

ESSENCE OF

# WITCHCRAFT

Origins, beliefs, and practices



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# 1. Witchcraft and Wicca

Witchcraft and Wicca, much has already been written comparing the two, and debates if they are one and the same. I am going to share my belief, and no I do not claim it as gospel truth. However it is my truth. We must all come to our own truths.

First, yes I have walked the Wiccan path, and have elevated to third offline with an Elder in eclectic Wicca. I have been in a Traditional circle-also eclectic with Gardnerian, and Alexandrian influences. Today I am a eclectic Gray Witch, and Priestess of Hekate. I serve as Advisor in a couple of covens today. I am convinced as I have read and studied, and just in my own walk and life experience believe Wicca and Witchcraft are not same.

- Witchcraft is not a religion
- Wicca is a man-made religion-birthed in 1957 by Gerald B Gardner.
- Not all Witches are religious, or Wiccan. Not all Wiccans are Witches. (Even Cunningham acknowledges this in one of his books on Wicca) Traditional or original Wicca is a Mystery religion, it is an initiatory system. To be part of Traditional Wicca, coven or circle- Gardner, Alexandrian both the oldest, one must be initiated by a HPS and HP.

To be a Witch one is or is not, one does not have to be initiated to be a Witch, if so then who initiated the first?????. Witchcraft does not require all what goes into ritual, another words the hoopla. Now I love ritual, do it, but as a Witch it is not a must for me to function as a Witch. Witches may be spiritual, but not religious in practices, and some are atheistic, meaning they work with no specific deity to call on, or work with. Yet honor the Sacredness of life and Earth. Most Witches are Pagans, but, not all Pagans are Witches. And, not all Witches are Wiccans. In other words, a Witch who practices Witchcraft does not necessarily mean that they practice the religion of Wicca.

I love what Lady Hecate says

“ A Wiccan involved in the religious practices of Wicca does not necessarily practice Witchcraft and which makes them not a Witch. And some Wiccan Pagans feel that no magick should be practiced at all, as Wicca is a religion and not magick. As Scott Cunningham wrote in one of his books *"Witchcraft: the craft of the Witch-magick, especially magick utilizing personal power in conjunction with the energies within stones, herbs, colors and other natural objects. While this may have spiritual overtones, Witchcraft, using this definition, isn't a religion. It is just that some followers of Wicca use this word to denote their religion."* So, according to Scott Cunningham simply being a Wiccan does not necessarily mean that you are a Witch” [www.hecatescauldron.org](http://www.hecatescauldron.org)

Wicca the religion has great reverence for nature, and honors the Goddess and God, and walks for a balance and harmony of life. Wiccans honor the Rede- council of the Wise, and uphold the threefold law. Witches do not, I will say- not all Witches acknowledge a God or even Goddess, yet they are still a Witch.

## II. Origins, and history of Witchcraft

The witchcraft of the early Christian period was essentially common sorcery or folk-magic developed over the centuries from its roots in the Ancient Period, not involving demons or devils. Anglo-Saxon magic involved spells and simple mechanical remedies, sometimes even mixed with Christian religious elements (such as saying the Lord's Prayer while brewing apotion). Early Christian methodology, involving saints and divine relics, was just a short step from the old pagan techniques of amulets, and was designed to attract potential Christians who were comfortable with the use of magic as part of their daily lives and who

expected the Christian clergy to work magic of a form superior to the old pagan way.

In the 5th Century AD, the influential Christian theologian St. Augustine of Hippo claimed that all pagan magic and religion (whether their effects were illusory or real) were invented by the Devil to lure humanity away from Christian truth. However, he also argued that neither Satan nor witches could have any real supernatural powers or could be capable of effectively invoking magic of any sort, and it was merely the "error of the pagans" to believe in "some other divine power than the one God". Thus, if witches were indeed powerless, the Church had no need to concern itself with their spells or other attempts at mischief, or to bother itself with tracking down witches or investigating allegations of witchcraft, a view which was accepted by the early medieval Church for several centuries.

In 820, the influential Bishop of Lyon and others repudiated the belief that witches could make bad weather, fly in the night and change their shape. St. Boniface declared in the 8th Century that belief in the existence of witches was un-Christian. Charlemagne, the 8th and 9th Century king of the Franks, decreed that the burning of supposed witches was a pagan custom that should itself be punishable by death.

Nevertheless, in the 7th to 9th Centuries, the Church began to influence civil law to create anti-witchcraft laws, and the Latin word "maleficium", which originally meant wrong-doing, soon came to mean malevolent magic, presumed to be associated with the Devil. Not only was magic now a crime against society, but a heresy and a crime against God. The Council of Leptinnes of 744 drew up a "List of Superstitions" which prohibited sacrifices to saints, and required the renunciation of the works of demons (specifically naming the old Norse gods Thor and Odin) as part of the Christian baptism ceremony.

In medieval lore, the Tempestarii were magi, specifically weather-makers, dwelling amongst the common people, who possessed the power to raise or prevent storms at will. For this reason, anyone reputed as a weather-maker was the subject of respect, fear

and hatred in rural areas. Church authorities gave credence to the belief by stating that God permitted the Devil and witches to perform these acts as punishment for the wickedness of the world. However, the Church prohibited superstitious remedies against witchcraft such as storm-raising because the remedies themselves were of pagan origin, and it prescribed prayer, sacraments and the invocation of the name of God instead (although some traditional remedies like charms were also sanctioned).

Prior to the 13 or 14th Century, then, witchcraft had come to mean a collection of beliefs and practices including healing through spells, ointments and concoctions, dabbling in the supernatural, and forecasting the future through divining and clairvoyance. In England, the provision of curative magic was the job of a "witch doctor" (a term used in England long before it came to be associated with Africa), also known as a "cunning man", "white witch" or "wiseman". "Toad doctors" were also credited with the ability to undo evil witchcraft. Although they did not refer to themselves as witches, these cunning-folk were generally considered valuable members of the community (however, some were also hired to curse enemies).

By the 13th Century, some groups holding to other beliefs and rituals (notably Christianity, the dominant religion in medieval Europe) began to brand witchcraft as "demon-worship". In 1208, Pope Innocent III opened an attack on a group of heretics known as the Cathars, who believed in a world in which God and Satan, both having supernatural powers, were at war. The Church attempted to discredit the Cathar beliefs by spreading stories that the heretics actually worshipped their evil deity in person, and by embroidering on their devil-worshipping rituals. Many Cathars, Albigensians and Waldensians migrated into Germany and the Savoy, fleeing the papal inquisition against their alleged heresies. Also in the 13th Century, the leading Christian theologian St. Thomas Aquinas (much of whose work became adopted as the orthodoxy of the Church), argued that the world was full of evil and dangerous demons that try to lead people into temptation, and thus began the long Christian association between sex and witchcraft.

The Inquisition, an effort by the Catholic Church to seek out and punish heretics and force them to change their beliefs, can be said to have begun as early as about 1230. Around this time, Pope Gregory IX assigned the duty of carrying out inquisitions to trained individuals from the Dominican Order, and Inquisitors acted in the name of the Pope and with his full authority, using inquisitorial procedures. Pope Innocent IV authorized the use of torture in 1252. Eventually, the secular (non-religious) courts, as well as all Christian churches, were involved in the persecution of witches. The Inquisition as a whole can be thought of as having four main phases or manifestations: the Papal Inquisition (from the 1230s), the Spanish Inquisition (1478 - 1834), the Portuguese Inquisition (1536 - 1821) and the Roman Inquisition (1542 - 1860).-Various resources

### III. Archeology of Folk Magic

#### The Archaeology of Folk Magic

By Brian Hoggard

Originally published at Beltane 1999

In this article I hope to draw to the readers' attention to a little known field of study known as the archaeology of folk magic. This is intimately related to what most people call witchcraft and involves the physical remains related to practices undertaken by the 'white' witch to protect people's property from 'black' witches and also practices which lay-folk undertook by themselves for the same reason. There is a bias of material in my collection to the 16th and 17th centuries, this is because this is the focus of my PhD and also because it is when there was the most fear about witchcraft - hence more archaeology relating to protection. Where material is not dated assume that it comes from these two centuries. Before beginning with a description of the finds and theories about them, it is important that I set the context for the topic.

Historians are getting better at writing about witchcraft. About thirty years ago there was still a tendency amongst them to use exclamation



marks when talking about the horrors of torture and to dismiss the belief in witchcraft as primitive heretical superstition or as over-enthusiastic religious faith. A classic and highly respectable work entitled *The Encyclopedia of Witchcraft and Demonology* written by Robbins in 1959 has some of these hallmarks.<sup>1</sup> While they were correct by our modern standards to be horrified by the tortures that occurred they did not attempt to compare the 'witch-craze' to Stalin's purges or the holocaust or other comparable situations. Now we have books like *Religion and the Decline of Magic* by Keith Thomas<sup>2</sup> which details the practices of the village cunning-men and wise-women (the 'white' witches who were really slightly grey) and *Early Modern European Witchcraft - Centres and Peripheries* edited by Ankarloo and Henningsen<sup>3</sup> which collects together major articles which deal, among other things, with spirit flight and Icelandic witchcraft. There is no doubt that historians are getting closer to understanding the role that witchcraft served in the village community better now than they ever have before. Tanya Luhrman did an historical and anthropological study of modern witchcraft called *Persuasions of the Witch's Craft* <sup>4</sup> which involved becoming initiated into several covens and writing about her findings in an historical-comparative style. Diane Purkiss in *The Witch in History* <sup>5</sup> has clearly shown the problems that are encountered when dealing with the historical claims of Wicca, some of which are clearly slightly suspect. For example there was no such thing as 'the burning times' in England because all witches here were hung by the neck. She does, however, acknowledge the validity of it as a religion alternative to mainstream Christianity other religions. Other authors such as Norman Cohn in *Europe's Inner Demons* <sup>6</sup> have demonstrated that many of the fears generated in the period of witch-persecution were created by the ruling elite. For example it was during the period of mass executions that the belief in witches riding broomsticks evolved and also when notions of a witches sabbath which parodied Christian church ritual came in to being. Eamon Duffy in *The Stripping of the Altars* <sup>7</sup> has demonstrated how Christian beliefs, which in many cases were very basic and superficial, were combined with folk beliefs very easily in pre-Reformation parishes. Here supernatural belief and a kind of polytheism through worship of the saints existed



hand in hand with mainstream Christianity. This is the type of situation which Anton Wessels in Europe - Was it Ever Really Christian? 8 describes as broadly 'pagan-animist' in nature, not Christian at all. Books worth having whatever your preferred theories about the witch in history are those which reprint court records and other documents relating to witchcraft. The best and most widely available one of these is Barbera Rosen's Witchcraft in England 1558-1618 9 which, as a prelude, has probably the best and most concise introduction to the study of witchcraft in existence. Another similar work, though sadly out of print, is Peter Haining's The Witchcraft Papers - Contemporary Records of the Witchcraft Hysteria in Essex 1560-1700.10 There are many excellent books that contribute sometimes a little, sometimes a lot, to the witchcraft debate and these are but a few of the more important ones - many of which can be ordered at your local bookshop. These books all indicate the steps forward that have been made by historians in recent years to clarify the nature of witchcraft as it really happened in England - instead of the 'Winnie the Witch' cartoons, fairytales and Hollywood images of the witch that most of us have inherited from our childhood, not to mention all the other images and expectations of the witch generated by the apparently vast numbers of third degree witches who you can meet down the local pub. READ-up on the history before you join-up if you possibly can!

An area of witchcraft which hasn't been looked at very much at all is the archaeology of witchcraft. It is this which is the focus of this article. There has been work by some authors on this topic but they have tended to attempt to make the evidence fit their theories rather than let the evidence create new theories. The only person to have written a serious book on this is Ralph Merrifield whose Archaeology of Ritual and Magic 11 covers periods from the Neolithic to the nineteenth century - therefore he spends only a chapter, albeit a very good one, on the archaeology relating specifically to witchcraft. Many people have written interesting academic articles on the archaeology of folk magic which you will find listed in the references but Merrifield's is the only book worth getting hold of. The type of finds that most often occur tell us more about what people did to protect

themselves against black witchcraft than what witches actually did. But the way in which people protected themselves against witchcraft seems to suggest the survival of much older belief system or practice which does (I think) tell us quite a lot about the nature of witchcraft and its origins. The finds covered by Merrifield in his book range from mummified cats (dried) to witch-bottles and all of them seem to have something to do with preventing the evil witch or demon from entering the home and causing harm. I shall detail the practices with examples and describe the way in which each was supposed to work.

### Concealed Shoes

The most common folk magic find by far relating to the protection of the home is that of concealing shoes in buildings. The Concealed Shoes Index at Northampton Museum receives an average of one find a month but curators there believe that hundreds of finds every year are simply thrown out by builders.<sup>12</sup> By February 1998 the index recorded over 1100 examples primarily from Britain, but with some from as far away as Canada. The date range for these finds is interesting and appears to be proportionally related to surviving buildings from the periods concerned, until the twentieth century when the practice appears to have gone into serious decline. For instance, pre 1600's there are around fifty examples, 1600-1699 around 200, 1700-1799 approximately 270, 1800-1899 around 500 and 1900+ (when the records appear to decline) around fifty<sup>13</sup> - but this latter may be because people either keep their concealed shoes secret or they have not had a reason to examine their chimneys yet. These shoes are usually found concealed in chimneys, either on a ledge a little way up the chimney or in purpose built cavities behind the hearth into which items can be deposited from above. These have been termed 'spiritual middens'.<sup>14</sup> Other places have included in walls, under floorboards, in window frames and in staircases. Nearly all of the shoes discovered in this context are well worn, half of those found belonged to children and only very rarely are pairs found. Shoes were expensive items and were repaired again and again until they could not be worn any longer. As a result of this the shoe was a unique item, perfectly fitting only the wearer at the end of use.

Various theories have been put forward to explain why shoes were concealed in chimneys.

One suggestion is that they were a fertility symbol. For example, Roy Palmer in his book *The Folklore of Hereford and Worcester* cites a very recent case from Broadwas-on-Teme where in 1960 a midwife refused to allow a young woman to remove her shoes until her child was born.<sup>15</sup> Merrifield, discussing shoes, noted the old rhyme, 'there was an old woman who lived in a shoe. . .' as being further evidence of the connection between shoes and fertility. He also quotes a case from Lancashire where it was apparently not unusual for women wishing to conceive to wear the shoes of those who had just given birth in the hope of 'catching' something of the wearer. Another slightly more bizarre account is a method once used by young ladies to invoke dreams of their future partners. They were said to pin their garters to a wall and arrange their shoes in the form of a 'T' and sing a short rhyme.<sup>17</sup> Just how successful this was I don't know but it reaffirms the link between shoes and fertility yet again.

When shoes are found beneath bedroom floors the above appears to be a likely explanation, but in other locations the following explanation seems more likely. Denise Dixon-Smith, who was Assistant Keeper of the Boot and Shoe Collection 1986-1990 states that, "One reason for hiding shoes in chimneys and around doors may have been because they were 'openings' where evil spirits could enter the home, and the shoe - as a good luck symbol - should warn them off."<sup>18</sup> She was not the first person to suggest this however. Merrifield in his book suggests that an unofficial Saint named John Schorn was partly responsible for the custom. Schorn was alleged to have performed the remarkable feat of casting the devil into a boot which Merrifield says may have led to shoes being seen as some kind of spirit-trap - this would explain the locations in which they are found.<sup>19</sup> Supporting evidence of the protective associations of shoes comes from Reginald Scot who mentioned that spitting on shoes was a way to protect against witchcraft.<sup>20</sup> A few shoes found have been vigorously slashed suggesting black witchcraft, not a spirit trap at all.

The lack of writings from contemporary accounts about this apparently very common practice has baffled many people, but it is probable that secrecy was an important part of the folk magic protection. After all, you wouldn't want to risk letting a witch know how to avoid or switch off your spiritual burglar alarm would you? It is probable that the shoes were a kind of bait which 'contained' enough of the human to lure the witch into a dead-end in the chimney and have her trapped forever - witches were reputed to be unable to travel backwards. It is fortunate that June Swann began the Concealed Shoe Index at Northampton<sup>21</sup> for it has reaffirmed the importance of many of the other finds which are found in associated contexts and has generated a substantial revival of interest in this type of find.

### Witch-bottles

Another concealed object often found, although nowhere near as often as concealed shoes, is that of witch-bottles. In some literature these are known as 'bellarmines' because the first kind of bottles used for this purpose were stoneware bottles with a face stuck on to them which people believed was a portrait of a man named Cardinal Bellarmine who persecuted Protestants. This theory has now been shown by M R Holmes to be untrue as some bottles pre-date the Cardinal by some time.<sup>22</sup> The basic facts about witch-bottles are quite amazing. The effort that went into placing them was quite substantial compared to that of shoes, which were merely thrown down a hole or perched on an existing ledge. Many of the earliest bottles have been found inverted beneath doorsteps and hearths. They are not exclusively inverted but this seems to have been an important part of the practice in some areas. The most common components of the contents of a witch-bottle are pins and urine. Joseph Blagrave's *Astrological Practice of Physick* published in 1671 describes putting urine into a bottle with pins to 'stop the urine' of the witch.<sup>23</sup> Although this clearly describes the placing of urine into the bottles, examinations of the bottles are not always conclusive. Most of those tested have reacted positively for phosphates and carbonate,<sup>24</sup> an indicator of the presence of urine, but further

examination has sometimes proved that these substances occurred in the bottle through the presence of other matter.<sup>25</sup> Some examples have a felt heart shaped piece of material within them which has been stuck with pins.<sup>26</sup> A common feature is that many of the pins have been bent before being placed into the bottle.

The aim of these bottles seems to have been, once again, to serve as a spirit trap. The placing of the bottles at doorways and chimneys seems to affirm this.<sup>27</sup> Other interesting facts are that the bending of the pins ritually 'kills' them which means they exist in the 'otherworld' where the witch travels - which is why you can't see them. The urine is a way of making the bottle 'contain' the person again in a similar way as worn shoes contain the person. Sticking pins into a heart soaked with your urine would seem to be a way of fooling the witch into thinking that your heart is in the bottle, so when the witch detects you they plunge into the bottle to grab your heart and get stuck inside it and impaled on the prickly pins. One bottle has been found on a parish boundary, suggesting perhaps the fear in one village of a witch in the next.

An unusual example of a witch-bottle was found in Wales. It was a pot which was found with the name 'Nanny Roberts' written on the bottom suggesting either black witchcraft against a particular person or the name of the witch-owner - the pot had the bones of a frog and its dried skin which was pierced by some forty pins.<sup>28</sup> Some bottles have been found with certain plant and insect remains and various body hairs. All suggestive of a spell or concoction of some kind. The use of 'bellarmines' as witch-bottles gradually degraded into using ordinary glass bottles,<sup>29</sup> many of which are now coming to light.<sup>30</sup>

### Mummified Cats

A not so common find-type is that of mummified cats, although the correct term is 'dried cats'.<sup>31</sup> These are often found concealed in walls but sometimes roofs as well. In some cases the cats have been positioned, indicating that they were already dead at the time of concealment.<sup>32</sup> One sad case is of a kitten which had been pinned



down and had its belly cut. There is also a case where a mummified puppy has been found.<sup>33</sup> Sometimes mummified rats are found with the cats, suggesting a symbolic placing of the creatures, possibly to indicate the cat's function on a spiritual plane. Some writers have commented that the likelihood is that cats are placed in such situations to act as vermin scaring devices.<sup>34</sup> This, however, is unlikely because the locations are often in impractical places such as the roof. When cats are found beneath floorboards there is always the possibility that they crawled there to die, but this does not rule out some kind of foundation sacrifice, which is another of the main suggestions.<sup>35</sup>

This idea of foundation sacrifice seems relatively sensible but you still have to ask why? Is it in the honour of some god or goddess for which there is no obvious evidence? A preferable and more reasonable explanation is that it was hoped that some of the qualities attributed to the cat in life would continue in the afterlife. Cats are reputed to be able to see ghosts and spirits easier than humans can<sup>36</sup> and it is possible that it was their job to catch vermin of a more spiritual kind, perhaps the witch's familiar. George Gifford, writing in 1593, complained of witch's familiars running around outside.<sup>37</sup> If he'd had a cat concealed in his walls, a witch-bottle beneath his doorstep and some shoes up his chimney he'd have had less to worry about.

### Concealed Horse Skulls

These unusual additions to a house aren't very common in England although there are some examples. They are more numerous in Wales and Ireland. In a small church at Elsdon in Northumberland National Park three horse skulls were found in the small belfry.<sup>38</sup> This indicates that they were placed there to serve a similar function to that of the bells, ie, to ward off evil spirits. As Ecgbert's (Archbishop of York) Pontifical from the eighth century has it, "Wherever this bell sounds, let the power of enemies retire, so also the shadow of phantoms ....and every spirit of the storm winds".<sup>39</sup> Another horse skull has been discovered during excavation at the

deserted medieval village of Yatesbury in Wiltshire.<sup>40</sup> In a pub called the Portway in Herefordshire over forty horse skulls were discovered screwed to the underside of the floor.<sup>41</sup> The explanation given for this was that it improved the sound of the fiddle when it was played. This explanation seems to have been a later folklore, rather than the true explanation of the practice as many locations in which horse skulls have been found do not improve the acoustics at all.<sup>42</sup> Horses, like cats, have been credited with the ability to see ghosts and other evil spirits<sup>43</sup> and as they serve humans in life, perhaps it was expected that they would serve humans in death too.

### Other House Protections

Other ways that the house could be protected were by written charms and curses. The Museum of Welsh Life at St. Fagan's, Cardiff has a good collection of these but the National Library of Wales at Aberystwyth has probably the best collection. Charms have been found in England too. A famous one from Dymock in Gloucestershire was found with the name Sarah Ellis scrawled backwards on it.<sup>44</sup> A charm has been found in a roof in Ludlow.<sup>45</sup> These were drawn-up by local cunning-men and wise-women (white witches) to protect the house or barn from evil in a similar way to the other measures mentioned above. It is probable that the more difficult the method of house protection, the more effective was deemed the method. Therefore written curses and charms are probably at the top of the effectiveness list. They are usually a mixture of Latin phrases taken from pre-Reformation services and astrological symbols.<sup>46</sup> All the charms are similar in terms of this mix of biblical and astrological literature indicating the way that differing philosophies were harnessed towards one common goal in an era of poor literacy and confusion about religion<sup>47</sup> - this is the period that Wessels described as 'pagan-animist'. The Christian God was one of many influences the cunning-man or wise-woman could draw upon to make a charm work. Saints Peter and Paul were the favourites for divination for instance.<sup>48</sup>



Various symbols have been engraved on to wooden beams and sometimes drawn into plaster work on ceilings. The most common of these is the 'daisywheel'.<sup>49</sup> It is a compass-drawn circle with petals within it and it appears on buildings and on furniture within buildings throughout Britain. It appears to have been a general protection against ill-fortune or was deemed a good luck symbol.

There are many different forms of house protection that were used, these are just the most important ones. During the course of my PhD I have come across many regional variations and many rather intricate and bizarre methods of warding off the evil of the 'black' witch. In all of them there is the implicit belief that the witch can travel through the air and that they can be easily confused by dead-ends or complex patterns. The belief that witches could fly seems to have been shared by all sectors of the population at different times judging by the high status houses which have yielded 'protections' such as these. This could be evidence of a very old cultural belief in the out-of-body experience similar to that which the Friulian *benandanti* of Northern Italy believed.<sup>50</sup> More research is ongoing to discover more about the many ways that people protected their homes against the 'evil' witch.

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Witches of Old were healers, medicine women, wise, but also used hexes and curses. I believe even SilverRavenWolf says in one of her books “,a Witch who cannot curse, cannot heal.” Witches of old were also primarily women, although there were men who practiced magic as well.-

## IV. Types of Witches

There many types of Witches, and practices in the old Craft  
There are Atheist Witches, Trad Witches-or Hereditary Witches  
Wiccan-Witches,Gray Witches,Dark Witches,White-or (healers)  
..Also=

Kitchen Witch: (aka - cottage witch & hearth witch)

Of the Hearth & Home, mainly dealing with practical sides of the Wiccan / Pagan religion, magick, gemstones, the elements and the earth. A Kitchen Witch is usually recognized as practicing Celtic Wicca: Goes by the elements, the Ancient Ones and nature. They are usually healers or respect them highly. They work with plants, stones, flowers, trees, the elemental people, the gnomes and the fairies. But most of all a Kitchen Witch performs her magick in the Kitchen and has Goddess given talents for food crafting.

Green Witch:

Is the practice of nature-based and earth oriented witchcraft, drawing on the folklore, folk religion and folk magic of ancient cultures as they connected to the forest; such as the tree worship of Druids, the kitchen craft of Italian witches or the keeping of sacred groves as presented in Gallic paganism. Green witches usually practice a traditional form of witchcraft in which the earth, trees, herbs, plants and flowers are consulted for their medicinal and magical value. They will grow their own herbs or Wildcraft them, and are very good at making herbal remedies. Belief in deities depends on the individual witch, though many Green witches acknowledge and earth mother or series of nature spirits as their deity. Usually, the spirits of nature, the dead (that of humans and animals) or the Fey have a large part in Green traditions. A form of green witchcraft which is better classified as Green Wicca was popularized by Ann Moura.

Hedge Witch:

Hedge craft is a path that is somewhat shamanic in nature, (sometimes referred to as wise man & wise woman) as they are practitioners of an Earth-based spirituality. These are the ones who engage in spirit flight and journey into the Other world. They can, in this capacity, be very powerful midwives and healers. A bird of one kind or another is usually associated with the Hedge Witch, most commonly the raven and the goose. The term "hedge" signified the boundary of the village and represents the boundary that exists between this world and the spiritual realm. (they are said to be Night travelers or walkers on the wind) Their main function is mediator between the spirits and people. They may also work as a herbal healer or midwife. Some claim it to be the continuation of the practices of the cunning folk and wise-women, while others say that it is a modern tradition.

#### Eclectic Witch

An individual approach in which the witch picks and chooses from many different traditions and creates a personalized form of witchcraft that meets their individual needs and abilities. They do not follow a particular religion or tradition, but study and learn from many different systems and use what works best for them.

The point here there are many ways to be a Witch, and practice the Craft.

## V. Spellcrafting

In the old times Witches were careful in sharing if at all their spells, and magickal work. Many of the Witches who base their craft on the Old ways pass things down generationally, by lineage. One of the beliefs of the Old ways is also if someone can have some kind of personal item, such as an image of you, someone else can do harm on you. It is one reason some Witches will never reveal their real face online, and yes some come across not as friendly. It is not that they are not friendly, but are guarded.

Spells you create for yourself will be the most effective spells of all. A spell is simply using our energies= pushing forth to create our future. Only you know what it is that you really need. If you use spells that are created by others, the intentions may not be as clear or precise as when you write them yourself.

These are just suggestions, and keep it simple to the point. Spell work does not have to be complicated, and was never meant to be. The first thing you need to do when writing your own spell is ask yourself the following questions:

- 1/ Whats is you spell for?
  - 2/ Do you really need too cast a spell for it?
  - 3/ Are you right,justified? Is your own plate clean
  - 4/ Does it mean taking anyone's free will away from them?  
(Manipulating free will of another is Sorcery and another topic.)
  - 5/ How quick do you want the result?
  - 6/ And what exactly do you want the outcome of the spell to be?
- Be very specific, and detailed,

Now you have answered all the above questions you need to find out the following:

- 1/ Which day of the week is best to cast the spell
- 2/ Which moon phase will work best to cast under
- 3/ Which colors are associated with your spell
- 4/ Which herbs, crystals and oils are associated with the need of the spell
- 5/ And which Gods or Goddesses you are going to work with.(If you work with Deity- Not all do, and you do not have to to cast a spell)

Note if there is a spell you need on the "wrong day or moon phase" You still can work you spell. Our ancestors did not have days of the week, specific Moon phases, nor worried about VOC Moon. The above helps, but do not make this gospel law.Do not worry about , oh crap I do not have right candle color. Use white, universal color, use what you have.

In Wicca- Always ask permission before doing healing or any kind of spell work. As one does not know lessons that need to be learned at this time in a person's life. Wiccans also believe in no way are they do work to cause harm to another, and in their work you will see, and harm none so mote it be. Each Witch has their own ethics, and keep in mind blessings come from blessings sent.

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## VI. The Old ways

When you think about the old ways, what do you think of? When you hear someone say, "I practice the Oldways", what do you think of? What do they mean?

The Old ways does not mean we go back to horse and buggy, however it does call us to more simplicity, and connecting to nature, and Mother Earth, without all of our hoopla.

If we wish to live the Old ways of magick, what do we do?

In truth I do not believe you can learn it so much from a book, it must come from within you. It means we must let go of mindsets we have learned and developed over the years. We must stop worrying what others think, and if this is acceptable or not.



Magick of the old ways included- Sympathetic Magick,Candle Magick,Elemental,Weather,Poppet,String,Cauldron,Healing-works,Protection,love, Bindinings,Justice,Curses,and Hexes when needed. Using herbs, honoring nature spirits, celebrating the Sabbats, Connecting with the energy of the moon without all the religious trappings, and laws made by men. When did we make magickal work so complicated? The Old ways included reverence of nature, which meant they did not waste. They killed for food, Clothing, and shelter. Nor did they have titles, and all these high -archy either. Think about this, they did not have how to books on doing their magick, it was by oral traditions passed to one generation to another.

## VII. Elemental Magick

FIRE



Fire represents passion, enthusiasm, desire and courage, force, lust, fertility and virility, initiative and rejuvenation. It represents both light and heat. The light of intelligence and the courage to follow it. A low fire person is usually cold, slow to act, without enthusiasm for life or himself. A high fire person is bold, dramatic and passionate in all areas within himself, however this person must be careful as fire can destroy everything in it's path. Fire magick can bring on the new, bring on courage and passion and destroy the old.

It's feelings are hot and dry, it's season is Summer and direction is South/Energy. It's symbol is the Athame/Sword, Candle and the Burner; it's colors are Reds, Oranges and Golds. The moon phase is the second quarter and it's time is high Noon.

The different types of Fire Magick are Bonfire Magick, which usually involves burning something such as an herb or flower, or a piece of paper or petition on which you have written your desire. It is used for banishing, ridding or destroying negative influences in your life.

Another is Candle Magick, a simple, easy and useful method in bringing about your desires. A color for the candle is chosen and can also include the correct scent in relation to your desire and lit sometimes for up to seven days. This type of Fire Magick is usually for any type of desire.

Another is Sun Magick. Using the Sun in our desires is a beautiful way in which to enhance new beginnings in love, health, work and home, awaken subtle powers and aid in attraction desires.

## AIR

Air represents mental activity, thoughts, reason and intellect, memory, knowledge, persuasion, birth and friendship, freedom, clarification and expression. A low Air person seems without any direction and unable to define or visualize any future and can not

reason out the alternatives and objectives. A high Air person is at ease in complex situations and can sit and think things through, and can carry through with decisions.

It's feelings are moist heat, it's season is Spring, it's direction is East/Mental, the symbol is the Wand, Athame, or the smoke of the incense. It's colors are White, Lt Blues, Yellows and Green. Moon phase is the first quarter and it's time is Dawn.

Different types of Air Magick include Visualizations. An important tool in any magick work, it makes the events happen. For this type, it is important that all the other factors such as color, time, the moon phase, winds, etc. are all in balance. And to have the other tools working such as incense and candle burning, or even the right tea or wine to drink in the background. This is because you need to "fix" or "ground" the images or ideas you are using in your visualization.

As our thoughts are extremely powerful, as are our Words. Words can be put together in such a way as to form spells, or used in channeling your power. Words give rise to our desires and can be released upon the winds for attainment. Created and repeated with intensity and concentration the spoken word is a powerful magick in itself. You do not have to be an accomplished linguist, just a simple sentence will do. It creates an atmosphere of concentrated awareness and strength. Words can be used in moments of stress and fear, and will create the magick itself. It does not have to be said aloud, say them to yourself if need or want be.

Another Air Magick is Mirror Magick. It can help in overcoming inner problems and also help with difficult personal decisions. It uses both the Word and Visualization forms and can also aid in being able to visualize a future event. Sometimes, used as a Scrying Tool, in which you are able to "see" possible future events.

## WATER

Ah water, the symbol of our emotions. Water imbibes all life forms and in us we flow with the "tide" of our feelings. It involves intuition, insight, conception and pregnancy, fertility, the womb, health, beauty and divination. A low water person would appear as a cold calculating one, one who is indifferent and unresponsive. On the other hand, a high water person may seem as though at the slightest touch the well is opened and can be over emotional and over dramatic in all areas of life. A good balance of water here is needed to keep the flow running smoothly.

Its feelings are cold moisture, its season is Fall, direction is West/Emotion and its colors are Blue, Light Grays, Sea Greens and Whites. The symbols are the cup or chalice. The Moon phase is the Full Moon and its time is Dusk.

Some Water Magick can involve the use of the beach and its sand, shells, animals and seawater. Especially good for love spells and too, when you need to "get a grip" or clarify your own emotions. The use of shells in the practice is widely used. These can hold appropriate herbs or be used as a symbol of Water Magick.

One old tradition is using that of well water. A lot of gems and stones are exposed to this for a period of time and used at night, in full moon or the waxing phases, for Water Magick. Be careful though to know your stones, as some do not react well in water for long periods of time. This type of magick can give you insights to how others think of you, what others are doing and how well they are and to find the truth within yourself. Be careful when using this type also, if there is an intent of maliciousness or control of another, all you will get is a reflection back unto yourself.

Water spells can involve the use of Scrying bowls. This is a bowl of clear or colored water in which you are able to "see" the future and future events or get a clear direction on decisions. Widely used in certain meditations and visualizations.

**EARTH**

Finally we come to the Element of Earth. The source and provider of all our needs. Represents sensations, decay, patience, stability, strength, health, warmth and comfort, animals and animal instincts, farming and physical labor.

Its feeling is dry and cold, its season is Winter, its colors are Browns, Blacks, Purples and some Greens. Its symbol is the Pentacle or Rice, Salt or grain in a brass or terra cotta bowl or a Stone. Its Moon phase is the Fourth Quarter and its favored time is Midnight. A high Earth person seems a practical sort and quite "down to earth". A hard worker, stable and a good provider. Can be a little too stubborn sometimes however. A low Earth person can seem confused, insecure and alone, unable to feel wanted and the work may be affected.

Earth Magick can involve the use of herbs and plants. Using the correct herb to attain your desire along with the other tools can be very effective. Burying something and making some offerings to the Earth such as planting trees is a form of Earth Magick. Using your gems or crystals and burying them in the Earth under the appropriate tree while making your wish is also effective.

Another type which is considered Earth Magick is any type of routine magick. Anything you do on a routine basis can be used as a magickal vehicle. While performing something you do at the same time everyday, prepare yourself and use this period for clarity on a subject, figure the best course of action in a situation or to find just where you are in the course of your life.

Essence of Magick is simple-

Magick is the use of energy in causing Change to occur in conformity with Will. Yes I redefined it.

