

Meyn Mamvro

ANCIENT STONES & SACRED SITES
OF WEST PENWITH

Issue 6 £1.35



**THE CELTIC CYCLE • CORNISH CROSSES
STONES – CENTRE, INSCRIBED & MISSING
ANCIENT DREAMS • DRYADS • WELLS
LEYS & EARTH MYSTERIES • PAGANISM**

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Our grateful thanks to Gabrielle Hawkes for the Earth Goddess pictures on the front cover & p.23, and to Jan Adamson for the headings and artwork.

VISIONS & JOURNEYS

33 FORE STREET, ST. JUST-IN-PENWITH-CORNWALL TR19 7LJ
 Tel: Penzance 787268

Photographs Tom Henderson Smith
Screen-prints Gabrielle Hawkes

A fine range of local crafts

Mon.-Sat. 10 - 12, 2 - 6. Thurs. 10 - 12.

The name of the gallery expresses a theme central to our own lives and common to many creative people living in the magical landscape of Penwith. Many of the pictures and carefully selected local crafts reflect the spirit of this unique area and we are gradually establishing a reputation in our community and among discerning visitors for showing interesting and reasonably priced work.

★ Solo Exhibition ★

★ Monday 4th July - Saturday 30th July ★
 Topham Vickers Photographs

RITUAL WORKSHOPS

A weekend workshop in Native European paganism is planned for Cornwall in September 1988, offered by Ken Rees, tutor in mythology, shamanism and witchcraft courses. Its aim is to get back to our links with the land and native psychic roots, and one of two workshops are possible;

either (1) MYTH & RITUAL DRAMA

The aim here is to translate part of the Welsh Mabinogian back into rural and dramatic form. Lectures, slides and story-telling introduce the Celts, their myths, Druidic priesthood and earth mysteries while visualisation, mime, chanting and role-playing facilitate the experimental side.

or (2) INTRODUCTION TO ASPECTS OF SHAMANISM

Stress here is placed on native British tradition. Participants are taught how to set up Sacred Space, the art of Invocation, ways of generating and handling Power and of exploring the Otherworld. Methods used to achieve this include path-working, ritual dance and gesture and making one's own music.

Date Saturday & Sunday 3rd/4th Sept. 1988.

Times 11.00 to 6.00 approx. **Venue** in West Cornwall
Fees There is a special concessionary rate for Meyn Mamvro readers of £12 per person (Normal full rate is £30).

Enquiries Contact Meyn Mamvro direct, or Ken Rees at 34 Kincaid Road, Peckham, London SE15 5UN. (Phone 01-639-9372). Please state course preference.

Meyn Mamvro

**EARTH ENERGIES • ANCIENT STONES • SACRED SITES • PAGANISM • LEYPATHS
CORNISH PRE-HISTORY & CULTURE • MEGALITHIC MYSTERIES • LEGENDS & FOLKLORE**

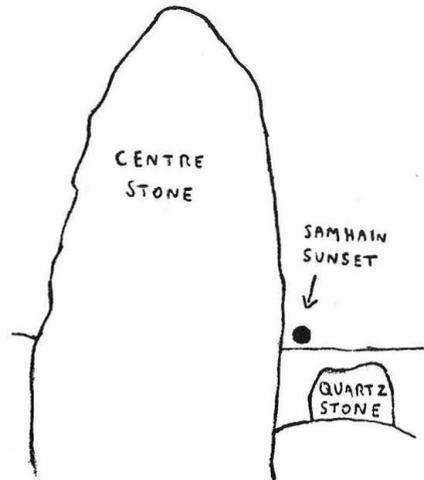
Readers and subscribers of 'Meyn Mamvro' will have noticed a price rise of the magazine this time. This increase has been forced on us by a substantial printers increase in our costs and is unfortunately nothing we can assimilate. MM is non profit-making - we did not envisage it would be when it was launched, but we must of course try to cover our costs each time. Gratifyingly, we always seem to sell out or nearly sell out, but because we are, unlike most small specialist magazine, professionally printed, it leaves no margin for error on our costs. We have a loyal and appreciative band of readers, and scarcely a renewal comes in without some nice note or letter with it - a not untypical one in front of me just now says "marvellous magazine, just what people with a 'feel' for West Penwith have been waiting for" - and we are anxious to maintain the standards that have brought such reaction. Part of the reason for having it printed in the first place was so that we could feature good-quality reproductions of photographs, paintings and artwork which is an integral part of the response to West Penwith. So we hope we can continue with printing. But it does very much depend upon the sales of this edition, and if we don't sell enough at the new price we shall have to look at alternative and cheaper methods of production. If we do, rest assured the quality of the contributions will remain the same.

As a boost to us, we had a lovely write-up in the last edition of *The Ley Hunter*, the national Earth Mysteries magazine. Paul Devereux said: "A very nicely produced A5 magazine, dealing with the whole spectrum of Earth Mysteries as pertaining to Cornwall. Everything from lore and legend to the geophysical aspects of sites. Editress Cheryl Straffon comes from a good Earth Mysteries 'school' - she came to an evening institute EM course I ran in London many years ago now. I couldn't have hoped for a better outcome! It really is a smashing magazine with a professional gloss to it. Highly recommended." A detailed review of MM No. 4 was featured including Helen Woodley's "Where Stones Touch the Skies", together with the comment: "She has hit upon an important feature here, one already remarked upon and illustrated by John Glover (TLH 94) and mentioned by official National Park literature with regard to standing stones in the Brecon Beacons!"

The *Ley Hunter* organises a Moot each year in a different location - a gathering of the EM clans. Last year in Oxford each regional group gave a presentation, including your editress and this is reviewed by TLH. I commented at the time: "West Penwith - the tip of Cornwall, the very end of the land, the old area called Belerion, the place where the lost land of Lyonesse begins, the legendary land of giants and spriggans. All this is part of the myth exploited in a thousand books, magazines and 'pisky shops' for the tourist, but underneath all the hype and superficiality, there does lie a very special place, an elemental landscape that seems to affect many people who live - or are drawn - to the place." I went on to give some examples of MM contributors who had responded to the magic and mystery of Kernow in their own individual ways, and concluded: "Many ideas and much creativity are buzzing around in West Penwith". Our area still continues to buzz and attract people. John Michell was down recently, and Paul Devereux himself plans to come shortly. Meanwhile for anyone interested, this year's EM Moot is in Swansea on July 16th/17th. Details from TLH (address in exchange listings) or MM.

FEEDBACK ON CENTRE STONES

The article in Meyn Mamvro No. 4 on centre stones in Cornish circles seems to have provoked a lot of interest and debate. The article pointed out that centre stones, such as Boscawen-un, are not central to the circle. Aubrey Burl believes they are probably earlier than the circle that encloses them which explains why so few of them are truly central. He adds - "Certainly in Cornwall with its plenitude of standing stones it would not be at all surprising if some of them had a later ring of stones erected around them." However, John E. Palmer from the Netherlands believes that the stones were contemporary with the surrounding circles because they were sited at intersections of the internal circle geometry, and on alignments. He says a strong indication of this is that some truly circular sites have their exact centre marked (e.g. Ring of Brodgar in Orkney) whereas at compound circles a centre stone is often sited off-centre. Aubrey Burl retorts that in SW Scotland at least there are no intersections on internal circle geometry at some stone circles there (eg. Glenquickan or Lairdmannock).



A different aspect on the matter is put by MM reader Barry Heafield (whose article on tree spirits appears on p.8 of this issue). He believes that it is explained by ley lines. "Centre stones are not intended to mark the precise centre of the circle geometrically; they mark the **power** centre of a circle. This is perhaps the main thing that circles are all about - energies - rather than astronomical, geometrical and mathematical alignments. After all, you don't really need to go to all the lengths of dragging a particular kind of stone and setting it up in a particular way in a particular place just so you can stand in the middle of your circle one day and say: 'Oh yes, today's the Summer Solstice' or whatever do you?! You would already know that it was the Summer Solstice to have been able to set it up in the first place. It might help in that way to have a precision market, but the key point must be the magical and spiritual operation with the right energies at the right time. I have always felt that all this stuff about alignments is ... the imposition of modern ideas, not the realisation of the circles true purposes."

Undoubtedly the alignments **are** there - from Boscawen-un at Samhain for example you can see the sun set in a notch between the centre stone and the quartz perimeter stone from a spot on the exact opposite edge of the circle, as I proved on November 1st last year (see drawing). This would not work if the stone were truly central, and could have been the focus for annual veneration and sacred observance by Neolithic peoples. The circle could have been added later to the standing stone to achieve this, or the whole thing could have been constructed with this aim in mind - once again you could argue both ways! At any rate, such a ritual observation could indeed have raised magical and spiritual energies in the circle, so perhaps everyone has an aspect of the truth of the matter!

(CS)

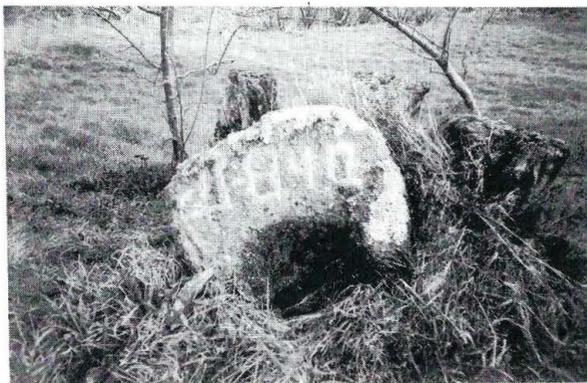
... ON INSCRIBED STONES

As reported briefly in MM No. 5, a stone from Trewern Round, an ancient walled enclosure near Newbridge has been discovered bearing a series of marked inscriptions which could be Ogham Script, a mysterious and magical writing system dating from the Dark Ages (about C6th) and found on about half a dozen other stones in mid and east Cornwall. The finder, Mr A. Woolcock of Lichfield. Staffs has sent us a copy of the picture his son took with the inscriptions chalked in (reproduced on right) and makes some interesting comments on it; "I am convinced that the marks are man-made



because other explanations such as (a) damage marks from an excavator as it was being dug out and moved (as it appears to have been), or (b) a geological effect leading to differential weathering, do not explain the "geometry" of the grooves i.e. its bold central location, the straightness of the major line and the regularity/lengths of the minor ones. I have thought at length about other possible explanations and can offer only one suggestion. It is now widely accepted that our distant ancestors used long distance straight tracks. Could this be a way marker, showing where the main track crossed other paths, streams etc." Perhaps then the inscription is indeed 'the old straight track' itself! Of course it may just be plough marks as has also been suggested (other stones lying around this one - and elsewhere in the landscape of West Penwith - also have marks on them though none quite distinctive as this), but its presence in the ancient round itself and proximity to a standing stone (formerly two) in a neighbouring field may well be significant.

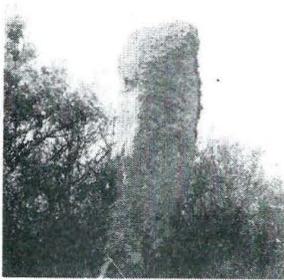
The discovery of this stone prompted a letter from Mrs. Mary Jasper, who formerly lived in the vicarage in St. Just, and wrote about a marked stone in the vicarage garden. The stone, which has been visited by MM, is shaped artificially with a hollowed-out centre and has evidently been broken off at some point. It is totally unknown and hitherto unrecorded stone, and has some definite incisions which appear to be letters (see photo on left) possibly reading d1.A.IQ. There are a number of inscribed stones in West Penwith and Cornwall, with inscriptions in Celticised Latin, (and even one recorded in Greek), the most well-known of which is the Men Scryfa, but none are shaped in quite this way, nor does the inscription seem to make sense, unless the dots



represent missing letters. It is not the cross-head in the garden which is nearby (see Crosses feature on p.14), nor does it appear to be the cross-head that was supposedly thrown down the vicarage well although the present incumbent, the Rev. Leach told us that the well was drained a few years ago and not trace of a cross was found. It has been suggested that it could be the base of a cross shaft, but there is no known example of such a base being inscribed in this way. Any other ideas, theories or information on this mysterious stone would be most welcome. (CS)

WHERE IS THE THIRD PIPER?

The Missing Stones from the Merry Maidens area by Cheryl Traffon



Gün Rith



Holed Gatepost Stone

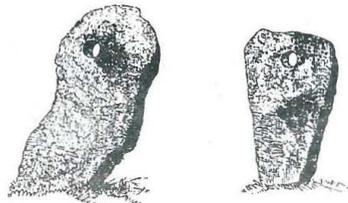
standing stones at Boscawen-Ros a few fields south of the Maidens, one re-erected in the field (4281 2394) and the other in the hedge (4277 2393).

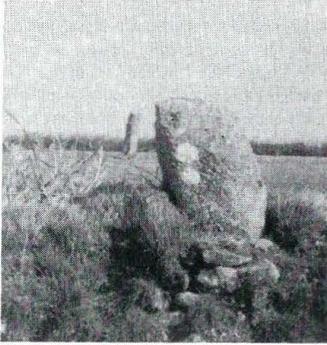
But there are also other stones in the area which we know of from earlier sources, but which are now missing, though in some cases they were there within living memory. Borlase (1754) has a plan of the area showing 3 holed stones, one of which is the gatepost stone already mentioned. The other two are located on his map in a lane (Rosemodress Lane) leading off the main road to the north of the circle. In an article by J.T. Blight (in *Archaeologia Cambriensis* Oct. 1864) on "The Holed Stones of Cornwall" two are illustrated (see below). The one on the left is the gatepost stone; the one on the right is described as blocking a gap in the hedge and its dimensions are given as 4'8" length, 2'9" diminishing to 10" breadth, 10" thick, with a 5½" diameter hole 7½" from the edge of



Ne Piper

The Merry Maidens stone circle (4327 2451) is one of the best known in West Penwith and Cornwall, being in a field visible from the B3315 road to Lands End and in an excellent condition, all its 19 stones still standing in a perfect circle (a couple had fallen when viewed by Borlase in 1754 but were restored in the C19th). Visible from the circle is Gün Rith standing stone (4294 2447) now in a hedge (recently cleared so it stands out). And not visible but a short distance away on the other side of the road are the two Pipers standing stones (NE 4355 2482 & SW 4348 2475). Beside the road near Gün Rith is Tregiffian Barrow (4304 2442) with its cupmarked stone (replica). There were also 2 more cup-marked stones, little known-about, "found loose" during the 1967 excavations, whose whereabouts is now unknown. The 1973 excavation report (*Archaeological Journal* Vol 130) indicates 2 decorated stones at the entrance. The only one now apparent is the one mentioned above, the original being in Truro museum, where it is incorrectly described as facing 'inwards'. There is one further cupmark on the topside of one of the roof covering stones. Opposite the Merry Maidens field there is a hold stone now used as a gatepost (4321 2457). Most of all this is apparent to the visitor to the circle: (s)he may also know about the Boleigh (Rosemerryn) fogou a short distance to the NE at 4370 2520, especially if they are readers of Meyn Mamvro! (see Jo May's article in No.3) And students of John Michell's 'Old Stones of Lands End' (1974) will also know of the 2

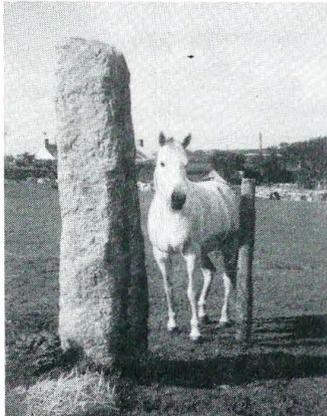




Boscawen - Ros 1 & 2



Boscawen - Ros 3



Rubbing Post Stone

The whereabouts of the second holed stone from Rosemodress Lane is unknown, though its location was that presumably given by Vivien Russell (West Penwith Survey, 1971) at 4352 2447 (St. Buryan 26) lying in the corner of the field by the lane. That too has disappeared, though there is half a holed stone lying on the ground at 4315 2450 on the opposite side of the road from the bottom of the Merry Maidens field (VR St.B 61). This however could possibly be a millstone or base of a cross shaft. Vivien Russell also lists **other holed stones** in the area including one at 4365 2489 (St.B 29) half missing in the wall of a mowhay near the Pipers, and one in the hedge of a field next to the road where it branches right to St. Buryan at 4277 2421 (St.B 60). Of this latter stone Vivien Russell has said (pers. comm. to me): "It was an irregularly shaped stone, maximum 44" x 43" x 12" thick. Hourglass hole, maximum diameter 9", not worn smooth. I saw this in November 1968 when perhaps the vegetation was less." The stone is not now apparent, though the hedge is well overgrown.

A couple of fields away from this hedge holed stone stand the Boscawen-Ross standing stones, the eastern one of which is now the only freestanding one. There may however be a **third Boscawen-Rôs stone** in the next field at 4260 2371. Listed by John Barnatt ('Prehistoric Cornwall', 1982) as a probable menhir (stone 30), Michell recounts that the farmer says it is modern: however farmers are not always to be trusted in these matters! Especially as the stone has been cut down to its existing height of 4ft, making it unlikely to have been a rubbing post. Barnatt also lists another **stone in a hedge** (stone 42) in a hedge near the Merry Maidens at 4343 2452. This is a 5½' stone and can still be viewed in situ. Another **stone** in the area given by Barnatt at 4383 2478 (stone 41), off a lane north of the Maidens, was 13' x 2'6" x 2', a goodly-sized stone. This was seen by Vivien Russell in 1959 and listed by her as St. Buryan menhir 15. She says (pers. comm.) that it was lying prostrate by the hedge, possibly on recent turf. It was much weathered, one end slightly rounded, the other square. What happened to it subsequently to this is not known, but interestingly enough a tall stone (about 8'-9' above ground) has recently been erected in the field opposite to the aforesaid stone's location (see photo.) The farmer's wife told me it had been found by her husband lying in the ground and erected as a rubbing post for their horses.

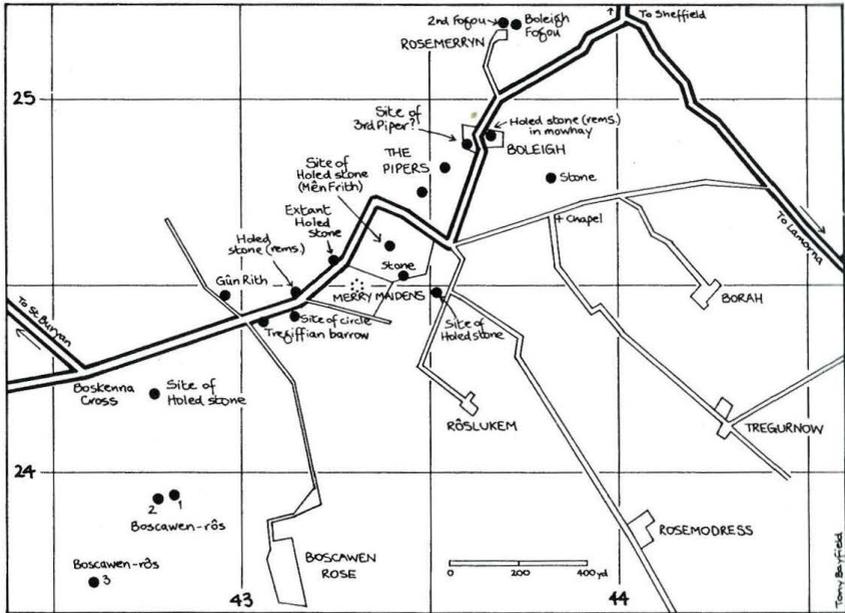
Perhaps this stone may have been the mythical **third Piper?** The two Pipers are well known, being the tallest menhirs in West Penwith at 15' (NE) & 13½' (SW) But a short piece in 'Old Cornwall' magazine of Winter 1939 (Vol. 3 No. 6) entitled "The Third Piper" By Ashley Rowe said that "a lady living in Penzance whose grandparents at one time lived at

Boleigh” had told him that there was a tradition in their family that there were at one time three Pipers. Rowe mentions that lying among the outbuildings of Boleigh farm is “another stone in direct line with the Pipers away from the circle”, the distance from the nearest Piper being “approximately the same as that between the two standing stones”, and suggests this may be the third Piper referred to. This stone was given by V. Russell (St. B 5) at approx. 4360 2490, but recent search has failed to find any trace. It was unknown by the farmer, but an old lady Mrs. Prowse living in Boleigh Cottage remembers Ashley Rowe’s research and his telling her of its existence, though she believes the third Piper was really Gûn Rith standing stone, already mentioned. (There is a large stone in the hedge behind her cottage incidentally, but that looks more like a capstone!) Vivien Russell herself doubts the veracity of the third Piper and she makes the point (pers. comm.) that “there would surely have been some reference to it by old writers if it had existed.” Nevertheless it remains a tantalising possibility, and if it did exist would perhaps have been, in Ashley Rowe’s words, “the remains of... an avenue or alignment leading to the Merry Maidens.”

Finally, two interesting possibilities. Firstly, a **second Boleigh fogou** at Rosemerryn at approx. 437252, 100ft. West of the existing one is mentioned by V. Russell (Fogous, St. B. 2). Traces of a structure there can still be seen, though Jo May thinks it was a storage pit. And secondly, we have the possibility of a second circle near to the Merry Maidens. This is the infamous **Boleigh circle** mentioned by Sir Norman Lockyer at 4314 2445 (“Stonehenge”, 1904). He was told of this by “a local antiquarian” who had heard it from “the oldest inhabitant”, who said it was “covered with furze and never shown to antiquarians”. Ultimately the field in which it stood was ploughed up and the stones removed. No trace of it or its stones have subsequently been seen, though a few years ago circular crop marks in the appropriate field were seen by someone living locally. A look at aerial photographs of the area has revealed two smaller circles enclosed within an oval shape at the revelant place, more likely to be the remains of a barrow than a stone circle. So Ian Cooke’s speculation (in ‘Journey to the Stones’, 1987) that there were originally 3 circles here is unlikely to be correct: there may have only ever been the one, the Merry Maidens itself, the jewel in the crown of an area rich in remains, but from where much has disappeared or frustratingly seems just out of reach - until, that is, someone tracks them down again!

*Aricle & photos (c) Cheryl Traffon Map - Tony Bayfield
Merry Maidens & Pipers Triptich Painting by local artist, Alex Smirnoff*





MERRY MAIDENS LEYS

- 1) Boskawaen-Ros hedge (west) stone (4277 2393) - Tumulus (4308 2428) - Merry Maidens circle (4327 2451) - Vanished Tumulus (4334 2459) - SW Piper (4348 2475). (A classic Michell ley)
- 2) Boskawaen-Ros field (east) stone (4281 2394) - Merry Maidens circle - NE Piper (4355 2482) - Sheffield standing stone (4585 2752) (Recently discovered by Michell)
- 3) Goon Rith (4294 2447) - Merry Maidens circle - stone in hedge (4343 2452) (This was originally postulated by Lockyer as giving an alignment to the Pleiades stars whose setting would have anticipated the May Day sunrise. The stone in hedge was subsequently discovered by Barnatt following the line)
- 4) Merry Maidens circle - Boleigh Fogou (4370 2520) (May Day sunrise line - Lockyer)
- 5) Merry Maidens circle - Vanished Boleigh circle (4314 2444) - Vanished Tumulus (4292 2435) (Imbolc/Samhain sunset line - Lockyer).
- 6) Merry Maidens circle - Tregiffian Barrow (4303 2442) - Boskenna Cross (4258 2426) - Boskenna Gate Cross (4203 2407).

GEIGER MONITORING

Readings were taken up to 400 yds east & west of stone circle. Background radiation averaged at 75 - 80 CPM. Stones in the circle read 90 - 110 CPM. Readings taken inside the circle dropped to a low of 60-65 CPM, a small but significant variation from background. Also tested were **Tregiffian Barrow** with a very high 160 - 180 CPM inside (there was an anomolous 90 - 100 CPM about 50 yds from the barrow, checked 3 times), and the **SW Piper** with a reading of 120 - 140 CPM, less that the barrow but more than individual stones in the Merry Maidens - it is of course much larger. Why there should be a lower reading inside the stone circle is not clear, unless the stones in the circle 'bounce' the radioactive emissions off each other around the perimeter and not into the interior of the circle area. But readings taken **between** the stones showed an average of 80 CPM, about the same as background and less than the individual stones themselves.

REE THO'D COAZ - Go to the woods

BY BARRY HEAFIELD

Barry Heafield is a lover of Cornwall - He has learnt the Cornish language and in a past-life regression found himself in "West Wales", speaking an early form of the language before it divided into Cornish & Welsh. He is an expert and sensitive dowser, and is also drawn strongly to trees and the Dryads who inhabit them.

TREES are something that there don't seem to be too many of in Kernow, which is a shame because I find those that there are have a very special magic about them. If you live in Kernow, you might not have noticed it, but a Cornish wood is very different to an English one.

I don't know why this should be so, but there seems a very close link between the Earth and the trees which is of a very ancient character in that they seem to reflect one another much more closely. That ancient spirit can be seen in the rich growths of moss, lichens and fungi that are everywhere - all over branches and trunks and the woodland floor, somehow making the trees part of the land and expressing its aged character much more.

But then, of course, Cornish people don't need to be told that Cornwall is different from the rest of the country. Certainly, a Cornish wood takes me back to a time long past when things were different. Maybe a quote from Merlin in Excalibur illustrates this well: "When bird and beast and man were one and death was but a dream!"

But these days, you might think it's impossible to retrieve what is lost, what has past and gone before. Not so! It is all there waiting for you and all it needs is the gift of your time and energy to give it life. Talking to the trees is one way in which you can reanimate this ancient spirit in this world of ours which grows more grey and chill by the day it seems.

Tree talking, as this special skill is called, is something you may have heard of before. Anyone who knows or has heard of Dusty Miller will know a bit about it, but to begin with it's a good idea to realise that trees as we see them have spirits or higher selves just as we do.

There are a number of differences between tree spirits, or Dryads as they prefer to be called, and ourselves. To start with, they are much older and wiser than

us. This is obvious simply from the fact that their incarnations last a lot longer than ours do - an oak can live for up to 1,000 years, a yew as long as 3,000 and most trees have lives two or three times the length of ours.

But it is also true, and not generally realised, that trees and nature spirits in general are in fact of a different level of creation and their existence did not begin with the creation of our own world, but in the creation of another many millions of years before ours. So, on the whole, it is perhaps very good that they are of a benign and friendly nature, even despite the terrible way most people hack them about and mistreat them generally.

It goes without saying, therefore, that immense respect should be shown them, though they respond very well to love and kindness and are a real joy to know, being full of life and love themselves. They seem very happy and jolly characters and will impart to you a beautiful peace which will make you feel very at one with the woodland if you take the trouble to try and communicate.

Another difference is that a Dryad will usually have more than one tree in the wild, and a largish wood with several hundred trees may only have a few Dryads. Each Dryad of one particular type will have a number of trees of that one sort. So you will get maybe one or two ash Dryads which have all the ash trees as their physical bodies, one Dryad for all the yews and so on. It is not uncommon for Dryads to be several miles across and a mile high.

However, Dryads of different types can live quite comfortably in the same space because they have different vibrational rates which allow them to mix in as it were without overcrowding.



In a Cornish Grove there stands a stone watched over by the Dryads.

The only places where they do get overcrowded is in Forestry Commission conifer plantations where lots of Dryads all of the same type are put closely together. This accounts for the dark and gloomy feel of such places and maybe why nothing else but a few ferns will grow in them.

Finally, Dryads do not have sexes as we do - they are always neuter and can properly be referred to as 'it'. Although the actual trees themselves have male and female parts, the Dryads can reproduce themselves by cloning, much in the same way as an amoeba, just by splitting up and the part that has split off is in no way a 'child' but has the same power, wisdom and abilities as the parent Dryad.

So, how to talk to a tree. To begin with, it's a good idea to calm yourself down by taking a few deep breaths, especially if you've been walking to find a good one in a wood which is nice, large and healthy looking.

Approach the tree peacefully and if you want to try and visualise the Dryad, see it as a sort of large balloon encompassing the tree and any others of the same sort nearby. Place the palms of your hands on the tree trunk at about shoulder height and look up into the swaying branches, allowing the tree's peaceful nature to overcome you.

Now close your eyes and rest your forehead against the tree and try to keep your mind free from outside niggles and worries. Allow yourself to be sensitive and don't resist any feelings or impressions which come to you. To start things off, you might say a few words of greeting - "hello" is usually a good one, you

know! Seriously, speak quietly to the Dryad and explain what you are trying to do and that you mean no harm.

You will almost certainly feel some response - most of them will be friendly once they know what you're about. Often they show me images and beautiful pictures - always in full technicolour - of woodland scenes and paths that I've never seen before and by the time I've followed it to the end, I have become completely at one with the tree and the whole wood.

At this point, you might feel you want to hug the tree and feel a strong, wonderfully peaceful, magnetism pulling you towards it. This experience will teach you such a lot about the woods and their life which so many people just don't understand anymore, living city lives cut off from nature as they do.

When you have finished, thank the tree spirit and give it an extra hug. Probably, you will realise that you have a whole lot of new friends in the wood. An extra point about Dryads is their ability to communicate with one another almost instantly over vast physical distances in any or all directions at once. This is why the ancients knew them as "the many eyed ones", because they seem to know what's going off in every direction at once.

So if one tree spirit knows how kind you have been, you can bet they all will in the wood. Like anything, of course, tree talking needs practice and it is always a case of 'if at first you don't succeed, try again.' If one tree proves uncommunicative, try another or another species. Do not expect instant results, but take time and make the effort to tune yourself in and become sensitive and you will surely be rewarded for your efforts.

But besides this, our world as a whole benefits from such communications, just as a grey and dreary day does when the Sun comes out. By talking to the trees, you will be parting the clouds which have hung over us too long and letting in a shaft of golden Sunlight. And every person who talks to the trees is one less who will chop down the one at the bottom of their garden.

We all know we are dependant on trees to give us oxygen, but those who think we live on money hack them down relentlessly to fill their bank accounts with meaningless figures.

Once upon a time, everyone knew about Dryads and most wooden items were made of live wood - that is wood with its own separate Dryad, which can take any form or shape and size. Tool handles, buttons, staffs and so on - all of these can still be made of live wood which gives the human a friendly, helpful nature spirit to carry around and gives the Dryad something they do not naturally have - mobility.

A Dryad friendly to you will look after you and help you in what ever work you are doing, making sure you don't make mistakes and protecting you from harm, either physically or spiritual. Various Dryads can perform various functions - everyday tools and items, lucky charms, psychic shields, wands, walking sticks and staffs. Whatever their size or the size of the wooden item they are attached to, their powers remain constant.

They work in co-operation with your own spirit or higher self. But of course, to make them requires friendship and co-operation with the trees in the first place. When you have become good friends with a Dryad in the wild, it may offer you a piece of itself in some way for magical use perhaps. When you cut the wood off, a subdivision of the Dryad will remain with the wood, while the rest stays with the tree. The piece you will then have will have its own personal Dryad.

This is now known as 'live wood'. Normally, a Dryad will know when someone is going to cut a piece of its tree off and will remove its spirit or life force in advance so that only dead wood will be cut. Only if you ask will you get live wood which does feel very beautiful and distinctive and has many powers which it has developed over its thousands of years in existence. Again, though, friendship and trust must build up.

All of this brings me back to that quote from Merlin at the beginning; which you might now understand better. We can and must become one with our world again and here you have one good way to start.

Article (c) Barry Heafield. Photo (c) Cheryl Traffon



GUIDE TO THE CROSSES OF WEST PENWITH

Compiled by Su French & Tony Bayfield

The symbol of the cross has been used by all cultures for thousands of years. It represents countless images, both Christian and Pagan, obvious ones being a sun symbol, when contained in a circle, and also the Cardinal Points of North, East, South and West. It is said, in the language of symbolism to represent the crossroads, not only as a meeting and parting of the ways, but also as magical and dangerous places where opposite forces meet. In ancient times, Janus, with two heads looking both ways was worshipped as God of thresholds and crossroads.

Most of the stone crosses in West Cornwall mark ancient crossroads, trackways and boundaries and it was believed by J.T. Blight that many of these wayside crosses were set up on sites "previously sacred to Duidic Ceremonies". It seems to have been a common practice of the early Christians to take over the ancient sites and festivals and adapt them to their own religion in order to woo the Pagans away from their older forms of worship.

Here is a selection from over 100 crosses still standing in West Cornwall. We will leave you to make up your own mind about how ancient they feel!

NUN CAREG 43302460 BOLEIGH. 100 yards North of Merry Maidens stone circle, a wayside cross with round head and a relief Latin cross on both sides, extending down the shaft. The name Nûn Careg means Downland Rock.

PENZANCE MARKET CROSS 47043003. PENZANCE. The old cross from Greenmarket in Penzance, which was removed in 1829, now stands alongside Penlee House. The shaft is decorated, with an inscription near the base.



TREMBATH CROSS 44902915 BURYAS BRIDGE. Found on the A30, between Newlyn turn and Buryas Bridge. The decoration includes two double-armed crosses, or labrys, the double headed axe, characteristic of Cretan mysteries.



BOSKENNA CROSS 42582426 ST. BURYAN TURN. At the junction of B3315 to St. Buryan is an ancient croshead mounted on a millstone and cider-press. This cross was found built into the hedge opposite, but now possibly stand on its original site. It is midway on an alignment from Merry maidens to Boskenna Gate Cross, crossing Tregiffian Barrow.

BOSKENNA GATE CROSS 42032407. Slightly West of the entrance to the Boskenna Estate, stand a cross marking the old church path to St. Buryan, also on which can be found another cross, very worn, in a hedge alongside the path. 41942418.



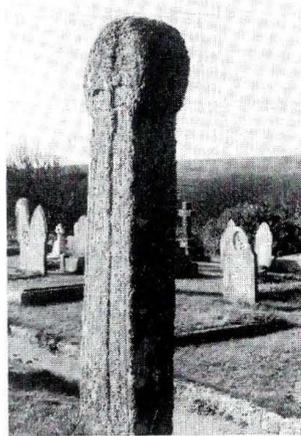
VELLANSAGA 42532584 ST. BURYAN. On the road from Lamorna Gate, east of St. Buryan, stands Vellansaga Cross, close to the site of an ancient chapel. A cottage now stand behind the cross in this lovely wooded setting.



ST. BURYAN CHURCHTOWN 40912569. This cross is set high on a built-up base, outside the church gate, having been removed from the churchyard. Above a short shaft, the worn crosshead has a figure on both sides.

ST. BURYAN CHURCHYARD CROSS 40922570. This churchyard cross, mounted on a large stepped base is well preserved. It is a four-holed crosshead, with a Christ figure on the front and five bosses on the back, said to represent the five wounds of Christ.

ALSIA CROSS 39672514 ST. BURYAN. Alsia Cross can be found in the undergrowth amongst trees, opposite the turn to Higher Alsia Farm. Now covered in moss, this large, round-headed cross on a short shaft, has a Latin cross in relief, on its face.



ST. LEVAN CHURCHYARD CROSSES 38042220. A tall decorated cross with a beaded head and shaft stands near the church door. The shaft incorporates an incised design and the head shows a figure on the front and Latin cross on the reverse.

Also in the churchyard is a crosshead mounted above an unusual stile, to the N.E. of the church.

ROSPLETHA CROSS 38202233 ST. LEVAN. On the path running from the Church stile cross to Rospletha is a round-head cross, mounted on a stone base. This falls on an alignment with Trevorgans Standing Stone, North West of St. Buryan and Boscawen-un circle.

ARDENSAWAH CROSS 37792234 ST. LEVAN. From St. Levan's Church, leading North West to Ardensawah, a round headed cross is set into the hedge alongside a low stile. Now almost obscured by brambles this cross probably once marked an old Church path.

TREBEHOR 37652431 ST. LEVAN. A small very worn round crosshead is mounted on a wall beside a stile at Trebehor, having been removed 80 years ago from its original position on the farm.

TREVILLEY CROSS 35692466 SENNEN. On a path from Trevilly to Sennen a cross shaft stands to the East of the hedge, on top of which was found a fine broken cross head, with a relief figure on the face.

TREVE CROSS 35642517 SENNEN. On the road from Lands End to Sennen, set against the hedge is the cross originally from Trevescan.

SENNEN CHURCHYARD CROSSES 35702551. A cross with a tall shaft stands near the North gate to the Churchyard. A sculptured Latin cross extends down the shaft on both front and back. There is also an unusual crosshead mounted by the South gate to the Churchyard. This crosshead is formerly from Treve.



SENNEN GREEN CROSS 36072566 SENNEN. Taking a footpath from the cemetery behind Sennen Churchyard, over two stiles into an enlarged field and walking with the Churchtower of St. Buryan ahead, you will find the preserved remains of a hedge and old stile in the centre of the field. The Churchpath Cross, originally known as Maen Cross is to be found set into this hedge.

BREW CROSS 36482573 SENNEN. This long shafted Latin cross appears to have been recently erected in the centre of a field on the road to Brew.



CROWS-AN-WRA 39552761. Standing beside a decorative milestone is the cross from which the village takes its name, Cross of the Witch.* There is another cross, Trevorgans Cross which is found ¼ mile to the East of the village.

BRANE CROSS 40902877 SANCREED. On an old Churchpath, leading from Brane to Sancreed is found a tall, roughly-hewn cross, once marking the boundary of the Boswarthen and Brane estates. It falls on an alignment between the tumuli and Homestead near Botrea, Boscawen-Un Circle, and the Trevorrian and Boskenna Gate Crosses.



SANCREED CHURCHYARD CROSSES 42032934. There are two elaborate crosses set on tall decorative shafts with incised geometric designs close to the church door. On the churchyard hedge, near the front gate is a cross head originally from Anjarden. A broken cross head from Trannack is set on the hedge by the side entrance, whilst inside the churchyard, against a dividing wall alongside the steps, can be found the cross from Sellan.



ST. JUST CROSSES 37133142. Originally sited outside the churchyard and now mounted on a base inside the churchyard wall is St. Just Market Cross, with a relief figure on its face and Latin Cross on the reverse.

Leaning against the Church Porch on the ground is a round cross-head formerly from Grouse, whilst inside the Church is the Selus Stone, inscribed with the Chi-Rho monogram and the words 'SELUS-IC-IACET' Here lies Selus.

In the vicarage garden is another round-head cross with a short shaft and an inscribed Latin design. 35233185 Near Cape Cornwall lies the ruin of St. Helen's Oratory on the top of which is cemented a small stone cross, recently unearthed from nearby. The original cross from St. Helen's Oratory, and bearing the ancient Chi-Rho symbol is believed to have been cast down the Vicarage well, and never recovered.

MADRON CHURCHYARD 45323180. There are two crosses in the churchyard, one near a wall, and another more interesting but possibly a later example is set against the edge of the path.

BOSWARTHEN CROSS 44513253 MADRON. On the road from Madron well to Boswarthen farm is found a well-preserved roundhead cross, unfortunately broken but remounted on its shaft.

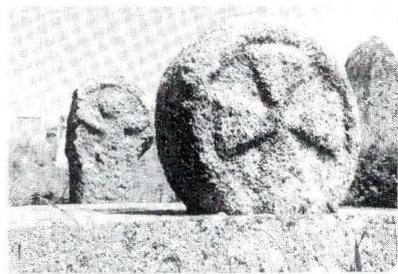
References: Granite Crosses of West Penwith, Laura Rowe/ Belerion, Craig Weathermill, Alison Hodge/ Old Stones of Lands End, John Michell, Garnstone Press/ Journey to the Stones, Ian Cooke, Men-an-Tol/ Ancient Crosses of West Cornwall, J.T. Blight, London 1856/ West Penwith Survey, V. Russell, Cornish Archaeological Society/ Old Cornish Crosses, Arthur Langdon, 1896.

TREMETHICK CROSS 44843013. The cross known as Tremethick cross is set high on the hedge behind the signpost to Tregavarah, and marks the remains of an ancient barrow. This latin cross with short arms originally came from Rose-an-Beagle, near Paul.

TRENGWAINTON CARN 44053219 MADRON. Beside a track which leads to Trengwainton Carn is a much neglected round-head cross on its original stone base. It falls on an alignment between Carfury and Tresvennack standing stones.

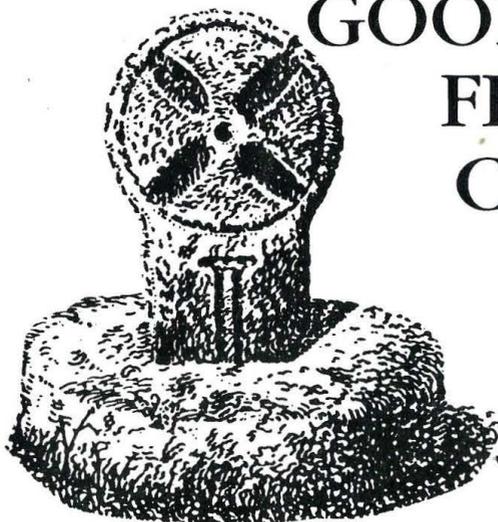
ZENNOR CHURCHTOWN CROSS 45443850. Supposed to have been the Churchtown cross, this is now used as a lintel above a back door to the Tinnars Arms.

TREVEGA CROSS 45463850 ZENNOR. A cross with a short shaft stands near the entrance to Zennor Churchyard, and is said to have originally come from Trevega.



TREWEY and TREGERTHEN CROSSES 45473852 ZENNOR. The cross originally from Trewey and having stood in the vicarage garden at Zennor, now marks the East end of the Borlase Grave, in Zennor churchyard. On the West End is the crosshead formerly from Tregertthen.

★ *Connected with the cross at Crows-an-Wra is the story of Harry the Hermit. See page 68 of Belerion by Craig Weatherhill*



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CORNWALL BOOKS



THE CELTIC YEAR

BY IAN COOKE AND CHERYL STRAFFON

Ian Cooke is author of the book "Journey to the Stones" (Men-an-Tol Studio, 1987) reviewed in Meyn Mamvro No.3, and has recently brought out a revised and updated guide to the Men-an-Tol and nearby ancient sites (£1.50). Cheryl Straffon is editress of the magazine.

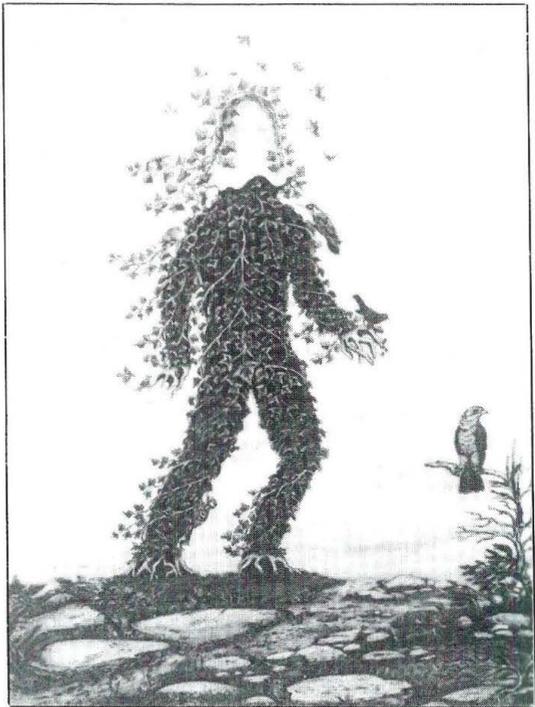
The Celtic year was marked with 4 great festivals. The calendar began with Samhain (or Sauwain) on Nov. 1st, the Celtic new year, when cattle were brought down to shelter, and was followed by Imbolc (or Oimelc) on Feb. 1st, the time for the lactation of ewes, Beltane on May 1st, the beginning of Spring, and Lughnasadh on August 1st, the beginning of the gathering in of the harvest. As may be seen, these festivals are predominantly pastoral, and were celebrated by a people to whom the fertility of the land was a matter of life and death for the tribe. They were later Christianised and secularised into All-Hallows Eve (Hallowean), Candlemas, May Day and Lammastide, but their meaning originates in the joining together of the fortunes of earth to the forces of the heavens. Let's take each festival in turn.

Samhain was the period of dominant feminine activity and the time of utmost danger as Mother Earth coped with the stresses of death and destruction, and prepared for Her annual renewal in the springtime. Her body lay bare lashed by rain and tortured by icy winds, covered only by decay and the stark black skeletons of trees silhouetted against the clear cold moonlit skies. Sometimes She would be caressed by gently falling snow which softened Her bony outline with the white 'quartz' of the Moon Goddess watching from above. The negative forces at this dramatic time of year had to be appeased and overcome so that the fertility of the coming year might be ensured. Samhain - the time for rest and thanksgiving for the good things of the past year - was probably celebrated at the time of the full moon, symbolising the completion of the waxing growing time of the year; and as at all 'turning points' the barriers between natural and supernatural, the living and the dead, became blurred and uncertain. Deceased ancestral spirits returning from the Underworld to become visible and terrifying reminders of the powers of the dead, and woe betide those descendants

who had failed in their duties towards them. As well as being an awesome and apprehensive period it was also one of hope. During the winter the Sun would be resurrected to become once more the divine consort to Mother Earth, and the daylight hours would slowly begin to lengthen even though they might be colder. Fire formed an essential ingredient of all major festivals and was in itself a magical force of destruction and fertility, lying 'hidden' in wood or flint until brought out by friction, when it would then appear as a spark at the point of contact or 'division'. Great sacrificial fires were lit on sacred hilltops from which all previously extinguished domestic fires were relit. These sacrificial fires were politically transformed into Guy Fawkes Night on November 5th in the C17th.

Samhain is thus the time of the Lord of Death when the spirits of the dead move freely among the living and the barriers between the natural and supernatural world are temporarily broken down. It is also a time of the mysterious side of the Goddess - the Dark Mother who lies dormant awaiting her reawakening in the Spring. She is the Crone, the third aspect of the Goddess, bearer of the wisdom of the Earth. Distant memories of Samhain can be found in the feastday of St. Just on the nearest Monday to 31st October. Although now entirely lacking in custom, once children and adults used to take apples to bed with them for divination purposes to dream of their future lovers, a distant folk memory of the thin veil that the Celts felt separated this world from the other world at that time. Sometimes a small piece of pastry or cakes used to be left outside the door at night as a gift for the dead ancestors.

The next festival after Samhain was the commencement of the spring season at **Imbolc** towards the end of January, and which lasted until the end of April. All the signs of the renewal of nature were apparent as young life in the vegetable and animal worlds made a hesitant appearance in the still harsh environment. The balance of the winter half of the year was being tipped towards summer and after the vernal equinox the daylight hours overcame the hours of darkness - the masculine energies of the sun had begun to take over from the feminine powers of the moon. Imbolc represents the growth aspect of the Goddess - a time of the approaching resurrection of the Earth's mantle of life - when sacred waters assumed extra importance as a vehicle of fertility. Imbolc is thus associated with divination and healing at wells, and is often dedicated to Brigid or Bride, Goddess of fertility and inspiration. It is a time of "the quickening of the year, the first foetal stirrings of Spring in the womb of Mother Earth", and is a propitious time for the healing of our Earth. St. Ives Feast takes place at this time, and its fertility aspect is emphasised in the custom there of people dressing up in Green Man costumes and clothes. A painting by Cornish artist Penny Harris perfectly captures this Green Man idea.



As Spring turns decisively into Summer with a colourful and prolific display of blossom and flowres all over the land, so did the winter half of the year change to the growing waxing seasonal half-year inaugurated by the joyous festival of **Beltane** - the 'Fire of the Shining One' - at the start of May. It was a celebration of the survival of winter and the explosion of the new life begun in the spring which would not be firmly established until the beginning of summer; it was probably celebrated at the time of the rising horned moon symbolising fertility and sexual energy. The tender and vulnerable new growth had to be nurtured through the coming months of summer of eventual maturity in the autumn. During Beltane the sacred waters of Mother Earth were particularly beneficial at Her Holy Well 'openings', and hilltop fires were lit throughout the land for the purification and protection of humans and cattle alike. The May Queen, ruler of woman's reproductive cycle, was crowned with the blossoms of the sacred five-petalled hawthorn, and the Maypole formed a colourful decorated phallic symbol around which ritual dances and promiscuous celebrations, so vital in the sympathetic magic of Beltane, could be performed. This was one of the few times, if not the only time, when the strict sexual code imposed by the patriarchal family on their wives could be broken with impunity, and was a survival from earlier forms of Beltane. A few watered-down aspects of this great pagan fertility festival still continue in the form of Morris and Maypole dances, the 'Obby 'Oss and the Flora Dance. The 'Obby 'Oss still has powerful pagan overtones of the death and rebirth of life, as the Oss symbolically dies and is teased back into life, and the music has a primeval throbbing feel to it as the crowds sing of the unity of all life:

"Unite and unite and let us all unite,
For Summer is acome unto day,
And whither we are going we will all unite
In the merry morning of May."



This is the festival of Bel, the Celtic god of fire and light (see Alan Bleakley's article in Meyn Mamvro No.2), and symbolises the return of life and fertility.

The final moon festival in the round of seasonal celebrations was that which began autumn at the start of August. This was **Lugnasadh**, which was essentially a harvest festival and a time for the contemplation of the coming death of nature, when the air was heavy and expectant, a time of tension when all was in the balance. As the matured golden crops were cut down by the 'crescent moon' sickle so did the Corn God fall back into the ground and renew its vitality through the shedding of his own blood. This led to the symbolism of the Crying of the Neck (see Jan Gendall's article in Meyn Mamvro No.4) in which the spirit of the harvest is found in the last sheaf of corn. But the spirit of the harvest was originally a God, a very powerful god, Lugh, who undergoes death and rebirth at this time in a sacrificial mating with the Goddess in her Earth Mother aspect. Lugh is thus represented by the Corn King whose death at the hands of the 'grim reaper' is the signal for the first stirrings from the earth of the Holly King, the Lord of the Waning Year, who will reach his apotheosis at the winter solstice (Yule). This is shown on p.19 in a local group's symbolic enactment of the death of the Corn King at Bosporthennis in West Penwith, a place where as recently as the late C19th a "giant figure" ascended the hill and "did there perform some magic rites which were neither never known or they have been forgotten." This giant, Jack the Tinker, was part of the

festivities marking Morvah Fair on the first Sunday in August, “a popular assembly bearing marked traces of the pagan festival (of Lughnasadh)”² during which Jack delivered the locality from the oppression of a grim rival, a clear reference to the original Lughnasadh motif of Lugh’s rivalry with the god Crom Cruach from whom he wrests power. “It would seem that the god Lugh, who established the fair, still participates in it as the all-skilful supernatural hero Jack the Tinkard.”³ Tolstoy in “The Quest for Merlin”² also points out that an episode in the life of Saint Sampson in the 7th AD (which has the Saint remonstrating with some Cornish men at Trigg who were worshipping a stone idol there) is a Lughnasadh event, a fascinating glimpse of the late retention of pagan practice still flourishing openly in Christian Cornwall.



Thus the year’s great Celtic cycle was complete as Lughnasadh marked the beginning of the descent into the dark days of Winter. The longest day was past, so it was both a celebration of what Mother Earth was providing in the Summer harvest, and an awareness of the coming half of the year. But the Celtic year may have even older antecedents: it surely cannot be coincidence that many stone circles and standing stones have sunrise and sunset alignments on precisely these same quarter days. In West Penwith alone there is an Imbolc alignment at the Pipers stones, an Imbolc sunset/Samhain sunrise alignment at Boscawen-un circle (see MM No.4), as well as Beltane alignment to the Pleides stars, announcing the May Day sunrise there, various Lughnasadh and May Day alignments at the Merry Maidens and a May Day line at Tregeseal circle (see MM No.1). Perhaps then, not only were these days important for the Celts but also for their Neolithic ancestors 2000-3000 years before who were aware of the same cycle of death and rebirth in the life of men and women, Mother Earth, and the God of the Sun.

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- 1 — ‘Eight Sabbats for Witches’ - Janet & Stewart Farrar (Hale, 1981)
- 2 — ‘The Quest for Merlin’ - Nikolai Tolstoy (Hamish Hamilton, 1985)
- 3 — ‘A Travellers Guide to Celtic Britain’ - Anne Ross (RKP, 1985)

Article (c) Ian Cooke and Cheryl Straffon. Parts of this article have appeared in ‘Journey to the Stones’. Painting (c) Penny Harris. Photos (c) Cheryl Straffon. An engraving by Ian Cooke illustrating the cycles of the moon is reproduced on the back page.

MIDSUMMER RITUAL

At the time of publication of this edition of Meyn Mamvro - Summer Solstice 1988 - a Midsummer Ritual was due to take place at the Men-an-Tol. Although local pagan groups do perform rituals at the festivals at ancient sites in W. Penwith, these are normally of a closed or private nature. This one is an “open” ritual, being publicised by the organisers Kevin & Ingrid Carlyon of Sussex, welcoming all who wish to join in celebrating the solstice, although they have limited the numbers “so as not to desecrate the site or cause upheaval to local people”. They add that they are “white witches who believe in a neutral force that can be tuned into by positive thought or wishing.” The ritual is a sunrise and sunset one on the Solstice itself - Tuesday June 21st - and anyone interested in this or other future ‘open’ rituals in West Cornwall are invited to contact the Carlyons at Flat 1, 79 - 81 London Road, Bexhill on Sea, East Sussex, TN37 6AN enclosing a SAE. What with this and at least one other local pagan group regularly using the sites, W. Penwith is becoming a focal centre for the new pagan awareness!

ANCIENT DREAM by AEOLIAN SONGSPELL

I must admit to a personal involvement with this cassette. Aeolian Songspell are a couple of musicians Michael Woolf and Rachel Garcia who are also Meyn Mamvro readers (they wrote the article on 'Sunset at the Blind Fiddle') in MM 4. Now they have produced a professional cassette of 8 songs which were originally written for a local pagan group in West Penwith to use to celebrate a year of pagan festivals. The songs were the result of a unique interaction between the ritual itself as conceived and enacted by the group and Aeolian Songspell who used the ritual material as a basis for their own very special and individual response to the festivals. The process was completed by interlacing and interweaving of the individual songs into the ritual itself when it was performed: a complete cycle of creative response to the wheel of the year. They are like no other songs I have ever heard before - it is as if they come from deep in the Earth herself and Songspell are but the vehicle for transmitting them to us. But an extremely talented and professional vehicle nevertheless: their voices blend with guitars, African drums, flutes, sitar, miniharp, laud, mandoline and harpsichord in a multi-track synthesis that is at once tender and subtle as well as powerful and perceptive - it is like listening to the spirit that is in all of us and catching glimpses of the essence of life itself. Once heard, it is music that is never forgotten and words that stay with you for ever, sending reverberations from deep inside yourself. It is precious material that you both want to keep personally for yourself and to share with the world.

The tape starts, appropriately enough, at the beginning of the Celtic year with the song for Samhain - **Draw Back the Veil**. This is a haunting, shape-shifting sort of a song, the verses calling to the "lost ones who walk in our dreams" and to the "Lord of the Shadows, come weave us your will" interlinked with the refrain to the Earth Mother: "Mother I see you, Mother I hear you, Mother I feel you." It captures the "formless, timeless and free" mood of Samhain perfectly. From the "Lord of Death stalking every corner" we move to **Light**, the song for the Winter Solstice. This song falls into two distinct parts, reflecting the movement from darkness to light on the shortest day. In the first half the quiet, almost menacing song tells of "the Goddess crying as the starchild stirs within", and "the Yule log blazing high upon the hill", and then it bursts into light in the middle as the "earth is reborn with the light that has found her". The song finishes on an upbeat note looking forward to "the seeds that are greening", and "strong grows the oak from the holly, as the earthyear turns and wakes the newborn one". This theme is picked up in the song for **Imbolc**, a pretty bubbly sort of a song whose chorus echoes round and around - "Imbolc, Imbolc, the season of rebirth, feel the infant stirring in the waters of the earth, Imbolc, Imbolc, the light will soon return, warm the earth this winter night, let the candle burn," Imbolc is also a time of mystery and the song captures this well with Lucy, the child of light dreaming of a feast of flames after midnight. **Changes in the Air**, the song for the Spring Equinox, is perhaps the catchiest on the tape, reflecting the strengthening of the year. We leave the path of the Dark Lord of Winter, the balance sways, and the sun brings changes, seen in the greening of the year. "Plant now the seed for the tree of tomorrow" sing Songspell, "from the egg grows the sound of the earthsong", and their earthsong is full of hope and promise, new joy, and delight in the "circle turning for the birth of changes."

The second side opens with **Beltane** where we "see Pan the piper, dancing in the greenwood dawn" and "hear Herne the Hunter's thunder at the call of a ram's horn." This piece has an appropriately old medieval feel to it, with the maypole dance chant at the end more frenzied and anarchic: "Come with pipe and come with horn, chase the maidens through the thorn, none shall now be seen till dawn, conjuring the Summer!" A 100 year old mandoline accompanies this fertility song as it builds into a climax of roused dancing and coupling. The zenith of the years cycle is reached with the **Hour of the Summer Solstice**, a vibrant restless fast-moving song, redolent of the pulsing power of the sun, dragon lines across the earth coming alive, horned hunter thundering the ground, and dancing twelve times round the stones. The sleepers awake in this song as it gallops across the highspot of the year. The title of the album **Ancient Dream** is also the song for Lughnasad, a wonderful dancing song that goes round and around the summer maze "waking the earth from her dreams below". A song to take you right into the Earth herself and to "open your eyes to the ancient dream, for nothing this day will be as it seems." A song that circles and enfolds you for, after all, "all that we are is an ancient dream, born on the wheel of the seasons green." And so, finally to **Season of Repose**, the song for the Autumn Equinox, as we sink gently into a poetic and reflective mood - "The Goddess bids her love farewell, the sun fades from the sky, Alone within the hollow hills, she sleeps but never dies." And we are at an end, an end that is also a beginning, for the cycle keeps turning and the wheel of the year begins again. A tape to treasure for ever!

(Reviewed by Cheryl Traffon. Lyrics by Mike Woolf, quoted with permission. All lyrics to the songs are included with the tape itself. Published 1988).

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ANCIENT DREAM is now generally available and retails at £5.95. But as a special offer to readers we have a limited number of tapes available at only £4.75 including postage and packing. Please make cheques/PO's out to Rachel Garcia and send direct to 21 Cremorne Road, Chelsea, London SW10 0NB.

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ITHELL COLQUHOUN - A TRIBUTE

Ithell Colquhoun, born Assam India October 9th 1906, died Lamorna in West Cornwall on April 11th 1988. She was a national figure of the Surrealist movement and received obituaries from The Times and The Guardian. Here Jo O'Cleirigh writes for MEYN MAMVRO of her pagan aspects.

Abler pens than mine shall write of Ithell Colquhoun as Surrealist Artist. Here, I shall simply provide a glimpse of her pagan connections.

These took the form of her involvement with the Golden Dawn Movement, which she details in her well researched and scholarly book SWORD OF WISDOM, MACGREGOR MATHERS AND THE GOLDEN DAWN, and, with her animistic feel for the natural world especially of the stones, wells, trees, wild plants and the sea, and her interest in Celtic traditions.

Her paganism is beautifully expressed in her marvellous book THE LIVING STONES, CORNWALL, which I told her once, actually led me to come and live in Lamorna Valley. She wrote it while living in the small corrugated iron and wooden hut which still survives (though falling into disrepair) in Lamorna, and which she named 'Vow Cave Studio'. Also, in her evocative poems as in the booklet GRIMOIRE OF THE ENTANGLED THICKET, based on the Celtic Tree Alphabet.

She met many people involved in Pagan ways, including Gerald Gardner (the father of the Wiccan Revival) and Doreen Valiente, but she never joined the "Craft". She did belong to a magical fraternity, and her interests in this line gave her a strong feeling for Ancient Egypt. Some years ago, she took a 600 mile Cruise up the Nile, visiting many of the great temples and sacred sites. My own annual expeditions to Egypt were the topic of many teatime chats extending sometimes aided with a few glasses of wine into the evening, as she liked to keep up on current developments in Egyptology, and hear tales of Egypt.

Long after her earlier visits to Ireland, recorded in THE CRYING OF THE WIND, she crossed the Irish Sea again and, at Clonegal Castle, Enniscorthy was initiated as a Priestess of the fellowship of Isis. She was also a member of the Breton Gorsedd.

In the early 80's she wrote articles and poems for the Pagan magazine WOOD AND WATER, and Lamorna features in her Gothic novel GOOSE OF HERMOGENES.

Pagan still feel they are such minority and yet Ithell was a lot more isolated than we are now. She often expressed her frustration to me at finding so few people over the years in Cornwall, who shared her feelings. She did though, take part in one beautiful rite we held some years ago in Lamorna.

Sadly, the recent resurgence of interest in seasonal pagan celebrations in W. Penwith, a study group of PAN-PAGAN SCHOOL and MEYN MAMVRO itself, all came too late for her participation; she was already ensconced in a home for the aged.

Yet, in this last year of her life, cut off from most contacts by feeling too unwell to correspond, and far from magical fraternities, the Goddess sent to Ithell a comfortee, a young female follower of the way of the Golden Dawn, who made frequent visits and with whom she could converse on matters of mutual interest, and look into the future.....

Two weeks before she died, we visited Ithell for the last time and talked long about the return of the Old Ways in Cornwall, in which she took a keen interest. That day, she tried hard to keep us beyond our time.....

And now, "She has directed her eyes to the West," and passed to Amenti, to Tir-nan og and the Apple Orchard. "May she live forever!"

".....forgive me that I forgot your timely libation!
I was drinking from a golden bowl of light
I was bathing in a diamond spray of sea—

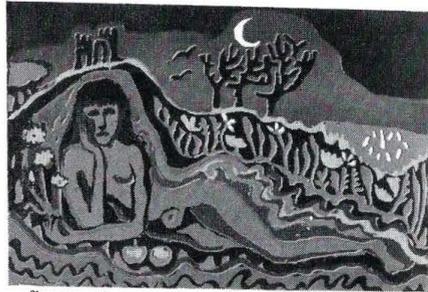
Do not strike with your lightning-rod but stand
Robust, a wand enduring in my hand."

Spirit of West Penwith

by ITHELL COLQUHOUN
(from 'The Living Stones')

The molecular dance of the particles composing an azure sky are best seen over Penwith's moors—as once the circulation of atoms became visible to me in the nursery-door like dazzling sap that streamed through wood long since dry. Many have remarked on the strange light which bathes this peninsula; they say it is reflected from the seas which almost surround it upon the low-sailing clouds above. The same appearance, but intensified, illuminates the Scillies; but Penwith has shade as well as light. In Lamorna I first saw the falling of dew; and it was at Penberth that the shifting of the landscape-veil first presented itself to my clear-sight disclosing—what? Later I was told that it was in this tiny cove that the remnant of the Atlanteans, escaping from cataclysm, first landed, bringing with them primrose and convolvulus, poppy and furze. Ask one of the fishermen to take you in his boat and you can pick out, if you look back landward, the plummet-sign with which they sealed the cliffs.

You get more sun here than in Wales or Scotland or Ireland: of eighteen parishes in West Cornwall, twelve have feasts or fairs on dates of ancient sun-worship. It is as far south as you can easily get. In summer, the gardens of Penzance



flaunt the sweet-smelling pink tassels of dracaenas of 'dragon-trees'; and the leaves of the gunnera, a plant imported from South America, spread sometimes to a span of six feet, hiding in sheltered hollows reddish toothed stems like a ferocious rhubarb, and sticky cones of bloom. Violets are cultivated for market out of doors all winter, and anemones for a good part of it. But it is the clumps of bamboo smelling of the damp of eastern fabrics from a trunk just opened which always make me stand still.

Valley of streams and moon-leaves, wet scents and all that cries with the owl's voice, all that flies with a bat's wing, peace! Influences, essences, presences, whatever is here—in my name of a stream in a valley, I salute you; I share this place with you. Stirrings of life, expanding spores, limbo of germination, for all you give me, I offer thanks. O rooted here without time, I bathe in you; genius of the fern-loved gully, do not molest me; and may you remain for ever unmolested.

BOOK REVIEW

The Healing Wells Cornish Cults and Customs - P.O. Leggatt & D.V. Leggatt (Dyllansow Truran, 1988 £3.95).

New books on Cornish wells seem to be coming more prolifically than the flowers in May! Hot on the heels of Paul Broadhurst's "Secret Shrines" (reviewed in last MM) comes this guide by the Leggatts. A slim volume of 90 pages, it is a different beastie from Paul Broadhurst's exquisitely produced and far-ranging work in both production and price. His is a more personal reaction to the magic of the sacred wells and earth energies; this is a factual guide to some 35 wells throughout Cornwall, 15 or so of which are illustrated. As such it bears comparison with Lane-Davies 'Holy Wells of Cornwall' (1970) which lists 150 under areas, and Meyrick's 'A Pilgrims Guide to the Holy Wells of Cornwall' (1982) which lists over 300 extant and destroyed

sites. Both of these volumes are more comprehensive than the Leggatts but are not now easily available. This current one is quite a useful general guide to some selected sites as they are now, together with some quite good detail about their history; but the selective nature of the work means that there are some very odd omissions, such as Sanced well for example, whereas some much less well preserved ones are included, such as Lower Boscaswell (though again curiously there is no mention of Higher Boscaswell!). The short introductory chapter of the celtic culture of wells is useful, emphasising their pagan origin (later overlaid with medieval Christian Catholicism). Leggatt points out that the healing rituals performed at wells often represented the rebirth of the sun linking to the renewal of the sick person. There is also a useful bibliography for those who want to explore the subject in more depth.

More on wells overleaf. (CS)

The Piper's Tune

Paul Broadhurst's book on holy wells 'Secret Shrines' (reviewed in MM 5) was launched at the beginning of June at St. Clether Well near Bodmin Moor, described by J. Meyrick (1982) as "perhaps the most beautiful, and most beautifully situated, well in Cornwall." Meanwhile, some other wells appear to be under threat. MM reader Sid Hancock contacted us about Lower Boscaswell well near Pendeen, which he had heard was destroyed due to building work nearby. We checked it out and it is still there, but only just, being in a very sad and sorry state with rubble from the building. Another reader Michael Paul also contacted us about Venton Sauras well near Lelant. Here a water bottling plant is planned, but there are to be no buildings close to the well. Michael has been active in establishing a public footpath to the well from the road. Thirdly, an ancient granite well at Bohellan near Penryn was destroyed by housing development and flooding. In this case the well is a listed structure, and local counsellors and residents have been forthright in condemning the destruction. The builders, Chaddlewood Homes Ltd, have been told that they must rebuild the well from the broken stonework or they face prosecution by Carrick Council. As John Michell said in his introduction to 'Secret Shrines': "Over a desecrated holy well, as over a mistreated child, hovers a scream of anguish...The process of healing the earth, and curing the sickness within ourselves, could begin with the reconsecration of our secret shrines." All builders and developers should have that enshrined in their contracts!

From destroyed wells to discovered stones. D.J. Harvey contacted us about a possible second paired stone to the Pridden menhir near St. Buryan (see picture above). He writes: "I have discovered what I think could be a large standing stone in the roadside hedge at Higher Trevorrian, St. Buryan. It lies due south and within about a hundred yards of the well-known (now leaning) Pridden stone. I suppose it could be its twin. I think that the stone was originally much higher, but at the moment, due to continued road resurfacing over the years, it now only stands about 5½ to 6 feet in height, so I expect that it goes down fairly deep into the ground now. The stone is of flat shape, and the flat surfaces are in line with the flat surfaces of the Pridden stone. There used to be a stone circle at Higher Trevorrian (4169/2625) and I've wondered whether the two standing stones (Pridden & Pridden hedge) were outlying points related to it, like the two Pipers at Boleigh in relation to the Merry Maidens stone circle nearby. The extremely twisted roadway along this area seems to indicate that perhaps there were once large obstructions to the ancient trackway along there before the fields were laid out alongside the road. Perhaps this was an extremely interesting area at one time."



Another recently re-discovered stone is a very interesting pagan stone figurine, dating from the Romano-Celtic period, which has been found on Chapel Downs on St. Martin's island in the Scillies. Over 3ft high, it is quite recognisably carved and worked as a head on a body, though the identity of the godling represented is unknown. "It is nevertheless another trace of pagan religion in this corner of the Isles." (Charles Thomas) Ironically, the Islands Environmental Trust plan to ask the Church if the pagan figurine can be situated in the local churchyard!

Another piece of feedback on stones has come from reader Colin McIntosh on the picture of Boswens stone in MM 5 (p2), free of snow while all around the land is covered. He writes: "On the 'hot zone' round the Boswen Longstone, I've noticed this before, and I'm now looking at a photo of the tall stone by Merrivale rows which shows the same effect - but I feel the answer is prosaic. You know that often round the base menhirs there is a sort of tufty ring of grass, then a sunken area, usually waterlogged - in the right season, so bad you go welly deep to get right up to the stone. I don't think that area would freeze in all but the most appalling conditions; so what happens is the water melts and dissolves the snow as soon as it lands. Mind you, it's something I'd be delighted to be wrong about!" Another reader T. Young adds this interesting comment: "As a teacher of Physics I could probably work out various formulae that would show that the wind eddying round the stone would blow the snow away... or that the sunlight reflected from the surface of the stone melted it... BUT I am mindful of the fact that when I placed my hand on the largest stone of the Nine Maidens it felt curiously warm to the touch - something the smaller stones were not. I know the explanation I prefer!" Finally, another reader has told us of an evening when he was sitting up at Boswens, and his dog refused to go anywhere near the stone. It's a pity the ancient wells don't have the same effect on builders and developers! (CS)

EXCHANGE MAGAZINES

MEYN MAMVRO now exchanges with the following magazines which we consider are all worthy of support:

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THE LEY HUNTER — The magazine of Earth Mysteries (Annual subscription: 3 issues + supplement £5) P.O. Box 5, Brecon, Powys, Wales.

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SOURCE — Journal of the Holy Wells Group (Annual: 3 issues £2.70). Mark Valentine 109 Oak Tree Rd., Bitterne Park, Southampton SO2 4PJ

THE FOUNTAIN — Journal of Fountain International, dedicated to earth healing & dowsing. (Annual: 4 issues £6, unwaged and OAP £3.20). Nut Lane, Hayle, Cornwall TR27 6JA

EARTHLORE INSTITUTE/RUNESTAFF — for list of publications (eg Cosmic Axis, Landscape Lines) SAE to Nigel Pennick, 142 Pheasant Rise, Bar Hill, Cambridge CB3 8SD

STONEHENGE VIEWPOINT (Annual: 8 issues \$15) 2821 De La Vina Street, Santa Barbara, California 93105 USA.

PAGANISM

THE CAULDRON — Pagan journal of the Old Religion (Annual: 4 issues £3) Mike Howard, Treforgan Mansion, Llangeodmor, Cardigan, Dyfed, Wales.

MEYN MAMVRO is available on annual subscription - 3 issues £4.50 (inc. P & P). A few back copies of Nos. 4 & 5 are available at £1.33 each (inc. P & P) from 51 CARN BOSAVERN, ST. JUST, NR. PENZANCE. CORNWALL TR19 7QX.

§ Future editions are planned to include articles on the pagan origin of crosses, the destruction of sites, the mystery of Madron Well, Cornwall & Brittany, more dowsing, a guide to stone circles, Arthurian legends, & the lost land of Lyonesse - plus all the usual features. Please renew your subscription promptly or consider subscribing direct if you do not already do so.

THE PIPES OF PAN & Pagan Parenting Network Newsletter (Annual: 4 issues £2.50 + 50p). Pagans Against Nukes, Blaenberem, Mynydd-cerrig, Llanelli, Dyfed, Wales.

WOOD AND WATER — A Goddess Inclined Eco-Pagan Magazine (Annual: 4 issues £3.40) Subs to 77 Parliament Hill, London NEW 3 (Address: 4 High Tor Close, Babbacombe Road, Bromley, Kent.)

ANCIENT WAYS — Irish pagan/EM mag. (Annual: 4 issues £4/Single: £1) c/o The Alchemists Head Bookshop, 10 East Essex Street, Dublin 2.

DALRIADA — Scottish Celtic pagan mag. (Annual: 4 issues £3/Single: £1) Clan Dalriada, Dun-na-Beatha, 2 Brathwic Place, Isle of Arran

CIRCLE NETWORK NEWS — US pagan scene (Annual: 4 issues \$17/Sample \$3) Box 219, Mt. Horeb WI 53372, USA.

THE NEW EQUINOX — Radical & Free-thinking Pagan journal, of interest to all practising Pagans and Magicians. (Annual: 6 issues £5/4 issues £3.50/Sample 95p). Wiccekraefte, P.O. Box 808, Great Dunmow, Essex CM6 2DF

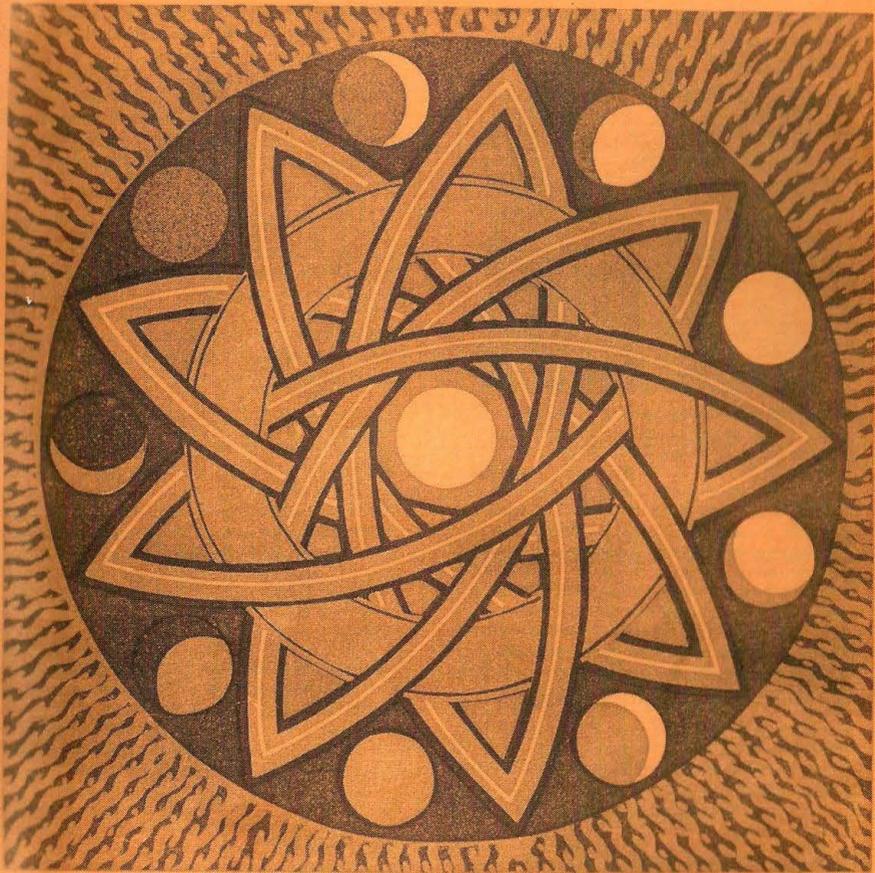
QUEST — Well established pagan magic mag. (Annual: 4 issues £4.50/Single copy £1.20) Marian Green, BCM-SCL Quest, London WC1N 3XX

TOUCHWOOD — Newest computer-printed magazine of the British Pagan Movement. (Annual: 4 issues £3.00/Sample copy 75p). Lucy Crawford, 8 Ivanhoe, Monkseaton, Tyne and Wear NE25 9AW

MISCELLANEOUS

RILKO (Research into Lost Knowledge Organisation) (Annual: 2 issues £4.50) 10 Kedleston Drive, Orpington, Kent BR5 2DR

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