            |                              |
| L                       | 1                           | -100                                     | L                                         | Iceland                                    | c.3400 BC            |                              |
| K                       | 1                           | -100                                     | K                                         | Faroes                                     | c.3500 BC            |                              |
| I                       | 1                           | -100                                     | I                                         | (West) Azores                              | c.3600 BC            |                              |
| J,G",H,E,<br>and F or G | 5                           | -500                                     | G"                                        | Rockall                                    | c.4100 BC            |                              |
| G or F                  | 1                           | -100                                     | E and<br>F                                | Madeira and<br>Porto Santo                 | c.4200 BC            |                              |
| D,B,A,C                 | 4                           | -400                                     | C                                         | Cape Verde<br>Islands                      | c.4600 BC            |                              |
|                         |                             |                                          | C                                         | Bissagos Islands                           |                      |                              |
| [Z',Z]                  | [2]                         | [-200]                                   | [Z]                                       | [Selvagens<br>Islets]                      | [c.4800 BC]          | carved later                 |
| A,B,C,D,G,H,<br>I,L,M   | 9                           | -900                                     | J'<br>G'b                                 | Shetlands<br>St. Kilda                     | c.5500 BC            | large glyphs                 |
| K,P                     | 2                           | -200                                     | B<br>G<br>G'                              | Canaries<br>Scilly Isles<br>Outer Hebrides | c.5700 BC            | smaller glyphs               |
| E,F,G",J                | 4                           | -400                                     | J                                         | Orkneys                                    | c.6100 BC            | smallest glyph               |

The glyphs J, G'', H, and E are attached to each other. Together with carving F in the center (or G), they form a group of 5 glyphs. The connection line from Iceland (L) to Rockall (G'') in this group indicates the discovery of this island, Rockall (G''), 5 centuries earlier, which is c.4100 BC. Porto Santo (F) was not attached to the group just mentioned, which indicates the special position of this little island. Madeira (E) is carved more to the right (east), so this island was discovered earlier than Rockall. The center of glyph G resembles the one of E. So, the Islands of Madeira (E and F) were discovered one century (G or F) earlier, c.4200 BC.

The shortest sailing distance to Madeira (E) equals the distance to Rockall (G''), 4 Moiras, so these islands were discovered at about the same time. The tablet of Paredes, Spain, as well as the petroglyphs of Dissignac, Brittany, confirm the fairly close discovery dates of Madeira and Rockall (Refs.1-5). In Dissignac, both discoveries are shown with a single glyph.

The 4 remaining glyphs D, B, A, and C give the discovery of the Cape Verde Islands (C), as well as the Bissagos Islands (also C), 4 centuries earlier, c.4600 BC. The passage grave of Kercado, Brittany (carbon dated to c.4500 BC) confirms the discovery of the Cape Verde Islands (C), one century earlier, c.4600 BC (Refs.1-5). The Bissagos Islands are located offshore Guinea-Bissau, and they form the important SW Cape of North Africa. Dissignac confirms the simultaneous discoveries of the Cape Verde Islands and the Bissagos Islands in a single glyph (Refs.1,5).

The vague glyphs Z and Z' are both different from all the others. For this reason they were probably carved in the stone at a later date. Apparently, the carver was irritated that the small Selvagens Islets (Z), situated above the Canary Islands (B and Z', the scratch from B to Z), had not been included on the stone. Note, that the 3 circles in Z' represent the correct geographic locations of the 3 islands of the Western Canaries (Z'), southwest of Madeira (E).

Today, the main Selvagens islet has a diameter of less than 3 miles (5km). The date of discovery is calculated just like the date of the Shetlands (J') (the top scratch from the edge to Z resembles J'), as will be explained. The Selvagens Islets (Z) were discovered 2 centuries (Z and Z') earlier than the Cape Verde Islands (C) (the scratch from Z' points to C), which is c.4800 BC.

Up to here, the dates over 15 centuries, between 3200 BC and 4600 BC, have been given by the 15 original petroglyphs. What remains are the discoveries of the Shetland Islands (J') near the Orkneys, and of the Canary Islands (B) near Madeira. Between the inscriptions of the Orkneys (J) and Madeira (E) are 4 simple glyphs J, G'', F, and E lying on a straight line. These are clearly less beautiful glyphs compared to the others. So it appears these do not play a role for the early datings.

Of the remaining  $15-4=11$  nice carvings, there are 9 large glyphs, indicating the discovery of the Shetland Islands (J'), 9 centuries before the Cape Verde Islands, so c.5500 BC. The Shetlands are located 43 NM (Nautical Miles) from the Orkneys. It appears, that the islets of St. Kilda (G'b), with a maximal diameter of 2 miles, located 32 NM west of the Outer Hebrides, were discovered as well.

The 2 remaining small glyphs K and P give the discovery of the Canary Islands (B), 2 centuries earlier, c.5700 BC (Refs.1-5,11,12). The Canaries are located 49 NM from the African coast. It appears, that the Scilly Isles (G), located 22 NM from Cornwall, and the Outer Hebrides (G'), 12 NM from the island of Skye, Scotland, were discovered as well.

These five archipelagos had been discovered much earlier than all the others, because they contain islands close to the coast. The shortest sailing distances to the Shetlands and to the Canaries are only c.1 Moira=  $1^\circ = 60$  NM (the scratch J'). Halfway to the remote Shetlands is a small islet, Fair Isle (with a diameter of about 3 miles), which facilitates the crossing. However, the mountainous Canary Islands can be seen from the African coast on a clear day, and probably due to their closeness to the Mediterranean, and warm seas, they were explored at an earlier date. The 2 glyphs A and B at the right side of the stone, confirm the discovery of the Canaries (B), 2 centuries before the Shetlands (J').

Loughcrew shows, the first important discovery on the Atlantic was the Canary Islands (B), at  $28^\circ\text{N}$  ( $A+B+G+G' = 6+6+8+8 = 28$ ). However, this first latitude encoding points to the carving of the Shetlands (J'), NE of the British Isles ( $G+G'$ ), which appears to be the second important discovery. The simple carving J' of the Shetlands also resembles one of the beams of the glyph of Madeira (E). This island had been discovered after the Canaries (B), like the Shetlands (J'), which confirms the order again, through comparison of the similar shapes.

The dates of all these discoveries, as shown in Fig.5, are the same as the dates found in the passage grave of Karleby (Falbygden, Sweden, c.2950 BC) (Refs.11,12). Significantly, those time encodings were also in centuries. However, the Scilly Isles, the Outer Hebrides, and St. Kilda are not indicated in the Karleby monument. The construction of the Karleby grave was just after the discovery of the island of Jan Mayen (c.2950 BC), which is encoded in its design.

All these dates have an uncertainty of half a century, or 50 years. However due to various reasons, like the monument construction date, the uncertainty may be slightly higher. Loughcrew deals with the discovery of the islands in the Atlantic. This means, that the Isle of Man in the Irish Sea is not mentioned on Stone C8. The Irish Sea is considered an inland sea, like the Mediterranean.

The 4 glyphs E, F, G'', and J, which are along a straight line, have not been used in the datings discussed above. However, Loughcrew suggests the discovery of the Orkney Islands (J), 4 centuries before the discovery of the Canaries, which is c.6100 BC. The prominent position of glyph J on the stone justifies this calculation. The Orkneys are located only 5 NM from mainland Scotland, in the north of the British Isles. They are clearly visible on a normal day. To our knowledge, there are no other megalithic monuments or petroglyphs which report the very early discovery of this important archipelago, where huge megalithic monuments were later built (Ref.13).

## Discussion

Glyph A is one of the oldest images of an ocean going sailing vessel in the world. Note, that the innermost hull line has dots at both ends of the deck (Fig.3). This is an

indication, that the expeditions may have been carried out with papyrus boats, as suggested by Thor Heyerdahl. The seaworthiness of these boats is based on the washing-through principle. On board water runs easily back to the sea, through and around the bundles. Apparently, both ends of the boat were attached with ropes to the top of the mast, preventing the papyrus bundles from sagging in the waves (Refs.18-20). It is known that the later built Egyptian sewn wood planked vessels were also strengthened by this technique.

The 9 beautiful glyphs in Loughcrew are carried out in three types: the boats A and C, the sails H, I, and L, and the Suns B, D, G, and M. These 3 types refer to the 3 ways they thought it might be possible to cross the Ocean to the Realm of the Dead in the west (glyph D, behind a natural relief of the stone).

In view of the north-eastern winds and currents, a possible route to the other side starts at the Cape Verde Islands (boat C). Only 2 glyphs (A and C) of this type were made, because this is the easternmost departure point, appearing to be most difficult. Probably any early exploratory vessels taking this route were not heard from again, because a route back was unknown at this date. The wind and current patterns of the Earth were not understood yet.

Because of the winds and currents from the west, the West Azores (sail I) were very difficult, but due to their apparent mid-ocean location, they were considered important for a possible return route. It is thought that they had been discovered by sailors reaching northwest from Madeira, trying to find winds to take them home to Brittany. A total of 3 sails (H, I, and L) were made (one more than the previous type), because the West Azores are located west of the Cape Verde Islands.

Finally, in view of its very western situation, Greenland (the Sun M) is most promising for reaching the unknown land at the back side of the Earth (America, D). A total of 4 Suns (B, D, G, and M) were made (one more again), because Greenland was by far the westernmost land of the then known world.

Stone C8 in Loughcrew shows that the attempts to cross the Atlantic Ocean lasted from c.5700 BC to c.3200 BC, which is 2500 years. Sailing the Ocean started c.6000 BC, which is an incredible 8000 years ago. The discovery of the Azores was relatively early (c.3600 BC), because of its favourable latitude, to the Strait of Gibraltar. The discovery of the Faroes was relatively late (c.3500 BC), because of its remote situation, north of the British Isles. The west coast of Greenland was reached c.3250 BC. Fifty years later, people gave up their efforts to cross Davis Strait, c.3200 BC. This was a firm decision of the megalith builders, illustrated by the little man glyph P. The discovery of America via the Atlantic did not happen earlier than c.2500 BC, which is 700 years after this decision (Ref.1).

The megalithic petroglyphs of Dissignac, France, illustrate that it was decided that it might be less risky to extend explorations to the east (Ref.1). These glyphs include a coast map of Australia (c.2700 BC), and stylized coast maps of the Americas (c.2600 BC). Recent discoveries of huge pyramids constructed at Caral, Peru, carbon-dated to c.2700 BC, illustrate first megalithic contact on the Pacific side of the Americas, despite

all the early voyages of discovery in the Atlantic.

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