

Gaulemoy

October 28, 1982



photo by Ray Criguer

I who am the beauty of the green earth and the white moon amongst the stars and the mystery of the waters and the desire of the heart of man call unto they soul arise and come to me

Huge bonfires leap across the autumn skies, and our pagan fathers huddled in the shadows, staring wistfully as their bloated sun sets to the west. This was their day of bonfires, their celebration of harvest, when the Earth Mother, Great Mother, goddess of fertility growth

and summer relinquished her throne to the horned one, god of the hunt, of winter, of the near endless cold, and that day the dead were allowed their final fling on earth before winter set in.

The pagan nature worshippers (dating as far back as the Druids) called this day Samhain, then November Eve, and later All Hallows Eve, and today October 31 is known better as Hallowe'en. To the nature worshippers Samhain and Belton (May Eve) were the two most important dates on their calendar, the former a rather pitiful attempt to overcome the God of winter and rekindle the sun, the latter ushers in a

new season, a new hope.

And as for witches and ghosts, well, the importance of Samhain in the witches year called for many a gathering, elaborate sabbaths and a furious collection of herbs and roots to carry even the busiest of congers and spell casters over a long and often troubled winter.

Even the church acknowledged this ancient holiday as the domain of the dead, fixing its feast for its fallen brethren on the following morn - All Saints Day, November 1st. (Much easier to rename a pagan feast day than to create a fresh one). As his fields emptied and his plants withered and died man's thought probably

would drift to more spiritual harvest, and as his granaries filled so did his world with shadows of fallen kin.

In Ireland footsteps heard behind you on that fateful day indicate that the dead ones are stalking you and if you weaken and look their way they'll pluck you for their ranks.

But not all superstitions associated with this holiday are gloom and doom, a few love traditions have lingered. One such tradition calls for young maidens in the dead of the night to steal away to a clear spring and peer into its depths by lantern light in hopes of seeing this reflection of a future husband (for those of you too chicken to venture out after

nightfall, the same effect can be had by taking a breaking an egg in it, filling it up with spring water and then gaze away for future hubbies' sparkling complexion).

And lest I leave any of you a bit paranoid, here's a handy dandy old Gypsy witch ward to repel those creepy crawlies that bump in the dark: (Wrap all 4 fingers round your thumb while chanting the following)

*Witchy, witchy, I defy thee.
Four fingers round my thumb.
Let me quietly go by thee.*

by Gilbert Bouchard