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The Witch Book

The Encyclopedia of Witchcraft,
Wicca, and Neo-paganism

RAYMOND BUCKLAND



DETROIT

The Witch Book: The Encyclopedia of Witchcraft, Wicca, and Neo-paganism

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About the Author

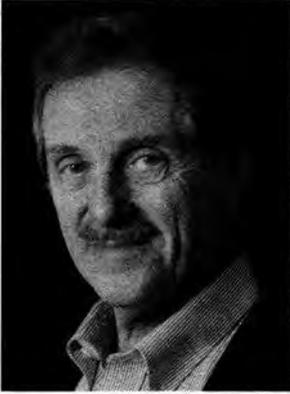


Photo by Jane Rosemont.

One of the world's foremost experts on the occult, Raymond Buckland has been studying Witchcraft, Gypsy magic, and other aspects of the supernatural for more than half a century and is credited with introducing modern Witchcraft into the United States.

Of Romany (Gypsy) descent, Buckland was born in London in 1934 and raised in the Church of England. At an early age, an uncle sparked a lifelong interest in the occult. He obtained a doctorate in anthropology and, in 1962, moved to America with his first wife, Rosemary. His spiritual quest eventually led him to the works of Wicca pioneer Gerald Gardner, who was living on the Isle of Man. Before long, Buckland and Gardner were corresponding on a regular basis, with Buckland serving as Gardner's spokesperson in the United States.

Buckland was initiated into the Craft shortly before Gardner's death in 1964, and began establishing a coven in the U.S. as well as that country's first museum dedicated to Witchcraft and magic. He eventually founded his own more open and democratic Wicca sect, Seax-Wica, based on a Saxon heritage. In 1969 he published his first book, *A Pocket Guide to the Supernatural*. He has more than thirty titles in print, including the classic *Buckland's Complete Book of Witchcraft*, first published in 1986. His *Gypsy Witchcraft and Magic* received the 1999 Visionary Award for nonfiction and his *Gypsy Dream Dictionary* was a Book-of-the-Month Club alternate choice.

Now living in Ohio, Buckland has been the subject of and has written countless articles, appeared on many television and radio shows, and lectured on college campuses nationwide. He has written five screenplays and acted as technical adviser for several films.



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Introduction

Raymond Buckland

The subject of Witchcraft has fascinated people for thousands of years. In pre-Christian and early Christian times, Witchcraft was viewed as what it was—an aspect of paganism practiced by the wiser of the common people who had knowledge of herbs, healing, augury, and magic. The very word “Witch” comes from the Old Anglo-Saxon *wicce* or *wicca*, meaning a “wise one.” For the first thousand years of Christianity—the “new” religion of those times—Witchcraft existed happily alongside it. In fact, many of the early Christian priests served double duty, also being priests of the Old Religion and leaders of the pagan worshipers.

Religion and magic have been inexorably intertwined from humankind’s very beginnings. Most religions even today have elements of magic within them. Witchcraft was not originally a religion in itself, but a practice. In Western Europe, the pagan religious beliefs incorporated belief in, and worship of, a god and a goddess who were closely attuned to nature and to the earth itself. There were celebrations of the seasons, the passage of the sun, and the phases of the moon. Witchcraft practices were an integral part of that pagan religion.

It was not until the start of the second thousand years of Christianity that Witchcraft, and paganism generally, was painted in a bad light by the leaders of the New Religion. Having reached a saturation point where conversion was concerned, the early Christian leaders decided that the way to promote what they saw as the “only true way” was to extinguish all other ways. To that end, anything non-Christian was presented as *anti*-Christian and, therefore, undesirable. Paganism, and Witchcraft, fell into this category.

At this time, then, Witchcraft came to be lumped together with Satanism (actually a byproduct of Christianity), black magic, and all things negative, in an attempt to do away with them. The persecutions, highlighted by the Inquisition, grew into the blackest page in religious history, with an estimated nine million people put to death on charges of “witchcraft,” many of them first terribly tortured in the name of the Prince of Peace and the God of Love. It was not until the very end

of the twentieth century that Pope John Paul II, on behalf of the Roman Catholic Church, apologized for this travesty of justice.

By the middle of the eighteenth century, all indications were that witchcraft had been stamped out by this powerful pressure from the Church. From time to time there were rumors of its continuance, but there seemed to be no proof. Small groups of Satanists would sporadically surface and be labeled as “witches” by the Church, but there were no signs of large-scale pagan gatherings as in earlier times. Yet at the end of the nineteenth century, folklorist Charles Godfrey Leland encountered a group of supposed Witches in Italy. He reported that they worshiped the ancient pagan goddess Diana, celebrated the seasons, and called themselves Witches.

By the early twentieth century, anthropologist Margaret Alice Murray had proffered her theory that Witchcraft had been a pre-Christian religion, loosely organized among the pagan population of the times. Digging through the records of the witch trials of the Middle Ages, Murray came up with a plethora of details on Witchcraft organization and practice. She even delineated a direct line of descent from the religio-magicians of Paleolithic times to the witches of the persecutions. Her theories were hailed by some and damned by others. It was not until the very middle of the twentieth century that any real sign of Witchcraft life came to light.

In 1951, in England, the last law against Witchcraft was repealed. Three years later a book was published, written by Gerald Brousseau Gardner, who professed to be an actual Witch. According to Gardner, the Witches of old had not all been exterminated; they had simply gone into hiding to continue their beliefs and practices without harassment. This became the start of the neo-pagan movement and the resurrection of the Old Religion. The Witchcraft that Gardner presented was not the anti-Christian, negative variety that the early Church’s propaganda had instilled in most people’s minds. It was a nature-based, positive religion of tolerance and love, with strict laws against harming others. As male and female are found throughout nature, so it was believed that with the deities there must be both male and female—a god and a goddess. Worship of these was the *leit motif* of Wica (also spelled Wicca). Witchcraft was shown to be one of the mystery religions, comparable to those of ancient Greece and Rome. No one was born a Witch, said Gardner; they were made Witches by virtue of passing through an initiation ceremony.

As word slowly began to spread, more people discovered Witchcraft and exclaimed, “This is what I want to be a part of!” This author was among them. I had been studying what was then termed “the occult” since the mid-1940s, reading Leland, Murray, and Gardner, among many others. Gardner’s books really brought home to me that there was another choice when it came to religion, and the choice of Witchcraft, or Wicca, was most appealing. I contacted Gardner and later, after my own initiation, helped introduce Wicca to the United States.

When Gardner’s books went out of print, I started writing others to help spread the word. Slowly but surely a vast modern library began to build as others discovered the true meaning of Witchcraft and, in turn, wanted to pass along what they had found. Progress was slow but, gradually, word got out. Many pioneers suffered at the hands of the ignorant, but eventually our religious rights were acknowledged. In

1955, lectures on the survival of the Witch religion were being held in the Paris University. Professor Varagnac based his Sorbonne course on Gardner's work. The Ethnographical Society accepted the reality of the Witch religion under the title of *Contemporary Witchcraft in Britain, and the Survival of Celtic Cults*, also in 1955. In 1959, Dr. Serge Hutin of the École Pratique des Hautes Études (Sciences Religieuses) wrote about the Craft and named Gerald Gardner as the "most qualified specialist in the field." In New York in 1964, the New School for Social Research offered a course on witchcraft, magic, and sorcery, taught by Dr. Joseph Kaster, with myself as guest lecturer. For many years I lectured at colleges and universities across the country, and I was soon joined by others.

In the late twentieth century, Wiccans established churches and applied to the Internal Revenue Service for tax exemption, as was the right of any church. Perhaps surprisingly, they started to get that exemption. The U.S. Department of the Army, in their Pamphlet No. 165-13 (*Religious Requirements and Practices of Certain Select Groups: A Handbook for Chaplains*), included instructions on the religious rights of Witches alongside those of Islamic, Sikh, Native American, Christian, Japanese, and Jewish groups.

It used to be that any novels, movies, or television shows dealing with Witchcraft presented the Witches in the old image of evil. *The Wizard of Oz* was perhaps unique for its time in having a "Good" Witch (of the East) in its cast of characters. The television program *Bewitched* then gave a newer and lighter view of Witchcraft. Today we have numerous movies and television programs that have the premise of one or more Witches who are fairly accurately portrayed as Wiccans and as doers of good.

One of the joys of Witchcraft, as practiced in these modern times, is its flexibility. It is structured but not pedantic in its rituals and hierarchy. The large number of different denominations, or "traditions," of Witchcraft allow a wide variety of people to find that which is exactly right for them, as individuals. Each tradition of the religion follows the same basic tenets, with celebrations of the seasons through the year. All worship the same male and female deities (although some may emphasize certain ones over others), albeit under a variety of names. The groups, or covens, are autonomous; there is no one leader of all Witches.

Yet this very "looseness" could become detrimental to what is seen as a phenomenal growth of the religion of Witchcraft. In the 1950s, 1960s, and early 1970s, a certain discipline emphasized the Craft as a religion. Indeed, the efforts of many of us had gone into establishing just that point—that Witchcraft is a religion. But in recent years, the emphasis for many newcomers has shifted from worship to spells and magic. In fact, it is not necessary to be a Witch in order to do, or attempt to do, magic. A magician does magic and works without necessarily including worship in his or her rituals. Yet it is the spell casting or the very name "Witch" that attract a lot of people today, and this is encouraged by some popular authors who have no real basis in the religion of Wicca. Would-be Witches are often fascinated by this new acceptance of Witchcraft by the general public, yet many have not totally thrown off the misconceptions of Witches as purely casters of spells. Covens are formed with the main goal being to "do" things, rather than to worship the deities.

The very looseness of the religion and its acceptance of a wide variety of ways have led to anything and everything being labeled “Witchcraft” simply because all guidelines have been traversed. With a fewer number of traditions, it was possible to say what was and what was not acceptable as Wicca. Now, with so many eclectic groups insisting that they can include virtually anything, there are fewer standards. But, happily, these dilettantes appear to be in the minority. I am sure there will always be a hard core of true traditionalists who will keep Wicca alive. As a Wiccan I am a “traditionalist,” holding the older values of religion first with the working of magic only if needed. I believe we have probably passed the stage of Wicca being purely a mystery religion. What might be termed “Pop Wicca” obviously has a place, at present. Whether it will last, and what its long-term effect will be, remain to be seen.

In this book I have tried to cover all aspects of Witchcraft in detail: the historical and the practical. To do so I have had to treat both the Christian concept and the true concept of Wicca. To help separate the two factions, I have spelled witchcraft with a lowercase “w” when addressing the Christian concept, and with a capital “W” when speaking of true Witchcraft.

When early Christian missionaries to Africa and other traditional societies encountered native practices they did not understand, or that did not fall into Biblical categories, they invariably labeled these practices as “witchcraft.” The term has become used, and misused, frequently as a synonym for “magic” or “sorcery.” One can, therefore, find books and articles on African witchcraft, Native American witchcraft, and Australian aboriginal witchcraft, for example. This present volume does not address these areas, which more accurately fall under the heading of anthropology. Although I have drawn upon some Voodoo and similar practices and beliefs, for comparison purposes, I have here concentrated on the Western European and later New World versions of Witchcraft and magic.

One final point. In the ever-growing world of the Internet, more and more pagan and Wiccan web sites are opening. Many close as quickly as they open, so I am not attempting to list them here. Also, the information found on these sites may or may not be accurate. Again, there is no central control—no overseer of Wiccan information. All I can do is encourage you to seek, read, and learn. Read everything you can find—books, magazine articles, web sites—the good and the bad. Then make up your own mind.



Acknowledgments

My many thanks go first to my old friend Brad Steiger, for recommending me to the publisher as the “right person” to do this book. Thanks also to his/our agent, Agnes Birnbaum, for bringing it all together. Part way into the writing of the book, the mother publishing company decided to disband Visible Ink Press, but Martin Connors would have none of that. Through his enthusiasm and zeal, Visible Ink Press became its own entity and the writing of this encyclopedia was able to continue, so I am especially indebted to Marty.

My thanks also go to Brad Morgan, editor in the “early days” of this volume, for his help and suggestions. Roger Jänecke and Christa Brelin must also be mentioned, along with all the other people at Visible Ink Press who have contributed to this book and its publication: Larry Baker, Dee Morgan, Mary Ramsay, Diane Sawinski, Chris Scanlon, Terri Schell, Christine Slovey.

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Although my own personal library was able to furnish most of the research material, I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the part that the World Wide Web now plays in bringing material straight to the writer’s computer. Hours of laborious study are cut short with the click of a few keys.

Finally, my deepest thanks to my wife, Tara, for her continual encouragement, constructive criticism, and continuous support over a period of concentrated writing.



Abracadabra

Healing **talismans** were of various types, but one of the most common was that which bore a **Word of Power**. Frequently, the word was repeated a number of times with a letter dropped from it each time. The person to be healed would speak the complete word, then the truncated words, until there was nothing left to pronounce. If the sick person was too ill to speak, then someone else could speak the words on the patient's behalf. This was a form of **sympathetic magic**: as the word diminished, so did the disease. The paper or parchment on which the decreasing word was written was worn around the neck of the sick person, tied there with flax. The words would be said every day. At the end of a nine-day period, the talisman would be taken to an easterly flowing stream and, with a final recitation of the words, the patient would throw the talisman over his or her left shoulder into the water, allowing the water to carry away both it and the disease.

Abracadabra was used to heal a fever. The earliest known mention of this was in 208 CE by Quintus Serenus Sammonicus, physician to the Roman Emperor Severus. Sir E. A. Budge, however, believes the formula is based on something much older than that.

A B R A C A D A B R A
A B R A C A D A B R
A B R A C A D A B
A B R A C A D A
A B R A C A D
A B R A C A
A B R A C
A B R A
A B R
A B
A

Many attempts have been made to explain the meaning of *abracadabra*. Sir A. E. Wallis Budge thinks it most likely to have been derived from the Chaldean words *abbādā ke dābrā*, meaning “perish like the word.”

Dr. Moses Gaster, a noted Jewish scholar, gave this formula:

Ab Abr Abra Abrak Abraka

Abrakal Abrakala Abrakal

Abraka Abrak Abra Abr Ab.

And the people called unto Moses and Moses prayed to God, and the fire abated. May healing come from heaven from all kinds of fever and consumption-heat to N son of N.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Selah. Selah. Selah.

Budge describes the above as “the perfect Hebrew amulet” since it contains the magical name Abrakala, text from the Bible, a prayer that is the equivalent of a pagan incantation, and the “threefold Amen and the threefold Selah.”

There is a similar Jewish spell to banish a demon known as *Shebriri*, believed to cause diseases of the eye. The name is said repeatedly: “Shebriri Briri Riri Iri Ri,” with the belief that he will gradually diminish to nothing.

The word *abracadabra* has been so overused in connection with magic that it has come to be thought of as no more than a nonsense word used by stage magicians, yet it was originally a word believed to have great power. Many magicians and Witches in the Middle Ages employed it on talismans for a great many purposes other than its original one of curing disease. Daniel Defoe, in his *Journal of the Plague Year* (1722), mentions the use of *abracadabra* by those wishing to ward off the plague.

Some scholars believe that the word comes from the name *Abraxas*, claimed by the Basilidian sect of Gnostics as their supreme deity. It was believed that Abraxas ruled over 365 lesser gods and, hence, over the 365 days of the year. In *Ceremonial Magic*, according to Collin de Plancy’s *Dictionnaire Infernal* of 1863, Abraxas is depicted as having serpents for feet and sometimes the head of a cockerel.

SOURCES:

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Absent Healing

There are many forms of healing practiced by Witches and others. Among them is absent healing. As its name implies, it is a form of healing in which the patient need not be present. Within this category are a number of methods of directing the healing energies. Some are done in the coven situation, with a number of people combining their energies, and some are done by individual, or Solitary, Witches.

In modern Wicca, all healings start with obtaining the permission of the patient. Wiccans will not interfere with another’s free will in any way whatsoever. They believe that each has his or her lessons to learn in life, and that a particular ill-

ness may be part of a lesson that needs to be experienced. If the patient feels strongly that the suffering is part of a learning process, then he or she may well not seek magical relief. The Witches will not, therefore, attempt to heal someone unless that person has told them they may do so. Also, Wiccans believe that the medical profession should be consulted first, since they are professionally trained in healing.

Looking first at the coven, a typical healing circle starts with all coven members being apprised of the complete situation: the name and location of the patient; what is wrong with him or her; how the situation came about; the patient's circumstances; and the medical prognosis, if there is one.

The members discuss which method should be used to raise the necessary power, and exactly which role each coven member will play. In some covens, the Witches will raise their **Cone of Power** and direct it individually toward the patient. In other groups, the power is channeled to the High Priestess or another coven leader, and that leader is the one who actually directs it to the recipient. In healing **magic**, as in all forms of magic, the focus is on the result. In other words, the Witches center on seeing the patient completely well, rather than simply getting better.

Much the same thing takes place with the Solitary Witch. First comes the complete assessment of the situation, followed by a decision about which method to use to raise power. If a long-term illness is being dealt with, then the Witch or Witches will repeat their distant healing regularly over a period of days, weeks, months, or even years.

In both coven and solitary practice, the actual type of healing is another decision to be reached. It is possible to simply project healing energies, but it is also possible to work through **Poppets**, **Candle magic**, color projection, and other methods. Covens are more likely to direct their energies directly or through color projection, while Solitaries are more likely to indulge in candle manipulation and poppet magic, although all methods are open to everyone.

Adept

In its broadest sense, an Adept is a **magical** Master—an initiate who has worked through many years of learning and experience to become a teacher and **Elder**. Medieval magicians and alchemists applied the term to any master of their sciences.

The Theosophists say that Adepts control forces in both the physical and spiritual realms, that they are able to prolong their lives by many years, if not centuries, and that their knowledge far exceeds that of normal human beings. Adepts are also referred to as Mahatmas, Rahats, Rishis, and as the Great White Brotherhood.

In **Witchcraft**, the term “Elder” is preferred and there is no connotation of having lived an extraordinary number of years in this lifetime. There is, however, a belief among many Wiccans that the position does come after many lifetimes spent in the **Craft** (**reincarnation** being one of the tenets of **Wicca**). An Adept is usually one who teaches others, and will often work one on one with a neophyte Witch, bringing the person to the point of **Initiation** and, not infrequently, beyond that.

“Adept” is not an official title in Witchcraft; it is an appellation earned but not bestowed.

Francis Barrett, in *The Magus* (1801), states: “To be an adept is possible . . . to be an adept, according to God’s will, is no contemptible calling.”

A **Solitary Wiccan** may well consider him- or herself an Adept, and be so considered by others. This is especially true if the **Witch** is an expert in a particular field, such as herbology, astrology, or divination.

African Witchcraft

Africa is the second largest continent in the world, yet it has a population of only 400 million—just two-thirds that of Europe. Despite that, Africa has more than 1,000 ethnic groups and 6,000 different tribes, each with its own lifestyle, language, religion, and social customs. The continent is rich in folklore, pagan religion, and magic. Despite 500 years of being disrupted by colonization, exploitation, slavery, and famine, the people of Africa manage to maintain their connection between life and spirituality.

In many ways, the African peoples are advancing into modern technology, changing their customs, fashions, jobs, and modes of living. Yet a firm belief in the supernatural remains deeply ingrained in many parts of the continent. Although local laws and authorities may strive to stamp out some of the older practices, they live on even in the midst of the largest cities. Many people are caught between their deeply rooted traditions and the influences of modern ideas and technologies. This is seen in many of the larger cities and towns around the world, where Voodoo (a direct descendant of African religious beliefs) is practiced in some form.

Religion is an integral part of family life throughout most of Africa, and there is great religious variety. For example, the religions of the Nuer of the Sudan and the Masai of Tanzania and Kenya center on a deity associated with the sky and with rain. They have no tradition of venerating their ancestors. Yet the Yoruba of Nigeria revere their ancestors, believing them to have attained the status of gods. The Kaka of the Cameroon have a belief in a creator-god and revere the spirits of the dead, each home having a shrine. The Ashanti of Ghana believe in amulets and talismans, not only for personal protection but also for influencing people and the gods. The Zulu are atypical in that they revere a goddess. They associate her with the beauty of the earth and with the rainbow.

The area in which practices are most similar in many ways to those of Wicca is in West Africa, in the Congo. Among this million and a half people, there is a shamanistic priestly tradition very similar to that of European Wicca: priests, known as the *Mganga*, or *Mufumu*, who are also the local doctors, lawyers, diviners, exorcists, and leaders.

Virtually all Africans believe in a Supreme Being, but for some this Being is virtually ignored because it is disassociated from the everyday life of humans. Of more concern are the lesser gods and the ancestors, who are accessible for help and advice. Below them come the forces of magic and of medicine.

To the African generally, a Witch is one person, a witch doctor (one who is called upon to find and exorcise a Witch) is another, a magician who uses white or protective magic is a third person, and a magician who uses black or negative magic is a fourth. The African magician is always thought of as being a male. He uses rituals, spells, and material substances, and must acquire his magical powers as well as his equipment from a medicine man. A witch is usually thought of as being a female. She uses no ritual, no spell, and no material substances. Her power is innate. The magician may operate at any hour of the day or night, yet a witch may operate only at night.

White magic, with its healing and protection, is the responsibility of the medicine man and of the witch doctor, who wages war on witches, viewed negatively in African witchcraft. White magic is so called because it is of the light and is done openly. Black magic, on the other hand, is of the darkness and is performed secretly.

Yet the Zande, in the southwest of the Sudan, think of witches as ordinary people. They feel that everyone is born with a substance within their body that has the power to injure others. You would not know that you had the substance unless it became operative, which could happen without being desired. In fact, it is thought that this frequently occurs at night, while the host is sleeping.

African pagans share with Wiccans the belief in a life after death. Yet they believe that no one dies of natural causes. A life ends because it has been "interfered with"—the death has been caused either by humans or by spirits. Therefore, when a person dies he or she does not leave the community but continues to take part in the community life, albeit in spirit form. Such a spirit is neither worshiped nor feared, but consulted for advice. The fear of witches, exercised by so many Africans, comes from a belief that somebody or something must be responsible for apparently inexplicable events. What others may call coincidental, the African calls witchcraft. Why should an accident happen to an apparently good person, who lives his or her life in an exemplary fashion, unless it has been brought about by some evil person or spirit?

A further parallel with the Witches of Europe is that most pagan Africans, not familiar with building from stone, prefer natural shrines and groves for their worship



South African native wizard. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

and magical practices. There may or may not be a hut in such a sacred area. However, in Nigeria, the Yoruba temples and shrines are set up almost like military compounds.

Again as with the Wicca, animal life is considered a sacred part of religion. In the north of Africa, in ancient Egypt, many of the deities were associated with specific animals, frequently personified by animals and reptiles. Throughout Africa, the worship of snakes, and especially the python, is common, particularly in tribes in eastern and western Africa. "Python Temples" are plentiful in these areas.

Many African Witches are thought to have familiars—magical servants who perform tasks for them. Witches of the Kuanyama Bantu in southwest Africa use owls and jackals; others use bats and hyenas.

A less pleasant parallel between the Witches of Europe and those of Africa is the belief that their powers may be negated by burning them alive.

In many areas of the world throughout history, iron has been regarded as a magical substance and iron tools as having special, magical qualities. The Ancient Egyptians called iron "metal from the sky." The Aztecs called it "the gift of heaven." G. Storms states: "Iron manifestly takes its power from the fact that the material was better and scarcer than wood or stone for making tools, and secondly from the mysterious way in which it was originally found: in meteoric stones. It needed a specialist and a skilled laborer to obtain the iron from the ore and to harden it. Indeed, we find many peoples regard their blacksmiths as magicians." Africans, in general, certainly regard their blacksmiths as magicians. In many African legends, the blacksmith is the healer. He also instructs people how to use fire and teaches animal husbandry and sexual behavior. The Masai, of Kenya and Tanzania, believe that to walk on the ground surrounding a blacksmith's hut is to risk misfortune, sickness, and death, while the Dogon, in a harsh area of West Africa, place the blacksmith's hut in the very center of the village, in a place of honor.

SOURCES:

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Afterlife

Witches believe in a life after death. Individual beliefs may vary, but most Witches think of it as being very much like the present plane of existence. It is, however, a place where the lessons of the life just completed may be reviewed and where (as with the **Wiccan** belief in **reincarnation**) the necessary lessons for the next life are planned.

There is no belief in a "Final Judgement," with its rewards and punishments. It is thought that we receive our rewards and punishments in this life, according to how we live it (see **Karma**).

Gerald Gardner, the "Grand Old Man of Witchcraft," responsible more than anyone for the re-awakening of interest in the **Old Religion**, was interested in spiritualism at an early age. In spiritualism, the afterlife is known as the "Summerland," a term



A vision of the afterlife: *The Ramparts of God's House*, engraving after a painting by J. M. Strudwick, 1891. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

coined by Andrew Jackson Davis in the mid-1800s. The afterlife is so called in Wicca as well. Whether or not the Wiccan term can be solely attributed to Gardner is unknown, although there seems to be no reference to it by that name prior to Gardner's teachings.

According to a Gallup Poll recorded in 1980, 71 percent of Americans believe in an afterlife. Many religions place that afterlife in one place, without the "heaven" and "hell" of orthodox theology.

The length of time spent in the Summerland, between lives, is indeterminate. Since there is no concept of time in the afterlife, it could be minutes or it could be centuries. Wiccans believe that it is possible for those in the physical body, on this plane, to communicate with spirits in the Summerland by various means.

Air

In a magic circle, the four elements—Earth, Air, Fire, and Water—are associated with the four directions of North, East, South, and West.

Air is connected with life—the breath of life--and with the soul in magic and mysticism. Many traditions of **Wicca** apply Air to the East and further associate it with the color yellow and the **elementals** known as Sylphs. There are correspondences with communication, consciousness, and the powers of the mind.

In Ritual or **Ceremonial Magic**, air is associated with Raphael and with the Tarot suit of Swords, with spring, the dawn, and the Hebrew letter Yod.

The elements of Earth, Air, Fire, and Water are assigned to different directions in the Native American Medicine Wheels; those associations vary from tribe to tribe.

ALL HALLOW'S EVE see SAMHAIN

Altar

An altar is a piece of furniture used at a religious ceremony, and it is usually regarded as the most sacred part of the temple in which it stands. In effect it is a table, its function being to hold the various items used in the rites. In primitive societies, the altar was the surface on which **sacrifices** were offered. Frequently a large, naturally flat, rock would be used. At **Mystery Hill**, in Salem, New Hampshire, an altar rock may be seen that has a deep groove worked into it, running around the periphery of the stone. This has been referred to as a “blood groove,” although there seems to be no concrete evidence of blood sacrifices having been made at this particular site. Blood sacrifice, and even human sacrifice, has been known in various societies such as the Aztec, as is evidenced in the sacrificial altar at the great temple pyramid to Huitzilopochtli, where King Ahuitzotl sacrificed more than twenty thousand prisoners after the two-year war in Oaxaca. The altar stone was five feet in length and three feet wide, rising three feet off the ground.

Few altars equaled the Aztec one for bloodiness; indeed, many if not most religious rites do not call for blood sacrifices of any sort. Ancient Egyptian altars were frequently in the form of small tables bearing only incense-burners and jars, although other, more elaborate, altars were also used. Many altars—as in Mesopotamia, Syria and Palestine—were of stones piled on top of one another with a fire-holding stone, or fire pan, at the top. Many Hebrew altars, such as the one from the old Canaanite site of Megiddo, were square and had pointed extensions at the corners, often referred to as “horns.”

The Greeks had both public altars dedicated to various gods, where fire burned continuously, and domestic altars for family use. The latter were sometimes placed in the kitchen, as the principal room. Examples of this are found at Pompeii. At other times the domestic altar would be placed in a special room constructed just for it. An early Greek altar was in the form of a tripod. This was used at Delphi and other sites as the seat for the Pythoness and her sister sybils. Barbara Walker says that the three legs signified the connection between the priestess and the triadic spirit of prophesy.



Wiccan altar of the Gardnerian tradition. Courtesy Raymond Buckland.

Altars were also used by the Native Americans. The Hopi and other Pueblo tribes built their altars of sand with decorated reredoses behind them. The Mound Builders, east of the Mississippi, invariably included clay altars in the center of the mound. These were as long as six feet, and they have been found filled with charcoal and fragments of human bones, suggesting mortuary rites.

In **Voodoo**, as found in Haiti, the peristyle temple is circular in form and has a central post holding up the roof. This post is known as the *poteau-mitan* and around it is built the altar. The principle god, Damballah-Wédo, a serpent, is believed to live at the top of this post.

In **Wicca**, the altar is the focal point of the religious gatherings. Witches meet in a consecrated circle, which serves as their temple. There are no sacrifices of any sort in Wicca since all life is held as sacred. The altar is frequently placed in the center of that circle, although it may be in the north or the east, depending upon the particular tradition. In the **Gardnerian** tradition, it is in the center and holds two white altar candles, censer, god and goddess figures, pentacle, scourge, cords, white-handled knife, sword, wand, containers of salt and water, wine goblet, and the *athamés* of the High Priest and High Priestess.

In the **Seax-Wicca** tradition, the altar itself is always circular and may be a tree stump (if the ritual is held outdoors) or a rock, a log, or a circular table. On it stand a single white altar candle, god and goddess figures, censer, salt and water, drinking horn, sword, and the book of rituals known as "**The Tree**." The presiding priest or priestess may also lay his or her **seax** on the altar.

Different traditions of Wicca use different altar arrangements. The candles and censer seem to be universal, as are a drinking vessel—goblet, horn, chalice—and some form of anointing substance such as salt and water or oil. Some altars seem to bear everything, including all the athamés of everyone present, while others are very sparse. An **altar** cloth may or may not be used.

Scott Cunningham suggests setting up an altar made of three stones: two roughly equal-sized stones as the base and a larger one resting across their tops. Smaller stones placed on top may represent the god and goddess, although there is no reason why the two supporting stones themselves should not represent the deities.

In some Wiccan rituals, such as the **Cakes and Wine** and the Gardnerian **Third Degree** ritual, the High Priestess will sit on the edge of the altar, using it as a throne. For the performance of the **Great Rite**, the altar may be cleared so that the High Priestess may lie down full length on it, if it is of sufficient size. Failing that, she will lie on the ground immediately in front of the altar. Doreen Valiente says, "Use of a living woman's naked body as the altar where the forces of Life are worshipped and invoked goes back to before the beginnings of Christianity; back to the days of the ancient worship of the Great Goddess of Nature, in whom all things were one."

In **Ritual or Ceremonial Magic**, the altar represents the center of the universe and, by extension, the center of the self. In the western occult tradition, the altar is ideally constructed of stone but is more usually of wood, in the shape of a double cube, two feet by two feet and four feet high. In many forms of Ceremonial Magic, the altar is constructed to precise dimensions and is inscribed with certain glyphs, or **sigils**, in one or another of the traditional **magical alphabets**: Theban, Malachim, Passing the River, Angelic, Ogam Bethluisnion, Egyptian Heiroglyphics, or Runes. Although not as necessary as in Ceremonial Magic, this is often carried over into Wicca, according to individual taste. Runes and Theban seem to be the favorites of Wiccans.

Some Wiccan altars are elaborately carved with figures of the gods, and/or foliage and animal forms. Others are plain and unadorned. Tables, trunks, boxes, and even chests of drawers are adopted and adapted for use. There are no criteria as to what constitutes a Wiccan altar. An altar made of two mighty yew logs topped by a solid block of stone is used by a **Solitary Wiccan** in England, while a simple white cloth laid directly on the ground is used by a whole coven in France. Wood, stone, clay, earth, brick, concrete—all can become the sacred space that is an altar, the center of the ritual area.

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Altar candles on a Wiccan altar. Courtesy Raymond Buckland/*Fortean Picture Library*.

Altar Candles

The *Book of Shadows* states that there should be fire on the altar. Some traditions, and some Solitaires, use a single candle, which is simply “the altar candle.” Others use two candles and refer to them as the God and Goddess candles. Most Witches have representations of the God and the Goddess on their altar often in the form of statuettes, but sometimes the candles themselves are used for these representations. It is possible to purchase candles that are shaped like male or female figures. These are especially suitable to be God and Goddess candles.

Although altar candles are usually white, it is not uncommon for Witches to use a candle in a color appropriate for the particular sabbat or for the season—for example, dark green for Beltane, brown for Imbole, yellow for Lughnasadh, orange for Samhain, light green at the spring equinox (Ostara), red at the summer solstice, orange at the autumnal equinox, and brown at the winter solstice (Yule). These colors may vary according to the particular Wiccan tradition or even to personal taste. Yellow candles are frequently used on the altar at the Full Moon. White candles are always used for Initiations. Purple candles may be used for the rites of death, or Crossing the Bridge.

Altar Cloth

Many Witches do not use altar cloths, instead placing the altar instruments on the bare wood or stone of the altar itself. But others do like to dress their altar by adding a cloth. This may be plain or decorated. Some Wiccans sew or paint intricate esoteric symbols on their cloths. There may be one all-purpose altar cloth, or, more frequently, there may be a number of altar cloths, colored and decorated appropriately for the ritual. As with the Altar Candles, the color of the cloths may reflect the particular sabbats and the time of year.

Amber

There are two stones associated with Witches, amber and jet, neither of them actually “stones” in the true sense. Jet, a fossilized wood, was known as black amber, in the Middle Ages. Amber itself is actually a fossilized resin, from extinct coniferous trees that flourished along the Baltic coast and other areas seventy to forty million years ago. It may be opaque or transparent, the opaqueness due to tiny air bubbles in the sap.

In Greek mythology, amber was thought to be formed by the tears of Phaëton’s two sisters, the Heliads, who were turned to poplar trees while weeping over Phaëton’s death. In Scandinavian mythology, it was formed by the tears shed by Freya when Odin wandered out into the world. In Homer’s *Odyssey*, Book XVIII (c. 700 BCE), Odysseus’s wife, Penelope, is presented with “an elaborate chain strung with beads of amber like golden sunshine.”

Amber occurs as irregularly shaped drops in all shades of yellow, from the lightest to the darkest yellow-brown. It is also found, although rarely, in opaque and translucent colors ranging from ruby red to iridescent green and blues. These color variations are due to the presence of foreign matter contained in the sap. Amber has been carved and used ornamentally in jewelry and such things as pipe mouth-pieces. It may well have been the first gemlike material ever used for personal adornment.

Since the Stone Age, the wearing of amber as an amulet has been considered a cure for numerous illnesses and is thought to be especially efficacious for asthma. Among the many diseases believed to be affected by amber are goiter, deafness, jaundice, throat ailments, poor eyesight, erysipelas (an acute bacterial disease marked by fever and skin inflammation), catarrh, headaches, digestive problems, and teething problems in children. Because of this, amber was thought to bring good luck and protection. Consequently, many talismans were made of amber.

One reason that amber was held in such esteem is that when rubbed it develops negative electrical static, causing it to attract small pieces of paper. The Greek word for amber was *elektron*, from which we get the word “electricity.”

Although legends have referred to amber as being the solidified urine of the lynx (one of its names is *lyncurius*) or petrified seal and dolphin sperm, the Greeks and the Romans both knew that it did in fact come from tree resin.

The Romans often used amber during the reign of the Emperor Nero, who likened his wife's hair to its color. The Chinese use it extensively in the making of incense and perfume. Since Roman times amber has also been thought to be a protection against witchcraft, despite the fact that it is a favorite jewel for Witches themselves.

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Amulet

An amulet is a consecrated object used for protection, for good fortune, luck, health, to attract, or to repel. It is a *natural* object, as opposed to a **talisman**, which, while used for much the same purposes, is a human-made object. C. Nelson Stewart (*Man, Myth and Magic*) likens a talisman to a sword and an amulet to a shield, saying the former is a reinforcer while the latter is a protector. Certainly amulets are primarily preventive, while talismans are transmitters.

Although amulets are frequently made and used by Witches, they are not exclusively so. They and talismans are a part of the larger world of **magic** and can be utilized by **magicians** who are not necessarily Witches.

Although amulets are basically natural objects—**amber** is an excellent example—they may be modified by carving or inscribing, or used in conjunction with other amulets and/or talismans. Most users will consecrate an amulet before using it, but others feel that the very essence of the amulet is that it is natural and therefore requires no consecration. An example of these two schools of thought may be found in the **mandrake** root. The mandrake naturally grows in the shape of a human figure. For this reason it was thought to have great magical properties, especially to heal and protect. Yet the more similar to a human being the mandrake appeared, the greater was the magical power it was believed to possess. For this reason it was permissible to carve the root to make it more lifelike and more powerful.

Another example of an amulet is a stone with a hole through it, known variously as a Witch Stone, a Goddess Stone, or a **Hag Stone**. This may be slipped onto a piece of cord or leather thong and worn around the neck for protection. Some would first cleanse the stone in salt and water and hold it in the smoke of incense, at the same time requesting from the gods that it protect its wearer. This act of consecration made the stone amulet even more powerful.

In Africa, elephant hairs are commonly used as an amulet, as are a lion's teeth or claws. Elephant hair is frequently woven into a bracelet, for ease of wearing. In Europe and America, a rabbit's foot is perhaps the most common amulet, worn or carried for good luck.

There is a doctrine of correspondences, or "doctrine of signatures," associated with amulets. This is a belief that there is a magical connection between things

which look alike, and things that have at one time been connected but that are now separate. Consequently, a bear claw might be carried to give its owner the strength and fearlessness of a bear, or a monkey's paw might be carried to bestow agility. A hag stone might be thought to aid in childbirth, because of its similarity to the female vagina. A piece of iron (a horseshoe nail, for example) might be believed to give its owner strength.

Among Scottish Witches the acorn is a popular amulet, symbolizing strength and protection. It may be carried in the pocket, or a Witch may make a necklace of strung acorns. Plants, or plant parts such as seeds, pieces of wood, or nuts and berries, are used universally as amulets. A four-leaf clover is a popular example.

The circumstances under which an amulet is found can have great bearing on its significance and importance. For example, if a climber found a feather at the foot of a mountain, it would behoove the finder to carry the feather with him or her to the top of the mountain, since the feather symbolizes the ability to rise. That particular feather would be a very potent amulet in that instance.

Certain items, although not natural in the sense of not having been manufactured, may still be regarded as amulets, rather than talismans, based on the circumstances in which they are found. For example, finding an old key at a time when one is wishing to gain access to something—be it a building, a new job, or even a marriage—would be regarded as fortuitous in that the key symbolizes access. The key should be carried or worn until the goal is achieved.

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Anderson, Victor

With Gwydion Pendderwen, Victor Anderson founded the Faery Tradition of Wicca. Anderson was born in New Mexico but moved to Oregon at an early age. For the majority of his life, he was nearly blind.

At the age of nine, Anderson had a vision in which he encountered the Goddess and the God. With friends, he formed what amounted to a coven and together they worshiped the "Old Gods," holding respect for the earth and for all of nature. They celebrated with song, dance, music, and poetry.

Angelica

One of many plants and herbs used by Witch herbalists. Medicinally, it is a stimulant, a tonic, and an aromatic or diaphoretic. It is used for the kidneys, spleen and heart, and to induce perspiration. Its Latin name is *angelica atropurpurea*. As a diaphoretic, or agent to increase perspiration, it is best administered hot before the recipient goes to bed.

Magically, angelica is used for healing and is often used in conjunction with vervain (*verbena officinalis*), feverfew (*pyrethum parthenium*), and betony (*betonica officinalis*). Angelica leaves hung about the neck are said to protect the wearer from evil spells and conjurations. It featured in early Nordic magic, and was used as a charm to be worn as a protection against the plague, in the fifteenth century.

Animism

From the Latin *anima*, meaning “soul” or “breath,” animism is the doctrine of spiritual beings—the concept that everything in nature, animate and inanimate, has consciousness. The term came into wide currency after being used by Sir Edward Burnett Tylor to describe his theory that primitive peoples believed that there were two parts to humans: the physical, and what he described as a “phantom”—that which was believed to exist in dreams and in trance. He held that early humans went further in believing, by analogical reasoning, that this phantom body existed in all things and could also exist beyond the physical life of the body. In other words, the spirit could live on after death as a “ghost-soul.” Sir James G. Frazer describes it as, “a childlike interpretation of the universe in terms of man.” Tylor felt that the beginnings of religion were to be found in this early belief that there was a soul, like a human’s soul, in all things.

Animism holds that all objects have a spirit or soul, which can survive the destruction of its host. Animistic medicine ascribes sickness and, especially, insanity to the possibility of the soul having been trapped outside the body. Possession, on the other hand, is ascribed to the forced entry of an alien soul into the body.

Animism ties in with ancestor worship and nature worship. Many Witches are believers in animism, giving credence to the idea that all things in nature, animate and inanimate, possess spirits or souls.

In Feng Shui, there are three principles that define the force *Ch’i* and so form the foundation of this ancient Chinese art. They are the concepts that everything is alive, connected, and ever changing. The vital force *Ch’i* is the energy that animates everything, connects it, and moves it through the cycles of life. Everything, then, is believed to have living energy, which is the essence of animism.

(See also **Mana**.)

SOURCES:

Frazer, Sir James G.: *The Worship of Nature*. Macmillan, 1926.

Tylor, Sir Edward Burnett: *Primitive Culture*. New York, 1874.

Ankh

Also known as the *crux ansata*, the ankh is a tau cross with a loop above it. It seems likely that the loop represents the female sexual organ and the tau cross the male. For this reason the ankh is considered a symbol of life, fertility and regeneration. DeTraci Regula suggested that it is derived from an African fetish doll of the



The Ibis-headed Thoth, an Egyptian god, holds an ankh. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

type used to promote fertility. Count Goblet d'Alviella suggested that it derived from primitive Phoenician and Libyan images of the Goddess, as a narrow triangle surmounted by crossbars plus an oval head.

The ancient Egyptian word *ankh* means both “life” and “hand mirror.” In Egyptian art, the ankh is carried by virtually every deity, symbolizing the gift of eternal life which they promised to their worshipers. The loop was frequently painted red and the cross white. There are many scenes of the ankh being applied to the nostrils of the dead, to bring them back to life.

The ankh is a common talisman, for protection and for fertility, and is worn by many Wiccans.

The Church of Wicca, based in a Welsh-Celtic tradition founded by Gavin and Yvonne Frost, uses—perhaps surprisingly, considering their background—an ankh as one of their working tools. They have both a standard ankh, for individual use, and a grand ankh, for coven use. Each is made of wood, usually willow fronds. The tool is used much as other traditions use the coven sword. The standard ankh is measured from the inside of the loop at the top to the base, and should be 2 feet, 8 1/2 inches. This is described by the Frosts as “one megalithic yard.” The coven ankh is two megalithic yards or 5 feet, 5 inches.

There are some Wiccan traditions that are based on ancient Egyptian beliefs and teachings, which use the ankh in various ways. Most common, however, is as jewelry and/or talismans.

SOURCES:

d'Alviella, Count Goblet: *The Migration of Symbols*. University Books, 1956.

Regula, DeTraci: *The Mysteries of Isis*. Llewellyn, 1995.

Anointing

Anointing is part of many religious rituals, be it the anointing of the whole person or the anointing of an object such as a simple talisman. It is, in effect, a symbolic cleansing, a clearing away of negativity, to make the anointed object spiritually pristine.

When a Witch enters the ritual circle, he or she is anointed by the priest. This is done in various ways, according to the tradition of the coven. It might be done with salted water or with oil. Typically, the priest will touch the oil to the Witch's forehead and draw a small pentagram while giving a blessing. If the coven works naked, or *skyclad*, then a typical anointing would be to the lips, right breast, left breast, and back to the lips, forming a triangle.

Anointings are also done in the various degrees, with traditions that have degree systems. An example is found in Gardnerian Wicca where a First Degree anointing is in a form similar to the triangle mentioned above: lips, left breast, right breast, lips. The second degree points are an inverted triangle: genitals, breast, breast, genitals. The third degree is in the shape of a pentagram: genitals, right foot, left knee, right knee, left foot, genitals. There are many variations on these points.

Candle magic is popular among Witches and others. A candle that is used in such a ritual should be anointed first. This is usually done with either a specially prepared candle-anointing oil or pure virgin olive oil. The candle is rubbed with the oil from its center outward, toward the ends, first to one end, all around the candle, and all around then to the other end. The anointer concentrates on the purpose for which the candle will be used while doing this.

Anointing an object, such as a talisman, is done as part of a **consecration**. This is usually done with salted water, after which the object is held in the smoke of burning incense.

Aphrodite

Aphrodite was the Greek goddess of love, beauty and sexual rapture. Her Roman equivalent is Venus. She is directly related to the ancient fertility goddesses and mother goddesses, such as Hathor, Isis, and Astarte. In fact some authorities suggest Aphrodite was Phoenician and was the sister of the Assyro-Babylonian Ishtar and the Syro-Phoenician Astarte. According to some mythological accounts, she was born from the churning and foaming of the sea when Kronos threw Ouranos's severed genitals into the water (the Greek *aphros* means "sea foam"), but this story arose later. In it, Aphrodite arose from the roiling sea and was borne by the waves to Cyprus. At the Cyprian city of Paphos, a temple was erected to her.

In origin, Aphrodite was obviously a fertility goddess. Her domain covered all of nature, animal and plant. She grew to be viewed in many aspects: as Aphrodite Urania, the goddess of pure love; Aphrodite Genetrix, or Nymphia, goddess of marriage (she was prayed to by unmarried women and widows); Aphrodite Pandemos (common) and Aphrodite Porn (courtesan) as the goddess of lust and venal love, and patroness of prostitutes. She was also Aphrodite the Warrior, represented helmeted and carrying arms. She was so worshiped at Sparta.

Aphrodite was married to Hephaestus, the god of fire, metalwork and craftsmanship, but was loved by many others, gods and humans. It is said that she roused the passionate desires of all the immortals and all came under her influence, with the exception of Athene, Artemis and Hestia. Her cult, in one form or another, was found throughout the Mediterranean lands. Festivals in her honor, known as *Aphrodisia*, were common.

Many Witches use the name of Aphrodite as the goddess they worship, while others include her in their listings of honored deities. Of the many symbols sacred to her were the dove, sparrow, goose and swan, the goat, the lynx, and the dolphin. Sacred plants included the rose, myrtle, quince, clover and watermint. Friday is sacred to her and her special festivals are on April 1 and 23, June 23 and July 19. She is associated with the zodiacal signs Taurus and Libra, and connected with the throat, kidneys and lumbar region.

SOURCES:

Duridin-Robertson, Lawrence: *Juno Covella Perpetual Calendar of the Fellowship of Isis*. Cesara Publications, 1982.

Guirand, Félix: *Greek Mythology*. Paul Hamlyn, 1935.

Aquarian Tabernacle Church

Founded in November of 1979 by Peter "Pathfinder" Davis, the Aquarian Tabernacle Church (ATC) has grown by leaps and bounds to become one of the most respected **Wiccan** institutions in the country, if not the world. It describes itself as a "positive, life-affirming, spirituality, a non-dualist, non-racist, non-sexist, non-exclusivist, bi-polar, ecologically oriented faith dedicated to the preservation of Holy Mother Earth, the revival of the Old Gods in a modern context, the achievement of the fullest of human potentials and the creation of a peaceful world of love, freedom, health and prosperity for all sentient beings."

The ATC was formed as a coven dedicated to providing religious services and support to the larger Wiccan community. It grew into the first Wiccan church with full legal status and recognition by the governments of three nations. Today it has congregations in the U.S., Canada, Ireland, Australia, and South Africa, with **elders** in Germany and France. ATC is now the only Wiccan institution ever granted an EDU designation for the Internet. It has also been authorized by the Washington State Higher Education Coordinating Board's Degree Agency to issue academic degrees in Wiccan Ministry, from Assoc. Min. through D. Min. As of early 2001 ATC has twenty-eight students in their third year of the four year B. Min. college level degree program.

ATC feels that the time has come to shed the covenant of secrecy and for Wicca to "emerge from the shadows." Archpriest Peter "Pathfinder" Davis, Primate of the ATC, is the originator of the Aquarian Tabernacle tradition of English traditional-based Wicca and the Primate of the ATC. He has served two terms as president of the Interfaith Council of Washington State and is the secretary of the Washington State Department of Corrections Religious Services Advisory Committee. He is also very active in other Interfaith organizations. The Very Rev. Deborah K. Hudson is vice-president and ATC International Archpriestess, with Rev. Ellen Norris as president of the Woolston-Steen Seminary.

A recent creation of the ATC is Spiral Scouts. This is a nationwide scouting program formally incorporated at Imbolc, 2001. It is designed to compensate for the prejudicial treatment **Pagans** and **Wiccans** receive in mainstream young people's programs. Spiral Scouts is for both boys and girls seven to fourteen years of age (there's also FireFlies for preschool to seven years old) and was developed within the church over more than a year. As word of it spread over the Internet, a demand for information increased and Spiral Scouts International, Inc., was formalized. The organization provides leadership handbooks, awards, merit badges and pins, shoulder patches, and activities handbooks for each local group. The program has a unique approach to scouting in that each group is led by both a male and a female adult, to achieve the balance so central to Paganism. While based on Pagan principles, the program is designed for easy adaptation to other nonhostile minority faiths as well. Teachings include not only the traditional scouting activities of camping and woodlore, but also instruction in the mythologies of the world and the acquisition of interpersonal skills.

SOURCES:

FATE Magazine. Llewellyn, April 2001.

Panegyria. ATC newsletters and www.AquaTabCh.org.

Aradia

In the late 1800s, the folklorist Charles Godfrey Leland, first president of the Gypsy Lore Society, befriended a young woman in Florence, Italy, who claimed to be a **Witch**. Her name was Maddalena and she came from the Romagna Toscana, a wild part of the country. She claimed that her family on her mother's side had been practicing Witches for several generations. Leland obtained from Maddalena a large amount of material pertaining to Witchcraft as practiced in that area and to the Witches' beliefs. He was a prolific author, writing on a wide variety of subjects, and he alludes to some of Maddalena's material in two of his books, *Gypsy Sorcery and Fortune Telling* (1891) and *Etruscan-Roman Remains in Popular Tradition* (1892). But he presents most of it in his book, *Aradia, or the Gospel of the Witches of Italy* (1899). In his preface he says:

If the reader has ever met with the works of the learned folk-lorist G. Pitré, or the articles contributed by "Lady Vere de Vere" to the Italian *Rivista*, or that of J. H. Andrews to *Folk-Lore* he will be aware that in Italy there are numbers of *strege*, fortune-tellers or witches, who **divine** by cards, perform strange ceremonies in which spirits are supposed to be invoked, make and sell **amulets**, and, in fact, comport themselves generally as their reputed kind are wont to do, be they **Black Voodoos** in America or sorceresses anywhere. But the **Italian *strega*** or sorceress is in certain respects a different character from these. In most cases she comes of a family in which her calling or art has been practised for many generations . . . even yet there are old people in the Romagna of the North who know the Etruscan names of the Twelve Gods, and **invocations** to Bacchus, Jupiter, and Venus, Mercury, and the Lares or ancestral spirits, and in the cities are women who prepare strange amulets, over which they mutter spells, all known in the old Roman time, and who can astonish even the learned by their legends of Latin gods, mingled with lore which may be found in Cato or Theocritus. With one of these I became intimately acquainted in 1886, and have ever since employed her specially to collect among her sisters of the hidden spell in many places all the traditions of the olden time known to them.

He goes on to say that among other strange relics, she obtained for him a "Gospel" (*vangelo*) which, he believed, came principally from oral narration. He published this under the title *Aradia, Gospel of the Witches*. Since Leland was seventy-five years old at the time of its publication, many of his fellow folklorists tended to believe that their leader was having his leg pulled by this young Italian "sorceress." In fact, the book was not a big seller. **T.C. Lethbridge** suggests it was "smothered in some way by vested interests." Certainly it was overlooked by such notable witchcraft researchers as **Margaret Alice Murray** and Pennethome Hughes. It was not until 1968 that it was finally reprinted, by the Buckland Museum of Witchcraft and Magic, in New York. Since then there have been a number of reprinted editions.

The book, as produced by Leland, is published in the original Italian together with an English translation. Part of the book is in prose and part in verse.

Lethbridge hazards a guess that the *vangelo*, as presented by Maddalena, dates from about the fourteenth century, although he believes the original oral form goes back to antiquity. He points out that the text, composed for a rural community, focuses on a time when the Witch cult was the religion of the suppressed classes.

The text tells of the Moon, Tana, “Queen of Witches All,” the goddess falling in love with her brother Lucifer the Sun. From this union, Aradia is born and becomes the Messiah of the Witch cult. Leland says that Aradia is obviously Herodias, who was earlier associated with Diana as Queen of the Witches. (Lethbridge compares Aradia to the Welsh goddess *Arianrhod*.) Tana (Diana) tells her daughter that she must become mortal and go down to earth to teach Witchcraft to humankind. This Aradia does, and when finished, she tells her followers that she must return to heaven. If further magical instruction was required, she tells them, they should appeal to Diana, gathering once a month at the full of the moon. At that gathering they were to extinguish all lights and play the game of *Benevento*, which Lethbridge informs us is basically a general sexual mating, then hold a sacred supper.

On Aradia’s return, she grants gifts to her followers: to bless or curse with power, converse with spirits, find hidden treasure, understand the voices of the wind, change water into wine, tell fortunes with cards and with the hand, cure diseases, beautify the ugly, tame wild animals, and more.

There then follows an alternative text in which it is said that Diana was the first act of creation, and divided herself into the darkness and the light. Lucifer, as her other half, is her brother the light. Diana spun the lives of humans on her wheel, which Lucifer turned. She turned mice into stars and became the Queen of Heaven, of Witches, and of the rain. But Diana trembled with desire for Lucifer and when both went down to earth she seduced him and brought about Aradia.

There are a number of Witches who draw on the teachings given in *Aradia*, and many who have adopted some of the language of the *vangelo*. Aradia’s charge to the



Title page of Charles Leland's book *Aradia*, 1899. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

worshippers, exhorting them to “adore the potent spirit of your queen, my mother, great Diana,” was adopted and reworded by **Doreen Valiente**, to become the **Charge of the Goddess in Gardnerian Wicca** (see **Coven, Covenstead, Covendom**.)

Interestingly, Sir Walter Scott remarks that “In Italy we hear of the hags arraying themselves under the orders of Diana (in her triple character of Hecate doubtless), and Herodias, who were the joint leaders of their choir.” This was written in 1831, nearly seventy years before Leland’s book appeared.

SOURCES:

Leland, Charles Godfrey: *Aradia, the Gospel of the Witches*. David Nutt, 1899.
Lethbridge, T. C.: *Witches—Investigating an Ancient Religion*. Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962.
Scott, Sir Walter: *Demonology and Witchcraft*. I & J Harper, 1831.

Arianrhod

The daughter of Dôn, Arianrhod is a Welsh goddess of the dawn. In Celtic mythology (according to the Fourth Branch, or tale, of the *Mabinogi*, center-piece of medieval Welsh literature) Math, the son of Mathonwy, had a compulsion to rest his feet in the lap of a young maiden. The only time he felt this was not necessary was when he had to go to war. Math’s nephew, Gilfaethwy, was in love with the current foot-holder, Goewin, and through machinations of his brother Gwydion got the opportunity to sleep with her, albeit against her will. Upon learning of this, Math turned his two nephews into deer. They remained deer for a year then became wild boars and, a year later, wolves. Returning to his natural form, Gwydion suggested that his sister Arianrhod fill the now vacant post of foot-holder. Before accepting, Math insisted that the girl step across his magic wand, to test her virginity. But she failed the test: as she stepped across the wand, two babies dropped from her. One was Dylan Eil Don, and the other—originally scooped up and hidden by a quick-thinking Gwydion—became Llew Llaw Gyffes, “the Bright One of the Skillful Hand.”

Arianrhod swore that Llew would never bear arms and would never have a human wife. She was tricked on both these counts by the magic of her scheming brother Gwydion, who fashioned a woman from the flowers of the oak, broom and meadowsweet. This became Blodeuwedd, the fairest of them all.

Arianrhod has become a goddess of some note, famed for her beauty. Her name means “silver wheel” and she is associated with the circumpolar stars. She was a fertility goddess as well as a lunar goddess, and a goddess of initiation. The willow was sacred to her.

Stewart Farrar suggests that the apparent foot fetish of Math was, in fact, an indication and recognition of the female principle of sovereignty—“the woman *was* the throne,” the validator of the king’s authority. The Court of Arianrhod, says Farrar, is the disc of stars around the polar star. The path to it is depicted in a modern Wiccan meeting dance, where the Witches follow a spiral path inward, from the outer edge of the circle to the center.

SOURCES:

Farrar, Janet and Stewart: *The Witches’ Goddess*. Phoenix Publishing, 1987.
MacCana, Proinsias: *Celtic Mythology*. Paul Hamlyn, 1970.

Arnold, Charles

A Vietnam War Veteran born in 1947 in Washington, D.C., Charles Arnold moved to Canada following his discharge from the army. There he became involved with the Wiccan Church of Canada and later, in 1984, founded the Spenweik Coven. He became executive director of Wicca Communitas and high priest of the Temple of the Elder Faith.

Arnold worked as a secretary in the Equine Center, Humber College of Applied Arts and Technology, in Toronto. In 1986 he went through the specified channels to apply for religious leave to celebrate the upcoming Wiccan sabbat of Beltane. That leave was denied by the authorities.

The college had a contract with the Ontario Public Service Employees Union and in that contract it was stated that paid leave would be granted to employees for religious reasons. Arnold happened to be the vice-president of the local chapter of that union. He filed a grievance, which was also denied.

At subsequent meetings with the college authorities, Arnold was advised that the only way his application would be accepted would be if he could provide (i) a statement from the Canadian Council of Churches, recognizing Wicca as a religion (the Council does not formally recognize any religion); (ii) a statement from Revenue Canada to the effect that Wicca was a church (Revenue Canada recognizes only charitable corporations that have made application); and (iii) a letter from the head of Wicca stating that the holidays in question should be observed (there is no one leader of all Witchcraft, no "Witch Pope" or the equivalent). With the backing of the union, Arnold took the matter to arbitration.

The college's case proved to be a weak one, largely dismissing Arnold's claims as frivolous. For his part, Arnold gave solid testimony and was ably supported by Rev. Donald Evans, a minister of the United Church of Canada and teacher of philosophy of religion at the University of Toronto. The court ruled in Arnold's favor, coming down heavily on the side of Wicca and supporting it as a religion in its own right. In December of 1987 Wicca gained legal recognition as a religion in Canada for the first time.

SOURCES:

Guiley, Rosemary Ellen: *The Encyclopedia of Witches and Witchcraft*. Facts on File, 1989.

Artemis (Diana)

Daughter of Zeus and Leto and twin sister of Apollo, Artemis was one of the twelve great gods and goddesses of Olympus. She was a Greek goddess mainly associated with wildlife and with human birth. She was originally one of the great Mother Goddesses, with emphasis on her role as virgin huntress and patroness of chastity. As Apollo's twin sister, she is regarded as a divinity of the light, specifically the light of the moon, and as such has been an influential archetype for Witches. Her symbol is the female bear and she is associated with the constellation Ursa Major.

Legend has it that she was born on the sixth day of the month of Thargelion, a day before her brother. As she grew up in her favorite Arcadia, she would hunt accompanied by sixty young Oceanids and twenty nymphs. Armed with bow and arrows given to her by Zeus, she gained the epithet *Apollousa*, “the destructress,” and was a deity of sudden death. She was especially venerated in Arcadia but was also worshiped throughout Greece, Crete and Asia Minor.

Her Roman equivalent is **Diana**, described as “the eternal feminist.” She is the source of magical power for Witches, who gather to adore her at the full of the moon (see ARADIA). The **Canon Episcopi** of the tenth century condemned those who “believe and profess themselves, in the hours of the night to ride upon certain beasts with Diana, the goddess of the pagans.” She is a slim, beautiful virgin, usually depicted with her hair drawn back and wearing a short tunic—a Dorian chiton. She is frequently accompanied by either a young hind or a dog. As goddess of fertility, she is sometimes depicted with many breasts.

Artemis made chastity a strict law, although she did fall in love with Orion, whom she later shot in the head when tricked into doing so by Apollo. She had a dark and vindictive character and many were punished by death or torment when they crossed her or forgot to pay her reverence. Yet she could also be gentle and loving. She was also a music goddess and lover of singing and dancing.

Most Wiccans honor Artemis/Diana as part of the triple goddess aspect of the moon and as a nurturer and protector. She has inspired the **Dianic**, strongly feminist, tradition of Wicca.

SOURCES:

Guirand, Félix: *Greek Mythology*. Paul Hamlyn, 1963.

Aspergillum

A ritual implement used to sprinkle, or “asperge,” holy **water**. This is usually part of a **consecration**, whether of a human prior to, or as part of, a **ritual** or of an object, such as a **talisman**. The aspergillum is often simply a bundle of **herbs**, which are dipped into the water and then shaken to dispense the droplets. But many **Witches** and **magicians** will make an aspergillum by setting a small bundle of sticks into a handle and perhaps decorating that handle. The resulting tool is then formally consecrated before use and becomes one of the Witch’s **working tools**.

Astral Plane; Astral Body

The astral plane is the first plane, or sphere, beyond the physical. It is the plane to which all spirits move after death, when departing the physical body. It is, however, possible to depart the body temporarily, in trance or during sleep, and visit the astral plane. This is known as “astral projection.” Fodor refers to the astral plane as being “material but of a refined texture.” Indeed, we know that all matter is composed of atoms vibrating at certain frequencies. Occultists view the universe as planes divided

by these vibrations, each plane vibrating at a different frequency. The astral plane seems to duplicate the physical world in its appearance to the spirit.

The physical body has a duplicate body which is invisible to all but the most sensitive. This is known as the “astral body” or “etheric double.” This is the form which escapes the physical body in a trance, during sleep, or at death. It might, therefore, be thought of as the form of the spirit or soul, at least the form taken by the spirit or soul immediately following death. As with Fodor’s idea of the astral plane being finely textured material, so it is with the astral body. When it leaves the physical body it is able to pass through seemingly solid objects.

On the astral plane, our astral bodies can move with the speed of thought: to think of another location is to immediately be in that location. This is not as surprising as it might appear initially, when one considers that radio waves move at the speed of light, or 186,000 miles per second, the equivalent of traveling around the world 450 times in one minute!

Many of those capable of astral projection at will have spoken of the initial difficulty of recognizing the state—they will walk about the bedroom not knowing whether they are, in fact, walking in their sleep or actually astrally projecting. It is only the discovery that they can float up to the ceiling or out of the room that confirms that it is actually astral projection.

It is possible to teach oneself to astrally project. There are a number of different techniques found to be effective. Many Witches are capable of it. The idea of witches flying off to the sabbat is thought by some to be attributable to astral projection.

The appearance of ghosts can also be attributed to astral projection in some instances. When the apparent ghost of someone who is known to be still alive is seen, then the most obvious explanation would seem to be that it is actually the astral body of that person that has become visible. Only by learning the circumstances of the person in question at that precise moment can this be verified. The secondary figure of such bilocation is known as a *Jüdel*, *Doppelgänger* (Germany), or *fylgia* (Norway), *Kama Rupa* (Hindu), fetch, fye, or waft (Britain). But the astral plane is also home to the spirits of those who have died. A ghost is therefore more usually the astral body of such a dead person, made visible to those on the earth plane.

The marked difference between the astral bodies of the dead and the living is the fact that the living have a connection between their astral selves and their physical selves. This is in the form of a “silver cord,” a very fine and infinitely elastic connection that is broken only at death. Should the astral body be far from its physical counterpart at a moment when the physical body is disturbed—by a sudden sound or contact—then the astral body returns, at the speed of thought, from the pull of this silver cord. In popular fiction it is intimated that “evil entities” can sever this cord when an astral body is away from its host, causing death. Apart from the improbability of this theory, should any attempt be made to interfere with the cord it would only result in the astral body being *immediately* returned to the physical, so such an “astral murder” could not be committed.

Since the astral bodies of both living and dead are to be found on the astral plane, it is possible for the spirits of the living to meet there with the spirits of the dead. This is the explanation of dreams in which one meets and converses with those who are known to have died. The dreams are memories of nighttime encounters on the astral plane.

The ancient Egyptians believed in what they termed the *Ka*, which was, in effect, the astral body. In Egyptian art it is shown as a duplicate of the physical body and as being the vital force which gave that body life. The Hindus call it the *linga sharira*.

A celebrated and well documented case of astral projection to the astral plane was that of Oliver Fox and his friends, Elkington and Slade. They decided to conduct an experiment in astral projection by agreeing to meet on the astral plane at a specific date and time. Fox and Elkington kept the appointment, which was on the astral plane's equivalent of England's Southampton Common. Slade, however, did not show up. When questioned some days afterward, Slade complained that he had not been able to "dream" at all, hence had not projected to the arranged meeting place.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Doors to Other Worlds*. Llewellyn, 1993.

Buckland, Raymond: *The Committee*. Llewellyn, 1993.

Fodor, Nandor: *Between Two Worlds*. Parker Publishing, 1964.

Fox, Oliver: *Astral Projection*. University Books, 1962.

Astrology

Although not a part of **Witchcraft** itself, many **Witches** do practice astrology, the art of predicting earthly events based on the movement of the planets. Indeed, many regard astrology as one of the fundamentals of **magic**. While some **Witches** keep their personal **Book of Shadows** as a notebook for recording knowledge of **herbs** or **divination**, for example, others keep theirs to record findings and teachings in astrology.

Astrology is the study of the planets in relation to the earth and their influence on human life. *The Emerald Tablet of **Hermes Trismegistus*** (patron of the magical arts, associated with the Egyptian god Thoth) states, "That which is below is like unto that which is above, and that which is above is like unto that which is below, for the performing of the miracles of the One Thing." This is usually shortened to "As above, so below," meaning that what is found in the heavens is reflected here on earth.

From this study of the planets' influences, a "natal chart," or "genethliacal horoscope," may be drawn. This is, in effect, a map of the heavens as they were at the very moment of birth, as seen from the geographical location of that birth. This map is divided into twelve "houses," each with a different jurisdiction. The planets are seen as influencing the subject both directly on the subject and in relation to their relative positions. By plotting these juxtapositions, the astrologer is able to interpret forces at work on the person being reviewed.

It has been argued that astrology is invalid, since it stems from a time when it was believed that the earth was the center of the universe, with the planets revolv-

ing around it. However, the basis of astrology is the relative positions of the planets to the earth, *as viewed from the earth*. It therefore makes no difference whether or not those planets do in fact revolve around the earth or if they revolve around the Sun (or around anything else, for that matter!). The relative positions, as seen from here, remain the same.

In addition to the Sun and Moon, the planets reviewed are Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune, and Pluto. For the purposes of astrology, the year is divided into twelve houses: January 21 through February 19 (Aquarius), represented by the Water Carrier; February 20 through March 20 (Pisces), the Fish; March 21 through April 19 (Aries), the Ram; April 20 through May 19 (Taurus), the Bull; May 20 through June 20 (Gemini), the Twins; June 21 through July 22 (Cancer), the Crab; July 23 through August 21 (Leo), the Lion; August 22 through September 22 (Virgo), the Virgin; September 23 through October 22 (Libra), the Scales; October 23 through November 21 (Scorpio), the Scorpion; November 22 through December 21 (Sagittarius), the Archer; and December 22 through January 20 (Capricorn), the Goat. (The actual dates may vary, depending at what hour of the night the Moon passes from one sign to the next.) The twenty-four hour period around the change from one sign to another is known as the “*cusps*,” although the term applies specifically to the very starting point of the new sign.

Looking at the twelve Houses of the natal chart, the First House, known as the Ascendant, deals with the physical build, childhood, temperament, environment, development of personality and constitution. The Second House is material possessions, money, and the individual’s attitude to these things. Third House is family connections, education, and communication. Fourth House is hereditary characteristics, houses, land, and the parental home. Fifth House is procreation, sexuality, children, pleasure, sport, speculation and risks. Sixth house is health, physical well-being, and subordinates. Seventh House is partnership, marriage, close relationships, the community, and obvious enemies. Eighth House is death and the afterlife, accidents, spouse’s money, stocks, bonds, inheritance. Ninth house is philosophy, religion, mental exploration, spirituality, foreigners, languages, and travel. Tenth house is vocation, ambitions, professional and public life, outward appearance, and discipline. Eleventh house is friendships, clubs and societies, hopes, and wishes. Twelfth house is seclusion, escapism, self-sacrifice, obscure difficulties, and hidden enemies.

The actual positions of the planets are found in a book of tables known as the “*Ephemeris*,” which details the positions at the many different minutes and hours over the years. It is possible to look back and establish the positions of every one of the planets a hundred years or more in the past for sixty or more years into the future. In this way, the astrologer is able to forecast what the influences will be on the individual at any specific time (not just at birth) and in any specific geographical location. Measurement of time is given in what is known as “*sidereal time*,” measured by the stars rather than the sun. The stars appear to move around the sky at a faster rate than the sun, and this must be allowed for in sidereal time.

Astrology was supposedly invented by the Babylonians and by the Egyptian god Thoth (Hermes Trismegistus), known to the Romans as Mercury. The Romans



Arabic astrologers, 1513. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

held astrology in great repute, especially under the reign of Tiberius. The art developed in Mesopotamia, and applied primarily to kings and high dignitaries rather than to the common person. The Arabians, c. 825 CE, became very proficient in its use and were instrumental in promoting it. With the conquest of Spain, the Moors

carried the knowledge there. As the art of **Ceremonial Magic** took hold throughout Europe, so astrology spread, flourishing in England and France, Italy and Germany. But by the early eighteenth century, astrology had gone underground due to a rising skepticism following the growth of its younger sibling astronomy. But by the end of the nineteenth century there was a revival of interest, especially in England and, later, in France. Germany did not rediscover the art until just before World War One. The European revival was attributable to the spurt of interest in occultism generally, with the practices of the Golden Dawn, the teachings of Helena Blavatsky, and interest in the **Kabbalah** and Theosophy. Today there is a tremendous interest in astrology, with enthusiastic practitioners in abundance.

The planets are seen as ruling all things, from herbs and gemstones to times for certain actions. Magicians and Witches will, therefore, observe these rulerships. A particular herb, for example, to be most effective, might have to be cut in the hour of Venus on the day of Mercury. Of two possible herbs that could be efficacious, one ruled by, say, Jupiter, might be far better than one ruled by Saturn. When making a magic wand, it might be necessary to cut the wood from a tree at a particular hour and day, and to work on it—inscribing and anointing it—at certain times and, finally, to consecrate it under a certain sign. Nicholas Culpeper, the famous astrologer-physician of the early seventeenth century, went strictly by the astrological rulerships of herbs.

Answering questions by means of astrology is known as horary astrology. There is also political or mundane astrology, which is astrological interpretation applied to inanimate objects, collections of people, or governments. So astrology can be a very powerful tool, and has a part to play in both magic and in Witchcraft.

SOURCES:

Parker, Derek and Julia: *The Compleat Astrologer*. McGraw-Hill, 1971.

Athamé

The one personal **tool**, used by every **Witch**, whether **Solitary** or **coven** member, is the athamé (pronounced either *a-tham-ay* or *a-th'm-ay*). It is a knife with a straight, double-edged blade, although a few traditions accept a single-edged blade. In many traditions, the handle and/or blade is incised with various symbols pertinent to that particular tradition. The handle is usually black, to aid in the tool's absorption of energies from the user.

The name *athamé* is of unknown origin, although the *Clavicle of Solomon*, an ancient **magical** manuscript or **grimoire** from 1572, mentions the name **Arthana** in connection with a similar ritual knife.

As with all magical tools, the best are entirely handmade. Ready-made, store-bought, knives are acceptable as long as the owner then does some work on the tool, if only the carving of the symbols. In this way, it is believed that he or she is putting personal energy into the knife.

Iron has universally been thought of as a magical metal, being found in meteoric stones that fell to earth. The Ancient Egyptians called iron “metal from the sky”; the Aztecs called it “the gift of heaven.” Its power was seen to come from the

fact that it was scarcer than wood or stone and yet far superior to these for the making of tools and weapons. A specialist was needed to fashion the metal and that specialist, the smith, came to be regarded as magical as well.

Knives and **swords** used in magic invariably have metal blades, reflecting this belief in the power of iron. The one exception in **Wicca** seems to be the **Frost** tradition, where iron is studiously avoided in favor of brass or copper.

Sirdar Ikbal Ali Shah says that a sixteenth-century manuscript, telling of the manufacture of a magical sword, specifies that it be fashioned of unalloyed steel tempered in the blood of a goose or the juice of the pimpernel, consecrated on a Sunday and exorcised by being exposed to a fire made of laurel and vervane (*verberna*). Other manuscripts say that the tool should be consecrated in the hour and on the day of Mercury. Witches are not as specific, being content simply to consecrate with **salt** and **water** (*never blood*) and the smoke of **incense**.

The athamé is not used for physical cutting. It is a ritual tool, used for casting a **Circle**, for cutting through such a Circle to enter or leave, and for **invocations** and **evocations**. It can serve in place of a **Sword** or a **Wand**, if necessary. From such use, it becomes charged with the energy of its owner and can act like a capacitor, storing energy for later release.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Buckland's Complete Book of Witchcraft*. Llewellyn, 1986.
Shah, Sirdar Ikbal Ali: *Occultism, Its Theory and Practice*. Roy Publishers, n. d.

Aura

For centuries it has been believed that certain persons, perhaps through their deep spirituality, emanate colored lights from the head (“nimbus”) or even the entire body (“aureole”). In early Christian and other religious art, these lights are depicted as “halos,” or “glorias,” but they are more generally known as the *aura*. Crowns and the headdresses of priests symbolize this aura emanating from the head.

Auras are not restricted to especially holy people but can be seen by sensitives, under the right circumstances, around all living things, animate and inanimate. In the sixteenth century, Paracelsus described the aura as “The vital force (which) is not enclosed in man but radiates round him like a luminous sphere.” Nandor Fodor says it is a “permanent radiation around the human body,” and goes on to say that “mystics distinguish four different types of aura; the Nimbus, the Halo, the Aureola and the Glory. The first two stream from the head, the aureola from the whole body, the glory is a combination of the two. Theosophists speak of five divisions: the health aura, the vital aura, the Karmic aura, the aura of character and the aura of spiritual nature.”

Although immediately obvious to sensitives, almost anyone can be trained to see and even to feel the aura. Many Witches are able to see and feel it and use the knowledge obtained in different ways. It is believed that the aura may reflect the general health of the person from whom it emanates. It can therefore be used to diagnose illness, by viewing the colors present and their relative brilliance. It is also

said that colors change dependent upon mood: red for anger, lilac or purple for spirituality, pink for love, or green for deceit. Much about a person can be determined just from looking at their emanations. By projecting—either by light or simply by thought—appropriate therapeutic colors, healings can occur.

In 1858, industrial chemist Baron Karl von Reichenbach discovered radiation emanating from crystals, magnets, plants and animals. In 1911, Dr. Walter Kilner of St. Thomas' Hospital, London, devised screens through which this radiation could be seen.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Practical Color Magick*. Llewellyn, 1983.

Fodor, Nandor: *Encyclopedia of Psychic Science*. London, 1934.

Spence, Lewis: *An Encyclopedia of Occultism*. University Books, 1960.

Autumnal Equinox

Also known as *Mabon* and *Alban Elfed*, the Autumnal Equinox is one of the eight Greater **Sabbats** of **Witchcraft**. It occurs on or about the Twenty-first day of September (depending upon when the Sun enters Libra). This is the time of the final harvest, when earth settles down for the approaching winter months.

Many Witches incorporate aspects of the Eleusinian Mysteries into their celebrations. These mysteries center around the myth of Demeter going in search of her daughter Persephone (or *Kore*, meaning “the maiden”). Persephone is abducted by Hades and taken down into the Underworld. In great sorrow, Demeter travels the world in search of her daughter. Learning that it was Zeus who allowed his brother Hades to take Persephone, Demeter withdraws from Olympus and refuses to allow the earth to grow its grain. Zeus eventually has to capitulate and, with Persephone's return (for all but three months of the year), Demeter allows the soil to become fertile again.

In **Gardnerian Wicca** there is also a myth of the Goddess going into the Underworld in this instance to “solve all mysteries, even the mystery of death.” In Saxon **Witchcraft** (**Seax-Wica**) there is the myth of Freya descending in search of her necklace, *Brosingamene*, stolen by Loki the Mischief Maker. All of these variations relate to the coming dormancy of the earth for the winter months, awaiting the return of life in the spring. This is the central theme of the Wiccan Autumnal Equinox. As Janet and Stewart Farrar say: “**Lughnasadh** marked the actual gathering of the grain harvest, but in its sacrificial aspect; the Autumn Equinox marks the *completion* of the harvest, and thanksgiving for the abundance.”

Symbols of this festival include wheat and corn stalks, gourds, squash, pine cones, and a **besom**. A **corn dolly** was often made from the last of the stalks cut, and this was kept carefully through the winter. It was known variously as Wheat Bride, Kern baby, Corn Dolly, Rye Mother, Great Mother, or Old Woman. In many areas of Europe, it was believed that the Corn goddess herself resided in those stalks, having been driven out of the rest of the crop as it was cut.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Ray Buckland's Magic Cauldron*. Galde Press, 1995.

Farrar, Janet and Stewart: *Eight Sabbats for Witches*. Robert Hale, 1981.

Kaster, Dr. Joseph: *Putnam's Concise Mythological Dictionary*. G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1963.



Avebury, Wiltshire. Courtesy Janet and Colln Bord/Fordean Picture Library.

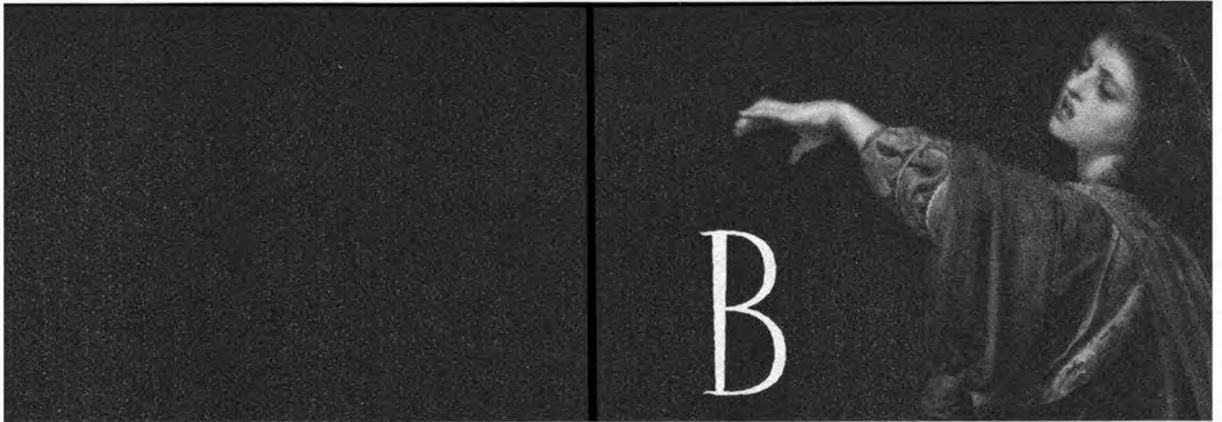
Avebury

Possibly built by the Bronze Age “beaker people,” Avebury, in Wiltshire, is the oldest of the megalithic henges in Britain. It stands at one end of a shallow valley, close to the river Kennet and not far from Silbury Hill, the largest manmade mound in Europe. Avebury covers an area of twenty-eight acres, including the village, and is circular in form and bounded by a deep ditch. The largest of the stones remaining standing in the outer circle is twenty-five feet tall and weighs over sixty tons. An avenue of standing stones extends for one and a half miles between Avebury and a smaller circle of stones known as the Sanctuary. Within the main, large circle are two smaller, equal-sized circles of nearly sixty huge, sandstone rocks known as sarsen stone. The Avebury site is comparable to the better-known Stonehenge, twenty miles away, which also uses sarsen stone.

Archeologists have estimated that this sacred, religious site was in use for at least a thousand years, from the Neolithic Age into the Bronze Age. It is said to be haunted, with figures, lights and music having been seen on various occasions. British **Witches** consider this a psychic center and believe it to have been used for **Goddess** worship.

SOURCES:

Bord, Janet and Collin: *Atlas of Magical Britain*. Sidgwick & Jackson, 1990.
Hadingham, Evan: *Circles and Standing Stones*. Anchor Books, 1976.



BABA YAGA see WITCHCRAFT IN MYTH, LEGEND AND FAIRY TALES

Balefire; Bonfire

The name "balefire" probably comes either from the Celtic word *bel*, meaning "bright," or from the Anglo-Saxon *bael*, meaning "a fire."

In the seventh and eighth centuries, Christian synods attempted to ban celebratory balefires as pagan. The sixty-fifth canon of the third council of Constantinople (680 CE) said, "Those fires that are kindled by certain people on new moons before their shops and houses, over which also they use ridiculously and foolishly to leap, by a certain ancient custom, we command them from henceforth to cease." The "ancient custom" referred to was that of dancing around and leaping over the balefires that were lit to celebrate the old pagan festivals. These fires would be lit on village greens and on hilltops across Britain and much of Europe. They could be seen at each of the eight great **sabbat** festivals of the **Old Religion**.

All domestic fires were extinguished on the day before the festival day. The Balefires, or "need-fires," would then be lit at the rising of the moon, on that festival eve. The celebrations took place, with participants dancing sunwise, or *deosil*, around the flames. Some couples would take hands and leap over the flames, to promote fertility. Sometimes there were two fires, and cattle and flocks of sheep would be driven between the two, again to promote fertility.

Ovid mentions (in *Fasti*) leaping over the fires taking place at the *Palilia*, the Feast of Pales, the shepherd's **goddess** of the Romans. Evidence presented at the trial of Jonet Watson, of Dalkeith, Scotland, in 1661, refers to a meeting of Witches that took place "about the time of the last Balefire night."

Just before the next moon rise, and before the Balefire was extinguished, fire from it would be carried off to rekindle the domestic fires. The ashes of the fire were

treated as sacred, and used in **amulets**, **charms** and **spells**, and also in **divination**. Divination would also take place using the flames while the fire was burning.

Frazer states that there are two schools of thought concerning Balefires. One school suggests that these fire ceremonies were in the nature of imitative magic, to ensure a needed supply of sunshine “for men, animals and plants by kindling fires which mimic on earth the great source of light and heat in the sky.” On the other hand, he says, it has been said that the fires do not refer to the sun but are “simply purification,” designed to destroy all harmful influences.

In the village of Whalton, Northumberland, England, the Baal Fire is still in evidence on Old Midsummer’s Eve (July 4). It is said to date “from time immemorial.” Traditionally a cart full of gorse and other fuel, pulled by two horses, was brought in as far as the village boundary. From there it had to be carried by hand, accompanied by much shouting and the blowing of horns. Local landowners contributed beer and food to the festivities.

Today’s Witches follow the traditional rituals, including pouring libations onto the flames as offerings to the **gods**, divining in the flames, and often throwing into the fire pieces of paper on which they have written wishes, prayers, or lists of things they wish to be rid of.

In Britain especially, the word Bonfire is now used more than Balefire. Possibly this derives from the French word *bon*, meaning good or excellent, or from “boon fire”—a fire at which one might receive a boon, or a gift.

SOURCES:

Cooper, J. C.: *The Aquarian Dictionary of Festivals*. Aquarian Press, 1990.

Frazer, Sir James: *The Golden Bough*. Macmillan, 1951.

Kightly, Charles: *The Customs and Ceremonies of Britain*. Thames & Hudson, 1986.

BAMBERG WITCHES see GERMAN WITCHCRAFT

Banish

To dismiss a conjured **spirit** from a **magic circle**. It is, however, more forceful than a simple “dismissal,” since it forces the spirit to depart, whether it wishes to or not. In that sense, it would not be used in a **Wiccan** circle, since the only invited “guests” are the **gods** themselves, who come and go as they please.

The **ceremonial magic** ritual of banishing involves inscribing **pentagrams** in the air, at the four quarters, with a consecrated **sword**, invoking archangels, and saying special prayers. A “banishing ritual” is often used to be rid of an uninvited spirit. It is, therefore, akin to an exorcism.

The banishing pentagram is usually drawn starting at the lower left corner and moving up to the apex, then on around to finish, closing, at the starting point. It can, however, become more involved if tied in with the elements of **earth**, **air**, **fire**, **water** and **spirit**. In those cases, the starting point is away from the point associated with the particular element. (e.g. Fire would start in the lower right corner, going up to the apex, since it is the lower right corner which is associated with the element of fire.)

Specific incense is also used in the banishing ritual. This includes such ingredients as angelica, basil, bay, mugwort, Solomon's seal, St. John's wort, and yarrow.

Herbs associated with banishment include angelica, asafoetida, basil, buckthorn, clove, cumin, devil's bit, dragon's blood, elder, fleabane, fumitory, garlic, heliotrope, horehound, juniper, mistletoe, mullin, pepper, pine, rue, tamarisk, and yarrow.

Banshee

From the Irish *bean sídhe* and the Gaelic *ban síth*, meaning "woman of the fairies." A Banshee is a supernatural being in Irish and other Celtic folklore who screams or "keens," usually at night. This keening is supposedly a forecast of death in the home where it is heard. It is said that the Banshee only appears to, or is heard by, families of pure Irish descent or as Sir Walter Scott put it, "families of the pure Milesian stock, and never ascribed to any descendant of the proudest Norman or boldest Saxon."

The Banshee appears in or near the home during the hours of darkness and keens in an unknown language. She may remain there for a number of nights. Although the person who dies may be elsewhere at the time of death, the Banshee appears at the ancestral home.

Scott mentions a Scottish belief in a Banshee: "Several families of the Highlands of Scotland anciently laid claim to the distinction of an attendant **spirit**, who performed the office of the Irish banshie. Among them, however, the functions of this attendant genius, whose form and appearance differed in different cases, were not limited to announcing the dissolution of those whose days were numbered. The Highlanders contrived to exact from them other points of service, sometimes as warding off dangers of battle; at others, as guarding and protecting the infant heir through the dangers of childhood; and sometimes as condescending to interfere even in the sports of the chieftain."

Katharine Briggs describes the Banshee as "very pale, with long streaming hair and eyes fiery red from weeping. She wears a gray cloak over a green dress." According to other reports, however, she can appear as an old hag dressed in a winding sheet.

Peter Haining suggests that the Banshee is associated with three other spirit forms: *Babd*, the Irish **goddess** of battles; *Morrigan*, ancient Celtic goddess of fertility, war and **magic**; and the Scottish *bean-nighe*, an old woman who is seen washing blood-stained clothing at a stream, prophesying death in battle.

SOURCES:

Briggs, Katharine: *Abbey Lubbers, Banshees and Boggarts*. Pantheon Books, 1979.

Haining, Peter: *The Irish Leprechaun's Kingdom*. Granada, 1981.

Scott, Sir Walter: *Demonology and Witchcraft*. J & J Harper, 1831.

Baphomet

In 1307, one of the accusations leveled by Philip IV of France against the Knights Templar, in an effort to lay his hands on their enormous wealth, was that they worshiped an image in the form of a human skull named Baphomet. Supposed-



Image of a Baphomet, with a pentagram on his forehead, 1896. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

ly there were a number of these skulls, or even whole human heads, one kept at each of the Templar centers.

The name Baphomet is of unknown origin. It has been suggested by Montague Summers that it comes from the Greek words *baphe* and *metis*, meaning “absorption into wisdom.” Others see it as a corruption of the name Mahomet (Mohammed) to Bahomet in Provence, home of the Cathars, or Albigenses, with whom the Templars are sometimes linked.

As a result of the attacks on the Knights Templar, their leader and Grand Master, Jacques de Molay, was burned at the stake. He was accused of worshiping the devil, of heresy, and of homosexuality. Under **torture**, only twelve of the 231 knights examined admitted to knowing anything of the head or skull. Some described it as simply a skull, some said it was a head made of wood, some a head made of metal. It was also variously described as having feet or breasts, or being bearded. However described, the consensus seems to have been that it was worshiped and regarded as a bringer of fertility and abundance.

Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall believed that the Knights Templar were, in reality, “Gnostics,” or secret heretics. He referred to objects of thirteenth century art, consisting of various statues, goblets, and coffers, depicting androgynous figures, often with a skull at the feet, and displaying the symbol of the **pentagram**. As drawn by the nineteenth century French magician Eliphas Levi, Baphomet was a human-like figure with a goat’s horned head and hind legs, and with bat’s wings. A torch stood between the horns, a caduceus rose as the phallus, and a pentagram was inscribed on the goat’s forehead.

Doreen Valiente points out that there were similarities between these depictions, descriptions of the Templars’ Baphomet, and **deities** acknowledged in **Witchcraft**. For example, **Wiccan** deities are thought of as **fertility** figures, or bringers of life. They are associated with a **horned god** and with a **goddess**. In addition, the pentagram is used by Witches.

Valiente goes on to point out that there are frequently “inner circles” to magical orders. Such may have been the case with the Templars, judging from statements like that of one of the accused, Stephen de Staplebridge, who admitted to there being “two professions in the order of the Temple, the first lawful and good, the second contrary to the faith.” He was admitted to the inner “profession” a year or so after his original **initiation** into the Templars.

It was not unusual for deities to be thought of as androgynous. One of Dionysus’s titles was *Diphues*, or “double-sexed.” Mithras was sometimes so presented. The Syrian god Baal was also sometimes presented as androgynous.

Aleister Crowley took the name Baphomet, as a member of the Ordo Templis Orientalis, a secret society focused on sexual practices, formed in Germany at the end of the nineteenth century.

Although the Eliphas Levi drawing is popularly reproduced and often associated with Witchcraft, through the symbolism mentioned above, it actually is not a

part of Witchcraft *per se*. Some individual Witches acknowledged it as a representation of a Wiccan fertility deity, while others abhor it.

SOURCES:

Cavendish, Richard (ed.): *Man, Myth and Magic*. BPC Publishing, 1970.

Valiente, Doreen: *An ABC of Witchcraft Past and Present*. St. Martins Press, 1973.

Barrett, Francis

Francis Barrett, F.R.C., a professor of chemistry, was the author of the occult classic *The Magus*, published in 1801. The book's subtitle was "Celestial Intelligencer, being a complete system of occult philosophy." Many later books and compendiums borrowed heavily from Barrett's work.

Living on Norton Street, in Marylebone, London, an area favored by artists at the end of the eighteenth century, Barrett took on students of the occult and taught them the magical arts.

Timothy d'Arch Smith, in his introduction to the University Books facsimile edition of *The Magus*, states that Barrett's book was at that time the only attempt to revive the mysteries of magic and the occult, and that Barrett had obviously put a lot of time and effort into his work. "He clearly spent long hours toiling over translations of qabalistic and occult lore which had never before been translated into English or which were issued in the seventeenth century and were then, as now, of the last rarity."

In his preface, Barrett says, "We have, at a vast labour and expence, both of time and charges, collected whatsoever can be deemed curious and rare, in regard to the subject of our speculations in Natural Magic—the Cabala—Celestial and Ceremonial Magic—Aichymy—and magnetism . . . we therefore explain, in the clearest and most intelligible manner, how **Talismans** may be made, for the execution of various purposes. . . . We likewise shew the proper and convenient times; under what constellations and aspects of the planets they are to be formed, and the times when they are most powerful to act. . . ." He goes on to enumerate the many subjects covered in the book. The illustrations, magical tables, seals and talismans have been reproduced in numerous subsequent books on magic and the occult arts.

Barrett did believe that **Witches** used their power for evil purposes but did not believe that power came from the devil. The book was a central part of the Gothic revival of interest into occult matters then burgeoning in England. It was written when Barrett himself was quite young, yet little is known of what became of him after the publication of this book.

SOURCES:

Barrett, Francis: *The Magus*. University Books, 1967.

Bath

In the *Pyramid Texts* of ancient Egypt (c. 2500 BCE), the oldest known writings, there is mention of the ritual bath as being both purifying and revivifying. The *Pyramid Texts*

deal with mortuary practices designed to ensure the successful resurrection of the dead. But similar baths were applicable to the living. In the Eleusinian **Mysteries**, the **initiation** started with bathing in the sea, to cleanse the Initiate both physically and spiritually. In the Mysteries of Cybele and Attis there was also a ritual bath, known as the rite of *taurobolium*, although this time it was in the blood of a sacrificed bull.

Ritual baths, designed to cleanse spiritually, are a part of many cultures and have been for millennia. The Dead Sea Scrolls speak of such rituals, saying of the new member to a holy community that “his flesh will be cleansed by the sprinkling of water for impurity and by the sanctification of himself with purifying water.”

In most **Witchcraft** traditions, there is a ritual bath before every **Circle**. It is especially important, of course, prior to an initiation. The bath consists of no more than a partial ritual immersion in water to which **salt**, symbolizing the life force, has been added. Some Witches do add herbs to their baths (e.g. lavender, lemon verbena, rosemary, valerian) and some add oils, but only the salt is mandatory.

SOURCES:

Cunningham, Scott: *The Magic of Incense. Oils and Brews*. Llewellyn, 1986.

Malbrough, Ray T.: *Spiritual Baths in Magico-Religious Practice*. Raymond Buckland, 2000.

BAY COVEN (MOVIE) see *Eve of the Demon*

Bedknobs and Broomsticks (movie)

Based on two books by Mary Norton, *The Magic Bedknob* (J. M. Dent, 1945) and *Bonfires and Broomsticks* (J. M. Dent, 1947), the 1971 Disney movie was directed by Robert Stevenson and starred Angela Lansbury and David Tomlinson. It tells of two London children, Carrie (Cindy O’Callaghan) and Charlie (Ian Weighall), sent to stay in the country with an aunt (Lansbury), during World War II. They discover that she is an apprentice **Witch**. Their hilarious adventures, as she tries to use her powers to fight the Germans, lead them to aid in the war effort. There is no true **Witchcraft**, but it is a fun story for children and adults alike, with no negativity about the **Craft**. The film includes an excellent underwater episode, with live action combined with animation.

Bell

For thousands of years bells have been instruments of **ritual** and **magic**. The ringing of bells was thought to drive away evil **spirits**, hence the wearing of bells around the necks of cattle and other domestic animals to keep them free of disease and clear of malicious spirits. In medieval Europe, bells were rung during plagues in the belief that the sound would drive away the pestilence and any evil emanations. Doctors would even prescribe the ringing of bells when a patient was sick. The ringing of a bell is part of the exorcism ritual and the rite of excommunication (see **Bell, Book and Candle**). In Italy, bells are placed around the necks of cattle and horses to protect them from the **evil eye**; in China, they are rung to bring rain; in Haiti, a small silver bell

hangs from the handle of the *asson*, the Voodoo priest's ritual tool. In Wicca, a bell is frequently rung at the beginning and end of rituals and within certain rites.

The outer shell of the bell is equated with the female element and the inner clapper with the male. Together, then, there is union. The vibrations created by the ringing of the bell are thought to raise spiritual power and increase magical energy. Bells are rung for fertility, for celebration, and for magical workings.

A common belief in the Middle Ages was that the sound of church bells ringing was abhorrent to witches and would cause them to fall from their broomsticks while they rode across the sky to the sabbat. Some old church bells are inscribed with the words *fulgura frango, dissipo ventos* meaning "lightning and thunder, I break asunder." It was thought that the ringing of church bells would overpower the evil spirits who caused storms and thereby temper the weather. Many church bells were dedicated to specific saints and were blessed in great ceremony.

The practice of hanging bells from clothing is found worldwide and was originally done for protection from evil spirits. Bells have been hung from the clothing of the sick and those afraid of being possessed or cursed. Medicine is sometimes drunk from a bell, in the belief that the sacred "cup" will give added potency to the potion.

In necromantic rituals, bells are used to help raise the dead and return their spirits to this earthly realm so that they might be interrogated. The practice of hanging a small bell on the door of a shop was not originally to tell the shopkeeper if anyone had entered, but instead to ensure that no evil spirits came inside.

The oldest bell in the world was found near Babylon and is believed to be over three thousand years old. The Roman emperor Gaius Octavianus (63 BCE–14 CE), who later became the first Emperor Augustus, hung a large bell from the Temple of Jupiter. In Athens the priests of Cybele used handbells in their rites, while in Sparta women walked the streets ringing small bells when a king died. Small bells made of copper and dating to the pre-Inca era have been found in ancient Peruvian tombs.

The sixth century saw the first use of church bells, although they were not introduced into western churches until the eighth century. They were termed *seings* or *signa*, and were not rung but simply struck with a wooden or metal hammer. (From this practice came the word *toc-seing* or *tocsin* applied to the peals of the Middle Ages.)

Witches believe that there is power in the vibrations caused by the ringing of a bell (or the sounding of a "singing bowl" or shaking of a sistrum, or ritual rattle). Together with the smoke of incense, the ringing of bells attunes a magic circle and brings great harmony.

SOURCES:

Encyclopedia Britannica. William Benton, 1964.

Lacroix, Paul: *Military and Religious Life in the Middle Ages*. Bickers & Son, 1876.

Bell, Book and Candle

This phrase comes from the Roman Catholic rite of "major excommunication" or anathema," which dates from the middle of the eighth century. It is the equivalent of a Catholic curse, applied to someone who has transgressed the strict laws of the

Church—someone who has “made shipwreck of their faith,” either by flagrant and impenitent immorality or by a denial of fundamental Christian teachings.

It is said that the **bell** represents the open announcement of the act, the book is the authority of the words spoken by the bishop, and the candle (or taper) symbolizes the possibility that the ban could be lifted, should the accused be sufficiently repentant.

The rite is always carried out in a public place. The excommunicating bishop gathers together with twelve **priests**, each holding a lit taper. The bishop says, “We separate him . . . from the precious body and blood of the Lord and from the society of all Christians; we exclude him from our holy mother the Church . . . we declare him excommunicate and anathema; we judge him damned and condemned to eternal fire with Satan and his angels and all the reprobate, so long as he will not burst the fetters of the demon, do penance and satisfy the Church.” A bell is rung as the book is closed. The priests respond with “So be it!” then they extinguish their taper and trample on it. This signifies the end of the culprit’s attachment to the Church and, indeed, his soul from the sight of God. In some countries, local churchgoers would subsequently carry a coffin to the door of the one excommunicated, and stones might be thrown at his house.

Bell, Book and Candle (movie)

A 1958 movie directed by Richard Quine, starring James Stewart, Kim Novak, and Jack Lemmon. Based on a John Van Druten stage play, it tells the story of a beautiful **Witch** named Gillian Holroyd (Novak) who loses her powers when she falls in love with an about-to-be-married publisher named Shepard Henderson (Stewart). Holroyd is aided and abetted by her crazy Witch brother Mickey (Jack Lemmon), and opposed by her mentor Mrs. De Pass (Hermione Gingold). Holroyd’s cat-**familiar** is named Piewacket, one of the names actually used by witches according to the frontispiece of **Matthew Hopkins’ Discoverie of Witches** (1647). Brother Mickey is erroneously described as a **Warlock** but other than that the **Witchcraft** presented is benign and not Satanic.

Bell Witch

The **Bell Witch** was, in fact, not a Witch at all. It had many of the attributes of a poltergeist but was more of a mischievous **spirit**. It is very rare that a poltergeist will actually harm anyone, so it seems that the Bell Witch could not really be called a poltergeist, for it not only harmed many but eventually killed a man.

John Bell was a farmer who lived in Robertson County, Tennessee, in the early 1800s. His problems began in 1817, exactly thirty years before the generally accepted birth of spiritualism, with the Fox family in Hydesville, New York. Yet Bell’s manifestations resembled those of the Fox family in many particulars. They started with knockings on walls, scraping noises, and rocks falling on the roof, gnawing noises on bedposts and scratchings on floor and ceiling. It seemed like typical poltergeist phe-

nomena, especially since much of it seemed to center around Betsy, one of Bell's nine children. Betsy was twelve years old and going through puberty, as is typical with those who are the focus of poltergeist activity. For a long time the Bells tried to ignore the sounds, but they eventually confided in a neighbor and friend, James Johnson.

Johnson tried an exorcism and for a time the disturbances stopped. But they soon resumed, worse than ever. As the focus, Betsy had her hair pulled viciously and her face slapped hard enough to leave hand imprints on her cheeks. All of the children would cry out in fright and Betsy would scream in pain.

On Johnson's advice, Bell called in a number of neighbors to observe and advise. They became so intrigued, however, that they got into a conversation with the spirit—who now spoke to them—and if anything, added to the confusion by asking it to rap the walls and respond to similar comments. Asked by one of the neighbors who it was, the spirit replied that it was “a spirit from everywhere . . . any place at any time. I've been created millions of years.” When further prodded, it went on to say it was the “witch” of Kate Batts, another neighbor with whom Bell had a very bad relationship. From this, the spirit became known as “Kate” and was generally regarded as a witch.

Sticks and stones were thrown at the Bell children as they went to and from school. Rocks rained down on the roof of the farmhouse. What sounded like heavy chains were heard being dragged across floors. Several members of the family received blows to the face, as though punched hard. Betsy began having fainting fits and frequent shortness of breath.

Meanwhile, the “Bell Witch” would mimic the voices of the two local Baptist ministers, repeating sermons they had delivered. But quickly these Christian words changed to vile obscenities, cursing Jack Bell, and vowing to torment him for the rest of his life. The spirit managed to break up Betsy's close friendship with her boyfriend, ending thoughts of an engagement between the two. It eventually drove Bell to take to his bed, his body shaking and his face twitching uncontrollably.

Finally, in the fall of 1820, three years after the psychic attacks had started, Bell received a terrific blow to the head when he tried to rise from his bed and go outside. He collapsed, with tears running down his cheeks. He soon dropped into an apparent coma and died the next day. In Bell's medicine chest was found a vial of dark colored liquid that had not been prescribed by his doctor. When it was given to a cat, the animal convulsed and died.

After Bell's death, the attacks gradually decreased. They returned briefly as promised, seven years later, then ceased altogether.

SOURCES:

Smyth, Frank: *The Supernatural: Ghosts and Poltergeists*. Aldus Books, 1975.

Beltane

The origin of the name is in some doubt. Cormac, archbishop of Cashel, in 908 CE, suggested it was a combination of the name of the god Bel (Baal or Bil) with the

Celtic word *teine*, meaning fire. It is spelled variously Beltane, Beltene, Beltine, Beal-Tene, or Bealltain. Also known as *Walpurgisnacht*, Rood Day, Rudemas, and May Day, this is one of the eight Greater **Sabbats** of **Witchcraft**.

In early times, the year was roughly divided into two halves: the summer months, when it was possible to grow crops, and the winter months, when it was necessary to resort to hunting for food. The **fertility goddess** was predominant in the former and the **horned god** in the latter. The seasons changed at Beltane (May Eve) and **Samhain** (November Eve), which remain the two greatest of the **Wiccan** festivals.

Beltane was certainly the beginning of summer for the Celts. It was the second of their four festivals (after **Imbolc**, on February Eve), and a time to placate the god Belenos. This was done with gifts, rituals, and with offerings of cakes and severed heads, which the Celts believed could plead with the god for the living. Cattle were driven through the purifying smoke of ritual **balefires** of oak and green yew for health and fecundity. The festival was associated with fertility, for both animals and crops.

Bel was “the bright one,” with Sun-like qualities, although not actually a Sun god, according to the Farrars (who mention that in Ireland no one could light a Beltane fire until the first one had been lit, on Tara Hill, by the High King). Choral dances were performed by the Druids, honoring the Sun. The fire had to be started with friction, rubbing two sticks together, or by striking flint. The Irish sometimes refer to the Beltane fire as *teine éigin*, meaning “fire from rubbing sticks.”

Jumping over the balefire was one of the traditions of Beltane and, indeed, of most of the main festivals. Individuals would leap across the flames to ensure fertility and good health, and as a spiritual cleansing for **protection** in the coming year. Couples would take hands and leap together, believing that in so doing their marriages would be sealed in health and happiness. Cattle and sheep would be driven between two fires, or through the ashes of one.

The central theme of Beltane seems to have been sexuality and fertility. It was, in the early days of Witchcraft, very much a time for ritual coupling. On the festival eve, men and women would go out to search for flowers and green boughs, often staying out overnight. Phillip Stubbes, the Puritan, commented in *Anatomie of Abuses* (1583): “I have heard it credibly reported by men of great gravitie, credite and reputation that of fourtie, three score or a hundred maides goying to the woode ouer night, there have scarcely the third pare of them returned home againe undefiled.” The people’s view is aptly summed up in Rudyard Kipling’s words, adopted by modern **Wiccans** as their “May Eve Chant,” and sometimes sung as they danced around the **Maypole**:

Oh, do not tell the priests of our rites
For they would call it sin;
But we will be in the woods all night
A-conjurin’ Summer in!

On the first day of May the Romans would pay homage to their *Lares*, or household gods. Homage was also paid to Maia, daughter of Atlas and one of the Pleiades. By Zeus, Maia became mother of Hermes. She gave her name to the month of May.

The *Druids Calendar* urges you to “drink from a well before sunrise. Wash in the morning dew, and adorn yourselves with greenery . . . watch the sun come up, dance round the Maypole, and otherwise abandon yourself to the season. A woodland frolic culminating in indiscretion is the order of the day.” Washing in the early morning dew was a popular Beltane practice, and was believed to make the bather more beautiful. Samuel Pepys, in his famous diary, refers to this practice. Many Witches also gather the dew, to use in potions and spells.

The hawthorn was associated with Beltane. Graves comments that “its later orgiastic use . . . corresponds with the cult of the Goddess Flora, and . . . accounts for the English medieval habit of riding out on May morning to pluck hawthorn boughs and dance round the maypole. Hawthorn blossom has, for many men, a strong scent of female sexuality.”

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Witchcraft from the Inside*. Llewellyn, 1995.

Dineen, Patrick: *The Druids Calendar*. Cahill, 1979.

Farrar, Janet and Stewart: *Eight Sabbats for Witches*. Robert Hale, 1981.

Frazer, Sir James: *The Golden Bough*. Macmillan, 1951.

Graves, Robert: *The White Goddess*. Faber & Faber, 1967.

Norton-Taylor, Duncan: *The Emergence of Man: The Celts*. Time-Life Books, 1974.

BERWICK WITCHES see SCOTTISH WITCHCRAFT

BESOM see BROOMSTICK

Bewitched (television series)

A successful television comedy series inspired by the movie *I Married a Witch*, it ran from 1964 to 1972, and starred Elizabeth Montgomery as Samantha, a young housewife who is a **Witch** trying to live a normal life. Unfortunately every time she is tempted to use **magic** to help herself or her husband, things go awry. The role of her husband, Darrin, was played first by Dick York and then by Dick Sargent. Agnes Moorehead played Samantha’s witchy mother, Endora, who kept trying to lead her daughter back to the path of **spells** and **magic**.

Bible

The original “wise woman” of Europe, the *wicce*, had to be the local doctor as well as **magician**, seer, spiritual leader, and arbitrator of all matters. As a doctor, she required a knowledge of all herbs and their uses including a knowledge of the antidotes for accidental poisonings by those unwary of what they ate. The early Witches’ knowledge of poisons, with the early **Witches**, was the source of the incorrectly translated Bible passage (Exodus 22:18) “Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live,” a passage that has been used as the first and final judgement on Witches for hundreds of years.

Sir Walter Scott pointed out that the original Hebrew word *chasaph* (or *kaskagh*) meant nothing more than “poisoner.” “Thou shalt not suffer a poisoner to

live” certainly makes better sense. But having a knowledge of poisons in order to be able to counteract them, is not the same as being a poisoner.

It was King James I, of England, who was responsible for the misconception. Due to his brush with the Berwick Witches, he had a phobia of what he perceived as witchcraft. This very much colored his authorized translation of the Bible. Translating from the Latin translation, he may have simply confused *veneficus* and *maleficus*—“poisoner” and “witch”—but it is far more likely that he consciously equated the two. But, as Scott pointed out, “supposing that the Hebrew witch proceeded only by charms, invocations, or such means as might be innoxious . . . the connexion between the conjurer and the demon must have been of a very different character, under the law of Moses, from that which was conceived, in latter days, to constitute witchcraft.” He goes on to say that “There was no contract of subjection to a diabolic power, no infernal stamp or sign of such a fatal league, no revellings of Satan and his hags, and no infliction of disease or misfortune upon good men. At least there is no word in Scripture authorizing us to believe that such a system existed.” He spent many pages examining the Bible and proved beyond doubt that the witch represented in the King James version bore no resemblance to any actual “witch” of biblical times. He summed up by saying that “It cannot be said that, in any part of that sacred volume, a text occurs indicating the existence of a system of witchcraft . . . in any respect similar to that against which the law-books of so many European nations have, till very lately, denounced punishment. . . . In the four Gospels, the word (‘witch’), under any sense, does not occur.”

The second most-often quoted “witch” of the Bible is the “Witch of Endor.” Again, King James’s hand is obvious. In I Samuel 28:3, the actual text says, “And Saul had put away those that had familiar **spirits**, and the wizards, out of the land.” Verse 7 goes on to say, “Then said Saul unto his servants, Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit, that I may go to her, and enquire of her. And his servants said to him, Behold there is a woman that hath a familiar spirit at Endor.” But the headings that are appended to these two verses in the King James version are: “3: Saul, having destroyed the *witches*” and “7: Saul seeketh to a *witch*.”

It becomes clear, as the text is read, that this woman is simply a spiritualist-type medium, one able to communicate with spirits of the dead. Nowhere is she further described, neither as being young nor old, yet later writers invariably refer to her as a “hag” and as living in a “hovel,” although the Bible gives no description of her dwelling. She is so depicted in the illustration found in Joseph Glanvil’s *Saducismus Triumphatus* (1681) and elsewhere.

Ronald Holmes mentions that the Welsh Bible, which first appeared in 1567, held few of the same misconceptions, probably because of the lack of suitable Welsh words. The Witch of Endor is presented there in the correct light, simply as a medium. Where it cannot be specific, the word *gwrach* was used for “witch,” without the implications of devil’s emissary.

The above biblical references were much used during the Witch persecutions in the Middle Ages. One of the tests given when a person was accused of witchcraft at that time was weighing them against the Bible. The village Bible was invariably a

monstrous volume, usually donated by the local lord of the manor and weighing many pounds, far heavier than most people. If the accused outweighed the Bible—an unlikely event—she was innocent of the charges. However, if the Bible weighed more than the accused, it was a sign of guilt. But although some few accused did weigh more than the Bible, they then found themselves facing additional tests.

A new Bible translation was proposed at the Hampton Court conference in 1604. There had been several previous translations. There was the fourteenth century translation associated with John Wycliffe and presented in two versions. The New Testament of William Tyndale was published in 1525, translated directly from the Greek original. The Great Bible of 1539 was followed by the Bishop's Bible of 1568. But the translation proposed at the Hampton Court conference was to become the standard. It was the Authorized or King James version.

Despite many of the oft-quoted biblical admonitions against various forms of **magic** and **divination**. Corinthians 12:4–12 and 14:1, 3, 31, 32, and 39 recommend accepting and using the gifts given, including those of prophesy, speaking with tongues—“covet to prophesy and forbid not to speak in tongues”—working miracles, *healing*, and so on. And all pagans should revel in Job 12:7–8, which says, “But ask now the beasts, and they will teach thee; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee: or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee: and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee.”

SOURCES:

Holmes, Ronald: *Witchcraft in History*. Citadel, 1977.

Scott, Sir Walter: *Demonology and Witchcraft*. J & J Harper, 1831.

Bigghes

The **jewels** of a Witch Queen, or **Queen of the Sabbat**, they consist of her crown, bracelet, necklace, and garter. They might also include a ring.

Binding

The central theme of an **initiation** is the *palingenesis*, or symbolical death and rebirth. This is a universal theme found in initiation and puberty rites in many civilizations and among primitive peoples alike. In many such rituals the novice is, at some point, bound and often also blindfolded. This binding and blinding symbolize the darkness and restriction of the womb prior to birth.

Mystery religions, of which **Witchcraft** is one, **magical** orders and secret societies, follow the same general pattern of blindfolding and binding the candidate at or before his or her initial entrance to the temple. There is a challenge and an exchange of passwords, then the proselyte is brought into the **circle**. At some point the blindfold and cords are removed, signaling the rebirth, and “new knowledge” is imparted.

In **Wicca**, the form of binding is important. The cord is first tied with a single square (or “reef”) knot around the left wrist. The arms are brought together, crossing

over one another, behind the Initiate's back, forming the base of a triangle with the back of the head. The cord is then tied again, once, around the upper right wrist. The two ends of the cord are taken up, one on either side of the neck. They are brought around, crossing the front of the neck, then back to be tied in a loose bow, known as a "cable tow," on the side of the neck with the ends of the cord hanging down. A similar binding is found in Freemasonry and in many forms of **ritual** and **ceremonial magic**.

Binding is necessary in some forms of Wiccan magic. In the **Gardnerian** tradition, for example, the High **Priestess** is bound, as described above, and then kneels before the **altar**. She is then ritually **scourged**, to course the blood through her body, which is believed to help generate magical power. She remains bound throughout the working of the magic.

Binding **spells** are used to prevent someone from divulging secrets, especially **Craft** or magical secrets. Witches may not perform negative magic, but binding spells are generally viewed as being in a "gray area," in which the person at whom the spell is directed is neither helped nor harmed. Most such binding spells involve the use of a **poppet**, to represent the subject although they can be done with no more than a photograph or even a brief example of the persons handwriting. If a poppet is used, it may be of wax, cloth, clay, or similar material. The figure is named for the person in a consecration ritual and it is stated that whatever is done to the figure will be done to the person it represents. The poppet is then bound with silk thread of a relevant color and, if necessary, the mouth may be sewed shut. No physical harm comes to the subject, but specific words and/or actions are restricted.

In ceremonial magic a spirit is said to be "bound" when subdued by the use of words and symbols sufficient to prove the superiority of the magician.

See, also, **Gray Magic** and **Knot Magic**.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Buckland's Complete Book of Witchcraft*. Llewellyn, 1986.

Birthstone

Supernatural powers have been attributed to objects since ancient times. Gemstones—precious and semi-precious—have been so assigned by astrologers and magicians for thousands of years. The Greeks and Romans believed that there was a force inherent in the stones.

The particular power attributed to a stone is usually based on the stone's color. For this reason there are frequently a number of different stones equally useful for various purposes. For example, in gem therapy ruby, garnet, and red coral would all be useful for the heart and for blood circulation and stimulation, as their red color corresponds to that of blood. Because blue is believed to having a calming effect, sapphire, beryl, lapis lazuli, were used against fevers.

Stones are also associated with birth dates and, as birthstones, are believed to have potency for those people born under their particular **zodiacal** sign. To carry

your birthstone is to ensure good luck, health and prosperity. Medieval **astrology** established such a relationship, although the particulars have been changed over the years to accommodate availability of the stones, their cost, and even their popularity.

Originally it was suggested that the stones corresponded to those on the Breastplate of Aaron, the Jewish High **Priest**, but this does not hold up under scrutiny. The twelve stones were also said to represent the twelve tribes of Israel, the twelve months of the year, and the twelve signs of the zodiac, and were set in four rows of three. According to the instructions given in Exodus 28:17–20, the stones were arranged as follows: Sardius, Topaz, and Carbuncle in the first row; Emerald, Sapphire, and Diamond in the second; Ligure, Agate, and Amethyst in the third; and Beryl, Onyx, and Jasper in the fourth. But these names do not necessarily equate with the names used today. For example, the “sapphire” of the Bible was more probably lapis lazuli rather than what we now know as sapphire, and “diamond” was probably what we now know as white topaz.

Birthstones, then, are not constant; they change over the generations. Here are the associations according to some magicians and Witches:

Aries:	Ruby, Bloodstone, Red Jasper
Taurus:	Golden Topaz, Coral, Emerald
Gemini:	Crystal, Carbuncle, Aquamarine
Cancer:	Emerald, Moonstone
Leo:	Ruby, Sardonyx, Amber
Virgo:	Pink Jasper, Turquoise, Zircon
Libra:	Opal, Diamond
Scorpio:	Agate, Garnet, Topaz
Sagittarius:	Amethyst
Capricorn:	Black-and-white Onyx, Beryl, Jet
Aquarius:	Blue Sapphire
Pisces:	Diamond, Jade

If you wish to be directed by the day of the week on which you were born, then the following are the gems associated with the days:

Sunday:	Gold and Yellow gems
Monday:	Pearls and all white stones
Tuesday:	Rubies and all red stones
Wednesday:	Turquoise, Sapphire, and all blue stones
Thursday:	Amethyst and all purple stones
Friday:	Emerald and all green stones
Saturday:	Diamond, also black stones

David and Julia Parker give the following, as the stones associated with the zodiac signs:

Aries:	Diamond
Taurus:	Sapphire
Gemini:	Agate
Cancer:	Pearl

Leo:	Ruby
Virgo:	Sardonyx
Libra:	Sapphire
Scorpio:	Opal
Sagittarius:	Topaz
Capricorn:	Turquoise
Aquarius:	Amethyst
Pisces:	Moonstone

To complicate the issue, many authorities give the calendar months rather than the zodiacal signs. For example, Arthur Edward Waite, writing as “Grand Orient” in *The Book of Destiny* (University Books, 1972) gives the following:

January:	Garnet, Zircon
February:	Pearl, Amethyst
March:	Jasper, Ruby
April:	Diamond, Sapphire
May:	Aquamarine
June:	Agate
July:	Ruby, Cornelian
August:	Moonstone, Sardonyx
September:	Chrysolite, Sapphire
October:	Opal
November:	Topaz
December:	Malachite, Turquoise

The *Encyclopedia Britannica* agrees on some of these, giving a table of both traditional and modern stones:

Month	Traditional	Modern	Synthetic
January	Garnet		Garnet
February	Amethyst		Amethyst
March	Bloodstone	Aquamarine	Aquamarine
April	Diamond		White Sapphire
May	Emerald	Emerald	Emerald
June	Pearl	Alexandrite	Cultured Pearl
July	Ruby		Ruby
August	Sardonyx	Peridot	Peridot
September	Sapphire		Sapphire
October	Opal	Tourmaline	Rozircon (pink or green)
November	Topaz	Topaz Quartz	Topaz (citrine)
December	Turquoise	Zircon	Zircon

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Practical Color Magick*. Llewellyn, 1983.

Encyclopedia Britannica. William Benton, 1964.

Parker, Derek and Julia: *The Compleat Astrologer*. McGraw-Hill, 1971.

Black Magic

“Black” **magic** is negative magic, magic that will harm a person in some way. **Curses** and **hexes** are examples of black magic. It is magic that invokes malevolent forces and destructive elements. According to the **Wiccan Rede**, “An it harm *none*, do what thou wilt,” **Witches** may not perform black magic. A “Black Witch” is a contradiction in terms. By definition, Witches can only be “White Witches,” able to do only positive magic. Those who do black magic are **Black Magicians**, not **Witches**.

Yet the Christian propaganda of the Middle Ages painted a different picture. In its attempts to do away with the **Old Religion**, the Church depicted the witch as a servant of Satan and the principle perpetrator of black magic. Witches at the time were believed to cause famine, blight, barren cattle, eggless chickens, and infertile fields. They were accused of causing their neighbors to have lice, to stutter and stammer, to limp, sicken, and even to die.

The practice of sticking pins into wax or other images to bring about death or injury to a person, is a typical example of black magic. Often erroneously referred to as “**Voodoo dolls**,” such **poppets** are not used in the rituals of Voodoo itself. As with all such imitative magic, the poppet is made to represent the person to be affected. It may be a simple, almost crude, figure, or it may be fully detailed with the person’s every feature. Either way, it is **consecrated** and named for the person. Words to the effect that “All that I do to this figure, I do to (Name)” are said. Then the figure is abused. It may be stuck with pins—pins in the head to bring about a headache, or pins in the heart to bring about death—or it may be slowly melted, if of wax, over a candle flame or fire. At the **Salem Witch trials**, evidence was presented against Bridget Bishop by two men who testified that “being employed by Bridget Bishop, alias Oliver, of Salem to help take down the cellar wall of the old house she formerly lived in, we the said dependents, in holes in the old wall belonging to the said cellar, found several puppets made up of rags and hogs’ bristles with headless pins in them with the points outward.”

Such figures have been found years after they were made. In 1964 two such puppets were found at a castle in Norfolk, England. One was a clay figure of a woman, pierced with a sliver of hawthorn and nailed to a wooden board. The other was an actual sheep’s heart pierced with pieces of hawthorn. In the ruins of a house in London that had been bombed during World War II, a doll dressed in a nurse’s uniform, with pins stuck into its heart was discovered. Another poppet was found in a miniature coffin. The hearts of sheep and cattle were commonly used, often pierced with thorns, rather than pins. Lemons were also used, pierced with black-headed pins.

Black magic is referred to as the “left Hand Path,” from when right-handedness was regarded as normal and left-handedness as unnatural. When working magic, it is necessary to build the “power”—to generate energy within the magician, that can then be sent out to the subject. In black magic, the magician will do this with wild gestures, perhaps slashing and stabbing the air with knife or sword to build up his anger and power. When sufficient power has been built, it is directed into the tool, which may be a poppet, as described, or other means of projection.

A.E. Waite makes a distinction between Black and White Magic and states, "In Egypt, in India, and in Greece, there was no dealing with devils in the Christian sense of the expression; Typhon, Juggernaut, and **Hecate** were not less divine than the gods of the over-world, and the offices of Canidia were probably in their way as sacred as the peaceful mysteries of Ceres. Each of the occult sciences was, however, liable to that species of abuse which is technically known as Black Magic. . . . White **Ceremonial Magic** is, by the terms of its definition, an attempt to communicate with Good Spirits for a good, or at least an innocent purpose. Black Magic is the attempt to communicate with Evil Spirits for an evil purpose." He goes on to discuss what he describes as "the four specific and undisguised handbooks of Black Magic," naming the *Grimorium Verum*, *True Black Magic*, *The Grand Grimoire*, and *The Constitution of Pope Honorius the Great*, noting that "They are all tiny volumes."

SOURCES:

Hansen, Chadwick: *Witchcraft in Salem*. George Braziller, 1969.

Waite, Arthur Edward: *The Book of Black Magic and of Pacts*. DeLaurence, 1940.

BLACK MASS see SATAN; SATANISM

Blair Witch Project, The (movie)

A 1999 movie written and directed by Eduardo Sanchez and Daniel Myrick and starring Heather Donahue, Michael Williams, and Joshua Leonard. It is presented as if it is a documentary, opening with a statement that on October 21, 1994, three young student filmmakers disappeared in Maryland's Black Hills Forest, which they entered in order to shoot a documentary centered on the local **Blair Witch**, a woman named Elly Kedward.

Elly Kedward was supposed to have caused most of the children of her village to disappear, 200 years before. She was said to have lured the children into her home and drawn blood from them. Found guilty of **witchcraft**, she was banished from the village and, after a particularly harsh winter, presumed to have died. In 1824, Blair had become a town and changed its name to Burkittsville. In 1940 and 1941 the town was the scene of ritualistic slayings of seven children. A local hermit, Rustin Parr, confessed to the killings but claimed that he had been told to do it by "an old woman ghost." He was convicted and hanged. This was the background for the documentary that the three college filmmakers wanted to make.

The Blair Witch Project is then made up of footage found a year after these three filmmakers disappeared. It shows their deterioration as they lose themselves in the woods and are scared by an unknown force. The reason for their fright is left to the audience's imagination, a perhaps welcome retrogression in modern horror films.

The actual filmmakers, Sanchez and Myrick, broke new ground not only with the script but with their treatment (giving cameras to unknowns and letting them loose with the barest of instructions) and their amazingly low budget. The documentary feel, and the amateurish photography, generates a perspective that is totally convincing. More interesting than the movie itself perhaps, was

the fans' reactions to it. Predictably, although repeatedly reassured that the story is pure fiction, people insisted on believing that there really was a Blair witch. A promotional Internet web site promoted that belief. The movie, however, was entirely fictional.

Wiccans are not happy with yet another stereotypically negative portrayal of a Witch. The Lady Liberty League (a referral network, and part of **Circle Wicca**, concerned with religious freedom issues), the Witches League for Public Awareness, the Religious Liberties Lawyers Network, and others managed to persuade one of the co-directors to add a disclaimer to the film, indicating that the movie had nothing to do with the **Wiccan** religion.

Blasting

A medieval term for the interference with the fertility of crops, humans, and animals, by **witches**. If a farmer suffered a poor harvest, he might well blame it on a witch for "blasting" his crops. If a woman miscarried, she might claim she had been blasted. It was said that the spell for blasting included the flaying of a cat, lizard, snake, or toad, then reducing the skin to ashes over a fire made of yew, hawthorn, and elder. The ashes were scattered over the farmer's fields or sprinkled on the threshold of his house.

In fact, true Witches are very pro-life and work *for* fertility, not against it. But this was part of the propaganda of the early Church, a reversal of true **pagan** ways to make them appear negative. In the *Malleus Maleficarum* (1486), the second of its three parts deals with a number of sexual matters (with which the inquisitors seemed especially fascinated), including the methods used by witches to dull the powers of generation and obstruct the sex act. It also deals with how they cause the male organ to disappear, how they kill a child in the womb, and how they injure cattle and raise storms.

The two monks who wrote the *Malleus Maleficarum* were quite specific when it came to descriptions of these acts: "Intrinsically they cause (obstruction of the procreant function) in two ways. First, when they directly prevent the erection of the member which is accommodated to fructification. And this need not seem impossible, when it is considered that they are able to vitiate the natural use of any member. Secondly, when they prevent the flow of the vital essences to the members in which resides the motive force, closing up the seminal ducts so that it does not reach the generative vessels, or so that it cannot be ejaculated, or is fruitlessly spilled."

But blasting could also be done with the **evil eye**, by the witch just looking at the person or thing and muttering a **curse**. Charges of blasting were frequently made against witches and, as with so many false charges, were almost impossible to disprove.

SOURCES:

Kramer, Heinrich and Sprenger, Jakob (Montague Summers, trans.): *Malleus Maleficarum*. Pushkin Press, 1951.

“Blessed Be”

Traditional greeting of **Witches**. It is a shortened form of a blessing included in the **Initiation** ceremony of many traditions. In full, the rite is as follows:

Blessed be thy feet, that have brought thee in these ways
 Blessed be thy knees, that shall kneel at the Sacred Altar.
 Blessed be thy womb/genitals, the fount of life, without which we
 would not be.
 Blessed be thy breasts, erected in beauty and in strength.
 Blessed be thy lips, which shall utter the sacred names.

To say “Blessed Be” to another is to imply this full blessing.

Blood

Blood appears in Act I, Scene V, of *Henry VI Part One*—ascribed to **Shakespeare** but generally attributed to as many as four additional authors: Peele, Marlow, Lodge, and Nash, with only slight input from Shakespeare himself. (It should be borne of mind, of course, that some evidence seems to point to Edward de Vere, Seventeenth Earl of Oxford, as being the true author of “Shakespeare’s” works.) Lord Talbot addresses Joan La Pucelle (Joan of Arc) with the words:

I’ll have a bout with thee;
 Devil or Devil’s dam, I’ll conjure thee:
 Blood will I draw from thee, thou art a witch,
 And straightway give thy soul to him thou servest.

This echoed the idea that to “blood” a witch was to take away her powers. Another expression, “to score above the breath,” meant to blood the witch about the head, which was thought to be especially effective.

Blood is seen not only as the life force of humankind but also as the source of **magical** power. In **Wiccan** traditions, there is a ritual **scourging**, which is part of the building of “power” for magical work. According to the Gardnerian **Book of Shadows**, the Scourge is used “to bring blood to the surface of the skin; not to hurt.” Dancing, prior to working magic, is another way to get the blood coursing through the veins, according to **Wiccans**.

In **Wiccan Initiations** there is another use for blood. In many traditions a “measure” is taken. This is a length of thread which is used to measure certain parts of the Initiate’s body. The thread is then rolled into a ball and daubed with a drop of the Initiate’s blood (obtained with a pin-prick to the end of a finger). This “measure” is then held by the coven leader(s), ostensibly to ensure that the **coven** secrets are not divulged. As a form of imitative magic, the measure represents the new Witch, so that anything done to the measure would affect the Witch.

In similar fashion, a drop of blood can serve as a “witness” for magical work; it represents the person from whom it comes and, therefore, anything done to it will affect that person. It may be worked into a wax **poppet** or smeared onto a piece of

paper. In Wicca, this may be used to work **healing** magic at a distance, when the actual person cannot be present.

It was believed that “witch blood” ran in families—that the children of witches would automatically become witches themselves. For this reason children of witches were invariably put to death along with their parent(s). In Salem, Massachusetts, in 1692, Dorcas Goode, the five-year-old daughter of Sarah Goode, was thrown into prison with her mother. At Castletown, on the Isle of Man, in 1617, Margaret Ine Quane was burned at the stake and her young son was burned with her. In 1691, in Mohra, Sweden, twenty-three adults and fifteen children were put to death in one day. It was felt that the best way to terminate the inheritance of witchcraft was to burn the offenders and end the bloodline. However, burning at the stake was not practiced in England or in New England.

In medieval times, it was also believed that witches had **familiars**—devil’s imps who served them. These familiars were supposed to be in the form of an animal, such as a cat, rabbit, snake, or toad. It was believed that the familiar gained its sustenance by sucking blood from a supernumerary teat on the body of the witch.

Another old belief about witches was that they gave their soul to the devil, making a **pact** with him and signing it with their blood. To sign any pact, or promise, with one’s blood was to make an inviolate promise.

Blood is a potent tool of magic. It is used in a **Witch Bottle**, a tool of protection. Such a bottle is made (and can be made by Witch or non-Witch alike) by filling a small bottle or jar with sharp objects, such as broken glass, needles, pins, or nails. The jar is then filled with the creator’s urine. If a woman makes the bottle, then she should also put her menstrual blood into it. The bottle is then sealed and buried below the frost line, in a place where it will not be disturbed. It is said that for as long as the bottle remains there undisturbed, any negativity sent toward its maker will be immediately reflected back on the sender.

In some areas it is believed that to allow blood to fall upon the ground is to allow part of the person’s spirit to enter the earth. This would make that land dangerous, perhaps inhabited by a ghost. Similar beliefs cause some people to avoid eating meat, lest the blood of the animal also allows the animal’s spirit to enter. Some Native Americans, along with Jews and the Estonians, carefully bled any animal to be butchered, to prevent the meat eaters from being so afflicted.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Buckland’s Complete Book of Witchcraft*. Llewellyn, 1986.

Bloodstone

A semiprecious stone used as an **amulet** by many **Witches** and **pagans**. It is a variety of green jasper and gets its name from the blood-red specks in it, formed by iron oxide. There is some controversy regarding bloodstone and heliotrope. Some say there is no difference between the two but others assert that heliotrope is green chalcedony with crimson spots, while true bloodstone is a green jasper flecked with red. In gem therapy, bloodstone is considered excellent for stopping bleeding.

Bloodstone is also known as haematite. Powder scraped from the stone is believed to help in the stanching of blood and is thought to aid women in childbirth. It is also used for bloodshot eyes, for snake bite, and is considered a protection against the **evil eye**. The name “bloodstone” is also applied to red agate, red coral, red jasper, red marble, and carnelian.

Bodin, Jean (1529–1596)

French political philosopher, son of a master tailor, widely influential in Europe when medieval systems were giving way to centralized states. He was born in Angers in 1529 and, at the age of fifteen, entered the Carmelite Order. In 1551 he left the order and went to the University of Toulouse to study civil law. He distinguished himself there as a student and, later, as a teacher. In 1571, he entered the service of François, duke of Alençon and brother to the king. His book, *Six Livres de la République* (1576), went through ten editions plus a translation into Latin. In it he put forward theories on the power of the people, and in so doing earned the disfavor of the king.

His treatise on Demonology and **Witchcraft**, *De la Demonomanie des Sorciers* (Paris, 1580), is the work by which he is best known to occultists. In the book Bodin speaks of methods of diabolic **prophecy** and communication, of witches journeying through the air to **sabbats**, of spells to become a werewolf, and of witches copulating with incubi and succubi. He also deals with how to recognize **witches** and sorcerers. In this he emulates the *Malleus Maleficarum* of 1486, providing a guide for witch hunters. He describes witches and their actions, speaks of pacts with the devil, and of flying, **spell-casting**, and **black magic**.

Bodin felt that the authorities should be harsher with witches, and suggested placing black boxes in churches for people to leave (anonymous) letters of accusation against their neighbors. He advocated accepting evidence from any and all informants, whether true or false, encouraged children to testify against their parents, prescribed **torture**, and encouraged the use of (false) promises of leniency to generate confessions. He said that a judge should proceed with torture on half-proof, or even just strong presumption.

Bodin aggressively opposed the works of **Johann Weyer**, his contemporary, who wrote against the burning of witches. He stated that Weyer was a fool to believe that witches and sorcerers were simply people of unsound mind. He said that Weyer's books should be burned “for the honor of God.”

SOURCES:

Encyclopedia Britannica. William Benton, 1964.

Guiley, Rosemary Ellen: *The Encyclopedia of Witches and Witchcraft*. Facts on File, 1989.

Shepard, Leslie A.: *Encyclopedia of Occultism and Parapsychology*. Avon, 1978.

Boleen; Bolline

In **Wicca**, a boleen is a small knife with a curved blade used strictly for cutting herbs. It is often confused with the **White Handled Knife**, which is a **coven** tool used for inscribing other **Craft** tools.



A boleyn is used strictly for cutting herbs. Courtesy Raymond Buckland/Fordean Picture Library.

The boleyn is usually about six inches from the tip of the blade to the end of the handle. The handle has a round hole in its end, through which the thumb or little finger can be placed when holding it, for easier use. A popular wood for the handle is cherry.

Bone, Eleanor "Ray"

A High Priestess to Gerald Gardner, initiated in the late 1950s. Her Craft name (see **Initiation**) is **Artemis**. For some years Mrs. Bone ran a home for old people in south London. She developed two covens, one in Tooting Bec, London, and the other in Cumbria. In the early 1960s, she was often quoted in the press and did a lot to promote understanding of the Craft. A spate of sensational and defamatory stories in the press caused Ray Bone to take on the role of Craft information officer, commenting on such things as people claiming to be "Queen of the **Witches**" or "King of the **Witches**"; non-existent titles in **Wicca**.

Ray Bone is considered an authority on **curse**s though, as a **Witch**, she does not use such a power. Some few years after Gerald Gardner's death, in 1964, and

burial in Tunis, she learned that the cemetery where his body lay was to be redeveloped. She organized a collection among British Witches and arranged for his remains to be moved to another cemetery.

BONFIRE see BALEFIRE

Book of Shadows

Witchcraft was originally an oral tradition; all of its rites and beliefs were passed on by word of mouth, with nothing written down. It was not until the persecutions of the Middle Ages, when Witches had to meet in secret and, consequently, were unable to maintain contact with one another, that any of the rituals were set down. Since Witches were having to meet “in the shadows,” as it were, the book acquired that name.

To be found in possession of such a book meant certain death; therefore, only one was kept for each group of Witches, whether the group comprised a single family or a **coven** formed of different families and individuals. If an individual Witch did keep a Book of Shadows, it would be burned at his or her death.

Later, as the persecutions eased, many of the surviving Witches who still practiced began to keep copies of the Book for themselves, supplementing the rituals with material that appealed to them as individuals. One might have a large section on **herbal lore**, another on **divination**, yet another on **astrology**. Where covens met, there was still a main Book of Shadows, kept by the **High Priest** or **High Priestess**, that was used at the coven rituals, whether or not the individual coven members also had their own books. This coven book contained all the rituals for **Initiation, Esbats, Sabbats, Handfasting and Handparting, healing, divination, spells, chants, dances, and songs**. It also contained what was known of the history of the particular coven, together with **Witchcraft laws and ethics, the Wiccan Rede**, and any necessary coven by-laws.

Today, some traditions (e.g. Gardnerian) still discourage individual coven members from keeping a full Book of Shadows. Since the rituals are performed only by the group as a whole, it is felt that so many books are unnecessary. The main coven book is therefore still kept by the High Priest or High Priestess, although coven members may be encouraged to keep their own *abbreviated* books focusing on their particular interests. But other traditions believe that *all* coven members should be able to copy everything from the coven book, although the priests of traditions with **degree systems** ensure that coven members copy only the appropriate passages for the degree to which they have arisen.

A Book of Shadows should be handwritten. It is regarded as a sacred book and, therefore, a book of power. By writing out all that it contains, some of this power is transferred to the writer. It should never, therefore, be typewritten or computer-generated. The title page of the book always bears the legend “The Book of Shadows of the Witch (Rowena, for example), in her own hand of write.”



Gerald Gardner, who published a *Book of Shadows* in the 1950s. Courtesy Raymond Buckland.

Some books are written in a very elaborate style; some are even written in one of the magical alphabets. This is fine for a personal book, used mainly for reference, but for a book that is actually used for performing rituals—one that is placed beside or on the altar and read from—it can make the reading of it very difficult, if not impossible. Some of the coven books used by degree-system covens have the higher degree material in one of the magical alphabets, with the bulk of the book in normal script.

The first *Book of Shadows* to appear outside a coven, available to the general public, was probably that of the Witch Maddalena, given to folklorist Charles Godfrey Leland and published by him in 1899. It was presented under the title *Aradia, or the Gospel of the Witches (of Italy)*. This *vangelo*, or *Book of Shadows*, contains two alternative texts and was remarkable (for the time) in that it presented a religion based around Goddess worship, specifically that of Diana, Queen of All Witches, and her daughter Aradia.

No further *Books of Shadows* were forthcoming until the 1950s, when Gerald Gardner began writing about Witchcraft as a surviving religion. He was introduced

and initiated into a coven in England's New Forest, in Hampshire, in early 1939. Excited to find that Witchcraft still existed and, further, that it was a benign, nature-based religion, he wanted to run out and tell the world. But his High Priestess, **Dorothy Clutterbuck**, would not allow it. It was not until ten years later that he finally was allowed to write something of what the Craft truly was, but in the form of a novel—*High Magic's Aid*. A few years later, after Dorothy's death in 1951 and the repeal of the Witchcraft Law that same year, Gerald was able to start writing non-fiction books that would help correct popular misconceptions about Witchcraft. The first of these was *Witchcraft Today* (Rider, 1954).

The Book of Shadows that Gerald obtained from "Old Dorothy," as she was affectionately known, was sparse and incomplete to Gerald's mind. From his lifetime of occult research, he tried to flesh it out, adding what he felt should be included and deleting what he felt did not belong. The sources for his additions were various and included pieces by **Aleister Crowley**, Rudyard Kipling, and Alexander Carmichael. **Janet and Stewart Farrar**, in their book *The Witches Way*, refer to this amended version as Gardnerian Text A. Over time he continued working on it, refining it to become the Farrar's Text B.

In 1953, Gardner initiated **Doreen Valiente**, and together the two set about completely revising the book. Doreen insisted on dropping much of the Crowley and O.T.O. material and rewrote much of the book herself, and included some of her poetry. This became Text C, the Book of Shadows that was to become known around the world.

Wicca is a **mystery religion** and, as such, requires an **Oath of Secrecy** from its Initiates. Despite this, the contents of the Gardnerian Book of Shadows began to appear in print—a passage here, a complete ritual there. Eventually, in 1971, the whole book was published by **Lady Sheba**, an American Witch who chose to ignore her oath. Previously, in England, **Alex Sanders** had managed to obtain a copy of most of the book and added ideas of his own—much of it from **Ceremonial Magic**—to lay claim to what he termed Alexandrian Witchcraft. Today the vast majority of Witches go by a Book of Shadows that owes much to the work of Gerald Gardner and Doreen Valiente.

No two Books will be found to be exactly the same (unless they are from the same tradition), yet all have the same basics, such as the celebrations of the sabbats and ceremonies of **Drawing Down the Moon, Cakes and Wine**. Over the years individuals have from time to time claimed to be the owners of ancient Books of Shadows, "passed down through the family," yet most have proven to be adulterated versions of the Gardner book. This led many to suspect that there never was an "original" Book of Shadows, as used by the Clutterbuck coven. But Doreen Valiente herself went to much trouble researching and investigating the existence of Dorothy Clutterbuck and the circumstances described by Gardner regarding his initiation, and she found that there was sufficient evidence to support Gardner's claims.

SOURCES:

Farrar, Janet and Stewart: *The Witches' Way*. Robert Hale, 1984.

Valiente, Doreen: *An ABC of Witchcraft Past and Present*. St. Martin's Press, 1973.

BOTHWELL, FRANCIS EARL OF see SCOTTISH WITCHCRAFT

BRACELET see PRIEST/PRIESTESS

Bracelin, Jack L.

Gerald Gardner's biographer, author of the book *Gerald Gardner: Witch*, published by The Octagon Press in 1960. Bracelin served some years with the Palestine Police Force. He was a Priest of Wicca, having been initiated into the Craft after meeting Gardner, in 1955.

In Aidan A. Kelly's book *Crafting the Art of Magic, Book One* (Llewellyn, 1991) it is claimed that Idries Shah actually wrote the Gardner biography but, for various reasons, decided that he did not want his name on the book and therefore allowed it to be published in Bracelin's name.

In October of 1957, despite the protests of other coven members, Bracelin and a girlfriend, along with another couple, presented a pseudo-Wiccan ceremony to some journalists, hoping to promote a positive response to Wicca. They were surprised when a newspaper story was published damning modern Witchcraft as "a repulsive pagan sect," concluding that "the pagan cult of witchcraft is a fact that Christians in Britain have to reckon with."

Bracelin continued to urge publicity-seeking for the Craft, despite the warnings of other Wiccans.

SOURCES:

Valiente, Doreen: *The Rebirth of Witchcraft*. Robert Hale, 1989.

Breac, Aidan (1897–1989)

Scottish **Witch** born and raised in a hereditary Craft family. Both of his parents were schoolteachers. Aidan was born in Dingwall, not far from Inverness. He lived the last thirty years of his life on Priest Island, off the northwest coast of Ross and Cromerty County, Scotland, devoting his time to teaching the **PectiWita** tradition.

Breac claimed that an ancestor, Elspet Breac, was a member of a group of Forfar Witches, some of whom were tried and burned at the stake in 1661.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Scottish Witchcraft*. Llewellyn, 1991.

Broomstick; Besom

Early brooms were made from the stalk of the Scotch Broom plant (*Cytisus scoparius*) with twigs and/or leaves tied about one end. Besom (pronounced *bi-s'm* or *bee-s'm*) was originally a common name for any sweeping implement. It was a bundle of rods or twigs of broom, heather, or birch. The name besom became interchangeable with broom.



Image conveying the popular notion of Witches flying on broomsticks. Courtesy Richard Svensson/Fordean Picture Library.

Brooms became a symbol of womanhood and of female domesticity. In medieval times, when a woman was away from her home she would leave her broomstick standing against the door of her house, as a sign that she was not at home. Alternatively, in a small cottage she might stick the broom up the flue so that it stuck out the chimney. This led to later assertions that witches flew their broomsticks out through the chimney when leaving for the *sabbat*. This form of egress was first mentioned by Petrus Mamor in *Flagellum Maleficorum* (1460).

The popular idea of Witches flying through the air on a broomstick, pitchfork, pole, shovel, or any of a variety of animals, was known as *transvection*. The earliest depiction of it is Ulrich Molitor's engraving in *De Lamiis* (1489). He shows three Witches, each with an animal's head, astride a long, forked branch. The earliest confession to it was in 1453, when Guillaume Edelin, Prior of St. Germain-en-Laye near Paris, claimed he had so traveled. Martin Tulouf, of Guernsey, said in 1563 that he saw his mother fly up the chimney on a broomstick, crying "Go, in the name of the devil and Lucifer, over rocks and thorns."

One of the old forms of *sympathetic magic*, designed to promote **fertility** of the crops, was for the country folk, the **pagans**, to go to the fields with their broomsticks,

pitchforks and poles. Straddling them like hobby-horses, they would dance around the fields, leaping in the air as they danced. The belief was that the higher they jumped, the higher the crops would grow. This practice may well have sparked the idea of them riding such instruments through the air. Certainly such a distortion made good anti-pagan propaganda for the early Church, which claimed that it was the work of the devil.

Doreen Valiente points to the fact that an old slang term for the female genitals was “broom” and a “broom handle” meant a dildo. To “have a brush” was to have sexual intercourse. As she says, “This throws considerable light on the real significance of the broomstick in witch rituals, and in old folk-dances, in which it often plays a part.”

Many inquisitors did not believe that witches could really fly through the air on broomsticks. But since the witches they questioned seemed to believe that they did, then the evidence was duly recorded and presented as proof of dealings with the devil.

Broomstick weddings were popular in Wales and elsewhere for many generations. A broomstick would be laid across the threshold of the couple’s new home and they would both jump over it, holding hands, as their first entry into the house. If the couple later decided to part, then they could jump backward over the broom to legally annul the wedding. This had to be done within one year of the original leap and both leaps had to be made in front of witnesses. In some Romany (Gypsy) weddings the couple will similarly jump over a broomstick, or bundle of broom, as part of the wedding ceremony.

Dame Alice Kyteler, an Irish Witch, claimed that she made frequent journeys by broomstick. As her accusers put it, she “ambled through thick and thin, when and in what manner she listed.” She didn’t actually claim to fly through the air on it, but her accusers didn’t hesitate to read that into it.

In some areas it is considered bad luck to step over a broom handle and extreme bad luck to drop a broom so that it falls flat on the floor. If an unmarried girl steps over a broom, it is taken as a sign that she will have a child out of wedlock. A broom should never be carried over water, and an old broom should not be taken into a new house.

In modern day Wicca, the broomstick is recognized for its associations with the Old Religion, whether factual or not. Many Witches, both covens and Solitaries, use a broom in their rituals. Some use it to mark, or sweep, the Circle in which the rites take place. Some use it as a sword that might be used by other Witches. Many use it to re-enact the old fertility rites of dancing round the fields. Many use it in their handfasting ceremonies, in much the same way that the Welsh and the Gypsies use it.

In Chinese folk belief, the Goddess of Fine Weather is called the “Broom Goddess” or *Sao Ch’ing Niang*, “the girl who sweeps the weather clear.” Little girls will cut out paper dolls representing her, during great rains, and will hang them near the gate.

SOURCES:

Leach, Maria (ed.): *Funk & Wagnalls Standard Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology, and Legend*. Harper & Row, 1972.

Murray, Margaret Alice: *The Witch-Cult in Western Europe*. Clarendon Press, 1921.

Valiente, Doreen: *An ABC of Witchcraft Past and Present*. St. Martin’s Press, 1973.

Bruja; Brujo

The name given to a **Witch** in Mexico and Meso-America; *Bruja*—female; *Brujo*—male. The female is considered more powerful than the male. The names are also used in Hispanic communities throughout the United States. The **Witchcraft** is of the **Hedge Witch** variety, with little or no connection to worship and other aspects of religion. **Charms** and **spells** are sold as are cures for physical ailments.

Buckland, Raymond (1934–)

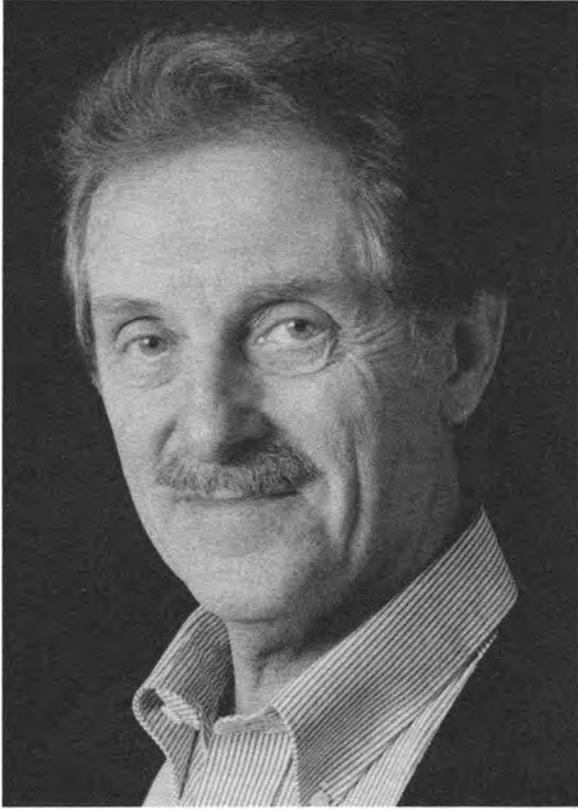
Born in London, England, on August 31, 1934, Buckland moved to Nottingham at the age of five and remained there during the war, returning to the London area in 1951. His father Stan, a full-blood Romany (Gypsy), was a Higher Executive Officer in the Ministry of Health. Stan was also a freelance writer of short stories, plays, and music who encouraged his son to write. At the age of twelve Raymond was introduced to spiritualism by his paternal uncle, George. This was the start of Buckland's interest in all matters of the occult. He read voraciously. In the 1950s, with friends, he researched spiritualism and first read Margaret Murray's book *God of the Witches*. Although raised nominally in the Church of England, his religious interest quickly focused on **Wicca**. He was educated at Kings College School, Wimbledon. From there he took a job as an engineering draftsman. He married Rosemary Moss in 1955, and spent two years in the Royal Air Force (1957–1959). He then worked as retail manager for a publishing company in London. Throughout the war years, and for some years after, Buckland was heavily involved in the theater, both amateur and professional, appearing regularly at the People's Theater, Nottingham, and the Nottingham Repertory Theater.

Reading **Gerald Gardner's** book *Witchcraft Today*, and re-reading Murray's book, in the late 1950s Buckland realized that, without consciously doing so, he had been searching for just such a religion as **Wicca**. He began a correspondence with Gardner and, later, with Gardner's High **Priestess, Monique Wilson** (Lady Olwen). He later became Gardner's spokesman in the United States, having emigrated there in February, 1962.

At the end of 1963, on a trip to Perth, Scotland, Buckland was finally **initiated** into the **Craft** by Olwen. This was his first actual meeting with Gardner, just before the "Grand Old Man of Witchcraft" left for the winter for what was to be his last visit to Lebanon.

There was great interest in **Witchcraft** in America in the early 1960s, and Raymond and Rosemary were not short of **coven** candidates. But, as taught, they were cautious and did not initiate anyone without due process. Such was the demand for **Wicca** entry at that time that they received a great deal of criticism for this caution. But even today Buckland feels that he did the right thing, pointing to many problems he has seen as a result of indiscriminate initiations.

However, many people, impatient and without **coven** contacts, decided to start their own covens without proper training or initiation, resulting in a number of



Raymond Buckland. Photo by Jane Rosemont.

pseudo-Wiccan groups based solely on misinformation gleaned from such sources as Ira Levin's *Rosemary's Baby*, ceremonial magic, and other nontraditional sources.

Buckland dedicated himself to correcting popular misconceptions about Witchcraft through the press, radio, and television, but he tried to do so anonymously. This anonymity was violated by Lisa Hoffman, a journalist with the *New York Sunday News*, which resulted in his name being published. This led to a great deal of persecution of himself, his wife, and their two children. However, Buckland continued his self-appointed task of correcting the misconceptions. Gardner's books had, by this time, gone out of print, so Buckland wrote *Witchcraft From the Inside* (Llewellyn, 1971) to fill the gap. This was to be the first of many such books.

Buckland found that his life paralleled Gardner's in many ways. One way was the building of a collection of artifacts which grew into a museum. Gardner had a Museum of Magic and Witchcraft on the Isle of Man (see Gerald Gardner),

the first of its kind in the world. Buckland's collection became the first of its kind in the United States, formally opening in 1968. Originally this was housed in the basement of his Long Island home and was open by appointment only, but it was later (1973) moved into an old Victorian house in Bay Shore. There it was reviewed in many major newspapers and periodicals and was the subject of a television documentary. Artifacts from the collection were loaned for a special exhibit to the Metropolitan Museum of Art and to the New York Museum of Folk Art.

Meanwhile, other covens eventually *hived* off from the original New York coven, slowly spreading the Gardnerian branch of the Craft throughout the United States. Gradually other traditions began to appear, joining with the various spurious ones to establish the Craft as a viable alternative religion in America.

Buckland's writing continued. In 1969, just prior to his *Witchcraft* book, *A Pocket Guide to the Supernatural* was published by Ace Books. This was followed by *Practical Candleburning* (Llewellyn, 1970), *Witchcraft Ancient and Modern* (HC, 1970), and many more. Today Buckland has written an average of one book a year since 1969.

Buckland's marriage ended in 1973, and the operation of the New York coven was turned over to another couple. In 1974, shortly after he moved to New Hampshire, Buckland married Joan Taylor. The museum was established in a new building in Weirs Beach, and he continued with his writing. In 1978 he moved to Virginia Beach, the museum went into storage, and Buckland became Educational Director for the Poseidia Institute.

While in New Hampshire, Buckland finally admitted to himself that he was not totally happy with the Gardnerian form of Wicca. It no longer met his religious needs and he was dismayed by the blatant ego trips and power plays displayed by many of its later practitioners. After much thought and research, he founded the **Seax-Wica**, based on a Saxon background. It was more democratically organized than the Gardnerian **Degree System** tradition. Although originally written for his own personal use, he found there was a great deal of interest in it and was persuaded to publish the rituals in *The Tree: Complete Book of Saxon Witchcraft* (Weiser, 1974). Some writers later suggested that the tradition was written as a joke, but Buckland insists this is far from the truth, since it is a form of the religion to which he felt very strongly drawn.

By the early 1980s Buckland and his wife found their interests going in different directions and divorced. In 1983 he married his third, and present, wife Tara Cochran. They lived for two years in Charlottesville, Virginia, before moving to San Diego, in southern California. While in Virginia, they founded the Seax-Wica Seminary and published the *Seax-Wica Voys*, a Wiccan magazine. The seminary, as a correspondence school, grew to over 1,000 students worldwide. Eventually, however, Buckland found it took too much of his precious writing time and terminated it.

In San Diego, before turning to writing full time, Buckland worked for a few years for a theatrical and film casting company. He became very close friends with the actor John Carradine, working with him for the last few years of the actor's life. Over the years Buckland also worked with Orson Welles (as Technical Consultant for *Necromancy*), William Friedkin, and other movie actors and directors. He also played character parts, appearing as a crazy psychiatrist in the cult movie *Mutants in Paradise*. While in San Diego, Buckland made the video *Witchcraft Yesterday and Today*. He also became good friends with **Scott Cunningham**, a fellow author and Wiccan.

The Bucklands finally decided that they had had enough of coven Witchcraft and became Solitaries. In search of a house and some land, they moved to Ohio (Tara's home state) in 1992 and bought a small farm. From there Buckland continues his writing, which now takes the form of fiction as well as nonfiction. His many interests include flying ultralight aircraft and building unusual automobiles.

Some of Buckland's best-selling books, from more than thirty written to date, are *Buckland's Complete Book of Witchcraft* (1986), *Scottish Witchcraft* (1991), *Doors to Other Worlds* (1993), *Advanced Candle Magic* (1996), *Gypsy Witchcraft and Magic* (1998), and his two novels *The Committee* (1993) and *Cardinal's Sin* (1996), all published by Llewellyn Publications.

Budapest, Zsuzsanna (1940–)

Zsuzsanna Mokcsay was born in Budapest January 30, 1940. She claims that many of her female ancestors were **herbalists** and her male ancestors bishops and military leaders. Zsuzsanna's mother, Masika, was a ceramics artist and trance medium. In her art, Masika often depicted the **goddess**.

Budapest says that, at age three, she experienced a psychic flash of her grandmother saying goodbye. According to Hungarian tradition, such a death apparition means that the departed will become the guardian **spirit** of the recipient. Budapest certainly feels that that has been the case throughout her life.

At age twelve, Budapest met Tom, a fourteen-year-old boy, and knew he would be her husband. But this was not to be until some years after the Hungarian revolt of 1956, which was suppressed by the Russians. During the revolt, Budapest and her mother made their way to Austria, where Tom finally located her. By the time she was eighteen, the two were engaged.

After Budapest won a scholarship to the University of Chicago, she and Tom moved there and were married. After ten years of marriage, and two children, the marriage broke up in 1970. Budapest hitchhiked to California, once again asking her dead grandmother for guidance. In Los Angeles she was drawn into the feminist movement, working on the staff of a local women's center. Dealing with what she described as "women's pain," she saw a need for a female-centered theology. On the **winter solstice** of 1971, she formed a **coven** with six friends and they began celebrating **sabbats**. They named the group the Susan B. Anthony Coven.

Word about the coven spread and for ten years Budapest led **esbats** and sabbats, initiating others and teaching women to connect with the goddess through nature. Budapest opened a store called The Feminist **Wicca**, in Venice, and self-published a book, *The Feminist Book of Light and Shadows* (1976), that became the basic text of **Dianic Wicca**. During the 1970s the Dianic Wicca movement grew and became a major force in modern **Witchcraft**. Other related covens sprung up in at least five other states.

In the early 1980s Budapest turned the coven over to others and moved to Oakland. She hosted a radio show in the Bay Area and became director of the Women's Spirituality Forum in Oakland. She organized lectures and workshops, retreats, festivals and conferences.

Unlike most Wiccans, Budapest does not hesitate to work negative magic if it is for positive ends. She will do what she calls hexing to stop perpetrators of crimes, especially crimes of violence against women. She has had some publicized successes with this.

Budapest's vision for the future, she says, is one of "Global Goddess Consciousness, acknowledging the oneness of all as children of one Mother, our beloved blue planet, the Earth."

SOURCES:

Guiley, Rosemary Ellen: *The Encyclopedia of Witches and Witchcraft*. Facts on File, 1989.

Buffy the Vampire Slayer (movie and television series)

Buffy the Vampire Slayer (1992) was originally a Twentieth Century-Fox movie directed by Fran Rubel Kuzui and written by Joss Whedon. The title character is Buffy Summers, played by Kirsty Swanson, a Californian high school cheerleader who is acknowledged as “The Chosen One” or “The Slayer,” a once-in-a-generation person who is destined to battle evil and destroy vampires. Buffy does this under the tutelage of the mysterious Merrick (Donald Sutherland), who is later killed by Lothos, a major vampire (Rutger Hauer). Lothos is eventually exterminated by Buffy.

The movie spawned a television series, which began in 1996 with a two-part episode, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer: Welcome to Hellmouth*. In the series, the title role is played by Sarah Michelle Gellar. At Sunnydale High School, Buffy gathers a close group of friends who learn of her role in life and assist her to the best of their abilities. Among them is Willow Rosenberg (Alyson Hanningan), who is a self-taught **Witch**, learning from library books. The library becomes the headquarters for the group, under the aegis of Rupert Giles, the librarian, who also happens to be Buffy’s “Watcher,” a guidance counselor for vampire slayers. Willow is something of a computer nerd and helps Giles do research and decipher ancient texts.

With the success of the television series, a set of novels have been published, the first written by Ritchie Cusick, who wrote the novel based on the original movie.

SOURCES:

All Movie Guide: www.allmovie.com.

Melton, J. Gordon: *The Vampire Book*. Visible Ink Press, 1999.

Burin

A sharp, pointed tool used in **Witchcraft** and **Ceremonial Magic**, for marking other **magical** items. Many **Wiccan** traditions engrave signs and symbols on the handles and/or blades of their **working tools**. Similarly, names are inscribed on candles to be used in **candle magic**. The Burin is used to do this engraving.

The Burin is similar in use to the **White Handled Knife**, a coven tool for many traditions. But where the White Handled Knife would be used only within the **Circle** during a **ritual**, the Burin could be used outside of coven use, since it is a personal tool rather than a coven tool.

Burning Times

Name given to the mid-fifteenth through the mid-eighteenth centuries, when **witchcraft** persecution was at its height. The supreme penalty for witchcraft at that time in many countries was burning at the stake, although this was not so in England or colonial America, where hanging was the penalty.

George L. Burr says, “Not till the fourteenth (century) did the Holy **Inquisition** draw witchcraft fully into its own jurisdiction and, by confusing it with heresy,



Engraving showing the burning of three witches at Derneburg, Germany, in 1555. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

first make the witches a diabolic sect and give rise to the notion of the witch-sabbath." Witchcraft generally fell under the heading of heresy, and it was heretics who were burned. This stemmed from St. Augustine's (354–430) theology expressed in *Liber de Fide ad Petrum Diaconum* in which he said that he "most firmly holds and in no way doubts that not only every pagan, but every Jew, heretic, and schismatic, will go to the eternal fire, which is prepared for the Devil and his angels." This position was incorporated into *Liber extra*, the decretals of Pope Gregory IX in 1234. The position was later developed and expanded upon by such inquisitors as Nickolas Eymeric and Thomas Aquinas.

The practice of burning was recognized by both the ecclesiastical and secular courts. In Spain and Italy all were burned alive, but elsewhere, the guilty might be strangled just before being burned if they showed contrition and begged forgiveness.

The persecutions were started by the Catholic Church but the Protestants soon took up the cause as well. Jean Bodin, in *De la Demononomie des Sorciers* (Paris, 1580), stated, "Even if the witch has never killed or done evil to man, or beasts, or fruit, and even if he has always cured bewitched people, or driven away tempests, it

is because he has renounced God and treated with **Satan** that he deserves to be burned alive. . . . Whatever punishment one can order against witches by roasting and cooking them over a slow fire is not really very much, and not as bad as the torment which Satan has made for them in this world.”

Adding insult to injury, the expense of burning a witch was charged to his or her estate. Similarly, when an accused witch was put in jail, all expenses were charged to him or her. Many people remained in jail long after being acquitted, simply because they could not pay their jail bill. Many of the charges of witchcraft leveled against people across Europe were politically motivated. Not all of those charged were poor (**Dame Alice Kyteler**, for example), and it was the Church, the State, or the feudal overlord who benefited from the confiscation of the accused's property. Often, then, the temptation of gaining wealth and property was behind a charge of witchcraft.

Joost Damhouder, a recognized authority on criminal law in the sixteenth century, wrote (*Enchiridion*, 1554) that “Whoever kills by sorcery, or by **charms**, should be burned in the conflagration of fire, for that is not simple homicide, because sorcery degrades homicide so that it merits death by burning. In the same way, he who hinders by magic the natural power of generation in men or women, or brings it about that a woman is not able to conceive, or to give birth to the child in her womb, or who dries up the milk of a wet nurse, or by whatever means of sorcery or *maleficia* kills anyone . . . is to be considered a murderer.”

The first person known to be accused of witchcraft and burned at the stake was Angela, Lady of Labarthe, in Toulouse, France, in 1275. The last execution in England was in 1717, and in Scotland in 1727. It is impossible to say exactly how many people were put to death on a charge of witchcraft—and very few of those accused were actually Witches—but there are records of the Vatican official Bartolommeo Spina burning over 1,000 people accused of witchcraft in 1523 alone. Between 1581 and 1591, **Nicholas Remy**, Attorney-General of Lorraine, boasted of burning 900. There are examples of hundreds of people being burned throughout the persecutions. Some estimates put the total number as 500,000, while others put it as high as nine million.

As Rosemary Guiley points out, today modern **Wiccans** speak of a possibility of a return to “the burning times,” meaning a reawakening of the religious persecutions of the past.

SOURCES:

Burr, George Lincoln: *Narratives of the Witchcraft Cases 1648-1706*. Barnes & Noble, 1968.

Guiley, Rosemary Ellen: *The Encyclopedia of Witches and Witchcraft*. Facts on File, 1989.

Robbins, Rossell Hope: *The Encyclopedia of Witchcraft and Demonology*. Crown, 1959.

***Burn, Witch, Burn!* (movie)**

A 1962 British movie, also known as *Night of the Eagle*, directed by Sidney Hayers and starring Janet Blair, Peter Wyngarde, Margaret Johnson, and Anthony Nicholls. Loosely based on Fritz Lieber's book, *Conjure Wife*, the story was original-

ly filmed as *Weird Woman* (1944) with Lon Chaney and more recently (1980) as a spoof under the title ***Witches Brew***, with Lana Turner.

A scientist, Norman Taylor (Wyngarde), is married to an American, Tansy (Blair), who is the reincarnation of a “witch,” although she is portrayed as a practitioner of Voodoo. Through his wife’s actions, the scientist is forced to accept the existence of the supernatural.

Burned at the Stake (movie)

Also known as *The Coming* for a CBS *Late Night Movie* in 1988, *Burned at the Stake* was originally a 1981 movie. It was directed by Bert I. Gordon and starred Susan Swift (in a dual role), Albert Salmi, and Guy Stockwell. It is set in modern-day Salem, Massachusetts. There, the ghost of a **witch** insinuates her **spirit** into the body of her modern-day descendant. This occurs because the spirits of those witches hanged in Salem in 1692 are supposedly trying to gain revenge for their fates.



Cabot, Laurie (1933–)

Termed “the official Witch of Salem (Massachusetts),” Laurie Cabot has been actively promoting **Witchcraft** in that community since 1986. She was born in Wewoka, Oklahoma, in 1933, while her family was en route from Boston to Anaheim, California. In 1947 she returned to Boston with her mother to finish high school. There she began a study of comparative religions and was encouraged to do research by a librarian who later revealed herself to be a Witch. This librarian later **initiated** Cabot.

Cabot became a dancer in Boston’s Latin Quarter and had two marriages and two daughters, one by each husband. Following her second divorce, she decided to wear long black robes, outline her eyes with black make-up, and live her life “totally as a Witch.” With a friend, she opened a store in Salem called The Witch Shop, but it was not successful and closed. A second store, Crowhaven Corner, has done well and is now run by one of her daughters.

Since the early 1970s, Cabot has sought recognition as the “Official Witch of Salem” and received a citation from the governor granting her that title in 1977.

In 1987 Cabot entered the mayoral race but later dropped out. She said that she wanted to “prove that Witches have civil rights.” She did serve on the executive board of the Salem Chamber of Commerce, which she had joined in 1980.

In 1988 she established a Temple of Isis, a chapter of the National Alliance of Pantheists. Two years earlier she had founded the Witches League of Public Awareness, working towards ending bigotry and prejudice against Witches and Witchcraft. One of its major achievements was in exposing what was known as “File 18,” an underground newsletter and hit list of occultists, compiled by a police officer. It named individual Witches and Witchcraft groups, falsely linking them to occult crimes. The League works with the American Civil Liberties Union.

SOURCES:

Guiley, Rosemary Ellen: *An Encyclopedia of Witches and Witchcraft*. Facts on File, 1989.

Cagliostro, Conte di Alessandro (1743–1795)

Born Giuseppe Balsamo, in Palermo, Italy, as a child he frequently got into trouble with undesirable young companions. He later claimed to have spent his youth in Alexandria, learning the art of alchemy. In 1770 he married the beautiful Lorenza Feliciani (also known as Serafina) and the two appeared in London in 1776, presenting themselves as the Count and Countess Cagliostro. The real Countess of Cagliostro was his godmother.

Earlier, in 1766, he had met Pinto, the Grand Master of the Order of the Knights of Malta, who encouraged him to take an interest in occultism and, specifically, alchemy. Malta was considered a center of mysticism and **magic** at that time and Cagliostro vigorously pursued that interest. Ten years later, in London, he was **initiated** into Freemasonry. He gained a reputation for making predictions, three times winning the lottery. Under the sponsorship of the Grand Lodge of England, he traveled Europe, visiting Masonic lodges and being received by kings and nobles. He is reputed to have been an exceptional healer and to have successfully conjured **spirits** and exorcised demons. He was a good hypnotist and became the rage of fashionable society. Opinion is divided as to whether Cagliostro was genuine or a charlatan.

In 1779, in Courland, a principality under the protection of Prussia, he discovered a ritual in an Egyptian papyrus. He named it “The Egyptian **Rite**.” It involved hypnotizing a young child and through it receiving visions and prophesies. He went on to establish a number of lodges of Egyptian Freemasonry.

The following year, while in Strasbourg, France, Cagliostro made the acquaintance of Cardinal Louis de Rohan, who was out of favor with Queen Marie Antoinette and desperately wanted to get back into favor. After witnessing many of Cagliostro’s feats, the cardinal thought the mystic could help him.

Cagliostro and Serafina moved to Paris, where he quickly established a reputation as a master magician. He apparently conjured up the spirits of dead statesmen and famous authors. Soon he was being called the “Divine Cagliostro” and was introduced to the Court of Louis XVI.

He continued to establish lodges of his Egyptian Freemasonry which admitted both men and women. Cagliostro, as Grand Master, adopted the title “Grand Copt,” while Serafina was Grand Mistress of the Order. There seems to be no doubt that a great deal of money was paid by the many who sought membership. The lodge was headquartered in Faubourg Saint Honoré.

Cagliostro got caught up in a scheme engineered by the Comtesse de Valois la Motte. The countess talked Cardinal Rohan into signing a note for a substantial sum to pay for a necklace much admired by the queen. She reasoned that if he presented the necklace to Marie Antoinette, the queen would immediately take him back into her favor. But once the necklace had been purchased, the countess made off with it instead of taking it to the queen. When apprehended she accused Cagliostro of masterminding the plot. He was arrested and imprisoned in the Bastille.

Cagliostro managed to talk his way out of the Bastille and he and his wife made their way to England. From there he wrote and published a book, *Letter to the French*

People (1786), in which he criticized the French monarchy and foretold the French Revolution. Subsequently the *Courier de l'Europe*, a French newspaper published in London, exposed him by printing what it claimed to be sordid details of his life. Cagliostro and Serafina left London and wandered about Europe before deciding to settle in Italy. In Rome he tried to establish lodges of Egyptian Freemasonry, right within the bounds of the Papal States. But Masonry was anathema to the Roman Catholic Church, and on September 27, 1789, he was arrested by order of the Holy **Inquisition** and imprisoned in the Castle of Saint Angelo. After eighteen months of interrogation and **torture**, he was sentenced to death. The Pope commuted this sentence to life imprisonment. After an unsuccessful escape attempt, he was sent to the solitary Castle of San Leo, near Montefeltro in the Apennines, where he remained until he died on August 6, 1795. It was named that his wife had denounced him to the Inquisition as a heretic, **magician** and conjurer of demons. There are also conflicting stories of his death: that he died of apoplexy or syphilis, or that he was strangled by his jailer.

Serafina was confined for life in the penitentiary at the Convent of St. Appollonia and died there in 1794.

SOURCES:

Dumas, F. Ribadeau: *Cagliostro: Scoundrel or Saint?* Orion, 1967.
Spence, Lewis: *An Encyclopedia of Occultism*. University Books, 1960.

Cakes and Wine/Ale

The **Wiccan ritual** of Cakes and Wine, or Cakes and Ale, thanks the **gods** for the necessities of life. It is a part of every ritual. It may occur at the end of the rite or, if there is **magic** to be done, it may be done in the middle, between the religious and magical segments.

The cakes are usually prepared especially for the ritual and are often made in the shape of crescent **moons**, although store-bought cakes or cookies are acceptable. They are placed on a plate or directly onto the **Pentacle**. The wine or ale (according to coven preference) is served in the **Goblet**. Mead, cider, or non-alcoholic fruit juice might also be substituted.

The form of the ritual is fairly constant throughout Wicca. The goblet of wine is proffered to the **Priestess** by the Priest. She holds her **athamé** between the palms of her hands and lowers it into the wine with the words, "As the athamé is the male, so the cup is the female, and conjoined they bring happiness." A **libation** is poured to the gods, then the Priestess and Priest take a sip from the goblet. It is then either passed around for the rest of the **coven** to drink or the coven file past the Priestess and drink.

Next the cakes are presented to the Priestess by the Priest. She dips her athamé into the wine and then touches it to each of the cakes in turn. As she does so, the Priest says, "O Queen most secret, bless this food unto our bodies, bestowing health, wealth, and joy; strength, peace, and that fulfillment of love which is perpetual happiness." Again, an offering is made, then the Priestess eats, followed by the Priest and then all of the coveners.

If the coven meets indoors, then the libations of wine and cake may be placed on a suitable plate and taken out after the ritual to be placed and poured on the ground as an offering to the gods.

There may be small variations from the above, according to the tradition, but the main form of this rite is followed by all Witches. It is an ancient ritual and is even mentioned in the Christian **Bible**, in Jeremiah 14, where “a great multitude” of people respond to Jeremiah’s threats with:

As for the word that thou hast spoken unto us in the name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto thee. But we will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth forth out of our own mouth, to burn **incense** unto the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, as we have done, we, and our fathers, our kings, and our princes, in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem: for then had we plenty of victuals, and were well, and saw no evil. But since we left off to burn incense to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, we have wanted all things, and have been consumed by the **sword** and by the famine. And when we burned incense to the queen of heaven, and poured out drink offerings unto her, did we make our cakes to worship her, and pour out drink offerings unto her, without our men?

Leland’s *Aradia, Gospel of the Witches*, describes a conjuration of meal, preparatory to the Cakes and Wine ritual. It says, “You shall take meal and salt, honey and water,” and make the incantation, which says, in part:

I conjure thee, O Meal!
Who art indeed our body, since without thee
We could not live, thou who (at first as seed)
Before becoming flower went in the earth,
Where all deep secrets hide, and then when ground
Didst dance like dust in the wind, and yet meanwhile
Didst bear with thee in flitting, secrets strange!

Later it says, “You shall make cakes of meal, wine, salt, and honey in the shape of a (crescent or horned) moon. . . . All shall sit down to the supper all naked, men and women, and, the feast over, they shall dance, sing, make music, and then love. . . .”

Candle Magic

A form of **sympathetic magic**, earliest examples of which appeared 25,000 years ago, in Paleolithic times. In candle-burning magic, candles represent people and things, attributes, emotions and influences. By lighting and by manipulating the candles, what they represent is manipulated.

A very simple form of candle magic is seen in Roman Catholic and other places of worship, when a petitioner lights a candle and asks for a healing (for example) for a friend or relative. Praying to God (or a saint or whomever) to ask for

the favor is part of that **ritual**. In medieval Europe, during Yom Kippur, it was a Jewish custom to light a candle and place it where it would not get accidentally blown out. It was left there for ten days before the Day of Atonement. If, at the end of that time, the candle had gone out, it was taken as a sign that the person burning it would not live out the year.

An old form of magical **divination** entailed a girl burning a candle outside the house of her betrothed. If the flame of the candle leaned toward the house, then her lover was faithful. If, however, it leaned away from the building, he was unfaithful.

In most candle magic in which a number of candles are used, the candles are distinguished from one another by their color. The symbolism of colors is as follows:

Red:	Courage, health, sexual love, strength, vigor
Pink:	Honor, love, morality
Orange:	Adaptability, attraction, encouragement, stimulation
Yellow (Gold):	Attraction, charm, confidence, persuasion, protection
White:	Purity, sincerity, truth
Greenish-yellow:	Anger, cowardice, discord, jealousy, sickness
Green:	Fertility, finance, healing, luck
Brown:	Hesitation, neutrality, uncertainty
Blue, light:	Health, patience, tranquility, understanding
Blue, dark:	Changeability, depression, impulsiveness
Violet:	Healing, patience, spirituality
Purple:	Ambition, business progress, power, tension
Silver (gray):	Cancellation, neutrality, stalemate
Black:	Confusion, discord, evil, loss

The color of candles representing people is based on the person's **zodiacal** sign. These are as follows:

Astrological Sign	Birth Date	Primary Color	Secondary Color
Aquarius	Jan 20–Feb 18	BLUE	Green
Pisces	Feb 19–Mar 20	WHITE	Green
Aries	Mar 21–Apr 19	WHITE	Pink
Taurus	Apr 20–May 20	RED	Yellow
Gemini	May 21–Jun 21	RED	Blue
Cancer	Jun 22–Jul 22	GREEN	Brown
Leo	Jul 23–Aug 22	RED	Green
Virgo	Aug 23–Sep 22	GOLD	Black
Libra	Sep 23–Oct 22	BLACK	Blue
Scorpio	Oct 23–Nov 21	BROWN	Black
Sagittarius	Nov 22–Dec 21	GOLD	Red
Capricorn	Dec 22–Jan 19	RED	Brown

A person's representative candle can be of the primary color alone or of the primary and secondary colors together, with half the candle one color and half the other, or in alternating stripes or bands. If the birthdate is unknown, a white candle

may be substituted. Store-bought candles can be used, but many people prefer to make their own, personalizing them to a higher degree.

The person doing the ritual (or for whom the ritual is being done) is represented by a candle called the Petitioner. This is of that person's astral color(s). Other pertinent candles are placed in positions about the Petitioner candle. They are first **anointed** with oil, then lit with appropriate words to designate the purpose of each. They may be left to burn as they are or, more frequently, they may be moved periodically to affect the magic. Candles that have been used in one ritual should not be used in another, even if that ritual is for the same or similar purposes. All new rituals should start with fresh candles.

An example of the use of candle magic would be to attract money. In very simple terms, the Petitioner's candle would be lit and the Petitioner named. An orange candle would be placed beside the first candle, proclaiming it a candle for attraction. Then a green candle, representing money, would be placed at the far side of the **altar**, the surface on which the candle manipulation is taking place. A simple ritual would involve moving the green candle by degrees closer and closer to the Petitioner's candle. Symbolically, the orange candle is attracting the money to the Petitioner.

Although candle magic rituals are somewhat more complex than this simple example, they are still very basic and require little in the way of monetary outlay or time to perform. For this reason they have remained popular for generations. Further, they have proven to be extremely effective, contributing to their popularity.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Practical Candleburning Rituals*. Llewellyn, 1970.
 Buckland, Raymond: *Advanced Candle Magick*. Llewellyn, 1996.

CANDLEMAS see IMBOLC

Canon Episcopi

An early religious document of unknown origin, the *Canon Episcopi* was for many centuries taken to be the official Roman Catholic view of **witchcraft**. The canon was quoted by Regino of Prüm, Abbot of Treves, about the tenth century CE. It was incorporated into the *Corpus Juris Canonici* in the twelfth century by Gratian of Bologna, becoming part of Canon Law.

It is an early ecclesiastical statement to the effect that a belief in witchcraft was heretical. Only God, it said, possessed supernatural power, so such things as flying through the air on **broomsticks** and **blasting** crops were impossible. Later Church theorists were to reverse this position, leading to the extremes of the persecutions.

The *Canon Episcopi* describes witches as being "deluded by illusions and phantasms of demons, (they) believe and openly profess that, in the dead of night, they ride upon certain beasts with the pagan goddess Diana, with a countless horde of women, and in the silence of the dead of night fly over vast tracts of country, and obey her commands as their mistress, while they are summoned to her service on

other nights . . . whoever believes such things or similar things loses the faith, and he who has not the right faith in God is not of God.”

It was decided, therefore, that witchcraft was a fiction and that to subscribe to that fiction was to be heretical.

CARMONEY WITCH see IRISH WITCHCRAFT

CAT see FAMILIAR

Caul

A thin membrane that envelops the fetus; part of the amnion. Some children are born with it still attached, covering the head. This is often referred to as being “born with the veil.” It was, for many hundreds of years, believed to have **magical** properties, in particular the power to save a person from drowning. This was probably because it, in effect, saved the fetus from drowning in the womb. Consequently, many sailors would seek out a **Witch** who could sell them a caul as an amulet to carry on their voyages.

Many believe that a person born with a caul also possesses special powers, such as divination and healing. Some even believe that all Witches are born with the caul. The Romans considered the caul an omen of good luck.

In Jewish tradition, the caul protects from storm demons—another reason for sailors’ interest in it.

Charles Dickens refers to the caul in *David Copperfield* when David says, “I was born with a caul, which was advertised for sale, in the newspapers, at the low price of fifteen guineas.”

Cauldron

In **pagan** tradition, the cauldron is the Great Mother’s cosmic womb. In Celtic lore the cauldron, as a symbol of and source for hospitality, had an almost religious significance. Life, in the form of food, came from the cauldron.

The Gundestrup Cauldron was discovered in a peat bog in Denmark’s Jutland in 1891. Made of embossed silver piece and twenty-seven inches wide at the rim, it dates from the first century BCE. Scholars believe it was taken from Central Europe to Denmark as war booty. The intricately detailed panels of the cauldron relate the Irish epic *Táin Bó Cuailnge*. In ancient Britain, cauldrons featured in many religious mysteries.

In ancient Babylon the cauldron that effected transformations changed shape often, like the womb that gave rebirth. It was controlled by Siris, mother of stars. Barbara Walker says Siris’s cauldron was “the blue heaven, where she stirred the mead of regeneration.” In Babylonian temples the cauldron was called *apsu*, or “abyss,” and was used for **ritual bathing** and rites of rebirth. Odin, the Norse god,



A Witch mixes a brew in a cauldron during a sabbat, 1687. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

obtained his power from three cauldrons in the cave-womb of the earth. He entered in the form of a phallic snake and beguiled the earth-goddess by making love to her. In Finnish folklore, a **magic** cauldron was the source of all things on earth. It was called Sampo and was located beneath a fairy island. At Vix, in France, a Greek bronze cauldron was discovered. It is known as a *krater*, and dates to about 500 BCE. It was found, with many other treasures, in the grave of a Celtic princess.

Medea, the Witch of Colchis in Greek myth, was a priestess of **Hecate**, goddess of the **Moon**. Medea had a cauldron and an entourage of twelve maidens, who helped in her rituals with the cauldron. There are many stories of kings and others being boiled in the goddess's cauldron and then being reborn. They included King Aeson, King Minos, Pelops, son of the king of Phrygia, among others.

One goddess closely associated with the cauldron was **Kerridwen**, ancient British fertility and mother goddess. A magical draught brewed in her Cauldron of Inspiration gave the recipient knowledge and inspiration. The brew had to simmer for a year and a day before it was ready. Branwen, another British goddess, had a Cauldron of Regeneration in which dead men could be brought back to life. Huge magic cauldrons were supposedly owned by several of the Irish and Welsh deities and their theft by semi-divine heroes is a popular theme of the early myths. The five feasting halls, or *bruidne*, of ancient Ireland each possessed a magic cauldron that duced just enough food to feed however many people were present.

The cauldron is invariably associated with Witches in the popular mind. The cauldron around which the three Witches of **Shakespeare's** *Macbeth* danced may be partly responsible. Certainly *Macbeth* is the source of the image of Witches throwing into the cauldron strange and grotesque items, such as "fillet of a fenny snake, in the cauldron boil and bake; eye of newt, and toe of frog, wool of bat and tongue of dog, adder's fork, and blind worm's sting, lizard's leg and howlet's wing. . . ." Shakespeare was obviously heavily influenced by the Church's distortion of the **Old Religion**. Yet there was some substance to the idea of Witches using cauldrons.

For the great **sabbats**, when large numbers of Witches got together to worship, many of them had to travel a considerable distance to reach the sabbat site. They drove along with them chickens, ducks, or geese, and carried a large cooking pot or a cauldron. At the site they got water from a stream, gathered local **herbs** (the seemingly obnoxious ingredients), and cooked up the fowl. So Witches did indeed have cauldrons at the sabbats—but not to boil up babies or the like!

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Witchcraft from the Inside*. Llewellyn, 1970.

Cavendish, Richard (ed.): *Man, Myth and Magic*. BPC Publishing, 1970.

Walker, Barbara G.: *The Woman's Encyclopedia of Myths and Secrets*. Harper & Row, 1983.

Cave Art

Margaret Murray says that "the earliest known representation of a deity is in the *Caverne des Trois Frères* in Ariège (France), and dates to the late Paleolithic period." This is a cave painting of a figure known as "The Sorcerer," and the period is

approximately 20,000 BCE. The Paleolithic people were hunters, while the Neolithic and Bronze Age people were pastoral and agricultural. Little remains of the Paleolithic people beyond their flint tools, engraved bones, and the painted and sculptured caves. Of particular note about “The Sorcerer” and other similar cave paintings, is that they were rendered on a wall of the cave in a normally remote place. Many of the smaller animal pictures with it are fifteen feet or more above the floor level with the main figure high up, in the deepest niche, suggesting that this painting was not for mere ornamentation.

That “The Sorcerer” is a picture of a deity, as Murray suggests, is not certain. But it is highly probable that it depicts a man representing a deity—the **God of Hunting**. Success in the hunt was of primary importance at that time, and supplicating a hunting deity would have been a natural practice. The positioning of the painting would allow only a select few to view it, probably those involved in the supplication, or perhaps only the one playing the part of the hunting god. These rites would take the form of a **ritual** pantomime of the hunt to be undertaken. From clay models of bison and bear that have been found marked with holes from spears and javelins, it is known that such **magical** rituals for success in the hunt were carried out.

In the *Forneau du Diable*, at Dordogne, France, there is an engraving of a similar scene. Where “The Sorcerer” wears the mask, skin and antlers of a stag, the figure at Dordogne wear the mask, skin and horns of a bull. He is also playing what seems to be a musical instrument, perhaps as part of the ritual. A rock carving at Val Camonica, northern Italy, from the mid-fourth century BCE, shows a male figure with the antlers of a stag, and has what is possibly a horned **serpent** beside him.

Many cave paintings seem to be connected to the working of magic to ensure success in the hunt. Hans Baumann says of the mammoth with the red heart painted on the walls of the 270 meter-long Altamira caves in northern Spain, “While the hunters danced they burned with the desire to hit the heart. They could see the heart before them as a runner on a race track sees the tape while he is still miles away from it . . . before the hunt they made a supreme effort to store up in themselves as much presence of mind as they could muster against the moment upon which all would depend. For their hunting dances they slipped inside the hides of the animals they had already killed, because they wanted to ‘get inside’ these animals . . . when it came to a fight they would aim unerringly at their tenderest spot.”

Magic was performed not only to ensure success in the hunt. Equally important was fertility—fertility of the animals hunted, which was needed to continue the food source. Sculpted clay figures of copulating bison were discovered in the cave at Tuc d’Audoubert, France, indicating that this magic was also a part of Paleolithic life. And along with fertility of the animals was the need for fertility of humankind.

Clay models of pregnant women are an important part of this early magic. Many examples have been found and are generally referred to as “Venus” figurines. They include the Venus of Laussel, carved into a slab of rock in Dordogne, France, the Venuses of Abri Patand (France), Malta (Malta), Lespugue (France), and the well-known Venus of Willendorf (Austria). Similar are female figures from Kostein-ki (Ukraine), Achilleion (Thessaly), Moldavia (Romania), and La Marche

(France), with sites ranging from France and Italy to Siberia and southern Russia. The common feature of these figures is that they are faceless and the feminine attributes are greatly exaggerated. The Venus of Willendorf is an excellent example, with its enlarged belly, as though it is pregnant, and its pendulous breasts. Frequently the figure exhibits greatly enlarged genitalia.

These female figures are generally accepted as being representations of the **Mother Goddess**, yet they could well be simply magical “poppets,” promoting fertility in the women of the tribes and symbolizing the women themselves rather than the goddess.

Doreen Valiente mentions what appears to be a Witch ritual—certainly a round dance by women—depicted in a cave painting from Cogul, Spain.

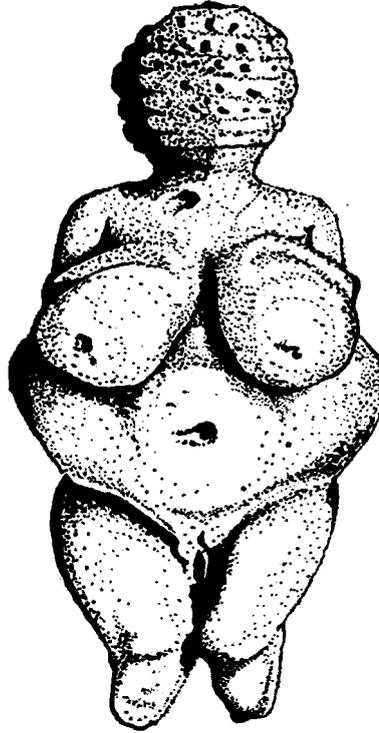
Witches look back on these examples of cave art as the beginnings of religio-magic. They may not have been the beginnings of Witchcraft *per se*, but were certainly a step in that direction.

SOURCES:

Baumann, Hans: *The Caves of the Great Hunters*.
Pantheon Books, 1954.

Murray, Margaret Alice: *The God of the Witches*. Sampson Low, Marston, 1921.

Valiente, Doreen: *An ABC of Witchcraft Past and Present*. St. Martin's Press, 1973.



Gravettian “Venus” figurine found at Willendorf, Austria. Drawn by Gerald Luxton, after B. Brauston. Courtesy Raymond Buckland.

Celts; Celtic Witchcraft

Celt (or Kelt) is derived from the Greek *Keltoi*, a name the Greeks used for a group of people spread across Europe and the Iberian Peninsula. Most authorities recognize the Celts as dwelling from the Black Sea across to the Atlantic Ocean and from the North Sea and Denmark, down to the Mediterranean. They were known as *Kelten* in Germany; *Celtes* (with the soft C) in France. Much of their expansion was due to their use of iron, rather than bronze, for weapons. The Celts were a distinctive group of related tribes who emerged in the eighth century BCE. Their social system was divided into three parts: king, warrior aristocracy, and freemen farmers. They introduced the use of iron to northern Europe. Their inventions and introductions were numerous: chain mail, soap, horseshoes, iron rims for wheels, chisels, files, and handsaws.

The Celts measured time in nights rather than days, dividing months, or **moon spans**, into two halves: bright and dark. Even today, the language of the Celts survives in Brittany, Wales, the Isle of Man, and along the west coasts of both Scotland and Ireland. In recent years, it has been revived in Cornwall, England, where the Celtic revival has been intense, with renewal of celebrations of the past and big festivals, including the lighting of **balefires** on hill tops across the county on the main feast days.

Each of the various Celtic tribes had its own leader and its own laws, yet there was great similarity among all tribes. Originally the leaders were known as Kings but later, with the exception of Ireland, the title became Chieftain. One form of their language, today known as P-Celtic, was spoken in Gaul and Britain while another form, Q-Celtic, was spoken in Ireland.

Although the Celts had a knowledge of Greek writing, their laws, histories, and religious beliefs were not committed to writing but were passed on orally. Caesar commented on this when speaking of the Celtic priesthood, the **Druids**. In his *De Bello Gallico* he said, “(They) learn by heart a great number of verses, and therefore some persons remain twenty years under training.”

There were four main festivals in the Celtic year: **Imbolc**, **Beltane**, **Lughnasadh**, and **Samhain**, which were celebrated at the main sacred site of each tribe. The **priests** and **priestesses** for these rituals were the Druids, although little is now known of them. It is known, however, that they were recruited from warrior-class families but were then regarded as of higher rank. The Druids were believed to be not only religious leaders and teachers, but also magicians and shape-shifters.

The Celts practiced human sacrifice. Dr. Anne Ross refers to three of their gods, Teutates, Esus, and Taranis, commenting that the Roman poet Lucan told of people being drowned in a vat in sacrifice to Teutates, stabbed and then hung in a tree in sacrifice to Esus, and burned in sacrifice to Taranis. Animals were routinely sacrificed and the bull sacrifice (*tarb-feis*) was featured at the crowning of a new king.

Anu (or Danu) was the Mother of the Gods. From her came the Irish gods known as the *Tuatha De Danann* (Tribes of the Goddess Danu). It is possible that the goddess Brigit is Danu known by another name. It was a custom to give a number of different names to any one **deity**, although some of these names were simply epithets.

Amulets and **talismans** were popular with the Celts. Many of the talismans were ithyphallic, others were described as “serpent’s eggs.” One of the most impressive Celtic cult animals—and peculiar to the Celts—was the ram-headed serpent, a snake with ram’s horns depicted on many Celtic amulets and jewelry.

A number of modern day traditions of **Witchcraft** link themselves to a Celtic background. **Irish**, **Welsh**, and **Scottish Witchcraft** are obviously linked. The American Celtic tradition in the United States was started by Jessica Bell, a self-styled “**Witch Queen**” who used the **Craft** name **Lady Sheba**. Generally, Celtic forms of Wicca embrace the Celtic pantheon, using the names of various Celtic deities according to coven preference.

SOURCES:

Ross, Anne: *Pagan Celtic Britain*. Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1967.

National Geographic Magazine: "The Celts." May 1977.

Norton-Taylor, Duncan: *The Emergence of Man: The Celts*. Time-Life Books, 1974.

Censer; Thurible

As its name implies, the censer holds incense and dispenses smoke during **rituals**. The ecclesiastical name for it is *thurible*. It is equated with the element of **Air**. Frequently the censer is hung on the end of a chain, or chains, so that it might be swung to promote the burning of the charcoal on which the incense rests. It is usually a metal vessel, perforated with holes, into which glowing charcoal is placed and incense is sprinkled onto the charcoal.

Ancient Egyptian censers were small bowls with a handle. Those used by the Greeks and the Romans were more like braziers. They were not swung, being much heavier than today's censers and were often made of bronze or iron. Early Jewish censers were like the Egyptian ones, and were shaped like ladles.

In **Wicca** the censuring of the **Circle** is part of its **consecration** at the start of every **coven** ritual. Each person in the circle is similarly censured, as a cleansing. Any object—amulet, talisman, working tool—is censured when consecrated.

Ceremonial Magic

Throughout the **Witchcraft persecutions** many high dignitaries of the Church openly practiced ceremonial magic, without fear of censure. The reason was that Witchcraft, as a religion, was heresy, while **magic** was viewed as simply a practice. Ceremonial magic was, in fact, a practice that required a great deal of knowledge (especially of Greek and Latin), sufficient time, and good financial backing. The people who had all three of these things, usually in some abundance, were the ecclesiastics. Many bishops, archbishops, even some of the **popes**, practiced ceremonial magic. Gerbert the Bishop, who later became Pope Sylvester II, was regarded as a great magician. Other practitioners included Pope Leo III, Pope Honorius III, Pope Urban V, Nicephorus Patriarch of Constantinople, the German Emperor Rudolf II, Charles V of France, Cardinals Cusa and Cajetan, Bernard de Mirandole Bishop of Caserta, Udalric de Fronsperg Bishop of Trent, and many others.

Ceremonial magic—also known as High Magic—is the practice of conjuring **spirits**, also known as entities, demons, or devils. Alphonsus de Spina stated in 1459 that there were 133,306,668 of these entities. This was "corrected" by Johann Weyer (1577) to 7,405,926 demons and 72 princes. Others also tried to count them, but came up with widely differing totals. Certainly there was a belief in a whole host of entities, all named and in a regular hierarchy, and each was thought to be an expert in a particular field. Depending upon what one wished for, the pertinent entity was conjured. For example, to be able to speak in tongues, Agares must

be summoned. To learn astronomy and philosophy, Furcus must be reached. To destroy cities and prominent people, Raym is the one.

These entities were very unwilling to appear and obey and had to be threatened; the magician had to demonstrate his power over the spirit. To demonstrate his superiority, the magician would conjure with “**words of power**,” usually using the names of god and of the angels and archangels, and the spirit was reluctantly forced to obey his commands.

The details of such rituals of the “Art Magic” were found in a book known as a *grimoire*, from the Old French for “grammar.” A number of these grimoires are extant in the libraries and private collections of Europe and America, although many seem to be no more than copies of copies. Some of the most notable grimoires are *The Key of Solomon the King*, *The Lesser Key of Solomon*, *The Arbatel*, *The Heph-tameron*, *The Grimoire of Honorius*, *The Black Pullet*, *The Pansophy of Rudolph the Magus*, and *The Book of Sacred Magic of Abra-Melin the Mage*.

A magician must do a great deal of preparatory work before he can start the conjuration. All the instruments must be made by the magician and constructed to an exacting formula. For example, wood for wands and the handles of knives must be cut from certain trees on specific days, in the hours of specified planets. Everything must be purified to the utmost, including the magician himself, through fasting, bathing, and prayer. The temple where the conjuration takes place must be carefully prepared and purified.

The Abra-Melin suggests that the magician’s “age ought not to be less than twenty-five years nor more than fifty; he should have no hereditary disease, such as virulent leprosy; whether he be free or married importeth little.” He must be dressed in special robes, prepared as carefully as the various instruments. He wears a crown of parchment and from his belt and around his neck hang **amulets** and **pentacles**. He operates within a large magic circle, carefully constructed and surrounded with the names of power. Outside the circle is a small triangle, also surrounded with names and words of power. Into this triangle will the entity be conjured.

The actual rituals to conjure the spirit are long and demanding, and frequently spoken in Latin or Greek. Exhortation after exhortation is made, and if the magician is successful, the entity will finally appear in the triangle. He often appears in terrible form, hoping to scare the magician out of his circle of protection. But if he appears, no matter his form, then he must obey the magician. Unfortunately it does not end there. When the conjurer has got what he wants, he then has to dismiss the entity, which is not always willing to leave. Again there are many exhortations and threats by the magician. Only when he is absolutely sure that the spirit has gone does the ceremonial magician dare leave his circle of protection.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *The Anatomy of the Occult*. Samuel Weiser, 1977.

Barrett, Francis: *The Magus*. University Books, 1967.

Macgregor Mathers, S. L.: *The Book of Sacred Magic of Abra-Melin the Mage*. De Laurence, 1932.

Cerne; Cernunnos

The name of the great pagan deity, representing winter and the hunt, depending upon the country in which he was worshiped. Names were recorded from early times in the Near East, but in western Europe there were no written records until Roman times. The Romans named the god *Cernunnos*, meaning "The Horned One." In some areas this has become *Kernunnos*, in others it has been shortened from *Cernunnos* to *Cerne*. In English it was *Herne*, the Hunter.

In the north of Gaul his image was found carved on an altar stone (now in the Cluny Museum, Paris) discovered under the cathedral of Notre Dame. The figure is similar to the Paleolithic painting of the Sorcerer (see **Cave Art**) in that it is a bearded human male head with the antlers of a stag.

Herne has long been recognized as the spectral figure who, accompanied by his hounds, ranges over Windsor Great Park at the full of the moon. French and German folklore contains references to a similar figure in the French Fontainebleau and the German Black Forest. *Kernunnos* is the name by which **Gardnerian Witches** refer to the Horned God.

Generally considered to be a representation of *Cernunnos*, a great white figure is cut into the chalk hillside at *Cerne Abbas*, in Wiltshire, England, and displays a fully erect penis as a sign of his potency.

SOURCES:

Ross, Anne: *Pagan Celtic Britain*. Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1967.

CERRIDWEN see KERRIDWEN

Chakra

From the ancient Hindu **Kundalini**, the *chakra* (pronounced *shak'rer*) is one of a number of centers of spiritual power in the body. Theosophists say they are the sense organs of the ethereal body. The Hindu concept is one of cosmic energy latent in the human organism. Hindu mystics saw the *kundalini* as a serpent coiled at the base of the spine. When aroused, through meditation and breath control, the energy moves up the spine, touching each of seven *chakra* points, or centers. The first, or root, *chakra* is associated with the base of the spine and corresponds with the adrenal glands. The second (sacral) is the genitals, corresponding with the gonads; third, solar plexus (lyden); fourth, heart (thymus); fifth, throat (thyroid); sixth, third eye (pineal); seventh (*sahasrar* or "thousand petaled lotus") is the crown of the head (pituitary).

Arousal of the *Kundalini*, by awakening the *chakras*, results in a blissful experience described as comparable to the sexual embrace of god and goddess, *Siva* and his Consort. Many **Witches** utilize the *Kundalini* energy, the *chakras*, and the colors associated with them in working **healing magic**.

SOURCES:

Leadbeater, C. W.: *The Chakras*. Quest, 1972.



Cerne or Cernunnos, pagan deity representing winter and the hunt. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

Chalice

Another name for the ritual **goblet**, or sacred cup, used by **Witches** in their **rituals**. It holds the **consecrated** wine and may symbolize the element of **water**.

Chanctonbury Ring

A tree-covered hilltop in West Essex, England, six miles north of Worthing, Chanctonbury Ring is the site of an ancient Romano-British temple and a hill fortress. For centuries the local residents went to the rounded hilltop to welcome the sunrise at Beltane. Doreen Valiente notes that those who were there to welcome the sunrise were undoubtedly **pagans** who had been out celebrating “in the woods all night, A-conjurin’ Summer in!” (see **Beltane**). Today, many Essex **Witches** use the site for their **rituals**.

The hill is a prehistoric bank and ditch, the top of which was planted with trees in the eighteenth century. It is said to be haunted, and is the subject of local legends. One has it that the devil will appear if you walk backwards around the site seven times. He will offer a bowl of porridge, milk, or soup. If you accept it, he will own your soul. Another legend describes a headless horseman who gallops around the Ring as the May Day sun rises. An old, white-bearded man who might be a **Druid** is another ghost, supposedly searching for treasure buried on the site.

SOURCES:

Bord, Janet and Colin: *Atlas of Magical Britain*. Sidgwick & Jackson, 1990.

Valiente, Doreen: *An ABC of Witchcraft Past and Present*. St. Martin's Press, 1973.

Channeling

At certain **Wiccan rituals**, the **priest** or **priestess** may channel the **god** or **goddess**. In doing so, the priest is acting as a conduit for the deity to speak to the **coven**. At the ceremonies of **Drawing Down the Moon** and **Drawing Down the Sun**, the deities are invoked and asked to descend into the body of the presiding priest or priestess. The deity speaks through the priest, although the priest may not be aware of what is said.

In **Aradia**, in what is known as The Charge of the Goddess, Aradia says, “. . . once in the month, and when the moon is full, ye shall assemble in some desert place, or in a forest all together join to adore the potent spirit of your queen, my mother, great Diana. . . .” It is at that time and place that the goddess is then able to speak to her worshipers.

The deities may well decide to speak at times other than those prescribed, so channeling can take place at any time, but it is most likely to be done within the ritual **circle**.

Chants

A rhythmic repetition of words, chants can be an important ingredient of **spells**. They can have an almost hypnotic effect and allow the mind to focus on the object of

the **magic** being worked, without the worker having to consciously think of the words. In this way power can more easily be raised. Often the words are sung to a simple tune or are accompanied by a rhythmic drumming, hand-clapping, or dancing.

Prayer is universal. Every religion throughout the world, in all places and at all times, uses prayer. In many religions the prayers are chanted. Eliphas Levi (1810–1875), the French magician, said, “In magic, to have said is to have done; to affirm and will what ought to be, is to create.” In other words, words are necessary to bring about change, which is what magic is. It has also been said that magic consists of two parts: things said and things done. Chants are frequently the “things said” part.

Chants either rhyme or have a heavy, sonorous beat that contributes to a gradually rising state of excitement, adding to the power produced. In **Witchcraft**, when raising power to work magic, **Witches** will chant as they dance clockwise about the **circle**, altering their consciousness and building their emotions, gradually increasing the tempo until it feels as if the power will burst forth. At that time, the spell is released.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *The Power of Magic Chants*. Parker, 1978.

Chap Books

Pamphlets released, beginning in Elizabethan times, giving details about witch trials. Notestein says, “The witch chap-book was a distinct species. In the days when the chronicles were the only newspapers it was what is now the ‘extra,’ brought out to catch the public before the sensation has lost its flavor.”

Much useful information about trials can be obtained from these chap books. Although they invariably praise the judge and his efforts to exterminate the blight of witchcraft, they do contain all of the trivial details of the trials that might otherwise be lost.

A chap book of 1566 was headed *The examination and confession of certaine Wytches at Chensforde in the Countie of Essex before the Quenes Maiesties Judges the XXVI daye of July anno 1566*. A later one was *The Wonderful Discoverie of the Witchcrafts of Margaret and Phillip Flower, daughters of Joan Flower neere Beuer Castel: executed at Lincolne, March 11, 1618*.

SOURCES:

Notestein, Wallace: *A History of Witchcraft in England from 1558 to 1718*. Russell & Russell, 1965.

Charge of the Goddess

At the ceremony of **Drawing Down the Moon**, the **High Priestess** will stand with her arms raised as the **High Priest**, using the **wand**, invokes the **Goddess** and asks her to descend into the body of the Priestess and to speak through her to the assembled **coven**. Often that is exactly what happens (see **Channeling**), but the Goddess does

not always deign to appear. At those times the High Priestess will instead recite what is known as the “Charge of the Goddess,” speaking on the Goddess’s behalf. This is the time honored speech given by Aradia to the Witches of Italy (see **Aradia**), as reported by Charles Godfrey Leland. The Italian version was rewritten by **Doreen Valiente**, when she and **Gerald Gardner** were fine-tuning the Gardnerian **Book of Shadows** in the early 1950s. Valiente presented both a prose and a poetic version. The Charge of the Goddess has become one of the best-loved pieces of ritual throughout **Wicca**, and is used not only by Gardnerians but by most other traditions also.

Charm

A **talisman** or an **amulet** may be referred to as a charm, as may a Christian rosary or *agnes dei*. A three-leaf clover is regarded as a lucky charm, as is a rabbit’s foot. Charms are objects, but they are also words used in **spells**, **chants** and **incantations**.

In the past, and even today, people will repeat a word, phrase, or verse that they have been told will work as a charm for health, wealth, protection, love or power. They might be spoken in English, Latin or some form of pseudo-magical gibberish, either meaningless or whose meaning has long since been lost.

The Church has had an ambivalent attitude toward charms. In medieval times holy relics and rosaries were blessed and encouraged. Prayers were also recommended. Yet in the seventeenth century, in Scotland, the use of a charm could lead to burning at the stake. Many charms invoked the names of saints, yet the Church warned that only prayers in their standard Catholic form were permissible.

In South America, no one can claim to be a shaman unless they have knowledge of a great many charms. All magical rites are assigned charms which are believed to have great power. The shamans use charms to combat disease, overcome evil, destroy enemies and summon spirits. Although ordinary people may also know charms, those of the shamans are thought to be especially effective.

Similarly, many believe that the charms of **Witches** are far more effective than any traditional, well-known charms. For example, there are probably hundreds of charms for getting rid of warts. Many of them seem to work. Yet people will place more faith in a charm spoken by a **Witch** than the very same charm spoken by themselves.

SOURCES:

Pickering, David: *Dictionary of Witchcraft*. Cassell, 1996.

Charmed (television series)

From *Spelling Television*, created by Constance M. Burge, this series was obviously inspired by the movie *Practical Magic*. The television series stars Shannen Doherty, Holly Marie Combs, and Alyssa Milano as three sisters: Prue, Piper, and Phoebe Halliwell. Reunited in their grandmother’s old Victorian home, they are mysteriously led up to the attic where they discover granny’s **Book of Shadows**. With a rit-

ual performed at the full of the **Moon**, they are given the role of “The Charmed Ones,” powerful **Witches** who must fight demons and **warlocks**. Prue is able to repel objects and people, using kinetic energy; Piper has the power to freeze time briefly; and Phoebe gets flashes of future events.

Actual **Craft** terms, such as Book of Shadows, **coven**, **pentagram**, **Wicca**, are used, giving an air of authenticity. The writers seemed to have some knowledge of actual Wiccan and **magical** practices (and even incorporated this author’s name into the plot), although in typical Hollywood fashion, facts are distorted and mixed in with fiction to produce an entertaining storyline. However, the three main **Witches** are presented in a positive light.

Church of All Worlds

The first neo-Pagan earth religion in the United States to obtain full federal recognition as a church, in 1968. Based on Robert Heinlein’s science fiction novel, *Stranger in a Strange Land* (1961), an organization known as Atl (Aztec word meaning both “home of our ancestors” and also “water”) was started by Tim Zell and Richard Christie, then college students. The group’s interest in innovative political and social change was further developed by Zell and formalized into the Church of All Worlds, a church with a lack of dogma concerning god, the afterlife, and any concept of retribution.

As in Heinlein’s book, the church was organized into groups known as Nests. It broke ground by being the first such organization to apply the term “pagan” to itself and other ecology-conscious groups of the 1960s. In 1968, Zell began publishing a church journal called *The Green Egg*, which, after a hiatus from 1976 to 1988, is now back in publication.

The church had no dogma; hypocrisy was considered the only sin, and the only crime was interfering in the free will of another. By 1974 there were nests in more than a dozen states. But two years later Zell remarried and left the church, and over the next ten years a number of leader’s succeeded him. The church’s headquarters in St. Louis was disbanded within five years of Zell’s departure, although a few nests remained active elsewhere.

By the late 1980s, The Church of All Worlds was active primarily in California. It had merged with Nemeton, a neo-pagan organization, and later spawned subsidiaries such as the Holy Order of Mother Earth, dedicated to agrarian and magical living. Eventually the Zells returned to inject new life into the organization and the church began to grow and recover its former popularity. It had, however, undergone a metamorphosis, becoming more Wiccan in that its focus centered more on the Horned God and the Earth Mother, and the celebration of the eight seasonal festivals.

SOURCES:

Guiley, Rosemary Ellen: *The Encyclopedia of Witches and Witchcraft*. Facts on File, 1989.

CINGULUM see CORDS

Circe

Daughter of the Sun God Helios and Oceanid, the fair-haired Circe was famous for her **magical** arts. Her brother was Aeëtes, wizard king of Colchis and father of Medea. Circe was banished to the island of Aeaea for poisoning her husband. Because she lived on the west side of the island, it is claimed that she was a moon goddess. It seems more likely, however, that she was a goddess of love, albeit degrading love.

On the island it was Circe's custom to change into swine all men who landed there by having them drink a potion from her magic cup. She tried this with Odysseus and his companions but was unable to transform Odysseus, who had been given *moly*, a protective magical herb, by Hermes. He forced Circe to restore his men to their normal shape and then went on to spend a year with her. Circe later gave birth to Odysseus's son Telegonus. When Odysseus finally left the island, Circe's warnings of the dangers he would encounter enabled him to reach home safely.

Circe may be related to the ancient Mediterranean goddess known as the "Lady of the Beasts," whose likeness is depicted engraved on Minoan gems. She was finally slain by Telemachus, Odysseus's son by Penelope. She was also comparable to the Babylonian Ishtar, with the latter's treatment of Gilgamesh.

Circle

Unlike many other religions that have permanent, **consecrated** places of worship, a **Witch** may consecrate any area deemed suitable at any time, for the length of that ritual only, giving her far greater flexibility and convenience. That area is enclosed in a circle. Witches used to meet in a field, or a clearing in a woods, or any other open place convenient to all members.

Witches refer to their **ritual** Circle as the place "between the worlds," neither in this world nor in the next. This is the place where all the rituals take place and where **magic** is performed, if needed. Circles have long been considered sacred, whether consecrated or not. A Roman ambassador in a foreign land would draw a circle around himself with his staff, indicating that he should be safe from attack. A circle of flour was drawn on the floor around the bed of a sick person, by the Babylonians, to keep demons away. German Jews would draw a circle around the bed of a woman in labor, in the Middle Ages, to protect her from evil spirits. Britain, and other parts of Europe, contains dozens of ancient stone circles, erected in times past for a variety of religious and magical reasons.

The dimensions of a circle depend on who is drawing it and for what purpose. A **Wiccan** circle is usually nine feet in diameter, although it can be smaller or larger depending upon the number of people it must enclose. In **Ceremonial Magic**, on the other hand, the drawing has to be exact and actually forms three concentric circles of nine feet, ten feet, and eleven feet diameter, with various **Words of Power** written between the lines. A ceremonial circle is to keep forces *out*; to keep negative entities from encroaching on the magician. The Wiccan circle is to keep *in* the power raised in the rituals, which is of a positive nature.

The Wiccan circle is first marked on the ground, to indicate exactly where the sacred space lies. If the meeting is to take place out of doors, then the circle can be indicated by simply scratching a line on the ground. If the meeting is indoors, then it can be marked with a piece of chalk or charcoal, or by laying down a length of cord or actually painting a circle on the floor. Some modern Witches have a circle permanently marked on a piece of carpet, which can be rolled up and put away between meetings.

With the area marked, the construction of the magic circle starts with a tracing of the line by the presiding **priest** with a **sword** or **athamé**. Some traditions first ritually sweep the area with a **broom**, removing all negativity. The line is then sprinkled with **salted water** and passed over with a **censer**. This **circumambulation** is carried out clockwise, or **deosil**. To move counter-clockwise, or **widdershins**, is considered negative.

In order to orient the circle to the four cardinal points, candles are placed at the east, south, west and north. In the center (or to one side, depending on the tradition) stands the **altar** on which the **coven tools** or those of the individual Witch are placed. All within the circle are also consecrated, so that nothing unpurified is within it.

Although ritually cast and consecrated, it is possible to pass out of and back into the circle. This is done ritually, carefully “opening” the circle and then resealing it (see **pentagram**) after the passage of the individual. Such opening and closing should be kept to an absolute minimum; ideally, the circle should not be disturbed during the ritual.

The Wiccan deities are invited into the circle to share the ritual with the Witches. Unlike in Ceremonial Magic, there is no commanding or conjuring of the gods or of any spirits or entities. All should be within the circle of their own free will. At the end of the ritual, the gods are thanked and the circle is opened.

Since Wiccan rituals are held inside a circle, the term “circle” is also a synonym for a meeting. Witches therefore speak of “having a weekly circle” or of “planning a healing circle.”

Circle Wicca; Circle Sanctuary

Founded by **Selena Fox**, with Jim Alan, in 1974, Circle sponsored its first **sabbat** gathering at **Yule** that year at Selena’s and Jim’s home in Madison, Wisconsin. In 1975, headquarters was established at Sun Prairie, WI, and public lectures were sponsored in Madison. By the following year, Circle became the first **Pagan** center in the United States to have its own weekly radio show (**Circle Magic** on WORT-FM, Madison), which aired for four years.

Circle’s first **coven** was formed in 1976, and a year later Circle Network was formed as a worldwide Pagan resource center. *Circle Network News* began as a one page newsletter for this network. In 1978, Circle was incorporated as the Church of Circle Wicca in Wisconsin, and the organization shifted from coven structure to church structure, with a board of directors, ordained ministers, a community of affiliated covens and **solitaries**.

The *Circle Guide to Wicca and Pagan Resources* was first published in 1979 and was an annual networking book that quickly became a staple among Wiccans and Pagans. That same year, after being evicted from its Sun Prairie farm by a prejudiced landlord, Circle began to raise funds to buy their own land. In 1980 they were officially recognized as a church, receiving 501(c)(3) tax exempt status under the IRS code, becoming one of the first Wiccan churches formally recognized in the United States. That same year, *Circle Network News* became a full quarterly newspaper with international distribution. In 1998 it changed format again to become a magazine, with full-color cover.

In 1981 Circle began inter-tradition Pagan minister training, offering intensive training for those from a variety of paths. Five years later a school specifically for **priestesses** was started. The Pagan Spirit Gathering was first held that same year, starting an annual tradition of bringing together hundreds of Pagans from around the country and from countries abroad. It has since served as the prototype for a variety of festivals sponsored by other groups.

After four years of fundraising, land was purchased in southwestern Wisconsin in 1984, and Circle Sanctuary Nature Preserve became the first such project supported by Pagans from many traditions and many countries. Headquarters was moved to Mount Horeb. The mortgage was paid off by 1995.

In 1985 Circle began to battle anti-**Witchcraft** legislation, leading a nationwide campaign that eventually defeated the Helms Amendment, designed to remove church status from Wiccan churches. The amendment was introduced by **Senator Jesse Helms** and passed by the U.S. Senate in late September. But thousands of Wiccans and other Pagans joined with the American Civil Liberties Union and others concerned about first amendment rights in opposing this amendment.

In 1988, after a four year battle, Circle won church zoning for the 200 acres of Circle Sanctuary land. This battle with the local zoning authority was won with the help of the Wisconsin chapter of the ACLU and the support of Wiccans and Pagans worldwide. In 1993 Circle participated in the Parliament of the World's Religions, an international interfaith conference, and the following year Selena Fox collaborated with federal prison chaplains in the creation of a video for use in diversity training for chaplains in correctional institutions.

Selena Fox was appointed in 1999 to serve on the Assembly of Religious and Spiritual Leaders, becoming the first head of a Wiccan church appointed to that body. That same year Circle Sanctuary joined with others to counter the national anti-Wiccan campaign of Rep. Robert Barr of Georgia against Wiccans in the military. An application to the U.S. Department of Defense Ecclesiastical Endorsing Organization status for a Circle candidate seeking placement as a military chaplain in the Air Force is currently pending.

Circumambulation

To circumambulate is to move clockwise around a **ritual** circle. Normally the casting of the circle (see **Circle**) is always done *deosil*, first with the **sword** or **athamé**,

then with salted water and finally with the censer. In many Wiccan traditions, the coven members may only move clockwise (*deosil*), never counterclockwise (*widdershins*). In other covens, there is freedom of movement in both directions.

Circumambulation is also known as the “holy round” and the “sunwise turn” and is not exclusive to Witchcraft. Such movement is recognized by various groups as magical, bringing good luck, protection, and protracted life.

Clutterbuck, Dorothy (1880–1951)

High Priestess of the coven of Witches into which Gerald Gardner was initiated in 1939. The coven was located at the edge of the New Forest, in England. The group was associated with The First Rosicrucian Theatre in England, and its operating body, the Fellowship of Crotona.

“Old Dorothy,” as she was known, was in fact Dorothy St. Quintin Clutterbuck, spinster daughter of Captain Thomas St. Q. Clutterbuck of the 14th Sikhs, and Ellen Anne Clutterbuck, neé Morgan.

For many years there was controversy over whether such a person as “Old Dorothy” really existed. Gardner’s references to her were vague, and some Wiccan detractors insisted that he had made up both this High Priestess and, indeed, the whole of Wicca. Thanks to detective work by Doreen Valiente, one of Gardner’s early Initiates and the co-compiler of the Gardnerian *Book of Shadows*, the details of Old Dorothy’s life were finally revealed.

SOURCES:

Farrar, Janet and Stewart: *The Witches’ Way*. Robert Hale, 1984.

Compendium Maleficarum

A work regarding the “abomination of witchcraft,” by the ecclesiastic Révérend Père M. Mar. Guaccius, published in Milan in 1626 and promoting the Church’s view of the Old Religion as devil worship and black magic. The book includes numerous engravings purporting to show scenes of witches at the sabbat, paying homage to Satan, feasting and dancing, rendering the *Osculum Infame*, being stripped of their clothes, and being baptized by Satan. Guaccius depicted witches riding goats on their way to the sabbat, but pondered, “whether witches were in truth borne from place to place on their nightly gatherings.” One illustration shows a small group standing within a circle of protection, but a bull-headed, bat-winged, devil still makes them sign a pact.

Guillot de Givry, in his *A Pictorial Anthology of Witchcraft, Magic and Alchemy*, reproduces illustrations from the *Compendium Maleficarum*, and comments upon them as if they were photographs giving unequivocal evidence of the true conduct of witches in the Middle Ages.



Three witches, as depicted in the *Compendium Maleficarum*, 1623 edition. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

SOURCES:

de Givry, Guillot (J. Courtenay Locke, trans.): *A Pictorial Anthology of Witchcraft, Magic and Alchemy*. Spottiswoode, Ballantyne, 1931; University Books, 1953.

Cone of Power

When Witches generate power, or energy, within the ritual circle, it masses in the form of a cone whose base follows the consecrated line of the circle. This is known as the Cone of Power. The energy from this cone can be directed to cause change—in other words, to work magic.

Energy is raised by dancing and chanting and a variety of other methods (see **magic**). It can be done by a group (**coven**) or by an individual (**Solitary**). It is psychic energy drawn from the body and drawn up from the earth. It is of a positive nature. In Wicca, it does not involve the conjuring of any spirits or entities of any sort.

When the power has been used for working the magic, any residue remaining may be **grounded**, or returned to the earth. Since it is positive energy that is raised,

there is actually no need to do this, and many Wiccans feel that what remains can only benefit them. But some Witches feel it is necessary to discharge the remains and therefore “ground” the energy. They do this by slapping their hands on the ground, prostrating themselves, or using similar methods that they feel will discharge what was raised.

Confessions

In England, during the persecutions, a confession alone carried little weight. As evidence of **witchcraft** guilt, the English courts sought concrete proof, such as **devil’s marks**. But in Continental Europe, confessions were a major part of the prosecution process. Indeed, obtaining a confession was in many cases of primary importance, since there was frequently very little in the way of concrete evidence. But exactly how the confession was obtained was irrelevant.

The *Malleus Maleficarum* of 1486, by the two monks **Jakob Sprenger** and **Heinrich Kramer**, presumed the guilt of anyone charged with witchcraft and advocated **torture** to obtain a confession. Part Three of their infamous work dealt with “how the trial is to be proceeded with and continued, whether the witch is to be imprisoned; what is to be done after the arrest; points to be observed by the Judge before the formal examination in the place of detention and torture; how she must be questioned; the continuing of the torture; how they are to be shaved in those parts where they use to conceal the Devil’s marks and tokens; various means of overcoming their obstinacy in keeping silence and refusal to confess; the trial by red-hot iron; the manner of pronouncing sentence. . . .” Torture was a necessary part of the investigation and the “continuing of the torture” was to ensure a full confession.

In the first half of the seventeenth century, Friedrich von Spee tried to slow the hysterical persecutions. A German Jesuit, he wrote *Cautio Criminalis* (Cologne, 1632) in which he said that even the healthiest of witches had “affirmed that no crime can be imagined which they would not at once confess to if it could bring down ever so little relief and they would welcome ten deaths to escape repetition.” He further stated “a single innocent person, compelled by torture to confess guilt, is forced to denounce others of whom she knows nothing; so it fares with these, and thus there is scarcely an end to accusers and accused, and, as none dares retract, all are marked for death.”

During the Salem witch trials in New England, torture was not supposed to be applied. Yet there were varying degrees of duress, such as keeping the accused awake for many days and nights without sleep, starving her, and beating her. Confession was important to the authorities. If the accused pleaded (whether guilty or not guilty was immaterial) they could lay claim to all personal property and possessions. No trial could proceed until the accused had pleaded. Giles Cory, an eighty-year-old farmer, was aware of this point and consequently, when he was charged, he refused to say a word. His wife, Martha, had been charged and found guilty. To try to make Giles talk, the court subjected him to the *peine forte et dure* (literally, “a penalty harsh and severe,” the only time in American history that this punishment

has ever been inflicted). This entailed laying him on the ground and piling rocks on his body. But Giles held out until he was finally crushed to death under the weight of the rocks.

An immediate confession to a charge of witchcraft was no guarantee against torture. The accused would be tortured anyway, to confirm the confession. Having obtained a confession, the authorities might then allow the victim to partially recover before repeating their questions. This second confession allowed them to say that it had been obtained without duress, even though it was invariably made out of fear of further torture.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Witchcraft from the Inside*. Llewellyn, 1995.

Robbins, Rossell Hope: *The Encyclopedia of Witchcraft and Demonology*. Crown, 1959.

Conjuration

Calling up **spirits/entities** in **Ceremonial Magic**. This is done using various **Words of Power**; sacred words and the names of god, angels, and archangels. A complete ceremony is needed to accomplish the conjuration of an entity, and requires great deal of careful and detailed preparation.

Conjuration is not done in **Witchcraft**, since nothing is ever called forth. All are in the **Wiccan circle** of their own free will.

Conjure Man/Woman

Southern term used for a practitioner of magic of the Hoodoo variety (similar roots to **Voodoo** but without the religious beliefs, rituals, and other elements). Akin to the **Pow-wow** of the Ozarks and other areas. A Conjure man or woman is sometimes called a "Root Doctor," since considerable magic and the healing is performed using roots and herbs. Also known as a "Leaf Doctor" (*dokte feuilles* in the Louisiana Creole patois).

Much conjuring of this variety has retained elements of the African ways of working magic. Spells may be cast or removed from clients for a fee. **Gris-gris** bags are made and sold. Ingredients such as graveyard dust, chicken feathers and bones, ashes, or soot are used. Every Conjure man has his or her own recipes, usually jealously guarded.

There are also aspects of conjuring that parallel the workings of early **Hedge Witches**, especially in the use of **herbs** and **healing**. (see also **Cunning Man Murrell**)

Conqueror Worm, The (movie)

A 1968 British movie starring Vincent Price and Robert Russell and directed by Michael Reeves (British title, **The Witchfinder General**). It is based on the Edgar Allan Poe story *The Conqueror Worm*, about the terrorization of villages by

Matthew Hopkins (Price), a self-styled “Witchfinder General,” assisted by John Stearne (Russell). Young Sara (Hilary Dwyer) is raped, and her boyfriend, Richard Marshall (Ian Ogilvy), tries to avenge her. Many people are tortured and put to death, echoing actual events of the seventeenth century.

Consecration

Meaning to make sacred, it is an act by which the profane is dedicated to the gods. It differs from a blessing in that it is irrevocable, constituting a transformation in the essence of the item or person. Repetition would be unnecessary. In this sense, any area used by **Witches** remains consecrated even after the ritual is over, the circle has been opened, and the participants have left.

Consecration is done with water to which salt has been added (making it “holy water”) and with incense. It can also be done with holy oil, or *chrism*.

Witches consecrate all their working tools, such as the **athamé**, **sword**, **wand**, **pentacle**, the circle in which they meet and the participants within that circle. Anything and anyone so consecrated is dedicated to the service of the gods.

Cords

In **Witchcraft**, three cords are used. They are each nine feet in length and usually red in color, although in some **traditions**, one cord is red and the others are different colors. Similarly, some traditions have only three coven cords, which are kept on the altar, while other traditions allow each and every coven member to have his or her own personal cord or cords. In the latter case, the cord(s) may be worn about the waist as a *cingulum*.

The cord has many uses, including marking the circle by sticking a knife into the ground and looping the cord around it at its halfway point. Holding the **White Handled Knife** at the extremities of the doubled cord, it can then be moved around, marking the ground, while keeping the cord taut. This would result in a perfect nine foot diameter circle.

The cord is also used for **knot magic**, or tying knots into it as part of a ritual where power has been raised. Power would be charged into each knot put into the cord. In this fashion, the power could be released at a later date by untying the knots.

The cord is also used to bind Initiates in Wiccan **Initiations**. Symbolically the binding represents the restriction of the womb before birth.

Corn Dolly

The Corn Mother is made from the harvest at **Lughnasadh**, and is laid to rest for the winter at **Samhain**. Three months later at **Imbolc**, this figure is taken up again to become the Maiden. Straws are plucked from the figure and fashioned into the

Imbolc Corn Dolly, the **Maiden** aspect of the **Mother Goddess**. In Gaelic this is called *Brídeóg*, or the “Biddy.”

The Corn Dolly figure is carried from the fields to the farmhouse with great ceremony. It is sometimes lowered to the ground with a great display of sorrow, or lifted high with cries of joy, signifying death and rebirth. The Corn Dolly is dressed and laid in a miniature bed made of corn and hay with **Candles** burning around it. A club representing the male energy of the **God of Fertility** is placed beside the bed.

In the Highlands of Scotland this Corn Dolly is an effigy of Bride, or Brigid, and was carried around the community while gifts were collected for the Bride Feast. A small bed as described above was placed near the door of the house. Bride was then invited into the house to prepare for the coming spring. The festival was strictly matriarchal, and the door of the feasting place was barred to the men of the community who had to plead humbly to honor Bride. This is similar to the Greek agricultural rites of **Demeter** and **Kore**, which were principally feminine and excluded males.

Some Corn Dollies are a crude representation of a human, but many are elaborate **knots**—intricate designs of braided corn stalks in spirals woven into squares or formed into crosses. In Germany the Dolly represented animals—pigs, goats, wolves, hares—and was referred to as the Corn Cock.

SOURCES:

Frazer, Sir James: *The Golden Bough*. Macmillan, 1951.

Gaster, Theodor H.: *The New Golden Bough*. New American Library, 1964.

COTSWOLDS see ENGLISH WITCHCRAFT

Council of American Witches

The Council of American Witches was organized in the fall of 1973, in St. Paul, Minnesota, and led by **Carl Llewellyn Weschcke**, its first chairman. It began with 73 attendees of different traditions. Despite many differences of opinion, a consensus of statements of principle was formulated. From this, Weschcke produced the first draft of “The Thirteen Principles of Belief” statement, which has become one of the cornerstones of **Wicca**. Five years later this document was incorporated into the Department of the Army Pamphlet No. 165–13: *Religious Requirements and Practices of Certain Selected Groups—a Handbook for Chaplains*.

Weschcke says that he wanted the council to be called the Council of American Witches, rather than the American Council of Witches, because he felt strongly—and still feels—that U.S. Wiccans are of a different caliber from European ones. He says, “In particular I wanted to protect against any feeling that ‘authority’ in Wicca belonged in the ‘Old Country.’ I have always been fearful that Wicca would succumb to institutionalization—seminaries, hierarchy, dogma, official history, etc.”

Wicca has always been a religion of individuals and individual covens and traditions. This is why there is no one “king” or “queen” of all Witches. But there are so many different paths that it is difficult to organize a cohesive body of any sort,

and this is why the Council of American Witches shortly disbanded. Yet they managed to present a front united enough to produce the Principles of Wiccan Belief:

- 1: We practice rites to attune ourselves with the natural rhythm of life forces marked by the phases of the Moon and the seasonal Quarters and Cross-Quarters.
- 2: We recognize that our intelligence gives us a unique responsibility toward our environment. We seek to live in harmony with Nature, in ecological balance offering fulfillment to life and consciousness within an evolutionary concept.
- 3: We acknowledge a depth of power far greater than that apparent to the average person. Because it is far greater than ordinary it is sometimes called “supernatural,” but we see it as lying within that which is naturally potential to all.
- 4: We conceive of the Creative Power in the universe as manifesting through polarity—as masculine and feminine—and that this same Creative Power lies in all people, and functions through the interaction of the masculine and feminine. We value neither above the other, knowing each to be supportive to the other. We value sex as pleasure, as the symbol and embodiment of life, and as one of the sources of energies used in magickal practice and religious worship.
- 5: We recognize both outer worlds and inner, or psychological, worlds sometimes known as the Spiritual World, the Collective Unconscious, Inner Planes, etc.—and we see in the interaction of these two dimensions the basis for paranormal phenomena and magickal exercises. We neglect neither dimension for the other, seeing both as necessary for our fulfillment.
- 6: We do not recognize any authoritarian hierarchy, but do honor those who teach, respect those who share their greater knowledge and wisdom, and acknowledge those who have courageously given of themselves in leadership.
- 7: We see religion, magick and wisdom in living as being united in the way one views the world and lives within it—a world view and philosophy of life which we identify as *Witchcraft—the Wiccan Way*.
- 8: Calling oneself “Witch” does not make a Witch—but neither does heredity itself, nor the collecting of titles, degrees and initiations. A Witch seeks to control the forces within her/himself that make life possible in order to live wisely and well without harm to others and in harmony with Nature.
- 9: We believe in the affirmation and fulfillment of life in a continuation of evolution and development of consciousness giving meaning to the Universe we know and our personal role within it.

- 10: Our only animosity to Christianity, or toward any other religion or philosophy of life, is to the extent that its institutions have claimed to be 'the only way' and have sought to deny freedom to others and to suppress other ways of religious practice and belief.
- 11: As American Witches, we are not threatened by debates on the history of the Craft, the origins of various terms, the legitimacy of various aspects of different traditions. We are concerned with our present and our future.
- 12: We do not accept the concept of absolute evil, nor do we worship any entity known as "Satan" or "the Devil," as defined by the Christian tradition. We do not seek power through the suffering of others, nor accept that personal benefit can be derived only by denial to another.
- 13: We believe that we should seek within Nature that which is contributory to our health and well-being.

Coven; Covenstead; Covendom

A group of Witches is referred to as a *coven*, from the word "convene." Within the Craft, a coven is a small group that meets together on a regular basis to practice their religion. To most members it is an extended family. In fact, many coven members feel far closer to their fellow coveners than they do to their own blood relatives. A coven is composed of Witches from one district or, perhaps, from just one family.

The word "coven" was first mentioned in 1662 at the trial of Issobel Gowdie, one of the Auldearn (Scotland) Witches. Under questioning, Issobel said, "Jean Mairten is Maiden of owr Coeven . . . Ther ar thretein persons in ilk Coeven . . . The last tyme that owr Coeven met, we, and an vther Coeven, wer dauncing at the Hill of Earlseat. . . ." (Robert Pitcairn *Criminal Trials* Edinburgh, 1833). There had been many references to groups of Witches before this was the first recorded use of the word. This was also the first time that thirteen was specified as the number of members of a coven, although that total could be found as early as 1567 in the trial of Bessie Dunlop. Bessie had spoken of five men and eight women in her group. Even earlier, in 1440, Gilles de Rais's group had eleven men and two women. Indeed, although not necessarily mentioned at trials, the number of Witches apprehended in any one district and taken to trial during the persecutions frequently totaled thirteen. Margaret Murray made a case that at a majority of the Witch trials, membership in covens was said to number thirteen, but as others have pointed out, she tended to manipulate figures to support her theory. Thirteen was certainly mentioned in a number of the trial records, but not nearly as often as Murray suggested.

Certainly not every coven had to have thirteen members. At the Alloa trial, in 1658, Margret Duchall declared that there were seven women in her coven. Today, there is considerable variation in coven membership. Smaller covens are more common.

The size of a coven is constrained by the size of the meeting place. Traditionally, Witches meet in a circle nine feet in diameter, and thirteen is the maximum number of people one can squeeze into such an area with any degree of comfort. The circle can be increased in size to accommodate more participants, but this is not traditional and can create its own difficulties. When working magic, the relationship of the number of people to the size of the circle is important for building what is known as the “Cone of Power”; the kinetic energy that is the driving force behind the magic. Having a large group in a large circle may work well for a purely celebratory meeting, but if there is magic to do then a smaller number is better. If a coven has a large number of members, it is better to split them into two separate covens.

Chaucer speaks of a *covent* in *The Canterbury Tales* when referring to the meeting of a group of thirteen people, indicating that the word was, at one time, used for a group of non-Witches of that size. Doreen Valiente mentions a book of *Ecclesiastic Memorials* (1536), which says, “the number in any one house is or of late hath been less than a covent, that is to say under thirteen persons.” Quite possibly, then, the word coven is derived from the older spelling *covent*, meaning simply, “no more than thirteen.”

In some traditions, thirteen is the maximum number of members in a coven, but it includes an “inner circle” of elders—those of high degree (where a degree system operates) and experience. They can number as many as eight. They make the major decisions affecting the coven and, perhaps, work the more strenuous magic.

In speaking of the significance of the number thirteen, Doreen Valiente cites the fact that there are thirteen lunar months in the year. In astrology, there are twelve zodiacal signs, together with the sun. Romulus had twelve companions (the *lictors*), and Hrolf, the Danish hero, had his twelve berserks. The Christian Jesus had twelve disciples, Odin had twelve lesser deities beneath him in Asgard, and Charlemagne had twelve Paladins. So the number thirteen, made up of a leader and twelve followers, seems to be significant for many groups of people.

The coven is led by a **High Priest** and/or **High Priestess**. From the records of the early trials, it seems that the majority of groups at that time were led by a man, known as the Grand Master. To the judges of the trials he was equated with “the Devil.” In cases in which he was identified, the local major landowner often filled the role. He would, however, have substitutes able to lead the individual groups in his absence. At the Grand Sabbats, where a number of covens would come together to celebrate, the substitutes would be known as “officers,” when the Grand Master led the proceedings.

It is possible that organized covens came into being during the persecutions, allowing the persecuted Witches to meet with the security of numbers. Before then, solitary Witches were common, as were smaller groups of family (hereditary) Witches, with larger groups coming together only for the festivals. During the Witch persecutions it was necessary for the “hard core” of the followers of the Old Religion to band together, and this was done in the form of covens.

The home of the coven, and the site of its temple, is known as the Covenstead. This is invariably the home of the High Priest and/or High Priestess. The temple

may be outdoors but today is more commonly inside the home: in the living room, basement, attic, or a room dedicated specifically for that purpose. In order that one coven would not overlap the boundaries of another, the old rule was that the “covendom” was limited to one league (about three miles) radius from the covenstead, and coven members had to live within the boundaries of their covendom.

Covens are autonomous. There is no central authority, no governing body or equivalent of the Roman Catholic Pope. Sometimes a number of covens do, over the years, hive or branch out from a central one. The original coven’s High Priestess then became known as a **Witch Queen**, or **Queen of the Sabbat**, ruling over her own group and those that had broken away. But she would help and advise the younger covens only if needed, and the newer covens would govern themselves. There are, then, no Kings or Queens of *all* Witches. At the Greater Sabbats, the covens stemming from one mother coven will frequently come together to celebrate, as was done in the past, with the Witch Queen—the High Priestess of the Mother Coven—playing the part attributed to the Grand Master in even earlier days.

The priesthood decides how often a coven meets. In *Aradia, Gospel of the Witches*, Aradia, daughter of Diana and her brother the Sun, Lucifer, speaks to her followers and says, “. . . Once in the month, and when the moon is full, ye shall assemble in some desert place, or in a forest all together join to adore the potent spirit of your queen, my mother, great Diana. . . .” Modern Wicca uses this passage as part of the **Charge of the Goddess**, recited by the High Priestess at the ceremony of **Drawing Down the Moon**. The words have been reworked by Doreen Valiente to read, “. . . once in the month, and better it be when the moon is full, then shall ye assemble in some secret place and adore the spirit of me, who am Queen of all Witches.” Most covens therefore meet at least once a month, preferably at the full moon. Many groups, however, meet weekly, and a few celebrate only the major sabbats.

The thirteen members of a coven are a mix of male and female, with many groups trying to achieve the natural balance of equal numbers of male and female members plus a leader. This balance is not always possible and, indeed, not always sought. There are covens, and whole traditions, today, that are totally Goddess or totally God oriented, and have all female or all male membership. The vast majority of groups, however, recognize that throughout nature there is a balance of male and female and consequently aim for that same balance within the coven. The balance of the two energies seems to be especially important for the raising of power to work magic.

The coven meets first and foremost to worship the deities, to ask them for what is needed and to thank them for what is received, as with most religions. Additionally, “work” may be done at the esbats—never at the sabbats, which are pure celebration—which is the Wiccan way of saying that **magic** (frequently healing magic) is performed, or divination accomplished. Initiations occasionally take place and there is much teaching of the coven members by the elders. Outside the coven meetings, teaching of neophytes may take place, preparatory to initiation.

Within the hierarchy of a coven, the **Maiden** is second to the High Priestess and is training to become a coven leader herself. In a system with three degrees of

advancement, she would be of the Second Degree. There is also a **Summoner**, who functions as the coven secretary.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Witchcraft from the Inside*. Llewellyn, 1995.

Farrar, Janet and Stewart: *What Witches Do*. Phoenix, 1983.

Murray, Margaret Alice: *The Witch-Cult in Western Europe*. Clarendon Press, 1921.

Valiente, Doreen: *An ABC of Witchcraft Past and Present*. St. Martin's Press, 1973.

Covenant of the Goddess

Formed in 1975 and based in Berkeley, California, COG is a non-profit federation working to gain recognition for Wicca as a religion. It includes a number of autonomous covens of various traditions, together with solitaries, working to end the harassment and continued persecution of the old Religion. It has members in nearly twenty states.

Cowan

Term used by **Witches** for a non-Witch, someone who has not been **initiated** into the **Old Religion**. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, a cowan is “uninitiated, outside, profane,” and that the term is slang for a sneak, or an inquisitive or prying person. In Scotland a cowan was someone uninitiated into the secrets of Freemasonry.

SOURCES:

The Compact Oxford English Dictionary, second edition. Clarendon Press, 1994.

Craft, The

Term used by **Witches** when referring to Witchcraft, or Wicca. It is a shortened form of “the Craft of the Wise.”

The Craft (movie)

Directed by Andrew Fleming, this 1996 movie is actually more about practicing **magic** than practicing **Witchcraft**. The story centers on Sarah (played by Robin Tunney), a young student who has recently relocated to Los Angeles and enrolled in St. Benedict's Academy. There she meets three other girls who, like her, seem to have difficulty fitting in. The leader of the three is Nancy (Fairuza Balk), a cunning, treacherous young woman. Bonnie (Neve Campbell) was badly scarred in a fire that left her **tortured** and insecure, and Rochelle (Rachel True) is an overachiever. The three feel that Sarah is a “natural Witch” who will complete their group. They get books and instructions from a nearby occult bookstore and do rituals on the beach. Their principal aim, however, seems to be to get even with classmates who have ill-treated them.

The group worships a deity called *Manon*, a fictional deity created for the movie. The young women dress in black clothing, wear heavy eyeliner and black

lipstick, and are more punk than Wiccan. There are some good special effects, but it is a poor script with stock characters and a weak ending.

Crone

Otherwise known as the Dark Goddess in Wicca. The (triple) Goddess corresponds to the three phases of the Moon: waxing, full, and waning. In her waxing phase, the Goddess is the Virgin, Maiden, and Warrior, in her full phase she is the Mother, and in the waning phase she is the Crone.

The Triple Goddess theme is found in many cultures. At Stymphalus, Greece, there was a temple dedicated to the three aspects of Hera, as maiden, mother and widow. The Roman goddess Carmenta formed three aspects with her younger sister Antevorta and her older sister Postvorta. The Morrigan of Ireland and Bhavani of the Hindu pantheon are other examples.

The Crone is often associated with Hecate of the Three Faces, and also with Kali the destroyer, Morgan Queen of the Ghostworld, and Kerridwen. Barbara Walker suggests that “crone” may have derived from Rhea Kronia, the Mother of Time.

The Crone also represents the third, post-menopausal, phase of a woman's life. According to Walker, “Because it was believed that women became very wise when they no longer shed the lunar ‘wise blood’ but kept it within, the crone was usually a Goddess of Wisdom.” Examples are Athene, Minerva and Medusa.

(See also Hag)

SOURCES:

Larousse Encyclopedia of Mythology. Batchworth Press, 1959.

Walker, Barbara G.: *The Woman's Encyclopedia of Myths and Secrets*. Harper & Row, 1983.

Cross

Small stones found in Le Mas d’Azil, France, from approximately 10,000 BCE, bear equal-armed crosses painted and engraved on them. This is probably the oldest known use of the cross, although its meaning at that site is uncertain.

Crosses have frequently been associated with the sun and sun deities. For this reason the cross was used as a protection from vampires and their like—not because the cross was a Christian symbol, but because it represented light.

Among the many variations on the cross, there are four basic types: (1) the *crux quadrata*, or Greek Cross, with equal arms; (2) the *crux immissa*, or Latin Cross, with the lower arm longer than the upper three; (3) the *crux commissa*, or Tau cross, which is three-armed and has no top section; (4) the *crux decussata*, or St. Andrew's Cross with diagonal arms. The Egyptian form, known as the *crux ansata* (see **ankh**), is a Tau cross with a loop at the top, and is a symbol for life. There are other well-known variations, such as the Celtic Cross (*crux quadrata* or *crux immissa* with a circle around the central intersection) and the Swastika (*crux gamita*).

Many **Witches** use the Greek Cross, the Celtic Cross and the Ankh, although they favor the symbol of the **pentacle** over that of the cross.

Schliemann's excavations at Troy unearthed a number of crosses marked on the pubic region of female figures. These may have been pure decoration, perhaps a tattoo, or may have represented defense against entry from evil spirits, but their purpose remains unclear. Early explorers of Mexico found crosses used in a clearly religious context. In one example, a scene depicts a figure offering a sacrifice to a cross in the form of a tree, and the Aztec goddess of the rains carried a cross.

In Africa, Hottentot women place wooden crosses above them to ease childbirth, and they also view crosses as symbols of the moon.

SOURCES:

Leach, Maria (ed.): *Funk & Wagnalls Standard Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology, and Legend*. Harper & Row, 1972.

Crossing the Bridge

The **Wiccan Rite of Passage** ritual performed at death. In a sense, **Witches** see the spirit of the deceased crossing a bridge from the physical plane to the spiritual. The **ritual** is performed to help the departed make that transition.

With the **Wiccan** belief in **reincarnation**, this is a celebration of the completion of another lifetime, with its attendant lessons and experiences.

The format of the ritual varies from one tradition to another. Some include a spiral dance connected to the palingenesis, or rebirth, theme. Others perform a ritual play, re-enacting (for example) the descent of the **Goddess** into the Underworld and her safe return.

The deceased is honored and survivors comforted, and as a celebration, there is feasting, singing and dancing.

Crossroads

A crossroads was originally described as a place "where three roads meet," rather than the crossing of two roads. Three is considered a **magical** number in many ways (e.g. three Fates, three aspects of the **goddess**, **threefold law** of return, etc.), and the meeting of three roads was therefore a mystical spot, often the site of magical **rituals** and religious rites. **Dame Alice Kyteler** was accused of **sacrificing** cockerels at a crossroads at her trial in 1324.

Jean-Paul Clébert suggests that Gypsies were frequently confused with witches through the then-popular conception of witches' sabbats. It was common knowledge that such sabbats were held in the woods or at a crossroads. Occasionally villagers traveling late at night might stumble upon a group of Gypsies camped at a crossroads, playing music and eating and drinking after a day of traveling the highways. The villager, hurrying along in fear of witches, believed he had seen witch's sabbat.

As a goddess of magical charms and enchantments, Hecate frequented crossroads where her image could be found, either as columns or as statues of the goddess, with three faces called Triple Hecates. Offerings were left there for her on the eve of the full moon. These were usually in the form of food, known as “Hecate’s Supper.”

In Voodoo, the god Legba is the “Guardian of the Crossroads.” The Japanese built phallic symbols at crossroads to protect travelers. Criminals were frequently hanged at crossroads and their bodies buried there, in the belief that since it was a sacred site their ghosts therefore would remain underground.

SOURCES:

Ciébert, Jean-Paul: *The Gypsies*. Penguin Books, 1967.

Guirand, Félix: *Greek Mythology*. Paul Hamlyn, 1963.

Crow; Raven

Ravens are considered the most intelligent of birds, on par with the smartest non-avian animals on earth, including dolphins and primates. John K. Terres suggests that *Corvidae*, or corvids—crows, ravens, and magpies—possess “the highest degree of intelligence” of any birds.

The raven, sacred to Apollo, was regarded as prophetic. In Norse mythology, Odin had two ravens, Hugin and Munin, who flew out each day and reported back to the god all that they had seen. Odin was called *Hrafna-gud*, or “God of the Raven.”

The crow features prominently in Native American mythology. Roger Williams wrote in 1643 of the reverence of the Algonquins for crows. In the Pacific Northwest, the Kwakiutl and Haida leadership clan is known as the Raven Clan, with Raven Priests. They speak of great leaders who were guided by crows and ravens. Among the Chipeweyan of eastern Canada, crow is a trickster, while the Navaho refer to missionaries as crows, because of their black robes.

The Greeks and Romans believed that crows could predict the weather. Similarly, the raven was sometimes regarded by the Greeks as a “thunderbird” because of its ability to presage a storm. An old Irish saying, “to have raven’s knowledge,” means to have an oracular ability to see and know all things. In Wales it was common custom to doff one’s hat at the sight of a crow.

In England, ravens are still kept in official capacity at the Tower of London. It is said that as long as they remain, England will never fall to her enemies. Crows and ravens are believed to have very long life, and in his *Metamorphoses* Ovid speaks of the witch Medea injecting the veins of the elderly Jason with the blood of a crow that had outlived nine generations of men. In Tibet, the raven is the messenger of the supreme being.

SOURCES:

Feher-Elston, Catherine: *RavenSong*. Northland Publishing, 1991.

Savage, Candace: *Bird Brains*. Sierra Club, 1997.

Terres, John K: *The Audubon Society Encyclopedia of North American Birds*. Alfred A. Knopf, 1980.



Aleister Crowley. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

Crowley, Aleister (1875–1947)

Born Edward Alexander Crowley, he changed his name after he read that the form of name most likely to become famous was one consisting of a dactyl followed by a spondee, hence *Al-eis-ter Crow-ley*. Later he was also to emphasize that his name was “Crowley, to rhyme with Holy.” He was born in Leamington, Warwickshire, England, on October 12, 1875, the son of Edward, a wealthy brewer, and Emily, described as “a rather common woman.” His father was also a fanatical preacher for the Plymouth Brethren, a sect that considered itself the only true Christian order.

Crowley was educated at Malvern and Tonbridge, and also by a private tutor. The latter was responsible for introducing Crowley to women, racing and gambling, for which Crowley was grateful, although he subsequently “caught the clap,” as he put it, from a prostitute in Glasgow. In 1895 he entered Trinity College, Cambridge. He read assiduously and also began to write, publishing his first poem, *Aceldama*, privately while at Cambridge. Within ten years he had written thirty books, many of them poetry. He was an excellent chess player, a world traveler and a mountaineer of some note: in 1902 he climbed K2 (Chogo Ri), spending sixty-five days on the Baltoro Glacier and reaching an altitude of 22,000 feet.

Although Crowley preached with his father in his youth, he soon became disenchanted with the Plymouth Brethren and rebelled to the point where his mother likened him to the Great Beast of the Book of Revelations. This description caught Crowley’s imagination and he accepted himself as that Beast. He despised his mother, later referring to her as “a brainless bigot.”

His father died of cancer when Aleister was eleven, leaving him a substantial inheritance. He left Cambridge without having acquired a degree and became deeply interested in the occult. After reading A. E. Waite’s *The Book of Black Magic and Pacts* (London, 1898), Crowley struck up a correspondence with Waite and determined to become a member of the Great White Brotherhood. On November 18, 1898, he joined the London Lodge of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, which had been founded only the year before and was the outer order of the Great White Brotherhood. At his initiation, Crowley took the magical name *Perdurabo*, meaning “I will endure to the end.”

The leader of the London Lodge of the Golden Dawn was Samuel Liddell Mathers, who later dubbed himself MacGregor Mathers. Crowley exhibited an aptitude for **ceremonial magic**, and he and Mathers developed a competitive relationship, with Crowley determined to take over Mathers’s leadership of the Order. Crowley moved up in the **degree system** rapidly but eventually his competition with Mathers, and Mathers’ own mismanagement resulted in the collapse of the London chapter of the Golden Dawn.

Crowley then went to Mexico, where he continued his study and practice of magic. He later founded his own magical order, the Silver Star or *Argentium Astrum*, or A.A.

In 1903 Crowley married Rose Kelly, sister to the artist Sir Gerald Kelly, who bore him a daughter, Lola Zaza. On a visit to Cairo, Rose fell into a trance at the

Egyptian Museum and led her husband to the exhibit of a wooden stele of the twenty-sixth dynasty. It bore an image of Horus in the form of Ra-Hoor-Khuit and, to Crowley's amazement, the exhibit bore the number 666—his number, the number of the Great Beast. At their Cairo apartment, Crowley sat in the temple he had built, and over a period of three days he claimed to hear the voice of Aiwass, his Holy Guardian Angel, who dictated what was to become the “Book of the Law,” or *Liber Legis*. From this book, Crowley took his famous dictum, “Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law. Love is the Law. Love under Will.” One hundred and fifty years earlier Sir Francis Dashwood had inscribed part of this phrase—as Rabelais's *Fay ce que voudras*—over the entrance to his Medmenham Abbey, home of the infamous “Hell-fire Club.” Later Gerald Gardner adapted it, in modified form, as “An it harm none, do what thou wilt. Love is the Law; Love is the Bond,” as the Craft dictum.

Over a period of years, beginning in 1909, Crowley published the rituals of the Golden Dawn in the official journal of the A. A., *The Equinox* (published twice a year), much to MagGregor Mathers's dismay. Crowley then became associated with the *Ordo Templi Orientis*, a German magical order that emphasized **sex magic**. In 1909 he began a homosexual relationship with poet Victor Neuburg. On September 27, 1911, Rose was certified insane and Crowley established a relationship with Mary d'Este Sturges, a companion of Isadora Duncan. Over the years Crowley formed liaisons with many women, all of whom he considered his Scarlet Woman.

Crowley lived in the United States from 1915 to 1919. In January of 1919, in New York, he met Leah Faesi and branded her with a heated knife, proclaiming her his Scarlet Woman. The following year they went to France, where Crowley met with Ninette Shumway, who came under his influence and became a mistress, although Leah was pregnant by this time. Leah gave birth to a daughter with whom she soon returned to England. Ninette, meanwhile, became pregnant and she and Crowley moved to Cefalu, Sicily, where he established the Abbey of Thelema. In 1920, Leah and her child joined them at the abbey, as did various devotees, including the actress Elizabeth Fox. Sex magic (including Leah's mating with a goat) and drugs predominated, culminating in the death of Frederick Charles (Raoul) Love-day—some say from drinking the blood of a sacrificed cat. In April, 1923, Mussolini, ruler of Italy, expelled Crowley, who then wandered through France, Tunisia and Germany. In 1924 he dropped Leah as his Scarlet Woman and took up with Dorothy Olsen, an American. While in Africa, Crowley encountered Herr Traenker of Gera, Germany, Grand Master of the O.T.O. of that country. Traenker, who was familiar with Crowley's reputation, saw in him a successor to the recently deceased Theodor Reuss, international head of the Order.

Scarlet Women came and went until 1929, when Crowley married Maria Ferrari de Miramar, described by him as “the High Priestess of **Voodoo**.” A year later he had left her too, and like his first wife, Rose, she ended up in Colney Hatch, a lunatic asylum. It was about this time that Crowley wrote his *Magick: in Theory and Practice*, perhaps his best book on magic.

In 1934, Crowley started libel proceedings in England against his old friend, the sculptress Nina Hamnett, who had referred to him as a purported black magi-

cian in her biography. Newspaper reports about the trial publicized Crowley's colorful and debauched lifestyle and dubbed him "The Wickedest Man in the World." He lost the case and with it all of his money. In 1937 he issued *The Equinox of the Gods*, followed in 1944 by *The Book of Thoth*.

At the close of World War II Crowley retired to Hastings, on the south coast of England, where he maintained a low profile despite intermittent newspaper exposés. By this time, his longstanding addiction to heroin was severe. He died in Hastings on December 1, 1947, and was cremated four days later. At the service, Louis Wilkinson (the novelist Louis Marlow) read Crowley's *Hymn to Pan*.

Arnold Crowther and Gerald Gardner visited Crowley in the last few months of his life. Gardner said that Crowley knew of **Witchcraft** but considered it "too tame" and never practiced it. He did, however, present Gardner with a charter to start a branch of the O.T.O. on the Isle of Man. It has been suggested that Crowley wrote what became the Gardnerian **Book of Shadows**, but although Gardner borrowed some of Crowley's excellent poetry, Crowley had nothing to do with writing the Book.

SOURCES:

Stephenson, P. R. and Regardie, Israel: *The Legend of Aleister Crowley*. Llewellyn, 1970.

Symonds, John: *The Great Beast*. Roy Publishers, 1952.

Symonds, John and Grant, Kenneth (eds.): *The Confessions of Aleister Crowley*. Bantam, 1971.

CROWN see QUEEN OF THE SABBAT

Crowther, Patricia and Arnold

PATRICIA CROWTHER (1927-). Wiccan High Priestess living in Sheffield, Yorkshire, England. Often referred to as a "Grandmother" of the Craft, Patricia has been a leading spokeswoman for the **Old Religion** in books, and through lectures and the media, for many years. She was initiated by **Gerald Gardner** in 1960 and has since worked continuously to aid the renaissance of the old Religion and to establish greater harmony and understanding between humankind and the rest of the natural world.

She was born Patricia Claire Dawson, in Sheffield. Her great-grandmother, who moved to Sheffield from Brittany, was an herbalist and card reader who met and married William Dawson of Dublin. Patricia's maternal grandmother was born Elizabeth (Tizzy) Machin, the surname meaning "fairy" or "elf."

The Dawsons were business people and lived next door to a palmist, Madame Melba, who gave Patricia a **crystal ball** and said that the little girl would become famous, accurately predicting that the **Moon** would play an important part in her life. Certainly as a child, Patricia experienced synchronistic links with the Moon and with the **Goddess**. Much of her childhood seemed to presage with her later life as a **Pagan** and **Witch**. At an early Christmas party, she was voted "Fairy on the Moon" and enthroned on a large, illuminated crescent. Her parents gave her a **snake** bracelet, symbol of wisdom and rebirth. Her later performances included a dance called "Child Immortal" and a song titled, "In the Valley of the Moon." As a



Patricia C. Crowther. Photo by Ian Lilleyman, courtesy Patricia C. Crowther.

young woman she played the part of Robin Hood in English pantomime (where the leading man is always played by a young woman). She also played the lead in a revue that featured a tableau, "The Legend of the Moon Goddess."

Trained in dancing, singing, music and acting, Patricia toured successfully in shows throughout Great Britain. Even today, she continues to perform as a singer, magician and puppeteer. In 1956 she did a summer show at Shanklin, Isle of Wight, where she met the stage magician, Arnold Crowther, a meeting predicted by a Manchester card reader two years earlier. Arnold felt strongly that they had met before, in previous lives, and showed her that he had even made puppets that looked like her. For her part, Patricia gave Arnold a book she had recently found called *Witchcraft Today*, by Gerald Gardner. Arnold told her that he knew the author and proceeded to write to Gardner, arranging for a meeting on the Isle of Man. Apparently Gardner had long before predicted that Arnold would meet a fair-haired woman who would initiate him into the Craft.

Patricia was initiated by Gardner on June 6, 1960, in Gardner's cottage on Malew Street, Castletown, on the Isle of Man. Patricia then initiated Arnold, in keeping with tradition that a Craft male initiates a female and a female initiates a male. Patricia received a coral necklace from Gardner, together with a silver-handled athamé as her personal tool. The "Grand Old Man of Witchcraft" also gave the couple their coven tools. Five months later, on November 8, 1960, Patricia and Arnold were joined together in the old ritual of **Handfasting**, with Gardner officiating. The following day they went through a civil ceremony, much publicized by the local press.

Gardner took both Patricia and Arnold to the Second Degree on October 11, 1961, and to the **Third Degree** just three days later, which also happened to be Patricia's birthday. Both of these two elevations took place at Gardner's cottage.

The Crowthers were frequently asked for interviews by the media. One interviewer asked if Patricia would like to meet others interested in the Old Religion. She said she would. To Patricia's surprise, the resulting article was published with the heading: "Witch Seeks Recruits for Coven." This resulted in many inquiries

about admission, yet only one man seemed to be a genuine seeker. Over the years, however, others joined and a coven was established.

Gardner and the Crowthers kept in touch and Patricia found that she and Gardner frequently shared dreams, often imparting knowledge of bygone Witchcraft practices. As the result of a television appearance, Patricia was approached by an old lady claiming to be the descendant of a long hereditary line. Over time, she passed on to Patricia an old athamé and details of her 300-year-old tradition. This too was something which Gardner had predicted.

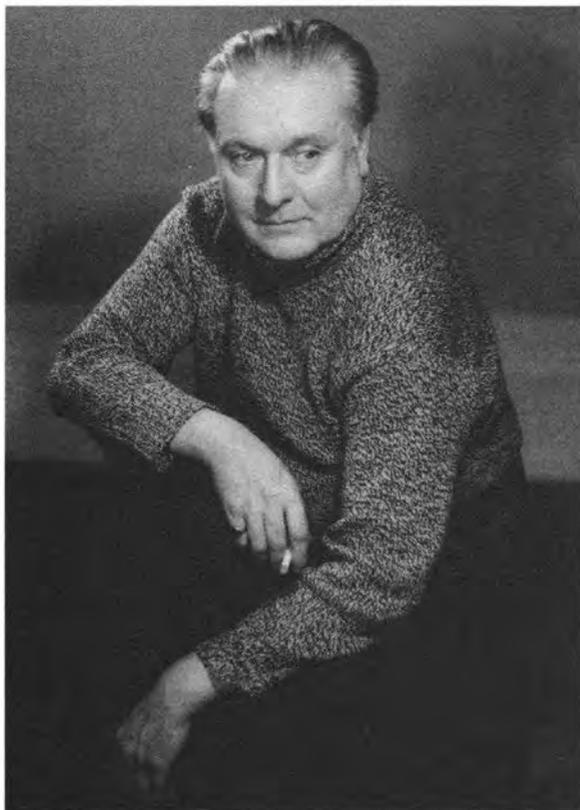
The Crowthers co-authored *The Witches Speak* (Athol Publications, 1965) and *The Secrets of Ancient Witchcraft* (University Books, 1974). For BBC Radio Sheffield, they presented the first British radio series on Witchcraft, *A Spell of Witchcraft*. It was first broadcast on January 6 (Twelfth Night), 1971. Their coven's magic was directed almost exclusively at healing, and achieved many positive results. In the Circle, Patricia would also practice **scrying**, with many visions of past lives devoted to the Craft.

Patricia's many books include *Witchcraft in Yorkshire* (1973), *Witch Blood!* (1974), *Lid Off the Cauldron* (1981), *The Zodiac Experience* (1992), her autobiography, *One Witch's World* (1998) and a novel, *Witches Were for Hanging* (1992). She has also contributed to many periodicals, is a frequent guest on radio and television shows, and has lectured internationally, fulfilling her desire to correct misconceptions about the Craft. She has been instrumental in reviving memories of the Great Goddess in order, as she says, "to achieve a greater harmony on spiritual levels of thought concerning the concept of Divine Duality, and in furthering equal opportunity and rights for women in general."

ARNOLD CROWTHER (1909–1974). English Witch, husband of Patricia Crowther, who considered him an "old soul." He became a close friend of Gerald Gardner. Arnold and his fraternal twin brother, Norman, were born in Chatham, Kent, England, on October 6, 1909. His father was an optician from Yorkshire and his mother a Scot from the Mull of Galloway area. From an early age Arnold was fascinated by stage **magic** and surreptitiously practiced sleight of hand in his bedroom. After leaving school, and an uninspired start as an optician, he turned to his love of magic and took to the stage. By the time he was twenty he was touring as a professional magician and ventriloquist.

Arnold ran his own summer show, appeared in cabaret and, in 1938–1939, was asked to entertain the then Princesses Elizabeth and Margaret at Buckingham Palace. This led to his acceptance as a "Society Entertainer." He was a founder member of the Puppet Guild, making more than 500 puppets. He also became a collector of curios and ancient religious artifacts, occasionally lecturing about them. He became a Freemason and developed an interest in Buddhism.

Arnold met Gerald Gardner and his wife Donna at a lecture given by folklorist Christina Hole in London just before World War II. They became good friends and Gardner's talk of **Witchcraft** captured Arnold's attention. Gardner told him that the time would come when a "very special lady" would initiate him into the Craft of the Wise.



Arnold Crowther. Courtesy Patricia C. Crowther.

During the war years, Arnold joined E.N.S.A. (the Entertainers National Services Association) and toured the European war zones, entertaining troops with his "Black Magic" show, named from the show's African Basuto choir. While in North Africa, an African **witch doctor** gave him a special blessing and the title "White Witch Doctor." In France, his show played for the troops in concerts in cinemas and once narrowly missed a direct hit from a bomb due to an error in bookings. While in Paris he visited a palmist named Madame Brux, who told him that he had had a past life as a Tibetan beggar monk. At a later *séance*, Madame Brux communicated with a spirit claiming to be Arnold's teacher from a previous life and his guide in the present incarnation. There followed contact with a student from a Tibetan lamasary who wanted to return Arnold's property from that lifetime. An apport arrived on the *séance* table. It turned out to be a Tibetan prayer wheel containing a scroll bearing the mantra *Om mani padre hum*.

Arnold acquired other Tibetan artifacts over the years: a drum made from a human skull, a trumpet made from a human thigh bone, a butter lamp and a rattle hand drum. A British Museum expert told him that they were all objects that would be owned by a *Z'i-jed-pa*, or "Mild Doer"—a homeless mediant class of Yogi regarded as a saint, who should attain Nirvana after death and so put an end to his cycle of rebirths. Arnold later came across evidence that seemed to indicate he had been such a monk but had been sent back for a further incarnation because of killing a soldier in a skirmish in 1904, four years before Arnold's birth.

While stationed in the Orkneys, Arnold obtained a copy of **Aleister Crowley's** *Magic in Theory and Practice*. Although it was not stage magic, he was fascinated and later visited Crowley, taking Gerald Gardner with him at Gardner's request. This meeting is confirmed in Crowley's diaries. An entry for 1947 states, "Thursday, May 1—Dr. G. B. Gardner, Ph.D. Singapore, Arnold Crowther, Prof. G. a Magician to tea. . . ."

In 1956, as Gardner had predicted, Arnold met a fair-haired woman, Patricia Dawson, in a summer show on the Isle of Wight. She later initiated Arnold into the **Craft**. In 1960 they were married, first in a Craft Handfasting and later in a civil ceremony. The two went on to achieve prominence as spokespersons for Wicca.

In addition to numerous magazine and newspaper articles on modern day Witchcraft, the Crowthers wrote books (see **Patricia Crowther** above) and presented a Witchcraft series on BBC Radio. Arnold, who continued his stage magician appearances after the war, also wrote children's books and one on stage magic. His autobiography was serialized on BBC Radio between 1975 and 1977. Arnold died on May 1 (Beltane), 1974. At his request, a Scottish piper played a lament at his graveside. As the sound of the pipes died away, everyone heard the sound of a babbling brook, a sign from the other side.

Crucible, The (movie)

Based on Arthur Miller's play, *The Salem Witch Trials*, this 1956 Jean-Paul Sartre French-East German movie (titled *Les Sorcières de Salem*) was directed by Raymond Rouleau and starred Simone Signoret and Yves Montand. It is also known as *The Witches of Salem*. In the film, Yves Montand's character is given an opportunity to escape hanging but refuses to bow down to the judges. There are many parallels to the McCarthy anti-Communist "witch hunts" in the U.S. in the 1950s, which strongly affected Arthur Miller.

CRYSTAL BALL see DIVINATION

Cunningham, Scott (1956–1993)

Best known for his books on **herbs** and, later, on **Wicca**, Scott Cunningham was born in Royal Oak, Michigan, on June 27, 1956. He was the son of prolific author Chester ("Chet") Cunningham and his wife Rose. Scott's great-great-grandmother, Abby Pointer, was described as a very superstitious woman who "believed implicitly in the signs of the Moon" and planted her garden by those signs. His paternal great-grandmother, Emmy, read tea leaves.

The Cunningham family moved to San Diego when Scott was four years old and he grew up there with his brother Greg and sister Christine. When he was fifteen he looked through a book his mother had bought (*The Supernatural* by Douglas Hill and Pat Williams, Hawthorn Books, 1965) and became fascinated with the illustrations and articles, especially those dealing with **Witchcraft**. That evening he watched the movie *Burn, Witch, Burn!* on television. The following day at school Cunningham met fellow student Dorothy Jones, who was to become his **magical** teacher and to **initiate** him into her version of the **Craft**. She told him that she had been initiated two years earlier, at the age of thirteen. Her Craft name was Morgan. Cunningham's journal entries at the time state that "This form of Wicca, unlike most others today, had no specific name, and had but one 'degree' and one initiation." Yet in later years (1982) he wrote that it was called "*American Traditionalist* . . . the *Standing Stones Tradition* does not claim to be an ancient order. It was begun in 1971 by Morgan, a **Moon Priestess**. . ."

In 1974 Cunningham enrolled at San Diego State University and studied creative writing. Within two years he had more writing credits than many of his professors and shortly thereafter he dropped out. His interest in herbs and their properties grew, and he quickly became an expert on the subject, writing a book called *A Witch's Herbal*. It was rejected by a number of publishers before being accepted at Llewellyn Publications and published in 1982 under the title *Magical Herbalism*. It went on to become a classic on the subject. Cunningham followed up with *Earth Power* (1983) and *Cunningham's Encyclopedia of Magical Herbs* (1985), both published by Llewellyn. Two years later he produced *The Magic of Incense, Oils and Brews*.

In the 1980s, Cunningham visited Hawaii and fell in love with it. He went there as often as he could until the end of his life, visiting the volcano Kilauea and dropping tributes of flowers into the crater, reverencing the Goddess Pele. He developed a great interest in Kahuna, the Hawaiian culture and magical practices. His *Hawaiian Religion and Magic* was published posthumously in 1994.

In 1987, with Llewellyn's backing, Cunningham and his friend deTraci Regula made a one-hour videotape titled *Herb Magic*. Much of it was shot at the Taylor Herb Farms in Vista, California, and, despite many obstacles along the way, was a success.

In 1988 Cunningham produced *Wicca: A Guide for the Solitary Practitioner* (Llewellyn), which was initially greeted with some disquiet by Witches who had been through coven initiations and practiced only in groups. The book reflected this author's thoughts on Self Initiation, as presented in *Buckland's Complete Book of Witchcraft* (Llewellyn, 1986), and Cunningham said that he felt that helped his cause. In recent years Cunningham's book has done extremely well, becoming one of Llewellyn's top sellers.

In early 1990, while on a lecture tour, Cunningham was rushed to a hospital and diagnosed with cryptococcal meningitis. He never fully recovered, and although he returned home and went back to writing, his health steadily deteriorated. There were many books he wanted to write and several he did manage to finish including *Hawaiian Magic*, written after he returned to his parents home in January 1993. He died there on March 28, 1993.

Other of Cunningham's magical books are *A Formula Book of Magical Incenses and Oils* (1982), *The Magical Household* (with David Harrington, 1987), *The Truth About Witchcraft* (1987), *The Truth About Witchcraft Today* (1988), *The Complete Book of Incense, Oils and Brews* (1989), *The Magic In Food* (1991), *The Truth About Herb Magic* (1992), *Sacred Sleep* (1992), *The Art of Divination* (1993), *Living Wicca* (1993), and *Spell Crafts* (1993).

SOURCES:

Harrington, David and Regula, deTraci: *Whispers of the Moon*. Llewellyn, 1996.

“Cunning Man” Murrell (1780–1860)

A Cunning Man or Woman was, in many ways, similar to a **Witch**, although without the religious connotations. Not uncommon in England from the fifteenth

through the nineteenth and even into the twentieth century, they were sought out for anything from the removal of a wart or tracing lost property to the curing of a major disease. They were quite often proficient **astrologers** and had an immense **knowledge of herbs** and their uses. Many claimed to be the seventh child of a seventh child. Such people were believed to have inherent psychic and magical powers. The word “cunning” came from the Old English *kenning*, meaning “wise.”

Perhaps the best known Cunning Man was “Cunning Murrell,” James Murrell of Hadleigh, Essex, England. As a young man, he was apprenticed to a surveyor and later worked for a chemist’s stillman before becoming a shoemaker. It is said that he fathered twenty children.

Murrell lived in a small cottage opposite the church in Hadleigh. Bunches of drying herbs hung from the beamed ceilings, and old colored bottles filled with mysterious liquids lined shelves and mantelpieces. The house became the center for what Eric Maple describes as “the Murrell cult.” From simple beginnings, his reputation as a cunning man grew until the wealthy would travel from as far away as London for his advice and services. His herbal knowledge was vast and he was also a great healer, sometimes by laying on his hands and sometimes by using **magic**, **amulets** and/or **talismans**. Murrell had a huge wooden chest known as a “wizard’s chest,” in which he stored his many books and instruments.

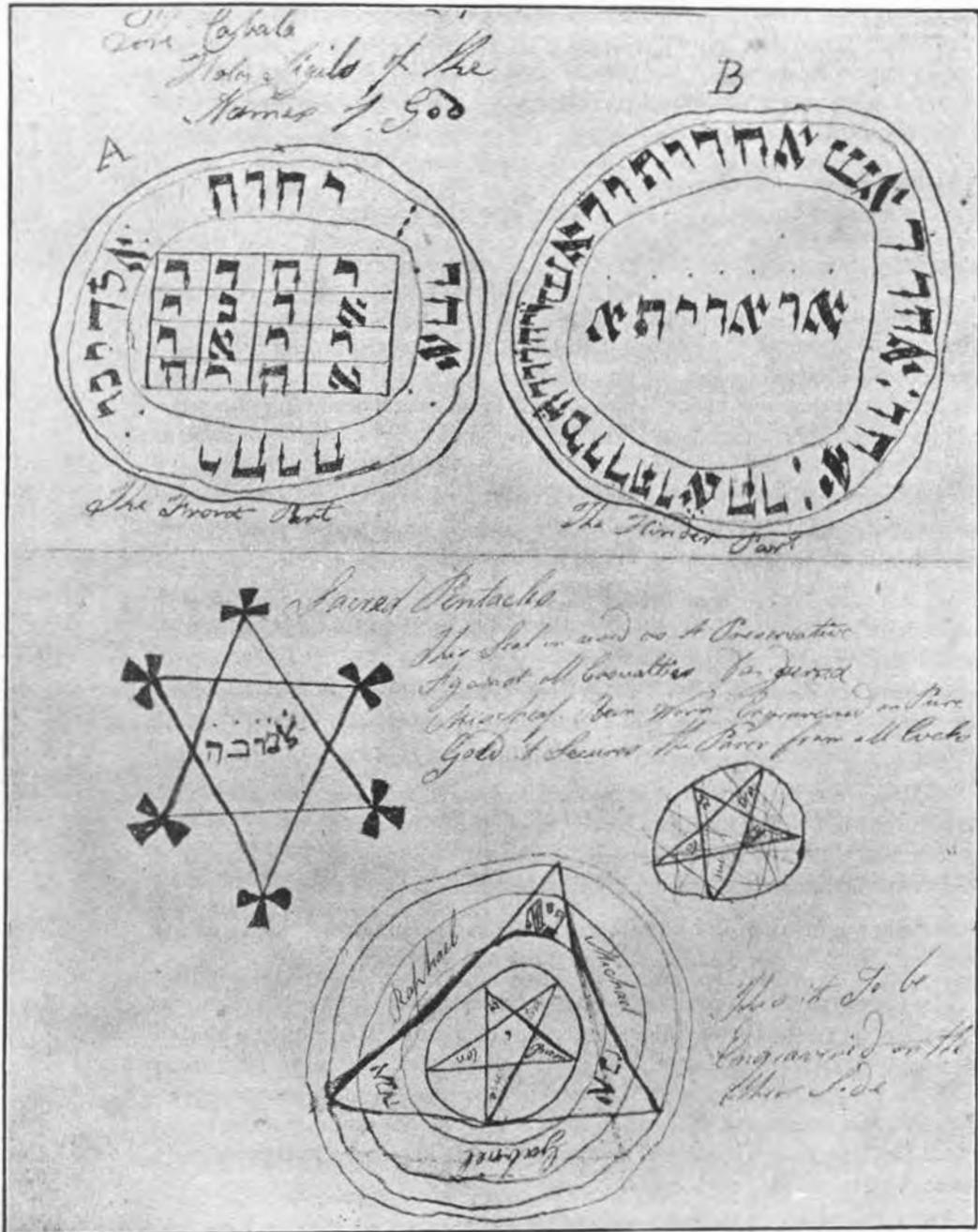
Murrell rarely charged more than a shilling for his services, even when asked to work complicated magic. For minor miracles he charged only sixpence, although this was still a considerable sum for the laborer of the time. The client was always asked if he or she required “high” or “low” assistance, the former spiritual and the latter material. For high assistance Murrell conjured good angels to fight the forces of evil.

Astrology was a major part of Murrell’s business. He consulted the tomes in his wooden chest and cast **horoscopes**. Many people of all classes who consulted with him returned again and again, his predictions were so accurate. After his death, Queen Victoria’s horoscope was found among his possessions.

Scrying was also part of Murrell’s stock in trade. He most often used a gazing **mirror** but might also use a pail of water or other reflective surface.

There is the story of Murrell using a **witch bottle** to counter an evil spell put on a farm girl. The girl had been cursed by an old woman and was having fits. Murrell placed a variety of items in a small metal bottle, along with some of the girl’s urine. The bottle was placed over a fire and heated. This resulted in the perpetrator beating on the door and crying out for him to stop what he was doing. But the bottle exploded and the sounds of the old woman died away. The young girl immediately recovered.

Although Murrell hoped that one of his children would carry on his work, none of them did. In fact, when Murrell died, his son Buck burned most of the contents of the wizard’s chest. The novelist Arthur Morrison visited the cottage in 1880 and was just in time to see what remained of the items, mostly books on astrology and herbalism.



This page, featuring sigils and pentacles, is from a book of conjurations belonging to "Cunning Man" Murrell, who lived in Essex till his death in 1860. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

SOURCES:

Maple, Eric: *The Dark World of Witches*. Robert Hale, 1962.

Morrison, Arthur: *The Strand Magazine*. George Newnes, July–December 1900.

Curandera; Curandero

Literally meaning “one who cures,” these are the “Wise Ones” of Middle America and of Hispanic communities throughout the United States and elsewhere. The Curandero (male) is more common than the Curandera (female). He mainly deals **magically** with mental and emotional problems, such as possession, and rarely uses **herbs** or the other material items used by the *bruja* and *brujo*, who are closer to the European idea of **Witches**.

Curse

Also referred to as a hex, a curse is used in **black magic** to bring misfortune or even death to the victim. It is a **spell** that is usually spoken; it may take the form of a simple statement wishing ill on the person, or it may be in the form of an intricate **chant** or **ritual**. Since it is negative, it would be done only by a Black Magician and never by a **Witch**, whose creed does not permit the harming of any person or thing.

As with all magic, the *intent* is most important. To simply say “I curse you” is seldom effective. There must be absolute hatred to generate sufficient power to make the curse effective. A deathbed curse is supposed to be especially effective since the perpetrator literally puts every last ounce of energy into it.

Many of the witchcraft trials of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries contained evidence that someone believed themselves cursed after the accused was seen to “mutter to herself.” At her trial in 1493, Elena Dalok was accused of bringing rain at her command, and it was said, “she has cursed very many who never lived in this world thereafter.” Kittredge reports that in 1596, Goody Jones, of Barking, was approached by a neighbor to give her some medicine for the colic. Instead, Goody Jones “fell down upon her knees, and after many curses and evil speeches, prayed that (her neighbor) might never be cured . . . since which time (she) . . . doth lay in great misery, and can find no ease.” Francis Moore of Huntingdonshire, England, said in 1646, “if she cursed any cattle, and set her dog upon them, they should presently die.” At the same trial Elizabeth Weed of Great Catworth confessed, “whomsoever she cursed and sent her cat unto, they should die shortly after.” Historically, there have been “family curses” in which a family has been cursed, perhaps “to the seventh generation.”

Old wishing wells are found throughout Britain. Less well known, there are also cursing wells. Such a one is to be found at Llanellian-yn-Rhos, in North Wales, near Colwyn Bay. At this well, ill-wishers could toss down the well a lead box containing the name of the one they wished harm upon. For a fee, the well keeper would retrieve the box. In similar vein, in Haiti a curse may be placed on a person, for a fee, by a *Boko*, or black magician. The *Boko* will then play perpetrator and victim against one another, removing or replacing the curse for the highest bidder.

Although the word *hex* is most often applied in a negative sense, like “curse,” positive hexes can be found in the **Pennsylvania Dutch** form of witchcraft.

(see also **Blasting and Poppets**)

SOURCES:

Kittredge, George Lyman: *Witchcraft in Old and New England*. Russell & Russell, 1956.

Murray, Margaret A.: *The Witch-Cult in Western Europe*. Clarendon Press, 1921.



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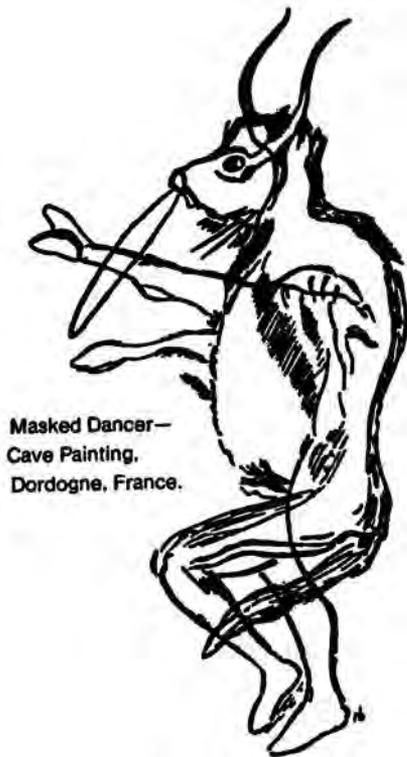
DAGHDA see GODS

Dance

From earliest times, dancing has been an integral part of religious worship and of magical practice. The dance was, in many ways, considered a prayer, a spell, or an invocation. Gertrude Prokosch Kurath, in *Funk & Wagnalls Standard Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology and Legend*, says, "Folk dance is communal reaction in movement patterns to life's crucial cycles." Pennethorne Hughes describes dance as "an extremely early expression of the emotional and rhythmic unity of the group." Throughout the world, humankind has celebrated life and communion with deity in dance. Its origins can probably be traced to early human mimicking of the stalking and slaying of game, perhaps as part of a hunting magic ritual.

Dancing around the Maypole on May Day is an example of an ancient dance custom. The phallic symbolism of the Maypole or Tree is generally accepted. Fine examples of such Maypole dancing are depicted in the stained glass windows of churches in England, such as the one at Batley, Staffordshire, dating from the reign of Henry VIII. One window depicts a figure astride a hobbyhorse. A similar hobbyhorse figure is included in the group that performs the ancient Abbots Bromley Horn Dance, still enacted in the county of Staffordshire, England. Performed on the first Sunday after September 4, the Abbots Bromley Horn Dance is the oldest such surviving ceremony in Britain, possessing shades of the shamanic magical workings of prehistoric times.

Dance was a part of Christian worship up into the seventeenth century, especially in Spain. In 1282, at Inverkeithing in Scotland, the village priest was admonished (but not punished) for leading his parishioners in a dance about a phallic symbol as part of the Easter celebrations. According to Pennethorne Hughes, dancing still occurs in the Church of Abyssinia.



Masked Dancer—
Cave Painting,
Dordogne, France.

Masked dancer from a cave painting, Dordogne, France.
Courtesy Raymond Buckland.

It is no surprise, therefore, that dancing should have been an integral part of a religion so full of life as **Witchcraft**. Leaping dances, astride pitchforks, poles, and broomsticks were a part of fertility rites to promote the growth of crops (see **broomstick**). Dancing was also a big part of **Witches'** sabbat celebrations. Margaret Alice Murray suggests that there were two main types of dance at these: the ring dance and the follow-your-leader type. Pierre de Lancre (*Tableau de l'Inconstance des Mauvais Anges*, Paris, 1613) described such a ring dance, saying, "once the banquet was finished the dancing began around a large tree, the participants dancing back to back in a ring." Thomas Cooper (*Pleasant Treatise of Witches* London, 1673) reported, "The dance is strange, and wonderful, as well as diabolical, for turning themselves back to back, they take one another by the arms and raise each other from the ground, then shake their heads to and fro like Anticks, and turn themselves as if they were mad." There is a detail of this back-to-back dancing in the painting *The Entry of Isabel of Bavaria into Paris as Bride of Charles VI* in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

In 1590 the North Berwick Witches (see **Scottish Witchcraft**) danced all around the churchyard. "Gelie Duncan played on a trump, John Fian, missellit, led the ring; Agnes Sampson and her daughters and all the rest following the said Barbara, to the number of seven score of persons," according to Robert Pitcairn (*Criminal Trials*, Edinburgh, 1833). Musical instruments varied, from Gelie Duncan's trumpet to trumpets, violins, drums, and tambourines. There was also much singing, as there is today at **Wiccan** gatherings.

Dancing Master or Dancing Mistress seems to have been one of the important positions in the old **covens**. Murray says, "One duty seems to have been delegated to a particular individual, who might perhaps hold no other office, or who might, on the other hand, be the chief official; this was the manager, often the leader, of the dance. As pace seems to have been an essential in the dance, the leader was necessarily active and generally young." One of the dances in use with most traditions is the meeting dance—a spiral dance that winds into the center and out again. As the **Witches** pass one another, males kiss females and females kiss males in greeting.

Many surviving examples of old **Pagan** dances can be found today, for example, in Morris dancing. The “dibbling” of sticks into the ground, as part of some of the dances, ties in with the planting of seeds, while the clashing of sticks and waving of handkerchiefs is intended to disperse negative **spirits**. In many of the Morris dances, the dancers leap high in the air in much the same way that the Pagans and Witches of old leapt high as part of imitative magic when showing the crops how high to grow.

Dancing is one of the ways for Witches to raise the power required to work magic. By moving rhythmically, clapping or slapping the body, and perhaps **chanting**, a state of *ekstasis* is brought on to direct the power raised to bring about the end sought. In Voodoo a similar *ekstasis* is achieved through dancing, which is done to the rhythmic beating of the drums. The ensuing ecstasy leads to the entry of the *loa*, the Voodoo deities.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Ray Buckland's Magic Cauldron*. Galde, 1995.

Hughes, Pennethorne: *Witchcraft*. Longmans, Green, 1952.

Leach, Maria (ed.): *Funk & Wagnalls Standard Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology and Legend*. Harper & Row, 1972.

Murray, Margaret Alice: *The Witch Cult in Western Europe*. Clarendon Press, 1921.

DASHWOOD, SIR FRANCIS see SATAN; SATANISM

DAVIS, PETER “PATHFINDER” see AQUARIAN TABERNACLE CHURCH

Day of Wrath (movie)

1943 movie made in Denmark (titled *Vredens Dag*), directed by Carl Theodor Dreyer and starring Lisbeth Movin, Sigurd Berg, and Albert Hoeberg. It is based on a stage play by Wiers Jensen. In the seventeenth century, Anne Pedersdotter (Movin), second wife to a parson, is accused of **witchcraft** because, on declaring her love for the parson’s son, Martin (Preben Leerdorff-Rye), the parson himself drops dead of a heart attack. Graphic scenes in the movie include one of an old woman being burned alive.

Dee, John (1527–1608)

English mathematician and **astrologer** to Queen Elizabeth I, who made many contributions to the scientific knowledge of his time. John Dee was born in London on July 13, 1527, and at age fifteen attended St. John’s College, Cambridge. He later studied in Brussels and Paris, where he lectured on the principles of geometry. Dee was a member of the “School of Light,” a group that met secretly to discuss occult subjects at the home of Sir Walter Raleigh. Dee claimed that he was descended from Roderick the Great, Prince of Wales.

Dee received a pension from the young Edward VI in 1551, being granted the rectory of Upton-upon-Severn, in Worcestershire. But in 1553 he was accused of attempting to take the life of the new Queen Mary by **magical** means. He was



John Dee (seventeenth-century engraving). Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

imprisoned at Hampton Court, where he remained until 1555. Mary's successor, Queen Elizabeth (whose astrological chart he had done when she was still a princess), asked him to name the most propitious day for her coronation. Dee later spent some time giving lessons in metaphysics to the monarch.

Dee spent thirty years of his life giving advice and instructions to mariners regarding navigation and piloting, and he developed a large scientific and mathematical library. He took a great interest in alchemy and also in **scrying**, or crystal gazing, an interest he began in 1583. His experiments with the crystal were preceded by his preoccupation with dreams, both his own and those of his wife, Jane Fromond. Despite Dee's interest in scrying, he was not adept at the practice himself and employed crystal gazers to scry for him. Unfortunately, he was not a good judge of character and at least two turned out to be charlatans. The first of these was Barnabas Saul, and the second was Edward Talbott, who later changed his name to Edward Kelley.

Kelley was supposed to see angels in the crystal and report to Dee on what they instructed. Kelley claimed that they communicated in their own language, called *Enochian*. In 1583 Dee introduced Count Adalbert Laski, a representative of the King of Poland, to his scrying experiments. Subsequently Dee and Kelley moved to Poland, and Dee did not return to England till 1589. During that time, Dee and Kelley traveled extensively and were entertained by royalty.

Kelley was subject to fits of temper and sometimes refused to scry for Dee. However, on one occasion, in 1587, he did scry and reported that the angels had ordered that he and Dee should exchange wives. Dee and Jane were at first not willing, but eventually, they gave in and did so. Shortly thereafter, Kelley left the employ of John Dee.

Stories abound of Dee spying for Elizabeth, of using scrying to obtain money from various rulers and aristocrats, and of conducting alchemical and **necromantic** experiments. The Church, at that time, saw a difference between what it considered "natural," or white, **magic** and **black magic**, which it considered the fruit of the devil. The view was that natural magic was permissible. Yet on May 6, 1586, the Papal Nuncio submitted a document to the Emperor Rudolph II, with whom Dee and Kelley were staying, accusing Dee of necromancy. This resulted in the pair being expelled from Prague.

After Dee's return to England in 1589, he did not fare well under James I, Elizabeth's successor in 1603. He was given the post of warden to Christ's College, Manchester, in 1595, which he held for ten years. In 1608 he died at his home in Mortlake.

SOURCES:

Deacon, Richard: *John Dee*. Muller, 1968.

Spence, Lewis: *An Encyclopedia of Occultism*. University Books, 1960.

Degree System

In some **Witchcraft** traditions, one is either an initiated **Witch** or one is not (example: **Seax-Wica**). Other traditions maintain a system of degrees of advancement to show the development stages of the **Witch** after **initiation** (example: **Gardnerian**).

Usually, after an extended introductory learning period, new witches are initiated into the First Degree (although some have an earlier initiation into the neophyte stage even before the First Degree). There they remain for at least “a year and a day,” the traditional waiting period. During that time they are taught various disciplines, such as **ritual**, **divination**, **herbology**, and **astrology**. When the coven **elders** feel the new witches are ready, they will be taken to the Second Degree. Again they must stay there for at least a year and a day and, again, there is a learning process. Eventually they will be taken to the Third Degree, which, in most traditions, is the highest.

A Third Degree Witch may initiate others and may also break away and form a new coven, separate from the “mother coven” (see **Queen of the Sabbat**), if they so desire. All Witches are known as Priests/Priestesses. A Third Degree Witch is a High Priest/Priestess. It is also from the Third Degrees that the Elders are chosen.

There are pros and cons for a degree system. It can be useful to know the probable knowledge of a Witch by the degree he or she holds. It can also be an incentive for the Witch to know that he or she can advance (although there are many who are happy just to belong, with no desire for advancement and its attendant responsibility). Perhaps the biggest argument against the degree system is the potential for ego—a problem encountered not only in the Craft, of course, but in many walks of life.

DEITIES see GODS AND GODDESSES

Déjà Vu

A French term meaning “already seen,” applied by parapsychologists to those events that people feel they are reliving. The expression *déjà entendu* (“already heard”) refers to those things that one hears, and might have heard before.

To have a sequence of events take place that one feels has happened before, with exactly the same words or events, is not an uncommon experience. It is sometimes associated with a belief in reincarnation—with the belief that the earlier experience actually occurred in a prior lifetime. Déjà vu usually occurs with no warning and may last from a brief second to a minute or more. Although the feeling is strong that the event has been experienced before, it is seldom possible to pinpoint the previous occurrence. Most Wiccans believe that it is a sign of previous lives.

Demeter

Greek earth **goddess** (Roman: Ceres). She brings forth the fruits of the earth and is especially associated with grain. She is the fertile and cultivated soil. Daughter of Kronos and Rhea, she is the sister of Zeus, and through him she became mother of **Persephone**.

Demeter is especially associated with the Eleusinian **Mysteries**. These were founded upon the myth of the abduction of Persephone by Hades and Demeter’s

wandering in search of her daughter. During Demeter's search, the earth produced no grain. When the goddess rested a while with the king and queen of Eleusis, the queen's son, Triptolemos, set out to teach people the art of agriculture.

Zeus finally ordered Hades to return Persephone to her mother so that the earth would once again produce. But since Persephone had eaten a pomegranate that Hades had given her, she was obliged to return to him annually for one third of the year.

Demeter's temples, called *Megara*, were often found in forests; her cult was frequently accompanied by orgies. The usual symbols for Demeter are the torch (which she carried while searching) and the fruits of the earth. One of her great festivals was the Thesmophoria, celebrated in Attica in the month of October. The return of Persephone was celebrated in February. The Great Eleusinia took place in Athens and Eleusis every five years, in September, and was a festival honoring Demeter, having no connection with the Persephone story. People of all walks of life were initiated into the Mysteries at Eleusis.

In modern-day Witchcraft, many traditions embrace the story of Demeter and her search for Persephone, reenacting the myth as part of their celebrations of the seasons.

SOURCES:

Guirand, Félix: *Greek Mythology*. Hamlyn, 1963.

Kaster, Joseph: *Putnam's Concise Mythological Dictionary*. G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1963.

Demons; Demonology

The word *demon* is from the Greek *daimon*, meaning a **spirit** or divine power that may be either good or bad. The early Church condemned all **Pagan** spirits as being evil, giving the word *demon* its present negative connotation. Demonology is the study and classification of demons.

In the Middle Ages, **Ceremonial Magicians** tried to establish the number and hierarchy of demons. Alphonsus de Spina, in 1459, stated that there were 133,306,668 of these entities. This was "corrected" by Johann Weyer in 1577 to 7,405,926 demons and 72 princes. Others tried to count them also, but came up with widely differing totals. Certainly there was a belief in a whole host of demons, named and in a regular hierarchy.

Witches today do not believe in demons. Whether the accused witches of the past believed in them we do not know, yet there was no defense from accusations of association with demons leveled by the persecutors. It was said that the witches consorted with demons at their **sabbats, dancing**, feasting, and having sexual relations with them. Up until the twelfth century, the Church had denied the possibility of humans having sex with demons, yet such was the hysteria of the persecutions that, at the trials, evidence was submitted and admitted of just such relationships. Intercourse with demons became generally accepted in theological dogma by the fourteenth century.

Demons were supposed to visit humans—especially witches—as they slept. There they would force themselves sexually on the victim. The demons that had



French wood engraving of crowned demons and Idoletores, with various astral demons, c. 1870. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

intercourse with women were known as *incubi*; those who preyed on men were *succubi*. It was said that the penis of a succubus and the vagina of an incubus were ice cold, so little pleasure was to be gained from this coitus. The belief in incubi and succubi was upheld by many theologians, including St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Augustine, who identified them with the sylvans and fauns of pagan mythology.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *The Anatomy of the Occult*. Samuel Weiser, 1977.

Crow, W. B.: *A History of Magic, Witchcraft and Occultism*. Aquarian Press, 1968.

Guiley, Rosemary Ellen: *The Encyclopedia of Witches and Witchcraft*. Facts on File, 1989.

Deosil

A **Wiccan** word meaning to move in a clockwise, or sunwise, direction. Its opposite is **widdershins**. Deosil is the direction moved by the **priest** or **priestess** when casting the **magic circle**.

It is associated with the direction of the sun crossing the sky and is considered a positive motion, whereas widdershins is generally considered negative. However, some traditions do not consider widdershins negative and will utilize that direction on certain special occasions (for example, to close a circle or during the waning cycle of the Moon).

Some traditions are very strict about moving deosil, even to the extent of only allowing people to move about within the circle in a sunwise direction and not allowing them to move back even a few paces. Others may cast the circle deosil but have no qualms about moving in either direction within that cast circle.

Devils, The (movie)

1971 British movie directed by England's *enfant terrible*, Ken Russell. Loosely based on the works of Aldous Huxley and John Whiting, it deals with the outbreak of possession by the **Loudon Nuns** in France, during the reign of Louis XIII. It starred Oliver Reed as Urbain Grandier and included plenty of shocking scenes, from a bevy of naked nuns to the closeups of Grandier being burned at the stake.

Devil's Bride, The (movie)

Directed by Terence Fisher, this 1968 British movie is based on the Dennis Wheatley novel *The Devil Rides Out* (which was the original British title of the movie). Starring Christopher Lee as the Duc de Richleau, with Charles Gray, Nike Arrighi, Patrick Mower, Sarah Lawson, and Paul Eddington. The Duke helps his young friend escape from the magical clutches of the evil Mocate, a **Satanist**. As with all Wheatley stories, **witchcraft** is happily mixed with Satanism and **black magic**. The result, however, is always exciting reading or, in this instance, viewing.

DEVIL RIDES OUT, THE see **DEVIL'S BRIDE, THE**

Devil's Mark

The persecutors of **witches** in the Middle Ages claimed that the devil marked his subjects with a special mark. These marks were always on parts of the body where they would be hidden and not normally be noticed. Under the armpit was one such place, as was on the genitals or under a woman's breast. These were places where the inquisitors would diligently search, stripping the accused and shaving all bodily hair, usually in front of a crowd of people.

The mark was supposed to be insensitive since it was caused by the devil's touch, so bodkins, or **Witch prickers**, were employed to stick the accused. Birthmarks, scars, warts, moles, blemishes, even hemorrhoids—all were taken to be marks put there by the devil. If the unfortunate also happened to have a supernumerary nipple, it was taken as a sure sign that a devil's **familiar**, or imp, was being suckled there. Since a large percentage of the population has one or more natural blemishes of this sort, it was not difficult for the persecutors to find confirmation that an accused was a subject of the devil.

The Italian monk Francesco Mara Guazzo, in *Compendium Maleficarum* (1608), reported:

At Brindisi in November 1590, when Claudia Bogarta was about to be **tortured**, she was closely shaved, as the custom is, and so a scar was exposed on the top of her bare brow. The Inquisitor then suspecting the truth, namely, that it was a mark made by the Devil's claw, which had before been hidden by her hair, ordered a pin to be thrust deep into it; and when this was done she neither felt any pain, nor did so much as a drop of blood come from the wound. Yet she persisted in denying the truth, saying that her insensitiveness was caused by an old blow from a stone.

Later on, under torture, she broke down and confessed to "abominable crimes."

SOURCES:

Hughes, Pennethorne: *Witchcraft*. Longmans, Green, 1952.

DIANA *see* ARTEMIS

Dianic Wicca

Wiccan tradition focused solely on the feminine aspect of deity. Most Dianic covens are open only to women.

Dianic Wicca was founded by Zsuzsanna Budapest during the winter solstice of 1971. According to Rosemary Guiley, Budapest says that the tradition is based on what she learned from the Hungarian uprising of 1956 and the feminist movement in the United States. Her first Dianic coven was named the Susan B. Anthony Coven.

For ten years, Budapest led full moon circles and sabbats and initiated others, training them to become Priestesses. She wrote and published *The Feminist Book of Lights and Shadows* as a text for the tradition. The Manifesto of the tradition states:

We believe that Feminist witches are wimmin (sic) who search within themselves for the female principle of the universe and who relate as daughters to the Creatrix.

We believe that just as it is time to fight for the right to control our bodies, it is also time to fight for our sweet womon souls.

We believe that in order to fight and win a revolution that will stretch for generations into the future, we must find reliable ways to replenish our energies. We believe that without a secure grounding in womon's spiritual strength there will be no victory for us.

We believe that we are part of a changing universal consciousness that has long been feared and prophesized by the patriarchs.

We believe that Goddess-consciousness gave humanity a workable, long-lasting, peaceful period during which the Earth was treated as Mother and wimmin were treated as Her priestesses. This was the mythical Golden Age of Matriarchy.

We believe that wimmin lost supremacy through the aggressions of males who were exiled from the matriarchies and formed the patriarchal hordes responsible for the invention of rape and the subjugation of wimmin.

We believe that female control of the death (male) principle yields hummin evolution.

We are committed to living life lovingly towards ourselves and our sisters. We are committed to joy, self-love, and life-affirmation.

We are committed to winning, to surviving, to struggling against patriarchal oppression.

We are committed to defending our interests and those of our sisters through the knowledge of witchcraft: to blessing, to cursing, to healing, and to binding with power rooted in womon-identified wisdom.

We are opposed to attacking the innocent.

We are equally committed to political, communal, and personal solutions.

We are committed to teaching wimmin how to organize themselves as witches and to sharing our traditions with wimmin.

We are opposed to teaching our magic and our craft to men.

Our immediate goal is to congregate with each other according to our ancient womon-made laws and remember our past, renew our powers and affirm our Goddess of the Ten-Thousand Names.

Guiley suggests that the impact of Dianic Wicca may be seen in the increase of literature and college courses devoted to the goddess and women's spirituality.

SOURCES:

Budapest, Z: *The Feminist Book of Lights and Shadows*. Lunar Publications, 1976.

Guiley, Rosemary Ellen: *The Encyclopedia of Witches and Witchcraft*. Facts on File, 1989.

Digitalis

The dried leaf of the common foxglove (*Digitalis purpurea*). In 1775 William Witherington, a physician of Birmingham, England, learned of its effectiveness for heart conditions from an old **Witch** in Shropshire. It was one of several ingredients in her cures, and Witherington managed to isolate digitalis as the main active ingredient. He went on to make many contributions to medicine, and a monument was raised to him at Edgbaston Old Church. The carved decorations on that monument are of the foxglove.

Prior to Witherington's application of its use, country wise women used foxglove to treat many maladies, including epilepsy and tuberculosis. Nicholas Culpeper suggests it is "one of the best remedies for a scabby head," while Meyer warns it is "too dangerous for domestic use or self-medication." It certainly is extremely poisonous. Old folk names for it were Witch's Bells and Deadmen's Bells.

Three cardiac glucosides have been isolated from digitalis: digitoxin, gitoxin, and gitalin. No synthetic drugs can duplicate the action of the glycosides in foxglove in treating heart failure. Digitalis is recommended in congestive heart failure from any cause, although prolonged use leads to cumulation of the drug because of its slow excretion and destruction. Because of this, side effects can occur, including greater cardiac irregularities.

SOURCES:

Culpeper, Nicholas: *Culpeper's Complete Herbal*. Foulsham, n.d.

Meyer, Joseph E.: *The Herbalist*. Meyer, 1971.

Reader's Digest: *Magic and Medicine of Plants*. Reader's Digest, 1986.

Divination

Divination is so called because it is considered a gift of the divine—a gift from the gods. It is the art of foretelling the future, using **omens**, portents, visions, and divinatory tools. Although far from being the exclusive preserve of **Witches**, it is an art that many present-day followers of the **Old Religion** have perfected in its various forms. Most **Wiccans** are experts at one or more branches of divination, including **astrology**, card reading (known as *cartomancy*), palm reading (*cheiromancy*), casting runes or dice (*cleromancy*), and crystal gazing (*scrying*). They recognize what is important in what they see and present it to the person questioning.

There are many methods of divining, possibly hundreds of them. Others include tea leaf reading (*tasseography*); interpreting dreams (*oneiromancy*); candle flame gazing (*lampadomancy*); using numbers (*arithmancy* or *numerology*); observing



Vestal virgins of Rome performing a divination ritual, depicted in an early nineteenth-century print. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

smoke (*capnomancy*); using a pendulum (*radiesthesia*); pouring oil on water (*leconomancy*); handling an object (*psychometry*); drawing lots (*sortilege*); and observing the behavior of animals (*zoomancy*). *Pyromancy*, or gazing into the flames of a fire and “seeing” pictures, is something that many people have done, probably without realizing that they were indulging in divination. But whatever tools are used, they are only that—tools. They serve as a focal point for the psychic senses. It is the interpretation of what is seen that is important. The diviner must see and then interpret the signs, awakening in him- or herself the psychic ability to recognize what is important to the person for whom the reading is being done. There may be warnings of danger, illness, even death. In the case of the latter, it is up to the reader to determine how best to present what is seen so as not to terrify the querant.

Divination has, for thousands of years, been a tool of priests, seers, shamans, astrologers, medicine men, Gypsies, and wise men and women. In some civilizations, only a special class of people were allowed to divine. The ancient Greeks had the oracles and sibyls, the Romans had augurers, a special priest class. The ancient Egyptians also had special priests. The Celts had the Druids. Divination was done

both for the individual and for a group, and was even used to determine the fate of kingdoms and countries.

In its simplest form, divination can entail gauging what the future may hold judging by the flight of a bird. A complex form might be throwing down yarrow stalks to form hexagrams for the ancient Chinese practice of I-Ching, or mathematically working through numerology. There are enough types of divination, ranging from very basic to very complex, that most people can achieve some sort of result with practice.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *A Pocket Guide to the Supernatural*. Ace, 1969.

Gibson, Walter B. and Litzka R.: *The Complete Illustrated Book of the Psychic Sciences*. Doubleday, 1966.

Doppelgänger

There is a belief that everyone has an exact double somewhere in the world and that, if ever one should come face to face with that double, it is a sign that he or she will die. John Aubrey (1626–1697), the antiquary, in his *Miscellanies* (1696), tells of Lady Diana Rich meeting her double while walking in the grounds of Holland House, London. A month later she was dead. Eric Maple, in *Man, Myth and Magic*, says that when the Empress Catherine the Great saw her double advancing upon her, she ordered her guards to open fire on it.

Such a duplicate of oneself is known as a *doppelgänger*, or “walking double.” The English painter Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828–1882) depicted a meeting between a man and a woman and their doppelgängers, showing one of the women fainting, in his painting *How They Met Themselves*.

In the Salem witch trials, one of the major debating points was the admission of “spectral evidence.” This was a belief that a witch could be observed by witnesses as being innocently occupied in one location, but a duplicate of the witch could be in another place, working mischief. Spectral evidence was, after some small debate, admitted, and a number of people were put to death on that basis. Such evidence was not restricted to New England. Kitteridge says, “Spectral evidence was admitted, for example, in England, either in examinations or in actual trials, in 1593, 1612, 1616, 1621, 1633, 1645, 1650, 1653, 1654, 1658, 1660, 1661, 1663, 1664, 1665, 1667, 1670, 1672, 1673, 1680, 1682, 1683. Even Justice Holt, whose honorable record in procuring the acquittal of every witch he tried is well known, did not exclude spectral evidence.”

SOURCES:

Hansen, Chadwick: *Witchcraft in Salem*. George Braziller, 1969.

Kitteridge, George Lyman: *Witchcraft in Old and New England*. Russell & Russell, 1929.

Man, Myth and Magic. BPC Publishing, 1970.

Dorset Oozer

Up until the beginning of the twentieth century, many of the small villages in the West Country of England—Devon, Cornwall, Somerset, and Dorset—had what was



The Dorset Oozer. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

known as an *oozer*. This was a wooden mask with attached hair, beard, and bull's horns. Together with the skin of a bull, it was worn by the head man as he danced and pranced his way about the bounds of the village at certain times of the year. He was representing the old horned god—a god of hunting and of fertility. The word *oozer* is of unknown origin, although Doreen Valiente suggests that it comes from the Old English *O*s, meaning “a god”; it might also be noted that *os* is Latin for “mouth.”

Valiente also suggests that the *oozer* was worn as part of a ritual during the Yule season, basing this on the words of Theodore (Archbishop of Canterbury from 668 to 690 CE), who said, “Whoever at the Kalends of January goes about as a stag or a bull; that is, making himself into a wild animal and dressing in the skin of a herd animal, and putting on the heads of beasts; those who in such wise transform themselves into the appearance of a wild animal, penance for three years because this is devilish” (*Liber Poenitentialis*). Valiente says that a similar figure played a part in the wassail celebrations of Kingscote, Gloucestershire.

Ralph Whitlock links the *oozer* of Melbury Osmond, Dorset, to the Beltane celebrations rather than, or in addition to, the Yule rites. He says that it was worn

and used as part of the ritual that took place around the Maypole, in the Trendle or Frying Pan earthworks above the head of the Cerne Abbas Giant figure. This is a huge, 180-foot-tall, male figure, brandishing a club and sporting an erect penis, carved into the chalk on the hillside near the village of Cerne Abbas, Dorset.

The ancient Dorset Oozer of Melbury Osmond was one of the last known to exist. It had been in the safekeeping of the Cave family for generations until, during a relocation hiatus, a servant of the Caves sold it to an unknown person from another part of Dorset. It was never traced, and Valiente suggests it may now be owned by a Witch coven more appreciative of its history and representation.

SOURCES:

Valiente, Doreen: *An ABC of Witchcraft Past and Present*. St. Martin's, 1973.
Whitlock, Ralph: *In Search of Lost Gods*. Phaidon, 1979.

DOWSING see WATER WITCH

DRAGON see SERPENT

Dragon's Blood

Daemonorops draco, a red resin obtained from one of the rattan palms of Indonesia. The fruit of the palm is round, pointed, scaly, and the size of a large cherry. When ripe, the fruit exudes a resin known as dragon's blood. In brittle, shell-like flakes, this can be ground into a fine red powder.

Dragon's blood was once prized as a medicine in Europe because of its astringent properties. Although used for such mundane things as coloring varnishes and lacquers, facing writing paper, and photographic engraving, dragon's blood is also used in Witchcraft and other aspects of the occult as an ingredient in incense.

Folklore has it that dragon's blood is useful in love magic and for protection, as well as for exorcisms. Scott Cunningham says that a stick of dragon's blood under the mattress will cure impotency, and when mixed with sugar and salt and stored in a bottle will guarantee peace and quiet in the house where it is kept. Many Witches and magicians use dragon's blood to make an ink used for constructing talismans and magical squares.

Siegfried, from the heroic literature of the ancient Teutons, was made invulnerable by taking a bath in dragon's blood. Such a bath is also said to restore the petrified to life. In Danish folklore, only the blood from the heart of a dragon can restore an imperiled king. These folk tales, however, refer to the actual blood of a dragon.

SOURCES:

Cunningham, Scott: *Cunningham's Encyclopedia of Magical Herbs*. Llewellyn, 1985.
Devine, Mary Virginia: *Brujería*. Llewellyn, 1982.

Drake, Sir Francis (1543–1596)

Francis Drake was the most famous of the Elizabethan sailors. The exact date of his birth is uncertain, although it is known that Drake's father was a Protestant preach-

er at Chatham Docks, England. Drake performed the first circumnavigation of the globe by an Englishman, with his voyage between 1577 and 1580. The profits of the sailing amounted to about 500,000 English pounds. He was knighted by the queen and with his share of the money purchased Buckland Abbey, in south Devonshire.

Drake was perhaps best known for his defeat of the Spanish Armada, when it attempted to invade England. The death of Mary had given Philip of Spain an immediate claim on the English throne. He did not want it for himself, but for his daughter, Isabella. In July 1588, the Spanish fleet of 132 vessels reached the English Channel. It is said that Drake was playing bowls on Plymouth Hoe at the time the Armada was spotted, and he reportedly said that there was time both to finish the game and to beat the Spaniards. However, the game was first reported in 1624 and there is no mention of the comment until 1736.

There may be more truth to the rumor that Drake was a follower of the **Old Religion**, despite his Protestant background. In his native Devon, many years after his death, he became associated with the **Wild Hunt**, with stories of his ghost leading the hunt across the Devonshire countryside, much as the old god **Herne** does in Windsor Great Park.

Within **Wicca** there is also the story that sixteenth-century **Witches** gathered to work **magic** to defeat the Spanish Armada. The same sort of thing was done when Napoleon was contemplating invading England, and it is also well documented that a **coven** of **elders** did the same to repel Hitler during World War II. But of that early magical working, it is said that Drake was one of the coven members who did the work.

SOURCES:

Andrews, Charles M.: *A History of England*. Allyn and Bacon, 1903.
Encyclopedia Britannica. William Benton, 1964.

Drawing Down the Moon/Sun

In **Witchcraft**, the **Moon** is associated with the **Goddess** and the **Sun** with the **God**. The Moon and Sun are not worshiped as **deities**, but are seen simply as symbols for them. This is the case in many civilizations, although the perceived gender of the Moon may vary. The Egyptian god Thoth was God of the Moon. In Greenland the Moon is male, as it is to the Bushman. In the Aleutian myth "Sun Sister, Moon Brother," the Moon is male, as in a similar myth found among South American Indians. Yet in many Native American stories (Apache, for example), the Moon may be male in one instance and female in another. To the Cora Indians of north Mexico, the Moon and the Sun are each both male and female.

In **Wicca**, however, the Moon is always associated with the Goddess and the full of the Moon is looked upon as an appropriate time to speak with her. This is done in the ritual known as "Drawing Down the Moon" (called "Calling Down the Moon" in some traditions). At that rite, the High **Priest** kneels before the High Priestess and invokes the Goddess, lightly touching her body at certain points with the tip of the **wand** as he speaks:

I invoke and call upon Thee, O Mighty Mother of us all, Bringer of all Fruitfulness. By seed and by root I invoke Thee; by stem and by bud I invoke Thee; by leaf, flower and fruit I invoke Thee; by life and love I invoke Thee and call upon Thee to descend into the body of this Thy High Priestess and Servant (Name) here. Speak with her tongue, touch with her hands, kiss with her lips, that Thy servants may be fulfilled.

Thus the Goddess is asked to enter the body of the priestess and to speak through her, although the actual wording may differ among traditions. Another difference found is that, in **Dianic** and similar traditions, the invocation may be performed by another female, not necessarily a male priest.

When invoked, the Goddess descends into the body of the high priestess and speaks through her. When this happens, it is not unusual for the coven members to see actual physical changes take place in the priestess. The Goddess will speak, and the priestess may or may not be aware of what is being said. It is much like the channeling performed by spiritualist mediums, acting as direct voice conduits for departed **spirits**. There is also a parallel with **Voodoo** and the possession of select worshipers by the Voodoo gods, the *loa*, who speak directly through them to the other assembled followers.

Sometimes, however, although invoked, the Goddess does not appear and possess the priestess. When this happens, the priestess will recite what is known as “The Charge,” a poetic address that was written by **Doreen Valiente** for **Gerald Gardner’s Book of Shadows**, based on the segment in **Leland’s Aradia, Gospel of the Witches**.

The ritual concludes with the High Priest giving the High Priestess the **Five Fold Kiss** and describing a **pentacle** with the wand. A similar ritual called Drawing Down the Sun is also performed by some groups with the male officiating and the male energy of the god being invoked.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Buckland’s Complete Book of Witchcraft*. Llewellyn, 1986.

Harvey, Graham: *Contemporary Paganism*. New York University Press, 1997.

Druids

Priest class of the Celts—the physicians, historians, priests, and scholars—ranking next to the king. Little is actually known about them except that, according to Julius Caesar’s *Gallic Wars*, they spent twenty years in training, and all their knowledge was passed on orally. Caesar placed them in southern and central Gaul from about 500 BCE, as did the Stoic philosopher Poseidonius (135–50 BCE) of Syria, the main authority on the Celts. The Roman historian Ammianus (330–395 BCE) said that Druids were “uplifted by searchings into things most secret and sublime.” They were later banned by Tiberius and Claudius, mainly because of their human sacrifices. Pliny, in his *Natural History*, refers to their magical cures.

Lewis Spence suggests a non-Celtic and even non-Aryan origin for the Druids, writing that it is possible the “so-called Iberian or Megalithic people of Britain introduced the immigrant Celts to the Druidic religion.” Certainly Britain became the center of that religion, the Isle of Anglesey being the chief seat. Classical writers refer to Druidesses, so women also figured among them. The name Druid itself is of unknown origin. Some suggest that it comes from the Gaelic *Druidh*, meaning “wise man” or “magician,” while others suggest the Old English *drud*, a “learned person.” Pliny the Elder believed it referred to the Greek *drus*, meaning “oak.”

In R. A. S. Macalister’s *The Archaeology of Ireland* (Dublin, 1928), the author suggests that the Irish Druids at least were learning sacred hymns dating from before the introduction of writing and, “like the Vedas in ancient India, preserved by oral tradition, because they would have been profaned were they to be committed to this novel art.” At that time, both Greek and the ancient Irish Ogham alphabet existed and were known to the Druids, so it was by choice that the learnings were not written down.

Druidic temples were out of doors, frequently in a grove of oak trees. They were usually circular or oval in form, sometimes enclosed by a palisade or bank and a ditch. In the center was a large stone representing deity. There was a degree system for the priests and priestesses, with two of the grades being Bards (*bardoi*) and Ovates (*vates* or *manteis*). W. B. Crow believes that Druidism was a tree cult, since Europe was, at that time, mainly covered with extensive forests, the predominant tree being the oak. We certainly know that an object of their veneration was mistletoe, a semi-parasitic plant growing on trees and particularly prevalent on the oak tree. (The Teutons also held mistletoe sacred.) The Druids would cut the mistletoe from the tree with a golden sickle, then allowing it to fall into a cloth, since it was not allowed to touch the ground. The only detailed account we have of this ceremony comes from Pliny, who stated that the mistletoe was cut on the sixth day of the moon. He also said that two white bulls were sacrificed after the cutting, and a feast was held.

Druids worshiped at the same festival dates that are recognized by Witches, the major ones being Samhain, Imbolc, Beltane, and Lughnasadh. The minor ones were called by the Druids Alban Eilir (spring equinox), Alban Hefin (summer solstice), Alban Elfed (autumn equinox), and Alban Arthan (winter solstice).

Several modern-day groups and societies dub themselves Druids. One is a society called the Order of Bards, Ovates, and Druids, founded in 1717 and reorganized in 1964. It held its first summer solstice ceremony at Hunsbury Hill, Northamptonshire, in 1964. Another is the Secular Order of Druids, headquartered in Frome, Somersetshire. The British Druid Order started in 1979. The Ancient Order of Druids claims to be “the parent body of all Druidical Societies,” according to its literature, “established nearly two hundred years ago.”

There are also modern Pagan groups who follow the Druidic path. One of the major American leaders of Druidism as a part of neo-paganism is Isaac Bonewits (b. 1949), who founded the Schismatic Druids of North America and Ar nDraiocht Fein, a Druid fellowship. He started the periodical *Druid Chronicler*, later renamed *Pentalpha Journal*, and wrote *The Druid Chronicles (Evolved)*.

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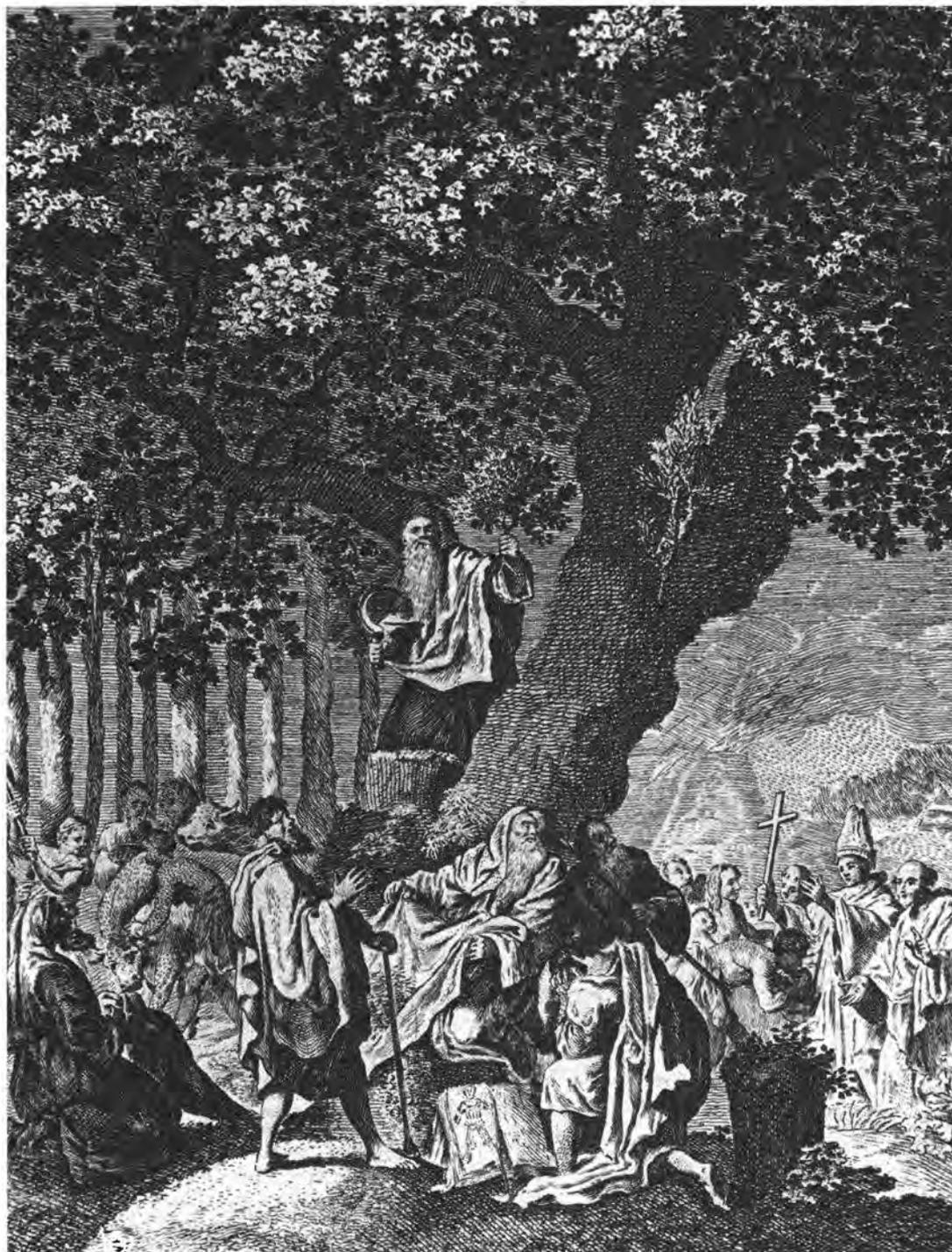
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Druids, under their sacred oak tree, are threatened by Christianity. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

SOURCES:

Crow, W. B.: *A History of Magic, Witchcraft, and Occultism*. Aquarian Press, 1968.

Figgott, Stuart: *The Druids*. Thames & Hudson, 1968.

Spence, Lewis: *The Magic Arts in Celtic Britain*. Rider, n.d.

Atwood, Ralph: *In Search of Lost Gods*. Phaidon, 1979.

DUCKING/DUNKING A WITCH see SWIMMING A WITCH

Dunwich, Gerina (1959–)

Gerina (pronounced with a soft G) was born in Illinois in December 1959, and she became fascinated with the paranormal at a very early age. She remembers, as a small child, sitting with a girlfriend under a large tree and suddenly, for no apparent reason, grabbing her friend's hand and pulling her away. Almost as she did so, a large limb broke away and fell from the tree, crashing to the ground on the spot where they had just been sitting. Her girlfriend's mother, a devout Christian, believed this prescience showed that Dunwich had supernatural powers, and she broke up the friendship between the two girls.

Dunwich remembers dreams of a past life in which she was burned at the stake as a Witch. She also learned that her mother had had similar experiences in her childhood.

A cousin introduced Dunwich to **Witchcraft** in the summer of 1969. The first two books Gerina read on the subject were Sybil Leek's *Diary of a Witch* and Raymond Buckland's *Witchcraft from the Inside*. Both exerted a profound influence on her, she claims.

In 1975 her parents separated, bringing a stormy ending to the marriage and an end to Dunwich's relationship with her father. He had discovered occult books, herbs, and poppets in his daughter's bedroom and decided she was a servant of the devil. At the divorce court, he publicly proclaimed his belief that she was a Witch. As Dunwich herself says, "In a different century such a startling accusation would surely have resulted in my arrest, trial and execution." But in 1975 it merely invoked sighs of disbelief and a few chuckles. The mother was awarded custody of Gerina.

In the spring of 1977, at age seventeen, Dunwich moved to southern California. She developed an interest in **astrology** and cartomancy and quickly began casting charts and reading tarot cards, first as a hobby and then to supplement her income. She was also pursuing a career in writing and in the entertainment industry. Three years later, she began publishing and editing a small, quarterly literary journal called *Golden Isis*. It contained poetry, fiction, and artwork focused primarily, on the Goddess and the contemporary Witchcraft scene. Its international circulation eventually grew to over 3,500. This success inspired Dunwich to write poetry on a daily basis and soon she began gathering a collection of magical verse that she self-published a decade later as *Circle of Shadows*.

In the early 1980s, Dunwich met Al Jackter, musician and part-time wrestler. He shared her interests in astrology, psychic phenomena, and spiritualism. Believ-

ing each other to be soulmates, they became lovers and decided to spend their lives together. In 1984 they relocated to Massachusetts, not far from **Salem**. Dunwich succeeded in landing a book contract with a major publishing house in 1987 (appropriately, she felt, the contract was dated October 31, **Samhain**). The following year saw publication of her first book, *Candlelight Spells*. It received mixed reviews but enjoyed good sales, prompting further contracts.

As the 1980s drew to a close, Salem lost much of its appeal for Dunwich, disenchanted with the blatant exploitation of Witchcraft that she saw there. She and Jackter returned to California. Four years later, they moved back across the country to upstate New York. There they moved into a century-old Victorian house that sat on hill north of the Adirondacks. The house had a reputation for being haunted. One of its ghostly inhabitants was an old woman, believed by many to have been a Witch. Intrigued by legends surrounding the house, Dunwich transformed a portion of the building into a combination antique/New Age store and called it the Country Witch. The store's success was marginal, but it served as an instrument to bring together the Pagan folk of the area.

An eclectic circle, called **Coven Mandragora**, was established on **Imbolc**, 1996, with Dunwich presiding as **High Priestess**. The same year, the **Wheel of Wisdom School** (an educational arm offering correspondence courses) and the **Pagan Poets Society** were established. There was also a local networking organization known as **North Country Wicca**.

In February of 1998, Dunwich received a ministerial license from the Universal Life Church. The first legal **Handfasting** she performed was for the cousin who had originally introduced her to Wicca thirty years before.

1998 proved to be a transitional year. A tremendous ice storm hit New York State, leaving many upstate areas without electricity or telephones for several weeks. Dunwich's house sustained damage, much not covered by insurance. **Coven Mandragora**, which had struggled through two years of trials and tribulations, began to fragment. Dunwich was unable to handle the stress, feeling that to try to hold everything together was futile. The coven officially disbanded. By this time, malicious rumors of Satanic rituals and animal sacrifices at "Dunwich Manor" began surfacing. Life in the small town became unbearable for Dunwich and her loved ones. Fearing the Christian community, she closed up the shop, put the house on the market, and moved down to Florida. She remained there only a few months before heading, once again, to Southern California and **Solitary practice**.

As a cat lover and the author of a book on feline magic, lore, and worship, Dunwich founded a unique tradition of **Witchcraft** that she called **Bast-Wicca**. It incorporated elements of Egyptian magic, classical **Witchcraft**, and felidomancy. The principle deity was the ancient Egyptian Goddess **Bast**, or **Bastet**. Dunwich firmly believes that all cats possess great psychic and magical powers. She says that cats are sacred on the **Bast-Wicca** path, and magic is seldom performed without the presence of a feline. Her own familiar is a graceful black cat named **Salem**.

Dunwich's books include *Circle of Shadows*, *Wicca Craft*, *Wicca Love Spells*, *Everyday Wicca*, *Magic Potions*, and *Your Magickal Cat*. She is a member of the Wiccan/Pagan Press Alliance.

Dunwich Horror, The (movie)

1970 movie directed by Daniel Haller and starring Sandra Dee, Dean Stockwell, Sam Jaffe, and Donna Baccala. Adapted from a novella by H. P. Lovecraft.

Wilbur Whateley (Stockwell) is a collector of **grimoires**—old books of **magic**—and covets one named the ***Necronomicon***, which he wants to use to bring the “Old Ones” back to Earth. Dr. Henry Armitage (Ed Begley Sr.) tries valiantly to **stop** him. Nancy Walker (Dee) is a young librarian who is drawn into the magic, **almost** to her peril.

Although both Lovecraft's book and the movie are fiction, many people came to believe that there really was a diabolical grimoire called the *Necronomicon*. Such **was** the demand that an enterprising modern author finally produced one!



Earth

The four elements—Earth, Air, Fire and Water—are associated in the magic circle with the four directions of North, East, South, and West.

Earth is connected with the Goddess, the Mother. It is fertile and nurturing, stabilizing and grounding. Many traditions of Wicca apply Earth to the North and further associate it with the colors green or brown and with the elementals known as gnomes. Earth is related to reliability, solidity, law, and the order of things.

In Ritual or Ceremonial Magic, Earth is also associated with Auriel and with the night, winter, the Tarot suit of Pentacles, and the Hebrew letter Heh.

The elements of Earth, Air, Fire, and Water are differently assigned to the directions in the Native American Medicine Wheels; those associations vary from tribe to tribe.

Egg Tree

Vance Randolph speaks of an old Ozark custom, no longer practiced, of creating an egg tree as a protection from witches and witchcraft. The basis is a small, dead bush—the closer to the home the better. The branches are closely trimmed, and then dozens, if not hundreds, of carefully blown eggshells are tied to the branches. Over a period of years, eggs may be added until it is completely covered with them. Exactly why it should work, no one seems able to recall.

SOURCES:

Randolph, Vance: *Ozark Superstitions*. Columbia University Press, 1947.

Egyptian Way

There is wide diversity in the many traditions of Wicca. Some have a basis in Celtic Britain, some have a Saxon background, and others owe their allegiance to the

Irish pantheon or to Greek or Roman tradition. Some are simply eclectic, stemming from many different backgrounds.

Isis, although primarily an Egyptian goddess, was found universally throughout history. It is no surprise, therefore, that many Wiccans are drawn to her as a deity despite the fact that she is not generally associated with Western European forms of **Witchcraft**. The Greeks referred to Isis as Aset or Eset and associated her with Demeter, Hera, Selene, and even **Aphrodite**. The cult of Isis invaded Italy by way of Sicily, and, although the Roman Senate tried to stop its progress, it spread to the center and north of Italy.

Many Wiccans feel an affinity for the ancient Egyptians and have therefore adopted the Egyptian deities—usually with Isis as goddess—into their rites. In Ireland, Olivia Robertson founded the Fellowship of Isis. Although not a Wiccan organization, many Wiccans do belong to it and consider Isis an aspect of the universal mother goddess.

SOURCES:

Hope, Murry: *Practical Egyptian Magic*. St. Martins, 1984.

Regula, deTraci: *The Mysteries of Isis*. Llewellyn, 1995.

EIGHTFOLD KISS see SALUTE

Eke Name

The secret name of a **Witch**. At **initiation**, a new Witch will take a new name of his or her own choosing. Along with the rest of the initiation, this symbolizes starting life anew or being reborn. Normally the eke name is used only in the **Circle**.

Most covens keep a list of names from which to choose, but there is no restriction to that list. Many Wiccans will choose a name that numerologically attunes to their birth date, to the Craft, or to the coven or covenstead.

A High Priestess—leader of a coven—has the appellation “Lady” before her name as a token of respect. In recent years, some traditions have allowed all female Witches to prefix their name with “Lady,” and some have even introduced the term “Lord” for male High Priests, although this is not traditional.

Elder

In **Wicca traditions** that utilize the **degree system** of advancement, an Elder is a Third Degree Witch who is consulted on matters of importance to the **coven**, such as policy and interpretation of Craft law. In other traditions, it is any Witch who has been in the coven for a number of years and is respected and looked to for such advice. There is often a number of elders in a coven that has been in existence for a number of years.

Elder Tree

Elder trees belong to the honeysuckle family. The European Elder (*Sambucus nigra*) has for generations been regarded as a **magical** tree, providing local wise men and women with leaves, flowers, bark, and roots, from which a wide variety of medicinal teas, syrups, and lotions can be made. It also supplies berries for making wine. The American variety (*Sambucus canadensis*) had similar properties, much used by the Native Americans. Elder wood was once used for making needles for sewing nets, butchers' skewers, and shoemakers' pegs, and for making musical instruments.

The elder has also been regarded by non-Witches as a protection against **witchcraft**. **Talismans** can be made from its wood to protect from evil and to ward off attackers of every kind. Similarly, sprigs of elder picked on the last day of April and hung on a house will protect all within that house.

The elder was used in burial rites and has been found in British long barrows. It is considered sacred to many **goddesses** because of its white flowers. Some people believed that witches and various spirits lived within the elder since the tree would bleed red sap when cut.

SOURCES:

Cunningham, Scott: *Cunningham's Encyclopedia of Magical Herbs*. Llewellyn, 1985.
 "Magic and Medicine of Plants." *Reader's Digest*, 1986.

Elementals

In earliest times, humankind believed in spirits that inhabited practically everything: a spirit of the river, the stream, the woods, rocks, thunder, lightning, wind, clouds, and so on. Four classes of spirits especially came to be associated with the four **elements** of **air**, **fire**, **water**, and **earth**. Sylphs were associated with air, salamanders with fire, undines with water, and gnomes with earth. Some **Wiccan** groups invoke these elementals as part of their rite of Casting the Circle. Some also believe that these elementals assist in the working of magic.

Doreen Valiente says that the gnomes, from the Latin *gnoma* (knowledge), are the "knowing ones." Undines, from the Latin *unda* (a wave), are the "creatures of the waves." Sylphs, from the Greek *silphe* (butterfly), are delicate creatures of the air. Salamanders, from the Greek *salambe* (fireplace), are spirits of fire.

Janet and Stewart Farrar say that the term "elemental" is used for a thought-form that, "spontaneously by strong emotion or deliberately by mental effort, is split off from its human originator and acquires temporary quasi-independent existence." Such elementals, they claim, may be used for doing healing work.

SOURCES:

Farrar, Janet and Stewart: *The Witches' Way*. Robert Hale, 1984.
 Valiente, Doreen: *An ABC of Witchcraft Past and Present*. St. Martin's Press, 1973.



Dramatization of the four elements. Sixteenth-century woodcut. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

Elements

Empedocles, the Greek philosopher of the fifth century BCE, advanced the theory that all things were made up of the four elements of air, fire, water, and earth. This theory became widely accepted and is still recognized by modern occultists. The four elements are associated with the four cardinal points of the magic circle. East is Air, South is Fire, West is Water, and North is Earth.

Symbolic meanings are associated with each of these elements. Air and fire are both considered positive, active, creative, and masculine elements, while earth and water are negative, passive, receptive, and feminine elements.

As with Ceremonial Magicians, Witches consecrate their working tools and other sacred objects by utilizing the four elements.

Rosemary Guiley gives the following correspondences for the four elements:

Earth: The north; the pentacle; female principle; fertility; darkness, quiet; practicality; thrift; acquisition; patience; responsibility; boredom; stagnation; the materialization of cosmic powers; the color green; the metal gold.

Air: The east; the wand (in some witchcraft traditions, the sword or athamé); male principle; intellect, energy, endeavor; sociabili-

ty; squandering, frivolity; the expression of the magician's will; the color yellow; the metal silver.

Water: The west; the cup, chalice and cauldron; female principle; fecundity; body fluids; magical brews; the rhythms of nature; emotions, sensitivity, receptivity; instability, indifference; the color blue; the metal silver.

Fire: The south; the sword or athamé (in some traditions, the wand); male principle; action, courage, defense against hostile forces; struggle, animosity, jealousy, anger; the color orange; the metal gold.

SOURCES:

Guiley, Rosemary Ellen: *The Encyclopedia of Witches and Witchcraft*. Facts on File, 1989.

Elf Darts/Shot

Supernatural beings of Teutonic mythology were called elves. It was believed that they were mischievous but could also be malignant, stealing children and leaving changelings in their place. Their weapon was the elf dart or arrow. Elf darts were used to harm cattle, making them sicken and run dry of milk. These darts were also used against humans. A child born with a deformity was referred to as "elf marked." A tangle in the hair was called an "elf lock."

The elf darts were made of flint and shaped like arrow heads. But rather than being fixed to an arrow and shot from a bow, the darts, or shots, were "spanged" by flicking from between thumb and forefinger.

Witches were often accused of using elf darts, and some admitted to doing so. In the trial of the Aldearne witches of Scotland in 1662, Issobel Gowdie testified, "As for Elf arrowheads, the Devil shapes them with his own hand, and then delivers them to Elf-boys, who whittle and dight them with a sharp thing like a packing needle." She further reported, "I shot at the Lord of Park, as he was crossing the Burn of Boath; but, thanks to God now, that he preserved him. Bessie Hay gave me a great cuff, because I missed him."

Elf bolts could be found scattered over the ground at the sites of elf battles. There had been a major one on the Isle of Man, between the elves and fairies of the south end of the island and those of the north. **Gerald Gardner** possessed a collection of these arrowhead-like elf bolts he had found there.

Enchantment

Sometimes used to describe a spell or charm placed on someone or something. Elves and **fairies** were especially thought to enchant people and animals.

Endor, Witch of

The Christian Bible (1 Samuel 28) makes reference to “the woman of Endor.” She is described as “a woman that hath a familiar spirit at Endor.” Endor is a small hamlet on the northern slope of a hill, four miles south of Mount Tabor. Saul, despite the fact that he has tried to purge the land of her sort, goes to consult her on the eve of the battle of Gilboa because he is afraid of the massed armies of the Philistines. She immediately recognizes him, despite his disguise, but Saul assures her he will cause her no harm. The woman of Endor—who is actually no more than a spiritualist medium—then describes what she sees clairvoyantly. She is able to connect Saul with the spirit of Samuel.

In the King James translation of the Bible, the chapter begins: “Saul, having destroyed all the witches, and now in his fear forsaken of God, seeketh to a witch.” Yet nowhere in the later passages is the word *witch* used. The woman is simply described as having a “familiar spirit,” and there is no description of the woman, her age, or her house. Nonetheless, later writers refer to her as a witch and depict her as an old hag living in a hovel. Indeed, Montague Summers, a supposed authority on witchcraft, says, “In a paroxysm of rage and fear the haggard crone turned to him (Saul) and shrieked out: ‘Why hast thou deceived me?’”

Reginald Scott, as early as 1584, doubted the existence of witches and suggested that Saul actually saw nothing but “an illusion or cozenage.”

(See also Bible)

SOURCES:

Scot, Reginald: *Discoverie of Witchcraft*. London, 1584.

Summers, Montague: *The History of Witchcraft and Demonology*. University Books, 1956.

English Witchcraft

The first witchcraft trial in England was held in the secular courts in 1209, when one woman accused another of sorcery. The accused was cleared by *ordeal*. In 1279, a man was accused of killing a witch who, he claimed, had assaulted him. In 1325, twenty-seven people of the city of Coventry were charged with plotting to kill the king, Edward II, using a wax image. Prior to that, Walter, Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry and former treasurer to King Edward I, was taken to trial in 1303 with charges related to witchcraft, although this was politically motivated. Also politically motivated was the charge of witchcraft brought by Roger Mortimer against Edmund, Earl of Kent, in 1330.

There are sporadic references to witchcraft in England from earlier times, many in Saxon manuscripts. Kittredge points out that if from no other proofs, the very richness of the vocabulary shows a prevalence of every form of witchcraft and sorcery before the Norman Conquest. He claims there are more than thirty Anglo-Saxon terms, including *wicca*, *witch*, *wizard*, *enchanter*, *seer*, and *diviner*, mentioned in the laws of King Alfred, Edward, Guthrum, Aethelred, Cnut, and others. In those early references, witchcraft was associated with the working of *magic*, including conjuring, casting *spells*, and using *charms*.

By the beginning of the fourteenth century in Europe, the idea of gatherings of witches for sabbat celebrations was established. As a remnant of the old pagan religion, Witchcraft was caricatured by Christianity to show it in a negative light. With the idea of nocturnal gatherings grew the belief that witches flew through the air on broomsticks and pitchforks. By the end of the fourteenth century, the University of Paris had formulated the theory that all magic hinged upon a pact with Satan. The Christians linked such a pact with the older belief in broomstick riders, through the responses obtained from carefully worded questions at witch trials. However, this belief did not become established in England until about a century later. It was with the start of Elizabeth I's reign that the true persecution of English witches began.

In 1542, during the reign of Henry VIII, the first statute was passed that dealt specifically with witchcraft, although it made no reference to pacts with the devil. It referred more to the practice of black magic, such as using wax images, or poppets, to cause harm. Edward VI then repealed that law in 1547 and prepared a new Act in 1559, but it failed to become law. It was not until 1563, when Elizabeth I issued new legislation, that there were fresh statutes prohibiting witchcraft.

A number of Elizabeth's Protestant bishops had witnessed the burning of witches on the continent, and they urged the queen to take strong measures against witchcraft. Bishop John Jewel, who had strong Calvinist leanings, drew no line between witchcraft and Catholic practices. He lectured the queen sternly on the "great forest and crop of superstitions" that had grown up during the reign of the Catholic Queen Mary. The 1563 Convocation of the Church of England urged stronger penalties. Whether from this preaching or from the very existence of the Act, discovery of witchcraft activity suddenly increased tremendously throughout England.

One of the first and best known trials was that of the Chelmsford witches of Essex, begun on July 26, 1566. The judges were notable: Sir Gilbert Gerard, the Queen's attorney, and John Southcote, justice of the Queen's Bench, plus Rev. Thomas Cole and Sir John Fortescue, who later became Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Elizabeth Francis was the first of the accused to be questioned, and she readily admitted to a variety of charges. She said that she had received a white spotted cat from her grandmother, Eve. Its name was "Sathan," and when she fed it with bread and milk plus a spot of her own blood, it gave her what she asked for. She said she "desired to have one Andrew Byles to her husband, which was a man of some wealth, and the cat did promise she should." However, when Andrew Byle sexually abused her but did not marry her, she caused the cat to "touch his body," and he subsequently died. The cat then procured another man as a husband for her, by whom she had a child. But the marriage was not a good one, and Elizabeth used the cat to kill her child and make her husband lame. After fifteen years of using the cat, Elizabeth gave it to her sixty-four-year-old sister, Agnes Waterhouse.

Mother Waterhouse was examined and admitted to having received the cat from Elizabeth Francis. But she turned it into a toad and used it to kill her neighbor's cattle, hogs, and geese. She went on to kill a neighbor and then her husband. Mother Waterhouse's eighteen-year-old daughter, Joan, confirmed that her mother



DAEMONOLOGIE, IN FORME
of a Dialogue,
Diuided into three Bookes.



EDINBURGH

Printed by Robert Walde-graue

Printer to the Kings Majestie. AN. 1597.

Cum Privilegio Regio.

Title page of *Dæmonologie*, James I's book against witchcraft, 1597. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

kept a toad. Joan had used it to torment a neighbor's twelve-year-old child, by causing a horned dog to repeatedly threaten her. That child, Agnes Brown, was then questioned, and so the investigation continued. Eventually Elizabeth Francis had to serve one year in prison with time in the pillory, Joan was found not guilty, and Agnes Waterhouse was put to death.

Chelmsford was a hotbed of witchcraft, it seemed, for again in April of 1579, four women from there were charged with witchcraft and three of them hanged. The three included Elizabeth Francis, who apparently had not learned her lesson (in fact, she had been charged and found guilty again in 1572, receiving the same sentence as previously, of one year in prison and time in the pillory). The other two charged and hung were Ellen Smith and Alice Nokes. The fourth accused was Margery Staunton, but she was not found guilty.

A third witchcraft case took place in Chelmsford ten years later, in 1589, again resulting in three hangings. At this trial the two judges were especially notable: Robert Clarke, Baron of the Exchequer, and John Puckering, Queen's Sergeant. Nine women and one man were charged with witchcraft. Joan Cunny, an eighty-year-old widow, was one of those hanged. Her pregnant daughter was reprieved until after she had her child, then hanged in 1590. Elleine Smith was also hung, as was Mother Upney.

A notable aspect of these Chelmsford trials was the acceptance of evidence from children. Indeed, the judges particularly commended the children for giving their evidence. Future trials, both in England and in New England, were to be greatly swayed by this evidence from children (see **Salem Witch Trials**). Fifty-six years later, in 1645, Chelmsford again became the scene of witch activities, this time the accusations led by "Witchfinder General" **Matthew Hopkins**.

In 1582 fourteen women were charged with witchcraft in the village of St. Osyth, near Brightlingsea, in Essex. **Margaret Murray** narrowed the number of these witches to thirteen, to support her theory of **covens**, but in fact there were fourteen so-called witches at St. Osyth. The vast majority of the evidence in the trial came from children six to nine years of age.

Eric Maple contends that the local Cunning Men and Women were at the heart of many witchcraft accusations. Although themselves practitioners of magic, they took on the unofficial role of witch-hunters and were "an integral part of the grand alliance of Church and State against black witchcraft," according to Maple.

The trial of the Windsor witches—Elizabeth Stile, Mother Dutten, Mother Devell, and Mother Margaret—took place in 1579. The evidence was three female wax images, stuck through with bristles and buried in a dunghill. The accused were impoverished old women who denied the charges against them until they were told that there would be leniency shown if they confessed. Although they dutifully did so, they were found guilty and put to death.

In 1584, **Reginald Scot** produced his famous book on the subject, *Discoverie of Witchcraft*, possibly induced by the St. Osyth trial. In the book, Scot pointed out all the obvious errors in the popular concept of witchcraft. According to Ronald

Holmes, the book was later banned by James I. But Scot's voice and that of George Gifford (*A Dialogue Concerning Witches and Witchcraftes*, 1593) were lonely ones.

One of the major trials of the period was that at Warboys, Huntingdonshire, in 1589. It started when one of the children of Sir Robert Throckmorton became ill. A neighbor, Alice Samuel, happened to call at the house, and the sick child nervously said, "Did you ever see one more like a witch then she is; take off her black thrumbed (fringed) cap, for I cannot abide to look on her!" Although the boy's parents thought little of what he said at the time, when Dr. Barrow, the physician, had no success curing the boy, he asked if there was any chance of witchcraft being involved. The parents thought not, until several other of their children also fell ill and similarly hinted that Mother Samuel was a witch.

Alice Samuel was brought into the presence of the children, and they immediately fell to the ground "strangely tormented." Lady Cromwell (second wife of Sir Henry Cromwell, grandfather of Oliver Cromwell) visited the house and, after meeting Alice Samuel, started having strange dreams of the woman. These persisted until Lady Cromwell's death, a little over a year later. Alice Samuel was made to live in the Throckmorton house and was constantly confronted by the children and their parents and urged to confess that she was responsible for their condition. For a long time she refused, but eventually, after constant harassment, she gave up and said that perhaps she was responsible. But after getting some rest, she retracted her confession. She was hauled off to appear before the bishop where, in fright, she again confessed. Her daughter and husband were imprisoned with her, and all three were tried before Judge Fenner at the Huntingdon assizes. In a trial that lasted five hours, the three were found guilty and put to death. As Wallace Notestein points out, there were many similarities to the trials that would take place at a later date in Salem, Massachusetts. It is perhaps significant that the American colony would have had access to the broadsheet produced in collaboration with Judge Fenner, *The Most Strange and Admirable Discoverie of the Three Witches of Warboys*, published in 1593.

The case had a significant impact on public opinion in England. That and the membership of the Cromwells in the Parliament of James I contributed to the passing of a new, more stringent Witchcraft Act in 1604. Death by hanging was the mandatory penalty even for first offenders of *maleficia*, and it did not matter whether or not the intended victim actually died—it was sufficient if they had been "killed, destroyed, wasted, consumed, pined or lamed in his or her body, or any part thereof."

Outbreaks of supposed witchcraft spread into Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire, Bedfordshire, and other counties around England. Wallace Notestein comments, "There were few aspects of sixteenth and seventeenth century life that were not affected by the ugly belief (in witchcraft). . . . It was the conception that controlled European opinion on the subject for the latter part of the fourteenth to the close of the seventeenth century."

Notestein makes the point that a large percentage of the witchcraft cases that ended in hangings took place in towns judicially independent of the assize courts. The clumsy municipal courts were not familiar enough with the law to properly determine guilt. An example is the 1560 case of Joan Cason, of Faversham, Kent,

who was accused of bewitching a three-year-old child to death. It was plainly shown in court, by her own defense, that the eight neighbors who testified against her did so out of malice and without any real evidence. The jury acquitted her, but a lawyer pointed out that the invocation of evil spirits was a felony. Therefore, although Joan steadfastly refused to admit guilt, the mayor sentenced her to be hanged.

Witchcraft in England is frequently associated most of all with the twenty-two-year reign of King James I. Certainly James was paranoid about witchcraft, having been badly scared by the **Berwick Witches** when he was still James VI of Scotland, before he succeeded Queen Elizabeth. He developed definite opinions on the subject, to the point of influencing translation of the Authorized or King James version of the Bible, carried out under his patronage in 1611. In 1597, he had written and published *Daemonology*, a treatise advocating severe measures against witchcraft. But by 1616, James was becoming suspicious of much of the hysteria and aware of fraud and delusion, to the point where he interfered in a case at Leicester being tried by Sir Randolph Crew, a former member of Parliament, and Sir Humphrey Winch, Justice of the Common Pleas.

On July 18, 1616, the two magistrates hung nine witches solely on the evidence of a possessed child named Smythe. There were similarities in the case to Alice Samuel's trial at Warboys. King James happened to visit Leicester a few days after the hangings to find that six more women were due to go to trial. The king interviewed the possessed boy and then sent him to Lambeth for further questioning. It quickly became evident that Smythe was pretending. Five of the women were released, the sixth having died in prison. James went on to reprimand the two magistrates for their lack of discernment and acumen. From then on, judges became more careful about the evidence presented and how they used it. In the remaining nine years of James's life, only five people were executed for witchcraft in England.

One of the most famous cases during James's reign was the case of the Lancaster witches. It also shows some of the continuation of the **Old Religion** in country areas. The incident took place in the forest of Pendle in the hills of eastern Lancashire, with focus on the two families of Elizabeth Sowtherne and Anne Whittle. Elizabeth Sowtherne was generally known as "Old Mother Demdike" and Anne Whittle as "Old Chattox," possibly their **eke-names**, or witch names.

As a young woman, Elizabeth Sowtherne had been introduced to the Old Religion by a young man she met near a stone pit in the forest. He had sex with her and promised her satisfaction in life if she followed his faith. This she did, and over the years she introduced her family and neighboring families to the old ways. She and Anne Chattox, her neighbor, gained reputations as effective witches. Unlike modern practitioners, they were not averse to practicing **black magic** as well as white and were involved in a number of deaths. In time, a rivalry built up between the two families, and a break came about due to the stealing of goods belonging to Alison Devise, Demdike's married daughter, by Anne Redfeame, Chattox's married daughter.

In March 1612, Alison Devise was arrested and examined by Roger Nowell. After her free admission of witchcraft, Alison, Demdike, and Chattox were imprisoned in Lancaster Castle. A meeting was held at Old Demdike's home, known as

Malking Tower (Malking, or Malkin, was a favorite name for a witch's cat, often thought to be a **familiar**). It was reported that the gathered witches feasted on mutton from a stolen sheep, drank ale, and plotted to blow up the castle to rescue their relatives. Within a few weeks, many more of the group were arrested until eighteen people were in custody. Old Demdike died in the prison.

A feature of the trial was the testimony of Jennet Device, the nine-year-old granddaughter of Old Demdike, who stood on a table to give evidence against her own family. Alison, her brother James, her son, and her eleven-year-old daughter were condemned to death, as were Old Chattox, her daughter, and five others. Although young Jennet Device was spared because of her youth, she was hung as a witch twenty years later.

There quickly became available handbooks for guiding magistrates. Two notable ones were *Country Justice* (1618) by Michael Dalton and *Guide to Grand Jurymen* (1627) by Richard Bernard. Both of these insisted that the chief evidence against a witch was the possession of a familiar spirit, usually in the form of an animal such as a cat, dog, toad, or rabbit. They also stated that spectral evidence was quite acceptable.

The worst years for witch persecution in England took place under Charles I in the mid-1640s, mainly due to the exuberance of the self-styled "Witch Finder General" Matthew Hopkins. He instigated what amounted to a reign of terror in the eastern counties for over two years. Although **torture** was not allowed under English law, Hopkins managed to obtain numerous confessions by such tactics as forcing the subject to walk back and forth until totally exhausted, and pricking with bodkins to find the supposed insensitive "devil's mark"—undeniable proof of a covenant with the devil. Hopkins also extracted confessions of familiars, or attendant demons. Most of his victims were elderly peasants, easily confused, and evidence leaned heavily on heresy and on the word of young children, priests, and malicious neighbors.

Despite Matthew Hopkins, there were actually few executions during the reign of Charles I. Such executions were widely scattered: Durham, Lancashire, Leicestershire, Middlesex, Northumberland, Somerset, Staffordshire, Wiltshire, and Yorkshire. Of these, the most notable was the case of the Lancashire witches, in 1633—an outcome of the earlier troubles of 1612.

Edmund Robinson, an eleven-year-old boy, was supposed to be looking after some cattle but wandered off hunting for plums. He encountered two greyhounds bounding along and tried to get them to chase a rabbit he saw. When they wouldn't, he tied them to a bush and beat them with a stick. According to his story, the dogs then changed into a woman and a young boy. He recognized the woman as a neighbor's wife, Frances Dicconson, but he didn't know the boy. The woman offered him money to keep quiet about the incident, but he refused it. She then turned the other boy into a horse and took Edmund off to a gathering of witches who were working black magic, feasting, and drinking. After being given a taste of the food and drink, Edmund ran off.

Edmund had grown up in Pendle Forest and knew all the stories of the witches' feast at Malking Tower twenty years before. He had even had some of the then-accused people pointed out to him.

Edmund's father went to look for him and for the cattle he was supposed to be attending. The father claimed later, in court, that his son was "quite distracted" when he found him—a telling piece of evidence when told to the magistrates. Although at his first examination in London, Edmund admitted making up the story, he later stood by it and named eighteen people as being among the witches he saw at the gathering. One of them was Jennet Device who, twenty years before, had been instrumental in sending her own family to the gallows.

Edmund was exhibited from town to town "as a great wonder and witch detector," according to Notestein. At the assizes in Lancaster he gave his testimony again, supported by his father. Many more were accused; one contemporary report said as many as sixty were charged and nineteen found guilty. However, there were finally some doubts about Edmund's truthfulness, and seven of the accused were sent to Henry Bridgeman, the Bishop of Chester, to be interviewed. King Charles himself also intervened, requesting three of the prisoners for questioning. From questioning and unsuccessful pricking of the women, both the bishop and the king determined them not to be guilty. It then transpired that Edmund's father had been blackmailing the originally accused Frances Dicconson and, on being separated from his father and further questioned, Edmund admitted to having made up the whole story at his father's bidding. Father and son were imprisoned. Although all the accused were to have been set free, several had died in prison and many remained there for as long as two years, probably due to poor administration.

Slowly the witchcraft mania died down in England. The last hanging took place in 1684, with the execution of Alice Molland in Exeter. The last official trial for witchcraft in England was conducted in Leicester in 1717. Justice Parker presided and Mother Norton and her daughter were the indicted. The two had been accused by twenty-five of their neighbors, subjected by them to the swimming ordeal, bloodied, and then publicly stripped and pricked. Yet, when they were brought before Justice Parker, he and the Grand Jury of the Assizes found no substance to the charges and acquitted both mother and daughter.

James's statute of 1604 was finally repealed in 1736 by George II. The action had little effect on the superstitions of the country folk, however, who still very much believed in witchcraft. But George's act decreed, "No prosecution, suit or proceeding, shall be commenced or carried out against any person or persons for witchcraft, sorcery, enchantment, or conjuration, or for charging another with any such offence, in any court whatsoever in Great Britain." Another section of the act also proclaimed, "Be it further enacted (that if any person) pretend to exercise or use any kind of witchcraft, sorcery, enchantment, or conjuration, or undertake to tell fortunes, or pretend from his or her skill or knowledge in any occult or crafty science to discover where or in what manner any goods or chattels, supposed to have been stolen or lost, may be found; every person so offending . . . shall for every such offence suffer imprisonment by the space of one whole year." However, over the two

hundred years or so of the witchcraft hysteria, at least a thousand people had been hanged in England and as many more put to death by crazed witch-hunting mobs.

Opinion swung back and forth on the whole subject of witchcraft. In 1715 Richard Boulton published his *Complete History of Magic, Sorcery and Witchcraft*, in which he accepted completely the stories of witches flying through the air, changing their appearance, and worshiping the devil. Three years later, Francis Hutchinson's *Historical Essay Concerning Witchcraft* appeared, dealing in a very down-to-earth manner with the delusions of sick minds, the acceptance of evidence from small children, political aspects, perjurers, and so on. By the mid-nineteenth century, popular opinion finally settled on a somewhat romantic-rationalist approach. In 1831 Sir Walter Scott's *Demonology and Witchcraft* appeared. It was to become enormously popular, its main theme being the identification of the witches and fairies with submerged races in Europe, a theme picked up a hundred years later by Dr. Margaret Alice Murray in her books on the origins of witchcraft.

The case of the Pendle witches of Lancaster, with Mothers Demdike and Chattox, illustrates that the Old Religion did survive in out-of-the-way country areas, even into the late Middle Ages. It seems logical to believe that it could continue to survive, despite the witchcraft persecutions, through to the present, as has been suggested by such scholars as Murray, Lethbridge, Gardner, et al. In 1921 Margaret Murray published *The Witch Cult in Western Europe*, and ten years later *The God of the Witches*. In these she attempted to establish that witchcraft was the remains of a pre-Christian pagan religion and that it could be traced back all the way to the beginnings of religio-magic in Paleolithic times. Many of her arguments are tenuous, to say the least, and were derided by other anthropologists. But not all disagreed; many did support her general theory, for there was no way all of her evidence could be swept away.

In 1824 the Vagrancy Act was passed, which was basically to protect the gullible from charlatans. This Act repealed part of the 1736 Witchcraft Act of George II. The balance of that earlier act was then fully repealed with the Fraudulent Mediums Act of 1951, again to protect from "any person who—with intent to deceive—purports to act as a spiritualist medium or to exercise powers of telepathy, clairvoyance or other similar powers."

With the final repeal of all laws against witchcraft in England, it meant that if there were any surviving witches, they were now free to come out into the open. But they had learned a hard lesson, and they remained hidden. However, one Witch, Dr. Gerald Brouseau Gardner, did feel that it was time the true story of Witchcraft was told. Although his attempts to correct the misconceptions concerning his beliefs were met with many incidents of persecution, he remained steadfast in speaking out. As a result, today the religion of Witchcraft, or Wicca, has become firmly re-established, not only in England but around the world. (See *Wicca and Witchcraft*.)

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EOSTRA see SPRING EQUINOX

EPONA see GODDESSES, see also HORSES

Esbat

A regular Wiccan meeting, as opposed to the **sabbats**, which are held at fixed dates throughout the year. The esbat may be held as often as the **coven** deems necessary or preferable. Some groups meet once a week, others once a month. The meetings should be held at least once a month, preferably at the full of the **moon**, so there are at least thirteen esbat meetings each year. Considering the association of the Goddess with the moon, the full moon would seem the most propitious time to meet. In addition, during the persecutions when Wiccans had to meet in secret, gathering during full moon ensured sufficient light to see where they were going and what they were doing without using tell-tale lanterns.

While the sabbats are times purely for celebration, the esbat meeting is a time to discuss problems, plan events, train Witches for advancement, do **initiations**, work **magic**, and perform **divination**, **consecrations**, and **healing**. An esbat may be called for at any time—if there is need for healing magic to be done on behalf of someone ill. An esbat is the religious meeting of a particular coven, while a sabbat may have a number of different covens coming together to celebrate.

The word esbat comes from the Old French *s'esbattre*, “to amuse oneself.” Yet the primary purpose of the meeting is to worship the old gods, to give thanks for what has been received, and to ask for what is needed. The Old Religion is one of joy and, as at the sabbats, it is not unusual for singing and dancing to take place as part of that worship.

The meeting starts with the **Priest** or **Priestess** casting the **Circle**, consecrating it and all within. The Gods are invited to attend and prayers are offered. One of the segments of the ritual is termed the **Cakes and Ale** (some groups call it Cakes and Wine), which is a thanking of the gods for the food and drink necessary for life.

Handfastings and **Wiccanings** also may take place at an esbat. The former is a Wiccan marriage and the latter the dedicating of a child to the gods—the equivalent of a Christian baptism.

Evil Eye

The concept of the evil eye seems to be found universally. It is the idea that someone may be able to negatively influence another person or thing simply by looking at him or her. The person with the evil eye may or may not be aware that he or she is causing harm. In some areas it is said that you have been “overlooked” if you are adversely affected by the evil eye. In Ireland, the term is “blinked.” In some areas, the use of the evil eye is termed “fascination.”

Fray Martin de Castañega, a sixteenth-century Spanish writer, claimed that the evil eye was actually a natural phenomenon, caused by foul thoughts producing evil emanations from the eye. Other writers of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries agreed with him. The evil eye was recognized by the Sumerians, Babylonians, Assyrians, and ancient Egyptians from as early as 3,000 BCE.

A glance from one with the evil eye may cause a cow to run dry, chickens to stop laying, a child to become sick, a field to go barren, or even death. It is frequently the unusual eye that is considered “evil.” In the Mediterranean and other areas of dark-eyed people, a person with blue eyes is viewed with caution, while in areas of fair-haired, blue-eyed people, a dark-eyed person is thought suspicious. Many so-called witches of the Middle Ages were thought to have the evil eye, and an old man or woman might end up on the gallows based solely on the fact that he or she had a squint, a cast, or a cataract.

Pope Pius IX (1846–1878) was believed to possess the evil eye, as was Pope Leo XIII (1878–1903).

There are many amulets to protect from the evil eye; those of the Greeks and Romans are similar to many available today. Bright blue beads are a recognized defense against the evil eye. So, too, are various hand gestures and carved amulets of those gestures. The Romans’ *mano pantea* is a hand with the thumb and first two fingers upright and the other fingers turned down. The Italian *mano cornuta*, or “horns,” has the first and little finger up and the others down. The *mano in fica*, or “fig,” has all fingers curled down with the thumb stuck between the first two fingers. This last is also a fertility sign, and as a sign of life is a defense against evil.

Doreen Valiente mentions that twining or interlacing knots were also considered a deterrent, the reasoning being that the evil eye would be distracted by the confusing pattern. Valiente says that the elaborately patterned belts traditionally worn by English nurses owe their design to this evil eye defense. She says, “In olden days a good deal of sickness was blamed on to the Evil Eye; so a nurse in particular had to be able to protect herself.”

Talismans in the form of frogs and other unpopular creatures were thought effective as a defense, since they would attract the evil eye and draw the power to them rather than to the wearer. Another popular antidote was to spit. This practice was found in ancient Greece and Rome, among other places, and is also found today among Gypsies. Shamrock, garlic, barley, jack beans, red ribbons, and bells are all considered useful in protecting from the evil eye.

SOURCES:

Guiley, Rosemary Ellen: *The Encyclopedia of Witches and Witchcraft*. Facts on File, 1989.

Leach, Maria (ed.): *Funk & Wagnalls Standard Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology, and Legend*. Harper & Row, 1984.

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Evocation

Used in **Ceremonial Magic**, an evocation is a command, or summons, to a **spirit** to appear. It differs from an **invocation**, as used in **Wiccan rituals**, in that the latter is a request or invitation, not a command.

A spirit evoked by a Ceremonial Magician is summoned into a specially drawn triangle marked with signs and **words of power** to contain it there. In order to make the spirit appear, the magician must go through a long and elaborate ritual in which the spirit is evoked by words of power, by cajoling, by threats, by calling him by all the many names by which he may be known, and with gestures. It can be a long and draining ritual, and there is no guarantee that the spirit will appear.

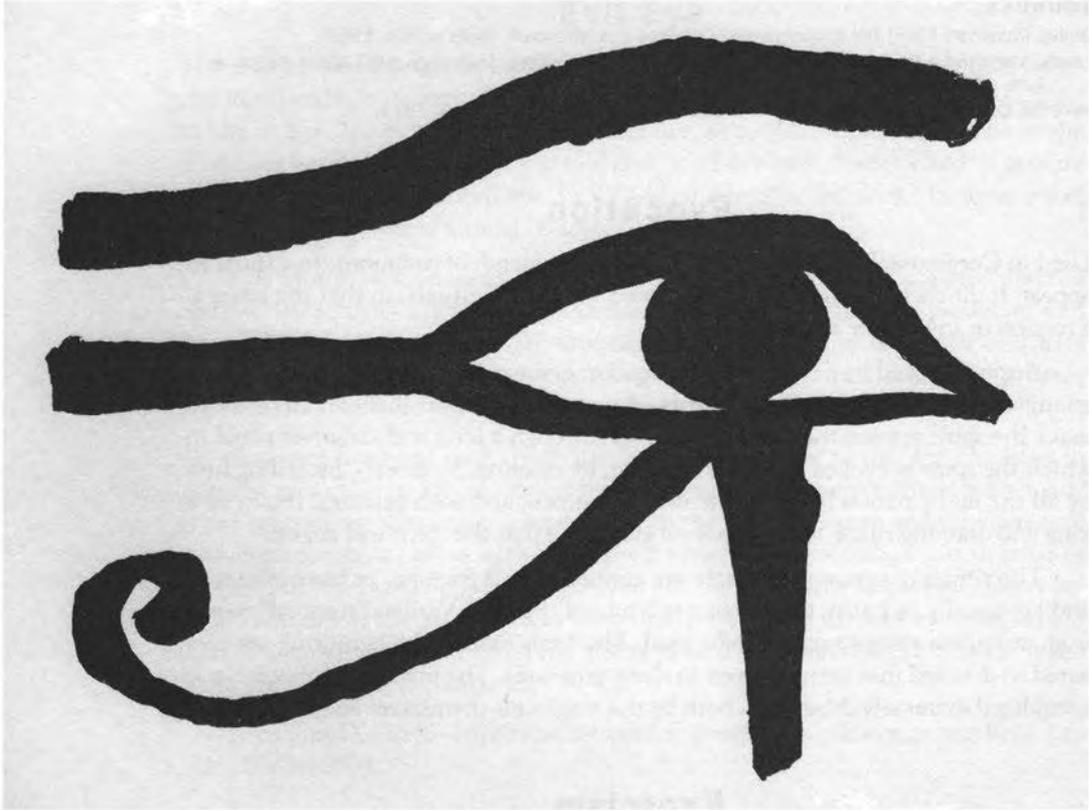
The rituals of ceremonial magic are contained in a *grimoire*, or book of magic, and are usually in Latin, Greek, or a mixture of the two. Various "magical" words from unknown tongues may also be used. The tools used in the conjuring are prepared to detailed instructions given in these grimoires. The practice of evocation is considered extremely dangerous, both by the magicians themselves and by Witches.

Exorcism

From the Greek *exousia*, meaning "oath," to exorcise is to expel, in a **ritual**, by **conjurations** and **prayers**. It is, in effect, a **magical** ceremony. As far back as the ancient civilizations of Babylonia, Assyria, and Mesopotamia five thousand years ago, it was believed that various **spirits**, or entities, existed and could possess a person, causing both physical and mental illness. The ancient Egyptians believed in possession and practiced exorcism. The practice is found universally, with exorcism rituals common in many societies. The idea of such possession was especially prominent in the Middle Ages, when the Christian Church was almost totally preoccupied with the Devil and believed all possessions were by demons. (See **Loudon**.)

Far more frequent than the possession of people is the possession of houses. The entity possessing a building is known as a *poltergeist* ("rattling ghost"). This differs from a ghost in that a ghost is usually the spirit of a person who once lived and is now dead, while a poltergeist is an entity, force, or buildup of psychic power that has no connection to anyone who was once alive.

Anyone can perform an exorcism, and many **Witches** are called upon to do so. A knowledge of demonology and **ceremonial magic** can be useful but is not essential. The main thing is that the exorcist be able to speak and act with complete confidence and authority, for the entity must be ordered out of the person or thing it possesses, and it is always reluctant to leave.



The Egyptian Eye of Horus. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

The Christian Church believes that the subject is possessed either by Satan himself or by one of his minions—a devil. The Church's rites, therefore, command in the name of God, Jesus, or the Holy Scriptures, for example. The fact that these rites are not always effective seems evidence in favor of the **pagan** point of view that, rather than a "Satanic demon," it is actually a malignant spirit. Since such spirits existed long before Christianity, there is no reason why they should be swayed by the names and terms of Christianity. It is certainly not unusual for a priest to have to make numerous attempts to exorcise before being successful. However, speaking in general terms, there is no reason why one form of exorcism should not be as effective as another. Much depends upon the exorcist and his or her presence and voice of authority.

While Christianity considers exorcism a battle for the possessed one's soul, in Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Shinto, and many other religions, it is simply a matter of getting rid of an inconvenience and a nuisance.

SOURCES:

Ebon, Martin (ed.): *The Devil's Bride: Exorcism: Past and Present*. Harper & Row, 1974.

Bayley, Rosemary Ellen: *Harper's Encyclopedia of Mystical and Paranormal Experience*. HarperSanFrancisco, 1991.

Thorston, Rev. Herbert: *Ghosts and Poltergeists*. Regnery, 1950.

Eye of Horus

Known by the ancient Egyptians as the *udjat*, or “Eye of God,” the symbol represents the eye of the god Horus and is used to protect from evil. It is a sigil that was placed on talismans, religious jewelry, sarcophagi, and other funerary items. It was also painted on the bows of boats to help the boat “see” their way.

Although generally known today as the Eye of Horus, Barbara Walker suggests that it has previously been the Eye of Maat, of Thoth, and of Ra, with the male deities coming later since Maat was the all-seeing Mother of Truth.

The Eye of Horus is used by many modern day Witches as a talisman and as a symbol for the Third Eye.

SOURCES:

Walker, Barbara G.: *The Woman's Dictionary of Symbols and Sacred Objects*. HarperSanFrancisco, 1988.

Eye of the Demon (movie)

1987 movie feature originally produced as a television movie called *Bay Covenant*. Directed by Carl Schenkel and starring Tim Matheson and Pamela Sue Martin. A young married couple (Matheson and Martin) move to a small New England town where they learn the history of the colonial witch trials and especially of the Bay Covenant. Their home is soon invaded by the spirits of the long dead witches. Also starring Woody Harrelson, Susan Ruttan, and Barbara Billingsley.



F

Faery-Faith Tradition

Tradition founded by Kisma K. Stepanich in 1990. Members of the tradition are also members of the Fellowship of Isis, headquartered in Clonegal Castle, Enniscorthy, Ireland. Kisma Stepanich was born on July 4, 1958, and became a **Solitary Witch** in 1976. In the 1980s, she received **Wiccan** training from **Cauldron of Ceridwen** coven, from **senachi Tom mac**, and others.

According to Stepanich, in Ireland is found an old manuscript called *Lebor Gabála Erenn* (R. A. Stewart Macalister, ed. and trans.): "The Book of the Taking of Ireland." Educational Company of Ireland, 1912–1956), which might be considered the first mention of the oral Faery tradition. It contains references to the ancient deities of pre-Celtic and Celtic Ireland, along with myths and folk tales. It also gives the pedigrees of the Shining Ones and the *Tuatha De Danann*.

Today's Faery-Faith tradition is divided into five primary groves, known as the Bialhd Grove (physicians, philosophers, **Druids**, wizards), Oamgn Grove (religious leaders, rulers, experts, masters, judges, teachers), Qeuung Grove (servants of the Goddess, artists, guards, gardeners, botanists, **herbalists**, therapists), Scuesstr Grove (servants of the God, soothsayers, **diviners**, **astrologers**, smiths, metalworkers, tradespeople, psychics, bodyworkers), and Roiitf Grove (science and arts, arts and crafts, animal husbandry). Each of these groves is also associated with a direction, season, date, and high holiday. Certain trees are found in each Grove, and they, in turn, are associated to an **ogham**, color, and specific date. The "Community Festivals" (equivalent to **sabbats**) are **Samhain** on October 31, **Nollaig** on December 21, **Imbolc** on February 1, **Lá Fhéile Earach** on March 21, **Lá Bealtaine** on May 1, **Lá Fhéile Eoin** on June 21, **Lúnasa** on August 1, and **Lá Fhéile Fómhar** on September 21.

Stepanich says that Faery practitioners strive to incorporate their spiritual beliefs and teachings into who they are every day of the week. Their professions represent their groves or their trees.



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SOURCES:

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Fairies

Belief in fairies (or *faeries*) is ancient and widespread. Among the Celts of Scotland, Ireland, the Isle of Man, Wales and Brittany, and the Teutonic races of Scandinavia, Germany, and Britain, the fairies are seen as counterparts of humankind. They live in societies, with families and dwellings. The Irish word for fairy is *sheehogue*. The fairies are the “Gods of the Earth,” according to the Book of Armagh. As the *Tuatha De Danaan*, they were the gods of pagan Ireland. In Highland Scotland, fairies are called *daoine sithe* or “men of peace.”

J. F. Campbell, writing in 1890, said:

I believe there once was a small race of people in these (British) islands, who are remembered as fairies, for the fairy belief is not confined to the Highlanders of Scotland. This class of stories is so widely spread, so matter-of-fact, hangs so well together, and is so implicitly believed all over the United Kingdom that I am persuaded of the former existence of a race of men in these islands who were smaller in stature than the Celts; who used stone arrows, lived in conical mounds like the Lapps, knew some mechanical arts, pilfered goods and stole children; and were perhaps contemporary with some species of wild cattle and horses.

The size of fairies is open to some controversy. Campbell believed them to be “smaller in stature than the Celts,” yet not diminutive. Supposition from the witch trials was similar. Of Joan Tyrrye (1555), it was told how “at one time she met with one of the fairies, being a man, in the market of Taunton, having a white rod in his hand, and she came up to him, thinking to make an acquaintance of him, and then her sight was clean taken away for a time.” (This, apparently, was not unusual. Many times when the fairies did not wish to be seen, the observer lost his or her sight for a period.) Joan, apparently, did not even realize he was a fairy but took him to be just another person in the marketplace. In Orkney, in 1615, Jonet Drever was found guilty of “fostering a bairn in the hill of Westray to the fairy folk, called on her our good neighbors.” Alesoun Peirsoun of Fifeshire said in 1588 that “a man in green appeared to her, a lusty man, with many men and women with him.” She also mentioned the fairies making their medicines: “the good neighbors make their salves with pans and fires, and gathered their herbs before the sun rising.” Master John Walsh consulted with the fairies in Netherbury, Dorset, in 1566, and “went among the hills” to do it. He consulted with them at noon and at midnight. The Auldearne witch, Issobell Gowdie, in 1662 said she was “in the Downie-hills, and got meat there from the Queen of Fearrie, more than I could eat.” She went on to say, “The Queen of Faerrie is brawlie clothed in white linens, and in white and brown clothes, and the King of Faerrie is a braw man, well favored, and broad faced.” In all these instances—and many more—the fairies were of almost the same

size as the humans. Sometimes a human would meet with a fairy and not realize, till later, that it was a fairy. There were even marriages recorded between fairies and humans. Shakespeare admitted their size when, in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, he had Mistress Page, a full-grown woman, not only dress as a fairy but expect to be accepted as one.

In the *Historia de Gentibus Septentrionalibus* of Swedish bishop Olaus Magnus (1558), there is an illustration of a knight visiting a fairy hill. The fairies are shown as smaller than the knight, but by no means diminutive. Another indicator of the size of fairies is found in the references to *changelings*. It is said that sometimes fairies fancied a human child and would carry it away, leaving their own child in its place. The exchange might not be discovered for years, since the children were of comparable size.

One theory regards the identity of the “little people” as those who were historically known as the Picts. The Picts were of the same race as the Lapps. Lapps, Picts, and fairies were all small-statured races. The fairies were said to live inside hollow hillocks and under the ground. In Scotland and other areas of Britain, there are numerous underground structures and artificial mounds whose interiors show them to have been dwelling places. These are popularly known as “fairy hills” and, in some areas, as “Picts’ houses.” A manuscript of the Bishop of Orkney, dated 1443, states that when Harald Haarfagr conquered the Orkneys in the ninth century, the inhabitants were the two nations of the *Papae* and the *Peti*, both of whom were exterminated. The *Peti* were certainly the Picts. Of these Picts of Orkney, it is said that they “were only a little exceeding pygmies in stature and worked wonderfully in the construction of their cities, evening and morning, but in the midday, being quite destitute of strength, they hid themselves in little houses underground.” Christina Hole speaks of “those primitive tribes who were conquered but not destroyed by the Celtic invaders and who continued for long afterwards to live in scattered communities in the wilder parts of the country. They were people of small stature and quick movements who dwelt in low turf-covered houses resembling green hillocks at first sight and easily overlooked by any casual traveller.” She goes on to say, “That they sometimes inter-married with their conquerors seems clear from the many tales of fairy-wives, or of human women carried away to the fairy kingdom.”

Although witches probably knew very little of the history of this small race, the two had many things in common, not least being their knowledge and use of herbs for medicinal purposes and their use of **magic**. Both also used “elf bolts”—the small arrowheads shot from the fingers.

Fairies frequented many parts of Durham in England. There is a hillock, or *tumulus*, near Bishopton and a large hill near Billingham, both of which used to be “haunted by fairies,” according to local legend. Even Ferry-Hill, between Darlington and Durham, is evidently a corruption of “fairy hill.”

The dwarfs of Yesso, in Japan, were small people who survived till the beginning of the seventeenth century. They were under four feet in height and lived in semi-subterranean pit dwellings. A belief about them has grown in recent times. The Aino word for “pit-dweller” is not unlike the word for a burdock leaf. It was

known that these people were small; it did not take long, therefore, for the belief to spring up that their name meant they were “people who lived under burdock leaves” rather than “in pits.” So, to many modern natives of Yesso, those historical dwarves were “so small that if caught in a shower of rain they could shelter under a dock leaf!” Similar thinking must have made the European fairy into the diminutive creature generally thought of today. The writings of Shakespeare (despite his probable accuracy in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*) and Spenser romanticized the fairies and made them part of the larger world of sprites and spirits, such as the elves, gnomes, goblins, and brownies.

Most modern-day Witches do believe in the spirits of nature, who they frequently see as tiny in size, and include “fairies” with them. It is possible that, over the years, the labels have become confused.

SOURCES:

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Campbell, J. F.: *Popular Tales of the Western Highlands*. Edinburgh, 1890.
Davidson, Thomas: *Rowan Tree and Red Thread*. Oliver & Boyd, 1949.
Hole, Christina: *Witchcraft in England*. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1947.
Hughes, Pennethorne: *Witchcraft*. Longmans, Green, 1952.
James, E. O.: *Prehistoric Religion*. Barnes & Noble, 1962.

Fairy Ring

A darkened green ring that sometimes appears in a patch of grass, in lawns and meadows. It is caused by the enrichment of the soil by the mycelium (spawn) of certain fungi, which radiates outward from the center. The ring gradually increases in size, year by year, with mushrooms appearing around the perimeter. Rings up to more than two hundred feet in diameter have been recorded.

In popular folklore these circles of mushrooms, or darkened grass, are the rings in which fairies meet and dance. In many areas it is considered dangerous to fall asleep within the circle, for the fairies will take exception to their space being invaded.

SOURCES:

- Encyclopedia Britannica*. William Benton, 1964.

Familiar

An attendant spirit that usually took the form of an animal or bird. During the persecutions it was believed that every **witch** had a familiar—a servant provided by the Devil to work the witch's mischief. The owner would feed his or her familiar by giving a drop of blood, sometimes from a supernumerary teat. Such a teat would be searched for when a person was accused of **witchcraft**. Any similar protuberance, mole, or papilla of any sort was considered damning evidence. **Matthew Hopkins** made familiars a major issue in his hunting of witches and had every accused searched for the supernumerary teat and for the **devil's mark**.



A man is pulled back before he enters a fairy circle. Drawing by T. H. Thomas, 1880. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

King James's Witchcraft Act of 1604 specified that it was a felony to "consult, covenant with, entertain, employ, feed, or reward any evil and wicked spirit." Reginald Scot's *Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584) states that demons could take animal form and be kept as pets by witches, who fed them milk and blood. Richard Bernard, in his *Guide to Grand Jurymen* (1627), said that witches "have ordinarily a familiar, or spirit, in the shape of a man, woman, boy, dog, cat, foal, fowl, hare, rat, toad, etc. And to these spirits they give names."

The very act of having a pet, especially one to which the owner spoke kind words, was in itself a sign of a witch and familiar, according to the accusers of the Middle Ages. Sometimes the mere fact that an animal—even one not belonging to the accused—had been seen running toward the supposed witch was enough to indicate that it might be the familiar.

According to the evidence of the 1692 Salem witch trials in Massachusetts, both Sarah Good and Sarah Osburn had familiars. Sarah Good's was a cat and a yellow bird; the bird sucked her "between the forefinger and long finger upon the right hand." Sarah Osburn had a thing with "wings and two legs and a head like a woman," according to the children accusers. Also at Salem, young Dorcas Good,

Sarah's five-year-old daughter, claimed to have a familiar. She said it was a snake. When asked where it sucked, she pointed to her forefinger, where the examiners observed "a deep red spot, about the bigness of a flea bite."

In Finnish, Lapp, and Norwegian folklore, familiars frequently take the form of flies, while Malay witches have owls and badgers. In European belief, cats are the most common, along with dogs, rabbits, and toads. The cat (and sometimes the hare) is often referred to as a *malkin* or *malking*.

In 1324 **Dame Alice Kyteler**, of Kilkenny, Ireland, was accused of having a familiar in the form of a cat, although it sometimes appeared as a shaggy dog and sometimes as a black man. She called it Robin Artison. Dame Alice attributed all her wealth to the workings of this familiar.

Many times a witch would give or bequeath his or her familiar to another. Elizabeth Francis, one of the Chelmsford witches of 1566, claimed to have received her white spotted cat familiar, named Sathan, from her grandmother. In turn, Elizabeth passed it on to her sister, Agnes Waterhouse.

Ursula Kemp, one of the witches of St. Osyth in 1582, had four familiars: a toad named Pygine, a lamb named Tyffin, a gray cat named Tyttey, and a black cat named Jack. The frontispiece to Matthew Hopkins's *Discovery of Witches* (1647) shows the "Witch Finder General" together with two witches and an assortment of their familiars. They bear such names as Pyewacket, Ilemazur, Sacke and Sugar, Jarmara, Vinegar Tom, Pecke in the Crowne, Newes, and Griezzell Greedigutt.

SOURCES:

Hansen, Chadwick: *Witchcraft in Salem*. George Braziller, 1969.

Hole, Christina: *Witchcraft in England*. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1947.

Murray, Margaret Alice: *The God of the Witches*. Sampson Low, Marston, 1931.

Scot, Reginald: *Discoverie of Witchcraft*. London, 1584.

Scott, Sir Walter: *Demonology and Witchcraft*. Harper's Family Library, 1831.

Farrar, Janet and Stewart

Janet Farrar was born Janet Owen in London on June 24, 1950. Her mother died when Janet was five. She attended school in London and in Hertfordshire. In 1970 she was initiated into the coven of **Alex and Maxine Sanders**, where she met Stewart Farrar.

Stewart was born in Essex on June 28, 1916. He was raised as a Christian Scientist but, by age 20, became an agnostic. He was educated at City of London School and then at University College, London, where he studied journalism, graduating in 1937. He served in the army from 1939 till 1946, then, on discharge, worked for a year as a public relations and press officer for the Control Commission for Germany. From 1947 on, he worked for a number of different newspapers, including the Communist Party's *Daily Worker*. But after only a year, disillusioned, Stewart left both the Communist Party and its journal.

For six years he worked as a scriptwriter for Associated British-Pathé and for ABC Television. As a freelance writer, he also authored radio dramas for the BBC.

From 1969 to 1974 Stewart worked as a feature writer for *Reveille*, a British tabloid newspaper. While working there he came in contact with Alex and Maxine Sanders. Interviewing Alex, Stewart was impressed by him and accepted an invitation to attend a Witch Initiation. He subsequently wrote an article for the newspaper on the subject and began attending the Sanders's training classes. On February 21, 1970, he was himself initiated.

On December 22, 1970, after only a few months with the Sanders's coven, Stewart and Janet broke away to form their own group. Stewart had written a book, *What Witches Do*, which the publisher of Alex Sanders's biography published. It came out in 1971 and helped establish Stewart as a voice for Wicca. (He later stated that he had been overly credulous in his admiration for Sanders.)

For the next six years the Farrars concentrated on building their coven. On January 31, 1974, they were **handfasted**, and they legally married in a civil ceremony on July 19, 1975. In 1976 they turned over their coven to Susan and David Buckingham and moved to the Republic of Ireland. There the Farrars jointly authored several books that have become classics in the modern Witchcraft field. Principle among these are the companion volumes, *Eight Sabbats for Witches* (1981) and *The Witches Way* (1984), in which they detail and dissect the **Gardnerian** rituals, aided by Gardner's associate, **Doreen Valiente**.

Their other works include *The Witches' Goddess* (1987) and *The Witches' God* (1989). In recent years they co-authored *The Pagan Path* and *The Healing Craft* with Gavin Bone, a Seax-Wica initiate who joined the Farrars in Ireland in 1993. Stewart was in failing health for some time and died on February 7, 2000.

SOURCES:

Guiley, Rosemary Ellen: *The Encyclopedia of Witches and Witchcraft*. Facts on File, 1989.

Fascination

Another term for the **Evil Eye**, especially used when the eye is cast on an individual, holding his or her gaze.

Fertility

There has long been a belief that fertility can be controlled by **magical** means. Extant **cave paintings** and rock carvings show that religious or magical **rituals** were performed for this purpose; for example, a clay figure of two bison mating was constructed to ensure that the real bison mated. Clay models and rock carvings were made of the **Mother Goddess**, emphasizing the feminine attributes: heavy, pendulous breasts and greatly enlarged genitalia. Similarly, representations of the male deity showed him with an erect phallus. The Venus of Willendorf is typical of the female deity representation, while the Cerne Abbas Giant—a huge, pre-Roman figure with a club and erect phallus, carved into a white chalk Dorset hillside—is perhaps typical of the male.



Fertility figure. Courtesy Raymond Buckland.

Mating of man and woman would ensure fertility of the tribe and, by extension, it was thought to ensure fertility of the crops. It was noted that the Moon, representative of the Goddess to many pagans, equated with woman's menstrual cycles and ovulation. Those who lived close to the earth, who worked daily with livestock and with seeds and grain, were more aware of the life cycle. They continued the fertility rites long after the coming of the new religion, Christianity, and its somber declamations that all things sexual were of the devil. For centuries, the pagan people performed the sex act in the furrows of a newly plowed field to ensure a good harvest. (In fact, it is said that some farm families continue this belief even today.)

It was perhaps because of knowledge of these continuing practices that the Church's witchcraft persecutors concentrated so much on sexual matters. Accused witches were charged with making animals and fields barren and with interfering in the sexual intercourse of married couples. The *Malleus Maleficarum* of Heinrich Kramer and Jakob

Sprenger (1486) included such chapters as: "Whether witches can hebetate the powers of generation or obstruct the venereal act"; "That witches who are midwives in various ways kill the child conceived in the womb"; and "How witches impede and prevent the power of procreation."

Some fertility rites did continue, apparently unnoticed, under the nose of the Church. One was the Maypole dance (see *May Day*). Originally the Maypole was a phallic symbol, with the ribbons streaming from it representing the semen flowing. For hundreds of years, Maypoles were kept in villages and towns across Europe. A huge one was set up in the city of London, only taken down in 1517 after being repeatedly preached against. Even then it was kept, stored within a row of cottages, until 1549. At the site of the Cerne Giant on Trendle Hill, a circle of stones just above his head was the site of a Maypole ritual held annually for generations. Originally these celebrations included sexual intercourse by most of the participants, but this was eventually curtailed by the clergy. In addition to the Maypole dancing at this site, it was (and may still be) common for a woman wishing to conceive to sleep overnight on the phallus of the figure. Many Maypole celebrations still take place today in villages, towns, and cities across Britain and other countries.

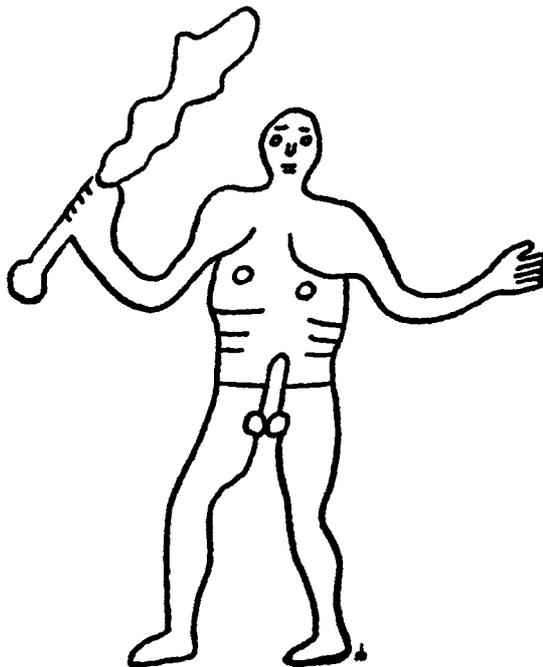
Insofar as Wicca is a fertility cult, there is still recognition of the power of sex in its ritual and magical operations. The sex act is recognized as a way to raise power for the working of magic. In the Third Degree ritual of degree-oriented traditions is found the **Great Rite**, which is a symbolical joining of the initiate with the God or Goddess—a *hieros gamus*, or sacred marriage. Yet sex is looked upon as something sacred. Because of this attitude, there is no promiscuity in modern Witchcraft.

SOURCES:

Goldberg, B. Z.: *The Sacred Fire: The Story of Sex In Religion*. University Books, 1958.

Lethbridge, T. C.: *Gogmagog—The Buried Gods*. Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1957.

Summers, Montague (trans.): *Malleus Maleficarum*. Pushkin Press, 1951.



Cerne Giant, Dorset, England. Courtesy Raymond Buckland.

Fetish

From the Portuguese *feitico*, “a thing made.” The term was originally applied by the Portuguese in the latter half of the fifteenth century to talismans, charms, and figures produced in West Africa and believed to house spirits. *Fetish* should properly be applied only to magical items such as charms and talismans, and not to carved representations of deities.

The words *fetish* and *fetishism* are today little used in modern anthropology, although they may be found in psychiatry, with fetishism seen as a mental condition wherein a nongenital object is used to achieve sexual gratification.

Many of the West African fetishes incorporate a mirror as a token of the “white man’s magic.” Fetishes are thought to retain the protective powers of the spirit world. They were brought to America by slaves and today are often found in the Ozark region. There they are known as “conjures,” “goofers,” and other local names, and they are dispensed by root doctors, goomer doctors, and conjure folk.

SOURCES:

Randolph, Vance: *Ozark Superstitions*. Columbia University Press, 1947.

Shepard, Leslie A. (ed.): *Encyclopedia of Occultism and Parapsychology*. Gale Research, 1978.

Fian, John

A schoolmaster at Saltpans (now Prestonpans), not far from Edinburgh, John Fian first came to the attention of the authorities in 1590 when Geillis Duncan named

him as one of the witches with whom she met. Geillis had been suspected by her employer, David Seton, Deputy Bailiff of Tranent, and subjected to torture before she admitted any coven activities and gave any names.

The leader of this coven of North Berwick witches was Francis, Earl of Bothwell. John Fian was his register, or secretary. Fian described himself as “clerk to all those that were in subjection to the devil’s service, bearing the name of witches; that he did take their oaths for their true service to the devil.” (As in most witchcraft trials, the accused’s word was probably not “the devil” but “God,” referring to the pagan deity worshiped. All records being kept by Christians, the word was automatically written as “devil.”)

Surprisingly, when questioned, Fian admitted his “wicked” ways and said that he had “too much followed the allurements and enticements of Sathan.” He was confined separately from the other witches and continued to renounce his previous ways. The following morning, he claimed that the Devil had come to him and demanded he continue his service. Fian had refused and the Devil had gone away. The schoolmaster was kept in solitary confinement, where he loudly prayed to the Christian god. Later that night, he disappeared; it seems he had obtained a key to his cell and he escaped.

There was a “hot and hard pursuit,” and Fian was again captured. He was subjected to terrible tortures, but, “notwithstanding all these grievous pains and cruel torments, he would not confess any thing.” He was executed at Castle Hill.

It has been suggested that Fian’s escape was organized by the Earl of Bothwell, since Fian was implicating him under the pressure of torture. Murray says that everyone, including King James, suspected Bothwell but needed such a confession as Fian’s in order to take action.

John Fian was present at the meeting in Barbara Napier’s house in Edinburgh at which a live toad was roasted, according to reports, and poison extracted to be used to kill the king. Ericson suggests that it was a toadstool, rather than a toad, that actually was used. Fian also reportedly led the dancing at the witch coven meetings, which took place at the North Berwick churchyard. When dancing around the church, according to evidence given at the trial, Geillis Duncan played the trump while Fian led the dancers. It was reported that he was *missellit*, or “muffled,” as he led the dance, which might mean he wore a hood or head covering of some sort.

SOURCES:

Ericson, Eric: *The World, the Flesh, the Devil*. Mayflower Books, 1981.
Murray, Margaret Alice: *The Witch Cult in Western Europe*. Clarendon Press, 1921.

Fire

There are four elements—Earth, Air, Fire, and Water—associated with the four directions of North, East, South, and West in the magic circle.

Fire is connected with the God. It is light and energy, healing, desire, fertility, and also destruction of the outworn. Many traditions of Wicca apply fire to the

south and further associate it with the color red and the elementals known as salamanders. Fire is related to reliability, solidity, law, and the order of things.

In Ritual or **Ceremonial Magic**, fire is associated with Michael and with the tarot suit of **Wands**, and with summer, noonday, and the Hebrew letter Vau.

The elements of Earth, Air, Fire, and Water are differently assigned to the directions in the Native American Medicine Wheels; those associations vary from tribe to tribe.

Fire Magic

Virtually every civilization has incorporated a **god of fire** into its pantheon. Most familiar are Ahura-Mazda of ancient Persia; the Greek's Helios; Hestia, **goddess** of the hearth fire; Loki, Norse god of fire and **magic**; Lugh, the **Celtic** sun deity; Ra, the Egyptian sun god; Sol, the Roman god of the sun; and Surya, Hindu god of the sun. Many of the world's religions accept that fire embodies a form of divinity. It is not uncommon for worshipers to make contact with that divinity through fire gazing, or propitiation.

In **Witchcraft**, fire is a part of magic and related to divinity. There should always be fire on a Wiccan altar, be it in the form of a candle or of the burning **incense**. Fire gazing is a popular form of **divination**. Just as small children will gaze into the glowing embers of a fire and imagine animals and scenes, so may a Witch or other seer gaze and see portents of the future. Such divination is known as *pyromancy*.

Candle magic is another popular form of magic utilizing fire. The candles, representing people and things, are manipulated in a ritual to influence who and what they represent. Candles are also used for divination, the flame being gazed at in the same way as are the embers of a fire.

FIVEFOLD KISS see SALUTE

Flagellation

Devotees of the **goddess** Isis, **priests** of Cybele, followers of Dionysus, the ancient Greek cult of the Spartans, and other religious followers of many different persuasions have recognized flagellation, or ritual scourging, as a necessary part of religious rites. In its broadest sense it is a spiritual cleansing.

The life-size frescos on the walls of the **Initiation** Room at the Villa of the Mysteries, just outside Pompeii, Italy, include a scene showing a **priestess** of Dionysus scourging an initiate. In the **Wiccan** initiation there is a similar ritual scourging as part of the *palingenesis*, which is the central theme of all initiations. It is a symbolic death prior to rebirth. Since it is symbolic, it is not designed to hurt the neophyte. The Wiccan **scourge**, in fact, is a whip made with thongs of silk or a similarly soft material. They are not knotted or in any way enhanced to produce pain.

Flagellation, or scourging, is also used by some Witches to raise power when working **magic**. There are many ways of raising this **cone of power**—**dancing, chanting, singing, or sex, for example**—and ritual scourging is one of them. Here again, the design is not to bring pain. The recipient (in some traditions this would be the priestess of the **coven**) is repeatedly scourged, but the thongs of the instrument are drawn across the body repeatedly in an almost hypnotic movement. The **Book of Shadows**, the coven's ritual text, states that "the Scourge is used to bring blood to the surface of the skin, *not to hurt*."

Yet the witchcraft practiced in the Middle Ages included a scourging that *was* designed to hurt. In the records of the 1662 trial of the **Scottish Auldearne** witches, Issobel Gowdie spoke of the leader of the coven beating them: "He would beat and buffet us very sore. We would be beaten if we were absent any time, or neglect anything that would be appointed to be done. . . . He would be beating and scourging us all up and down with cords and other sharp scourges." Of the Northumberland witches (1673), it was reported, "All of them who had done harm gave an account thereof to their protector, who made most of them that did most harm and beat those who had done no harm."

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Ray Buckland's Magic Cauldron*. Galde Press, 1995.

Murray, Margaret Alice: *The Witch Cult in Western Europe*. Clarendon Press, 1921.

Flying Ointment

The popular idea of **Witches** portrays them flying through the air on a **broomstick**, pitchfork, or pole of some kind as a means of traveling to the **sabbat** meetings. This is known as *transvection*, and the earliest depiction of it is Ulrich Molitor's engraving in *De Lamiis* (1489). He shows three Witches, each with an animal's head, each astride a long, forked branch. Many of the old illustrations show Witches either flying or preparing to fly by rubbing their bodies with an ointment that supposedly enables flight. According to reports of the period, the main ingredient in this potion was the fat boiled off the limbs of unbaptised babies. Other major ingredients often mentioned were aconite (monkshood, wolfsbane), hemlock (cowbane), and belladonna (deadly nightshade).

From as early as the ninth century, there has been skepticism regarding Witches' ability to fly. The **Canon Episcopi**, of c. 900 CE, stated that Witches did not have the power to fly through the air, nor to turn themselves into birds and animals. It stated that:

some wicked women, perverted by the Devil, seduced by illusions and phantasms of demons, believe and profess themselves, in the hours of the night, to ride upon certain beasts with Diana, the goddess of pagans, and an innumerable multitude of women, and in the silence of the dead of night to traverse great spaces of earth, and to obey her commands as of their mistress, and to be summoned to her service on certain nights. . . . For an innumer-

able multitude, deceived by this false opinion, believe this to be true, and so believing, wander from the right faith and are involved in the error of the pagans when they think that there is anything of divinity or power except the one God.

However, later Christian inquisitors decided to ignore this and admit flying as evidence of a Witch being in league with the Devil. In addition, a large number of those accused of witchcraft did claim to have rubbed their bodies with ointment and flown through the air.

The *Malleus Maleficarum*, the infamous book of instructions produced by the two German monks, Heinrich Kramer and Jakob Sprenger, and followed by the majority of judges at the Witch trials, says that:

It must not be said that witches cannot be locally transported because God does not permit it. For if He permits it in the case of the just and innocent, and of other Magicians, how should He not in the case of those who are totally dedicated to the devil? And we say with all reverence: Did not the devil take up Our Saviour, and carry Him up to a high place, as the Gospel testifies? . . . Now the following is the method of being transported. They take the unguent which, as we have said, they make at the devil's instruction from the limbs of children, particularly of those whom they have killed before baptism, and anoint with it a chair or a broomstick; whereupon they are immediately carried up into the air, either by day or by night, and either visibly or, if they wish, invisibly; for the devil can conceal a body by the interposition of some other substance.

Records of the trial of the Somerset Witches, in 1664, contain reference to the use of flying ointment. According to one of the accused, Elisabeth Style, they all anointed themselves with a greenish ointment given to them by their Chief, an unknown man dressed all in black. Style said that after anointing themselves they would fly while saying the words: "Thout, tout a tout, tout, throughout and about." On their return journey they cried, "Rentum Tormentum."

Francis Bacon, in *Sylva Sylvarum* (1608), gives a list of ingredients for the flying ointment that includes "the fat of children digged out of their graves" and adds, "I suppose that the soporiferous medicines are likest to do it." The soporiferous medicines were henbane, hemlock, mandrake, deadly nightshade, opium, saffron, and others. Reginald Scot, in his *Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584), details how the "bowels and members" of children, similarly dug up out of their graves, are fast boiled in a cauldron and the thickest of the resulting grease is used for the flying ointment. Scot, however, did not believe that Witches really did fly, with or without this ointment.

Flying by Witches has been compared to the levitation of saints—the one condemned, the other lauded by the Church. St. Joseph of Cupertino reportedly made seventy flights in the seventeenth century. Magdalena Crucia, Abbess at Cordova, Spain, reportedly levitated on a number of occasions, although she later confessed to



An old witch anointing a young witch in preparation for flight to sabbat, eighteenth century. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

being a Witch. In the secular world, in 1855, Daniel Dunglas Home supposedly flew out of one window at Ashley House on Victoria Street in London and into another, all while seventy feet above the ground. This was done in front of credible witnesses, including Lord Adare, the Honorable Master of Lindsay and Captain Charles Wynne.

The most popular form of egress from the Witch's cottage was by way of the chimney, first mentioned by Petrus Mamor in *Flagellum Maleficorum* (1460). The Witch would stand beside the cauldron in which the ointment was made and anoint herself, aided perhaps by an older woman. It was then simply a matter of stepping forward into the large fireplace and soaring up through the chimney. It would seem that any sparks, flames, and soot were inconsequential.

In *The Book of Sacred Magic of Abra-Melin, the Mage*, which supposedly dates to the fifteenth century, there is the following passage:

At Lintz I worked with a young woman, who one evening invited me to go with her, assuring me that without any risk she would conduct me to a place where I greatly desired to find myself. I allowed myself to be persuaded by her promises. She then gave unto me an unguent, with which I rubbed the principal pulses of my feet and hands; the which she did also; and at first it appeared to me that I was flying in the air in the place which I wished, and which I had in no way mentioned to her. . . . Appearing to myself to have remained there a long while, I felt as if I were just awakening from a profound sleep, and I had great pain in my head and deep melancholy. I turned round and saw that she was seated at my side. She began to recount to me what she had seen, but that which I had seen was entirely different. I was, however, much astonished, because it appeared to me as if I had been really and corporeally in the place, and there in reality to have seen that which had happened.

The book, written "as delivered by Abraham the Jew Unto his son Lamech," was translated by S. L. MacGregor Mathers in 1932. The episode agrees in many ways with this author's own experience in Scotland, in 1963. **Gerald Gardner's** High Priestess, the Lady Olwen, managed to make ointment following an old recipe from the **Book of Shadows**. The ingredients included aconite, cinquefoil, foxglove, and poppy juice. She and I rubbed a little on our wrists, inside elbows, armpits, backs of the knees, and ankles. We were sitting in front of a fire, as was prescribed, and in a very short time both of us felt a sensation of rising up off the ground and floating in the air. This continued for a while before we returned to normalcy. Olwen stated that one of her other Witches, when trying the ointment, had sworn she floated outside the house and onto the front lawn. It would seem, then, that it is indeed the potency of the ingredients that gives one the illusion of flying. Gerald Gardner suggested that originally the ointment was rubbed on the body simply as protection from the cold when traveling **skyclad** to a sabbat. The potent ingredients then persuaded the Witch that she had actually flown to the meeting place.

One recipe for a traditional English flying ointment, found in the Gardnerian *Book of Shadows*, is as follows:

Lard—100 gram, Hashish (first quality)—5 grams, Hemp flower—a handful, Poppy flower—a handful, Powdered Hellbore Root—a pinch, Ground Sunflower Seed—a pinch.

To be rubbed into the skin behind the ears, on the neck along the line of the carotid arteries, in the armpits, to the left of the sympathetic nerve, in the back of the knees, on the soles of the feet, and in the bend of the arms. After application, subject should sleep naked in front of a fire, or a statue of the Goddess.

Another recipe from the Book of Shadows:

3 grams annamthol
50 grams extract of opium
30 grams extract of betel
6 grams cinquefoil
15 grams henbane
15 grams belladonna
15 grams hemlock, ordinary
250 grams Indian Hemp (Cannabis Indica)
5 grams cantharides
Gum tragacanth
Powdered sugar

Blend with any oil, such as pure olive oil, or mix in with creme, such as lanoline. For external use only; not to be taken internally; extremely dangerous.

A modern recipe is also available, which is:

1 jar hand cream
1 tsp vegetable oil
2 tsp belladonna
3 drops liquid detergent
2 tsp wolfbane juice

To be mixed with a perfume of your choice.

In an appendix to Murray's *The Witch-Cult in Western Europe*, A. J. Clark gives three French recipes:

1. Parsley, water of aconite, poplar leaves, and soot.
2. Water parsnip, sweet flag, cinquefoil, bat's blood, deadly nightshade, and oil.
3. Baby's fat, juice of water parsnip, aconite, cinquefoil, deadly nightshade, and soot.

The soot was probably added merely to make it more difficult to see the Witch traveling in the night. The baby's fat (or perhaps pig's fat) is simply a base or carrier, and the bat's blood would seem to be an inert ingredient. But from the use of the aconite, belladonna, and hemlock, there can be no doubt about the efficacy of this unguent.

Giambattista della Porta was one of the earliest to investigate the ingredients of such aids to flying. His book, *Magia Naturalis*, appeared in 1558 and included a section on flying unguents (*Lamiarum Unguenta*). His knowledge of such matters was called to question by the Church, and he was summoned before Pope Paul V to explain about Witches' flying ointments and the necromantic arts.

Montague Summers states that Martin Anton Delrio, in *Disquisitionum Magicarum Libri Sex* (1599), says:

The Demon is able to convey them to the sabbat without the use of any unguent, and often he does so. But for several reasons he prefers that they should anoint themselves. Sometimes when the witches seem afraid it serves to encourage them. When they are young and tender they will thus be better able to bear the hateful embrace of Satan who has assumed the shape of a man. For by this horrid anointing he dulls their senses and persuades these deluded wretches that there is some great virtue in the viscid lubricant. Sometimes too he does this in hateful mockery of God's holy Sacraments, and that by these mysterious ceremonies he may infuse, as it were, something of a ritual and liturgical nature into his beastly orgies.

Modern Wiccans do not believe that they fly to the sabbat. The use of drugs is anathema to them, so there is no use of unguents today, even to give the illusion of flight. Individuals may experiment, as individual nonWitches may, but the old flying ointment recipes are only of historic interest and are not considered utilitarian.

SOURCES:

Guiley, Rosemary Ellen: *The Encyclopedia of Witches and Witchcraft*. Facts on File, 1989.

Kramer, Heinrich and Jakob Sprenger (Montague Summers, trans.): *Malleus Maleficarum*. Pushkin Press, 1951.

Murray, Margaret Alice: *The Witch-Cult in Western Europe*. Clarendon Press, 1921.

Summers, Montague: *The History of Witchcraft and Demonology*. Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1926.

Foliate Mask

Earliest representations of the **Wiccan god** were as a God of Hunting. He was, therefore, usually depicted wearing the horns or antlers of the animal that he hunted. There are many extant examples of this, such as in the **cave art** of the Paleolithic cave people, the figures on the Gundestrup Cauldron of the first century BCE, and the Roman altar stone found beneath Notre Dame Cathedral. The Hunting God was especially important because success in hunting was necessary for humankind to survive.

With the spread of agriculture and improvements in storing food for the winter, the dependency on hunting success lessened and the god became more a general god of nature instead of just a hunting god. When this happened, depictions of the god frequently incorporated leaves as well as—or sometimes instead of—the horns or antlers. From this foliage surrounding his face, the figures became known as “foliate masks.”

When the first Christian churches were being built in Britain, most of the stone masons and wood carvers available to build them were still following the **Old Religion**. In erecting the new churches, these artisans incorporated carvings of their own old gods into the decorations. These figures, carved in wood and stone, were of the god of nature, his face surrounded by leaves, fruit, and nuts. Generally called foliate masks, they are also referred to as “Jack i’ the Green” and “Robin of the Woods.”

The **goddess** was also depicted in these church carvings. She was generally shown as very much a **fertility goddess**, with her legs spread wide and with greatly enlarged genitalia. These are known as **Sheela-na-gigs**, and a number of examples are still extant in English churches.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Witchcraft from the Inside*. Llewellyn, 1995.

Folk Dances and Rhymes

Folk songs, nursery rhymes, and folk dances often continue ancient **pagan** sentiments and contain elements of myth and **magic**, serving as the means of preserving old beliefs despite centuries of persecution and attempted obliteration. Many English folk dances contain ancient ritual steps and gestures. Obvious examples are the **Morris dances**, now performed around the world.

The well known children’s nursery rhyme, “Ride a Cockhorse,” is a good example of retained paganism:

Ride a cockhorse to Banbury Cross
To see a fine lady upon a white horse.
With rings on her fingers and bells on her toes,
She shall have music wherever she goes.

A “cockhorse” was a hobbyhorse and is featured in many Morris dances. There is one in the famous Abbots Bromley Horn Dance (see **Dance**). A hobbyhorse is made with a wooden framework that hangs from the “rider’s” shoulders. There is a horse head at the front, often with a moveable jaw that can be “snapped” when the rider pulls a string. There is also a tail at the rear. A skirt is attached around the frame, hanging down to hide the performer’s legs. Often there are bells hanging from the framework and from martingales. (A similar figure is found in a Balinese dance where ritual, rhythmic movement on the part of the dancer brings on *ekstasis*.) The cockhorse is a greatly refined version of riding astride a simple pole, broomstick, or pitchfork, as was done by the early practitioners of sympathetic magic when dancing around the fields to promote crop fertility.

The goddess Epona was especially associated with horses, as the white horse was a very ancient figure in British folklore. There are many huge figures of horses carved into the white chalk of hillsides across southern England. St. George, the patron saint of England, was originally the old god of sheep, cattle, horses, and vegetation. In his honor, bells were rung to drive away evil spirits from the animals and



Abbots Bromley Horn Dancers. Courtesy Raymond Buckland.

plants. The bells on the toes of the riding lady in the nursery rhyme might also be connected to such an exorcism. Additionally, it was traditional on St. George's Day to parade a white horse, bedecked with bells, through the streets of London (specifically the Strand), Leicester, and other towns and cities, possibly including Banbury. There is the strong possibility that the traditions associated with Epona and with St. George were brought together, for some now unknown reason. George was not adopted as the patron saint of England until 1348. Prior to that he was a spring culture hero, and, according to Lewis Spence, "slew the dragon and thus let loose the magical tank of life-giving moisture which the monster guarded. . . . His legend may have been superimposed upon that of an ancient British goddess of fructification, whose female worshipers passed to their secret rites in a state of nature (naked)."

The nursery rhyme refers to the lady going to Banbury Cross. This would indicate a crossroads at Banbury. Crossroads were regarded as magical places, particularly where three roads, rather than four, came together.

The Furry Dance at Helston, Cornwall, is an ancient remnant of paganism that has continued for centuries. It takes place from May Day through May 8, which is variously referred to as Furry Day, Flora Day, or Faddy Day. The word "furry" comes from the Cornish *fer*, meaning a fair day or day for rejoicing. A band parades through the town on May Day, with hundreds of local children wearing lilies-of-the-valley and dancing after it. At different times throughout the next few days, different age groups dance. Apparently the dancing is spontaneous and not rehearsed or organized in any way. Village houses are decorated with sycamore branches, flowers, and evergreens. The "Hal-an-Tow" (heel and toe) song is sung, which tells of bringing in the

summer. The principle dance begins at noon on May 8, led by the mayor and his officials, all dressed in their formal best. They dance through the main streets, through gardens, houses and stores, in one door and out another. The purpose is to usher in the summer months and drive out any negativity associated with winter.

Dancing around the Maypole on May Day is another pagan custom that is still enjoyed today. The Maypole itself has been traced back to prehistory. There is a fine representation of dancers around a Maypole in the stained-glass windows of Batley church, Staffordshire, England, dating from the reign of Henry VIII. The figures dancing include a hobbyhorse, a jester, and a May Queen. The dance footed around the Maypole traditionally is in the nature of an ordinary round dance, to the tune “Sellenger’s Round,” in which the performers sometimes take hands and at other times dance alone. Occasionally the dance takes the form of “plaiting” the Maypole with the streamers that hang from it.

Guise dancing took place in Cornwall and elsewhere at Christmas; the dance obviously dated back to ancient Yule celebrations. In the Scilly Isles it was known as “goose” dancing. It took the form of a general round dance, but with the men dressed as women and the women dressed as men.

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Fortune, Dion (1891–1946)

Pseudonym of Violet Mary Firth. Growing up in a Christian Science family, Firth demonstrated mediumistic talents while still in her teens, when she studied Freud and Jung (preferring Jung) and worked for the Medico-Psychological Clinic in London. After some years, she came to the conclusion that neither Freud nor Jung had all the answers and that the truth lay in the **occult**. Although fascinated by the works of Helena Blavatsky, Firth was not enthusiastic about occultism when it was presented in an Eastern setting and therefore was not drawn to the Theosophical Society.

At the age of twenty-eight, Firth joined the Alpha and Omega Lodge of the Stella Matutina, an outer division of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn led by J. W. Brodie-Innes. On initiation, she took the **magical** name *Deo Non Fortuna* (“by God, not chance”). This Firth later shortened to Dion Fortune, which became her pen name. Five years later she left the order and founded the Community of the Inner Light, based on contacts she claimed to have made with “Inner Planes” of wisdom.

Firth had learned **Ceremonial Magic** from Brodie-Innes and quickly became an adept. In 1936 she wrote one of her best known books, *The Mystical Qabbalah*, dealing with the use of the Qabbalah by modern occultists. She had previously written *Sane Occultism* (1929) and *Psychic Self-Defense* (1930), the latter as the result of a psychic attack she said she received from an employer. Firth/Fortune went on to write a number of fiction and nonfiction books that taught the Western Esoteric Tradition. Many **Witches** and **Pagans** appreciate her work, especially the two nov-

els, *The Sea Priestess* (1938) and *Moon Magic* (published posthumously in 1956). Although these two books are written as fiction, they contain a great deal of practical occult knowledge in telling the story of a priestess of Isis who comes to restore paganism to a world that has lost touch with nature. *The Goat-Foot God* (1936) is another novel enjoyed by modern day Pagans, as it deals with the powers of Pan.

SOURCES:

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Fox, Selena (1949–)

Founder, executive director, and High **Priestess** of Circle Sanctuary, an international Nature Spirituality resource center located in southwestern Wisconsin. Circle Sanctuary is legally recognized as a Shamanic **Wiccan** church.

Selena Fox's approach to spirituality emphasizes Nature communion and blends ancient and contemporary **Paganism**, Wiccan traditions, multicultural shamanism, and transpersonal psychology. She is the founder of the Circle Craft tradition (known previously both as Circle Wicca and as Wiccan Shamanism). Fox has been a priestess since 1973 and is one of America's best-known Pagan **elders**, networkers, and religious freedom activists.

Fox was born on October 20, 1949, in Arlington, Virginia. Her ethnic roots extend throughout Western Europe and also include the Cherokee (Tsalagi) tribe of North America. She claims that among her ancestors are the hereditary keepers of the goddess Brigid's sacred site at Abernethy, Scotland. Although raised in a fundamentalist Southern Baptist family, Fox began her lifelong exploration of consciousness and spirituality at an early age when mystical experiences became a part of her life. She began recording her dreams and, as a teenager, did tarot card readings and began to study mysticism and the ancient Pagan religions of Europe.

Fox attended the College of William and Mary in Virginia, graduating *cum laude* in 1971 with a B.S. in psychology. She has continued her training in clinical psychotherapy over the years. While at the college, she led her first public **ritual**, which was a celebration of Spring and an honoring of Mother Earth, with invocations of Dionysus. At age twenty-five, she founded Circle Sanctuary, which today ministers to thousands of Wiccans, Pagans, and Nature Spirituality practitioners around the world.

Since the 1960s, Fox has been a social change activist for peace, gender and racial equality, and environmental preservation. She has joined with ministers of other religions to promote multicultural understanding, interfaith dialogue, and global cooperation. She has been a delegate and speaker representing Paganism and the Wicca religion at a variety of international interfaith conferences. In 1999, Fox was appointed to the Assembly of Religious and Spiritual Leaders, which meets in connection with the Parliament of the World's Religions.

Fox is best known for her work as a religious freedom activist on behalf of Pagans and Wiccans, for which she travels nationally and internationally. She was a

force in the successful effort to defeat federal anti-Witchcraft legislation in 1985, and has been an expert witness in a variety of court cases involving the Wiccan religion. In 1999, she was among those working to uphold the rights of Wiccans in the U.S. military, which came under attack by a U.S. congressman, a U.S. senator, and anti-Wiccan religious right political groups. (See also **Helms, Senator Jesse.**)

Fox lives with her husband, Dennis Carpenter, spending her limited leisure time pursuing her interests in genealogy and archaeology. Carpenter, who holds a Ph.D. in psychology, works on behalf of Circle Sanctuary.

Frazer, Sir James George (1854–1941)

Best known as author of the twelve-volume *The Golden Bough*, first published in 1890, Sir James George Frazer was a British anthropologist, folklorist and classical scholar. He was born in Glasgow, Scotland, on January 1, 1854. He attended Glasgow University and then Trinity College, Cambridge, becoming a fellow of that college in 1879.

Frazer's interest in comparative religion grew as a result of his association with W. Robertson Smith at Cambridge. At the age of 36, Frazer published the twelve-volume work, *The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion*, which was his theory of religious and magical development. His distinction between magic and religion has greatly influenced anthropological thought since that time.

The Golden Bough was reissued in 1907 and then appeared in a one-volume abridged version in 1922 and in a two-volume paperback in 1957. The wealth of information contained in the work is constantly utilized by Witches and Pagans.

SOURCES:

Encyclopedia Britannica. William Benton, 1964.

French Witchcraft

Witchcraft in France is perhaps most remarkable for the large numbers of people executed after they were accused of being witches. The Benedictine Abbey of St. Maximin contained a register of supposed **witches** covering 306 accused persons, who, in turn, named 1,500 others as suspects. Eventually, a total of 6,000 names was recorded. By 1350, in two towns in southern France, the Inquisition had prosecuted more than 1,000 people and burned 600 of them. In the first few years of the 1580s, **Nicholas Remy** sent 900 people to the fires. In 1600, Henri Boquet exterminated another 600 people, and just nine years later, **Pierre de Lancre** killed another 600 in a four-month span.

A French witchcraft law passed in 500 CE demanded proof that an act of evil had been committed. Without that proof, the accuser had to pay damages. As Robbins points out, had that law remained in force, none of those accused of attending witches' **sabbats** would have been executed. But based on the speculation of such theologians as Thomas Aquinas, Archbishop Guillaume d'Auvergne, Gabriel Biel,

Pierre de Palude, and Duns Scotus, a precise picture of **pacts with the devil** was painted and **magic** and sorcery moved into the realm of religion, becoming an anti-Catholic heresy subject to the **Inquisition**.

One of the earliest trials took place in 1275, at Toulouse, when Angèle de la Barthe became the first person burned at the stake. In 1278 Bishop Peter of Bayeux, together with his nephew, was tried for using sorcery against Philip III. Bishop Guichard of Troyes used magic against Philip le Bel, in 1308, and Count Robert d'Artois made a wax image of Louis X in 1331.

In 1335, seventy-four people were accused of witchcraft. After being **tortured**, Anne-Marie de Georgel confessed to attending a witches' sabbat presided over by a goat. In 1352, at Carcassonne, near Toulouse, seven people were found guilty of attempting to join a group of witches. They were unsuccessful in their attempt but were still found guilty of worshipping a goat.

By 1390, the Parlement de Paris encouraged secular courts to try witchcraft cases. The first secular trial was held that year, and gradually the secular courts replaced the Inquisition. However, the Inquisition did continue to try some cases, notably that of Gilles Garnier in 1592. Garnier was accused of lycanthropy (were-wolfism), and the case caused much publicity and led to proclamations from the local parliament. Garnier was eventually found guilty of attacking and eating numerous children and was burned at the stake without the mercy of strangulation.

Between 1428 and 1448, 110 women and 57 men were burned alive at the stake at Briançon, Dauphiné. In 1438, Pierre Vallin confessed to flying to sabbats on a stick, to copulating with the devil in woman's form, and to giving up his daughter to the devil. In 1477, Antoine Rose, who also claimed to have flown on a stick, was tortured and tried in the Savoy region. She said that she saw many men and women at the sabbat, all feasting and **dancing** backwards. She adored the devil in the form of a dark man named Robinet, who put his mark on her.

Witches were numerous in Dauphiné and in Gascony, according to Franciscan Alphonsus de Spina's book *Fortalicium Fidei* (1459). Many writers wrote of the great number of witches in existence in all parts of the country. Anything that seemed in any way out of the ordinary was linked to Satanic forces. A hundred years later, in 1595, Nicholas Remy wrote in *Daemonolatreia*, "Whatever is not normal is due to the Devil."

In 1456 and 1457, there was unusually bad weather at Metz, which harmed many crops. This was attributed to witches, and huge witch hunts followed. In 1488, again in Metz, an unusually cold summer was similarly attributed to witchcraft, leading to twenty-eight people being burned alive. In 1460, at Arras, the ecclesiastical authorities examined a large number of suspected witches. After torture, many confessed that they had been to sabbats. There, they said, they had worshiped the devil, feasted liberally, and indulged in wild orgies. There was mention of the osculum infame, the kissing of the devil's posterior, and of signing pacts in their own blood. Twelve of the more than thirty suspects were executed.

There were more cases at Luxeuil in 1529, Bièvres in 1556, Toulouse in 1557, Poitiers in 1564, Amon in 1567, Poitiers in 1574, Avignon and Puy de Dôme in

1594, plus many other cases. The Toulouse case of 1557 involved the burning of forty witches. In 1580, in *De la Démonomanie des Sorciers*, Jean Bodin wrote that burning over a slow fire was not punishment enough for witches, since it only took about half an hour.

Richard Cavendish points out that almost all of the accusations about what took place at the sabbats had been made earlier against the heretical sects, such as the Knights Templar. **Gilles de Rais** and **Joan of Arc** were accused of witchcraft at their trials. From the end of the fifteenth century the pace increased, with more and more people accused and put to death. The main period for the trials was the forty years between 1580 and 1620. That time saw mass persecutions by civil judges, with thousands of witches burned alive at the stake. In 1579, the death penalty was extended to everyone who even practiced **divination**. In Alsace, Béarn, Burgundy, Lorraine, and Normandy alone there were more than 3,000 men and women put to death.

By the early seventeenth century, witchcraft suddenly started appearing in convents around the country. It generally appeared in the form of possession of the nuns by the devil. Cases emerged at Aix-en-Provence (1611), Lille (1613), Loudon (1634), Louviers (1647), and Auxonne (1661).

Witchcraft also made an appearance in the royal court of Louis XIV in what became known as the “Chambre Ardente Affair” of 1680. It included the exposure of a complicated poisoning ring, with various aristocrats poisoning and attempting to poison one another. Catherine Deshayes, a popular fortune-teller known as *La Voison* (“the Poisoner”), led a large coven dedicated to worshipping the “old gods,” including Ashtaroth the goddess and Asmodeus the god. She claimed that she had been initiated at the age of nine. In addition to fortune-telling, she sold beauty potions, aphrodisiacs, preparations to induce abortions, and poisons.

As her fame spread, Catherine Deshayes became very wealthy. In the garden of her large house, in rue Beauregard, she built a special chapel for worshipping the old gods. Her coven met there, and she then made even more money by initiating aristocrats into the **Old Religion**. She continued that practice for more than ten years. At the initiation **rituals**, according to Deshayes’s daughter Marguerite, the titled ladies were stripped and laid naked on the **altar**, with the officiating priest standing between the woman’s legs. The **chalice** was placed on the belly of this living altar, and the priest kissed the woman’s genitals as part of the rite. There were a number of actions similar to the **Great Rite** that is practiced in Witchcraft today. Many famous women of the time were initiated in this fashion, including Madame de Montespan, Louis’s mistress. A chance remark by one of the inner **circle**, Marie Bosse, brought the police to Deshayes’s door and, after they searched the premises, she was arrested. In prison, she underwent brutal torture, forcing her to reveal many names, and after which she was condemned and burned alive.

By 1625 the excitement had finally started to die down, although occasional outbreaks did still occur. Louis XIV reprieved twelve witches at Rouen, in 1670, after as many as 525 people had been indicted. The king rebuked the Parliament of Normandy, restored property to the accused, and reduced sentences from death to banishment. In 1682 he issued an edict that effectively ended all of the witch hunts

in France. Probably the last execution took place as late as 1745, when Father Louis Debaraz was sent to the pyre for performing sacrilegious masses.

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Freyav

Goddess worshiped by Saxon Witches (the *Seax-Wica*). Embleton and Banting suggest that while the Saxon deities of England were common to Scandinavia and continental Europe, there were subtle differences. The English Woden, for example, was not the same as Odin.

In England the principal goddess was Frig, but Freya was taken as the name used by the Seax-Wica. Freya was born of Nerthus (Mother Earth) and adopted many of her mother's attributes. Freya means "Lady." She is the equivalent of the Greek **Aphrodite** (Roman Venus): a goddess of love, a mother, a protectress of children and of women in childbirth. In Norse mythology, she is referred to as "most lovely of the goddesses." She is also equated with the British goddess Branwen.

Branston says that the Old Norse sagas and eddas point to the fact that there is an ancient goddess who is the earth and who is consort to the chief god, who is the sky. That goddess is known variously as Nerthus, Saga, Fulla, Freya, Gna, and many other names.

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- Branston, Brian: *The Lost Gods of England*. Thames and Hudson, 1957.
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Frost, Gavin and Yvonne

GAVIN FROST

Gavin, born in 1930, was raised in a tight-knit family group ruled by his hard-working, hard-drinking Welshman grandfather, who was the family's patriarch. All of the family's sons and cousins worked in its galvanizing business, and members lived together on a wooded ridge outside Aldridge where the Welsh patriarch had built homes for each of his children. When the old man passed in 1936, the family promptly moved away from Aldridge, and Gavin was enrolled in boarding school.

During the war years, the family's kitchen garden and business paid dividends, and family members sought advice from Granny on putting down eggs, storing, and canning, so that there would be food through the winter. That ancient knowledge

became essential to life and health. The methods Gavin learned in youth served his family well in later years.

At war's end, a particular hero of Gavin's graduating class was a decorated navy commander who taught mathematics. From that man, Gavin derived his love of mathematics and physics, and in college he continued in the two disciplines.

In his final year at the University of London (King's College), Gavin grew interested in the prehistoric peoples of the British Isles, and in the reconstruction of their spiritual beliefs. The influence of T. C. Lethbridge (*Witches*) and Glyn Daniel (*Megalithic Monument Builders*), and the heady atmosphere in London after the repeal of the **Witchcraft Act**, made this a formative time in Gavin's life.

After earning an honors degree, Gavin was requested to work for the Department of Atomic Energy, but before he moved to the wilds of Cumberland, he was **initiated** into the **Coven** of Boskednan. (Boskednan is a Nine-Maidens **circle** in Cornwall.) Today the spirit-through-fire scar that the initiation entailed is still visible on his wrist.

The Coven of Boskednan was formed after a number of London University students contacted a Penzance group that had formally been at the university. Gavin's group was instructed on what books to study and what lectures were pertinent if members hoped to be considered for initiation. Individual tasks were also allocated. Gavin's was to walk around Cornwall on the cliff path, carrying tents and supplies, which turned out to be quite a trial—he encountered numerous signs with warnings such as “Dangerous path. Beware of land slips.” When the tasks were completed and further interviews held, four members of Gavin's group were initiated.

Roots of that Penzance coven's practice always intrigued Gavin because (a) they seemed to owe nothing to **Gerald Gardner's** work, and (b) the order of service (as shown in *The Good Witch's Bible*) did not resemble that of most other groups.

Gavin's move to Cumbria and research proceeded. He completed his doctoral thesis and moved on to other research. Soon he had a long-term “significant other” in Dorothy Whitford. Gavin and Dorothy moved to de Havilland Aircraft in Hatfield, near London, where his research concentrated on the investigation of long-wave infrared radiation for the British equivalent of the Sidewinder missile. Much of that missile's testing was carried out at night on Salisbury Plain. This gave Gavin time during the day to explore nearby ancient monuments such as Stonehenge and to talk with local historians on what may be called the **pagans** of Stonehenge.

At the time archeologists, led by Gerald Hawkins' *Stonehenge Decoded*, were reinvestigating the old monuments and the people who built them. Fascinating discoveries were being made. One that Gavin vividly recalls was that of a skull that showed evidence of three trepanning surgeries—holes carved into it for brain surgery or perhaps for reduction of pressure. One such scar had been covered with a screwed-on silver plate, yet the man had lived to a great age after the operations (as shown by regrowth of bone). Incredibly, scientists estimated that his age at death was as much as three hundred years.

Gavin and Dorothy married in January 1953 and honeymooned in Ireland. At that time, finding pagan sites was difficult and, most likely, not the highest priority

for a young married couple. A trip to the Isle of Man to see the TT races was more memorable for seeing Old Man Honda than for the visit to the Witch's Mill. Although Dorothy assured him that he met Gerald Gardner, quite frankly Gavin has no memory of it.

The young couple was extremely happy when Dorothy became pregnant and Gavin obtained three offers of employment. One was at MIT, one with the group that became Hewlett Packard, and one with Canadair in Montreal, Canada. Gavin and Dorothy elected to emigrate to Montreal to work on the Canadian missile program. Upon arrival they learned they would immediately be assigned to Quebec City, site of Canadair's Research Institute. Gavin declined, joining instead the firm's Training and Simulator group. On one assignment Gavin visited a remote village in Chile, and in his four days there, he got his first taste of religion and **healing** as practiced by shamans. The villagers could not believe that an outsider (especially a Caucasian!) would have any interest in their procedure or would be receptive toward it. He saw many parallels in what they were doing to what he had been taught in England.

Gavin later moved to California, where he became senior project engineer on the radar system used in the F-104 military jet. This gave him the opportunity to travel around the world extensively. In Milan, Italy, he seized the opportunity to investigate Leland's *Aradia*, through police contacts and records. In his search, he uncovered both truth and fiction.

The long work hours required in the aerospace industry took their toll on Gavin's personal life, and when an opportunity arose to become his firm's European representative, he took it. He and his family moved to Munich, Germany. Although the hours and work expectations were still high, there was more free time in Munich to investigate the fascinating subject of German sorcery. Gavin studied for initiation with a group of German sorcerers in Geiseltal, the old Bohemian artists' colony south of Munich. Because Dorothy had no interest in the **occult** or in writing for a living, the family was beginning to fragment and, upon their return to the United States, Gavin and Dorothy divorced. It was not an amicable divorce, and it became evident that if Gavin remained in southern California, Dorothy would continually harass him and any new associates. So, accompanied by his new love interest, Yvonne Wilson, Gavin accepted a post as international sales manager for a firm in St. Louis, Missouri. There, he and Yvonne began the long process of getting the U.S. government to accept **Wicca** as a religion (see *Church and School of Wicca*, below).

Gavin felt that his international travel gave him opportunities that were not available to most Wiccans. For example, the King of Thailand arranged for Gavin to live as a monk for one week in a monastery outside Bangkok. Further, Gavin's copy of the *Bhagavad Gita* bears the signature of Madame Indira Gandhi, who also introduced him to some authentic Tantrists.

YVONNE FROST

Yvonne, born in 1931, felt she was reincarnated into a family of Kentucky foot-washing, hard-shell Baptists in the heart of the Depression. A large group of relatives from the Cumberland Gap area moved from the poverty in Kentucky to Depression-era Los Angeles. As the eldest of four children, Yvonne lived in silent

obedience and conformity, wondering why she did not fit in. The best lessons of those early days were a frugal approach that she never outgrew and a gratitude for every good experience that enriched her life.

A marriage to a well-meaning “Neanderthal,” as she described him, lasted ten years. At some point in that era, she came across Velikovsky’s *Worlds in Collision* and mentioned it, with excitement, to her Sunday-school teacher. His response: “If it isn’t in the **Bible**, I don’t want to hear about it.” She says she never looked back.

For the next eight years, Yvonne lived as a self-supporting, single woman. In that time she earned her degree in Orange County, California, and began exploring alternative paths of spirituality. She considered espousing Buddhism, but found the Eastern philosophy too passive for her spiritual needs. She finally discovered Spiritualism. At a séance in 1965, a voice came to her through the medium’s trumpet: “Can I be your little girl?” Because she was single, she was taken aback, but she still managed to answer, “Yes. You come when it’s time.” (Bronwyn was born in 1969.) In another séance her spirit guide, Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace (the first proponent of evolution), brought her a green cabochon stone, which she had set into a bracelet. Wallace once pointed out (as a spirit) that a photo in his biography had been printed as a mirror image. Yvonne found a copy of the book and confirmed the complaint.

Her career at that time was in the aerospace industry; Gavin was her boss’s boss. During Gavin’s stint in Munich, he began writing a novel titled *Pagans of Stonehenge* and asked her to edit it for him. The two eventually became linked romantically. Once Yvonne met Gavin and learned of the Craft, she found that some of its aspects overlapped with the teachings of Spiritualism and Buddhism; for the first time, she felt she was finally on the right path. After Gavin’s divorce, the couple moved together to St. Louis.

Once there, Gavin’s work as an international sales manager led to more travel and longer hours away from home. Yvonne used her time alone to type all of the school’s lectures (see *The Church and School of Wicca*, below) and the draft of *The Witch’s Bible*.

In late July 1969, Gavin flew in from Australia, full of excitement. He had traveled on a Qantas flight especially rescheduled so passengers could see the reentry of the capsule carrying the first astronauts to walk on the moon. When he finally paused to take a breath while telling Yvonne about his special flight, Yvonne calmly informed him, “My water broke this morning.” Witnessing Bronwyn’s birth brought Gavin an epiphany. He gave up his career in aerospace, although he worked intermittently for a year or so as a consultant, and committed his life and energies to the Craft.

Effectively, the two of them sawed off the limb they had been sitting on: no more gold credit cards, no more first-class flights, no more captain of industry and management matron. They traded all of that in for a vow of poverty and full-time commitment to living and teaching the **Craft**.

In retrospect, they both felt that their shared life showed a pattern. They spent a couple of years remodeling a derelict building in St. Charles, Missouri, three years

raising pigs on unimproved rural Missouri acreage and restoring an abandoned schoolhouse, twenty years in New Bern, North Carolina. These experiences served to fill in gaps in their respective learning. What the Frosts did not already know about humility from the discomforts of rehabbing buildings and from raising pigs, they learned well and thoroughly from the Pagan/Wiccan community and the warmth of its reception.

Today their life marches on. Yvonne says, “As we respectively approach our seventieth birthdays, we are eager to meet our successors—poor devils!”

THE CHURCH AND SCHOOL OF WICCA

When Gavin and Yvonne moved to Missouri in 1968, their first act was to attempt to form a coven. They quickly found that they were not comfortable having people come to their home to attend classes. The answer seemed to be a correspondence course, especially since Gavin was still on the road much of the time. Together they wrote a series of lectures that later formed the nucleus of their book, *The Witch's Bible* (Nash Publishing, 1972).

In order to meet IRS requirements as a nonprofit organization, the church had to have a defined philosophy. The Frosts symbolized that philosophy using the five points of the pentagram: (1) The Wiccan Rede—“If it harm none, do what you will.” (2) Power through knowledge. (3) The Law of Attraction and of Threefold Return. (4) Harmony with the universe. (5) Reincarnation. The center of the pentagram represented deity.

A furor was created in Wiccan circles when the Frosts published their rituals and revealed that a dildo was used in the female initiation. Despite that furor, they have stood by their teachings.

Having finally satisfied all the IRS demands, the Church of Wicca was issued a Letter of Determination on August 31, 1972, after which fifteen other Church of Wicca facilities were chartered across the United States. Six years later, Gavin and Yvonne retired from active leadership in the church but retained responsibility for the correspondence school. The school has since grown to be the largest Witchcraft correspondence school in the United States. It also offers courses in astrology, Tantra, psychic development, healing, herbs, and other subjects.

The church continues to work for Wiccan rights, especially by making its teachings available to those in prison and in the military. The church was a leader in the fight against the Helms Amendment (see **Helms, Senator Jesse**). The church and school publishes a periodical called *Survival* that is edited by the Frosts' daughter, Bronwyn.

Futhorc

Acronym for the first six characters of the Anglo-Saxon runic alphabet: Feoh, Ur, Thorn, Os, Rad, Cen. Runic writing was in use from the third century CE until almost modern times in remote areas of Sweden. Originally the runes consisted of twenty-four letters: the all-Germanic staves known as “futhark” (again from the

first six letters). By the third century, runic writing had spread to Norway and was used to carve inscriptions onto stone monuments. By the fifth century, the writing was found in England, where it flourished during the five centuries of the Anglo-Saxon period. There it evolved as a stave of twenty-eight letters, although by the ninth century, the number had increased to thirty-three. The best preserved example of English runes is found on the Frank's Casket, a casket made out of whalebone dating from about 650 CE. Runes, together with illustrations, cover the sides of the casket and the lid.

The word *rune* means “mystery” or “secret” in early English. Runes were never a strictly utilitarian form of writing, and there are many variations to be found in different areas. Just within Anglo-Saxon areas, the characters vary in number from twenty-eight to thirty-three. Two popular variations of Anglo-Saxon runes are the “Ruthwell” and “Thames.”

Within **Witchcraft** (and **magic** in general), runes are often used as magical writing when constructing **talismans** and similar constructs. The **Seax-Wica** tradition, for example, uses a twenty-eight character version of Anglo-Saxon.

SOURCES:

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Gaia

(Also spelled *Gaea*, *Ge*.) Greek goddess personifying the “deep-breasted” Earth, who sprang from primeval Chaos. From herself she bore Ouranus; Sky, with whom she mated to produce the Titans; the Furies; the Cyclopes; and the hundred-armed giants, Hekatoncheires. According to Hesiod, the primitive Greeks worshiped the Earth and saw in it the mother-goddess Gaia, from whom all things came. She not only created the universe but also gave birth to the human race.

Although the cult of Gaia remained in Greece, gradually other deities grew in stature, pushing Gaia into the background. She had a number of sanctuaries—at Athens and Sparta, for example—and was especially **worshiped** at Delphi, Aegae, and Olympia. Gaia was a great prophetess, a **healer**, and the patroness of marriages.

Even after Gaia had been supplanted as the main deity, the Greeks continued to worship her, placing barley cakes and honey at sacred openings in the Earth’s (Gaia’s) surface. It was at these fissures—especially at Delphi and Dodona—that prophetesses spoke. According to Monaghan, it was to Gaia that the Greeks swore their most sacred oaths.

Gimbutas says that the triumphant days of the Earth Mother are in August. She says August 15 is now “the Feast of the Assumption of Mary, (and) is a feast of **herbs**, flowers, and corn richly celebrated to this day in all Catholic countries between Ireland, Lithuania, and Malta. Bouquets of corn ears, flowers, and herbs are brought to church to be blessed by the Goddess, and on this day is made a fat **Corn Dolly**.”

A bumper-sticker and t-shirt slogan sported by many neo-Pagans reads: “Gaia Lives,” reflecting the environmental watchword of modern **Wicca** and Paganism. There is a high consciousness for the environment’s condition, with strong recognition of the need to curb pollution and restore harmony between mankind and Earth. In the early 1970s, Tim “Otter” Zell, leader of the **Church of All Worlds**, had a profound

vision relating to Gaia, seeing Earth as a single biological organism. He believed it possible to establish telepathic communication with all beings. But he felt that the reconnection was seriously threatened by pollution and urged immediate involvement/activism on the part of all **Witches** and Pagans. Gaia remains a favorite goddess to most Wiccans and Pagans and symbolizes emotional ties of many sorts.

SOURCES:

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James, E. O.: *Prehistoric Religion*. Barnes & Noble, 1962.

Monaghan, Patricia: *The Book of Goddesses and Heroines*. E.P. Dutton, 1981.

Walker, Barbara G.: *The Woman's Encyclopedia of Myths and Secrets*. Harper & Row, 1983.

Gardner, Gerald Brouseau (1884–1964)

Gerald Gardner was born on Friday, June 13, 1884. He was born into a well-to-do family at Blundellsands, near Liverpool, in the north of England. His father, William Robert Gardner, was a justice of the peace and his mother was a member of the then-fashionable Browning Society. The family timber business had been founded in 1748. The Gardners were of Scottish descent and traced their lineage back to Simon le Gardinor in the fourteenth century.

Gardner had one younger and two older brothers. From a very young age, Gardner suffered from severe asthma. When he was four years old, a new children's nurse was hired, a young Irish woman named Josephine McCombie. She had only been employed for a short time when she suggested that the asthmatic boy might be much better off if he were to winter abroad—accompanied by his nurse, of course. This was thought to be an excellent idea, and soon Gardner and “Com,” as she came to be called, set off for Nice, France, to start what was to become, for Gardner, a lifetime of globe-trotting.

Within a week of leaving England, Com showed her true colors. She was searching for a husband, and she had very little time for her young charge. Her idea of wintering abroad was simply to give herself a chance to chase young men and hopefully find a prospective husband. From Nice, Gardner was taken to the Canary Islands, then on to Accra. After a short stay, they moved to Madeira.

On their brief stops back in England, Gardner made no mention of Com's many affairs to his parents. In fact, he was quite happy. In Madeira, in 1891, he taught himself to read and discovered a whole new world. He read, indiscriminately, everything on which he could lay his hands. About this time he bought his first knife. This was to be the precursor of a vast weapons collection he would gather from around the world.

Nine years and a dozen countries later, Com found her man and decided to settle down. His name was David and he lived in Ceylon. Gardner traveled there with Com and took his first job, working on a neighboring tea plantation called Ladbroke Estate, which had many hills covered with low tea bushes, surrounded by jungle slopes. Gardner stuck with the job for two years and then moved on, alone, to a similar position at the Noupareil Estate.

Gardner was very much a loner and spent a lot of time in the jungle, which was unusual for a white man at that time. He became friendly with the local natives, studied their beliefs, and took a part in their lives. Continuing his avid reading, he came across Florence Marryat's books on Spiritualism, and read all of them. He accepted the view that there were many local gods and spirits and found himself unable to accept the usual Christian concept of deity.

An American relative named Jennie Tompkins visited him one time, along with his parents. While there, she gave him a copy of the Bible. "Read it," she said. Then she added, "I read the whole of this when I was young and I've never believed a word of it since!"

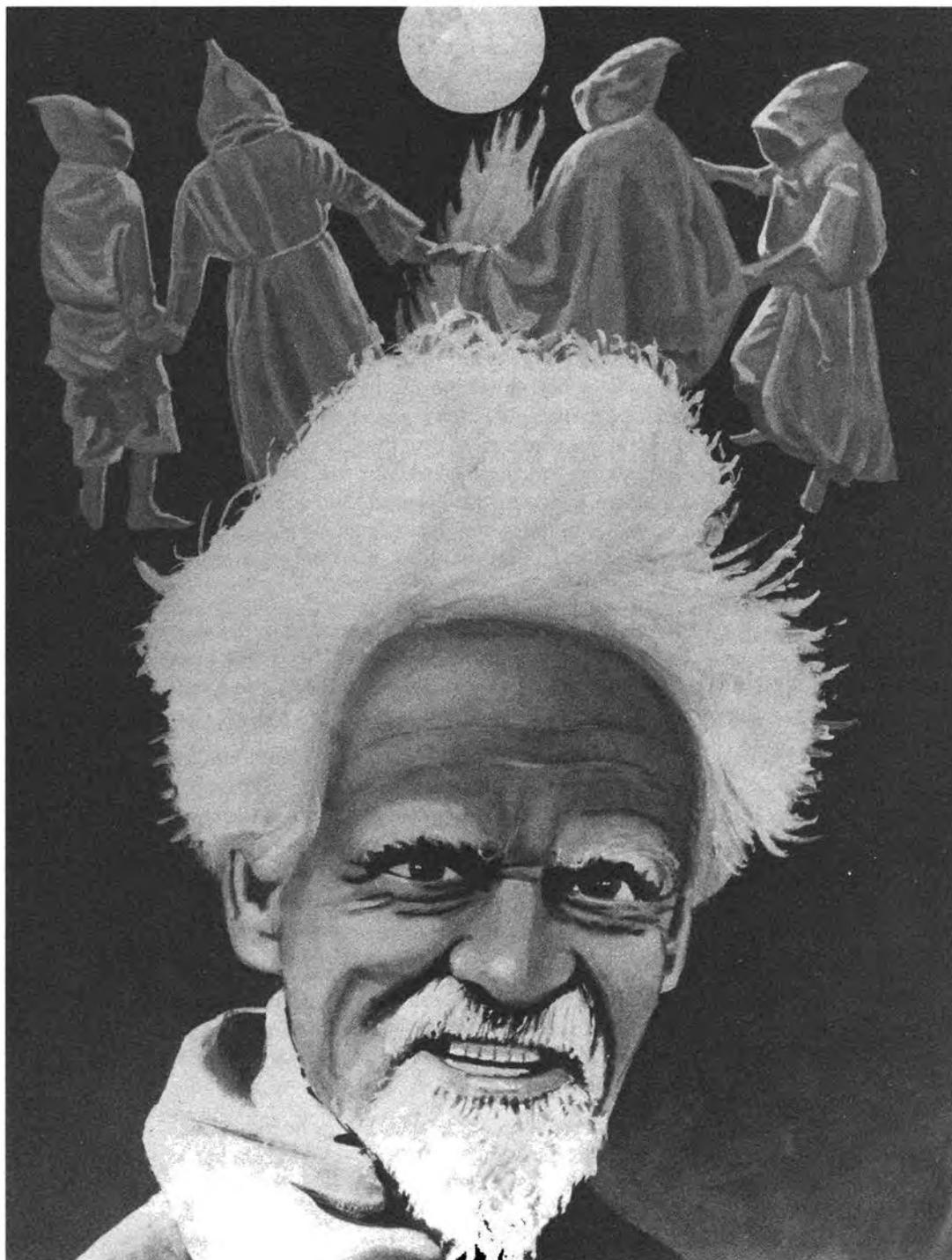
By 1908, Gardner moved to Borneo, where he worked on the Mawo Estate at Membuket. It was there, in the jungles of Borneo, that he came to know and respect the Dyaks, a tribe that had once been headhunters. He was especially fascinated by their weapons, especially their deadly blowpipes, the *sumpitan*. Gardner attended their tribal séances and was surprised to find that they were in many ways similar to séances held by English Spiritualists. About this time Gardner became ill with malaria, as did most Caucasians who visited the Far East at that time. While recuperating, he took a short vacation in Sarawak. While there, he met with his friend, the Rajah of Sarawak, and told him about his experiences with the Dyaks.

Gardner next took a job as an assistant on a rubber plantation at Sungkai in central Malaya. There he was struck down with blackwater fever. This should have killed him, as it did to several others in the local hospital, but it didn't. He somehow managed to find the strength to recover.

The year 1923 found Gardner working as an inspector of rubber plantations for the government. He worked hard for several months and enjoyed his job, but he once again ended up in the hospital, this time suffering from synositis in his knee. During his very long stay in the hospital, he discovered the wonderful therapeutic powers of the sun. That discovery later led him to become a member of several nudist clubs when he returned to England; one was located at Highgate, and another at Bricketts Wood.

Soon after his return to work, Gardner was promoted to principal officer of customs. Life now became very exciting for him, with occasional raids on contraband hideouts. He also frequently took part in offshore patrols in the Indian Ocean, which entailed trying to intercept smugglers running guns, ammunition, opium, and hashish out of the Muar and Batu Bahat rivers.

In Gardner's next position as inspector of opium establishments he found himself with a lot more spare time. He studied more and spent time thinking about the Malays and the Saki, even examining the sites of those society's ancient cities. He became particularly interested in the *keris*, or *kris*, a wavy-bladed dagger on which, at that time, there was virtually no literature. Over a period of about twenty years, Gardner studied two magical daggers called the *kris majapahit* and the *kris pichit* and wrote a paper on them for the Malayan branch of the Royal Asiatic Society. When



Gerald Gardner, considered the founder of modern Wicca. CourtesyFortean Picture Library.

he finally produced his book, *Keris and Other Malay Weapons* (Progressive Publishing, Singapore, 1936), he was established as the world authority on the subject. He later received an honorary doctorate from the University of Singapore.

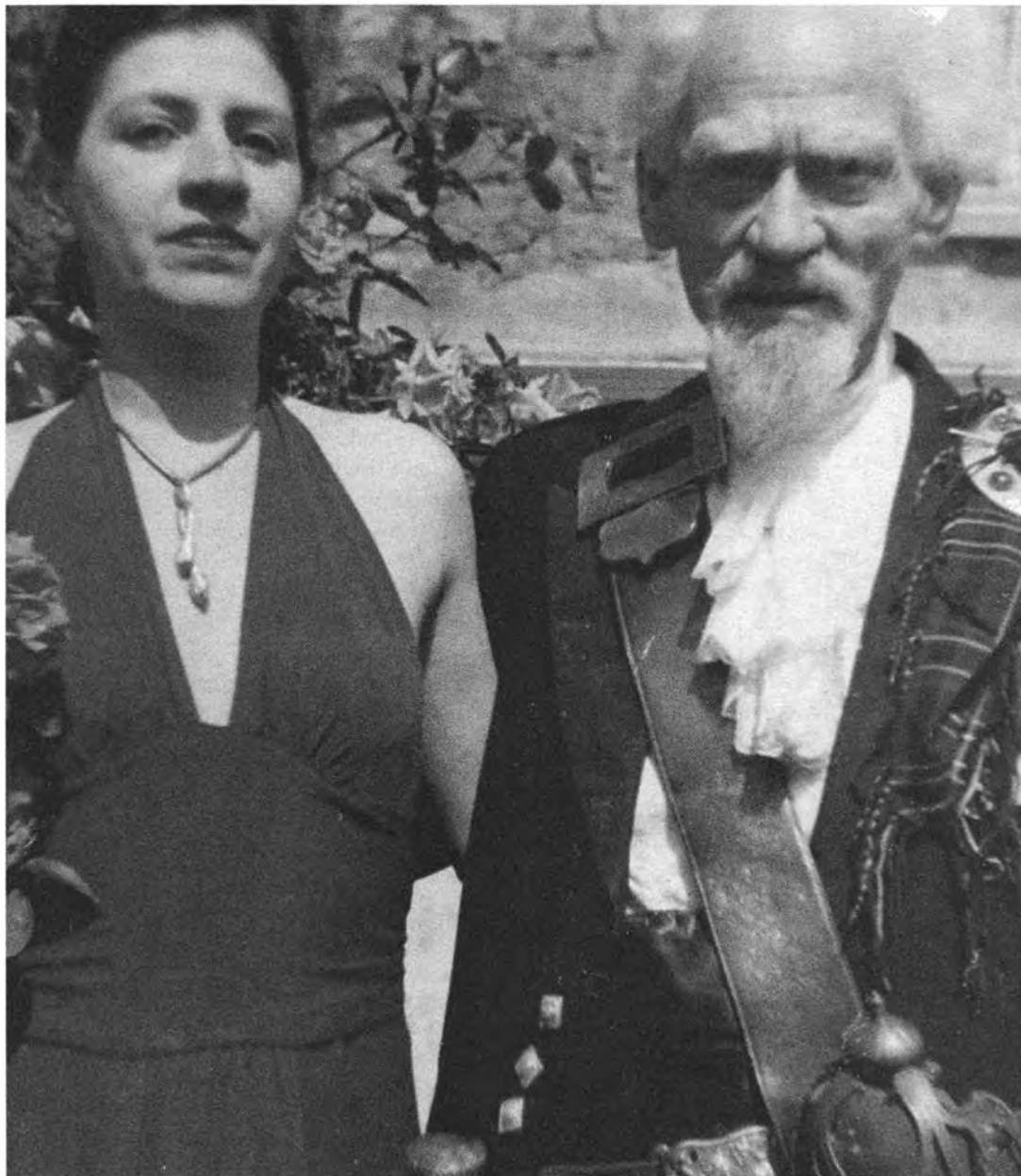
Among Gardner's archeological finds was the site of the ancient city of Singapura. He also proved that the ancient civilization used ocean-going ships, and he reconstructed models of them. One of his models is in the Singapore Museum and another is in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London. For a period, Gardner joined J. L. Starkey, Director of the Wellcome Archeological Research Expedition, digging at the ancient city of Lachish, in Palestine.

On Gardner's retirement, in January 1936, he started back for England. He had wanted to retire to Malaya, but the climate did not agree with his wife Donna (he had married Donna Rosedale on one of his few trips to England, in 1927). On the way back to his homeland—which was hardly home to Gardner after so many years away—he stopped in Istanbul, Athens, Budapest, and Germany. It was still necessary, because of his asthma, to spend the winter months out of England. The first winter after his return he visited Cyprus. It was there that he found the exact place he had seen many times in his dreams. The site was at Kyrenia, and many things there turned out exactly as he had dreamed them, to the point that Gardner concluded he must have lived there in a previous lifetime. He attempted to establish a temple to the Goddess on Cyprus, purchasing a beautiful site that included a ruined temple. Unfortunately the local authorities did not care for his idea, and Gardner was forced to leave and once again return to England. There, in 1939, he published his first novel, *A Goddess Arrives* (Arthur H. Stockwell, London), set in the year 1450 CE and dealing with the worship of Aphrodite.

Throughout his travels and his many and varied jobs, Gardner maintained an interest in the occult. In 1905, while on one of his leaves, he met the Surgensons, distant relatives who were considered “a little odd.” This was because one of the daughters in the family had a reputation as a palmist and crystal gazer, and the whole family firmly believed in reincarnation. Gardner noticed that some other relatives, also friends of the Surgensons and also named Gardner, were sometimes teased and asked if they had been to any Witches' sabbats. Gardner then discovered (from his brother Bob) that his grandfather Joseph's second wife, Ann, had supposedly been a Witch. The relatives Gardner now met were Ann's descendants and supposedly followed in her footsteps. However, it was not until 1938 that Gardner came into direct contact with the Witch cult.

Just before the start of World War II, Gardner was living in Highcliffe, England. In nearby Christchurch, he contacted an organization started by Mrs. Mabel Besant Scott, daughter of Annie Besant. Mrs. Scott had taken up Co-Masonry after the Theosophists had chosen Bishop Leadbeater as their leader, when Annie Besant died. Mrs. Scott's group was known as the “Rosicrucians.”

Gardner became very friendly with a small “group within the group” called the Fellowship of Crotona. He was somewhat surprised when one of his new friends said he had known Gardner in a past life. The man went on to describe the location of



Monique Wilson and Gerald Gardner. Courtesy Raymond Buckland.

Gardner's recurring dream, which had turned out to be Kyrena, Cyprus. Other group members were intensely interested when Gardner mentioned that one of his ancestors, Grizell Gairdner, had been burned at the stake as a witch at Newborough, Scotland, around 1640.

A short time later, Gardner took part in the group's initiation ceremony, which was led by the coven's leader, Dorothy Clutterbuck-Fordham. Gardner finally realized that these new friends—and now he, himself—were in fact Witches. For the first time since he had left the Far East, Gardner felt wonderfully happy. He knew from reading books by Dr. Margaret Murray that Witches were not Satanists or devil worshippers, as had been charged by the church for so long. In fact, he soon learned many wonderful things about the true nature of Witches, so much so that he felt he wanted to share them with others. He asked if he might write a book about Witchcraft and what it really was, but was told that he should not do that. "Old Dorothy," as the High Priestess was known, pointed out that Witches had survived only by remaining secret.

Gardner's approach to the study of the occult followed the same pattern he had employed so successfully with archeology. With the end of World War II, he started to travel again. He visited America, where, among other things, he went to New Orleans to study voodoo. In 1951, and again in 1952, he traveled to West Africa.

In 1946, a stage magician friend of Gardner's, Arnold Crowther, was going to visit the infamous Aleister Crowley, who was then living in Hastings. He offered to take Gardner with him. Afterward, Gardner continued to visit Crowley until Crowley's death the following year. The two became friends and Crowley gave Gardner a charter to start a branch of his magical order, the *Ordo Templi Orientis*. He also gave him honorary membership at the grade 4–7. Gardner never did utilize the charter, but a few years later he put it into his museum collection.

After a great deal of persuasion, Gardner did manage to get his coven to agree to let him write about the true face of Witchcraft, but in the form of a novel, a fictional account of three young ceremonial magicians in search of a Witch. It was published as *High Magic's Aid* (Michael Houghton) in 1949 and written under his Craft name of "Scire," although his mundane name also appeared on the title page.

Gardner broke away from the New Forest group and started his own coven in Bricketts Wood, St. Albans, in 1947. They met in what was called a "Witch's Cottage," on the grounds of a nudist club. Gardner had obtained the Elizabethan-style cottage from a man named Ward, who had run the Barnet Folklore Museum at Barnet.

A year later Gardner moved to the Isle of Man and lived there with Cecil Williamson who, four years earlier, had established the Witchcraft Research Centre in the old 1611 mill at Castletown. This was known as "The Witches' Mill" and was the site of the Arbory Witches' meetings in 1850. Williamson helped Gardner purchase a cottage on Malew Street. Gardner had first met Williamson in 1947, when they both happened to be in the Atlantis Bookshop in London. Williamson also knew Mrs. Woodford-Grimes, one of the elders of the Clutterbuck coven. Gardner would sit at Williamson's museum, with a pile of his *High Magic's Aid* beside him, and bask in the glory of being "Resident Witch." When Williamson decided to sell the museum and move back to England, Gardner purchased the property and installed his own collection.

In 1951, the last law against Witchcraft in England was repealed. That same year "Old Dorothy" Clutterbuck, Gardner's original High Priestess, died. Gardner

felt the time was right to at last publish a factual book about Witchcraft. The book appeared in 1954 and was titled *Witchcraft Today* (Rider, London). In 1959, he followed his initial work with a companion volume, *The Meaning of Witchcraft* (Aquarian Press). These books established Gardner as the spokesman for the Old Religion. He initially suffered from popular ignorance and superstition and was persecuted by the locals, but he persevered and considered it to be his mission in life to try to clarify the misconceptions that existed concerning Witches and Witchcraft. His museum at the Witches' Mill aided that effort, and it soon became a clearinghouse for those who were sincerely interested in the Craft and eager to learn more of its ways.

By 1955, lectures on the survival of Witchcraft as a religion were being held at Paris University. The instructor, Professor Varagnac, based his Sorbonne course on Gardner's works. Also in 1955, the Ethnographical Society accepted the reality of the Witch faith, under the title of "Contemporary Witchcraft in Britain, and the Survival of Celtic Cults." In 1959, Dr. Serge Hutin, of the *Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes (Sciences Religieuses)*, wrote about the Craft and named Gerald Gardner as the "most qualified specialist in the field." In New York, in 1964, the New School for Social Research offered a course on "Witchcraft, Magic, and Sorcery" that was taught by Dr. Joseph Kaster (with this author as guest lecturer) and that included Gardner's books as required reading.

In 1953 Gardner initiated Doreen Valiente into the Craft. She became very influential in shaping what was to become known as Gardnerian Witchcraft. Gardner had found the Book of Shadows, or ritual book, of his original coven sadly lacking. Over the many generations of Witches through whose hands it had passed, items had been added while other sections had been lost. Gardner felt that it was woefully incomplete and decided to "correct" it. He did this by drawing on his own knowledge of religio-magic and by borrowing heavily from a wide variety of sources. Valiente recognized much of what he had used—in particular passages from Aleister Crowley's works—and worked with Gardner to give the whole a better balance that was more in keeping with the feelings and philosophies of the Old Religion. As an accomplished poet, Valiente added a number of inspired, original passages that have since become classics of Wiccan ritual. The resulting Gardnerian Book of Shadows has now been in use for several decades in many countries around the world.

In 1960, in recognition of Gardner's distinguished work in so many fields of ancient beliefs, he received a prestigious invitation to a Buckingham Palace reception and was presented to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. The year before, his wife Donna had passed away. Gardner himself had been suffering more and more from asthma. The British climate hindered him, and he invariably traveled to the continent for the winter months. The winter of 1963 Gardner left, as usual, for a warmer climate, traveling to one of his favorite spots, Lebanon. He was returning home on board the *Scottish Prince* when he died at sea on February 12, 1964. His body was taken ashore and buried at Tunis. His museum and cottage on the Isle of Man were left to Monique Wilson—Lady Olwen, his High Priestess—with other bequests going to other Priestesses.

SOURCES:

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 Crowther, Patricia and Arnold: *The Witches Speak*. Athol, 1965.

GARDNERIAN WITCHCRAFT see GARDNER, GERALD BROUSEAU

Garlic

In folklore, thought to be a deterrent to vampire attack and also to **witchcraft** and the **evil eye**. Garlic was put to great use throughout Europe as protection from the plague, and before that, Roman soldiers ate it because they believed it gave them strength and courage.

It was said that the plant grew where Satan had planted his left foot after leaving Paradise. Sometimes referred to as stinkweed, garlic was generally hung over the entrance to the house, at the windows, and around the bed—especially the bed of a child—to fend off both vampires and witches.

Garlic was placed at a **crossroads**, for **Hecate**, and was also carried by travelers. It was frequently used as an **amulet** or incorporated into a **talisman** for protection.

Garter

A garter is worn by a **Witch Queen**, or **Queen of the Sabbat**, as a symbol of rank. Her other accompanying symbol is a silver crown, typically a band of silver with a silver crescent **moon** at the front. Traditionally, the garter is made of green leather (often snake skin) with a blue silk lining. There is one large, silver buckle on the garter, representing the Queen's own **coven**, with additional, smaller, silver buckles for each of the other covens under her jurisdiction. It is worn on the left leg, just above the knee.

Garters have always had a special significance. **Cave art** in eastern Spain that dates to the Paleolithic period shows a naked sorcerer performing in a ritual while wearing nothing but a pair of garters just below his knees. The traditional dress of Morris dancers includes garters, usually red.

Red garters were always worn by a **Witchcraft coven** Messenger. At the time of the persecutions, he would be sent out by the Priestess to advise members on meeting days and times. The red garters indicated to others that he was authentic.

Pennethorne Hughes mentions that when a tortured witch was likely to give away others, he or she might be murdered in jail by the other witches to prevent additional arrests and tortures. To show that the killing had been done under those circumstances, a garter would be left tied loosely around the victim's throat. Such a potential informant would be known as a "**warlock**," meaning traitor. The case of John Stewart of Irving in 1618 is one such example. John Reid, of Renfrewshire in 1696, is another. A number of legends and folk tales have a garter as the leitmotif.

The Witch Garter is found in English history as being related to the formation of the **Order of the Garter**. This order is Great Britain's highest and most ancient order of knighthood. The most common story states that the countess of Salisbury was dancing with King Edward III at a court function. As they danced, the countess's garter dropped to the ground. The king picked it up and, to save her embarrassment, put it on his own leg with the words, "*Honi soit qui mal y pense*" ("Shame be to him who thinks evil of it."). He went on to form the Order of the Garter, with that phrase as its motto. The exact date for the founding of the order is unknown, since the records have perished, but it is given variously as 1344 or 1350. The most likely date, however, seems to be 1348.

Margaret Alice Murray points out that it took more than a dropped garter to embarrass a lady in the fourteenth century, even a lady of the court. However, if the garter dropped was a ritual one, indicating that its owner was in fact a leader of the Old Religion, then there would be very real embarrassment, especially since there were high dignitaries of the Christian Church present on the occasion. Edward's action, therefore, was very smart thinking, for in placing the garter on his own leg he not only saved face for the countess but also, in effect, proclaimed himself willing to be a leader of the Pagan population as well as the Christian. This was an adroit move considering that a high proportion of his subjects were still Pagan at that time.

Murray is mystified by Edward's words but, if considered as referring to the Old Religion itself, rather than the action or the garter, then they make admirable sense. Edward then went on to form the Order of the Garter with twenty-four knights, himself, and the Prince of Wales—a total of twenty-six, or the number of two traditional covens. As Chief of the Order, the king wore a blue velvet mantle powdered over with 168 miniature garters. Together with the one on his leg, that made 169, or thirteen times thirteen.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Witchcraft from the Inside*. Llewellyn, 1995.

Hughes, Pennethorne: *Witchcraft*. Longmans, Green, 1952.

Murray, Margaret Alice: *The God of the Witches*. Sampson Low, Marston, 1931.

German Witchcraft

More than a hundred times as many **witches** were executed in Germany as were in England. Whereas England did not **torture** nor burn witches, Germany did both. Rossell Hope Robbins emphasizes the severity of the **witchcraft** persecutions in Germany by listing typical atrocities. In Wolfenbüttel in 1590, there were so many stakes erected for burning witches that the site looked like a small woods. In 1631, outside the walls of many towns and villages near Cologne stood numerous stakes with women bound to them and burned. At Neisse in 1651, the executioner built an oven and in one year roasted to death 42 women and girls, including children two to four years of age (witchcraft was believed passed on from mother to child or even from godmother to child). Over a period of nine years, this same executioner roasted over a thousand people.

The witchcraft scare actually was late arriving in Germany, as trials did not start until well into the sixteenth century. In southern France and elsewhere, trials occurred since the fifteenth century. However, Germany quickly made up for lost time through sheer brutality and ferocity. What really brought witchcraft—or the suspicion of it—to Germany was the Council of Trent in 1563, when the Jesuits set out to save Germany from Protestantism. The use of torture was prescribed by the law of the Holy Roman Empire, to which the states belonged. Through hundreds of laws and thousands of sermons, recognition that witchcraft was real was forced on the people. Just as the Dominican inquisitors had brought the idea of witchcraft into Europe in the preceding two centuries, so did the Jesuits establish its presence in Germany in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Julio Carò Baroja says that although the *Canon Episcopi* continued to be quoted by some theologians of the sixteenth century, and they still looked upon *Diana* as the patron goddess of witchcraft, most books and trials of the period regarded the Devil as the prime leader of witches.

Godelman (*Tractatus de magis, veneficis et lamis*, Frankfurt, 1601), a prolific author on the subject of witchcraft in Germany, said, “It is widely believed that all German witches are carried, on the night of the first of May, in the shortest time imaginable, to the mountain called Blocksberg and Heinberg, in the Brusteri region, having first anointed themselves. . . . They spend the whole night in feasting and jollity, dancing with their lovers.” Blocksberg is the old name of the highest peak in the Harz mountains in Saxony (now East Germany); on many maps it is called Brocken. The First of May is the old festival of *Belshane*, or *Walpurgisnacht* in Germany, and it is a known date for witches’ sabbats. Brocken is the scene of the sabbat in Goethe’s *Faust*, which inspired many artistic renderings of the gathering, particularly by painters of the Flemish and German schools. In fact, in the middle of the eighteenth century cartographers showed witches riding broomsticks toward the mountain top when drawing maps of the region.

Confessions in Germany were obtained under torture and generally followed a particular format that had been established over a thousand years before by the Emperors Constantine, Valentine, and Valens. The format had originally been laid down in the fourth century, when used against demon-worshippers. By retaining that format, the records of the trials are repetitive and monotonous.

Robbins points out that no one religion had a monopoly on the hunt for witchcraft. Protestants were just as eager as Catholics to destroy witches. In Protestant Saxony, in just one day in 1589, 133 witches were burned at Quedlinburg. Between 1587 and 1594, twenty-two villages under the jurisdiction of the Catholic Abbey of St. Maximin were eradicated of witches. Two of the villages were completely decimated; just two women were left alive in two others; and 368 witches were burned at the stake in total.

Eric Maple makes a point when he states that the trials and executions became the livelihood of many people, from the judges to the people who provided the wood for the pyres. An industry was born. Costs were borne by the estate of the accused. As Maple says, “Whenever the confiscation of the property of the accused was suspended, the number of executions always declined.” Johan Linden, in his *History of Treves*, says, “Notaries, copyists, and innkeepers grew rich. The executioner rode a blooded horse, like a noble of the court, and went clad in gold and sil-

ver; his wife vied with noble dames in the richness of her array. The children of those convicted and punished were sent into exile; their goods were confiscated.”

Such was the fury of Germany’s persecution of alleged witches that it is perhaps sufficient to examine only one or two areas to reach a full understanding of what took place across the country.

Würzburg and Bamberg were ruled by cousins who were prince-bishops—Philipp Adolf von Ehrenberg and Gottfried Georg II Fuchs von Dorheim. Von Dorheim was known as the “Witch Bishop” and ruled the state of Bamberg from 1623 to 1632. During that time he executed 600 people as witches. His predecessor had killed only half that number. Von Dorheim set up a special “Witch’s House” (*Hexenhaus*), where those accused could be interrogated and tortured; the house was presided over by his subordinate, Suffragan Bishop Friedrich Förner. Torture included the use of thumb-screws, leg vices, heavy weights hung from various parts of the body, roasting on a red hot chair, the rack, the Spanish boot, a bath of lime, the wheel, rending flesh with red hot pincers, and much more. All the instruments of torture, as was the custom throughout Germany, were blessed by a priest before use. Trials were extremely speedy. From accusation to death might take no more than three weeks.

Dr. George Haan, vice-chancellor of Bamberg, had difficulty with the entire process and tried to slow the wholesale slaughter. He was immediately labeled a “witch lover” and was himself accused of witchcraft. He was terribly tortured until he named others—eventually all the burgomasters were condemned—then he and his wife and daughter were burned in 1628. By April 1631, the *Hexenhaus* held twenty-two prisoners. Robbins states that their combined property, which went to line the Bishop’s pockets, amounted to 220,000 florins. Another 500,000 florins had previously been collected from those already executed.

Refugees from Bamberg fled to the emperor and inundated him with details and accusations of travesties of justice. Ferdinand II was slow to respond but eventually, after his confessor pointed out the adverse effect of public opinion, he did order some reforms. They were slight, however, and merely slowed the atrocities. In 1630, Bishop Förner died, followed two years later by Von Dorheim, the Witch Bishop himself. Shortly thereafter Germany was invaded by Gustavus Adolphus, king of Sweden, and attention was drawn away from witchcraft.

However, Von Dorheim’s cousin, Prince-Bishop Philipp Adolf von Ehrenberg, was not to be outdone in cruelty. Between 1623 and 1631, he burned 900 witches in Würzburg. In Eberhard David Hauber’s *Bibliotheca, Acta et Scripta Magica* (Lemgo, 1738–1745), there is a list of 29 mass executions that took place on February 16, 1629, with 157 people put to death on just that one day. Men, women, and children were all executed, and thirteen of the children were under the age of twelve. They came from all walks of life, many of them wealthy and, until then, respected. Peasants and clergy were tortured and executed. Burghers, parish priests, schoolboys, old men and women, and young children all suffered. One of the wealthiest citizens was burned, as was a village mayor. A guard who allowed some prisoners to escape was executed, along with a number of strangers to the town. Even Ernest von Ehrenberg, heir to the prince-bishop, was accused and killed.

In 1612, the Jesuits had been invited into Bamberg and they became advisors to the two cousin prince-bishops. Robbins believes they were the ones mainly responsible for starting the hysteria in the two bishoprics.

In the late sixteenth century, the hysteria of the witch persecutions spread from Luxemburg and Loraine into Treves, an electoral state of the Holy Roman Empire. The infamous judge of that area was Nicholas Remy. In 1595 he published his *Demonolatreia*. On the title page of the book he boasted that he had condemned 900 witches in fifteen years. Five women had been accused and burned in 1572, but it was ten years later that the main persecutions began, which was earlier than in Bamberg and Würzburg. Detailed court records from 1587 to 1594 show as many as 1,500 people denounced, 306 actually taken to trial, and 6,000 names on record within a jurisdiction of twenty villages.

With the succession of Johann von Schöenburg to the See of Treves in 1581, there began a suppression of heretics, first the Protestants, then the Jews, and finally the witches. Bad harvests for nineteen years, with accompanying plagues of pests, were thought to be caused by witches. This stoked the fires of persecution. Dr. Dietrich Flade, vice-governor of Treves and, in 1586, rector of the university, found himself at odds with the wholesale slaughter (much as would George Haan of Bamberg in 1628). As a result, it was not long before Governor Johann Zandt approached the archbishop with false evidence of Flade's attendance at sabbats and had him charged as one of the witches. After much investigation, accusation, and repeated torture, Flade was executed on September 18, 1589, after first being "mercifully and Christianly strangled."

How much credence might be given the confessions is seen in the comments of Father Friedrich von Spee, a confessor to witches in Würzburg. Writing in 1631, he said: "The most robust who have thus suffered have affirmed that no crime can be imagined which they would not at once confess to if it could bring down ever so little relief and they would welcome ten deaths to escape repetition."

As elsewhere in Europe, the professional witch finders earned a good income. In Styria, Jakob Bithner was the witch finder of note. In Lindenheim, it was a man named Geiss. Count Balthasar operated in Voss and Nagogeorgus in Esslingen. But perhaps the most interesting witch finder was a man named Kothman in the town of Lemgo. In early persecutions in that area, Kothman's mother was burned at the stake and he was forced to flee and roam the country in poverty, despite having come from a wealthy family. Some years later, Kothman returned to Lemgo and became friendly with the mayor. On the mayor's death in 1666, Kothman managed to get himself elected as the new mayor. He then set out to gain revenge. With a number of accomplices, he systematically accused all those who had been in high authority and had executed his mother. Kothman remained in office till his death in 1684. In that time he sent ninety people to the stake.

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Glamor

A magical enchantment or spell designed to make the observer believe things are different from what they actually are. The *Malleus Maleficarum* (1486) has the question “Whether **Witches** can by some Glamour Change Men into Beasts” as its Question Ten in Part One. Heinrich Kramer and Jakob Sprenger, the co-authors of the book, offer arguments on the matter put forward by St. Thomas in the *Second Book of Sentences*, VIII, where he discusses “whether devils can affect the bodily senses by the delusion of a glamour.” Allan Ramsay, in the glossary to his *Poems* (1721) says, “Glamour: When devils, wizards or jugglers deceive the sight, they are said to cast glamour o’er the eyes of the spectator.”

SOURCES:

Kramer, Heinrich and Jakob Sprenger (Montague Summers, trans.): *Malleus Maleficarum*. Pushkin Press, 1951.

Oxford English Dictionary. Oxford University Press, 1989.

GLASTONBURY see MERLIN

Gnomes

Elementals are often associated with the four “corners” of the **ritual Circle**; east, south, west, and north. This is so both in **Ceremonial Magic** and in **Witchcraft**. Gnomes are the ones associated with the north and with the element of **earth**. The word gnome comes from the Latin *gnoma*, meaning “knowledge,” suggesting gnomes as “the knowing ones.”

Many Witches and Pagans believe that they can project a thought form of a gnome as an aid to doing work, such as healing, at a distance.

Goblet

The sacred cup used by **Witches** in their **rituals**. It holds the **consecrated** wine and may symbolize the element of **water**. Some **Wiccans** refer to it as a **Chalice**, while others feel that word has Christian connotations that they would prefer to avoid. Some traditions (e.g. **Seax-Wicca**; Saxon Witchcraft) use a drinking horn, rather than a goblet.

In the ceremony of **Cakes and Wine**, the goblet is filled with wine and held by the **High Priest**. The **High Priestess** takes the **athamé**, holds it between the palms of her hands, and lowers it into the wine with the words:

As the Athamé is the Male,
So the Cup is the Female,
And conjoined they bring Blessedness.

Gods and Goddesses

Deities worshiped by humankind. In early days there was a belief in many gods and goddesses, associated with such things as wind, thunder, lightning, **water**, sky, and **earth**. These forces were powerful, so it was believed that they were controlled by supernatural beings. Of these, two were especially important: the God of Hunting and the Goddess of **Fertility**.

The God of Hunting was of special significance if only because success in the hunt was necessary to ensure continued life. Many of the animals hunted were horned or antlered, so the God of Hunting was usually depicted in cave art as horned or antlered. Later, as agriculture developed and humankind learned not only to grow food but also to store it for the winter months, hunting became less important. The horns of the god gave way to leaves and foliage (see **Foliage Mask**).

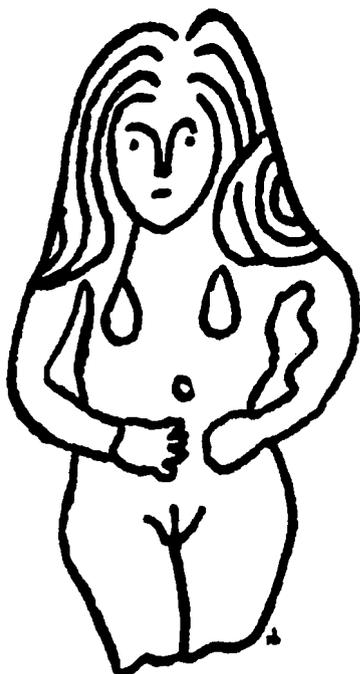
Similarly, the Goddess of Fertility was important since the fertility of animals and humans—and, later, crops—was equally important for continued existence. The Goddess was usually depicted with the feminine attributes greatly emphasized (see **Cave Art**).

In different countries, and even in different areas within one country, the gods and goddesses were given different names. Mostly they were thought to be in human form (anthropomorphic), but they were also represented, wholly or in part, in animal form (theriomorphic) or even in tree form (dendromorphic).

Where deity is concerned, within **Witchcraft** most **Wiccans** believe in a powerful, incomprehensible power of the universe that is totally beyond human comprehension. Although such a power must be genderless, in order to relate to it—to pray, to ask for that which is desired, to give thanks for that which is received—this power is pictured in human (or animal) form. Since males and females are found throughout nature, it seems logical to think of that deity in terms of both male and female, God and Goddess. The principle deities of Witchcraft are, therefore, the Horned God (originally of the hunt) and the Goddess (originally of fertility). Different traditions choose to use different names for these entities, usually based upon that tradition's background. (For example, the Saxon tradition uses the names **Woden** and **Freya** for its deities.) Occasionally a tradition chooses the name of its god from one pantheon and its goddess from an entirely different pantheon, for example, **Pan** (Greek—Arcadia) and **Kerridwen** (Celtic). This is sometimes done for good reason, but more often occurs out of ignorance.

Many Witches think of themselves as polytheistic, believing in many gods, although most seem to be essentially duotheistic, with just one God and one Goddess named and worshiped. A few groups are strictly monotheistic, worshiping the Goddess to the total exclusion of the God. Although there is no written theology for Witchcraft, the general consensus is that there should be balance between the male and female deities, as it is found between the sexes throughout Nature.

The Goddess is seen by many Witches in three aspects: **Virgin**, **Mother**, and **Crone**. Triple goddesses have been found in many cultures since ancient times. The three aspects often found in Wicca are the Greek deities **Artemis**, **Selene**, and



Goddess figurine, Gloucester, England. Courtesy Raymond Buckland.

Hecate—all three are associated with the Moon. (Some mix Roman with Greek and use Diana instead of Artemis.)

Some of the many names used for the god by modern day Witches are: Anu, Anubis, Apollo, Arawn, Balor, **Cerne**, **Cernunnos**, Daghdá, Dionysus, Eros, Hermes, Herne, Hugh, Janicot, Lugh, Mabon, Manannán, Manawyddan, Odin, **Osiris**, **Pan**, Poseidon, Ra, Set(h), Shiva, Tammuz, Thoth, Wayland, and Woden. For the goddess, some of the many names used are: **Aphrodite**, **Aradia**, **Arianrhod**, Artemis, Astarte, Athena, Brighid, Britannia, Ceres, **Circe**, Danu, Diana, **Demeter**, Epona, **Freya**, **Gaia**, Gana, Hathor, Hecate, Inanna, **Ishtar**, **Isis**, **Kali**, **Kerridwen**, Kwan-Yin, **Lilith**, Ma'at, Melusine, **Morrigan**, Persephone, Rhiannon, and Selene.

SOURCES:

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Stone, Merlin: *Ancient Mirrors of Womanhood*, Vols. 1 and 2. New Sibylline Books, 1979.

Gowdie, Issobell

One of the Auldearne coven of witches tried in Morayshire, Scotland, in 1662. Gowdie, young and red-haired, became famous partly because her testimony was so full of details and partly because it was supposedly freely given, without **torture**. However, as Cameron points out, preliminary torture—which could include being deprived of food and drink, being kept without sleep, and even beatings and having the legs crushed—was frequently ignored by the courts. The recorded torture was only that which was applied at a later stage, to obtain the names of accomplices. Prior to that, the words “The prisoner confessed without torture” would be written into the records. However, Gowdie did tell her story at least four times, between April 13 and May 27, never once deviating, contradicting herself, or altering her testimony in any way, including the recitation of a number of **spells** and **incantations**.

Gowdie claimed she had been **initiated** fifteen years earlier (in 1647) at Auldearne Church in Nairnshire by a man dressed all in gray. Her sponsor was a

woman named Margaret Brodie. The man in gray put his “Devil’s mark” on her and gave her the **eke-name** of Janet. From that time forward, she met with twelve other women—a traditional coven of thirteen—on a regular basis, with **sabbats** taking place every quarter.

Gowdie’s testimony included everything one would expect to hear about the activities of witches at that time: attendant imps, the use of a wax image to harm another person, blighting a farmer’s fields, meeting with **fairies**, transformation into animals, riding to sabbats on straws, shooting elf bolts, and feasting and drinking followed by wild orgies. The latter she described in lurid detail.

The attendant imps, or devils, were of various types and dressed in a variety of colors. Gowdie’s was named Reed Reiver and wore black. The use of the wax image was to destroy the male children of the Laird of Park. One of the coven—John Taylor—provided the clay which was worked upon to create a **poppet**, a figure representing a male child in all details. The witches then laid the poppet in the fire till it baked hard. After that they would roast it each day, concentrating on a particular part each time.

The coven raised storms by beating wet rags against stones and **chanting**. To blight a farmer’s field, they dug up the body of a child from the graveyard and, after sharing parts of it with another neighboring coven, buried pieces in the farmer’s compost pile, which worked against the **fertility** of his fields.

To the authorities, the most shocking part of Gowdie’s testimony was her detailed description of sexual **rites**. Some were the outcome of feasting, **dancing**, and festivities, but some were of a ritualistic nature. Gowdie made much of the fact that the devil’s penis was extremely large and extremely cold, as was his emission. The female leader of the coven—the “**Queen**” or “**Maiden**”—was Jean Marten. In that position, she was always the first to enjoy the male leader’s sexual favors.

Most authorities say there is no record of the outcome of the trial, although they assume Issobell Gowdie paid the usual penalty, along with her coven mates. Tindall, however, says that Gowdie was hanged at the West Point of Elgin and her body later burned. The ashes were scattered.

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 Tindall, Gillian: *A Handbook on Witches*. Atheneum, 1966.

GRANDIER, URBAIN see LOUDUN NUNS

Graves, Robert (1895–1985)

English poet, novelist and essayist, born in Wimbledon, London, on July 24, 1895. Robert Graves’s father, Alfred Perceval Graves, was an Irish poet and Gaelic scholar. Robert, one of ten children, was influenced by his mother’s puritanical beliefs and also by his father’s love of Celtic myth and poetry. He served in World War I with the Royal Welsh Fusiliers, and he was injured in the Somme offensive. After the war, he attended Oxford University at St. John’s College.



Ruins of Inshoch Castle, Scotland Highlands, where Isobell Gowdie is said to have met the Devil and learned from him the practice of wax image making. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

Graves married Nancy Nicholson in 1918, while he was in the army. By that time, he had already published three volumes of poetry. By 1927, he and Nancy had separated. After the divorce, he first spent a number of years with Laura Riding, but by 1940 he had settled down permanently with Beryl Hodge.

Among Graves's best-known novels are *I, Claudius* (1934) and *King Jesus* (1946). However, among **Witches** and **Pagans**, he is best remembered as the author of *The White Goddess* (Faber and Faber, 1959). In that book, Graves demonstrates that the language of poetry is inseparably connected with the ancient cult-ritual of the White Goddess (with the Sacred King as her divine victim). In the book's foreword, Graves says, "My thesis is that the language of poetic myth anciently current in the Mediterranean and Northern Europe was a magical language bound up with popular religious ceremonies in honor of the Moon-goddess, or Muse, some of them dating from the Old Stone Age."

Graves claims that he was reading the Welsh epic *The Mabinogion* when he had a sudden flash of inspiration that the seemingly meaningless poem titled "The Song of Taliesin" was in fact a series of medieval riddles containing clues to an ancient Celtic system of knowledge. In pursuing that system, he found a repeated connection with the moon and with **Diana** as a moon goddess.

During his lifetime, Graves published more than 140 books, including fifty-five collections of poetry, fifteen novels, ten translations, forty works of nonfiction, an autobiography, and various literary essays. He died in Majorca in 1985 at age ninety.

SOURCES:

The Academy of American Poets, 1997.

Gray Magic

Positive **magic**, which helps people, is termed "white" magic. Negative magic, which is designed to harm, is termed "**black**" magic. There is an area between the two that is neither positive nor harmful; this is called "gray" magic. An example would be a **binding** spell.

A number of years ago, a group of professional men and women were investigating and experimenting with Ceremonial Magic, attempting to conjure one of the entities that supposedly had been invoked in centuries past by the ritualists of the period. The group was operating solely for academic reasons, yet an acquaintance of one of the would-be magicians, upon hearing of the project, thought he might make some money selling the group's story to a tabloid newspaper. He was apparently unconcerned that his exposé might seriously harm the reputations of those involved.

When the magicians learned what the man was planning to do, they decided to stop him by using sympathetic magic. To do this, they made a poppet—a clay image of the man—and held a ritual in which they bound the figure and sewed-up its mouth. Subsequently, the man found that he was totally unable to tell anyone of what he knew, no matter how hard he tried. The spell had no other effect on him; it simply made him mute on that particular subject.

That binding spell is an example of gray magic. The man was not harmed, so it was not black magic. He certainly was not helped, so it was not white magic. Instead, the spell covered a gray area between the two.

GREAT BEAST see ALEISTER CROWLEY

Great Rite

The Great Rite is a religious experience of exultation. It is an essential part of the Third Degree and other rituals in **Gardnerian** Wicca, and it has been adopted by most Wiccan traditions. It is a sexual rite, with the participants enacting the roles of the **God** and the **Goddess** as part of the *hieros gamos*, or sacred marriage.

At some point, all peoples possess initiation rituals that are similar to the ancient Mysteries. Of these Mysteries, the Eleusian were of special significance, reaching their height in Attica around 600 BCE as part of the worship of Demeter. Initiates participated of their own free will, on a purely religious basis. Unlike the Thesmophoria and other Demeter festivals, which were secret and open only to women, the Eleusian Mysteries were for both sexes. Many writers, including Hippolytus, refer to a sacred marriage that takes place as part of the rituals. Some say this marriage is between Zeus and Demeter, but the Eleusian myths refer to the union of Hades and Persephone.

Asterius wrote of celebrating “a union between the Hierophant and the Priestess,” representing the god and goddess. In the Wiccan Third Degree ceremony, the Great Rite takes place between the Initiate and the **High Priest** or **High Priestess** (the male initiates females, and the female initiates males). This ritual is not concerned with raising power for magical work, but rather is a sacred blending symbolizing the ultimate union with the deity. As Monica Sjöö and Barbara Mor remark, “Wherever the worship of the Great Mother occurred, ritual emphasis was on the sacredness of life . . . and so sexual rites, worship, and ceremonial union—not to be confused with fertility rites—were a part of her mysteries everywhere.”

Sir James Frazer, in *The Worship of Nature*, speaks of the sacred marriage between the Sun God and the Earth in Indonesia, when men and women indulge in a saturnalia. He says, “The mystic union of the Sun and the Earth is dramatically represented in public, amid song and dance, by the real union of the sexes.” In Crete there was the sacred marriage between Iasion and Demeter; in Greece, a similar union occurred between Zeus and Hera. Much like the Wiccan rite is the Babylonian *Akitu* festival, where the king represents the god and celebrates a sacred marriage with a chosen priestess.

In the Wiccan Great Rite, there is no saturnalia, no general sex. The act takes place between the principal persons only. Although the sex act takes place, it is not sex for the sake of having sex. Rather, it is a very sacred, holy union that is the culmination not only of the Great Rite ritual, but of the whole journey the Initiate has traveled through the degrees, a journey that usually takes place over a number of

years. In most traditions, during the act itself the other members of the **coven** face outward in the circle.

The Great Rite may also take place at each of the major **sabbats** as a climax to the celebrations. However, it is never mandatory. Indeed, if there is ever any reason why the participants should not actually consummate the act, then it may be done “in token,” although, unless the reason is a very valid, choosing to perform the act in token is considered inappropriate by many traditionalists. In the token form, the High Priest holds the athamé between the palms of his hands and slowly lowers it into the goblet of wine offered to him by the High Priestess, symbolizing the penis entering the vagina.

A tremendous amount of energy is released during the sexual act, which is why **sex magic** is considered to be so potent. The Great Rite may therefore be performed as the culmination of some magic workings, but this is certainly not common.

Janet and Stewart Farrar suggest that the Craft uses a sex ritual, or a gender ritual, to mark its highest degree of initiation because it expresses three fundamental principles of the Craft: “First, that the basis of all magical or creative working is polarity, the interaction of complementary aspects. Second, ‘as above, so below’; we are of the nature of the Gods, and a fully realized man or woman is a channel for that divinity, a manifestation of the God and Goddess (and each in fact manifesting elements of both). And third, that all the levels from physical to spiritual are equally holy.”

Doreen Valiente adds, “Ritual sexual intercourse is a very old idea indeed—probably as old as humanity itself. Obviously, it is the very opposite of promiscuity.”

SOURCES:

Farrar, Janet and Stewart: *The Witches' Way*. Robert Hale, 1984.

Frazer, Sir James George: *The Worship of Nature*, Vol. 1. Macmillan, 1926.

Sjöö, Monica and Mor, Barbara: *The Great Cosmic Mother*. Harper & Row, 1987.

Valiente, Doreen: *Natural Magic*. Robert Hale, 1975.

Green Man

A term sometimes applied to a **foliate mask**, or representation of the old **God** of Nature. A wood or stone carving showing a face peering out from a surround of leaves, or as a face actually made up of leaves, it may also be referred to as “Jack i' the Green” or “Robin of the Woods.” It symbolizes the spirits of the woods—the flowers, trees and plants. Green is the color generally associated with the **fairies**.

Throughout Europe there have been—and in many places still are—festivals with parades that feature an appearance by a Green Man—usually a man enclosed in a wickerwork cage completely covered with green boughs. In some areas he is known as Green George. The processions in which he is most often featured are at **Beltane** (or May Day), since he represents the spirit of vegetation and the coming spring.

Green Witch

Another name for a **Hedge Witch**; also sometimes applied to **Cunning Man** or **Woman**. A person who is knowledgeable of the properties of **herbs** and plants, particularly their **healing** properties.



image of the Green Man on an early sixteenth-century bench in Crowcombe Church, Somerset. Courtesy Janet and Colin Bord/Fordean Picture Library.



Grimoire, begun prior to 1950, by one of the members of a Rite of Thoth group, in the style of the Book of Shadows. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

Grimoire

A book of magic, including spells and conjurations, as used by Ceremonial Magicians. The word comes from the Old French for “grammar.” A grimoire contains full, detailed instructions on how to make the required tools, talismans, and robes, as well as calculations for the best time to perform rituals and the rites to perform to actually conjure the entities.

Many grimoires draw heavily on the Kabbalah, cabalistic magic, and astrology. Many also claim to be copies of works used by the biblical king Solomon. Some of the better known grimoires include *The Key of Solomon the King*, *The Lesser Key of Solomon*, *The Arbatel of Magic*, *The Heptameron*, *The Grimoire of Honorius the Great*, *The Black Pullet*, *The Pansophy of Rudolph the Magus*, and *The Book of Sacred Magic of Abra-Melin the Mage*.

Of those titles, *The Key of Solomon* is the best known and the one that is most often referred to and copied from, although it seems extremely unlikely that it actually originated with Solomon himself. However, the book has obviously been

revised many times, and some versions of it certainly date from at least the fourteenth century. In fact, there is a Greek version in the British Museum that dates from the thirteenth century. Additionally, there are a number of old grimoires that exist in libraries and private collections throughout Europe and America, although many seem to be nothing more than copies or translations of other copies and translations. Real grimoires were always handwritten by the magician/author, and frequently many parts were written in one of the “secret writings.”

The book used by **Witches** is called the **Book of Shadows**. Although technically it, too, is a grimoire, it is seldom referred to as such by **Wiccans**.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Anatomy of the Occult*. Samuel Weiser, 1977.

Shah, Idries: *The Secret Lore of Magic*. Citadel, 1958.

Gris-gris

A talisman of **Voodoo** that can be made for positive or negative purposes. One common form is a bag containing a variety of objects, although sometimes it is in the form of a cloth **poppet** stuffed with items. There are always an odd number of items, up to thirteen total. Items typically stuffed into the gris-gris include **herbs**, stones, feathers, hair, nail clippings, bones, and dust.

In West Africa, the word *juju* is used instead of gris-gris, although this may simply be a European variation of the native word *grou-grou*, which more probably is the origin of gris-gris.

It is important to note that gris-gris is a part of **Voodoo**, not **Witchcraft**. **Witches** are more likely to use actual talismans, amulets, and poppets in their **magic**.

Grove

A term equivalent in many ways to the word “**coven**,” and used by various **Pagans**.

In the early 1960s in America, there were few visible **Witchcraft** covens, which made it difficult for many people who were drawn to the religion to actually make contact and become initiated. In 1967, Ed Fitch (a member of the original **Gardnerian** coven in New York that was started in 1964 by Rosemary and **Raymond Buckland**) authored *The Pagan Way* to serve as an “Outer Court” system through which anyone could become involved in Paganism. With the book, they could perform rituals and follow the cycle of the **Wiccan** year until they were really taken into an actual Wiccan coven. The groups under this system were originally termed “Groves.”

Fitch based his idea of an Outer Court on a concept put forward by **Dion Fortune** in her novels. Fitch’s writings later developed into a whole “**Grimoire of Shadows**” that was adopted as a true Wiccan path by many groups that were, at the time, using the term coven as a group name. The word Grove has come to be used by a wide variety of neo-Pagans today, both as a group name and in reference to a meeting place or temple.

Gwydion

The name means “the prophetic one.” Gwydion is a powerful sorcerer and brilliant storyteller who is featured in the Fourth Branch of the medieval Welsh book, *The Mabinogian*.

In both Welsh and Irish mythology there is a hierarchy of deities headed by a mother (Dôn in Welsh and Danu in Irish) and three sons. They are the family of Dôn.

According to *Mabinogi*, which is a centerpiece of medieval Welsh literature, Gwydion is one of the three sons and also is a master sorcerer and wonderful craftsman. His brother, Gilfaethwy, falls in love with a young girl named Goewin, foot-holder to Math, the son of Mathonwy and uncle to the three sons. Math has a compulsion that forces him to always rest his feet in the lap of a young maiden. The only time he does not feel the compulsion is when he goes away to war.

Through the machinations of Gwydion, Math leaves to fight a battle, allowing both he and Gilfaethwy to sleep with Goewin, albeit against her will. When Math returns and learns of their treachery, he turns his two nephews into deer. They remain that way for one year, after which they are turned into wild boars, and then, one year after that, wolves.

When he returns to his natural form, Gwydion approaches Math and suggests that **Arianrhod**—Gwydion’s sister—fill the now-vacant post of foot-holder. Before accepting, Math insists that the girl must step across his magic wand as a test of her virginity. She promptly flunks the test, as two babies drop out of her as she steps across the wand. One of the babies is Dylan Eil Don, and the other—originally scooped up and hidden by a quick-thinking Gwydion—becomes Llew Llaw Gyffes, or, “the Bright One of the Skillful Hand.” In fact, the rescued child is the result of an incestuous relationship between Gwydion and Arianrhod.

Arianrhod swears to Math that Llew will never bear arms and will never have a human wife. She is tricked on both counts by the powerful magic of her scheming brother Gwydion, who fashions a woman out of the flowers of the oak, broom, and meadowsweet. The woman becomes known as Blodeuwedd, the fairest woman of them all.

In reality, Gwydion was almost certainly an ancient deity, sharing affinities with Lug himself. Gwydion is a powerful and cunning sorcerer and a great craftsman, but he can also fight as a hero.

SOURCES:

Jones, Thomas: *The Mabinogion*. Dutton, 1950.

MacCana, Proinsias: *Celtic Mythology*. Hamlyn, 1970.

Gypsies

A nomadic population who originated in northern India. A mass exodus began about the middle of the ninth century, as large groups of people departed their homeland and moved westward. They passed through Pakistan, Afghanistan, and

Persia, eventually reaching the Caspian Sea north of the Persian Gulf. There the large group split into two distinct, smaller groups, one moving northward through Turkey and, by way of Byzantium, into Bulgaria; the other, smaller band, going southward, sweeping down through Jordan into Egypt. By 1348 the nomads were in Serbia, with others heading north, through Walachia and into Moldavia. By roughly 1400, they were so widespread that they could be found as far away as Peloponnesus and Corfu in the south, as well as in Bosnia, Transylvania, Hungary, and Bohemia. By the early 1400s, they had moved into Central Europe, carrying on into Germany by 1417 and England and Wales by 1430.

As the nomads spread across Europe and other areas, their origins were unclear. With their dark, swarthy skin and colorful dress, it was suggested that perhaps they were descendants of the ancient Egyptians. When that idea caught on, they were referred to as “Egyptians,” which was sometimes shortened to “Gyptians” and, eventually, to “Gypsies.”

Gypsies (more correctly, Romanies) were, in many places, equated with **witches** and sorcerers. They were accused of engaging in **black magic** and dealing with the devil, and in many countries they were banished. Tenaciously they held off their oppressors. When people treated them as mystics, they were quick to play that role. They carried tarot cards and read palms and told fortunes. While doing so, they kept their own **pagan** beliefs hidden, outwardly adopting the main religion in whichever region they happened to be in.

Charles Godfrey Leland says that Gypsies had a **goddess** named Gana, whom he identifies with **Diana**. Although it is difficult to label the Gypsies’ actual religion, there are many similarities between their practices and those of Witches. For example, both work **magic**, do **spells**, and perform **divination**, and both prefer to worship a female rather than a male. The Gypsies “Saint” is known as “Black Sara,” or “Sara *la Kâli*,” who differs in many respects from the Saint Sara of the Roman Catholic Church. *La Kâli* means both “the black woman” and “the Gypsy woman” in Romanes, which is the Gypsies’ language.

Gypsies believe in vampires, ghosts, and spirits of the dead. The Kalderash Gypsies say that God is not the creator of the world. Rather, the world has always existed as the mother of all humans. They refer to the earth as *De Develski*, “The Divine Mother.”

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Gypsy Witchcraft and Magic*. Llewellyn, 1998.

Clébert, Jean-Paul: *The Gypsies*. Penguin, 1967.

Fraser, Angus: *The Gypsies*. Blackwell, 1992.

Leland, Charles Godfrey: *Gypsy Sorcery and Fortune Telling*. Fisher-Unwin, 1891.



Hag

Term sometimes applied to the Crone aspect of the Triple Goddess. She represents **Wisdom**, although, at times, she can seem to be terrible, as when she is in character as the Gateway to Death.

Rosemary Guiley suggests that the origin of the term may be found in the Egyptian *heq*, who was a matriarchal ruler of predynastic times who knew the **Words of Power**. From the Old Norse, there is *hagi*, a “sacred grove,” and *haggis*, or “Hag’s dish,” which is a mixture of organ meats that is still served today.

In Scottish **Witchcraft**, the goddess Cailleach, the “Mother of All,” was often depicted as a hag with the teeth of a bear or the tusks of a wild boar. She was reputed to be a great worker of spells. Fragmentary accounts survive of how she created the earth, fashioning the hills and the lochs, the valleys and the mountains. In Scotland, also, is the New Year custom of Hogmanay, which stems from the pagan Yule celebrations. “Hogmanay” comes from *Hagmenai*, or Hag’s **Moon**, signifying the last night of the old year. Couples and families would celebrate the night together, making a point of not parting till after midnight, when they would do so with a kiss.

Barbara Walker says that Hag originally meant “holy woman.” In Greece, she became **Hecate**, the Queen of the Dead. As such she wore a veil over her face, so that no one would know the manner of their death. Old High German uses *Hagazussa*, or “Moon Priestess,” to describe a wise woman, while in the sixteenth century “hag” was synonymous with “fairy.” Robert Graves speaks of the “Hag of the Mill” which, he says, is another name for the **White Goddess**, and states that the Greeks called her “Alphito, Goddess of the Barley Flour.”

In England, a hag is a hedge enclosing a field or pasture and it is also a term applied to a cut-like gap or ravine in a mountain. This latter may be because of its serpentine-like meandering. In England, there is a mound named Hagpen, where “hag” meant serpent and “pen” meant hill. It seems possible that hag could mean



Illustration, by Doris Burton, of the hag of Blackwater Mere. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

both serpent and dragon. Hag is a name for the slime-eel, a snake-like fish related to the lamprey. These meanings are related to beliefs that the serpent represents earth energy, as seen in ley lines and so-called dragon lines. There would, then, seem to be a correlation between Hag, Serpent, and Earth Mother.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Scottish Witchcraft*. Llewellyn, 1991.
Century Dictionary and Cyclopedia. Century Co., 1902.
 Graves, Robert: *The White Goddess*. Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 1966.
 Guiley, Rosemary Ellen: *The Encyclopedia of Witches and Witchcraft*. Facts on File, 1989.
 Walker, Barbara: *The Women's Encyclopedia of Myths and Secrets*. Harper & Row, 1983.

Hag Stone

A stone with a natural hole through it. As an **amulet**, it is much in demand by **Pagans** and **Wiccans** because it symbolizes the female principle, or Great Mother. It was, however, once used as protection against **witches** during the time when it was thought they would steal horses and use them to ride to the **sabbats**. When they returned the next morning, the horses were always covered in sweat and completely worn out. To prevent such theft, a hag stone was hung from an **iron** nail in the stable as protection.

A hag stone was also considered protection from attacks by an **incubus** or **sucubus**. A hag stone placed under one's pillow held both creatures at bay.

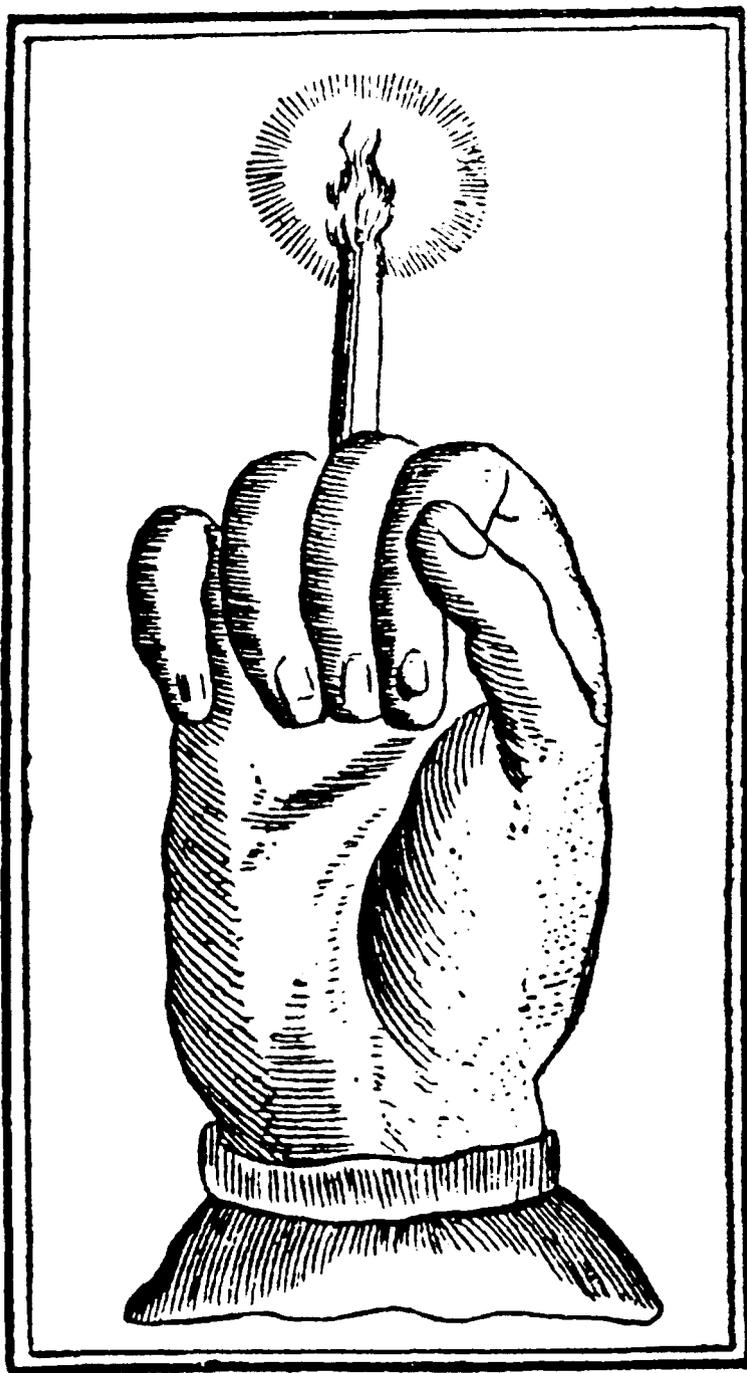
HALLOWE'EN see SAMHAIN

"HAMMER OF THE WITCHES" see *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*

Hand of Glory

The hand of a hanged man, dried and preserved, used in various magical **charms** and **spells**. Frequently a lit candle was attached to each extended finger and thumb, or perhaps even the digits themselves were set afire. It was believed that such a burning Hand of Glory would cause the people inside the house where the hand burned to pass into a deep sleep; those already asleep would stay in a deep stupor. While the inhabitants slept, the house would be robbed. It was also believed that a burning Hand of Glory induced all locks to open.

The book *Secrets merveilleux de la magie naturelle at cabalistique du Petit Albert* (Cologne, 1722) gave full details on how to make a Hand of Glory. It stipulated that the hand, which could be either left or right, had to be cut from a felon hanging from a gibbet. Once severed, the hand was wrapped in part of the funeral pall, having been well squeezed to remove any lingering blood. It was then placed in an earthenware vessel for two weeks with *zimat* (possibly verdigris), nitre, salt, and long peppers, all well powdered. It was then taken out and exposed to the sunlight until well-dried, preferably during the dog days. If the sun was not strong enough, then the hand could be dried in an oven heated with **vervain** and fern.



Illustration, from the *Albertus Parvus* grimoire, of a hand of glory. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

Meanwhile, a **candle** was made from the fat of the felon, with virgin wax, sesame, and *ponie* (which may have been horse manure). A single candle was placed in the palm of the hand, or five separate candles could be made and attached to each of the fingers and the thumb.

The book says that the Hand of Glory “would become ineffective, and thieves would not be able to utilize it, if you were to rub the threshold or other parts of the house by which they may enter with an unguent composed of the gall of a black cat, the fat of a white hen, and the blood of a screech owl.” The only way to extinguish a Hand of Glory was with milk, as no other liquid would work.

Many **witches** were accused of using a Hand of Glory in their practices to break into churches and to immobilize people and then do them harm. John Fian of Salt-pans, Scotland, one of the North Berwick Witches, was accused of using a Hand of Glory in such a manner.

SOURCES:

de Givry, Grillo: *A Pictorial Anthology of Witchcraft, Magic and Alchemy*. Spottiswoode, Ballantyne & Co., Ltd., 1931.

Handfasting; Handparting

Wiccan rituals of marriage and divorce. At a **Witchcraft** wedding, known as a Handfasting, the couple are joined together for “so long as love shall last.” When there is no longer love between them, they are free to go their separate ways, after the ceremony of Handparting. This does not encourage promiscuity, however, since Wiccans cherish their love for one another and seldom seem to part. In fact, most believe strongly in the concept of having found a “soul mate.”

Handfasting takes place within a **consecrated circle**, usually in the **waxing** cycle of the **Moon**, and is usually witnessed by **coven** members and by any **cowans** (non-Wiccans) that were invited. The ceremony is conducted by a **Priest** and/or **Priestess**. Often the couple exchanges rings, which may be inscribed with **runic** or other lettering. The marriage may or may not be legal in the “outside world,” depending upon the standing of the Wiccan Priest in the local legal system. If he or she is legally ordained, then the marriage is recognized by the courts. The wedding’s legality usually has little significance to the couple, who are more attuned to the spiritual bonding.

Ceremonies are very individual, with some couples incorporating the old custom of leaping over a **broomstick** and others including a binding of the hands. Some people even make small cuts in their wrists to mingle their blood with that of their partner. The couple—and the whole coven—may be **skyclad** (naked), robed, or in everyday clothes. Some couples include the **Great Rite** in their Handfasting ceremony. Although there are Handfasting and Handparting rituals included in most **Books of Shadows**, couples are encouraged to write their own ritual and include/exclude what they wish.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Buckland's Complete Book of Witchcraft*. Llewellyn, 1986.
Farrar, Stewart: *What Witches Do*. Phoenix, 1983.

Hare

Anne Armstrong, one of the accused witches at Northumberland, claimed in 1673 that, on one occasion at a coven meeting, Ann Baites turned into the form of a hare, as well as that of a cat, a greyhound, and a bee, “letting the devil see how many shapes she could turn herself into.” Then a number of the coven members assumed the shapes of hares and other animals. According to **Issobell Gowdie** of Auldearne, Scotland (1662), to become a hare it is only necessary to say the words:

I sall goe intill ane haire,
With sorrow, and sych, and meikle caire,
And I sall goe in the Divellis nam,
Ay whill I com hom againe.

To change back to human form one had to say:

Hare, hare, God send thee care.
I am in an hare’s likeness just now,
But I shall be in a woman’s likeness
even now.

Gowdie, who seemed to delight in giving details of witchcraft activities, claimed that she was once chased by dogs while she was in the form of a hare, and that she only escaped by running through her own house, in one door and out another. It is possible that this was a story based on a ritual game of chasing, with the Grand Master, or coven leader, playing the part of the hound.

Margaret Alice Murray points out that the witch had to announce to the other witches what shape she was about to assume. Others might then join her in that same shape. Yet it seemed that anyone else observing them would not actually see a change.

Some pagan societies regarded the hare as sacred. The Icenic Queen Boudicca’s (Boadicea’s) banner bore the likeness of the Moon-Hare, which was also associated with the goddess Eostre. Indeed, it is from this latter that the “Easter Bunny” derives. The Moon-Hare was what the Celts believed caused the marks seen on the surface of the full moon.

The hare (and the rabbit) as a symbol of the goddess, and therefore of good fortune, is still remembered in the form of the rabbit’s foot carried for luck even today. In ancient Greece it was connected with **Hecate**, the lunar goddess of the Witches. In Germany, France, and Holland, the hare is revered as the spirit of the corn. The act of reaping the last corn is referred to as “cutting the hare.” In Rome, the hare’s movements were carefully observed to divine the future, and only members of the priesthood could eat its flesh.

SOURCES:

Murray, Margaret Alice: *The Witch Cult in Western Europe*. Clarendon Press, 1921.

Walker, Barbara G.: *The Woman’s Dictionary of Symbols and Sacred Objects*. HarperSanFrancisco, 1988.

Healing

The old “Wise Ones” of the villages, from whom **Wicca** stemmed, were perhaps best known for their healing. **Cunning men** and women, **pow wows**, conjurers—these

are but a few of the many names by which the healers were known. They had a great knowledge of **herbs** with which they could treat any illnesses from which their neighbors might suffer. They also, of necessity, had a knowledge of poisons, so that they could treat accidental poisoning.

It was, in fact, from this knowledge of poisons that the confusion arose which led to the King James translation of the Bible to state, “Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live” (see **Bible**), rather than the more correct, “Thou shalt not suffer a poisoner to live.” But in addition to using herbs, many of the Wise Ones worked healing magic and practiced various forms of hands-on healing. All of these types of healing are utilized by Wicca today; both by coven groups and by **Solitary Witches**.

Healing is a most important part of Wicca, and many **covens** and individuals specialize in it. The first thing any Witch does before healing is gain the permission of the person to be healed. The prime axiom of Wicca is to not interfere with another’s free will. Some individuals feel that if they are sick, it is for a reason and they need to experience the illness. Such a person would be averse to anyone trying to cure them. Only the individual could decide if and when it was time to seek relief. For this reason, the first step for healing Wiccans is always to obtain permission to treat from the sufferer.

If at all possible, a Witch has the afflicted person actually present in the **Circle** while the healing takes place. It is possible to heal from a distance, but it is far better to have immediate contact. In hands-on healing by a coven, one Witch makes the contact while the others direct their power into her. This can happen from their individual positions around the circle, or they might actually make a point of physically touching the healer so that there is contact between all involved. The Witch doing the healing starts by drawing off any negativity that is present, then proceeds to direct and project positive, healing forces, including the energy from the coven.

Healing may also be done by projecting healing colors (*chromotherapy*), and by affecting change in the sufferer’s **aura**. Actual color may be projected using color gels, or colored precious and semiprecious stones might be laid on the body. In the late 1980s, there was great interest in crystals as amplifiers of energy, and crystals were—and are—used a great deal in healing. As a natural process, bodies select from the sunlight whatever colors are needed for balance, absorbing the vibrations of those colors. The principle of healing with color is to determine what color(s) is lacking and to provide an extra dose of that color. This can be done the aforementioned color projection, and also by absorption through drinking color-charged water.

If it is not possible to have the patient present in the healing circle, then the projection of “power,” whether in the form of color(s) or simply as healing energy, can be done at a distance. Burning **candles** is another method that may be utilized from afar to ease suffering. Candleburning magic is extremely popular, not only by Witches, but by many people, including Christians and others. The basis for this is **sympathetic magic**, where candles represent different objects, people, or ideas and are manipulated to influence those things.

Another popular method of healing at a distance is using what are known as **poppets**. These are dolls that have been specially made to represent the sick per-



A witch working a magical cure on a man's foot. Drawing in the style of Ulrich Molitor, 1489. Courtesy Raymond Buckland.

son. They are filled with appropriate healing herbs, stones, and other objects. If it is possible to obtain a lock of hair or nail parings, a piece of clothing, or even a photograph of the person seeking the cure, then those will be incorporated into the poppet's stuffing, making it that much more personal. A poppet is another form of sympathetic magic. (See also **Absent Healing**)

SOURCES:

- Buckland, Raymond: *Practical Candleburning Rituals*. Llewellyn, 1982.
 Buckland, Raymond: *Practical Color Magick*. Llewellyn, 1983.
 Buckland, Raymond: *Advanced Candle Magic*. Llewellyn, 1996.

Hecate

Pre-Olympian Greek earth goddess associated with the lower world, with night and the moon, ghosts and spirits, and with magic, witches, and sorcery. She was known as Prytania of the Dead, or the Invincible Queen, goddess of enchantments and magical charms. She seems to have originated in the southwest of Asia Minor. There, in the area of Caria, Greek personal names based on her name, such

as Hecataeus, are common. Of several genealogies, the best-known states that she is the daughter of Perses and Asteria. Because she helped Zeus in his fight against the Gigantes, Hecate was allowed to retain her powers as a Titan.

Hecate is associated with the **crossroads**, which is where three roads come together. In this respect, she is often depicted as a triple goddess, watching all three roads at the same time. Images of her on columns and statues show the triple Hecate as three heads or three full figures standing back-to-back-to-back. The Romans dubbed her "Diana Triformis"—Diana, Hecate, and Prosperpina (or **Artemis**, Hecate, and Persephone, in Greek terms). She was also sometimes depicted with three animal heads: dog, boar, and horse.

Hecate was a native of Thrace. She resembles Artemis in many ways and at times is merged with her. She was powerful on earth and in the sky, and she was accompanied by a pack of dogs. Rosemary Guiley suggests she was more important in antiquity than Circe. The torch is a symbol of Hecate, from her search in Hades, with **Demeter**, for Persephone.

SOURCES:

Guirand, Félix: *Greek Mythology*. Paul Hamlyn, 1935.

Kaster, Joseph: *Putnam's Concise Mythological Dictionary*. G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1963.

Phillips, E. D.: *Man, Myth and Magic*. BPC Publishing, 1970.

Hedge Witch

A term applied to those who, like the Old Wise Ones, have great herbal knowledge and deal in the healings and magics of everyday life. With the Hedge Witch there is not necessarily any recognition of the religious side of Witchcraft. She, or he, is a practitioner of low magic, i.e., magic that does not involve complicated rites and the use of ritual force to call upon entities. The Hedge Witch invariably works alone, as a Solitary.

HELL-FIRE CLUB see SATAN; SATANISM

Helms, Senator Jesse

In the mid-1980s, then-Secretary of the Treasury James Baker declared that any religious group that was sincere in its beliefs and that conformed to “clearly defined public policy” could claim tax-exempt status. This included all **Wiccan** churches, should they have decided to apply for such status. However, Baker’s “freedom of religion” policy did not, apparently, satisfy conservative Senator Jesse Helms of North Carolina. In 1985, together with equally conservative Representative Robert Walker of Pennsylvania, Helms introduced bills that would specifically remove Wiccans and **Pagans** from tax-exempt status.

The American Civil Liberties Union immediately opposed the bills, as did various **Witchcraft** and Pagan organizations. Even the IRS itself opposed the Helms Amendment. The ACLU called the bill “the crudest example of First Amendment infringement.”

The Church and School of Wicca owners **Gavin and Yvonne Frost** were alerted to Helms’s attempt to tack the anti-Wiccan amendment onto a House Bill. Among those who brought the bill to the Frost’s attention was noted evangelical preacher Billy Graham, who immediately saw that such a limitation could affect Christian churches as well as Pagan ones. As a result of all the ensuing resistance, the Helms Amendment was shelved.

Herbs

Herbs are aromatic plants used in culinary arts, in medicine, and also in **magic**. A lot of herbal lore has been handed down orally, from generation to generation, and only in relatively recent times has it been written down. Hippocrates listed more than 400 “simples,” or single herbs, while Dioscorides detailed 600. Some Roman emperors had botanists gather herbs from the outreaches of the far-flung empire and



A boleyn is a traditional Wiccan tool for cutting herbs. Courtesy Raymond Buckland.

send them back to Rome. A similar system was established in the New World by Spanish explorers.

Herbal medicine derives from the human need for health and strength; they are seen as cures for numerous ills and aids that help wounds mend. Many of today's medicines come from primitive botanical compilations. Some have been discarded for stronger, supposedly more effective and "purer" synthetic drugs, while others are still used in many parts of the world in their natural form. In 1775 William Withering, a doctor from Birmingham, England, isolated digitalis, an important heart remedy found in the leaves of the foxglove. For centuries **Witches** prescribed a tea brewed from foxglove leaves for weak hearts. Dr. Cheney, of Stanford University, "discovered" and proved that raw cabbage juice helped heal stomach ulcers. Again, such knowledge had been known to Witches for centuries.

One popular misconception of Witches is that they boil up all sorts of unsavory ingredients in their cauldrons: a mouse's ear, a lizard's tail, a frog's foot, and a snake's head, for example. In fact these ingredients, and others, are simply colorful common names for herbs and plants. Before all plants were given their own individual Latin name as a definite identifier, they had local names which varied greatly in

different parts of a country. Many of these names were given to the plant based on its shape or color, or on the shape or feel of its leaves. Mouse's ear was also known as mouse-blood wort; its official name was *Hieracium pilosella*. Lizard's tail was breast-weed, or *Saururus cernuus*, while frog's foot was the bulbous buttercup, or *Ranunculus bulbosus*. Finally, snake's head was balmony, or *Chelone glabra*. There were dozens, if not hundreds, of these colorful names applied to plants, which led to the mistaken believe that all sorts of horrible ingredients were employed in **potions** and **salves**. The notion that the physical appearance of an herb indicates its use is known as the Doctrine of Signatures.

In addition to making simples, syrups, teas, salves and ointments, and poultices and powders, as well as decoctions, infusions, and macerations, Witches also use herbs in a magical fashion. For this, the herb must be gathered in the right phase of the **Moon**, according to its **astrological** associations. It should be cut with a **boleen**, a magical knife used only for cutting herbs. The herb might be used to stuff a **poppet**—a cloth doll representing someone—in order to aid in recovery. Herbs could also be strewn around a house, or a person, as a protection from evil. They could even be placed in a bath to protect or empower the bather. Worn as part of a talisman, they could attract money, power, or blessings. Herbs also are frequently dried and burned as incense in magical rituals.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Buckland's Complete Book of Witchcraft*. Llewellyn, 1986.

Culpeper, Nicholas: *Culpeper's Complete Herbal*. Foulsham, 1946.

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Hereditary Witchcraft

It used to be that families would practice **Witchcraft** for hundreds of years, passing on the **Old Religion** from parents to children over many generations. These people were known as the Hereditary **Witches**.

Today the vast majority of Witches become such by being **initiated** into an existing **coven**. Solitary Witches perform a **Self Initiation**, or Dedication. Usually they have found the **Craft** after having been raised in another religion. There are very few Witches today who are descended from a family that has practiced Witchcraft for many generations.

For whatever reason, there are more people who claim to be Hereditary Witches than can ever be proven. In reality, most of their **Books of Shadows** can be traced to no earlier than **Gerald Gardner's** works. However, as the Craft moves into the twenty-first century, there are (and there will be) those who again may be termed Hereditary—even though their roots go back no further than early Gardner—just because they are second or third generation Wiccans.

Hermetica

The body of mystic wisdom attributed to Hermes Trismegistos, or “thrice great Hermes,” between the third century BCE and the first century CE. Hermes Trismegistos was a combination of the Greek Hermes and the Egyptian Thoth, or god of wisdom, learning, and literature. The Hermetica involved two levels of teachings: a popular pedagogy of **astrology**, **magic**, and alchemy, and a higher religious philosophy. It was very influential in the development of Western magic and modern neo-Pagan and Wiccan material.

Perhaps the best known work of the Hermetica was the *Emerald Tablet*, which opens with the statement, “That which is above is like that which is below, and that which is below is like that which is above, to achieve the wonders of the one thing.” This indicates that the microcosm of the earth is a reflection of the macrocosm of the heavens, and this is regarded as the foundation of astrology and of alchemy.

SOURCES:

Shepard, Leslie, A. (ed.): *Encyclopedia of Occultism and Parapsychology*. Gale Research, 1978.

Herne

A modified form of **Cernunnos**, a Latin title meaning “the Horned One”—the ancient **God** of Hunting and of Animals. In some areas of England, Cernunnos has been shortened to Cerne and that, in turn, has become Herne. Herne the Hunter is a figure of the Old God said to dwell in Windsor Forest, in Berkshire, and to ride with his hounds on the night of the full moon. He also appears at times of national crisis. In the reign of Henry VIII, the Earl of Surrey reported encountering the spectral hunting party in Windsor Great Park. Herne is the name used for the Wiccan God by many covens, and equates with the Welsh deities Arawn and Gwyn.

HEX see CURSE

Hex Sign

A sign painted on barns and other buildings in the Pennsylvania Dutch country (see **Pennsylvania Dutch Witchcraft**). They are believed to protect the inhabitants—human and/or animal—from the **evil eye** and other forms of **negative magic** known as *hexerei*; they also protect the barn from lightning strikes. In addition, some designs are intended to promote **fertility** and some are supposed to bring good fortune. The word hex comes from the German *hexe*, meaning “witch.”

The hex signs, although often incorrectly attributed to the Amish, are actually used by the Lutherans, Reformed, and other church people of the region. In fact, the signs are never used by the Amish, or any of the other “plain people.”

The signs are circular and painted in bright colors. They feature such objects as rosettes; tulips; **serpents**; **moons**; stars with five, six, or eight points; and a wide variety of geometric shapes, including **pentagrams**, swastikas, and hearts. There are



Herrn der Hunter, blowing his horn. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

also double-headed eagles and distlefinks—a goldfinch that ate thistle seed and used the thistle down for its nest. The bird came to be called a “thistlefinch” or, by the Pennsylvania Dutch, “distlefink.”

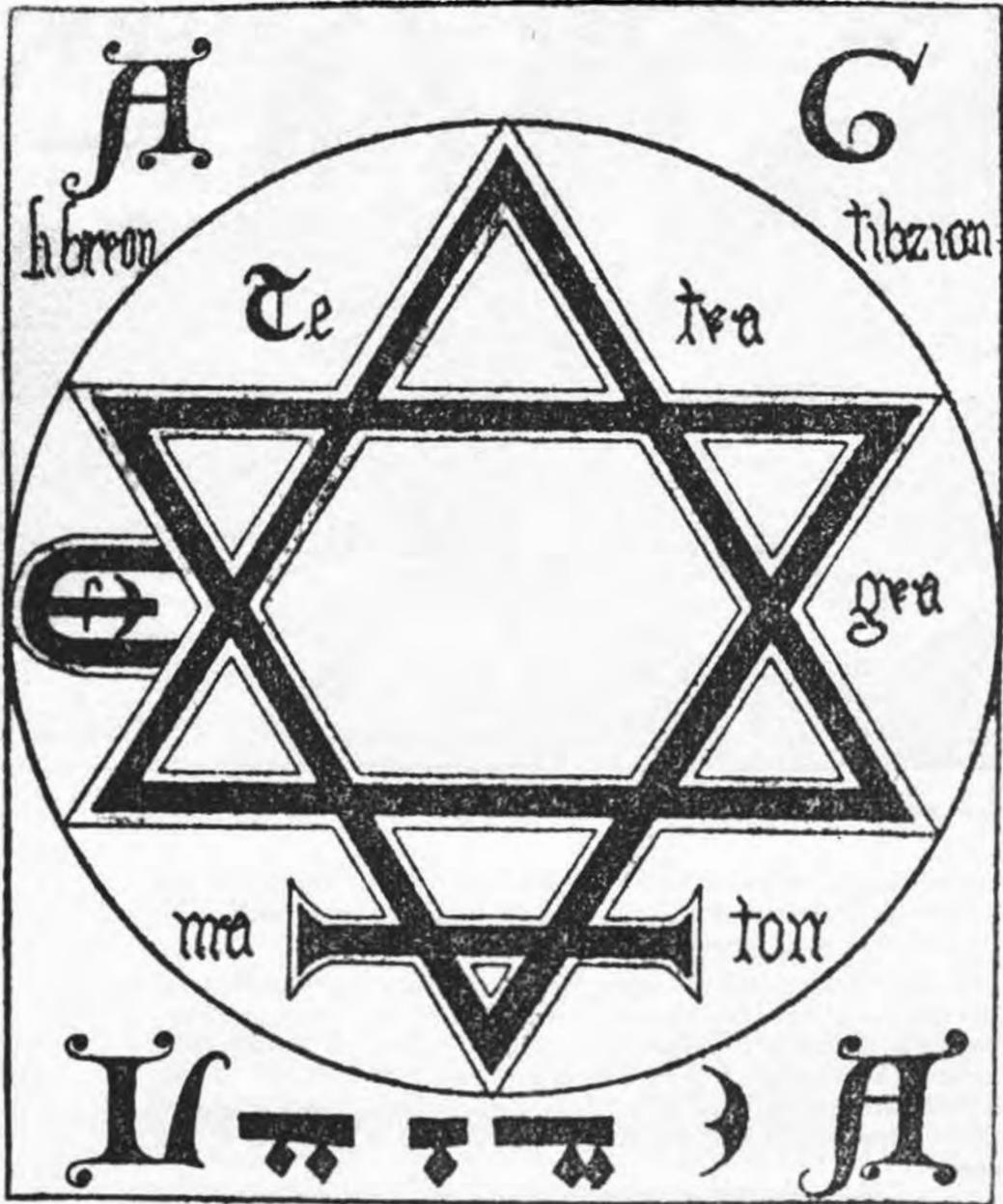
The practice of using hex signs comes from both Germany and Switzerland and was brought to the United States and utilized by eighteenth- and nineteenth-century immigrants. According to Rosemary Guiley, such protective symbols were painted on barns and household goods in the Old Saxon religion. In Switzerland, hex signs were placed on houses and barns, but in Germany, only on barns. Today the signs are found not only on buildings, but also on household items such as beds and tools.

SOURCES:

Guiley, Rosemary Ellen: *The Encyclopedia of Witches and Witchcraft*. Facts on File, 1989.
 Zook, Jacob and Jane: *Hexology*. Zook, 1962.

Hexagram

The hexagram comprises two triangles, one reversed and superimposed on the other, and is found in many areas of magic. As a decoration (possibly for magical



Fourteenth-century invocation circle, featuring an encircled magical hexagram. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

purposes), it has been found as early as the Bronze Age. The two triangles represent male and female energies, and they are also the symbols for fire and water. Additionally, they represent the ideas of “above” and “below” (see *Hermetica*).

The hexagram is part of the Seal of Solomon, a magical symbol of great power employed in Ceremonial Magic and used to banish spirits. Also known as the Star of David (in Hebrew, *Magen David*, or “David’s Shield”), the symbol was actually not identified with the Jewish faith until the seventeenth century. However, strictly as a magic symbol, it was found on Jewish amulets as early as the twelfth century.

HIGH MAGIC see CEREMONIAL MAGIC

High Magic’s Aid

An entertaining novel written by **Gerald Gardner** under his **Craft** name of **Scire**. The theme of the story, set in thirteenth-century England, concerns three would-be **Ceremonial Magicians**—Jan, Olaf, and Thur—who are in search of the **Witch** of Wanda, who they hope will **consecrate** their tools. The church’s medieval attitude toward **magic** and **Witchcraft** is addressed.

In the 1930s, when Gardner was first **initiated** into an existing **coven** of **Witches** in the New Forest area of England, he wanted to tell the world what he had discovered. He wanted to broadcast the fact that **Witchcraft** was alive and well and that it was, in fact, a benign, positive religion dating from pre-Christian times. However, Dorothy Clutterbuck, Gardner’s **High Priestess**, would not allow him to write about his discovery, since there were still laws against witchcraft at that time.

In time, Clutterbuck did allow Gardner to write his story, but it had to be in the guise of a fictional work. Thus, *High Magic’s Aid* was born, and in it, Gardner presented **Witchcraft** for what it was, including many of the actual **rituals** used by the original coven, albeit modified by himself. The Ceremonial Magic he presented was also authentic, as it was taken from S. L. MacGregor-Mathers’s translation of *The Greater Key of Solomon* (London, 1914).

Gardner’s book is highly sought after by **Wiccans**, since it is one of the first books to present the **Craft** accurately and in a positive light. It is also the first book written about **Witchcraft** by a practicing **Witch**.

SOURCES:

“Scire” (Gardner, Gerald): *High Magic’s Aid*. Michael Houghton, 1949.

Hocus Pocus

A term used by **cowans** (non-**Witches**) to describe **magical** work, usually used in a disparaging manner. Also sometimes used by stage conjurers as a “magical” word akin to “**abracadabra**.” An early mention of it being used in that way is found in Thomas Ady’s *A Candle in the Dark; or a Treatise Concerning the Nature of Witches and Witchcraft* (London, 1656): “I will speak of one man . . . who called himself ‘The King’s Majesty’s most excellent Hocus Pocus,’ and so he was called, because that at the playing of every trick, he used to say, ‘Hocus pocus, tomus talontus, vade

celeriter jubeo,' a dark composure of words to blind the eyes of the beholders, to make his trick pass the more currently without discovery.”

The actual origin of the phrase is uncertain. It has been suggested that it comes from “Ochus Bochus,” a demon of the North, in **Ceremonial Magic**. However, it may also be a corruption of the Latin phrase “hoc est corpus,” said by a Roman Catholic priest at the act of transubstantiation.

Hocus Pocus (movie)

Dull and pedantic 1993 movie starring Bette Midler, Sarah Jessica Parker, and Kathy Najimy, directed by Kenny Ortega. In **Salem**, Massachusetts, a lonely male teenager named Max (Omri Katz) conjures up three long-dead **witches**, Winifred (Midler), Sarah (Parker), and Mary (Najimy). The three had prepared for their immortality back in 1693, but they were executed before finalizing it. When returned to life, they are only able to remain alive by sucking the life out of young children. Although supposedly a comedy, there are few laughs in the film, and no sympathetic characters. It does not help the cause of modern **Wicca**.

HOLED, OR HOLEY STONE *see* HAG STONE

Holy Water

Water that is used in religious and/or magical rites. It is usually ordinary water to which **salt** has been added and that has been consecrated before use. In **Witchcraft**, this consecration is done by placing the forefinger or the tip of an **athamé** into the water while asking that all negativity be removed and all good enter into it.

It was once thought that Christian holy water was a powerful witch deterrent. It was also considered a protection from sickness and a cure for many ailments. In some towns and villages, churches had lockable lids fastened to the fonts to stop people from helping themselves to the powerful panacea.

Holzer, Hans (1920–)

Born in Vienna, Austria, on January 26, 1920, Hans Holzer's interest in **Wicca** stems from research he did for the book *The Truth About Witchcraft* (Doubleday, 1969), which was his first work on the subject.

Raised in Austria, Holzer studied at Vienna University and later at Columbia University. He has a Ph.D. from the London College of Applied Science, and he taught parapsychology for eight years at the New York Institute of Technology, where he was a professor.

Immediately after the World War II Holzer became a freelance writer. He was drama critic for the *London Weekly Sporting Review* from 1949 until 1960, and he

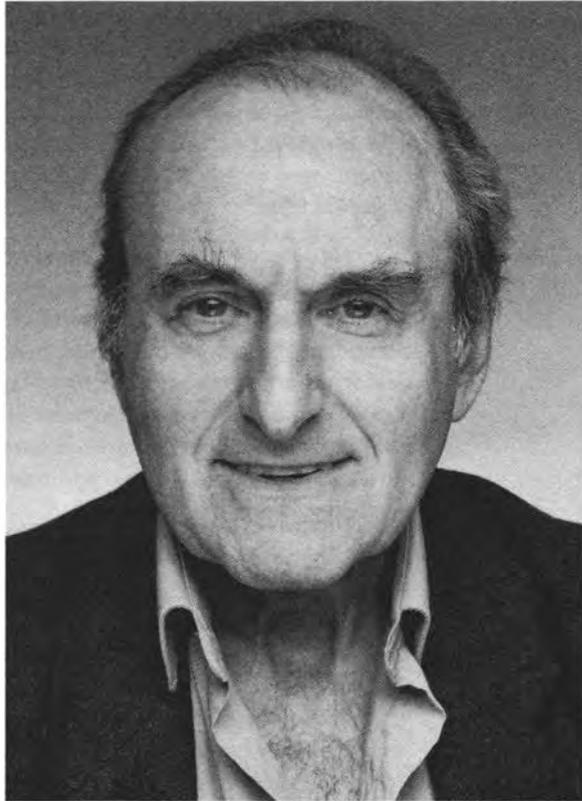
also acted as a television consultant. He was writer-producer for the NBC series *In Search of . . .* and has been involved in many other television series, documentaries, and talk shows. He also wrote screenplays, stage plays, music, musical revues, magazine articles, and well over 100 books.

Holzer became especially well-known for his many books on ghosts and hauntings. He says that even though he had previously met Sybil Leek, she was not the one who sparked his interest in Witchcraft. Instead, he says, "It was the subject itself leading to my personal involvement." He believed that you could not learn about a subject simply by casual observation, that you had to become deeply involved. Therefore, he was initiated into the Craft and participated in a number of rituals, both in the United States and in Great Britain.

Holzer's second book on modern day Witchcraft and Paganism, *The New Pagans* (Doubleday, 1972), was followed by a paperback called *The Witchcraft Report* (Ace Books, 1973). A third book on Witchcraft was a novel called *Heather:*

Confessions of a Witch (Mason & Lipscomb, 1975). That was followed by *Pagans and Witches* (Manor Books, 1978) and *Wicca: The Way of the Witches* (Manor Books, 1979). Although his books were not always well received by Wiccans, they did introduce many people to the religion. Holzer always emphasized the point that Witchcraft was the very antithesis of Satanism.

In 2001, Holzer was still writing, mostly for television and films. One of the projects he was working on was a documentary on the Craft. Of the year 2000, Holzer said, "I consider a major shift with the year 2000—veering more into the visual media."



Hans Holzer. Courtesy Raymond Buckland.

Hopkins, Matthew

The son of James Hopkins, who was the minister of Wenham in Suffolk, England, Matthew Hopkins became one of the most notorious British witch-hunters. In 1644, Hopkins was nothing more than a little-known lawyer who was having trouble paying his taxes. Originally a resident of Ipswich, he later moved to Mistley-

cum-Manningtree near the Suffolk border to Essex. There he became suspicious of seven or eight women he thought might be **witches**. He later claimed that the women held a **sabbat** near his house every sixth Friday night. Hopkins learned the name of one of the women—Elizabeth Clarke, who had but one leg. She was taken into custody on Hopkins's charge, after which a tailor in the village, John Rivet, remembered that Elizabeth Clarke's mother had been hung as a witch, leading him to accuse Clarke of being responsible for his wife's illness.

Eric Maple makes the point that accusing a Witch's close relative of also practicing the Craft was fairly common, as a number of the children and grandchildren of those who had been executed as witches in the towns and villages of East Anglia during the trials of the 1560s and 1570s were pinpointed for arrest because it was believed that **witchcraft** ran in the family. Maple also believes that, at the time of Hopkins's accusation, conditions were ripe for an attack on Witches since great tension existed in the Puritan eastern counties. Whether or not Hopkins was a Puritan is not known, although it is known that his principle assistant, John Stearne, was one.

Hopkins became extremely adept at extracting confessions from the accused, usually by pricking (while searching for the "**Devil's Mark**") and by keeping the accused from sleeping, either by repeatedly walking them about the jail cell or by having them painfully tied, cross-legged, in the middle of the room. Elizabeth Clarke was searched and pricked, and then kept awake and watched to see if she was visited by any **familiars**. It was claimed that two dogs, a kitten, a polecat, a rabbit, and a toad all visited her in her cell. She was then hung as a witch, although not before she had implicated others. Those trials took place at Chelmsford before the justices of the peace and Robert Rich, Earl of Warwick.

Hopkins had almost certainly read King James's *Daemonologie* (1597) and probably Richard Bernard's *Advice to Grand Jurymen* (1627), plus other broadsheets and pamphlets on witch trials. During the Clarke affair, his first foray into witch hunting, he brought a total of nineteen people to the gallows. A contemporary recorder, Arthur Wilson, said: "There is nothing so crosse to my temper as putting so many witches to death." He saw nothing in the condemned women "other than poore mellenchollie, ill-dieted atrabillious constitutions, whose fancies working by grosse fumes and vapors might make the imagination readie to take any impression."

After the first wave of trials, Hopkins was instrumental in bringing back the concept of witches' sabbats, an idea that had more or less subsided. He took on assistants, including John Stearne and a woman named Mary Phillipps. They were sometimes assisted by Edward Parsley and Frances Mills. Together, the group set out to "discover" witches, receiving twenty shillings apiece for each person they accused, plus a twenty shilling bonus for each conviction. They traveled to Suffolk, Norfolk, Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire, Bedfordshire, and other areas in their search, and in the space of two years, they caused at least 200 executions. Hopkins described himself as a "Witchfinder" and as "Witchfinder General" on the frontispiece of his book *The Discovery of Witches: in answer to severall Queries, lately Delivered to the Judges of Assize for the County of Norfolk. And now published by Matthew Hopkins, Witchfinder* (London, 1647).

Hopkins also enjoyed employing the water test, “dunking” or “swimming” an accused witch to see whether or not he or she floated. If a person being dunked floated, it was believed the devil was keeping his or her head above water and the person was hauled out of the water and hung. If the person sank, as it was believed all good Christians would do, then he or she was innocent. If that happened, the accusers hoped they could fish the suspected witch out of the water in time, before he or she drowned. Many times they could not.

Hopkins was extremely energetic in his persecution of witches, dashing back and forth across the country. He would find witches in one location and, before they could even be tried and executed, he would be off to another location to find more. Wallace Notestein remarks, “During the last part of May (1644) he had probably been occupied with collecting the evidence against the accused at Bury. Long before they were tried he was busy elsewhere. We can trace his movements in outline only, but we know enough of them to appreciate his tremendous energy. Sometime about the beginning of June he must have gone to Norfolk. Before the twenty-sixth of July twenty witches had been executed in that county.” As he continued that his travels, in August he was in Great Yarmouth, then it was on to Ipswich where, in early September, Mother Lakeland was burned (only the second case of a burning, which was a penalty for women who murdered their husbands).

In 1645 Hopkins came up against stiff opposition from Rev. John Gaule, vicar of Great Staughton. The vicar resented Hopkins and preached against him from the pulpit. He also published a pamphlet called *Select Cases of Conscience Touching Witches and Witchcraft* (London, 1646) in which he exposed the **tortures** used by Hopkins and his cronies. This was the beginning of the end of Hopkins’s reign as “Witchfinder General.” By 1646 he retired home to Manningtree. Stories have circulated that, as public opinion turned against him, he was once seized by a mob and subjected to his own dunking in a village pond. However, there seems little substance to this story. According to his partner John Stearne, he died “peaceably, after a long sickness of a Consumption.”

SOURCES:

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Horne, Fiona

Raised as a strict Roman Catholic, Fiona Horne has become the spokeswoman for **Wicca** in Australia. Educated by nuns in a girls school, Horne once wanted to be a nun herself. She studied the **Bible** and other recommended works but quickly came to the conclusion that they included too many inconsistencies and contradictions. The more she questioned, the more she found that answers were not forthcoming. To her, there were many stories and myths borrowed from elsewhere, along with unexplained laws and a great deal of disempowering of female stereotypes. Disenchanted, she started searching for alternatives in religion.



Fiona Horne. Photo by Karen Djordjevic.

After a brief exploration of **Satanism**—which she found greatly wanting—she began to explore various aspects of metaphysics, after which she discovered Wicca. Unlike Satanism and other forms of “witchcraft” that she had previously encountered, she found Wicca to be a positive, nature-based religion that held great appeal. She says that she “felt very attracted to the fact that Wicca acknowledges many different Goddesses and Gods, but most importantly, recognizes that they can exist within the individual, not in the sky out of your reach.”

By the time she was twenty-one, Horne had accepted the Craft as her true path and had performed a **ritual of Self Initiation**, becoming a **Witch**. Over the next few years she practiced as a **Solitary**.

In her early twenties, Horne started singing with a band that later named itself **Def FX**, which played a techno-metal fusion style of music. She wrote many of the band’s songs, and through them, she expressed her religious feelings. She never spoke openly about her involvement in Witchcraft until the band eventually broke up, at which time she wrote her first book about her personal

religious quest. Her recent focus has been on teenagers searching for the **Old Religion**, which led to new books and a “Witchcraft Kit” aimed at teenagers.

Horne has become a radio, television, and recording personality in Australia, where she hopes to expand her international horizons. She has worked as a journalist for mainstream Australian magazines and continued her music career as a solo artist. She describes herself as an author, journalist, recording artist, and television personality—and above all, a **Witch**.

SOURCES:

Horne, Fiona: *Witch: A Magickal Journey*. Thorsons, 2000.

Horned God

In Paleolithic times the principle male deity was a **God of Hunting**. Humankind needed success in the hunt in order to survive: the hunt provided skins for clothing, food, and bones for tools and weapons. In cave art, this god is portrayed wearing horns just like those found on the animals the men were hunting. That horned image can almost

be considered a prototype for what eventually became known as the God of the **Witches**. Over time he developed into a general God of Nature, but he is still frequently depicted with horns or antlers in representations used by modern day **Wiccans**.

The Romans dubbed the Horned God **Cernunnos**, meaning “the Horned One.” This name was adopted in many areas, often shortened to **Cerne** (and modified to **Herne** in some locations).

By the Bronze Age, horns had become a sign of divinity, and horned gods were fairly common in areas such as Mesopotamia. The number of horns came to indicate the importance of the god, with seven horns representing the acme of divinity—hence the seven horns of the Divine Lamb in the **Bible’s** Book of Revelations. Interestingly enough, in the Bible, Satan is never described as having horns, although the Church tried to equate him with the God of the Witches because of the presence of those appendages.

In Wicca, the Horned God is regarded as the Lord of the Underworld and of Death and all that comes after, as well as of Life and of Nature. His symbol is the Sun, as the Goddess’s symbol is the Moon. He rules over the “dark half of the year”—the winter months—while the Goddess rules over the summer months. At certain Wiccan rituals, the High Priest plays the part of the God by donning a **Horned Helmet**. Different Witchcraft traditions have different names for this deity. Some use Pan, the horned woodland deity of Arcadia; some use Herne, the hunter of England; and others use Cernunnos. As with the Goddess, there are many names by which he is known.

The Horned God is very much a god of fertility and, from the earliest cave paintings, is frequently depicted as an ithyphallic figure. In Stone Age society, the fertility of the animals was important, because the more fertile the animals were, the more there was to hunt. Human fertility—for the continuation of the race—was equally important. And, with the coming of agriculture, fertility of the crops became important as a source of food. These are the main reasons that both the god and the goddess are fertility deities.

When the altar at Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris was being repaired near the end of the eighteenth century, a much older altar was discovered beneath it. On it was carved a representation of the Horned God, an obviously **pagan** deity. At the behest of Pope Gregory the Great, in a letter to Abbot Mellitos in 601 CE, all “well built” pagan temples were to be cleansed and **consecrated** and converted to Christian churches. Open sites where pagans were traditionally gathered to worship were supposed to serve as the site of new Christian churches.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Witchcraft from the Inside*. Llewellyn, 1995.

Valiente, Doreen: *An ABC of Witchcraft Past and Present*. St. Martin’s, 1973.

Horned Helmet

Worn by the High Priest of a Wiccan coven when representing the Horned God. At the **Samhain ritual**, marking the change of season from winter to summer, the



Image of a horned god. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

High Priestess places such a helmet on the head of the High Priest, symbolizing the passing of power. The God is predominant during the winter months and the Goddess during the summer months, dating from earliest times when it was necessary to hunt for food during the winter but possible to grow food during the summer.

HOROSCOPE *see* ASTROLOGY

Horses

Poseidon, the Greek god of the sea, was said to have created the horse—whipping up the wave tops, the thunder of the surf sounding like the thunder of hooves. Many gods and goddesses have been associated with the horse. Demeter, the Greek goddess of fertility, was sometimes represented as having the head of a horse. Epona, the Celtic goddess, was almost always depicted riding side-saddle on a white horse. She was adopted by the Roman cavalry as a protector of horses. The famous White Horse of Uffington, in Berkshire, England, which was cut into the chalk scarp near a pre-existing Iron Age hill fort in the first century CE, was of cult significance and probably marked a site sacred to the horse goddess Epona.

The Norse god Odin had an eight-legged stallion named Sleipnir, regarded as the finest of all steeds. It could carry him to the land of the dead and back. The god Hermod once rode Sleipnir down to Hell to rescue Balder from the Underworld.

In many areas, the horse is considered a fertility symbol. In parts of Germany, the last sheaf of the gathered harvest is called the “Oat Stallion.”

Martingales were hung from horses to protect them from evil and to promote health, strength, and fertility. These were lengths of leather onto which were fixed brass talismans of different shapes, known as horse brasses. The symbols used included the sun and the crescent moon, horseshoe shapes, stars, acorns, oak leaves, trefoils, and hearts. Martingales and individual brasses can still be seen worn on horses throughout Europe and elsewhere.

The martingales were important, because it was believed that witches would steal unprotected horses to ride to the sabbat. The animals would be found in the morning, exhausted and covered with sweat. They were referred to as “hag ridden.” A stone with a natural hole through it, known as a “hag stone,” was often nailed up in the horse’s stall to protect the animal from theft.

It was also believed that a witch could turn a person into a horse. In 1633, in Lancashire, England, an eleven-year-old boy named Edmund Robinson encountered two greyhounds that later changed into a woman and a young boy. He recognized the woman as Frances Dicconson, a neighbor’s wife. The woman offered him money to keep quiet about the incident, but he turned it down. She then changed the accompanying boy into a horse and forced Robinson to ride the animal to a gathering of witches. The usual way for a witch to turn someone into a horse was to throw a magic halter over the head of the desired changeling. This would immediately transform the person into a horse, which the witch could then ride. If the per-

son was quick enough, he could pull off the halter and throw it over the witch's head, in turn changing her into a horse.

Hobbyhorses were a part of many old **Pagan rituals**, some of them extant today. The hobbyhorse is a wooden or wickerwork frame, draped with cloth, carried by a man who stands inside it. It includes a simulated horse's head—which may even be an actual horse's skull—and a tail. According to the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, it “is a fertility animal disguise that appears at a change of season. . . . To stimulate renewal of life it chases women and brings ‘luck’ (i.e., fertility) to the houses it visits in exchange for food or money.” There are hobbyhorses found all over Europe. In England, the best known are the “Old Hoss” at Padstow, Cornwall, which participates in the **May Day** revels, and the Minehead horse in Somerset, which is “ridden” by a man in a tall pointed hat who wears a metal mask. Some **Morris Dancers'** sides feature a hobbyhorse. Many early ecclesiastical prohibitions mention the hobbyhorse specifically, due to its Pagan connections.

SOURCES:

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Encyclopedia Britannica. William Benton, 1964.

MacCana, Poisias: *Celtic Mythology*. Hamlyn, 1970.

Horseshoe

A symbol for luck. The British admiral Lord Nelson had a horseshoe nailed to the mast of his ship *Victory* that was supposed to bring success in battle. It is thought that the horseshoe became a good luck symbol by virtue of being crescent in shape, like the **moon**; by being made of **iron**, which is a “**magical**” metal; and by being associated with the **horse**, which is often linked with **gods and goddesses**.

An old **Gypsy** folktale tells of a young Rom (male Gypsy) who was riding back to camp late one night. He suddenly realized that he was being pursued by four demons: Bad Luck, Ill Health, Unhappiness, and Death. He managed to keep ahead of them, but Bad Luck started to draw away from the others and gain ground. As they crossed a road, the Gypsy's horse threw a shoe, which flew through the air and struck Bad Luck in the forehead, knocking him from his horse and killing him. The Gypsy stopped to pick up the shoe then hurried on to the campground. The other three demons took their dead brother and buried him. The young Gypsy nailed the horseshoe up over the door to his *vardo* (Gypsy wagon), telling the rest of the tribe how it had killed Bad Luck. The next day the three demons came seeking revenge, but when they saw the horseshoe that had killed Bad Luck hanging over the door, they turned tail and fled. To this day, the Gypsies believe a horseshoe will keep bad luck away.

Traditionally, a horseshoe found lying on the ground is the best one to hang for luck. If it is found with its open end toward you and the calks (the “toes” on the end of the shanks) pointing upward, then simply toss it over your left shoulder for luck, spitting as you do so. However, if the open ends of a found shoe point toward you and the calks are turned down, then it is best to hang it from a nearby tree or fence with the ends down so that the bad luck may run out. If the closed end points

toward you, with calks either up or down, then take the shoe home and hang it over your front door with the pointed ends up. It will retain luck and keep all negativity away from the house and its occupants.

One superstition says that hanging a horseshoe in the chimney prevents **witches** from flying in on their **broomsticks**. Another says that a horseshoe at the head of the bed prevents nightmares.

In Sir Walter Scott's novel *Redgauntlet*, a character says, "Your wife's a witch, man; you should nail a horseshoe on your chamber door." A common seventeenth century greeting was "May the horseshoe never be pulled from your threshold." Bessie Bathgate of Eymouth, Scotland, nailed a horseshoe to the door of her house in 1634, but she was actually indicted for it. It seems the court believed that it the horseshoe was "a devilish means of instruction from the Devil to make her goods and all her other affairs to prosper and succeed."

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Gypsy Witchcraft and Magic*. Llewellyn, 1998.

Leach, Maria (ed.): *Funk & Wagnalls Standard Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology, and Legend*. Harper & Row, 1972.

Huebner, Louise

An astrologer and psychic in Los Angeles who, in 1968, persuaded Los Angeles County Supervisor Eugene Debs to name her "Official **Witch** of Los Angeles" in connection with a Folk Day to be held in the Hollywood Bowl. Unfortunately the proclamation did not specify that the title was just for the one day of the event, so Huebner made the most of her grand title and used it for the rest of her life. While she authored two books and produced a recording, the "**witchcraft**" she presented was of the Hollywood movie variety, featuring love **charms** and potions together with purported **spells** for good and bad.

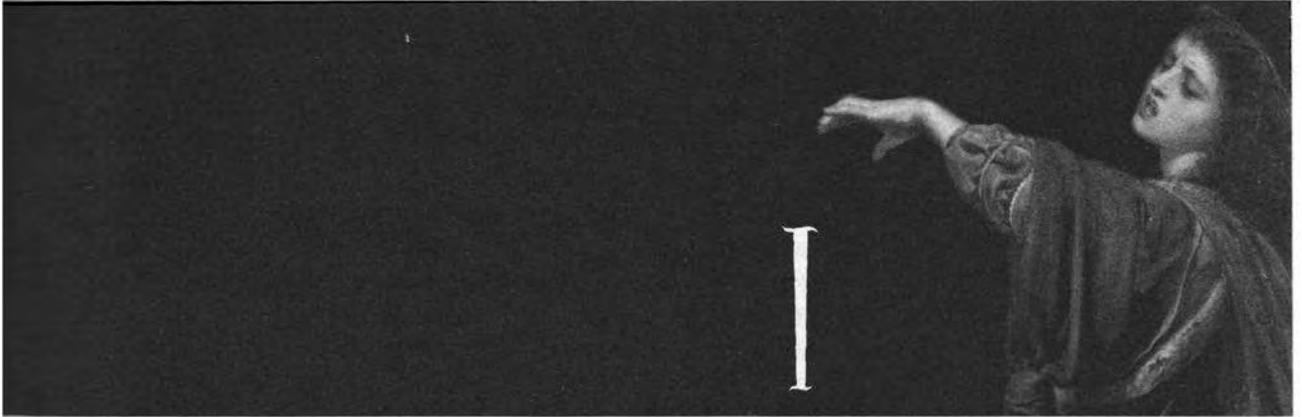


Image Magic

A form of sympathetic magic, which is based on the belief that “like affects like.” The earliest example is found 25,000 years ago, in Paleolithic times. Large clay models of bear and bison have been found constructed on the floors of caves in the south of France. These figures are pock-marked with holes where they were ritually attacked with spears and javelins, as cavemen acted out the hunt. It was believed that by successfully “killing” the images of the animals, the ensuing hunt would be affected by the magic and the animal would be successfully killed. A figure of a bison that had holes in it was found at Le Tuc d’Audoubert, Ariège, France. There was also a similarly pocked figure of a bear, although the bear was missing its head. There was a hole in the neck where, presumably, a stake would be placed with a real bear’s head attached to it, to giving extra potency to the magic.

Since that time, there have been numerous examples of this thinking. In ancient Egypt, about 1200 BCE, a treasury official worked harmful magic by making a wax image of Pharaoh Rameses III. In 1325 CE more than twenty men were indicted and tried by the king’s bench for a murder committed by tormenting a waxen image. Francis—Earl Bothwell—tried the same thing through the agencies of the North Berwick coven of witches, utilizing an image against King James VI of Scotland in 1590. In seventeenth century France, Catherine de Medici, wife of King Henri II and mother of succeeding kings Francis II, Charles IX, and Henri III, was rumored to have used image magic to bring her sons to the throne. It was not uncommon for a witch’s accusers to, during the persecutions, pretend to find wax or clay images in the witch’s house. This was always taken as proof of guilt that the witch had been using image magic.

Under the Secular Laws of King Cnut of England (c. 1030 CE), homicide by witchcraft came under the heading of secret murder and was punishable by death. Directly mentioned is the act of *invultuacio*, the maltreatment of an image or effigy representing the person to be afflicted or destroyed. This method of murder is also

mentioned in the Anglo-Saxon *Modus Imponendi Poenitentiam* of King Edgar and in the Anglo-Saxon Penitential of Pseudo-Ecgbert. A case of image magic occurred in the tenth century, and the accused woman was found guilty and was drowned. In 1419 Richard Walker, a chaplain, was arrested for sorcery by the prior of Winchester. Among his belongings were found two small images of yellow wax together with two books containing **conjurations** and figures.

In the late 1300s, King Edward III of England became infatuated with a woman named Alice Perrers. That infatuation was later blamed on the Monk of St. Albans, who was one of Perrers's friends. He made wax images of the king and of Alice and, by using these together with other magic, caused the king to become obsessed with the lady. The monk was arrested in 1376. When eleven-year-old Edmund Robinson was carried off to visit the witches by his neighbor, Frances Dicconson (see **English Witchcraft**), in Lancashire in 1633, he claimed that he observed "three Women take six pictures (images) from off the beam (in the barn), in which pictures were many thorns or such like things sticked in them."

The principle of image magic was well described by Elizabeth Southern, known as "Old Demdike," at the trial of the Lancashire witches in 1613. She said, "The speediest way to take a man's life away by witchcraft is to make a picture of clay, like unto the shape of the person whom they mean to kill, and dry it thoroughly. And when you would have them to be ill in any one place more than another, then take a thorn or pin and prick it in that part of the picture you would so have to be ill. And when you would have any part of the body to consume away, then take that part of the picture and burn it. And so thereupon by that means the body shall die." An eighteenth-century **chap book** titled *The Witch of the Woodlands*, sold in Aldermary Church Yard, London, in 1710, contains an engraving of a devil-like figure surrounded by witches, two of whom are offering doll-like figures, presumably for his approval and blessing.

In addition to sticking wax images with pins or thorns, harm could be caused by melting the figure slowly or quickly over flames. Clay images were sometimes laid in a stream, so that the action of the water would gradually wash away the clay, rendering a slow and painful death.

The majority of image magic is done for negative reasons, although it can also have positive ramifications. In the example cited above concerning King Edward III, he is made to fall in love; while it is against his will, this is still not as negative as trying to harm or kill him. Certainly much image magic is done in the name of love. **Candle magic** is often used to attract one person to another. In this type of magic, candles are used to represent the people involved, with the color of the candles determined by the **astrological** signs of those who are to be affected.

Poppets are often used, especially for positive magic such as **healings**. A poppet is a cloth doll that represents the person involved. They are stuffed with **herbs**—either healing herbs or those associated with love. As with the Stone Age clay bear that had a real bear's head attached to it, it is felt that the image or poppet is strengthened if it includes something that belonged to the subject of the image. Hair clippings, fingernail parings, pieces of cloth—even photographs and dirt from the person's footprints—are considered potent.

Image magic was once considered one of the most effective ways of influencing a person. **Wiccans** today use it mainly for healing, although it has also been used for binding spells. Modern day Witches, however, never use it for negative purposes.

SOURCES:

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***I Married a Witch* (movie)**

A 1942 film directed by René Clair, starring Fredric March, Veronica Lake and Susan Hayward. As a seventeenth-century witch (Lake) is being burned at the stake, she puts a curse on her accuser (March), saying that all his descendants will be unhappy in marriage. The curse is a success and works for centuries. The film then cuts to present day, when a gubernatorial candidate and descendant of the accuser, Wallace Wooley (March), is about to marry socialite Estelle Masterson (Hayward).

A lightning strike frees the spirit of the long-dead witch and she materializes (as Jennifer), only to fall in love with Wooley even as she attempts to make his life miserable. She uses her magic to try to help him win the election, which leads to fraud charges. Eventually Wooley falls in love with Jennifer, which frees her from the spirit world and caused her to become mortal once again.

The story is loosely based on the Thorne Smith novel *The Passionate Witch* and was the inspiration for the television series *Bewitched*.

Imbolc

Also known as Oimlec, Candelaria, and Lupercus, Imbolc is one of the four major **sabbats** of **Witchcraft**, falling on February Eve. It marks the halfway point through the “dark half” of the year, or the winter months. Great bonfires, or **balefires**, were once lit on the highest hilltops across Britain and much of Europe to lend extra energy to the **God** as he made his way through the dark half of the year toward **Beltane** (May Eve) and the coming of the **Goddess**. The Goddess herself was in the throes of transferring from the **Crone** aspect to that of **Maiden**, when she emerged from the Underworld in the spring.

The Christian church adopted the old **Pagan** Imbolc festival, as it did so many others, calling it Candlemas. By the fifth century, a procession of lighted candles became a regular part of the Roman Catholic rites, echoing the Pagan origins.

Stewart Farrar says that Imbolc, or the Irish form of *i'mbolg*, means “in the belly,” being the “first foetal stirrings of Spring in the womb of Mother Earth.” However, Graham Harvey says the word means “lactation.” Regardless of meaning, it traditionally marks the beginning of lambing season and the time of the lactation of the ewes. It is also the Feast of Brighid, who is a fertility bringer. In a monastery at Kildare, in Ireland, a perpetual fire was kept burning in Brighid’s honor.

The making of **Corn Dollies** and **Sun Wheels** is a popular Pagan practice, to recognize and honor the Maiden aspect of the Goddess. In many cases, the straw used to weave the Corn Dollies is that which was cut from the last bundle—known as the Corn Mother—at the previous year's harvest.

Imbolc is the time of the year when **Wiccans** look to make a change, to clear out that which is no longer useful in their lives to make room for the new things that need to come into their lives. Some traditions and **Solitaries** symbolically sweep the circle with a broomstick as part of the Imbolc rites.

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Imprecation

From the Latin *imprecari*, meaning to “invoke by prayer,” an imprecation is a plea to a deity and, most often, a recited **spell** meant to **curse**. The term is seldom, if ever, used today, but it was used in many **witch** trials during the persecutions.

INANNA see ISHTAR

Incantation

The recitation of a **spell**. In the working of **magic**, words are power. Written words can be powerful, but spoken words are even moreso. An incantation is actually far more than a simple recitation—it is a command. Prayer is a request, while an incantation is a command for something to happen, made with the absolute assurance that it *will* happen.

In **Ceremonial Magic**, the magician is trying to summon **spirits** or entities to do his bidding. They are reluctant to appear. The only way he can make them do so is to use various Names and **Words of Power**, which are delivered in the most authoritative manner. The words, as the words of any incantation, must be spoken with familiarity, firmly, and in a certain rhythmic manner. Rhyme and rhythm are most important in the working of magic, especially with incantations. If the actual incantation is not written as a rhyme, then it should be spoken with a regular, definite beat.

Incantations are often long and repetitive. This is so the magician performing the incantation can gradually build up his or her energy through the rising inflections and the sonorous, rhythmical, often rhetorical use of the words. Doing an incantation should charge the magician with energy—he or she should feel it building and building until the words are almost being shouted. There should be a rising state of intense excitement that explodes with the final declaration. Richard Cavendish says of the magician, “He has now ‘summoned up’ a spirit from his inner self. At the climax the full force of his magical power gushes from him, he

loses all consciousness of his normal self and becomes the mental picture which he only saw before.”

It is important to be thoroughly familiar with the incantation. For this reason, it is not good magical practice to simply repeat, parrot-fashion, words that are written in a dead or unknown language. It is necessary to know the language in order to give the correct pronunciation and the necessary inflections. For example, the Ecumenical Council of 1963 voted to allow the Roman Catholic mass to be said in languages other than Latin, but stipulated that the Latin was to be retained for “the precise verbal formula which is essential to the sacrament.” Incantations are done as part of working magic, although not all magic calls for them. Sometimes **Witches** use incantations in the magic they do.

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Incense

Incense is the perfumed fumigation that results from the burning of various gum resins, flowers, barks, roots, dried seeds, and **herbs**. Burning incense has been a part of **magical** and religious **rites** for thousands of years. True incense is actually limited exclusively to frankincense, the gum resin of trees of the *Boswellia* family, growing chiefly on the Somali coast of east Africa. But today the term “incense” is applied to a variety of substances. It was believed in the past that incense smoke carried one’s prayers up to the gods.

A memorial stone placed on the breast of the Sphinx in Gaza, Egypt, shows Tuthmosis (Thothmes) IV (1533 BCE) pouring libations of wine to his deity Ra and offering him incense. Worshiping deities and burning incense in their honor is one of the most common scenes depicted in ancient Egyptian art, which is carved and painted in the temple interiors. Egyptians worshiped Ra at sunrise with resin, at midday with myrrh, and at sunset with *kuphi* (a compound of sixteen ingredients, including sweet calamus, honey, raisins, resin, myrrh, and wine). The usual Egyptian **censer**, or thurible, was a hemispherical bronze bowl supported by a long handle. The bowl rested in a formed hand, while at the other end there was the symbol of Ra, most often a hawk’s head crowned with a disc.

From early use in Egypt and Babylonia, incense spread to Greece and Rome. Homer mentions the burning of incense, as does Hesiod. It is probable that gums and resins from around the Indian Ocean began finding their way into Greece by the eighth or seventh centuries BCE. The Orphic Hymns specify a variety of incenses for the deities, all of which were selected based on some **occult** significance. Frankincense became popular with the Romans, first for religious rites, then for state occasions. It was offered on a daily basis to the household deities, the *Lars familiares*.

Incense did not find its way into Christian ritual until the fifth century CE, although it had been a part of Judaic ritual since the seventh century BCE. One of

its earliest uses occurred in England, as remains that have since been labeled “incense cups” were found in barrows on Salisbury Plain, not far from Stonehenge. According to Doreen Valiente, the cups are small round vessels of clay with perforations on all sides that could only have been used for burning incense.

Incense is a part of all **Wiccan** rituals. Not only does it create a positive atmosphere, but it also induces a feeling of being separated from the ordinary, everyday world. **Witches** speak of their time inside the **consecrated Circle** as being “between the worlds”—neither in this world nor yet in the next. The smoke and perfume of the incense, combined with the flickering candlelight, help reinforce that feeling.

Modern incense is usually available in three different forms: as long, thin sticks that may be lit and that burn down slowly; as small concentrated cones, which again may be lit and are self-burning; and in a powder, which must be sprinkled onto burning charcoal. Although the first two forms are convenient and are commonly used in homes and private ritual rooms, the powdered form is most commonly used in **coven** rituals. A lit charcoal briquet is placed in a censer, and the incense is sprinkled on it. Frequently the censer is suspended by chains, so that it can be swung to keep the charcoal alight. Such thuribles are used by **Witches**, **Pagans** of all types, **ceremonial** and other magicians, and by Christian and other churches and temples. Some **Solitary Witches** favor the Native American practice of burning such dried items as white sage, cedar, and sweet grass.

SOURCES:

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Incubus and Succubus

Female (succubus) and male (incubus) demon lovers that, in the Middle Ages, were believed to visit innocent people in the night to seduce them. Those so attacked would wake to feel a heavy weight on their chest, which would turn out to be the incubus or succubus demon. It was believed that malformed children, and even twins, were the result of a union between a woman and an incubus.

The Latin for “nightmare” is *incubo*, the literal meaning of which is “to lie upon.” (From this we get the modern English word “incubator.”) The incubus and succubus were related to nightmares; in fact, a visit from one of the creatures was regarded as a nightmare. In the Middle Ages the concept was widely discussed. The initial idea of these two demons may have first arisen from the myths of ancient **gods and goddesses** seducing humans, but it was the sexually titillated inquisitors at the **witch** trials during the persecutions that made it seem as if such creatures were almost commonplace.

Many times the demons would assume human shape. It was thought that the same demon could appear as a male or a female. In that way, it could impregnate a woman—first it would appear as a succubus and take semen from a man, and then it would reappear as an incubus and deposit it in a female. Thomas Aquinas said, in his *Summa Theologiae* (1266–73), “If sometimes children are born from intercourse with demons, this is not because of the semen emitted by them, or from the bodies they have assumed,



Incubus hovering over the body of a sleeping woman, c. 1865. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

but through the semen taken from some man for this purpose, seeing that the same demon who acts as a succubus for a man becomes an incubus for a woman.” However, there were cases that seemed to throw some doubt on the whole theory of demon visitation. A medieval nun said that she had been attacked by her bishop, Bishop Silvanus. The bishop, however, pointed out that it was obviously an incubus in his form who had tried to seduce her. The convent accepted the bishop’s explanation.

Nuns seemed especially susceptible to incubi attack. Ludovico Maria Sinistrari, in *Daemonialitate et Incubis et Succubis* (1754), told of a nun who would regularly disappear into her cell after dinner. Another nun heard low voices and the sounds of lovemaking through the thin partition between their rooms. Boring a hole in the wall, she saw the nun making passionate love with a “comely youth.” After all the other nuns had been allowed to witness the scene, the miscreant was approached. Under threat of torture, she admitted that she had “long been indecently intimate with an incubus.” In most of the earlier accounts of copulation between incubi and women, or succubi and men, there was mention of the intense pleasure brought about by this union. But later, toward the end of the fifteenth century, the authorities seemed to realize that attacks should not be made to sound attractive and, after

torture, descriptions began to include talk the incubi possessing large, rough penises that emitted ice-cold semen.

The *Malleus Maleficarum* (1486) made three classifications: (i) those who submit voluntarily (to incubi) as witches; (ii) those brought against their will by witches to sleep with incubi; (iii) those assaulted against their will. As the witch trials gained in fervor, the inquisitors came to expect that a witch would have had relations with an incubus, and each witch was tortured until she confessed to that misdeed. Since women were regarded as far more licentious than men, it was supposed that incubi outnumbered succubi by nine to one.

St. Anthony was said to have been sorely tempted by female demons. According to St. Athanasius's *Life of Anthony* (c. 361 CE), "The devil, unhappy wight, one night even took upon him the shape of a woman and imitated all her acts simply to beguile Anthony." St. Hippolytus was once visited by a nude woman (c. 230 CE), but when he threw his chasuble over her to hide her nakedness, she turned back into what she really was—a corpse that had been animated.

In the **Salem Witch Trials** there was suggestion of succubi when Bridget Bishop was charged. She had been a tavern keeper who had two ordinaries, one at Salem Village and the other in Salem Town. The main charge against her seems to have been that she wore a "red paragon bodice" and had a great store of lace. She was also said to retain her youthful appearance despite her advancing years. Various decent, upright, married men of the Puritan community testified that her "shape" had visited them and plagued them in their sleep! On June 10, 1692, she was hung on Gallows Hill.

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Initiation

Different traditions of **Wicca** have different forms of initiation, but all contain the same basic ingredients: a challenge, an **oath of secrecy**, the imparting of certain knowledge, and a symbolical death followed by a rebirth.

Mircea Eliade says, "The term initiation in the most general sense denotes a body of **rites** and oral teachings whose purpose is to produce a decisive alteration in the religious and social status of the person being initiated." He goes on to say that the initiate emerges from the experience "endowed with a totally different being from that which he possessed before his initiation; he has become *another*."

Certainly the central theme of all initiations (and puberty rites) from around the globe involves *palingenesis*—a death and rebirth. To show this rebirth, an initiate will take a new name, which is usually one of his or her own choosing. For example, a newly elected Roman Catholic **pope** selects a new name. Nuns also choose new names when they take their vows. In many religions, a new name is taken when a person formally enters that faith.

Like the old religions of ancient Greece and Rome, the **Craft** is what would be termed a “**mystery religion**”—it is a religion of initiation, with an oath of secrecy. You cannot be born a **Witch**, just as you cannot be born a Roman Catholic. You can be born into a Witch family, but you do not actually become a Witch until you have been officially accepted into the religion with due ceremony. Where the **Old Religion** differs from the New, however, is in the fact that, as an alternative to a **coven** initiation, an individual can initiate him or herself (**Self Initiation**), becoming what is known as a **Solitary Witch**.

Gerald Gardner, in *Witchcraft Today*, deals extensively with the Villa of Mysteries on the Street of Tombs in Pompeii, Italy, which was the home of the Dionysian Mysteries. Within the villa, the walls of an initiation room are painted with a series of frescoes showing a neophyte passing through the initiation. Gardner points out the similarities between these scenes and the stages of the Wiccan initiation.

First, there is a challenge, which ensures that the would-be Witch is sincere in his or her desire to become a part of the Old Religion. As in many such rituals, the initiate is then blindfolded and bound. This symbolizes the darkness and restriction of the womb prior to birth. As is the case in many other similar rites, a ritual, cathartic **scourging** is then performed, which represents the symbolic death. An oath to preserve the secrets of the Craft is taken, and then, at the rebirth, the cords and blindfold are removed and certain knowledge is imparted. The ceremony ends with a celebration of the person’s entry into a new life.

Initiations are performed male to female and female to male. In other words, a male will be initiated by a **Priestess**, and a female by a **Priest**. The same format is found in many areas of folk **magic**, where **herbal** and magical lore are never passed to a person of the same sex. The only exception is that a mother can initiate her daughter, and father his son; no other female-to-female or male-to-male ceremonies are allowed.

Only adults are permitted to undergo initiation. A child can be taken into a coven, although he or she must be the child of a couple that already belongs to the group. Today, no one under the legal age is admitted unless he or she is related in that manner.

Margaret Alice Murray addressed the admission ceremonies at the time of the persecutions. According to her research, one of the requirements of the candidate was “the explicit denial and rejection of a previous religion.” The evidence at some of the trials said that, in addition to verbally rejecting the former religion, an action was also required, such as trampling a **cross** underfoot. Both of these acts were probably required at that time to ensure that the applicant was a true **Pagan** and not a spy of the Church, since such declaration and defilement of the Christian symbol would have been considered a mortal sin. To an Old Religion follower, the cross held no special significance, and therefore its trampling was of no consequence. Such denials and trappings are not a part of Witchcraft today, and they were only included in the Middle Ages for the reasons stated.

Murray also speaks of a Witch’s Mark, or **Devil’s Mark**, and suggests it might have been in the form of a small tattoo. Again, this may well have been the practice

at that time to separate the true believers from the spies. To have such a mark would mean risking one's life, as discovery of the symbol would inevitably lead to the gallows or the pyre. Few spies were willing to take such a risk.

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INNOCENT VIII, POPE see POPES

Inquisition

George L. Burr says, "Not till the fourteenth (century) did the Holy Inquisition draw **witchcraft** fully into its own jurisdiction and, by confusing it with heresy, first make the **witches** a diabolic sect and give rise to the notion of the **witch-sabbath**." Witchcraft generally fell under the heading of heresy, and from the middle of the fifteenth through the middle of the eighteenth century, burning at the stake was the supreme penalty for committing such an act. (In Britain hanging was the rule. There, witchcraft was looked upon as a civil crime, and those accused came under the jurisdiction of the secular arm of the law.) This stemmed from St. Augustine's (354–430) theology as expressed in *Liber de Fide ad Petrum Diaconum*, in which he said that he "most firmly holds and in no way doubts that not only every **pagan**, but every Jew, heretic, and schismatic, will go to the eternal fire, which is prepared for the Devil and his angels." This position was incorporated into *Liber extra*, as issued by Pope Gregory IX in 1234. The position was later developed and expanded upon by such inquisitors as Nickolas Eymeric and Thomas Aquinas.

Torture of those accused of heresy—which would continue until a confession was obtained—was recognized by both the ecclesiastical and secular courts. In Spain and Italy, all heretics were burned alive, but elsewhere, there was the opportunity for a guilty person to be strangled just prior to being burned. This exception was only granted if the accused showed contrition and begged forgiveness.

The Inquisition was started by the Catholic Church, but soon after, the Protestants also took up the cause. **Jean Bodin**, writing in *De la Demononomie des Sorciers* (Paris, 1580), stated that, "Even if the witch has never killed or done evil to man, or beasts, or fruit, and even if he has always cured bewitched people, or driven away tempests, it is because he has renounced God and treated with **Satan** that he deserves to be burned alive. . . . Whatever punishment one can order against witches by roasting and cooking them over a slow fire is not really very much, and not as bad as the torment which Satan has made for them in this world."

As Rosemary Guiley points out, "The Inquisition was not a persecution of witches per se; it was a persecution of heretics and enemies of the church. The 'crime' of witchcraft became an effective way to accomplish the Inquisitor's aims."

In many cases across Europe, charges of witchcraft were leveled against people for purely political reasons. Not all of those charged were poor (**Dame Alice Kyteler**, for example), and the church, the state, or the feudal overlord benefitted from the confiscation of the accused's property. Therefore, in many cases, the temptation of wealth and property proved to be too much, and a charge of witchcraft was used to gain access to that wealth.

The Church's efforts had been growing more forceful as time went on, and by 1184, under the direction of Pope Lucius III, all deviations from the Church's teachings were being investigated by the bishops. The papal Inquisition was established between 1227 and 1233. The Inquisition traveled a circuit and carried out its investigations and tortures in strict secrecy. It was only at the Sunday masses that the findings were made public.

The first person accused of witchcraft and burned at the stake was Angela, Lady of Labarthe, in Toulouse, France, in 1275. The last execution in England was in 1717; in Scotland, 1727. It is impossible to say exactly how many people were put to death under a charge of witchcraft—and it should be remembered that very few of those accused were actually Witches—but the records of Vatican official Bartolommeo Spina show that he alone was responsible for burning more than 1,000 people accused of witchcraft in one year (1523). Between 1581 and 1591, **Nicholas Remy**, Attorney-General of Lorraine, boasted that he burned 900 witches who had been found guilty. There are many examples of people being burned by the hundreds throughout the persecutions. Some estimates put the total number around 500,000, while some place it as high as nine million.

As Rosemary Guiley points out, today modern **Wiccans** speak of a possibility of a return to “the **burning times**,” meaning that they fear there is a reawakening happening that will echo the religious persecutions of the past. This fear stems from the words and actions of many Christian fundamentalists, including the political actions taken by **Senator Jesse Helms**.

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Invocation

An invocation differs from an evocation in that the former is a Witch's *invitation* to the deities to appear in the magic circle, or to lend power for magical work, while the latter is a Ceremonial Magician's *command* to spirits/entities to appear in a confining triangle. The evocation is, by its nature, extremely dangerous, while there is no danger in the invocation.

An invocation should be delivered boldly yet lovingly. It seems to be especially potent when delivered in poetic form, rather than prose, yet both can be effective.

Generally, in magic, that which is rhythmic—whether or not it actually rhymes—is the most effective.

Irish Witchcraft

There was little **witchcraft** recorded in Ireland during the persecutions. The first trial was held in 1324 and the last in 1711, but there were no more than a half dozen trials between those two dates.

The trial of 1324 was that of **Dame Alice Kyteler** and was of special note since she was the wealthiest lady in Kilkenny. She was accused by Bishop Richard de Ledrede of Ossory, who no doubt was inspired by thoughts of confiscating Dame Alice's property. The two matched wits for a prolonged period—the bishop excommunicated Dame Alice, while Kyteler had the bishop imprisoned—until the lady fled to England. Her maid, Petronilla de Meath, then bore the brunt of the accusations and, under extreme **torture**, confessed all manner of crimes and was burned alive at the stake on November 3, 1324.

In November 1578, the next trial occurred. Again the location was Kilkenny. In this trial, three **witches**, one of whom was a black woman, were prosecuted. Few details of this trial are known, but the outcome was that all of the women were executed.

Queen Elizabeth's witchcraft bill of 1563 was adopted by the Irish Parliament in 1586. Twenty years later, a minister was accused of employing "wicked and lying **spirits**," but there were no real cases until September, 1661. In that year, Florence Newton, a woman living in Youghal (and later known as the "Witch of Youghal"), was charged at the Cork Assizes with **hexing** a servant girl, Mary Longdon. Longdon, who worked for John Pyne, had refused to give Goodie Newton a piece of her master's pickled beef for Christmas in 1660, and Newton had gone away muttering to herself. A week later, Newton met Mary Longdon in the street and knocked the girl down as she forcibly kissed her. Newton cried that she was Longdon's good friend and that the girl was not to bear her any ill will. A few days later Longdon dreamed that she saw Newton at her bedside, accompanied by an old man dressed in silver, whom she took to be a spirit.

A few weeks after she was kissed by Newton, Longdon began to have fits of vomiting and additional wild dreams. When she had her fits, she shook so hard that three or four grown men could not hold her still. She also suffered loss of memory and started vomiting up pins and needles, regular and horseshoe nails, wool, and straw. Showers of stones occurred around her, both indoors and out, although the stones vanished after they landed. The girl also **levitated** out of her bed.

Florence Newton was summoned and taken to Cork for trial. When she was manacled, Mary Longdon's fits would cease, but when the "bolts" were removed, the girl would go into convulsions again. It was believed that a witch could not say the **Lord's Prayer** without making a mistake. This was tried on Newton and, indeed, she was unable to recite the whole prayer without stumbling. A man, David

Jones, was appointed to teach her the prayer, but to no avail. At one point, in apparent gratitude, Newton kissed his hand. For the next several days Jones had pains in that hand, then his entire arm. Eventually he became very ill and at the end of two weeks he died.

At a hearing on March 24, 1661, Newton said she was sorry for casting the evil eye on Mary Longdon. She also named two other local women as witches, and the mayor of Youghal had them arrested. He was about to have all three **ducked** when Newton confessed that the other two were innocent, and the mayor released them. No records are available showing the outcome of Newton's trial, but it seems likely that she was put to death. Mary Longdon eventually recovered.

The last witchcraft trial in Ireland took place at Carrickfergus, County Antrim, on March 31, 1711. After a number of weeks of poltergeist activity, a widow named Haltridge died under mysterious circumstances. A newly employed maid, Mary Dunbar, who was hired to look after the widow's daughter-in-law, began to have fits and visions of various women tormenting her. She named seven local women as witches, and they were all arrested. Dunbar later accused another woman, but she was not held. In the eight-hour trial, the main evidence was various items that Mary Dunbar was supposed to have vomited up during her fits. The accused were found to be hard working, religious people. One of the judges, Anthony Upton, felt they were innocent and the other, James MacCartney, thought them guilty. The jury finally decided they were all guilty. They were sentenced to serve one year in jail with four appearances in the pillory.

As recently as 1808 Mary Butters, known as the Carmoney Witch, narrowly escaped trial. In Carricfergus, she was hired by Alexander Montgomery of Carmoney to cure a cow from whose milk no butter could be made. Montgomery's wife believed that a witch had **curled** the cow. When Butters was called in, she told Montgomery and another young man named Carnaghan to go to the barn and turn their vests inside out. They were then to stand by the head of the bewitched cow until she sent for them. Butters went into the house, where she sat with Montgomery's wife, son, and an old woman named Margaret Lee.

The two men dutifully waited beside the cow until dawn, when they returned to the house to find all four people collapsed on the floor. There was a strong smell of sulfur which seemed to issue from a **cauldron** Butters had placed on the fire. In the cauldron she had put a quantity of milk and lots of sharp objects, like needles and pins, nails, and broken glass, much as is found in a **witch bottle**. The chimney had been covered over and the door and windows sealed tight. Montgomery found that his wife and son were already dead and the old woman, Lee, died soon after. He furiously kicked Butters out of the house and onto a dung heap, where she eventually recovered consciousness.

An inquest was held on August 19, in Carmoney. There it was determined that the victims had all died from asphyxiation due to the smoke and fumes from Mary Butters's cauldron of anti-witchcraft ingredients. Butters claimed that a mysterious "man in black" had suddenly appeared to them all, wielding a huge club, and had

killed the others and beaten her into unconsciousness. She was sent for trial at the spring assizes but, before that time, the charges against her were dropped.

If there was little historical witchcraft in Ireland, there was a heavy background of Paganism. Danu, or Dana, was the primal Mother Goddess. As with many triple goddesses, she was **Maiden, Mother, Crone**. The *Tuatha De Danann* were “the Children of the Goddess Danu.” In her Maiden aspect, the Mother Goddess was Brighid. She was patroness of bardic lore (*filidhecht*), inheriting the **Druidic** role, according to R. J. Stewart, of a goddess of poetry, inspiration, and **divination**. Her feast day is **Imbolc**.

The Morrigan, meaning “Phantom Queen,” was also a triple goddess, controlling both death and sexuality. Cuchulainn is the primary warrior goddess of Irish tradition. The **fertility** goddess Macha is connected to ritual games and festivals, especially those involving contests of skill and arms.

Lugh is one of the principle male deities, honored at the major **Wiccan** festival of **Lughnasadh**. Another male deity is Dagda, originally the son of Brighid but in later myths presented as the father of all female triplicity. He was the possessor of the great **cauldron** of death and rebirth. Irish-based Wiccan traditions today use various names for their deities.

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Iron

Iron is regarded as near-**magical** and frequently credited with supernatural powers. The first iron implements appeared about the third millennium BCE, in Mesopotamia. The Aztecs called iron “the gift from heaven” because it fell in the form of meteors. The ancient Egyptians called it “the metal from the sky.” **Talismans** of meteoric iron were placed in the tomb of Tutankhamen. The Roman historian Pliny claimed that a house would be protected from evil spirits if iron coffin-nails were placed above the entranceway.

Dr. G. Storms points out that iron manifestly takes its power from the fact that the material was “better and scarcer than wood or stone for making tools, and from the mysterious way in which it was originally found: in meteoric stones.” Specialists were needed to obtain the iron from the ore and harden it. These specialists—blacksmiths—became looked upon as **magicians**. The best-known smith was probably Wayland Smith, the smith of the Norse gods, depicted on the seventh-century Northumbrian Franks Casket.

Whitlock suggests that when the bronze-using British were invaded by iron-using newcomers from Europe in the first millennium BCE, they retreated, feeling that they had been defeated by magic rather than superior strength. Iron has since remained a magical metal, used to fight evil, keep **fairies** and demons at bay, and

even ward off witches. An iron **horseshoe** nail would be laid in a baby's cradle to prevent the fairies from stealing the baby and leaving a changeling. An iron horseshoe would be nailed up over the entrance to a house to protect the house from fire and to keep evil at bay. Early pins were made of iron, so to stick a wax or clay figure with pins was to work powerful magic (see **image magic**).

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Ishtar

The great Mother **Goddess** of ancient Babylonian and Assyrian mythology, Ishtar was the Semitic name for the Sumerian goddess Inanna. Her worship quickly spread throughout the Middle East, Egypt, and Greece. In 2350 BCE, Enheduanna, the daughter of King Sargon of Agade, composed a lengthy hymn to the goddess titled *The Exaltation of Inanna*. It told of her struggle against the Moon God Nanna and her final acceptance by the High God An.

Ishtar was a **fertility** goddess of love and procreation but, like all the great goddesses of the ancient Near East, she was also goddess of bloodshed, war, and destruction. She is usually depicted riding on her sacred animal, the lion. She was the lover of Tammuz, god of the harvest, who was either her brother or her son. He was slain, and Ishtar, who caused his death, descended to the Underworld from where she triumphantly brought him back. Fertility and joy then returned to the earth.

Ishtar called herself "Goddess of the morn and goddess of the evening." According to some myths, she was the daughter of Anu, but others say she was the daughter of Sin. Sacred prostitution was part of her cult and it was said that when she descended to earth she was accompanied by "courtesans, harlots and strumpets." She herself is sometimes described as "courtesan of the gods." Certainly she had many lovers.

Ishtar and Inanna are names recognized by a number of **Wiccan** traditions as names for the Mother Goddess.

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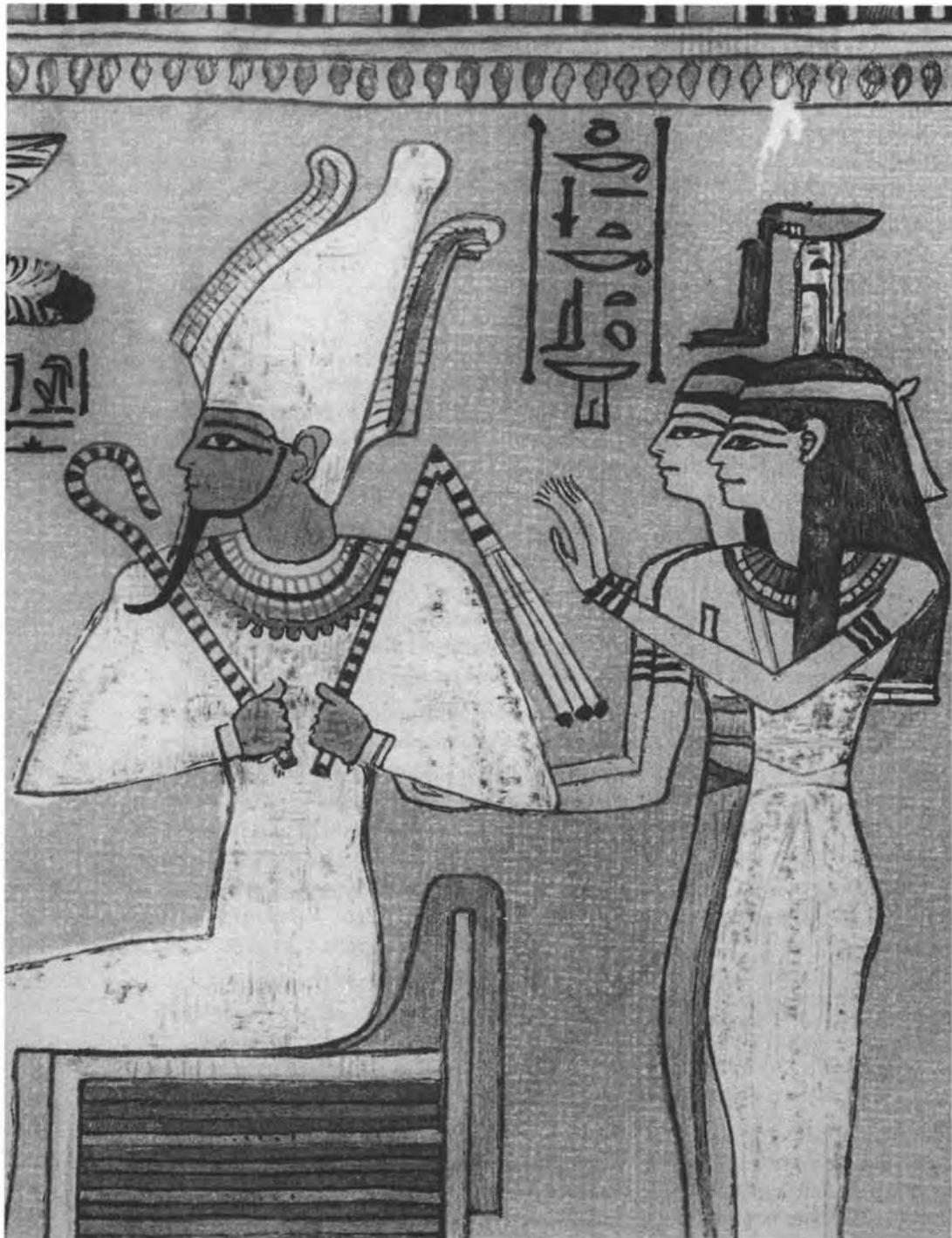
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Isis

The great **goddess** of ancient Egypt whose worship came to spread across many lands and continues even today. Her name was originally Au Set (Auzit, Eset), meaning "Exceeding Queen," but the Greeks altered the pronunciation to Isis. The Greeks called her *myrionymos*—"the one with ten thousand names"—and identified her with their own goddesses. As goddess of love, she was **Aphrodite**; as goddess of **magical arts**, she was **Hecate**; as the wife of the king of the gods, she was



Egyptian goddesses Isis and Nephthys, attendant on Osiris, King of the Dead. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

Hera; as the provider of corn, she was **Demeter**, and so on. A Roman inscription read, "Thou, the one who is all, goddess Isis."

Isis was the daughter of Geb (the Earth) and Nut (the Sky) and sister to Osiris, Set, and Nephthys. She obtained immortality by tricking Ra, the Sun God. When Ra was an old man, Isis fashioned a snake from earth that Ra had spat upon. She placed it in his path so that it bit him, then offered to save him with her magical arts, but only if he told her his true name (see **Names of Power**). When he finally did so, she became immortal by virtue of knowing that name.

Although she was Osiris's brother, Isis became his wife. Their evil brother Set, jealous of Osiris, killed him. (There are various, conflicting accounts of how this was done. One text from c. 2400 BCE says that Set "laid him low in Nedjet," while another text of the same period says that Osiris was drowned in the Nile by Set. There are also stories of him being encased in an elaborate chest made by Set and then tossed into the river.) Osiris's body ended up encased in a tree, which was subsequently cut down to build a column to hold up the front of the palace of the king of Byblos. After much searching, Isis learned of the whereabouts of Osiris's body and, by revealing herself, obtained it and took it back to Egypt. However, Set soon discovered that the body was back in Egypt and he attacked it, cutting Osiris's body into fourteen pieces and scattering them throughout the land.

Once again Isis searched for Osiris, and eventually she found all parts of his body except his penis, which had been eaten by fish. She fashioned a gold penis to replace it, **consecrated** it, and gave life back to Osiris. He proceeded to impregnate her and she gave birth to Horus. Osiris then went to rule the underworld, emerging only to train Horus to fight Set and punish him. Horus defeated Set and delivered him, in chains, to Isis. But she released him.

Isis has been worshiped all over the world for 6,000 years, in her many forms. Her sacred animal is the cow, for she gives life and prosperity. The consecration **rituals** of the Mysteries of Isis are described in detail in Lucius Apuleius's *Metamorphoses*, or *The Golden Ass* (c. 100 CE). The initiation into these mysteries was similar, in many ways, to the initiation into **Witchcraft** as it is performed today. The Isis Mysteries first occurred in the Roman Empire, during the Imperial period. R. Merkelbach says that great pilgrimages were undertaken in the service of Isis and that a whole cycle of festivals was established in her name. During the period of the Roman Empire, the Mysteries of Isis were strongly influenced by the Greeks.

Isis is one of the names used today by a number of **Wiccan covens** and **Pagan** groups. In Ireland, in 1976, Olivia Durdin-Robertson, together with her brother Lawrence and his wife Pamela, founded the Fellowship of Isis, headquartered at their home in Clonegal Castle. Today the fellowship has a worldwide membership of more than 12,000 people.

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Italian Witchcraft

By 500 CE, Rome had driven out all **sorcerers** and the only **divination** allowed was by public, not private, augury. In 1181 the doge of Venice, Orlo Malipieri, passed laws punishing sorcerers and poisoners. A hundred years later, Emperor Frederick II of Sicily began to reverse the trend by employing Saracen diviners and inviting Michael Scot, the Scottish wizard, to his court. By the thirteenth century, sorcery was still an offense in Italy, yet **astrology** was not. Divination, especially by charting the course of the stars, worked its way back into favor. Learned people studied both astrology and divination. In fifteenth century Italy, many papal decisions were made with the aid of astrologers, and there were resident astrologers at all the courts.

Much like the rest of Europe, in Italy there were many lowly “wise women and men” who dispensed **herbs** and **potions** and worked a little **magic**, and these people became the targets of the **Inquisition**. The **Old Religion**, or *La Vecchia Religione*, had endured through the many centuries of Christianity. Whatever sophisticated **high magic** might be done in the towns and cities, those who lived in the country, or **Pagans** (from the Latin *paganus*, “a country dweller”), still **worshipped** the **goddess** and celebrated the seasons.

The epidemic of **witch** hunting and persecution that swept the whole of Europe started in Italy, at the court of **Pope** Innocent VIII, with his Papal Bull against witchcraft in 1484. This was reprinted as a foreword to, and endorsement of, the horrific *Malleus Maleficarum* of Heinrich Kramer and Jakob Sprenger two years later. The Bull was a typical pronouncement from a Christian against a non-Christian form of worship that had **fertility** as its central theme. The Bull laid great stress on power over fertility, citing intercourse “that members of both sexes do not avoid to have . . . with demons, **Incubi and Succubi**.” Practically every pope in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries issued a Bull against sorcery. What made that of Innocent VIII especially important was the development of printing at that time and the resulting widespread distribution of the Bull. It provided the spark that started the widespread panic against witchcraft that raged out of control across Europe and even leapt the Atlantic Ocean to the New World. In the first year that the Bull appeared, forty-one people were burned at the stake in Como alone. In 1510, 140 witches were burned at Brescia, seventy at Valcanonica, and, four years later, 300 more were burned in Como.

The old wise ones who had worked diligently to cure the sick now found themselves charged with causing the sickness. Anything unusual was ascribed to witchcraft. If a hen stopped laying or a cow ran dry, witchcraft was immediately suggested. There was no hesitation by the authorities to use torture to gain the necessary confessions.

A feature unique to Italian witchcraft was the witch **dance**, which was known as *La Volta*. The staid churchmen proclaimed that this dance, which they said was

practiced by witches at their **sabbat rites**, was so fast and furious it could only have been taught to them by the devil himself.

But while the persecutions raged throughout most of Italy and the rest of Europe, there were many isolated areas where the Old Religion was able to survive. In the wild countryside of the Romagna Toscana, on the island of Sicily, and in other pockets, the country people still worshiped the old gods. The way in which the magical arts and the Pagan religion survived from Roman times was through the *streghe*, the followers of the Old Religion. The women of Gaeta were notorious for being *streghe*, as were those of Nursia. Charles Godfrey Leland discovered this at the end of the nineteenth century when, in Florence, he encountered a witch named Maddalena. She recognized his knowledge on such matters and let him have a copy of a *Vangelo delle-Streghe*, a Gospel of the Witches of Italy. This was the source of his next book, titled **Aradia**, *Gospel of the Witches*, published in 1899. It told of the worship of **Diana**, as “Queen of the Witches,” and of her daughter Aradia, who is really a younger version of Diana herself.

Even today, Sicily abounds with believers in the old gods. There are many ruins of ancient temples—to Demeter, Persephone, Diana, Minerva, and others—still found there. One of them is the Temple to Demeter in Castrogiovanni. Others include temples and temple ruins at Segeste, Syracuse, Taormina, and Tyndari. **Leo Martello** makes the point that the *streghe* would outwardly adopt the New Religion but continue their own practices in secret. This was a common ploy elsewhere. It was also a practice of the **Gypsies**, the Roma, as they moved across Europe. Today there are a number of Wiccan traditions that have an Italian foundation, many of them basing their rituals on the material to be found in Leland’s *Aradia*.

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J

JACK O' THE GREEN *see* FOLIATE MASK

Jack o' Lantern

The most important Witchcraft celebration is that of **Samhain**, which takes place on the eve of November. This sabbat celebration marks the change of year, from the summer months to the winter months. There is also a shift of emphasis from the **Goddess** to the **God**. On the old **Celtic** calendar, Samhain was the start of the new year, which was reckoned by nights rather than days. In 527 CE there was a change, and New Year's Day was declared to be March 25. Almost a thousand years later (1600 CE in Scotland, 1751 CE in England) this was changed again, to January 1.

In early pre-Christian times people followed a basically lunar calendar. Festival celebrations began at the rising of the **moon**. In other words, they started on the eve of the actual day. The calendar ran from Samhain to Samhain. This celebration, for the **Celts**, commemorated the creation of the world, when chaos was transformed to order. On Samhain night, the spirits of the dead were free to roam and return to earth to visit with their loved ones. It was said that the veil between the worlds was thin on this particular night.

When the **Witches** and **Pagans** went off to their sabbats and other Samhain celebrations, they would carry with them a light to symbolize a departed spirit traveling with them. So that the flame would not be blown out by any wind, they carved out a hollow in a large turnip and placed the candle there. Many years later, in America, the turnip gave way to a pumpkin, which was larger and much easier to carve. To add to the idea that it was the spirit of a dead loved one being carried, a face was carved into the side of the pumpkin. This primitive lantern became known as a Jack o' Lantern. It's also from these beliefs that the idea of ghosts roaming at Hallowe'en came about.

Jack o' Lantern is also a term applied in some areas to phosphorescent light seen over swamps and marshes, otherwise known as swamp gas, will-o'-the-wisp,



Jack o' Lantern is a term for the phosphorescent light sometimes seen over swamps and marshes. *Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.*

and fox-fire. In Ireland it is sometimes called *Seán ne gealaige*, or “Jack of the bright light.” Together with the Celtic ideas of returned souls, it is believed by some to be the soul of a dead spirit who is wandering, searching for someone or something.

Janicot

A Basque **God** associated with the **Witches** of that area. It is thought that the name comes from the old Roman god Janus. In pre-Latin times Janus (a variation of Dianus) was a sun god, and he had a feminine counterpart Jana (**Diana**), a **moon goddess**. As the Roman Janus, he was the two-faced god of doors and entrances, his statue being placed in doorways.

At the beginning of the seventeenth century, **Pierre de Lancre** (1553–1631), a witch trial judge who boasted of burning 600 victims, went to the Basque-speaking Pays de Labourd, Béarn, France. This is in the southwest of Guienne, adjoining the Spanish border. De Lancre was commissioned by Henri IV and went to investigate reports of **witchcraft** there. He quickly determined that the whole population of 30,000 were witches, including all the **priests**. He found that the people all celebrated the old **sabbats**, and that the priests themselves joined in, sometimes allowing their churches to be used for **pagan** rites. According to de Lancre, sabbats were held in the public square at Bordeaux, and at some of them, more than 100,000 people attended. It was not uncommon to have 2,000 children at these meetings, he said. Through the use of torture, de Lancre learned many more details about the local population.

Among the details de Lancre unearthed was that the Basque people referred to their god as Janicot. They had a rhyme, which went like this:

*In nomine patrica,
Aragueaco petrica
Gastellaco Janicot,
Equidae ipordian pot.*

This can be translated as “In the name of the Father, the father of Aragon, Janicot of Castile, give me a kiss on the backside.” The Basque word for God is *Jaincoa*. As the Roman god Janus was two-faced, similarly was the god figure at a sabbat sometimes depicted as having a second face (a mask) on his posterior, which the **worshippers** kissed in the **osculum infame**, as a sign of homage. Doreen Valiente suggests that there’s a remnant or memory of that homage that still lingers today in the popular expression “kiss my ass.” She goes on to say that to kneel and kiss the “devil’s” posterior was an act of homage by his worshippers, shocking as it may have seemed to the Christian chroniclers.

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Jewelry

Most modern Witches wear occult jewelry, especially that which points to their religious beliefs. Some do not wear any jewelry while others seem to overindulge,

with a ring (or two) on each finger and thumb, and layers of necklaces and pendants. But whatever the preference for everyday wear, there are certain items of jewelry that are called for in rituals.

The requirements/suggestions for each tradition differ, so we will first look at the Gardnerian tradition as a typical example. In that denomination of Wicca, all wear a necklace of some sort in the ritual circle to symbolize the circle of rebirth, since one of the primary beliefs in Wicca is a belief in reincarnation. This can be any type of necklace, but traditionally the Witch's necklace is of amber and/or jet. The coven members may also, if they wish, wear a ring or two, although an overabundance is discouraged. The High Priestess wears a wide, silver bracelet as a sign of rank. This is decorated with certain Wiccan signs and symbols. The High Priest does not wear anything special, although at the Samhain Rite, he dons a horned helmet as representative of the god.

In Gardnerian Wicca, there is another position that may be attained by a High Priestess. If she has been leading her coven for some years, she has probably had one or more of her Third Degree Witches (Gardnerian has a degree system) break away to form their own covens, as offshoots of her own. This makes that original High Priestess a Witch Queen, or Queen of the Sabbat. To show that she holds that position, she wears a crown—a band of silver with a silver crescent moon at the front—and a garter. The garter is of green leather—often snakeskin—lined with blue silk. On it there is a silver buckle representing her own coven, and another buckle for each coven that has sprung from hers. The jewels of a Witch Queen—necklace, ring(s), bracelet, crown, and garter—are called her *bigghes* (jewels). The High Priest of a Witch Queen is known as a Magus, and he wears a gold bracelet, again marked with certain Wiccan signs.

As noted, there are many different denominations of Wicca, and not all follow the same guidelines where jewelry is concerned. There are some groups where all High Priestesses wear crowns and some where all female Witches wear silver bracelets. The Farrars speak of covens where all the women wear garters and say that a High Priestess doesn't become a Witch Queen until she has three buckles (her own coven plus two more) on it. There is no right and wrong in these different traditions, other than what may or may not be done within each particular tradition.

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Joan of Arc (1412–1431)

In the countryside of Domremy, France, Joan of Arc was known as Jeanette, with the surname of Arc or Romée. She's also mentioned in contemporary documents as Jeanne, commonly called *la Pucelle*, the Maid. She was born on January 6, 1412 to Jacques d'Arc and Isabelle de Vouthon, two devout Catholics. Her two brothers were Pierre and Jean du Lys. Her father owned horses and cattle and was the head man of his village of Domremy. Joan was very pious and, while the other girls her age were dancing, she chose to attend church.

When Joan was thirteen, she was in her father's garden when she heard a voice she believed came from God. During the next five years she heard voices two or three times a week and was able to distinguish those of Saints Catherine, Margaret, and Michael. They even appeared to her, wearing crowns. She was determined to remain a virgin and lead a godly life.

The Hundred Years War between France and England, over who should rule France, was in full swing. The dauphin Charles, son of Charles VI, battled the English, who had control of large portions of the country. Joan's voices told her to help the dauphin and to see that he was crowned king of France. In May 1428, Robert de Baudricourt, commandant at Vaucouleurs, about twelve miles from Domremy, was approached by Joan. She was accompanied by Durand Lassois, a relative on her mother's side. Joan told Baudricourt that she had been sent by God to place the dauphin on the throne, and she would like to speak with him. The commandant sent her home again.

In July 1428 the village of Domremy was threatened by the English and the inhabitants retreated to Neufchâteau. It was October before they were able to return, only to find the village burned to the ground. The English, meanwhile, had laid siege to Orléans. When news of this reached Domremy, Joan again set out to see the dauphin. Again, at Vaucouleurs, she encountered Robert de Baudricourt. She also met a young squire, Jean de Metz, in whom she confided. He lent her men's clothes. Baudricourt finally authorized her departure for Chinon, where Charles had his court. The people of Vaucouleurs bought her a horse and she was given a sword.

Louis de Bourbon, count of Vendôme, presented her to the dauphin, who talked with her for two hours. According to Jean Pasquerel, her confessor, she told him, "I am God's messenger, sent to tell you that you are the true heir to France and the king's son." Charles had her interrogated by a commission, presided over by the archbishop of Riems, who found her honest and ruled in her favor. Joan then assured Charles that she would raise the siege of Orléans and have him crowned.

In a suit of "white armor" Joan, accompanied by **Gilles de Rais**, led an army of 4,000 men, and on the night of April 28, they entered Orléans. On May 5, they stormed the bastille and captured the Tourelles. On May 8, they held the first thanksgiving procession, which was the origin of what has become the great Festival of Orléans. Joan went on to Troy, and then Reims, by July 14. Two days later Charles was crowned King Charles VII of France, with Joan standing beside him. On December 29, 1429, Joan was ennobled and her village exempt from taxation.

The following May, Joan attempted to raise the siege of Compiègne. She and her forces made a sortie against the Burgundian camp, and in the process, Joan was taken prisoner by the Duke of Burgundy, an English ally. He handed her over to the Bishop of Beauvais, also an English ally. On January 3, 1431, Joan was passed on to Pierre Cauchon, bishop of Beauvais, an ambitious man who hoped to obtain the vacant see of Rouen. She was to be tried by tribunal, which had been selected by Cauchon and consisted of ten Burgundian theologians, twenty-two canons of Rouen (all in the hands of the English), and some monks of different orders. Inter-



Joan of Arc. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

rogation began on February 21. Judgement was to be based on seventy different points, including charges that she was a **diviner, prophetess, sorceress, witch, and conjurer** of evil **spirits**. Eventually these charges were dropped to twelve. Her judges were of the opinion that her visions were worthless and denied her the gift of **prophecy**. They censured her for dressing in masculine clothing and for “sinful pride” and for believing that she was responsible only to God and not to the Church, which the judges represented. This last was the charge that most incensed her accusers.

On May 23 Joan was taken to the cemetery of Saint-Ouen and sentenced to be burned at the pyre unless she submitted. Tired and worn out, Joan signed what was presented to her and was returned to her cell to serve out a sentence of life imprisonment. She was given a woman’s dress, but she either did not put it on or else she returned to her men’s clothing, for on May 27 Cauchon found her so dressed and declared her to have relapsed. He handed her over to the English secular arm. On May 30 she was made to appear in the Old Market Square of Rouen, although she had again been dressed as a woman. There she was burned. Joan was not executed for **witchcraft**, but for being a relapsed heretic.

It has been said that throughout Joan of Arc’s capture and imprisonment, Charles made no attempt to assist her or obtain her release. In fact, on December 15, 1430, upon hearing the news that Joan had fallen into the hands of the duke of Burgundy, Charles sent an embassy to Philippe le Bon, saying that if there was nothing that could be offered to set Joan free, then Charles would exact vengeance for her upon Philippe’s men that he held captive. There is correspondence that states, “The English wished to burn her (Joan) as a heretic, in spite of the Dauphin of France who tried to bring threatening forces against the English.” But Charles’s attempts seemed half-hearted. Finally, in 1450, he instituted a preliminary inquiry into her trial and execution, but it was not fully followed through. It wasn’t till June 16, 1456 that the judgement was annulled by Pope Calixtus III. Joan was finally beatified in 1909 and canonized by Pope Benedict XV in 1920.

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Judith, Anodea (1952–)

“The work of a **priestess**,” says Judith, “is to artfully weave together the disparate threads of energy that the **gods** offer you. Each weaving is an act of **healing** and evolution, mending ruptures in the web of life yet creating something new. This is how I think of **magic**.”

Anodea Judith was born Judith Ann Mull on December 1, 1952, in Elyria, Ohio. Her siblings are a middle brother, David, and the youngest of the three, comedian Martin Mull. Anodea (whose name means “One who serves the **Goddess**”) began reading stories of Greek mythology when in her early teens. This

led her to rethink her ideas of diety. She spent much time at her grandmother's farm, where she grew close to nature. In high school she became known as a healer. During her mother's second marriage, Judith was exposed to Christian Science—the art of healing the physical plane through the magical practice of **prayer** and **ritual**. “This taught me how our consciousness can affect our reality, which is one of the foundational principles of magic,” she says.

She goes on to say, “As a fifties child I came of age just in time for Women's Liberation and the spiritual revolution of the sixties.” She was well prepared to meet it after having encountered Christian denominations from Unitarian to Methodist, Catholic, and Christian Science, depending on who her mother was married to, or living next door to, at the time. Having come from a divorced family, Judith came to believe that the divorce between the archetypal mother and father is the mythical framework of our culture. “The only difference is that, in Christian theology, it's the father who's the single parent (and not a very good one at that), whereas in modern culture it's usually the mother who winds up with the kids,” she says.

After completing high school in suburban Connecticut, she studied psychology at Clark University, Massachusetts, and then moved on to the California College of Arts and Crafts. Judith switched from psychology to art and started painting murals, making a name for herself with her cloudscapes on ceilings. An out-of-body experience in 1975 led her to study and research the **chakra** system, culminating eleven years later in the publication of her first book, *Wheels of Life: A User's Guide to the Chakra System*, something she had seen in an earlier **meditation**. In 1993, with longtime friend and co-teacher Selene Vega, she published a second book, *The Sevenfold Journey: Reclaiming Mind, Body, and Spirit through the Chakras*, and in 1997 a third book, *Eastern Body: Western Mind*.

In the mid-1970s she lived alone for two months in a tent on a California mountain top on a five-acre lot given to her by a friend, whom she describes as “a crazy Israeli chemist, who disappeared after bequeathing me the land.” By this time she had discovered **Witchcraft** and practiced weather magic by becoming one with the **elements**. Judith says that she felt she received direct teachings from the Goddess.

In 1977 Judith met **Otter Zell** and **Morning Glory Zell** of the **Church of All Worlds**. She also became intimately involved with **Gwydion Pendderwen**, founder of Forever Forests, and helped him develop the Church of All Worlds Sanctuary. She started a gradual transition from artwork to bio-energetic bodywork, doing healings, massage, and **aura** reading. Judith and Pendderwen married and, in 1982, had a son, Alex. They moved to Annwn, Pendderwen's land in Mendocino County. When Pendderwen died in 1982, Judith became one of five stewards of the land.

In 1983 Judith founded Lifeways and offered classes and workshops in magic, ritual, healing, and psychic development. Five years later she became president of the Church of All Worlds Sanctuary. In 1988 Judith married Richard Ely, who has three children of his own. In 1989 she received a master's degree in metaphysical psychology from Rosebridge Graduate School of Integrative Therapy, followed by a Ph.D. in mind-body healing in 1999.

In the late 1990s, when Judith felt that the Church of All Worlds had become too big to be the focused magical experience she most appreciated, she passed on her position and retreated to what she calls a “back seat” in the community. She remains a member of the church’s clergy, however. Judith’s magic is now more focused on the creation of **initiation** rituals from archetypal myths. “If the Goddess ever grants me retirement,” she says, “I’ll return to the life of an artist and Woods Witch.” Her mission statement, she says, is that “the separation of polarities was a necessary step in the evolution of consciousness, but it left a wide abyss. Having separated, the task now is to reunite our severed parts into a new and better whole.”

Juno

Roman goddess, identified with the Greek goddess Hera. Described as the “Queen of the Gods,” her chief function was to supervise the life of women, acting as protector. Under one or another of her aspects, Juno accompanied every woman throughout life, from birth to death.

She was entreated by women in labor as Juno Lucina. A temple to her was built on the Esquiline in 735 BCE, only a few years after the founding of Rome. The festival of Juno Lucina, the *Matronalia*, was celebrated by Roman matrons on the Kalends of March. As Juno Couella, she has lunar associations. One of her oldest titles was Juno Lucetia, in which aspect she was the feminine principle of the celestial light. As a **moon** goddess she was coupled with **Diana**. The Kalends—time of the new moon—was under her protection.

Juno seems to have had no original connection with Jupiter, or with any god other than possibly Janus, one of whose titles was *lunonius*. Later, however, Juno came to be regarded as the sister and consort of Jupiter. The month of June is named after her, although her festival, *Nonae Caprotinae*, is on July 7. Her bird was the peacock.

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Larousse Encyclopedia of Mythology. Batchworth Press, 1959.



Kabbalah (also spelled Kabala, Cabala, Qabalah)

A Jewish system of theosophy, magic, philosophy, science, and mysticism. The name means “knowledge received through tradition.” Legend has it that God whispered the secrets of the Kabbalah to Moses who, in turn, passed it on to seventy elders. They, in turn, passed it to their successors, and so it continued as an oral tradition. In the Middle Ages various authors—many of them writing anonymously—published versions of it, but some say that even today there are some of the most secret parts of the Kabbalah known only to a few initiates.

The two most important books on the subject are *Zohar*, or “Book of Splendor,” written in Spain in the late thirteenth century by Moses de Léon, and *Sefer Yetzirah*, or “Book of Creation,” written in either Babylon or Palestine between the third and sixth centuries.

The Kabbalah teaches that God (known as *En Soph*, “infinite radiance”) is in all things, good and evil; all things in the universe are part of an organized whole. But this whole is governed by secret laws with hidden connections to each other. Ten emanations, known as the *sephiroth* (singular *sephirah*), come from God. These, in the form of angels and men, make up the Tree of Life, which contains aspects of the divine. The Tree is arranged in three triangles representing the human body, with the tenth point being the reproductive organs. The ten sephiroth underlie the construction of the universe and of humankind. Twenty-two paths connect them all together. These link to the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet.

The Tree of Life shows how God descended from *Kether*, the Crown, to *Malkuth*, the Earth. It also shows how humankind can rise from Earth to God.

The Kabbalah’s teachings are similar to those of Gnosticism, which flourished in the countries around the eastern Mediterranean at the time that Christianity was first taking root. Kabbalists and Gnostics both believed that the way to God is through knowledge and that the only sin is ignorance.



Frontispiece and title page of Knorr von Rosenroth's *Kabbala Denudata*. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

The Kabbalah is used by many Ceremonial Magicians. Since it incorporates Judaism's authoritative monotheism and strict codes of behavior, is not a part of Witchcraft. Many individual Wiccan, however, are interested in it and pursue their own studies and practice of it.

SOURCES:

Myer, Isaac: *Qabbarah*. Samuel Weiser, 1970.

Kali

Literally the "the Black One." In Hindu myth, Kali is the destructive aspect of Parvati, consort to Shiva. She is usually depicted draped with severed human heads and trampling on the body of her slain husband. She is simply one aspect of the ultimate goddess, *Devi*.

She is often called *Kali Ma*, "the Black Mother," and in addition to being a necessary destroyer, she is also a powerful creative force. Many of her rituals are orgiastic in nature. According to Patricia Monaghan, Kali first manifested herself when the demon Daruka threatened the gods. The great goddess Parvati frowned at Daruka, knitting her brows in fury. From her sprang Kali, armed with a trident. She chased off the demon and made the heavens safe again.

Myths tell of Kali **dancing** with Shiva, her dancing becoming wilder and wilder. She pauses, but, should she continue, she could shake the world to pieces with her wildness. Despite the seeming negativity of this goddess, she is one of the most popular in India and is adopted by some **Witchcraft covens**.

SOURCES:

Monaghan, Patricia: *The Book of Goddesses and Heroines*. E. P. Dutton, 1981.

Karma

The word means “action” but, according to the doctrine of Brahmanism, Hinduism, and Buddhism, amounts to “as you sow, so shall you reap.” It is related to the concept of **reincarnation**, wherein everyone passes through a number of lives and in each life atones for the errors of the previous one. What actually occurs after death varies a little with different theologians. According to Hindu and Buddhist doctrines, a system of rewards and punishments starts immediately following death. Those who have led an exemplary life will enjoy a brief period of joy in paradise. Those who have been wicked will suffer any one of a number of hells of varying torment, depending upon the transgressions. But these serve only as reminders of what has been done and foretastes of what is to come. Eventually all are reborn and again either rewarded or punished in the new life, depending upon what they had done in their previous lives. They experience a succession of lives until the slate has been wiped clean.

The concept of karma in **Witchcraft** is somewhat different. There is a belief in the “**Threefold Law**,” the law of threefold return. Do good, and good will be returned, either three times or at three times the intensity. Do evil, and that too will return threefold. But these returns will be *within the current lifetime*. There is no “putting off” one’s rewards or punishments; they come about in this life. Obviously, with this belief, there is no inducement to do evil. It is, therefore, a corollary of the **Wiccan Rede**: “An it harm none, do what thou wilt.” By consciously harming none as you live your life, you will not invoke any negative threefold return upon yourself.

In the Hindu and Buddhist doctrines, the point of reincarnation is to return, in other incarnations, in order to expiate one’s transgressions. When the slate has been totally wiped clean, there will be no further incarnations. In Witchcraft, however, the purpose of reincarnation is different. It is for experience. One goes through a number of lives on this earth in order to learn and to experience all things. Only when everything has been learned and experienced will the cycle cease. But each individual life is not dependent upon the previous life, as it is in the Hindu and Buddhist doctrines. (See also **Reincarnation**.)

Kelley, Edward (1555–1593)

Assistant to Queen Elizabeth I’s **astrologer**, Dr. John Dee. A native of Lancashire, England, Kelley—who sometimes used the name Talbott—was born in



Nineteenth-century print depicting the Dance of Kail. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

1555. Little is known of his early years other than the fact that he lost his ears at Lancaster after being convicted of the offense of “coining.” Thereafter he wore a black cap to cover his loss. He subsequently moved to Worcester and established himself as a druggist.

Kelley was a lover of luxury and turned to alchemy and searching for the Philosopher’s Stone in hopes of striking it rich. It was said that as a **necromancer** he could get the dead to speak and tell the secrets of what the future held. He gained a reputation for **scrying**. This reputation reached the ears of Dr. John Dee, whose own scryer, Barnabas Saul, had recently left his employ. Kelley took over the position, allowing his powerful imagination to describe the incredible sights he said he received from the “great crystalline globe” that Dee possessed. By his enthusiasm and fertile imagination he quickly won Dee’s confidence and established himself as a needed associate to Dee.

Dee carefully recorded all the conferences he held with the spirits, courtesy of Kelley’s crystal ball gazing. In 1659 Méric Casaubon published *A True and Faithful Relation of what passed between Dr. John Dee and some Spirits*. Soon the reputation of the duo extended across the continent of Europe, and Kelley found himself traveling with Dee and both their families.

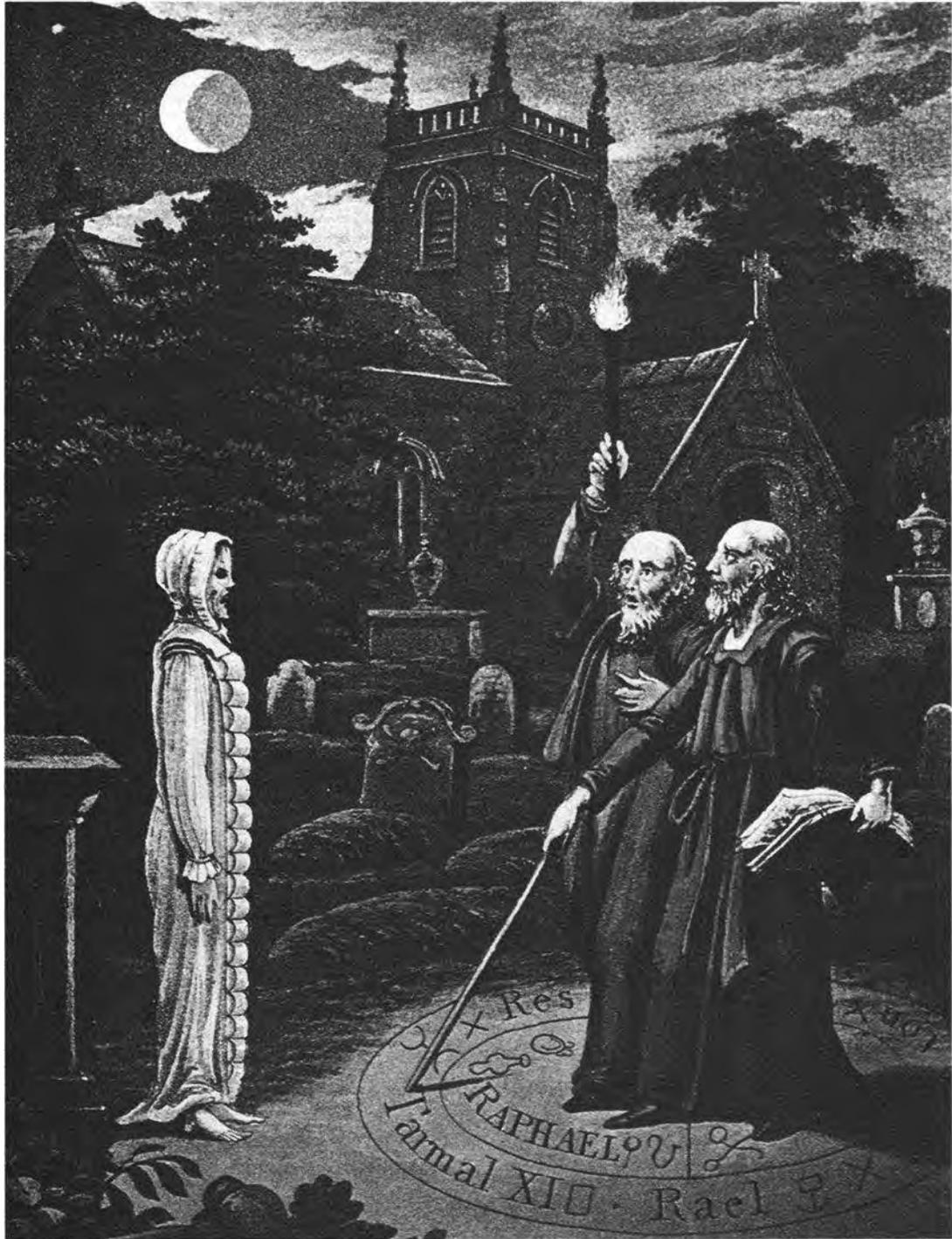
First came a visit to Poland in the company of Albert Laski, Count Palatine of Siradz. They lived sumptuously for a while with the count, ostensibly trying to create gold using the count’s own gold as part of the experiment. When they had drained him of his fortune, they continued on to Prague and the Emperor Rudolph II. The emperor was aware of Dee and his reputation but wary of Kelley. After a short stay they had to rapidly move on due to a Papal Nuncio complaining of them being heretical magicians.

Stephen, king of Poland, was next to greet them but soon tired of their demands for gold. Count Rosenberg was the next in line and they stayed two years living off his hospitality at Trebona, in Bohemia. Kelley, on a number of occasions, proclaimed to Dee that he did not like what the “spirits” were telling him to do and that he would quit. Each time, Dee would increase his salary, and Kelley stayed. Eventually Kelley claimed that the spirits were demanding that the two men exchange their wives. Dee and his wife, Jane Fromond, were violently opposed to this, but, when Kelley left and later returned, Dee was so glad to have him back that he acquiesced, and the four signed an agreement to share everything in common.

Dee eventually grew restless to go back to England and, obtaining permission from Queen Elizabeth to return, finally did so, leaving Kelley in Bohemia. Kelley tried to go back to Prague, but on his arrival there he was arrested by order of the emperor and thrown into prison. He managed to gain release and wandered about Germany telling fortunes and scraping a living. Arrested a second time as a heretic and sorcerer, he tried to escape and fell from the dungeon wall, breaking both his legs and two ribs. He finally died of his injuries in February 1593.

SOURCES:

Shepard, Leslie A. (ed.): *Encyclopedia of Occultism and Parapsychology*. Gale Research, 1978.



Edward Kelley raising a corpse. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

Kerridwen

Ancient Welsh **fertility** and mother **goddess**, also referred to as a goddess of the underworld and as “the goddess of various seeds.” Many Welsh tradition **Wiccans** give the goddess the name of Kerridwen or Cerridwen.

Myth says that she lived with her two children on an island in the middle of Lake Tegid. Her daughter was Creirwy, the most beautiful of girls. Her son was Afagdu, the ugliest of boys. To compensate for her son’s ugliness, in her **cauldron** Kerridwen brewed a **magic potion** that would make him the possessor of all knowledge. This potion was made from six **herbs** and had to boil for a year and a day. While she went off collecting herbs, Kerridwen had a mortal boy, Gwion, stir the mixture.

As Gwion stirred the cauldron, the hot liquid bubbled and three drops splashed out onto his finger, burning him. He put his scalded finger in his mouth and, by tasting the drops of the potion, gained knowledge. He could suddenly hear everything in the world. Frightened that Kerridwen would be angry, Gwion ran off.

When Kerridwen returned, she guessed what had happened and pursued him. He **shape-shifted**, turning into a **hare**. Kerridwen changed into a greyhound and continued the pursuit. When he turned into a fish, she became an otter. When he became a bird, she became a hawk. Finally, exhausted, he spied a pile of wheat grain, jumped into the middle and turned himself into a single grain. As a hen, Kerridwen scratched him out and ate him. As a result of eating Gwion, the goddess became pregnant and eventually gave birth to a boy, whom she abandoned to the waves in a tiny coracle. He was rescued by a prince and grew up to be the Welsh bard Taleisin, the greatest poet. It is in *The Book of Taleisin* that the story of Kerridwen is found. Spense feels that the Cauldron of Kerridwen must have been the same as the Cauldron of Inspiration alluded to in the myths of Annwnn.

SOURCES:

Farrar, Janet and Stewart: *The Witches' Goddess*. Phoenix, 1987.

Monaghan, Patricia: *The Book of Goddesses and Heroines*. E. P. Dutton, 1981.

Spense, Lewis: *The Magic Arts in Celtic Britain*. Rider, 1945.

Spense, Lewis: *The Mysteries of Britain*. Rider & Company, 1970.

Key of Solomon

Ancient **grimoire**, or book of **Ceremonial Magic**. It is unlikely that this book originated with the Biblical king himself, although it has been attributed to him. It has been revised many times, and some versions of the grimoire date from at least the fourteenth century. The book is permeated with Jewish ideas. Francis King feels that the book is “a slightly Christianized version of a Qabalistic magical system of considerable antiquity.”

There is also a *Lesser Key of Solomon*, or *Lemegeton*, dating from the seventeenth century. It deals with invoking the hierarchical legions of the abyss. The first part of the book, *Göetia*, gives **conjurations** for seventy-two different spirits or demons, together with details of their powers and their office. The second part, *Theurgia Göetia*, deals with the spirits of the cardinal points. The third part of the

book is called the *Pauline Art*, for no discernible reason, and “treateth of the spirits allotted unto every degree of the 360 degrees of the **Zodiac** and also of the Signs and the Hours.” The fourth part is the *Almadel*, which deals with four other choirs of spirits, or “Quaternary of the Attitude.” The fifth part is a *Book of Orations and Prayers* supposedly used by King Solomon.

SOURCES:

King, Francis: *Ritual Magic in England (1887 to the Present Day)*. Neville Spearman, 1970.

KING JAMES see BIBLE; ENGLISH WITCHCRAFT; SCOTTISH WITCHCRAFT

Kiss

The kiss that was usually associated with witchcraft was the so-called *osculum infame*, the “infamous kiss” or “kiss of shame.” It was said that witches would kiss the buttocks of the officiating goat figure at the sabbats and, especially, at the initiation. The *Compendium Maleficarum* of R. P. Guaccius (1626), among other works, includes a woodcut showing witches giving this ritual kiss.

Lambert Danaeus, writing in 1575 (*Dialogue of Witches*), says, “Some of them fall down at his knees, some offer to him black burning candles, others kiss him on some part of his body where he appeareth visibly.” Thomas Cooper (*Mystery of Witchcraft*, 1617) says, “In testimonial of this subjection, Satan offers his back parts to be kissed by his vassals.” Jane Bosdeau, one of the witches at Puy-de-Dôme, France, said, “All the witches had candles . . . danced in a circle back to back. They kissed his backside and prayed that he would help them.” Andro Man of Aberdeen, Scotland, said, “All they who convene with them kiss Christsonday and the Queen of Elfame’s arse.”

The “devil” figure was not only kissed on his posterior but also on other parts of the body, at his bidding. The buttocks, however, seem to have been the usual place. This was obviously a ritual obeisance of some sort. Some witches stated that in fact they were not kissing their leader’s posterior but a second face that was there. There is certainly the possibility of a mask being worn there, perhaps relating to the old two-faced god Janus, or a similar deity.

Witches today do not kiss anyone’s posterior, although there is still a kiss—in fact, a number of kisses—that play a part in rituals, especially those of initiation.

The traditional greeting between two Witches is a mouth-to-mouth kiss. In ritual, there are also the three-fold kiss, five-fold kiss, and eight-fold kiss. As the names indicate, they are on three, five, and eight parts of the body, in the form of a triangle, pentacle, and tentacle surmounted by a triangle. The ritual kiss is referred to as a Salute.

The three-fold kiss, or Kiss of the First Degree (where there is a degree system), is on the mouth, breast, breast, mouth. There are, therefore, actually four kisses involved but in the shape of a three-point triangle. Similarly, the five-fold kiss (Second Degree) is on genitals, foot, knee, other knee, other foot, genitals; the shape of a pentagram. The Third Degree eight-fold kiss is the two (three-fold and five-fold) combined.



Witches kissing the posterior of the Devil. From Guazzo's *Compendium Maleficarum*, 1608 edition. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

SOURCES:

Murray, Margaret Alice: *The Witch Cult in Western Europe*. Clarendon Press, 1921.

Knights Templar

In the early twelfth century, Hughes de Payens and Geoffrey de Saint-Aldemar, together with nine other nobles of French birth, obtained from Guarimond, patriarch, and from Baldwin II, king of Jerusalem, permission to form an order that would act together with the already established Hospitallers to protect pilgrims, fight infidels, and defend Solomon's Temple. Baldwin granted them a dwelling within the Temple walls, and from this they earned the name of Templars, or Knights of the Temple. Their charity and devotion gained the sympathy of many kings, rulers, and the Eastern Christians, who gave them frequent and considerable donations.

The order was composed of *milites*, or knights commanders; serving brothers called *armigeri*, or "men bearing arms"; and *clientes*, whose duty it was to attend to domestic matters. They swore to live in absolute chastity, poverty, and obedience.

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The order was composed of *milites*, or knights commanders; serving brothers called *armigeri*, or "men bearing arms"; and *clientes*, whose duty it was to attend to domestic matters. They swore to live in absolute chastity, poverty, and obedience.

They were forbidden to **kiss** even their mothers and exhorted to totally avoid female company. They all made public confession of extreme poverty, were forbidden to use valuable articles of furniture or gold or silver utensils, or to wear velvet trappings in the field, helmets with armorial bearings, silken sashes, or other superfluous articles of clothing. At the Council of Troyes in 1128, Hugues de Payens presented letters that the brotherhood had received from the **pope** and the patriarch of Jerusalem. The council granted them confirmation of their order, and a special code was drawn up for them. They wore a white robe symbolizing purity, to which Pope Eugenius III added a red **cross** to remind them of the Christian religion. They were to accept every combat, even though they might be outnumbered, and were to ask no quarter and give no ransom.

After being established for fifty years, the Order of the Temple held its first general chapter, at which three hundred knights were present. They elected Gérard de Rederfort as Grand Master and, in so doing, freed themselves from the jurisdiction of the patriarch of Jerusalem. Every knight swore allegiance to the Grand Master, making him supreme ruler.

With numerous donations and legacies, the Knights Templar's resources quickly increased. In 1135 the king of Navarre bequeathed his estates to the order. By that time they possessed seventeen strongholds in the kingdom of Valencia alone. The Templars rapidly became enormously wealthy. In London, England, most of their treasures were deposited. King Philip Augustus, on the eve of his departure to the Holy Land, entrusted them with the care of all his jewels.

On the field of battle, the Knights Templar won enormous fame for their bravery and honor. They were exempted from taxes and secular laws and answered only to the pope. But in the last years of the thirteenth century, the Crusades came to an inglorious end and the Templars left the Holy Land. There was talk of a fifth Crusade but it never came about, so the Christians contented themselves with hunting down the heretics in their midst. The Templars moved their headquarters to Cyprus. There they began a long rivalry with the Hospitallers, eventually leading the pope to intercede and ask that the two grand masters re-establish peace and goodwill. By this time the Templars were very conscious of their wealth and power, and rumors spread of perverted practices.

In 1273 Pope Gregory X had considered merging the order with that of the Hospitallers. Some years later, Philippe le Bel, King of France, received accusations against the Templars and consulted Pope Clement V. Clement thought the charges made against the Templars were improbable, but Philippe decided to investigate for himself. On October 13, 1307, he arrested all the Templars in his jurisdiction, including the Grand Master, Jacques de Molai. One hundred and forty knights were examined in Paris, and all but three admitted that the order had a secret **initiation** involving spitting of trampling on the cross. Homosexual **rites** were also said to be practiced along with **worship** of a figure named **Baphomet**. This was described either as having three heads or as being a human skull. There was talk of the Knights Templar worshipping the Devil and of boiling up babies to get their fat, which they then used to anoint the skull of Baphomet. They were also said to worship the Devil in

the form of a black cat and to kiss it beneath its tail. Many of the accusations paralleled those made against witches during the **witchcraft** persecutions.

All of the testimony was obtained under extreme torture. Pope Clement V protested Philippe's actions and claimed that the king had no authority either over the knights or over their possessions. When Philippe ignored this criticism, the pope examined seventy-two Templars himself. Their confessions agreed with those obtained by Philippe.

Inquiries were started in England, Germany, Spain, and Italy. Although the many answers to questions asked under torture did not fully agree, the confessions to homosexuality, perversion, and impiety were numerous. In Paris, at the back of the abbey of St. Antoine, fifty-nine Templars were burned at the stake, followed by nine more at Senlis.

At the council of Vienne, on March 22, 1312, Clement absolved rather than condemned the order, but he placed all their property at the disposal of the Church. Most of the Templars' possessions in France were given over to the Hospitallers. Philippe refused to give up what he had claimed, and he enjoyed the money as long as he lived. Similarly, Edward II of England enjoyed the confiscated wealth.

Many surviving knights of the Templar Order were able to enroll in other orders, such as the Order of St. John. Pope Clement reserved judgment on the Grand Master, Jacques de Molai, and three other commanders. When the four repeated their avowals of guilt before a special commission, they were placed on a scaffold in front of Notre Dame Cathedral, on March 18, 1314, and publicly condemned to life in prison. On the scaffold, Jacques de Molai and the others suddenly recanted their confessions and protested their innocence. This surprised the cardinals, who gave the knights over to the care of the provost of Paris. When Philippe heard what had happened, he had the four men subjected to terrible tortures, but de Molai and one other refused to admit to being guilty. Philippe then took the two out and burned them alive.

Rosemary Guiley suggests that there may have been a basis of fact for some of the charges against the Knights Templar. She feels that, with their exposure to many rites and beliefs in the Holy Land during the course of the Crusades, they may have absorbed aspects of Gnosticism and ritual homosexuality. But, as she says, the full truth may never be known.

SOURCES:

Guiley, Rosemary Ellen: *The Encyclopedia of Witches and Witchcraft*. Facts on File, 1989.
Lacroix, Paul: *Military and Religious Life in the Middle Ages*. Bickers & Son, 1876.

Knot Magic

Knot magic has been used since the time of the ancient Egyptians and has been connected with **witches** since the Middle Ages. Knots were thought to be powerful magical weapons since they could be ritually tied to impede a person or event, or undone to release power tied up in them. A knot might be tied, for example, to prevent conception or to join two people together irrevocably.



Seal of the Knights Templar, thirteenth century. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

In ancient Egypt, Isis possesses the magic knot, *Tat*, or “Knot of Isis.” An Egyptian robe would be tied with a *Tat* knot at the front (made by tying together ends of the material). Regula suggests that it is a symbolic representation of the female reproductive organs, worn as a **talisman** for fertility or health and luck.

Rabbinical law forbade the tying of knots on the Sabbath unless they could be untied with one hand. Celtic knotwork was famous and still is as decoration.

An old folk belief was that by tying a knot in a length of red thread, one could stop a nosebleed. If a woman is having problems in childbirth, the untying of knots will ease the birth. Gypsies will knot together two *diklos*, or scarves, that have been

used to wipe the male and female genitals after sex, believing this to bind the two lovers together for life. They will also knot a red silk ribbon with seven knots to keep a marriage together and make it last. A female Gypsy will similarly knot a red silk ribbon the same length as her lover's erect penis, and this is said to keep him faithful to her.

Olaus Magnus's work *Historia de gentibus septentrionalibus* (1555) shows a woodcut of a **sorcerer** selling two sailors a knotted rope. It was said that if one of the knots was untied it would provide a gentle wind from the southwest. The second knot would loose a strong north wind. The third knot would unleash a dreadful tempest. **Sir Walter Scott** tells of a witch named Bessie Millie who did the same thing, selling winds to sailors, as did the witches in Finland and Lapland.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Secrets of Gypsy Love Magick*. Llewellyn, 1990.

Regula, DeTraci: *The Mysteries of Isis*. Llewellyn, 1995.

Robbins, Rossell Hope: *The Encyclopedia of Witchcraft and Demonology*. Crown, 1959.

KRAMER, HEINRICH INSTITOR see MALLEUS MALEFICARUM

KUAN YIN see GODDESSES

Kundalini

In many occult systems the kundalini is thought to be the energy that lies dormant within all human beings. Awakening, it is referred to as "waking the fiery serpent," since it is believed to lie like a snake, stretching from the base of the spine to the crown of the head. It must be wakened correctly or it can be extremely dangerous. Normally the **serpent** lies asleep, coiled at the base of what is known as the Rod of Brahma, the spine. It is by certain yogic practices that it can be awakened. As the energy moves up the body, along the Rod, it passes through each of the seven chakra points, awakening the power within each of them.

Many **Witches**, in their practices, will do the equivalent of waking the fiery serpent by sending energy coursing up their body through the chakra points. This is often done as a preliminary to working **magic**. It is said that psychic powers are enhanced by this practice.

Kyteler, Dame Alice

The first and perhaps most famous **witch** trial in Ireland was that of a woman of substance, Dame Alice Kyteler, in 1324. It is of especial interest since it seems likely that Dame Alice was, in fact, a follower of the **Old Religion**, although she was charged with heresy rather than **witchcraft** *per se*. From the extant records of the trial, it seems that there was a **coven** in operation in Kilkenny, Ireland.

Dame Alice was married to her fourth husband, Sir John le Poer, the previous three having died and left her all their wealth. By her first husband, William Out-

lawe, she had a son, also named William, and she doted upon him. Her second husband was Adam le Blund; the third, Richard de Valle. The start of Dame Alice's troubles came when she was accused of causing the chronic illness from which her current husband, Sir John, was suffering. It was Dame Alice's stepchildren, by two of her marriages, along with a disgruntled maid servant, who suggested she might be trying to get rid of Sir John. He listened to their charges to the extent of demanding his wife's keys from her. She would not release them, but he forced them from her and proceeded to unlock the various chests in her private room. In these he found a variety of powders and ointments, which he immediately assumed to be connected with **sorcery**.

In Raphael Holinshed's *Chronicle of Ireland* (1587), he says that they found "a wafer of sacramental bread having the devil's name stamped thereon instead of Jesus Christ, and a pipe of ointment wherewith she greased a staff, upon which she ambled and galloped through thick and thin, when and in what manner she listed." However, these items are not listed in contemporary records, so it seems possible that Holinshed was embroidering the story.

Sir John sent what he found in the chests to the bishop of Ossory. The bishop, Richard de Ledrede, was actually an Englishman who had been trained in France. He was not a popular man with the local people. The seneschal of Kilkenny described him as a "vile, rustic, interloping monk." The bishop became convinced that Dame Alice was not a poisoner of husbands but a sorceress involved in witchcraft, and in 1324 he charged her with heretical sorcery. He also charged ten accomplices with her. He indicted Dame Alice on seven counts: that she and her followers denied the faith of Christ; **sacrificed** animals at a **crossroads**—always considered a meeting place for witches; used sorcery to communicate with **demons**; held nightly meetings at which they "blasphemously imitated the power of the Church"; caused disease and death and aroused love and hate, using potions, powders, **candles**, and ointments; and that Lady Alice caused her previous husbands to bequeath all their money to her son William, and she bewitched her husband Sir John to the point where he was near death; and that she had an **incubus** demon lover named Robin Artison, who sometimes appeared to her as a black man and sometimes as a hairy black dog or a cat.

Witnesses reported that they had seen Dame Alice, at night, sweeping the streets of the town. She was brushing all the dirt toward the house of her son William, chanting: "To the house of William, my son, hie all the wealth of Kilkenny town." Christina Hole points out that there is an old superstition that the first sweeping of a house must always be made inward, so that the good luck of the house is not swept outside. Here Dame Alice was apparently trying to sweep everyone's luck and good fortune to her son.

The bishop wrote to the chancellor, asking for the arrest of Dame Alice and her followers. The chancellor was Roger Outlawe, who just happened to be related to Dame Alice's first husband. The seneschal of Kilkenny, Sir Arnold Le Poer, also happened to be related to Dame Alice's fourth husband. Both refused to act on the bishop's request. Young William Outlawe took his mother into his household for protec-

tion. The bishop then proceeded to excommunicate Dame Alice. In return, she used her influence to have the bishop arrested. He was jailed for seventeen days.

When released, the bishop placed the whole diocese under an interdict and cited William Outlawe. William was given a penance of hearing three masses a day for a year, providing food for a number of poor people, and putting a new lead roof on the chancel and chapel of the church. William did none of those things and was later imprisoned for nine weeks. The bishop, meanwhile, repeatedly presented himself at the court of the Seneschal but was always refused entry.

Eventually, with William in prison, Dame Alice made her escape to England, taking along her main follower Sarah de Meath, daughter of her maidservant Petronilla. Of the other coven members who were left behind (Robert of Bristol; William Payn de Boly; Eva de Drownestown; Alice Faber; John, Ellen, and Syssok Galrussyn; Annota Lange; and Petronilla de Meath), all were arrested and convicted. As an example, the bishop had Petronilla tortured until she confessed various atrocities performed by herself, Dame Alice, and the others. She was flogged, excommunicated, and burned at the stake on November 3, 1324. She was the first such victim in Ireland. (See also **Irish Witchcraft**.)

There is no official record of what happened to the others, although it is said some were burned, some flogged and branded, some banished. While Dame Alice spent the rest of her life in England, the unhappy Bishop de Ledrede was himself later accused of heresy by the archbishop of Dublin. His revenues were seized by King Edward III in 1329, and he was exiled for nearly twenty years. He died in 1360.

SOURCES:

Hole, Christina: *Witchcraft in England*. Collier Books, 1966.

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Wright, Thomas (ed.): *A Contemporary Narrative of the Proceedings against Dame Alice Kyteler*. Camden Society, 1843.



L

Labrys

The double-bladed axe of Crete, often used as a symbol for the **Moon Goddess** because of the double crescent of the blades. At Delphi the priests were known as *labryadae* or "axe-bearers." At Crete, the mazelike layout beneath the palace of Knossos was known as the *labyrinth*, or "House of the Double Axe." It was the home of the Minotaur or "Moon Bull." The labyrinth was not actually a maze in that it had only one path.

Today the sign of the labrys is used by many feminist **Witches** and is often worn as a **talisman** or as **Circle jewelry**.

SOURCES:

Walker, Barbara: *The Woman's Dictionary of Symbols and Sacred Objects*. HarperSanFrancisco, 1988.

LAMMAS see LUGHNASADH

Lancre, Pierre De (1553–1631)

A trial judge who boasted of having burned 600 people as witches. In 1612 he published his *Tableau de l'inconstance des mauvais anges*, or "Description of the Inconstancy of Evil Angels." Two other notable books of his were *L'Incredulité et mescréance du sortilège*, "Incredulity and Misbelief of **Enchantment**" (1622) and *Du Sortilège*, "**Witchcraft**" (1627).

He was born Pierre de Rosteguy, Sieur de Lancre, in Bordeaux, France, in 1553. His father was a rich vineyard owner who became a royal official. Pierre studied law at Turin and became a doctor of law in 1579. Three years later he was a lawyer for the Parlement of Bordeaux.

On December 10, 1608, King Henri IV commissioned De Lancre to investigate the Basque-speaking area of Pays de Labourd. This was in response to a petition pre-

sented by two sailors who had visited that region and claimed that it was overrun with witches. On February 4, 1609, the Parlement restricted De Lancre's investigations purely to witchcraft. He enthusiastically sought out witches, looking particularly for the **Devil's Mark**. He came to believe that the whole population of that southwest area of the country was "infected" by witchcraft and accused 30,000 people, including **priests**. De Lancre found instances of demonology, pacts with the devil, and witches' **sabbats**. He also spoke of lycanthropy (werewolves) and vampirism. A young woman named Margarita was the first to confess, in great detail and without torture, possibly hoping to save herself by naming others. De Lancre started arresting suspects, soon implicating virtually every family in the region. De Lancre relied a great deal on the testimony of children, some as young as five years of age. He amassed details of weekly sabbat meetings, with as many as 2,000 naked witches dancing, drinking, and copulating together.

For his services, De Lancre was granted a leave of absence in 1610 and visited Rome and Naples. Two years later he was made a State Counsellor in Paris. He died there in 1631.

(See also **French Witchcraft**.)

SOURCES:

Robbins, Rossell Hope: *The Encyclopedia of Witchcraft and Demonology*. Crown, 1959.

LAVEAU, MARIE see VOODOO

LAW OF THREE see THREEFOLD LAW

Leek, Sybil (1923–1983)

Astrologer who emigrated from England to America in the mid-1960s. In her books and through various newspapers and other interviews, Leek created a confused and frequently contradictory background of her life, with few verifiable details. She was born Angela Carter (although in one of her books she gives her family name as Falk) in Staffordshire, England, in 1923. Her father was a civil engineer who, in his earlier years, had been an actor. He went walking and climbing with his children and taught his daughter yoga exercises. Leek came from a large, close family. Her maternal grandmother was an astrologer who taught some of her art to Leek. She was mainly homeschooled until she was eleven.

Leek said that in late 1939, at the age of sixteen, she married a famous pianist who died two years later, but she gives no details of the man, not even his name. She said that after getting married they toured Europe for two years before his death, although Europe was in the throes of World War II at that time. Leek claims to have been **initiated** into the **Craft** in the south of France, in the hills above Nice, after the death of her husband, but she makes no mention of the German occupation of France. Back in England she lived for a year with some **Gypsies** before opening an antique shop in the New Forest. Leek worked as a roving reporter for Southern Television, in addition to running her antique store, provid-

ing material for documentaries about life in the south of England. She also claims to have joined a **coven of Witches** in the New Forest area and became its High **Priestess**. At some point she married a man named Brian and by him had two sons, Stephen and Julian.

By the early 1960s, Leek was claiming a **Witchcraft** background. Unfortunately, her publicity drew unwelcome attention to her shop, and her landlord terminated the lease. She had, meanwhile, written a book called *A Shop in the High Street* about her experiences in the antique business. It mentioned her life in the New Forest and her encounters with Gypsies. Nowhere in the book was there any mention of Witches or Witchcraft, since it was written prior to her initial claims of Witchcraft association. The book had moderate success and was published in the United States in 1964. To help promote the book, Leek came to the United States where she started a self-publicity tour presenting herself as a practicing Witch. At that time, her claims were many and varied. The *New York Times* of April 26, 1964, said that she was “the only practicing witch in England today,” while *Fate* magazine of June 1964 said she was “Chief Witch of England.” On a number of occasions, Leek claimed that she was “Chief Witch” or “Queen of all the Witches,” having been voted into that position “by all the witches of the world in 1947,” even though the Craft was fragmented and still under cover at that time. In October of 1964 Leek was selling **Hallowe’en** candy at the New York World’s Fair and claiming that she was “one of 80 professional witches in Great Britain” and that she communicated “with the more than 300 ghosts she keeps around her old beamed cottage” (*New York Daily News*, October 13, 1964).

Leek was fascinated with figures, as was evident from the following: she claimed to have starred in “some 926 television shows” (*Boston Herald*, September 16, 1964), commanded “800 full-fledged, initiated witches in addition to some 8,000 followers of witchcraft” (*New York Sunday News*, December 6, 1964), and could “trace her witch lineage back some 500 years” (*Sunday News*).

On a television show broadcast from WNEW-TV on June 11, 1966, she claimed to be 450 years old. She also claimed during that period that, in addition to being an antiques dealer, she was “an anthropologist” (Reuters, 1965), “a journalist by trade” (*Houston Post*, November 28, 1966), “self-proclaimed Queen of England’s witches and a spiritualist” (*Staten Island Sunday Advance*, March 20, 1966), and “a British writer and medium” (*New York Sunday News*, July 3, 1966).

By the end of 1966 Leek had taken to using the title “Dame.” A Dame of the British Empire is the female equivalent of a Knight. Sybil Leek’s name does not appear on the honor rolls of that period, the Queen did not bestow the title on her, and it is certainly not a Witchcraft title.

Leek lived with a series of people in New York for a number of years. She was a colorful character, invariably dressed in floor-length purple dresses and capes. She later moved to California, then Texas, and finally to Florida. She continued her work as an astrologer and for several years produced a popular astrology magazine. Although in her early American years she gave out much misinformation about **Wicca**, over the years she did educate herself on the true workings of the Craft and

for the last few years of her life performed good work for Wicca in helping to straighten the misconceptions. The rituals of her Horsa tradition owed much to **Gerald Gardner**, her tradition using the names **Faunus** and **Diana** for the male and female **deities**. She died in Melbourne, Florida, in 1983.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Witchcraft from the Inside*. Llewellyn, 1971.

Jordan, Michael: *Witches*. Kyle Cathie, 1996.

Leek, Sybil: *A Shop in the High Street*. McKay, 1964.

Leek, Sybil: *The Complete Art of Witchcraft*. Signet, 1973.

Left Hand Path; Right Hand Path

Terms used to denote whether **magical** work is for good, positive purposes (Right Hand Path) or for evil, negative purposes (Left Hand Path). Good magical work is also termed **white magic** and negative work **black magic**. Followers of **Satanism** are followers of the Left Hand Path, while **Wiccans** are followers of the Right Hand Path, by virtue of their belief in harming none.

LEGEND OF WITCH HOLLOW (MOVIE) *see* **THE WITCHMAKER**

LELAND, CHARLES GODFREY *see* **ARADIA**

Lethbridge, Thomas C. (1901–1971)

Thomas Lethbridge was born in the west country of England in 1901. Records trace the family to the twelfth century. He came from a family of soldiers, explorers, churchmen, and members of Parliament. All were individualists, and many exhibited a certain eccentricity. Lethbridge told the story of how his grandfather was arrested on a first visit to London for leaning out of his bedroom window and shooting at a cockerel that kept him awake.

Although the family traditionally went to Oxford University, since Lethbridge had not learned Greek in school he had to go to Cambridge. There he studied archaeology and spent much time in the museum, where he became closely acquainted with the curator, Louis Clarke. When Lethbridge left Cambridge with his degree, Clarke invited him to participate in some archaeological digs. In the course of these, he became friends with such notables as Sir Cyril Fox and Sir William Ridgeway. Lethbridge subsequently became Keeper of Anglo-Saxon Antiquities at the Archaeological Museum at Cambridge University, where he stayed until 1957. He was also Director of Excavations of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society and Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries.

Lethbridge became acquainted with **Margaret Alice Murray**, Egyptologist at London University and author of *The Witch Cult in Western Europe* (1921) and *The God of the Witches* (1931). He was fascinated by her theory of **Witchcraft** being a pre-Christian nature religion. It fitted with what he had discovered doing

archaeological excavations near Cambridge and uncovering a figure, or figures, akin to the **Cerne** Abbas Giant, carved into the turf of an Iron Age fort known as Wandlebury Camp. The detailed scene he resurrected had been long overgrown and lost, but, by judicial investigation and the sinking of test holes, Lethbridge uncovered a giant **goddess** figure, riding a horse and brandishing a sword, with the symbol of the **moon** behind her. He identified her with the goddess Matrona, **Celtic** equivalent of Diana, goddess of the Witches. Lethbridge wrote a book on the subject, *Gogmagog: the Buried Gods*, and some years later wrote a book on Witchcraft. In the latter work he expanded upon Murray's writings, looking especially at the goddess of the Witches.

After his retirement from Cambridge in 1957, Lethbridge wrote a number of books, including important works on psychokinesis, psychometry, dowsing, ESP, UFOs, **healing**, and telepathy. He died in Branscombe, Somerset, in 1971.

SOURCES:

Graves, Tom and Hoult, Jane (eds.): *The Essential T. C. Lethbridge*. Granada Publishing, 1982.

Lethbridge, T. C.: *Gogmagog: The Buried Gods*. Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1957.

Lethbridge, T. C.: *Witches*. Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1957.

Levi, Eliphas Zahed (1810–1875)

One of the best-known French **occultists**, whose real name was Alphonse Louis Constant, Eliphas Levi was born in Paris, France, in 1810. His father was a poor shoemaker. Levi was educated at Roman Catholic schools and at the seminary of St. Sulpice, eventually being ordained a deacon in 1835 at the age of twenty-five. Nearly ten years later he began taking an interest in the occult, reading the works of Cornelius Agrippa, Raymond Lull, and Guillaume Postel.

He was expelled from St. Sulpice for teaching doctrines contrary to those of the Church, and thus did not become a priest. He wrote a pamphlet called *The Gospel of Liberty* and for it was thrown in prison for six months. Shortly after his release he married Noémi Cadiot, a young woman half his age, but the marriage only lasted seven years. It was annulled in 1865.

Levi studied with Hoëne-Wronski, Alphonse Esquiros, and an old occultist named Ganneau, and himself began teaching students the **magical** arts. He made a trip to England in May, 1854, which did not turn out as well as he hoped due to his inability to speak the language. However, he did establish a relationship with Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton, an occultist of some note. While there he agreed—somewhat reluctantly—to perform a magical **ritual** for the benefit of a female acquaintance of Sir Edward's. It was a rite of **Ceremonial Magic** entailing much preparation both of himself and the temple in which he performed the rite. He claimed success afterward, writing of the experience some years later in his *Transcendental Magic* (1891). This was his only actual practice of the art, all else being theoretical. He returned to France, virtually penniless and homeless. Adolphe Desbarolles, a noted **palmist**, came to his aid and established him in a room at No. 19 avenue de Maine, Paris, an impressive three-story building with a gatehouse. Levi began to attract

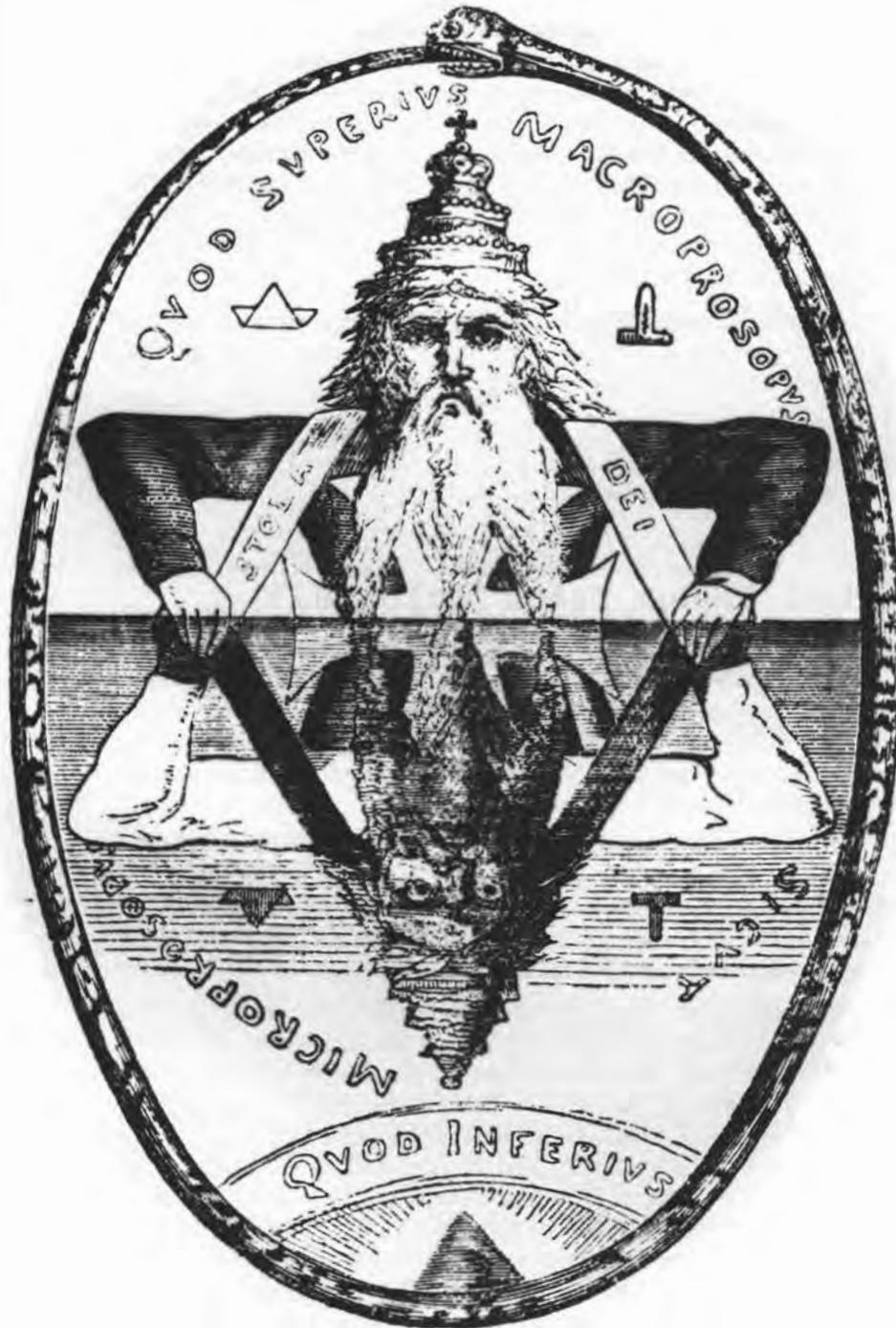


Illustration from the 1891 edition of *Transcendental Magic*, by Eliphas Levi. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

pupils for his teaching of the Kaballah. For the rest of his life he made a comfortable living teaching various occult arts until his death in 1875. He did visit England again in May 1861 to study with Bulwer Lytton. His most important book was *Dogme et Rituel de la Haute Magie* (*The Dogma and Ritual of High Magic*; *Dogma and Ritual* were originally published separately in 1854 and 1856, then together in 1861). Other notable titles were *Histoire de la Magie* (*A History of Magic*, 1892) and *La Clef des Grands Mystères* (*The Key of Great Mysteries*, n.d.). Levi is credited with having reawakened interest in the occult arts in France in the nineteenth century.

SOURCES:

King, Francis: *Ritual Magic in England (1887 to the Present Day)*. Neville Spearman, 1970.

Levi, Eliphas (A. E. Waite, trans.): *Transcendental Magic*. Rider, 1968.

McIntosh, Christopher: *Eliphas Lèvi and the French Occult Revival*. Rider, 1972.

LEVIN, IRA see ROSEMARY'S BABY

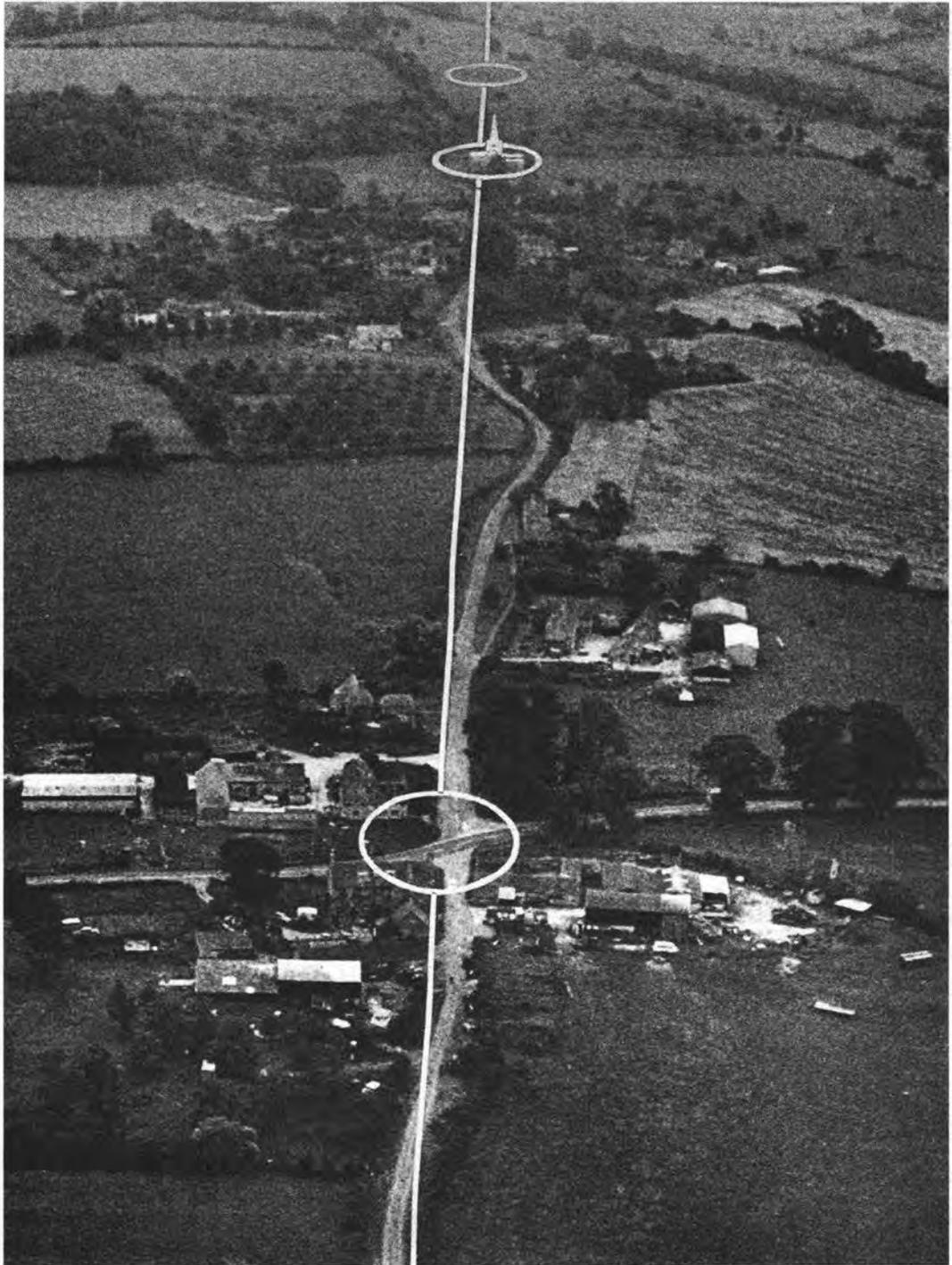


Depiction of levitation, 1681. Courtesy Janet and Colin Bord/Fordean Picture Library.

Levitation

Causing people or things to float above the ground, in opposition to the laws of gravity, by magical or mystical means. The Christian Saint Joseph Mary Desu of Cupertino (1603–1663) made a habit of levitating, making at least seventy flights, according to the *Acta Sanctorum*. The Abbess of Cordova, Spain, Magdalena Crucia, was reported to have been “sometimes lifted up above the ground three of four cubits high,” according to the report of Henry More, in *Antidote Against Atheism* (1635). Others who reportedly levitated include St. Dunstan (918–988), St. Alphonsus Liguori (1696–1787), St. Andrew Fournet, Francis Suarez (1548–1617), and St. Teresa of Avila (1515–1582). A review by Professor O. Leroy (*Levitation*, 1928) lists 155 cases. All these levitations of Christians are hailed as miracles, while levitations of anyone else are labeled, by the Christians, “works of the Devil.” Certainly the idea of witches flying through the air was the devil’s handiwork, according to the persecutors of the Middle Ages. Yet there have been hundreds of cases of levitation, both of people and objects, over the centuries, many well documented.

One of the best known and best documented cases was that of the Scottish-born spiritualist medium Daniel Dunglas Home (1833–1886) who, in 1868, levitated out of one window seventy feet above the ground and in through a different window, in



Aerial view of Saintbury ley, Gloucestershire, looking south. Courtesy Paul Devereux/Fordean Picture Library.

front of credible witnesses: Lord Adare, Captain Charles Wynne, and the honorable Master of Lindsay (later Earl of Crawford and Balcarres). Italian medium Amedee Zuccarini, of Bologne, was photographed levitating nearly two feet above the surface of a table top. Similarly, the British medium Colin Evans was photographed three feet off the ground at the Conway Hall in London during a public séance. In spiritualism, especially in its heyday, levitation of tables and other objects was not uncommon. Certainly, there were and are many cases of fraud, but there have been a sufficient number of well-observed, fully documented instances to prove that it happens.

There are many levitations recorded in Islamic records, also in Hinduism and Buddhism. Advanced practitioners of Transcendental Meditation have claimed to be able to levitate at will.

SOURCES:

Bentine, Michael: *Doors of the Mind*. Granada, 1984.

Buckland, Raymond: *Doors to Other Worlds*. Llewellyn, 1993.

Fodor, Nandor: *An Encyclopedia of Psychic Science*. Arthur's Press, 1933.

Guiley, Rosemary Ellen: *Harper's Encyclopedia of Mystical and Paranormal Experience*. HarperSanFrancisco, 1991.

Leroy, O.: *Levitation*. Burns & Oates, 1928.

Ley Lines

Leys (pronounced "lays") is the term used to indicate ancient straight lines that connect natural points of power in the earth. In his book *The Old Straight Track* (1925), Alfred Watkins (1855–1935), an early photographer and inventor of the pinhole camera, showed that a vast network of straight lines crisscrossed Britain and aligned large numbers of ancient sites, earthworks, standing stones, and burial mounds. He also suggested that such ley lines existed in other parts of the world.

Many believe that the leys indicate the course of subtle earth energies. Where two or more leys cross is a power point that has, in the past, naturally drawn people to assemble or build structures such as standing stones, barrows, temples, and churches. Today, many people use dowsing rods to map out the ley lines. Janet and Colin Bord give several examples of leys, such as the Montgomery ley on the Welsh border. In just six miles it includes six sites: Offa's Dyke; Montgomery Church; Montgomery Castle; Hendomen, the motte and bailey castle predating the Norman castle; Forden Gaer, a Roman camp; and a half mile of straight road exactly along the ley. All are in an exact straight line. One major ley runs from Glastonbury Abbey in Somerset, through Stonehenge, and on to Canterbury Cathedral in Kent, which is more than 150 miles.

SOURCES:

Bord, Janet and Colin: *Ancient Mysteries of Britain*. Guild Publishing, 1986.

Watkins, Alfred: *The Old Straight Track*. Methuen, 1925.

Libation

An offering to the gods. Whenever Witches have a meal, before they themselves eat or drink they pour some wine onto the earth, onto the altar, or into the fire as a

sign of giving thanks to the gods for what they have. This is an essential part of the ceremony of **Cakes and Wine**, a part of every Witch meeting, but also is done any time Witches are feasting together. Where a meeting is taking place indoors and it is not possible to pour the wine directly onto the ground, it is poured into a libation dish. This is then taken outside and its contents poured on the ground immediately following the closing of the **Circle**.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Buckland's Complete Book of Witchcraft*. Llewellyn, 1986.

Buckland, Raymond: *Witchcraft from the Inside*. Llewellyn, 1995.

Ligature

A **magical spell** used to cause impotency. It is also sometimes referred to as an *aiguillette*, from its use in sixteenth and seventeenth century France. In Italian **Witchcraft** it is called *ghirlanda delle streghe*; in Latin, *vaecordia*. Ligature is also the name given to the state of impotency caused by this **black magic**.

A length of cord or thread is tied with **knots**, with the desired effect in the mind of the spell-caster. It was suspected that one time this might be done was during a wedding ceremony. In fact, marriages were annulled when the husband was unable to perform and ligature was suspected. Francesco-Maria Guazzo, in his *Compendium Maleficarum* (1608), gives seven headings under which ligature might have occurred:

When one of the married couple is made hateful to the other, or both hateful to each other.

When some bodily hindrance keeps a husband and wife apart in different places, or when some thing or phantasm is interposed.

When the vital spirit is hindered from flowing to the penis and the emission of semen is prevented.

When the semen is not fertile.

When a man's penis becomes flabby whenever he wishes to perform the sex act.

When certain natural drugs are given a woman to prevent her from conceiving.

When the female genitals become narrow or close up, or when the male organ retracts.

As can be seen from the sixth instance above, sometimes **potions** were administered in addition to knots being tied. However, the tying of knots was generally believed to be sufficient to cause the loss of erection, impotence, or sterility.

SOURCES:

Robbins, Rossell Hope: *The Encyclopedia of Witchcraft and Demonology*. Crown, 1959.

Lilith

In Jewish folklore, a female **demon** in some ways similar to a vampire. She derives from a Babylonian-Assyrian demon Lilit, or Lilu. She was believed to have a special power for evil over children. In the Rabbinical literature, Lilith became the first wife of Adam but, being his equal, objected to lying under him in intercourse. When he tried to force her, she flew away.

The “Maid of Desolation” (*ardat lili*) of Babylonian tradition was a demon of waste places who originally lived in the garden of the Sumerian **Inanna**. In Assyrian belief, she became a wind spirit, wild-haired and winged. In the Talmud Lilith is a **succubus**—a demon of the night whose offspring, from her unions with men, became demons. Attacking men who slept alone, she was an angel of darkness, becoming a **goddess** of conception. This belief gained strength in the Middle Ages. It was said that children in their first week of life were most susceptible to Lilith, although some said a girl was in danger for twenty days and a boy for the first eight years of his life.

A **talisman** of protection against Lilith had to have three names engraved on it: *Sanvi*, *Sansanvi*, *Semangelaf*. These three names could also be written on the door to a child's room. To medieval Jewry, Lilith was the one who caused men to have nocturnal emissions. Her offspring were the *lilin*, or *lilim*, and were said to have human bodies but with wings and the hindquarters of a donkey, although a terracotta relief from Sumer depicts Lilith herself as a human but with wings and the taloned feet of a bird. Lilith also appears in the folklore of Britain, Greece, Germany, Mexico, and even in Native American legends.

Some **Witches** consider Lilith a patroness. A **Moon** goddess, her beauty is more than human. Leland identifies her with Herodias, or **Aradia**, and quotes ancient Slavonian charms where she is mentioned.

SOURCES:

Leach, Maria (ed.): *Funk & Wagnalls Standard Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology and Legend*. Harper & Row, 1984.

Leland, Charles Godfrey: *Etruscan-Roman Remains*. Unwin, 1892.

LINGAM see YONI

Lord's Prayer

The Lord's Prayer of Christianity was treated by the medieval persecutors of **witches** as a **magical charm** against **witchcraft**. As early as 400 CE, in his *Sermon Against Fortune-Tellers and Diviners*, St. Augustine said, “Cross yourselves in the name of Christ and say faithfully the Creed or the Lord's Prayer, you may go about your business secure in the help of God.”

It was also used as a test for a witch. In England, at Chelmsford in 1579, Agnes Waterhouse was questioned on her ability to say the Lord's Prayer. In the summer of 1682, three Devonshire women were tried for witchcraft at Exeter Assizes. The

judges, Sir Thomas Raymond and Sir Francis North, used their inability to repeat the Lord's Prayer as a sign of guilt. In the trial of Julian Cox, in front of Justice Archer in 1663, the accused was asked to repeat the Lord's Prayer and failed. Jane Wenham, at Hertford in 1712, was asked by the Rev. Mr. Strutt to say the Lord's Prayer and, in failing, made the excuse "she was much disturbed in her head."

Yet the ability to say the Lord's Prayer without error was no guarantee of an accused witch being found innocent. At Salem, Massachusetts, on August 19, 1692, a cart carrying five accused witches to Gallows Hill stopped in front of the gallows. One of the accused, George Burroughs, asked to address the crowd. This he did in carefully chosen words that worked on the emotions of the crowd. He then, clearly and faultlessly, recited the Lord's Prayer to them. The crowd was moved and would almost certainly have released him, but **Cotton Mather** arrived on horseback and, with stern words, cautioned them all against the workings of the Devil. Burroughs was hung with the others.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Witchcraft Ancient and Modern*. H. C. Publishers, 1970.

Notestein, Wallace: *A History of Witchcraft in England from 1558 to 1718*. Russell & Russell, 1965.

Loudun Nuns

In 1633, the Ursuline convent of Loudun, France, was the scene of one of the most famous outbreaks of demonic possession. At the root of it was political movement against Father Urbain Grandier, who, at the age of twenty-seven, had been appointed parish priest of the church of St.-Pierre-du-Marché, in Loudun. Since he was not from that area, being a native of Mantes, the local clergy felt very antagonistic toward him.

Grandier was born in 1590, at Bouère, and educated at Bordeaux by the Jesuits. He was very much a lady's man, despite his priestly orders. In Loudun he was suspected of being the father of a child born to Philippa Trincant, daughter of the public prosecutor of Loudun, and he openly had one of his young penitents, Madeleine de Brou, as a mistress. On June 2, 1630, his enemy, the Bishop of Poitiers, charged him with immorality, and he was found guilty before the Ecclesiastical Tribunal of Poitiers. But within the year he was free again and back at his priestly duties, due to his political connections with the Archbishop of Bordeaux, Sourdis. Despite suggestions from his friends that he move elsewhere, he remained in Loudun and flaunted his affairs.

The confessor to the nuns of Loudun was Canon Mignon. He was approached by Grandier's enemies to persuade some of the sisters to pretend to be possessed and to accuse Grandier of bewitching them. The Mother Superior, Sister Jeanne des Anges (Madame de Béclier), and another nun cooperated and seemingly went into convulsions. They claimed they were possessed by two devils, Asmodeus and Zabulon, sent by Father Grandier. Later, other nuns, affected by the apparent convulsions and seizures of the Mother Superior, also became possessed. All accused Grandier of bewitching them.

A variety of **priests** proceeded to try to **exorcise** the nuns, and great crowds came to see the spectacle. When Grandier himself spoke to one of the nuns in Greek, she responded in Greek, having been taught what to say. Much of the pretense was suspected and eventually discovered. But Grandier did not fight back, believing that he could never be convicted. However, on November 30, 1633, he was thrown into jail in the castle of Angers, where Dr. Mannouri searched him for the **Devil's Mark**. Mannouri pricked Grandier with one end of a lancet, causing him to cry out, then reversed it and pressed with the blunt end and proclaimed that Grandier felt no pain. Another doctor saw the trick and revealed it.

For purely political reasons, Cardinal Richelieu wanted to bring back the **Inquisition** and saw the Grandier case as an excuse to do so. He wanted to impress the Protestants by staging great public exorcisms, thereby moving toward revoking the Edict of Nantes, which gave religious freedom to all denominations. Richelieu had Grandier arrested by his agent Jean de Laubardemont, who happened to be a relative of Sister Jeanne des Anges, the Mother Superior. The trial became a mockery. Although Grandier should have been tried in a secular court and permitted an appeal to the Parliament, the Cardinal threw out all the rules and proceeded as he saw fit.

Some of Grandier's rejected mistresses came forward to speak against him. According to Monsieur Des Niau, writing in *La Véritable Histoire (de Loudun)* (1634), "Sixty witnesses deposed to adulteries, incests, sacrileges, and other crimes, committed by the accused, even in the most secret places of his church, as in the vestry, where the holy host is kept, on all days and at all hours."

The 1634 trial was a complete travesty of justice. The Bailli of Loudun protested the proceedings but was immediately suppressed by implications that his actions could be construed as treason. Any evidence in favor of Grandier's innocence was suppressed or disregarded. An alleged **Pact with the Devil**, supposedly signed by Grandier, was produced as evidence of his dealings with Satan.

The Mother Superior and one or two of the nuns eventually had second thoughts and tried to recant their accusations, but they were either ignored or not allowed to speak. Sentence was pronounced on August 18, 1634. Grandier was found guilty "of the crime of **magic**, *maleficia*, and of causing demoniacal possession of several Ursuline nuns." To atone, he had to appear at the church of St.-Pierre-du-Marché, with a rope around his neck and holding a two-pound taper in his hand. There he had to drop to his knees and beg God's pardon. All his goods were to be confiscated by the Crown. Not only that, but he was to be **tortured** into naming accomplices before being burned alive at the stake, together with all his books and manuscripts.

Urbain Grandier was put to the most violent torture by Father Tranquille and other Capuchins, having his legs smashed and crushed until the marrow ran out of his bones. When he cried out to God, in his agony, the priests said that he was really crying out to Satan, *his god!* This was a tactic used, and recorded by the Christian chroniclers, throughout the **witch** trials during the persecutions. But Grandier refused to name anyone as an accomplice. Franciscan Father Lactance and Madame de Laubardemont lit the pyre and, according to reports, gloated over his struggles as he burned.

As it happened, the “possession” of the nuns did not cease at Grandier’s death. In front of hundreds of people the nuns continued to roll on the ground, lift up their clothing to expose themselves, and, as Des Niau reported, use “expressions so indecent as to shame the most debauched of men, while their acts, both in exposing themselves and inviting lewd behavior from those present, would have astonished the inmates of the lowest brothel in the country.” It was not until some time later, when Richelieu stopped making payments to the convent, that the nuns seemed to lose interest in their performances and things finally returned to normal.

SOURCES:

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Love Magic

Love magic seems to be one of the most popular forms of **magic**. It is usually used by a woman to persuade a particular man to fall in love with her, or by a man to persuade a particular woman to fall in love with him. Yet working magic to achieve such desires is actually considered, by **Wiccans**, akin to working **black magic**. The reason is that, in trying to make another person fall in love with you, you are working against that person’s free will. The **Wiccan Rede** says, “An it harm none, do what thou wilt.” To force—in this case by magic—someone else to do something they would not do naturally is to harm them. It should therefore not be done.

This may or may not have been the reasoning behind a sixteenth-century law in England that said it was a felony to “practise or cause to be used . . . any invocation of spirits, **witchcrafts**, **enchantments** or **sorceries** to . . . provoke any person to unlawful love” (Witchcraft Statute, 1542). It was said that Anne Boleyn had used witchcraft to lure King Henry VIII into marrying her. This was ten years before that particular Statute.

The “harm none” creed of Wicca is not to say that no form of love magic can be performed. The usual solution is for the would-be perpetrator to work magic on him or herself, to make themselves so attractive that the desired one will be drawn naturally, rather than by having a spell put on them. Another way out would be to work magic to attract “someone,” without naming any specific person. In working the magic, the *type* of person can be specified: appearance, interests, whatever is found attractive. This, then, might draw the attention of the particular one desired, but might just as easily draw another—someone not even realized or considered before, yet filling the “requirements.”

Love magic has a considerable history, usually of the above mentioned “black” variety. **Poppets**—human-shaped figures of cloth, clay, or wax—have been constructed, frequently made more potent by mixing in nail clippings, hair, or blood drops from the one desired. Yet here there needs to be caution, as was shown in the incident of Dr. John Fiene, one of the accused witches of North Berwick, Scotland, in 1590 who was described as “clarke to all those who were in subjection to the Divil’s service.” Fiene, whose name was also given as John Cuningham, was a

schoolmaster at Salt pans, in Lowthian, and took a fancy to the sister of one of his students. The brother and sister apparently slept together—not unusual at that time and place—and Fiene therefore asked the boy to obtain “three hairs from his sister’s privities” and gave him a special piece of paper to place them in. Unfortunately for Dr. Fiene, the boy inadvertently woke his sister while trying to get the hairs. She complained to their mother. The mother, being a witch, guessed what Fiene was up to and substituted three hairs from the family cow’s udder, placing them in the paper. The boy delivered them to his schoolmaster, who “wrought his arte upon them.” Subsequently, the young heifer appeared in the doorway of the church when Fiene was inside, then followed him everywhere he went.

Certain **herbs**, such as the **mandrake**, were thought to possess aphrodisiac qualities or magical potency especially effective in cases of love. **Amulets**, **charms**, and **talismans** have been constructed, **candles** lit and **ritualistically** manipulated, and ceremonies performed, all in the name of love. There are many love charms and practices used by the **Gypsies**. They include magic to draw a desired person, magic to repel an undesirable, and magic to cement relationships.

SOURCES:

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Davidson, Thomas: *Rowan Tree and Red Thread*. Oliver & Boyd, 1949.

Low Magic

High Magic is the ceremonial variety, involving the use of carefully prepared “Instruments of the Art,” intricate **evocations** and **conjurations**, and careful preparation of **magician** and tools. Low magic, by comparison, is simplicity itself and is the magic of the **Hedge Witch** and **Cunning Man** and Woman. It involves the use of ordinary, common items, such as sticks and stones, **herbs**, and roots. The secret of Low Magic is that the “power” is drawn from the earth or from within the Magician or **Witch**, rather than demanded from God and the Angels through “**Words of Power**.”

Another name for Low Magic is Folk Magic or Natural Magic, since it does not favor the strict disciplines and severe regimens of **Ceremonial Magic**.

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LUGH see GODS, see also LUGHNASADH

Lughnasadh

The August Eve **sabbat** of **Witchcraft**, pronounced “*Loo-nu’-suh*.” Named for the **Celtic** fire and light god Lugh (variations: Lug, Hugh, Llew), a young, beautiful god with some of the attributes of the Greek god Apollo. He possessed a massive spear and a sling, with which he put out the eye of Balor. The Farrars believe him to be

the same god as Baal/Beli/Balor, albeit a later version of him. In Irish mythology Lugh, as leader of the Tuatha Dé Danann, is the renewal of Balor, king of the Fomors. In his book *Witches*, T. C. Lethbridge looks at the replacement of pagan gods with Christian saints and details many parish churches now dedicated to St. Michael as being built on sites associated with Lugh.

The Christianized version of Lughnasadh is Lammas, from the Old English for “loaf-mass,” and this name is favored by some modern **Witches**. This is a time of first harvests, the wheat from which went into the making of loaves of bread. There is a thanksgiving at this time, together with **rituals** to endure the fruitfulness of the next year’s crops. This is also a time for the thinning out of plants toward a better harvest. Ritual dramas acted out at this time might include enactment of the death and rebirth of the god, or the killing of the old god by the young one.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Buckland’s Complete Book of Witchcraft*. Llewellyn, 1986.

Farrar, Janet and Stewart: *Eight Sabbats for Witches*. Robert Hale, 1981.

Lethbridge, T. C.: *Witches: Investigating an Ancient Religion*. Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962.

Lycanthropy

The transformation of a human being into the form of a wolf. From the Greek *lukos*, a wolf, and *anthropos*, a man. Such a human, transformed, is known as a werewolf. This, in turn, comes from the Anglo-Saxon *wer*, man, and *wulf*, wolf. There are many folk tales of werewolves in all countries of the world where wolves are, or were, found. In other countries that have not known the wolf, there are folk tales of such things as weretigers, -bears, -leopards, -panthers, or -foxes.

Some people believed that the transformation took place solely in the mind of the person. In other words, no physical changes took place; the affected person simply believed that the changes had taken place. Yet there were many well documented cases—several in France in 1598, for example—that seemed to prove otherwise.

During the time of the trials for **witchcraft** at the end of the sixteenth century, there were a number of cases of lycanthropy. Geiler von Kayserberg’s book on witchcraft, *Die Emeis* (Strasbourg, 1517), contains an illustration of a man being attacked by a werewolf. The Révérend Père M. Mar. Guaccius’s *Compendium maleficarum* (Milan, 1626) has an engraving of a **witch** turned into a wolf. Various German works of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries also show such pictures. In many of the British witch trials evidence was presented of witches transforming themselves into a variety of animals: rabbits, **hares**, cats, dogs, mice, **crows**, and wolves. In 1573, Gilles Garnier of Dole, France, admitted to becoming a werewolf and killing a ten-year-old girl, tearing her body to pieces with his teeth and claws. In 1589, Peter Stumpf of Bedburg, near Cologne, under **torture** admitted that he changed into such an animal with the aid of a **magic** belt that the devil had given him. He could change back into a man, he said, by removing the belt. Among others, Stumpf killed his own son and twelve other children, plus two young women and various livestock. He was sentenced to be horribly tortured then burned alive at the stake, along with his daughter.



Wahrhaftige Begebenheit!
 Mit einem verbannten Wolff: welcher im 1685ten Jahr von
 Marggraffthum Onoltzbach etliche Kinder weggetragen und ge-
 freßen. hiezlich den 6 October in einem Brünner zu Neuses bei Eschen-
 bühgefangen und ertödtet: so dem dylet figür nach, außgehangen worden.

Neuses Eschenbach

Ich Wolff ein Graußener Thier. Ein freßer vieler Kinder.
 ich achte sie viel mehr, als fette Schaf und Rinder.
 Ein Hinder der bracht nicht umb. Ein Brünner war mein Todt.
 nun herck an Galgen ich zu aller Leuchte spott;

bei Georg Luch Schmidts fecit
 Kupfergestalt 1685

Werewolf of Eschenbach, 1685. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

Vergil, the Roman poet, in his *Eclogues* (c. 20 BCE), wrote, "Often have I seen Moeris turn into a wolf and hide in these woods: often too have I seen him summon the spirits from the depths of the tomb and transfer crops elsewhere." Pliny the Elder (23–79 CE) spoke of one of the clan of Anthius, who was chosen by ballot of the family and led away to a certain pool in the region of Arcadia. There he hung his clothes on an oak tree, swam across the pool, and went into the woods on the far side to transform into a wolf. He remained in that form for nine years before swimming back across the pool and changing back into a man. According to William Stokes (*Religion of the Celts*, 1873), St. Patrick cursed a certain race in Ireland so that every seven years they and their descendants would become werewolves.

SOURCES:

- Basil, Copper: *The Werewolf in Legend, Fact, and Art*. Robert Hale, 1977.
 Murray, Margaret Alice: *The Witch Cult in Western Europe*. Clarendon Press, 1921.
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 Thompson, Stith: *The Folktale*. Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1946.



Macbeth

Fillet of a fenny snake,
In the cauldron boil and bake;
Eye of newt and tongue of dog,
Adder's fork and blind-worm's sting . . .

These words, from the Second Witch of the three in Shakespeare's *Macbeth* (Act IV, Sc. 1), are words that most people automatically associate with witches. The picture of the three old hags gathered about a steaming cauldron, throwing in all kinds of obnoxious ingredients and stirring the brew, is typical of the popular misconceptions of Witches and Witchcraft.

In the play, written about 1605, Macbeth is guided by the prophesies of the three witches, their words encouraging him to commit murder in his quest to become king. Ultimately, he dies cursing the three and the day he met them on the heath. Interestingly, Shakespeare never refers to the three as "witches" in the words of the play, but as "Weird Sisters."

The witch scenes in *Macbeth* are based on the idea of witches concocting evil brews with gruesome ingredients. In fact, this idea was the result of the propaganda of the Christian Church, at a time when it was trying to stamp out its rival Witchcraft and Paganism in general. The play was written only two years after King James I came to the throne with all his prejudices against the Old Religion. Witches did boil up brews when at their sabbats, but these were ordinary stews and soups to eat. The horrible-sounding ingredients thrown into the mixture were no more than herbs and roots, known in those days by colorful names. These names were frequently based on the appearance of the plant: the shape or texture of its leaves or the color of its flowers, for example.

Macbeth's witches speak of lizard's legs, adder's fork or tongue, fillet of snake, and dog's tongue. Breast weed (*Saururus cernuus*) was commonly known as lizard's

tail or lizard's leg; the dogtooth violet (*Erythronium dens-canis*) was known as adder's tongue; fillet of snake was adder's meat or chickweed (*Stellaria holostea*); dog's tongue was tory weed (*Cynoglossum officinale*). Most ingredients mentioned in *Macbeth* and elsewhere were simply the common names of plants and herbs. Shakespeare added to the Pagan image of the witches by having them conjure **Hecate**, the Greek goddess of Witchcraft.

Shakespearean scholars believe that *Macbeth* was originally a shorter play than the one we have today. It is generally felt that the witchcraft scenes were added or expanded after the main play had been written. Some suggest that it might not have been Shakespeare who was responsible—that possibly Middleton made the additions. His play, *The Witch*, had been published in 1600.

SOURCES:

Holmes, Ronald: *Witchcraft in History*. Citadel Press, 1974.

MABON see AUTUMNAL EQUINOX

Maciste All'Inferno (movie)

Maciste in Hell (1962), is a 1960 Italian movie directed by Riccardo Freda. It was re-released in 1972 as *Witches Curse*. The story is set in seventeenth-century Scotland, where Maciste (Kirk Morris) does battle with a witch named Martha Gunt (Helene Chanel) and they both visit Hell. Maciste manages to remove a curse, and love conquers all.

Magic(k); Magician

“Magick” is an old spelling of “magic” and is used by many modern occultists to differentiate the parapsychological form from the stage conjuring variety. There are many definitions of magic. Some of them are:

Creating your own reality.

A seemingly unnatural happening brought about by human means.

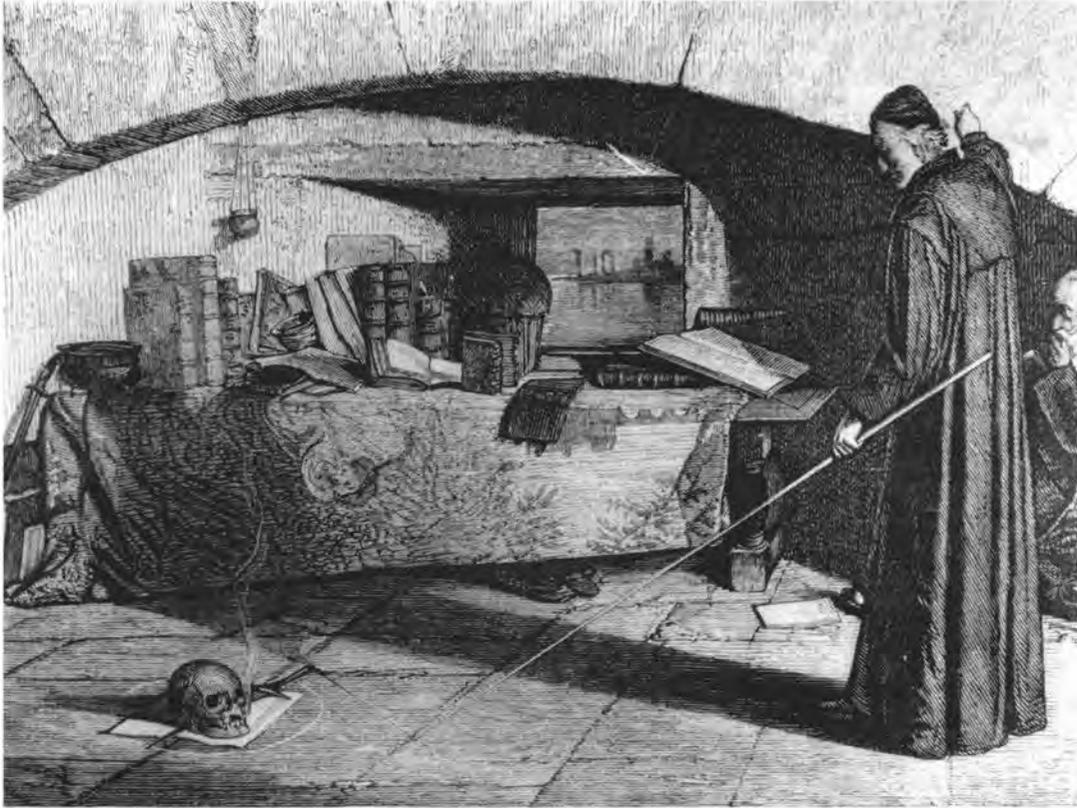
Words and actions affecting physical reality.

“The science or art of causing change to occur in conformity with Will.” (**Aleister Crowley**)

“The projection of natural energies to produce needed effects.” (**Scott Cunningham**)

“Making something happen that you want to happen.” (**Raymond Buckland**)

Events normally happen following a course of cause and effect, although we are invariably unaware of this principle as life flows by in a seemingly haphazard manner. However, if this flow—this seemingly disorganized pattern—can be interrupted and changed to make an event take place when and where we want it, then “magic” has been done. We are making something happen that we want to happen.



Magician casting a spell. Engraving by Stephen Miller after a painting by William Douglas. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

Scott Cunningham says there are three main sources for magical energy: personal power, **Earth** power, and divine power. Personal power is that which resides within each and every one of us, empowering our bodies and sustaining life. This power can be aroused with the right stimuli, directed to achieve some purpose, and released to that end. Earth power is within the planet and may be reached through any number of means: stones, trees, plants, wind, fire, water, and so on. It, too, can be aroused, manipulated, and directed to achieve desired ends. Divine power is the driving force that works through the other two. It is universal power coming from what we perceive as deity and acting through our bodies or through the Earth.

Cunningham makes the point that magic is not supernatural. It is **occult**, meaning hidden or secret and known only to the **initiated**, but it is also natural. Its workings may not yet be known, understood, or even labeled by science, but that does not mean it does not exist.

Anyone who practices magic is, by definition, a magician. It should be stressed that a magician is a *practitioner*; in other words, he or she is not necessarily connected with any religious beliefs or worship. It is not necessary to become a **Witch**,

Christian, Jew, Buddhist, or follower of any other religion in order to be a magician and practice magic. Whether or not one believes that the power behind magic comes, ultimately, from deity is immaterial; magical **rituals** do not have to be done as part of religious rituals.

There are many different ways of working magic and as many different types of magician. There is “Low” and “High” magic, imitative or sympathetic magic, **Ceremonial Magic**, folk magic, and magic for health, wealth, love, power, and protection. Generally, magic can be divided into positive and negative, although some small actions may fall somewhere in a gray area between the two (see **Binding**). Some magic can be potentially dangerous to the practitioner because of entities or spirits conjured, while other magic is totally benign, drawing only from natural forces within.

Magic can be done by individuals or by groups. Most Ceremonial Magic is done by an individual, while most **Witchcraft** magic is done by groups (**covens**), but there are exceptions to both of these. In Ceremonial Magic, the magician may take days or even weeks preparing for the ritual. All the instruments needed are carefully prepared to an ancient formula. The time and place of performing the ritual is determined and, again, carefully prepared. The power is drawn down by using the **Names of Power**: powerful names that can be used to force the spirits to do the magician’s will.

In Witchcraft, the work to be done is carefully planned out, with the objective clear in everyone’s mind. Then the power necessary to work magic is drawn from the bodies by raising them to a state of excitement, or *ekstasis*—a “getting out of oneself.” This may be achieved by **dancing**, singing, **chanting**, scourging, sexual activity, or other ways. When sufficient power has been raised, it is sent out, directed to achieve the desired result. In some **Wiccan** traditions, each individual sends the power as and when ready. In other traditions, the power is sent by the individual witches into the body of the High **Priestess**, who then projects the total.

In **Hedge Witchcraft**, **Wort Cunning**, and many forms of folk magic, there is less emphasis on the drawing down of power and more on imbuing **charms**, **amulets**, or **talismans** with the power to do the work.

The time of working magic is always important. In such forms as Ceremonial Magic and even **candle magic**, the time to work may be carefully established through the use of tables or by following set formulae. In most folk magic and that of Wicca, a more general approach involves simply working positive magic in the waxing phase of the **Moon** and negative magic (i.e., magic to be rid of something, be it an unwanted suitor or a bad cold) in the waning phase.

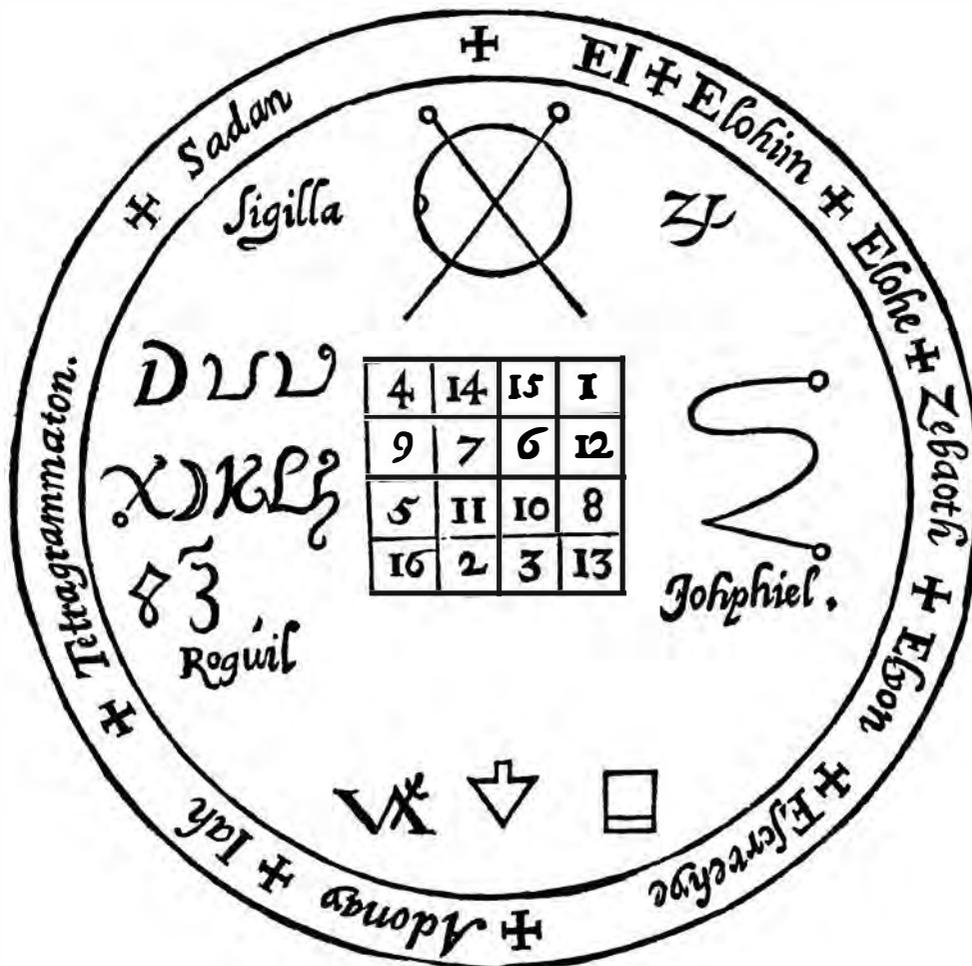
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- Green, Marian: *Natural Magick*. Element Books, 1989.
- King, Francis: *Ritual Magic in England (1887 to the Present Day)*. Neville Spearman, 1970.
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Magic Squares

An arrangement of numbers in the form of a square so that every row and column, plus both diagonals, will add up to the same number. This number is called the *constant*. Each number may only appear once in the square. Magic squares have been known and used from ancient times, engraved on metal talismans and drawn on parchment ones. Used in ancient India and China, they were introduced into Europe early in the Christian era and have been found in many of the *grimoires* of Ceremonial Magic.

Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa von Nettesheim (1486–1535), best known simply as Cornelius Agrippa, founded several secret magical societies and wrote a number of books on magic. His best known work was *De Occulta Philosophia* (1531). He con-



Magic square of the planet Jupiter, from J. Welrus In *Opera Omnia*, 1660. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

structed seven different magic squares that he aligned with the seven planets: Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Sun, Venus, Mercury, and **Moon**. These have become standards in ritual magic. The Saturn square is probably one of the oldest, being found in the Chinese I-Ching. Its constant is 15.

Francis Barrett in his *The Magus* (1801), **Eliphas Levi** in *Transcendental Magic* (1896), and others followed the lead of Agrippa, employing magic squares for a variety of purposes from protection in childbirth to making a man powerful. In 1932, S. L. MacGregor-Mathers published a translation of *The Book of Sacred Magic of Abra-Melin, the Mage*, purported to be the manuscript of a fifteenth-century grimoire. Much of the book is made up of magic squares for many different purposes, but the majority are comprised of letters rather than numbers. These are arranged so that the words read the same from the left, right, downward, and upward. One of these, known as the Sator formula, from the first word across the top of the square, was discovered engraved on old drinking vessels and on fragments from a Roman villa near Cirencester, England. It was believed that a **witch** could not stay in the same room as a talisman engraved with the Sator square.

Great care had to be exercised when constructing magic squares. When drawn on parchment, the squares should be marked in black ink with the numbers or letters in red ink. All should be drawn with the parchment set up so that the maker's shadow does not fall on the parchment. The red lines should not touch the black anywhere. As with all magical items, it should be appropriately **consecrated** before use.

SOURCES:

Encyclopedia Britannica. William Benton, 1964.

MacGregor-Mathers, S. L.: *The Book of Sacred Magic of Abra-Melin, the Mage*. De Laurence, 1932.

Magical Alphabets

There are two main reasons for using magical alphabets: secrecy and power. In the Middle Ages, at a time when the Christian Church was mercilessly persecuting people for being **witches**, many high dignitaries of the Church were practicing Ceremonial Magic. Since it was a practice, not a religion, it was not viewed as counter to the teachings of the Church and so was allowed.

Each **magician** usually worked alone and jealously guarded his methods of operation, since there was great rivalry between them. To safeguard his work, a magician would write the most important parts of his **grimoire** in a secret, or "magical," alphabet. This way, if it was stolen, the thief would not necessarily be able to perform the work it had taken so long to perfect. Various magical alphabets were used, with such titles as *Passing the River*, *Angelic*, *Writing of the Magi*, *Malachim*, *Enochian*, *Ogham*, and *Theban*. Various runic alphabets were also employed, as were Egyptian hieroglyphs.

The second reason for using the magical alphabets—power—was perhaps the more important. When doing ordinary, everyday writing, it is easy to scribble down what is to be recorded without really thinking about the actual writing itself—the

MAGICAL ALPHABETS

	Theban	Passing the River	Malachim	Angelic	Runic
A	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ
B	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ
C	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ
D	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ
E	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ
F	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ
G	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ
H	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ
I	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ
J	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ
K	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ
L	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ
M	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ
N	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ
O	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ
P	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ
Q	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ
R	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ
S	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ
T	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ
U	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ
V	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ
W	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ
X	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ
Y	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ
Z	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ	ⵏ

Magical alphabets. Courtesy Raymond Buckland.

formation of the letters. But if using an unfamiliar alphabet, one has to concentrate on the actual forming of every letter. In this way the writer is, according to magicians, putting his or her energies or “power” into that writing. This was important in the writing used on such things as **talismans**. The more power that went into the making of a talisman, the better. So magical alphabets were used both for secrecy and for directing energy into what was being written.

Modern day magicians and Witches still use some of the magical alphabets. However, some have forgotten or are ignorant of the original reasons for using them and display their proficiency with, for example, Theban, by writing it as rapidly as everyday English. This, of course, defeats the purpose of using it.

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González-Wippler, Migene: *The Complete Book of Amulets and Talismans*. Llewellyn, 1991.

Magus

An **adept**, or master **magician**. In ancient Persia the *Magi* (plural of Magus) were the wise men of the priesthood. In many secret magical societies, such as the Golden Dawn, the title is given on achieving the highest degree of advancement. In **Wicca**, it is a gratuitous title given to a High **Priest** when his High **Priestess** becomes a Witch Queen, or “**Queen of the Sabbat**.”

THE MAGUS see FRANCIS BARRETT

Maiden

The **Triple Goddess** is viewed as Maiden, Mother, **Crone**. In the Maiden aspect, she is considered a virgin, representing youth and innocence, with potential for growth and learning. She is allied with the waxing **Moon**. As **Janet and Stewart Farrar** say, “She is the adventurous young flame that banishes indifference and leapfrogs obstacles . . . She is springtime . . . she is excitement.”

Maiden is also the title given to a young **Wiccan Priestess** who is training to become a **coven** leader. In a **degree system** she would be Second Degree, training to eventually take over the position of High Priestess when that lady feels it is time to retire. In this respect, the **Gardnerian** tradition is criticized for its chauvinism in demanding that a High Priestess retire when she is no longer young and beautiful. The Priestess is a representative of the Goddess, but the Goddess is in three aspects, including the Crone, so many feel that there should be no such pressure. In fact, most women in the position of Maiden are simply training for when they will eventually break away from the mother coven and form their own coven, as a High Priestess in their own right. In family traditions of Witchcraft, the Maiden is usually the daughter of the Priestess.

SOURCES:

Farrar, Janet and Stewart: *The Witches' Goddess*. Phoenix, 1987.

Mald of Salem (movie)

Movie starring Claudette Colbert and Fred MacMurray, made in 1937 and directed and produced by Frank Lloyd. It is set in **Salem**, Massachusetts, at the time of the **witch** trials. Barbara Clarke (Colbert) falls in love with adventurer Roger Coverman (MacMurray), causing a scandal. Ann Goode, a young girl, pretends to be possessed to show that Barbara is a witch. Barbara is tried and sent to be burned at the stake (even though no one was burned in New England) but is saved by Coverman, who proves the accusations are false.

MALKIN see FAMILIAR

Malleus Maleficarum

The first papal bull directly against **witchcraft** was that of Alexander IV, launched in 1258. It was followed by a second in 1260. Many more bulls followed by various **popes**, but none received the attention accorded that of Innocent VIII in 1484. This was not so much for its content but for the fact that, with the advent of printing, Innocent's bull was distributed far and wide, thus having greater effect than any of its predecessors. The bull was then published as an introduction to the *Malleus Maleficarum*, which appeared in 1486.

The *Malleus Maleficarum*, or "**Witches' Hammer**," has been described as the most sinister book ever written. It is, in effect, a book of instructions for witch hunters and judges on how to recognize witchcraft, how to test a witch, what **tortures** may (and should) be applied, what questions to ask, and what answers should be obtained after the torture. It is a terrifying testimony to the nature of the Christian Church at that time. All the tricks for snaring a confession and all the tortures are detailed, including everything deemed necessary to be sure of obtaining a confession, presuming that all those charged with witchcraft were guilty.

The book is in three parts, the first of which treats the "three necessary concomitants of witchcraft which are the Devil, a Witch, and the permission of Almighty God." Here the reader is first admonished that it is heresy not to believe in witchcraft. Points are then covered on whether children can be generated by **incubi and succubi**; witches' copulation with the Devil; whether witches can sway the minds of men to love or hatred; whether witches may work some prestidigitatory illusion so that the male organ appears to be entirely removed from the body; various ways that **witches** may kill the child conceived in the womb, and so on.

The second part, "Treating of the methods by which the works of witchcraft are wrought and directed, and how they may be successfully annulled and dissolved," deals with:

the several methods by which Devils, through witches, entice and allure the innocent to the increase of that horrid craft and company; the way whereby a formal **pact** with evil is made; how they

MALLEVS MALEFICARVM, MALEFICAS ET EARVM

hæresum frameâ conterens,

EX VARIIS AVCTORIBVS COMPILATVS,
& in quatuor Tomos iustè distributus,

*QVORVM DVO PRIORES VANAS DÆMONVM
versutias, prestigiosas eorum delusiones, superstiosas Strigimagarum
ceremonias, horrendos etiam cum illis congressus, exaltam denique
tam pestifera secta disquisitionem, & partitionem complectuntur.
Tertius praxim Exorcistarum ad Damonum, & Strigimagarum male-
ficiam de Christi fidelibus pellendo; Quartus verò Arsem Dollrionicam,
Benedictionalem, & Exorcismalem continet.*

TOMVS PRIMVS.

Indices Auclorum, capitum, verumque non desunt.

Editio nouissima, in finitè penè mendis expurgata; cuique accessit Fuga
Damonum & Complementum artis exorcisticæ.

*Vir sine muliere, in quibus Pythonicus, vel diuinationis furis spiritus, meris moritur
Leuitici cap. 10.*



Z P U D V N I,
Sumptibus CLAVDII BOVRGEAT, sub signo Mercurij Galli.

M. DC. LXIX.
CVM PRIVILEGIO REGIS.

transport from place to place; how witches impede and prevent the power of procreation; how as it were they deprive man of his virile member; how witch midwives commit most horrid crimes when they either kill children or offer them to devils in most accursed wise; how witches injure cattle, raise and stir up hailstorms and tempests and cause lightning to blast both men and beasts.

Then follow remedies for all the above.

The third part of the book, "Relating to the judicial proceedings in both the ecclesiastical and civil courts against witches and indeed all heretics," is perhaps the most important. It is here that the order of the trial is dealt with. "Who are the fit and proper judges for the trial of witches?" is the first question. It then addresses the "method of initiating the process; the solemn adjuration and re-examination of witnesses; the quality and condition of witnesses; whether mortal enemies may be admitted as witnesses." Here it is said that "the testimony of men of low repute and criminals, and of servants against their masters, is admitted . . . it is to be noted that a witness is not necessarily to be disqualified because of every sort of enmity." In the case of witchcraft, virtually anybody could give evidence, even though in any other case the person would not be admitted. Even the evidence of young children was admissible.

This third part continues with such topics as:

how the trial is to be proceeded with and continued, whether the witch is to be imprisoned; what is to be done after the arrest; points to be observed by the judge before the formal examination in the place of detention and torture; how she must be questioned; the continuing of the torture; how they are to be shaved on those parts where they use to conceal the **Devil's marks** and tokens; various means of overcoming their obstinacy in keeping silence and refusal to confess; the trial by red-hot iron; the manner of pronouncing sentence.

It is obvious, from the above, that the authors of the *Malleus Maleficarum* had certain obsessions. A large number of the chapters are, for example, concerned with sexual aspects of witchcraft. But, as Julio Baroja points out, it was not the theologians and scholastic philosophers who were responsible for putting these obsessions into practice. It was the law and the lawyers, both Catholic and Protestant, who made the greatest use of the book from its first appearance in the late fifteenth century through the early eighteenth century.

The authors of this infamous book were two Dominican monks named Jakob Sprenger and Heinrich (Institor) Kramer, Chief Inquisitors for Germany. It is on record that Kramer once bribed an old woman to climb into a baker's oven and scream that the Devil had put her there. She was to continue by shouting out the names of witches in the area. Kramer then seized the women named and tortured them until he obtained confessions.

The publication of the *Malleus Maleficarum* was a signal for the persecutions to start in earnest. As Robbins says, it “opened the floodgates of the **inquisitional** hysteria.” Up until that time, the Church had only made a half-hearted attempt to stamp out the remnants of the **Old Religion**. But now they started to eradicate every last pagan practice.

An interesting sidelight on the authors of the *Malleus Maleficarum* is recounted by both **Gerald Gardner** in his *Meaning of Witchcraft* and H. C. Lea in his *Materials toward a Study of Witchcraft*. At the time of publication of the *Malleus Maleficarum*, the appointed Censor of Books was the University of Cologne. When Kramer and Sprenger presented their work, all but four of the professors wanted nothing to do with it. As Gardner says, “nothing daunted, this precious pair of scoundrels proceeded to forge a document which purported to show the approbation of the whole Faculty.” Even the four professors who had not rejected it entirely had limited their comments to the fact that there was nothing in the first two parts of the book that was averse to the Catholic teachings, and that the third part of the book must be true because of the character of the various witnesses quoted there. Joseph Hansen, Archivist of Cologne, exposed the forgery in 1898. Apparently copies of the book actually sold in Cologne did not carry the Approbation, although it did appear in copies circulated elsewhere. At Sprenger’s death in 1495, although he was a member of the Theological Faculty, he was not given the traditional Requiem Mass by the university.

SOURCES:

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Kramer, Heinrich and Sprenger, Jakob (Montague Summers, trans.): *Malleus Maleficarum*. Pushkin Press, 1951.

Lea, Henry Charles: *Materials toward a Study of Witchcraft*. University of Pennsylvania, 1939.

Mana

A general term for the mysterious spiritual power that is found throughout the universe, within humans, animals, and even inanimate objects. In general ethnological usage, the term is applied to the concept of spiritual power found in sacred things, places, people, and objects. Originally, it was specifically a Melanesian and Polynesian term, where it was thought to be a power derived from divine ancestors. Mana is not supernatural, although some view it as that, but natural. It is the means by which **Witches**, **magicians**, and healers are able to cure sickness, control forces, bless, and curse.

Eliade says that anyone possessing large quantities of mana in the Solomon Islands is regarded as *saka*, which is “burning.” The idea of mystical heat belongs to magic generally and shamanism in particular. Many primitive tribes have a word meaning heat or burning to describe the energy of mana. When Witches and others do hands-on **healing**, the patient invariably feels great heat coming from the hands, to the point where sometimes red marks are left on the body despite the fact that there was no actual physical contact made.

The power of a male or female virgin in magic (and especially as a **sacrifice**, in novels and movies) comes from the belief that by sexual intercourse the mana is lost to the powers of the **earth**. This happens through both the emission of semen and by virtue of the heat generated in the union. A virgin, therefore, possesses far greater mana than a nonvirgin. The ancient Chibcha of Colombia would take a young boy at puberty for sacrifice to the sun **god**. But he would be released if he managed to have intercourse with a woman, for he would have lost his mana.

The power generated in **Witchcraft rituals** is referred to as mana, as is the power found in anything from crystals to trees.

SOURCES:

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Eliade, Mircea: *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy*. Princeton University Press, 1964.

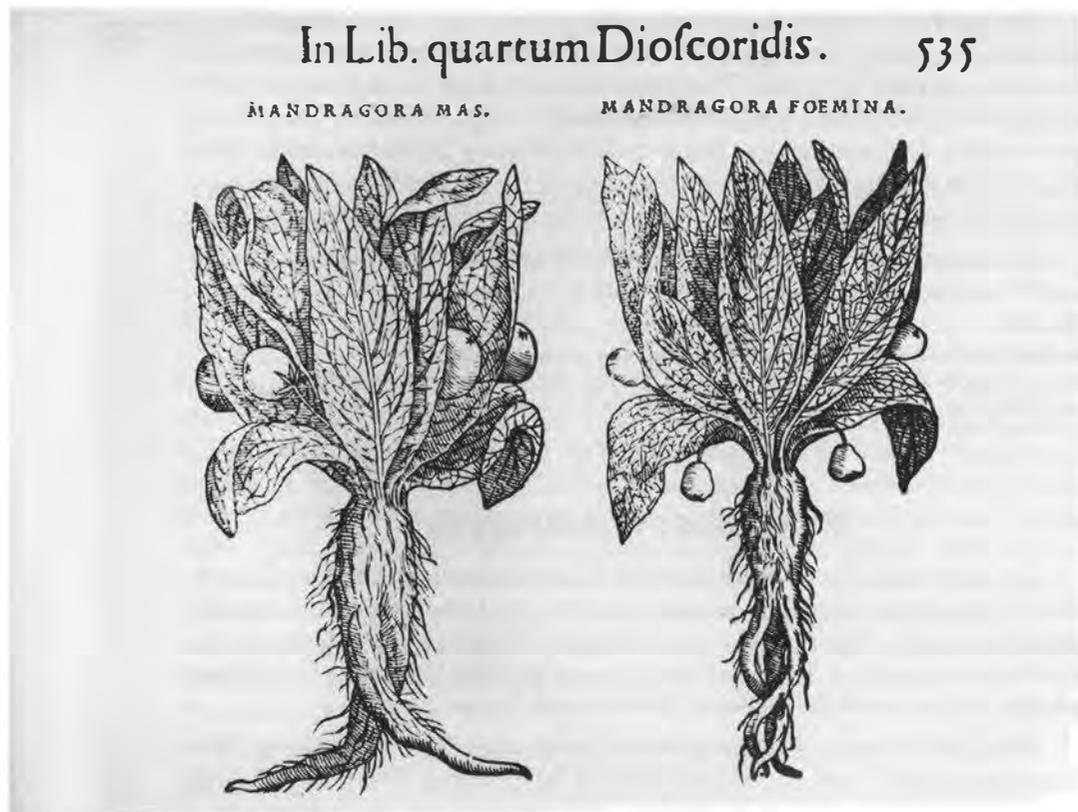
Leach, Maria (ed.): *Funk & Wagnalls Standard Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology and Legend*. Harper & Row, 1984.

Mandrake; Mandragora

The *Atropa mandragora*, a member of the *Solanaceae* family (which includes such plants as the deadly nightshade and henbane). It is a plant whose roots grow naturally in the rough shape of a human being and, because of this, was once thought to have great **magical** properties. The American version of the Mandrake is the *Podophyllum peltatum*, but this is actually a different plant from the European variety.

In the Middle Ages, a Mandrake would fetch a high price. Small slices of the root would be sold to sailors to protect them on their voyages. Pieces would be sold to place over the entrance of a house to protect the home from **fire** and intruders. Pieces would be placed under pillows to promote dreams and under mattresses (particularly those of infants) to protect from nightmares. A complete Mandrake root would command a high price, and the more it looked like a human being, the higher was that price. But since the plant grew wild, those who made money from selling Mandrakes circulated stories about the problems of trying to obtain one straight from the soil, to discourage others from simply helping themselves.

Since the Mandrake root looked human, it was said that it was alive and to take it from the earth was to tear it from its home. It would, therefore, give a terrible scream when pulled up. That scream was so terrible that it would drive insane the person who had tried to take it, or even kill with its shriek. There was, then, a special way in which one obtained a Mandrake. Needed were a hunting horn, a length of rope, a hungry dog, and a piece of meat. The Mandrake was said to grow beneath a gibbet, feeding on the fat dripping from the hanged corpse. On the night of a **full moon**, the **magician** had to drop a noose of the rope over the Mandrake and then tie the other end to the dog's collar. He would then retire to a safe distance and throw down the piece of meat. The dog, being hungry, would lunge forward to get the meat, pulling on the rope and dragging the mandrake out of the soil. At that point the magician should blow loudly on the horn to drown out the sound of the plant's scream. The dog would hear the scream and drop dead, but the magician would have his mandrake!



Male and female mandrake plants, from Book 4 of Dioscorides's *Commentarii*, 1544. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

Knowing how much higher a price could be obtained for a Mandrake that really looked human, many magicians were not averse to modifying the plant as it grew. They would find a young Mandrake and carefully dig it up. Examining it, they would cut away small pieces to make it look more human, even carving a face into it if necessary. They would then place it back in the earth and let it grow for another month or so. Again, they would carefully dig it up and examine it. And again they might modify it before putting it back. By the time the Mandrake was fully grown, when dug up it looked as though it had grown naturally to look exactly like a human being, and so it could be sold for a very high price. In this way, also, a Mandrake could be made to look either male or female.

Another story of the Mandrake was that it glowed in the dark. Certainly if one came across a Mandrake at night, it would seem to do that. According to Doreen Valiente, the reason was that its leaves attracted fireflies. These, hovering about the leaves, made it look as though the plant itself were glowing. Valiente also mentions that the plant had highly soporific powers and was used, in the early days of surgery, as an anesthetic.

The Mandrake grew naturally in the Mediterranean area and was introduced to Britain in the fifteenth century, if not earlier. A good substitute often used was white or black bryony, a hedgerow plant (*Bryonia alba*) with a similar large, fleshy root. One of the common names for Mandrake in England was “love apple,” since it was supposed to have aphrodisiac qualities. The Arabs, for this same reason, called it “devil’s apple.”

SOURCES:

Valiente, Doreen: *An ABC of Witchcraft Past and Present*. St. Martin's Press, 1973.

Martello, Leo Louis (d. 2000)

Leo Martello, a self-proclaimed **Witch**, was born in Dudley, Massachusetts, and grew up in nearby Worcester and Southbridge. He was the son of Rocco Luigi Martello and was baptized and raised a Roman Catholic, spending six years in a Catholic boarding school. In his early teens he took an interest in fortune telling, being especially drawn to **palmistry** and graphology. At age 18 he moved to New York City and attended Hunter College.

Martello’s grandmother, Maria Concetta, was known as a *strega*, or Witch, in her hometown of Enna, Sicily. She was reputed to cast the **evil** eye and claimed to have **cursed** a man to death of a heart attack.

In 1955 Martello obtained a doctor of divinity degree from the National Congress of Spiritual Consultants and became minister of the Spiritual Independents, Nonsectarian, serving as pastor from 1955 until 1960. He did research into graphology and hypnotherapy, in 1950 founding the American Hypnotism Academy in New York and acting as treasurer for the American Graphological Society from 1955 to 1957.

In 1964 and 1965 he spent time in Tangier, Morocco, studying Oriental **magic**. In 1969 his book *Weird Ways of Witchcraft* was published, but it was mainly his own personal attack on the Roman Catholic Church. The publisher later regretted its appearance and asked the author to write *Witchcraft Ancient and Modern* to replace it. Martello subsequently claimed **initiation** into various branches of Witchcraft and established himself as a spokesman for **Wicca** in New York, although his methods were frequently controversial among Wiccans and non-Wiccans alike. He founded the Witches Liberation Movement and the Witches International Craft Association (originally called the Witches Institute of Craft Arts). On October 31, 1970, he sponsored the first Hallowe’en “Witch In” in New York’s Central Park. Initially, the Parks Department refused permission, but when Martello took his case to the New York Civil Liberties Union, threatening a discrimination suit, he got the permit. He went on to draft a “Witch Manifesto” calling for a National Witches’ Day Parade and the condemnation of the Roman Catholic Church for its torture and murder of Witches during the **Inquisition**, with a \$500 million suit against the Church for damages to be paid to the descendants and a \$100 million suit against the city of Salem, Massachusetts.



Cotton Mather, outspoken opponent of witchcraft. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

In 1974 University Books, Inc., of New Jersey, published Martello's book *Witchcraft: The Old Religion*, a serious attempt to detail the background and present-day practice of Wicca. Other of his books included *Black Magic*, *Satanism and Voodoo*; *Curses in Verses*; *Your Pen Personality*; and *The Hidden World of Hypnotism*.

Mather, Cotton (1663–1728)

A Puritan minister and outspoken opponent of witchcraft in New England. The son of Increase Mather (1639–1723), Cotton was born February 12, 1663. He entered Harvard at the age of twelve, took his A.B. in 1678, his A.M. in 1681, and was made a fellow in 1690 at the age of twenty-seven. By age twenty-five he had become a leader in his father's North Church in Boston, Massachusetts. He thought of himself as having been chosen by God to ensure the salvation of the Puritans and focused his efforts on the sins of drunkenness, dancing, and witchcraft. He firmly believed that the Native Americans were all devil worshipers and practiced

Satanism. Of witches and witchcraft, he said, "Witchcraft is the most nefarious high treason against the Majesty on high. A witch is not to be endured in heaven or on earth."

Mather was a devout believer in the presence of the supernatural in daily life. His *Memorable Providences Relating to Witchcrafts and Possessions* (1689) was a collection of instances of this. Indeed, this work is thought to have been one of the stimulators of what developed into the witch hysteria of 1692 in Salem. Another of his works, *Wonders of the Invisible World* (1693), helped shape the trials at Salem. When the Salem witchcraft scare was at its height, Sir William Phips, the colony's governor, and his Council asked the advice of the Boston clergy. Cotton Mather was the one who formulated the response and, in it, encouraged the prosecutions. He was appointed official chronicler of the trials and became, according to Rossell Hope Robbins, possibly the most active witch hunter in America.

Mather had investigated the earlier witchcraft case of the Goodwin children, taking the eldest child, thirteen-year-old Martha Goodwin, into his home to live for three months so that he could treat her. This he did medically, by prayer, and by

frequent “laying on of hands.” Mather wrote that the girl “went on Fantastick Journeys to the Witches’ Rendezvous.” John Fiske, writing in 1902 on the episode, said that “the girl showed herself an actress . . . (who) seems to have known Mather’s prejudices,” and her “fantastic journeys” were no more than sitting astride a chair and rocking backwards and forwards as though riding a horse.

When the Reverend George Burrows, a victim of the Salem epidemic, was about to be hanged, he swayed the crowd of onlookers by loudly and clearly reciting the **Lord’s Prayer**. This was something a witch was supposed not to be able to do. In effect, Burroughs proved his innocence. But Cotton Mather arrived on the scene at just that moment and delivered a blistering attack on Burroughs, resulting in the man’s execution.

In later years, when Samuel Sewall and other presiding judges at Salem came to realize their error and to ask publicly for forgiveness, Mather remained resolute in his condemnation of those killed.

Cotton Mather married three times and had fifteen children. Only two of them survived him. He died on February 13, 1728.

SOURCES:

Encyclopedia Britannica. William Benton, 1964.

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Robbins, Rossell Hope: *The Encyclopedia of Witchcraft and Demonology*. Crown, 1959.

Increase Mather (1639–1723)

The oldest son of Richard Mather, an English Puritan minister, Increase Mather was born in Dorchester, Massachusetts, on June 21, 1639. He graduated from Harvard in 1656 and from Trinity College, Dublin, in 1658. He then ministered to various congregations in England before returning to Boston in 1661. The following year he married Maria, the daughter of the Reverend John Cotton.

Mather took a leading role when King Charles II demanded that Massachusetts surrender its original charter, by which the citizens elected their own governor. He went on to work against the royal governor Sir Edmund Andros. In 1688 Mather went to London to try to reacquire the old colonial charter, and he remained there for four years. There he met with James II, William III, Queen Mary, and a number of influential politicians. Unsuccessful in regaining the old charter, Mather worked for a new one and was instrumental in getting Sir William Phips appointed as the new governor.

Mather was concerned about what he saw as the decline of religion in New England. He started collecting examples of what he termed God’s “illustrious providences,” or works to demonstrate the real existence of apparitions, **spirits**, and **witches**. In this way he hoped to convince skeptics of the existence of the supernatural and to encourage them as Puritans and Pilgrims. He published the collection as *An Essay for the Recording of Illustrious Providences* (Boston, 1684). The essay contained an account of the **Tedworth Drummer** and of various pacts with **Satan**, and it became something of a best-seller.

Mather became pastor of Boston's North Church and also served as president of Harvard from 1685 to 1701, eventually losing that position due to his political stand on the Massachusetts charter. His son, **Cotton Mather**, was prominent during the **Salem Witch Trials**, although Increase kept a low profile. In the recriminations after the scare, he did side with what he saw as a volume of evidence against the accused, although he called for greater caution and published *Cases of Conscience Concerning Evil Spirits Personating Men; Witchcrafts, Infallible Proofs of Guilt in Such as Are Accused with the Crime* (Boston, 1693).

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May Day

Beltane is one of the major **sabbats** in the **Witches'** calendar and is celebrated on the eve of May Day. May Day celebrations are still practiced in part throughout much of Europe and the rest of the world and are the continuing celebrations of this **pagan** religious festival. The name of the sabbat is spelled variously Beltane, Beltene, Beltine, Beal-Tene, Bealltain. It is also known as *Walpurgisnacht*, Rood Day, and Rudemas.

In early times, the year was roughly divided into two halves: the summer months, when it was possible to grow crops, and the winter months, when it was necessary to hunt for food. The **fertility goddess** was predominant in the former and the **horned god** in the latter. The transition between these seasons occurred at Beltane (May Eve) and **Samhain** (November Eve), which remain the two most important of the **Wiccan** festivals.

Jumping over the **balefire** was one of the May Day traditions. Individuals would leap across the flames to ensure fertility and good health, as a spiritual cleansing, and for **protection** in the coming year. Couples would take hands and leap together, believing that in so doing their marriages would be sealed in health and happiness. Cattle and sheep would be driven between two fires, or through the ashes of one fire.

The central theme of Beltane was sexuality and fertility. It was, in the early days of Witchcraft, very much a time for **ritual** coupling. On the festival eve, men and women would go out to search for flowers and green boughs, often staying out overnight. Philip Stubbes, the Elizabethan Puritan, commented (*Anatomie of Abuses*, 1583): "I have heard it credibly reported by men of great gravitie, credite and reputation that of fourtie, three score or a hundred maides goying to the woode ouer night, there have scarcely the third parte of them returned home againe undefiled." The people's view is aptly summed up in Rudyard Kipling's words, adopted by mod-

ern Wiccans as their “May Eve Chant,” and sometimes sung while dancing around the Maypole:

Oh, do not tell the **priests** of our rites
 For they would call it sin;
 But we will be in the woods all night
 A-conjurin’ Summer in!

The major custom for May Day was “Bringing in the May”—carrying home, at sunrise, the boughs and flowering branches that had been gathered in the woods overnight. Any tree that was in bloom at that time was referred to as “May.” The hawthorn was the most popular, although the sycamore was favored in Cornwall and the rowan in much of Scotland and Wales. The flowering branches were used to decorate the houses and left on the doorsteps of people who were admired. Flowers, such as the marsh marigold, were also brought home by the “Mayers,” and these were woven into garlands and elaborate decorations. Herdsmen in Sweden still follow an old practice of cutting the first bough of a mountain ash struck by the sun on May Day morning. With this bough they then strike the horns and flanks of their cattle, chanting, “As the sap comes to the trees, may milk come to these udders.” May Day was celebrated throughout the British Isles, across much of Europe, and even in Russia.

The high point of May Day, and a pagan practice still very much alive even in Christian communities, was the dance around a Maypole. The phallic symbolism of the Maypole is generally accepted. The distribution of gifts from it, and ribbons streaming from its tip, emphasizes its fruit-bearing qualities. Goldberg states: “Like the rod or the pole, the **tree** graphically represents the lingam. But it also suggests the generative organ functionally; standing erect, rooted in the ground and stretching skyward . . . (it) emphasizes power and virility . . . it was generative in no unmistakable manner. The tree was, then, a living image of the lingam.” A huge Maypole was regularly set up in the City of London. It stood for generations until finally being taken down in 1517, by order of the Church. Even then it was stored in a row of cottages only to be preached against and, 32 years later, destroyed. There was a revival of May Day celebrations, and with it the Maypole, as an expression of loyalty to the restored Charles II, after the Commonwealth period, and a further revival in Victorian England.

Stubbs commented on the Maypole as the “chiefest jewel,” and described how the people “have twentie or fortie yoke of Oxen, every Oxe having a sweet nose-gay of floures placed on the tip of his hornes, and these Oxen drawe home this May-pole (this stinking Idol rather) which is covered all over with floures and herbs bound about with strings . . . And thus being reared up, with handkerchiefs and flags hovering about the top, they straw the ground round about . . . and then fall they to dance about it as the heathen people did at the dedication of Idols.”

On the first day of May the Romans paid homage to their *Lares*, or household gods. They also paid homage to Maia, daughter of Atlas and one of the Pleiades. By Zeus, Maia became mother of Hermes. She gave her name to the month of May.

The *Druids Calendar* urges one to “dance round the Maypole, and otherwise abandon yourself to the season. A woodland frolic culminating in indiscretion is the order of the day.” Washing in the early morning dew was a popular May Day practice, it being believed that to do so made the recipient more beautiful. Samuel Pepys, in his famous diary, refers to the practice. Many Witches also gather the dew to use in potions and spells.

The hawthorn was associated with Beltane. Graves comments that “its later orgiastic use . . . corresponds with the cult of the Goddess Flora, and . . . accounts for the English medieval habit of riding out on May morning to pluck hawthorn boughs and dance round the maypole. Hawthorn blossom has, for many men, a strong scent of female sexuality.”

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MAYPOLE see MAY DAY

Measure

The measure is a **magical** measurement of “the whole person,” used in **Witchcraft**. It is usually taken at the **Initiation ritual** and is done using a length of thread equal to the height of the individual. **Knots** are then tied in the thread, marking such points as chest and waist circumferences. The whole measure is then wound into a tight ball and touched on a point on the individual’s body where **blood** has been let. It is then given to the leader of the **coven** for safekeeping. This ritual was intended to ensure the loyalty of the new member, who knew that such a measure could be used magically if there were ever proof of disloyalty.

Medea

A **priestess** of **Hecate** and niece to **Circe**, in Greek mythology. She was the daughter of Aëtes, king of Colchis and was famed for her magical arts. Medea fell in love with Jason and, with **magic**, helped him acquire the Golden Fleece from her father. However, when Jason betrayed her, she caused the death of their two children and also the death of Jason’s second wife. Medea married king Aegeus and by him had a son, Medus.

Medea later married Achilles, in the Elysian fields, and was honored as a **goddess** at Corinth, although the chief seat of her cult was Thessaly, the home of magic. She was made immortal by Hera and became known as “the Wise One.”

SOURCES:

- Encyclopedia Britannica*. William Benton, 1964.

Meditation

Meditation is listening to the Inner Self, the Creative Force or Higher Consciousness. It involves closing the mind to all external stimuli and concentrating on the creative forces within the body. It is a technique used by most **Wiccans** and many non-Wiccans alike, and is a useful tool in the working of **magic**. As a technique for advancement in the psychic and spiritual fields, it has been found to be extremely effective.

In its present form, meditation has entered the Western world by way of the East. Eastern initiates have for centuries been able to control their minds to overcome sickness, develop psychic powers, and expand knowledge of Universal Law and philosophy.

There are many different techniques, from the methods used in Transcendental Meditation, Silva Mind Control, Zen Buddhism, and Edgar Cayce techniques, to various forms of yoga and self-taught and developed methods. All are similar in that they involve stilling the mind and conscious thought so that the inner mind may listen to messages from within and solve problems.

Meeting Dance

A **dance** often performed at the start of a **sabbat** meeting, when a number of **covens** have convened. It is a way for all of the **Witches** to meet the others present. One leader takes hands with another Witch and all join up in a long chain, alternating male and female. The leader then dances in a circle, gradually moving in, in a spiral. When the center is reached, he or she starts to lead out again but now as each Witch passes those going the other way, they **kiss**. The line continues until it has unwound again and everyone has kissed everyone else. The line may wind in to the center and out again a number of times.

One name for the meeting dance is *Lufu*, from the Anglo-Saxon word for “love.”

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Buckland's Complete Book of Witchcraft*. Llewellyn, 1986.

Mendes, Goat of

A name often given the **Baphomet** figure supposedly worshiped by the **Knights Templar** and frequently portrayed as a half-goat, half-human figure. The name comes from the goat worshiped in ancient Egypt at Mendes, which was said to fornicate with its female worshipers.

The Goat of Mendes became the symbol, if not the object of worship, of many **occult** groups, usually those with **Satanic** leanings.

SOURCES:

Robbins, Rossell Hope: *The Encyclopedia of Witchcraft and Demonology*. Crown, 1959.

Mephisto Waltz, The (movie)

1971 movie directed by Paul Wendkos, starring Alan Alda and Jacqueline Bisset. Adapted by Ben Maddow from a novel by Fred Mustard Stewart. The story con-

cerns a journalist, Miles Clarkson, and his young wife, Paula. The wife observes changes in her husband after he meets and interviews Duncan Ely, a dying concert pianist. Clarkson becomes involved with a **Satanic** cult and gradually becomes possessed by Ely, a black magician who uses Satanic rituals to obtain the journalist's body as a new host in which to live. When Paula realizes what is happening, she becomes possessed. To add to the intrigue, Ely's daughter, Roxanne, was involved in an incestuous affair with her father.

Merlin

A Latinized form of the Welsh name Myrddin. He was a **magical** figure who appears in literature ranging from medieval manuscripts to modern novels. References to him may also be found in a wide variety of place names and specific sites throughout Great Britain. He was a **wizard** frequently linked with King Arthur, although Guiley suggests he may have originated as a version of the **Celtic** god Mabon, the British Apollo. According to Geoffrey of Monmouth's life of Merlin, the great wizard, together with the bard Taliesin, took the wounded King Arthur to the Fortunate Isles.

One of the best known portrayals of Merlin is found in Sir Thomas Mallory's *Le Morte d'Arthur*, first published in 1485. In this story Merlin helps raise the young Arthur and, on Arthur's accession to the throne on the death of Uther Pendragon, becomes the young king's magical advisor. Although more recent portrayals of Merlin show him as an old man, usually bearded, earlier representations depict him as a young, beardless man.

SOURCES:

Guiley, Rosemary Ellen: *The Encyclopedia of Witches and Witchcraft*. Facts on File, 1989.
Monmouth, Geoffrey of (B. Clark, trans.): *Vita Merlini*. University of Wales, 1973.

Michelet, Jules (1798–1874)

A French historian and occultist, born in Paris on August 21, 1798. Michelet was the author of a number of books including *La Sorcière* (1862), translated as "**Satanism and Witchcraft**," which suggested that witchcraft grew out of the lower classes' revolt against the harshness of the Church in the Middle Ages. Michelet did relate medieval witchcraft to the remnants of a pre-Christian European **fertility** cult, but claimed that it featured the Black Mass and **ritual** sexual intercourse between the devil and his followers.

Michelet's father, a master printer, sent his son to the Lycée Charlemagne, from which Jules went on to teach history in the Collège Rollin. In 1827 he was appointed maître de conférences at the École Normale. In 1838 he was appointed to the chair of history at the Collège de France. His chief work was a history of France, and *La Sorcière* grew out of this. He died at Hyères on February 9, 1874.

SOURCES:

Encyclopedia Britannica. William Benton, 1964.
Michelet, Jules (A. R. Allinson, trans.): *Satanism and Witchcraft*. Citadel Press, 1939.

MIDSUMMER see SUMMER SOLSTICE

Midvinterblot (movie)

Made in Sweden in 1946 and directed by Gösta Werner, *Midvinterblot* starred Gunnar Björnstrand. Also known as *Midwinter Blood* and *Midwinter Sacrifice*, it shows an attempt to reconstruct an ancient pagan rite of human sacrifice.

Mirror

Mirrors have been associated with **magic** in many stories, myths, and legends. It was once believed that one's reflection in a mirror, or any reflective surface, was a vital part of one's soul. Mirrors were therefore regarded as "soul catchers," and were therefore draped with black cloth in the sick room of a dying person. Today's superstition that breaking a mirror causes bad luck stems from these old beliefs. Walker points out that the ancient **Egyptian** word for "mirror" is also the word for "life." Buddhists claim that all existence is like a reflection in a mirror.

In **Witchcraft**, mirrors are mainly used for **divination**, the user gazing into the reflective surface as into a crystal ball. Some such mirrors are blackened to cancel out any extraneous sights, while some are made with concave glass to help draw the eyes into the image.

The murals on the walls of the **Initiation** Room in the Villa of Mysteries at Pompeii include a scene of the initiate gazing into a polished copper mirror held aloft by a priest. In it, the initiate sees and relives the death of Dionysus. Leonardo da Vinci drew a picture (now in the library of Christ Church, Oxford) of two **witches** using a magic mirror to see the future. A similar illustration is found in the miniature from the eighteenth-century manuscript attributed to the Comte de Saint-Germain, *La Très Sainte Trinosophie*.

De Givry suggests that Catherine de Medici possessed a magic mirror in which she studied the future of France. Queen Elizabeth I's astrologer, Dr. **John Dee**, owned a magic mirror made of polished obsidian, a black volcanic glass. This mirror, or *speculum*, is preserved in the British Museum. Dee and his assistant, **Edward Kelley**, toured sixteenth-century Europe using the mirror in the service of various rulers and aristocrats.

Old **grimoires** for **Ceremonial Magic** give recipes for the paint used to turn a piece of clear glass into a black gazing mirror. Ingredients include turpentine and multiple coats of asphaltum. Some suggested inscribing the edge of the glass with the words "S. Solam S. Tattler S. Echogordner Gematur." Others say the mirror should be standing within a triangle whose three sides are marked with the words "Alpha—Omega—Tetragrammaton" (others say "Adonay—Eloy—Tetragrammaton").

The Roman god Vulcan had a magic mirror that showed past, present, and future. Al-Asnam, in the *Arabian Nights*, had a similar mirror. Other magic mirrors appear in fairy stories and folk tales around the world.

SOURCES:

De Givry, Grillot (J. Courtenay Locke, trans.): *A Pictorial Anthology of Witchcraft Magic and Alchemy*. Spottiswoode-Ballantyne, 1931.

Macchioro, Prof. Vittorio: *The Villa of Mysteries*. Richter & Co., n.d.

Walker, Barbara G.: *The Woman's Dictionary of Symbols and Sacred Objects*. HarperSanFrancisco, 1988.

Mistletoe

Although there are many species of mistletoe around the world, most folklore refers to *Viscum album*. This is found most commonly on apple trees but also on oaks and other deciduous trees. It is only occasionally found on evergreens. Mistletoe is, in fact, a parasite, its seeds deposited in the tree by a bird, the mistle thrush (*Turdus miscivorus*). After feasting on the white, sticky substance found in the berries, the thrush will wipe its beak on a branch, leaving seeds embedded in a crevice in the bark.

In many primitive societies mistletoe is regarded as a sacred healing plant. It is also known as All-heal, and it is used to treat pleurisy, dysentery, epilepsy, and vertigo. Its **magical** properties included protection from lightning, **fire** and disease, and the promotion of **fertility**. It was also said to be useful in fending off **witches**. It was placed in baby's cradles and in sick beds and was carried by hunters and sailors. It was hung in stables to protect the **horses** from evil and disease.

For the Greeks it was sacred to the **god** Apollo. The **Celtic Druids** honored it, gathering it with a golden sickle on the sixth day of the **moon** and not allowing it to fall to the ground, catching it in sheets of white cloth held by young virgins. It was cut on Midsummer's Day.

Today English mistletoe is hard to find and what was once a thriving English mistletoe market is now swamped with French mistletoe. Every year there is an auction of mistletoe held at Tenbury Wells in southeast Wales.

SOURCES:

Cunningham, Scott: *Cunningham's Encyclopedia of Magical Herbs*. Llewellyn, 1985.

Elliott, Charles: *Horticulture magazine*, December 1997.

Man, Myth and Magic. PBC Publishing, 1970.

Moon

"Now when **Aradia** had been taught, taught to work all **witchcraft**, . . . she said unto (her pupils): Whenever ye have need of anything, once in the month, and when the moon is full, ye shall assemble in some desert place, or in a forest all together join to adore the potent spirit of your queen, my mother, great Diana." This is found in Charles Leland's book of **Italian witchcraft**, obtained at the end of the nineteenth century. A later incantation to Diana, also in Leland's book, says, "Thou who art Queen of the sun and of the moon and of the stars . . ." The **Witch Goddess** was associated with the moon from earliest times. Even today, **Witches** will meet at the full moon to honor their deities. These meetings are called **esbats**. **Doreen Valiente** refers to the **Bible's** Book of Job and its reference to moon worship

as indicative of the antiquity of such rites. Barbara Walker claims that moon worship was the religion of Adam and that the early Christians insisted that the full moon shone on Jesus's crucifixion. The Babylonians worshiped the moon as a queen, the ancestor of the sun, and exceeding the sun in power.

The moon has not always been regarded as feminine. There are many moon gods. In Eskimo legend the moon is a male who is lover to the feminine sun. Old English nursery stories speak of the Man in the Moon. In Japanese Shinto (meaning "the Way of the Gods"), tales are told of the sun goddess Ama-Terasu and her brother the moon god Tsuki-yomi. An argument between them led to the god being banished to never again see his sister face to face. In the Emergence Myth of the Navajo people, The First World was too small for First Man, First Woman and Coyote, so they traveled to the Second World, where there were two men who became Sun and Moon. Moon-Old-Man is found among the Pueblo Indians at Isleta, Jemez, Taos, and Tewa. In some areas, such as the Upper Amazon, there is a belief that if a girl stares at the moon she may become pregnant by him. The Semitic moon god Sin lived on top of Mount Sinai, while the **Egyptian** god **Thoth** was god of the moon.

The phases of the moon are always addressed when working magic—positive magic (to increase, strengthen, attract, for planting) being done during the **waxing** phase and negative (to decrease, rid, end, harvest) in the **waning** phase. The full moon is one of the best times for scrying and other forms of divination. In that the moon revolves around the earth in 28 days, there is a relationship to the menstrual cycle of women. More than that, the phases of the moon affect the spawning of various sea creatures such as crabs, oysters, mussels, and sea-urchins, and the very movement of the tides. Many farmers used to (and some still do) plant and sow, shear sheep, and slaughter swine according to the progress of the moon.

While some peoples have **worshiped** the sun and the moon as **deities** in themselves, Witches see the moon simply as a symbol of the goddess. In the Full Moon Esbat there is the ritual of "**Drawing Down of the Moon**," in which the High **Priest** calls upon the Goddess to descend into the body of the High **Priestess** and to speak through her to the assembled worshipers. The ancient Greeks used to speak of the witches of Thessaly "drawing down the moon," meaning that they called upon the power of the moon in their rites.

SOURCES:

Fraser, Sir James: *The Worship of Nature*. Macmillan, 1926.

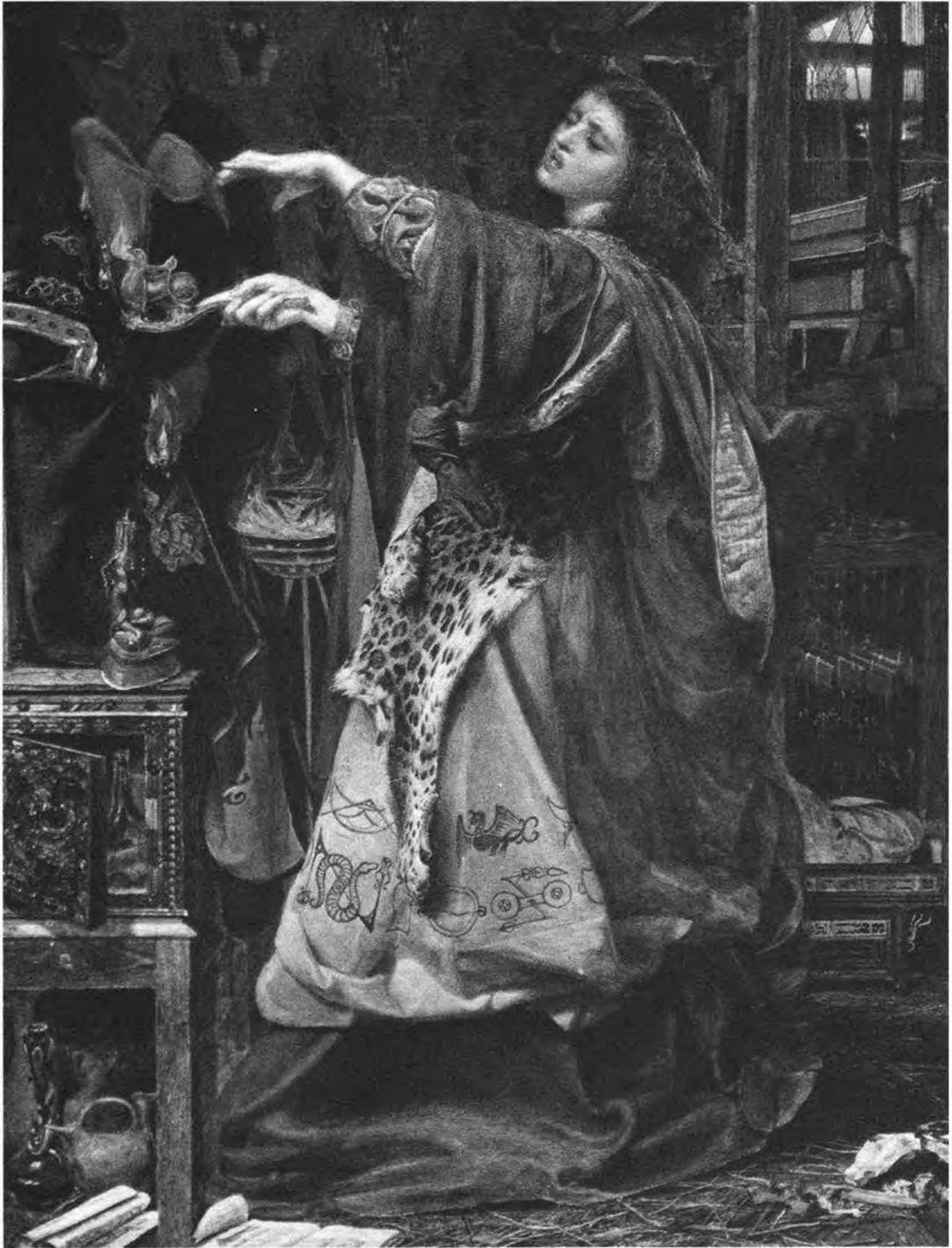
Leland, Charles Godfrey: *Aradia, the Gospel of the Witches*. David Nutt, 1899.

Valiente, Doreen: *An ABC of Witchcraft Past and Present*. St. Martin's Press, 1973.

Walker, Barbara G.: *The Woman's Dictionary of Symbols and Sacred Objects*. Harper San Francisco, 1988.

Morgan Le Fay

Arthur's sister in the Arthurian legend, her name comes from the French *Morgain la Fée*, in which *fée*, or *fay*, means "of the **fairies**." Her character is based on Welsh *Modron*, daughter of *Avallach*, and a water nymph of Breton folklore. There are also ties to the ancient river goddess *Matrona*, and the goddess known to the Irish as **Morríghan**.



Morgan le Fay, by Frederick Sandys. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

Such writers as Geoffrey of Monmouth, Chrétien de Troyes, Giraldus Cambrensis, and Guillem Torrella of Majorca have sullied the waters to the extent that there is no unequivocal pedigree for the lady. She appears as a noblewoman, a temptress, an **enchanted**, as Arthur's sister, Guingamor's mistress, and as a "good fairy." She also appears in two aspects, as a young girl and an old woman. According to some legends she was Merlin's sister.

Whatever her true identity, Morgan le Fay was usually presented as evil but also as adept in the **healing** arts. On the one hand she was working against Arthur, yet on the other she magically healed his wounds after the battle of Camlan.

SOURCES:

Graves, Robert: *The White Goddess*. Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 1966.

Loomis, R. S.: *Morgain la Fée and the Celtic Goddesses*. Speculum XX, 1945.

Paton, L. A.: *Studies in the Fairy Mythology of Arthurian Romance*. Radcliffe College, 1903.

Morríghan

Irish goddess of fertility, war, and death. Morríghan, or Morrighu (Irish *mór-ríogan*), was closely associated with **horses** and with the **earth** itself. She was one of the triad of Morríghan, Neman, and Macha, all war goddesses in Old Irish mythology. Sometimes Morríghan is used as a generic name for all three. They appeared on battlefields in the form of **crows** and **ravens** and would consume the dead.

Morríghan, whose name means "Great Queen," was the daughter of Ermas and the wife of Daghdha. She mated with Daghdha at **Samhain** to ensure the continuing prosperity of the earth. She can appear as a young **maiden** or as a **crone**. She helped the Tuatha Dé Danann defeat the Fomorians at the Battle of Mag Tured.

Morríghan fell in love with Cú Chulainn, the Irish hero and son of **Lugh**. He rejected her and was consequently harrassed by her in battles, although she eventually tried, in vain, to save his life.

SOURCES:

Larousse *Encyclopedia of Mythology*. Hamlyn, 1966.

MacCana, Proinsias: *Celtic Mythology*. Hamlyn, 1970.

Morris Dancing

Originating as **pagan** fertility dances, Morris (or Morrice) dances have been performed by teams, or "sides," in almost every village in England for hundreds of years. They can also be found, in various forms, in other European countries. In some of the dances the dancers leap high in the air, in the same way that the **Witches** did to show the crops how high to grow (**sympathetic magic**). In one of the traditional dances the men "dibble," or bang, sticks against the ground, simulating planting seeds. They then bang the sticks together to frighten away any negativity. Similarly, the waving of handkerchiefs, a part of many of the dances, is done to frighten away any negative **spirits** that might inhibit **fertility**. Mumming plays were often performed as an adjunct to Morris dancing.



Mother Shipton, propheticess. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

The name is possibly derived from “Moorish.” In fact, some sides perform with blackened faces, suggesting that the origins may be found in North Africa or in Moorish medieval Spain. Yet nothing like these English dances can be found in the Moorish lands. It seems more likely that they are a holdover from pre-

Christian fertility **rituals** and that the face-blackening may have been done originally as a disguise.

Most sides consist of six dancers accompanied by one or two musicians, a young boy dressed as a girl (and called Maid Marian), a fool, and a hobby **horse** rider. The dancers wear bells attached to their legs, tuned to harmonious notes. Crossed ribbons, much like the *sautois* of **Voodoo**, were worn over white clothing adorned with ribbons and flowers. Morris dancing was banned by the Puritans but was revived at the Restoration. Today it is practiced not only throughout Great Britain but also in America and other countries. Many Modern Wiccan and **Pagan** groups enjoy Morris dancing as part of their regular activities.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Ray Buckland's Magic Cauldron*. Galde Press, 1995.

Kightly, Charles: *The Customs and Ceremonies of Britain*. Thames & Hudson, 1986.

Mother Redcap

Generic name for an old woman who might or might not be a **hedge witch**, **healer**, or **cunning woman**. Red was often associated with witches. In Ireland it was believed that witches donned red caps before leaving on their **broomsticks** for the **sabbat**. At the **Salem witch trials**, Bridget Bishop was convicted largely on the evidence that she favored a “red paragon bodice.”

Mother Shipton (1488–1561)

Ursula Shipton was born in Knaresborough, Yorkshire, to Agatha Southeil (Sowtheil or Southill), who was believed to be a **witch** and mistress to the Devil. Agatha had supposedly been impregnated by the Devil himself but, as **Doreen Valiente** points out, the male leader of a witches' **coven** was often referred to as the Devil. Agatha certainly displayed powers of clairvoyance and **healing** . . . and **cursing**. She was also said to be able to **conjure up storms**. Ursula, as a daughter of the Devil, inherited all of her mother's talents showing, as a young girl, that she could magically harm other children who taunted her for her ugliness. The *Encyclopedia Britannica* suggests that she was simply regarded as “the Devil's child” because she was so ugly. However, apparently she was frequently surrounded by poltergeist-like activity.

Despite her unattractiveness, Ursula married a young man named Tobias Shipton, a builder by trade. Nothing much is known of him, there being no mention of him in the many later references to Ursula.

Despite her dislike of prying neighbors and her tendency to bewitch them, Ursula became sought after as “Mother Shipton,” witch and seer. People traveled from miles away because of the accuracy of her predictions. She is said to have predicted such things as cars, radio and/or telephone and the internet, iron ships, the California Gold Rush, and the Crystal Palace of the London Exhibition of 1851. All this was given in the verse:

Carriages without horses shall go,
Around the world thoughts shall fly
In the twinkling of an eye.
Iron in the water shall float
As easy as a wooden boat.
Gold shall be found, and found
In a land that's not now known.
A house of glass shall come to pass
In England, but alas!

She made sensational prophesies about Cardinal Wolsey, the Duke of Suffolk, Lord Percy, and other men prominent in King Henry VIII's court. She also predicted the end of the world occurring in 1881, which panicked people and led to them to desert their homes and spend a night in prayer in the fields and in churches across the country.

SOURCES:

Encyclopedia Britannica. William Benton, 1964.

Guiley, Rosemary Ellen: *The Encyclopedia of Witches and Witchcraft*. Facts on File, 1989.

Valiente, Doreen: *An ABC of Witchcraft Past and Present*. St. Martin's Press, 1973.

Mugwort

Artemisia vulgaris is a common plant throughout northern and southern temperate zones. It is named for **Artemis**, the Greek **goddess** whose shrines were often centers for **healing**. Mugwort is used for easing the pain of childbirth, for many women's disorders, and for epilepsy and hysteria. **Witches** and folk doctors have, for centuries, regarded it as a **magical healing herb**. As a tea, it is used to aid **divination** and general psychic work; stuffed into pillows, it dispels nightmares and promotes divinatory dreams.

In France and Germany it is gathered on St. John's Eve, consequently being referred to there as St. John's Plant, and is thought to protect corn from mice. Some modern **Wiccans** use the tea as a bath for **consecrating** crystals, **amulets**, and **talismans**. Some even use it as a ritual drink at full **moon esbats**. But in Normandy, it is traditionally used to prevent witches from spoiling butter.

Murray, Margaret Alice (1863–1963)

As Michael Jordan states, Margaret Murray was "a pioneer in the study of a subject which had, hitherto, been virtually devoid of academic research." That subject was **Witchcraft**.

Margaret Alice Murray was born in Calcutta, India, on July 13, 1863. At 31, she entered University College, London. At that time it was difficult for a woman to receive an advanced degree in archaeology, her main interest, so she obtained a degree in linguistics. This led to her study of **Egyptian** hieroglyphics and her specialization in Egyptology. She joined Sir Flinders Petrie in his excavations at Abydos, in Egypt, then returned to University College and became a Fellow and, in

1899, a junior lecturer in Egyptology. She remained at the college as an assistant professor until her retirement in 1935.

The works of **Sir James Frazer** led Murray to take an interest in witchcraft and view it as possibly being a pre-Christian **pagan** religion. She studied the records of the witch trials during the persecutions and published her findings in 1921 in *The Witch Cult in Western Europe*. Here she proposed that witchcraft was not merely a product of the Christian Church of the Middle Ages but had, in fact, been a religion in its own right. Its adherents, she said, formed groups known as “**covens**.”

Although Sir James Frazer had discussed the possible prehistoric origins of witchcraft rituals in *The Golden Bough* (1890) and Charles Godfrey Leland had examined the workings of **Italian** witches in *Aradia, the Gospel of the Witches* (1899), no one had previously done the detailed examination that Murray did, nor drawn quite the same conclusions. She referred to the cult as a “**Dianic**” one (as did Leland), centering on the worship of the **goddess** Diana. According to Murray, evidence from the trials showed an organization of groups led by a male leader regarded, at least by the Christian chroniclers, as the Devil. She saw connections to witchcraft in all strata of society.

Her conclusions caused a minor sensation. Many were quick to dismiss her findings out of hand, while others were just as quick to join forces with her. In 1931 she published a complementary volume, *The **God** of the Witches*, that looked more closely at the male deity, a horned god, and traced the origins of the pagan cult back to Paleolithic times.

In 1954 Murray published another book, *The Divine King in England*, and this too proved to be extremely controversial. In it, she proposed that the majority of English kings, from William the Conqueror to James I, were secret witches and that most died a **ritual** death as a Sacred King, as found in many primitive religions. This was too much for many of her contemporaries, who then dismissed all of her works. She remains a controversial figure, yet much of what she uncovered from the early witchcraft trials was valid. It is impossible to read her first two books on the subject without acknowledging that there is a core of truth to her theory that witchcraft was an organized, pre-Christian, pagan religion. Her arguments for covens were weak, but the evidence from the trials was genuine. Many of her detractors are not nearly as qualified as she was. She received a number of academic honors and, in the mid-1950s was the president of the Folk-Lore Society.

SOURCES:

Frazer, Sir James: *The Golden Bough*. Macmillan, 1890.

Jordan, Michael: *Witches, an Encyclopedia of Paganism and Magic*. Kyle Cathie, 1996.

Murray, Margaret Alice: *The Witch Cult in Western Europe*. Clarendon Press, 1921.

Murray, Margaret Alice: *The God of the Witches*. Sampson Low, Marston, 1931.

Murray, Margaret Alice: *The Divine King in England*. Faber and Faber, 1954.

Museums of Witchcraft

In 1949 Cecil Williamson opened his first **Witchcraft** exhibition at his Witchcraft Research Centre, housed in the old Witches' Mill on Arbory Street, Castletown, Isle of Man. He had tried to open it in Stratford-upon-Avon, but when the local press

broke the story that it would be a Witchcraft museum the locals brought pressure to bear to drive him out of town, so he moved to the Isle of Man. The buildings in which Williamson housed his collection—an old stone-built mill and barns—dated from 1611. In the nineteenth century, after a fire burned out the insides of the mill, the structure was used for the meetings of the Arbory Witches, a local **coven**. In 1952, after three years on the island, Williamson returned to England, taking all his artifacts with him. He went to Windsor and bought a building known as the Old Drill Hall and an old public house known as “The Goswells.” There he reopened his museum of Witchcraft and **magic**. After a couple of years there he moved yet again to Boughton-on-the-Water, where he had a number of problems with Christians who called the museum “**Satan’s House**” and tried to drive him out. Local newspaper headlines proclaimed, “Witchcraft Back in the Midlands,” “**Black Magic Grips Village**,” and “Witchcraft Exhibit Not Likely to Stay.” After a fire burned out a whole section of the museum, he returned to Boscastle in 1960 and reopened the museum there.

The Boscastle Museum was open from April through September, exhibiting items once owned and used by people like **Aleister Crowley**. One of his more unusual exhibits was the mortal remains of Ursula Kemp, the famous witch of St. Osyth, who was executed on February 18, 1582. In 1992, Williamson retired and sold the Boscastle Witchcraft Museum to Graham King and Elizabeth Crow. The museum is still open in Boscastle and is very popular.

Perhaps the best known museum of witchcraft was that run by **Gerald Gardner**, at the old Witches’ Mill on the Isle of Man, taking over in 1952 after the one founded by Cecil Williamson. Gardner had originally visited Williamson and been forced to stay for twelve weeks, before a dispute over his family money was settled. From the first, Gardner was keen to own the Isle of Man property. When Williamson moved back to England, Gardner bought the property. There he established a museum with his impressive collection of religio-magical artifacts, collected over a lifetime of traveling in various parts of the world. He also had a selection of items from Witches with whom he was personally involved.

The museum became well known mainly because of the notoriety of Gardner himself. As the unofficial spokesman for modern Witchcraft and the author of the first books written by a practicing Witch, he was always in the public eye, which left him open to attacks similar to those Williamson had suffered. His museum had exhibits on Witchcraft, sorcery, **ceremonial magic**, astrology, talismans, amulets, divination, alchemy, **necromancy**, devil worship, and the **black mass**. It exhibited items that had belonged to Aleister Crowley and to the Order of the Golden Dawn, to Sir Francis Dashwood and his Hellfire Club, as well as ancient Egyptian items, and religio-magical items from around the world.

On Gardner’s death in 1964, the museum was left to his high priestess, Lady Olwen (**Monique Wilson**). She and her husband ran it for a short time but eventually sold it to Ripley’s in America. It was exhibited for a time on Fisherman’s Wharf, San Francisco, and at Gatlinburg, Tennessee. At the Fisherman’s Wharf site the collection was enhanced by a variety of tableaux, dioramas, and manikins, together with a free magic show given by a resident magician (stage conjuror).



Gerald Gardner in front of the Witches' Mill, Castletown, Isle of Man. Courtesy Raymond Buckland.

Gardner's collection inspired his protégé **Raymond Buckland** to start collecting, and in 1966 he opened his own Museum of Witchcraft and Magic, in Brentwood, Long Island, New York. It was originally housed in the basement of his home and available by appointment to individuals and groups such as senior citizens and boy scouts. Later it was moved to its own building in nearby Bay Shore, where it stayed until 1975. It was very successful and was the subject of an hour-long television documentary and various newspaper and magazine articles. From Bay Shore the museum moved with Buckland to Weirs Beach, New Hampshire. When Buckland relocated to Virginia in 1979, it was closed and remained in storage for many years.

For a number of years in the 1990s, several people made unsuccessful attempts to purchase the museum collection. Then, in 1999, Monte Plaisance, of Houma, Louisiana, bought the collection, with Raymond Buckland staying on the board as consultant. It retained its name of "The Buckland Museum of Witchcraft and Magic," opened for a trial period in Houma in 2000 and was displayed in part at the WitchFest 2000 gathering at the University of New Orleans. It seemed probable that the collection would find a new permanent home in the French Quarter of New Orleans in 2001. Like Gardner's collection, it exhibits a wide range of arti-

facts, including items from Aleister Crowley, Sybil Leek, Gerald Gardner, and other notables, as well as many contemporary Wiccan tools and objects.

SOURCES:

- A & B Trading Company: *Gerald Brousseau Gardner's Collection from the Museum of Magic and Witchcraft, the Witches' Mill, Castletown, Isle of Man*. A & B Trading Company, Miami, n.d.
- Gardner, Gerald B.: *The Museum of Magic and Witchcraft*. Castletown Press, Isle of Man, 1955.
- Museum of Witchcraft: *The Museum of Witchcraft: A Brief History and Guide to the Displays*. Museum of Witchcraft, Boscastle, 1998.
- Steele, John H.: *Souvenir Booklet: Dr. Gardner's Museum of Witchcraft and Magic*. Ripley Museum, 1974.

Mystery Religion

Witchcraft/Wicca is a mystery religion similar to the ancient Greek mysteries. A mystery in this sense is a **rite** or religion that is kept secret from all but its initiates, who have been trained, prior to the revelations of the rite, by a heirophant, or "revealer of holy things."

There are various parts to a mystery religion **initiation**: a *catharsis*, or purification; a *palingenesis*, or symbolical death and rebirth, with the imparting of new knowledge; a *heiros gamos*, or sacred marriage with the deity; an *orgia*, or overpowering emotion, leading to an *ekstasis*, or getting out of oneself. (The Greek Theo Smyrnaeus referred to this as "the bliss of being god-beloved and sharing the life of the gods.") There is also a final triumphal procession.

Lawson suggests that the reason for secrecy in the mysteries was due, in part, to the intrusion of the Achaeans upon the Pelasgians, whose worship of **Demeter** was the most holy part of their religion. The Pelasgians would not accept the Achaeans into their rites, hence the performance of them in secret. Yet in Crete these same rites were open to all.

The leitmotif of the mysteries was the marriage of mortals with the gods. In the earliest period for which there is a written record, the principle deities of the mysteries were Demeter and her daughter Kore. (Kore was never styled Persephone in the official language of Eleusis.) The third deity, god of the lower world, was known by the names Pluto and Eubouleus, according to the Homeric hymn to Demeter (circa seventh century BCE) and reaffirmed in an ancient hymn of Pamphos. One view is that Dionysus entered at a somewhat later period, due to the great influence of the Orphic sects, while another view is that he was a part of some inner mystery.

Besides the greater mysteries at Eleusis, there were lesser mysteries at Agrae, on the banks of the Ilissus. Sacrifices were made to the same great **goddesses** at both. The Oriental mysteries associated with Attis, Cybele, **Isis**, and Sabzius, were akin to these and came into later Greece and early imperial Rome. However, their orgiastic ecstasy was more violent, with emasculation practiced by the devotees of Attis. Religious dramas were an important part of all the mysteries.

SOURCES:

- Encyclopedia Britannica*. William Benton, 1964.
- Fielden, F. J.: *A History of Greek Religion*. Oxford, 1925.
- Lawson, John Cuthbert: *Modern Greek Folklore and Ancient Greek Religion*. University Books, 1964.



NAGALISM see SERPENT

Names of Power

Certain names are believed to have intrinsic power, which magicians use for raising energy. The “tetragrammaton” of ceremonial magic is the ineffable name of god, the name many believe should never be written nor spoken. It is the YHWH, or Yahweh, of the Old Testament. In ceremonial magic, the magician tries to conjure entities and make them appear. The magician does this by using the powerful names of god and of the angels and archangels—names that apparently strike fear into the entities being conjured.

To know the most secret name of a god is to have a power over that deity. It followed, then, that to know the name of your enemy’s god was to gain immeasurable power over that enemy, so such names were known only to a favored few in the priesthood.

Sir James Frazer tells the story of Isis and how she became a goddess by learning the most secret name of the great god Ra. Isis knew that Ra walked in his garden every morning. She lay in wait, and when he passed by she saw that he spat upon the ground. She hurried forward and fashioned a serpent from the earth and his spittle. She lay this in the pathway so that on his return Ra stepped near the serpent and was bitten. Ra cried out for help from “the children of the gods with healing words and understanding lips, whose power reacheth to heaven . . . And Isis came with her craft, whose mouth was full of the breath of life, whose spells chase pain away, whose words maketh the dead to live.” Ra pleaded with her to heal him but she refused until he gave her his true name. Ra gave her many names, all the time getting weaker. To each of them, Isis replied, “That is not thy name that thou speakest to me. Oh tell it me, that the poison may depart.” Finally Ra told her his most secret name and she made the poison flow away. From then on she became known as “the queen of the gods, she who knows Ra and his true name.”

Even today in **Wicca**, the names of the gods are given at initiation to the neophyte, who is then administered an **oath of secrecy**.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Witchcraft from the Inside*. Llewellyn, 1995.
Frazer, Sir James: *The Golden Bough*. Macmillan, 1890.

Natural Magic

Natural **magic** is that which utilizes natural objects such as **herbs**, **oils**, stones, or **amulets**. It is not the type of magic that depends upon the **conjuring** of entities or calls for the use of elaborate tools and ceremony. **Hedge Witchcraft**, folk magic, and **healing** use natural magic. Also called “low magic”—as opposed to the “high magic” of **ceremonial magicians**—it is frequently performed instinctively by country dwellers, **pagans**, and **solitary Witches**.

The spells and charms of **cunning men** and women, together with the folk cures and magic of the Pennsylvania Pow-wows, Ozark yarb doctors, granny-women, power doctors, and doodlebuggers, are all good examples of natural magic.

NECKLACE see JEWELRY

Necromancy

In the Middle Ages it was believed that the **spirits** of the dead were privy to knowledge of future events. It was therefore reasoned that if it was possible to speak to the dead, then it would be possible to learn what the future held. Some **magicians** attempted to do this by magically “raising the dead,” briefly giving back life to a corpse just long enough to interrogate it. This act was known as necromancy (from *necro*, the Greek word for a dead body or person).

A freshly buried corpse would be dug up and conjured, using a necromantic **trident** or **wand**. When questioned, it would reply truthfully, telling all it knew of future events. The frontispiece of Mathieu Giraldo’s *Histoire curieuse et pittoresque des sorciers* (Paris, 1846) shows **Dr. John Dee** and his assistant **Edward Kelley** standing in a **magic circle** confronting a shrouded corpse who stands at the foot of its tomb. There is actually no mention of such a **ritual** being performed in Dee’s private journal, so the event depicted may be spurious.

Marcus Annaeus Lucanus, in his *Pharsalia* (c. 65 CE), tells of Sextus Pompey, son of Pompey the Great, who employed the necromancer Erichtho. From a battlefield they obtained the body of a recently slain soldier and, by magic ritual, interrogated it concerning the probable outcome of Pompey the Great’s coming battles. They later burned the body.

SOURCES:

De Givry, Grillot: *A Pictorial Anthology of Witchcraft, Magic and Alchemy*. Spottiswoode, Ballantyne, 1931.
Wheatley, Dennis: *The Devil and All His Works*. American Heritage Press, 1971.

NECROMANCY (MOVIE) see *THE WITCHING*

Necronomicon, The

The name that author Howard Phillips Lovecraft gave to a fictional book described as the most evil book in the world. Its full title was *Necronomicon, also known as Kithab Al Azif, the Book of the Names of the Dead, unholy masterpiece of the madman Abdhl' Al Hazred*. It was a complete fabrication of Lovecraft's, created to give more substance to his stories, yet it has been seized upon to the point where various editions have been published, each claiming to be the actual book. Some of these have been produced with tongue in cheek, others as out-and-out fakes. Copies and translations have been produced by L. Sprague De Camp; Colin Wilson with George Hay, David Langford, and Robert Turner; "Simon"; Frank G. Ripel; Lin Carter; and others.

The *Necronomicon* was supposedly written about 735 CE. A Greek translation was made in 950 CE and a Latin one in 1228. It was said that **Dr. John Dee** made an English translation, although that was never published. All of these "translations," of course, are as fictitious as the original.

Neo-Paganism

The revival of paganism in many forms, including those of **Witchcraft** and **Druidism**. The term is used extensively in the United States but little used in Europe. Neo-paganism is a revival of original forms but, although thoroughly researched, does not form an unbroken line from the original.

The focus of neo-paganism is on pre-Christian, nature-based religions and a reverence for the natural world. The movement has been motivated by various factors, including dissatisfaction with established religions, ecology-consciousness, equal rights movements, and back-to-basics philosophies. According to author Michael Jordan, more women than men are attracted to neo-paganism.

SOURCES:

Jordan, Michael: *Witches: An Encyclopedia of Paganism and Magic*. Kyle Cathie, 1996.

New Age

A modern term given to a spiritual movement originating in the 1960s that embraces meditation, belief in reincarnation, creation of one's own reality, nonconventional religion, channeling, astrology, tarot, holistic medicine, use of crystals, various healing techniques, and many of the arts and sciences previously listed under the heading of "occult." As a label, it serves a useful purpose in attracting seekers and querants who might otherwise be repulsed by the occult heading.

NOVEMBER EVE see *SAMHAIN*

Nudity

Ritual nudity is not uncommon and was found throughout the ancient world. Both the Greeks and the Romans favored it, as did the naked wise men of India—the Gymnosophists. Ancient British women performed **magical rites** naked, according to Pliny, as did the women of Ancient Persia. Charles Godfrey Leland tells of the daughters of the ancient Persian magi who **worshipped** the sun as it rose by waving freshly plucked verbena (one of the seven most powerful plants in magic). In *Aradia, Gospel of the Witches of Italy*, Leland says that “these Persian **priestesses** were naked while they thus worshipped, nudity being a symbol of truth and sincerity.” Many ancient Jewish **prophets** worked naked. The Old Testament states (I Samuel 20:23–24): “And the spirit of **God** was upon him also, and he went on and prophesied, until he came to Naioth in Ramah. And he stripped off his clothes also, and prophesied before Samuel in like manner, and lay down naked all that day and all that night. Wherefore they say, Is Saul also among the prophets?”

Leland recounts Aradia, the Witches’ **Goddess**, speaking to her followers: “And as the sign that ye are truly free, Ye shall be naked in your rites, both men and women also.” This exhortation is echoed in modern **Wicca** in the rite of “**Drawing Down the Moon**.”

Many early illustrations of Witches and **sabbats** depict naked Witches. Albrecht Dürer’s drawing of a Witch riding on a goat to the **Walpurgisnacht** shows the Witch naked, as does his *The Witch* and *The Four Witches* (1491). Similar is Hans Baldung Grun’s *Witches Concocting Flying Ointment before the Sabbat* (1514). Grun did any number of illustrations showing naked witches, such as *Witches at Work*, *The Consecration of the Fork*, and *Witches’ Sabbat*. The Douce Collection, Bodleian Library, Oxford, contains an illustration of *The Witches’ Sabbat on the Brocken* with many of the participants naked. Practically all of Goya’s paintings of Witches show them naked, *Two Witches Flying on a Broom* being typical. In the 1610 (Paris) edition of Pierre de Lancre’s *Tableau de l’inconstance des mauvais anges*, a great gathering of Witches is shown with a **circle of dancing** nudes in one area and a naked mother presenting her equally naked child to the **Horned God** in another area, this engraved by Ziarnko. Johannes Geiler von Keisersperg’s *Die Emeis* (1517) shows a naked *Assembly of Witches*. A decoration on the right hand voussoir of the western doorway of Lyons Cathedral (fourteenth century) shows a naked witch riding on the back of a goat.

Today in Witchcraft, Wiccans are divided. The majority in Europe seem to follow the original tradition and to favor **ritual** nudity, while in the United States the majority prefer to be robed. Some traditions, such as **Gardnerian**, prescribe ritual nudity, while others leave it to the wishes of the individual **covens**.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Witchcraft from the Inside*. Llewellyn, 1995.

De Givry, Grillot: *A Pictorial Anthology of Witchcraft, Magic and Alchemy*. Spottiswoode, Ballantyne, 1931.



Oath of Secrecy

The oath administered to those initiated into the mystery religions. The word “mystery” is from the Greek word *meuin*, meaning “to shut the mouth or eyes; to keep mum; to keep secret.” A mystery is a rite, or religion, that is kept secret from all but its initiates. Since **Wicca** is a mystery religion, **Wiccan** initiates take such an oath of secrecy. In a few **Wiccan** traditions, however—for example, **Seax-Wica**, or Saxon **Witchcraft**—the rites are not kept secret, so no oath is extracted.

According to Nicolas Remy’s *Demonolatry* of 1595, “It has long been the practice of those who are associated in the crime of witchcraft to bind themselves together by an oath under the heaviest of curses in order to give them greater confidence in each other; and so that they may be less ready, in the event of their being taken up by the law, to betray that which they have together plotted.” He also says that “they do not trust to that alone: for they take further precautions against such a risk by covering their faces with a mask or veil or some such thing.”

SOURCES:

Eliade, Mircea: *Rites and Symbols of Initiation: Birth and Rebirth*. Harper, 1958.

Heckethorn, C. W.: *Secret Societies of All Ages and Countries*. University Books, 1965.

Remy, Nicolas (E. A. Ashwin, trans.): *Demonolatry*. University Books, 1974.

Occult

That which is hidden, secret, or esoteric. Occultism is the study of the occult—of psychic phenomena and supernormal influences, magic, and divination. The word is from the Latin *occulere*, meaning “to conceal.”

ODIN see **WODEN**



Ogham stone, Sperrin Mountains, County Tyrone. Courtesy Allen Kennedy/Fortean Picture Library.

Offering

A sacrifice or gift to the gods. Whenever **Witches** have a meal, before they eat or drink they pour some wine onto the **earth**, onto the **altar**, or into the **fire**, as a sign of giving thanks to the gods for what they have. This is an essential part of the ceremony of **Cakes and Wine**, a part of every **Witch** meeting, although it will also be done any time **Witches** are feasting together. Offerings may also be made at any time, but they are done especially at the time of harvest to show appreciation for the bounty of the gods.

In some forms of primitive **magic**, it is felt that an offering is needed in order to bribe the gods to be beneficent. According to Sir James Frazer, offerings of first fruits may also be presented to a king, in his character of god, before the people are at liberty to partake of new crops. The Samoans would present the first fruits to the *aitus*, or ancestor spirits, and to the chiefs. In Voodoo, offerings of the best cuts of meat from sacrificed birds or animals to the *loa*, or gods, are placed on the altar.

SOURCES:

Frazer, Sir James: *The Golden Bough*. Macmillan, 1890.

Ogham

The oldest form of Goidelic writing used by the Celts and found in Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Cornwall, Devon, and the Isle of Man. The majority of examples have been found in Kerry and Cork counties of Ireland. The oldest of these inscriptions were composed of notches carved onto the edge of an upright stone.

The system would seem to be founded on the Latin alphabet. Some stones have bilingual inscriptions, which have helped in their translation. The main key, however, was found in a treatise on Oghamic writing contained in the fourteenth-century *Book of Ballymote*.

SOURCES:

Encyclopedia Britannica. William Benton, 1964.

Oil

The use of oil as an anointing agent in **ritual** is both widespread and ancient. It is used in religious rites and in **magical** rituals. The ancient Egyptians used oils, as evidenced by the illustration found in Tutankhamen's tomb of the young king's mother anointing him. Hindu followers of Shiva anoint a sacred lingam. The Greeks placed containers of oil, known as *lekkythoi*, in tombs for the dead to use. Similarly, the Romans poured oil over the ashes of the dead.

In Eastern and Latin churches, a mixture of olive oil and balsam is referred to as "chrism," from the Greek *chrío*, to anoint. In the Latin church it is consecrated by the bishop on Maundy Thursday in a solemn ceremony in which he is assisted by twelve priests, seven deacons, and seven sub-deacons. The chrism is used for the consecration of bishops, altars, and chalices, and in the ordination of priests.

In some traditions of **Wicca**, including **Gardnerian**, the **Witch Queen** is anointed from head to toe with consecrated oil as part of the coronation ritual. The kings of France were especially proud of the fact that they were anointed with oil "of divine origin," incorporating the famous oil of Clovis. The English monarch, at the coronation, is anointed on head, breast, and hands.

In modern day **Witchcraft**, many **traditions** consecrate the **worshippers** with oil as they enter the **circle**. Most traditions use oil to **consecrate** the neophyte at **initiation**. Oil is also used in **Voodoo**, Santeria, Catholicism, and Judaism. Oil, corn, and wine are also the Masonic elements of consecration.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Witchcraft from the Inside*. Llewellyn, 1995.

Encyclopedia Britannica. William Benton, 1964.

Mackey, Albert G.: *An Encyclopedia of Freemasonry*. Everts, 1887.

Man, Myth and Magic. PBC Publishing, 1970.

OIMLEC see **IMBOLC**

"Old Religion"

Name given to the religion of **Witchcraft**, or **Wicca**, since it predates Christianity (often referred to as the "New Religion").

OLWEN, LADY see **MONIQUE WILSON**

Omen

A sign or indication of forthcoming events; a portent of what is to come. One deeply held belief says that coming events can cast their shadows in front of them. They do this in the form of omens. As one example, when a black cat crosses your path, moving from right to left, it is said to foretell some ill luck that is coming your way. Some folklore, however, has it that it is ill luck if the cat proceeds from the left

and crosses to the right. When a flock of birds flies across your path, usually from left to right, it signifies good luck coming. To see a spotted dog is good luck on its way, while to encounter a white **horse** and a red-headed woman is bad luck.

These are natural omens that may easily be recognized and noted. But many believers in the past made it a science to discover what is to be. Four thousand years ago, the Babylonians would sacrifice a sheep and study its liver for signs of future events. The coloring of the liver, its veins, and its blemishes were all indicative of certain things. The Romans would place a cockerel in the center of a circle of grain. Beneath the grain lay the letters of the alphabet. Note was made of which letters were beneath the grain that the cockerel chose to peck, and those letters were made to form a word or words.

The alighting of a white dove on the banner of **Joan of Arc** was seen as a favorable omen. Primitive peoples have interpreted rainbows, eclipses of the **sun**, comets, shooting stars, and other unusual events in the sky as omens. Seers and soothsayers made a living by interpreting omens and portents. Today, fortunetellers, card readers, **astrologers**, and other **diviners** carry on the tradition of foretelling future probabilities.

SOURCES:

Leach, Maria (ed.): *Funk & Wagnalls Standard Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology and Legend*. Harper & Row, 1984.

Oracle

In ancient Greece, the populous consulted with oracles, which are those able to contact the **gods** and answer questions put to the deities. Although the **priesthood** led public **worship** and offered necessary **sacrifices**, the oracles made the personal contact and expressed the will of the gods. These oracles would go into trances and frequently speak in a greatly changed voice, with no later recollection of what they had said.

The words uttered by the oracle were frequently confusing to the questioner, often ambiguous or even nonsensical. The priests interpreted what was said and thereby brought order out of possible chaos. This was especially the case when the questioner was an ambassador or diplomatic figure and where the question held political significance.

Delphi was the Greek center for oracles. It was only open for nine months out of the year. When open, the oracle could only be approached on one day a month. The order of questioners was determined by lot, although it was possible for those with influence to gain precedence.

Greece was not the only place for oracles. Many primitive societies had similar soothsayers. James Wellard, writing in *Man, Myth and Magic*, suggests that all practitioners of **divination** are, in effect, oracles, and that African tribes, Australian aborigines, medieval **necromancers**, **astrologers**, and modern psychiatrists are all variations on the same theme.

SOURCES:

Lawson, John Cuthbert: *Modern Greek Folklore and Ancient Greek Religion*. University Books, 1964.

Man, Myth and Magic. PBC Publishing, 1970.
Parke, H.W.: *Oracles of Zeus*. Harvard University, 1967.

Ordeal

The **torture** inflicted upon an accused **witch** during the persecutions. It might take the form of red hot irons, thumbscrews, boot jacks, water torture, or any of a number of atrocious punishments administered by the Christian persecutors.

The “Ordeal” is also the name given to the part of the **Wiccan initiation** ceremony in which the neophyte is bound and blindfolded. There is no torture involved here, but the very fact of not knowing what is about to happen is considered an ordeal of sorts.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Witchcraft from the Inside*. Llewellyn, 1995.
Robbins, Rossell Hope: *The Encyclopedia of Witchcraft and Demonology*. Crown, 1959.

Order of the Garter

English Order of Chivalry founded by King Edward III. The usual story of its formation is that the king was at a royal ball, dancing with the Countess of Salisbury, when her **garter** fell to the floor. The king returned it to her after first placing it on his own leg, with the words, “*Honi soit qui mal y pense*” (“shame be to him who thinks evil of it”). The date, according to Froissant, was 1344 (although some authorities assign it to 1350). Edward went on to form the highest and most ancient order of knighthood, known as the Order of the Garter. This was formally created on April 23, 1350—St. George’s Day. **Margaret Murray** suggested that, since it took more than a dropped garter to embarrass a woman—even a countess—in the sixteenth century, it must have been a **pagan ritual** garter she had been wearing. At that time England was still almost half pagan. If, as Murray suggests, it was a ritual garter, then the king made a smart move by placing it on his own leg. In effect, he was declaring himself willing to rule over the pagan population as well as the Christian one. His words, which seemed to mystify Murray, make admirable sense when one considers that there were many Christian dignitaries at the ball and that Edward was referring not to the garter but to the **Old Religion** itself when he made his comment.

Edward formed the Order of the Garter with twenty-four knights plus himself and the Prince of Wales. Murray points out that the number, twenty-six, is the same as found in two **covens** of thirteen each. Furthermore, as leader of the order, the king wears a blue velvet mantle with 168 miniature garters sprinkled over it. Together with the one on his leg, that would total 169, or thirteen times thirteen.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Witchcraft from the Inside*. Llewellyn, 1995.
Murray, Margaret: *The God of the Witches*. Sampson Low, Marston, 1931.



**Antlered figure, Caverne des Trois Frères In Ariège, France.
Courtesy Raymond Buckland.**

sought to indicate how successful the hunt would be. Such signs and portents can multiply and become extremely complex. It seemed to those early people that there was some power controlling everything—a God of Hunting, for want of a better image. It therefore seemed logical that gaining the favor of that god would produce success in the hunting. From extant cave paintings we know that prayers, and probably rituals, were made to this hunting god, with one man acting as a priest, by playing the part of that god as he guided the others through a pantomime of the hunt to be undertaken. Since most of the animals hunted at that time were antlered or horned, it was thought the god of hunting was similarly antlered or horned. Paintings—such as the ones at the Caverne des Trois Frères in Ariège, France, and at Forneau du Diable in Dordogne, France—show an obvious human male leading a ritual dressed in the skin of an animal, and wearing the mask and horns or antlers of the beast.

Sympathetic magic was performed to aid in the success of the hunt. Again, this is known from extant artifacts (for example, at Le Tuc d'Audoubert, Ariège), such as clay models of bear and bison, pock-marked with holes where they were ritually

Origins of Witchcraft

It is impossible to pinpoint the actual origin of Witchcraft, although Dr. Margaret Murray did her best to trace it back from the persecutions of the Middle Ages to the beginnings of humankind in the Paleolithic Age. In fact, that early time was the beginning of religio-magic rather than the beginning of Witchcraft *per se*.

In those primitive times nature could be awesome to humankind. The sun, the roaring wind, the crackling thunder, and the flash of lightning were all things that seemed to have a power, if not a mind, of their own. Out of awe and respect came a belief in gods: a god of the wind, of the rushing river, of the mighty trees, of all things that drew respect. This was animism, the most potent factor in the evolution of religion and a belief that lingers, even today, in the islands of the South Pacific, in the bush of Australia, the jungles of Africa, and elsewhere.

Of primary concern to the early people was success in the hunt. Without meat to eat, skins for warmth, and bones and antlers for tools and weapons, a tribe could perish. When hunting, omens were



Drawing of a Roman altar stone of Cernunnos found beneath Notre Dame Cathedral. Courtesy Raymond Buckland.

stabbed in the mime of the hunt. Such rituals from relatively recent times include the Buffalo Dance of the Mandan Indians in the Great Plains region of the United States.

There was also a goddess, recognized by early humankind: a Goddess of Fertility, for without fertility there could be no animals to hunt. And without fertility there would be no children to swell and continue the tribe. Later, too, without fertility there would be no crops to provide food throughout the year. Early depictions of this goddess emphasized the feminine and the reproductive aspects of woman. There are many extant examples of these early "Venus" figurines (as they are termed): the Venuses of Willendorf, Lausel, Abri Patand, Sireuil, and many more. Most of them are figures with greatly exaggerated breasts, buttocks, swollen pregnant stomach, and enlarged genitalia, to underscore the fertility aspect. In a later stage of humankind's development, this Fertility Goddess became the more important of these two deities, as agriculture developed and people depended less on hunting.

So a crude form of religion came into being, made up of animism and magic, with a priesthood who served as plenipotentiary between humans and the gods. From what was essentially a polytheistic religion, the Hunting God and Fertility Goddess came to the fore in many areas to become the two major deities. With the development of agriculture and the later storage of food for the winter months, the hunting aspect fell in importance and the god became one of nature generally.

The practice of burial of the dead as innovated by the Gravettians (22,000–18,000 BCE) showed a probable belief in an afterlife, for the bodies were sprinkled with red ochre to resemble life and were buried with food and implements that might be needed in the afterworld. The God of Hunting then became also a God of Death and of the Afterlife, retaining his place opposite the Goddess.

As humankind spread from its origins in the Fertile Crescent, people brought with them these ideas of the deities, ritual, and magic. As different areas and different countries developed, the deities took on various characteristics, yet they remained essentially the same god and goddess from earliest times. The Great Mother remains recognizable, as does the Horned God. To the Celts, the god was known as **Cernunnos** (Latin for “the horned one”). He is found depicted on a stone altar discovered under the Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris and on a silver Iron Age **cauldron** found at Gundestrup in Himmerland, Jutland. By the Bronze Age, the Horned God was found across most of Europe and in the Near and Middle East.

Throughout western Europe the people followed this pattern, worshiping these two main deities with emphasis on the Fertility Goddess when it came to crops and farm animals. By then, individuals as well as groups would worship these deities, asking for what they needed and thanking for what they received. Farmers and their families developed their own forms of magic to encourage the gods in what they wanted. Much of this was in the form of sympathetic magic, as when a farming husband and wife would have intercourse in the first furrow plowed to ensure the field would be fertile.

The “priests” of the areas still existed but as much for administering **herbal** medicines as for leading religious rituals. They became known as the *wicca* (f. *wicce*) or “wise ones.” From this came the word “Witch” (see **Wicca** and **Witch/Witchcraft**).

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Witchcraft from the Inside*. Llewellyn, 1995.

Hughes, Pennethorne: *Witchcraft*. Longmans, Green, 1952.

Murray, Margaret Alice: *The Witch Cult in Western Europe*. Oxford University Press, 1921.

Murray, Margaret Alice: *God of the Witches*. Sampson Low Marston, 1931.

OSCULUM INFAME *see* KISS

Osiris

The Greek rendering of the Egyptian *Ousir*, Osiris was the chief deity of the ancient Egyptian cult of the dead. The cult of Osiris was only rivaled by that of the sun god Ra. Osiris was an agricultural deity, and he was usually depicted holding the crook and flail. He was god of crops, vegetation, life, and growth, and of the Nile River and its annual flood.

Osiris was the son of Geb and Nut. He was born at Thebes in Upper Egypt. When Geb retired, Osiris ascended the throne and took Isis, his sister, as his queen. He taught his people the art of agriculture and instituted the cult of the gods, building the first temples. His jealous brother Set aspired to the throne and, by trickery,

imprisoned Osiris in a trunk and cast it into the Nile. Set later found the trunk, by chance, in the swamps of the Delta, and carved up the body of Osiris and scattered the pieces far and wide. Isis painstakingly tracked down all the pieces except one, the penis, and by her **magic** restored Osiris to life as an immortal god.

SOURCES:

Larousse Encyclopedia of Mythology. Hamlyn, 1966.

OSTARA *see* SPRING EQUINOX

OVERLOOK *see* EVIL EYE

Owl

The Greeks looked upon the owl as a sacred symbol of wisdom. Athena, the goddess of wisdom, was always accompanied by an owl. Many old Greek vases are decorated with owls, some of which have breasts and even vulvas. In Rome, however, the hooting of owls or the sight of one was said to presage a death, and it was considered bad luck to dream of an owl.

Athena, Anath, Blodeuwedd, **Lilith**, Mari, and Minerva are associated with owls. From the Neolithic Age through to the Early Bronze Age, a prominent image in art is the goddess in the form of an owl. The Latin for owl is *strix*, from which comes the Italian *strega*, meaning “**witch**.”

Owls were frequently depicted, during the persecutions, as companions and servants of witches. Some owls were believed to transform into succubae. The ability of an owl to turn its head almost a full 360 degrees led to Christian belief that it was a servant of the devil.

Despite a lot of negative beliefs, the owl has also been credited with profound wisdom, oracular powers, and the ability to avert evil. De Givry suggests that the owl, along with the cat and the **toad**, is the inseparable companion of every witch.

SOURCES:

De Givry, Grillot: *A Pictorial Anthology of Witchcraft, Magic and Alchemy*. Spottiswoode, Ballantyne, 1931.

Gimbutas, Marija: *The Language of the Goddess*. Harper & Row, 1989.

Walker, Barbara G.: *The Woman's Dictionary of Symbols and Sacred Objects*. HarperSanFrancisco, 1988.



This decorated letter shows an owl and a witch with a cauldron. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.



Pact with the Devil

The Christian chroniclers at the early witch trials invariably recorded that the accused had made a pact with Satan. The Satanic pact was a signed document promising one's soul to the devil, after a certain number of years, in return for certain advantages during that period. At the end of the prescribed period, the devil would come for his due. The period was usually seven years or, sometimes, a multiple of seven. Many of the trial records speak of the accused witch "signing the devil's book." In 1653, when Anne Styles joined the group of witches at Salisbury, the other witches "pricked (her hand) with a pin and squeezed out the blood and put it into a Pen, and put the Pen in the Maid's hand, and held her hand to write in a great book" (Thomas Bayly Howell, *State Trials*, London, 1816). Joseph Glanvil (*Sadducismus Triumphatus*, London, 1681) reported that the Somerset witches who signed even if they could not write by putting a circle or a cross as their mark. When the Prior of St. Germain-en-Laye, Guillaume Edeline, signed a pact with Satan, it was discovered on his person.

The literature of the Middle Ages is filled with stories of people who supposedly sold their soul to the devil. One example, seemingly substantiated, is that of Oliver Cromwell. According to the memoirs of a Captain Lindsay, on the eve of the Battle of Worcester Cromwell left his tent at about midnight and said he was going for a walk in the nearby woods. He specifically forbade Lindsay to remain with him, as was his job. Lindsay nevertheless did follow at a discreet distance. He saw Cromwell enter a clearing in the woods and meet with an old man who carried a scroll of parchment. The two talked for a while and seemed to argue. Eventually the old man presented the parchment to Cromwell, who signed it. The old man then disappeared, and Cromwell returned to his tent. The following morning he led the Roundheads into battle against the royalists and won. Cromwell went on to become Lord Protector of the Commonwealth of England, Scotland, and Ireland, and ruled for exactly seven years. On the seventh anniversary of his meeting with



The Devil presenting the demonic pact to Theophilus, from the Psalter of Queen Ingeborg of Denmark, c. 1210. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

the old man in the woods, September 3, 1658, Cromwell died. It was reported that there was a tremendous thunderstorm over London that night.

One form of the pact is given in the book *Le Dragon Rouge* (Paris, 1521), together with an illustration of the Magic Circle of Pacts. Urbain Grandier, the infamous priest of Loudon, supposedly made a pact, a copy of which is in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. In 1545, when only twelve years of age, Magdalene de la Croix, the Abbess of Cordova, made a pact “for the space of thirty years,” according to the *Pleasant Treatise of Witches* of 1673.

SOURCES:

De Givry, Grillot: *A Pictorial Anthology of Witchcraft, Magic and Alchemy*. Spottiswoode, Ballantyne, 1931.
Murray, Margaret Alice: *The Witch Cult in Western Europe*. Clarendon Press, 1921.

Pagan; Paganism

The word *pagan* is from the Latin *pagani*, meaning dwellers in the country. Similarly, the word *heathens* originally meant dwellers of the heath. When the new religion

of Christianity began to spread across Europe, it was adopted in the cities and towns long before the country people accepted it. Most pagans, therefore, were practitioners of the **Old Religion**. Christianity subsequently put a negative bias on the word that was entirely misplaced.

The term *paganism* has come to be applied to the follower of any religion other than Christianity, Judaism, or Islam. In fact, a great many widely varying beliefs and practices would come under that heading. Modern **Wicca** is one of them. To escape some of the negative imagery associated with the word, many modern Pagans prefer the term **Neo-Pagan**, inferring a newer form of paganism.

Contemporary Pagans worship Nature and frequently draw from ancient religions, including those of Europe, the Middle East, Ancient Egypt, and Native America. They tend to be **polytheistic** rather than monotheistic. Like Wiccans, Pagans work either as **solitaries** or in groups, which are autonomous. Paganism may be a religion or simply a way of life.

SOURCES:

Crowley, Vivianne: *Principles of Paganism*. Thorsons, 1996.

Harvey, Graham: *Contemporary Paganism: Listening People, Speaking Earth*. New York University Press, 1997.

PALMISTRY see DIVINATION

Pan

Greek nature and **fertility deity**, rustic son of Hermes and Dryops' daughter, god of flocks and of shepherds and goatherds. He was said to be a native of Arcadia and was incorporated into the retinue of Dionysus. Pan is usually depicted as half man, half goat. He was the inventor of the *Syrinx*, or Pan-pipe, and was extremely musical, leading nymphs in dances.

Pan purportedly lived on the slopes of Mount Maenalus or Mount Lycaeus. He brought about good hunting and caused goats and ewes to multiply, hence his aspect as a **phallic** divinity. Disguising himself as a white ram, he seduced the moon goddess **Selene**.

SOURCES:

Kaster, Joseph: *Putnam's Concise Mythological Dictionary*, G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1963.

Guirand, Félix: *Greek Mythology*. Paul Hamlyn, 1963.

Paracelsus (1493–1541)

"Paracelsus" Philippus Aurelius Theophrastus Bombastus von Hohenheim was born in Switzerland, near Einsiedeln, in the canton Schwyz. He named himself Paracelsus, probably as an indication that he was superior to Celsus, the first century Latin medical writer.

Paracelsus studied at the University of Basle and, later, with the abbot of Sponheim. In 1529, after a controversial three years of lecturing on medicine at the university, during which he burned the works of Avicenna and Galen, he was thrown



EFFIGIES PHILIPPI THEOPHRASTI
AB HOHENHEIM ÆTATIS SVÆ XLVII
OMNE DONVM PERFECTVM
A DEO
IMPERFECTVM A DIABOLO.

Paracelsus. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

out and wandered Europe. He settled in Salzburg in 1541 under the protection of Archbishop Duke Ernst of Bavaria. There he died in September of that year, some say from being thrown down a steep hill by his enemies.

Paracelsus earned a reputation as an alchemist and was certainly a doctor with a great gift for **healing**, believing that the body and soul must be treated together to bring about a cure. Although he looked askance at **ceremonial magicians**, he did believe that they possessed greater healing power than did his contemporary physicians. He strongly believed that there was a “natural” **magic** available that came from deity and conferred on the user the true power to heal. His beliefs included the use of **talismans** and the study of **astrological** influences. Paracelsus’s *Astronomica et astrologica opuscula* (Cologne, 1567) features a woodcut illustration of him holding a **sword** with the word “Zoth” engraved on the pommel. It was generally believed that his famous sword had a **demon** named Azoth imprisoned in that pommel. Gril-lot De Givry, however, points out that *azoth* was the word Paracelsus used for the so-called “vital mercury” of the alchemists.

Paracelsus was the first to describe zinc and to introduce the use of chemical compounds into medicine. A book of his medical theories, *Die grosse Wundartzney*, was published in 1536.

SOURCES:

Encyclopedia Britannica. William Benton, 1964.

De Givry, Grillot: *A Pictorial Anthology of Witchcraft, Magic and Alchemy*. Spottiswoode, Ballantyne, 1931.

Guiley, Rosemary Ellen: *The Encyclopedia of Witches and Witchcraft*. Facts on File, 1989.

PATHFINDER, PETER see AQUARIAN TABERNACLE CHURCH

PectiWita

The **Witchcraft** of the Picts, the early **Celtic** people of Scotland. PectiWita differs from the **Wicca** of England and much of Europe in that there is little emphasis on **ritual** or the **worship** of the **gods**. It is closer to the **Hedge Witchcraft** of Europe, with emphasis on **healing**, **herbal** lore, folk **magic**, and **divination**.

PectiWita is a **solitary Witchcraft** practice found mainly in the Highlands of Scotland. **Aidan Breac**, a PectiWitan, was teaching it to select students when **Raymond Buckland** heard of him in the late 1970s. Ten years later, Buckland made contact with Breac, who lived off the northwest coast of Ross and Cromerty County, Scotland, after which Breac agreed to let Buckland publish some of his teachings.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Scottish Witchcraft*. Llewellyn, 1992.

Campbell, J. G.: *Witchcraft and Second Sight in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland*. MacLehose, 1902.

Peine Forte et Dure

When a person was brought before the court in a witchcraft trial in America, he or she was first required to plead whether guilty or not guilty. No trial could proceed

until the accused had so pleaded. By refusing to plead, the accused could prevent the trial altogether. To circumvent such an occurrence, the law provided a horrible punishment for anyone so obstinate. It was called *peine forte et dure*—“a penalty harsh and severe.” It consisted of stretching the culprit out flat on his or her back, on the ground, with arms and feet extended to the utmost in all four directions. Heavy weights of iron and stone were then piled on the body until the accused either pleaded or was crushed to death. The common name for this was “pressing to death.”

The only time in American history that this punishment was actually inflicted was during the witch trials of 1692 in Salem, Massachusetts. Giles Cory, accused in the hysteria of that time, knew that if he refused to plead, his trial would be balked and the authorities would be unable to confiscate his goods and estate, as they would be entitled to do if he were proven guilty. Giles therefore refused to plead and was subsequently put to the *peine forte et dure*. He died without speaking.

Pendderwen, Gwydion (1946–1982)

Pendderwen was born in Berkeley, California, on May 21, 1946. At the age of 13 he met the poet **Victor Anderson**. They became friends, and Anderson and his wife, Cora, initiated him into their form of **Witchcraft**, which was closer to **Hedge Witchcraft** than to the **Wiccan** traditions of today. Later, Pendderwen and Anderson founded a **Faery tradition**, motivated by Anderson’s reading of **Gerald Gardner’s** books.

Pendderwen studied at California State University at Hayward. He was drawn to **Robert Graves’s** theories regarding the **goddess** and the sacred king; from corresponding with Deri ap Arthur, a friend in Wales, he was inspired to learn the Welsh language. With Alison Harlow, a fellow Wiccan of the Faery tradition, in 1970 he founded the organization Nemeton, the name being Welsh for “sacred grove.” Nemeton was a **Pagan** networking organization that merged, in 1978, with the **Church of All Worlds**. In 1972, Pendderwen issued his first recording of songs for the seasons and the **sabbats**: *Songs of the Old Religion*.

After a visit to Wales, Pendderwen returned to the United States, quit his job with the Internal Revenue Service, and began homesteading on a piece of land in Mendocino County. In 1979 he published a songbook, *Wheel of the Year*, followed at yearly intervals by two musical fantasies, *The Rites of Summer* and *The Faerie Shaman*.

In 1977 Pendderwen founded Forever Forests for the ritual planting of **trees** and to encourage ecological consciousness. This merged with the Church of All Worlds in 1978. In 1982 Pendderwen was killed in an automobile accident.

SOURCES:

Guiley, Rosemary Ellen: *The Encyclopedia of Witches and Witchcraft*. Facts on File, 1989.

Pennsylvania Dutch Witchcraft

The people who live between the Delaware and the Susquehanna rivers in southern Pennsylvania believe in what they term *hexerie*, or “**witchcraft**.” An extremely reli-

gious people, they are also very superstitious. Among their beliefs, for example, is that a **cross** painted on the handle bar of a door latch will prevent the devil from entering. From such beliefs has grown an assortment of utilitarian “hex signs”—decorative signs and symbols placed on the sides of barns and houses to cleanse evil; promote **fertility**, health, and happiness; or even start or stop rain.

These hex signs are not used by the Amish and Mennonites—the plain sects—but by some of the Lutherans, Reformed, Moravians, and others. Different designs have become established over the years. They feature such objects as stars of various types, oak leaves and acorns, hearts, distlefinks (the good luck bird of the early Pennsylvania Dutch settlers; a goldfinch that ate thistle seed and used the thistle down for its nest), tulips, and many geometric patterns and signs. Many of the patterns were found tooled into the leather of family **bibles**, on *taufscheine* (birth certificates), and on illuminated manuscripts from the Ephrata Cloisters.

The Witchcraft of the area is also called *braucherei* (**healing** without medicines), *powwow* (healing by words and motions), *hexa marrik*, and *gruttafoos* (marks drawn to ward off evil). Some of the same superstitions and **magical** practices, though not the hex signs, are found in the Ozark region of Missouri and Arkansas.

In the area, if a cow goes dry, it is considered to be bewitched and is butchered. A bottle of asafetida will be hung in a barn to ensure the cows do not give stringy milk. A feather is placed in a child’s diaper to stop him or her from wetting. Worts are bought and sold, as are various other **charms**, **spells**, **amulets**, and **talismans**. Frequent references are made to the *Sixth and Seventh Books of Moses* and similar collections of charms published by such houses as Horst, de Claremont, Sheldon, and Dorene.

It is thought that any supernatural power cannot be passed on to one of the same sex, so there are roughly equal numbers of male and female witches known in the area. **Poppets** (wax images) are common, and many cases of hexerie end up in the local courts.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Witchcraft from the Inside*. Llewellyn, 1995.

Hohman, John George: *Pow-Wows or the Long-Lost Friend*. Hohman, 1819.

Leach, Maria (ed.): *Funk & Wagnalls Standard Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology and Legend*. Harper & Row, 1984.

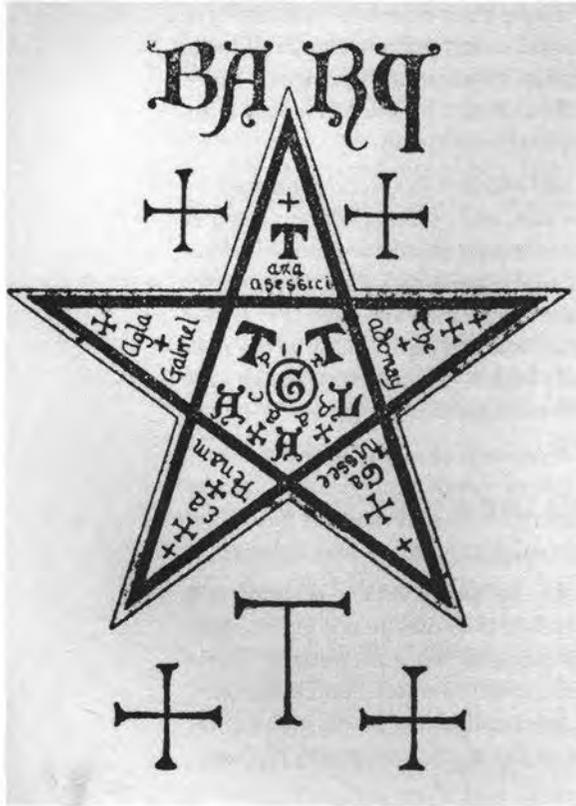
Randolph, Vance: *Ozark Superstitions*. Columbia University Press, 1947.

Zook, Jacob and Jane: *Hexology*. Zook, 1962.

Pentacle

Sometimes spelled *pantacle*. The pentacle originally had the same meaning as **pentagram** but has come to mean a circular wooden or metal plate engraved with **magical** symbols (usually including a pentagram) and used in magical **rituals**.

A **Gardnerian Wiccan** pentacle is made of copper and engraved with the three **degree** symbols, plus those for the salute (kiss) and **scourge**, and for the **god** and **goddess**. Other traditions may incorporate different symbols and may use **silver** or wooden pentacles.



This pentagram, from a fourteenth-century manuscript, is designed to facilitate the acquisition of "all secrets of knowledge." Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

In ceremonial magic, a pentacle is frequently a protective talisman incorporating the design of a pentagram together with various words and names of power.

Pentagram

The pentagram is a five-pointed, star-shaped figure usually drawn with the single point upward. It is also known as Seal of Solomon, pentalfa, Star of Logres, goblin's foot, witch's cross, and Druid's foot.

As a magical figure, its origins are lost in time. Eliphas Levi describes the pentagram as signifying "the domination of the mind over the elements." It is generally associated with the life force, much like the ancient Egyptian ankh, and was often associated with the Microcosmic Man—a figure of a man, with arms and legs extended, superimposed on a five-pointed star. For medieval alchemists, magicians, and philosophers, the pentagram symbolized man as the microcosm. As Barbara Walker says, "Man is the world, the world is man, and his genitals are the center of the universe." It was considered an illustration of the principle "as above, so below."

The pentagram has always been associated with magic. The five points represent the four elements—earth, air, fire and water—surmounted by spirit. According to the fourteenth century tale of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, the pentacle was sacred to Morgan, the Celtic death-goddess, and in the tale was carried on a blood-red shield in her honor.

The Golden Dawn's "Lesser Ritual of the Pentagram" includes a self consecration by drawing the pentagram on the body, touching with the tip of a ritual knife. A similar consecration (done either on oneself or on another) is found in some traditions of Witchcraft, where the forefinger is dipped into oil or salted water and then touched to the forehead, right breast, left shoulder, right shoulder, right breast, back to forehead. In some degree systems (e.g. Gardnerian), a variation of this ritual is part of the consecration for first degree. An inverted pentagram—with the two points upward—is for the second degree, and a pentagram surmounted by a triangle is for the third degree.

An inverted pentagram is not necessarily a sign of evil. How and by whom it is used may suggest good or evil. Reportedly, Satanists use an inverted pentagram, often portrayed superimposed on the head of a goat. In that sense it is a negative symbol, whereas an inverted pentagram used in **Wicca** is a positive symbol.

In modern-day Witchcraft, a pentagram is described in the air, using an **athamé**, to seal a consecrated circle. It may also be drawn with single point uppermost to invoke and with two points upward to banish.

SOURCES:

Crowther, Patricia: *Life of the Cauldron*. Frederick Muller, 1981.

Levi, Eliphas: *Transcendental Magic*. Rider, 1896.

Walker, Barbara G.: *The Woman's Dictionary of Symbols and Sacred Objects*. HarperSanFrancisco, 1988.

PERSECUTIONS see BURNING TIMES

PERSEPHONE see BELTANE

Phallic Worship

The term phallism, although specifically referring to **worship** of the male sex organ or phallus, is frequently used in reference to any sex worship or reverence. *Phallus* and *kteis*, or *lingam* and *yonis*, are the terms most often used for the male and female generative organs. In ethnology and folklore, the term phallism is restricted to beliefs and practices associated with **magic** and religion.

The start of the spring rites of Dionysus were signaled by a procession into the fields. This was led by a **maiden** carrying a phallus. She was followed by the farmer and his wife and daughters. Dionysus was the Greek god of vegetation. Similarly, **Osiris** was the ancient Egyptian god of vegetation, and his **rituals** included processions in which his effigy was carried by women. The image of Osiris was adorned with an overly large phallus, according to Herodotus, the fifth century Greek historian. The sex organs, both male and female (see **Sheela-na-gig**), were frequently modeled in disproportionate size to stress their power and importance.

Benjamin Walker says that the powers of reproduction were thought to be among the fundamental potencies of the universe. The largely Christian feeling that the sex organs are "dirty" has not been shared by most of the world's population. Evidence of phallism has been found in prehistoric **cave art**; paintings and carvings show that, as early humankind was surrounded by the vagaries of nature, people developed an increasing awareness of the need to ensure the **fertility** of humans, livestock, and crops. Many Egyptian temples bear murals that include phallic representation.

Phallism is found throughout India and much of China and Japan. Ireland, Africa, ancient Rome, and Greece were all places where divinities associated with sexuality were recognized and honored.

In **Witchcraft**, the ends of the handles of **broomsticks**, pitchforks, and riding poles were frequently carved to represent a phallus. These were ridden, like hobby-

horses, between the legs for **rites** associated with bringing fertility to the fields. In some modern traditions of **Wicca**, a phallic **wand** is used in the rites. This may be carved like a penis or tipped with a pine cone to represent the organ of fertility.

There was much more reference to the phallus and to phallic symbolism in the Christian Bible in its original forms, before later censorship. Typical, perhaps, is the Old Testament reference to making an oath, made by Abraham when addressing Eliezer: “Put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh and I will make thee swear by the Lord . . .” The thigh was the generic term for the organ of creation. It was common to place a hand over the genitals, as a sacred object, when swearing an oath. Words like “loins” and “rock” became euphemisms for the phallus, while “knowledge” meant sexual intercourse. Goldberg points out the sanctity of the Holy Prepuce, the foreskin of Jesus. Although there were claimed to be twelve such prepuces scattered about churches throughout Europe, the one at the Abbey Church of Coulomb, Chartres, France, was believed to possess the power of making sterile women fruitful—another example of **paganism** in Christianity.

SOURCES:

Goldberg, B. Z.: *The Sacred Fire: The Story of Sex in Religion*. University Books, 1958.

Leach, Maria (ed.): *Funk & Wagnalls Standard Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology and Legend*. Harper & Row, 1984.

Walker, Benjamin: *Sex and the Supernatural*. Macdonald, 1970.

Philtre

A **magic** potion. Philtres were often, though not always, used for love or sexual purposes. Supposedly, when drunk, the philtre would cause the recipient to fall madly in love with the first person he or she saw. As described in literature of the Middle Ages, many were made up of obnoxious ingredients and administered in strong wine, to disguise their foul taste. **Mandrake** root was a common ingredient, as were **vervain**, briony, human or animal blood, and the red gum known as **dragon’s blood**.

As Rosemary Guiley points out, in **Wicca** the forcing of love upon another is forbidden—one must never interfere with another’s free will—so today philtres would only be used to enhance love that already exists.

SOURCES:

Guiley, Rosemary Ellen: *The Encyclopedia of Witches and Witchcraft*. Facts on File, 1989.

Pickingill, (Old) George (1816–1909)

Born in Hockey, Essex, George was the oldest of nine children born to Charles Pickingill and his wife Susannah (née Cudner). Little is known of his early life, but he grew up in the Canewdon district of East Anglia to become a farm laborer like his father. He was reputed to have a foul temper and was generally disliked and feared. However, he was frequently sought after because of a reputation he gained for **magical** prowess, and he would therefore be classed as a Cunning Man or local **Hedge Witch**. It was said he could find lost property and cure sickness.

Pickingill claimed that he was descended from the “**Witch** of Brandon,” a woman named Julia who lived near Thetford, Norfolk, in the eleventh century. According to E. William Liddell, he further claimed that since Julia’s time, members of the Pickingill family had served as **Witch priests** and directed **covens**. Unlike the majority of Wiccans, he was vehemently anti-Christian.

Pickingill would visit local farmers when they were harvesting and threaten to bewitch their threshing machines. To make him go away, they would bribe him with beer. Eric Maple says that he typically ended his day in a drunken stupor.

Liddell states that Pickingill established nine covens over a sixty-year period. They were located in Essex, Hampshire, Hertfordshire, Norfolk, and Sussex. Liddell also claims that **Aleister Crowley** was initiated into a Pickingill coven in 1899, although there seems to be no evidence to support that. He similarly claims that the coven into which **Gerald Gardner** was originally initiated was a Pickingill one. Again, there seems to be no evidence of this.

Local parish registries show many variations on the name Pickingill, including Pittingale, Pickingale, Pickengale, and Pettengell, which makes it difficult to trace detailed records of the family.

SOURCES:

Liddell, E. William (“Lugh”): *Old George Pickingill and the Roots of Modern Witchcraft*. Taray Publications, 1984.

Liddell, E. W. and Michael Howard: *The Pickingill Papers*. Capall Bann, 1994.

Maple, Eric: *Dark World of Witches*. Robert Hale, 1962.

Pins

Pins are used in many **spells**, especially those of negative **magic**. The old saying, “See a pin and pick it up; all the day you’ll have good luck,” intimates that by picking up the pin, you will save it from being picked up by a **magician** who might use it in a negative spell. One of the best-known spells is to stick a **candle** or a **poppet** with pins in order to cause harm to the person represented by that candle or poppet (see **sympathetic magic**). Similarly, to bring ill luck to someone, a lemon may be stuck with black-headed pins, then sent to an unfortunate recipient. When that person touches the pins, the ill luck is transferred to him or her.

On the positive side, together with needles, nails, screws, broken glass, and other sharp objects, pins may be placed in a bottle filled with urine as a protection from evil (see **witch bottle**).

An old British tradition says that if a girl has been betrayed, she can get revenge by throwing twelve pins into the **fire** at midnight as she chants the name of her ex-lover. To remove a **wart**, one pricks the wart with a pin that has first been stuck into an ash tree. After sticking the wart, the pin is returned to the tree. For card players, if someone sticks a pin in a player’s lapel, it will bring him luck.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Buckland’s Complete Book of Witchcraft*. Llewellyn, 1986.

Hill, Douglas: *Magic and Superstition*. Paul Hamlyn, 1968.

Planetary Hours

In working **magic**, certain days are better than others (see **planetary rulers**, on the next page), depending upon what is being sought. In addition to working magic on the appropriate day, some **Witches** like to start the **ritual** on the actual planetary hour. In other words, if they are working **love magic** they would start the ritual not only on a Friday but also in the hour of Venus, the **goddess** of love. To determine the hour of Venus (or any other particular planet), it is necessary first to know the local times of sunrise and sunset. These times vary across the country and throughout the year.

As an example, in a specific location at the time of year that the magical ritual needs to be done, sunrise comes at 6:25 a.m. and sunset at 8:20 p.m. That means there are more hours of daylight than of darkness. Divide the daily hours into twelve parts and do the same with the nighttime hours. With a total of 835 minutes of daylight (6:25 a.m. till 8:20 p.m.) and 605 minutes of darkness (8:20 p.m. till 6:25 a.m.), dividing each into twelve parts (not hours), you have twelve 69.58-minute daylight sections (835 divided by 12), and twelve 50.42-minute nighttime sections (605 divided by 12). For the purposes of working with Planetary Hours, these 69.58-minute sections and 50.42-minute sections will be called “hours” even though they are not regular 60-minute hours.

The first “hour” of daylight on a Friday is the Planetary Hour of Venus. (On a Wednesday, the first “hour” would be the Planetary Hour of Mercury.) The hours then follow through the twelve rulers in order, each daylight “hour” taking, in this case, 69.58 minutes and each nighttime “hour” taking 50.42 minutes. Different days of the year will, then, vary in the lengths of their hours according to the local times for sunrise and sunset.

Below is a table of daytime planetary hours, in which the hour shown marks the sunrise:

Hour	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	Sun	Moon	Mars	Mercury	Jupiter	Venus	Saturn
2	Venus	Saturn	Sun	Moon	Mars	Mercury	Jupiter
3	Mercury	Jupiter	Venus	Saturn	Sun	Moon	Mars
4	Moon	Mars	Mercury	Jupiter	Venus	Saturn	Sun
5	Saturn	Sun	Moon	Mars	Mercury	Jupiter	Venus
6	Jupiter	Venus	Saturn	Sun	Moon	Mars	Mercury
7	Mars	Mercury	Jupiter	Venus	Saturn	Sun	Moon
8	Sun	Moon	Mars	Mercury	Jupiter	Venus	Saturn
9	Venus	Saturn	Sun	Moon	Mars	Mercury	Jupiter
10	Mercury	Jupiter	Venus	Saturn	Sun	Moon	Mars
11	Moon	Mars	Mercury	Jupiter	Venus	Saturn	Sun
12	Saturn	Sun	Moon	Mars	Mercury	Jupiter	Venus

Below is a table of nighttime planetary hours, in which the hour shown marks the sunset:

Hour	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	Jupiter	Venus	Saturn	Sun	Moon	Mars	Mercury
2	Mars	Mercury	Jupiter	Venus	Saturn	Sun	Moon
3	Sun	Moon	Mars	Mercury	Jupiter	Venus	Saturn
4	Venus	Saturn	Sun	Moon	Mars	Mercury	Jupiter
5	Mercury	Jupiter	Venus	Saturn	Sun	Moon	Mars
6	Moon	Mars	Mercury	Jupiter	Venus	Saturn	Sun
7	Saturn	Sun	Moon	Mars	Mercury	Jupiter	Venus
8	Jupiter	Venus	Saturn	Sun	Moon	Mars	Mercury
9	Mars	Mercury	Jupiter	Venus	Saturn	Sun	Moon
10	Sun	Moon	Mars	Mercury	Jupiter	Venus	Saturn
11	Venus	Saturn	Sun	Moon	Mars	Mercury	Jupiter
12	Mercury	Jupiter	Venus	Saturn	Sun	Moon	Mars

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Wicca for Life*. Citadel, 2001.

Gonzalez-Wippler, Migene: *The Complete Book of Spells, Ceremonies and Magic*. Llewellyn, 1988.

Shah, Idries: *The Secret Lore of Magic*. Frederick Muller, 1957.

Planetary Rulers and Attributes

In working **magic**, some days are better than others, depending on what is being sought. Each day is ruled by a planet and has its own particular attributes for purposes of working magic. If, for example, there is need for **healing** magic, this would best be done on a Monday since that day, ruled by the **Moon**, is the one best suited to that purpose. It should be noted that, in astrology, celestial bodies including the Sun and Moon are called planets. The following list shows which planet rules each day, and which conditions and activities are favored on each day.

Sunday—Sun—Agriculture, beauty, creativity, fortune, guardianship, hope, money, self-expression, victory.

Monday—Moon—Ancestors, childbearing, dreams, healing, instinct, memory, merchandise, purity, theft, virginity.

Tuesday—Mars—Enemies, initiation, loyalty, matrimony, prison, protection, war, wealth.

Wednesday—Mercury—Business, communication, debt, fear, loss, travel.

Thursday—Jupiter—Clothing, desires, harvests, honor, marriage, oaths, riches, treaties.

Friday—Venus—Beauty, family life, friendship, fruitfulness, growth, harmony, love, nature, pleasures, sexuality, strangers, waters.

Saturday—Saturn—Building, doctrine, freedom, gifts, life, protection, real estate, sowing, tenacity.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Advanced Candle Magick*. Llewellyn, 1996.

Buckland, Raymond: *Wicca for Life*. Citadel, 2001.

Gonzalez-Wippler, Migene: *The Complete Book of Spells, Ceremonies and Magic*. Llewellyn, 1988.

Poison

Although a true **Witch** is interested in **healing**, not in harming, witches are often erroneously associated with poison. Certainly a **Witch**, as local wise person, did need to be knowledgeable about poisons in order to be able to provide antidotes. In fact, the misquote, “Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live” arose from this misconception. The original **Biblical** text employed the word *veneficor*, or “poisoner.” King James’s translators, deliberately or through ignorance, transcribed the word as *maleficor*, meaning “witch,” presumably because witches were knowledgeable about antidotes to poisons. The correct translation, then, should be “Thou shalt not suffer a poisoner to live,” which makes much more sense.

In an article in *Man, Myth and Magic*, Eric Maple states, “Renaissance physicians, not unnaturally, took every opportunity to cast the blame for their failures upon their unprofessional rivals, the witches; a policy for which there was ecclesiastical sanction, for the **Inquisitor** Bernard de Como had laid down the doctrine that all diseases beyond the curative power of medicine must be due to sorcery.”

Throughout history women (and men) have resorted to poison to get rid of an unwanted spouse. Many times the poison would be obtained from a **cunning man** or woman, or “**hedge witch**.” With the local wise person’s knowledge of herbs, it is hardly surprising that the stigma of poisoner came to be associated with **Witches**.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Witchcraft from the Inside*. Llewellyn, 1995.

Man, Myth and Magic. PBC Publishing, 1970.

Polytheism

Polytheism—whose name is derived from the Greek words for “many” and “gods”—refers to the belief in, and worship of, many deities. Early humankind’s concept of deity included gods of **wind**, **water**, **fire**, **air**, storm, sky, hunting, and **fertility**. Polytheism was found in Sumeria, Greece, Rome, Egypt, and elsewhere, and was passed on to the present day via many primitive tribes, such as those found in Africa, South and North America, and Polynesia.

Witchcraft is a polytheistic religion (although it might be more accurate to term it duotheistic, since its followers worship a **god** and a **goddess** rather than a multitude of deities). Although Christianity professes to be monotheistic, its inclusion of Jesus, Mary, Joseph, and the many saints—who are revered and **prayed to**—would seem to indicate that this is actually a polytheistic religion.

James, E. O.: *The Ancient Gods*. Capricorn Books, 1964.

Leach, Maria (ed.): *Funk & Wagnalls Standard Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology and Legend*. Harper & Row, 1984.

Popes

Many Roman Catholic popes practiced **magic**. Author Michael Jordan states that an unbroken line of Popes, from Sylvester II to Gregory VII, were accused of being actively involved with magical practices. This line included Leo IX, Sylvester II, Sylvester III, and Benedict IX. Later, Urban II and Gelasius II could be added to the list.

The popes most connected with **Witchcraft** were opponents, not practitioners of that religion—most notably popes Gregory the Great (590–604), Gregory IX (1227–1241), and Innocent VIII (1484–1492). When Christianity, the new religion, was trying to establish itself, Pope Gregory I sent a letter to Abbot Mellitus who was about to journey to England. According to Bede (*Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation*), “When (by God’s help) you come to our most reverend brother Bishop Augustine, I want you to tell him . . . I have come to the conclusion that the temples of the idols in England should not on any account be destroyed. Augustine must smash the idols, but the temples themselves should be sprinkled with holy **water** and **altars** set up in them. . . . For we ought to take advantage of well-built temples by purifying them and dedicating them.” He went on to explain how the **Pagans** might be coerced into the now-Christian temples, since they were accustomed to **worshipping** in those places.

Practically every pope during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries issued a Bull against **sorcery** and witchcraft. Gregory IX, writing to the Archbishop of Sens, said “Thou shouldst be instant and zealous in this matter of establishing an **Inquisition** by the appointment of those who seem best fitted for such work, and let thy loins be girded, Brother, to fight boldly the battles of the Lord.” Pope Alexander IV launched a Bull against **Witchcraft** in 1258, following it with another in 1260. The most important, and influential Papal Bull, however, was that of Innocent VIII, in December 1484.

Innocent’s Bull was influential, due, in part, to the fact that the newly introduced printing process enabled widespread distribution of the Bull. It was reprinted two years later, in 1486, as a preface to the infamous **Malleus Maleficarum** of Heinrich Kramer and Jakob Sprenger.

In October of 1999, 1,650 **Wiccans**, **Druids**, and other Pagans from around the world signed a letter to Pope John Paul II. The letter requested that Pagan peoples be included in the Vatican’s Millenium Apology for the persecutions of the Inquisition, addressed to Muslims, Jews, Christians, and other groups. The letter was drafted by an international committee of Pagans and was available for signing in English, French, Spanish, and Polish. On Sunday, March 12, 2000, Pope John Paul II made a sweeping apology, which he described as “long overdue.” He said, “We cannot not recognize the betrayals of the Gospel committed by some of our brothers.” Tantamount to a request for divine forgiveness, the apology failed to mention specifics, such as the failure of the Catholic Church to help the Jews during the Second World War. Although the apology mentioned the Inquisition, it did nothing to address those who had been burned at the stake as witches.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Witchcraft from the Inside*. Llewellyn, 1995.

Jordan, Michael: *Witches, an Encyclopedia of Paganism and Magic*. Kyle Cathie, 1996.



Witch's poppet. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

Poppet

A figure made to represent a person, a poppet is used in magical ritual. Made of cloth, wax, clay, or any other substance, it may or may not look exactly like the person it represents. A simple candle representing a person—moved, melted, or stuck with pins—can effectively act as a poppet, through what is known as sympathetic magic.

Most poppets bear some resemblance to a living person. Cloth poppets have always been popular in magic, especially for healing purposes. Two pieces of cloth are cut out in a crude “gingerbread man” form and sewn together with an opening left at the top. The figure is then stuffed with herbs, or other paraphernalia suitable for the intended ritual, and the top is closed. For healing, the figure might be stuffed with healing herbs, feathers, or stones. A lock of hair, nail parings, a piece of clothing, or even a photograph of the person seeking the cure may be incorporated into the stuffing of the poppet to make it more personal. The cloth may be decorated with embroidery, paint, or ink to add facial features that resemble its living counterpart.

The poppet is then consecrated and named after that person. The practitioner utters words to the effect that, “All that I do to this figure, I do to (Name).”

If the intent is to harm, the figure may be stuck with pins—in the head to bring about a headache, in the heart to bring about death; if the figure is of wax, it may be melted over a candle flame or fire. As early as 1100 BCE, a treasury official and the women of the harem of Pharaoh Ramses III worked together to make a wax image of the Pharaoh to bring about his death.

At the Salem Witch Trials, two men presented evidence against Bridget Bishop, testifying that “being employed by Bridget Bishop, alias Oliver, of Salem to help take down the cellar wall of the old house she formerly lived in, we the said deponents, in holes in the old wall belonging to the said cellar, found several puppets made up of rags and hogs’ bristles with headless pins in them with the points outward.” This proved to be damning evidence.

Poppets figured in many witchcraft cases over the centuries. In 1590, when the witches of North Berwick were working against King James VI of Scotland, in 1590, they made a wax image that was melted in front of a fire. In 1594, when the fifth

Earl of Derby died suddenly, a wax image was found in his bedroom. In 1664 the Wincanton **coven** of Somerset, England, presented their Chief with wax poppets to have him consecrate them. Ann Bishop, of that group, asked that her poppet be named for John Newman. She then thrust thorns into it. In 1678 the Paisley witch coven used a poppet to try to kill a man. According to one of the male members of the group, “the Devil required every one of their consents for the making of the Effigies of Clay, for the taking away the life of Sir George Maxwell.”

George Kittredge tells of Caroline of Brunswick, Princess of Wales: Locked in a loveless marriage with the future King George IV, she often made wax images of her husband. In the presence of close friends, she delighted in sticking these figures with pins and melting them in front of the fire. In 1916, a woman in West Sussex showed her local vicar a crude image cut out of a turnip. Two pins were stuck into its chest. The woman claimed that her husband had made the figure in her likeness, and that she had subsequently developed burning pains in her chest.

Although the majority of past cases involving poppets have involved negative intent—such as harming or killing the intended victim—today’s **Wiccans** employ only positive magic, using poppets to heal.

(See also **Black Magic**, **Curse**, and **Healing**.)

SOURCES:

Davidson, Thomas: *Rowan Tree and Red Thread*. Oliver and Boyd, 1949.

Hole, Christina: *Witchcraft in England*. Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1947.

Kittredge, George Lyman: *Witchcraft in Old and New England*. Russell and Russell, 1956.

Murray, Margaret Alice: *The God of the Witches*. Sampson Low, Marston, 1931.

Seabrook, William: *Witchcraft: Its Power in the World Today*. Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1940.

PORTENT see **OMEN**

Potion

Any medicinal drink may be referred to as a potion. **Witches**, as the wise people of the villages, were very knowledgeable about the use of **herbs** and brewed potions as medicines to administer to the sick. The term can also be used for a drink of poison. Many herbal teas are termed potions; though, in fact, they are more specifically decoctions or infusions. In the past, and especially in literature, the use of potions is associated with **love** (or lust) **magic**.

Potter, Harry

Young protagonist of the fictional books by Joanna Kathleen Rowling (1965–). As of this writing, four have been completed with an additional three planned. The first of the series, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone* (U.S. title: *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone*), Rowling’s first published book (published in 1997), won a variety of literary awards and became one of the most successful children’s books in the world. To date, it has been published in sixteen countries.

Rowling was born in Chepstow, Gwent, in South Wales, in 1965. At the age of six she wrote her first story, titled *Rabbit*. She graduated from Exeter University and worked for some time as a teacher. A single parent, she started writing the first Harry Potter book while sitting in a café in Edinburgh (where she lives today), as her daughter slept beside her. Having thought of the premise of her first book on a long train trip from Manchester to London, she spent five years committing the story to paper.

The books are about a young orphaned boy—aged eleven when the story opens—who lives with his uncle, aunt, and cousin (the Dursleys). All three Dursleys make Harry's life miserable. Forced to live in a tiny closet under the stairs, he is never given a birthday party. One day he is informed—in a letter delivered by an owl—that he is to start his education at a school of wizardry. Harry is a **wizard**, as his parents were. Against the wishes of the Dursleys—who are not **magical** in any way—Harry reports to Hogwart's School of **Witchcraft** and Wizardry. The seven books cover the seven years that Harry spends at the school, where he is involved in many adventures.

A movie of the books was released in November 2001, with Daniel Radcliffe playing the part of Harry Potter. Emma Watson plays his friend Hermione, with Rupert Grint as his other friend Ron Weasley. Directed by Chris Columbus, the movie features a variety of special effects.

Powwow

Term for a wise man or woman in **Pennsylvania Dutch** country and in the Ozarks (where they are also known as “Power Doctors”). The term is also used for the folk **magic** performed by these people. The appellation derives from the early settlers' observations of Native American powwows. Guiley suggests that the early settlers learned about **healing herbs** and roots from the Native Americans, who also employed **charms** and **incantations** in their healing work.

A powwow, or powwower, is in many ways similar to a **Hedge Witch**, although most of the former profess to be staunch Christians. Followers seek them out for anything from removing **warts** or tracing lost property to dispelling **curses** and curing major diseases. Powwowers are often proficient **astrologers** and are knowledgeable about herbs and their uses. Many have claimed to be the seventh child of a seventh child. Such a person is believed to have inherent psychic and magical powers.

As in **Wicca**, a male powwower is trained by a female, and vice versa. Often, they exhibit healing proclivities at a very early age. Hohman's book presents another parallel to Wicca, through its insistence that the contents are intended for healing, not harming. Hohman himself was a powwower, living near Reading, Pennsylvania, in the early 1800s.

While Powwowers generally do not receive money for their services, they do accept goods and services as payment.

SOURCES:

Guiley, Rosemary Ellen: *The Encyclopedia of Witches and Witchcraft*. Facts on File, 1989.

Hohman, John George: *Pow-Wows or the Long-Lost Friend*. Hohman, 1819.

Randolph, Vance: *Ozark Superstitions*. Columbia University Press, 1947.

***Practical Magic* (movie)**

Directed by Griffin Dunne and produced by Denise DiNovi, this 1998 movie stars Sandra Bullock and Nicole Kidman, with Dianne Wiest and Stockard Channing. Based on Alice Hoffman's novel, the story follows the Owens sisters, Sally and Gillian, as they struggle to overcome obstacles to finding true love. They find they are hampered by their hereditary gift for practical **magic**, having been raised by two witches, their aunts Jet and Frances. Taken in by their aunts after the death of their parents, they grew up in a household that was far from typical. The family **curse** causes the Owens men to fall in love and suffer an untimely death. Described as a romantic fantasy, the film falls somewhat short of the 1995 book on which it is based.

PRANA see MANA

Prayer

A petition to the **gods**. Originally spontaneous supplications, they developed into set formulae in most established religions, with emphasis on correct wording and phraseology. In **Wicca**, the "words from the heart" method is still preferred.

Alfred Métraux, speaking of the Incas, says traditional prayers were couched in a solemn and grandiose style reminiscent of that of the psalms; the Chaco tribes of the Amazon, however, generally posited requests to their sun god Apinayé as short sentences merely stating a desire.

Prayers may vary from begging to demanding and even threatening. They may be delivered standing, kneeling, bowing, or prostrate, with head covered or uncovered, depending on the religious prescription. Maria Leach argues that, when rigidly prescribed, prayer becomes a form of **magic**.

Many times prayer is accompanied by **sacrifice**, to show the petitioner's willingness to pay the deity for answering the request. In **Voodoo** there is invariably a **sacrifice** involved, be it a chicken, goat, or young bull. In Roman Catholicism the prayer is frequently accompanied by the burning of a **candle**. In **Witchcraft** there are no sacrifices, prayers being simple requests to the deities.

Rosemary Guiley points out that in Christianity, prayer was encouraged in order to supplant **Pagan charms** and **spells**. "A nine-day regimen of holy bread and water accompanied by the recitation of three Paternosters and three Aves in honor of the Trinity and St. Herbert would protect against all disease, witchcraft, mad dogs and **Satan**."

SOURCES:

Guiley, Rosemary Ellen: *The Encyclopedia of Witches and Witchcraft*. Facts on File, 1989.
Leach, Maria (ed.): *Funk & Wagnalls Standard Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology and Legend*. Harper & Row, 1984.
Métraux, Alfred: *The History of the Incas*. Praeger, 1965.

Priapus; Priapic Wand

In Greek mythology, Priapus was a faunlike creature with an erect phallus. A son of Aphrodite, he ensured the fecundity of crops, animals, and humans. He also presided over the vine, bees, and fishing. While still in Aphrodite's womb, he was cursed by Hera, who had been offended by Aphrodite's pregnancy. Hera cursed Priapus with large, ugly features, including an enormous, always-erect penis. Aphrodite found her son so hideous that she abandoned him to the care of shepherds.

In some modern traditions of **Wicca**, a phallic, or priapic, **wand** is used in rites. The priapic wand is carved like a penis, or it may be tipped with a pine cone to represent the organ of fertility. In **Witchcraft**, the ends of the handles of **broomsticks**, pitchforks, and riding poles were frequently carved to represent a phallus. These were ridden, like hobby-horses, between the legs, in **rites** associated with bringing **fertility** to the fields.

(See also **Phallic Worship**.)

SOURCES:

Guirand, Félix: *Greek Mythology*. Paul Hamlyn, 1963.

PRICKING see WITCH PRICKERS

Priest/Priestess

From "Presbyter," the leader of a **Witchcraft** coven. The priest or priestess is the one who officiates at religious and/or **magical rituals**. Generally, a priest or priestess is considered to be a plenipotentiary between humans and the **gods**. However, in **Wicca**, all **Witches** are considered to be priests and priestesses, since it is possible to **worship** in **solitary** and therefore to interact directly with deity without an intermediary. For this reason, leaders of **covens** are often referred to as High Priests and High Priestesses.

Among the Assyrians and Babylonians, priestly functions included magic and soothsaying. In ancient Egypt, the Pharaoh himself could perform any priestly duties. By the time of the new empire, priests wielded tremendous power, with the priesthood rapidly increasing in wealth and number. In ancient Greece the priests performed the main ritual acts, while the king was empowered to **sacrifice** on behalf of the people. According to Aristotle (*Politics*), priests were the elected officials charged with "those things which are ordained to be done towards the gods." The Roman poet Virgil (70–19 BCE) described the amazing powers of a priestess in the *Aeneid*: "She undertakes by her **incantations** to give peace to minds at will, or

to fill them with heavy cares; to arrest the flow of rivers and turn back the stars in their course: she summons the nocturnal spirits: you will see the ground rumble beneath her feet; and the ash trees descend from the mountains.”

Wiccan priestesses are not so powerful; in some traditions of Wicca, however (e.g. Gardnerian), the priestess is more important than the priest. A coven meeting may be led by the high priestess even when no high priest is present, yet a high priest cannot hold a coven without a high priestess. In other traditions, a priest or priestess may lead the rituals. In traditions with a degree system, the priest and priestess are designated as permanent heads of the coven, while in many nondegree traditions (e.g. Saxon, or *Seax-Wica*), the leadership changes at specific intervals.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Buckland's Complete Book of Witchcraft*. Llewellyn, 1986.

Buckland, Raymond: *Witchcraft from the Inside*. Llewellyn, 1995.

James, E. O.: *The Nature and Function of Priesthood*. Barnes and Noble, 1955.



High Priestess crowning a High Priest In a Samhain ceremony.
Courtesy Raymond Buckland/Fortean Picture Library.

Prophecy; Prophecy

A prophecy is a divinely inspired utterance that foretells events in the future events. The verb differentiation, to prophesy, did not emerge until c.1700. Today, to prophesy is to speak by divine inspiration, or in the name of a deity.

A prophet is regarded as the mouthpiece of deity. He or she does not question deity but, rather, prepares for divine inspiration, making him- or herself receptive by prayer and/or fasting.

Puck

Variations on the name Puck include Púca, Phouka (Irish), Pwca (Welsh), Bocca, and Boucca (Cornish). According to Margaret Murray, these names derive from the Slavic *Bog* meaning “God.” Puck is often depicted much like Pan, or a satyr, with goats’ legs and horns.

Puck is a spirit, frequently depicted as mischievous in the manner of the Teutonic Loki. He is said to be able to give humans the power of understanding animals’

speech, but is also fond of leading travelers astray. Christianity frequently associates him with their devil. He is a **shape-shifter** and often appears as a black animal.

Puck is also sometimes known as **Robin Goodfellow**. **Witches** associate him with the Horned God and the Greenwood.

An interesting remnant of **Pagan** festivities is found in County Kerry, Ireland, where the annual August Eve (**Lughnasadh**) Puck Fair is held at the little village of Killorglin. A horned goat is crowned “Puck King of the Fair” and “Puck King of Ireland.” The goat is treated with great pomp and ceremony: its horns and hooves are painted gold and garlands are hung about its neck. The fair lasts for three days. The goat is displayed on a platform, which is made higher each successive day. On the third and final day, the goat is crowned before being returned to the wild. Significantly, in earlier ceremonies, the goat was killed, roasted, and eaten shortly after its final crowning. This was undoubtedly a survival of the substitute Divine King sacrifice.

SOURCES:

Briggs, Katharine M.: *The Anatomy of Puck*. Hillary House, 1959.
Murray, Margaret Alice: *The Divine King in England*. Faber, 1954.



QABBALAH see **KABBALAH**

Queen of the Sabbat

In Pierre de Lancre's greatly detailed and highly imaginative illustration of a witches' sabbat, in his *Tableau de l'inconstance des mauvais anges* (1612), he includes a four-horned goat that presides over the proceedings from its throne. To the right of this goat, on an accompanying throne, sits the Witch Queen of the Sabbat. Margaret Murray suggests that the Queen was an official at the sabbats during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. She notes that, in 1579, Elizabeth Stile of Windsor said, "Mother Seidre dwelling in the Almshouse, was the mistress Witch of all the rest." Murray also says that in France, in the early seventeenth century, the custom of acknowledging a Witch Queen seems to have been universal; "in each village was found a Queen of the Sabbat" who sat beside the representative of the God.

In Wicca there is no one Queen of all Witches (despite the claims of some). There are, however, a number of Witch Queens—High Priestesses who have more than one coven—in various traditions. In Gardnerian Witchcraft, for example, when a High Priestess raises another female Witch to the Third Degree, that Witch is encouraged to leave the mother coven to start her own. The original Priestess, who is available for help and advice, is known as a Witch Queen. As badges of office, the Queen wears a silver crown—a band of silver with a silver crescent moon at the front—and a garter. (In some traditions such a crown may be worn by other female witches, not just the Witch Queen.) The garter is of green snakeskin (see Garter and Order of the Garter) lined with blue silk; a large silver buckle represents the Queen's original coven, while smaller silver buckles represent the covens that were spawned from the original. Together with the High Priestess's bracelet and necklace, these accouterments are known as the Witch Queen's *bigghes*. When a High Priestess becomes a Witch Queen, or Queen of the Sabbat, she undergoes a

coronation ceremony in which she is anointed from head to toe with consecrated oil. Her High Priest receives the honorary title of **Magus**. There is no such title as Witch King or King of the Witches in Wicca.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Buckland's Complete Book of Witchcraft*. Llewellyn, 1986.

Buckland, Raymond: *Witchcraft from the Inside*. Llewellyn, 1995.

Gardner, Gerald: *Witchcraft Today*. Rider, 1954.

Gardner, Gerald: *The Meaning of Witchcraft*. Aquarian Press, 1954.

Murray, Margaret Alice: *The Witch Cult in Western Europe*. Clarendon Press, 1921.



RABBIT *see* HARE

Rais, Gilles de (1404–1440)

Gilles de Laval, Baron de Rais (Rayx or Retz), was born in 1404 to Guy de Laval II and Marie de Craon, both wealthy landowners. Gilles was descended, on his father's side, from a woman—Tiphaine du Guesclin—who many considered to be a *fairy*.

During his youth, Gilles de Rais was treated as a prince. When his father died, Gilles inherited a considerable fortune, together with estates and castles at Champ-tocé, Tiffauges, Machecoul, Malemort, and La Suze. At the age of sixteen he married Catherine de Thouars, Dame de Tiffauges, a wealthy heiress, making him one of the richest men in Europe. It was a loveless marriage.

At twenty-two, Gilles de Rais entered the service of Charles VII and was able to maintain a large troop of men at his own expense. A favorite of his overlord, the Duke of Brittany, Gilles fought bravely against the English and served as bodyguard to **Joan of Arc**. At the age of 25, at Charles's coronation, he was appointed as a Marshall of France.

Shortly thereafter, in 1432, Gilles retired to his estates where he lived in great luxury, spending money at a prodigious rate. At Tiffauges, he built a chapel, which he staffed with a dean, archdeacons, precentors, canons, choirboys, and musicians from Italy. He amassed a library of rare manuscripts and became proficient at manuscript illumination. His corps of personal bodyguards consisted of two hundred knights.

Over the years his wealth became depleted to the point where he had to sell off some of his real estate to continue to enjoy his life of luxury. His thoughts then turned to the art, or science, of alchemy. Having built laboratories, he sent to Germany and Italy for men who professed to be able to turn base metal into gold. The sale of his estates furnished the alchemists with working material.

In 1436, alarmed at the rate at which Gilles de Rais was depleting his fortune, relatives managed to persuade Charles VII to issue an order forbidding further sales of land and buildings. This order was obeyed everywhere except in Brittany, where Duke John V and his Chancellor, Malestroit Bishop of Nantes, were eager to acquire properties.

One of the charlatans Gilles de Rais employed was a Florentine priest named Francesco Prelati. He gained the confidence of his employer and led him to believe that, when alone, he was able to conjure a **demon** named Baron. This Baron was able to produce gold, but only if the necessary **sacrifice** was forthcoming. Sacrifice followed sacrifice, with no success. Young children were enticed into the castle, or simply kidnapped, and sacrificed to the demon. Young blood flowed freely.

Meanwhile, in July 1440, Geoffroi le Ferron, Treasurer of Brittany, purchased the castle St. Etienne de Malemort. He sent his brother, Jean, to take the title. Gilles de Rais refused him and had the man beaten and imprisoned. Unfortunately, Jean le Ferron was a **priest**. Malestroit, Bishop of Nantes, had been collecting information concerning Gilles de Rais's crimes with children. Hearing of the imprisonment of le Ferron, the bishop was able to bring Gilles to court for committing sacrilege and violating clerical immunity. The bishop was joined by the **inquisitor**, Jean Blouyn, who charged Gilles with heresy. The bishop, the inquisitor, and Duke Jean profited from the situation insofar as they were allowed to confiscate his property.

Initially forty-seven charges were brought against Gilles de Rais. It came out in the trial that he had performed a variety of obscene acts with the children, both boys and girls, before and after they had been put to death. Gilles was accused of being a "heretic, apostate, **conjurer** of demons, . . . (and) accused of the crime and vices against nature, sodomy, sacrilege, and violation of the immunities of the Holy Church." The formal trial opened on October 15, 1440. On October 19, Gilles de Rais was tortured, as were four of his servants. Two of his personal attendants gave damning evidence against him. One witness claimed that he had counted between 36 and 46 heads of murdered children. After further torture on October 21, Gilles de Rais confessed to the crimes "voluntarily and freely." He was found guilty and, on October 26, 1440, was strangled. Although his body was placed on a pyre, relatives were allowed to remove the corpse, which was buried at a nearby Carmelite church.

SOURCES:

Christian, Paul: *The History and Practice of Magic*. Citadel, 1963.

Robbins, Rossell Hope: *The Encyclopedia of Witchcraft and Demonology*. Crown, 1959.

RAVEN see CROW

Ravenwolf, Silver (1956–)

Born September 11, 1956—a Virgo with Gemini rising and a Sagittarius **moon**—Silver began to study metaphysics and alternatives to traditional religions when she was a teenager. She claims to remember wondering, at the age of five, why **God** was not a woman. In her early teens she received her first deck of **tarot** cards from

an older cousin. Two years later, she was accused of being a **Witch** by fundamentalist neighbors.

When Silver was seventeen, her mother died of leukemia. This, together with the lack of support her mother received from the religious establishment, prompted Silver to look beyond traditional religion. Her search led her to **Wicca**. Today Silver is a respected Wiccan **Elder** and mother of four children, all of them **initiated** into **Witchcraft**.

Silver practices what she terms Euro-Wicca, a mixture of Witchcraft and German/American folk magic. She founded the Black Forest Clan in 1991; a large number of covens remain a part of her overall organization, although they do not hive. Silver refers to herself as a **Priestess** of the **Morrighan**, reflecting her descent from Michael Ragan's Irish tradition. Michael Ragan, who was initiated into the Saxon tradition by this author, founded an **Irish** tradition; the line passed to Silver by way of Lord Serphant.

Married to an abusive husband, Silver eventually broke free and is now supported by her current husband, Michael, who describes himself as a **Pagan** rather than a Witch. He travels with Silver and together they work as a team, taking the word of the **Old Religion** wherever they can.

In 1993 Llewellyn Worldwide, Ltd. published Silver's first book, *To Ride a Silver Broomstick*. This was soon followed by *To Stir a Magic Cauldron* (1995), *Teen Witch* (1998), *To Light a Sacred Flame* (1999), and many others. A popular writer with her own style, Silver has tremendous energy and works tirelessly.

SOURCES:

Ravenwolf, Silver: *Teen Witch*. Llewellyn, 1993.

Regardie, Francis Israel (1907–1983)

Best known as secretary to the infamous **Aleister Crowley**, Regardie was born in England on November 17, 1907. He came to the United States in 1920. Eight years later, on a visit to Paris, he met Aleister Crowley. Regardie had been fascinated by the **occult** for many years, having been introduced to it through the writings of Charles Stansfeld Jones. Well versed in Crowley's writings and activities, he soon became the writer's unpaid companion and secretary—a position he held for six years. Crowley nicknamed his amanuensis "The **Serpent**." On occasion however, as Francis King notes, Crowley referred to Regardie as "that worm."

In 1932 Regardie wrote *The Tree of Life* (Rider, London)—dedicated to Crowley (as "Marsyas")—and its companion volume, *The Garden of Pomegranates* (Rider, London). In 1934 he became an **initiate** of Stella Matutina (Order of the Morning Star), a temple of the by-then-defunct **Hermetic** Order of the Golden Dawn. He immersed himself in the teachings of this secret **magical** order and rose through the ranks. Convinced that the teachings were doomed to obscurity, he decided that they should be revealed to the public. Between 1937 and 1940, he published the teachings as *The Golden Dawn: an Encyclopedia of Practical Occultism* (Aries Press,



Silver Ravenwolf. Courtesy Raymond Buckland.

London). In doing so he broke his **oath of secrecy**, albeit for the overall good of **mystery** teachings. With this publication, the Stella Matutina came to an end.

Francis King tells an interesting story about the artifacts of the organization's sister order, Alpha et Omega. All its banners and magical implements were buried in a box in a cliff-top garden on England's south coast. By 1966, the cliff had eroded to the point where the box fell to the shore below. There it was discovered by passing tourists; the *Daily Telegraph*, later declared that the box was the property of some long-dead **Witch!**

Regardie became a chiropractor, settling in Studio City, California. He wrote what is considered by many to be the definitive biography of Aleister Crowley: *The Eye in the Triangle* (Llewellyn, 1970). In an interview with Christopher S. Hyatt, a few months before his death, Regardie said that he felt life was a "bloody weird business."

SOURCES:

Guiley, Rosemary Ellen: *The Encyclopedia of Witches and Witchcraft*. Facts on File, 1989.
 Jordan, Michael: *Witches, an Encyclopedia of Paganism and Magic*. Kyle Cathie, 1996.
 King, Francis: *Ritual Magic in England, 1887 to the Present Day*. Neville Spearman, 1970.
 Shepard, Leslie A.: *Encyclopedia of Occultism and Parapsychology*. Avon, 1978.

Reincarnation

Rebirth of the **spirit**, or soul, in successive bodies. Originally a Christian tenet, the notion of reincarnation was rejected at the Second Council of Constantinople in 553 CE. Reincarnation is very much a part of Hindu and Buddhist beliefs, and, according to Benjamin Walker (*Man, Myth and Magic* article, 1970), "is being increasingly adopted as an article of faith by a large number of people in other religious denominations." Rosemary Ellen Guiley suggests that approximately two-thirds of today's population "accepts some form of reincarnation or rebirth as a fundamental belief."

Belief in reincarnation has existed for thousands of years. The Orphics of ancient Greece believed, through Pythagorean doctrine, that souls returned through a number of incarnations. Through leading a good life, a soul ascended in purity. This cycle continued until total purity was attained, at which time divinity was achieved. This is similar to the Wiccan belief in reincarnation. **Witches** hold that the spirit goes through a number of incarnations, learning and experiencing in each until all things have been assimilated. At that time, the spirit becomes at one with the **gods**. The progression has been likened to passing through the grades in a school, where certain curricula have to be absorbed in order to graduate. Since the psycho-physical experience of a male is dissimilar to that of a female, lives as both sexes must be experienced by the spirit in order to gain full knowledge.

Witchcraft does not subscribe to the concept of **karma**, as found in many other religions. Wiccans believe in the "**Threefold Law**"—the law of threefold return. Do good, and good will be returned, either three times or at thrice the intensity. Do evil, and that, too, will return threefold. But these returns will be *within the current lifetime*. There is no "putting off" one's rewards or punishments; they come about in

this life. In the Hindu and Buddhist doctrines, the point of reincarnation is to return in subsequent incarnations to expiate one's transgressions. In Witchcraft, incarnations are not determined by previous lives, as they are in Hindu and Buddhist doctrine. Each life is a separate experience with its own agenda.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Buckland's Complete Book of Witchcraft*. Llewellyn, 1986.

Buckland, Raymond: *Doors to Other Worlds*. Llewellyn, 1996.

Guiley, Rosemary Ellen: *Harper's Encyclopedia of Mystical and Paranormal Experience*. HarperSanFrancisco, 1991.

Holzer, Hans: *Born Again: The Truth about Reincarnation*. Doubleday, 1970.

Kelsey, Denys and Joan Grant: *Many Lifetimes*. Doubleday, 1967.

Litvag, Irving: *Singer in the Shadows*. Macmillan, 1972.

Lutoslawski, W.: *Pre-Existence and Reincarnation*. Allen & Unwin, 1926.

Remy, Nicholas (1530–1612)

Born about 1530, at Charmes in Lorraine, France, Nicholas Remy was the son of Gérard Remy, Provost of Charmes. Nicholas studied law at the University of Toulouse, where **Jean Bodin** taught. As a child he watched various trials of people accused of **witchcraft**. At the age of thirty-three, Remy went to work in Paris. Seven years later, in 1570, he left to become Lieutenant General of Vosges, succeeding his uncle. At age forty-five, Remy became Privy Councilor to Duke Charles III of Lorraine and, nine years later, added the title of Seigneur de Rosières-en-Blois et du Breuil. At sixty-one he became Attorney General of Lorraine.

Influenced by having witnessed **witch** trials as a child, Remy began a campaign of his own. In 1582, his oldest son had died shortly after Remy denied alms to an old beggar woman. Remy believed the woman used witchcraft to cause his son's death, so he prosecuted her. In his book *Demonolatreiae Libri Tres*, published in Lyons in 1595, Remy claimed to have condemned 900 witches to death by **burning**; he names 128 of his victims.

His book, *Demonolatreiae*, was a conglomeration of court records, anecdotes, and personal impressions. He wrote it at a time when he was living in the country, having left the city to avoid the plague. The work is roughly divided into three sections, the first dealing with **Satanism**, the second with the sexual activities of witches, the third outlining his conclusions.

SOURCES:

Remy, Nicholas (Montague Summers, trans.): *Demonolatreiae*. Rodker, 1930.

Robbins, Rossell Hope: *The Encyclopedia of Witchcraft and Demonology*. Crown, 1959.

Retribution

Something exacted in recompense. In the concept of **karma**, it is the reward or punishment received in one life in payment for the actions of the previous life (see **Reincarnation**).

Wiccans believe that we receive retribution within the same lifetime: do good and good is returned, threefold. Similarly, do evil and that, too, is returned threefold, within that lifetime. This belief should overcome any temptation to act negatively.

Rings

Since it is without beginning or end, the ring is a symbol of eternity. As a microcosmic magical **circle**, it also represents protection. The gold rings excavated from Egyptian tombs—signet rings inscribed with the names of the **gods** and with **prayers** to these gods—had both utilitarian and magical functions.

The earliest rings were made of **iron**, which was regarded as a magical metal. As G. Storms says, “Iron manifestly takes its power from the fact that the material was better and scarcer than wood or stone for making tools, and secondly from the mysterious way it was originally found: in meteoric stones. It needed a specialist and a skilled laborer to obtain the iron from the ore and to harden it. Indeed we find many peoples regard their blacksmiths as **magicians**.”

The British Museum contains a bronze Greco-Roman ring set with an amethyst, designed as a **charm** against the **evil eye**. The Romans saw the iron ring as a symbol of strength. Victorious generals were presented with iron rings. It wasn't until the end of the third century CE that the Romans generally accepted gold rings, due to the influence of neighboring peoples. The iron ring became less popular, and eventually became the mark of a slave. Freedmen—as opposed to those born free—were a level above slaves, and were allowed to wear **silver** rings.

The magic ring of the Germanic god Odin was named *Draupnir*, the name of the dwarf who made it. Odin placed the ring on the funeral pyre of his son Balder.

Many **talismanic** rings, believed to have the power to **heal**, are associated with noble families in Britain and other parts of Europe. King Edward II (1307–1327) had a ring that was supposed to cure the “falling sickness.” In Trôyes, France, in 1263, officials passed a statute decreeing that nuns could not wear rings set with precious stones *except in cases of illness*. Certain stones became associated with specific illnesses and ailments. In some cases, patients drank from a goblet of wine or water into which a ring had been dropped.

Rings were engraved with particular designs for specific purposes: to guard against evil, to bring knowledge of **herbs**, to cause invisibility, or to promote good health. **Ceremonial magic** involves a long and intricate ritual to prepare and consecrate a ring. The ring must be made, engraved, and **consecrated** at particular times, according to the hours and days of various **spirits** and planets. Such rings are still made and worn today.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Ray Buckland's Magic Cauldron*. Galde Press, 1995.
Storms, G.: *Anglo-Saxon Magic*. Gordon Press, 1974.

Rite; Ritual

The form of a religious or **magical** ceremony, usually following a traditional structure. Isaac Bonewits states that “the word ‘ritual’ comes from the Latin root related to ‘number’ or ‘counting,’ the way things are to be done (that is, ‘one after another’). . . . In all rituals the crucial point is to do things in the proper order in the proper way, usually as prescribed by custom or tradition.” Ritual is made up of “things said” (*legomena*) and “things done” (*dromena*).

Van Gennep divides ritual into three parts: separation, transition, and incorporation. The first involves withdrawal from the world. In transition, one is “between the worlds” (a term used by **Wiccans** to describe being in the **consecrated Circle**). In the final stage, incorporation, change is integrated into life. This can be seen on a broader scale in the many parts comprising the **initiation** process in most primitive societies. The beginning of such an initiation involves complete separation from what, to that point, has been normal life. This often requires the initiate to go to a separate living area, overseen by the initiator. In **Voodoo**, this period can last as long as nine days. The actual ceremony of initiation marks the transition to a new level of being. Finally, the initiate returns, with newfound knowledge and experience, to his or her family and everyday life. As Van Gennep has observed, this entire process takes place, in compressed form, in any act of ritual. Ritual is a means of bringing undivided attention to vital issues of such a ceremony.

Rosemary Ellen Guiley argues that the most effective rituals engage the senses, alter consciousness, and open the gateway to visionary thinking. Most effective rituals incorporate such elements as special dress, **altar** and paraphernalia (candles, **incense**, and sacred figures), **chants**, **prayers**, mystery dramas, **dance**, and song. These adhere to a prescribed formula, determined by the purpose of the ritual. Sir James Frazer suggests that in primitive ritual, the rites are generally magical rather than propitiatory.

Wiccan rituals are usually led by a **priest** and/or **priestess**, who may or may not have an entourage of aides. Wiccan rituals include celebratory rituals for the seasons, such as the eight **sabbats** of **Witchcraft**; rituals for births, marriages, or deaths; rituals for **healing**; and rituals for **divination**. Rituals may be performed by individuals or by groups such as **covens**.

SOURCES:

Bonewits, P. E. I.: *Real Magic*. Berkley, 1971.

Frazer, Sir James: *The Golden Bough*. Macmillan, 1890.

Guiley, Rosemary Ellen: *The Encyclopedia of Witches and Witchcraft*. Facts on File, 1989.

Van Gennep, Arnold: *The Rites of Passage*. University of Chicago, 1960.

RITUAL MAGIC see CEREMONIAL MAGIC

Robin Goodfellow

Often equated with **Puck**, Robin Goodfellow was originally a hobgoblin said to be the child of a mortal woman and the **fairy** king Oberon.



Rollright Stones, Oxfordshire. Courtesy Janet and Colin Bord/*Fortean Picture Library*.

In his play *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Shakespeare makes Puck's nickname Robin Goodfellow. A chapbook printed in 1628 and titled *Robin Goodfellow—His Mad Pranks and Merry Jest*s relates a short history of the fairy. He has the power to change his shape, and his job is to reward good people and punish bad.

Robin was the name frequently given, in the Middle Ages, to the earthly representative of the god of the Witches. Sometimes this became Robin Goodfellow, sometimes Robin Artisan. There is also a possible connection with Robin Hood.

SOURCES:

Briggs, Katharine: *Abbey Lubbers, Banshees and Boggarts*. Pantheon, 1979.

ROBIN OF THE WOODS see FOLIATE MASK

Rollright Stones

Located in Oxfordshire, England, three miles northwest of Chipping Norton, according to local legend the Rollright Stones were originally an invading Danish

ROBIN GOOD-FELLOW, HIS MAD PRANKES AND MERRY IESTS.

Full of honest Mirth, and is a fit Medicine
for Melancholy.



Printed at London by Thomas Cotes, and are to be sold by
Francis Grove, at his shop on Snow-hill, where the

Title page of *Robin Goodfellow*, 1639 edition. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

king and his army. They were turned to stone by a local **witch** who, in turn, changed herself into an **elder tree**. The story goes that the king, encountering the witch, asked if he would become king of England. She replied that if he took seven strides to the top of the ridge and was then able to see the village of Compton, he would indeed become king. The king did so but found his view obstructed by an ancient burial mound. The witch then cried out, "Sink down man and rise up stone, King of England thou shalt be none." At that, the king and his knights were all turned to stone. A second group of knights, who followed at a distance, were actually whispering together, plotting against the king. These, too, were turned to stone by the witch, becoming the Whispering Knights.

The site is made up of an eight-foot standing stone known as the King's Stone, a **circle** of stones known as the King's Men, and a burial chamber comprised of five stones known as the Whispering Knights. It is said that the number of King's Men stones cannot be counted. Legend also has it that, on New Year's Eve, these stones go down to a nearby stream to drink.

It is said that the largest of the King's Men stones was once temporarily removed to be used as a footbridge over a stream, but the person who took it was unable to rest until he returned it to its original place. Pieces of the King's Stone used to be chipped off to be kept as protective **charms**, especially for soldiers going into battle.

Until 1949 the Rollright Stones were used as a meeting site for modern-day **Wiccans**, but intrusion by outsiders deterred them and they discontinued such use.

SOURCES:

Bord, Janet and Colin: *Ancient Mysteries of Britain*. Guild Publishing, 1968.
 Bord, Janet and Colin: *Atlas of Magical Britain*. Sidgwick & Jackson, 1990.
 Hadingham, Evan: *Circles and Standing Stones*. Walker, 1975.

Rosemary's Baby (movie)

1968 movie produced by William Castle and directed by Roman Polanski. It starred Mia Farrow as Rosemary Woodhouse, John Cassavetes as her husband Guy, Sidney Blackmer as neighbor Roman Castavet, and Ruth Gordon as his wife Minnie. The two couples are neighbors in a New York City apartment building. The elderly Castavets seem very eccentric but spend a lot of time with the younger couple. Guy lands a leading role in a Broadway production, and shortly thereafter, Rosemary finds she is pregnant. Rosemary is concerned because Minnie has been forcing her homemade chocolate mousse on her, and she feels it was responsible for a nightmare she had about being raped by a beast.

Guy grows closer to the older couple while Rosemary seems more and more isolated. Eventually it is revealed that the Castavets are **Satanists** (incorrectly termed "**witches**" in both the movie and the Ira Levin book on which it was based). Rosemary is told that her child died at birth, but she suspects it has been taken by the Castavets. When she hears the baby's cries during the night, she invades her neighbors' apartment to find all the "witches," including her husband, there with the

child. She learns that the baby she had was fathered by the Devil; her nightmare was reality. Her husband's success was directly related to her production of the Satanic Messiah.

Royalty

European royalty has been associated with **witchcraft** in various ways over the centuries. Most notably, England's King James I (while still James VI of Scotland) became the object of the North Berwick witches' magical malfaisance under the direction of Francis, Earl of Bothwell in 1590. This led to the king's great fear of witchcraft, which affected even his translation of the Christian **Bible**. He subsequently enacted the Witchcraft Act of 1604.

Much earlier than that, in the eleventh century, King Cnut had passed a law forbidding **paganism**, or "heathenism," and those who "**worship** heathen gods . . . (and) love witchcraft." Henry IV was informed that Lincolnshire was full of witches and sorcerers, and he ordered the bishop of that county to seek them out and imprison them. Henry VIII enacted a law against witchcraft, **enchantments**, and **sorceries**, although that was repealed by Edward VI in 1547.

Queen Elizabeth I's reign saw strong efforts to put onto the statute books severe penalties for witchcraft, sorcery, and **conjuring** in 1563. King Charles I was involved, to a small degree, with the witches of Lancashire in the mid-seventeenth century. During the reigns of Charles II and James II the courts were active in persecuting witchcraft, but none of this was directly connected to the throne. In 1736 George II finally repealed Charles I's Witchcraft Act.

Next to James I's involvement, the most notable royal-pagan connection was with Edward III and the Countess of Salisbury in 1344 and the founding of the **Order of the Garter**.

Margaret Murray proposed a theory of the divine king, in which she saw as ritual the deaths of King Osred of Northumbria in 792, King Edmund in 946, William Rufus in 1100, and various rulers of France, Scandinavia, and elsewhere. Although she presented interesting evidence for these and other possible divine victims, her theories are generally discounted.

SOURCES:

Murray, Margaret Alice: *The Witch Cult in Western Europe*. Clarendon Press, 1921.

Murray, Margaret Alice: *The Divine King in England* Faber and Faber, 1954.

RUNES see FUTHORC



Sabbat

From the Old French *s'ebattre*, “to revel or frolic,” the word *sabbat* is applied to the main festivals of **Witchcraft**. There are eight such festivals, spread more or less equidistant throughout the year. They mark the agricultural and solar divisions of the year.

Originally the year was divided into two parts, summer and winter. During the summer, when it was possible to grow food, the **Goddess** predominated as a goddess of **fertility**, looking over the crops and the flocks and herds. But in the winter months, before humankind learned to store food, reliance on successful hunting became the main preoccupation, and the **God** predominated as a god of hunting and death. The divisions of the year occurred at May eve and November eve, known as **Beltane** and **Samhain** (pronounced *sow'n*, to rhyme with *cow*), and these divisional points became times for the pagans to celebrate the shift of emphasis between the deities. Later, additional celebrations were added halfway through each of these periods, marking that mid-point and also acknowledging specific occasions in the agricultural year. These mid-points were named **Imbolc** (February eve) and **Lughnasadh** (August eve). These four festivals are known by today's modern Witches as the four Major or Greater Sabbats.

Eventually, the sun festivals were added to these agricultural ones: the summer and winter solstices and the spring and autumn equinoxes, known as the Minor or Lesser Sabbats. **Margaret Murray** suggests that the equinoxes were never observed in Britain, although more recent research has revealed that they were observed by the pre-Celtic Megalithic people of Britain.

With all of the old festivals, celebrations began on the eve of the date and invariably continued throughout the night until the following sunrise. Fertility was the main theme. Indeed, for the Beltane Sabbat, modern Witches have adopted a version of a Rudyard Kipling rhyme:



Witches' Sabbat, by Hans Baldung Grien, 1510. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

Oh, do not tell the priests of our **rites**,
 For they would call it sin,
 But we will be in the woods all night
 A-conjuring summer in!

It was this emphasis on fertility—necessary for existence, of course—that became the focus of the Christian chroniclers during the persecutions. Artwork of the period invariably depicts naked witches indulging in licentious practices, while the text of the infamous **Malleus Maleficarum** focuses repeatedly on sex organs and the sex act. According to the Church of the time, the purpose of the sabbat was to parody Christian rites and to worship the Devil, climaxing in licentious orgies.

At a trial in Toulouse in 1335, there was mention of a sabbat. In 1440 there was a report of an old woman who claimed to have attended sabbat celebrations since she was sixteen. The word itself began to appear regularly in the fifteenth-century records. Certain locations in Europe were traditionally associated with witches' sabbats. In the Carpathian Mountains is a peak known as the Old Women's Mountain, believed to have been a sabbat site. In France a traditional site was the Puy de Dôme. In Germany were the Horselberg, Huiberg Mountain, and the Köterberg. In Italy were the Paterno di Bologna and Tossale di Bergamo.

The feast was a major part of the sabbat celebrations. Sabbats were frequently large affairs, often held by a number of **covens** coming together from the surrounding neighborhood. At St.-Dié, in France, anywhere from fifty to 100 witches were supposed to be in attendance, while in Italy Bartolommeo Spina (writing in the sixteenth century) was told of as many as 6,000 at one gathering. Traveling to the sabbat site, the Witches would bring food to enjoy after their journey and before the religious ritual. Live poultry might be driven along with them, then cooked there. One large cooking pot, or **cauldron**, would be carried. It would be filled with water from a nearby stream and local wild herbs (see the article on **Herbs**, regarding names of plants). An early reference to the sabbat feast is found in the records of the trials of the Lancashire witches in 1612. A meeting was held at Old Mother Demdike's home, known as Malking Tower (Malking, or Malkin, was a favorite name for a witch's cat, often thought to be a **familiar**). It was reported that the gathered witches feasted on mutton from a stolen sheep, drank ale, and plotted to blow up the local castle to rescue their relatives, held captive there on a charge of witchcraft. Although this feast took place indoors, it was similar to the majority of later sabbat feasts. Even today, modern Wiccans will have a feast—usually a “pot-luck”—at the sabbats.

Witches supposedly traveled to the sabbat by riding naked astride **broomsticks** that flew through the air. This story came about from a mixing of various pieces of propaganda promulgated by the early Christian Church in its attempt to discredit the old religion. One of the old forms of **sympathetic magic**, designed to promote **fertility** of the crops, was for the **pagans** to go to the fields with their broomsticks, pitchforks, and poles. Riding them astride, like hobby-horses, they would dance around the fields, leaping up in the air as they danced. The belief was that the higher they jumped, the higher the crops would grow. This sparked the idea of pagans or

witches riding their poles, forks, and brooms through the air to their meeting sites. Certainly such a distortion made good anti-pagan propaganda for the early Church, who could claim it was the work of the devil.

Not all reported sightings of witches' sabbats were well founded. It was a common practice for **Gypsies** to camp at a **crossroads**. Many times they would feast, **dance**, and sing into the late night. A traveler might well chance on a such a gathering and assume it to be a witches' sabbat.

SOURCES:

Murray, Margaret Alice: *The Witch Cult in Western Europe*. Clarendon Press, 1921.

Robbins, Rossell Hope: *The Encyclopedia of Witchcraft and Demonology*. Crown, 1959.

Sabrina, the Teenage Witch (television series)

Youth-oriented sitcom that premiered in 1996 on the ABC network. It stars Melissa Joan Hart as a teenager who inherits the powers of her father (incorrectly referred to as a "warlock") on her sixteenth birthday. The series follows the life of a typical teen whose existence is turned upside-down by her inheritance of the **Witch** powers. Pilot directed by Tibor Takacs.

Sacrifice

A sacrifice is the giving of something or someone to a deity or **deities** as a gift, in supplication, to atone, or to appease. It establishes a connection between the profane and the sacred. Common sacrifices are food and drink, tokens from the harvest, animals, and—historically—even humans.

In the **Witchcraft** ceremony of **Cakes and Wine**, or Cakes and Ale, **Wiccans** give the first of the wine and the first piece of cake as an offering to the **gods**. Flowers may also be offered, along with nuts, fruit, and harvest gatherings. There is no blood sacrifice in **Wicca**.

In **Voodoo** it is common to sacrifice an animal, such as a chicken, goat, or a young bull. This is most frequently done when asking for help from the *loa*, or gods. In Haiti, for example, this is a very real sacrifice, since to give up that food deprives the person or family making the offering of that much sustenance.

On the mainland of ancient Greece and in the Greek colonies, human sacrifice was not uncommon, usually as a means of expelling evil. In Sparta, all state sacrifices were offered by the kings, as descendants of the gods. In the Athenian sacrifice known as the *bouphonia* ("murder of the ox"), which took place at the end of June, oxen were driven around the **altar**, and the one that approached and ate the offering was the one sacrificed. This was done to bring an end to the drought of that season. The sacrifice eaten by the ox was in the form of cakes made from barley mixed with wheat.

Demeter is described by Homer as "Yellow Demeter" because of her association with the corn. She is also known as "Green Demeter" when associated with unripe corn. In that aspect she had sanctuaries at Athens and other places, where sacrifices

were made to her when the crops were young. Pregnant sows were sacrificed, intended not only to symbolize the abundance of the crops but also to promote that abundance.

In Rome, human sacrifice occurred at the Saturnalia, and animal sacrifice was found extensively. Teutonic kings acted alongside their **priests** in the matter of sacrifice, while in China the emperor's duties included the offering of public sacrifice as part of the traditional **ritual** lore. The Aztecs were probably the best-known practitioners of human sacrifice, although they did not begin the practice until about two hundred years before the conquest. In India it was common to sacrifice a widow on her dead husband's funeral pyre. According to **Sir James Frazer** (*The Golden Bough*), the Semitic custom of sacrificing children, especially the first born, was also found in some Aboriginal tribes of New South Wales, where the first-born child of every woman was eaten by the tribe as part of a religious ceremony. Some Native Americans of Florida also sacrificed their first-born children, according to Frazer.

In a **Druidical** custom, a huge figure made of wicker-work was burned at **mid-summer**. The figure would often contain animals as a sacrifice. This was a practice continued across France for generations. According to the *Athenaeum* of July 24, 1869, at Luchon in the Pyrenees, "a hollow column, composed of strong wicker-work, is raised to the height of about sixty feet in the centre of the principal suburb, and interlaced with green foliage up to the very top; while the most beautiful flowers and shrubs procurable are artistically arranged in groups below, so as to form a sort of background to the scene. The column is then filled with combustible materials . . . bonfires are lit, with beautiful effect, in the surrounding hills. As many living **serpents** as can be collected are then thrown into the column, which is set on fire at the base by means of torches."

SOURCES:

Encyclopedia Britannica. William Benton, 1964.

Frazer, Sir James: *The Golden Bough*. Macmillan, 1890.

Gaster, Theodor H.: *The New Golden Bough*. Criterion Books, 1959.

St. Agnes Eve

St. Agnes Eve is the night of January 20. It was the traditional time for **Witches** to perform **love magic** and **spells**. According to H. Pomeroy Brewster, "next to the Evangelists and Apostles there is no saint whose effigy is older" than St. Agnes. Barbara Walker states that Agnes is associated with the Roman-Jewish Agna, virgin incarnation of the **ewe-goddess Rachel**. At thirteen, Agnes was put to death for renouncing the love of Sempronius, a Roman officer. Sempronius's father was a prefect, and he directed that Agnes become a vestal virgin. When she refused, the prefect sent her into the streets naked. It is said that onlookers shouted, "Burn the **Witch!**" She was taken into custody and placed on a pyre, but the flames died down and went out. She was then beheaded.

Agnes's true nature, according to Walker, was as an orgiastic **priestess-heroine**. Bollandus's *Acts of the Saints* claims that Agnes founded her nunnery in a house of sacred prostitutes. She was supposed to have appeared a week after her execution,

carrying a lamb in her arms. Today, on her feast, two white lambs are blessed by the Pope, and their wool is used by nuns to make the pallia of Western Archbishops.

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ST. JOHN'S EVE see SUMMER SOLSTICE

St. John's Wort

Also known as Goat Weed, Tipton Weed, Sol Terrestis, Amber, Herba John, and Klamath Weed, St. John's Wort (*Hypericum perforatum*) is an herb used a great deal in **Witchcraft** and **magic**. It is good for protection, health, happiness, and strength. When picked before sunrise with the dew still on it, it is used in **love divination**. Classified as a masculine herb ruled by the Sun, its element is **fire**. If gathered at midsummer (its name comes from St. John's Eve, which is midsummer's eve) and worn on the person, it will keep you safe from colds and fevers, will make you invincible, and will attract others in love. It will also keep mental illness at bay and cure melancholy.

St. John's Wort flowers or leaves were often hung from the beam over the front entrance to a house to protect the home from burglary, lightning, fire, and evil **spirits**. It was also considered effective against ghosts, spirits, **demons**, and the **evil eye**. If you placed a piece of the root under your pillow, it was said to cause you to dream of your future spouse. Early Christian persecutors believed that holding the herb to the mouth of an accused witch would cause them to confess their supposed crimes.

An old folk tale warned that if you accidentally stepped on St. John's Wort you ran the risk of a **fairy horse** rearing up underneath you and carrying you away. It would gallop all night before suddenly vanishing at the dawn, leaving you miles from where you started.

The herb was burned and used as incense. Along with bracken, corn marigold, daisy, dwarf **elder**, fennel, ivy, male fern, mogwort, orpine, **vervain**, and **yarrow**, it was burned at the **Summer Solstice** to purify and protect.

If you hold the leaf of the plant up to the light, you can see small red dots in it. These were said to have been made with a needle by the devil. Some say they only appear on August 27, the day St. John was reputedly beheaded.

SOURCES:

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Saints

Traditionally, saints are distinguished by the quality of their lives. Many are associated with miracles. Also, many saints are Christianized versions of old **pagan gods**

and **goddesses**. In the Old Testament the term “saint” was applied to any Israelite as one of the “chosen people.” It was not until the sixth century that the term came to be applied as a title of honor.

The original Christian saints were actually martyrs, and the veneration of those who had died a martyr’s death was a local affair, acknowledged and sanctioned by the local bishop. These martyrs were people who had died at the hands of persecutors rather than deny their faith—ironically similar to the later slaughter of so many **Witches** who died at the hands of their Christian persecutors. Later, the Christians acknowledged “confessor saints”—those who had confessed to their faith and consequently placed themselves in danger, but had not necessarily been killed for it. Throughout the first millennium of the Christian era, bishops could allow public veneration of martyrs and confessors on their own authority. By the thirteenth century it was the **Pope** alone who declared that a person had attained the beatific vision and was then canonized, with veneration of that person as a saint imposed on the entire Church. This formalization of the process was brought about because of the rapid naming of saints by the unscrupulous, who then made money at **shrines** and from selling relics.

The list of saints has become something of a hodgepodge of real, legendary, and mythical people. Many of the ancient gods and goddesses became known as saints in the Christian church simply because their worship was so ingrained with the local populous that the Church was unable to eradicate it. They therefore decided to adopt the deities and make them Christian saints. One of the best known examples is that of **Bride**, the Great Mother goddess of England and Ireland. She became Saint **Brigit**. **Lugh**, after whom the Sabbath of Lughnasadh is named, became St. Michael. Lugh was equated with the sun and is also Lucifer, the Lord of Light. St. Michael then became an archangel associated with light. **Mabon**, also known as Maponos, the Celtic god associated with Apollo, became St. Andrew.

SOURCES:

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Salamanders

Some **Wiccan** traditions that use ideas from **Ceremonial Magic** acknowledge **elemental** beings as “Guardians of the **Watchtowers**” of the four corners of the **ritual Circle**. These elementals are creatures that personify the qualities of **Air**, **Fire**, **Water**, and **Earth**. The element of Air, in the east, is associated with the elemental spirits known as Sylphs. Fire, in the south, is associated with Salamanders; Water, in the west, with **Undines**; and Earth, in the north, with **Gnomes**.

According to tradition, Salamanders taught humankind the use of fire. They are sometimes seen at night as balls of light floating over bodies of water or marshy ground. St. Elmo’s Fire is the Christianized name for this phenomenon. Salamanders are usually depicted as lizardlike creatures, sometimes partly human.



Salamander in the flames, being tended by an alchemist, seventeenth century. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

Salem Witch Trials

The village of Salem, Massachusetts, later known as Salem Farms and today as Danvers, was the scene of the best known of American witch trials, in 1692. The

village's name was taken from "Jerusalem." As a community of Puritans, it was extremely troubled long before the so-called "witchcraft" manifested itself. It had had a succession of ministers, none of whom had stayed for any length of time because of disputes with the village administrators.

Before 1692 there had been a dozen or so cases of witchcraft in Massachusetts. This relatively small number was, perhaps, unusual when it is considered that the main exodus of Puritans from England to the colonies occurred during the reign of Charles I, when the persecution of witches was on the increase in England. In New England, the first victim of the persecutions that were to follow was Margaret Jones of Charlestown, who was hanged in 1648 for dispensing herbal cures. Another early victim was Ann Hibbins, who was sister to the deputy-governor of Massachusetts. The Colonial Records do not show exactly what Ann Hibbins was charged with; they merely contain the verdict and death-warrant. The Rev. John Norton, the persecutor of the Quakers, is on record as saying that Ann Hibbins was hanged "only for having more wit than her neighbors."

In 1688, the case of the Goodwin children involved a Catholic Irishwoman named Glover, laundress to the Goodwin household. The case was similar in many ways to the later Salem case, with four children accusing the old woman of bewitching them. The Rev. **Cotton Mather** took a special interest in this case, as he did with the case in Salem.

Both the Goodwin children and the children of Salem knew exactly how a witch was supposed to behave. Tracts and chapbooks on the subject were plentiful. Details of the latest trials in England were published and soon found their way to the New World. In *New France and New England* (1902), John Fiske wrote, "In 1692, quite apart from any personal influence, there were circumstances which favored the outbreak of an epidemic of witchcraft. In this ancient domain of Satan there were indications that Satan was beginning again to claim his own. War had broken out with that Papist champion, Louis XIV, and it had so far been going badly with God's people in America. . . . Evidently the Devil was bestirring himself; it was a witching time; the fuel for an explosion was laid, and it needed but a spark to fire it. That spark was provided by servants and children in the household of Samuel Parris, minister of the church of Salem."

Samuel Parris had lived for some years in Barbados, in the Caribbean, where, before turning his attention to theology, he had acquired two servants named Tituba and John Indian. When he was offered the position of minister to Salem Village, a lengthy correspondence took place before an agreement was reached. This was due to the village's reputation for miserliness when it came to supporting its pastor. It was finally agreed that Parris would be paid sixty-six pounds a year, with only one-third paid in cash and the balance in goods. He would have to chop his own firewood and keep the fence around his property in good repair. There was also provision that "if God shall diminish the estates of the people, that then Mr. Parris do abate of his salary according to proportion."

Parris's family consisted of his wife, their daughter Betty, aged seven, and Betty's cousin Abigail Williams, aged nine. The two children were generally in the



The trial of George Jacobs at Salem, Massachusetts. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

care of Tituba, who would give them small chores in the kitchen and around the house. In a Puritan community, boys would work in the fields with the men while girls worked in the house. The two girls in the Parris home were smart enough to know that Tituba would rather sit and tell them stories of life in the West Indies than do a lot of hard work. It wasn't long before a number of their friends joined them in the parsonage kitchen, sitting and listening to these stories. The friends included Ann Putnam, aged twelve, Mary Walcott and Elizabeth Hubbard, both seventeen, Elizabeth Booth and Susannah Sheldon, both eighteen, and Mary Warren and Sarah Churchill, both twenty. They were occasionally joined by Mercy Lewis, seventeen, a servant in the Putnam household.

Exactly what Tituba told the children is not known, but it is highly probable that the stories were flavored with tales of **Voodoo** and **magic**. It is also highly probable that the children would try to reenact some of the anecdotes they heard, even to the extent of going into trances and uttering mystical words. Voodoo, as practiced in Haiti and other islands of the Caribbean, is a polytheistic religion with a **priesthood** and set forms of **worship**. One of the main reasons for a Voodoo ceremony is to commune with the gods, or *loa*, to the extent that those deities manifest

their presence by taking possession of the worshipers. The main male deity is Damballah-Wédo, who is a **serpent** god. When possessed by him, the worshiper will initially writhe on the floor and hiss, like a snake. One of the early signs of “possession” of the Salem children was that they crawled on the floor, barking like dogs. Probably being more familiar with dogs than with snakes, this would seem to be an interpretation of Tituba’s stories being acted out by the children.

Early in January 1692, young Betty’s parents noticed that she was having what seemed to be mild fits. She would sit and stare into space for long periods, then, when reprimanded, would cough and splutter and, according to her father, bark like a dog. Soon Abigail, her cousin, started doing the same thing, and both girls would get down on the floor and crawl around the furniture doing their barking. Parris called in the **Elders** of the village and they all prayed over the girls, but to no avail. Doctor Griggs was then called in to examine them. Finding nothing wrong, he commented that perhaps the girls were bewitched. This called for a renewal of the **prayers** said over the girls. No one seemed to notice that whenever they had their fits, the girls would merely indulge in all the playful things normally forbidden young, high-spirited children in such a community. They would shout and scream, roll on the floor and climb on the furniture, even throw things—including the **Bible**—about the room. It was not long before the other girls in their Tituba circle joined with them in such activity.

People remembered the case of the Goodwin children, since Mather’s book on the subject had received wide circulation. There was probably a copy of it even in the Parris household. Parris himself called in neighboring clergy, who flocked to see the “Afflicted Children.” Among them, the Rev. Nicholas Noyes came from the First Church in Salem Town and John Hale came from nearby Beverly. Hale had previously dealt with witchcraft cases in his own area, although he had been loathe to act in them. With this distinguished audience, the girls may have realized that they had gone too far, but possibly it seemed too late to back out. Soon they were being urged to name the person who had bewitched them.

Young Ann Putnam rapidly became the leader of the group of girls. She had a mother, also named Ann, who was well educated but very highly strung, having lost a number of children at birth before finally bearing Ann. Her sister had also suffered this way, finally dying in childbirth. It seemed possible that the elder Ann was using her daughter as a go-between with Tituba to try to make contact with the dead.

Abigail Williams, young Betty’s cousin, would put on a tremendous show, howling louder than the rest as the clergy prayed over them. The ministers, for their part, started naming people to see if there was any reaction from the girls at hearing the names. Finally the girls realized that they would have to name someone. Betty, the youngest, mentioned Tituba’s name, although it seems uncertain whether this was meant as a charge against the woman. The men leapt at the name and asked if indeed Tituba had done the bewitching. Other girls agreed that she had. They also added the names of Goody (Goodwife) Osburn and Goody Goode. Sarah Goode was a beggar woman in the village with a bad reputation. She smoked a pipe and had a quick, coarse tongue. It was believed by the villagers that she had been

responsible in some way in the recent smallpox epidemic, spreading the disease through her general uncleanliness and negligence. She had a number of children and was at that time pregnant again. Sarah Osburn also had no good name in the village, although at that time she was bedridden. She was a widow but had lived with her second husband, William, for a number of years before marrying him. Tituba and the two Goodwives were arrested, and the village felt it could breathe again.

The preliminary hearing, to determine whether the case should go to trial was to have been held in Deacon Ingersoll's Ordinary in the village. However, so many people turned out for the event that it had to take place in the church. The magistrates were Jonathan Corwin and John Hathorne (an ancestor of the novelist Nathaniel Hawthorne). Neither man had any legal training, since the practice of law was not permitted in the Puritan colony. Before embarking on the hearing, therefore, both men studied Cotton Mather's recent work on the Goodwin case and such books as Bernard's *Guide to Jurymen* and Glanville's *Collection of Sundry Tryals in England*. On searching through the Bible, they would have found no definition of witchcraft. In fact, the word itself was hardly used, especially in editions predating the **King James** version that was so heavily biased due to James's own personal fear of what he saw as witchcraft.

The accused were not legally represented in any way, and they were presumed guilty before the start. The hearing commenced on Tuesday, March 1, and the first to be interviewed was Sarah Goode. She was openly defiant, disclaiming any knowledge of the affair. However, several people testified that there had been times when Goody Goode had come begging and been turned away. On leaving she had been seen to mutter to herself and, a day or so later, a chicken would stop laying or a cow would run dry of milk. This seemed proof conclusive.

Sarah Osburn was obviously a sick woman, having been taken from her bed to the prison and then needing assistance to appear in court. Whenever she looked at the "afflicted children," who were present, they would start going into their fits again. Other than that there was little evidence against her. But when Tituba was brought in, she caused quite a sensation. She did not attempt to deny anything; in fact, she claimed that she was a witch. For three days she told her tales. She said that she had been approached by a "tall man from Boston" who wanted her to sign her name in his book. She said that both Goody Goode and Goody Osburn already had their names there. In fact, she said, there were nine names in the book. This last claim caused much disquiet, since it meant that there were still more witches to be tracked down.

The three accused were moved to Boston, where, a few weeks later, both Sarah Osburn and the child she was carrying died in their cell. Young Betty Parris was sent to stay with friends in Salem Town. Separated from the other girls, her fits quickly ceased. John Proctor managed to cure his servant of her affliction, if only for a while, by promising her a beating if the fits continued. However, over his protests, Mary Warren was called back to court by the magistrates. The elders and ministers had continued to pray over the girls in an attempt to learn the identities of the other witches. Ann Putnam soon provided the name of Martha Corey, an outspo-

ken woman who had moved to the village from Salem Town only a year previously. The main reason for suspicion, in her case, seems to have been the fact that Martha Corey had been loud in her disbelief of witchcraft.

The newly accused started out by denying all and saying that the girls should not be believed. From then on, everything that Martha Corey did, the children copied. If she bit her lip, they all bit theirs, till the **blood** ran, saying that she made them do it. One of the girls claimed to be able to see “the Black Man” standing beside the woman and whispering in her ear.

The next to be “cried out upon” by the girls, once again led by Ann Putnam, was the aged and extremely deaf Rebecca Nurse. Rebecca was in her seventies and had been confined to her bed for almost a year. For her whole life she had been regarded as a pillar of the community and a devout Christian. The main charge against her seemed to have been that while she lay seemingly immobile in her bed, her “shape”—her etheric double—was running around the community wreaking havoc. Or so claimed the afflicted children.

At Rebecca Nurse’s trial, a petition was presented to the magistrates, signed by thirty-nine people and attesting to Rebecca’s good character. Yet while she was on the stand the children had their usual fits. At one point, when Magistrate Hathorne seemed affected by her straightforward answers, Ann Putnam senior cried out, “Did you not bring the Black Man with you? Did you not bid me tempt **God** and die? How often have you eaten and drunk your own damnation?” Rebecca raised her hands to heaven in despair. The girls took this as a signal and went into violent fits. Hathorne decided that it was the accused’s raised hands that had caused the fits, and Nurse was sent to jail to await trial.

Arrests continued from there until, by the end of spring, at least 125 people were in prison. Among them were John Proctor and George Jacobs, masters to two servant girls who were among the afflicted children. Another man, John Willard, had commented that it was the girls who were the real witches and who were deserving of the gallows. He was instantly cried out upon.

Perhaps the most amazing arrest was that of the Reverend George Burroughs. He had been minister in Salem Village from 1680 to 1682 and had left because of various feuds within its church. To his later sorrow, he had been on the opposite side of the feud from the senior Ann Putnam. He had settled in Wells, Maine. He was arrested there at the beginning of May and was taken to Salem to answer the charge of witchcraft. In a prior consultation with other ministers, it had come out that he had only had his eldest son baptized and that he could not remember when he had last served the Lord’s Supper. This was damning evidence. He was stripped and searched for the **Devil’s Mark**, but without success.

By the middle of May, the first royal governor, Sir William Phips, had arrived with a new charter replacing the provisional government of Massachusetts that had followed the overthrow of Andros. On Phips’s departure again for a few months, a special court of “Oyer and Terminer” (meaning “to hear and determine”) was appointed to try the witchcraft cases. This was presided over by William Stoughton, who, with Samuel Sewell, joined Hathorne and Corwin.

The evidence against Burroughs came mainly from Ann Putnam the elder. He was charged, among other things, with murder of a spectral nature. It was claimed that whenever a soldier from the village was killed in the Indian fighting, Burroughs was responsible. His first two wives appeared in ghostly form—visible only to the children—to testify that he had murdered them. Burroughs had always been exceptionally strong for his size, and this was now held against him. Where he had once taken pride in the fact that he was able to “hold out a gun of seven feet barrel with one hand, and had carried a barrel full of cider from a canoe to shore,” this was now brought as evidence that he had been dealing with the supernatural.

One of the tests given to the witches was the test of touch. As the “afflicted” writhed and screamed, the accused would be made to touch them. If their screaming then ceased it was proof of guilt for the evil had been returned, if only momentarily, to the accused. This test was frequently carried out and unflinchingly proved the guilt of the one involved.

On June 2, Bridget Bishop became the first of the accused to actually go to trial. Since her original hearing she had been chained up in a prison cell, seeing more and more of the accused join her. One of these was little Dorcas Goode, the five-year-old daughter of Sarah Goode. She, too, had been cried out upon by the girls and she, too, was chained, as was the custom with witches.

Although the original examinations were supposed to have been merely preliminary hearings, the evidence from them was carefully reviewed and noted by the magistrates of the Court. The only new business was the hearing of anything fresh that had been uncovered since that time. Bridget Bishop had been a tavern keeper, having two ordinaries—one at Salem Village and the other in Salem Town. The main charge against her seemed to have been that she wore a “red paragon bodice” and had a great store of laces. The “new” evidence against her was that she seemed to keep her youth despite her years. Various supposedly decent, upright, married men of the community testified that she sent her “shape” to plague and torment them in their sleep at night.

The afflicted testified that Bridget had been at the **sabbat** meetings of the witches and had, in fact, given suck to a **familiar** in the form of a snake. She was taken out and searched for a supernumerary nipple, which they claimed was found between “ye pudendum and anus.” The verdict was a foregone conclusion. On June 10, Bridget Bishop was hanged on Gallows Hill.

There was then a break of twenty-six days while the judges argued the pros and cons of accepting spectral evidence. This was the evidence of the afflicted saying that they saw the shape of the accused in a certain place when that person was known to be physically elsewhere. The consensus of opinion was that the devil could assume the shape of innocent people (this had previously been doubted) as well as the guilty.

Rebecca Nurse’s case came up, and the jury returned a verdict of not guilty. Immediately there was a great uproar, and the judges expressed their dissatisfaction with the verdict. The foreman of the jury later wrote, on a certificate, “When the

verdict not guilty was given, the honored court was pleased to object against it, saying to them, that they think they let slip the words which the prisoner at the bar spoke against herself, which were spoken in reply to Goodwife Hobbs and her daughter, who had been faulty in setting their hands to the devil's book, as they had confessed formerly. The words were, 'What do these persons give in evidence against me now? They used to come among us!' After the honored court had manifested their dissatisfaction of the verdict, several of the jury declared themselves desirous to go out again, and thereupon the honored court gave leave; but when we came to consider the case, I could not tell how to take her words as evidence against her, till she had a further opportunity to put her sense upon them, if she would take it . . . these words were to me a principle evidence against her."

So after having their verdict of not guilty rejected, the jurors retired once more and came back with a verdict of guilty. Rebecca tried to explain that when she had referred to Deliverance Hobbs—who had previously confessed to being a witch, although later she joined the ranks of the afflicted—as being “one of us” she did not mean “one of us *witches*” but “one of us *prisoners*.” It was to no avail. Earlier she had damned herself due to her deafness; she had not answered one of the questions put to her because she had not heard it. But her silence was taken as an acknowledgment of guilt. The Reverend Noyes excommunicated her, and Tuesday, July 19, in company with Sarah Goode, Elizabeth How, Sarah Wild, and Susanna Martin, she was hanged on Gallows Hill.

On August 19, the cart driven out to Gallows Hill carried five more: John Procter, John Willard, Martha Carrier, George Jacobs Senior, and the Reverend George Burroughs. Burroughs had been identified by the afflicted children as the “Black Man” in charge of the coven. He was allowed to address the crowd from the scaffold. This he did in carefully chosen words that worked on the emotions of the crowd. So much so, in fact, that some started to call for his release. One of the tests of a witch was that he or she could not say the Lord's Prayer without stumbling. George Burroughs stood at the scaffold and, clearly and faultlessly, recited it to the crowd. Almost certainly they would have released him, but, as some moved forward, a young man on a horse cried out to them to stop. It was Cotton Mather. With stern words, he cautioned them against the workings of the Devil, intimating that it had been the Devil speaking to them through George Burroughs. The hanging went on as planned.

On Monday, September 19, an unusual execution was carried out. When a person was brought before the court for trial, he or she was first required to plead guilty or not guilty. No trial could proceed until the accused had so pleaded. By refusing to plead, therefore, the accused could prevent the trial altogether. To circumvent such an occurrence, the law provided a horrible punishment for anyone so obstinate. It was called *peine forte et dure* (“a penalty harsh and severe”). It consisted of stretching the culprit out flat on his or her back, on the ground, with arms and feet extended to the utmost in all four directions. Heavy weights of iron and stone were then piled on the body until the accused either pleaded or was crushed to death. The common name for this was “pressing to death.”

Giles Cory was arrested for witchcraft in April. His wife, who had been in jail since March, was sentenced to death on September 10, and Giles's own trial came two or three days later. In all his eighty years, Giles had never known the meaning of the word fear, yet seeing what was done to his wife nearly broke his heart. He knew that if he did not plead, not only would his trial be balked, but the authorities would be unable to confiscate his goods and estate, as they would be entitled to do if he were proven guilty. Giles therefore refused to plead and was subsequently put to the *peine forte et dure*—the only time in American history that this punishment had actually been inflicted. He died without speaking.

Eventually, the accusers went too far. They started mentioning members of the Mather family; they tried to implicate Lady Phips, wife of the governor; they named the most respected Reverend Samuel Willard and, finally, Mrs. Hale, wife of John Hale himself. This proved to be too much. These accusations opened the eyes of John Hale to the point where he turned about and began to oppose the whole prosecution. He confessed that he had been wrong all along. It seemed that a number of other people had reached similar conclusions. More and more ministers came out with Hale against the prosecutions. The court recessed.

A fatal blow to the witch hunters came when a group of people in Andover, Massachusetts, on being accused of witchcraft, responded by bringing an action of defamation of character with heavy damages. This marked the end of the panic. Just at this time, the court of Oyer and Terminer was abolished due to the assembly of the general Court of Massachusetts at Boston. It was the first court elected under the new charter. The jail at Salem was filled with prisoners, and many had been taken to other jails. When the court met for the first time in January 1693, it started by throwing out indictments. The Grand Jury found bills against about fifty for witchcraft, but upon trial they were all acquitted. Some of the court were dissatisfied, but the juries changed sooner than the judges.

In May 1693, Governor Phips ordered the release from jail of all those awaiting trial, and the Salem witchcraft hysteria was over. Excommunications were erased, and claims from survivors and those who had been held from days to months, awaiting trial and almost certain death, were honored by the colony within a few years.

Five years afterward, Judge Samuel Sewell stood up in the Old South Church and publicly acknowledged his shame and repentance. For the rest of his life he kept an annual day of fasting and prayer in memory of his errors. Ann Putnam, the younger, fourteen years afterward, stood before the congregation of Salem Village church and confessed that she and others had brought upon the village the guilt of innocent bloodshed: "... though this was said and done by me against any person, I can truly and uprightly say before God and any man, I did not out of any anger, malice, or ill-will to any person, for I had no such thing against any one of them, but what I did was ignorantly, being deluded of **Satan**. And particularly as I was a chief instrument of accusing Goodwife Nurse and her two sisters, I desire to lie in the dust and to be humbled for it, in that I was the cause, with others, of so sad a calamity to them and their families."

It has been suggested that what took place was, on the part of the “afflicted children,” not fraudulent but was in fact pathological, being hysterics in the clinical sense. There have also been theories that the fits and hysterics of the children were brought on by the ingesting of native **herbs**, but there seems little evidence for this idea. Whatever the cause, what happened in the village of Salem, where nineteen people were hung and one man was pressed to death, was little compared to what happened throughout Europe during the persecutions of the followers of the Old Religion.

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Salt

Much like **iron**, salt was believed to have supernatural origins and has become an essential part of most religious and **magical rituals**. The very word “salary” comes from the Latin *salarium* meaning “salt allowance,” showing it to have great worth. The habitual use of salt is connected with the advance from nomadic to agricultural life. The **gods** were worshiped as the givers of the foods necessary for life; so salt, frequently together with bread, was associated with offerings to the deities. This was especially prevalent among the Greeks and Romans.

Since it is so essential to life—both human and animal—salt symbolically represents life. It is added to baptismal water, to water used in **exorcism**, and to the holy water used on a **Wiccan altar**. Some traditions of **Witchcraft** mark their **Circle** with salt. Magically, it is considered a great defense against evil. For this reason, people in the Middle Ages believed it to be a tool for preventing witchcraft and for destroying a **witch**. Even today, in the Ozarks, it is believed that if a woman complains that her food tastes too salty, she may well be a witch. There is an old saying in the region: “The Devil hates salt.”

Since salt represents life, to spill salt is a bad **omen** for it presages spilling blood. In alchemy it represents the principle of body, the female, and **earth**. On the **Wiccan** and **ceremonial** altars it represents the element of earth. In the old British custom of “first-footing” (being the first person of the new year to set foot across another’s doorstep), salt is one of the gifts presented by the first-footer to the homeowner.

Salt used to mark the line at the meal table between family or close friends and those who were casual visitors or menials. The former sat at the head of the table, while the latter sat “below the salt”—below where the salt cellar stood on the table.

Salt and **incense** were both religious and economic necessities of the ancient world. Via Lalaria, as one of the oldest roads in Italy, was used for moving the salt of Ostia to the Sabine country. Herodotus mentions the caravan route connecting the many oases of the Libyan desert as a road for the transportation of salt.

In Wiccan rituals, sea salt is the preferred type, although any regular salt is acceptable. There are various ways of processing sea salt, the traditional and possibly the oldest and purest method being by allowing the wind and sun alone to dry ocean brine that is channeled from the open sea into pristine shallow clay ponds. In this manner, Celtic Brittany farmers produce some of the finest and purest sea salt in the world.

SOURCES:

deLangre, Jacques: *Seasalt's Hidden Powers*. Happiness Press, 1994.

Encyclopedia Britannica. William Benton, 1964.

Randolph, Vance: *Ozark Superstitions*. Columbia University Press, 1947.

Salute

In **Witchcraft**, a salute is the term used for a **ritual kiss**. Witches acknowledge that hugging and kissing are a natural part of life for humans who are close to one another, as **coven** members are.

There are certain ritual kisses known variously as the “three-fold salute,” the “five-fold salute,” and the “eight-fold salute.” The three-fold salute traces the outline of a triangle and is done on mouth, breast, breast, back to mouth (to close the figure). The five-fold salute describes a pentagram and is genitals, right foot, left knee, right knee, right foot, genitals. The eight-fold salute is both of these salutes, one after the other. In some **Wiccan** traditions there is an inverted three-fold salute, which is genitals, breast, breast, genitals. Kissing these parts of the person is an acknowledgement of the sacredness of his or her body and of life. It is also an honoring of the **God** or **Goddess** within every person.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Wicca for Life*. Citadel, 2001.

Samhain

Samhain (pronounced *sow-'n* to rhyme with “cow”) is the name for the **Witchcraft** Greater **Sabbat** that falls on November Eve. It is popularly known by non-Witches as Hallowe'en—the eve of All Hallows on the Christian calendar. It is the old **pagan** new year—the end of the growing season and the start of the winter season when, long ago, humankind had to go back to hunting animals for food. The **Witchcraft** year ends and begins at Samhain. There are variations of its spelling, as with many **Wiccan** names; Scottish Witches, for example, call it *Samhuinn* and the Irish *Oiche Shamhna*.

Samhain is a time when Witches believe that the veil between the worlds is thin. This, then, is a time when it can be relatively easy to communicate with the **spirits** of loved ones who have died during the previous year. Many Witches believe that the dead come back to celebrate the sabbat with them. This is the idea that gave rise to the stories of ghosts at Hallowe'en. It is also from this idea of communication with the dead that Samhain is considered an especially good time to do **div-**

ination about the future. In the old days, it would have been of critical interest to divine the nature of the coming winter.

The Samhain feast was and is a big one. This was the time when the herds and the flocks had to be thinned, leaving only enough sheep and cattle essential to continuance to be fed during the harsh winter months. The rest would be slaughtered, their meat **salted** and stored. The Samhain feast therefore included plenty of fresh meat cooked on the sacred Samhain **fire**. Such fires, known as *Samhnagan*, blazed from all the mountain tops, marking visual lines of pagan association across the length and breadth of Britain and much of Western Europe. Such **balefires** burned at all the major sabbat dates.

The spiritual emphasis is the **Goddess** throughout the summer, and at Samhain, that emphasis shifts to the God. This turnabout is emphasized by the “crowning” of the High **Priest** in that role. He is crowned with a horned or antlered headpiece at the Samhain Sabbat celebration.

Apples and nuts became associated with Samhain from the ancient Roman festival of Pomona, which took place on November 1 and which celebrated the ripening of the fruits. The apple was the **Celtic Silver Bough** and the fruit of the underworld, symbolizing love, **fertility**, wisdom, and divination. The game of applebobbing originated with this festival, combining the acknowledging of the ripened fruit and the desire to foresee the future. Apples are floated in a tub of water and must be seized and pulled out using only the teeth. The apple is then peeled, with the peel being kept in one long strip. Throwing the apple peel over the shoulder, it should land in the shape of the initial of one’s future spouse.

Pliny gives an account of a **Druid** festival at this time, and of the cutting of the mistletoe from the oak tree. It was cut with a golden sickle and caught in a white cloak, since it was believed it must never touch the ground.

In the seventeenth century on the island of Lewis, off the northwest coast of Scotland, a rite was carried out at Samhain that was a curious blend of Christian and Pagan belief. Beginning and ending at St. Mulvay’s Church, it involved someone wading into the sea and chanting to the sea-god Shony. The words of the chant were:

O God of the Sea
Put weed in the drawing wave
To enrich the ground,
To shower us with food.

A cup of ale was offered as an inducement for a good crop of seaweed, used to fertilize the fields the following year. While the one person was placating the god, another extinguished the altar candle in the church. The festival continued on through the night, with a great deal of singing and dancing together, and drinking ale and wine to the gods. The following morning everyone would gather on the shore and invoke the god Briannuil, praying for a strong wind to blow the seaweed ashore.

SOURCES:

Cooper, J. C.: *The Aquarian Dictionary of Festivals*. Aquarian Press, 1990.

Darwin, Tess: *The Scots Herbal*. Mercat Press, 1996.

Kightly, Charles: *The Customs and Ceremonies of Britain*. Thames and Hudson, 1986.

Sanders, Alex (1926–1988)

The self-styled “King of the **Witches**” (there is actually no such title in **Witchcraft**), Alex Sanders was born in 1926 in Manchester, England. His father was an actor named Harold and his mother was Hannah Sanders. He attended St. George’s Primary School in Hulme, then went on to William Hulmes Grammar School. After leaving school he worked for a carpenter for a while, then for a manufacturing chemist. At the age of twenty-one, he met and married a nineteen-year-old woman named Doreen. They had two children, Paul and Janice, but the marriage did not last.

Sanders drifted from job to job, became an alcoholic like his father, and later admitted to sexual affairs with both women and men. He was attracted to **black magic** and dabbled in that for a while, performing **rituals worshipping** the Devil. He studied Abra-Melin **magic** and eventually attracted others to him to the point where he was able to form what he termed a **coven**. In fact, he later claimed that he had over 100 covens, with 1,623 initiates! Neither of these figures were ever substantiated. All of these followers, Sanders claimed, were the ones who elected him “King of the Witches.” Yet, despite all these supposed covens, he did not himself have a High **Priestess**. The “witchcraft” that he taught was a hodgepodge of material he had gleaned from such books as **Francis Barrett’s** *The Magus*, the works of Franz Bardon and **Eliphas Levi**, and an assortment of books on **ceremonial magic**. Much later, he obtained a copy of **Gerald Gardner’s** *Witchcraft* material from Pat Kopanski, and he intermingled that with what he had. He claimed he had received the books from his grandmother when he was only seven. He said that she had “initiated” him, yet the only thing she did, according to Sanders, was prick his scrotum and declare him a witch.

In 1963, when he met Maxine Morris (born 1946), a Roman Catholic girl twenty years his junior, Sanders was still without a priestess of his own. He initiated Maxine and eventually **handfasted** with her; for some reason, they went through the ritual a number of times on different occasions. In 1967 they married in a civil ceremony and moved into a basement apartment in Notting Hill Gate, in London. A daughter, Maya, was born that same year and nine years later a son, Victor. Both children were brought up as Christians.

Sanders continued to attract a wide variety of people and made them “Alexandrian” witches, still passing off material from a variety of sources as that given to him by his grandmother. Sanders’s **Craft** name was Verbius; his grandmother’s, he claimed, was Medea. In his rituals he made a point of always being robed, while the others of the coven were naked.

Sanders generated publicity for himself, and in 1969 June Johns, a reporter for the *Manchester Evening News*, wrote a book about him titled *King of the Witches: The World of Alex Sanders*. It was something of a fantasy world, but it did serve to promote him and his followers. Despite the material he was presenting, he did manage to attract and introduce into the world of the **Craft** some worthwhile seekers. Best known among them were **Stewart and Janet Farrar**, who later became respected and admired teachers of **Wicca** in their own right.

Alex and Maxine separated in 1973, and he moved to Bexhill-on-Sea, Sussex. There he married again and divorced again. On April 30, 1988, he died of lung cancer in a Hastings hospital. The tradition he founded, Alexandrian, continues in various forms today. It did not become well established in the United States, although it did have a following in Canada.

SOURCES:

Johns, June: *King of the Witches*. Peter Davies, 1969.

Jordan, Michael: *Witches: An Encyclopedia of Paganism and Magic*. Kyle Cathie, 1996.

Satan; Satanism

Satan is the English transliteration of the Hebrew *Ha-satan*, meaning “adversary.” Originally this was not an all-evil entity, simply an opponent. (The Greek transliteration of the Hebrew, for the New Testament, was *Satanas*.) The idea of dividing the Supreme Power into two—good and evil—is not ancient, but the idea of a complex and advanced civilization. The earliest mention of Antichrist is in the Epistles of St. John (1 John 2:18, 22 and 4:3; 2 John 2:7). The Old Gods were believed to be very human, in many respects; they could have their bad moods as well as their good moods, but they were never all evil or all good.

The first concept of an all-good deity with an all-evil one as its opposite appeared in Persia. According to the writings known as the Avesta, Zoroaster was the founder of the Wisdom of the Magi about a thousand years before the start of Christianity. He taught a new religion rooted in the old Persian or Aryan folk religion. The older religion was **polytheistic**, with popular divinities such as Indra, a war god and dragon slayer. The evil **spirits** in the Avesta were known as *daevas*. Zoroaster’s new doctrine taught that in the beginning there were two equal powers, one of good and one of evil—an original idea at that time. The good was Ormazd, or Ahura Mazda, of light and truth. The opposite was Ahriman, of darkness, negativity, and evil. This idea of a good god and an evil opposite was picked up by the Romans in Mithraism (late Zoroastrianism had found room for Mithra as a subordinate of Ahura Mazda). Mithraism was a chief rival to Christianity in the latter’s early days. Christianity itself then adopted this idea of an all-good god with an evil opposite, giving that opposite the name of Satan.

Early followers of the **Old Religion** were little interested in the Christian ideas and held to their beliefs of a large number of deities who had both good and bad moods. There was never any thought of evil personified. However, as the New Religion grew in power it also brought more and more pressure to bear on the ordinary man and woman, the farmer and the serf. Part of this pressure was enforced celibacy. Brad Steiger points out (*Sex and Satanism*, 1969):

When the church proclaimed coitus illegal on Sundays, Wednesdays, and Fridays it effectively removed the equivalent of five months of the year from the possible taint of sexual pleasure. Mother Church’s next move was to enforce sexual abstinence for forty days before Easter and forty days before Christmas. Clerical

decree had now removed the equivalent of nearly eight months from medieval man's coital calendar. It furthermore seemed advisable to the clergy that sexual intercourse be prohibited for three days prior to receiving communion—and regular communion attendance was required. For the remaining four months available for permissible sexual intercourse, the new edict could remove the equivalent of at least one more month. Then, of course, coitus was forbidden from the time of conception to forty days after parturition and any time during any clerically levied penance.

This left a total of approximately two months out of the year when a husband and wife might have sexual relations with each other—and then, of course, only for the purpose of procreation and definitely without any thoughts or feelings of pleasure. With restrictions such as these, it was no wonder that eventually people began to rebel. Finding that they were getting no joy from the supposed god of love of Christianity, many decided to try the other side and to approach the Prince of Darkness, to see if he would provide some relief. So Satanism came into being as a rebellion against the harshness of the Church of that time. It probably turned out that the rebels did not get any better returns from Satan than they had from God and Jesus, but at least they had the satisfaction of knowing that they were working against the establishment. Satanism started as a revolt against the Church and came to be structured largely as a parody of the Christian **rituals**: the **Lord's Prayer** said backward, black candles, the crucifix upside down, the Black Mass, and so on.

Satanism, then, was a product of Christianity; it was not a part of the pre-Christian teachings. Since the Old Religion predated Christianity, **pagans** did not even believe in the Devil, let alone **worship** him.

Over the centuries, there have been various upsurges of interest in Satanism, with a few individuals and groups making themselves known as followers of the dark side. It is doubtful, however, that many of these were true believers in Satan as a deity, or near-deity, and with sincere desire to worship him. By far the majority of known Satanists have been people who indulged in the practice as a statement, for thrills, from peer pressure, out of boredom, or just to be different. A modern example would be Howard Stanton Levey, from Chicago, who changed his name to Anton Szandor LaVey and started the First Church of Satan. This he did as a purely commercial venture, designed to make money. He had a tremendous response to his church, again mainly from those who wanted to appear different, wanted to make a statement, or wanted the thrill of defying convention.

Earlier, in the mid-eighteenth century, one man did seem to come close to being a true Satanist. That was Sir Francis Dashwood, founder of the Friars of Saint Francis of Wycombe, better known as the Hellfire Club. At the age of fourteen, on his father's death, Sir Francis was left a fortune. Like most of the young aristocrats of the time, Francis took the "European tour"—he spent his time touring Europe, together with a tutor, ostensibly studying art and examining the cities in Italy, France, and Germany. In fact the tour was used by most of the young rakes as an excuse for a continual drunken orgy. On one occasion, in Italy, Francis returned to his lodgings much the worst for

drink. He collapsed on his bed and stayed there until he was awakened, sometime in the middle of the night, by two cats either fighting or mating on the rooftop opposite his window. As Francis looked out of bleary eyes, his tutor rushed in, dressed in his white nightshirt, and shooed away the cats. Francis collapsed. The following morning he awoke confident in the knowledge that during the night two demons had fought for possession of his soul, and that an angel dressed in white had come and rescued him. A changed man, he returned immediately to England and threw himself into a most pious, religious life. He donated expensive **altar** items to the church and became one of its most devoted followers. Eventually, however, word got out of the true nature of his experience in Italy. He quickly became a laughingstock. Angrily, he rejected the church and founded his own Satanic order, with himself and twelve disciples. He purchased a ruined medieval abbey at West Wycombe and had it restored. He furnished it with stained glass windows showing himself and his followers in obscene positions. The gardens he ornamented with statues in lewd poses. Over the entrance to the abbey he had placed the inscription: *Fay ce que voudras*—"Do what thou wilt." (Without the Wiccan proviso "An it harm none . . ."). For the rituals held at the abbey, prostitutes were hired and dressed as nuns to amuse the "monks" of the order.

The Old Religion was accused of parodying the Christian mass. Why it was thought that Witches would spend their time mimicking another religion's rites when they had their own much older ones is never explained. The Hellfire Club, on the other hand, went out of its way to do just that. But because of the positions and titles of its members, they were never taken to task. Members included William Hogarth, the Earl of Sandwich, the Earl of Bute, Charles Churchill, Lord Melcombe, George Selwyn, and Benjamin Franklin. For roughly thirty years, Sir Francis conducted his Satanic rites. Members left, or died, and others took their places. Eventually, with deaths and internal disagreements, the Order fell apart. On December 11, 1781, Sir Francis died.

In nineteenth-century France, the Abbé Boullan performed infant sacrifice as part of Satanic rituals performed by the Church of Carmel. This church, which was later condemned by the Pope, was founded by Eugene Vintras as the result of a vision he claimed he had from the archangel Michael. In 1851 Vintras was accused of conducting Black Masses and of homosexual acts as part of his rituals. On Vintras's death, a splinter group was formed by a disciple of his named Charles Boullon, who was obsessed with Satanism and had a nun as his mistress.

As mentioned above, Witches were accused of worshiping the Devil and of parodying Christianity. To add to the confusion on this issue, when the Christian chroniclers were recording the proceedings of the witchcraft trials, when a defendant would refer to his or her God, the recorder would automatically write in the word Devil, believing them to be one and the same. There are therefore records of accused witches speaking of their worship of the Devil, when in fact they were speaking of their worship of the God, or **Goddess**, in whom they believed—a deity of nature and of life and love.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Witchcraft from the Inside*. Llewellyn, 1995.
 Huysmans, J. K.: *Là Bas (Down There)*. University Books, 1958.



Comic illustration of a satyr, 1922. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

LaVey, Anton: *The Satanic Bible*. Avon, 1969.
 Michelet, Jules: *Satanism and Witchcraft*. Citadel, 1939.
 Steiger, Brad: *Sex and Satanism*. Ace Books, 1969.

Satyr

Frequently linked with Dionysus (Bacchus), the Greek god of nature and fertility, satyrs were spirits of nature—of the forests and the mountains. They were a kind of wood genie whose sudden appearance would terrify shepherds and travelers. Part man and part animal, they were traditionally lascivious by nature, usually depicted with erect phalli. They were often found in the company of nymphs. They had pointed ears, low foreheads, upturned noses, goat horns protruding from their heads, and cloven hooves. Satyrs are usually depicted with the body of a goat, like **Pan**, although early depictions show them with a horse's tail. They were lovers of music and played various musical instruments, including the pan pipes. Many times they are shown carrying a *thyrsus* wand, which is much like the **Wiccan phallic** wand with pinecone tip.

Satyrs are not mentioned by Homer, but in Hesiod they are referred to as brothers of the mountain nymphs. They had a particular dance called the *Sikinnis*, perfected in the satyr plays of the Greek theater. In Attica there was a form of drama known as the satyric, which was half comic and whose chorus was made up of satyrs.

As a translation of the Hebrew *se'irim*—"hairy ones"—in the Authorized Version of Isaiah 8:21 and 34:14, the word "satyr" is used to mean a **demon** or supernatural being who inhabited waste lands. They correspond to the "shaggy demon of the mountain pass" of old Arab superstition.

The satyr symbolizes the primal force of sexual energy, depicted in the frescoes showing the rites of liberation in the cult of Dionysus. Through participation in those orgiastic rites, the worshiper felt such a surging vitality resulting from communion with the great life forces that he felt born again.

SOURCES:

Guirand, Félix: *Greek Mythology*, Paul Hamlyn, 1963.
 Kaster, Joseph: *Putnam's Concise Mythological Dictionary*. Capricorn Books, 1964.

SAXON WITCHCRAFT see SEAX-WICA

Score, John (?–1979)

A Flight Lieutenant in the British Royal Air Force, in which he served from 1931 to 1946, John Score was influential in establishing **Wicca** in Britain in its formative years. He became editor of *The Wiccan* newsletter in 1968 and established it as the main Wiccan publication in Britain. He played a part, with Ed Fitch, in America in establishing the **Pagan Way**, an open organization that absorbed many of the people who wanted to get into Wicca but were unable to, for various reasons, at the time.



The discoverie of witchcraft,

Wherein the lewde dealing of witches
and witchmongers is notablie detected, the
knauerie of coniuors, the impietic of inchar-
tors, the follie of soothsaiers, the impudent fals-
hood of coufenors, the infidelitie of atheists,
the pestilent practises of Pythonists, the
curiolitie of figurecasters, the va-
nitie of dreamers, the begger-
lie art of Alcu-
mystric,

The abhominacion of idolatrie, the hor-
rible art of poisoning, the vertue and power of
naturall magike, and all the conueiances
of legierdemaine and iuggling are deciphered:
and many other things opened, which
hase long lien hidden, howbeit
verie necessarie to
beknowne.

Heerevnto is added a treatise vpon the
nature and substance of spirits and diuels,
&c : all latelic written
by Reginald Scot.
Esquire.

1. Iohn 4, 1.

Believe not euerie spirit, but trie the spirits, whether they are
of God; for manie false prophets are gone
out into the world, &c.

1584

Title page of *The Discovery of Witchcraft*, by Reginald Scot, London, 1584. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

In Britain the organization became known as the Pagan Front, and later changed to the Pagan Federation.

In establishing the Pagan Front, Score set out to defend the religious freedom of all pagans and to eradicate those who associated paganism with **black magic** and negative works. He was especially interested in all forms of **healing**, earning a doctor of naturopathy degree, and he developed unique methods of communicating with **spirits** of the dead.

Score suffered from ill health much of his life. He died in December 1979.

SOURCES:

Guiley, Rosemary Ellen: *The Encyclopedia of Witches and Witchcraft*. Facts on File, 1989.

Jordan, Michael: *Witches, an Encyclopedia of Paganism and Magic*. Kyle Cathie, 1996.

Scot, Reginald (1538–1599)

The first edition of Reginald Scot's *The Discovery of Witchcraft* was published in 1584. It was the first book published in English about witchcraft. It was also the most important book in English to attack the witchcraft delusion. **Shakespeare** got tips from it for his rendering of the witches of *Macbeth*, as did Middleton for his play, *The Witch*. When King James I ascended the throne in 1603, he ordered all copies to be destroyed. A second edition did not appear until 1651.

Reginald Scot was born in Kent. He attended Hart Hall, at Oxford University, which he later left without obtaining a degree. For a while he was a collector of subsidies for the government, was a member of Parliament for a year, and managed the estate of his cousin, Sir Thomas Scot, who supported him. He married twice but remained childless.

In 1574 he wrote *The Hop Garden* (its full name being *A Perfect Platforme of a Hoppe-Garden and necessary instructions for the making and maintaining thereof*), which led to the growth of hop production in his native county. But in 1582 he was shocked by the mass executions of witches at St. Osyth, in Kent, not far from his home. This led to Scot's writing of *The Discovery of Witchcraft*, in which he attacked the persecution, blaming the whole delusion on the **Inquisition**. In 1582, fourteen women had been charged with witchcraft in the village of St. Osyth, near Brightlingsea, in Essex. They were put to death, the vast majority of the evidence in the trial having come from children six to nine years of age.

Scot had previously been alerted by the story of seventeen-year-old Mildred Norrington, who, reputedly with an evil **spirit** speaking through her, had accused an old woman named Alice of Westwell of working evil witchcraft. But Mildred was exposed as a ventriloquist and finally confessed. This happened less than six miles from Scot's home. Similarly, two women, Agnes Bridges and Rachel Pinder, in London, had claimed to be bewitched and appeared to vomit straw and pins. They, too, were revealed as frauds. Such cases alerted Scot to the possibility of fraud, and he came to view all charges of witchcraft with some skepticism.

Although he was not a lawyer, Scot filled his book with references indicating a legal way of thinking. He also exhibited a fine knowledge of theology and scripture.

He attended many trials and investigated many alleged cases of witchcraft. One-third or more of his book is devoted to showing the methods used by sleight-of-hand performers, **conjurers**, and stage **magicians**. No form of dabbling with the supernatural was left unexposed.

In his attack on the phenomena of witchcraft, Scot had to deal with so-called facts that were not susceptible to material explanations. It became necessary for him to attack the theological conception of a Devil based on the nature of spirits. He said that “witchcraft is a cousening art, wherein the name of **God** is abused, prophaned and blasphemed, and his power attributed to a vile creature (the Devil) . . . it is a supernaturall worke, contrived betweene a corporall old woman, and a spirituall divell. The maner thereof is so secret, mysticall, and strange, that to this daie there hath never beene any credible witnes thereof.” He said that most accused witches were commonly old, lame, bleary-eyed, pale, foul, and full of wrinkles. He went on to detail how such an old woman could fall upon hard times, go begging to her neighbors and be turned away, then be suspected of cursing the one who had rejected her and of causing what would otherwise be seen as natural mishaps.

Scot was careful not to totally deny the existence of witches, since that would have been to deny the **Bible**. But he showed very forcefully that those accused of witchcraft were invariably not operating with powers from the Devil. At the time, few men dared speak as Reginald Scot had done. His book was almost certainly studied by George Gifford, who, in 1587, wrote *A Discourse of the Subtill Practises of Devilles by Witches* and, in 1593, *A Dialogue Concerning Witches and Witchcrafts*, both of which were meant to end the punishment of innocent women.

SOURCES:

Notestein, Wallace: *A History of Witchcraft in England from 1558 to 1718*. Russell & Russell, 1965.

Robbins, Rossell Hope: *The Encyclopedia of Witchcraft and Demonology*. Crown, 1959.

Scot, Reginald: *The Discoverie of Witchcraft*. E.P. Publishing, 1973.

Scott, Sir Walter (1771–1832)

The Scottish poet and novelist was born in Edinburgh on August 15, 1771. His father, also named Walter, worked as a writer for a lawyer, and his mother was the daughter of Dr. John Rutherford, a professor of medicine at Edinburgh University. Scott was left permanently lame from a bout of fever in infancy.

As a schoolboy, Scott mastered French well enough to read collections of French romances, and by fifteen he had also mastered Italian. When he was sixteen he was apprenticed in the lawyer’s office where his father worked but came to prefer studying for the law himself. In 1799 he obtained the office of sheriff-deputy of Selkirkshire. To his joy, the office carried very light duties, which left him plenty of time for his literary exploits. In 1806 he obtained the office of clerk of session, which he retained for twenty-five years.

His writings became very successful, but due to financial problems with publishers he came close to financial ruin. He pushed himself to produce more to the

point where his health suffered and ugly symptoms began to alarm his family. In February 1830 he had his first stroke of paralysis.

His failing health did not slow Scott, and in 1830 he produced *Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft*, which was published as Number XI in the Harper's Family Library series. The letters were addressed to J. G. Lockhart, his son-in-law. The letters discussed belief in the immortality of the soul, the fall of the communication between men and the **spiritual** world, mystical cures by **charms**, prosecution of **witches**, King James I's opinion of witches, and other mystic arts independent of witchcraft. It was a probing discourse and commentary. The first letter starts:

You have asked me, my dear friend, that I should assist the Family Library, with the history of a dark chapter in human nature, which the increasing civilization of all well-instructed countries has now almost blotted out, though the subject attracted no ordinary degree of consideration in the older times of their history.

Number L of Harper's Family Library was Sir David Brewster's *Letters on Natural Magic*, addressed to Sir Walter Scott, published in 1832.

SOURCES:

Encyclopedia Britannica. William Benton, 1964.

Scott, Sir Walter: *Letters On Demonology and Witchcraft*. Harpers Family Library, 1830.

Scottish Witchcraft

The most barbaric persecution of **witchcraft** undoubtedly occurred in **Germany**, but Scotland came a close second. The Presbyterian clergy acted like **inquisitors**, and the church sessions often shared the prosecution with the secular law courts. **Torture** was intense and limited only by the fact that the poor technology of the area produced unsophisticated implements. In the case of Agnes Sampson (see page 425), a **witch's** bridle was applied. This was an iron instrument with four sharp prongs that were forced into her mouth so that two of the prongs pressed against her tongue, the other two against her cheeks.

There are many cases of witchcraft throughout Scottish history, reflecting the bitter crusade pursued by Protestants and Catholics alike in their paranoia over possible "servants of the Devil." The Scottish Kirk recognized the religious origins of witchcraft and therefore applied to it the same sort of congregational frame of reference found within the Kirk, seeking out **covens**, or "coventicles," of thirteen—a leader and followers.

Witchcraft was practiced in Scotland from earliest times. During the reign of Natholocus, in the second century CE, there was a famous witch who lived on the Isle of Iona (a tiny island off the coast of the large island of Mull, in the Hebrides, on the west coast of Scotland). Such was the renown of this witch that the king sent a messenger to her to find out the result of a rebellion that was building in his kingdom. The witch told the messenger that the king would be murdered by a trusted friend, and that friend was he, the messenger. This did turn out to be the case; the messenger returned and killed the king.



North Berwick witches being interrogated in Edinburgh. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

Up to the end of the sixteenth century, although there was plenty of simple folk magic in evidence, there were few large trials of witchcraft. The trials that did take place were of a political nature. The Earl of Mar was accused, in 1479, of using witchcraft to try to kill his brother, King James III. Lady Glamis was burned as a witch in 1537 for working magic against King James V. Lady Foulis was charged—but acquitted—of employing charms, wax images, and poison to get rid of Lady Balnagowan, hoping to then marry Lord Balnagowan.

Trials started to increase with the introduction of a new statute by Mary, Queen of Scots, in 1563. But this law was aimed primarily at sorcery and fortune-telling, although it did make the one who sought to have the magic done as culpable as the actual practitioner of the magic. It was not until the reign of King James VI of Scotland (King James I of England) that witchcraft trials really caught hold. The case that particularly affected James—and the history of witchcraft in Britain—was that of the North Berwick witches.

The trial of the North Berwick witches took place from 1590 to 1592. It started innocently enough with charges of cures being made by a serving maid named Geil-

lis Duncan. She had been rapidly acquiring a reputation for curing the sick through **occult** means, enough to cause her employer, David Seaton, to start investigating her. Seaton was deputy-bailiff of a small town called Tranent, near Edinburgh. In his own mind, Seaton decided that the girl's skill was a gift from the Devil. Taking the law into his own hands, he set about interrogating her by using a thumb-screw and other implements of torture. By these he finally got her to confess that she was involved with the Devil.

When Geillis was subsequently turned over to the authorities, she was questioned further and started to implicate others, implying that they had all been working together in a plot against the king. One of the people she implicated was the Lothian schoolmaster, **John Fian**. Fian was apparently the secretary of the group of witches. A copy of *News from Scotland* for 1591 carries a picture of him sitting at a desk alongside a group of witches.

Fian was tortured until he confessed, signing his confession in King James's presence. He implicated Francis, Earl of Bothwell, a cousin of the king. On being returned to his jail cell after the torture and confession, Fian managed to escape. It is possible that he was desperate to warn Earl Bothwell. Fian was recaptured and, on interrogation, denied all of his original confession. Despite further torture, he would say nothing more and went to his execution without another word.

Geillis Duncan had also named Agnes Sampson, of Haddington, as a witch. Agnes was arrested and questioned at Holyrood Castle, with James himself in attendance. She had all of her body hair shaved off and was searched for the **Devil's Mark**, which the examiners claimed to find. Under torture, Agnes Sampson gave out some amazing stories. She claimed that as many as two hundred witches had gathered together in a churchyard in North Berwick. They got there by sailing in sieves, she claimed, drinking wine as they went. At the churchyard there was singing and dancing, with Geillis Duncan playing the Jew's Harp, or "trump." At this point in the trial, the king had Geillis play him a **dance** tune, which he apparently very much enjoyed.

Inside the North Berwick church, the earthly representative of the Devil preached to the assembled witches. He then had them give him the oscullum infami before departing. The court records state, "Now efter that the deuell had endit his admonitions, he cam down out of the pulpit, and caused all the company to com and kiss his ers, quhilk (which) they said was cauld lyk yce."

King James was not overly impressed with Agnes Sampson's stories and actually called her a liar. However, he was suddenly stunned, according to his own report, when Agnes went on to tell him exactly what his queen had said to him on the first night of their marriage, when they were in Oslo, Norway. Since this was something that no one could know by normal means, the king then came to believe that there must be truth in the other stories she told. One of these other stories concerned a spell for the king's downfall. It involved the gathering of venom from a toad and then spreading it on some item of the king's clothing, to bewitch him.

When the king had traveled to Denmark to marry his fifteen-year-old queen, Anne, his ship had been badly tossed about in what seemed to be an unnatural

storm. Agnes Sampson now told James that the witches had caused the storm. They had taken a cat, christened it, and then fastened a human limb—taken from a grave—to each of its paws and tossed it into the sea. This had caused the great storm.

Another piece of magic that had been done was the making of a wax **poppet**, or “picture,” of the king. This had been done by Agnes with some of the others, and the image had then been carefully wrapped in a linen cloth. It was taken to the meeting with the Devil and there inspected by him. It was then passed around the group, whereupon each witch said, “This is King James the Sixth, ordained to be consumed at the instance of the nobleman, Francis Earl Bothwell!” At one of the subsequent meetings, an old plowman named Grey Mill happened to remark, “Nothing ails the king yet, God be thanked.” According to the records, “the deuell gaif him a gret blaw!”

Almost certainly, the part of the Devil was played at the meetings by Francis Bothwell himself, wearing a mask. More than sixty people were eventually implicated in the North Berwick case. Among them were Barbara Napier, sister-in-law to the Laird of Carschoggill, and Dame Euphemia McCalyan, daughter of Lord Cliftonhall. Dame McCalyan was burned alive at the stake on July 25, 1591, while Barbara Napier—through claiming to be pregnant—was eventually freed. It is more than likely that Dame McCalyan was executed because of her friendship with Bothwell and because she was a Roman Catholic. The Earl of Bothwell, although denying any connection with the witches, was imprisoned in Edinburgh Castle. He managed to escape and fled to Italy, settling in Naples. Two years later, James pardoned him, but Francis, perhaps wisely, remained in Italy where he eventually died penniless.

In 1597, the case of the Aberdeen witches took place. The publication of King James’s *Demonology* that year brought about a witch craze that swept through Aberdeen, resulting in the burning of twenty-four men and women. Typical of the ones accused was Janet Wishart, who was accused of casting a **spell** on Alexander Thomson, causing him to shiver and sweat. Andrew Webster was similarly bewitched by her, although he died as a result. It was claimed that Wishart, by casting the **evil eye**, had also caused others to die. The witches named were Margrat Bean, Katherine Gerard, Jonet Grant, Marion Grant, Thomas Leyis, Andro Mann, Margrat Og, Issobell Oige, Christen Reid, Issobell Richie, Helen Rogie, Jonet Spaldarg, and Janet Wishart. One of the accused escaped punishment by informing on the others, saying that she had seen as many as two thousand witches and that she “knew them well enough, and what mark the devil had given to every one of them.”

In 1607, on March 10, Issobel Grierson was brought to trial in Edinburgh. Issobel was the wife of John Bull of Prestonpans. She was charged on six counts. The first was that she went in the form of her own cat and, together with a great number of other cats, had entered the house of her neighbor, Adam Clark. There the cats made a great deal of noise and caused a lot of trouble, to the point where Adam Clark and his wife were “in such a great fear that they were likely to go mad.” The second charge was that Issobel sought to kill William Burnet by “devilish and ungodly means.” Thirdly, she cast a sickness on Robert Peddan nine years prior to her indictment. Peddan claimed that she had bewitched him because of a small



Site of witch burning near Dunning, Strath Earn, Tayside, Scotland. Courtesy Hamish Brown/Fordean Picture Library.

debt he had forgotten about. When he remembered and paid the debt, she removed the curse. Robert Peddan was also the accuser in the fourth charge, claiming that Issobel had stretched out her hand to stroke his cat at the time he was brewing ale. As a consequence, the ale turned sour. Peddan's wife was the object of the fifth charge of bewitchment. She had fallen sick and believed Issobel had caused it. Every time she got better, Issobel would curse her for spreading rumors, and Peddan's wife would fall ill again. The sixth charge was that Issobel was "a common sorcerer and a witch, and abuser of the people, by laying in and taking off of sickness and diseases, and using all devilish and ungodly means to win her living." After the witnesses had been heard, Issobel Grierson was found guilty, strangled, and burned. All her goods and property were forfeited to the king.

The trial of Margaret Barclay in 1618 was another example typical of the witchcraft cases in Scotland at that time. Margaret Barclay did not get along with her brother-in-law and his wife. Margaret was the wife of Archibald Dean, a Burgess of Irvine. The Kirk suggested a reconciliation between the people involved, but Margaret could not accept her in-laws. When her brother-in-law made a trip to

France, it was said that Margaret had wished the ship would sink and carry him to the bottom. A tramp who happened to be traveling through the area claimed that he knew of the ship's sinking. It later transpired that the ship had indeed gone down, leaving only two survivors. The tramp was arrested and charged with precognition, and Margaret was charged with witchcraft. The tramp, John Stewart, under torture claimed that he had seen Margaret making a wax image of the ship. He further claimed that she had an accomplice—her eight-year-old daughter, Isobel Insh. The little girl confessed that she had been at a deserted house where a devil dog lit the room with light from its jaws as they made wax images. Young Isobel was tortured into confession and imprisoned in a church belfry. She escaped but fell from the roof, dying five days later. John Stewart managed to kill himself despite a heavy guard, but Margaret Barclay was tortured and eventually convicted, strangled, and burned to ashes.

1623 was the date of the Perth Witch trial, and 1662 the trial of Issobel Gowdie, one of the best-known Scottish “witches.” Issobel claimed that she met with the Devil in 1647 in the church at Auldearne. There she made a **pact** with him and received a new name: Janet. The Devil sucked her blood and rebaptized her. She claimed that she would go to the witches’ **sabbat**, leaving a **broomstick** in her bed to fool her husband. To get to the sabbat she rode on a piece of straw. Robbins, in his *The Encyclopedia of Witchcraft and Demonology*, says that the woman was “clearly demented, although by her statements it is plain she believed what she confessed.” As he points out, all of Issobel’s confessions were given without torture of any kind. But what she had to say simply amounted to all the popular delusions of the time about witches and witchcraft. She spoke of witches, including herself, being able to change into animals and birds, of shooting **elf darts** made by elf boys, of controlling the weather to produce **storms**, of having **familiars**, and of witches working in covens. **Margaret Murray**, in *The Witch Cult in Western Europe*, presents much of her evidence based on Issobel Gowdie’s wild imagining.

Major Thomas Weir, executed in 1670, was regarded as one of Scotland’s most notorious **wizards**. He had been an outstanding parliamentary officer and evangelical leader but, at the age of seventy, he voluntarily confessed to a long list of crimes, including sodomy, bestiality (with mares and cows), incest (with his sister Jane since she was sixteen until she was fifty, and with his stepdaughter, Margaret Bourdon), fornication (with his maid servant Bessie Weems), and witchcraft. His sixty-year-old sister Jane was burned as a witch on her own confessions and the evidence of her brother’s statements.

Major Weir always walked with a thornwood **staff**, on which he would lean even when praying. This came to be regarded as a wizard’s staff that brought him inspiration from the Devil. At the trial it was mentioned that a woman had seen the Major having sex with a mare in 1651 or 1652 but that on reporting it she had been whipped through the town for slandering such a well-respected man. Weir’s sister-in-law, Margaret, reported that when she was twenty-seven she had seen him and his sister Jane making violent love together in a barn. Jane Weir told tales of magic work being done for her by spirits and of she and her brother traveling in a

magic coach of fire that took them to Musselburgh and back to Edinburgh. Found guilty, Major Weir was strangled and burned on April 11, 1670, and his sister on April 12.

Belief in witchcraft continued in Scotland well into the eighteenth century. The King's Advocate, Robert Dundas, in 1720 refused to act against some Calder women imprisoned on charges of witchcraft. But in 1729, Janet Horne was burned at Dornoch, Ross-shire, for causing her own daughter's lameness by using her as a horse and having her shoed by the Devil. The witchcraft act was formally repealed in 1736, although the Associated Presbytery passed a resolution declaring their continued belief in witchcraft. It has been estimated that as many as 4,400 people may have been burned on a charge of witchcraft in Scotland. Significant trials in Scotland occurred in the following years:

North Berwick Witches, 1590
 Dr. John Fian (leader of North Berwick Witchse), 1590
 Aberdeen Witches, 1597
 Isobel Grierson, 1607
 Margaret Barclay, 1618
 Perth Witches, 1623
 Issobel Gowdie, 1662
 Thomas Weir, 1670
 Renfrew Witches, 1697
 Pittenweem Witches, 1704

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 Davidson, Thomas: *Rowan Tree and Red Thread*. Oliver & Boyd, 1949.
 Lochhead, Marion: *Magic and Witchcraft of the Borders*. Robert Hale, 1984.
 Robbins, Rossell Hope: *The Encyclopedia of Witchcraft and Demonology*. Crown, 1959.
 Russell, Jeffrey Burton: *Witchcraft in the Middle Ages*. Citadel, 1972.

Scourge

One of the **coven** tools used in **Wicca**. It is used in initiations as part of the symbolic death that is part of that **rite**. By some **Witches**, scourging is also done in **magical** work. One way of building power is to bind a person and scourge them, thus causing the blood to course through the body and help build up the power. However, this is a delicate balance and one that is best taught on a personal basis, for no scourging, in **Witchcraft**, is done to hurt.

The scourge itself is simply a handle to which is attached a number of thongs or "tails." There may be three, seven, or nine tails—all of these considered "magical" numbers. The tails are anywhere from nine to twenty-one inches in length and are attached to a short handle, which may be marked or inscribed much like an

athamé. Many covens make the tails of silk cord. To avoid causing pain, the tails are not knotted and are seldom made from leather.

(See also **Flagellation.**)

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Wicca for Life*. Citadel, 2001.

Scrying

The word *scrying*, or *skrying*, means “seeing” and is the term used for crystal gazing. Indeed, it can apply to gazing into any reflective surface for the purpose of **divination**.

In the Villa of **Mysteries** at Pompeii, one of the scenes depicted in the frescoes around the walls of the **Initiation** Room shows the neophyte scrying. As Professor Vittorio Macchioro says in *The Villa of Mysteries*, “The neophyte is born again in Zagreus; she has begun to live the life of the **god**, but terrible tests await her. Silenus seated on a double plinth shows her a hemispherical silver case on which a youth gazes in ecstasy while his companion holds on high behind him a Dionysiac mask.... The hemispherical case at which the youth gazes ecstatically is a **magical mirror**; (he is seeing) in the mirror a series of visions which have their center and starting point in the mask and life of Dionysus . . . he gazes on the mirror as Dionysus did, so as to become as Dionysus and die with him.”

Any reflective surface will serve for scrying. Polished copper or other metal, **water**, a mirror, a crystal ball, even an ink blot have all been used successfully. The Cherokee and Apache use crystals, as do the tribes of Borneo and New Guinea and the Australian aborigines. The Maya used a variety of polished stones. John Aubrey (*Miscellanies*, 1696) suggests that a green-tinted glass such as beryl is best. Others favor an aquamarine coloring. Some use a polished obsidian ball.

In the sixteenth century, **Edward Kelley** gained a reputation for scrying. This reputation reached the ears of Dr. **John Dee** (Queen Elizabeth I's astrologer), whose own scryer, Barnabas Saul, had recently left his employ. Kelley took over the position, allowing his powerful imagination to describe incredible sights he said he received from the “great crystalline globe” that Dee possessed. By his enthusiasm and fertile imagination, he quickly won Dee's confidence and established himself as a needed associate. Dee carefully recorded all the conferences he held with the **spirits**, courtesy of Kelley's crystal ball gazing. In 1659 Méric Casaubon published *A True and Faithful Relation of What Passed between Dr. John Dee and Some Spirits*. Together, Dee and Kelley traveled around Europe amazing the nobility with what they presented.

Some of the old books of **Ceremonial Magic**, the **grimoires**, give detailed instructions for the stand that should hold a crystal to be used for scrying. They prescribe intricate **sigils** and **words of power** to be engraved on the stand. In fact, none of these is really necessary. The grimoires would again lead one to believe that a great deal of preparation is necessary before the act of scrying. Some suggest periods of fasting, the saying of lengthy **prayers**, and the summoning of various spirits. Again, none of these is strictly necessary. It is a good idea to do some sort of psychic cleansing of oneself

and of the area before starting, however. Witches generally do their scrying within a magic circle. One then only needs to quiet the mind, relax, and concentrate on looking at the reflective surface. It is a good idea to place the ball, or crystal, on a piece of black cloth so that there is nothing in its immediate vicinity that will detract. It is also important to try to keep the mind blank, so that anything may come into the vision. The gaze should be relaxed, not an unblinking stare. Most scryers say that the ball (or glass of water, or whatever) seems to slowly fill with smoke. This gradually fades away, leaving a scene that must then be interpreted.

SOURCES:

Besterman, T.: *Crystal-Gazing*. Rider, 1924.
 Buckland, Raymond: *Buckland's Complete Book of Witchcraft*. Llewellyn, 1986.
 Melville, John: *Crystal Gazing*. Samuel Wesley, 1970.

Seal of Solomon

The Seal of Solomon is a six-pointed star figure made up of two interlocking triangles (one with the point up and the other with the point down). It is also known as the “Star of the Microcosm,” being symbolic of the spiritual potential of the individual. The two triangles may be regarded as denoting fire (upright) and water (inverted) intermingling. In India this is viewed as a male-female union. The hexagram they create, according to legend, was used by King Solomon to cast a spell on evil spirits. In alchemy and theosophy it is known as the “signet star”—a star “that gives understanding to the wise and shows the way” (G. Gichtel, 1682). It is frequently employed in talismans as a protective sigil.

The hexagram that is the Seal of Solomon is also known as the Star of David, although its use as a symbol of Judaism has only been official for about a century. It came into Judaism through the Tantric influence on medieval Jewish cabalists. According to Barbara Walker, the cabalists “spoke of the desired reunion between God and his spouse Skeina (a Semitic version of Kali-Shakti). This reunion was symbolized by the Tantric sexual mandala.”

SOURCES:

Cirlot, J. E.: *A Dictionary of Symbols*. Philosophical Library, 1962.
 Roob, Alexander: *The Hermetic Museum: Alchemy and Mysticism*. Taschen, 1997.
 Walker, Barbara G.: *The Woman's Dictionary of Symbols and Sacred Objects*. HarperSanFrancisco, 1988.



Seal of Solomon on gravestone, mid-nineteenth century.
 Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

Séance

The word *séance* means “sitting.” It is a sitting to communicate with **spirits** of the dead. It can be one on one (just the sitter and a medium) or it can involve a whole group with a medium. A medium is one who is able to bridge the gap between this world and the next—a connecting link between the living and the dead.

A group usually sits in a **circle** around a table, although it may form an open circle. Invariably the members hold hands to make a connection of energy. The *séance* often starts with the singing of songs to bring an attunement and to balance the vibrations of everyone present. There may then be a brief period of **meditation**, during which the medium will slip into trance. From there the medium, through a “Gate Keeper” or “Guardian,” will relay messages between the people in the circle and their deceased loved ones.

Witches do not perform *séances*, but they do believe in communication with the spirits of the dead. This can be done in various ways, but is traditionally done at the sabbat celebration of **Samhain**.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Doors to Other Worlds*. Llewellyn, 1993.

Buckland, Raymond: *The Truth about Spirit Communication*. Llewellyn, 1995.

Seax-Wica

A **tradition of Witchcraft** founded by **Raymond Buckland** in 1973. It has a Saxon basis, although it makes no claims to being a recreation or reconstruction of original Saxon Witchcraft.

The tradition was originally formed to fill Buckland’s personal religious needs. After a decade of leadership in **Gardnerian Wicca** (which he introduced to the United States at the beginning of the 1960s), Buckland felt the need for something more personal. He felt that religion is a matter of individual needs and should not be one of compromise. With his background in religio-magic and his knowledge of **ritual**, he felt competent to construct a new form of the **Old Religion**. Yet, because of his **Oath of Secrecy**, taken when **initiated** into the Gardnerian tradition, Buckland did not want to utilize any of that material. All the rituals, therefore, were new, and the entire makeup was a break from previous Wiccan structure. There were a number of things in Gardnerian and other traditions that had been obviously adopted from **Ceremonial Magic**. These Buckland dropped in an effort to simplify what, to him, was a very basic religious structure.

Certain problems had seemed to emerge from the use of a **degree system** of advancement within a **coven**. To counteract this, the Seax-Wica tradition does not have degrees. A leader (or leaders) of a coven is chosen by the group itself and leads that group for a year. The coven can be led by either a male or a female, or both working together. At the end of the traditional “year and a day” there is a new vote, and the leader(s) may or may not be voted in for another year. This counters any possible abuse of power and also allows many different Witches to experience the

responsibilities of High Priesthood. If a person is a good leader, he or she may well continue as **High Priest** or **High Priestess** for a number of years, or he or she may opt not to run again.

The tradition also has no Oath of Secrecy, which Buckland felt was outdated. He also was anxious to help spread the Old Religion, and an open tradition seemed the best way to do that. Although Buckland originally wrote the tradition for his own use, when others heard of it he was asked to share it. This he did, and eventually he published a book on the tradition, called *The Tree: Complete Book of Saxon Witchcraft*. The actual book of rituals written by hand by the Witch him- or herself, the **Book of Shadows**—whether for the individual or for a coven—in Seax-Wica is known as “The Tree” and is usually bound in a green cover.

A **Cowan**, or non-Witch, is referred to in Seax-Wica as a *Theow* (pronounced Thō, to rhyme with go). Up until this point, anyone wanting to become a Witch had to be initiated on faith, since it was not possible to attend a Wiccan ritual unless initiated. With Buckland’s open system, however, Theows could attend a ritual as a guest to get the feel of the form of the **worship** and so make a more informed decision about becoming a Wiccan. Once initiated, the individual became a *Gesith* (with a soft “g”). Since there are no degrees of advancement, all Saxon Witches are *Gesiths*, and it is from them that the High Priest and/or High Priestess is chosen.

In most traditions it is necessary for a person to be initiated into the coven to become a part of it. A new coven can then only start by hiving off from the mother coven, if approved. In Seax-Wica, as in **Solitary Witchcraft**, it is possible for a person to **self initiate**, or self dedicate, him- or herself. From there, a coven can be formed. To form a new coven, then, any *Gesith* may leave the old one and start a new one. The terms *Theow* and *Gesith* are taken from Old Anglo-Saxon, as is Buckland’s own title of *Faeder*, or father of the tradition. In 1993, after teaching his branch of the Craft for more than two decades, he handed over the reins to an ex-student of his, Michael B. Smith, who took over as *Stiweard*, or steward, of Seax-Wica. After more than a quarter of a century, there are now Seax-Wica covens in many countries around the world, including Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Japan, and Russia, as well as in North America and Europe.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *The Tree: Complete Book of Saxon Witchcraft*. Samuel Weiser, 1974.

Selene

Also called Mene, Selene was a Greek **goddess** of the **Moon**. She was the daughter of Hyperion and Theia. Selene was also the sister of Helios, the Sun; and Eos, the Dawn. She fell in love with the handsome young man named Endymion, described variously as a shepherd, a prince, or a king of Elis. Selene caused him to fall asleep so that she could caress him undisturbed.

Such was Selene’s beauty that she attracted the attention of Zeus and by him had three daughters: Pandia, Erse, and Nemea. She was also greatly loved by **Pan**.

In **Wicca**, Selene is one aspect of the triple goddess, the others being **Hecate** and **Diana**. In Greece, Selene was worshiped at both the full moon and the new moon, since she influenced the **fertility** of all life forms. The Roman equivalent of Selene is **Luna**.

SOURCES:

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Self Initiation

Since **Wicca** is a **mystery religion**, it is necessary to be **initiated** into it. This was a stumbling block for many people in the United States when Wicca first became visible in the early 1960s. They learned of the **Old Religion** and wanted to be a part of it, but it was extremely difficult to find a **coven** to join. Frustration eventually led to large numbers of covens being started from scratch, with the founders having no real training in Wicca. This also led to a large number of **Solitary Witches**—those who either couldn't find a group to join or had no wish to join with a group yet still desired to practice the Old Religion.

For many years there was a conflict between those Witches initiated into one of the established **traditions** and those who had started their own. Gradually, as more eclectic covens came into being, this conflict died down, although it will probably never be fully eliminated.

Witchcraft back in the early Middle Ages had initiation ceremonies, as we know from references to them in the evidence of the witch trials. Sometimes the leader of the coven would place one hand on the crown of the initiate's head and the other under the soles of the feet, dedicating all between the hands to the old **gods**. This was a popular dedication in Scotland. In fact, this ritual is part of the initiation into **Gardnerian** and some other traditions of Wicca.

But there were many Witches in those early days, as there are today, who did not belong to a coven. Frequently a farming family lived some distance from the village, or from a coven, yet still worshiped the old gods—still asked and worked magic for a good harvest and thanked the gods when it came. These solitary Witches would dedicate themselves and their children to the worship of the gods—if not in a formal ceremony, then in a simple **ritual** of their own words. So it is today with many Witches who are either unable or unwilling to join an established coven. They will dedicate themselves to the old gods in a simple ritual of self initiation. Just as the early Witches who did this were as valid as any other Witch who happened to belong to a coven, so today such self initiation is as bona fide as a coven initiation. **Doreen Valiente**, who was one of the founders, with **Gerald Gardner**, of modern Wicca, said, "Many people, I know, will question the idea of self-initiation. . . . To them I will address one simple question: who initiated the first Witch?"

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Buckland's Complete Book of Witchcraft*. Llewellyn, 1986.

Buckland, Raymond: *Wicca for Life*. Citadel, 2001.

Murray, Margaret Alice: *The Witch Cult in Western Europe*. Clarendon Press, 1921.

Valiente, Doreen: *Witchcraft for Tomorrow*. Robert Hale, 1978.

Serpent

Snakes were considered immortal by virtue of renewing themselves, apparently indefinitely, through shedding their skin. The serpent is one of the oldest symbols of female power, and it is a lunar symbol. Both serpents and women were considered holy in pre-classic Aegean civilization, since both seem to embody the power of life. In Egypt and India, the first serpent was depicted as a totemic form of the Great Mother herself. In India, the **Goddess** of the Earth and “Mother of All That Moves” often bore the title *Sarparajni*, or “Serpent Queen.” In ancient Egypt, the serpent-mother Iusaset—or Per-Uatchet, according to the Pyramid Texts—was the Celestial Serpent whose symbol, the *uraeus*, meant both “serpent” and “goddess.” Gaea, or **Gaia**, the **Earth Goddess** and mother of all the **gods**, was originally a serpent, *Gaea Pelope*, referred to by Hesiod.

In **Wicca**, of those traditions that have a degree system, a **Witch Queen** or **Queen of the Sabbat** wears a silver-buckled **garter** as a badge of office. This garter is traditionally made of green snake skin and lined with blue silk. In **Hedge Witchcraft**, snake skin is regarded as a cure for rheumatism. In Kentucky and the Ozark region of Missouri and Arkansas, it is thought that the rattles from a rattlesnake can be powdered to make a drink that will give a mother an easy birth. It is also thought that wearing the rattles as a head ornament will cure a headache.

The Gnostics masculinized the serpent and called it Ophion, the Aeon of Light, or Helios. Worshipers were known as the Brotherhood of the Serpent. Several other mythologies had a **Tree of Knowledge**, or **Tree of Life**, that was guarded by a serpent. Gnostic mysticism turned the Great Serpent into *Ouroboros*, who lived forever in the uterine underworld. The symbol of *Ouroboros* is a serpent biting its own tail and forming a **circle**—a never-ending figure. The Naasenes also adopted the symbol of the serpent—*naas* meaning “snake.”

P. Z. Goldberg says that at Tamburbrin, a married woman need only to enter the place where the serpent dwelt to become pregnant, for the serpent was regarded as the source of all generation. Within the temple, the serpent might assume human form and “bless the woman worshiper with his divine sexual presence.” The offspring resulting from this union were known as the “Children of the Snake.” Goldberg also says, however, that “in the execution of the sexual function . . . the priest represented the serpent.”

The snake represents **ley lines**, “dragon lines,” or “earth lines”—lines connecting sites of great power and cosmic energy. Many myths of subduing a great serpent—for example, the legend of St. George and the dragon—are probably connected to the idea of mastering powerful earth powers. In Britain there are a number of sites bearing names associated with this serpent power: Serpent Hill, Hagpen (*hag* was an old name for snake; *pen* meant hill), Hackpen (a variation on *hag*), Worm Hill (worm was an old word for snake or dragon), and Dragon Hill. The monument at **Avebury**, Wiltshire, with its two stone circles, is approached by an avenue of stones connecting it to another site, the Sanctuary. This site is on a hill known as Hagpen. William Stukely and others have interpreted this avenue as evidence of a serpent cult.



Detail of *Atalanta Fugiens*, by Maler, 1618, showing Venus being strangled by a serpent in the grave. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

The dragon was a variation on the serpent and is found universally. It is a bringer of fertility and is sometimes depicted with foliage springing from its tail and even bunches of grapes or fruit issuing from its mouth. The dragon had strong connection with fertility. Janet and Colin Bord, in *Ancient Mysteries of Britain*, suggest that there are a “number of legends telling of hoards of treasure watched over by dragons, and we wondered whether in such cases the dragon was a symbol of the earth energy which prehistoric men might have utilised—an energy which, if carelessly handled, could cause havoc and destruction just as the dragons do in the traditional tales.”

Several writers have suggested that the White Horse of Uffington (a huge figure carved into the white chalk of the hills of Oxfordshire) might not be a depiction of a horse but of a dragon. The fact that there is a round hump close by that is named Dragon’s Hill would seem to lend support for this theory. Dragon’s Hill is a mound where, as legend has it, St. George slew the dragon. In fact, this is a reworking of an earlier legend of the archangel Michael, who was set up by the early Christian Church to guard the sacred hills previously dedicated to the pagan god Bel.

The **Kundalini** energy of yoga is called the serpent energy, symbolizing a snake coiled within the human body. Its awakening and uncoiling activate the **chakras**,

which are the energy centers of the body. Mircea Eliade, in *Mystische Reste in der Paradiesanzahlung*, Archiv. F, Ref. X, 345, points to numerous Middle Eastern deities who are frequently depicted with snakes in their hands (for example, **Artemis**, **Hecate**, Persephone, the Cretan Snake Goddess, Medusa, and the Erinyes). Some statues of Vishnu in India show him sleeping in the shade provided by the seven heads of the snake god Sessa.

The Nâgas were a fabulous race of snakes in the mythology of India. Statues show them with human bodies and long, twisting tails. They were believed to be among the ancestors of certain royal families. Statues of them are still worshiped in areas of southern India. Wives of Nâgas are known as Nâginis.

On St. Bride's Day, in Scotland, a verse is repeated in a hymn, showing that the serpent represents earth energy:

Early on Bride's morn
The serpent shall come from the hole.
I will not molest the serpent,
Nor will the serpent molest me.

SOURCES:

Bord, Janet and Colin: *Ancient Mysteries of Britain*. Guild Publishing, 1986.
 Circlot, J. E.: *A Dictionary of Symbols*. Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962.
 Goldberg, P. Z.: *The Sacred Fire*. Horace Liveright, 1930.
 Hadingham, Evan: *Circles and Standing Stones*. Walker & Co., 1976.
 Stewart, Bob and John Matthews: *Legendary Britain*. Blandford, 1989.
 Walker, Barbara G.: *The Woman's Dictionary of Symbols and Sacred Objects*. HarperSanFrancisco, 1988.
 Whitlock, Ralph: *In Search of Lost Gods*. Phaidon Press, 1979.

Sex Magic

There are many different ways of doing **magic**, and all of them entail utilizing energy and directing it to make something happen. The magic done by **Witches** draws on the energy within the human body. To raise that energy it is necessary to achieve a state of *ekstasis*, or ecstasy, which can be accomplished by **dancing**, **chanting**, awakening the **kundalini**, **drumming**, **scourging**, or any one of a number of ways, including sexual activity. The **Old Religion** was originally very cognizant of the need for **fertility** (of the crops, of animals, and of humans) and so did not hesitate to use sexual magic to promote that fertility.

In working magic, the main ingredient is the power that is raised, whether by the individual or by the group. Without this power, no magic can be performed. Sex magic is the art of using the sexual experience, and especially the orgasm, for magical purposes. Dr. Jonn Mumford (*Sexual Occultism*) says that the most important psycho-physiological event in the life of a human is the orgasm. That orgasm is achieved following much the same pattern as any magical working and power raising. It starts slowly, then gradually builds to a climax.

The literal climax of sex magic is the orgasm. How that is achieved is unimportant, so sex magic can be done by the **Solitary**, by a couple, or by a whole **coven**. All that matters is that the orgasm be the time of directing the power generated to

the target selected. The method of achieving orgasm is immaterial. In fact, any variety of sexual stimulation methods may be employed, whether by homo- or heterosexual couples, including mutual masturbation and oral stimulation.

Sex magic by whole covens is unusual, in the sense of being rarely performed. There is absolutely no reason why it should not be done—with the coven working in pairs and/or solitary—but to many modern Witches it carries connotations of an orgy, an image best avoided. Much, of course, depends upon the makeup of the coven—its relationship, ease, and comfort between members. It is also not easy to arrange an orgasm for all members at, or even close to, the same time, so the benefit of group working is frequently lost. This is yet another reason that it is more usual to find sex magic done by single couples and Solitaries rather than by covens.

One thing that does need to be emphasized where sex magic is concerned is that, in **Wicca**, no one should be coerced into doing it. Sex magic is simply one method out of many, and it is definitely not for everyone. Any group that claims that this *has* to be done is not a true Wiccan group.

Wiccans do view the body as a temple. The woman is viewed by the man as an earthly representation of the **Goddess**, and the man is seen by the woman as an earthly representation of the **God**. To join together in sexual intercourse is to enact the *Hieros Gamos*, the Sacred Marriage, of the ancient **Mystery Religions**. Even on a relatively mundane, domestic level, Witches retain this concept in their unconscious, or even conscious, minds, giving them a respect for the act while still being able to enjoy it at a deep, chthonic level. The **Great Rite** of Wicca is a purely ritual *Hieros Gamos* and is not an act of sex magic.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Wicca for Life*. Citadel, 2001.

Kraig, Donald Michael: *Modern Sex Magick*. Llewellyn, 1998.

Mumford, Jonn: *Sexual Occultism*. Llewellyn, 1975.

Shakespeare, William (1564–1616)

The works of Shakespeare contain many references to **witches**, **witchcraft**, and **magic**. Best known, perhaps, are the witches of *Macbeth* (1605–06). Their appearance in act 1, scene 3 of the play demonstrates a variety of acts and beliefs of the time that concerned witches and witchcraft: **conjuring** winds, sailing in sieves, and causing someone to be unable to sleep. Later in the play (act 4, scene 1), the three witches are presented stirring a **cauldron** and throwing in an assortment of gruesome-sounding ingredients, many of which are no more than local **herbs**. Also in *Macbeth* is the statement, “witchcraft celebrates Pale **Hecate’s** offerings.”

The **fairies** of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (1595–96) are presented with obvious knowledge, on Shakespeare’s part, of fairy folklore and magic. In the play, **Puck** is also called **Robin Goodfellow**. **Margaret Murray** points out that Robin Goodfellow was not a fairy but the **God** of the Little People and often depicted as the God of the **Old Religion**. She says in *The God of the Witches*, “The most alarm-

ing of all the fairies was Robin Goodfellow until Shakespeare made him subordinate to Oberon.”

The Merry Wives of Windsor (1600–01) also contains fairies but, importantly, fairies who were acknowledged to be the same size as humans; Shakespeare has Mistress Page, a full-grown woman, not only dress as a fairy but expect to be accepted as one.

In *Cymbeline* (1609–10) we find the words sung by Guiderius and Arviragus: “No **exorciser** harm thee!” “Nor no witchcraft **charm** thee!” In *Othello* (1604–05), there is also talk of magic and of witchcraft.

The Tempest (1611–12) is replete with magic. Prospero has many books of magic in his study, and the very island on which he and his daughter Miranda live is bewitched by the witch Sycorax.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Witchcraft from the Inside*. Llewellyn, 1995.

Shakespeare, William: *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare*. Odhams, n.d.

Shape-shifting

In many of the records of **witchcraft** trials during the persecutions, it was not uncommon to find witnesses testifying that the accused **witch** had changed his or her shape into that of an animal, bird, or even insect. Many of the witches themselves claimed they had made that metamorphosis. The favorite animals were cats and **hares**, although dogs, mice, and **crows** were also fairly common. The belief in metamorphosis appears to be universal and is found especially among primitive peoples.

In Northumberland in 1673, Ann Armstrong stated that another witch, Ann Baites, “hath been several times in the shape of a cat and a hare, and in the shape of a greyhound and a bee.” Ann Armstrong went on to say that while she stood and sang, the others in the **coven** “**danced** in several shapes, first of a hare, then in their own, and then in a cat, sometimes in a mouse, and in several other shapes.”

Margaret Murray suggests that there was no actual metamorphosis—that the “change” was purely an act of **ritual** following the witch’s statement as to what she was. Hearing one witch say she was a dog, another witch would decide that she too was a dog and join the first one. The witches believed they really were the animals but, in fact, no physical change occurred. But in 1729, Janet Horne was burned at Dornoch, Ross-shire, for supposedly causing her own daughter’s lameness by using her as a **horse** and having her shod by the Devil. If she actually tried to shoe her daughter, we must assume that she really did believe she had turned the girl into a horse.

On March 10, 1607, Issobel Grierson was brought to trial in Edinburgh. She was charged on six counts. The first was that she went in the form of her own cat and, together with a great number of other cats, had entered the house of her neighbor, Adam Clark. There the cats made a great deal of noise and caused a lot of trouble, to the point where Adam Clark and his wife were “in such a great fear that they were likely to go mad.” Here, of course, it is the accusers who are saying that Isobel Grierson had changed into a cat, not the accused witch herself. Yet Issobel Gowdie,

in 1662, claimed at her trial that she and her sister had become cats, hares, crows, and other animals, to the point where they had been chased and bitten by dogs. Issobel said, “When we go in the shape of a hare, we say thrice over:

“I sall goe intill ane haire,
With sorrow, and sych, and meikle caire,
And I sall goe in the Divellis nam,
Ay whill I com hom againe.”
(I will go into a hare,
With sorrow and sigh and much care;
And I shall go in the Devil’s name,
A while I come home again.)

Issobel Gowdie continued, “And instantly we start in a hare. And when we should be out of this shape, we will say:

“Hare, hare, God send thee care.
I am in a hare’s likeness just now,
But I shall be in a woman’s likeness even now.”

She gave similar formulae for changing into a cat and a crow and other creatures. Issobel also stated that other witches could be transformed with her by simply stating, “I conjure thee, go with me.” She continued, “and presently they become as we are, either cats, hares, crows.”

In the classical author Apuleius’s *The Golden Ass* (90 BCE), there is a description of a witch turning herself into a crow. The woman undresses completely, puts two grains of **incense** into a burning lamp, and, while standing up straight, mutters a few words of **magic**. She then opens a chest containing various vials and, from one of them, rubs an oily liquid all over her body. Wings and beaks then sprout and, uttering harsh cries, she flies out of the window. A witness to this tries to do the same thing but gets the wrong vial and turns into an ass.

Shape-shifting was supposedly accomplished by means of a magic ointment, similar to that used for flying through the air on a **broomstick**.

SOURCES:

- Baroja, Julio Caro: *The World of Witches*. Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1968.
Murray, Margaret Alice: *The Witch Cult in Western Europe*. Clarendon Press, 1921.
Robbins, Rossell Hope: *The Encyclopedia of Witchcraft and Demonology*. Crown, 1959.

Sheelagh-na-gig

In a number of old churches in Ireland and other parts of western Europe can be found a sheelagh-na-gig: a small bas relief carving depicting a woman with legs spread wide and displaying greatly enlarged genitalia. Much like the foliate masks—the representations of the old **God** of Nature and of Hunting—that are found in such buildings, these figures were put there by the **pagan** artisans who were made to build the churches. The stone masons and wood carvers incorporated figures of their own deities so that, if they were forced to go to these places to **worship**, they could still worship their old gods there.

The sheelagh-na-gig is the representation of the Goddess of Fertility—the female generative principle. These figures were often placed over building entrances. In addition to churches, they have also been found on priories and convents and occasionally on castles, according to the Janet and Stewart Farrar. Examples can be found above the south door of Whittlesford Church of St. Mary, Cambridgeshire, and at a priory building at St. Ives, Huntingdonshire, among other places.

SOURCES:

- Andersen, Jorgen: *The Witch on the Wall*. Allen & Unwin, 1977.
- Farrar, Janet and Stewart: *The Witches' Goddess*. Phoenix, 1987.
- Goldberg, B. Z.: *The Sacred Fire: The Story of Sex in Religion*. University Books, 1958.
- Harrison, Michael: *The Roots of Witchcraft*. Frederick Muller, 1973.
- Lethbridge, T. C.: *Witches: Investigating an Ancient Religion*. Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962.
- Ross, Anne: *Pagan Celtic Britain*. Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1967.



Carving of sheelagh-na-gig on the exterior of Kilpeck Church, Herefordshire. Courtesy Janet and Colin Bord/Fordean Picture Library.

Sherwood, Grace

In 1689, in the newly formed Princess Anne County of Virginia, carpenter James Sherwood and his wife, Grace, brought suit against a neighbor, Richard Capps, for defamation of character. They claimed damages of fifty pounds (the equivalent of about one thousand dollars today). Capps apologized and the matter was settled out of court. No details of the charges were recorded. However, six months later the Sherwoods were back in court, this time with two suits for slander, asking one hundred pounds on each count. The first suit was against husband and wife John and Jane Gisburne, claiming that Jane “slandered, wronged, and abused” Grace Sherwood. Further, Jane said that Grace was a witch and that she had cast a spell that had blighted the small crop of Gisburne cotton.

The second case claimed that another husband and wife—Anthony and Elizabeth Barnes—had similarly wronged and abused Grace by declaring that she appeared at the Barnes’s farm in the shape of a black cat. In that form, they said, Grace jumped on Elizabeth as she lay in her bed, then drove and whipped her “as a man does a horse.” Grace finally left the room by way of the keyhole!

Both cases were dismissed, however, and the judge assessed James and Grace the cost of attendance and the entertainment of nine witnesses for four days.

For the next few years things remained quiet in Princess Anne County. James Sherwood died, leaving Grace with three sons: John, James, and Richard.

In the fall of 1704 Grace Sherwood appeared in court once again, this time demanding fifty pounds in damages. She charged that Elizabeth Hill assaulted her, bruising and beating her “to great damage.” Elizabeth did not deny the charge. In fact, she asserted that Grace bewitched her, causing her to strike back in defense. Grace was awarded twenty shillings (or one pound). But Elizabeth and her husband, Luke, turned the tables. They immediately took Grace to court, charging her with **witchcraft**.

Up to this point Grace Sherwood had always been the plaintiff; now she was the defendant. On March 7, 1706, the sheriff provided a jury of “discreet and knowing women” who were to physically examine Grace and report their findings. The women were to search Grace for any mark on her body: moles, **warts**, pimples, or any type of blemish. Such a blemish was believed to be a mark of the Devil, where the witch suckled her imp **familiar**.

At the end of the seventeenth century, Scotland, France, and to a lesser extent England were still staggering under the hysterical persecutions. In the New World, in Boston, the Goodwin family’s Irish washerwoman, Goody Glover, was accused of witchcraft by the family’s children, found guilty, and hung. In nearby **Salem** village, nineteen people were hung and one man was pressed to death. In Connecticut various women were charged; many were found guilty, but most were acquitted. In total, nine women and two men were hung there. But in Virginia the authorities were more tolerant.

The justices were Captain Henry Chapman, Mr. John Cornick, Captain George Hendcock, Colonel Edward Moseley, Mr. Jno. Richason, Mr. William Smith, Major Henry Sprat, Lieutenant Adam Thorrowgood, and Captain Horatio Woodhouse. Ann Bridgets, Mary Burgess, Mary Catle, Winiford Davis, Hannah Dimis, Sarah Goodaerd, Ursula Henly, Sarah Norris, Sarah Sergeant, Margaret Watkins, and Exable Waplies comprised the jury of women searchers. The forewoman was none other than Grace Sherwood’s old enemy Elizabeth Barnes. The women quickly found “several spots” on her body signifying that “she was not like them.” The justices had no hesitation in finding Grace guilty.

The case was without precedent in Princess Anne County, and in fact all of Virginia. Colonel Moseley and his fellow justices did not know how to proceed. Eventually they advised Luke and Elizabeth Hill to take their complaint to the Governor’s Council at Williamsburg. This Council was likely the most distinguished, influential body of men in the colonies before the Revolutionary War, its members appointed by the king to hold office for life and awarded the gratuitous title of “colonel.” In April 1706 the members were Colonels William Bassett, James Blair, Robert Carter, William Churchill, John Custis, Dudley Digges, Henry Duke, Benjamin Harrison, Edmund Jennings, John Lightfoot, and Philip Ludwell. They listened to the Hills’s story and examined their papers. They conferred briefly, then, with due ceremony, referred the Hills to the Attorney General.

After reviewing the case, the Attorney General announced that he thought the accusations against Grace Sherwood were far too vague. He decided that Colonel Edward Moseley and his court should handle the affair, and he withdrew his involvement. Luke and Elizabeth Hill returned to Princess Anne County and the justices there.

Sheriff Shallows was ordered to search Grace Sherwood's home for items such as **poppets**, "images and such like things," and report back when the court reconvened in May. Meanwhile, the decision was made to conduct a witch ducking of Grace Sherwood. The theory at that time was that **water**, being the element of baptism, would accept good and reject evil. Therefore an accused witch would sink if innocent and float if guilty. If she did indeed sink, she would be pulled out before she drowned. The court set the date of July 5, 1706, for the ducking.

When the date arrived, bad weather caused the sheriff to postpone the event for a week. On Wednesday July 10, 1706, the court assembled on a point of land on Lynnhaven Bay, on John Harper's plantation. Sheriff Shallows stood by with men and boats. Grace Sherwood was bound in the traditional manner for a witch ducking: her right thumb was tied to her left big toe and her left thumb to her right big toe. She was then taken out in one of the boats to where the water was "above man's depth," and tossed over the side. Perhaps because of the air trapped in the voluminous clothing she wore, Grace managed to stay afloat. She was hauled back into the boat and taken to the shore. There she was again searched, by "five ancient women who have all declared on oath that she is not like them nor other woman that they know of." Grace was then ordered by the court to be secured in irons and held in jail for further trial.

The further trial never materialized, according to the records of Princess Anne County. In 1740 Grace's three sons presented her will, together with proof of her death. She left 145 acres of land to the eldest and a small legacy to the others. There is no record of her age, although she was almost certainly about eighty when she died. Today the spot where she was thrown into the water is still known as Witch Duck Point.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Ray Buckland's Magic Cauldron*. Galde Press, 1995.

Sigil

From the Latin *sigillum* ("seal"), a sigil is a **magical** design or symbol, often representing a word or concept. It is, in effect, a focal point or visual stimulus. Many sigils are created from **Magic Squares** (examples of which are found in *The Book of Sacred Magic of Abra-Melin the Mage*) by connecting the numerical values of letters throughout the square. Such a sigil gives the essence of the name or word that is being used. Others may be obtained by adopting and adapting traditional symbols such as **pentagrams**, **astrological symbols**, **circles**, **squares**, or **triangles**.

Once obtained, sigils are used on **talismans** and for marking magical tools, robes, and crowns in both **Ceremonial Magic** and **Witchcraft**. When properly constructed and **consecrated** before use sigils can convey great power.

SOURCES:

Barrett, Francis: *The Magus*. Lackington, Allen & Co., 1801.

Buckland, Raymond: *Buckland's Complete Book of Witchcraft*. Llewellyn, 1986.

MacGregor-Mathers, S. L. (trans.): *The Book of Sacred Magic of Abra-Melin the Mage*. De Laurence, 1932.

Silver

Silver is the metal of the **Moon** and, as such, it is favored and used a great deal in **Witchcraft**. The bracelet of a **Wiccan High Priestess** is usually made of silver, as is the **crown** and the buckles on the **garter** of a **Witch Queen**. Many modern **Witches** favor silver over gold for their rings, pendants, and other jewelry.

Silver has been considered a metal of **divination**; it's an excellent **screaming** tool if highly polished. In the **Bible**, Genesis 44:5 mentions a silver cup used for divination. An old superstition involved turning a silver coin when making a wish, which should be made to the Moon.

Considered very potent and also pure and impervious to magical influence, silver was ideal for magical work. **Ceremonial Magicians** preferred silver receptacles. The purity of the metal made it perfect to use for making bullets to kill werewolves, vampires, and their ilk.

SOURCES:

Pickering, David: *Dictionary of Witchcraft*. Cassell, 1996.

Sixth Sense

Also known as extrasensory perception, the sixth sense embodies precognition, or a knowledge of future events that logically cannot be based on present events. Many people, such as Ursula “**Mother**” **Shipton**, who foretold the future, were referred to as having a “sixth sense.”

Skyclad

Skyclad—clad only by the sky—is the term **Witches** use to mean that they are naked. Author Michael Jordan suggests that the term may have come from a Jain sect of India known as the *digambaras*, on the basis of its name meaning “sky-clad.” Followers profess that the true ascetic should wear no clothing. Contrary to Jordan's assertion that there is little evidence of naked **Witches**, however, many early illustrations indeed support the skyclad **Witches** theory. In numerous paintings, woodcuts, and engravings naked **Witches** are shown anointing themselves in preparation of their departure for the **sabbat**. Other illustrations show **Witches** at the **sabbat** both naked and clothed. Hans Baldung Grun, the sixteenth-century German, did any number of illustrations (*Witches at Work* and *Witches' Sabbat*, for example) that show naked participants. Albrecht Dürer's *The Four Sorcerers* is of naked witches.

The Douce Collection of the Bodleian Library, Oxford, contains an illustration of *The Witches' Sabbat on the Brocken* with many of the participants naked. Practically all of Goya's paintings of Witches show them naked (*Two Witches Flying on a Broom*, for example). Especially interesting is the 1613 (Paris) edition of Pierre de Lancre's *Tableau de l'inconstance des mauvais anges*, which shows a great gathering of Witches with a circle of dancing nudes in one part of the picture and a naked mother presenting her equally naked child to the **Horned God** in another section.

Today some traditions of **Wicca** work skyclad, while others are robed. Some are robed for some parts of their **rituals** and skyclad for other parts. Charles Godfrey Leland's *Aradia, Gospel of the Witches of Italy* contains the exhortation made by the Witches' **Goddess**, Aradia, speaking to her followers: "And as the sign that ye are truly free, Ye shall be naked in your rites, both men and women also." This is echoed in modern Wicca, in the rite of "**Drawing Down the Moon**." In the *vangelo*, or "gospel," of *Aradia*, it is also stated, when talking of the sabbat: "All shall sit down to the supper all naked, men and women, and, the feast over, they shall dance, sing, make music, and then love in the darkness. . . ."

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Witchcraft from the Inside*. Llewellyn, 1995.

Jordan, Michael: *Witches, an Encyclopedia of Paganism and Magic*. Kyle Cathie, 1996.

Slater, Herman (1938–1992)

A flamboyant character who did much to educate people on the **Craft**, Herman Slater managed to alienate as many as he acquired as admirers. Slater was born in a Jewish neighborhood of New York in 1938 and studied business administration at New York University and liberal arts at Hunter College. He worked in various jobs until 1969, when he was forced to stop working because of tuberculosis. Hip replacement surgery required three years of recuperation.

After a number of paranormal experiences, Slater was **initiated** into a New York **coven** of Welsh Traditional **Witches** by the High **Priest**, Ed Buczynski. Together, Slater and Buczynski opened an **occult** store named "The **Warlock Shop**" in Brooklyn. From there they published a periodical-cum-catalog titled *Earth Religion News*, which rapidly gained notoriety for its content and covers. In 1974 Slater claimed to have been initiated into a **Gardnerian** coven. He moved the store to Manhattan and renamed it the "Magickal Childe."

Slater had a charming way of blatantly appropriating and commercializing the ideas and objects of others. He was given a cast cross-hilt and pommel for a Gardnerian **Wicca sword** (made by **Gerald Gardner**) on the strict understanding that it was for his own personal use and not for commercial use. In a few short weeks his catalog carried copies of the items, cast from that original. In 1974 he published a book titled *A Book of Pagan Rituals* that was almost entirely taken from the *Outer Court Book of the Pagan Way*, written by Ed Fitch. In 1981 his *The Magickal Formulary* appeared with a wide variety of recipes for incense, oils, and powders taken from various sources without permission. Yet for all his faults, Slater was respected, and he did a lot of good spreading the word of the **Old Religion**.

Slater made his own video, *An Introduction to Satanism and Witchcraft*, in which he appeared in his ritual robes and wearing an antlered headdress, accompanied by his pet boa constrictor. He also hosted a weekly cable television show called *The Magical Mystery Tour*. In 1982 he reprinted Gerald Gardner's two main books, *Witchcraft Today* and *The Meaning of Witchcraft*. He died on July 9, 1992, of AIDS.

Smudging

In **Witchcraft**, the consecration of a person or thing involves a sprinkling with salted **water** and a "censing" with the smoke of **incense**. Some **Wiccans** have adopted the Native American form of censing known as "smudging," which involves the burning of sage and other **herbs** and grasses.

Almost any herb that smells good when burned may be used for smudging. Any combination of two or three of the following herbs are traditionally favored among Native Americans: sage or sagebrush (*Artemisia spp.*); sweetgrass (*Hierochloa odorata*); calamus (*Acorus calamus*); red willow bark (*Cornus amomum*); dogswood bark (*Cornus floridum*); cedar needles or bark (*Thuja*, *Chamaecyparis*, and *Juniperus spp.*); and tobacco (*Nicotiana tabacum*). After being ground or cut finely, the herbs are burned on an open plate such as a thin, flat rock or a shell, and the smoke is wafted onto the person or thing using a feather or fan made of bird's wings.

Modern Wiccans will also use white sage, garden sage, sweetgrass, and lavender. These can be dried, then the leaves tied together in a tight bundle wrapped with thread, and the resulting "stick" is burned.

SOURCES:

Hawk, Medicine and Grey Cat: *American Indian Ceremonies*. Inner Light, 1990.

SNAKE see SERPENT

Solitary Witch

A Solitary Witch is one who does not belong to a **coven**. From earliest times there have been **Witches** who worked alone. Since the *raison d'être* of **Witchcraft** is to **worship** and relate to the **gods**, there is no reason at all why a person should not do so alone.

To become a Witch, one must go through an **initiation**, which is essentially a dedication of oneself to the gods. This can be done just as well by the Solitary as by the coven Witch. A Solitary will perform a **ritual** dedicating himself or herself to the gods, stating a desire to worship them from that point onward. Such a **Self Initiation** is as valid as any coven initiation.

If a Solitary Witch desires to do **magic**—which is not required—he or she may do so on an individual basis. The **Wiccan Rede**—"An it harm none, do what thou wilt"—applies equally to the Solitary.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Buckland's Complete Book of Witchcraft*. Llewellyn, 1986.

Sorcery

Sorcery is concerned with the casting of **spells** and the making of **charms**. The word comes from the French *sors*, meaning “spell.” Rosemary Ellen Guiley points out that sorcery is “**low magic**,” in other words, akin to folk magic. It is the magic of the **Hedge Witch**. It is not connected with **worship** of the **Old Gods**, although in Africa the sense of the two is reversed, with sorcery close to religion and “**witchcraft**” viewed as the evil working of magic.

Some anthropologists view sorcery as harmful magic, which in fact it is not. According to the Western definition of the word, sorcery is magic by manipulation of natural forces and powers to achieve a desired end that is not necessarily negative. In the **Bible**, Acts 8:9–11 states, “But there was a certain man, called Simon, which beforetime in the same city used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one: To whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God. And to him they had regard, because that of long time he had bewitched them with sorceries.” Simon was a pupil of Dositheus, a thaumaturgist, or **magician**.

Rossell Hope Robbins claims, “Sorcery is an attempt to control nature, to produce good or evil results, generally with the aid of evil **spirits**. On the other hand witchcraft embraces sorcery, but goes far beyond it.” Guiley mentions that by the late Middle Ages the term “sorcerer” was applied to men of higher learning, such as alchemists, physicians, and **ceremonial magicians**.

In 1432 two arrests for sorcery were recorded in England within a few days of each other. Authorities seized Thomas Northfield, a Franciscan friar of Worcester, along with all his books and other materials of “conjuration.” Another friar, John Ashwell, was also arrested as were his two companions: a clerk named John Virley and a woman named Margery Jourdemayn.

In fifteenth-century England, charges of sorcery were first raised against people of eminence, invariably prompted by their enemies. One celebrated case was that of the Duchess of Gloucester in the reign of Henry VI. But there had been another prominent case, that of **Dame Alice Kyteler** of Kilkenny, Ireland, a hundred years earlier. The Bishop of Ossory, Richard de Ledrede, became convinced that Dame Alice was not a poisoner of husbands (as had been claimed), but a sorceress. In 1324 he charged her with heretical sorcery and also charged ten accomplices with her. He indicted Dame Alice on seven counts.

SOURCES:

Guiley, Rosemary Ellen: *The Encyclopedia of Witches and Witchcraft*. Facts on File, 1989.

Robbins, Rossell Hope: *The Encyclopedia of Witchcraft and Demonology*. Crown, 1959.

Wright, Thomas (ed.): *A Contemporary Narrative of the Proceedings against Dame Alice Kyteler*. Camden Society, 1843.

Spell

A spell is part of an act of **magic**, the essence of the actual working of the magic. While magic itself is causing something to happen that you want to happen, a spell is the **ritual** act of bringing about the desired result.



A witch conjuring demons, along with a demonic cat and dog, in order to divine the future, 1688. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

A ritual is made up of “things said” (*legomena*) and “things done” (*dromena*). A spell is usually the *legomena* of the ritual. Important to a spell are rhythm and rhyme. Many spells are chanted, or even sung, and they have a regular beat to them, usually with the words rhyming. This is to bring about a trance-like state in

the practitioner, aiding in the visualization of the goal and helping build the power needed to project to that goal.

Not all spells rhyme, however. **Prayers** are actually spells. They are desires directed to deity, with thoughts aimed toward the accomplishment of the desire. Prayers are usually made up of words coming directly from the heart, with little thought of rhyming what is said. The feeling expressed is powerful and compensates for the lack of rhyme. Prayers are the least dynamic of spells yet can still be surprisingly effective.

In **Wicca**, spells are usually cast from within the ritual **Circle**. This is to protect the spell caster from any negative feedback. Witches may not perform negative magic, but **binding** spells are generally viewed as being in a “gray area,” where the person at whom the spell is directed is neither helped nor harmed. Binding spells are used when it is deemed necessary to stop someone from talking (especially from giving away **Craft** or magical secrets). Most such binding spells involve the use of a **poppet** to represent the recipient, although they can be done with no more than a photograph or even a brief example of the person’s handwriting. If a poppet is used, it may be of wax, cloth, clay, or similar material. No physical harm comes to the person, but he or she is restricted in words and/or actions regarding the object of the rite.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Buckland's Complete Book of Witchcraft*. Llewellyn, 1986.

Davidson, Thomas: *Rowan Tree and Red Thread*. Oliver and Boyd, 1949.

Pickering, David: *Dictionary of Witchcraft*. Cassell, 1996.

Spirit

The term “spirit” is used in many contexts: the soul of a dead person; the divine essence, or animating principle, within a living being; a **magical** entity of some sort; or a **demon**, angel, or deity. The word comes from the Latin *spirare*, meaning to breathe. This idea may apply not only to humans but also to all animals, birds, and other living things. To the **Wiccan** even the **trees** and plants have spirits, with many **Witches** also believing in spirits of such inanimate objects as **earth** and rocks.

In **Ceremonial Magic**, various spirits and entities may be **conjured** and enjoined to appear to and obey the magician. In **spiritualism** the spirits of the dead are invited to return to speak to the living relatives and friends. In **Witchcraft**, spirits are communed with for a variety of reasons, none of them negative.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Doors to Other Worlds*. Llewellyn, 1993.

Guiley, Rosemary Ellen: *The Encyclopedia of Ghosts and Spirits*. Facts on File, 1992.

Spiritualism

Spiritualism is the belief in and practice of communication with **spirits** of the dead. A 1980 Gallup Poll revealed that 71 percent of Americans believe in an **afterlife**. In many religions, including both Spiritualism and **Wicca**, there is no division of

that afterlife into “Heaven” and “Hell.” There is just one place, neither all good nor all bad, where everyone goes. Andrew Jackson Davis coined the term “Summerland” for this afterlife world; a name that was picked up by **Gerald Gardner** for the afterlife believed in by Wiccans.

Spiritualism maintains that certain people have the ability to act as conduits between this world and the next. They are mediums through which the dead may communicate. Such a medium may receive the information in visions (termed “clairvoyance” or “clear seeing”), by hearing it (“clairaudience” or “clear hearing”), by sensing it (“clairsentience”), or by direct voice (the spirit utilizing the medium’s vocal cords to actually speak). Other ways of communicating include automatic writing, **scrying**, **meditation**, and talking boards.

A gathering to communicate with spirits, with one or more persons acting as medium, is known as a **séance**, or “sitting.” These may vary considerably in structure but usually involve the seekers sitting in a **circle**, holding hands.

When spiritualism is blended in with Christian religious philosophy—the contact with the spirits serving as part of a religious worship service—it is known as Spiritualism, with a capital “S.” There are many Spiritualist churches, but one does not have to belong to one to practice spiritualism.

At the Wiccan **Samhain** celebration it is not unusual for the coven to make contact with spirits of the dead. This usually happens without the aid of a regular medium, many times the entire group seeing or hearing the communicating spirit. Samhain is the traditional time for such contact.

SOURCES:

Barbanell, M: *This Is Spiritualism*. Smithers, 1959.

Buckland, Raymond: *Doors to Other Worlds*. Llewellyn, 1993.

Guiley, Rosemary Ellen: *Encyclopedia of Mystical and Paranormal Experience*. HarperSanFrancisco, 1991.

SPRENGER, JAKOB see MALLEUS MALEFICARUM

Spring Equinox

Many **Witches** call the festival at the Spring Equinox Ostara, or Eostre, after the Teutonic sun **goddess** Ostara and the Anglo-Saxon **fertility** goddess Eostre, whose name was picked up by the Christians and applied to Easter. The name may be from the same source as Astarte and **Ishtar**.

The days and nights are of equal length at the spring, or vernal, equinox. As with all the equinoxes and solstices, the exact date will depend upon the calendar. The twenty-first of the month is the usual date, but it can be a day or so before or after. **Margaret Murray** claimed that the equinoxes were never celebrated in **Celtic** Britain and Teutonic Europe, but today’s **Wiccans** include them in the **sabbats**, making an equal division of the year.

Janet and Stewart Farrar state: “Spring was a particular season in classical and pre-classical times for a form of the **sacrificial** mating . . . the *Hieros Gamos*, or

sacred marriage. In this, woman identified herself with the **Goddess**, and man sank himself into the Goddess through her, giving of his masculinity but not destroying it, and emerging from the experience revitalized." The Wiccan **Great Rite**, the Witches' hieros gamos, is therefore performed at this sabbat festival. Douglas Hill, in *Man, Myth and Magic*, says: "Drinking, **dancing**, feasting, noise-making and love-making have been the usual ways in which men have celebrated occasions of communal happiness . . . but ever since prehistoric times man has reserved special celebratory energies for the turning of the seasons and has reacted with perhaps the strongest surge of emotion to spring, the time when the earth is freed from the shackles of winter."

As with most of the sabbats, **balefires** were lit on the mountain tops to encourage the sun to warm the earth and bring about regeneration of the plants and **trees**. Also at this time many Wiccans bless seeds prior to planting them.

SOURCES:

Farrar, Janet, and Stewart Farrar: *Eight Sabbats for Witches*. Robert Hale, 1981.
Man, Myth and Magic. PBC Publishing, 1970.

Staff

The staff is one of the "working tools" of **Scottish Witchcraft (PectiWita)**. The Gaelic term for a **magical** staff is *an luirgean* or *an lorg ohn*. Scottish Witches use the staff in much the same way as others use a **sword**, **wand**, and/or **athamé**, casting a **circle** with it and also directing energy with it. Oak, yew, walnut, and ash are favorite woods used.

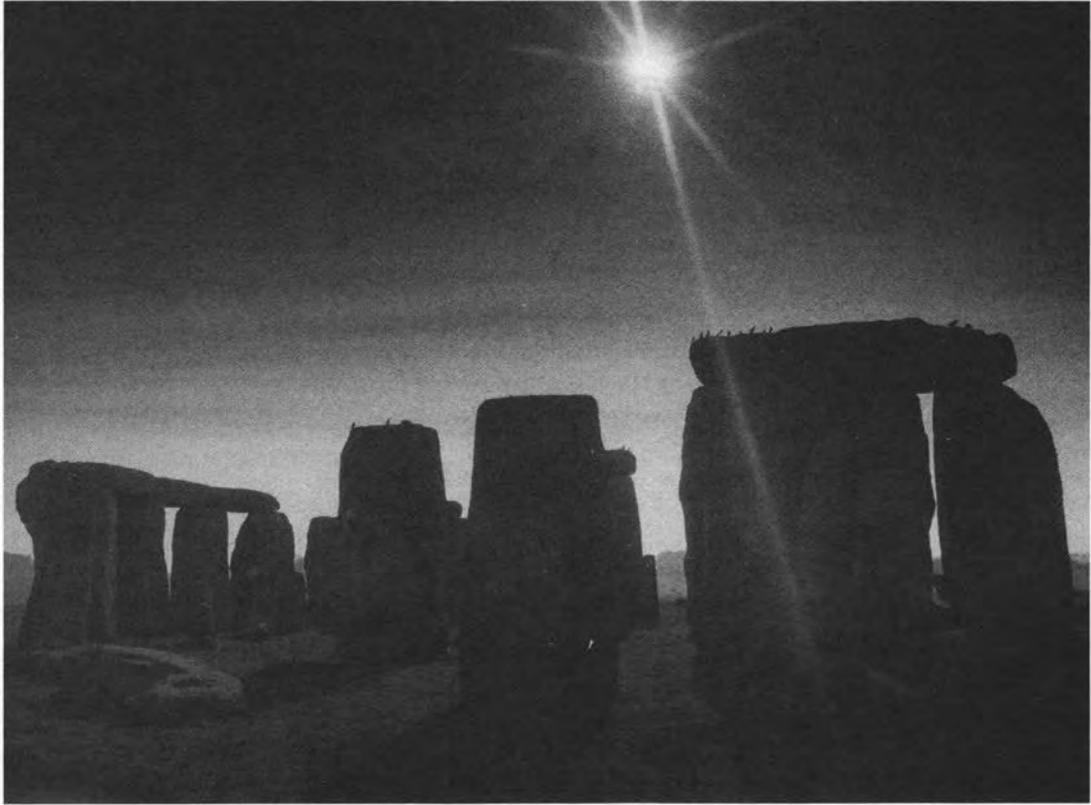
Other **Witches** also use staffs, some for circle casting but most as a purely personal tool. Many **Wiccan elders** have a staff as an unofficial sign of their status. In the old days **trees** were revered, and carrying a staff of such a tree signified authority and power. It is a version of the old rod of power, which manifested as a royal scepter and can also be seen as a bishop's crozier, a mace, a baton, and in many other forms. Traditionally **fairies** carried staffs, some tipped with crystals or pine cones, symbolizing the organ of generation.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Scottish Witchcraft*. Llewellyn, 1992.
 Walker, Barbara G.: *The Woman's Dictionary of Symbols and Sacred Objects*. HarperSanFrancisco, 1988.

Stonehenge

Stonehenge is a circular setting of standing stones and trilithons surrounded by an earthwork, situated about eight miles north of Salisbury, in Wiltshire, England. Long believed to have been built by the **Druids**, Stonehenge in fact predates those people by many hundreds of years. Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae* (c. 1136) contains one of the earliest references to it, in which the legend is told of the stones being transported to that site from Ireland by the **magic** of the magician **Merlin**. In fact, the huge blue stones originated in Pembrokeshire.



Stonehenge, Wiltshire. Courtesy Janet and Colin Bord/Foretan Picture Library.

John Aubrey (1626–97) was the first to incorrectly associate the site with the Druids. In 1740 William Stukeley later elaborated upon this point.

Most of the site is circular in plan. There is an outer ditch with a bank behind it. Inside the bank is a ring of 56 pits known as the Aubrey holes, after their discoverer. There are two further rings of pits, moving inward, before the main stones in the center. This center setting is composed of two circles and two horseshoe shapes of uprights, the first and third capped with lintels. An **Altar** stone lays southwest of center, two Station stones stand just within the bank on the northwest and southeast, and the Hele stone stands on the avenue outside the entrance, itself surrounded by a small circular ditch.

The Henge formation belongs to the late Neolithic period, a date that has been confirmed by pottery and other objects carbon-dated to 1848 BCE. Other parts of the monument were probably started as early as 2800 BCE. The outer horseshoes of the five Sarsen trilithons increase in height from 16 feet at the outside to 22 feet at the center. In 1953 carvings of Bronze Age weapons were discovered on three of the Sarsen stones.

In the 1960s Professor Gerald Hawkins conducted computer-aided research on the site and proffered the theory that the whole complex was, in effect, a giant astronomical observatory, although more recent discoveries have underscored errors in the supposed alignments of certain stones with astronomical events.

Two miles northeast of Stonehenge is Woodhenge, an older site that was originally constructed of large wooden elements in much the same style as the later Stonehenge. Discovered through the use of aerial photography as recently as 1925, Woodhenge is a circular area of 200 feet in diameter, enclosed by an outer bank and inner ditch. It has six concentric rings of holes.

The reason for building Stonehenge, and the uses to which it was put, are unknown. Modern “Druids” (whose history goes back only to 1833) use the site for a Midsummer ceremony that is more media event than religious ritual. It has no connection with **Witchcraft**.

SOURCES:

Bord, Janet, and Colin Bord: *Ancient Mysteries of Britain*. Guild Publishing, 1986.

Bord, Janet, and Colin Bord: *Atlas of Magical Britain*. Sidgwick & Jackson, 1990.

Hawkins, Gerald S.: *Stonehenge Decoded*. Dell, 1966.

Stones and Stone Circles

In addition to **Stonehenge**, many more standing stones and **circles** of stone are scattered around Europe, with several hundred in Britain alone. The **Rollright Stones**, in Oxfordshire, three miles northwest of Chipping Norton, according to local legend were originally an invading Danish king and his army. The invaders were turned to stone by a local **witch** who, in turn, changed herself into an **elder tree**. At Le Menec, on the southern coast of Brittany, there is a great ring of seventy large stones, nearly 300 feet in diameter. To the east of the ring stand eleven lines of standing stones, with a total of 1,099 megaliths. Nine Stones is a small elliptical setting of stones in Dorset, with three circles in nearby Knowlton. Arbor Low is a stone circle in Derbyshire, and Castle Rigg another found in Cumberland. In Pendleton Forest, in Lancashire, are the Hoar Stones, which were frequented by the Lancashire witches in the seventeenth century.

Henges are an exclusively British monumental form. The exact origins and *raison d'être* of these sites are unknown. They likely go back to **pagan** origins but their connection, if any, with the **Old Religion** is for the most part unclear, although many such sites have been frequented by **Witches** in the past and today. Many of these sites certainly involve reverence for the **earth** and for the **goddess of fertility**, known by such names as Macha, Danu/Anu, and Brigit/Bride.

It has been suggested that many of the standing stones are in fact energy points, where energy may be stored, concentrated, and amplified. The “White Stone” at Cregg, in County Londonderry, is a magnificent quartz standing stone that is six feet tall. Several other such standing stones are also of quartz and many are found on **ley lines**. “Leys” (pronounced “lays”) is the term used to indicate ancient straight lines that connect natural points of power in the earth. Many believe that

the leys indicate the course of subtle earth energies. Where two or more leys cross is a power point that has, in the past, naturally drawn people to assemble or build structures such as standing stones, barrows, temples, and churches.

Many standing stones are regarded as representations of the male generative organ. There are also large standing stones with holes through them, representing the female principle. Women have crawled through one such stone, in Cornwall, England, for generations, believing that by so doing they will become fertile. Sick people also would pass through such stones, believing that there was a curative power present. Many Witches will wear a small stone with a natural hole through it, on a cord around their neck, as a symbol for the fertility goddess.

SOURCES:

Bord, Janet, and Colin Bord: *Ancient Mysteries of Britain*. Guild Publishing, 1986.

Bord, Janet, and Colin Bord: *Earth Rites*. Granada, 1983.

Graves, Tom: *Needles of Stone*. Turnstone Press, 1978.

Hadingham, Evan: *Circles and Standing Stones*. Doubleday, 1976.

Hawkes, Jacquetta: *A Guide to the Prehistoric and Roman Monuments in England and Wales*. Chatto & Windus, 1973.

Storm Raising

When King James I of England sailed to Denmark to marry his fifteen-year-old queen, Anne, his ship was badly tossed about in what seemed to be an unnatural storm. One of the accused North Berwick **witches**, Agnes Sampson, admitted to James that her **coven** had caused the storm. She said that they had taken a cat, christened it, and then fastened a human limb—taken from a grave—to each of its paws and tossed it into the sea. This had caused the great storm that had almost sunk the king's ship.

That witches could raise storms was a long-held folkloric belief. By the thirteenth century it was totally accepted as true. As early as 700 CE Archbishop Theodore, in his *Liber Poenitentialis*, ordered five years penance, with at least one year on nothing but bread and water, for raising storms.

In his *Demonolatreiae* (1595), **Nicholas Remy**, the French demonologist, claimed that witches had told him how they would beat pond water with a stick in order to bring rain. They said that the water would rise to form clouds that could then be directed to make rain and hail. Other methods of bringing rain included urinating into a hole in the ground and stirring the mixture with a stick, casting a flint stone over the left shoulder toward the west, shaking a wet broom, boiling hog bristles, and burying sage until it was rotten.

At the trial of Mary Hicks at Huntingdon in 1716, evidence purportedly showed that the accused removed her stockings and made a lather with soap, thus producing a storm in which ships were lost at sea. In 1645 **Matthew Hopkins**, the self-styled "Witch Finder General," **tortured** and forced a confession from the seventy-year-old pastor of Bradeston, the Reverend John Lowes, accused of causing a tempest to sink a ship off Norwich, drowning fourteen sailors.

Many, if not most, of these tales and confessions of storm-raising were torture-induced and/or obvious flights of fancy on the part of the narrator.

SOURCES:

Kittredge, George Lyman: *Witchcraft in Old and New England*. Russell & Russell, 1929.
Robbins, Rossell Hope: *The Encyclopedia of Witchcraft and Demonology*. Crown, 1959.

STREGA see ITALIAN WITCHCRAFT

Streghe, Le (movie)

This 1966 Italian/French movie was directed by Mauro Bolognini, Vittorio De Sica, Pier Paolo Pasolini, Franco Rossi, and Luchino Visconti. It was also known as *Les Sorcières* and, in the United States, *The Witches*.

The movie is actually an anthology of five different directors' works from the previous year. Each tells a story about witches. The five stories are: "The Witch Burned Alive," "Civic Sense," "The Earth as Seen from the Moon," "The Girl from Sicily," and "A Night Like Any Other." Silvia Mangano appears in all five. Clint Eastwood stars in the last of the five.

Suffumigation

Suffumigation, by definition, means "to fumigate from below." This practice involves herbal incenses burned for magical purposes and is used in Ceremonial Magic to attract certain spirits. When an object is consecrated, it is held in the smoke of the incense, thus suffumigating it.

SUMMERLAND see AFTERLIFE

Summer Solstice

One of the Lesser **Sabbats** on the **Wiccan** calendar, the Summer Solstice falls on or about June 21, depending upon when the sun enters Cancer. This was originally a **fire** festival throughout most of Europe, although **Janet and Stewart Farrar** point out that it was late developing as such in **Celtic** countries, since they were not originally solar oriented.

Other names used for the Summer Solstice are St. John's Eve, Alban Hefin, and Litha. It is the time when the sun is at its zenith, giving the longest day of the year. This sabbat marks the end of the reign of the Oak King and the start of that of the Holly King.

SOURCES:

Dunwich, Gerina: *Wicca A to Z*. Citadel, 1998.
Farrar, Janet, and Stewart Farrar: *Eight Sabbats for Witches*. Robert Hale, 1981.

Summers, Montague (1880–1948)

Alphonsus Joseph-Mary Augustus Montague Summers was born in the Barton Regis district of Clifton, near Bristol, England, on April 10, 1880. His father was a justice of the peace and a banker. Summers had six older siblings.

He developed a love of drama at an early age and made himself a toy theater at age sixteen. Although brought up in the Anglican Church, he was fascinated by the **ritual** of Roman Catholicism and became a Roman Catholic. In 1899 he began studies at Trinity College, Oxford, then entered Lichfield Theological College. He obtained his B.A. in 1905 and his M.A. the following year. At the age of 28 he was ordained as a deacon and appointed to a curacy in Bath. There, with another clergyman, he was prosecuted for pederasty but acquitted. In 1909, as a pastor in the Roman Catholic Church, he took up residence in Wonesh, near Guildford.

Although Summers took the title of Reverend, there seems to be some doubt about his ordination, which is presumed to have taken place in Italy. He taught at private schools from 1911 to 1926 and published a number of books as an authority on Restoration literature and eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Gothic novelists. He eventually moved to Oxford, where he wrote a succession of scholarly works, many of them on **occult** subjects such as **witchcraft**, **Satanism**, vampires, and werewolves.

Summers greatly admired both Oscar Wilde and **Aleister Crowley**. He believed very much that witchcraft and Satanism were synonymous and that all **witches** should be burned at the stake. It has been said that he had a split personality, being pious and kind yet having a fascination with evil and lust. He has been described as “a picturesque and somewhat sinister figure in a broad, black cloak, with bejeweled hands and a high-pitched, feminine voice” (*Encyclopedia of Occultism and Parapsychology*, vol. 2, Ed. Leslie A. Shepard).

Summers's most notable books, seemingly heavily researched, include *The History of Witchcraft and Demonology* (1926), *The Geography of Witchcraft* (1927), *The Vampire; His Kith and Kin* (1928), *The Vampire in Europe* (1929), and *The Werewolf* (1933). He translated and annotated the **Malleus Maleficarum** in 1928, the *Compendium Maleficarum* (1929), and *Demonolatry* (1930). Others of his books on witchcraft included *A Popular History of Witchcraft* (1937) and *Witchcraft and Black Magic* (1946).

Summers disagreed with **Margaret Murray**'s theory that witchcraft was a religion dating from pre-Christian times. He sincerely believed that the confessions of the witches, obtained during the persecutions, were real, and he seemed to delight in the stories of evil and obscenity. Russell claims that “Summers's own works and his many editions and translations of classical witchcraft handbooks are marred by frequent liberties in translation, inaccurate references, and wild surmises.” Summers died on August 10, 1948.

SOURCES:

- Frank, Frederick S.: *Montague Summers: A Bibliographical Portrait*. Scarecrow Press, 1988.
Russell, Jeffrey Burton: *Witchcraft in the Middle Ages*. Citadel, 1972.
Shepard, Leslie A.: *Encyclopedia of Occultism and Parapsychology*. Avon, 1978.

Summoner

Also known as the “Messenger of the Gods,” the Summoner was sent out by a coven **High Priestess** to advise the coveners of where and when the next meeting would take place. If it was a **Witch Queen**, or **Queen of the Sabbat**, who sent out word for an upcoming **sabbat** festival, the Summoner would travel to all the **covens** in the covendom. So that he might be recognized as a true messenger of the **Old Religion**, he wore red **garters**.

In *The God of the Witches* **Margaret Murray** says: “To any member of the coven might be deputed the task of summoner. In a small district the Chief himself would notify all members as to the place where the **esbat** or weekly meeting would be held; but in a large district a member, well known to the whole coven, went from house to house with the information.”

Janet and Stewart Farrar speak of a Summoner known as a “Fetch,” who not only advised of coven meetings but would also act as a go-between, or courier, with messages between coven leaders and others not necessarily of the coven(s). He (Summoners are usually male) would also act as an escort when needed.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Witchcraft from the Inside*. Llewellyn, 1995.

Farrar, Janet and Stewart: *The Witches' Way*. Robert Hale, 1984.

Murray, Margaret A.: *The God of the Witches*. Sampson Low, Marston, 1931.

Swastika

The word “swastika” is from the Sanscrit *svastika*, meaning “well-being” or “good luck.” Based on a sun wheel, or **Wheel of the Year**, it has been found in many countries over many thousands of years, and is one of the most ancient and widespread of all decorative forms, appearing in both hemispheres.

In Buddhism, the clockwise form of the swastika represents cessation and the counterclockwise version genesis. The swastika is found among Native American tribes, such as the Navaho, and a swastika formed by four long-beaked birds has been found in Native American burial mounds. Ancient Greek and Aegean pottery has been found decorated with the symbol. It is also found in China, Persia, Asia Minor, Libya, Scandinavia, Britain, and Iceland.

In some examples the swastika is depicted as two S-curves intersecting at right angles at the center. A Solar Swastika is formed by an equal-armed cross with the ends forming into circles. This represents the four solar festivals: the solstices and equinoxes.

The swastika first appeared in Germany in the late nineteenth century, associated with the *völkisch* movement's ideology. Hitler's National Socialist German Workers' Party eventually adopted it as its symbol. It has thus become associated with the infamy of the Nazis during World War II but, in fact, like any other symbol, it is neither good nor evil in itself. It is merely a symbol and has meaning only to the person using it.

SOURCES:

Man, Myth and Magic. BPC Publishing, 1970.

Walker, Barbara G.: *The Woman's Dictionary of Symbols and Sacred Objects*. HarperSanFrancisco, 1988.

Swimming a Witch

In 1689, in the newly formed Princess Anne County of Virginia, carpenter James Sherwood and his wife Grace brought suit against a neighbor, Richard Capps, for defamation of character. They won the suit but six months later were back in court with two separate suits for slander against other neighbors. Apparently the neighbors of the Sherwoods believed strongly that Grace was a **witch**. In 1704 Grace was back in court again as a plaintiff, but two years later, neighbors turned the tables and took Grace to court on a charge of **witchcraft**. The trial dragged on for some time before Grace Sherwood was found guilty, and it dragged further before any sentence was carried out.

To confirm Grace's guilt it was decided to "swim" or "duck" her. The theory was that **water**, the element of baptism, would only accept good and would reject evil. Therefore, if a witch was thrown in the water and she floated, her guilt was confirmed. She could then be dragged out and executed. On the other hand, if she sank, she was indeed innocent; it was hoped that she could be pulled out and rescued before she drowned. Grace Sherwood floated, although it was probably due to the air trapped in her voluminous clothing.

Swimming a witch was a common procedure for determining probable guilt. In *Daemonologie*, 1507, King James stated: "It appears that **God** hath appointed, for a supernatural sign of the monstrous impiety of the witches, that the water shall refuse to receive them in her bosom, that have shaken off them the sacred water of baptism and wilfully refused the benefit thereof."

In *Discovery of Witches* (1647), Matthew Hopkins stated: "If a man charges another with **black magic** and has not made his case good, the one who is thus taxed shall go to the river and plunge into the water. If the river overcometh him, then shall his accuser possess his property. If, however, the river prove him innocent and he be not drowned, his accuser shall surely be put to death, and the dead man's property shall become the portion of him who underwent the ordeal." The method of preparing the person for swimming involved tying the right thumb to the left big toe and the left thumb to the right big toe. This was known as being "cross bound."

The first official use of the swimming test in England occurred in Northampton in 1612 against Arthur Bill and his parents. The last use was in Leicester in 1717 against a mother and daughter who, it was recorded, "swam like a cork, a piece of paper, or an empty barrel, though they strove all they could to sink." Although swimming a witch was later banned, many people took the law into their own hands; in 1751 two beggars, husband and wife, were drowned at Longmarston, Northamptonshire. As recently as 1865 a mob swam an elderly deaf and dumb Frenchman who subsequently died.



Swimming a witch, 1613. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Ray Buckland's Magic Cauldron*. Galde Press, 1995.

Hole, Christina: *Witchcraft in England*. Batsford, 1947.

Hughes, Pennethorne: *Witchcraft*. Longmans, Green, 1952.

Kittredge, George Lyman: *Witchcraft in Old and New England*. Russell & Russell, 1956.

Robbins, Rossell Hope: *The Encyclopedia of Witchcraft and Demonology*. Crown, 1959.

Sword

One of the coven tools in Wicca, a sword is used to mark the ritual Circle. The Priest or Priestess walks around the line marked on the ground and points the tip of the sword at it, directing energy into that line. This is the first stage of consecrating the Circle; the second and third stages involve sprinkling it with consecrated water and censing it with the fumes of incense.

The coven has only one sword, since it is only used in a coven situation. It is not necessary, therefore, for every Witch to own a sword. However, the sword may be used in lieu of a magic wand for directing power when working magic. This, again, is done in a coven situation with the coven leader wielding the sword.

At the start of many initiations, the officiating priest points the sword at the neophyte when asking if he or she really does wish to become a Witch. Sometimes the words, “For ’tis better to run on my sword and perish than to make the attempt with fear in thy heart,” are addressed to the initiate.

The sword used in the **Gardnerian tradition** of Wicca has a brass cross-hilt that comprises two crescent **moons** back-to-back. The pommel is circular with a **penta-gram** engraved on each side. Many other Wiccan swords also follow this design.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Buckland's Complete Book of Witchcraft*. Llewellyn, 1986.
Buckland, Raymond: *Witchcraft from the Inside*. Llewellyn, 1995.

Sympathetic Magic

Sympathetic **magic** may also be called Imitative magic, since **ritual** actions imitate the real ones you wish to bring about. There are probably more forms of sympathetic magic than any other type. It is a magic that follows the rule of “like attracts like.” In *The Golden Bough*, Sir James Frazer states that all magic is based on the Law of Sympathy—that all things are connected by invisible bonds.

Sympathetic magic can take more forms in **Witchcraft**, such as **candle-burn- ing**, **poppet** or image magic, placket magic, and beating **water** to bring rain. In candle magic, the candles are used to represent people and things. By manipulating them, the practitioner exerts forces on those people and things. Poppets are actual cloth, wax, or clay figures made to represent specific persons and are manipulated as desired to manipulate those people. Plackets (Old English for both “pocket” and “vagina”) are containers used to hold pictures, photographs, or objects associated with specific persons, again to be manipulated as desired.

Nicholas Remy, the French demonologist, claimed in his *Demonolatreiae* (1595) that **witches** had told him how they would beat pond water with a **broom- stick** in order to bring rain. They said that the water would rise to form clouds, which could then be directed to make rain and hail.

SOURCES:

Davidson, Thomas: *Rowan Tree and Red Thread*. Oliver and Boyd, 1949.
Frazer, Sir James: *The Golden Bough*. Macmillan, 1890.
Hole, Christina: *Witchcraft in England*. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1947.
Murray, Margaret Alice: *The God of the Witches*. Sampson Low, Marston, 1931.
Seabrook, William: *Witchcraft: Its Power in the World Today*. Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1940.



Talisman

The word “talisman” is from the Greek root *teleo*, meaning “to consecrate.” A talisman is a man-made object endowed with magical power, often used for purposes of protection. A rosary, St. Christopher medal, or crucifix are all, in effect, talismans. The most potent of magic is that done for a specific purpose by the person most concerned. Therefore, the normal, store-bought crucifix or St. Christopher medal are too general and nonpersonal to be as effective as they might be. However, as talismans they would certainly be more powerful if constructed from scratch and could be made even more potent by a ritual consecration, as the name implies.

Pierre de Bresche, in *Traité des Talismans* (1671), said: “A talisman is nothing else than the seal, figure, character, or image of celestial omen, planet, or constellation; impressed, engraved, or sculptured upon a sympathetic stone or upon a metal corresponding to the planet, by a workman whose mind is settled and fixed upon his work and the end of his work without being distracted or dissipated in other unrelated thoughts; on the day and at the hour of the planet; in a fortunate place; during fair, calm, weather and when the planet is in the best aspect that may be in the heavens, the more strongly to attract the influences proper to an effect depending upon the power of the same and on the virtues of its influences.”

De Bresche makes an important point when he says, “. . . by a workman whose mind is settled and fixed upon his work and the end of his work . . .” In other words, in making a talisman, the maker must concentrate on the engraving or drawing he is doing and must also concentrate on the “end” or purpose for which the talisman is being made, to the absolute exclusion of all else.

A talisman can be of any shape and of virtually any material. Many are constructed on parchment or paper. Others are engraved into metal, the metal specifically chosen (as de Bresche mentioned, above) according to the talisman’s purpose. For example, silver is the metal of the Moon, so silver would be used to make a talis-



A talisman reputed to have the power of causing the stars to fall from heaven. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

man for the purposes connected with the Moon: dreams, theft, or merchandise. To go a step further, it should be made on a Monday—the Moon day—and also made in the *hour* of the Moon, which would be the first hour of the daylight or the night-time hours (see **Planetary Hours**).

The metals associated with the days of the week and their properties are as follows:

Sunday—Sun—Gold: fortune, hope, money.

Monday—Moon—Silver: dreams, merchandise, theft.

Tuesday—Mars—Iron: enemies, matrimony, prison, war.

Wednesday—Mercury—Mercury/Aluminum: debt, fear, loss.

Thursday—Jupiter—Tin: clothing, desires, honor, riches.

Friday—Venus—Copper: friendship, love, strangers.

Saturday—Saturn—Lead: building, doctrine, life, protection.

According to the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, a talisman is “a magical figure charged with the Force which it is intended to represent.” It is so charged by inscription and consecration. The inscription can, as mentioned, be written or engraved. For inscriptions written on paper or parchment, the ink is often handmade and the pen is a quill made from a feather. The consecration is completed when the paper is sprinkled with salted water and held in the smoke of burning incense.

What is put on the talisman is the most important part of the ritual. It can be a word or words, or it can be a **sigil** or traditional design. Many medieval talismans show geometric designs in combination with magical symbols. Following the doctrine that the more energy you put into the making of the talisman, the more powerful it will be, any writing is usually done in one of the magical alphabets, which require a great deal of concentration to use. The sigils can be constructed from such things as magical squares, again giving greater power to their meanings. Great care has to be exercised when constructing **magic squares**. When drawn on parchment, the squares should be marked in black ink with the numbers or letters in red ink. All should be drawn with the parchment set up so that the maker’s shadow does not

fall on the parchment. The red lines should not touch the black anywhere. As with all magical items, it should be appropriately consecrated before use.

The first step in making a talisman is to determine precisely how it will be used. Will it be for protection, to bring love, for healing, to gain power, or for some other purpose? Once the need has been determined, that need must then be reduced to a single sentence. From there, the **Witch** or **magician** can decide which of the planets and the days of the week would be most appropriate for that purpose. For example, Tuesday is appropriate for matrimony, while Friday is appropriate for love. Thursday is good for desires. Which of the three would be best suited for the talisman? Will it be affecting a new love, the desire for love, or a state of marriage that already exists?

Once the proper sigil has been determined and applied to the talisman, and it has been personalized for the one who will use it, the object must be consecrated before it can be used. So long as it is worn, it will continue to work and to attract the required forces from the universe.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Buckland's Complete Book of Witchcraft*. Llewellyn, 1986.

Cirlot, J. E.: *A Dictionary of Symbols*. Philosophical Library, 1962.

González-Wippler, Migene: *The Complete Book of Amulets and Talismans*. Llewellyn, 1991.

Tantra

Tantra, a form of sex magic, plays an essential role in a number of magical societies. Long periods of training are a prerequisite of this highly specialized practice. Certain exercises lead to the control of various autonomic functions, such as body temperature, pulse rate, and the reflexes that trigger ejaculation. Breathing exercises are also an important part of the discipline.

The word *Tantra* is the name of the Hindu texts in which the system is expounded. According to Tantric philosophy, the universe is built up of two basic forces personified as male and female **deities**, the **god** Shiva and his consort Shakti. The female principle is the dominant one and the male the subordinate. Women are treated on terms of complete equality with men and in many of the rites are assigned superior status, as living embodiments of the mother **goddess**. This makes the philosophy and practice appealing to many **Wiccans**.

Many Tantric **rituals** are similar to **ceremonial magic** ones, with candles, **incense**, **wands**, **bells**, **magic circles**, and **words of power**. Awakening the "sleeping serpent" known as the **kundalini** power is a major part of Tantric practice. Once aroused, the kundalini travels up through the **chakras** of the body. The ability to open the chakras in their correct order so that the kundalini can continue its upward journey is essential to the working of Tantra. At the climax of the journey, Shakti and Shiva are united in an ecstasy that is known as "The Supreme Bliss." The Hindu texts contend that only by laying hold of the power inherent in the sex force is it possible to find the creative energy to ascend to spiritual liberation.

Benjamin Walker describes one Tantric rite, "known as *chakra-puja* or circle worship, where the participants sit in a circle, which implies complete mutual

equality among those present. Male and female participants sit next to each other on the floor, and in the middle of the circle sit another couple who represent Shakti and Shiva. Sometimes a nude girl occupies the central place as Shakti All the members partake of a ceremonial meal consisting of wine, flesh, fish, and bread, followed by a rite of sexual intercourse.” In the Tantric circle **worship**, participants do not choose their partners; no personal preference is allowed. Various means are used to ensure that the partners pair by chance and not by choice, so a man may partner with his wife, with another man’s wife, or with his sister, his daughter, or even his mother. One Tantric text says, “The man who knows the fiery form of Shiva procreates himself anew at every intercourse. His body glows, his mind is crystal clear, his **spirit** in harmony with heaven.”

SOURCES:

Garrison, Omar: *Tantra: The Yoga of Sex*. Avon, 1973.

Kraig, Donald Michael: *Modern Sex Magick*. Llewellyn, 1998.

Mumford, Jonn: *Sexual Occultism*. Llewellyn, 1975.

Walker, Benjamin: *Man, Myth and Magic: Tantrism*. BPC Publishing, 1970.

Tarot

The oldest known cards used for **divination** are the *tarocchi*, or Tarot cards. Their exact origin is unknown. Some **occultists** and tarot experts, including Etteilla, **Eliphas Lévi**, and S. L. MacGregor-Mathers, suggest they can be traced back to ancient Egypt, while others consider them an invention of the Chinese. However, there is little or no evidence to support either of these theories. It seems far more likely that the Roma, or **Gypsies**, brought the cards with them into Europe, although the exact date of this is unknown. The earliest known deck of tarot cards dates from the fourteenth century. De Givry claims there is a trace of the tarot in Germany as early as 1329 but does not give any details.

The tarot deck itself consists of seventy-eight cards in two parts: the Major Arcana (or Greater Trumps) and the Minor Arcana (or Lesser Trumps). The Major Arcana consists of twenty-two cards. Each displays an allegorical figure in a scene of complicated symbolic meaning. Some occultists attribute them to the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet:

- 1—The Magician—Aleph
- 2—The High Priestess—Beth
- 3—The Empress—Gimel
- 4—The Emperor—Daleth
- 5—The Hierophant—Heh
- 6—The Lovers—Vav
- 7—The Chariot—Zain
- 8—Justice—Cheth
- 9—The Hermit—Teth
- 10—The Wheel of Fortune—Yod
- 11—Strength—Kaph
- 12—The Hanged Man—Lamed

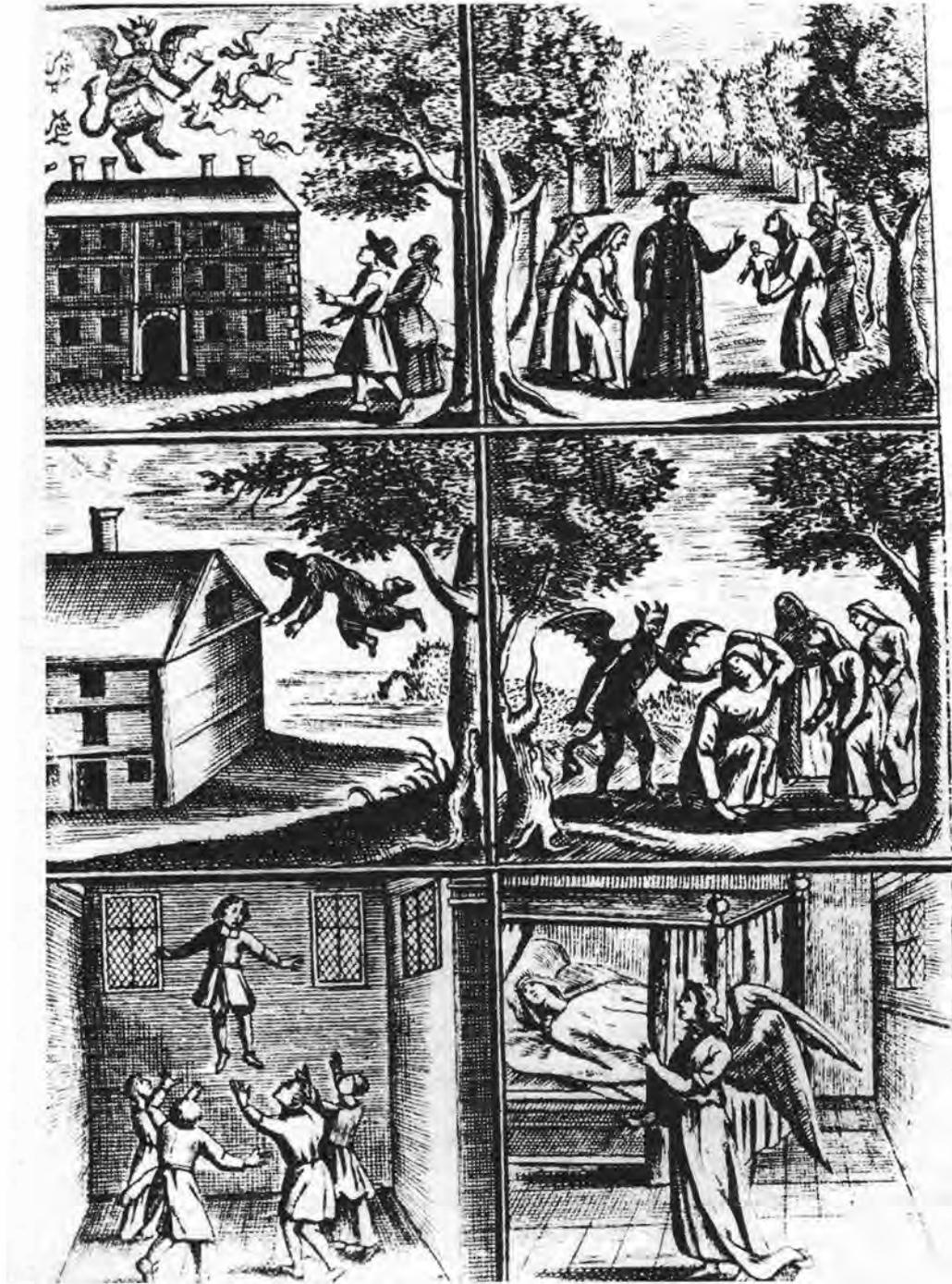


Tarot cards based on the Marseilles deck: the Hanging Man, the unnamed Death Card, and Temperance. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

- 13—Death—Mem
- 14—Temperance—Nun
- 15—The Devil—Samekh
- 16—The Tower—Ayin
- 17—The Star—Peh
- 18—The Moon—Tzaddi
- 19—The Sun—Qoph
- 20—Judgement—Resh
- 21—The World—Shin
- 0—The Fool—Tav

While some attribute the cards listed here, others, including Paul F. Case, place The Fool at the beginning (since the number is 0), realigning up everything as follows:

- 0—The Fool—Aleph
- 1—The Magician—Beth
- 2—The High Priestess—Ginél



Frontispiece of *Saducismus Triumphans*, 1681, showing the major cases of witchcraft discussed by Joseph Glanville in his book. The Tedworth Drummer appears in the upper left. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

To further complicate matters, A. E. Waite and Paul F. Case give the number 8 to Strength and number 11 to Justice, the reverse of what all other practitioners contend.

The Minor Arcana is divided into four suits, variously known as **Wands** (Koshes, Staffs, Staves, Batons, Rods, Scepters), **Cups** (Koros, Chalices, Cauldrons, Vessels), **Pentacles** (Bolers, Coins, Disks, Stars, Deniers), and **Swords** (Chivs, Knives, Blades, Spears). Each suit runs from Ace to Ten, with a Page, Knight, Queen, and King. The regular card deck of hearts, diamonds, clubs, and spades is based on the Minor Arcana. Somewhere along the way the Page became a Jack, the Knight fell out, and the Major Arcana's Fool became the Joker.

On some decks, the cards of the Minor Arcana merely display the number of each suit, such as six swords, three cups, or ten pentacles. But many more decks depict a whole scene on each card, usually incorporating the number of symbols in the scene.

In a reading, the Querent shuffles the cards and then draws off a number of them. The Reader arranges these cards in a particular pattern—many different spreads can be used. Each card position has its own meaning, which the Reader interprets. The cards can give an indication of the probable course of events over the next few months for the Querent. As with any form of divination however, nothing is set in stone, and the forces can change or be changed.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *The Buckland Romani Tarot: The Gypsy Book of Wisdom*. Llewellyn, 2001.

Case, Paul Foster: *The Tarot: A Key to the Wisdom of the Ages*. Macoy, 1947.

Gray, Eden: *A Complete Guide to the Tarot*. Crown, 1970.

Gray, Eden: *The Tarot Revealed*. Inspiration House, 1960.

Kaplan, Stuart: *Tarot Classics*. Grosset & Dunlap, 1972.

Waite, Arthur Edward: *The Pictorial Key to the Tarot*. University Books, 1959.

Tedworth Drummer

The case of the Tedworth Drummer is an early example of poltergeist phenomena. It was first recorded by Joseph Glanville in his *Sadducismus Triumphatus* (1668). The occurrence was at the home of a magistrate, John Mompesson, in Tedworth, England, in April, 1661.

It all began with a simple case of vagrancy. William Drury was an itinerant **magician** as well as a drummer who was caught in some suspect dealings. Officials confiscated his belongings, which included his drum. Drury was found guilty and forced to leave the area. His drum was not returned to him but was kept at the magistrate's house.

The magistrate later had to leave home for a few days. He returned to hysterical reports of strange noises that had been plaguing his house ever since he had left. The noises sounded like the tapping and banging of a drum, and came from within the walls and on the roof. Roundheads, cuckolds, and tattoos played at all hours of the day and night, very obviously beaten out on a drum. Magistrate Mompesson had Drury's drum brought out and personally destroyed it. He assumed that would take care of things. It did not; the sounds continued.

The Reverend Joseph Glanville, chaplain to King Charles II, was invited to investigate. According to the account given in his book, Glanville went upstairs and found two young girls, aged seven and eleven, sitting on their bed, very frightened. Scratching noises came from the bolster at the head of the bed and from the wall panels. Glanville could see the girls' hands in full view so he knew they were not the cause of the noises. He searched carefully and thoroughly but could find no explanation for the sounds.

Glanville noticed a second bed with a linen bag hanging from one of its bedposts, swinging and moving as though it contained something alive. He grabbed the bag and up-ended it, but found nothing inside.

After many days the sounds began to die down. Mompesson learned that Drury had been found guilty of theft in the city of Gloucester and deported to the colonies. Drury's departure seemed to quiet the noises. Some months later, however, the noises started up again, and it was learned that Drury had returned to England. The sound of the drum became more intense than ever and was accompanied by other poltergeist phenomena. Shoes flew across rooms, chamberpots emptied onto beds, and terrible sulfurous smells filled many parts of the house.

The drumming sounds were so loud that others in the village could hear them clearly. No explanation could be found, and the noises continued for almost a year until they suddenly stopped. Mompesson tried to locate William Drury, but he seemed to have disappeared. He was never heard from again, and the sound of his drum was heard no more.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Ray Buckland's Magic Cauldron*. Galde Press, 1995.

Robbins, Rossell Hope: *The Encyclopedia of Witchcraft and Demonology*. Crown, 1959.

THEBAN see MAGICAL ALPHABETS

Theism

In the broadest sense, theism means a belief in **God**. The general implication, however, is that the belief is held in a conscious and rational manner; hence theism is usually applied only to a system of beliefs that has some claim to be regarded as a philosophy. **Wiccans** are considered **polytheists**, believing in more than one god. They might also be regarded as pantheists, believing that the divine is in all of Nature.

Theism is the direct antithesis of atheism, which is a denial of the existence of a god. Theism is also distinguished from deism, a belief held by a group of eighteenth-century writers on natural religion who thought of god and the world as being quite separate and distinct.

SOURCES:

Encyclopedia Britannica. William Benton, 1964.

THIRD DEGREE see DEGREE SYSTEM

Third Eye

The spot on a person's face between and slightly above the eyebrows is frequently referred to as the position of the third eye. It is the location of the pineal gland and the site of the sixth **chakra**. In yoga philosophy it is the *ajna chakra*. It is the focus for **meditation** in Oriental mysticism.

SOURCES:

Shepard, Leslie A.: *Encyclopedia of Occultism and Parapsychology*. Avon, 1978.

Thirteen

Although considered an unlucky number by some, thirteen should in fact be thought of as lucky. There are thirteen **moons** in the year—making it the number of the Moon **Goddess**; thirteen is the traditional number for a **Witches' coven**; in Christianity Jesus had twelve disciples, for a total of thirteen; in alchemy it is the number of **necromancy**—of bringing the dead back to life; a “baker's dozen” includes an extra item, or thirteen; according to Pythagoras, adding one to twelve creates the unlimited number of thirteen, and through this formula miracles may take place; in the system of gematria found in the **Kabbalah**, thirteen is equated with “love of unity.”

Some ascribe the belief that thirteen is unlucky to the fact that there were thirteen who sat down to the Last Supper, but the belief is far older than the beginnings of Christianity. The Romans, for example, associated the number with death and misfortune. Twelve is considered a perfect number (there are twelve hours in the day, twelve in the night, twelve months in the year, twelve signs of the **zodiac**, twelve tribes of Israel, etc.); by going beyond that, to thirteen, one leaves the beneficence of the stable number and invites bad luck.

SOURCES:

Guiley, Rosemary Ellen: *The Encyclopedia of Witches and Witchcraft*. Facts on File, 1989.

Hoffman, Paul: “Friday the 13th.” *Smithsonian*. Feb. 1987.

Thoth

In Graeco-Roman times, the Egyptian **Moon God** Djehuti, or Zehuti, took the form Thoth (pronounced “Toe-th”). He was associated with Hermes. In Egypt, Thoth was patron of literature, science, wisdom, and inventions. He was also the spokesman for the gods and Keeper of the Records.

Thoth is depicted with the head of an ibis and, many times, wearing a solar disk sitting on a crescent on his head. Thoth also was occasionally depicted as a dog-headed ape, suggesting that he may have been derived from a fusion of two earlier lunar deities. He is usually counted as the oldest son of Ra but sometimes as the child of Geb and Nut.

Thoth had all knowledge and wisdom. He invented mathematics, astronomy, **magic**, medicine, music, and all the arts and sciences. He was also the inventor of

hieroglyphs and, as such, became known as “Lord of Holy Words.” As Moon God, it was his job to measure time.

A tarot deck designed by **Aleister Crowley**, with the art executed by Frieda Hariss, is known as the Crowley Thoth Tarot.

SOURCES:

Larousse Encyclopedia of Mythology. Hamlyn, 1966.

Rawlinson, George: *History of Ancient Egypt*. Dodd, Mead, 1880.

Wilkinson, Sir J. Gardner: *The Ancient Egyptians: Their Life and Customs*. Crescent Books, 1988.

THREEFOLD KISS see SALUTE

Threefold Law

In **Wicca** the Threefold Law—also known as the Law of Three—is the law of return. The concept of **karma** in **Witchcraft** is to do good and good will be returned, either three times or at three times the intensity. But do evil, and that too will return threefold. These returns will be *within the current lifetime*. There is no “putting off” rewards or punishments, as in Christianity; they come about in the present life. With this belief there is no inducement for a Witch to do evil. It is, therefore, a corollary of the **Wiccan Rede**: “An it harm none, do what thou wilt.” By consciously harming none as you live your life, you will not invoke any negative return upon yourself.

Some **Witches** believe that the return is not threefold, simply like for like. Others hold to a sevenfold return. Charles Godfrey Leland’s *Aradia, Gospel of the Witches* refers to a double return. The majority of **Witches**, however, believe in the Threefold Law. Karma is the Sanskrit word for “action” with no implication of reward or punishment.

The Threefold Law has become a cornerstone principle at the heart of **Wicca**, yet there was no mention of it in print until **Raymond Buckland**’s book, *Witchcraft Ancient and Modern*. Buckland was a disciple of **Gerald Gardner** and introduced Gardnerian **Wicca** into the United States in the early 1960s. Gardner founded **Gardnerian Witchcraft** and taught the Threefold Law as part of that tradition.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Witchcraft Ancient and Modern*. HC Publishers, 1970.

Buckland, Raymond: *Buckland’s Complete Book of Witchcraft*. Llewellyn, 1986.

Crowther, Patricia: *Lid Off the Cauldron*. Frederick Muller, 1981.

Valiente, Doreen: *Witchcraft for Tomorrow*. Robert Hale, 1978.

THURIBLE see CENSER

TITUBA see SALEM WITCH TRIALS

Toad

Many a **Witch** of old was accused of having a “**familiar**”—an imp of the devil—to do her bidding, and this was frequently described by her accusers as being in the

shape of a toad. One reason behind this thought was that most Wise Ones would indeed keep a toad in their garden to take care of the insects that attacked the flowers and plants. Many of the aromatic plants and **herbs** attracted all forms of insect life. A toad was therefore a common possession.

In 1566 Mother Waterhouse, one of the Chelmsford witches, purportedly changed her white-spotted cat into a toad. In 1579, at Windsor, Mother Dutton of Cleworth Parish was accused of keeping a spirit “in the likeness of a toad” and feeding it while it was “lying in a border of green herbs” in her garden. Three years later, at St. Osyth in Essex, eight-year-old Thomas Rabbet claimed that his mother, Ursley Kemp, had several spirits, one of which was “black like a toad.” That same year, Alice Hunt, also of St. Osyth, confessed to having two spirits like toads, “the one called Tom and the other Robbyn.” In 1599 Olive Barthram, executed at Bury St. Edmunds for “devilish and wicked witcheries practiced upon Joan Jorden,” was supposed to have sent three toads to trouble her victim in her bed. In 1665, at the trial of the Bury St. Edmund witches, a Dr. Jacob gave evidence that he had found a toad in the bedding of one of the children involved in accusing the two women in the case. The doctor stated that he had thrown the toad into a **fire** and as a result one of the accused, Amy Duny, developed burns on her arms. Similarly, in the Maldon case of 1579, a toad was burned and Mary Smith (executed in 1616) also suffered appropriate burns.

It was generally believed that a jewel could be found buried in a toad’s head. Such a stone had great magical properties and was highly sought. Any stone that had a color reminiscent of a toad, or was in the shape of a toad, came to be called a “toad stone” and might be set into a ring or pendant, to be worn as a protective talisman.

SOURCES:

Kittredge, George Lyman: *Witchcraft in Old and New England*. Russell & Russell, 1956.

Murray, Margaret Alice: *The Witch Cult in Western Europe*. Clarendon Press, 1921.

Notestein, Wallace: *A History of Witchcraft in England from 1558 to 1718*. Russell & Russell, 1965.

Tools

Witchcraft utilizes various “working tools,” including both **coven** tools and personal tools. Coven tools, as the name implies, are used purely in a coven situation, with just one of each tool available for the whole coven’s use. Personal tools are those that are owned and used by individual **Witches**.

The number and variety of coven tools depends upon the **tradition** of the coven. For example, some traditions use a **sword** to mark and consecrate the **ritual Circle**; others will not have a sword but may use a **besom**, or broomstick, to “sweep” the Circle. Still others may make do with an **athamé** or a **staff**, rather than a sword. Below are listed some of the tools used in **Witchcraft**:

SWORD—Usually used to mark and consecrate the **magic Circle**, it is also used in **initiations**. It is only used by the **Priest** or **Priestess**.

WAND—A capacitor and projector for the magical power raised. It may also be used to “draw down” the deities, as in “**Drawing Down the Moon**.”

WHITE HANDLED KNIFE—A true tool in that it is used to mark or engrave other tools with magical sigils.

SCOURGE—Used in initiations as part of the symbolic death that is found as part of that rite. By some Witches, scourging is also done in magical work.

CENSER—Also known as a “thurible,” this is used for burning the **incense** that helps create the right atmosphere for the rituals.

SALT—Representing life, or the life force. This is always on the **altar** and is an essential part of the consecration process.

WATER—Representing **spirit**; like salt, it is an essential part of the consecration process.

CORDS—Used to bind both in initiation (representing the restrictions of the womb prior to birth) and for the working of magic.

PENTACLE—Used in divination as a **scrying** tool.

ASPERGILLUM—Used to sprinkle the salted water during a consecration.

ATHAME—This is the Witch’s personal tool. Every Witch should have his or her own athamé. It is a ritual tool, not used for any physical cutting and most certainly never to draw blood.

BESOM—A ritual broomstick used in some **fertility** rituals and by some covens for Circle casting or closing.

STAFF—A version of the old rod of power, which manifested as a royal scepter and can also be seen as a bishop’s crozier, a mace, a baton, and in many other forms. Used by some Witches like a wand and/or a sword.

CANDLE—Always found on the altar and also around the Circle at the four cardinal points.

BELL—Used by some Witches in various rituals.

Anything may be used by a Witch as a ritual tool if he or she feels that it is important and if there is good reason for using it. What is felt to be essential to one Witch is not necessarily acknowledged by another.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Buckland’s Complete Book of Witchcraft*. Llewellyn, 1986.

Farrar, Janet and Stewart: *The Witches’ Way*. Robert Hale, 1984.

Harris, Eleanor and Philip: *The Crafting and Use of Ritual Tools*. Llewellyn, 1998.

Torture

The vast majority of the evidence obtained during the persecutions—evidence that purportedly showed **witchcraft** to be aligned with **black magic** and **Satanism**—was coerced from the accused through the use of torture. **Doreen Valiente** put it best

when she said, “Were I to tell the full and detailed story of how the supposed followers of the Christian **God** of Love have smeared their blood-stained hands over the pages of human history, I would be accused of anti-Christian prejudice. Yet every detail of such an accusation could be supported by documentary evidence, in sickening abundance.”

Torture was widely employed across continental Europe and also in Scotland. It was not permitted in England, although some **witch** hunters, including **Matthew Hopkins**, managed to skirt the regulations on most occasions.

In some trials the judge falsely pronounced that confession was obtained without the aid of torture. In his book *Cautio Criminales* (1631), Friedrich von Spee said, “I wondered at this and made inquiry and learned that in reality they were tortured, but only in an iron vice with sharp-edged bars over the shins, in which they are pressed like a cake, bringing **blood** and causing intolerable pain, and this is technically called without torture, deceiving those who do not understand the phrases of the inquisition.” Doreen Valiente further commented, “The prisoner was stripped and made ready. Women prisoners were supposed to be stripped by respectable matrons; but in practice they were roughly handled and sometimes raped by the torturer’s assistants. Then some preliminary taste of torture was inflicted on them, such as whipping, or an application of the thumb-screws. This preparatory examination was not officially reckoned as torture; so those who confessed anything under it were stated in the court records to have confessed voluntarily, without torture.”

Heinrich Kramer and Jakob Sprenger’s infamous *Malleus Maleficarum* of 1486 emphasized the appropriateness of torture, stating that only confessions obtained under such extremes might be considered genuine and valid. The two monks said, “Some are so soft-hearted and feeble-minded that at the least torture *they will confess anything, whether it be true or not* [author’s italics]. Others are so stubborn that, however much they are tortured, the truth is not to be had from them. There are others who, having been tortured before, are the better able to endure it a second time, since their arms have become accommodated to the stretchings and twistings involved; whereas the effect on others is to make them weaker, so that they can the less easily endure torture.”

Malleus Maleficarum prescribed first-degree tortures and second-degree, or “Final,” tortures. Those of the first degree included being stripped and flogged, being placed on the rack, and being subjected to the “Spanish Boots,” named from their use during the Spanish **Inquisition**. There were two types of boot: one was adjustable, like a vise, to crush the feet and legs; the other was a large metal device into which boiling water or oil could be poured. The second-degree tortures included the *strappado*, thumbscrews, squassation, and breaking on the wheel. In the city of Offenburg, Germany, the accused were strapped into an iron chair with a seat studded with iron spikes and a fire lit beneath it.

Accusers considered confession by the witch herself to be the best way to prove witchcraft and especially the **Pact with the Devil**. They believed that torture was necessary to obtain that confession. Many of the tortures applied are illustrated in contemporary engravings. One such illustration shows thirty people imprisoned in a



Torture of a reputed witch, Herr Lirtzen, Burgomaster of Rheinbach, in 1631. Having endured continuous torture for twenty-four hours, Lirtzen refused to confess to witchcraft and was burnt on the order of Judge Bulmann two days later. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

small room, chained together in pairs. Deprived of food, they eventually became delirious through hunger and began tearing each other to pieces. Other illustrations show people stripped naked and dragged along a tightly-drawn rope which, acting like a saw, would cut the body in two. Some were tied to stakes with fires lit a short distance away, so that they would burn very slowly. Other methods included disemboweling, eye-gouging, flogging, burning, stretching on a rack, and pouring water into the stomach until it swelled and burst, as well as squassation and the use of ovens and red-hot pincers. One ingenious torture involved trapping dormice on the victim's stomach, with a bowl over them. A fire was then kindled on top of the bowl, prompting the dormice to burrow into the stomach in an attempt to escape the heat. This particular cruelty was committed in the Gueux, Holland (pictured in *Theatrum Crudelitatum nostri Temporis*, Antwerp, 1587).

A common torture was the *strappado*, from the Latin *strappare*, "to pull," which involved pulling the victim's limbs from the sockets. His or her hands were tied behind the back and then a rope passed over a pulley in the ceiling. Hauling on the rope, the torturers lifted the victim off the floor, then tied weights to the feet until

the arms separated from their sockets. Additionally, the person was often raised to near the ceiling, then allowed to fall but stopped just short of the ground. Pregnant women were allowed to land on their belly.

Other extreme tortures included the cutting off of hands and ears, immersion in scalding baths laced with lime, and the searing of the flesh with red-hot pincers. If an accused witch later recanted his or her confession, he or she was immediately returned to the torture chamber. In 1630, in Bamberg, Germany, Barbara Schwartz was tortured eight times.

Age was no barrier to torture. The elderly and the very young were all subjected to the same atrocities. In Bamberg, in 1614, a woman of seventy-four died under torture, while in Catton, in Suffolk, England, an eighty-year-old woman was repeatedly forced to sit on a chair studded with the points of knives. In 1617, at Castle-town on the Isle of Man, Margaretine Quane and her ten-year-old son were both burned alive at the stake. At Rintel, in 1689, a nine-year-old girl was flogged while watching her grandmother burn at the stake, and at Würzburg, Germany, in 1628, two eleven-year-old girls were burned.

Over the years authorities changed and with them, so did the methods of torture. In Alsace, France, in 1573, a woman was accused by the Protestants and found not guilty. Four years later she was again accused, this time by the Catholics. They tortured her seven times before obtaining a “confession,” then found her guilty and burned her at the stake. Sir John Fortescue (*In Praise of the Laws of England*, 1468) commented on the French laws: “They choose rather to put the accused themselves to the rack till they confess their guilt Some are extended on the rack till their very sinews crack, and the veins gush out in streams of blood: others have weights hung to their feet till their limbs are almost torn asunder and the whole body distorted: some have their mouths gagged to such a wideness for such a long time, whereat such quantities of water are poured in that their bellies swell to a prodigious degree, and then being pierced by a faucet, spigot, or other instrument for the purpose, the water spouts out in great abundance, like the whale To describe the inhumanity of such exquisite tortures affects me with too real a concern, and the varieties of them are not to be recounted in a large volume.”

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Witchcraft from the Inside*. Llewellyn, 1995.

Lacroix, Paul: *Military and Religious Life in the Middle Ages*. Bickers & Sons, 1876.

Robbins, Rossell Hope: *The Encyclopedia of Witchcraft and Demonology*. Crown, 1959.

Traditions

Just as there are a large number of different denominations of Christianity, so are there a number of traditions of **Wicca**. The oldest formal tradition is Gardnerian, founded by **Gerald Gardner** and based on what he learned from the **coven** into which he was initiated in the 1930s.

With the success of Gardnerian, other traditions arose, most basing themselves on the Gardnerian rituals. Alexandrian, founded in the 1960s by **Alex Sanders**,

includes a large percentage of Gardnerian Wicca with the addition of many aspects of **Ceremonial Magic**. Others quickly emerged, many claiming great antiquity, but further examination proved them to be based on the Gardnerian rites. Saxon **Witchcraft**, or **Seax-Wica**, founded in 1973 by **Raymond Buckland**, made no claims to antiquity nor did it use any of the Gardnerian rites. It broke with tradition by being open and far more democratically organized than most other traditions.

Covens have arisen that claim to be **Italian, Celtic, Druidic, Welsh, Irish, Dianic**, or **Scottish** traditions, as well as a host of others. Those that have no special background classify themselves as simply “eclectic.”

All traditions follow the basic Witchcraft beliefs and celebrate the **sabbats** at the same times of year. The makeup of the covens differs, with some being equal numbers of male and female, others unequal numbers, and some even all male or all female. Some emphasize the **God**, others the **Goddess**, but the majority believe in a balance between God and Goddess. Some traditions have a **degree system** while others do not. The coven tools used may vary, as may the emphasis on what forms of magic are practiced. All traditions have a great reverence for nature and for all forms of life. All follow the **Wiccan Rede** and none practice harmful **magic**.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Buckland's Complete Book of Witchcraft*. Llewellyn, 1986.

Farrar, Janet and Stewart: *The Witches' Way*. Hale, 1985.

Guiley, Rosemary Ellen: *The Encyclopedia of Witches and Witchcraft*. Facts on File, 1989.

Valiente, Doreen: *The Rebirth of Witchcraft*. Hale, 1989.

Transmigration

Also known as metempsychosis, transmigration is a belief in the passage of the soul into another body after death. Many religions have this belief, including Buddhism and Hinduism. Specifics vary, some believing that the rebirth is into either a “lower” or a “higher” form of life, while others believe it is always into a human body. Some also believe the next life is dependent upon the actions within the present life—a **karmic** rebirth.

TREE, THE see SEAX-WICA

Trees

The **worship** of trees has for generations been a common practice throughout much of Europe. A.J. Huxley makes the point that trees themselves were originally an object of veneration since, to the relatively short-lived human, they appeared immortal. The Old Testament contains references to sacred groves and to setting up **altars** under trees such as sacred oaks. This reverence for living trees was later shown to the simple erect trunk, sometimes with an altar placed before it. Representation of the trunk as a stone pillar was found in as the standing **stones** and menhirs in western Europe. A further stage involved placing a mask on the tree or pillar to represent the deity within, or even carving the trunk to look like the **god** or **goddess**.

The belief that spirits dwelled in trees was universal. In ancient Egypt these spirits were especially seen in the sacred sycamores (*Ficus sycomorus*) that existed on the border of a great desert between this world and the next. When the dead soul reached this border, the spirits in the sacred trees would provide food and **water** for the journey. Such scenes are depicted in the Book of the Dead. Persian mythology also contains references to the tree as a dwelling place for a deity, with the cypress as the sacred symbol of Ahura Mazda.

Trees such as the sequoias of northern California live for two, three, or even four thousand years, so it is no wonder they have been revered. England is dotted with ancient oaks that are hundreds of years old. **Sir James Frazer** says that nothing could be more natural than the worship of trees, speaking of the remnants of the great forest of Anderida which once covered the entire southwest portion of England, the Ciminian forest of Germany, and the beautiful woods of pine, oak, and other trees in Greece. Sacred groves were common among the ancient Germans, and tree worship, says Frazer, is well attested for all the great European families of Aryan stock. Among the **Celts** the oak-worship of the **Druids** is legendary.

Most closely connected with trees were the female spirits known as hamadryads, or dryads. Considered the incarnate souls of trees, especially of oak trees, they were thought to be necessary to the growth and well-being of the tree; by touching the roots, they could cause the tree to fruit. A dryad would only die when the tree died. In some areas the spirit living in a tree was thought to need placating, otherwise it might become hostile. Arabian *jinn*s inhabited trees, as did similar Egyptian monsters. In Scandinavia there is a belief in moss-covered men and women who lived under trees.

Oak, ash, birch, hawthorn, **elder**, rowan, hazel, and holly trees became especially revered in Britain and other northern temperate countries as protectors from evil. A piece of wood cut from these trees would protect the one who carried it, and a branch kept in the house would protect the home from fire, lightning strikes, and intruders.

Robert Graves called a tree alphabet used by **Wiccans** and other **Pagans** a "genuine relic of Druidism." It is used in much the same way as the Runic alphabet, for **divination** and for secret writings. Each letter of the alphabet is named for a tree or shrub. By stringing a leaf from the particular trees on a string, messages could be spelled out and passed along. Barbara Walker suggests that occasional leaves from nonlettered trees might also be introduced to make the message more cryptic. The tree alphabet is as follows:

- A—Silver Fir (Ailm)
- B—Birch (Beth)
- C—Hazel (Coll)
- D—Oak (Duir)
- E—White Poplar (Eadha)
- F—Alder (Fearn)
- G—Ivy (Gort)
- H—Hawthorn (Uath)
- I—Yew (Idho)

L—Rowan (Luis)
M—Vine (Muin)
N—Ash (Nion)
O—Furze (Onn)
P—Dwarf Elder (Pethboc)
R—Elder (Ruis)
S—Willow (Saille)
T—Holly (Tinne)
U—Heather (Ur)

Barbara Walker says that the consonantal letters have also been related to the lunar calendar, the pagan feast days, and the agricultural seasons.

Of the trees themselves, the oak represented power. Irish churches were once called *dair-thech*, meaning “oak-house.” The oak represented Diana and her lovers, the Kings of the Wood in Greco-Roman tradition, according to Walker. Few trees have been so widely revered as the oak.

The ash was considered the universal mother. **Yggdrasil** was the name of the World Ash Tree of Norse mythology, its roots reaching down to the underworld and its branches reaching up to the heavens.

The alder was associated with various pagan deities. Considered the tree of resurrection, it was sacred to the Celtic god Bran, brother of the keeper of the Cauldron of Regeneration. The Romans associated the alder with the Roman-Celtic god Cocidius, a disreputable orgiast.

The hawthorn, also known as the May tree, represented the White Goddess Maia. She was a goddess of both love and death, connecting the tree to both sexuality and destruction. The blossoms of the hawthorn made up the garland that was attached to the tip of the maypole at **Beltane** celebrations, serving as the **yonis** to the pole’s lingam.

The willow, sacred to the Celtic Goddess **Arianrhod**, was said to beget **serpents**. **Witches** would go to a willow tree to forswear God, according to the medieval clerics. Willow **wands** were popular for **water witching** and other forms of divining.

The rowan, or mountain ash, was sacred to Bride. It was used in breaking curses and was the preferred wood for vampire-killing stakes!

The holly was dedicated to Cu Chulainn and to the Celtic Goddess Holle, or Hel. Holle was the universal mother, patron of newborn children. Planting holly trees around a house was believed to protect the home from evil.

The walnut harbored female spirits that would make indecent propositions to passers-by. Walnut shells were associated with female genitalia. Witches were said to sail walnut shells like miniature boats.

The three most magical trees were the oak, ash, and thorn. By holding leaves from these three, and pronouncing certain secret words, it was thought possible to summon the god **Woden** to aid you. Believers handed down the secret words from

woman to man and man to woman, alternating sexes, in the same manner in which the mysteries are taught in Wicca.

SOURCES:

Frazer, Sir James: *The Golden Bough*. Macmillan, 1890.

Frazer, Sir James: *The Worship of Nature*. Macmillan, 1926.

Graves, Robert: *The White Goddess*. Creative Age Press, 1948.

Huxley, A. J.: *Man, Myth and Magic: Trees*. BPC Publishing, 1970.

Walker, Barbara G.: *The Woman's Dictionary of Symbols and Sacred Objects*. HarperSanFrancisco, 1988.

Triangle

Equivalent to the number three, the triangle concerns the Trinity. The Trinity of ancient Egypt included **Isis**, **Osiris**, and Horus; the Hindu Trinity, or Trimurti, includes Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva; the Greek Trinity included **Artemis**, **Selene**, and **Hecate**. It is the symbol for the **Triple Goddess: Maiden-Mother-Crone**.

In its normal position, with the point at the top, the triangle is a symbol for **fire**; when inverted—with the point at the bottom—it is a symbol for **water**. Inverted and with the tip cut off, it is a symbol for **earth**; upright and with the tip cut off, it symbolizes **air**.

Wiccan traditions that work with a **degree system** use the inverted triangle as a symbol for the First Degree. Apex upward, it is placed above a pentagram as the sign of the Third Degree. The Greek letter D, or *delta*, is a triangle and is described as “the letter of the vulva” and as the “Holy Door.” Barbara Walker points out that the Jewish tradition of triangular *hamantaschen* for Purim is an apparent adoption from the ancient Egyptian custom of making triangular cakes for public rituals.

Walking under a ladder is considered unlucky because a ladder leaning against a wall forms a triangle. The action breaks that triangle, thus breaking the sacred three and the Trinity.

In numerology the number three, the number of the triangle, is ruled by Jupiter and is attuned to the investigator, the scientist, and the seeker; it is also associated with the letters C, L, and U.

SOURCES:

Cirlot, J. E.: *A Dictionary of Symbols*. Philosophical Library, 1962.

Walker, Barbara G.: *The Woman's Dictionary of Symbols and Sacred Objects*. HarperSanFrancisco, 1988.

Trident

The trident is the alchemical sign for **water**, from its association with Poseidon, Greek **god** of the sea and creator of waters. Son of Kronos and Rhea, and brother of Zeus, Poseidon split the **earth** with his trident, earning himself the title “Earth Shaker,” according to Homer.

In India, Shiva was trident-bearer to **Kali**. Originally thought of as a triple phallus, the trident has come to be associated with Satan’s pitchfork in the Christian tradition.

In **Ceremonial Magic**, a necromantic trident is fashioned of hazel wood. The old **grimoires** state that it should be cut at the full **moon**, from a **tree** that has never borne fruit, and with a knife whose blade has not previously been used. The shaft of the Trident is then engraved with the magic words “Tetragammaton” and “Jehova.”

Charles Ploix (*La Nature et les Dieux*) associates the trident with the **wand** used in **water witching**. Mircea Eliade suggests that the trident was originally a representation of the teeth of sea monsters, aligning it with Poseidon’s world and with the three-headed Cerberus.

SOURCES:

Cirlot, J. E.: *A Dictionary of Symbolism*. Philosophical Library, 1962.

Eliade, Mircea: *Historical Treatise of Religions*. Madrid, 1952.

Shah, Sirdar Ikbal Ali: *Occultism: Its Theory and Practice*. Roy Publishers, 1955.

Triple Goddess

The **Goddess of Wicca** is looked upon as being in triple form: **Maiden-Mother-Crone**. A young man or woman in love might relate to the young aspect of the Goddess, while a married woman expecting a child might feel more comfortable with a maturer aspect. Elderly people generally relate better to older aspects of the **deities**. So Wiccans speak of the Maiden-Mother-Crone, the young, mature, and older aspects of the Goddess.

The Maiden is virginal (unmarried but not necessarily nonsexual), pure, and very much her own woman. The Mother is Creatrix, sensuous and full-bodied, whole and ripe. The Crone is wisdom and knowledge, still sexual, but purely for pleasure, not procreation.

These different aspects of the Goddess were sometimes given different names in ancient Greek and Roman mythology, and even in some traditions of Wicca. For example, the Roman maiden goddess Antevorta had her mother aspect as Carmenta and her crone aspect as Postvorta. The Greek **Artemis** is the **Waxing Moon**, young and energetic, aligned with the Roman Diana as goddess of the hunt. **Selene** is the Full Moon and Mother. **Hecate** is the **Waning Moon**, goddess of the nocturnal hunt, of death and destruction.

In Greece, at Stymphalus, stood three temples to Hera. One was to her as the child-goddess, another as the wife-goddess, and the third as widow-goddess. Bhavani, of the Hindu pantheon, is known as the “Triple Universe,” while the Chinese Buddhists have a triad associated with Kuan Yin, known as the “Triple Pussa.” The Irish **Celtic** mythology of the Tuatha Dé Danann includes Éire, bride of the sun, the Maiden; Fodhla as Mother, spouse of the Earth; and Banbha, the antediluvian Crone mated to the primordial Deep. In Norse mythology the goddess is **Freya**, of love and beauty; Frigga, the mother; and Hel, of the underworld and of death.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Wicca for Life*. Citadel, 2001.

Dunwich, Gerina: *Wicca A to Z*. Citadel, 1998.

Farrar, Janet and Stewart: *The Witches’ Goddess*. Phoenix, 1987.



U

Uncrossing

Uncrossing involves removing a curse or any form of negative **magic**. The uncrossing **ritual** may be performed as needed, but, it is most effective when performed during the **waning** cycle of the **moon**.

By making a **Witch Bottle**, a person will uncross him or herself, removing any and all negativity and evil influences known and unknown that may have been directed at him or her. An uncrossing oil used in magic is made by mixing sandalwood, patchouli leaves, myrrh, and finger grass. In **Voodoo**, a popular recipe mixes lemon grass, herb salt, and oil.

SOURCES:

Malbrough, Ray T.: *Charms, Spells and Formulas*. Llewellyn, 1986.

Unction

The act of anointing a person or a **ritual tool** is a religio-magical rite. The anointing is done with consecrated **oil**, or with an **herbal** ointment or salve. After unction, the person or object is considered sacred. In Christianity the sacrament of “extreme unction” is administered to those near death.

Undines

Some **Wiccan traditions** whose practices utilize ideas from **Ceremonial Magic** acknowledge elemental beings as “Guardians of the **Watchtowers**” of the four corners of the ritual **Circle**. These elementals are creatures that personify the qualities of **Air**, **Fire**, **Water** and **Earth**. The element of Air, in the east, is associated with the elemental **spirits** known as **Sylphs**. Fire, in the south, is associated with **Salamanders**; Water, in the west, with **Undines**; and Earth, in the north, with **Gnomes**.

Undines are also known as nereids, oceanides, nymphs, and mermaids. They are usually female.

Unguent

Unguent is an ointment or salve used for **healing**. Some used by **Hedge Witches** are no more than any fatty substance to which various powdered **herbs** have been added. A concoction made from mallow leaves steeped in vegetable shortening and then strained is an example of an unguent used for protection. Rubbed into the skin, this is supposed to keep all evil at bay and protect from harmful **black magic**.

SOURCES:

Cunningham, Scott: *Cunningham's Encyclopedia of Magical Herbs*. Llewellyn, 1985.

Unicorn

The unicorn is a mythical beast, a symbol of supreme power. It is like a **horse**, but with cloven hooves and a long, single horn protruding from the middle of its forehead. The horn is reminiscent of the twisted tusk of a narwhal, and is made of ivory. The unicorn has a goatlike beard and sometimes is depicted with the hind legs of an antelope and the tail of a lion.

Ctesias, the fourth-century BCE Greek historian, gives the earliest description of a unicorn. He states that in India there were wild white asses with a horn a cubit and a half in length. These beasts were colored white, with blue eyes and red heads, and that the horns were used to make drinking cups that protected from poison. Aristotle also mentions the unicorn, as does Pliny. This belief in the efficacy against poison endured until the time of Charles II of England, when cups of rhinoceros horn were engraved with pictures of unicorns. In France as late as 1789, instruments of "unicorn horn" were used to test royal food for poison.

The unicorn is found in the religion and sacred writings of Persia, in which it is described as having only one horn. The horn is spoken of as being hollow and made of pure gold. Many Buddhist temples contain paintings and sculptures of unicorns, and from Tibet the unicorn is thought to have spread to China, where it is known as the *ki-lin*. *Ki* means "male" and *lin* means "female." The unicorn is indeed thought to be both male and female, equated with the hermaphrodite in alchemy and rich in the symbolism of opposites. The alchemist Lamsprinck's *De Lapide Philosophico* (Frankfurt, 1625) depicts a stag facing a unicorn. The text says, "A deer and a unicorn are hidden in the forest. Blessed can we call the man who artfully can capture and tame them." The forest is the body, the unicorn the spirit (sulphur, male), the deer is the soul (mercury, female).

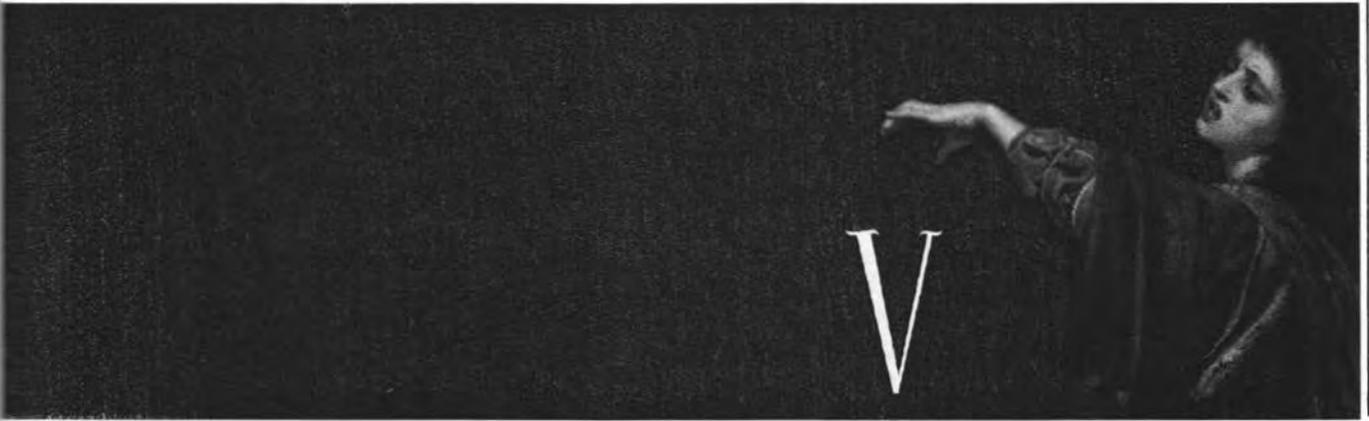
Stories of unicorns flourished in medieval times. A sixteenth-century tapestry depicts a young woman holding a mirror and petting a unicorn. The belief was that only a young virgin was innocent enough to capture the beast. Seated alone, in a forest under a tree, the unicorn would come to her and place its head in her lap. There it would permit her to caress it to sleep.

SOURCES:

Encyclopedia Britannica. William Benton, 1964.

Grimble, June: *Man, Myth and Magic: Unicorn*. BPC Publishing, 1970.

Roob, Alexander: *The Hermetic Museum: Alchemy and Mysticism*. Taschen, 1997.



V

Valiente, Doreen (1922–1999)

Doreen Valiente was one of Gerald Gardner's High Priestesses. With him, she co-authored what became known as the Gardnerian Book of Shadows, the book of rituals used in that tradition of Wicca. Although that book is a gathering of material from a wide variety of sources, much of it originated with Valiente. She was one of the most influential people in the Wiccan revival.

Doreen Dominy was born in London, England, living in Horley, Surrey, in her early years even though her family came from the New Forest area of Hampshire and from Cerne Abbas, Dorset. She read extensively on Theosophy as well as the writings of Aleister Crowley, her interest in matters occult growing rapidly. In 1944 she met and married a wounded and recuperating refugee from the Spanish Civil War.

Valiente learned of the Folklore Centre of Superstition and Witchcraft, opened in 1950 by Cecil Williamson at Castletown, on the Isle of Man, and entered into a correspondence with Williamson. From him, Valiente learned of an existing Witchcraft coven in New Forest, and she eventually became acquainted with Gerald Gardner, a member of that coven. Gardner presented her with a copy of *High Magic's Aid*, his novelized version of Wiccan practices. Valiente's husband was not interested in Wicca but did not stand in her way. By 1953 Gardner had initiated Valiente into his own coven, which was then separate from the original New Forest group.

Valiente studied Gardner's Book of Shadows, which was based on the one belonging to the New Forest coven but heavily modified by Gardner. Valiente, with her knowledge of occult literature, identified material attributable to Aleister Crowley, Rudyard Kipling, Alexander Carmichael, Charles Godfrey Leland, and others that Gardner had added to the text. She set about editing the book so that it was not so obviously laced with outside material, contributing much original work herself, including the universally admired Wiccan "Charge of the Goddess." This

she wrote in verse, but she also revamped the original prose version, which was largely written by Leland and in part by Crowley. Valiente worked on the Gardnerian Book of Shadows from 1954 till 1957 before they were both satisfied with it. It has since become the mainstay of modern Wicca.

By the end of 1957, Valiente left Gardner's coven and formed her own with a man named Ned. From 1964 till 1966 she received a series of trance communications from a **spirit** claiming to be a Witch. He gave his name as Jack Brakespeare and said that he lived in Surrey in the early nineteenth century, where he had a coven. Later, in 1978, Valiente incorporated some of this spirit material in her book, *Witchcraft For Tomorrow*. In that book Valiente also criticized such people as Lady Sheba, the self-proclaimed "**Witch Queen** of America," who published the Gardnerian Book of Shadows under her own name, claiming it to be "words handed down by word of mouth for generations." Several writers have claimed great antiquity for their particular tradition while producing only a version of the Gardner-Valiente writings.

Valiente's husband died in 1972. For the later years of her life Valiente lived in Brighton, Sussex, on the south coast of England. She became very much a recluse until her death on September 1, 1999.

SOURCES:

Guiley, Rosemary Ellen: *The Encyclopedia of Witches and Witchcraft*. Facts on File, 1989.

Farrar, Janet and Stewart: *The Witches' Way*. Robert Hale, 1984.

Valiente, Doreen: *Witchcraft for Tomorrow*. Robert Hale, 1978.

Valiente, Doreen: *The Rebirth of Witchcraft*. Robert Hale, 1989.

Venefica

Venefica is one who practices poisoning as a secret art, or one who has a knowledge and deals in poisons. This was a source of mistranslation by King James in his version of the **Bible**. The original text referred to *venefica* (poisoner), and he mistook the term to be the same as *malefica* (witch), thus confusing a poisoner with a **Witch**. "Thou shalt not suffer a poisoner to live," made sense while "Thou shalt not suffer a Witch to live," did not. The confusion probably came about because Witches did have a knowledge of poisons, as a doctor would have, in order to be able to administer antedotes when necessary.

VERNAL EQUINOX see SPRING EQUINOX

Vervain

Verbena officinalis, also known as vervain, is a plant in the family of Verbenaceae. Native to Europe and Asia, it is common in southern England and has become naturalized in North America. One to three feet in height, it is a slender annual with opposite, deeply incised leaves and numerous slender spikes of white or purplish flowers. The plant has been held in superstitious veneration for centuries.

Folk names for vervain include Brittanica, Enchanter's Plant, **Herb** of Enchantment, Herb of Grace, Juno's Tears, Pigeon's Grass, Simpler's Joy, Van-Van, and Verbena. It is ruled by the planet Venus and hence is thought to hold power in the field of love. It is also regarded as powerful for protection, purification, and chastity, and to bring **healing** and preserve youth. In addition to Venus, the plant is associated with **Aradia**, **Isis**, **Kerridwen**, Juno, Jupiter, and Thor.

Traditionally, vervain is gathered at Midsummer, or at the rising of the Dog Star. It should be gathered when neither sun nor **moon** is showing. Although its medicinal qualities have been held in doubt, its use as a **magical** herb is legendary. As a love **amulet**, any part of the plant may be carried. A **Ceremonial Magician** often wears a crown of vervain to protect from negative **spirits**. An infusion sprinkled around the magical temple will hold negativity at bay. Vervain is also used in **exorcism**.

Vervain worn around the neck, kept under the pillow, or made into an infusion and drunk each night is said to bring everlasting youth. The undiluted juice spread on the body is also said to cure numerous diseases and to guard against future health problems. Placed in a baby's cradle, it is said that vervain will ensure the child grows up with a happy disposition and a love of learning. Many Witches use vervain in love **spells** and protection spells and charms.

SOURCES:

Cunningham, Scott: *Cunningham's Encyclopedia of Magical Herbs*. Llewellyn, 1985.
Encyclopedia Britannica. William Benton, 1964.

Virgin Witch, The (movie)

The Virgin Witch, is a 1970 movie directed by Raymond Austin. Also known as *Lesbian Twins*, the movie stars Ann Michelle, Vicki Michelle, Patricia Haines, Keith Buckley, and James Chase in a story of two beautiful sisters, Christine and Betty, who travel to London to start a career as models. They discover that the agency to which they become signed is actually a coven of witches looking for virgins to sacrifice!

Visione del Sabba, La (movie)

La Visione del Sabba is a 1988 French/Italian movie directed by Marco Bellocchio. Also known as *The Sabbath* and *The Witches' Sabbath*, it stars Daniel Ezralow, Omero Antonutti, and Roberta Palladine. The story concerns a young psychiatrist named David (Ezralow) who is tormented by his own dreams. A disturbed but beautiful mental patient named Maddalena (Béatrice Dalle) resembles a woman David dreams of seeing being burned at the stake for witchcraft. Having difficulty separating fantasy and dreams from reality, David falls in love with Maddalena. A feature of the movie is a sabbatical orgy, although it is performed with all the participants fully clothed.

Voodoo

Like **Witchcraft**, Voodoo is a religion. It is not **black magic** and it does not consist of sticking pins into dolls. It is rather a religion of **initiation**, a **mystery religion**.



Grave of Marie Laveau, Voodoo queen in the 1830s, a place of pilgrimage for Voodoo followers. Courtesy Dr. Elmar R. Gruber/Forstean Picture Library.

Voodoo stems from the kingdom of Dahomey, on the Ivory Coast of Africa, and was brought to the West Indies by slaves at the end of the seventeenth century. The language of Dahomey was known as *fon*, meaning “king.” The word *Voodoo* or *Voudoun* is the fon word for “spirit” or “god,” or for a sacred object.

The Republic of Haiti—the western part of the island that also includes the Dominican Republic—is the place most often associated with Voodoo and probably where it is practiced in its purest form. It is a religion in the sense of any other religion, with a system of beliefs, faith, and traditional rites. Religion can be defined as “the attitude of individuals in community to the powers which they conceive as having ultimate control over their destinies and interests.” (*Religions of the World Made Simple*, Dr. John Lewis. Doubleday, New York, 1968.) This definition fits Voodoo as well as Roman Catholicism, Judaism, Witchcraft, Buddhism, or any other established religion.

In Voodoo there are a number of gods, or *loa*, as well as a priesthood and various festivals and ceremonies. The ceremonies are held at a sanctuary or temple known as a *houmfor* or *hunfo*. These vary greatly in size and style depending on the affluence of the immediate community. Some are very elaborate with a number of *peristyles* (covered altar areas), while others are small buildings with a rough cement block for an altar.

The priest in Voodoo is the *houngan* and the priestess the *mambo*. Ceremonies are attended by initiated and noninitiated alike. However, the initial part of the ceremony is performed by the priests, the initiates, and the shortly-to-be-initiated only, while the rest of the congregation sits and watches. Participants and audience tend to merge more and more as the ceremonies progress. The initiated are known as the *hounsi*, meaning “the spouse of the god.” They are dressed in white at the rituals and assist the *houngan* and *mambo*, whom they call “Papa” and “Mama.” Those who are going through a training period for initiation are dressed in red and are known as the *hounsi-kanzo*.

Initiation for the *hounsi-kanzo* starts with a series of public prayers, led by the *mambo*, every evening for a period of six days. At the end of this time the *hounsi-kanzo* are blindfolded and led off into seclusion. For nine days they remain in an isolated hut. There they must lie on their beds on their left side, and may eat only food that is white in color. Only the *mambo* and her assistants may enter the hut during this period, which is called the *couché* (putting to bed).

Upon first entering the hut the individual *hounsi-kanzo* strips and kneels. She has her head bathed with an herbal concoction prepared by the *mambo*, and then all bodily hair is removed. During the nine day period she learns many prayers, songs, and a variety of secret passwords and signs. On the third day her soul is ritually transferred to a *pot-de-tête* jar, which will be kept by the *mambo* on the *houfor* altar. The jar also holds a lock of the initiate’s hair, fingernail parings, and pubic hair.

The many gods, or *loa*, of Voodoo have specific names and definite duties. They are invoked in ceremonies and make their presence known by possessing their worshipers and “riding” them like horses. There are two types of god: the *Rada*, who

are chthonic deities known as “the Gentle Gods,” and the *Petro*, who are bitter, unyielding deities specializing in **magic**, **charms**, and cures. The *Petro* are feared and are named after a certain Don Pedro, who introduced the rites to Haiti from Santo Domingo. The more important loa are the Rada. The name Rada comes from the name of the ancient capital of Dahomey, Arada. Rada deities include:

DAMBALLAH-WÉDO—Known as “the Ancient and Venerable Father,” Damballah-Wédo is looked upon as the source of all wisdom, the origin and essence of life. Damballah is regarded as a **serpent** deity. In the corner of many hounfours is a **tree** with a pond (or even an old bathtub sunk into the ground) beside it. This is the special home for this loa, who is also looked upon as the guardian and protector of springs, lakes, and ponds. The center post holding up the roof of the peristyle, and around which the **altar** is constructed, is also regarded as Damballah’s tree, and he is thought to be at the top of it during the rituals. Two eggs are a particular offering for Damballah.

AYIDA-WÉDO—The wife of Damballah, she is also depicted as a serpent. Together the two represent sexual totality. Their symbol is an egg (representing the world).

LEGBA—A most important loa, Legba is the Guardian of the **Crossroads** (in this sense similar to the Greek goddess **Hecate**). He is sometimes referred to as *Maître Carrefour*, or God of the Crossroads. Legba can remove the barrier between this world and the next, so he must be invoked first, of all the loa. He is usually represented as an old man, dressed in rags and leaning on a crutch, although he is thought to have tremendous strength. His attributes are a tree, a cane, and a tall hat.

AGWÉ (or Agwé-Taroyo)—The Poseidon of Voodoo. Called The Shell of the Sea, Eel, Tadpole of the Pond, he is lord of the sea and all that is in it: flora, fauna, ships, and shipwrecks. He is depicted as a fair-skinned mulatto with green eyes, dressed in a naval officer’s uniform. His emblems are miniature boats, oars painted green or blue, and shells.

ERZULIE (or Ezilie)-**FREDA-DAHOMÉY**—The counterpart of **Aphrodite**. Considered the Great Mother and a goddess of beauty, she has an overabundance of love. She comes from a family of sea **spirits**. She is extremely extravagant, and she loves beautiful clothes, makeup, and perfume. Erzulie is very refined, very sensual, very coquettish. She always wears three wedding bands. There is usually a small room near the peristyle furnished especially for Erzulie. It contains a large brass bed; a dressing table covered in makeup, perfume, and powder; and a closet full of beautiful dresses, all contributed by the community.

OGOUN (or Ogu-Balindjo)—Ogoun is a storm god. Basically a sky deity, he is depicted as a wounded warrior who carries an enormous sabre. He is also known as “Blacksmith of the Gods,” like the Greek god Hephaestus.

ZAKA (or Papa-Azzaca)—Zaka is in charge of crops and agricultural labor. He appears in peasant dress wearing a dark blue denim shirt and straw hat, with a short clay pipe in his mouth and a machette over his shoulder.

GUÉDÉ—The loa of Death and Sexuality is very much a chthonic deity. He is frequently obscene in both word and gesture. He is usually depicted in formal mourning clothes wearing black spectacles. Yet he is also a great **healer**. In his Petro aspect he is known variously as Baron Samedi, Baron La-Croix, Baron Cimitière, and The Three Spades (grave digging tools). His symbols are a **cross** or a spade, a pick, and a hoe or adze.

BRIGITTE (Madame Brigitte or Big Brigitte)—The wife of Guédé. She calls him “Corpse and Phallus; King and Clown.” Other members of the Guédé family are Guédé-nibo and Captain Guédé, otherwise known as Captain Zombi.

Each of the loa has a symbol, or emblem, peculiar to him or her, much like the **sigils** found in **Ceremonial Magic**. These are known as *vévés* or *vevers* and are drawn on the floor of the hounfor during a ritual to invoke the specific loa. The mambo takes a handful of corn meal and allows it to trickle through her fingers, making the design on the ground. She draws the extremely intricate designs with amazing rapidity yet great accuracy.

At a typical Voodoo ceremony, the villagers file into the peristyle through the *tonnelle* and take their places on the seats and benches spread around the central circular area. The roof is usually palm-thatched and is supported on columns around the sides, with no outer walls, and with a central column around which the altar is set up. The central pole is known as the *poteaumitan* and is sacred to Damballah. On and about the altar are candles, bottles of rum, pots-de-tête, bundles of dried **herbs**, statues of Catholic saints, an iron cross, gourd rattles, and many strings of colored beads.

Drummers lead the procession into the peristyle and take their positions. They are important to the rituals; under the direction of the mambo, the drummers can bring about the necessary *ekstasis* for possession by the loa to take place. There are three types of drum: *Maman*, *Seconde* or *Papa*, and *Boula* (Baby) or *Cata*. An *Ogantier* strikes a steel bar known as an *ogan* with a metal stick, producing a rhythmic staccato beat to complement the drums.

With a burst of activity from the drummers, the procession starts in earnest, led by the master of ceremonies known as *La-Place*. He carries a sabre. Behind him come the standard bearers, carrying the flags of the hounfor and its *société*. They are followed by houngan and mambo then by the hounsi and hounsi-kanzo. All process into the peristyle, salute the poteaumitan, and stand in a **circle** about the altar. The mambo takes her ceremonial asson—a gourd rattle decorated with colored beads and snake vertebrae—and shakes it at the four cardinal points, much as a **Wiccan** High Priestess will walk about to the four cardinal points. She is followed by the houngan, who spits rum at those same points, again similar to the Wiccan sprinkling of **salt** and **water**.

Papa Legba is the first loa invoked, and he is asked to “open the gates.” Chants, prayers, and liturgy continue with the mambo, at one point, drawing the *vévé* of the requested loa on the ground in front of the altar. Different loa may be asked to appear for different purposes. All of them seem anxious to appear and sometimes the wrong one comes through and has to be sent off till the one sought appears.

As the mambo finishes drawing the *vévé*, a frenzy of drumming is unleashed. All dance about the altar, gradually intruding onto the drawn *vévé*. Line by line it gets trampled into the dirt of the peristyle. Eventually someone becomes possessed. Once the houngan has verified that the requested loa has appeared, the possessed person will then take up that deity's attributes. If, for example, it is Agwé, the possessed will don a captain's hat and tuck a telescope under his arm (all kept beside the altar). If it is Guédé, he will wear the black top hat and glasses and may light a large cigar. For Erzulie, the possessed will retire to the room devoted to her and put on a dress, makeup and perfume before coming back to mingle with the worshipers. A man may be possessed by Erzulie or a woman by Guédé—it doesn't matter, because to the worshipers it is the loa him or herself who is now present, not simply a person dressed as him or her. In this way, the Voodoo followers are able to relate to, and actually talk with, the gods in whom they believe.

There is a generous dose of Christianity mixed in with Voodoo. For years Christian missionaries tried to stamp out Voodoo and convert its followers from their ancestral religion. Not understanding the makeup of Voodoo, the missionaries—fervent monotheists—persecuted the natives, burning peristyles, drums, flags, beads, assons, and all Voodoo trappings, naively believing that by so doing they could stamp out beliefs that had been held for generations. The Haitians, for their part, eventually assumed a mask of Christianity in order to be left alone, but they continued to practice their own religion in secret.

Since St. Patrick is often depicted surrounded by snakes, Haitians used such depictions to represent the Voodoo serpent deity Damballah. Similarly, Mary represented Erzulie, St. George depicted Ogoun, and Jesus was found in the plenipotentiary Legba, for example. A Christian priest could then go to a home in Haiti and happily see many Christian emblems and figures prominently displayed, not realizing that to the people in the house these were still their old **pagan** gods. In similar fashion, the Voodoo followers could see the power of the Church and thus adopted some of its rituals believing they would add to their own power. In this way a typical Voodoo ritual will include prayers, chants, Paternosters, and Ave Marias.

Voodoo is found in places other than Haiti, although Haiti seems to be the main area for the religious emphasis. In New Orleans, Louisiana, for example—and in many large cities around the United States—a variety of Voodoo exists that emphasizes the buying and selling of *gris-gris* (charms and spells), candles, baths, powders, and other items. The Voodoo “kings” and “queens” may also be found here. In the early nineteenth century the most famous of these was Marie Laveau, a free mulatto woman who would stage huge dances on the shores of Lake Pontchartrain.

Many South American countries have variations of Voodoo. Macumba, Umbanda, Qimbanda, and Candomblé are the names of the varieties of Voodoo found throughout Latin America. These are not dying out. On the contrary, even with the ever-increasing literacy rate in Brazil and the other South American countries, the followers of these different versions of Voodoo are increasing in number, perhaps because of the very personal nature of the relationship between the wor-

shiper and his deities. As in Witchcraft, the follower is not just a spectator but a participant. The communion with divinity is absolute.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Anatomy of the Occult*. Samuel Wesley, 1977.

Deren, Maya: *Divine Horsemen*. Thames & Hudson, 1953.

Leybrun, J.G.: *The Haitian People*. Yale University Press, 1941.

McGregor, Pedro: *The Moon and Two Mountains*. Souvenir Press, 1966.

Métraux, Alfred: *Voodoo in Haiti*. André Deutsch, 1959.

St. Clair, David: *Drum and Candle*. Bell Publishing, 1971.



W

Walpurgisnacht

Walpurgisnacht is a Christian feast day celebrated in Germany that falls on May Eve. Named for a popular Devonshire (England) saint, St. Walburga, it coincides with the **pagan** celebration of **Beltane** but is not connected to it.

Walton, Charles (1871–1945)

On Wednesday, February 14, 1945, Charles Walton was **ritually** murdered by having a pitchfork driven through his throat into the ground and a **cross** slashed into his torso with a bill-hook. This became known as “The **Witchcraft** Murder,” even though there was no direct evidence that it was related to **Witchcraft**. It was thoroughly investigated by the then-famous “Fabian of the Yard,” Detective Superintendent Robert Fabian of Scotland Yard, but the murder was never solved.

Lower Quinton, Warwickshire, is not far from Stratford-on-Avon and only two miles away from the ancient **Rollright Stones**. Walton was a casual laborer in the village who kept very much to himself, living alone with his niece Edith. He had a reputation as a **Hedge Witch**, able to foresee the future and talk to the birds and animals. He was also reputed to have a team of walking toads (*natterjacks*) that could pull a miniature plow.

On Wednesday, February 14—St. Valentine’s Day and the eve of the Feast of the Lupercal on the Roman calendar, as well as the date on which the **Druids** allegedly performed their **sacrifices**—Walton took his bill-hook and went to trim hedgerows on Meon Hill for a local farmer. The farmer claimed that he had seen Walton hard at work around midday, but Walton did not return home that evening. When his niece and the farmer went in search of him, they found his body lying under a **willow tree**. A pitchfork had been driven through his throat with tremen-

dous force, embedding six or eight inches into the ground. The bill-hook had been used to carve a large cross on Walton's upper body and then stabbed into his ribs.

Legend has it that, as a boy, Walton saw a large black dog on Meon Hill for three nights in a row. On the third night the dog changed into a headless woman, and the following morning Walton's sister died. This incident made a deep impression on Walton, and from then on he became very much a recluse. At the time of the murder, a large black dog was found hanging from a tree, not far from Walton's body. Detective Fabian later saw another large black dog being chased by a farmhand, but when he queried the farmhand the man denied any knowledge of the animal. Shortly afterward a police car ran over a black dog.

Despite taking four thousand statements and examining twenty-nine pieces of clothing as well as hair and **blood** samples, Scotland Yard was unable to find a suspect. The villagers were not forthcoming with information, and it was obvious that Walton was not well-liked. Some speculated that he was a witch, or into **black magic**, and that he was responsible for the poor crops in the area. Because of the large walking (not hopping) toads that Walton kept, some people drew parallels with the case of **Issobel Gowdie**, one of the **Auldearne Scottish Witches** who, in 1662, spoke of having toads (or "*Paddokis*") draw a plow, a magical **charm** believed to bring about the failure of crops.

Walton's murder seemed to copy another murder that took place seventy years before, in 1875, less than two miles from Lower Quinton. In this case a mentally retarded man named John Haywood accused an old woman, Ann Tenant, of bewitching him; he killed her, pinning her to the ground with a pitchfork through her throat and carving a cross on her chest with a bill-hook.

A folk belief said that bleeding a witch so that the blood seeped into the ground would neutralize any evil he or she had done. This seems to have been the intent in Charles Walton's death. No one was ever charged in the crime, and the murder remains unsolved.

SOURCES:

Murray, Margaret Alice: *The Witch Cult in Western Europe*. Clarendon Press, 1921.

Pickering, David: *Dictionary of Witchcraft*. Cassell, 1996.

Wilson, Colin: *The Occult*. Random House, 1971.

Wand

A wand is **magical tool** used in **Ceremonial Magic** and in many **traditions** of **Wicca**. Associated with both **air** and **fire**, a wand may be used in much the same way as an **athamé**, directing power for consecrating a **ritual Circle**, for example. In many **Witchcraft** traditions it is used for "**Drawing Down the Moon**"—invoking the **goddess** to descend into the body of the **High Priestess**.

The royal sceptre, a symbol of power, is derived from the magic wand. The caduceus of the Greek god Hermes was a wand. Coins found at Cydonia dating from 250 to 267 BCE, show a nude Hermes carrying a wand. A Roman ambassador would always have a wand or **staff** with him when visiting a foreign country. If he

drew a circle around himself with the staff, then that designated the area sacred to him and he was considered safe from attack within it.

As a symbol of power and virility, the wand is recognized as a **phallic** symbol. Some wands are actually carved with the likeness of a phallus at the tip, others with a pine cone, a frequent representation of the phallus. In magic the wand is a capacitor, storing energy raised in magical ritual, as well as a projector, sending out that energy when and where needed.

An anonymous fifteenth-century work, *Errores Gazariorum*, stated that a **Witch** receives a wand at the time of her **initiation**. In fact, in today's Wicca the Witch receives his or her personal **athamé** rather than a wand. Dr. **John Fian** of the **Scottish** witches belonging to the North Berwick coven stated that, while in jail, he was visited by the Devil, who carried a white wand. When Fian broke the wand, the Devil vanished.

In Ceremonial Magic, the various **grimoires** give a variety of recipes for constructing a wand. The choice of wood varies. It can be yew, rowan, ash, hawthorn, hazel, or **willow**. A wand's length also varies. Some grimoires say it must be the length of the magician's arm, measured from the elbow to the tip of the middle finger. Others say it must be exactly nineteen-and-a-half inches long, while others stipulate twenty-one inches. Most wands are straight, but some are not; the end may be forked or have a crystal set into it. Sometimes a symbol such as an **ankh** might be attached to the end. Many times the shaft is engraved with magical **Words of Power** and/or **sigils**.

The "rods" employed by Moses and Aaron, to divide the Red Sea and to cause water to gush from a rock, were magic wands. According to Eric Maple, Jewish legend has it that Aaron's rod originated with Adam in the Garden of Eden and was handed down through a long line of patriarchs. Maple also states that an early third-century portrait of Jesus shows him in a catacomb holding a wand.

Whatever the length and regardless of what wood it is made from, a wand is no good until it has been **consecrated**. This is what makes it special and also what ties it to the magician who will use it. Consecration usually involves sprinkling the instrument with salted **water** and holding it in the smoke of **incense**.

SOURCES:

- Buckland, Raymond: *Buckland's Complete Book of Witchcraft*. Llewellyn, 1986.
 Hope, Murry: *Practical Egyptian Magic*. St. Martin's Press, 1984.
 Maple, Eric: *Man, Myth and Magic: Wand*. BPC Publishing, 1970.
 Shah, Sirdar Ikbal Ali: *Occultism, Its Theory and Practice*. Roy Publishers, 1955.

Waning; Waxing

The circuit of the **moon** from new moon to full moon and back to new moon is called the lunation cycle. The waxing phase is when the moon is seemingly increasing in size, from new moon to full moon. The waning phase is the opposite; it is the apparent reduction of size going from the full moon to the new moon.

Most **magic** is done in conjunction with the phases of the moon. Positive magic is done during the waxing phase and negative magic during the waning phase. Negative magic is not necessarily harmful magic; its intent may be to rid a person of something such as a **wart**, a bad habit, or discomfort. The waning cycle is also a good time to have hair cut, since then it will not grow back so quickly. The phases of the moon are also very much considered with gardening. During the moon's increase it is time for germination, growth, and composting. The waning cycle is a time for fruition, maturity, and pruning and thinning.

SOURCES:

Llewellyn's 2001 Herbal Almanac. Llewellyn, 2001.

Warding

In powwow **magic** among the Pennsylvania Dutch, warding is the term used for protective magic. Derived from the expression "to ward off evil," it is used for people, animals, property, and homes. Warding is used against the **evil eye**, slander, bad luck, barrenness and sterility, disease, and a host of other maladies. (See also **Uncrossing**.)

Warlock

From the Scottish and Old English *waerloga*, meaning traitor or oath-breaker, warlock is a term that has been applied to a male **witch** but is never used by Witches themselves.

During the persecutions, when witches were being **tortured** and questioned, the inquisitors were especially anxious to learn of other witches in the community. To this end many witches were harshly and repeatedly tortured to obtain this information. When a person broke down under the pain and anguish and gave out names of others, he would be termed a warlock by those he gave away.

Pennethorne Hughes mentions that when a tortured witch seemed likely to give away others, he or she might be murdered in jail by the other witches, to prevent additional arrests and tortures. To show that the killing had been done under those circumstances, a **garter** would be left tied loosely around the victim's throat. The 1618 murder of John Stewart of Irving is one example, as is that of John Reid of Renfrewshire in 1696.

SOURCES:

Hole, Christina: *Witchcraft in England*. Batsford, 1947.

Hughes, Pennethorne: *Witchcraft*. Longmans, Green, 1952.

Kittredge, George Lyman: *Witchcraft in Old and New England*. Russell & Russell, 1956.

Warts

The archetypal **witch** is invariably depicted as a **hag** with a humped back and a large wart on her face or nose. During the persecutions it was important to be as

unlike this depiction as possible, to avoid accusation. The wart caused by a viral infection was often seen as the “teat” from which the witch fed her devilish imp. Removal of warts was therefore important.

Many cures (some of which are used today) involved rubbing the wart with another object, perhaps a piece of bacon fat, a snail or frog, a **horseshoe** nail, a potato, a bean, or a piece of meat. Other cures involved transferring the wart to another person by direct contact or by touching an object to the wart and then ensuring that another person touches that object. One such old cure/**charm** states, “Buy a new, red, silk ribbon twenty-one inches long and tie as many **knots** in it as there are warts on the body. Drop the ribbon near a school or where many children or adults pass by. Whoever picks up the ribbon will take on the warts.” Commenting on this, Dr. Henry E. Sigerist pointed out that there were no **incantations** and that the purchasing of a new length of ribbon, to be later discarded, involved a minor **sacrifice**. The disease was transferred to the ribbon through the tying of the knots and then further transferred by being picked up by another.

Professor H. J. Eysenck, of London’s Maudsley Hospital, conducted an experiment with two groups of children. One group was given conventional medicine to get rid of the warts while the other group was led through a “**magical**” **ritual**, involving drawing the wart in progressively smaller size on a piece of paper. The group practicing the old folk magic had a far greater success rate in eliminating the wart than did the group with the medicine.

Vance Randolph said that warts may be disposed of by hiring a boy to “take them off your hands.” He said that “two or three more warts don’t matter to a chap who has a dozen or so already. Just give the boy a penny or a nickel for each wart and they will pass from you to him as soon as he spends the money.”

Some people stipulate that a wart must be removed at a **crossroads** or, even better, where three roads meet, because such a meeting or crossing of roads is special to **Witches**. As a **goddess** of magical charms and enchantments, **Hecate** frequented crossroads where her image could be found, either as columns or as statues of the goddess, with three faces called Triple Hecates. Offerings would be left there for her, on the eve of the full **moon**, usually in the form of food, known as “Hecate’s Supper.” Three is considered a magical number in many ways, and the place where three roads meet was therefore a mystical spot, often the site of magical rituals and religious rites. **Dame Alice Kyteler** was accused of sacrificing cockerels at a crossroads at her trial in 1324.

One old folk cure for warts involved placing a grain of corn for each wart in the road at a crossroads, each under a small stone. The person or animal who moved a stone and uncovered the grain would take on the warts.

The exact number of warts can be important when using a **spell** to get rid of them. Randolph quotes an old farmer who would apply stump water to the warts and say “Stump water, stump water, kill these (number) warts!” The number stated had to be the exact number of warts that were there. If not, then none of the warts would go. Another countryman would squeeze a drop of **blood** from the wart onto

two grains of corn. He would feed one of the grains to a rooster and carry the other in his pocket. At some point he would find that he had lost the grain from his pocket, and he then would find that the wart had disappeared.

SOURCES:

Pickering, David: *Dictionary of Witchcraft*. Cassell, 1996.
Randolph, Vance: *Ozark Superstitions*. Columbia University Press, 1947.
The Supernatural: Healing Without Medicine. Aldus Books, 1975.

Washes

Wash is a term given to a mixture of **herbs** and **water** that is sprinkled on people and things for the purposes of protection, success, **uncrossing**, attraction, and other needs. Washes are used to bring people into a shop or business, to keep undesirables out of a business or home, and to cleanse and purify. This practice is found in certain types of **Voodoo**, Hoodoo (a very commercial variety of Voodoo dealing mainly with the sale of **magical** items), Santeria, and other similar practices and religious beliefs.

To make a wash, the appropriate herb is steeped in water for a certain period. The mixture is kept in a cool, dark place and shaken periodically while a **spell** or **chant** is said over it. After three or seven days (depending upon the purpose) the water is strained off into a clean container, the wash is what remains. It may be used as it is or it may be mixed into a bucket of water that will be used to scrub down a floor, door, or wall. If used for a business that has walk-in customers, the wash should be used on the entrance floor, door, and door handle. For a mail-order business, the mailbox itself may be washed. This washing should be repeated once a week.

SOURCES:

Malbrough, Ray T.: *Charms, Spells and Formulas*. Llewellyn, 1986.

Watchtowers

Watchtowers are associated with the four directions—east, south, west, and north—in the **Wiccan** ritual **Circle**. They are etheric, symbolical structures set up to guard the Circle during the rites. The ceremony of erecting and **consecrating** the Circle contains reference to the Guardians of the Watchtowers. In some Wiccan **traditions** these guardians are equated with the **magical** elementals of **sylphs** (east = **air**), **salamanders** (south = **fire**), **undines** (west = **water**), and **gnomes** (north = **earth**). In other traditions, there is no specific naming or identifying of the guardians.

According to Grimassi, in ancient Rome small towers were built at the joining roads of a **crossroads** and an **altar** placed before each tower. On these altars offerings were made to Nature **spirits** in the form of the Lares, or *Compitales*. The Lares were originally placed where two fields joined, since they were protectors of agriculture, but later they were also placed at crossroads.

SOURCES:

Grimassi, Raven: *Encyclopedia of Wicca and Witchcraft*. Llewellyn, 2000.
Larousse Encyclopedia of Mythology. Hamlyn, 1966.

Water

Four elements—**Earth, Air, Fire** and **Water**—are associated with the four directions of North, East, South and West in the **magic Circle**. Water is connected with the feminine aspect, love and **fertility**, cleansing and **healing**. Many **traditions** of **Wicca** apply Water to the West and further associate it with the color blue, and the elementals known as **undines**. There are correspondences with **initiation**, with death and rebirth. In Ritual or **Ceremonial Magic**, water is also associated with Gabriel and the **Tarot** suit of Cups, as well as autumn, dusk, and the Hebrew letter Heh.

Native American Medicine **Wheels** assign directions to the elements of Earth, Air, Fire, and Water; those associations vary from tribe to tribe.

Holy water is a part of many religions, including Wicca. Virtually all such holy water is simply water with **salt** added to it. Salt represents life and symbolizes semen. Such consecrated water is a part of all Wiccan **rituals** and is used in the **consecration** of the Circle, those within that Circle, and all ritual **tools**. The Old Testament (Exodus 30:19–21) contains a reference to the need for **priests** to do a ritual purification before approaching the **altar**. Roman Catholic priests wash their hands in a basin of water called a lavabo before saying Mass, and baptismal water is water with salt in it.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Buckland's Complete Book of Witchcraft*. Llewellyn, 1986.

Water Witch

“Water Witch” is a term often applied to a water diviner or dowser. The tools used by dowsers are many and varied. Some use a forked twig (hazel seems the most popular), while others can use objects such as bent clothes hangers, metal rods, and pendulums.

The diviner is able to use the chosen tool to locate whatever is being sought: **water** (hydromancy), metal, oil, treasure, coal, gold, or any other mineral or object. The first dowsers were probably the prospectors operating in the Harz Mountains of Germany in the fifteenth century. No records of the practice before then exist although it may well have been in use previously. In the reign of Elizabeth I, these German miners brought the practice to England, where it became popular and well established. Since that time dowsing has been in use around the world with great success but, as might be expected, with little acknowledgement from the scientific community.

The most popular form of dowsing involves use of a forked stick, the ends of which one holds firmly with the palms of the hands upward. With the single prong of the stick pointing straight outward, the **water witch** will walk the land until the stick suddenly and very forcefully twists to point downward, indicating the presence of water or whatever else is being sought. Most water witches say that they must concentrate on what they are looking for, seeing it in their mind's eye.

Divining can be done from a distance by working with a map, usually using a pendulum. The necessary information may be obtained by slowly moving a pointer over a large-scale map while holding a pendulum. The pendulum will swing when the pointer passes over a spot with water (or whatever is being sought). The pendulum can then be further used to determine the depth at which the object will be found and, in the case of water, even the amount and rate of flow. (Working with a pendulum is usually referred to as radiesthesia, which has now extended to include medical diagnosis and prescription.)

SOURCES:

Mermet, Abbé: *Principles and Practice of Radiesthesia*. Watkins, 1975.

Richards, Dr. Guyon: *Medical Dowsing*. Medical Society for the Study of Radiesthesia, London, n.d.

Vogt, E. Z. and R. Hyman: *Water Witching USA*. University of Chicago, 1959.

Willey, Raymond C.: *Modern Dowsing*. Esoteric, 1976.

Weatherworking

For hundreds of years Witches have been thought to have the power to control the weather. In Francesco-Maria Guazzo's *Compendium Maleficarum* of 1626 he reported, "Witches have confessed that they made hailstorms at the **sabbat**, or whenever they wished, to blast the fruits of the **earth**. To this end, according to their confessions, they beat **water** with a **wand**, and then they threw into the **air** or into the water a certain powder which **Satan** had given to them. By this means, a cloud was raised which afterwards turned to hailstones and fell wherever the witches wished. When water was lacking, they used their urine."

At Agnes Sampson's trial in Scotland, January 27, 1591, she testified that one of her **coven**, Marion Lenchop, was told, "You shall warn the rest of the sisters to raise the wind this day, at eleven hours, to stop the Queen from coming to Scotland." At their meeting, she said, they "should make the storm universal through the sea." Others at that same trial gave evidence to the storm raising that was done and in fact a great storm did come up and threaten the ship carrying King James I (James VI of Scotland) and his young bride. Sampson claimed that in order to raise the storm the witches tied limbs from a dead man—retrieved from a grave—to the four legs of a cat and cast the cat into the sea, shouting, "Hail, hola!" and "Hola!" Records of the trial claim "There did arise such a tempest in the sea, as a greater hath not been seen."

Fifth century Greek historian Herodotus, in his *History of the Persian Wars*, said, "At length the Magi, having sacrificed victims and endeavored to charm the winds by incantations, and moreover, having offered sacrifices to Thetis and the Nereids, laid the storm on the fourth day."

In **Shakespeare's Macbeth**, one of the Weird Sisters threatens to toss the ship **Tiger** about on the seas in a violent storm for nine-times-nine weeks, to extract vengeance on a sailor. In old Anglo-Saxon England, according to Oswald Cockayne's three volume *Leechdoms, Wortcunning and Starcraft of Early England* (1864–1866), there were **charms** and **spells** to calm a storm, to drive away hail, and to control the winds.

Archbishop Theodore of Canterbury, in 700 CE, published the *Liber Poenitentialis*, in which he ordered five years' penance, with one year on bread and water, for anyone causing storms. Archbishop Agobard of Lyons (c. 840 CE) published a tract "against the Foolish Notions of the People about Hail and Thunder" in which he complained bitterly about "weather wizards" of the time who could "not only bring on storms but also can protect the inhabitants from them."

In the sixteenth century and beyond, Witches sold knotted ropes to sailors, claiming that they had conjured winds into the knots. If the sailor found his ship becalmed he had only to undo a knot to get wind. Untying one knot would give a gentle breeze; two knots a strong, steady wind; three knots a gale force wind.

In the twelfth century the poet Sumner, in his *Last Will and Testament*, wrote:

In Ireland and in Denmark both
Witches for gold will sell a man
a wind,
Which in the corner of a napkin
wrapp'd,
Shall blow him safe unto what
coast he will.

Most records of Witches controlling the weather seem to focus on their ability to raise a storm, as in the case of the North Berwick Scottish witches, mentioned previously. Ulrich Molitor (*Tractatus de Pythonicis Mulieribus*, 1498) said that it was common knowledge that witches provoked lightning and hail. His *De Lamiis et Pythonicis Mulieribus* of 1489 contains an illustration of two witches casting a rooster and a snake into a bubbling cauldron to bring rain. In 1653 Henry More wrote in *An Antidote Against Atheism*, "But now for the truth of this, that certain words or ceremonies do seem at least to cause an alteration in the air or to raise tempests." More was a firm believer in the power of witches.

Today's Witches do believe that they are able to control the weather to a certain amount. They do not bring on dire storms and tempests, but have been known to bring sunshine when a farmer has needed fair weather to get in his harvest. The coven of Lady Olwen performed such a conjuring on the Isle of Man in the 1960s.



Witches place a cock and serpent in their broth to cause a hailstorm, c. 1489. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

SOURCES:

Kittredge, George Lyman: *Witchcraft In Old and New England*. Russell & Russell, 1956.
Murray, Margaret Alice: *The Witch Cult in Western Europe*. Clarendon Press, 1921.
Robbins, Rossell Hope: *The Encyclopedia of Witchcraft and Demonology*. Crown, 1959.

Weighing against the Bible

In the Middle Ages many churches had very large Bibles. When someone was accused of **witchcraft**, it was a practice to weigh that person against the Bible. If the Bible weighed more, then the accused was assuredly a witch since the word of God was “heavier” than the word of the Devil. However, if the person accused outweighed the Bible, then he or she was judged innocent. Although the Bibles were large and extremely heavy, few of them weighed more than the average person, so rarely was someone accused of witchcraft found guilty with this method of judgement. It soon fell out of favor.

Weir, Thomas (1600–1670)

In 1670 Major Thomas Weir voluntarily confessed to a long list of crimes including sodomy, bestiality with mares and cows, incest with his sister Jane (from the time she was sixteen years old until she was fifty) and with his stepdaughter Margaret Bourdon, fornication with his maid servant Bessie Weems, and **witchcraft**. At the age of seventy, Weir, an outstanding parliamentary officer, a Puritan, and evangelical leader of the Presbyterian strict sect, came to be regarded as one of Scotland’s most notorious **wizards**. Despite efforts to stifle the affair and avoid scandal and disgrace, a minister in whom Weir had confided revealed the story to the Lord Provost of the city, and an inquiry was instituted.

Weir and his sister were arrested, and according to George Sinclar’s *Satan’s Invisible World Discovered*, 1871, “the terrors of God which were upon his soul urged him to confess and accuse himself.” To various ministers who visited him in prison, Weir stated, “I know my sentence of damnation is already sealed in Heaven . . . for I find nothing within me but blackness, darkness, brimstone, and burning to the bottom of Hell.” Jane Weir, in an attempt to save herself, accused her brother of witchcraft.

Major Weir always walked with a thornwood **staff**, on which he would lean even when praying. This came to be regarded as a wizard’s staff, bringing him inspiration from the devil. The trial revealed that a woman had seen the Major having sex with a mare in 1651 or 1652 but that after reporting it she was whipped for slandering such a well-respected man. Weir’s sister-in-law Margaret reported that when she was twenty-seven she had seen him and his sister Jane making violent love in a barn. Jane Weir told tales of spirits doing **magic** work for her and of her and her brother traveling in a magic coach of **fire** that took them to Musselburgh and back to Edinburgh.

Found guilty, Major Weir was strangled and burned at a stake between Edinburgh and Leith on April 11, 1670, and his body was then burned to ashes. His

sixty-year-old sister Jane was burned as a **witch** and for incest on April 12, in the Grassmarket at Edinburgh, on her own confessions and the evidence of her brother's statements.

SOURCES:

Anderson, A.O.: *Early Sources of Scottish History* (2 vols.). Edinburgh, 1922.

Burr, George Lincoln: *Narratives of the Witchcraft Cases, 1648-1706*. Charles Scribners' Sons, 1914.

Summers, Montague: *The History of Witchcraft*. Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1926.

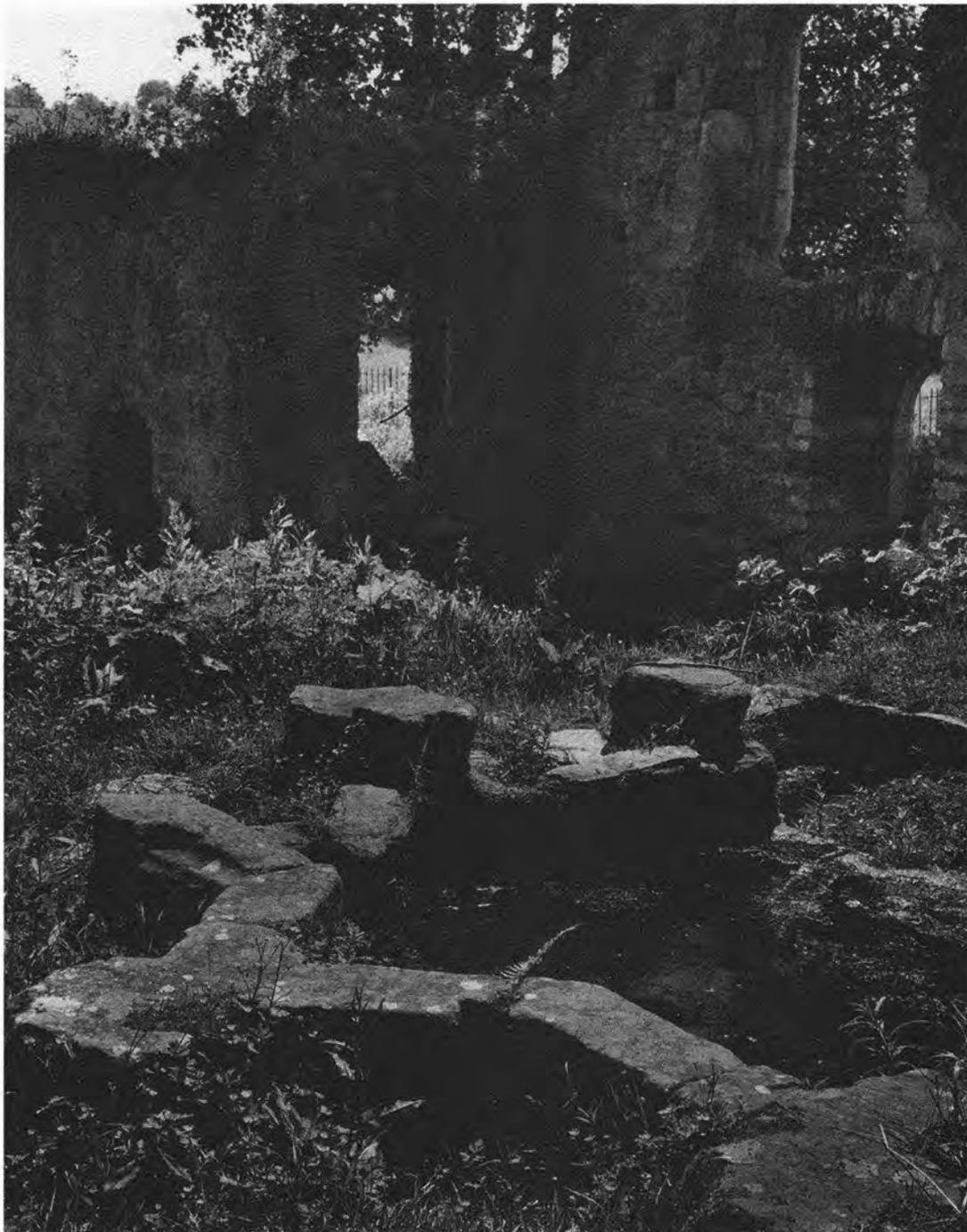
Wells

In pre-Roman times vital sources of **water** were believed to be the dwelling places of powerful **gods** and **goddesses**. Especially revered were those sources where the water was mineral-rich, possessing curative powers, an example of which could be found at Bath, Somerset, England, where even today people still go to "take the waters." The baths there were dedicated to the Romano-British goddess Sulis. Similar curative waters at Buxton, in Derbyshire, were dedicated to Arnemetia. Even the coming of Christianity could not stamp out the faith the people had in these waters and their deities. References to the goddess patron at Bath changed from "Lady of the Well" to simply "Our Lady." At Buxton, St. Anne replaced the goddess Arnemetia, but otherwise the popularity of the **magical** springs continued.

Many other wells and springs flourished and still flourish around Britain and continental Europe. St. Winifred's Well, in Flintshire, continues to attract people, and the partly abandoned well (reputedly haunted by a stag-headed deity) at Pilleth, in Radnorshire, is still visited on occasion. Because of the depth of the water in many wells, many believed that they acted as a conduit to the underworld and to the **spirits** who dwelled there.

Not all wells were known for the curative powers of their waters. Some were credited with the power to foretell the future, some for granting wishes, some for placing **curses**, and some simply as a sacred place to honor the gods. The innumerable coins and other objects that archaeologists have found when excavating such wells (some objects dating from prehistoric times) attest to the belief that it was necessary to placate the gods, or pay for sought-after favors. Even today the desire to toss a coin into any well and make a wish is ingrained in many people.

One method of honoring the gods was to "dress" the well. This was done by tying a rag (usually red) known as a *clout* to any **tree** or trees close to the well. Green boughs, branches, and flowers were also lain about the well. This practice often coincided with a particular day of the year, perhaps a day special to the individual well or else one of the old **Pagan** holidays, or **Wiccan Sabbats**. Well dressing in England today is most common from May through to August. In May wells are dressed at Etwell, Tissington, and Wirksworth; at Ashford-in-the-Water, Hope, Monyash, Tidewell, Buxton, Litton, Breaston, Rowsley, Youlgreave, Bakewell, and Edlaston in June; at Ault Hucknall, Dore, Stoney Middleton, Whitwell, Pilsley, Heath, and Holmewood in July; and at Barlow and Bradwell in August.



Bathing pool at St. Mary's Well, Ffynnon Fawr, Denbighshire, North Wales. Courtesy Janet and Colin Bord/Fordean Picture Library.

John Arbrey, in *Three Prose Works* (1688–1697), related how the civil war in England forced the people of Droitwich, in Worcestershire, to desert their well. Apparently as a result of this abandonment, the well dried up. The villagers immediately tried to revive it, by again dressing it and honoring the deities. Aubrey said, “notwithstanding the power of the Parliament . . . the Minister there and also the Soldiers, they did and will dress it, and the water returned again.”

Even today well dressing continues in many parts of the British Isles. The Church even sponsors some of the dressings, saying that they are “symbols of Thanksgiving to the Almighty for the precious gift of drinking water.” The longest established well dressing is at Tissington, in Derbyshire, where the local church in 1899 erected a highly Christian decoration around the ancient site.

The beginning of the nineteenth century saw a revival of interest in well dressing. This practice has evolved from a motley collection of rags tied to branches and boughs laid about the site to a community project to construct an elaborate decoration—sometimes as much as twelve feet high—that stands around the well. This decoration has a clay base into which innumerable flower petals, leaves, pine cones, bark, and pebbles are set to construct a large and colorful picture.

SOURCES:

Bord, Janet and Colin: *Ancient Mysteries of Britain*. Guild Publishing, 1986.

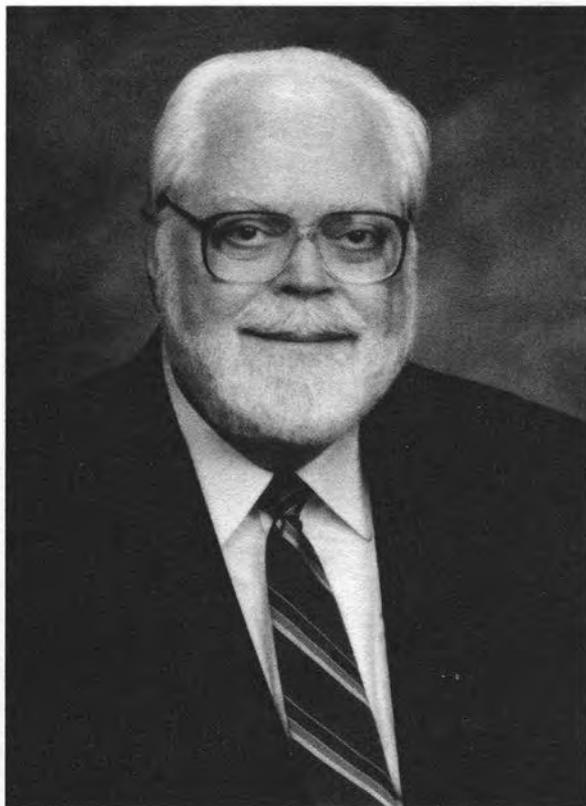
Rightly, Charles: *The Customs and Ceremonies of Britain*. Thames & Hudson, 1986.

Weschcke, Carl Llewellyn (1930–)

Carl Weschcke was born September 10, 1930, in St. Paul, Minnesota. He attended St. Paul Academy, graduating in 1948, and went on to Babson College in Massachusetts, where he received a B.S. in business administration in 1951. Although he then joined the family pharmaceutical business, he soon felt himself drawn toward the publishing industry and dreamed of becoming a publisher himself.

Despite being born into a Roman Catholic family, Weschcke developed an interest in metaphysics, perhaps encouraged by the fact that his paternal grandfather was a vice president of the American Theosophical Society. Both his father and his grandfather believed in **reincarnation**. Over the years Weschcke investigated a wide variety of metaphysical subjects, and he studied with the Rosicrucian Order and the Society of the Inner Light. He did practical research in **Astrology**, **Ceremonial Magic**, **Kabbalah**, Shamanism, **Tantra**, and Taoism. Active in the civil rights and civil liberties movements in the 1950s and 1960s, Weschcke held office on the boards of the NAACP and the ACLU of Minnesota, playing a major role in bringing about fair housing legislation in St. Paul. In later years he became Grandmaster of Aurum Solis, an international magical order founded in Great Britain in 1897. However, he withdrew from that order in 1991.

In the 1950s Weschcke entered the University of Minnesota to pursue a doctorate in philosophy; his drive to become a publisher led him to leave before completing his degree. In 1960 he purchased Llewellyn Publications, an old astrological publishing company founded (in 1901) by Llewellyn George, author of *A to Z Horoscope*



Carl Llewellyn Weschcke. Courtesy Raymond Buckland.

Maker and Delineator, Practical Astrology for Everybody, The Astrologer's Searchlight, and a number of other books and bulletins. Started in Portland, Oregon, the company moved to Los Angeles, where it operated mainly as a mail-order company until George's death in 1954. Weschcke purchased the company six years later and moved it to St. Paul. He immediately broadened the scope of the company with a complete line of astrological and occult books. In 1964 he purchased one of the old stone mansions on Summit Avenue in St. Paul to serve as his home and the home of the new Llewellyn Publications. It turned out that the house was haunted, and Weschcke had a number of ghostly encounters there over the years.

Within a decade Llewellyn Publications was publishing a healthy list of titles, and by the late 1980s was issuing thirty to fifty books a year, together with audio and (later) video tapes, and computer software. The company also launched a series of successful magazines: *New Dimensions, Gnostica, Astrology Now, Minutescope, New Times, and New Worlds*. More recently it took over publication of the venerable *Fate* magazine.

In 1970 Weschcke opened the Gnostica Bookstore together with the Gnostica School for Self-Development in Minneapolis. The following year he hosted the First American Aquarian Festival of Astrology and the Occult Sciences. Later known simply as "Gnosticon," this festival grew into a successful series and drew some of the better known names in **Witchcraft/Wicca, Magic, Astrology, and Paganism**. In 1972 Weschcke was himself initiated into the American Celtic tradition of Wicca, going on to become a **High Priest and Elder** in that tradition.

Around this time Weschcke met Sandra Heggum, a **Priestess** in the American Celtic tradition, and they were **Handfasted** at a **full moon** in 1972. In the fall of the following year, Weschcke helped organize the Council of American Witches, becoming its first chairman. He prides himself on having drafted the "Thirteen Principles of Belief" statement, which has gone on to become one of the cornerstones of modern Wicca.

After the birth of son Gabriel in 1973, Weschcke began to cut back on his public activities to concentrate more on family and business. Gabriel was raised in the

Unitarian Church and, like his father, attended Babson College; he obtained a master's degree in publishing science from Pace University, New York. He has since gone on to join his parents at Llewellyn Publications.

Weschcke moved from the Summit Avenue house to a place in the country separate from the business. He ended the festivals and closed the bookstore in order to focus his energies on building the publishing business. He also adopted Llewellyn as his middle name. The business grew—becoming Llewellyn Worldwide, Ltd.—and is today one of the largest and most respected of **New Age** publishers in the world, issuing approximately 100 new titles a year by the top authors in the field.

Weyer, Johann (1515–1588)

Johann Weyer was born in Brabant, Germany, into a noble Protestant family. In his *De Praestigiis Daemonum* (1563) Weyer states that he was a student of the scientist and reputed **magician** Cornelius Agrippa, working with him on a daily basis. Weyer's book was the most celebrated of all books to expose the **witchcraft** delusion at the time when it was at its height. He was one of the first to question the persecution of people on a charge of witchcraft and to try to separate those who did no true evil from those who really did align themselves with **Satan**. He said that whatever evil some women might think they worked was actually a hallucination. The true evil, he said, was done by Satan himself and alone.

Weyer studied medicine in Paris and went on to become tutor to the two sons and nephew of King Francis I of France. He travelled extensively with the boys, across France and to Crete and Africa. Later he became physician to Duke William of Cleves, and it was in that post that he started to write his books on witchcraft and what he perceived as the delusions of its practitioners. Through Weyer's diagnostics and writings, the Duchy of Cleves and Juliers-Berg became a sanctuary of sanity in the midst of the chaos of the persecutions. Had it not been for the protection of the Duke, Weyer would certainly have been taken himself and burned as a **witch**, or witch lover.

Weyer, a Protestant, spoke out openly against the clergy who readily accused others of witchcraft, sometimes just to get money for performing **exorcisms**. He cried out against the inhuman **tortures** inflicted on the elderly victims to gain confessions, and denounced the typical methods of the persecutors with their false accusations. His emphasis on the uselessness of false confessions extracted in this way laid the foundations for later humanitarians.

SOURCES:

Robbins, Roswell Hope: *The Encyclopedia of Witchcraft and Demonology*. Crown, 1959.
Summers, Montague: *The History of Witchcraft*. Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1926.

Wheel of the Year

Wheel of the Year is the term used in **Wicca** for the changing seasons, the spokes of the wheel being the Greater and Lesser **Sabbats**: **Samhain**, Yule, **Imbolc**, Spring, **Beltane**, Summer, **Lughnasadh**, Autumn. The Wheel marks the passing of the year and the

continual cycles of death and rebirth. The Greater Sabbats relate to the old Celtic agricultural calendar, while the Lesser Sabbats relate to the transitions of the sun.

Not all **Witchcraft** traditions observe the same Sabbats; for example, many Scottish **Witches** observe only Samhuinn, Yule (or *Feill-Fionnain*), Bealltainn, and Midsummer (or *Feill-Sheathain*), following a four-spoked wheel rather than an eight-spoked one.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Buckland's Complete Book of Witchcraft*. Llewellyn, 1986.

Buckland, Raymond: *Scottish Witchcraft*. Llewellyn, 1992.

Hutton, Ronald: *The Stations of the Sun*. Oxford U. P., 1996.

White Handled Knife

One of the **ritual tools** of **Witchcraft** is a knife with a blade that may be single- or double-edged. The handle is white, as its name implies. The knife is used for making, marking, and inscribing the other ritual tools. The Gardnerian **Book of Shadows** states, "Its use is to form all the instruments used in the Art. It can only properly be used within the **Circle**." Like all such tools, the White Handled Knife is **consecrated** before its initial use. This is not the same tool as the **Bolene**, or Bolline, which has a curved blade and is used strictly for cutting herbs.

There is also a White Handled Knife used in Ceremonial Magic. In fact it may be from there that **Witches** picked up the use of this magical tool. According to such old **grimoires** as the *Key of Solomon the King*, this knife is engraved on its handle with such words and **Names of Power** as tetragrammaton, adonay, and jehova, showing the Judeo-Christian connection.

SOURCES:

Harris, Eleanor and Philip: *The Crafting and Use of Ritual Tools*. Llewellyn, 1998.

Shah, Idries: *The Secret Lore of Magic*. Frederick Muller, 1957.

Shah, Sirdar Ikbai Ali: *Occultism: Its Theory and Practice*. Roy Publishers, 1955.

White Magic

White Magic is used for positive purposes. There are many shades of **magic**, although it is generally thought of in terms of black and white, bad and good (with various shades of gray in-between). White, or good, magic is the variety that is done to help people and is the only type of magic done by **Wiccans**. True **Witches** do not do **black magic**.

Healing magic is an example of white magic, as is love magic, so long as it does not impose on anyone's free will. Protective magic is also considered white magic.

Wicca

Wicca is the preferred word for "**Witchcraft**" with most **Witches** today, since it does not carry the negativity associated with the stereotypical witch promoted by Christianity. It denotes the positive, nature-oriented **Pagan** religion derived from pre-Christian roots. The origins of the word are frequently debated. **Gerald Gardner**

was the first to use the word in recent times and, as with his form of the **Old Religion**, it has become the norm, although Gardner spelled it with one “c”—Wica—while most Witches today employ two: Wicca, or Wicce (f).

Most modern Witches believe, as Gardner asserted and as seems to have been borne out, that the word comes from the Anglo-Saxon word meaning “a wise one.” Others have suggested it comes from the Old English *wiccian*, “to work sorcery,” or *wican*, meaning “to bend.” In fact, various words were used to mean “witch” in Old English and Anglo-Saxon. Henry Sweet’s *Dictionary of Anglo-Saxon* shows *haegtesse* (f) as one, and Grattan and Singer’s *Anglo-Saxon Magic and Medicine* also uses that root (*haegtesan gescot*, meaning “witch shot”). But Sweet mainly refers to *wica* and its variations: *wicca*, “wizard”; *wicce*, “witch”; *wiccacraeft*, “witchcraft”; *wiccung*, “witchcraft”; *wiccian*, “to use witchcraft.” Other sources include the Anglo-Saxon *witalio/ge* (m), “a sage or wise man,” and *witegla* or *witga*, “wise man or prophet.”

In early Britain, the king had a national council of wise ones known as the *Witan* (King Alfred and his *Witan* made peace with Guthrum). This *Witan* was composed chiefly of *eorls*, or nobles of hereditary rank, together with *gesiths*, or professional warriors. As a lawmaker, the king always acted with his *Witan*. There are many instances to show that this *Witan* was also able to elect a king. Edain McCoy says, “Witta, the Irish Gaelic term for the Anglo-Saxon word Wicca, is one of the Irish names of the craft.”

SOURCES:

Grattan, J. H. G. and Charles Singer: *Anglo-Saxon Magic and Medicine*. Oxford University Press, 1952.
 Kittredge, George Lyman: *Witchcraft in Old and New England*. Russell & Russell, 1956.
 McCoy, Edain: *Witta: An Irish Pagan Tradition*. Llewlynn, 1998.
 Moore, Samuel and Thomas A. Knott: *The Elements of Old English*. George Wahr Publishing, 1965.
 Storms, G.: *Anglo-Saxon Magic*. Gordon Press, 1974.
 Sweet, Henry: *The Student’s Dictionary of Anglo-Saxon*. Oxford University Press, 1976.

Wiccaning

“Wiccaning” is the **Witch** term for the equivalent of a Christian baptism. It is one of the Wiccan rites of passage, marking the naming of a child and his or her dedication to the **gods**. Although at this time a name is given to the child and it is offered to the gods, the child may choose a new name (accompanied by a *Craft Initiation*) when he or she reaches puberty and is in a position to make such a decision. However, if at that time the child has decided to take a different path, he or she is free to leave the rite and follow that chosen course.

At the Wiccaning of a small child, the child is sprinkled with the **salted water** and passed through the smoke of **incense**, as a spiritual cleansing. There may or may not be Godfather(s) and Goddessmother(s) present.

Wiccan Rede

There are no commandments, catechism, or similar doctrine in **Wicca**. There is only one law, which is known as the Wiccan Rede: “An it harm none, do what thou

wilt." The word "an" means "if," so it is saying that you may do whatever you like just so long as what you do harms no one. That "no one" includes yourself.

Other religions express the same idea. In Brahmanism is found, "Do naught unto others which would cause you pain if done to you." In Buddhism, "Hurt not others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful." Christianity has, "Wherefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." Confucianism states, "Do not unto others what you would not have them do unto you." Islam says, "No one of you is a believer until he desires for his brother that which he desires for himself." Judaism has, "What is hateful to you, do not to your fellowman." Taoism states, "Regard your neighbor's gain as your own gain and your neighbor's loss as your own loss." And Zoroastrianism says, "That nature alone is good which refrains from doing unto another whatsoever is not good for itself." Yet many of these other religions find it necessary to supplement this prime law with other laws. As stated in **Witchcraft** no other laws are necessary, since the Wiccan Rede says it all.

Wicker Man, The (movie)

A favorite among **Wiccans** and **Pagans**, this 1974 British movie directed by Robin Hardy is based on a book by Anthony Shaffer, who also wrote the screenplay. It stars Edward Woodward, Christopher Lee, Britt Ekland, Diane Cilento and Ingrid Pitt. Lee also co-produced. Although put out on a low budget, the film is striking in its photography (set in the northern islands of Scotland) as well as its script and acting.

The story involves a devout Christian police sergeant (Woodward) sent to a secluded Scottish island to investigate the disappearance of a young girl, whose disappearance was reported in an anonymous letter. The island is unusual in many ways. It is ruled over by Lord Summerisle (Lee), an eccentric aristocrat whose word is more or less law. The population of the island steadfastly refuses to admit to the girl's disappearance. As Sgt. Howie moves about the island asking questions, he discovers that the whole population follows the old pagan ways. There is great emphasis on nature worship, sexuality, and **fertility**, with many pagan **rituals** performed. Sgt. Howie comes to believe that the girl's disappearance is somehow linked to an upcoming festival. In fact he finds himself playing a leading part in that celebration.

The screenplay is well crafted, creating a convincing pagan society in modern times and the plausible premise of a Christian placing himself freely amidst Pagans. The film's climax is exciting, if somewhat terrifying. The film's score and songs (by Paul Giovanni) have also become Wiccan and Pagan favorites.

Widdershins

"Widdershins" is the term for moving in a counterclockwise direction (clockwise is termed *deosil*). In many **Witchcraft traditions** moving widdershins within the **ritual Circle** is forbidden, yet it is acceptable in other traditions. For some **Witches** a widdershins movement is necessary for **uncrossing** and for banishing **spells**, and it is even used by some **covens** when casting a Circle in the **waning** phase of the moon.

The word comes from the Anglo-Saxon *with sith*, meaning “to walk against.” It is regarded by many as unlucky since it goes against the natural rotation of the sun. Rosemary Ellen Guiley suggests that a widdershins movement is used in **necromantic** rituals, when a **magician** is conjuring with corpses in an effort to discover future events.

SOURCES:

Guiley, Rosemary Ellen: *The Encyclopedia of Witches and Witchcraft*. Facts on File, 1989.

Wild Hunt

As the *wilde Jagd* the Wild Hunt is part of Teutonic folklore, although it was known across most of northern Europe. In France it is known variously as *Chasse Maccabei*, *Chasse Artu*, or *Mesnie Hellequin*. It is a procession of beings, usually female and including ancient **deities**, across the sky. Names of the deities known in southern Germany include Perchta, Berhta, or Berta, called “the bright one” and sometimes aligned with **Diana**. Other names associated with the Wild Hunt include Holt, Holle, or Hulde; Faste; Selga; Selda; and Venus. In France the names Abundia and Satia are used; in Italy, Befana, Befania, or Epiphania.

The Wild Hunt took place not only across the sky. In some areas it was supposed to pass along the country roads, especially on **sabbat** dates. **Witches** were commonly believed to be a part of the Wild Hunt. It was first described in the **Canon Episcopi** of c. 900 CE, which stated, “Some wicked women . . . seduced by illusions and phantoms of **demons**, believe and profess themselves in the hours of the night to ride upon certain beasts with Diana, the **goddess** of the **Pagans**, and in the silence of the night to traverse great spaces of the earth, and to obey her commands as of their mistress, and to be summoned to her service on certain nights.”

By many accounts the Wild Hunt was led by Satan himself, attended by the hounds of Hell. Reports have it accompanied by a cacophony of baying hounds and blowing horns. For those who heard it approaching, the only safe thing to do was to lie flat on the ground, face down with eyes tightly shut, and hold on to any plant or bush until the hunt had passed.

The Wild Hunt was believed to ride in various parts of England. In Shropshire it was led by Wild Edric, the hero who held out against William the Conqueror for several years. In Warwickshire an unknown hunter led a pack of hounds known locally as the Hell Hounds, the Night Hounds, or Hooter. Across Windsor Great Park, on the night of the full moon, **Herne** the Hunter led his pack of hounds (and, according to many, still does). Across Dartmoor, and some other areas of England, **Woden** led the hunt. In the 1940s, during the war years, it was reportedly heard at Samhain, passing through West Coker, near Taunton, Devon.

The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (1127 CE), as reported by Brian Branston in *The Lost Gods of England* (1957), contains the passage:

Let no one be surprised at what we are about to relate, for it was common gossip up and down the countryside that after February 6th many people both saw and heard a whole pack of huntsmen

in full cry. They straddled black horses and black bucks while their hounds were pitch black with staring hideous eyes. This was seen in the very deer park of Peterborough town, and in all the wood stretching from that same spot as far as Stamford. All through the night monks heard them sounding and winding their horns. Reliable witnesses who kept watch in the night declared that there might well have been twenty or even thirty of them in this wild tantivy as near as they could tell.

SOURCES:

Hole, Christina: *Man, Myth and Magic: The Wild Hunt*. BPC Publishing, 1970.

Jordan, Michael: *Witches, an Encyclopedia of Paganism and Magic*. Kyle Cathie, 1996.

Russell, Jeffrey Burton: *Witchcraft in the Middle Ages*. Cornell University Press, 1972.

Williamson, Cecil (1909–1999)

Cecil Hugh Williamson was born into a well-to-do family in Paignton, Devon, on September 18, 1909. His father was a naval officer in the first world war. Since his father was sent to various postings, and his mother followed his father, Cecil was boarded at preparatory schools and spent the holidays with different relatives. While spending a summer with his uncle, the Reverend William Russell Fox, vicar of North Bolly, Williamson had his first encounter with a **Witch**.

When he was seven, Williamson was mercilessly bullied at Norfolk House School by a boy named Bentham. Bentham would chase Williamson to the point where Williamson had to hide in bushes and hedgerows. One day when he was so hiding, he met an old woman collecting twigs. She taught him how to use a **spell** to get rid of his tormentor. It worked—Bentham even suffered a skiing accident. This started Williamson's lifelong respect for **Hedge Witchcraft**. Not long after the hedgerow incident, the young Williamson heard a commotion in the road outside his uncle's home and ran out to discover some drunken farm laborers trying to strip the same old lady. They claimed she was a witch, responsible for a **curse** on some local cattle, and they were searching for the "devil's teat." Williamson, though only a young boy, threw himself on the old woman to try to protect her. His uncle then came on the scene and the drunks retired. Later that week the old woman met Williamson near a **willow tree** by a stream. She taught him how to tickle trout and told him more about **Witchcraft** and **magic**.

Williamson went on to Malvern College in Worcestershire, spending some summer vacations in Dinard, France, with his grandmother. Williamson's grandmother was an **astrologer** of note and, through her, he came to meet such people as **Aleister Crowley**, **Margaret Murray**, **Montague Summers**, and Sir Wallace Budge. Immediately after the first world war Williamson's father took a job with the Admiralty and the family lived for a while in a house in Mayfair. There he was introduced, by a fellow college student named Kennedy Cox, to Madame De La Haye, a well-known fortune-teller. Williamson became the fortune-teller's "boy in white," playing the part of a **spirit** contact at some of her **séances**.



Cecil Williamson. *Courtesy Raymond Buckland.*

Williamson claimed that in his lifetime he knew eighty-two Wise Women, or Witches. He said, "I have got to know, over the years, how the simple ordinary wise woman produces her positive visual and beneficial results. To me that is all that matters; everything else is a waste of time and you can keep your world of *athamés*, chalices, and all the other ritual junk!"

For a while Williamson's parents lived at a place known as Newlands Manor, in the New Forest area. It was a vast house built in the Gothic style, set in a large acreage of woodland complete with a nine-acre lake and a half-mile long driveway from the lodge gate to the house. There Williamson met with Mrs. Woodford Grimes, a leading local Witch, as well as with Dorothy Clutterbuck-Fordham (who was to be Gerald Gardner's High Priestess) and other Witches of that area.

In May of 1930 Williamson started a file on the subject of Witchcraft and continued filling it with his research until his last year alive. The file, which worked much like a journal in many ways, showed that as of June 1997 he had taken part "as a spectator and later as an operative in one thousand one hundred and twenty Witchcraft cases over sixty-seven years." The record also showed, he claimed, that

he had known, met with, and been taught various aspects of the **Craft** by eighty-two wise women. He further claimed that the success rate in this run of 1,120 “incidents,” as he called them, worked out to about sixty percent.

Williamson married Gwen Wilcox, niece of British film producer and director Herbert Wilcox, in 1933. Gwen worked in a makeup studio, and Williamson was doing production work. Five years later, due to his growing expertise in the occult, he became a part of MI6, the British intelligence network, and worked on collecting evidence of Nazi occult interests throughout the second world war.

In 1947 Williamson visited the Atlantis Bookshop, near the British Museum. This was—and still is (today run by Caroline Wise)—a favorite place for those interested in the occult. Founded by Michael Houghton, an occultist and publisher who ran a magical lodge known as the Order of the Hidden Masters in its basement, it was not just a book store, but was also a meeting place where one could have a cup of tea or coffee and read, talk, and discuss matters metaphysical. There Williamson met with Dr. Margaret Murray, who in turn introduced him to Gerald Gardner. At the time Gardner was writing *High Magic's Aid*. Williamson told Murray of a gift of some **amulets** from Sir Wallis Budge and asked her advice on displaying them in the museum he planned. He wanted to know what he should present that would be of most interest to the public. Murray suggested Egypt of 6,000 BCE but Gardner disagreed and kept pressing for “Celtic mythology, **Moon goddesses**, and all that sort of thing.” Apparently Murray and Gardner had quite a heated argument over it.

It was in 1949 that Williamson opened his first exhibition of Witchcraft at his Witchcraft Research Centre, housed in the old Witches' Mill on Arbory Street, Castletown, Isle of Man. He had wanted to open it in Stratford-upon-Avon, if only because of **Shakespeare's** three witches in *Macbeth*, and was offered a building by a doctor he knew there. But when the local press broke the story that it would be a Witchcraft museum, the locals pressured him out of town, so he moved to the Isle of Man. Shortly after he had opened, Gerald Gardner showed up at the museum and talked Williamson into letting him stay there as the museum's “official Witch,” selling copies of his book, *High Magic's Aid*. He ended up staying with Williamson for twelve weeks before a dispute over Gardner's family money was settled and he was able to purchase a cottage of his own on Malew Street, close to the museum.

Williamson saw Gardner as “very, very vain, very self-centered, very tight with money; and he did not have the gift of diplomacy about when to give a little.” This was in sharp contrast to Sir Wallis Budge, of whom Williamson said, “I could not have met a nicer person . . . who had the time to speak to a young fellow. I had the highest regard for him just as I had for Dr. Margaret Murray.”

By 1952 Williamson decided to return to England. Gardner bought the Isle of Man property, although he owned only the buildings and not the museum items. Williamson took all his artifacts with him when he left. He went to Windsor and bought a building known as the Old Drill Hall, together with an old public house known as The Goswells. There he reopened his museum of Witchcraft and Magic. After a couple of years there he moved yet again to Boughton on the Water, where

Williamson had a number of problems with Christians who called the museum “Satan’s House” and tried to drive him out. Local newspaper headlines proclaimed, “Witchcraft Back in the Midlands,” “Black Magic Grips Village,” and “Witchcraft Exhibit Not Likely to Stay.” To add emphasis, a fire burned out a whole section of the museum. The local priest verbally attacked Williamson from the safety of his pulpit and Williamson’s housekeeper was refused Holy Communion, even though she was a very religious person.

In addition to the Witchcraft Museum at Bourton, Williamson also opened a Museum of Smuggling in the little Cornish village of Polperro. Finally, in 1960, he retreated from Bourton and reopened in Boscastle along with a Museum of Sorcery in Tintagel, which he did not keep going for long, since it was not a big attraction.

At Boscastle, Williamson was open from April through to September, presenting items once owned and used by people like Aleister Crowley. One of his more unusual exhibits was the mortal remains of Ursula Kemp, the famous Witch of St. Osyth who was executed on February 18, 1582. After her execution, her body was dipped in tar and then put back on the gibbet for twenty-nine days. The parish priest would not give the remains a Christian burial, so she was buried in wasteland. The remains were discovered during excavation for a cottage extension in 1921, just outside the walls of St. Osyth’s Priory. Metal spikes were driven through the knees, ankles, and wrists of the skeleton, nailing it to the ground. After being on display for a while, the body was reburied, this time under a load of rubble. It wasn’t till the late 1940s that Williamson acquired Ursula Kemp’s remains, for the sum of one hundred pounds.

Over the years Williamson was called in to investigate any number of remains, artifacts, and belongings of recently dead magicians and Witches. He once said, “One of the rewards of being the proprietor of a witchcraft museum is that one is always meeting interesting people connected with ‘the Craft.’” If it hadn’t been for him it is possible that Gerald Gardner’s museum might not have come into being, certainly not at its Isle of Man site. Williamson did much to promote Witchcraft, especially the “Craft of the Wise”—the wisdom of the Hedge Witch or country wise man and woman.

In 1992 Williamson retired—as much as such an active figure will allow himself to retire—and sold the Boscastle Witchcraft Museum to Graham King and Elizabeth Crow. The museum is still open and very popular.

Willow

The willow tree was sacred to the goddesses **Arianrhod**, **Circe**, **Hecate**, and **Persephone**. On Circe’s enchanted island, there was a grove of willows from which hung corpses. The virgin form of Hecate was Helice, who guarded Mount Helicon. She carried a willow **wand** as a cosmic symbol connected with the stars. In the Celtic tradition, the willow was called *saille*, the letter S, in the tree alphabet.

The willow was also a tree associated with grief, although this association probably dates only from the Middle Ages. The Bible refers to exiled Jews weeping

beside the rivers of Babylon and hanging their harps on “willows” there. However, it is more likely that the trees referred to were the Euphrates aspen rather than what we know of as the willow.

Willow wands are used for **divination** and **water witching**, and are one of the preferred woods for the making of magical wands. Many modern **Witches** use the willow in **healing** rites and believe that a willow planted in the garden will draw down the blessings of the goddess from the moon, thus guarding the home. Other names for the willow are Saugh Tree, Tree of Enchantment, Witches’ Aspirin, and Withy.

Scott Cunningham equates the willow with the moon and water, and with **Artemis**, Ceres, Hecate, Persephone, Hera, Mercury, Belili, and Belinus. He states that willow leaves are used in mixtures to attract love and that all parts of the willow guard against evil. The leaves, bark, and wood are utilized in healing **spells**.

SOURCES:

Cunningham, Scott: *Cunningham’s Encyclopedia of Magical Herbs*. Llewellyn, 1985.

Walker, Barbara G.: *The Woman’s Dictionary of Symbols and Sacred Objects*. HarperSanFrancisco, 1988.

Wilson, Monique

Gerald Gardner had a number of different High **Priestesses** over the years. The last one he had before he died was Monique Wilson, whose **Craft** name was Lady Olwen. Monique was born in Haiphong, North Vietnam (then French Indochina), in 1928. Her father was a French naval officer stationed there. She first met Gardner while in Haiphong as a child and came to know him as “Uncle Gerald,” although there was no actual blood relationship.

Monique saw her father murdered by Communists in the streets of Hanoi. For safety she and her mother then moved to Hong Kong, where she once again briefly encountered Uncle Gerald. Also there, on a blind date, Monique met Campbell “Scotty” Wilson, who was serving in the Bomber Command of the Royal Air Force. Within four months they were engaged and soon after were married. They moved to Britain in 1954, and three years later they had a daughter, Yvette.

Some years later, while married and living in Scotland, Monique met Gardner again. At that time she had become interested in the **Old Religion**. The goddess worship equated with her own upbringing with reverence to Kuan Yin. She wrote to the author of *Witchcraft Today* seeking further information. She knew that author as the “Grand Old Man of **Witchcraft**” but was surprised to find that he was none other than the same Uncle Gerald she had known as a child. A renewed friendship developed and she was taken into the Craft. Monique came to be the High Priestess Lady Olwen and Scotty was her High **Priest** Loic. As a child, their daughter Yvette was **initiated** as Morven.

Olwen became a **Witch Queen**, with a number of **covens** in Perth, Scotland, where Gardner was a regular visitor (she initiated this author there in 1963). In February of 1964, Gardner died and left the bulk of his estate to Olwen. This included his museum on the Isle of Man, with all the contents, and his cottage on

Malew Street, in Castletown. The cottage contained almost as many artifacts and magical documents as there were in the museum. Much animosity arose in the Wiccan world in Britain (perhaps partly due to jealousy) when Gardner left so much of his material to Olwen, although he had made some bequests to others. The Wilsons moved to the Isle of Man and took up residence in Gardner's old cottage.

The financial lifeblood of the Isle of Man museum was the restaurant, the Witches Kitchen. This Gardner had left to his biographer, Jack Bracelin, for Bracelin's lifetime. Eventually, however, Olwen and Loic purchased it from Bracelin, and with that their financial interest in the venture stabilized. They received a great deal of press coverage, most of it positive. However, as a result of an article in the *News of the World*, neighbors of the Wilsons started a rumor that their young daughter was abused in the Circle, and as a result, Morven was placed under the supervision of a probation official for three years. Unfortunately by this time Olwen began to drink heavily. The combination of these events caused Loic to urge Olwen to sell the museum. She did not want to, so Loic himself negotiated its sale to Ripley's ("Believe It or Not") in the United States. He and Olwen, with Morven, then retired to Torremolinos, in Andalucia, Spain, which was at the time a quiet little village. Both Olwen and Loic passed to the Summerland in the mid-1980s, Loic as the result of an auto accident.



High Priestess Lady Olwen (Monique Wilson). Courtesy Raymond Buckland.

Winter Solstice

The shortest day of the year marks at the Winter Solstice, known to Wiccans as Yule (from the Norse *jul*, meaning "wheel"). This is the time when the new Sun God is born to the Mother Goddess. It is one of the Lesser Sabbats of the year and falls at or about December 21.

The myth of the battle between the Holly King and the Oak King that occurs at the Winter Solstice and again at the Summer Solstice can be found throughout Europe. The Yule battle is won by the Oak King, who then rules as the days increase

in length and the **Wheel of the Year** turns toward the summer. In the summer the Holly King wins. Remnants of this belief in the battle may be found in the traditional Yule Mummings play, performed across Britain and Europe (and now even in the United States) often in association with **Morris dancing**. In the play the light is represented by St. George and the darkness by a Turkish knight.

Part of the **Pagan** celebration is the gathering and displaying of evergreen boughs, showing the promise of new life in the coming spring. A Yule **tree** is erected in many areas to represent the phallus, or the spirit of **fertility**. From this came the Christian Christmas tree (gifts from the tree actually symbolize the semen springing from the phallus). Yule was established as the birth date of Mithra—with veneration for the sun—and was then adopted by the New Religion (within a few days) to mark the birth of the “Son” Jesus.

A Yule log is burned on the **balefire** at this time. Obtained from the land of the **covenstead**, the log is ceremoniously carried in and placed in the fireplace (or the balefire, if at the sabbat site) with just one end in the fire. Lit from the remnants of the previous year’s Yule log, it is then inched forward as it burns. The end of a fresh Yule log from that fire is then saved and carefully kept until the following year and is used to start that year’s fire. The Yule log supposedly protected the house from **fire** and lightning throughout the year. The balefire itself was burned to give life to the sun on its journey. Ashes from the Yule fire were mixed with cow manure and sprinkled over the fields as a symbolic aid to fertility, insuring new life and a fertile spring.

SOURCES:

Dunwich, Gerina: *Wicca A to Z*. Citadel, 1998.

Farrar, Janet and Stewart: *Eight Sabbats for Witches*. Robert Hale, 1981.

Valiente, Doreen: *An ABC of Witchcraft Past and Present*. St. Martin’s Press, 1973.

Witan

The Witan, or *Witenagemot*, was the national council of “wise ones” who advised the Anglo-Saxon kings in early Britain. For example, King Alfred asked the advice of the Witan regarding the testamentary disposition of his private inheritance. He also consulted his Witan before making peace with Guthrum. The Witan started as a small group of advisors but with the king of Wessex becoming the king of all England, the Witan also grew in size.

The group was composed chiefly of *eorls*, or nobles of hereditary rank, together with *gesiths*, or professional warriors. As a lawmaker, the king seldom acted without his Witan. There are many instances to show that this Witan was also able to elect a king. By late Old English times the Witan had many ceremonial functions, joining the king when he received ambassadors and, by the eleventh century, joining him in public feasting.

The word “Witan” comes from the same root as the Old English *wiccian*, “to work **sorcery**.” Henry Sweet’s *The Student’s Dictionary of Anglo-Saxon* cites the Anglo-Saxon *wita/io/ge* (*m*) meaning “a sage or wise man,” and *witeg/a* or *witga*, “a wise man or prophet.”

Speaking of a modern **tradition** of Witchcraft, Edain McCoy says, “Witta, the Irish Gaelic term for the Anglo-Saxon word Wicca, is one of the Irish names of the **craft**.”

SOURCES:

McCoy, Edain: *Witta: An Irish Pagan Tradition*. Llewlynn, 1998.

Moore, Samuel and Thomas A. Knott: *The Elements of Old English*. George Wahr Publishing, 1965.

Sweet, Henry: *The Student's Dictionary of Anglo-Saxon*. Oxford University Press, 1976.

Witch; Witchcraft

Many modern dictionaries and encyclopedias today define the word “witch” as a person who practices **black magic** and is associated with **Satan**. At the very least many still state that a witch is a sorceress and an ugly old woman. Yet in the *Odyssey*, Homer speaks of the Witch **Circe** as a “goddess with lovely hair . . . radiant . . . the beautiful goddess singing in a lovely voice . . . (in) a white shining robe, delicate and lovely, with a fine girdle of gold about her waist.” **Medea**, the Witch in the Golden Fleece adventures, is described as a beautiful young princess of whom Jason said, “(Her) loveliness must surely mean that she excelled in gentle courtesy.” **Canidia** and **Erichthoë** were both famous Witches yet both beautiful women. The great **Hecate** herself is depicted as a beautiful woman on a stone carving in the British Museum. Even the so-called “**Witch**” of **Endor** (who was actually a spiritualist type of medium) is described nowhere in the **Bible** as being either young or old, although numerous later writers credit her with being, as **Montague Summers** put it, “a fearful hag (with) bleared, rheumy eyes” (*Witchcraft and Black Magic*. Montague Summers, Rider & Co., London, 1946). So the idea of a Witch being an ugly old **crone** is of relatively recent invention.

The actual meaning of the word Witch is linked to “wisdom,” and is the same root as “to have wit” and “to know.” It comes from the Anglo-Saxon *wicce* (f) or *wicca* (m) meaning “wise one,” witches being both female and male. According to Dr. **Margaret Alice Murray**, who wrote the definition for the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, the word has been used almost exclusively since the fifteenth century to describe persons, male or female, who worked magic. She says, “**Divination** or foretelling the future is one of the commonest forms of witchcraft; when this is done in the name of the deity of one of the established religions it is called **prophecy**; when, however, the divination is in the name of a **pagan god** it is mere witchcraft.”

The word “Witchcraft” has been misused for hundreds of years. Christian missionaries, encountering native peoples in other lands whose beliefs differed from their own, automatically labeled those beliefs and practices as “witchcraft.” Despite references to African witchcraft, Native American witchcraft, Australian aboriginal witchcraft, and other forms, none of those practices have any relationship to the ancient pre-Christian nature religions of western Europe.

In fact, Witchcraft—*Wiccacraeft*, the craft of the wise—dates from long before Christian times. It is an ancient Pagan religion with a belief in both male and female deities, with a reverence for nature and all life, and recognition of a need for **fertility** among plants, animals, and humans. In western Europe Witchcraft grew



Image of a witch, based on popular misconceptions, with a young woman whom she lures into the craft. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

into a loosely formalized religion with its own priesthood. The followers **worship** at specific times of the year, at major festivals known as **sabbats**, and at minor “working sessions” known as **esbats**. The sabbat festivals coincide with certain points in the agricultural year and also with the passage of the sun. The esbats reflect the phases of the **moon**.

Early Christians tolerated the **Old Religion** of the Pagans, but as Christianity spread and adopted the goal of being the only religion, it aligned the ancient beliefs of the Witches with Satanism and ideas of working evil and black magic. In fact Witches do not believe in the Christian Satan, and to do harm to anyone or anything is against Witch beliefs. But the hysteria that resulted from Christianity’s trying to abolish all rival faiths saw followers of the Old Religion tortured and put to death in the cruelest of ways during the persecutions. This campaign to eradicate the Pagans started in the fifteenth century, and even today many fundamentalist Christians still hold on to those erroneous ideas and beliefs. Both the Roman Catholic and the Protestant churches drove the **Inquisition** of the Middle Ages, with estimates of the number murdered by them reaching into the millions. Strongest and harshest treatment was administered in Germany, Switzerland, and France. As Rosemary Ellen Guiley states, “Political and social unrest were factors; trials increased in Germany and elsewhere in Europe during the Thirty Years War from 1618 to 1648. Bad crops years, plagues and infectious illnesses that spread throughout villages also contributed to searches for scapegoats.”

By the early to mid-eighteenth century the hysteria died down. France was one of the last countries to persecute witches, the last execution there was in 1745. In England the last hanging took place in 1684, and the last trial in 1717. The idea that witchcraft was related to Satanism slowly waned and the practice was once again relegated to the realms of folk magic, **healing**, fertility, and divination.

Witches observe their religious rituals as individuals or in groups known as “**covens**.” As with the ceremonies of most other religions, Witchcraft rites consist of worshiping the gods in whom the Witches believe, thanking them for what has been received, and asking for what is needed. Again, as with most religions, Witches may practice **magic** as part of their religious rites.

Modern Witches claim a descent (not necessarily unbroken) from the earliest Pagans. The persecutions nearly eliminated the Old Religion, but it did manage to survive, in family groups and with small covens in isolated areas. It was not until the mid-twentieth century, however, when many people were looking for alternate choices of religion, that its continued existence was revealed. The Wiccan beliefs in male and female deities, **reincarnation**, and **retribution** in the current life, as well as the closeness to nature and respect for both sexes, sparked interest in many who had found established religion sadly lacking. Dr. **Gerald Gardner** was the first actual Witch to gain public recognition when he published a book—**Witchcraft Today**—describing Witchcraft beliefs and practices. This opened a floodgate and today Wicca, the modern version of Witchcraft, is described as “the fastest growing religious movement in America.”

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Witchcraft from the Inside*. Llewellyn, 1995.
Encyclopedia Britannica. William Benton, 1964.
Farrar, Janet and Stewart: *The Witches' Way*. Hale, 1985.
Gardner, Gerald: *Witchcraft Today*. Rider, 1954.
Gardner, Gerald: *The Meaning of Witchcraft*. Aquarian Press, 1959.
Guiley, Rosemary Ellen: *The Encyclopedia of Witches and Witchcraft*. Facts on File, 1989.
Lea, Henry Charles: *Material Toward a History of Witchcraft*. Pennsylvania, 1939.
Valiente, Doreen: *The Rebirth of Witchcraft*. Robert Hale, 1989.

Witch Balls

Witch Balls are glass balls, usually colored, manufactured in England since the early eighteenth century. By the mid-nineteenth century these balls were also being produced in the United States. Popular colors are silver, blue, green, and red, and the surface is highly reflective. They vary in size, from three inches in diameter to as much as twelve inches. The ball would be hung in windows, in the corners of rooms, or in gardens, it is said it would ward off evil by reflecting away any negativity. Today they are very popular as a purely decorative feature in gardens.

Vance Randolph describes a “witch ball” about the size of a marble, composed of black horsehair mixed with beeswax and rolled into a hard pellet. A “witch” will toss such a ball at the person she wishes to bewitch or even kill. Randolph says, “It is said that the fatal hair ball is always found somewhere in the body of a person killed in this manner.” A large puffball fungus is known both as the Devil’s snuffbox and as a witch ball.

SOURCES:

Randolph, Vance: *Ozark Superstitions*. Columbia University Press, 1947.

Witchboard (movie)

This 1985 movie written and directed by Kevin S. Tenney and stars Todd Allen as Jim Morar, Tawny Kitaen as Linda Brewster, Stephen Nichols as Brandon Sinclair, and Burke Byrnes as Lt. Dewhurst. It is the story of the **spirit** of a young boy named David, who reaches out to Linda Brewster through a Ouija® board during a party. When Linda later uses the board while alone in an attempt to reconnect with David’s spirit, she actually connects with the spirit of a brutal murderer who begins to hunt down and kill her friends. The film depicts no actual connection to **witchcraft**.

Related movies are *Witchtrap* and *Witchboard 2: The Devil’s Doorway*, also directed by Kevin S. Tenney, and with the same stars.

Witchboard 2: The Devil’s Doorway (movie)

A 1993 sequel movie starring Ami Dolenz, Laraine Newman, and Timothy Gibbs focuses on a female artist (Dolenz) who finds a Ouija® board in her attic. Through using the board she is brought into a face-to-face encounter with a murderer who once lived in her apartment.

Witch Bottle

There are two types of witch bottles, one used against “**witchcraft**” and the other used by Witches, even today, against any evil directed toward them.

The witch bottle used by Witches—and popular with many **Wiccans**—is made by filling a glass jar or bottle with sharp objects. Broken glass, pins, needles, nails, and screws, whether new or old and rusty, may be used. Pieces of a broken **mirror** are also an effective ingredient. The bottle is then filled with its maker’s urine. If it is a woman making the bottle, then it is recommended that menstrual blood also be included. The top is sealed with wax or tape, and the filled bottle is then buried in the ground in a place where it is unlikely to be disturbed, at a depth that will protect it from any possible damage by frost. The belief is that as long as the bottle remains intact, any negativity directed at its maker will be reflected back by the bottle.

The witch bottles produced in the fifteenth through the nineteenth centuries were to protect from supposed witchcraft attacks. Quite often the local blacksmith manufactured a special metal bottle, although pottery and glass were also used. The bottle was brought into play when someone felt he or she had been the object of a **curse** or **black magic**. The person filled the bottle with urine, perhaps adding nail clippings and hair, and sometimes **iron** nails. He or she then buried the bottle or threw it into a **fire**, where it would heat up and explode. At the explosion, the perpetrator of the evil supposedly would be badly burned, if not killed. Accusor’s introduced such a bottle into the trial of Jane Wenham, of Walkerne, Hertfordshire, in 1712. The bottle exploded but Jane was not hurt. The very explosion, however, was taken as a sign of her guilt. Eric Maple makes mention of the many witch bottles that, over the ages, have been found buried under doorsteps or near the hearths of old cottages.

Cunning Man James Murrell, a local wise man of Rochford, Essex, in the early nineteenth century, often used witch bottles to cure people from the evil he claimed he found directed at them. He had the local blacksmith make the bottles out of iron. Fortunately the smith took the precaution of leaving a tiny opening in the bottle, for steam to escape. If it had not been for this, most of Murrell’s clients, and Murrell himself, might have perished from the explosion of the bottle when it was tossed into a fire. When Murrell heard the hiss of escaping steam, he thought it was the **spirit** of the witch being driven out.

According to *Discovery.com News*, in October, 2000, British researchers came across a still-intact witch bottle underneath a house in Reigate, England. It was placed there in 1720. Two chemistry professors from Loughborough University, Alan Massey and Tony Edmonds, examined the contents and found nine brass pins, bits of clothing, animal hairs, human hairs, an insect leg, a blade of grass, and human urine. Brian Hoggard, a doctoral candidate studying folk magic at University College Worcester, said that witch bottles are “peculiarly English objects usually dating from the mid-sixteenth to the mid-seventeenth centuries.” He added “The Reigate Witch Bottle is unusual because it is one of only a handful of bottles found with its contents intact.”

SOURCES:

Discovery.com News. November 2, 2000.

Macfarlane, A. D. J.: *Witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart England*. Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1970.

Maple, Eric: *The Dark World of Witches*. A. S. Barnes, 1962.

Witchcraft (1916) (movie)

A silent black and white movie from 1916, this is actually the winning scenario of a photoplay contest promoted by Columbia University and the Lasky Company. It was written by New Jersey physician R. Ralston Reed. The story is set in the New England colonies in Puritan times. An old man named Makepeace Struble, played by Paul Weigel, lusts after a young girl named Suzette (Fannie Ward). He threatens to accuse her mother of witchcraft if Suzette won't marry him. Despite her love for a young soldier (Jack Dean), Suzette does marry him. Makepeace becomes mean and abusive to the point where Suzette tells him she wishes he were dead. Shortly after, the old man does die and Suzette finds herself on trial for witchcraft. Her soldier lover then sets out to save her by having such witchcraft trials outlawed.

Witchcraft (1964) (movie)

A 1964 movie from Twentieth Century-Fox, directed by Don Sharp. It stars Lon Chaney Jr., Victor Brooks, and Diane Clare. The movie is set in an old English village where a man is trying to dig up an old cemetery. The graves contain the charred bodies of witches burned at the stake 300 years before (even though England did not burn its witches!). The man who looks after the cemetery is referred to as a warlock and attempts to stop the digger but is unable. As the graves of the witches are disturbed, the spirits of the deceased rise up and begin to wreak vengeance on the family of the man who has disturbed them.

Witchcraft (1988) (movie)

A 1988 Italian movie directed by Robert Spera, it stars Anat Barzilai, Mary Shelly, Lee Kisman, Deborah Scott, and Gary Sloan. The story is a close copy of *Rosemary's Baby*. Grace, a new mother, and her husband John move into an old mansion owned by her mother-in-law. Grace quickly realizes that her husband and mother-in-law are reincarnated witches who wish to use the newborn child in their Satanic rites. Happily, the mother has clairvoyant gifts which let her see something of the past lives of the two and help her stay one step ahead of them, although at one point she is abducted and almost sacrificed.

Witchcraft 2: The Temptress (movie)

A 1990 movie directed by Mark Woods as a sequel to the 1988 Robert Spera movie *Witchcraft*, it stars Mia Ruiz, Deila Sheppard, and Charles Solomon. The story is of a naïve young man who is drawn into the evil world of the occult through his attraction to a seductive witch.

Witchcraft 3: The Kiss of Death (movie)

A 1990 movie in the *Witchcraft* series directed by R. L. Tillmans. It stars Charles Solomon, Lisa Toothman, and Dominic Luciano. In this movie, attorney William Spanner, played by Solomon, is the son of parents who have certain occult powers. When he learns that his girlfriend Charlotte (Toothman) is being threatened by the Satanic Louis (Luciano), he grudgingly accepts the magical inheritance from his parents to use in her defense.

Witchcraft 4: Virgin Heart (movie)

A 1992 movie directed by James Merendino. A Satanic cult captures and murders the girlfriend of Pete Wild, played by Orien Richman. Attorney William Spanner (Charles Solomon) is called in and uses the occult powers (described as “warlock powers”) he inherited from his parents to battle the Satanic forces, who are led by Santara (Clive Peterson).

Witchcraft 5: Dance with the Devil (movie)

A 1992 movie directed by Talun Hsu. Satanic forces, led by a man named Cain, played by David Huffman, put the “good warlock” William Spanner (played here by Marklen Kennedy, not by Charles Solomon as in previous *Witchcraft* movies) under a spell that opens him up to his own evil desires. Spanner’s current girlfriend, Keli (Carol Taye-Loren), quickly realizes that all is not well and battles the Satanists to reclaim her boyfriend.

Witchcraft 6: The Devil’s Mistress (movie)

A 1994 movie directed by Julie Davis and starring Debra Beatty and Jerry Spicer. In this movie, a “good warlock” (Jerry Spicer) is called upon to do battle with the forces of evil who threaten to take over the world.

Witchcraft 7: Judgement Hour (movie)

A 1995 movie directed by Michael Paul Girard and starring David Byrnes, April Breneman, Alisa Christensen, John Cragen, and Loren Schmalle. In this movie, an attorney delves into the occult to try to save himself from an attack by vampires.

Witchcraft and the Armed Services

Under a heading, “Religious Tolerance,” accommodation of religious practices within the U.S. Military is covered by Department of Defense Directive DODD-1300.17. Excerpts are as follows:

DODD-1300.17

A: REISSUANCE AND PURPOSE

This directive reissues reference (a) and, pursuant to references (b) and (c), prescribes policy, procedures, and responsibilities for the accommodation of religious practices in the Military Services...

C: POLICY

A basic principle of our nation is free exercise of religion. The Department of Defense places a high value on the rights of members of the Armed Forces to observe the tenets of their respective religions. It is DoD policy that requests for accommodation of religious practices should be approved by commanders when accommodation will not have an adverse impact on military readiness, unit cohesion, standards or discipline.

The directive also lists goals to be used by the Military Departments, such as worship services, religious practices, religious items or articles, and “religious apparel” such as jewelry, etc.

“Department of the Army Pamphlet No. 165–13 RELIGIOUS REQUIREMENTS AND PRACTICES of Certain Selected Groups—A Handbook for Chaplains,” is issued by Headquarters, Department of the Army and includes the religious requirements and practices of such Christian Heritage Groups as Children of God, Holy Order of MANS, Mennonite Church, Religious Order of Friends in the U.S., and the Worldwide Church of God. Indian Heritage Groups listed include Divine Light Mission and World Plan Executive Council™. There are three Islamic groups, three Japanese Heritage Groups, five Jewish groups, two Sikh groups, and “other” groups which include Church of Satan, Churches of Scientology, Gardinerian (sic) Wicca (Lady Theos, of Long Island, NY, was largely responsible for the initial inclusion of this information in the pamphlet; something for which all Wiccans should be grateful), and the Universal Life Church. The information given for the Gardnerian tradition of Wicca is basically sound, although a specific priest and priestess were originally listed as “Current World Leader,” something anathema to Wiccans. In the latest edition of the manual, there is some updating and correcting and the address of the Covenant of the Goddess is given as a clearinghouse.

Despite the above, the practice of the Wiccan religion is generally not an easy thing in the U.S. Armed Services and has been actively fought by such people as Congressman Robert Barr and Senator Jesse Helms. Congressman Barr even sent a letter to military leaders demanding an end to Wiccan rituals at Fort Hood, near Killeen, Texas, and sought to introduce a \$290 billion defense bill that would forbid Wiccan worship on military bases.

In May of 1999 Congressman Robert Barr addressed his constituents in the Seventh District constituency at his Memorial Day town meeting. Earlier, Barr had made a number of comments against the First Amendment, and, at the meeting, made the surprising statement that the military is unique in that it does not fall under the protection of the First Amendment. He had previously put forward anti-

Wiccan rhetoric in press releases and media interviews and had also introduced anti-Wiccan legislation on Capitol Hill. He sought to outlaw the practice of the Wiccan religion on U.S. Military installations by Wiccan personnel. There was a very large gathering of Wiccans and Pagans at the meeting, and they held Barr with informed, intelligent questions which, through his evasive answers, showed his woeful ignorance of the meaning of the First Amendment. There were a number of veterans in the audience, one with a large shadow box filled with his military medals, who were also Wiccans and wanted straight answers, but Barr was consistently evasive.

Following the meeting, *U.S. News and World Report* had coverage of the subject of First Amendment rights for Wiccans in the military with a headline, "A Genuine Witch Hunt" (June 14, 1999). *The Washington Post* carried a report with the headline, "Witches Stir Controversy in the Army" (June 8, 1999). *The Philadelphia Daily News* editorial for June 8, 1999 said, "GIs Bewitched, Barr-thered, and Bewildered the Broomstick Brigade." On June 6, 1999, the headline, "When a Political Witch Hunt Fails" appeared in the *Atlanta Journal Constitution* and *Cox Newspapers*.

Christian political groups, such as the Christian Coalition, Traditional Values Coalition, Christian Action Network, American Family Association, Free Congress Association and others have launched a campaign urging Christians to boycott joining or re-enlisting in the U.S. Army until it bans Wiccan rituals on military installations. If they had done this against Judaism or Native Americans or Islamic groups, there would probably have been an uproar.

The Reverend Barry Lynn of Americans United for Separation of Church and State announced a condemnation of Representative Barr and the Religious Right for their intolerant efforts against Wiccans. He wrote a letter to Defense Secretary William S. Cohen in which he accused the "Religious Right" groups of hypocrisy. "Religious Right activists claim to be for religious freedom but here they are trying to squelch the rights of a group just because they don't like what it preaches. It's positively un-American. Thankfully, the First Amendment protects the rights of all Americans, including Wiccans. No amount of Religious Right bigotry can change that."

In 1985, Representative Robert Walker (Pennsylvania) introduced a bill in the U.S. House of Representatives, and Senator Jesse Helms (North Carolina) introduced similar legislation in the U.S. Senate. These were attempts to take away tax exempt status from Wiccan churches. Although the Walker bill remained dormant, the Helms amendment was passed without opposition by the U.S. Senate and was on its way to becoming law. The American Civil Liberties Union, other constitutional freedom organizations, and thousands of Wiccans, Pagans, and members of other religions, plus other concerned citizens, expressed their opposition to this legislation to their elected officials. Thousands of letters, telegrams, and phone calls poured into Capitol Hill. Elected officials got the message that the Wiccan religion is indeed a real religion, entitled to the same treatment as other religions. Fortunately members of the Congressional Joint Conference Committee, which was preparing the final version of the bill, voted to remove the amendment before the bill became law.

There is now a Military Pagan Network on the Internet which carries recent news that U.S. Air Force personnel may now change their military records to reflect their religious preference. A set of choices includes Pagan, Druid, Shaman, Wicca, Seax-Wica, Dianic Wicca and Gardnerian Wicca. However, on a large number of individual U.S. Military bases the Wiccan must still fight for what should be a religious right, and the same situation exists (and is actually far worse) in federal penitentiaries.

SOURCES:

Lady Liberty League Report. Circle Network, May 29, 1999.

Witchcraft through the Ages (Häxan) (movie)

This classic from 1921, made in Sweden and directed by Benjamin Christensen, is a silent, black-and-white movie starring the director, Benjamin Christensen, as Satan and as a doctor, with Astrid Holm as Anna, and Maren Pedersen as a witch.

A feature of this movie is its bizarre yet effective lighting. It starts with a series of stills of engravings and woodcuts depicting witches and witchcraft then, suddenly, goes into a sequence of powerful vignettes showing witchcraft at work in the Middle Ages. The scenes are graphic and startling. In many respects the movie seems like a documentary and shows the extensive research done by its director prior to production. This was the last movie Christensen made for the Danish film industry. From here he went to Germany and eventually to Hollywood. Another of Christensen's movies was the 1929 *The Mysterious Island* with Lucien Hubbard and Maurice Tourneur.

Witchcraft Today

The title of a book by **Gerald Brousseau Gardner** published in England in 1954. It was the first book actually written by a **Witch** giving the **Witch's** side of the story, since Gardner was himself an **initiated Witch**. Until that time virtually all publications written on the subject of **Witchcraft** had presented the Christian point of view.

Printing as known by western civilization came into being in Germany in the middle of the fifteenth century. This was a time when the Christian church was already in power and trying to exterminate the **Old Religion**. The publication and distribution of the very earliest books on **Witchcraft**, therefore, was by the **Witches' persecutors**. Later writers had only these very biased works for reference, and for centuries the only material written about **Witchcraft** was from its detractors' point of view. By the end of the nineteenth century, hints of the true nature of **Witchcraft** (with such books as Charles Godfrey Leland's *Aradia, Gospel of the Witches of Italy*) began and in the 1920s and 1930s, Dr. **Margaret Murray** presented her theories. However, it was not until Dr. Gardner's book that there was any confirmation of the continued existence of **Witches** and their benign practices. It was the repeal of the last law against **Witchcraft** in England in 1951 that laid the foundation for this new knowledge.



N'Ganga, or witch doctor, in Zimbabwe. Courtesy Cynthia Hind/Forsean Picture Library.

Gardner had been initiated into Witchcraft in the 1930s, and from the moment he discovered what it really was, as opposed to what so many people thought it to be, he wanted to spread the word about its truth. But he was not allowed to do so by his High Priestess and the coven. Eventually, in 1949, he was permitted to write an account but only by presenting it in fictional form. This was the novel *High Magic's Aid*. It would be five more years, with the repeal of the Witchcraft Law, before he could write from a non-fictional point of view.

SOURCES:

Gardner, Gerald: *High Magic's Aid*. Michael Houghton, 1949.
 Gardner, Gerald: *Witchcraft Today*. Rider, 1954.

Witch Doctor

A term used for a shaman or practitioner of magic and healing in primitive cultures. Among the indigenous peoples of Africa, Haiti, Australia, Polynesia, South Africa and elsewhere, the local wise man or woman who uses spells and charms to cure

and **exorcise** may be referred to by outsiders as a Witch Doctor. He or she is akin to the **Hedge Witch** but has no real connection to the European Witch in the sense of a **Wiccan** and follower of the **Old Religion**.

WITCH OF ENDOR see ENDOR, WITCH OF

Witchery (movie)

This 1988 Italian movie directed by Fabrizio Laurenti and Martin Newlin stars Linda Blair as Jane Brooks, David Hasselhoff as her boyfriend, and Hildegard Knef as an “evil witch.” A group of people travel to an old, secluded, New England hotel where they run afoul of a witch. The group is killed off one at a time while a young photographer (Hasselhoff) and his girlfriend (Blair) struggle to defeat the witch. The horror scenes emphasize torture.

Witches, The (1966)

This 1966 British movie directed by Cyril Frankel and starring Joan Fontaine, Kay Walsh, Alex McCowen, Ann Bell, Gwen Ffrangcon-Davies, and Ingrid Brett is an adaption of a novel by Peter Curtis and involves the residents of a rural English town who become embroiled in supernatural terrors. Everything is sparked by the arrival of a new schoolteacher, Gwen Mayfield (Fontaine), who is haunted by what are described as Voodoo rites she witnessed in Africa.

Witches, The (1990)

A 1990 movie directed by Nicolas Roeg based on the children’s book by Roald Dahl. The original story concerns a seven-year-old boy (who is never named) whose parents are killed in a car crash. He is sent to live with his Norwegian, cigar-smoking grandmother, and a bond develops between them. Dahl wrote, “In fairy tales, witches always wear silly black hats and black cloaks and they ride broomsticks. But this is not a fairy story. This is about REAL WITCHES. REAL WITCHES dress in ordinary clothes and look very much like ordinary women. They live in ordinary houses and they work in ordinary jobs.” Unfortunately, that was as far as Dahl’s accuracy went.

The boy’s grandmother has (supposedly) a great knowledge of witches and is determined to stop all witches of England from turning the children into mice . . . which they manage to do to her grandson. In the movie, the boy is vacationing at the seashore with his grandmother when he finds that there is a convention of witches at the hotel where they are staying. He overhears them planning to turn all the children into mice.

Angelica Huston plays the Grand High Witch. Mai Zetterling, Rowan Atkinson, Bill Paterson and Jasen Fisher also star. Jim Henson’s workshop provides the witches and the mice.

As a children's story it is amusing and entertaining, but when Henson decided to work on this major motion picture the Witches of the world were not happy. They felt there was no need to further promote the inaccuracies of the past. Thousands contacted Henson and asked him not to make the movie. He didn't listen. It seems extremely coincidental that Jim Henson died before he saw the finished product. He checked himself into a hospital in May 1990, stricken with streptococcus pneumonia. He died within a few days at age fifty-three. Witches do not believe in harming others, but they do believe that what one sends out will return threefold. Many Wiccans therefore believe that Henson brought about his own death by his determination to malign the Witches of today.

Witches' Brew (movie)

A 1979 movie directed by Richard Shorr and Herbert L. Strock. Originally known as *Weird Woman*, it is a remake of *Burn Witch Burn* and stars Richard Benjamin, Terry Garr and Lana Turner. With many similarities to the television series *Bewitched*, this is the story of a young housewife who also happens to be a **witch**. Margaret (Garr) is married to a young psychology professor (Benjamin) and, with her magic spells, she advances him in his career. All goes well until a negative witch named Vivian (Turner), who is approaching the end of her life, decides to transmute her soul into Margaret's body. Her negativity affects both Margaret herself and her husband and his career.

The movie was originally made in 1978–79 but was not distributed until 1985, and then it made its debut as a movie for cable television.

Witches in Movies and on Television

It is no secret that **witches** are usually depicted as the antagonists in movies and on television. Presented with all the misconceptions foisted for so many centuries by the Church, the witches of the screen are nearly always the witches of the Middle Ages—working evil **spells**, practicing **black magic**, throwing **curses**, worshipping the devil; things which, were they attributed to Jews, Buddhists, or other religious groups would not be tolerated for an instant. Yet, despite the work of true Witches over the past fifty years to straighten these misconceptions, studios still get away with it.

Many of the tired screenplays follow the story of a curse made by a witch as she was being burned at the stake. Interestingly, many such movies feature the witches of Salem being burned at the stake (e.g., *Maid of Salem* and *Burned At the Stake*) even though not a single person in New England was burned (they were hung), typifying the little if any research that goes into the writing of most scripts.

There was a small break for screen **Witchcraft** in the 1960s with the television series *Bewitched*. A witch was finally presented as an ordinary person—a housewife living, or trying to live, in normal circumstances. This was loosely based on the Thorne Smith novel *The Passionate Witch* (which in turn inspired the 1942 Para-

mount movie *I Married a Witch*, directed by René Clair). It also rode the coattails of John Van Druten's stage comedy (later Columbia movie, directed by Richard Quine) *Bell, Book and Candle*. In it, the Witch, Gillian Holroyd, was much closer to normal, even if she did use her magic to make someone fall in love with her.

There was a "Good Witch" in the L. Frank Baum 1900 classic, *The Wizard of Oz*, but was balanced by a "Wicked Witch of the West." These were featured in the 1939 MGM movie directed by Victor Fleming.

The popular children's books by Mary Norton, *Bonfires and Broomsticks* and *The Magic Bedknob*, were made into a BBC radio series in the 1950s and featured an otherwise ordinary, elderly, children's aunt, Eglantine Price, who was a witch. The books were combined into the successful Disney movie of 1971, *Bedknobs and Broomsticks*. The theme of the not-very-successful witch-in-training was also picked up in *The Worst Witch*, a 1986 comedy movie directed by Robert M. Young and based on Jill Murphy's children's story of a witch's academy run by a **sorceress** and her assistants who teach the magical arts. In 1998 a (UK/Canada) television series based on the books began.

More recently, with such movies as *Practical Magic* and *The Craft*, and television series like *Charmed* and *Sabrina the Teen-Age Witch*, there has been more of an acceptance of witchcraft, even **Wicca** in everyday life. *Practical Magic* was a 1998 Warner Brothers movie directed by Griffin Dunne and was based on Alice Hoffman's novel about two sisters who are part of the Owens family of Witches. Raised by two aunts, the sisters, Sally and Gillian Owen, had always accepted magic as being practical until, as adults, they find it carries a curse. The original novel is a lighter story, but the movie is simplified into a romance with horrific overtones. Typically, Hollywood couldn't resist adding spooky special effects. However, *Practical Magic* does treat Witchcraft and magic as normal practices not associated with **Satan**.

The Craft, a 1996 Columbia/TriStar movie directed by Andrew Fleming, presents four teenage girls as Witches, yet the film is more about working magic than about practicing the true **Craft**, the **Old Religion**. There are snatches of Wicca with **athamés** and a **Circle** held on the beach and talk of the god Manon (a fictitious deity created for the film), but again Hollywood gets carried away with special effects. There was a true Wiccan consultant for the movie, Pat Devin (an officer of the Southern California local council of the Covenant of the **Goddess**), but as this author has found, there is only so much pressure that can be brought to bear on filmmakers to present an accurate picture. The movie did, however, inspire the television series *Charmed*, which is a lot closer to true Wicca than *The Craft* ever was.

Charmed, started in 1998, produced by Spelling TV and directed by John T. Kretchmer, is a story of three sisters, Prue, Piper, and Phoebe Halliwell, who discover that they are Witches and learn from an old **Book of Shadows** that belonged to their grandmother. Although there are special effects, the stories follow closely the true nature of Wicca, presenting a Witch as someone who is not evil and must not use her powers for negative purposes. There are many true Wiccan points presented in this series, which is probably the high point of true Witchcraft's climb into public acceptance.

Sabrina the Teen-Age Witch is a youth-oriented ABC sitcom. The feature length pilot was introduced in 1996 and directed by Tibor Takacs. Again, the emphasis is on working magic and not always for positive purposes. But once again, it shows Witchcraft as being a part of everyday life.

Unfortunately, Hollywood cannot let go of its negative approaches to witchcraft. *The Witches*, a 1990 Warner Brothers movie directed by Nicolas Roeg, was an adaptation of Roald Dahl's novel about a "Grand High Witch" leading a convention of witches in an attempt to turn all the children of England into mice! Worse still, if only because of its pseudo-documentary approach, was 1999's *The Blair Witch Project* and its even worse 2001 sequel, *Book of Shadows*. One critic (at www.calendarlive.com) said of the original movie that it "is perhaps more amusing and satisfying as a cautionary tale deflating a certain kind of filmmaking arrogance than it is an offbeat horror show."

It is certain that Hollywood will continue to make movies that blatantly malign Witches, but there is some small hope that along with these, there may be a few that present the Craft for what it is—a true religion of nature with respect for all life and desire for harm to none.

Witches in Literature

One of the earliest references to **witchcraft** is found in Apuleius's, *The Golden Ass* (also known as *The Metamorphoses*). The novel was adapted from a story called "Lucius, or the Ass," possibly by the Greek author Lucian. Apuleius was born in Madauros, in Roman Africa, in the second century CE. He was the son of a local Romanized African aristocrat and was educated in his home town, in Athens and Carthage. He also lived briefly in Rome.

In this romance, Apuleius says that when in Thessaly he was in a place "where by common report of the world, **sorcery** and **enchancements** were most frequent . . . The very stones in the street I thought were men bewitched and turned into that figure, and the birds I heard chirping, the **trees** without the walls, and the running **waters** were changed from human creatures into the appearances they were. I persuaded myself that the statues and buildings could move; that the oxen and other brute beasts could speak and tell strange tidings; that I should hear and see oracles from heaven conveyed in the beams of the sun." Thessaly, after the invasion by the Persians, had become famous for its sorcerers and **witches** and for their **magics**, "from **calling down the moon** to brewing magical **herbs** for love or death."

In the first book of *The Golden Ass* story, the protagonist Lucius encounters two men. One, Aristomenes, tells Lucius fantastic stories of magic, witchcraft, and a witch named Meroe. The story is set in second century Rome. Lucius is driven by desires for magic, **necromancy**, and sexual encounters. Indeed, Lucius indulges in relentless lovemaking. He stays with a man named Milo and his wife Pamphile, and is later advised that Pamphile is a "witch of the first rank . . . she is constantly ablaze with desire, and your youth and handsome bearing make you a suitable target for

her.” Lucius finds himself drawn into the art of magic. The town where he is staying, Hypata, is known as a place where magic and sorcery are widespread.

Lucius soon finds himself transformed into the shape of an ass; he finds his inability to speak especially frustrating. After many amorous adventures, Lucius finds true meaning in the cult of Isis and returns to human form. Throughout the story, many details of Roman religion and everyday life are included. It has been suggested that the book was written in response to the rapid rise of Christianity in and around Apuleius’s home town, since Madauros was one of the earliest centers of the new religion.

In the Bible and the Talmud, there are many instances of witches and witchcraft. The Torah expressly forbids witchcraft, stating, (Deuteronomy 18; 10–12) “There shall not be found among you any one that . . . useth **divination**, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar **spirits**, or a **wizard**, or a necromancer.” In the Torah there is a prohibition against the existence of witches and against the practice of witchcraft, with emphasis to show that a witch is looked upon as necessarily being a woman (the Hebrew term is *mekasefa*, a feminine form). In the Apocrypha, Enoch I, it is said that two hundred angels led by Shemhazi came down from Mount Hermon and that, “they took for themselves, they and all the others with them, took themselves wives, and each chose for himself one. They began to come upon them and cleaved to them and taught them magic and witchcraft and they taught them to cut roots and plants.” In other words, angels came and married human women and taught them magic and the use of herbs.

In the centuries just before and after the beginning of the Common Era, the Jews were thought to have magical powers. In the Talmud, there is the story of how Simeon ben Shetah hanged eighty witches in Ashkelon—all women who had lived together in a large cave and, according to the story, had “harmed the world” (Hagigah 2:2). It seems likely that the women were killed primarily because they were **priestesses** of a **Pagan** cult. Throughout the Talmud it is difficult to see whether the witches are Jewish or not, although in many instances they obviously are.

Probably the best known witches in literature are the three “Weird Sisters” of Shakespeare’s *Macbeth*. Rosemary Ellen Guiley points out that this play, written at the very beginning of the seventeenth century, is one of the most influential literary works to help establish the negative stereotype of the witch as an ugly old hag. The goddess **Hecate** appears as Queen of the witches, at one point complaining about their actions saying, “I, the mistress of your **charms**, the close contriver of all harms, was never call’d to bear my part, or show the glory of our art?” Even though they have no names, the three witches are unique as females in Shakespeare’s plays in that they come across as extremely strong characters, being stronger even than Lady Macbeth.

Morgan le Fay of the Arthurian stories was well versed in herbal lore. She was the sister, or half-sister, of King Arthur and, according to some reports, mistress to the **magician Merlin**. She was an enchantress and a **shapeshifter** and is usually portrayed as a worker of negative magic. Although generally portrayed as a beautiful

woman, in some instances she is described as a **hag** or **crone**. According to early literary accounts, she is the daughter of Avallach, king of Avalon the enchanted island (also known as “The Fortunate Isle” and “The Isle of Apples”), but in Arthurian lore, she is generally the daughter of Gorloës, Duke of Cornwall and Igrain. After her father died, Morgan was brought up by her stepfather, Uter-Pendragon. Although sent to be educated as a nun, Morgan secretly learned the magical arts.

Morgan le Fay actually seems to have taken shape in the early twelfth century in the leys of the Breton minstrels, who adopted her from a water nymph of Breton folklore. There is also a correspondence to the Welsh Modron and the Irish goddesses Macha and **Morrighan**. Some feel that it is because of this pagan background that the later Christian writers changed her from an initially good person into a worker of evil magic.

Morgan tended the wounded knights at Camelot, working her healing magic on them. When Guinevere’s cousin Guyomar visited the castle, Morgan and he fell deeply in love, but Guinevere forbade them to meet. For this Morgan was to hate Guinevere for the rest of her life. She created the Green Knight and sent him as a test for Arthur and his knights and to frighten Guinevere. After slaying the Green Knight, Gawain became the Knight of the Goddess, Morgan’s champion. When Arthur was finally mortally wounded during the Battle of Camlan, it was Morgan who took him to Avalon in her boat to be healed. This view of Morgan as a healer has its roots in Celtic mythology. The *Vita Merlini*, c. 1150, by Geoffrey of Monmouth, states that Morgan was one of nine sisters who ruled Avalon (they included Gliten, Grito, Glitonae, Mazoe and Tyronoe), and presents her as a healer and a shape-shifter.

In Homer’s *Odyssey* there is the witch **Circe**, a daughter of Helios who lived on the west of the island of Aeaea. Earlier married to the king of the Sarmatians, Circe poisoned her husband and went to live on Aeaea—the name meaning “wailing”—where she built herself a magnificent palace. The name Circe is aligned with *kirkos*, the falcon, and Barbara Walker points to the same root from the Latin *circus*, originally an enclosure of funerary games.

Circe cast a spell over all who landed on her island and, by means of a magic potion, turned them into animals. She turned Odysseus’s companions into swine. Odysseus himself escaped by means of the herb *moly*, given to him by Hermes, and forced Circe to restore his men. However, he spent a year with Circe, forgetting all about his wife. Circe was slain by Telemachus, who had married her daughter Cassiphone.

Circe was not depicted as the ugly old crone witch. Homer spoke of her as a “goddess with lovely hair . . . radiant . . . the beautiful goddess singing in a lovely voice . . . (in) a white shining robe, delicate and lovely, with a fine girdle of gold about her waist.” Statius, the Roman poet, in his *Thebais* describes the appearance of Witches as “with flowing hair and barefooted, as is the custom.”

SOURCES:

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Lucius (who was transformed into an ass shortly after this) witnesses a witch rubbing unguent on her body in order to fly. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

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Witches In Myth, Legends and Fairy Tales

Storytelling goes back to the earliest of times, with the stories told incorporating human hopes, fears, beliefs, and memories. The world of fairy tales seems filled with memories of myths and legends, strange and wondrous creatures, fairies and **Witches**. Many of these characters in more recent fairy tales are descendants of the old Witches from Greek and Roman mythology.

All peoples seem to recognize the role of Witches, or wise men and women, in society and reflect them in their myths, legends, folk tales and fairy stories. Regrettably, available space limits these entries to brief samplings from different sources.

In Greek myth the Witch **Medea**, or **Medeia**, was the daughter of Aeëtes, king of Colchis, and was famed for her magical arts. Her skills were inherited from the

god of the sun and greatly increased by her visits to the shrine of **Hecate**. When Jason came to her country she fell madly in love with him. Using **magic** she had obtained through Hecate, Medea helped Jason successfully deal with two fire-breathing bulls with brazen feet; then further enabled Jason to obtain the golden fleece by sprinkling the eyes of the sleepless dragon with a mystic brew, while under the protection of Hecate. After marrying Jason, Medea returned with him to Greece where she induced the old king Peleus to bathe in her magic **cauldron** on the pretext that it would cause him to regain his youth. He was boiled alive, leaving Jason heir to the throne. However, the Greeks were so repelled by her actions that the couple were forced to flee Iolcos. When Jason then courted Glauce, Medea presented the princess with a garment which, when worn, caused her to die in great agony. After leaving Jason and murdering their two children, Medea fled Corinth in a vehicle drawn by dragons. In Athens she married Argeus and together they had a son, Medus. Medea was eventually given immortality and became the wife of Achilles in the Isles of the Blest.

The pre-Olympian Greek **earth goddess** Hecate was associated with night and the **moon**, ghosts and **spirits**, magic, Witches and **sorcery**. She was known as Prytania of the Dead, or the Invincible Queen, goddess of enchantments and magical **charms**. Hecate seems to have originated in the southwest of Asia Minor and is associated with the **crossroads**, which is where three roads came together. She was a native of Thrace and resembles Artemis in many ways; at times being merged with her. Hecate was powerful on **earth** and in the sky and was accompanied by a pack of dogs. The torch is a symbol of Hecate, from her search in Hades with **Demeter** for Persephone. She became known as the queen of ghosts and mistress of **black magic**, the keeper of the keys of Hades. Hecate was to antiquity the great goddess of magic, more important than her daughter Circe. Circe was best known for her adventures with Odysseus and for turning his crew into swine. Homer called Circe, "the fair-haired goddess."

Medusa, sometimes referred to as a Witch, was the only mortal of the three Gorgons. Her appearance was so terrible that all who looked on her were turned to stone. Originally she was a beautiful young maiden, however, she desecrated Athena's temple by copulating in it with Poseidon. In revenge, Athena (known to the Romans as Minerva) turned Medusa's hair into snakes. Eventually, Medusa's head was cut off by Perseus, who presented it to Athena. Athena placed it in the center of her aegis, which she wore over her breastplate (the aegis is an awesome protective device associated both with Athena and Zeus). The blood that ran onto the ground when Medusa's head was cut off gave birth to Chrysaor and the horse Pegasus.

No study of children's fairy tales would be complete without mention of the Brothers Grimm. The brothers, Jacob Ludwig Carl Grimm (1785–1863) and Wilhelm Carl Grimm (1786–1859), were collectors and editors of *Grimms' Fairy Tales*. Jacob was the grammarian and Wilhelm the literary scholar. They were inseparable from childhood through adulthood. After attending public school in Kassel and later studies at Marburg where they obtained law degrees, they developed a great love for literature. They were influenced to start collecting folk material by the

“Heidelberg Romanticists” and, in particular, by Joachim von Arnim and Clemens Brentano. Between 1812 and 1814, the brothers published three volumes of *Kinderund Hausmärchen*—Grimms’ Fairy Tales. Previously, in 1805, they had published a book of folk songs. The fairy tales were as they had collected them, without any embellishment or alteration. In their preface they said, “Our first aim in collecting these stories has been exactness and truth. We have added nothing of our own, have embellished no incident or feature of the story, but have given its substance as we ourselves received it.”

In 1830 the Brothers Grimm moved to Göttingen University where Jacob became professor and librarian and Wilhelm under-librarian. Interestingly, in 1835 Jacob and Wilhelm published *Deutsche Mythologie*, which lauded Germany’s past. They presented the **Pagan** religion of the Germans as an animistic Nature religion with an abundance of spirits, both good and evil, and with gods who had very human characteristics. By 1856, Wilhelm had stated the brothers’ theory that the Germanic folk tales were versions of Indo-European myths.

In the collection of fairy tales that make up *Grimms’ Fairy Tales*, there are stories that originally appeared in Latin, tales from the sixteenth century, sagas, riddles, legends, games, rhymes, **incantations**, and anecdotes that the brothers found to be universal, suggesting that folktales and myths were once one. There is much magic found in the tales with imitative and **sympathetic magic**, magical formulas, transformations from human to animal or even from plant to mineral and back. Witches are also found, as are magicians and fairies. Most memorable, perhaps, are the Witches who appear in *Hansel and Gretel* and in *Snow White* and *Sleeping Beauty*. In *Cinderella* there is no Witch or fairy godmother. The magic of giving Cinderella beautiful gowns and shoes is performed by birds, which became a fairy godmother/good Witch in later versions of the story. In *Sleeping Beauty*, Witches are presented as the “thirteen wise women of the kingdom.” (Only twelve are invited to the party because the king has only twelve gold plates!) Again, in later versions, these Witches become “fairy godmothers.”

Parts of these stories are edited in modern days. At the end of *Snow White*, for example, the wicked queen is made to dance in red-hot iron shoes until she drops dead. In *Cinderella*, the two step-sisters, who are not ugly but no match for Cinderella’s beauty, mutilate their feet to try to get the slipper to fit. One cuts off a toe and the other her heel. And in the end (at Cinderella’s wedding to the prince), birds peck out the eyes of the sisters.

The *Hansel and Gretel* story is related to the tales of Russian Baba Yaga or Baba Jaga, analogous to Frau Berchta, or Brechta, of Germany. Baba Yaga was a female witch who lived in a hut in a distant forest beyond a river of fire. The hut stood on chickens’ legs and was forever spinning around. It was surrounded by a picket fence topped with human skulls. Baba Yaga liked to steal young children, cook them in her oven and then eat them. She often traveled with Death who provided her with human souls on which she also feasted. She rode through the air in an iron cauldron, conjuring up tempests with her magic wand. She swept away her tracks with a **besom**. Baba Yaga was a guardian of the fountains of the water of life, and sometimes she is presented in triple form, with two sisters, all of whom are called Baba

Yaga. The usual attitude in which she is found is lying on her back in the hut, a foot in each of two corners, her head to the door, and her nose either touching the ceiling or even growing up out of the chimney.

Ozark folklore and legend is replete with tales of Witches. Vance Randolph tells of a man who assured him that, "witches are thicker than seed ticks" in Pulasky county. There, however, a witch is regarded as a woman, "who has had dealings with the Devil and thereby acquired some supernatural powers." The belief is that when a woman decides to become a witch she repairs to the family burial ground at midnight in the dark of the moon. There she swears her body and soul to the Devil, denouncing her Christian faith. She strips off her clothes and gives her body to "the Devil's representative," the one who is **initiating** her into this "mystery." The rite is witnessed by at least two other initiates, who are also naked, and must be repeated three nights in a row. The neophyte witch is free to turn back at any time until she has completed the third and final rite.

The legends of Ireland include a number of stories of the King of Erin. One long tale tells of his hunt for a black pig, which he follows to an enchanted island. The pig turns into a Witch who bears him a magical child. The Witch is active in "Druidic magic" and works for positive purposes, eventually marrying the king. Many Irish folk tales deal with kings or princes and their encounters with enchantresses and witches.

A Spanish folktale tells of a little girl who watches her grandmother, a Witch, rub **flying ointment** under her arms and say, "*Sin Dios ni Santa Maria, de villa en villa!*" ("Without God and without Holy Mary, from town to town!") before flying off out of the window. The little girl gets hold of the ointment and tries to do the same, but mistakenly says, "*Con Dios y Santa Maria, de viga en viga!*" ("With God and Holy Mary, from beam to beam!") She only succeeds in flying up in the air and repeatedly beating herself against the roof beams. Her grandmother finds her and cures her bruises with Witch remedies, teaching the girl all the Witchcrafts and making her a real Witch. A similar Mexican folktale has a man follow his Witch wife on her visit to her mother where he sees them both say similar words before flying off through the air.

In many Witch legends the Witches appear in threes, quite often as sisters (as in *Macbeth*). Also, the Witch often first appears in the form of some animal before later changing back to her true form, which may or may not be as a beautiful woman.

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Witches in Pop Culture

The **Witch** has become a familiar figure in pop culture. Many rock bands identify with the image, from the early Black Sabbath (whose music emphasized the “black” part of their name) and Coven to more recent bands using such names as Coven 13, Blood Coven, Two Witches, Seven Witches, The Witches, and even a British band called Morgan le Fay. The group Godsmack recently caused a furor in the Wal-Mart and K-Mart chains because of an album’s content, which features a Wiccan **pentagram** on the cover. The recording was immediately labeled satanic by various Fundamental Christian groups.

The Witches is a women’s rock and roll trio in Israel. The Two Witches is a Gothic rock band in Finland, and Seven Witches is a heavy metal band in the United States. Blood Coven was formed in 1993 and recorded such songs as “Midnight Offerings,” “Dark Harmonies,” and “Statuary.”

Black Widow did an album called *Return to the Sabbath* in 1969. But the original band Coven, formed in the 1960s, was one of the first, if not *the* first, to focus almost exclusively on occult-oriented music. They recorded lyrics dealing with **Satanism**, Witchcraft, magic, and good and evil. Coven’s LP *Witchcraft Destroys Minds and Reaps Souls* was a big success at the time. A Miles Davis album from 1969 was titled *Witches Brew*. Apart from Frank Sinatra’s recordings of “That Old Black Magic,” “Witchcraft,” and one or two other isolated recordings, magic and witchcraft had not otherwise been dealt with extensively.

Coven 13 is a band based in Massachusetts and is part of a new wave of positive, Craft-oriented music makers. Several of the band members are practicing Pagans and Wiccans. Their music has such titles as “Haunted” and “Book of Shadows.” Since their start in 1997, the band has toured and produced a number of successful CDs. They are becoming very popular with Wiccan and **Pagan** groups and individuals and are marking the trend of pop music moving away from the Satanic to the true Wiccan. Another such Wiccan/Pagan group is Moonstruck, who have produced a couple of CDs, one titled *Witch of the Wildwoods*, and most of the titles and songs are Wiccan oriented.

Marianne Faithful wrote the lyrics to “Witches’ Song,” the soundtrack to the television series *The Craft*. Stevie Nicks, who is believed to be a Wiccan, wrote and recorded such titles as “Sorcerer,” “Rhiannon,” and “Enchanted.” In Australia, **Fiona Horne** is a popular singer who is also a very public Wiccan figure.

According to a PRNewswire report, the band Godsmack’s lead singer, Sully Erna, is a practicing Witch who has been active in Wicca for about ten years. The band is doing a video for their new album, *Voodoo*, filming it in Massachusetts with **Laurie Cabot**. Supposedly, they are including an actual Wiccan **ritual** in the video, which is directed by Dean Carr.

In the world of comic books, witches make frequent appearances and, again, the trend points away from the medieval ideas of witchcraft and toward modern Wicca. There are comic book series titled *Witches* (published by DC/Vertigo), *Books of Magic* (featuring a **Harry Potter** type of hero, published by DC), and *Tales of the*

Witchblade (published by Image). From 1951 through 1954, there was a series called *Witches Tales*. The *Witchcraft* series features the three Witches, known as the Kindly Ones, from the *Sandman* series. This series feature elements of mythology, medieval history, Victorian romance and contemporary gender politics. It is basically a story of revenge over the ages for murder and rape that took place in Roman times. Initially there is a sacred rite performed to **Hecate**.

Television is the most notable canvas for the presentation of Witchcraft as pop culture. See the separate entries for **Bewitched**, **Charmed**, and **Sabrina the Teenage Witch**, for example. Instead of movie presentations perpetuating the witch image of the Middle Ages, we now can enjoy fairly realistic portrayals of Witches following the Craft. Regrettably, there are still throwbacks like **The Blair Witch Project**, but it is hoped that such fare will be presented less and less as Wicca establishes itself more firmly as a straightforward, alternative religion.

Television miniseries have included the spectacular Hallmark Entertainment presentation of **Merlin** in 1998 with Sam Neil in the title role and Helena Bonham Carter as Morgan le Fay. The movie was directed by Steve Barron. Executive Producer Robert Halmi was also responsible for the miniseries *Jason and the Argonauts*, with Jason London in the title role. The **gods** of ancient Greece, including Zeus (Angus MacFadyen) and Hera (Olivia Williams), made this a favorite among present day Pagans and Witches.

The various Walt Disney animated productions are a category in themselves. *Fantasia* (1940) held a wealth of paganism, not least of which was the appearance of Mickey Mouse as the Sorcerer's Apprentice. (There had been an earlier use of *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* in 1930 by Hugo Reisenfeld and the Artcinema Association, and a few years later in *Der Zauberlehrling* by the Compagnie Française des Films.) The sorcerer was an imposing figure, demonstrating the power of **ceremonial magic**. In the *Pastoral Symphony* segment were centaurs, Pegasus, Bacchus, Zeus, Vulcan, and a wonderful figure of Diana shooting her bow, which was the crescent **moon**. Iris, goddess of the rainbow, and Apollo also made brief appearances. But perhaps the most moving episode of the film was the *Night on Bald Mountain* sequence, which had the Black Mountain Chernabog creating figures from flames that came from his fingers and a procession of necromantic figures crossing the sky that has been described as both evil and erotic.

In sharp contrast to the emotive *Night on Bald Mountain* is the lovable character Witch Hazel and her broomstick Beelzebub in the 1952 Donald Duck short *Trick or Treat*. Good Witch Hazel was a combination of the (later) characters Eglantine in **Bedknobs and Broomsticks** and **The Worst Witch** in her bumbling working of magic. In contrast to Witch Hazel is the evil witch represented by the Wicked Queen in *Snow White*, released in 1937, three years before *Fantasia*. Here, all of the misconceptions of witches are brought together to give a true parody of the Wise Woman with the ugly old hag figure, sporting talon-like fingers, warty nose, pointed chin, and humped back.

The *Snow White* of the new breed of Disney animators was *The Black Cauldron*, released in 1985. It was based on the five books of Lloyd Alexander: *Chronicles of*

Prydain, with the Horned King, the old wizard Dallben, King Eidilleg of the Fairy Folk, and the Witches of Morva: Orgoch, Orddu, and Orwen, who are keepers of the cauldron. Two of these witches are in the “ugly old hag” mold, while the third, Orwen, leans more toward the plump Witch Hazel type but with voluminous breasts and the belief that she has tremendous sex appeal. The saving grace of these three witches is that they are in no way frightening.

Cartoon witches will probably continue to be presented in something akin to “traditional” form, but hopefully with a humorous side. Such was the point of the newspaper comic strip witch Broom Hilda, created by Russell Myers and distributed by Chicago Tribune Syndicate. She first appeared on April 19, 1970, as a green, cigar-chomping, fat witch whose best friends were a troll and a buzzard. In 1971, *Archie's TV Funnies* introduced an animated Broom Hilda on a Saturday morning show, but she seemed most effective in the newspaper.

SOURCES:

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PRNewswire Report, New York, September 16, 2000.

Witches' Cradle

The Witches' Cradle was a device for inducing sensory deprivation. Depriving the physical senses by external means is an old idea. For centuries Arabian Dervishes have dangled on a rope wound around the wrist known as “dervish dangling.” Hindus have sat for days, weeks, or even longer in a Lotus position. **Witches** have used the “Witches' Cradle” to separate the consciousness from the physical in order to better meditate or concentrate for certain types of **magical** workings.

There are different versions of the Cradle. In one, the person is laced into skin-tight leather with arms that extend and end in loops or strips and includes a leather mask that fits over the head. In this “suit,” the person is suspended from a short beam by the loops or straps at the ends of the arms. In turn, the beam is suspended on the end of a single rope so that the beam and the hanging, bound Witch can turn or spin for complete disorientation. Belts are buckled tightly about the body at a half dozen points from ankles up to under-arms. The inside of the suit is lined with fur or a similar material to ensure some sort of comfort.

Another version has the Witch bound into a similar suit of leather, but with the arms crossed and bound much like a straight jacket. The figure is then bound by wide leather straps on to a stretcher-like cradle, which is suspended from a rope and free to turn or spin for disorientation.

It is said that the idea for the Witches' Cradle came from **torture** used during the persecutions, when an accused witch would be tied in a sack and the sack would be suspended from a rope thrown over a tree limb. The sack would then swing to disorient the accused in an attempt to induce a confession.

A scientific version of the technique was devised by Robert Masters and Jean Houston at the Foundation for Mind Research. Known as the ASCID (Altered

States of Consciousness Induction Device), it is a metal swing in which the subject's eyes and ears are covered and swung in a complex pattern. The subject's slightest movements become exaggerated, and within less than half an hour, profoundly altered states of consciousness occur, involving hallucinatory visions and sensations.

SOURCES:

Minnesota Minutoscope. Llewellyn, 1964.

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Witches League for Public Awareness

Founded in May, 1986, by **Laurie Cabot** in Salem, Massachusetts and presently headed by Reverend Cheryl Sulyma-Masson, the Witches League for Public Awareness is a proactive educational network dedicated to correcting misinformation about **Witches** and **Witchcraft**. The League says that its work springs from a shared vision of a world free from all religious persecution. Its founding was inspired by the misinformation conveyed in the movie *The Witches of Eastwick*.

The Witches League for Public Awareness works with the American Civil Liberties Union and various police departments to correct false information connecting **Wiccans** and **Pagans** with **occult** crimes. It was instrumental in exposing a secret newsletter compiled by a police officer in the 1980s, which falsely named individual **Witches** and **Craft** organizations as likely suspects to be considered for any and all occult crimes. The newsletter was known as "File 18."

A similar organization is based in Minnesota and known as The Witches' Informational Network. This is a growing group of modern Pagans who are striving to help dispell the myths about the **Old Religion** through education and networking. They publish essays, news articles, and contact information on a web site and take part in local events and gatherings to encourage human rights and dignity for people of all faiths.

One of the most important organizations fighting for Wiccan rights is The Witches' Voice. Their mission statement says, "The Witches' Voice is a proactive educational network dedicated to correcting misinformation about **Witches** and **Witchcraft**. **Wicca** IS a legally recognized religion in the United States, and it is our mission to protect that right through education and awareness." They go on to say, "It is our belief that **Witches** are givers and healers. By keeping abreast of the latest news and updated information, as well as having access to critical resource tools, we, as **Witches** and **Pagans**, can not only empower ourselves, but develop programs to educate our local towns and cities on who we are and what we do."

On The Witches' Voice web site, they offer printable documents on a wide variety of subjects, such as *Wearing a Pentagram in School*, *Education and the Pagan Child*, *Supreme Court on "Prayer in School," Know Your Legal Rights*, *Letter to Your Local Police Department*, and *Child Custody and the Modern Pagan*. It is a very active organization doing much for Wiccan and Pagan rights.

In 1973 the **Council of American Witches** adopted a set of thirteen declarations defining the Wiccan world view termed "The Principles of Wiccan Belief":

- 1: We practice rites to attune ourselves with the natural rhythm of life forces marked by the phases of the **Moon** and the seasonal Quarters and Cross-Quarters.
- 2: We recognize that our intelligence gives us a unique responsibility toward our environment. We seek to live in harmony with Nature, in ecological balance offering fulfillment to life and consciousness within an evolutionary concept.
- 3: We acknowledge a depth of power far greater than that apparent to the average person. Because it is far greater than ordinary it is sometimes called 'supernatural,' but we see it as lying within that which is naturally potential to all.
- 4: We conceive the Creative Power in the universe as manifesting through polarity—as masculine and feminine—and that this same Creative Power lies in all people and functions through the interaction of the masculine and feminine. We value neither above the other, knowing each to be supportive of the other. We value sex as pleasure, the symbol and embodiment of life, and as one of the sources of energies used in **magickal** practice and religious **worship**.
- 5: We recognize both outer worlds and inner or psychological worlds sometimes known as the Spiritual World, the Collective Unconscious, Inner Planes, etc.—and we see in the interaction of these two dimensions as the basis for paranormal phenomena and magickal exercises. We neglect neither dimension for the other, seeing both as necessary for our fulfillment.
- 6: We do not recognize any authoritarian hierarchy, but honor those who teach, respect those who share their greater knowledge and wisdom, and acknowledge those who have courageously given of themselves in leadership.
- 7: We see religion, magick and wisdom as being united in the way one views the world and lives within it—a world view and philosophy of life which we identify as *Witchcraft—the Wiccan Way*.
- 8: Calling oneself a 'Witch' does not make a Witch, but neither does heredity itself, nor the collecting of titles, **degrees** and **initiatiions**. A Witch seeks to control the forces within her/himself that make life possible in order to live wisely and well without harm to others and in harmony with Nature.
- 9: We believe in the affirmation and fulfillment of life in a continuation of evolution and development of consciousness giving meaning to the Universe we know and our personal role within it.
- 10: Our only animosity toward Christianity, or any other religion or philosophy of life, is to the extent that its institutions have

claimed to be 'the only way' and have sought to deny freedom to others and to suppress other ways of religious practice and belief.

- 11: As American Witches, we are not threatened by debates on the history of the Craft, the origins of various terms, or the legitimacy of various aspects of different traditions. We are concerned with our present and our future.
- 12: We do not accept the concept of absolute evil, nor do we worship any entity known as 'Satan' or 'the Devil' as defined by the Christian tradition. We do not seek power through the suffering of others, nor accept that personal benefit can be derived only by denial to another.
- 13: We believe that we should seek within Nature that which is contributory to our health and well-being.

SOURCES:

Witches' Informational Network: c/o David J. Rust, 722 36 Ave NE, Minneapolis, MN 55418.

Witches League for Public Awareness: P.O. Box 909, Rehoboth, Massachusetts 02769 or WLPA, P.O. Box 8736, Salem, MA 01971.

Witches' Voice, The: P.O. Box 4924, Clearwater, FL 33758-4924.

Witches' Mountain, The (movie)

A 1971 Mexican movie directed by Raul Artogot, starring John Caffari, Monica Randal, and Patty Shepard; it is a slight tale of a news photographer who is assigned to photograph a supposedly haunted mountain (or hill). He becomes entangled in hauntings, demonology, **witchcraft** and possession, and battling the forces of evil.

Witches of Eastwick, The (movie)

This 1987 movie directed by George Miller and starring Cher, Michelle Pfeiffer, Susan Sarandon, Veronica Cartwright, and Jack Nicholson, is a dark-edged comedy based on a novel by John Updike.

Three women friends living in New England—Alex (Cher), Sukie (Pfeiffer), and Jane (Sarandon)—meet weekly on Thursday night to drink martinis, gossip, learn Chinese aphrodisiac cookery, and fantasize about men . . . in particular their ideal man. They are unaware of the power of their desires and what may be conjured up. One Friday a stranger named Darrell Van Horn (Nicholson) arrives in town. He seduces the three women, one by one, after which strange things begin to happen. When the town's matriarch (Cartwright) tries to denounce Van Horn and gets her editor husband to publish a story about him, she is badly injured and he is swamped in cherries. The three friends quickly realize that they could be in danger and try to plan an escape. There are many special visual effects and plot twists, and the movie is aided by Vilmos Zsigmond's photography.

Witches of Salem, The (movie)

A short (35 minute) 1972 movie directed by Dennis Azzarella and loosely based on the Salem Witch Trials of 1692.

Witchfinder General

The unofficial title adopted by **Matthew Hopkins**, the son of James Hopkins, minister of Wenham in Suffolk, England. Matthew made a career out of “discovering” **witches** for a fee. One of his earliest trials took place in 1645 at Chelmsford, Essex before the justices of the peace and Robert Rich, Earl of Warwick. On Hopkins’s first foray into witch hunting, he brought a total of nineteen people to the gallows.

Hopkins took on assistants: a man named John Stearne and a woman named Mary Phillipps. They were sometimes helped by Edward Parsley and Frances Mills. Together they set out to “discover” witches at twenty shillings apiece, plus a further twenty shillings for a conviction. They visited Suffolk, Norfolk, Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire, Bedfordshire and other areas. In the space of two years, they caused at least two hundred people to be executed. Hopkins described himself as a “Witchfinder” and as “Witchfinder General” on the frontispiece of his book *The Discovery of Witches: in answer to severall Queries, lately Delivered to the Judges of Assize for the County of Norfolk. And now published by Matthew Hopkins, Witchfinder* (London, 1647).

SOURCES:

Kittredge, George Lyman: *Witchcraft in Old and New England*. Russell & Russell, 1929.

Notestein, Wallace: *A History of Witchcraft in England from 1558 to 1718*. Russell & Russell, 1965.

WITCHFINDER GENERAL, THE (MOVIE) see *THE CONQUEROR WORM*

Witch Fire (movie)

A 1986 movie starring Shelley Winters as an escaped mental patient who uses her **occult** powers to wreak supernatural vengeance on those who mocked her.

Witch from Nepal, The (movie)

A 1985 Hong Kong movie directed by horror film director Siu Tung Ching and starring Chow Yun Fat. Joe Wong (Chow Yun Fat) has unknowingly inherited a supernatural power from a Nepalese tribal ancestor (Emily Chu). He is enlisted to fight a Satanic cat-beast with superhuman strength, and the action includes fights against zombies in a sequence that takes place in a cemetery, and lots of fast-paced activity enhanced with special effects.

Witch Hat

Witches are stereotypically shown wearing a tall, pointed hat. This dates from the time when the new religion (Christianity) was trying to discredit the **Old Religion** and make it look undesirable.

In the fifteenth century, the tall conical hat was very much in fashion for women of the court and with the upper classes. Eventually it went out of fashion. In those days it took time for fads and fashions to travel from the cities and towns to the villages and country folk. Long after the tall, pointed hat had become *démodé* in town, it was still being worn in the country. This was the time that the Church was trying to draw people away from the old **Pagan** religion and into Christianity. At that time, followers of the Old Religion were usually depicted wearing the no-longer-fashionable tall, pointed hats to subtly suggest that the Old Religion itself was out of fashion. It also tied in with the Church's view that all pointed hats were associated in some way with the pointed horns of the Devil.

In modern day **Witchcraft**, Witches generally do not wear anything on their heads. A Witch Queen, or **Queen of the Sabbat**, will wear a simple band of **silver** with a silver crescent **moon** on the front as a crown. On occasion a **High Priest** will wear an antlered or **horned helmet** when representing the **God**. The tall, black, pointed hat is not worn.

WITCH HUNTS see BURNING TIMES

Witching, The (movie)

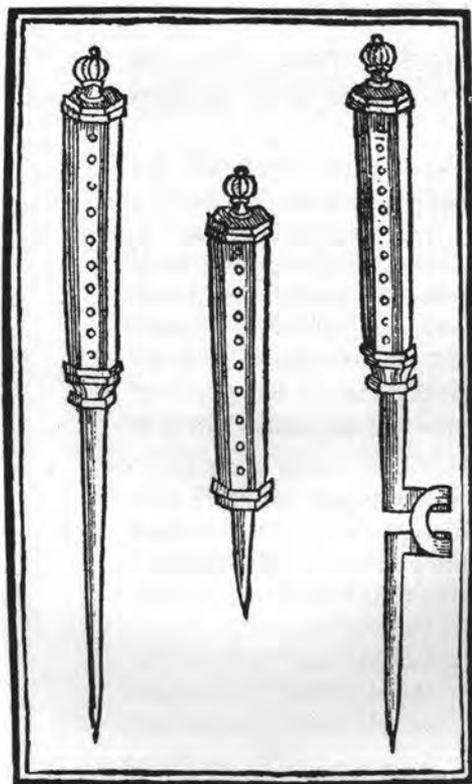
Originally released in theaters as *Necromancy*, this movie is directed by Bert I. Gordon and stars Orson Welles and Pamela Franklin. This author was technical advisor for the movie (despite which Gordon retained a typical Hollywood approach to his subject). As Mr. Cato, Welles controls an entire town, forcing its residents to make the "toys" he needs to cast evil spells (the working title for the movie was *The Toy Factory*). His young son is dead and his intention is to revive him by magical ritual, hence the name "**Necromancy**." To do this he needs to steal another soul, and decides that the wife of his newest employee, Lori (Franklin), is ideal.

WITCHKILL (MOVIE) see THE WITCHMAKER

Witchmaker, The (movie)

A 1969 movie directed by William O. Brown. The video version is titled *Witchkill* and it stars John Lodge, Alvy Moore, Thordis Brandt, Anthony Eisley, and Shelby Grant.

A professor of parapsychology, Dr. Ralph Hayes (Moore), leads a group into the Louisiana swamp to investigate a string of murders of young women. He believes that **witchcraft** is behind these murders. One of his students, Tasha (Brandt), has psychic powers inherited from her own **witch** ancestors. Victor Gordon (Eisley), a reporter, is also part of the group.



Retractable bodkins, used by witch finders to search for Devil's marks on accused witches. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

The culprit is discovered—Luther the Berserk (Lodge), a powerful sorcerer who drinks the blood of his victims, which gives him the power to raise an army of dead. The story revolves around the ensuing battle between good and evil.

Witch Prickers

During the persecutions of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, an accused witch would be examined for evidence that he or she was a servant of the Devil. One of the recognized signs was an insensitive spot, frequently unmarked, which would not bleed when pricked where, supposedly, the Devil had touched the witch on **initiation**. To find such a blemish, the examiners would use a bodkin-like instrument known as a “pricker.” This would be jabbed repeatedly into the accused’s body, searching for the insensitive spot. Nicolas Remy’s 1595 work *Demonolatriy* states, “The Devil brands and seals those whom he has newly claimed as his own . . . on that part of the body which was **anointed** by the priest on the day of their baptism . . .

And it is a strange and marvellous fact that they can endure the deepest wound in that part which has been marked by the Demon’s talon without feeling any pain.” Remy’s book played a significant part in the persecutions, becoming one of the handbooks of the day for witch trial, persecution and punishment.

In Brother Francesco Maria Guazzo’s *Compendium Maleficarum* of 1608, he lists those things which he feels are done when a witch enters into a **Pact with the Devil**. The tenth item—“He (the Devil) places his mark upon some part or other of their bodies, as fugitive slaves are branded; and this branding is sometimes painful . . . neither does he always mark them upon the same place: for on men it is generally found on the eye-lids, or the arm-pit or lips or shoulder or posterior; whereas on women it is found on the breasts or private parts, as has been observed.”

Examiners of accused witches seemed to take delight in searching for this devil’s mark with their witch prickers. Some, such as **Matthew Hopkins** and John Stearne, who sent 220 people to their deaths, were not above using fake prickers to ensure proof of conviction. These “false bodkins” had blades which slid back into hollow handles giving the illusion of the blade entering the body but drawing no

blood and producing no pain. Such men were being paid the princely sum of one to three pounds per person convicted.

There were other (visible) spots examined that were also pricked to see if they were insensitive or would not bleed. Virtually any blemish, be it mole, freckle, wart, birthmark, or whatever, was taken as a possible devil's mark and was vigorously pricked. Supernumerary nipples were also sought where the witch was supposed to nurse her **familiar** imp—her Devil's servant that did her every bidding.

A few modern day Witches will have a tattoo to commemorate this practice of the Middle Ages. They will have it put on their bodies about the time of their initiation (though it is not done as part of the **ritual**). For some **Wiccans** the tattoo will take the form of a small animal. Others will have a **pentagram**, crescent **moon**, or similar symbol tattooed in an inconspicuous place. Such tattooing is usually an individual preference rather than the requirement of a particular tradition.

SOURCES:

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Remy, Nicolas (E. A. Ashwin, trans.): *Demonolatry*. University Books, 1974.

WITCH QUEEN see QUEEN OF THE SABBAT

Witch's Curse, The (movie)

A 1962 Italian movie starring body-builder Kirk Morris as a Scottish shepherd. A seventeenth century muscle-man rips up a **tree** and descends to Hell to force a **witch** to remove her **curse** from his village. The movie has also been titled *Maciste in Hell*.

Witch's Ladder

The name given to a cord tied with knots and used much like a rosary. For example, if a **chant** needs to be repeated nine times, then nine knots would be tied in the cord. The **Witch** would then run his or her fingers along the cord, counting off the knots as the chant was repeated until all nine had been counted.

A Witch's Ladder might also be used to store **magical** power for later use (see **Knot Magic**).

Witch's Mirror, The (movie)

This 1960 Mexican movie directed by Chano Urueta and starring Rosita Arenas, Armando Calvo, Isabela Corona, and Dina de Marco, is a typical special effects-laced horror movie about a **witch** whose **magic mirror** turns her into a cat. The special effects produce a severed hand that comes alive and beautiful flowers that immediately wilt when an evil wind blows over them. There is disfigurement, **sorcery**, **curses** and **witchcraft**.

Witch Trap (movie)

This 1989 movie, starring James Quinn and Linnea Quigley, follows a group of paranormal experts who go to a haunted mansion in the hopes of cleansing it of its ghost. However, the tables are turned and the evil spirit torments the people who would exorcise it.

Witch Who Came from the Sea, The (movie)

This 1976 movie directed by Matt Cimber stars Milly Perkins as Molly, a young woman working as a barmaid in a seaside bar. She is actually a witch who “came from the sea” and wreaks havoc on hapless ships at sea, while lusting after a variety of football players and other well-built men who frequent the bar. She then slices them to pieces with her scythe.

Witch without a Broom, A (Una Bruja Sin Escoba) (movie)

This 1967 Spanish movie directed by Joe Lacy is a comedy horror/fantasy film starring Jeffrey Hunter as an American professor visiting Spain who encounters a witch who came from the fifteenth century. Unfortunately, she is only a beginner and has difficulty with her magic. She takes him back in time with her but then cannot return him. They stumble to various other centuries, ranging from prehistoric times to the future, before the witch’s father intervenes and sends the professor back to the present.

Witch Who Turned Pink (movie)

An animated children’s movie about werewolves, singing pumpkins, owls, and a green witch who has been turned pink and is trying to return to her normal color.

Wizard

The word “wizard” was applied in the past to a male **magician** or sorcerer and, occasionally, to a male **Witch**. The word comes from the Middle English *wis*, meaning “wise.” According to Rosemary Ellen Guiley, the term first appeared in 1440 and was synonymous with “wise man.” By the sixteenth century, it was applied to alchemists, blessers, cunningmen, sorcerers, Witches, and others. William West, in his *Simboleography* (1594), stated that, “Soothsayers and wizards . . . divine and foretell things to come, and raise up evil **spirits** by certain superstitious and conceived forms of words. And unto such words as be demanded of them, do answer by voice, or else set before their eyes in glasses, **crystal** stones or rings, the pictures or images of things sought.”

In England the Witchcraft Acts of 1542, 1563, and 1604 made felonies of such practices as fortune-telling and **divination**, conjuring spirits and making love **charms**. Despite this many wizards continued to operate, protected by the fact that

their clients were very close-mouthed about their dealings with them. The word is not used in **Wicca** nor in **ceremonial magic**.

SOURCES:

Guiley, Rosemary Ellen: *The Encyclopedia of Witches and Witchcraft*. Facts on File, 1999.
Robbins, Rossell Hope: *The Encyclopedia of Witchcraft and Demonology*. Crown, 1959.

Wizard of Oz, The (movie)

A 1939 movie directed by Victor Fleming (with assistance from King Vidor), starring Judy Garland, Frank Morgan, Ray Bolger, Bert Lahr, Jack Haley, and Margaret Hamilton. Also in the cast are Billie Burke, Gus Wayne, and Clara Blandick. This is the third screen adaptation of L. Frank Baum's 1900 children's fantasy, one of a series of Oz books, and is produced as a musical with a score by Harold Arlen and E. Y. Harburg.

Orphan Dorothy Gale (Garland) lives with her aunt and uncle on a farm in Kansas. To Dorothy it is unexciting and she yearns to travel "over the rainbow" to find more thrills. She gets her wish when a tornado picks her up and whisks her away to a magical land. There she manages to offend a wicked **witch** (Hamilton) but is protected from her wrath by wearing a pair of ruby slippers. At the suggestion of Glinda, a good witch (Burke), Dorothy heads along the yellow brick road to find the Emerald City and the powerful **wizard** who lives there in the hopes that he can send her home again. Along the way, she meets up with a variety of characters who she persuades to accompany her to see the Wizard of Oz.

Woden

The Anglos and the Saxons invoked Woden before setting out to invade England in the fifth century. Woden was the principle **god** of the Teutonic peoples. God of the Anglo-Saxons and a counterpart of the Scandinavian Odin and the German Wodan or Wuotan, Woden was identified by the Romans with their **deity** Mercurius because of his connection to the spiritual life. It was said that Woden spoke with ease and eloquence, often expressing himself in verse. He was a **shape-shifter**—he had the power to change himself into any shape he wished, as did Zeus, the major Greek deity. It is generally believed that Woden was first thought of as a sky god—perhaps a wind or storm deity—with great wisdom and powers over life and death. This is evidenced by the derivation of Wodenaz from an Indo-European word, parent also of the Sanskrit *vata* and the Latin *ventus*, both meaning "wind." The name Woden also appears to be connected with the old adjective *wood*, which means "furious," "wild," "mad." This word was still used in Chaucer's time but archaic by **Shakespeare's**, although in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, an angry Demetrius says that he is "wood within this wood."

In England there are many place-names associated with Woden, such as the earthwork Wansdyke (Wodnes dic) which runs from Hampshire to Somerset; Woden's Barrow, at Alton Priors; Woden's Valley at West Overton; Woden's Plain above the headwaters of the River Thames; Woodnesborough, near Sandwich;

Wednesbury in Staffordshire; and Wornshill, near Sittingbourne. Woden's eke-name, or nickname, was Grim, a word meaning one who wears a hood in such a way as to mask his face. This is from the Old Norse *grimr* and was given to Woden because of his habit of wandering between the worlds, wearing a hood or a large, floppy hat. The name is reflected in such places as Grimsdyke (which appears in many locations in southern England), Grimsby, Grimley, and Grimesthorpe.

Woden was credited with special magical powers as a **magician** or sorcerer (*Gal-dorcraftig* was "a person proficient in magic"), ruling by his magic and taking an interest not only in this world but also in the next. In spite of his interest in battles, Woden did not fight in them but intervened magically, making use of his *herfjöturr*, or army-fetter, a paralyzing panic. His magic extended to **healing**. From old magical formulae, surviving in Scandinavian countries, we learn that Woden was asked to cure sprains and dislocations. He was also invoked by warriors in battle to bring them victory. Woden had two **ravens** that sat on his shoulders: Hugin ("thought") and Munin ("memory"). They could fly through all reaches of the universe and would tell Woden what they had seen. Two wolves were also his constant companions.

The Saxons were practicing **pagans** during at least their first five generations in England and worshiped four principle deities: Woden, Thunor, Tiw, and Frig. In the Saxon tradition of **Witchcraft**—the **Seax-Wica**—as practiced today, the deities worshiped are Woden and Freya (Frig). The Woden of the Saxons was not quite the same personage as the Odin of the Vikings. He was not so concerned with organizing battalions of slain warriors, but more with walking the rolling downs of England and watching over his (living) people.

SOURCES:

Branston, Brian: *Gods of the North*. Thames & Hudson, 1955.

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Larousse: *Larousse Encyclopedia of Mythology*. Hamlyn, 1959.

Whitlock, Ralph: *In Search of Lost Gods*. Phaidon, 1979.

Woman Who Came Back, The (movie)

This 1945 movie directed by Walter Colmes starred Nancy Kelly, John Loder and Otto Kruger. The story concerns a young woman named Lorna Webster (Kelly) who returns to her ancestral New England. After an encounter with a strange old woman, Lorna becomes convinced that she is the reincarnation of a seventeenth century **witch**. Various bizarre happenings lead to her being stoned by frightened villagers, and she has to be rescued by her boyfriend, Matt Adams (Loder), and the local minister Reverend Stevens (Kruger).

Women's Mysteries

When the **Moon Goddess** Diana fell in love with the Sun Goddess Lucina, their daughter was **Aradia**, the first female avatar in our times. Upon the request of the moon, Aradia manifested her-

self as a human woman and came to teach **Witchcraft**. It was a time when there were too many poor people in jails unjustly; when landlords abused their powers and oppressed the working poor. Our avatar Aradia came and gathered the women and taught them the **mysteries**, the **esbats** and blessings and cursings, using the power of the moon.

According to Zsuzsanna Budapest, one of the original forces behind the Feminist **Wiccan** movement, the above is the legend at the core of the **Dianic Tradition** today. She does not give a source for the above passage. It is not in Leland's Aradia, although it does carry the flavor of that *vangelo* or gospel. Budapest says, "It's time to lift our collective female will against the abusers, hence the rebirth of the Dianic Tradition in the seventies; lifted upon the mighty back of the phenomenon called 'women's liberation'."

The Vestal Virgins survived into Roman times, and the Women's Mysteries traditions were still alive into the fourth century. Seven-year-old girls were **initiated** into the **rites** of Athena, and there were the schools of Artemis. But the destruction of the shrine of the two goddesses at Eleusys by the Christians signaled the end of the goddess culture in Europe. To consciously reclaim the Goddess and her female mysteries, Budapest and her followers had to infuse the neo-Wiccan tradition with a modern feminism.

She did this by pledging to be at every **sabbat**, esbat, full moon and seasonal celebration. She held her rites whether alone or with a group of other women. Gradually, the ritual **Circles** built to as many as a hundred women or more. Straight women and lesbians alike found peace and solace in the Circles. As Budapest says, "The pure female energy we generated in these circles taught us that we are whole and powerful without the men. Nothing is out of balance. Women are healed."

After two decades, Dianic Wicca became the fastest growing tradition in the Craft. Like the rest of Wicca, there was no centralization, no single leader nor rules and regulations. All **covens** are autonomous. Despite the propaganda, all-women circles formed even within Christian churches. Female journalists found their voices and wrote supportive articles about the Goddess work. The Goddess Movement swept across the country. From Budapest's early, self-published books on feminist Wicca, today there are significant books on the subject published by major publishers. There are even university departments of Women's Studies teaching women's spirituality.

There are still no rules as to what a woman must or must not do to be considered of the Dianic Tradition, other than that her circle should be all female and that no male **gods** may be invoked. But today, in addition to these purely Dianic covens (all women), there are also Goddess groups that include men who favor the emphasis on the Goddess to the near total exclusion of the God.

According to Raven Grimassi, the Women's Mystery Tradition arose from primitive women trying to understand such things as menstrual bleeding, pregnancy, and childbirth—the things which separated women from men and seemed to point to female power. There seemed to be some primitive magical force at work in women that was not in men. Women's Mysteries evolved as **fertility** rites pertinent to women—their knowledge of conception and birth, along with secrets of **love**

magic and the nurturing of the family. In Greek mythology, there are the *Morae*, or *Moirai*, who are goddesses of fate and rule over the three decisive moments of life for a woman: birth, marriage and death. They also align with the three stages of womanhood: **Maiden**, **Mother** and **Crone**.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Witchcraft from the Inside*. Llewellyn, 1995.

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Budapest, Zsuzsanna: *The Holy Book of Women's Mysteries*. Susan B. Anthony Coven No. 1, Los Angeles, 1979.

Budapest, Zsuzsanna: *Grandmother of Time*. Harper & Row, 1989.

Grimassi, Raven: *Encyclopedia of Wicca and Witchcraft*. Llewellyn, 2000.

Words of Power

The words of a **chant** or **spell** can imbue the **magician** with feelings of power and, by so doing, can help generate that power into reality. In themselves, words can be a means of emotional control over persons and events. The foundation of successful spell-casting lies in the power and mystery of “the word.” Jack Kornfield says, “In ancient cultures, shamans learned that to name that which you feared was a practical way to begin to have power over it.”

In medieval times, it was believed that some words were so powerful that they should only be pronounced in exceptional circumstances. Because of their power, they should only be used with appropriate caution and preparation. The word *Tetragrammaton*, considered to be the ineffable name of **God**, was such a word and has come to be regarded as the most powerful word in **ceremonial magic**.

The pamphlet *Tryall of Witch-Craft* (London, 1616) says, “Galen writeth that a certain **Sorcerer**, by uttering and muttering but one word, immediately killed or caused to die a **serpent** or scorpion; Benivenius in his *De Abd. Morb. Caus.*, affirmeth, that some kind of people have been observed to do hurt, and to surprise others, by using certain sacred and holy words.”

Eliphas Lévi said, “In magic, to have said is to have done; to affirm and will what ought to be is to create.” These are the two necessary ingredients of magic—the strong belief/desire, willing that it be so, and the right words. Finding those words is usually either a question of trial and error or discovering previously effective, time-tested words.

According to the Book of Genesis, “God said, ‘Let there be light,’ and there was light . . . and God said, ‘Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters,’ . . . And God said ‘Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear’ . . . and God said ‘Let the earth bring forth grass.’” All these things came to pass because God *said* them. According to the Old Testament, God created the world with words he spoke. In magic, exactly the same thing is being done: using powerful and *appropriate* words together with a concentration of power. (It doesn’t matter that we are not as powerful as God, since we are not trying to create a whole world!)

Words of power, especially when in the form of chants or spells, must also be spoken rhythmically, with a heavy, sonorous beat. This can have a hypnotic effect and can lead to *ekstasis*, the necessary rising state of excitement and “getting out of oneself.”

Egyptian texts report that the **priest** magicians of ancient Egypt used foreign words for their magical workings. Herodotus, the earliest Greek historian whose words have come down to us, says that magical chanting by the Egyptian magicians is what enabled them to lift the great blocks of stone with which they built the pyramids.

In magic, the words themselves must be spoken in a particular way. They must be spoken with authority and *familiarity*, which is one of the reasons why modern-day magicians have little success using ancient Latin, Greek, and other mystical texts that they do not fully understand. It is useless to repeat magical words of power parrot-fashion, or phonetically, in the hopes that they will be as effective as they were for the mighty magicians of the past. If you do not know what the words mean, you cannot put the necessary feeling into them, and the magic will not work. Yet the very opposite is true when dealing with *writing* words of power. In order to use written magic words of power, it is most effective if you are *not* familiar with them.

When making magical tools, they must be marked or engraved at the time of **consecrating** them with a word or words of power to make them potent. The very act of making the tool (**wand**, **athamé**, **sword**, for example) puts something of yourself into the object. The Melanesian word for this “power” is *mana*. But to increase mana, it is common to inscribe the instrument with specific words of power, and these are usually in one of the alphabets of ceremonial magic.

In the Middle Ages, ceremonial magicians would spend years perfecting the art of conjuring **spirits** or entities who would, when **conjured**, do their bidding. The magicians kept notes of their experiments in books known as **grimoires**. These books would have been written in Latin, Greek, Hebrew or whatever was most familiar to the particular magician. Some sections would be carefully written in one of the so-called “**magical alphabets**,” such as *Theban*, *Malachim*, *Angelic*, *Passing the River*, *Robatian*, or *Enochian*. The reason was two-fold: first was secrecy. The magician did not want his many years of hard work to be available to anyone who gained access to the book. But the second and more important reason was the power of these words when written in those alphabets. They made the book itself powerful and were the letters used when making such things as **talismans** and the various instruments of his art. The less familiar the magician was with the alphabet he used, the more powerful it was, for it meant that he had to concentrate on every stroke of every letter. In this way, his energy, his mana, was going into what he wrote.

So in speaking the words of power used in magical operations, it was necessary to be familiar with them, and to be able to place the necessary emphasis where needed. But in writing the words of power, it was equally important to be unfamiliar with the construction of the letters.

SOURCES:

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Kornfield, Jack: *A Path with Heart*. Bantam Books, 1993.

Lévi, Eliphas Alphonse Louis Constant (A. E. Waite, trans.): *The History of Magic (Dogme et rituel de la haute magie*, Paris, 1861). Rider, 1913.

Working Tools

The “working tools” of **Witchcraft** are implements used in **rituals**. They are sacred items, and, as such, must be **consecrated** before first being used.

The number of working tools differs from **tradition** to tradition. In **Gardnerian**, for example, there are eight: **sword, athamé, white-handled knife, pentacle, scourge, cords, censer, and wand** (see individual items). In **Saxon Witchcraft**, for example, there are only four: sword, seax (athamé), censer, and spear. The **covens** of virtually all traditions also have dishes of **water** and **salt** on their **altars**, together with candle(s), **goblet(s)**, and **deity** figures, plus the **Book of Shadows**. However, these are not generally classed as “working tools” *per se*.

Some of the working tools of **Wicca**, as used by many traditions, had their origins in **ceremonial magic**. The wand, for example, an instrument of **invocation** and/or **conjunction**, was almost certainly not used by early **Pagans** and **Witches** whose primary attunement to deity was in the simple form of **prayers** and later thanks for good harvests and hunting. It was only with the later structuring of the **Craft** as a religion, with its pertinent rites and the gathering of groups, that such then-necessary items came into use.

Stewart Farrar says, “a ritual tool is a psychological aid to concentration and synchronizes the psychic effort of a group working together; its symbolism is archetypal in nature and therefore activates the Unconscious in partnership with the purposeful Ego; and through consecration and constant use, it acquires a helpful, psychic charge of its own.”

Some tools are coven and others are personal tools. Every Witch has his or her own athamé, for example, yet if a sword is used (for casting the Circle), there is only one such owned by the coven. In some traditions, every Witch has his or her own cord(s) while in others, there is only one set for the whole coven’s use. The individual Witch’s tools are made by that Witch. The tools of the coven are made by the coven members, either working as individuals or together as a coven project. All are consecrated before use.

In the case of a **Hedge Witch**, the working tools would be at the whim of the individual. Most would certainly have a knife, which might be an athamé-like blade or a **boleen**, used for cutting **herbs**. Eleanor and Philip Harris point out that the High **Priest** of the ancient Jewish San Hedron carried a crook to display his religious authority. The Celts carried a **staff** called a *stang*, which was forked at the top. Jesus advised his disciples to take only staffs when they went off to spread his word. These were all working tools.

Many working tools are inscribed with specific **sigils**. Again, these are dependent upon the tradition. Examples are the owner’s name done in one of the **magical alphabets**, **astrological** signs and symbols, **pentagrams**, **hexagrams**, and/or other signs and symbols special to the tradition. The purpose is to inject the tool with the maker’s *mana*, or personal power. Rhodes has suggested that it was Pythagoras who first conceived the practice of creating sigils from planetary squares and the use of geometrical figures in magic.

SOURCES:

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Worship

The word comes from “worth-ship,” meaning dignity, honor, respect and reverence. In religion it is used in a sense of reverence to deities. Worship is usually a group of people with similar beliefs coming together to give thanks to their deities, often with specific **rituals** at certain times of the year. In **Witchcraft** there are the eight main **sabbat** ceremonies plus the weekly or monthly **esbat** rites. The **gods** of life and of nature—the male and female principles of all life are worshiped.

The **Old Religion** worship is performed in groups, known as **covens**, and also by individuals or **Solitaries**. The covens are led by a **priest** and a **priestess** who represent the god of nature and the **goddess of fertility**. In **Witchcraft** it is believed that all are their own priest or priestess, and so able to worship alone if preferred.

Documentary evidence of the worship of Nerthus, Mother Earth, is found in England well after Norman times, as evidenced by her nude effigies found in more than a dozen eleventh and twelfth century churches. There is also a twelfth century medical treatise (Ms Harl. 1585, fol. 12a) which says:

Holy Goddess of Earth, parent of Nature, who dost generate all things, and regenerate the planet which thou alone showest to the folk upon earth . . . Thou givest us food in safety by a perpetual covenant; and when our soul fleeth away, it is in thy bosom that we find our haven of rest. Thou too art called by the loving-kindness of the gods, the Great Mother, who hast conquered the god of Mighty Name.

The need to worship, and the aversion to changing beliefs, is reflected in the **Bible** passage (Jeremiah, 44:15–19):

Then all the men which knew that their wives had burned **incense** unto other gods, and all the women that stood by, a great multitude, even all the people that dwelt in the land of Egypt, in Pathros, answered Jeremiah saying: “As for the word that thou hast spoken unto us in the name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto thee. But we will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth forth out of our own mouth, to burn incense unto the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, as we have done, we, and our fathers, our kings, and our princes, in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem: for then had we plenty of victuals, and were well, and saw no evil. But since we left off to burn incense to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, we have wanted all things, and have been consumed by the sword and by the famine. And

when we burned incense to the queen of heaven, and poured out drink offerings unto her, did we make our cakes to worship her, and pour out drink offerings unto her, without our men.”

This explains the slowness of the New Religion (Christianity) in its efforts to oust the Old Religion. For generations the people had worshiped their ancient deities, seeing the relationship of the gods to the earth and to all life. They had developed a close relationship with these deities and with Mother Earth. There was understandable hesitancy to abandon what had been known for so long for an upstart god, however much his worship was enforced by the authorities. By the tenth and eleventh centuries, many priests continued to lead their people in the worship of both the gods of the Old Religion *and* the New. In 1282 a village priest at Inverkeithing, Scotland, was severely reprimanded for leading his parishioners in a **fertility dance** which included a **phallic** symbol. In 1303 the Bishop of Coventry, Walter de Langton, was accused of paying homage to a deity in the form of a goat. Many local priests would serve their **pagan** flock during the week and go through the motions of Christian worship only on Sundays.

Worship can give a sense of purpose to life and also a sense of worth to the individual. **Wicca** has been called the fastest growing religious movement in the United States. Reasons include the form of worship and the freedom from strict rules and rulership. The participants are free to express their feelings for deity in the ways that make most sense to them and which give them the greatest satisfaction.

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Buckland, Raymond: *Witchcraft from the Inside*. Llewellyn, 1995.

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Worst Witch, The (movie)

This 1986 comedy movie, directed by Robert M. Young, was based on Jill Murphy's children's story and stars Fairuza Balk, Tim Curry (as the Grand Wizard), Charlotte Rae (as Miss Cackle) and Diana Rigg (as Miss Hardbroom). The story tells of a witch's academy run by a sorceress and her assistants who teach the black arts. One of the new witches, Mildred Hubble (Balk), is too good to be a witch, bringing all sorts of problems on herself at the academy.

In 1998 a television series based on the books began. It was a UK/Canada co-production, initially directed by Andrew Morgan. In the series, the part of Mildred Hubble is played by Georgina Sherrington, Miss Cackle by Clare Coulter and Miss Hardbroom by Kate Duchêne.

Wortcunning

The knowledge of the use of **herbs** in **healing**, both medicinally and magically. **Hedge Witches**, **Wiccans**, **Pagans**, **Wise Men** and **Women**, **Cunningmen** and **women** all had wortcunning, as do many of today's **Witches**.

Many of the healers and **magical** practitioners grew their own plants for healing and magical use, but others felt it was more important to find the plant growing in the wild.

The harvesting was frequently done according to the phases of the **moon** or by the **Planetary Hours** and the **Planetary Rulers**, depending upon the need and the use of the plant. The herbs were usually cut with a **boleen**, a curved-bladed knife used only for that purpose. They could be used fresh or dried for future use.

SOURCES:

Cunningham, Scott: *Cunningham's Encyclopedia of Magical Herbs*. Llewellyn, 1985.

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Yarrow

Yarrow is also known by the folk names Arrowroot, Bad Man's Plaything, Carpenter's Weed, Death Flower, Devil's Nettle, Field Hops, Hundred Leaved Grass, Lady's Mantle, Milfoil, Nosebleed, Old Man's Mustard, Seven Year's Love, Snake's Grass, Tansy, Wound Wort, and Yarroway. It is used in many magical spells for protection, to gain courage, for developing psychic powers, for love and, in company with other herbs, for exorcism. Yarrow is ruled by the planet Venus and associated with water.

Yarrow is frequently used in a **talisman** for protection. When such a talisman is worn, it gives the wearer a feeling of self-confidence and courage. It is said that by carrying yarrow with you, anyone you wish to see or hear from will think of you and contact you. Drinking an infusion of yarrow will help develop your psychic powers.

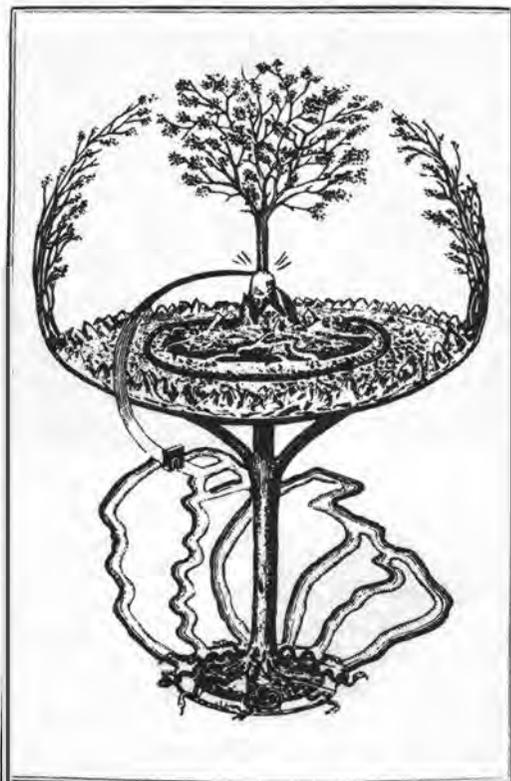
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Yggdrasil

In Scandinavian mythology, Yggdrasil or Igdrasil, is the world tree, an evergreen that overshadows the whole world. The name may come from *Yggr*, which was one of the many names by which Odin was known. Yggdrasil is the guardian tree of the gods. Heaven and hell are bound together by its roots and branches, and the gods meet daily beneath its branches to sit in judgement. It is said to actually link together nine worlds, including those of the giants, the gods, and the dead.

Yggdrasil is fed by three main roots: one in Asgard which is watered daily from Urd's fountain by the three Norns who decide the destiny of men; one in Niflheim, watered by the spring Hvergelmir; and one in Midgard which is watered by the underworld giant, Mimir's well of knowledge. Odin's spear, Gungnir, was made from a branch of the tree.



Yggdrasill, 1824. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

Odin was the god of death and battle. He was the Wodan of the Germans and the Woden of the Anglo-Saxons. He was believed to welcome into his halls those warriors who died a heroic death on the battlefield. Mythology says that Odin hung from the World Tree for nine days and nights while pierced with a spear. He fasted as he hung there as a sacrifice. Afterwards he was able to bend down and lift up the magical runes which brought secret knowledge to men.

Vithofnir, a golden rooster, sits on top of the tree, and an eagle sits on the highest branch with a falcon perched on its head. That branch shades Valhalla. The eagle and the falcon report all that they see to the gods who meet below. Gnawing at the roots of the tree is the serpent, Nidhoggr, the World Serpent. A squirrel named Ratatosk runs back and forth between the serpent and the eagle, trying to stir up discord between the two.

Four stags, Dain, Duneyr, Durathor, and Dvalin, feed on the upper twigs of the tree while their antlers drop dew on the world below. Odin's goat, Heidrun, the supplier of milk for the heavenly mead, browses on the tree branch known as Lerad.

SOURCES:

Davidson, H. L.: *Scandinavian Mythology*. Hamlyn, 1969.

Leach, Maria (ed.): *Funk & Wagnalls Standard Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology, and Legend*. Harper & Row, 1972.

Yin; Yang

In Chinese philosophy Yin and Yang are the two great opposite principles on whose interplay everything in the universe depends. Yin is female and Yang is male. Yin is also regarded as negative and dark, while Yang is positive and light. Both are necessary to make up the whole. The traditional Yin/Yang symbol is a circle divided into two teardrop shapes, one black and one white. In the center of each is a small circle of the opposite color, showing that each encompasses the other's attributes, just as a man has a feminine side and a woman a masculine side.

The vital energy that animates, connects, and moves everything through the cycles of life is termed *ch'i* (pronounced *chee*), the Chinese word for energy. In the

art of Feng-Shui, ch'i should be able to flow freely from room to room and within any room without obstruction. Within your own body, your personal ch'i should also flow freely. When it does, you feel good and energized, whereas when you are sick, there is some obstruction in the body's ch'i. By maintaining a balance of Yin and Yang, good ch'i is obtained. Ch'i is constantly changing as is life. Growth and movement produce change.

Yin is associated with the following: dark, small, ornate, horizontal, curved, rounded, soft, low, cool, cold, floral, earth, **moon**, and feminine. The opposite, Yang, is associated with light, large, plain, vertical, straight, angular, hard, high, warm, hot, geometric, sky, sun and masculine.

Most **Witches** are aware of ch'i and Yin and Yang, if only subconsciously. Many were originally drawn to the **Old Religion** by the fact that there is a balance of **deities**—a **god** and a **goddess**. This balance is found throughout life and is reflected in much of **Witchcraft**. In many **traditions**, there must be a balance of male and female members in a **coven**.

SOURCES:

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Yoni and Lingam

Since prehistoric times, humans have made clay figures, bone and ivory carvings and painted on walls, depicting the sexual attributes of **gods** and **goddesses**. The walls of ancient Egyptian temples show **phallic** figures. In the fifth century BCE, the Greek historian Herodotus described phallic statues of **Osiris**. Such representations are also found in Central and South America, Africa, and around the world. The name generally given to the male organ is “lingam” and to the female, “yoni.” These terms were used in India where the reproductive organs were especially associated with the generative divinity.

The organs of generation, both male and female, were often modeled in disproportionate sizes to stress their power and importance. The Roman god **Priapus** was invariably represented with a huge, erect lingam. Every bride of Roman aristocracy was supposed to sacrifice her virginity to him. St. Augustine (*City of God*, London, 1609) said, “This custom was once regarded as very honest and religious by Roman women, who obliged the young brides to come and sit upon the masculine representation that was Priapus.” In the form of a talisman, the lingam of Priapus was known as *Fascinus* and might be carried to promote **fertility**.

Goldberg tells of the priests in Canara and other districts of India who walk the streets naked, carrying and ringing small **bells**. These bells are to call women out of their houses to “the religious duty of piously embracing their sacred organs.” Goldberg goes on to point out that the sanctity of the lingam survives in the Christian attitude of reverence toward the Holy Prepuce, the foreskin of Jesus. He says, “Until very recently there were twelve such prepuces extant in European churches, and many a legend was woven about them. One of these, the pride possession of the

Abbey Church of Coulomb, in the diocese of Chartres, France, was believed to possess the miraculous power of rendering sterile women fruitful.”

Both the Greeks and Romans would place a lingam over a grave, affirming the belief in eternal life in the face of death. In Naples, phallic images were popular designs on vases, **rings**, medals, and even into precious stones.

A cylinder hanging from a vase set into a pedestal is part of a Hindu temple's altar. The pedestal is symbolic of Brahma, the basis of everything in the universe. The vase represents Vishnu, the goddess and female principle, and within it is the cylinder representing Siva, the male god, the lingam. The two together represent the sexual union, the foundation upon which Hindu mythology has developed. The pestle and mortar have long been thought of as representing the lingam and the yoni. The two working together in an act of creation.

In the **Wiccan Cakes and Ale** (or **Cakes and Wine**) **ritual**, the **athamé** represents the lingam and the **goblet** represents the yoni. The priest will lower the athamé into the goblet with the words, “As the athamé is the male, and the cup is the female, conjoined may they bring happiness.” In **Witchcraft** the lingam is also represented on the Phallic or **Priapic Wand** and on many riding poles or **broomsticks**.

SOURCES:

Buckland, Raymond: *Buckland's Complete Book of Witchcraft*. Llewellyn, 1986.

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YULE see WINTER SOLSTICE



Z

Zell, Tim and Morning Glory

Tim Zell was born on November 30, 1942 in St. Louis, Missouri, the son of a Marine who served in World War II. After the war, the family moved to Clark's Summit, Pennsylvania, then to Crystal Lake, Illinois. Zell attended Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri.

At an early age, Zell started reading and absorbing the Greek myths and other stories of Paganism. He was an introvert who spent a great deal of his time communing with nature, roaming the woods near his Pennsylvania home and then around the lake in Illinois. He felt that he had telepathic powers to the point where he could pick up the thoughts of others.

At college he befriended Richard Christie, a devotee of Ayn Rand and Abraham Maslow. Together they discovered Robert A. Heinlein's science fiction novel, *Stranger in a Strange Land*, which became their catalyst for founding the Church of All Worlds (CAW), which was based on an organization of that name in the novel. Initially the group was called "Atl," a term derived from the Aztec word for both water and "home of our ancestors." This was later changed to Church of All Worlds. By 1967, the Church filed for incorporation and was formally chartered on March 4, 1968. This was the first of the Pagan Earth religions in the United States to obtain full federal recognition as a church. With its formation, Zell coined the term "neo-Pagan."

In 1963, Zell met and married his first wife, Martha, and together they had a son, Bryan. The marriage lasted eight years. Meanwhile, Zell earned undergraduate degrees in sociology/anthropology and psychology from Westminster. In 1970, Zell had a visionary experience that led to his concept of Mother Earth as a single sentient being, dependent upon the harmonious balance of all things on the planet. He presented this as the Gaia Thesis, which spread rapidly and was adopted throughout the Pagan community. In 1973, Zell promoted his ideas at the Gnostic Aquarian Festival in Minneapolis under the title, "Theogenesis: The Birth of the Goddess."

Zell met Morning Glory at the festival, and they recognized each other as soul mates.

Morning Glory had been born Diana Moore, May 27, 1948 in Long Beach, California. Her parents were from Mississippi and had Irish and Choctaw Indian heritage. Her grandfather was a Methodist minister and her parents were Pentecostal. An only child, Moore became involved in the Pentecostal Church by age twelve. But by age sixteen she had tired of the male chauvinism of the Church and began to study Buddhism, joining the Vedanta Society. This introduced her to the Goddess, although she found Buddhism to generally focus on the male. Her search widened to Greek mythology, Paganism, and comparative religions generally.

At age nineteen, she changed her name to Morning Glory, having discovered **Witchcraft** a year before after reading Sybil Leek's, *Diary of a Witch*, and during her studies of Diana/**Artemis**. She traveled to Eugene, Oregon and picked up a hitch-hiker named Gary along the way. They decided to get married, and, a year later, had a daughter named Rainbow (later changed to Gail). It was an open marriage, so when she later met Tim Zell, her relationship with Gary remained friendly. Her meeting with Tim Zell was the fulfillment of a dream she previously had in which she saw Zell clearly.

Six months after meeting, Zell and Morning Glory got legally married in 1974, having a **Handfasting** ceremony at the Spring Gnostic Festival in Minneapolis. Again, it was an open marriage, and ten years later, a third party, Diane Darling, joined them with a triad Handfasting.

In 1968, Tim Zell had launched a magazine for CAW called *The Green Egg*, which they published for nearly nine years. In 1976, the Zells left their home in St. Louis, bought an old school bus, and took to the road. The Zells traveled throughout the West and while in Mendocino County, they visited Coeden Brith ("Speckled Forest"), land owned by Alison Harlow. They went on to Eugene, Oregon, where, in the fall of that year, Zell undertook a vision quest, spending two weeks alone in the wilderness, where he lived near a hot spring with nothing but a sleeping bag and a hunting knife. He became so attuned to nature that he felt completely reborn and looked upon himself as a **priest** of Gaia. With Morning Glory, he initiated himself into the "Eighth Circle" of CAW in a **ritual baptism**.

The following year, the Zells returned to Coeden Brith and experimented in producing what they called "**unicorns**"—essentially goats with their horns twisted together to form a single horn. (The unicorn of legend is generally described as a horse with a horn, though having cloven hooves, the beard of a goat, and the tail of a lion.) Harlow offered the Zells jobs as caretakers of her land. The Zells accepted and created a Pagan retreat, conducting seminars and running the Church of All Worlds. They also worked with a local wildlife rescue team. Morning Glory created a Pagan workshop: the Animal **Spirit** Circle. A talented poet, songwriter, and author, Morning Glory's work has appeared in a number of publications and anthologies. According to Grimassi, her life work has developed into "creating an initiation into a new cycle leading to our next stage of planetary evolution: the Gaia Cycle—a marriage of science and spirituality, ecology, feminism, and sexuality."

In 1979, after an impressive ceremony to celebrate the total eclipse at the Stonehenge replica in Oregon Dalles, Tim decided to change his name. While sitting with Morning Glory on the bank of a river that flowed through Coeden Brith, the Goddess gave a sign that his new name should be "Otter." He also changed his last name to "G'Zell" (as a contraction of "Glory" and "Zell," in the style of Anne McCaffrey's fantasy novel series, *Dragonrider*).

For several years the G'Zells traveled extensively, promoting their "unicorns," and signed a contract with Ringling Bros./Barnum & Bailey Circus in 1984. In 1985, they moved from Coeden Brith to near Ukiah, and the extended family consisted of Otter, Morning Glory, Bryan, Rainbow, Diane Darling and her son Zack. They founded "Ukiah's Home Town Festival," each year leading the parade. In 1987, they opened a fantasy store called "Between the Worlds," and the following year resurrected *The Green Egg*, which they published through 1996.

Since the 1960s, Zell had been a freelance graphic artist, illustrating fantasy and science fiction magazines and books. In the early 1980s, he began sculpting goddess figurines and mythological animals. By 1990, the G'Zells had started "Mythic Images," producing museum quality figures, altar figurines, and a variety of deity figures. In 1994, he changed his name again to Oberon.

In 1989, Otter/Oberon fell in love with Diane Darling, who joined him and Morning Glory. This lasted five years, by which time Morning Glory had formed a relationship with Wolf Dean Stiles from Texas. He joined the family in 1995, and the three of them were Handfasted in 1996. That same year, Wynter Rose joined Morning Glory and Wolf, and Liza Gabriel came to Oberon, making what they termed a five person "line marriage" (again inspired by *Stranger in a Strange Land*), although Morning Glory also coined the term "polyamory" to describe their lifestyle. They all took the family name of Ravenheart.

Morning Glory, a high priestess of the Great Goddess, thinks of herself mainly as a Goddess historian and "natural lore-mistress." Oberon is an accomplished ritualist, metaphysician, shaman, sculptor, artist and writer. He works on sculpture series of gods, goddesses, and legendary and mythical creatures, and calls himself a wizard.

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Grimassi, Raven: *Encyclopedia of Wicca and Witchcraft*. Llewellyn, 2000.

Zodiac

In astrology and astronomy, the zodiac is a zone of the heavens along which lie the paths of the sun, moon, and principal planets. An earth-bound observer sees the orbits of the planets as moving in a narrow zone due to their very slight deviation from a common plane. The zone is about eight degrees either side of the ecliptic, the path of the sun. Astrology is geocentric. The real orbits of the planets are around the sun in the same plane.



Depiction of the zodiac found at Bracken House, London. Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.

As early as 3,000 BCE in Mesopotamia, the various configurations of the fixed stars were grouped into constellations representing animals and objects. Since the majority of the constellations represented animals, the Greeks called this zone *zōdiakos kyklos*, or “circle of animals.” From this comes the name “zodiac.”

Some time before the Hellenistic period in Mesopotamia, the development of mathematical astronomy resulted in accurate definitions of the boundaries and number of zodiacal constellations. Equal arcs of the orbital circle of the sun gave twelve “signs”: Aries the ram, Taurus the bull, Gemini the twins, Cancer the crab, Leo the lion, Virgo the virgin, Libra the balance, Scorpio the scorpion, Sagittarius the archer, Capricorn the goat, Aquarius the water bearer, and Pisces the fish. In fact, Leo is the only constellation that actually looks anything like its name, so it is unknown how the signs got their names. The symbols for these signs first began to appear in Greek manuscripts of the late Middle Ages.

The concept of the zodiac reached Egypt around the third century BCE, when the country was under Greek domination. A rapid development of astrological doctrines occurred at that time, combining Egyptian, Greek, and Babylonian elements into a system regarding the powers of celestial bodies and their relationship to the zodiac. These ideas spread to Rome, Byzantium, India, and on to the West. Ancient Mexican codices include examples of astrology and its use.

Theories linking various stone monuments around the world with astrology and astronomy, presenting the sites as ancient, computer-like equipment. **Stonehenge** would seem the prime example, according to the research performed by Professor Gerald S. Hawkins in the early 1960s. The site at Mystery Hill, New Hampshire reflects this on a smaller scale, as do the menhirs at Carnac and elsewhere. According to Derek and Julia Parker, the pyramids of Egypt still hold pride of place among ancient astronomical buildings, being oriented to the north pole which lies close to Polaris.

Although not a part of **Witchcraft** itself, many **Witches** do practice astrology, with many regarding it as one of the fundamentals of **magic**. While some **Witches** keep their personal **Book of Shadows** as a notebook for **herbs** or **divination**, others keep theirs for findings and teachings in astrology and the zodiac.

Astrology is the study of the planets in relation to the earth, with regard to their influence on human life. *The Emerald Tablet of Hermes Trismegistus* (patron of the magical arts, associated with the Egyptian god Thoth) states, “That which is below is like unto that which is above, and that which is above is like unto that which is below, for the performing of the miracles of the One Thing.” This is usually shortened to, “As above, so below” or, “what is found in the heavens is reflected here on earth.”

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Zoomorphism

Zoomorphism is another name for **shape-shifting** by use of magical **charms**, but is restricted to the ability to change back and forth between human and animal form. In Robert Pitcairn’s, *Criminal Trials in Scotland*, (Edinburgh, 1833) he describes a spell for a **witch** to say to change into a cat: “I shall go into a cat, with sorrow, and

such, and a black shot, and I shall go in the Devil's name. I will come home again." To change back into human form, he gives: "Cat, cat, **God** send thee a black shot. I am in a cat's likeness just now, but I shall be in a woman's likeness even now. Cat, cat, God send thee a black shot." Each of these chants was to be repeated three times. The name given to the art of changing into a cat was aeluranthropy. Changing into a cow or bull was boanthropy, a dog was cynanthropy, lepanthropy to become a rabbit or a **hare**, and lycanthopy to change into a wolf.

In Apuleius's *The Golden Ass* (90 BCE), there is a description of a witch turning herself into a **crow**. The woman undressed completely, put two grains of **incense** into a burning lamp and, while standing up straight, muttered a few words of **magic**. She then opened a chest containing various vials and, from one of them, rubbed an oily liquid all over her body. Wings and a beak then sprouted and, uttering harsh cries, she flew out the window. A witness tried to do the same but got the wrong vial and turned into an ass. Shape-shifting was supposedly accomplished by means of a magic ointment similar to that used for flying through the air on a **broomstick**.

A form of zoomorphism takes place on the **astral plane** in shamanism. Shamans are found universally: among the Lapps, Siberians, Australians, Africans, Amerindians, and other tribal groups. The shaman believes that all elements have their source of power in the **spirit** world and that all life forms are interconnected in a giant web. The shamanic journey is the usual method of communicating with the spirit self for the purpose of gaining knowledge. The shaman will descend into the earth down a hole or through a cave, and will often adopt the shape of an animal, especially a burrowing animal. He may also take the shape of a bird, in order to fly high and observe.

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ZOROASTER see SATAN; SATANISM



Resources

Thousands of books have been written about Witches and Witchcraft. The vast majority have been from the Christian point of view, but in recent years a number have been written by practicing Witches themselves. Listed here are those books used as sources for *The Witch Book* entries, together with the major works on the subject, from all points of view.

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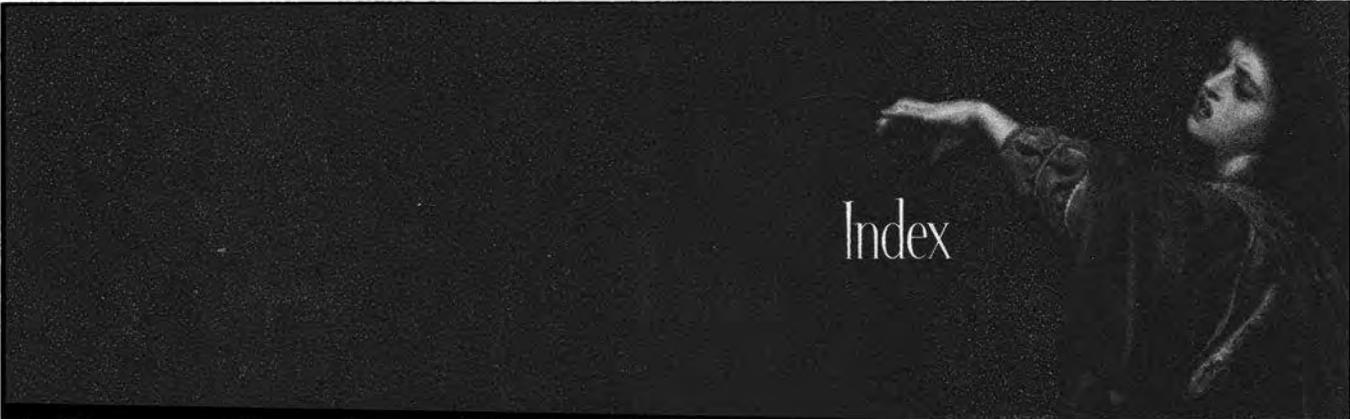
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From Abracadabra to Zodiac

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