

Witchcraft Today



by **GERALD B GARDNER**
Introduction by Dr. Margaret Murray

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Introduction By Dr. Margaret Murray

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Notes

Another witch would of course recognise them, even at a distance. There is also a higher order, the witch's garter; but this is never worn so that it can be seen in public. I have mentioned a necklace, but this can be of any sort as long as it is fairly conspicuous. They have no story of its origin or meaning; it is merely the custom.

Myself, I think that there must be some story to the effect that the goddess always wore a necklace; I believe that Astarte always wore one and was known as the Goddess of the Necklace, being otherwise 'sky-clad', as they say in India. I have known one or two witches who wear talismans on their necklaces, but these are mainly astrological, being made for the owner only, and they bear no witch signs, so that I am inclined to think that the necklace itself is the important thing.¹⁰

Necklaces were important things both to Celt and Saxon. Some important priestess must have set the fashion. Thank goodness we are not plagued with people in the cult who are continually changing the fashions.

The Witch's Tools

There are no witch's supply stores, so a poor witch usually has to make or improvise her own tools; a novice is often presented with an Athame, and of course in a witch family there are often old tools to be had. Old tools are always preferred, as they are supposed to have Power.

If you cannot get these, you are told to attempt to make your own, and I have seen some very clever work. Women are usually helped with making their tools if they have no family ones, but some of them are very clever work-women also.

The tools may be of the simplest construction, but actually, as they are used for a religious purpose, they try to make them as nice as possible. Of course, the average witch does not have a full battery of tools; not all have the sword, for instance. An Athame (witch's knife), a censer, some cord and one or two other tools are quite enough to work with. For initiations the whole battery of tools has, of course, to be present; but these usually belong to the coven.

It is very amusing to see how clever some witches are in disguising their tools so that they look like something else; indeed, they often are something else, until they are put together in the proper way to be used. For the benefit of anyone interested I have a large number of witch tools which I will be pleased to show anyone at the Museum of Magic and Witchcraft, called locally the Witches' Mill, Castletown, Isle of Man.

Witches use incense in quantities. Nowadays they usually buy this at the nearest church stores, but some compound their own; they are very secretive about this, and I think they put some strong stuff in it; at least I have known people behave rather queerly

¹⁰ See Notes

