



Lughnasadh Issue, Y.R. XLVIII
August 1, 2011 c.e.
Volume 27, Issue 5

Editor's Note

It's getting towards the end of the summer. I wish I was on vacation, not in D.C. with all the tourists.

So this issue we escape to deserted islands and hope you can too. The next issue will delve into how different the British Isles were for Paleolithic and Neolithic forms of humanity.

The submissions deadline for the Fall Equinox issue is Sept 5. Mikerdna@hotmail.com

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Please also see our Facebook websites:

Reformed Druids Gorsedd

Reformed Druids of North America (RDNA)

Our Youtube Channel is also greatly expanding:

www.youtube.com/ReformedDruids



NEWS OF THE GROVES

Not much news this season.

THREE STONES PROTOGROVE

Greetings from S.Nevada!

The unusually mild weather here in the normal high desert heat afforded us to have a gathering of like minded folks, as we went amongst the scrub oaks, desert willows, pines and sage brushes. Our journey led us to a wilderness area and camp grounds at the Valley of Fire, where amongst the Trees and petroglyphs we had our 'yearly' meditations amongst the trees, led by Finneagas

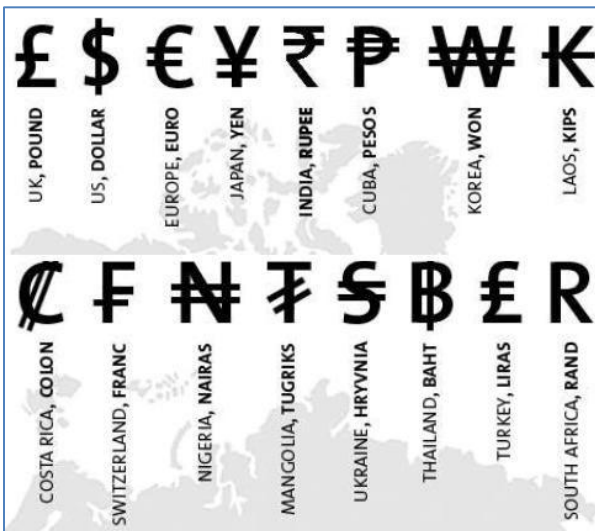
and myself. The guided meditations were worked to connect to the Earth Mother in all Her glory, sensing and identifying the type of trees and offerings to the dryads!

The active meditations, and offerings near the petroglyphs, we were joined by a local Piute medicine man, who gave us such wisdom about the desert, Her flora and fauna, also how to give a offering of sage, tobacco and cornmeal to the 'standing spirits' there! We were led on a sacred-walk, and we shared ways of healing the Earth Mother, and how to survive in the desert climate.

In the coming Lughnassadh, we are dedicating a new Altar stone in the grove area, and we are preparing for a larger gathering than usual, with the focus on, yes the harvest, with a more 'cultural native' theme this year. All who gathered agreed the importance is on our development and 'service to the Mother'!

Be at PEACE during this season!
 Brid the Preceptor!
 Three Stones protogrove

I Spy a Sigil (Random encounters with the world)

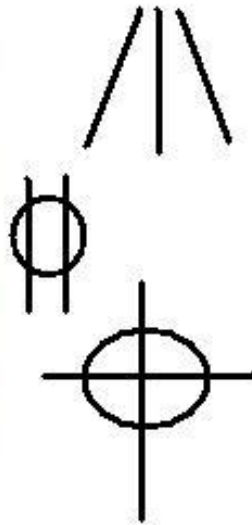


Druid Sigil and Money, perhaps a connection?





Resemblances



Monster/Chaos are mythological words.

50% OJ, oranges are symbol of the sun, the sun provides energy.

Just musing on a lazy morning at CVS.

A friend of mine is brewing and I noticed her logo looks a bit like a Sigil:





www.youtube.com/user/ReformedDruids

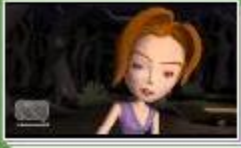













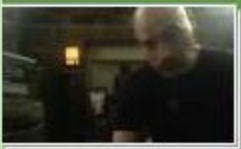

Stop by the YouTube webpage.

It has greatly expanded.

Send me links on videos to add.

Reformed Druid Channel
ReformedDruids's Channel

All Favorites Playlists

 <p>Desperate Druids - What's RDNA? - An 20 hours ago more info</p>	 <p>Isaac Bonewits 1 month ago more info</p>	 <p>Celts and Druid Historical 23 hours ago more info</p>	 <p>Films with Celts or Druids 20 hours ago more info</p>
 <p>Videos from other Druid Groups 23 hours ago more info</p>	 <p>Druidic Book Launches 20 hours ago more info</p>	 <p>Video Games with Druids 20 hours ago more info</p>	 <p>Pagan Wicca Druid Documentary 23 hours ago more info</p>
 <p>Arts and useful stuff 1 month ago more info</p>	 <p>ADF 1 month ago more info</p>	 <p>Ellen Evert Hopman 1 month ago more info</p>	 <p>OBOD & Phillip Carr Gomm 1 month ago</p>
 <p>Animated Clips with Druids or Celts 20 hours ago more info</p>	 <p>Others' Animations about Druids. 23 hours ago more info</p>	 <p>Reformed Druidism 2 weeks ago more info</p>	 <p>The Prisoner Series (1967) 2 weeks ago</p>



Update on the "Desperate Druid" Series

Available on the "Reformed Druids Channel" of Youtube.
Just type in "Reformed Druid" or "Desperate Druid".

Begun in June 2011, "DD" has begun growing rapidly.

- First Druid (or Pagan) themed animated drama web-series
- Currently there is 95 minutes of footage.
- 33 more episodes are planned.
- Each episode is on track for 100 views in their first month.

SERIES REBOOT!

Originally planned as a stand-alone set of 7 lectures, it changed into a dramatic series, and the original 3 episodes needed to be retooled.

Episode Zero: Was added after episode 5, to explain the overarching story, introduce the rapidly increasing number of characters, and provide resources for learning about Reformed Druidism.

Episode 1 & 2: Being totally redone with a drama-series focus, new scenes, less lecture.

Episode 3: A new intro scene will be added and some music.

Episode 4, 5: Music will eventually be added to the scenes

UPCOMING EPISODE SNEAK PEEKS:

Episode 7 – Simplicity: Peter meets Dan and Zoe, two outdoorsy Druids, while Andrea confides with Jody. Dan presents a simpler version of Reformed Druidism.

Episode 8 – The Spooky Woods: Peter follows Dan's instructions to explore the woods and meets Kikki and her connection with Zoe.

Episode 9 – Seasonal Cycles: Thomas discusses Druidical festivals and Calendars. Ishaan's return brings a difficult choice for Andrea.

THREE MUSICIANS ON BOARD

Irony Sade, Jon Powers, and Gayla Paul have volunteered to have some of their music provide better background mood to the episodes. Other artists are welcomed to contribute, either instrumental as above, or to provide vocals for filked Druid songs of the RDNA. All works will be credited in the episode.

ANIMATORS AND SCRIPT ADVISORS are INVITED

If you'd like to do some work with XTRANORMAL or STATE, then I could use some assistants to work on selected scenes, adding gestures, timing and camera work. Takes a few days to get the hang of it.

STORY IDEAS

If you have an odd event in a Grove, or a bizarre encounter, or great piece of advice you ran across, please share it with me and I'll gladly include it.

To volunteer or participate in the project, write to mikerdna@hotmail.com



Summer Fun on the Beaches

By Mike the Fool

We all dream of going to a deserted tropical island, but as long as it is on our terms, and we can leave when we want.

If you are like me, you can't afford a real vacation, so a virtual vacation is all that is left to us.

The Celts have been having adventures to islands since time immemorial. Islands are finite, set apart, mysterious spaces.

See the tales of Brendan to North America or the Voyage of Bran Maeldun. Greeks got into it with Ulysses and Jason and the Argonauts. Alexander Selkirk was a Scotsman who got marooned on a pacific island near Chile in the 18th century which inspired the Robinson Crusoe story, which established the marooned island paradise genre.

Recent Book and Movie examples of this genre:

- The Lost TV Series
- Lord of the Flies
- Swiss Family Robinson
- Castaway
- Gilligan's Island TV series
- Survivor TV series
- Island of the Blue Dolphins
- Blue Lagoon
- Black Beauty
- Six Days and Seven Nights (Harrison Ford & Anne Heche)
- The Mysterious Island (Jules Verne)
- Treasure Island (Kidnapped)
- King Kong
- Jurassic Park, series



Video Games and Computer Games

I love this genre, and you get to try your survival skills, so here are a few that I recommend:



Marooned, and the sequel: **Marooned II: Secrets of the Akoni**

This was surprisingly fun.

Scientist wakes up on a deserted island with amnesia, and tries to figure out why she is there, and why all the other scientists have disappeared. An energy source peculiar to the island and a mysterious group trying to get it drives a very exciting plot. Ages 10-93. Much of the time is spent unlocking secrets and cut-away-scene plot movies by pouring over items full of hidden objects, about 15 per screen. You can also pick up spears that you can throw to hit objects you are having trouble. Most of the time I can complete a screen in about 7-10 minutes, and they are lovely and clever.



The sequel has our scientist trying to prevent the super energy source from falling in the hands of a mercenary group that have set up base on an adjacent island. Intriguing, fun, and the time passes, and you learn a little chemistry, archaeology, ethnology and detective work.



Return to Mysterious Island and Return to Mysterious Island 2

<http://www.mysteriousislandgame.com/1/uk/>

A sort of sequel and set in the Jules Verne world of Captain Nemo.

It follows Mina, a strong young woman alone on a round-the-world sailing expedition. Caught in a tremendous storm, she becomes stranded on the shores of a wild and apparently uninhabited island. As she explores her new surroundings, she uncovers artifacts, living spaces and technologies left behind by the people who came before her to

this uncharted island.



There is a very intriguing method of finding and assembling natural resources to make new tools, to feed herself, and stay healthy. It is not laborious and repetitive like some survival games. There is almost no violence, and she takes care not to hurt animals and shows a bit of concern for vegetation and the environment of this uncharted island.



You learn a little about animal behavior, pottery making, milling, tool production, chemistry, geology, and marine biology in the process of these two games. There is some lovely music, and the still shots that you maneuver really bring the island and its eco-system to life.

In the second game you also can explore the island as a monkey to accomplish some of the task and help Mina in her quest. But you have to figure out how to convince, scare and entice other monkeys.

The dreamy feel and gritty attitude of the heroine make this game a real winner for me.

Takes about 16 hours of total game time for each, 7 if you use a cheat walk through guide. Ages 10-97





Stranded

The game has no campaign mode, but its "random island" mode is wrapped up in a story where the player is stranded on an abandoned island. **Resource management** is a vital component of gameplay, since the player character has a constant need for food and water, and has to sleep. Sleeping in the open injures the player, unprocessed food is not very effective against hunger and aggressive animals threaten the player. So the player is forced to gather resources like branches, stones and vines to construct tools, buildings and weapons. Each building that is finished will unlock another, more sophisticated building, until the player is able to build a raft to escape from the island and reach his homeland.

There are also some mini-missions such as rescuing kiwi birds or fighting off a pack of blood-thirsty raptors under a time limit. Such custom maps can be created with the built-in map editor. Several of these fan-made maps can be downloaded from the Stranded home page. Although there are some limited settings, such as turning off the need for food, water and sleep, any way of story-telling is limited to a single briefing message after the map has started and creative terrain design.

Stranded II

Because of the unexpected success of Stranded, Peter Schauß started work on the sequel "Stranded II" in late 2003. Development entered public alpha stage in December 2005. But still, the release of the final version didn't happen until June 2007. He supplied an additional update in 2008, but then development on Stranded II was abandoned in favor of work on Counter-Strike 2D. After some time, the Source Code of Stranded II was released under the [GNU General Public License](#), but some days later, Peter Schauß changed the license of the Source Code to [Creative Commons \(by-nc-sa\)](#).

In comparison to its precursor, Stranded II features improved graphics and more items, tools and weapons. Also, Stranded II now has a campaign with a story spanning over a travel to several islands. The fundamental gameplay principles remained the same.

In addition, Stranded II has [scripting](#) capabilities and therefore allows the creation of scripted maps. This enables map creators to incorporate narratives into their stories by use of character dialogues, [quests](#), scripted events or [cut scenes](#).

One goal of Stranded II was to allow an easy creation of [modifications](#) by use of these scripts and editable object definition files. The community-created mods either extend the range of available items ("Extension Mod", "Massive Mod") or take the game scenario to other places ("Lost in Space"). The new items, and the new possibilities to combine these allow the player to discover the game mechanics anew, increasing the replay rate.



STRANDED! (iPhone)

Version: 1.33 Release Date: 2011-03-06 License: Commercial (\$2.99) Developer: Gilligames | App Owner: adammokan
Stranded! is a desert island survival game set in the Space HORSE universe.

Four passengers on a space ship were on a mission to colonize a new planet when the ship crash landed on a planet that is almost completely covered by ocean. You are the only survivor - an upper-management executive from the Decoo corporation, the company that sponsored the original mission.

Now you must use your survival skills to stay alive long enough to get rescued. Build shelter, find food and drink, and collect salvageable parts from the wreckage that wash ashore. Use the parts to build a space radio and call for a rescue team to win the game.

Search for natural resources, then use them to create other items using various combinations.

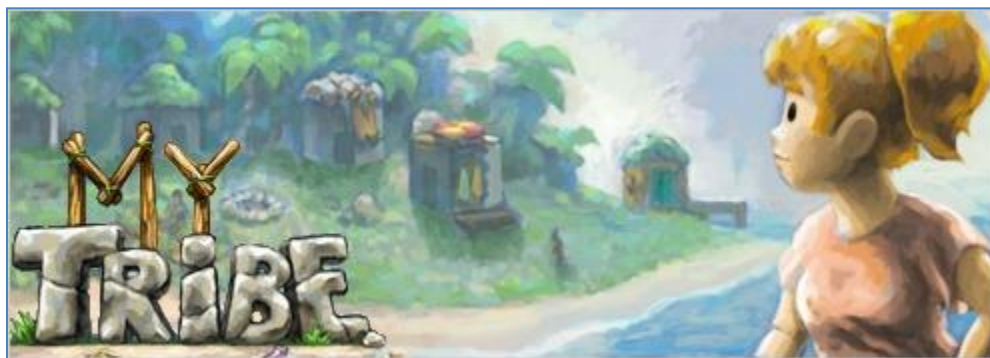
Features:

- Familiar RPG-style inventory system.
- Over 70 different items.
- Randomly generated map with each new game.
- Day/night cycle.

Hints:

- Search dirt areas for small boulders to build a fire pit.
- Use coconuts as an immediate source of nutrition and hydration, but also find fish in shallow water.
- Boar meat provides the best nutrition and health.
- Search beaches often for useful items from the shipwreck.

www.gillgames.com



My Tribe

If you were going to be stranded on a desert island, and you had to pick one computer game to take with you, what would it be? I can't speak for you, but I'd take a game where the characters are stranded on a deserted island with one computer game. That game, naturally, would feature characters stranded on a desert

island with one computer game, centered on a deserted island with...

Ow. Okay, maybe that isn't such a good idea. If the recursion makes your mind hurt too, you could get a copy of Grubby Games' (the creator of [Professor Fizzwizzle](#) and [IncrediBots](#)) latest release instead. In [My Tribe](#), you play as sort of a guardian angel for a tribe of island-dwellers, telling them what to do, dragging them from place to place, and occasionally sprinkling them with a (hopefully) beneficial potion.

As the game starts, you're given a chance to pick an island. For a starting player, it doesn't really matter which you pick; they all have plenty of trees and rocks for you to harvest, and the oceans will provide more than enough fish for your small starting tribe. From there, it's pretty much your standard resource management game. You need to harvest food (in the form of fish and later crops) and wood (for the fire) to feed your tribe, wood and stone to build with. You'll also need to build huts for your tribe to live in, and other buildings when you have enough resources to spare.

The tribe of [My Tribe](#) continues to work even when your computer is off. If you've played the [Virtual Villagers](#) series before, this mechanic will seem very familiar. In fact, the games are similar enough that you may be tempted to skip the tutorial, but there are enough small differences that it might be worth your while to play through it.

One novel mechanic of [My Tribe](#) is that it rewards you for being around. Every so often a crate or barrel will appear in the ocean, or Stardust or Moondust will land on the island. Drop an islander onto these gifts to collect them. Crates and barrels contain recipes, items, or even dangerous insects while Stardust and Moondust can be used in various places to provide all sorts of useful effects, from stocking your stockpiles to building your buildings and researching your research.

Each island also comes with three of the game's eight mysterious objects for you to solve. Once you've figured them out, each one gives a powerful benefit to your tribe, and one of the game's 25 trophies. Trophies can also be gathered by other tasks, ranging from the simple (build a building) to the complex (keep an islander alive for 969 years).



Analysis: When a game as successful as Virtual Villagers comes along, there will naturally be a host of similar titles following in its wake. My Tribe rides the wave of the village sim but is careful to tread its own innovative path while keeping the core concept in familiar territory. The number of islands you can inhabit is staggering (numbering in the billions), and the potions system really sets the game apart from Virtual Villager knockoffs. Grubby Games is an experienced studio and covered all the main bases a casual game should touch upon, making the game easy to get into, easy to come back to, and rewarding no matter how long or short you play.

The biggest strength and weakness of this kind of game is its persistent nature. Part of the reward in playing My Tribe is coming back every so often and seeing how your tribe has progressed while you were away. This also brings two big problems: not being able to play continuously and coming back to find your entire tribe dead. My Tribe has done an admirable job with the first part, though time doesn't seem to work quite the same when the game is open. Unfortunately, the tribe is still prone to sudden die-offs when your back is turned.

Perhaps the biggest problem is the reasons your tribe dies off. It only takes a few islanders to provide the food and wood needed by the entire tribe, so there are basically three things that can go wrong. If you don't stop in and call the stork regularly, your entire tribe may grow too old to have children. If your food gatherers die from old age, the rest of your tribe will lounge around until they starve. And if you forget to mark trees for harvesting (they all start marked "don't harvest me!"), your builders may use up all your firewood, again making everyone starve.

As much fun as it is to look after a tribe of island-dwellers, it hardly seems believable that fifty people would starve themselves because the voice in the sky forgot to tell them which trees were OK for firewood. Even though he didn't forbid them from harvesting trees to start with.

I also find myself underwhelmed by the amount of content in this game. It boasts "billions of islands", but the only important feature is which three of the eight mysteries you get (only 56 possibilities, with repetitions). It also advertises "over 40 powerful potions", yet many of the ones given are purely cosmetic.

Despite its downsides, however, My Tribe is very compelling. I have spent many hours in-game, and in the end, it was well worth the price of admission. If you start playing you will find yourself coming back to it again and again, even if you don't need to yet. You'll set it on Fast overnight and check it nervously in the morning to see if your Lunar Tower has finished. In the end, I had to stop playing not because I'd run out of things to do, but because I had too many *other* things to do... and had been neglecting them while I played.



Planning your efforts

Your skills at fishing and coconut-gathering leave something to be desired, so you decide to plan your food-gathering efforts carefully a week in advance. How many hours should you spend harvesting coconuts, and how many fishing? Remember that your nutritional goal is to eat roughly equal amounts of fish and coconuts. (Your score equals the lesser amount of the two foods - so eating 60 coconuts and 50 fish scores 50.)

Food	Capacity per Hour	Time Spent	Change Time	Max	Number Produced	Score
Fish	1	20	▲▲▲▲	20	20	20
Coconuts	3	20	▲▲▲▲	60	60	50

Cheat
(Have the computer optimally divide your labor for you)
Click here

Back Next

DESERT ISLAND GAME

Got only a few minutes?

Make various calculations about food, shelter, tool, water and contact attempts to see if you survive.

Go online and try <http://desertislandgame.com/>

Honorable Mentions in the Desert Island Video Game

Genre:

- The Sims 2: Castaway
- The Sims Castaway Stories
- Left 4 Dead 2
- Lost in Blue
- Lost in Blue 2
- Lost in Blue 3
- Lost in Blue: Shipwrecked
- The ClueFinders 5th Grade Adventures: The Secret of the Living
- The Oregon Trail (video game) Not desert island, but similar idea.
- Minecraft
- Survival Kids
- Castaway (Armor Games)
- Castaway 2



Volcano



Druid Apps for Your I-Phone, Part 2 : Story Time for Kids

By Mike the Fool

I read a lot to my pre-school children, and link to a lot of YouTube videos of fairy tales. I spent quite a bit of time exploring the 100,000+ iTunes apps for stories. Some are free, some are not, some are "lite"/demo versions. Some are rather crappy. Few are better than a good library collection of stories, but useful when on the go, stuck in traffic/line with the kids or at the dentist. Here they are:

A great number of them fall into certain formats: rehash of public domain old ethic collections, new artist's vehicle for getting out picture books, and fairy tale/Aesop works, Christian/bible time works. I tend to find collections give you more bang for your buck than individual story apps.

I didn't list their full names, but the short-hand name and icon should be enough to find them.

Purple= Excellent
Green=Good
Yellow=Okay
Gray = Mediocre

STORY COLLECTIONS (GRAPHIC ON NEXT PAGE)

Story Robe: For those who want to make their own slideshows of a favorite story and share with child and friends. Ages 1-99.

World Lite: Insert your child's name into this story. Ages 3-7.

Story Lite: A story that you can pre-set with different formats, characters, ending, names, etc. Ages 4-7.

Mythbooks: Download various Public Domain collections (mostly 19th century) from numerous ethnicities (Norse, Celtic, Vedic, Egyptian, Japanese, Greek, etc. Ages 6-14.

Adventure: Sort of like "Choose your own adventures" where you make decisions in the stories and that changes the course of the story. Age 4-9.

Read Me Stories: You get one free new story a day. I logged in regularly, got about 49 when I hit the limit. You can buy a whole bunch at a time too. Same artist. Usually 3 minute, flash-cartoons, with voice actors, original stories. Sometimes a bit of music. Very simple. Ages 1-5.

Touchy Books: Purchase a mixture of mixture of color story books, some with fairy/myth. Mostly static/some moving elements, music and voice option. About \$2/each. Ages 2-6.

Bedtime Stories: Similar to Touchy books.

Wild Fables: .99 flash-animated paged Aesop stories.

Bedtime Mommy: a few flash cartoons, more for a fee.



Magic Key: A long text story about a child in a magical forest. Age 6-10.

Beatrix Potter Collection 1: several stories of the 19th century sensation. Odd Victorian language, lavished with original illustrations, recommend paraphrasing the words for the younger ones. Age 3-7.

Bedstories: About 84 tales from 19th century. Grimm, Anderson, Aesop. 1 photo, rest is text. Age 4-10.

Fables: Aesop: About 84 tales from a 19th century Aesop collection. No photos. Age 7-11.

Bedtime Story: Always crashes! Audio retelling of Grimm stories.

Bedtime Stories: About 45 stories, likely stolen from generic internet, some with fantasy style, but usually with a Christian moral. No photos. Ages 5-8.

Stories for Children: Same collection as above 45 stories, only with about 20.

Arabian Nights Stories: 19th century source, all 40 stories (Alladin, Camaralzaman, Barber, Enchanted Horse, Sisters, Nouraddin, Ali Baba, etc.) Sound recordings, no text. Ages 6-11. Might have to pause to explain parts.

SEE THE GRAPHIC ON THE NEXT PAGE

Princess and the Goblin 19th century Scottish story, 32 chapter book, text. Age 5-10.

Princess and Curdie Same as above

Goodknyght: Dark Forest -Lite: Part of an entertaining book series, in chapter form with a Prince and Pauper theme and all their hijinks together. Age 5-9.

Story Mouse: Traditional fairy tales, same artist, picture book format, each bought separately. Previews available.

Folk Tales of Africa: 6 or so stories that you have not likely heard. Ages 6-11. Text only.

Children's Fairy Tales 1, 2 Lite: Can't review, expired free version. Similar to Story Mouse format.

Indian Moral Bed Time Stories: 154 stories from India and Vedic tales. No pictures. Age 6-11.

Childhood's Favorites and Fairy Stories: A very clunky interface, but a lot of good material from 19th century. Take time to figure out the HELP menu's walkthrough of how to navigate. You have 65 pages of nursery rhymes, 54 pages of nursery tales (e.g. 3 bears), 81 screens of children's poems, about 34 fairy tales, 115 pages of old children's poems (sloppily without line breaks!), and of course lots of Aesop fables. A few extra days making it more readable and user friendly, , and I would have given it a green. Too much prep time required to use. Ages 6-11.

Fairy Tales: Full version of 19th century public domain books on Aesop, Hans Anderson, Grimm. Double tap to read chapters. Text. Age 5-10 You can choose the font.

Fairy Tales 2: As above, but 65 Fairy Tales of England.

English Story World: Korean production in English of 14 color paged audio/text of basic fairy tales (e.g. Red Riding Hood). Have to buy most of them, only a few samplers. It pans through a page, some minor animations. You can also enable Korean language, if you wish.

Andersen's Fairy Tales: 19th Century book, easy to use chapters, text only. Ages 5-12

Just So Stories (Kipling): Now, some think Kipling a bit overly Anglo-Saxon, but he wrote some stuff that stuck. 12 chapters, no pictures.

Chinese Mythology: 16 chapters, 19th century. Not very fun to read, lots of academic notes. Ages 10-18.

More English Fairy Tales: Joseph Jacobs. 44 tales, one photo each, nice parchment background, paragraphs separated, moderately readable. Age 6-12.

Grimm's Fairy Tales: 19th century, 33 tales, woodcut pictures at the top. Chapters of tales have woodblock first letters. Readable paragraph spacing. Ages 6-12. Font size adjustable.



HONORABLE MENTION STORIES (mostly single stories)

GRAPHIC ON THE NEXT PAGE

Magic Dragon: Puff the Magic Dragon animated 2 minute video WITHOUT the sad ending. BOO!

Kid Song Box Lite: 4 little nursery rhyme sing alongs with animation.

A Children's Garden of Verses:

Humpty Dumpty (Once upon an App): Flash cartoon of nursery rhyme, puzzle of putting him together. 4 or 5 other in series.

The Fairy Tales of Andrew Lang – Lite: A mixture of his colored fairy books (Blue Book , Yellow Book, etc.) and Arabian Nights Tales. Samples of each color book. Mildly readable. All in one app is nice, but they are also available in separate apps by another company raiding the public domain. Age 6-12.

123 Color: Paint by numbers for animals, seasons, shapes, and such. Age 1-4.

Robin Hood: a 70 page illustrated photo book, with read along text to each illustrated page, and/or audio. Ages 4-9. (By I-StoryTime, see below).

Legend of Sleep Hollow same series

Peter Pan same series

Jack and the Beanstalk same series

Fred the Fish: Same series. Tries to convince the Polar Bear to be vegetarian. Ages 2-5

ShellMovies: 4 Shell Silverstein animations Toy Eater, Giving Tree, Runny on Rount Mushmore, Slithergadee. Ages 5-9.

Rodokushojo: Little animated school girl reads Japanese classics in English, while you sit by the fire. Buy more books after the free sample of Roshomon. Ages 11-18.

The Enormous Carrot (Mini Book series) : Rabbit needs help pulling out a really big carrot. Age 1-5.

Red Riding Hood (Interactive Short Stories Series): Someone's daughter must have animated this in 3rd grade. About 8 slides and text. Age 5-9.

The Wonderful Wizard of Oz: Scanned in, but readable version of the original children's novel. Lots of the original illustrations too. Age 5-9.

How the Zebra got his Stripes (Reading A-Z series): African stories of how donkey used camouflage to get out of work. Age 2-7. More books in this series. About 10 slides, text and audio. Fun. Also has vocab links and after story questions.

iKid Stories: Sampler is about Easter Bunny, simple watercolor, easy to read text. Can switch English & French. Age 3-7. More available.

Elsa (iEasyReader Lite): 8 panels about a wonderful dog. Ehh. Slowly scrolling words, adjustable speed.

The Tale of Timmy Tiptoes (Talkie Book Series): Beatrix Potter story about a squirrel going nuts about acorns in the winter. A nice format. Age 2-7.

Sophie the dog , Volume 1: 8 slide story, with hand scribbled story about a dog who likes to eat fish, Age 1-4. Part of series.

Three Little Pigs: - The Wolf's Story (Reading A-Z Series): New version, wolf is hungry and sick, sneezes a lot, vegetarian, and pigs help him in the winter.

The Snow Queen (Yasmin Studios): Fun retelling. 25 new illustrations, story, audio. Want to read more.

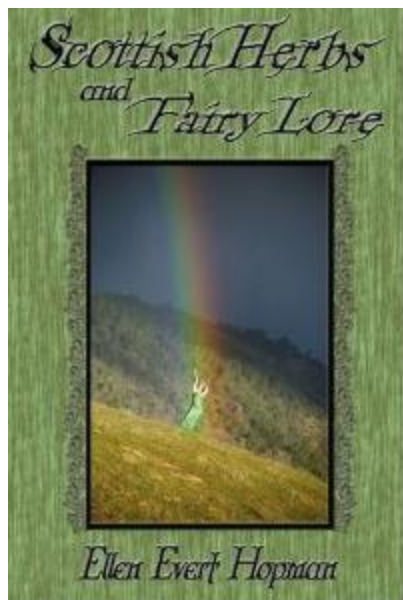


I like the Story Chimes Series.

Audio plus read along text, age 2-7. Fun to read. Most are okay.



For Story Chimes: I also recommend the Jack and the Beanstalk, Princess and the Pea, 3 Pigs, 3 Pigs (2), The Giant Radish, Red Shoes, Thumbelina, Rumpelstiltskin, and Grampa.



SCOTTISH HERBS AND FAIRY LORE

by Ellen Evert Hopman

Reviewed by Mike the Fool (5 out of 5 stars)

A more extensive review will later be posted on Amazon, I need a few months to really immerse myself in this book!

I try to get my hands on every book that Ellen releases. There are only a handful of Druids out there who have more than 1 good book in them, and can keep the presses running. None, have been more successful in different genres than Ellen.

I must say that of all her books, this will be one that I use the most often.

Don't let the title fool you. While the herbal part is great, this is also **a very broad picture** of the everyday folk-religious life of various peoples in Scotland. Herbs don't grow and get picked in a vacuum!

If I had the urge to start again as a Scottish pagan, this is the book I would want for my daily lifestyle and activities. If you want abstract gods/theology/stories and fancy rituals, that is a different book. This is for the common man dealing with common problems on an earthy level.

The tone is helpful, friendly, encouraging. Endnotes litter the page to dutifully lead you to the source material. Ellen is very upfront and when she has an opinion about something that is not in the folk record, she clearly states it. Her talent is assembling the numerous collections of folklore and herblore, sifting them, updating them, and presenting a workable version.

Not that it lacks material, there's enough here to keep even the most ambitious Druid more than busy, but the presentation seems very organic, as one piece leads into another, so that as one immerse oneself into the book, you say

to yourself, "Oh, yes, that's the way to enhance this part". Never is Ellen saying it's the only way, and she often gives alternatives, based on circumstances of modern life. **If you go through a year's cycle and check this book every 2 weeks or so**, you'll have a much fuller experience and want to explore numerous tangents, and such a rich life it would be.

SECTIONAL REVIEW OF THE BOOK

This is a useful book that you cannot read in one go, it is a reference book, chock a block full of lore, something to keep at hand whenever you need a tidbit of advice, a sudden malady, a plan for a seasonal activity, or a folk custom to round out a life-cycle event. It covers so much ground, and paints a full picture.

Introduction, The Old Gods, The Druids - These 30 pages set the historical scene on how Scotland was a land of mixed cultures with regions heavily Gaelic, Norse, Saxon and Brithonic/Pict; with . She is usually careful to indicate in later chapters where a custom, herb or term is primarily found in one of these regions/ethnicities. There is one little typo error that lists the arrival of the Gaelic invasion at 500 BCE, when it should be 500 CE. But the rest seems right.

Lore of the Elements – An herbalist and pagan was much more intimately dependent on the land. To collect, prepare, and use herbs you need the right water, choose the timing of collection, and consider the location that is granting the boon to you. Timing the phase of the moon and tides affects the potency of herbs and their properties. Springs, wells, rivers and other sources of water existed and had their charms and gifts to thank them. Sometimes building a fire from scratch, choice of woods, or keeping the hearthfire also affected the health of the household and spirits.

Stones, Bones and Talismans – Walk around the countryside and you'll find little items from animals, minerals, and natural phenomenon that may become part of your toolkit. She goes over several traditionally prized items and their usage. Not exhaustive, but enough to get you thinking.

Holy Days and Holidays – Now, before your eyes glaze over at another list of the 8 festivals, please note that she has a different approach for 26 pages. This is not high-faluting language. There are about 35 festivals here, often closely packed around what we call the big 8, each with a different angle. She adds recipes, quotes, bits of songs, herbal usages appropriate for that period of the year, and some crafting activities.

Life Cycles – You don't see this so often. 18 pages about courtship, marriage, conception, childbirth and death rites. All times when herbalist and doctors might be consulted for assistance.

Divination Practice: A 4 page side focus on guessing the future for the items in the previous chapters and a few famous examples of those with the second sight.

A Highland Herbal: Yes, this is what you thought would be the main portion of the book. It is the heart of the book, thus the center portion, and it is great! 72 pages and about 145 herbs (see a sample below) each with a lovely classic woodblock and various Latin, English and Gaelic names for the herbs. After a very basic explanation of general preparation methods (more in her other books) she drops in notes on collection, usage of the parts, cautions, folklore, seasonal festival use (if any), and any mythological associations. She is also kind to share her bibliography of 20 sources.

Lore of the Sea: Celts almost invariably lived near the sea or a river, and no part of the British Isles is more than 20 miles from the ocean, one day's walk. Any Scottish pagan would have needed to know about boats, placating the spirits of the water, and getting fish.

Farming, Fertility and Harvest Customs: Herbs are helpful, but crops are vital to Scottish life. A few tips on making your farm a more wholesome place.

Domestic Life: Where did the pagan Scot go after a big community festival? He/she went home. Realistically, that is where most of their life and magical traditions were practiced. While covered in many of the previous sections, I wish she had elaborated further on these customs.

Sacred Birds and Animals: While not exhaustive, the breadth of animals discussed here in 14 pages, each with a few sentences, gives one a flavor for the many creatures that shared the landscape with the Scots, and their role in the consciousness of the people.

Magical Practices: Here is an interesting example of how Ellen takes a step back and looks at the various ways that the Scots approached magic, healing, protective, and cursing; and then she fills in numerous examples with a sentence or two description. A good primer, and any good herbalist will find this a good first foray into the subject.

Elves, Sprits, Witches, Monsters, Fairies: The Scots weren't the only folk that used magic, but there was a whole realm of supernatural creatures - below the deity level – but not quite human that the Scots worried about, placated, avoided and endlessly talked about. She gives a good overview of the main cast of characters and what to do about them over 16 pages, a good basis to do more reading.

Now any herbalist or part-time Druid will mangle the Gaelic terms for herb, folklore and festivals. It is a painful fact of life. Thus, as ever, Ellen comes to our rescue with 15 pages of rough approximation of how an English speaker would try to pronounce these terms.

She also kindly provided an extensive index to find all those reference to various terms, fairies, herbs that are scattered about the book. In addition to her 2 pages of Herbal bibliography, there is a 3 page bibliography of where she got all those folklore and custom terms, mostly heavy-weights in the field, but a few newer online repositories for those who don't like to lurk in large libraries for such works.

HERBAL PAGE SAMPLE FROM THE BOOK

(With permission) (Sorry, I don't have the original scanned woodblock image)



Thistle

Part used: the leaves, stem and root

Gaelic: *gíogan, cluaran, cluas an fleidh*

Latin: *Onopordon acanthium, Carduus heterophyllus, Sonchus oleraceus*

The roots of Scotch thistle (*Onopordon acanthium*) are used as tea for catarrhal conditions. Simmer 1 ounce of the roots per 1 ½ pints of water until 1 pint remains. The fresh juice can be applied to tumors and ulcers. The flowering plant is a heart tonic. The florets are eaten like artichoke; the stalks can also be peeled and eaten. Gather the leaves before the flowers bloom and remove the prickles before cooking. The Melancholy thistle (*cluas an fleidh*)

(*Carduus heterophyllus*) is decocted in wine to dispel depression. Sow thistle (*Sonchus oleraceus*) is the best tasting genus. The young spring gathered leaves are eaten raw or cooked. Add the leaves to salads and soups. Cook the stems like asparagus after removing the outer skin.

Lore: "the flower of Scotland", the thistle was adopted as the national symbol after the battle of Cargs. A Danish invader had attempted to make a surprise attack on a Scottish clan but he stepped barefoot on a thistle and his howls of pain foiled the attack. The thistle symbolizes strength and tenacity through adversity, thriving in the wild, damp landscape of Scotland.

Her site; www.elleneverthopman.com

<http://www.pendraigpublishing.com/products.asp?genre=Folk>

The ISBN is 978-1-936922-01-7

There are 152 images of herbs included in the book.

The book has 310 pages total.

The price is \$17.95

If you love Ellen, look at her other herbal output of lore and wisdom:

- Walking the World in Wonder: A Children's Herbal
- Druid's Herbal: Sacred Tree Medicine
- Making Kitchen Medicines: A Practical Guide
- A Druid's Herbal for the Sacred Earth Year
- Tree Medicine, Tree Magic
- Gifts from the Healing Earth (DVD)



Eisteddfod: How Welsh can you get?

On the eve of this year's Eisteddfod, Jasper Rees recalls his nervewracking attempts to find out.

Anna Davis representing 'Fruits of the Earth' with her attendants in the Royal National Eisteddfod annual arts festival procession in 1937 Photo: Getty Images/ Hulton Archive

By Jasper Rees

8:00AM BST 27 Jul 2011

The stage is aglow. Somewhere out there beyond the lights an audience of perhaps a thousand can be made out, including, near the front, three judges. Cameras patrol the faces of the performers.

Though English by birth and upbringing, I am doing the Welshest thing of all, competing in Welsh on Welsh television on the national stage of Welsh Wales – the National Eisteddfod. The worry – the terror – is that I'll fluff my Welsh lines.

At first sight the Eisteddfod looks like any other country festival. Armies of attendants in Day-Glo livery. Happy humanity in cagoules and fleeces congregating under gun-metal skies to cheer and drink and commune. Television presenters with cheerful hair poking microphones in faces. But here, you pass through a portal and something is definitely different. Everyone seems to be speaking Welsh.

The annual celebration of Welshness, of cymreictod, known as the National Eisteddfod takes place every summer in the first week of August. The venue commutes each year between north and south. Embarking on a project to reclaim my heritage and turn myself into a Welshman, I first went two years ago to the Eisteddfod in Bala on the edge of Snowdonia. Last year it was in Ebbw Vale in the Valleys. This year it's the turn of Wrexham.

Every conceivable representative of Welsh life has an outlet along the tented avenues: the political parties, from Plaid Cymru to the Tories, farming and teaching unions, the universities from Lampeter up to Bangor, Welsh museums, publishers, manufacturers, harpists, jewellers, cottage-rental companies, single-issue agitators of various hues. There's also a Welsh learners tent. Here people such as myself, who are tentatively grappling with the language of the land of our fathers, meet and exchange nervous pleasantries.

But the focus of attention is a huge pink pavilion that dominates the Maes (as the Eisteddfod's field is known in Welsh). It is here on the penultimate afternoon that you are greeted by one of the great Welsh sights. Onstage is a seated array of druids and bards in various shades of eye-catching hoods and robes: forthright blue, searing turquoise, ultimate white. This is the Gorsedd, or bardic circle, who keep alive the great tradition of Welsh poetry that stretches back beyond 1176, when the first Eisteddfod was held in Lord Rhys ap Gruffudd's castle in Cardigan.

The lights dip. In from the back of the auditorium various figures process wearing robes of burgundy or British racing green, variously bearing cushions, trumpets and, in one case, a huge monumental sword. Soon enough a man in a white robe and a small round hat enters bearing a book. This is the Archdruid of Wales. It doesn't pay to seek deep-rooted antecedents for the elaborate theatrical construct that now unfolds. The week of ceremonial was devised in the 1790s by an enthusiastic celebrant of Welsh bardic traditions who called himself Iolo Morganwg (non-bardic name: Edward Williams). Indeed, he was so enthusiastic that he invented some fresh traditions – costumes, regalia, rituals – and it is thanks to these that the National Eisteddfod's ceremonial is sometimes derided by outsiders as ever so slightly bogus.

What is indisputably antique is the Welsh veneration of poetry as a public and democratic art form. The skills associated with Welsh poetry – the composition of the fiendishly tricky verse metre known as *cynghanedd*, which means harmony – slid into abeyance after the Norman occupation and Henry VIII's Act of Union. The Eisteddfod in its current form took shape as a political response to a public inquiry into the state of Welsh education, which in 1846 attributed the perceived ignorance of the Welsh to the influences of chapel and the Welsh language.



It's impossible to imagine the scene that unfolds in the pavilion happening in any other culture. The Archdruid gives a short speech, and then names the winner of this year's Chair. When his bardic pseudonym is called out, a victorious poet identifies himself (or more rarely herself). He is duly clothed in a purple robe with gold braiding, ushered to the stage and enthroned in a specially commissioned chair. Everyone claps furiously as Men of Harlech loops out of the organ.

But it's not just poets who can win things. Welsh musicians, actors, singers and choirs compete across a range of categories defined not only by art form but also age, gender, number.

For my second Eisteddfod last year, I joined Pendyrus Male Choir. Founded in the Rhondda Fach in 1924, it is one of the most venerable choirs of Wales. The adjective also holds for many of its loyal choristers, some of whom can remember the last time they competed, in 1968.

Wearing the crested blue jacket of the choir, I sit in the waiting area watching a live video feed piped in from the pavilion stage. I can't help noticing that the camera gets in good and tight on choral faces. It strikes me that if you don't know the words, you are going to look like John Redwood, who when Welsh Secretary was famously caught lip-synching badly to *Hen Wlad Fy Nhadau* (Land of My Fathers).

Somewhere in my guts a butterfly clambers out of its chrysalis. As all 80 of us line up backstage, I do another word run-through of the two songs I know least, the warp-speed *Hela'r Sgyfarnog* (Hunting the Hare) and the melancholy ballad *Cennin Aur* (Daffodils).

We're moving, and I am suddenly onstage among the second tenors. A hush descends. Our charismatic young conductor, Stewart Roberts, raises his baton. I glue my eyes on him and don't remove them for the next 15 minutes. Our four-song set also consists of some jaunty Bellini (in Welsh) and a dissonant, fist-clenched anthem called *Heriwn, Wynebwn Y Wawr* (Let Us Challenge, Let Us Face the Dawn). It's a Rolls-Royce performance, all effortless power and precision cornering. I am word-perfect.

Later we learn that we have been placed third. Second are Llanelli ("Llanelli!" say various choristers, open-mouthed in disbelief). The winners are *Côr Meibion Taf* from Cardiff, who leap to their feet like a football crowd, fisting the air in triumph. Pendyrus choristers clap sportingly.

As the evening darkens, the beer swimming into our veins mutates anger to sorrow and the old Welsh acceptance of fate's whims. Until 2012, that is, when the Eisteddfod comes south again.

Jasper Rees's book *'Bred of Heaven: One Man's Quest to Reclaim His Welsh Roots'* is published by Profile on Aug 4, and will be BBC Radio 4's *Book of the Week* from Aug 8. To order for £11.99 plus £1.25 p&p, call 0844 871 1515 or visit books.telegraph.co.uk



Irish Medical Education Through the Many Ages

July 8, 2011

'Monastic medicine was wiped out by the suppression of the monasteries by the Tudors from the mid-1500s onwards'
Prof Pierce A Grace of the University of Limerick examines the earliest origins of medicine in Ireland, where the lines between fact and mythology are sometimes blurred.

This year is an important one in Irish medical education, as we commemorate the tercentenary of the founding of the School of Medicine at Trinity College Dublin, and celebrate the graduation of the first medical doctors from the University of Limerick. However, for as long as we know, people have been practising medicine in Ireland. Yet what is not so well known is how people trained in medicine before the modern era and the founding of the

School of Medicine at Trinity in 1711.

In 1649-50 Dubhaltach Mac Fhirbhisigh compiled his famous *Book of Genealogies*, the manuscript of which is conserved in the archives in University College Dublin. Mac Fhirbhisigh, from Sligo, was a historian and genealogist who knew Irish, English, Latin and Greek.

The *Book of Genealogies* covers the period from pre-Christian times to the mid-17th Century and contains, among other things, lists of kings, saints, poets and physicians. The information was collected from a variety of sources and compiled just as Cromwell's armies ravaged Ireland, when a huge number of Gaelic manuscripts were destroyed.

According to Mac Fhirbhisigh, the first doctor ever in Éirinn was Capa and the first female doctor was Eaba. After telling us who the doctors of the Fir Bolg were, he mentions Diancecht, who was the craft god of medicine for the Tuatha dé Dannan.

The line between myth and fact is very blurred for the pre-Christian era and it is really impossible to say how medicine was organised or how physicians were trained in that time. It is possible that the Druids were involved in medicine, but we have little information on this.

Old Irish law

The Brehon Laws applied in Gaelic Ireland until the early 17th Century. John O'Donovan and Eugene O'Curry translated the laws from medieval manuscripts in the 19th Century, and Daniel Binchy produced his six-volume *Corpus Iuris Hibernici* in the 20th Century. The laws were handed down orally until the coming of writing to Ireland with Christianity.

They were first written in old Irish between 750 and 850AD and copied, with commentaries in middle Irish, in law schools between the 14th and 16th Centuries.

The training of doctors is not recorded in the laws, but there are references to treatment by properly-trained physicians, who were called *liaig* (leech) or *midach téchta*. The trained doctor had considerable status in the túath and some were recognised as ‘masters’ (*ollam*).

Herbs were frequently used to treat patients and surgery may have been performed (*fuil midaig téchta*). If a physician was deemed not fit to practise, he was distrained by removing his lancet and horsewhip, and by tying a thread round the ring finger. The physicians’ fees were based on the wounds sustained by, and the status of, the patient.

Some of what the early medical students might have learned included the ‘12 doors to the soul’, which were defined anatomical sites, e.g. the *popliteal fossa*. They would also have known of the seven most serious fractures in the body, including the fracture of a tooth. Wounds were also classified in great detail, ranging from a harmless ‘white blow’ (*mbanbeimen*) to a fatal injury (*croligiú chuntabartach báis*).



Prof Pierce A Grace, author of this article.

However, all of this activity had more to do with working out the compensation due for an injury rather than any medical treatment, per se.

Historical doctors

It is not until 860AD that we find the first historical reference to a doctor in Ireland, when it was noted in the *Annals of the Four Masters*, also translated by O’Donovan, that the death had occurred of Maelodhar Ua Tindridh, the most learned physician in Ireland. It would seem that from an early time, medicine was hereditary in Ireland.

It certainly was in mediaeval Gaelic Ireland (and, indeed, some people might say that it still is!). The Carneys were doctors in Connacht, while the Ó hÍceadha were the physicians to the O’Brien kings of Thomond in Munster. The Ó Conchobhairs were physicians to the Mac Giolla Padraig chiefs, who were rulers of Upper Ossory until the early 17th Century.

We know a lot about the Ó Conchobhairs because they maintained a medical school at Aghmacart, near Cullahill in modern Co Laois. It is likely that the other medical families also had schools, but we know nothing of them.

The medical school at Aghmacart was in existence in 1500 and disappeared from view in 1611. We know, through the work of Aoibheann Nic Dhonnchadha of the Dublin Institute of Advanced Studies, that several generations of Ó Conchubhair practised medicine and maintained the school there.

One of their main activities was to translate European Latin texts into Irish (e.g. Gilbert’s *Lilium Medicinae*), but they also added their own interpretations and revisions. Donnchadh Óg (1581-1611), who was described as “*ullamh Osraighi re leghes*”, was particularly adept at translation.

In a note written about him by Risteard Ó Conchubhair (1561-1625), it is stated that Donnchadh Óg was the “best of doctors in Ireland in his own time — and that without leaving Ireland”. It would seem, therefore, that some doctors travelled overseas to obtain medical education even at this early period.

The presence of Donnchadh Albanach (1571-1647) in the school indicates that Scottish students attended the medical school; we know that medical kindreds also existed in Gaelic Scotland at this period.

Often it is the notes in the margins of the texts that are the most interesting. Cathal Duinnleibhe, who was a student in the school in the 1590s, bemoans the loss of Mairghréag and says, “upon my word, I don’t know what I shall do without her from now on”.

Later he commented on the devastation wrought in Laois by the governor, Sir Henry Power, and the sheriff, Sir Robert Piggott. We hear little more from the school after that. With the Tudor conquest and the flight of the Earls, the whole structure of patronage in Gaelic Ireland disappeared and with it the medical and the law schools. From now on, aspiring Gaelic medical students would have to leave Ireland to be trained.

Anglo-Norman medicine

In the Anglo-Norman colony, medicine was in the hands of the monasteries and members of the regular clergy practised as physicians. To this day the Archbishop of Canterbury has the right to award honorary Lambeth degrees in medicine (DM), which is a historical remnant of early monastic medicine.

The Priory of St John the Baptist in Thomas Street in Dublin was the biggest mediaeval hospital in Ireland. In 1334, St John’s had 155 beds and remained in use as a hospital until the 17th Century. However, while it was called a ‘hospital’, it is probable that more praying than healing went on in it.

We do not know how the monks were trained in medicine, but one monk, called the *Infirmarium*, was responsible for looking after the infirmary and probably learned on the job or as an apprentice to his predecessor.

Herbal medicine was also very important for the monks. In the Wellcome Library in London there is a beautiful manuscript, written in English, by an Irish monk around 1400. It is entitled *The Virtue of Herbs of Master Jon Gardiner* and describes medicinal uses for herbs including parsley, St John’s wort (hypericum), saffron and rosemary.

In 1346, it was recorded that 14d was spent on “rose water and sugar for the Prior when sick”. However, the treatment appears not to have worked, as the next entry in the roll is for: “Boards and nails for the Prior’s coffin, 4s, and a further 3d for shoes for the prior to be buried in”.

Shedding of blood

Following the edict *Ecclesia abhorrent a sanguine*, promulgated at the Council of Tours in 1169, monks were forbidden to perform surgical operations, as the shedding of blood was believed to be incompatible with their priestly duties. Barbering and tonsuring, therefore, became the preserve of the lay barbitonsores, or barbers, who shaved the monks and kept their hair in order.



By the 15th Century, a body of surgical knowledge was beginning to emerge among this group of laymen. To bring some order to this disparate group, Henry VI issued a charter in 1446, creating the Dublin Guild of Barbers, dedicated to St Mary Magdalene.

'These medical men (all men) brought with them a new scientific view of medicine, based on dissection and experiment; e.g. the anatomy of Andreas Vesalius (*De Humani Fabricus Corporis*, 1543) and the physiology of William Harvey (*De Motus Cordis*, 1628).'

The charter expressly commanded that the apprentices should be: “free of condition, of the English nation and of good conversation”; no mere Irish need apply! Monastic medicine was wiped out by the suppression of the monasteries by the Tudors from the mid-1500s onwards.

The 17th Century brought huge change to Ireland and to Irish medicine. The Gaelic world and its medicine were destroyed after the Flight of the Earls, but some Irish doctors who had trained in European universities, e.g. Edmund O’Meara (1614-1681), Thomas Arthur (1593–1675), Gerald Fennell (d. c.1666) and Christopher Talbot were active.

However, apart from the Guild of Barber Surgeons, there was no regulation of medicine; all sorts of quacks and charlatans practised openly in Dublin at the time. Charles I offered to establish a College of Physicians in Ireland in the 1620s, but this plan came to nought.

In the wake of the Cromwellian army, some new doctors arrived in Ireland, notably John Stearne (1624-69), Abraham Yarner, and Sir William Petty (of ‘Down’ survey fame, so called because it was written ‘down’). These new doctors along with a few of the remaining Irish physicians (Arthur and Fennell) set up the ‘Fraternity of Physicians’ in 1654, which would eventually obtain its first royal charter from Charles II in 1667 to become the Royal College of Physicians in Dublin.

More importantly, however, these medical men (all men) brought with them a new scientific view of medicine, based on dissection and experiment; e.g. the anatomy of Andreas Vesalius (*De Humani Fabricus Corporis*, 1543) and the physiology of William Harvey (*De Motus Cordis*, 1628). To encourage the study of natural sciences a group of intellectuals, including doctors Dun, Mullen, Petty and Molyneaux, established the Dublin Philosophical Society in 1683.

However, it would be another 60 years before the apothecaries became incorporated in 1745, and another 100 years before the surgeons could extricate themselves from the barbers and establish the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland in 1784.

It would appear, then, that in both Gaelic and Anglo-Norman mediaeval Ireland, medical knowledge was acquired by apprenticeship to a master or an ollam. The Gaelic Irish medical families ran medical schools and accumulated a huge body of knowledge about medicine from their own experience and international texts. Herbal medicine was important to both Gaelic and Anglo-Norman physicians.

They all seem to have been very well aware of contemporary European medicine, which was heavily based on Galenist principles. In both societies, women were admitted to medicine on an equal footing to men, and some students travelled from and to Ireland to learn medicine. This whole medical infrastructure collapsed with the suppression of the monasteries and the destruction of Gaelic Ireland — both events achieved by the Tudors. From the early 1600s, many Irish students went to Europe to train as doctors, attending universities across the continent, e.g. Angers, Leiden, Leuven, Montpellier, Paris, Bordeaux, Prague, Reims, Edinburgh and Glasgow. It has been estimated that almost 1,300 Irishmen obtained medical degrees from European Universities between 1640 and 1800.

The modern era of scientific medicine was heralded by the doctors of the post-Cromwellian period. These men saw the need to train doctors in Ireland and, on August 16, 1711, the School of Medicine at Trinity College opened its doors for business.

Three hundred years on, the Graduate Entry School of Medicine at Limerick is the newest member of the Irish medical schools group, which collectively has trained thousands of Irish and international medical students and contributed much to the science and art of medicine.

- **Prof Pierce A Grace**, Professor of Surgical Science, University of Limerick, Department of Surgery, MWRH, Limerick



Celtic Games of Our Fathers – From Setanta to Rory McIlroy

Way back in the mists of time, a hero came to Scotland from Ireland. With three massive steps, he came bounding over from the green swards of the Emerald Isle to the Isle of Skye. Hanging off his thighs and traveling with him were 80 other people: 80 more on each arm; nine more spinning in his hair. He came to Scotland to compete his education as a fosterling with the Warrior Queen Sgáthach; to learn to battle and love. As a gift in return, he gave the game of shinty to Scotland.

Historians, though uncertain about exact chronologies, generally testify to the both the antiquity and commonality of the ball and

stick games of the Irish and the Scots. The above legend of the Queen Sgáthach and the origins of camán in Scotland, quoted by my good friend, Hugh Dan MacLennan, the Mícéal Ó Muircheartaigh of Scotland, captures through metaphor the common heritage of the Irish and Scottish national games. ‘The game of camanachd’, MacLennan continues, ‘is peculiar to the Celts of Scotland and Ireland - peculiar that is to say, to the old Scottish or Gaelic-speaking people’. Shinty - *iomain* or *camanachd* in Scottish Gaelic - was introduced along with Christianity and the Gaelic language to Scotland around 1500 years ago by Irish missionaries. It is noteworthy that Saint Colmcille is believed to have arrived in Scotland as a result of a little local difficulty at an Irish hurling match! Born in c.521 A.D. in Donegal, Colmcille is actually the first historical person to be referenced in connection with the ancient game.

Before the codification of sport in the nineteenth century, stick and ball games existed as early forms of field entertainment and ceremonial practices in indigenous cultures across the world. There may have been cross fertilisation, or in the case of the native South American Aracuanos stick game or Isle of Man *cammóg* game, eradication, of playing styles through the ages as civilisations and empires rose and fell, but the human impulse to propel a ball through use of stick or body is a universal emotion that lay at the root of society’s greatest sports today.

Many respected academics and commentators on Scottish heritage acknowledge the Celtic Scots from Ireland as the originators of a pan-Celtic kingdom which once embraced the north of Ireland and the western seaboard of Scotland. Father Ninian Macdonald, the shinty historian claimed in the 1930s that:

Shinty is one of the oldest games in the world. It is nearly as old as the Gaelic language itself. Wherever in antiquity we find that language, be it in Ireland or Scotland, there, too, have we shinty with it...The oldest legends and myths, written over a thousand years ago, represent the mythic heroes of the Gael...as engaging in gigantic matches all over the lands of the Gael. At the dawn of history proper, with Columba (Colmcille) at Iona and King Brude at Inverness, we have historic evidence that the game was played...*Camanachd* is therefore a game of high antiquity.

A survey of the ancient Brehon laws of Ireland casts an illuminating light on the significance of *camán*.. Fostered children had to be provided with a hurley; bronze and copper ornamentation on the hurleys delineated between ranks of the sons of noblemen, and immunity was granted to a player who injured another during the course of play. The early Irish had a tremendous love of competition, be it ball games or the board games of winter – and some renowned students have traced the origins of chess to these early peoples. Gaelic scholars have recorded references to native ball and stick games back as far as the Battle of Moytura, near Cong, County Mayo, in 1272 BC between the native Fir Bolg and the invading Tuatha De Danann. The earliest Irish myths refer to the Tailteann Games, an ancient Irish sporting festival began by the god, Lugh – it was not unintentional (nor in a fit of modesty!) that the modern founder of the GAA, Michael Cusack, also went by the pen-name of Lugh Lámh Fhada. The Tailteann Games occurred annually during the Feast of Lughnasa (August 1) for almost 4,000 years until 1169 A.D.

Later medieval accounts of the early Irish sagas which outline the epic life and deeds of Cúchulainn, may be shrouded in the variables of folk memory but from these mythical mists emerge accounts of hurling spectacles, events and

warriors, that show how central camán was to the Irish consciousness. The Scottish camanachd also traces its mythological ancestry with camán/iomain back to this Ulster cycle. In their brilliant 2009 exploration of the development of ball playing, camán, shinny (and yes, the informal ice hockey game of Canada goes by the same name) and hurling in the province of Ulster before the GAA in the acclaimed book, *Ulaidh, Eire agus Eile*, Art Ó Maolfabhail, Roddy Hegarty and Dónal McAnallen cast new light on the history and myth of Séadanta, (the gaelic for pathmaker, leader and later corrupted into Setanta), also known as Cú Chulainn. In so doing, they open up intriguing possibilities for Ireland as being an ancestral progenitor of golf, even before the Celtic cousins later settled across the sea in Scotland and fine tuned the modern version.

It is related how at Eamhain Mhacha, one of the seats of power in ancient Ulster, Séadanta took part in a game of *áin phoill* – ‘the driving of a hole’ as it is called in the earliest version of the story, written down in *Leabhar na hUidhre*, (The Book of Dun Cow) in 1100 and used a *lorg ána*, or driving stick. In the later Book of Leinster version of 1180A.D. this game is called *cluiche poill*, meaning literally ‘the game of a hole’, and the words, *báire*, *iomána* (hurling) and *camán* (hurley) are introduced. *Iomáin*, literally meaning to ‘drive about’, was derived from *áin*, meaning to drive. The terms of *lorg ána*, *áin phoill* and *cluiche poill* have long been obsolete in an Irish context since. However *iomáin* has never gone out of use in either Ireland or Scotland, and later it developed another form *iománaíocht*, signifying hurling, and similarly the word *camán*, the hurley, is universally understood in Ireland and Scotland. It is possible that two different types of play may have been confused in the written stories of Cú Chulainn. Though it may be a subject of conjecture, there is no doubt, that this ‘game of the hole’ with its ‘driving stick’ does bear the traits of an early form of golf, but further references to this sport in the ancient gaelic tracts of Ireland remain elusive, and there is a case for citing European influences and beyond such as the Dutch sport of *kolf* as fusing with our own to create the modern game. The golf historian Robert Browning also referred to the ancient gaelic roots of golf in his 1955 history of the sport. Given the exploits of a certain young County Down man hailing from Holywood recently at the US Open, the following Shaw Mason Survey of north Down in 1825 is of interest:

Amongst their other amusements, the game of shinny, as it is called by some, and common (camán) by others is of note. Common is derived from a Celtic word ‘com’, which signifies ‘crooked’ as it is played with a bent stick at its lower extremity somewhat like a reaping hook.It resembles the game of golf in Edinburgh. Christmas is the season when it is most generally played. It prevails all through Ireland, and in the Highlands of Scotland. Nor is it confined to any sect, as Dissenters and Romanists seem to be equally attached to it.

The great game of *Iomán* was always the game of the people of all creeds, and of all classes. It is interesting to note that golf actually featured as one of the later *Tailteann Games* in the 1920s. As for the Holywood man who bested the Congressional in unprecedented style, Rory McElroy, nephew of the 1980s Armagh footballer Mickey McDonald, is obviously steeped in a great tradition of Gaelic ball and stick games. He sure did play like the modern take on the Red Hand heroes and more power to him in the years ahead as his greatness to come reflects well on his family and on the talent conveyor belt of the thirty two county Golfing Union of Ireland from which he emerged.



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