

NORTHFIELD
Revealed

The Great Stone

THE VILLAGE
POUND
Heritage Site

This large boulder is known as The Great Stone. It gives a name to the pub next-door - The Great Stone Inn. During the last Ice Age it was carried from a larger mass of rock in Wales.

The Great Stone

This glacial erratic boulder was formed in an explosive volcanic eruption during the Cretaceous period, 450-600 million years ago. During the last ice period only 10,000 years ago, it was carried by ice from the Brecon area of North Wales and deposited with many others around Northfield when the area was a frozen tundra. For generations it lay at the corner of Church Road and Church Hill where it prevented the bus halt. The boulder was moved by Birmingham City Council to this site in 1974 for road safety reasons.

The boulder is made of felsite, an igneous rock formed when volcanic lava solidifies.

During the last Ice Age, more than 12,000 years ago, stones like these were dislodged and shifted by the movement of the ice glacier. When the ice melted the boulders were deposited. They are glacial erratics.

They were often used as boundary stones, a bit like signposts. Until 1954, The Great Stone was located directly on the corner of Church Hill and was used as a dismounting point for travellers arriving on horse-back, at the Inn. This boulder has seen Northfield village change over time.

Stones like these are sometimes linked to local legends. e.g. The Gilbertstone, in Yardley, holds a tale that it was lifted by a giant called Gilbert who relocated it as part of a quarrel over land ownership.

Another glacial erratic in the city is The War Stone in Hockley. It was used to mark where the manors of Aston, Birmingham and Handsworth met.



Task 1: Using clues in the picture. Work out which stone belongs in which place...

1. The Gilbertstone now located at Blakesley Hall in Yardley by a tree.
2. The War Stone in a cemetery in The Jewellery Quarter on a plinth.
3. Cannon Hill Park boulder is near the lake.

Task 2: Describe the life of The Great Stone as a biography or an autobiography. Maybe include:

- Its formation during a volcanic eruption
- A journey during the Ice Age
- Arrival in Birmingham and changes it saw
- Or make up an imaginary legend

