

## **Roll Rights Information**

The Rollright Stones is an ancient site located on the Oxfordshire/Warwickshire border in England. The complex consists of three main elements, The Kings Men stone circle, the King Stone, and the Whispering Knights. The name "Rollright" is believed to derive from "Hrolla-landriht", the land of Hrolla.

### **The Kings Men**

At present there are 77 stones of heavily weathered local oolitic limestone, which were poetically described by William Stukeley as being "corroded like worm eaten wood, by the harsh Jaws of Time", which made "a very noble, rustic, sight, and strike an odd terror upon the spectators, and admiration at the design of 'em".

Aubrey Burl has, in a more down to earth way, called the Rollrights "seventy-seven stones, stumps and lumps of leprous limestone". This number seems to have altered considerably over the years - drawings from the tail-end of the 19th century, just before the Stones were scheduled under the 1882 Ancient Monuments Protection Act along with Stonehenge and Avebury, show about 25 stones in the Circle. "In the year 1882 the proprietor of Little Rollright replaced all the fallen stones in their original foundation."

The Rollright Stone Circle is the southerly cousin of the Cumbrian circles such as Swinside and Long Meg and her Daughters in the English Lake District. Family traits include similar size, shape, close-set stones (it is believed that there originally some 105 stones standing shoulder to shoulder), astronomically-aligned entrance and a pair of outlying portals where gates were hung to stop the sheep from straying into the road.

### **The King Stone**

Its purpose and age are unclear, although it is believed to be of middle Bronze Age origin. Some sources suggest that it might be an outlier to the Stone Circle.

The strange shape (likened to a seal balancing a ball on its nose) of this standing stone has less to do with the weathering effects of nature than with the destructive habit of 19th century drovers who chipped off small pieces to act as lucky charms and keep the Devil at bay. Thankfully this superstitious vandalism no longer goes on.

### **The Whispering Knights Dolmen**

The 5000 year old burial chamber, believed to be part of a Neolithic long barrow. The Knights are a small group of five upright stones 400 yards away from the actual Stone Circle, who got their name because of the conspiratorial way in which they lean inwards towards each other as if they are plotting against their king.

<http://www.rollrightstones.co.uk/index.php>