

Companie of the Hidden Crone

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Greenludd Press

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+ The Bones of the Hills [Statement] +

Our initiation is the British Hills, for that is what it means to be exiled.

As we hath always been exiled as heretics, so the dead and the fairies alone protect our way of life, in the woods and the caves. Come with us then, to the hollows, and dream for the sake of our angry gods. For this memory, we are Cathars and Templars, in defence of our heretical heritage which we have kept alive across the centuries.

Our country is the Land of the Dead. Each of us has two names, one for the community and one for the earth; for all our kin became one in the initiation by fire, May Eve or burning stake. The gift of initiation begins in us, in order that the spirits of the witches might bring us life from death. Each of us is a ghost. And so, it has come to pass.

Our heart is Glastonbury and Stonehenge, for among these hills the evil one was spawned. Hence, we were all burned. Every tree has been a gallow, and so it becomes clear we have always borne the heresy in the guts of the church. Our heresy was to make our own church. In the eyes of the dystopian State we are now both Christ and Lucifer. And so, it has come to pass.

Our religion is in the trinity of the crystal pyramid raven, the shape-shifter Morrigan, for she alone is charm, and poppet and secretly defiled triple horned man, and so we drink from the bloody cup of our black mother.

The Witch is the androgynous devil. And we are bound to their regenerative fires, of Gawain's sword struck on the neck of the May King. It is told, and behold, a black horse; and he was feasting at the burning in the woods, wearing the head of the horned hare. And yet, that hare is the father, Cernunnos, and his son is the devil Merlin. He ascends, in the last year of his life, to save the world, as Green Man, for his green is as splendid



as the Black knight Dionysus or Bacchus the healthy newborn sun-king Arthur. And so, it has come to pass.

The exposed breasts of Our Lady, seated in the darkness, O daughter of the Queen of May, the marshes and the swamps, and the out-flowing of the first lunar blood. And there she has played Mary. She is a witch, and a queen, and so is Morrigan, Morgan le Fay, the Virgin Mary, the Apostle of the Black Death. And we who stand with her wither, and we art men of blood, sons of the head which is cut off. And so, we become Fianna. Our goddess is fanged and green and carrying the sign of the Enemy. Under the shell of the bones of the skull, we went over and honoured Baphomet in his hollow hill; the shadowy figure at the edge of the circle who wears the face of a Cat. And so, it has come to pass.

You shall not take form as one of us at the Sabbath, unless thou go into the initiation flying, for wherever He has dominion as Lord of Misrule, he requires the immortal soul as bargain. There is a mysterious Intoxicant which maketh immortal, like unto our Wyrd fungus, the innermost secret, which covers the Most Ancient One, and there is no Holy Grail but Clotho, Lachesis, and Atropos. For us the intoxication is the only way to our God, for that is the dream of the Black Jacobite, and we are in truth all saved by the sacrament of our Bacchanalia, the last and final mystery of initiation. And so it has come to pass.

British we must be, and alive to our oath as witches and heretics. And so our names are written on the heart of Britain, for we alone saved the rite of the old god. We will only provide for the leader of our cult, but that which has been revealed to you is henceforth a memorial written in the soil. In place of the worship of the Son, we worship the Wyrd Sun. And so, it has come to pass.



At present the CoHC exists as it always has within Britain, scattered wordlessly through the Isle of the Dead in various households and hovels, following the wax and wane and concerning themselves with local matters. Some examples have manifested themselves more publically, as has been agreed upon, in order to take advantage of modern communicative mediums, yet with the same goal as ever; to preserve, transmit and manage the 'way' in accordance with its historical purpose. Each is their own current, their own thread in the skein of the Companie, working with the same rhythms as their forebears. Some maintain contact with each other, others work entirely alone, a tactic learned during invasive centuries, which may well become appropriate once again; this brief stepping-forth from the briars may cease at any moment. However, it has been decided and accorded that, in order to seed future Companions, some truths should be put forward into the public arena, whispered into ears of those who are curious. For this reason, a very short background of the Companie is now provided, as has been passed down orally since the days of stone and skin. Whether this is 'true' in the modern sense is unimportant; it is the foundation, it is believed, and contains our trouthe. Further fragments of tradition will be revealed for the same purpose in separate missives.

The twin realms of the living and the dead, as Sarum has always been, is the womb of the Companie, birthed from Brythonic priests, who themselves inherited their ways from unknown times. Initially these priests held a small splinter, who practised their guardianship of the Lond with nettles, spears and long nights amidst the burial mounds. They viewed the Lond as a witch, a crone, who both weaned and wounded man as She saw fit, and communed with the Others who lived in the hidden spaces. Through this communion, they were said to grow horned and hoary, embodiments of the Wild



Man who gradually lived deeper and deeper in the Lond, in woodlands and lonely heaths. It is possible to see echoes of these priests in the exoteric myths of Britain, some symbols of which are still in circulation today. These will be explored separately elsewhere, but some examples may include the Green Man, Robin Hood, Cernunnos, King Arthur and others.

It is said that with the Romanisation of much of Britain, some were driven further into the moors, forests and caves, whereas others took it upon themselves to enter the local communities and begin working as healers and workers of natural justice; in this way many became local figures of significance, and over the centuries would find themselves integrated both into the rural peasantry and the aristocratic households.

During the 7<sup>th</sup> century, Glastonbury emerged as a focal point for the Companie, in which it began to see the need for some manner of cohesion, following the arrival of missionaries and the ensuing 'conversion' of the powerful. The lore dictates that the local Glast family frequently consulted with a member of the Companie, whom had given some indication of how the Lond was, and how Gwyn was said to inhabit the mound upon which the Tor was later built. While it is popularly said that the Tor was constructed to disband and crush Gwyn and his followers, the Lore states that permission was granted to St Collen so that the mound might be preserved as a conduit to the Land of the Dead, through Gwyn's hall, at which many of the Companie had been guests through the ages. For this reason, we see the association between Glastonbury, the Grail [communion with the Others] and Arthur [Companie]; what is now told in books is a mutation of the original bind between the CoHC, the passage of the Dead, and the Lond.

It was also here that a rare occurrence gave rise to what we now know as the Companie. On the eve of May, 648, when the Kingdom of Wessex was restored, many met in the grove beneath the hill so that they would be known to each other and their families, to



be known from then on as the CoHC, and to maintain distance from any affairs which took place beyond their parish. This was all that was necessary; the knowledge is primarily wordless, but in times of upheaval it is right that we should know each other.

Many took the forms of 'witches' or 'cunning men' in their local villages. In some notable cases, the form of astrologer or herbalist was assumed in royal courts, most notably in the case of Dee, however the majority continued to appease and adore the Lond in hamlets, hermitages and hovels. Some were hung as heretics, witches, warlocks, or simply as dissidents; all of this was expected, yet in many cases a thicket of nettles would grow where their blood spilled upon the soil, and a hare's paw would be left on a nearby stone; this was the sign from the Crone, and the Companie. The Mother would welcome them back into the soil with her talons, thrice-loved, thrice-defiled.

From this point, it was decided that little should be given beyond the boundaries of family, yet if a position of import came about, it could be used for the benefit of the Crone and the Lond. The CoHC stepped back even further into the brambles, living quietly and managing local affairs; this included discreetly meting out judicial acts against anti-social elements. The blood of the abuser has traditionally been seen as the finest blessing for the soil, and ensures a bountiful harvest among men and the Hidden folk.

The CoHC gradually spread out from its Wessex heartland into many areas of the Isle, such as the Highlands, Lowlands, Welsh Marches, Northumbria, Yorkshire, Shropshire, Herefordshire, Gloucestershire, Berkshire, Cornwall and even Ireland. Those in Wales, Cornwall, Scotland and Ireland have their own particular rites and observances, as their ways developed with their own folk-customs, which is natural and healthy; their lines remain secret, which is also proper, and exchanges between they and the English current are frequent and instructional. However, the winding



lanes of Hampshire, Wiltshire and Somersetshire remain the traditional homes of many from the Companie, with sites such as Avebury, the Rollright Stones, Stonehenge, Silbury, West Kennet and others forming a liminal landscape that maintains the Crone. The Rollrights in particular have become used in the 'modern' era for initiations; they are a frozen circle of traitors, King's Men, into which the supplicant must step, and sleep then atop the nearby barrow. Each is initiated by his or her own; there are no great gatherings, and apart from notable examples the meeting of two or more households of the Companie is accidental. While this are the current centre of the Crone cult, due to their historical significance for the CoHC both Glastonbury and Avebury are the spiritual heartlands.

Some figures did rise to some public prominence, without divulging their true role; with the passage of time the risk of their revelation is dead, and thus we can reveal some elements from an era of great turmoil, the Civil War. One member, 'Mary', lay behind the legend of Prince Rupert's dog, 'Boy', her aim being to encourage him in acts of justice against marauding soldiers and let their blood feed the Lond. Many figures in the Jacobite, Diggers and Luddite movements also worked within the CoHC, in order to restore the harmony of the Lond's primal role as Crone Mother, the Yeoman's role as the rightful son, and the incursion of land enclosure, rural displacement and technomancy, all of which remove the Britons their communion with the Lond. Another example can be found in the figure of the 'Black Jacobite' or 'Black Donald', a Highland Scots name for the Devil. Appearing as a man but with cloven hooves, a demon or fairy disguised as a rebel, he came to sow discord and then disappear. We know he was a member of the Scots strand of the cult and sought to spread dissent in the loyalist ranks. Similar incarnations can be seen in prominent persons involved in the Guy Fawkes assassination, the Irish troubles and so on; all intent on disrupting the influence of politics over the Lond, in containing it, abusing it, and depreciating the rural folk. Various figures of the British artistic establishment were also involved or



associated with the Companie, including architect John Wood the Elder; his long-held fascination with ancient British history led him to stumble across some clues towards the CoHC, and ultimately influenced his decisions to survey Stonehenge, the Stanton Drew circles, and his architectural designs in 18<sup>th</sup> century Bath. The restoration of the city to its primal importance in Brythonic times relates to the sacred geography of Sarum and the haunts of the first priests of the Crone.

Ultimately, however, the CoHC has largely confined itself to local matters, parish custodianship, and appeasing the Crone, without any public face, engaging in a wordless path with a minimum of fuss, so that the dance may be continued. This pattern was maintained until another surge; the repeal of the Witchcraft laws in 1951 allowed a greater freedom of movement for the Companie, as well as subtle recruitment with greater reach during the 1960's and 1970's countercultural explosions in Britain, as well as the artistic establishment. Numerous folk musicians became associated, telling the tales of the Companie through allegory in their works, as did a handful of painters, intent on a neo-rural revival through their art and action. Several more hermetic figures also became drawn into the households, which by this point had begun to open beyond their immediate doors, and one in particular became an itinerant herbalist and teacher, practising the rituals of the original priests in the Wessex woodlands. It is through these figures that we find a significant portion of the current Companie's expression and methods.



+ Fyrst Bramble [Contact and Initiation] +

The Lineage of Master and Student

A brief example of the lineage of a pair of the current 'master and student' (the most oft used system of coven in the Companie, just two witches, bound by oath, each who would never betray the other).

The master was born in the West Country, to an Austrian refugee of the Soviet occupation of Vienna and Cotswold peasantry going back into antiquity. This influx of Viennese blood gave him that characteristic imperial thirst for organisation and exploration, causing him to seek out initiates in the drug induced miasma of the 1960s. With the repeal of the witchcraft laws many of the cults which rightly had a boot heel on their necks began to thrive, much to the distaste of the real cult, which had managed to exist with relative impunity throughout the 19th and early 20th century. The master was born into a tumultuous time of chaotic botched initiations throughout the latter half of the 20th century and was privy to at least three attempts on his life by disgruntled former associates. Some system of blood curse was passed on through that paternal line however, and before his 30th birthday, his father, and brother were dead, and he joined them in the Eternal Garden not long afterwards.

An Example of Initiation

The student, an initiate of this line, was brought into the fold at the foot of a Hazel tree in the guts of the Cotswolds, in the shadow of a ruined manor and decrepit village chapel. The master walked and talked with him in the old custom of passage by word of mouth, with as little recorded to paper as possible, if ever. Much of what he taught



will be deliberately lost to the mists of time. The student's lineage was dual, on one side descended from Monmouth's exiles in the Somerset Levels (erroneously remembered as diehard Protestants by history) and on the other from Highland Jacobites; both grandparents were Masons, Scottish Rite and Order of the Eastern Star. The student was initiated as a boy by his grandfather on the slopes of an abandoned Bronze Age settlement in the hills of his home, with the simple mantra: All of this is ours. That was all that was needed, and that is all he will tell his sons.



+ The Other Heath [Fragments of Rites] +

The Beginning of Sacrifice

At the hour we setteth out as servants, we art not. Thus a drink we need. We walketh to the stone circle or the raised up burial mound and danceth with the sickle, playing nak'd togeth'r. A drink of gin or rum and we danceth in the stone circle, running backwards, to the tune of a fiddle or bells, and all wend to the burial mound, high-lone or as a group. At the appoint'd hour, we wend naked, and at which hour the honey of excitement cometh from naked flesh, we become malt-worm amongst our guests, the ghosts. Our sanctuary is with the fairies, and so this is not religion, tis only gods and ghosts. And so, every sir maketh his declaration, free and naked, high-lone up to the lord of ghosts and then goeth to catch but a wink in the circle. In sleeping dreams that gent is preserved and confirmed into the Companie of the sneaky beldame.

The Witches Sabbath

In honour of the goddess of charm and change, we maketh the sacrifice as if it were the first rite of murder. Our priestess endues forth her bliss, and her honey is the cuppeth of glory. Our nak'd mistress sitting 'mongst us after the dinner of pig or beef, so yond all may seeth her, and raiseth their lust towards her, seated in opposition to all yond hast'been called holy. The mistress becomes divine charm, and the eating of her hind quarters is the Eucharist. A Holy Grail in the naked arse of the divine mistress as the goddess in flesh. Our mistress mother sits upon her bloody seat, and as a queen sits on yond most wonderful stone throne, our lord, yond heretic scoundrel, sings to her and



goeth to his hams, for the feast of her nether climatures. All art together naked, singing to the stars and the dead. This rite is our art.

In the wide green field, on a high cleareth full moon night, we each taketh our position and gather in our naked dance. Each of us seals our gage to each other and the ghosts and fairies. Each sir doth take a drink and goeth up to the stone throne with a sigil of his making, a symbol of power he hath sent to live within the corpse of the field. The Eucharist itself is a criminal sacrifice, and so we wend to our feast as criminals. Our sacrifices send us to the promise of fusty age. The dripping and quite quaint and lovely queen doth take her throne and doest as a mistress is wont with her gentleman. Tis yond gentleman who hath brought us forth over the centuries. And together those taketh the throne of the Sabbath of the Black Grail, as Black Donald and his Dark Lady.

#### Wheel of the Year

The year's festivals are the only approved way by which the Companie lore is transmitted, being handed down by word to word. The story of the Slain King is told by the Wheel of the Year, and so below are merely a few droplets of information regarding this path. Local traditions and customs reign supreme and individuals carve furrows of their own making as they will; this is the only law of the Companie, enforced over the centuries by punishment of exile.

February. Imbolc. The snowdrops rise, some rare daffodils, the pregnant ewes bring forth lambs and the boy king emerges into the new year. The symbol of the pregnant Virgin.

March. Spring Equinox. Ostara. Easter. The spring fires, boxing hares are sought as auguries, the boy king emerges into the forest decked with a blossom crown.



May. Beltane. Witches Night & May Day. The May pole dances, the Morris men, the joy of the garlanded pillar by the village virgins. The boy king, now a teen, selects his bride, crowned as the May Queen and King.

June. Summer Solstice. Midsummer. The rite at Stonehenge culminates in the dawn crowning of the king, now a man. Dusk until dawn revelries, all the blasphemous lusts of the flesh slaked.

August. Lammas. Lughnasadh. The first harvest. The king, as Lord of the Verdant Forest stands before the community as a willing sacrifice, his blood ready to feed the Dark Lady who stands before him as virgin maid. The harvest of the summer fruits. Apples and berries.

September. Autumn Equinox. Mabon. The second harvest. The king, as Lord of the Falling Leaves stands before the community as willing sacrifice, his blood ripe to feed the Dark Lady who stands before him as pregnant mother. The harvest of the fields. Bread and mead.

October. Samhain. Halloween. The third harvest. The king, as Lord of the Slain stands before the community as willing sacrifice, his blood is brought forth by the Dark Lady who stands before him as Hidden Crone, offering him up in promise of next year's bounty. The baking of cakes and butchering of pigs.

December. Yule. Wassailing and Old Twelfth Night. The Companie keep to the calendars Old and New, with the Solstice fires and January songs held of equal importance. The king is reborn as Sun/Son. Mulled wine and mead.

Of all the myth cycles and stories of the various pantheons and traditions, the ones which have stood the test of time are the poem of Gawain and the Green Knight, featuring as it does all of the symbols present in the Wheel of the Year, young heroic



foolish knight, old green king of winter, haggard old witch and beautiful tempting maiden. The other most important tradition is that of the Bacchanalia, transmitted into the medieval Christian tradition as the Lord of Misrule, king of the various festivities throughout the year. In modern parlance we see this Lord, in his various guises, as Saturn in the form of Master, and Dionysus in the form of Student.



