

PART TWO

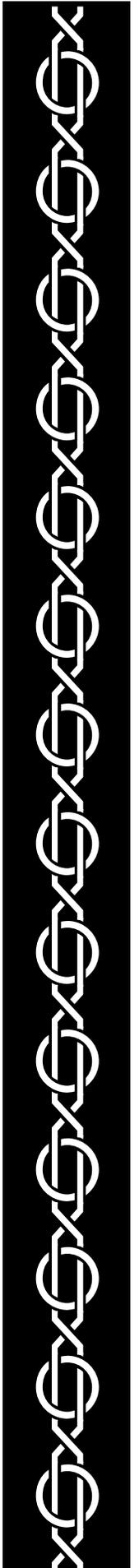
THE BOOKS
OF THE
APOCRYPHA

(COMBINED AND EXPANDED)

DEDICATION

To Jan Johnson
The first Reformed Druid to write an epistle.

DRYNEMETUM PRESS



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New Introduction

The following Books were chosen from hundreds of letters circulated at large amongst the Third Order members of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu (although the lower orders are also welcome to communicate), because they are deemed illustrative. It has always been our firm intention that every Druid should add and/or subtract to their own copies of the *Apocrypha* as they see fit. These selections are merely a suggested nucleus for such a personal collection. As with the *Druid Chronicles (Reformed)*, **none** of these authors would ever wish that their words be considered a dogmatic authority, nor do their words represent anyone's opinion but their own opinion.

The contents of various books may often seem to be in conflict with each other or even unconcerned with Celtic or Neo-pagan issues. This is because many of the Druids felt that Reformed Druidism has a life or message that goes beyond the window trappings of any one culture or religion; it is more of a perspective. Everything beyond the two Basic Tenets (Book of Law verses 4-6) should be considered only as a personal opinion from the author or a local custom. This includes me. In many ways, the *Apocryphas* provide better understandings of how various Reformed Druids have interpreted the message of Reformed Druidism in their own spiritual lives. Many of these letters were painstakingly composed to convey subtle thoughts, so ponder them carefully when reading them.

Most of these Books have been published before, in one of two collections, either the "*Carleton Apocrypha*" or *The Books of the Apocrypha* in Part Two of "*The Druid Chronicles (Evolved)*". Both versions had the *Epistle of David the Chronicler*, *The Book of Faith* and *The Outline of the Fundamentals*. The latter half of both *Apocryphas* dealt with various opinions on the "Isaac Affair" of the mid-70s, when Isaac initially desired to redefine the RDNA as a Neo-Pagan organization with more interaction (i.e. the Provisional Council of Arch-Druids) and an effective hierarchy. I have chosen to combine these two Apocryphal versions (plus adding some letters), because one version provided only the "Isaac" letters and the other only provided "The Carleton" letters. Neither version was truly understandable without reading the other version. But, *together*, they can provide an interesting historical dialogue for the reader.

The issues leading up to the Isaac Affair are complex and are dealt with in more detail in "*A General History of Reformed Druidism in America*". The end-result was a lot of productive introspection, mutual understanding and an organizational sub-division of the Reform into three branches. The first branch retained the name RDNA and was composed of the Carleton Grove, Ann-Arbor Grove and New York #2. The second branch called themselves the "New RDNA" (NRDNA), and didn't wish to label themselves as Neo-Pagan, but they still wanted more interaction between Groves and a more functional Council of Dalon Ap Landu. The third branch was the Schismatic Druids of North America (SDNA), led by Isaac; they essentially abandoned the Council, identified themselves as being squarely in the Neo-Pagan movement and also spawned the short-lived Hasidic Druids of North America. After about three years, the original NRDNA groves had collapsed (along with the HDNA), and the SDNA relabeled itself as the NRDNA with the understanding that non-pagan members would be treated equally, but this second version of the NRDNA had an noticeable preference for the issues of the Neo-Pagan movement.

References of a sexist or creedist nature have been left intact, in order not to spoil the historical value of the various books. I have broken *The Book of Changes* into three parts to aid the reader in following the chronological dialogue. Except for arranging them in biblical-verse format, no spelling changes or emphasis has been added to these documents. All words in square brackets have been added by Michael Scharding for clarification. Longer side-notes were compiled in a document called the "Endnotes" and were placed the end

of the letters; check them out. You may treat the Apocrypha as a collection of undoctored primary sources. I provide some background information on each letter in the Historiography section.

Please enjoy,

Michael Scharding
Big River Grove of Saint Cloud Minnesota
Day 1 of Samradh, Year XXXIV of the Reform
May 1st, 1996 c.e.

P.S. I've added some new selections to the ARDA version: the Epistle of Renny, the Epistle of Ellen, Gobbledegook and Red Tape, the three Epistles of Robert, A Cup Filled to the Brim with Druidism, Salutations, The Speaking of Beliefs, and the Book of Lacunae.



Why Were Two Separate Apocryphas Printed?

When the *Druid Chronicles (Reformed)* were written, as found in Part One of this ARDA, most people felt that no more books should be added to the *Chronicles*. However, they still had the itch to write and distribute their own thoughts to other people, especially to future students at Carleton. The Blue Book was a binder of such past materials and it was passed from one Carleton Arch-Druid to their successors. Unfortunately, the Arch-Druids of the other groves did not have access to this mini-Archive, so Isaac put together "*The Druid Chronicles (Evolved)*", abbreviated as DC(E), to act as a Blue Book for other Groves. Not knowing where to put the letters into DC(E), Isaac borrowed Carleton's idea of an "*Apocrypha*", itself taken from the Christian bible making tradition. The term "*Apocrypha*", defined as being "unofficial accretion", seems to fit well, except that there are no "official" materials" onto which they can accrete. Also the definition of *Apocrypha* as "writings or statements of questionable authority", strikes a warm chord in the Druid heart.

Isaac had always intended his printed version of the *Apocrypha* to be enlarged by other people adding new selections that they deem fit. I suspect that most of the Carleton letters of the Isaac Affair were written too late to be included in the printed collection of DC(E). Richard Shelton in collecting his own *Apocrypha*, which have many letters of opposition to Isaac's reforms, positively decided not to include any of Isaac's letters. I suspect this is because Richard felt that Isaac had essentially formed or discovered a Neo-Pagan religion, and was trying to retroactively superimpose it upon the Reform. I don't think that Richard ever disliked Neo-Paganism, but he would have equally opposed similar attempts by Catholics to claim that Reformed Druidism has always been Catholic, or if Nicheren Zen Buddhists demanded that we should realize that Reformed Druidism is really Zen in disguise and that we should adopt mandatory chanting of sutras and eating pickled radishes. Richard felt that Isaac's letters would convince people to become overly concerned with the group's existence, and would encourage dogmatic group posturing rather than encouraging new Druids to work towards their own awareness. Any animosity between these two Druids was finally resolved at a Carleton meeting in April of 1994 over a pitcher of beer.

Richard's reasons for excluding Isaac's letters, and producing a "purer" *Apocrypha* are very tempting to me, because I am very much one of Richard's disciples. However, I have decided in ARDA to throw both versions together and then add a few more letters. Richard's "*Carleton Apocrypha*" will remain an available separate publication. I personally feel that the resulting *Apocrypha* displays an important facet of Reformed Druidism, the communication of ideas amongst peers. The Reformed Druidism at Carleton today and elsewhere is mostly drawing in people with at least a little bit of a Neo-Pagan background, and I think that these letters will help them to understand the differences between NeoPagan Reformed Druidism and old-fashioned Reformed Druidism. This *Apocrypha* will also show them how Reformed Druidism can improve or mesh with a NeoPagan Druidic religion (or any other type of religion), and yet still remain a quasi-distinct organization.

Good fortune to thee,

Michael Scharding
Day 1 of Samradh, Year XXXIV of the Reform
May 1st, 1996 c.e.

Let's begin with the introductory letters that were published with the original versions of the Carleton and Berkeley Apocryphas...

Preface to the Carleton Apocrypha

My purpose in printing the writings here collected is (of course) three-fold. First, I would like to preserve some of the history and tradition of Carleton Druidism that was not preserved in *The Druid Chronicles (Reformed)* or that developed after the *Chronicles* were written. The intended audience here is the Carleton Grove itself. Second, in face of the growth of Neopagan Druidism, I would like to have something to offer those interested in the original nonpagan variety, something more complete and representative than the *Chronicles* alone. And third, I would like to discharge a long-standing promise to do something about the first two purposes.

This collection is a real hodgepodge, and despite my best efforts has nothing like the aesthetic unity of the original *Chronicles*, which are known to every Reformed Druid. Also it has nothing like the currency of the original *Chronicles*, which are known to every Reformed Druid. Most of these Apocrypha are known to few, though every Carleton Druid will find familiar material herein.

Although this is not a complete collection of all Druidic writings from Carleton, I have tried to keep the selection reasonably catholic, at least to represent the period from the founding in 1963 to about 1976, when my close contact with the Carleton Grove began to fade. Most of this material dates from 1976 or before. There are no Neopagan selections here, since in the early days the Grove was nonpagan, even arguably Christian. Certainly the founders would not have characterized Reformed Druidism as one of the oldest Neopagan groups in America, although on the strength of its founding in 1963 it seems to enjoy that reputation in the Neopagan community.

In recent years (after the period from which these writings are drawn) Druids at Carleton have become more interested in Neopaganism and Native American spiritual practices. Many would call themselves Neopagans. We "old-style" Druids have no quarrel with this, for one's Druidism is one's own affair, as David taught from the beginning. I believe Druidism transcends the nice distinctions we habitually make to compartmentalize the variety of the human spiritual experience, and I hope newer Druids will still find this material of interest, even, perhaps, of value.

Richard M. Shelton
Midsummer Day 1993

Contents of The Carleton Apocrypha

Preface, 1993

Introduction, 1976

Apocryphal Works

The Epistle of David the Chronicler

The Book of Faith

The Discourse of Thomas the Fool

The Wisdom of Thomas the Fool

Letter to My Brothers

The Words of Green

The Epistle of Norman

The Epistle of Richard

The Epistle of Midsummer

Outline of the Foundation of Fundamentals

Some Final Thoughts

Historical Background (now found in Part 4 of ARDA)

The Record of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu

What is Reformed Druidism? (1965 pamphlet)

Between-the-lines (footnotes to DC(R) & Apocrypha)

The Druid Calendar (Carleton's time-keeping)

Introduction to the Carleton Apocrypha

In the first days, the Reform had no published writings. David Frangquist ("the Chronicler") collected and printed *The Druid Chronicles (Reformed)* in 1964, and there were originally plans to update them by adding new material periodically. The mock-Biblical style seemed to call in particular for the "Acts of the Druids" and an Epistle or two. Several such works were in fact written. But as the aesthetic unity of the Chronicles came to be appreciated, it was decided not to add the other works, which naturally became known as the Apocrypha.

The term *apocrypha* signifies "things hidden away", and indeed almost all of these works remained literally hidden away in the personal files of the founders until comparatively recently. Some in fact were withdrawn by their authors. Thus, although they are of independent historical interest, these "early Apocrypha" did not contribute significantly to the development of either the Carleton Grove or the Reform in general.

When the College's religious attendance requirement was abolished in 1964, partly—perhaps largely—due to the challenge from the Reformed Druids, Druidism deepened considerably. With the Reform's immediate purpose fulfilled, the founders were a bit nonplused (David Fisher said he was "frankly stunned") to discover that this goal was but a secondary one for many who came to the services on the Hill of Three Oaks. Although all agreed that coerced religion was not a Good Thing and did not promote spiritual growth, what surprised the founders was that they had unwittingly created a setting more conducive to spiritual growth than many Druids had found anywhere else.

More was involved here than the rebellion against coercion. There was the spirit of intelligent and critical inquiry in matters religious, essentially an application of the high intellectual standard encouraged by the College in all things. There was the emphasis on the necessity of each person finding his own path himself, and a strong dislike for the very ideas of Dogma and Orthodoxy. There was a mistrust of formalism, a feeling that formalism tends to drive out meaning. Finally, there was the firm belief in the inseparability of humankind from its place in nature. These elements, and a vaguely mystical turn, combined to produce a view of life embracing far more than spiritual matters—or better, extending spirituality to all matters. This attitude is what Carleton Druids understand by the term "Druidic".

In this period (circa 1965-1973) the forms and trappings adopted by the founders (with an eye toward hastening the death of the attendance requirement) became less important. The liturgy became more fluid. The turn to mysticism became sharper, and Druidism became more and more a personal affair. More writings appeared, many finding their way with some frequency into services, but never really intended for publication. This second wave of scripture became known as the "later Apocrypha".

The Third set of writings represented here stems from the flurry of letters and activity following proposals of Isaac Bonewits in 1974. Isaac, who came to Druidism via the Berkeley Grove, was the first Druidic proponent of Neopaganism. In a letter dated 18 July 1974 to the Council of Dalon ap Landu (comprising all Druid Priests), he suggested that the Reform describe itself in the following terms:

"The RDNA is an Eclectic Reconstructionist Neo-Pagan Priestcraft, based primarily upon Gaulish & Celtic sources, but open to the ideas, deities and rituals from many other Neo-Pagan belief systems. We worship the Earth-Mother as the feminine personification of Manifestation, Be'al as the masculine personification of Essence, and numerous

Gods and Goddesses as personifications of various aspects of our experience."

He went on to outline a program for transforming the sleepy organization of Druidism into a vibrant Neopagan ministry. But it seemed to many of us that what he proposed for the Reform was very far from what Druidism was all about. In explaining our opposition, a good deal of ink was spent in trying to pin down our own conception of the Reform.

Of the selections included here, only two are from the early Apocrypha: *The Epistle of David the Chronicler* by David Frangquist and *The Book of Faith* by David Fisher, both dating from 1964. From the later Apocrypha come the *Outline* by David Frangquist (that quintessential Druidic broadside, dated 6/6/66), *Letter to my Brothers* by Steve Savitzky (circa 1970), and the *Discourse* and *Wisdom* of Thomas the Fool (a.k.a. Tom McCausland), both from 1970.

The Words of Green and *The Epistle of Norman* both were responses to Isaac's general letter of 1974. *The Epistle of Richard* dates from a couple of years later. These three letters have all been heavily edited in the present version to remove repetitive and irrelevant material.

I began working on *The Words of Green* almost the instant Isaac's letter arrived. It was addressed to the entire Council and dated 14 August 1974. At the time I was a Teaching Fellow at the University of Michigan, and the most expedient way to generate the requisite number of copies was to use the math department ditto machine I was already using to churn out lecture notes, problem sets, and exams. But I balked at the usual dittoed purple, so in an attempt to match the color of the letter to its spirit, I used green ditto masters for the letter—whence it acquired its current title. (Unfortunately, greenery has proven to be ephemeral: original copies of the letter have faded almost to illegibility.)

The Epistle of Norman was drawn from a letter by Norman Nelson to Isaac, dated 10 November 1974. Norman's response to Isaac was probably the most charitable, and Norman later spent time with Isaac, answering questions and eventually turning out *Between the Lines*, a set of historical notes on the *Chronicles* which were incorporated into the footnotes of Isaac's book (discussed below).

The Epistle of Richard is a pastiche of material drawn from two letters to Isaac, dated 26 May 1976 and 18 July 1976. By this time, Isaac had broken away to found his own group, the Schismatic Druids of North America, and was in the throes of assembling and printing *The Druid Chronicles (Evolved)*, a compendium including much Neopagan material in addition to the original *Chronicles* and three of the present selections, as well as material from *Between the Lines*. At the time, it seemed possible that this compendium would answer the need for a new edition of *the Druid Chronicles*. As an added attraction, Isaac was also including his updated version of David Frangquist's pamphlet *What is Reformed Druidism?* But he was writing for a different audience and with a different agenda, and in the event, the *Evolved Chronicles* evolved into something most of us did not find useful.

In June of 1976, toward the end of this period, several Carleton Druids gathered at Carleton on the occasion of Midsummer Day. We had hoped to meet Isaac and other members of his Twin Cities Grove to work out our differences and come to some amicable understanding, but Isaac returned somewhat precipitously to California a month or so earlier. David and Deborah Frangquist, then living in Germany, could not come themselves, but sent in their stead, *The Midsummer Epistle*. This letter has special significance for me, as it articulates what I had come to learn about my own feelings about Druidism (and religion in general) in the course of the struggle with Isaac. I hope Druidism will continue to bask in its light, as we basked in the light of the setting sun of Midsummer Day on the Hill of Three Oaks!

ADDENDUM

Contents of the Original Berkeley Version

The works that I had originally intended for this collection all came from the three sets described above. But as time passed, it became clear that other documents, such as the *Record of the Council of Dalon ap Landu* and David Frangquist's pamphlet, which in my day were widely known and in no sense hidden, have ceased to enjoy their former currency. Simply by dropping out of the light of day these became in a sense hidden, and in the interest of preserving a more complete picture of early Druidism, I have included these as supplementary works. To these I have added the original version of Norman Nelson's *Between the Lines* and my own brief disquisition on Druidic Time keeping. The latter developed from the set of instructions I drew up to accompany a Druid Calendar laboriously batted out on my typewriter at Carleton. (My excuses for not publishing the *Apocrypha* finally began to run out when I found a word processor that could handle the Calendar!)

A few textual notes. Except for the extracts from the letters to Isaac, which have been heavily edited as mentioned above, I have tried to restrain the editorial pen. I have silently corrected spelling errors and grammatical solecisms. I have made very few changes in punctuation since punctuation rules are more flexible and since some authors have strong views about certain non-standard usages. In particular, I have made no attempt to standardize hyphenation or internal capitalization of the terms "Earth-Mother," "Arch-Druid", or "Neo-Pagan" as the Reform itself exhibits no consistency in this matter. Most of my additions to the text have been relegated to footnotes. The main exceptions are notes added to *Between the Lines*, which I have been careful to mark with my initials.

—Richard Shelton, circa 1976

Introduction to the Berkeley Apocrypha

The following Books consist of some of the letters circulated at large among the members of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu. None have been officially published before this time. Any member of the Third Order is entitled to add to this collection by the simple process of writing a letter, reproducing it, and mailing it out to all the members of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu. Because each Book represents (at most) the opinion of its author(s) concerning various matters of a Druidical nature, the reverence (if any) in which each Book is held will vary from Druid to Druid.

And because each Book is a personal communication, editing has been restricted to the correction of obvious spelling errors and similar trivia. References of a sexist or creedist nature have been left intact, in order not to spoil the historical value of the various Books.

The Editor has been informed that there are other Apocrypha currently being printed for distribution. Assuming that each has a date of writing attached, it should be easy to insert them in their proper order, vis-a-vis those included in this edition.

—Isaac Bonewits

Summer 1976 c.e.

Introduction (as above)
The Book of Faith
The Epistle of David the Chronicler
The Outline of the Foundation of Fundamentals
Leabhar Toirdhealbhagh
The First Epistle of Isaac
The Book of Changes
The Epistle to the Myopians
The Second Epistle of Isaac

Let us now begin to read the Apocrypha, with a slow and steady approach. Feel free to skip over anything that looks dull. You can always come back later.

The Book of Faith

(Carleton & Berkeley Apocryphas)

1. I, David, Arch Druid of the Grove at Carleton, write these words so that those who come after me may know and understand some of the feelings which moved me to found the Druid movement. The tone of these writings will differ from the rest of the Books, but I write as I do for clarity, and, in accordance with Druid practice, make no request that my words become a dogma.
2. In the beginning, Druidism was formed as a protest against a religious requirement at Carleton College, not in affirmation of anything, except to affirm a mutual protest against coerced religion. The History of the Druids will be found elsewhere in the various books of this canon.¹
3. The founders varied considerably in their degree of religious commitment. Some believed in no God, others in their own uncertainty, and others in the Christian religion. I am a believer in Christianity, and still hold myself as such.
4. Attacks have shifted in time from charges of insincerity to charges of emptiness and lack of real value. I write to reaffirm a new purpose, set forth elsewhere in the canon.
5. Druidism boasts no ethos. Since Druidism has never claimed to be a religion, dogmatism has always seemed incompatible with the organization. This does not mean that, as an individual Druid, I have no ethic, nor that any others who call themselves Druid are without beliefs as to what is right and wrong. As Druids, however, we can only affirm a mutual desire to ask ourselves questions about the meaning of life, and about the degree to which religious truth can be truth for us.
6. If I were to pass on any advice to my followers, it would be to never consider that they have found, as Druids, the ultimate answer to any of their questions. Druidism is a faith, if a faith, in questioning, not in answering. Awareness, to a Druid, is an individual thing, to be shared, perhaps, but never codified.
7. It has been asked, and with good reason: what is awareness. I can only answer that for me, awareness has meant a strengthening of my own faith, through communing with myself and with the world around me. I have come to a closer vision of the greater Reality that lies beyond this world precisely because I have come to appreciate this world.
8. It has been asked, and again with good reason: if your purpose is to ask and to inquire, then why your use of ritual? Can not men seek for answers without the crutch of a ritual which has no real religious purpose? I can only answer that the Druid ritual has a value because it can be used by different men in different ways.
9. For one man, the sacrifice of life is the offering up of himself to a god or gods. To another, it is an offering up of his mind to a search for truth. As a priest, I repeat the great Answer to calm men's hearts and minds, not as a magical formula of absolution; but for some, the Answer is an absolution, washing away the distractions of a week of worry, and reaffirming confidence in the idea of a purpose in life.
10. For one man, the partaking of the Waters of Life is a mystical sacrament of communion with a god or gods. For another, it is an act of common fellowship with other seekers of the truth. As a priest, I do not seek to consecrate the Water to any use with my words, but rather think of my words as a common means for others, who watch and listen, to consecrate the Water within themselves.
11. Whether what has been founded at Carleton remains or passes away is now unclear. I will always have a concern for the Druids. My own feeling is that if the experience has helped any men to better see themselves, and to become aware of the problems of life in a new way, then it will have served its purpose.

12. I have called this book the Book of Faith. It is my faith in what I have done and in what I have seen grow. In accordance with a basic principle of Druidism, I do not presume to speak for anyone else except for myself. Yet I would add one word to the skeptical, to the vain, and to the self-satisfied.
13. Before you, O reader, pass a judgment on the Reformed Druids, look first into your own heart and be very sure that all is right and at peace. Then without false pride, ask those who call themselves Druids what they have learned from being Druids. Then, when you have weighed the amused against the serious, the scoffers against the men who call themselves aware, then only will you be able to judge.
14. In the name of the Earth Mother, the great personification of all that moves and walks and lives and is upon the Earth, and in the name of Be'al, the source of all truth without whom no Druid is aware, but whose nature remains to each man his own mystery, I ask upon you peace. May you, in your own way, find the truth, as I have found it.

So be it.

David Fisher
April 12th, 1964.



The Epistle of David the Chronicler

(by David Frangquist)
(Carleton and Berkeley Apocryphas)

Chapter the FIRST

1. To Norman [Nelson], Patriarch of the Order of Braciaca, from his devoted servant David [Frangquist], a priest of the Order of Braciaca and Patriarch of the Order of Belenos.
2. It is with deep regret that I was required to postpone the writing of this epistle until the present time, but it was mine earnest desire that I should communicate to you only the fullest details of these experiences. It was therefore necessary to wait until all of the events herein recounted had transpired before I could begin to set them down on paper.
3. I would assure you, however, that I did receive the epistles which you did so graciously send to me and I have read them with great interest.
4. But there are a number of points which you have made which do cause me some concern.
5. Concerning your reference to yourself as the Arch-Druid of the South Dakota group: I would remind you that an Arch-Druid must be elected by the members of his grove, but that the only requirement in the formation of a grove is that each of the three officers be properly filled by election.²
6. Yet you mention only one other person as being a member.
7. Perhaps there is yet another whom you did not mention; I keep in mind the Bishop, who I'm sure would participate excellently in the position of Server.
8. Of much more concern to me, however, is your comment that it all did now seem so much like playacting.
9. It is with this that I should like to deal at some length, drawing freely from mine experiences of this last summer.

Chapter the SECOND

1. When I FIRST came to arrive at Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan³, I was fully resolved to there establish my mission.
2. But it was only with great difficulty that I did succeed in persuading two of my friends to attend the ceremony at Midsummer, which it was my duty to perform nevertheless.
3. But I was to be greatly disappointed in mine efforts, for in the following two weeks I was able to persuade no-one to join me in the worship of the Earth-Mother.
4. But the writings of our cause were well received, such that after I had made them available no fewer than nine people did attend the services which were held during the next two weeks.
5. Now we did continue to meet, and in the course of time there were seven who did see fit to become Druids of the FIRST Order in the service of the Earth-Mother. And so earnest were two of these that they did take upon themselves the responsibilities of the Second Order.
6. Now it was at this time that they did come unto me, desiring to know if we might form a grove. And at their insistence, I did finally agree.
7. And a number there were who were most greatly impressed by our cause, and they did declare that at last had been found that for which they had made their search.
8. Now I bear proudly the title of Arch-Druid of Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan, not because of the title, for in that it is nothing, but because of the light that Druidism has now been able to bring into the hearts of a few people here.

9. I am firmly persuaded that what I have seen this summer is a clear demonstration that our message is an important one.
10. Here there were no restrictions against which to rebel, but only the desire to find truth in our own way.

Chapter the THIRD

1. It is mine observation that religion is composed of two parts: the philosophy and the ritual. Should either be absent, there is no longer religion.
2. For without the philosophy the ritual is but playacting; and without the ritual the philosophy lacks the warmth and vitality which is capable of perpetuating it beyond its originator.
3. For there is in all men a certain desire for the glory of ceremony.
4. Often it is indulged in for its own sake, as in the case of secret organizations and in the worship of the state (which is often confused with patriotism).
5. For ritual is capable of crowding all else out and becoming the end in itself. It is for this reason that we are constantly threatened by the Druid ritual shedding its philosophy and becoming mere playacting.
6. I am persuaded that our philosophy is valuable, for in Nature we have found a peace and a fulfillment that was otherwise lacking.
7. But we have also recognized that ritual is most often a hindrance; and to eliminate it is simply to encourage non-ritual to become the ritual. Rather as Druids we have endeavored to build a ritual which will be the destroyer of its own importance.
8. We have therefore adopted a ceremony which is sufficiently foreign to our cultural tradition as to shock, whereas being sufficiently close to it to be taken seriously.
9. It is our fervent hope that in this way we will be able to impress upon men that ritual is only relative, and thus help them to rise above its limitations toward the greater truth beyond.
10. It is for this reason that we must be careful not to admit of any ceremony which would be too closely allied with our cultural traditions or which would tend to focus too much attention on the ritual itself.
11. We must not utilize any practice which is not derived directly from ancient Druid custom or from analogies from Nature.
12. And as leaders of our cause, we must always keep in mind our principal objectives.
13. For I would again affirm that insofar as we can continue to bring to others a greater appreciation of the wonders of the Earth-mother, I am persuaded that our effort is not in vain.
14. May the Peace of the Earth-mother be yours, and may the radiance of Belenos daily illumine your spirit.

Peace!

Outline of the Foundation of Fundamentals

(Carleton and Berkeley Apocryphas)

BEING: a brief catalogue of the major quasi-metaphysical-theological conclusions which may be abstracted from and by the application of the Reformed Druid point of view to questions of ultimate relevance (in outline form).

THE THREE PILLARS (or treasures, or paths, or baskets, or roots, or branches, or wondrous illuminations)

I. The Relentless Rebellion (threefold)

A. The categorical If

No Intellectually honest mind can long remain so termed unless it is willing to submit all things to rigorous examination, even the most sacred provinces. Blind faith is no faith; it is blindness.

B. The Principle of Non-Confirmation

Applying rigorous scrutiny to the world's religions, we find, especially in western form, universal claims to exclusiveness; yet none submits any more proof of its claim than an appeal to faith. Logically, therefore, all are equal.

C. The Principle of Non-Conformation

In the face of the insoluble problem of selecting the "one true faith" most people conform to one of two patterns:

1. The True Believer embraces the faith of his fathers wholeheartedly and unquestioningly, fearing to face the logical possibility (probability?) that he is wrong.

2. The Non-Believer rejects all faiths out of hand, fearing that he might prove himself a fool by choosing the wrong one.

Reformed Druids reject the necessity of conforming to either of these patterns based on fear. True spiritual growth exists only in the *Relentless Rebellion* against petrified norms.

II. The Paths of Paradox (also threefold)

A. The Ceremonial Syndrome

Man is incurably finite. He cannot conceive of spiritual activity except in terms of ritualistic hocus-pocus. But ritual must be carefully selected or it will independently acquire magical properties of its own. Ritual properly constitutes a spring-board for the spirit only. Oak worship is ideal for this purpose (see also III).

B. The Primacy of Ambiguity

True spiritual growth consisting of personal effort and rebellion, Reformed Druidism must remain devoid of orthodoxy. All writings must be ambiguous and non-final (present dissertation included).

C. The Principle of Non-Confirmation (rears its ugly head again)

You'll get no pat answers here. There being no logical basis for the acceptance or denial of any faith, Reformed Druidism confirms nothing (including Reformed Druidism). You're welcome to, but you're on your own.

III. The Last Refuge (whadaya know?...threefold!)

A. The Noble Fivefold Formulation

1. The Nature of Life

Life is defined as the unity of the spiritual (Be'al) and the material (the Earth-Mother). Without the material the spiritual has no form; without the spiritual the material is dead.

2. And Man?

Man, as a living animal, ideally consists of both material and spiritual.

3. And Man?

Man is unique. This is because he has self-awareness. He passes from self-awareness through self-centeredness to self-importance, thence to self-isolation, resulting in self- misery.

4. Unity for All and All for Unity

Man's self-importance cuts him off from the life-giving benefits of unity with the spirit and Nature (the material). Druids sometimes call unity *Awareness*. It is the object of religion to restore unity; most concentrate on the direct attainment of spiritual unity, ignoring (or rejecting) the material.

5. Back to Nature

Druids (at least some of them) believe that a good approach is to FIRST restore material unity. Having broken down part of the barrier around the self, the rest should then be easier. Hence, Druid Nature worship: the ideality of going to worship oaks.

B. The Basic Tenets

The Basic Tenets of Reformed Druidism, which form the basis (believe it or not) for the preceding discussion, are found in the Constitution of the Reformed Druids, and in another form in the Book of the Law in *The Druid Chronicles (Reformed)*. They are the quintessences of Druidism, such that a person need accept nothing else and still become a Reformed Druid. They are here presented in their most concentrated form:

1. Nature is good!

And the second is like unto the FIRST:

2. Nature is good!

C. The Last Refuge

It is simple to grind out these systems. It is the expected thing to do. Perhaps it is useful. It is meaningless!

It is simple to sit on the Hill of the Three Oaks and look at the pretty blue sky. That, too, can be meaningless!

It is not so simple to stand alone under the pretty blue sky and watch all your pre-conceived systems come tumbling down.

But when they come tumbling down, there is a refuge: in Nature. There one may find a clearing of the head, a freedom from stagnant forms, a beginning. (The End)

David Frangquist

6/6/66

Leabhar Toirdhealbhaigh

(Translates as "Book of Torvel")
(Berkeley Apocrypha Only)

I

The moonlight shining on the path
Blinding

The sister stars
Brightening the way
Dimming
Foot falls heavy
And raises dust in a
Shimmering
Cloud
Of many colors.

Grass whispers
And trees walk
As you go your contemplative way
Brain empty, thinking
Body dead, living
Walking
Unfeeling.

Tree roots move
Snakes trying
To entwine your feet
And hold you forever
Wanting you, loving you
Wishing to talk—
If you dare listen
But you will walk.

The owl hoots his song
Of loneliness
And the terror of the woods
Frightening you
Sending you running
Happily, joyfully
Fearfully
Tearfully
Through the forest
Seek then to escape
The tale that is told.

The grass damp beneath
You
Sparkles in the moon
Stops wets and cools your feet
Making you joyful
And cold
Feet numb from damp
Frigid
Fighting the moonlight trees
Continue on out
Out to the city
The grass hastens you away
You are not ready yet to stay
The woods seem to say.

II

Dew Drips heavy

Wets the ground
Sparkling dew
Shimmering in the moonlight
Reflecting color schemes
Prismatic.

Moonbows
Sparkle from
Dripping dew
Bright and joyful
Breaking the moonlight
Healing.

Rejoicing in it, he wend
His way
Out from the city down below
Up to the fields
Where flowers grow
To the thicket
Full of life
Through the forests
Across the lea
Seeing all there is to see.

March forward, stepping lightly
Trampling life underfoot
Apologizing and smiling
—Pardon my clumsiness in going—
Up to the ancient oak
Caressing, talking
Adoring
Age untold, oh so old
And wise wonderful.

He stays doing nothing
Breathing, absorbing
Speaking at time
Throwing his head back
And laughing
Enjoying
Accosting the grass
Kissing the flowers
Teaching and learning
Talking with animals
On their way
Entranced, pause and
Tell of nightmare worlds
Of strange tales
And marvel at his
yet stranger tale.

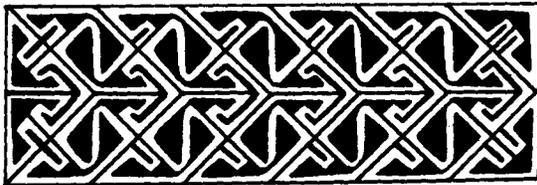
Walking onward through the trees
Over the thicket
Down the rabbitway
To the waterhole
Moonlight shines through his shape
Stars for eyes
Moon for heart
Meteors for limbs
Onward, onward into the eternal day-night
Smiling goes he.

No more seen in the city
No more seen in the field
No more seen but felt and heard
Kindly master-slave of all

Unwielding of power possessed
Yielding of love and life
Breath on the wind
Yet learning
Teaching, preaching
Lore-filled in every pore
Ethereic and solid
Whispering into unknown ears
The man the grass teaches how to grow.

Toirdhealbhadh MacLorcain
Ard-draoi Clann na Brocheta
Earrach 12 y.r.
[circa Spring 1973 c.e.)

Robert Larson, DAL, Be.
ArchDruid, Berkeley Grove
a.k.a.



The Discourse of Thomas the Fool

(Carleton Apocrypha Only)

I Invocation

O Grannos, hallow this thy essence by thy renewing power and by thy way of many-yet-one paths. Cleanse us. Purify us. Remind us that this thy essence is also ours and that as thou art many-yet-one, so too are we. Show us thy All-penetrating wisdom, and prepare us to receive thee as fully as thou hast received us.

II Text

I am the wind which breathes upon the sea,
I am the wave of the ocean,
I am the murmur of the willows,
I am the ox of the seven combats,
I am the vulture upon the rocks,
I am a beam of the sun,
I am the fairest of plants,
I am a wild boar in valor,
I am a salmon in the water,
I am a lake in the plain,
I am a word of knowledge,
I am the point of the lance of battle,
I am the God who created in the head the fire:

Who is it who throws light into the meeting on the mountain?
Who announces the ages of the moon?
Who teaches the place where couches the sun?

If not I—

III Discourse

1. Often it is that the Arch-Druids do read this ancient mystery. It is indeed one of the greatest treasures we know for it came verily from the ancient Sage-Druids who pleased the earth in younger times. But who among you have verily heard this ancient mystery?

2. Oft it seems that these lines refer to the All-Mother, for she is truly all of these and more. But what is the mystery there? Not mystery but shining fact. No, the mystery is not the Mother. Nor is it Be'al. For this mystery is even more secret than He, though He knows and

speaks it.

3. Verily, *I* am that mystery. Not the Mother, not Be'al, but I. How is it that I came to be all these things? I am the God who created in the head the fire! It is there. Look and understand! Who else could it be, if not I?

4. Now there may be some among you who would agree and would say that this was so, for ultimately Be'al and I are one. How deceived they are! While I am, Be'al is not, and there is no touching of these two. No, not oneness. For Be'al is not to have oneness with. Be'al is not! Understand this. It is only delusion which lends you to believe in Him and the Mother. Verily, a poor hoax it is!

5. Now listen carefully so you can understand. Be'al is not, for he is invented by man. He was invented to give man the freedom to relax in Man's creation. If Be'al is great, how much greater is man, the creator of Be'al. Nothing more than the Highest spirit of man is Be'al. And though that seems most wondrous, it is but a poor hoax. Be'al is not great for He needs Existence and Non-Existence. He is

All and Nothing. Can One be great and still be so dependent upon such limited realms? No. Be'al, though He is more than you or I can comprehend, is very powerless.

6. He who created the Universe cares not for All and Nothing. They are nothing to Him. He is so beyond that even all the Words of Knowledge said at one time would change Him not a drop. Be'al is merely the half-drop that almost changed.

7. Great it is to be one with Be'al, but to be one with Him is not great at all. *If not I-*. Is the water great because it flows and trickles and dances—in other words, because it is water? No, water is not great: it is merely water. He is not great. I am not great. He and I are one. But hear the greatest mystery.

8. He is all of me, but I am not all of Him. And yet, by being merely a drop of Him, I am all of Him. Understand this!

9. Now you understand the Words of Power. Be the lake in the plain; be the ox and the boar; throw light upon the mountain. *If not I-*.

The Wisdom of Thomas the Fool

(Carleton Apocrypha Only)

Chapter the FIRST

Listen, my brethren, and I will tell you the great secret of Druidism. This I tell in order to assure the pure transmission of Druidism for all time. Many of you are there who have the spirit of the Mother burning brightly inside of you and yet, lacking a priest, must let this fire die. Hear and understand. Here is the great Wisdom known to all the Druids of old. Here is the one wisdom you must grasp if you would stay in the bosom of the Mother forever!

Chapter the SECOND

1. The great secret of Druidism is this: All the powers of the Mother are yours if you but learn your True Name. Even if you are but of the FIRST Order, no secret shall be hidden once you learn this great secret.
2. The way is hard. The Three Ways of Day and One of Night must be traveled. The Wisdom of the Waters of Life must be heard.
3. What are the Three Ways of Day? The Way of the rising sun; the Way of the setting sun; the Way of the sun at Zenith.
4. What is the wisdom of the Waters of Life? The Wisdom of ice; the Wisdom of steam; the Wisdom of water.
5. Yet it is not in the Three Ways of Day that your True Name dwells; nor in the Wisdom of the Waters of Life. Neither is your Name of the Mother or of Be'al. It is of them both and of them not at all. Your True Name is in the Way of Darkness. Yet it is not of darkness nor was it of darkness born nor shall it die of darkness. Though Be'al is born of darkness and dies in darkness, your True Name knows darkness not at all.
6. Your True Name will be heard upon the bosom of the Mother; yet She hears it not, for it is not Her Name. Your Name, when it is truly heard, will rock Be'al from his slumber and cause rain to fall in the center of a stone.
7. To hear your Name, hear the Mother. To hear your Name, hear Her not. To hear your Name, hear the Mother!
8. This is the most powerful secret of Be'al! It is the most powerful secret in all of the Realm of the Four Ways and the Seven Powers and the Thirteenfold Mystery.
9. It is the Word which makes of all ends a beginning.
10. Only this is necessary. Know your True Name! All else is but the dreams of sand.

Chapter the THIRD

1. But how do we know that True Names exist? Listen and understand!
2. When we consecrate the waters, we do not say, "O great and glorious grove, thou of power deep rooted in the Mother; thou of power deep rooted in the Mother; thou of power sky rending; thou of power to block the sun and rain; consecrate these waters." Nor do we say, "O Healing waters, consecrate this thyself by thy powers of All-pervading Wisdom." nor yet, "O power of the most secret essence of the vine, hallow this." nor even, "Mighty swirling Ocean, pounding the Mother, as mighty and as vast as even She is, hallow this drop of thee." We do not say, "O great light which rends the sky in storm, hallow this as thou dost hallow the rain by the great leveling fire." nor, "O greatest of the powers we see, Mighty Sun, hallow this which thou didst bring into being!" Nor do we say, "O gentle stream, by thy joyous power hallow this thy essence." nor even, "O great mysterious

Life, hallow this, the essence of all life.”⁴

3. Verily, all this is great Wisdom. And yet I tell you that this Wisdom consecrates not even the water of man’s dreams.
4. If one but says “Dalon ap Landu” with the knowledge of the power of it, truly the whole Universe will be forever consecrated!
5. Understand the Thirteen-fold Mystery⁵ and then understand how much more powerful is the knowledge of your True Name than the knowledge of the Names of the Mother. Your Name will consecrate even Be’al!
6. Brethren, hear your Name! Listen every moment, for the wind and the waters and all that dwell upon the Mother speak all the Names that are. Only by continual vigilance will ye hear your Name when it is spoken.
7. Be’al knows your Name. The Mother knows your Name. The Patriarchs know your Name. And ye, with every breath speak your Name. Listen and understand. Your every breath speaks your Name. Great is this secret. I pay for the carrying of it with my very life. Hear and understand. Listen always, for the Mother will speak your Name a moment before it is expected. Only by constant vigilance will ye be prepared.

Chapter the FOURTH

I pray that the Mother will act kindly towards one such as I, who must tell these lies to those who would truly seek her. The Wise will hear me not. The Dull will hear me not. Only those who vigil will hear me, and maybe even they will not hear. For the sake of purity I tell these lies. May the Mother forgive such a fool as I who would have men chasing the bile of trees

This is my folly—Thomas the Fool
August 25th, 1970

Peace to those who dwell in the Mother!

Letter to my Brothers

(Carleton Apocrypha Only)

I

1. I am writing these words
for all of us
because I am writing them
and because I am
all of us

I find that I am a strange fraternity
knowing you brothers and sisters
who do not know one another
but who know

10 your brothers and sisters whom I do not know

I will speak of myself
and what I know

I have stood upon a hill
and felt the powers of the Earth leap out
over the nerves of the city bright below

Gazing into a fire I have seen
a life that is old and strange and glows
with the beating of the ruby heart
that lies in the breast of darkness

20. I know now that the trees
live guided by a wisdom beyond time
that they weave in their looms of leaves
the fabric of space itself and die by fire
to free the secret essence of their souls

I find within myself
the labyrinth which I have begun to search
there are many ways

- 30 mine is the power to gaze
deep into fires
into the core of things
mine is the power
to speak to trees
and listen to their songs
mine is the power to walk
at the left hand of darkness
at the right hand of the moon
mine is the power to dance
and call the winds together
into stillness

40. there are other powers
I have not yet found

We stand together now
at the still point of the storm to come

brothers and sisters
afraid
uncertain of our strength

but we are the children of light and darkness
we are the makers of dance and song
we are the joyful servants of earth and sky

50. I call you together to go forth
into the world of men
to learn of yourselves and your powers
and give your lives that life itself not die!

II

1. I have written these things
after reading Demian
dazed
from walking down halls of mirrors
dazzled by the reflections of myself

I write having consumed
green tea in cups uncounted
bread that did not rise
black coffee and black night

10. I write at the end of a time
when nothing has gone quite right
and I have not rated my studies
worth the price of coal in Hell

I can no longer keep things to myself
not only must I write
but also share

20. and so I give you these words
because I am driven
possessed
insane
a fool or a prophet whatever the difference is

I have told you to save the world
and look into your souls
I tell you to read Demian
and vigil upon the hill

30. I have said you are my brothers
I say you are my world

I will write to you again
and speak with you
and walk with you in city or on hill

and we will cast off these chains
for a little while
these chains of time and space
of loneliness
of darkness and of distance and of fear

40. and we will gaze together
into a dying fire upon a hill
and warm ourselves with dance and words and love
until the dawn looks over the world's edge
and we like it are part of all we see

III

1. "I need only bend over that dark mirror to
behold my own image, now completely
resembling him, my brother, my master."
—Hesse
2. "Hypocrite lecteur, mon semblable, mon frere!"
—Baudelaire
3. "I can call on spirits from the vasty deep!"
"Why so can I, and so can any man,
but do they come when you do call them?"
—Shakespeare



The Book of Changes, PART ONE

(Berkeley Apocrypha Only)

Chapter the FIRST

1. On July 18, 12 y.r. (1974 c.e.), the letter which follows was sent out by the ArchDruid of the Twin Cities Grove to all the members of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu.
2. "Dear Brothers and Sisters:
3. "I have thought long and hard about the difficulties facing the RDNA in the years ahead, and have come up with the following suggestions.
4. "as is traditional among the Druids, I make no request that my words become dogma, but rather that they be pondered and acted upon (either pro or con) by those of you who give a damn about Reformed Druidism, or would like to see it survive and even grow.
5. "Let us begin by admitting that we *are* a religion and describe ourselves to each other and the outside world roughly as follows:
6. "The RDNA is an Eclectic Reconstructionist Neopagan Priestcraft, based primarily upon Gaulish and Celtic sources, but open to ideas, deities and rituals from many other Neopagan belief systems. We worship the Earth-Mother as the feminine personification of Manifestation, Be'al as the masculine personification of Essence, and numerous gods and goddesses as personifications of various aspects of our experience. We offer no dogmas or final answer but only continual questions. Our goal is increased awareness and harmony within ourselves and all of Nature. We are willing to interact philosophically and ritually with members of all other belief systems that are compatible with our own approach and Nature."
7. "Let this be how we view ourselves and approach others.
8. "Next, I would recommend that, without getting into an evangelistic trip, we make our writings available to others and publicize the location and mailing addresses of our Groves through the Neopagan media.
9. "Next, let all the members of this Council who may in traveling meet other Neopagans of equivalent dedication to the search for awareness, act more swiftly to found Groves and to telescope (if ethically possible) the time needed to ordain these others to the Third Order down to a few months or even less; leaving the new Druids and Druidesses to take over the fledgling Groves while the ordainer travels on.
10. "Most especially can this be done, without the loss of 'quality control' within the Council, with those individuals who are already Priests and Priestesses in other Neopagan traditions based upon similar philosophies.
11. "In this way, a single Third Order Druid or Druidess in traveling about and meeting other Neopagans could in the space of one year provide legitimate ArchDruids or ArchDruidesses for three or four new Groves. This would solve the problem of maintaining our "Apostolic Succession" without the necessity of forcing would-be Druids to travel up to 2,000 miles to attend the services of one of the two surviving Groves for a year and a day.
12. "A similar program of 'exchanging ordinations' has already been carried out by many Witchcraft and other Neopagan organizations; and as long as reasonable care is exercised in the choices of who to telescope training for, no major problems arise.
13. "As for the conducting of the business of the Council, we are going to have to make some serious decisions immediately. Do we really need the Council? If the Carleton Grove is defunct (which it seems to be) how can we convene the Council when its official Chairperson is nonexistent? Was it really that wise to have the election of the head of the Council left to the caprice of any one Grove, especially a Grove whose membership changes every four years by 100%???
14. "I will make the following organizational proposals and ask that all members of the Council contact me with their reactions, before September 15th.
15. "Let the office of the Chairperson of the Council rotate from year to year among the heads of genuinely active Groves (i.e., holding at least one meeting per month). I will nominate Robert Larson, D.A.L., Be., ArchDruid of the Berkeley Grove and an original Carleton Grove member as the FIRST Chairperson.
16. "Let the By-Laws be changed so that members of the Council who do not keep in touch with the Chairperson (and send in change-of-address notes, etc.) may be temporarily dropped from the rolls of the Council until they get back into communication. This would solve the quorum problems so that we could actually get some work done now and then.
17. "Let the rules governing the Higher Orders and the selection and replacement of their Patriarchs and Matriarchs be changed or else let the Higher Orders be abolished.
18. "It is my earnest belief that these changes need to be made immediately and I hope that when this letter is eventually edited and tacked on to the end of my addition to the *Apocrypha*, that it will give a better picture of the RDNA than this letter presently presents.
19. "If the RDNA is to survive as an organization, these or similar changes are going to have to be made. I request all members of the Council to contact me as I said before, by September 15th at the latest.
20. "If the majority of the Council members approve (and remember, this is only the majority of those members known to exist as of two years ago—because nobody ever bothered to send out updated lists), then I will go down to Carleton College and attempt to recover the Archives. These I will send to Robert Larson.
21. "If the majority of the letters I receive disapprove of my suggestions, Robert and I will take our Groves and leave the RDNA to found a new group to be called the SDNA or Schismatic Druids of North America.
22. "We will declare *The Druid Chronicles [of the Foundation]* to be our 'old Testament' and will rewrite those portions we consider objectionable (though for historical reasons we will retain the original readings in footnote form). Then we will write additions of our own, incorporating the contents of this letter as our guidelines.
23. "This we will do, not because we seek to destroy Reformed Druidism or to co-opt it, but because we honestly feel that this is the only way that the principles that the RDNA stands for can be spread and grow into any form that can help either humanity or ourselves.
24. "The RDNA being basically anarchistic, has little it can do to prevent schisms and we are ready, willing and able to schism if that is what it takes.
25. "We are open to other suggestions, but suggest that they come quickly for our decision to schism or remain within the RDNA will be made by *Samhain*.
26. "May the Mother bless us all, and inspire us with the wisdom we need.
27. [signed] "Isaac Bonewits, D.A.L., Be.; ArchDruid of the Twin Cities."

[Continued in The Book of Changes, part two]

The Epistle of Renny

(A New Addition to the Apocrypha)

Chapter the FIRST

1. Dear Brother Isaac,
2. I am torn between a desire to write in such a manner as to show you the ludicrous irony of your discrepancy in spirit with the founding fathers of Reformed Druidism, and a desire to seriously confront you with the rather “dangerous” nature of the tone you have established.
3. Three things disturb me greatly.

Chapter the SECOND

1. One. Your tone, your approach, your pointed lack of all brotherly community feeling—and even awareness—in attempting to adopt a position of authority and a spirit of action.
2. An interest in change, in reform, in producing responsiveness, is perfectly admirable.
3. Where the need for such ominousness?
4. Please reread your letter and try to perceive the fearsomeness it quite naturally communicates.
5. If I did not take you seriously, I would laugh at what seems to me (if possible—and probably the only possible) highly undruidic sentiment.
6. The “voice” itself of your letter frightens me into suspicions of its content and eventual implications.

Chapter the THIRD

1. Two. Your completely undemocratic method of attempting to bring about change. I cannot “vote” on the content of your letter, because I disapprove of both alternatives—i.e. your own particular approach vs. a schism.
2. Why do you assume that no other Druid would have worthwhile alternatives?
3. And why do you present the matter in such a way that it is impossible to make additional suggestions subject to vote?

Chapter the FOURTH

1. Three. Your overriding concern with form, with definition, with growth, speed, efficiency, in other words with “progress” (please catch the implications of that term—I know you didn’t use it), all “without getting into an evangelistic trip.”
2. My dear brother Isaac, a concern with evangelism is a concern with evangelism, no matter whether you perceive that that’s the source of your high or not.
3. Evangelism or even conversion have never been aims of Druidism.
4. Though you may think you can maintain an interest in “quality”, an interest in speed and conversion are themselves antagonistic to the essential spirit of Reformed Druidism as it was conceived.
5. I myself, would never have become a Druid under your proposed approach or definition.
6. The entrance into any “public” system of information dispensing is itself a very touchy question, the importance of which you seem entirely unaware.

Chapter the FIFTH

1. I have many objections to your “definition” of Druidism.
2. Unfortunately, you have presented it as subject to a yes or not

vote, and not even revision by the members.

3. In the past, form and definition have always been of the greatest flexibility, and there is a principle and a spirit behind that fact - unexpressed, but all the more solemn for its unexpressibility.
4. You act as if this flexibility were a result of disinterestedness, rather than meaningful interest.
5. In other words, you have presented a very complex question in a very narrow and political manner.
6. One might almost say tyrannical.

Chapter the SIXTH

1. To put it mildly, brother Isaac, you scare the living daylights out of me, as far as the future of Druidism goes.
2. I am much more concerned about the institutional and highly political aspects you are introducing, than even in the sleepiness of the Carleton Grove, in spite of its crucial position organization-wise.
3. Scepticism and organizational sluggishness have always been present in the past and have not yet threatened the very existence of the Druidic movement.
4. In fact, it’s very possible they reflect a certain typical state of mind—or one which at least has its own particular spiritual validity—the more credit to Druidism that it can attract even such people—refer e.g. to the founding fathers themselves!
5. If you are so concerned about the situation at Carleton, I suggest you take a trip there and call a meeting, before you claim their membership has dropped to zero.
6. I suggest you contact Donald Morrison, who is only FIRST order (due to his extreme spiritual ponderousness) and has not therefore taken over the “formal” rituals at the school.
7. You will find him most receptive to brotherly discussion.

Chapter the SEVENTH

1. The situation organizational-wise of Druidism is of course difficult. I have no argument against your complaint—only against your presentation and your solutions.
2. You will undoubtedly be hearing from at least one other person (Richard of Ann Arbor) on the history and the intricacies of the problem itself.
3. I hope you will be convinced of the necessity of a more involved discussion among members on so involved an issue.
4. (Schism is certainly not a light matter!)
5. P l e a s e s l o w d o w n and calm down, brother Isaac!
6. A blessing from the peacefulness of the East.
7. (Tonight, by the way, is Krishna’s birthday.)

Peace,

Renny the Silent
Archdruid of Carleton

August 10th, 1974

The Epistle of Ellen

(A New Additon to the Apocrypha)

Chapter the FIRST

1. Dear Brother Bonewits.
2. I have thought long and hard about what might be the nature of the difficulties you mention facing the RDNA in the years ahead, for I do not see that any are yet apparent.
3. They only difficulties I can see at all are those facing RDNA as an organized religion; and for the existence of these I rejoice.
4. I should be troubled indeed were RDNA to decline to the status of an organized religion.

Chapter the SECOND

1. "Verily, I say unto you: is it not written:
2. "An each took this to be a sign, each in his own way"?
3. "Which of you, having risen up saying: "This is truth, for I have seen it, will be followed? For even as ye have seen it, have not the others also seen it not; and where therin is the proof?
4. "Rather, that which is as the bright light unto one man is as but the thick cloud unto the other." (Med. 6:1-3)

Chapter the THIRD

1. The most which may be said to characterize all of the RDNA is that which is set forth in the Two Basic Tenets.
2. If you wish to be more specific about your own view of your own Druidism, then it is your responsibility to make clear that the narrower view is your own, within the broad range defined by the Basic Tenets.
3. I confess that it is with some regret that I avow this to be so, for I not only am most definitely not a NeoPagan, but also object to the infusion of Neo-Paganism into Reformed Druids.
4. But by the same token, you must not expect that any of us will fail to complain bitterly if you present your view as that of all Reformed Druids.

Chapter the FOURTH

1. I do not share your hope for "RDNA... to survive as an organization."
2. Its origin was in protest at the organization of religion, and I hope to see it continue so.
3. I would prefer to see RDNA survive as a fellowship of people whose search for religious truth has led them to the contemplation of and delight in nature.
4. And I earnestly feel that in this (lack of) form, RDNA can indeed spread and grow (if so desired) into a vehicle that can help both ourselves and humanity.
5. But let us not make the mistake which so many others have made, that of stressing the form to the neglect of the goal.
6. The form of Reformed Druidism of North America must be unique to each person in his own circumstances: only so can it ever hope to attain its goal.

Chapter the FIFTH

1. "Religions construct cathedrals and design robes [or definitions], just as scientists develop elaborate journals, but all too often the enterprise may become limited to a propagation of the means, with the original end, the desired objective, forgotten." (Robert E. Ornstein, *The Psychology of Consciousness*, p. 98)

Ellen Shelton
Archdruid of Ann-Arbor
August 11th, 1974 c.e.

The Words of Green

(Carleton Apocrypha Only)

Chapter the FIRST

1. To the Council of Dalon Ap Landu:
2. Many of you will recently have received a letter from Isaac Bonewits; this letter is in response to his.
3. I am somewhat bemused by this call for a description of Druidism. The description has been there all along; refer the curious to the Basic Tenets in the *Chronicles* (Law 4-6). More than that there is not. We are such a diverse group that there is almost nothing one can add to the Tenets and still embrace the entire Reform. If one wants a more direct description, say:
4. The Reformed Druids of North America are a fellowship dedicated to the search for religious awareness. We believe each person must find for himself his own path to awareness; we believe there is comfort and wisdom in nature and in the words of all who search.
5. I hesitate to suggest even that much. On the other hand, I find that Isaac's description bears little resemblance to my brand of Druidism. There is literally not one sentence in it I can agree with whole-heartedly.
6. I am not sure that I worship anything, for example; I am not even sure I know what worship is.
7. I find "the feminine personification of Manifestation" and "the masculine personification of Essence" devoid of any meaning whatever.
8. The phrase "eclectic Reconstructionist Neo-Pagan Priestcraft" just sticks in the throat; we have practicing Jews and Christians in the Reform, and "pagan" is not usually used to describe Jews or Christians, or Mohammedans or Buddhists, or their writings, from which I have drawn comfort and inspiration.
9. As for Priestcraft: if Druidism is Priestcraft, what shall we say of those Druids who are not ordained to the Third Order? Are they failed Druids, Druids who have not seen the light?
10. Quite the contrary; they are Druids in the fullest sense, even as we of the Third Order are Druids of the FIRST Order FIRST.
11. Indeed, it is the *priests* who fail, to the extent that our priesthood is in evidence. If we insist on attempting to guide others and on managing the Reform, let us at least recognize with Lao Tzu⁶ that the best leadership is that which is not perceived.
12. It will be evident that Isaac and I disagree strongly on many matters.
13. Yet—and this is my point—we both call ourselves Reformed Druids. Let the Reform remain such that this is possible. Let us in particular not represent our private paths as Reformed Druidism.

Chapter the SECOND

1. What is the hallmark of the Third Order? The answer is written all over Customs 6: it is service.
2. We are ordained to the Order because we feel the call to minister, and not to confer upon us any honor.
3. This call is beyond our commitment as Druids to the search for awareness, and it carries responsibility; responsibility to the Reform not to vitiate its particular Druidic nature, responsibility to the individual Druid not to tread too heavily in his path.
4. Take on the priesthood of the Neo-Pagans if you will, for your path may lead that way.
5. But as an Arch-Druid, offer the priesthood of Reformed Druidism only to those who receive it as a commitment to the service of the Reform and who receive it in this spirit of humility.

Chapter the THIRD

1. I hope to avoid schism; I find it hard to believe that, as undogmatic as we have been, we are faced with it.
2. But if Isaac and Robert feel the need for more dogma and more organization *within* Druidism, I am afraid I will welcome their schism.
3. For my part, I wish Druidism to remain what it took me some time to come to appreciate: a quiet, gentle revolution against tyranny in religion—and as all-embracing as the mother Earth.

Peace be unto all of you!

Richard M. Shelton
14 Foghamhar XII
14 August 1974



FIRST Epistle of Isaac

(Berkeley Apocrypha Only)

Chapter One: On the Disintegration of the Druids

1. Dear Brothers and Sisters: The Reformed Druids of North America today seem to be facing an inevitable choice; a choice that most organisms, be they physical, psychic or social, must eventually face.
2. That choice is between growth and change on the one hand or stagnation and disintegration on the other; that is to say, between Life and Death.
3. As I write these words in the late summer of the Twelfth Year of the Reform (1974 c.e.), the RDNA *as an organization* is nearly defunct.
4. For of the many Groves which have been founded (Carleton, Berkeley, Chicago, Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan, New York, Stanford, Twin Cities, Vermillion and others) few are known to be thriving still.
5. The Berkeley Grove and the Twin Cities Grove meet frequently and have a score of members each. The Chicago Grove has a score of members who meet only on High Days. The Stanford Grove has only a handful and, as far as I have been able to determine, the other others are defunct or nearly so.
6. Does this mean that the RDNA is dead?
7. Nay, for as someone from the apparently defunct Carleton Grove recently wrote to me, "The Druids are dead. Long live the Druids!"
8. For Reformed Druidism, as an idea, can never die as long as there is one individual still seeking awareness through Nature.
9. Now there are many possible interlocking explanations for the impending demise of the organizational body of Druidism, some of which should be briefly noted.
10. FIRST of all, there is the basic anarchism of the majority of the Founders.
11. This dislike of authority and organization is vital and basic to our philosophy; for it has kept dogmatism and politics from engulfing the Druids.
12. But it has also prevented us from effective communication not only with each other, but with the outside world as well, many of whose inhabitants would have benefited greatly from Reformed Druidism, had they been able to find out about it.
13. Secondly, while many both inside and outside of the RDNA consider us to be one of the oldest public Neopagan movements in the country, nonetheless, it seems that many of the Founders were either Neo-Christians, Atheists or Agnostics.
14. Most of these have in the last ten years become respectable Neo-Christians, Agnostics, Marxists or members of other traditional and accepted religions, and have quietly but firmly dropped out of the RDNA (except to protest vigorously whenever anyone suggests changing the structure of the RDNA).
15. Thus, because most of its leaders have abandoned it, the RDNA has quite naturally tended to fall apart.
16. Thirdly, the RDNA has never been very "evangelistic" or anxious to recruit members, and therefore our numbers have never been very great.
17. Perhaps at our largest we have had sixty members and thirty priests and priestesses across the entire continent.
18. This is too small for an organization to survive in small, scattered units, without a logical and sensible structure.
19. There are no doubt that many other factors which have played important roles in our increasing disintegration as an organization, but there is no room to go into them here.
20. Let us instead turn to consider possible answers to what I feel

are the two most important questions facing us in this Twelfth Year of the Reform:

21. Is Reformed Druidism, as an organization, worth bothering to keep alive at all? If so, how can we do it without violating our basic principles of individual autonomy and freedom?

Chapter Two: Neopaganism and Reformed Druidism

1. "Neopaganism" is a term that was FIRST brought to the attention of our generation by Ven. Tim Zell, Primate of the Church of All Worlds (in St. Louis, MO), which is the second oldest public Neopagan organization in America, having been founded in 1961 c.e., two years before the Reform (2 b.r.).
2. As he uses it, "Neo-Paganism" refers to a complicated and constantly evolving philosophy based upon "viewing humanity as a functional organ within the greater organism of all Life, rather than as something separate and 'above' the rest of the natural world."
3. Other philosophers have since expanded the term to make it far broader than Ven. Zell might consider proper.
4. As I use it, "Neopaganism" refers to the modern polytheistic (or conditional monotheistic) nature religions that are based upon the older or "Paleopagan" religions; concentrating upon an attempt to retain the humanistic, ecological and creative aspects of these old belief systems while discarding their occasionally brutal or repressive developments which are inappropriate to the "Aquarian Age."
5. "Neochristianity", to give a parallel that might make things clearer, is a term used by some to refer to such groups as the Christian Scientist, Quakers, Unitarians, and other "liberal Christians;" while the "Paleochristians" include Roman Catholics, High Church Anglicans, Baptists, Pentecostals and other "conservative Christians".
6. There are of course people who could be called "Neojews" (Reform) and "Paleojews" (Orthodox), "Neobuddhists" (Mahayana) and "Paleobuddhists" (Theravada), "Neowitches" (Wiccans) and "Paleowitches" ("Fam-Trads"), etc.
7. The major Neopagan movements include modern, humanistic versions of Egyptian, Norse, Celtic, Roman, Greek, Slavic, African, Chinese, Native American and other ancient religions from around the world.
8. Perhaps the most well-known of such Neopagan movements are the various diverse belief systems that refer to themselves as being "Wicca," "Witchcraft", "The Old Religion", etc.; based upon many different cultural backgrounds (though primarily Celtic) and of wildly varying levels of scholarship and practice.
9. The major principles that these Neopagan religions have in common would seem to be these: (1) a reverence for Nature and a willingness to live by Her laws, rather than trying to "conquer" Her; (2) a constant search for awareness and growth, beginning in the realm of Nature; (3) a belief that there are certain Archetypal forces in the cosmos, usually called "gods," "goddesses," "nature elementals," "spirits," etc., that humans interact with for mutual benefit; and (4) a knowledge that psychic talents do indeed exist and can be trained and developed through the use of ritual, among other methods.
10. So it is clear that, in this expanded sense of "Neopagan," the RDNA fulfills more than one qualification to be a Neo-Pagan movement, though whether it is a "religion" or a "philosophy" was never decided by the original Carleton Founders.
11. I will maintain that Reformed Druidism is, or can be, a Neopagan religion, even though this contradicts the word of the major Founder of the RDNA (see *The Book of Faith*, verse 5) and absolutely horrifies him and others.
12. I will maintain further, that if it is to survive, Reformed Druid-

ism must recognize its own Nature, as an originally proto-neopagan movement that has evolved into a genuine Neopagan group, and accept its duty to take its rightful place among the Neopagan movements of America.

13. But let me now approach this subject from another angle, one that will make more sense to some of you and less sense to others.

Chapter Three: Magic, Witchcraft and Reformed Druidism

1. "Magic"; is a word that has many meanings to many people, but for the purposes of this Epistle, I shall define it as "Folk Parapsychology", the techniques developed for centuries all over the globe that are designed to facilitate the use of psychic talents.
2. While respectable clergy and physicians scream to the contrary, it is a fact that psychic phenomena exist and that they rarely follow the desires of scientists or other preachers.
3. A religious ritual is a spiritual drama done for magical purposes, whether simple or complicated, heavy or lightweight.
4. When the ritual is led by a priest and/or a priestess who perform(s) the act of channeling the energies raised, and who act (s) as the official representative(s) of the deities invoked, then we have a psychic technology that is referred to as a system of "Priestcraft".
5. If, on the other hand, all the members of the religious group share the task of channeling the energies equally, and all expect to develop their psychic abilities, then we have a psychic technology that is referred to (at least by some) as a system of "Witchcraft".
6. But be warned that both of these approaches can blur together greatly! And they are both interwoven with Ceremonial Magic, Wizardry, Shamanism, Strega, Macumba and other system of magic working; for these terms have always been in flux and today are more slippery than ever.
7. But it is safe to say, from a scholarly viewpoint, that the RDNA is a Priestcraft and not a Witchcraft; though many Druids and Witches seem to encounter no difficulty in attending each other's rituals.
8. Now the rituals of the RDNA, though not originally designed to be magically strong, can be (and have been) used by trained Druids for powerful magical purposes; ranging from the mere charging of the chalice with stronger than usual psychic energy, to healings of physical diseases and the performance of drastic weather spells.
9. So, while the RDNA has not been around long enough as an organization to acquire a strong circuit of power in the collective unconscious (as the 40+ Catholic Churches have, for example), nonetheless, under the leadership of a Druid/ess who has been properly trained in magic, our rites can be used to reach back to touch the Ancient Gods invoked.
10. Yet another advantage to the rituals of the RDNA is their ecumenical or eclectic structure; for almost any good Pagan deity can be contacted within the context of our liturgy, including the Pagan deities behind the Christos myths.
11. When the waters of Life are passed about the circle and a psychic link is forged between those who drink and the Old Gods—that is magic!
12. When Grannos of the Healing Springs is invoked to heal a sick person and that sick person is healed—that is magic!
13. When Taranis is beseeched for rain and clouds suddenly gather from the four corners of the sky, rushing together to pour their bounty upon the Earth below—that is magic!
14. All these things I have seen, and more.

Chapter Four: Magic vs. Science?

1. Now lest there be some of you who feel that I am talking foolishly about that which I know naught, I will state that I have been a scholar of minority belief systems for ten years, that I have authored books and many scholarly treatises upon the subjects of Magic, Paganism, Witchcraft, Voodoo, Parapsychology and other related subjects.
2. Therefore, Brothers and Sisters, do I assure you, that *I know whereof I speak*.
3. All these wonders, of the sort that I have just related, though their very possibility is frightening to many, have always been common among Paleopagans and Neopagans (and they used to be common among Christians and Jews as well); and it is only the fanatic technologists and devout materialists who will close their eyes to that which they do not wish to see.
4. For to admit that the cosmos is bigger than their minds can comprehend, would be to admit that they are only a *part* of Nature, and not Her "conqueror". And this admission truly goes against all of Western Civilization and the "Judeo-Christian" tradition.
5. Even so, I beseech you Sisters and Brothers, that as the RDNA has always fought against the coerced belief systems of Established Religions, let us also be willing to combat the coerced belief system of the Established Religion of Scientism.
6. For no humans are infallible, even if indeed they be wearing the ceremonial white Labcoats, and waving the ritual Sliderules, and chalking up the mystic Numbers, and chanting the most sacred mantra, "Science has proven that..."
7. Wherefore, let us as Reformed Druids confess that there are indeed powers beyond human comprehension, beyond the limitations of human religions (no matter how respectable), and work to develop our psychic talents for our benefit and that of the Earth-Mother.

Chapter Five: What Can Be Done

1. Now this can be accomplished through many means: through ritual and music, poetry and song, enchantment and the seeking of oracles.
2. Groves may easily add magical spells to the middles of the Orders of Worship, or reserve those enchantments for magical Orders within the Reformed Druid movement.
3. For while there are three Lower Orders and seven Higher Order at present, still there is no reason why more may not be founded and dedicated to patron deities—for there are many more Gaulish, British, Irish, Scots, Manx, Welsh, and Pictish gods and goddesses who are not mentioned in *the Chronicles of the Foundation*, but who were known to the ancient Druids, whose ways we seek to reconstruct.
4. Now among these other deities were many who are now worshipped by some of those who call themselves "Witches"; and although the Triple Moon/Earth/Sea Goddess and the Horned God of the Woods are not mentioned in our scriptures, still they are a part of our Paleopagan heritage.
5. Let us therefore cooperate with those Witches and Covens who are of a like mind to our own, neither lording it over them nor bending the knee, but treating them as sisters and brothers along the Paths to Awareness.
6. For while Ancient Druidism (*Druidecht*) had little if anything to do with Ancient Witchcraft (*wiccaeraeft*), representing in all likelihood different social classes, in today's world it is best for Neopagans of all kinds to assist each other in whatever way they can, for the benefit of All.
7. And as we attempt to resurrect and reconstruct the religious and magical practices of the of the Ancient Druids, let us not forget one of their most powerful ones—Poetry.
8. For every Druid and every Druidess should be a poet.
9. It is said that the Ancient Druids spent twenty years or more in

training, learning the unwritten lore of their peoples and how to fashion it into poetry that could inspire and subdue, crown a brave warrior and dethrone a tyrant, heal the sick and enchant the world.

10. Surely, Reformed Druids can continue this tradition.
11. So therefore, Sisters and Brothers, let us return the magic of ritual and poetry, music and song, dancing and feasting to our forms of our worship.
12. Only in this way do I think we may provide the psychic revitalization which we and the world so sadly need.
13. Only in this way, by forging the bond between us through the *waters-of-life* into an unbreakable chain linking us with the Earth-mother and Be'al, may we survive as anything other than a quaint Carleton College Alumni Club.
14. Only in this way may the *spiritual body* of Druidism be revived from the malaise that has brought it low.
15. *The organizational body of Druidism* can then be easily resurrected, though in what forms remains to be seen.
16. But since this is already the longest book in the *Apocrypha*, I will close with this assurance:
17. Rejoice!
18. The Gods are alive! Magic is afoot!

Peace!

—Isaac Bonewits, D.A.L., Be.
 ArchDruid, Twin Cities Grove
 Foghamhar, 12 y.r. [circa late August, 1974 c.e.]

Goobledegook and Red Tape

(A New Addition to the Apocryphas)

Chapter the FIRST

1. Dear Rev. Brother Isaac.
2. Having received your missive, and the subsequent communique from Richard, I now feel as if I must add my humble opinions to the tempest which you have insisted on brewing in the RDNA's teacup.
3. There are several bones that I must pick with you. Having never met you, through no fault of my own, (I tried!) I hesitate to pass any judgement on your convictions.
4. However, I must react to what I consider the high-handed and willful way in which you have presented your ideas.

Chapter the SECOND

1. I, as a Quaker as well as a priest of the third order, cannot help but object to your efforts to turn a heretofore simple movement dedicated to the individual search for religious awareness into a Neo-Pagan Gobbledegook.
2. Haven't you had enough red tape in your life, that you want to wrap Druidism in more of the same?
3. If you feel the need to narrow your outlook by enclosing it in pompous definitions, be it on your hand, but leave me out of it.
4. I try to follow the Inner light, wherever it may be, and I am not about to reject any belief system just because it is not a part of the "Neo-Pagan" belief system that you describe.

Chapter the THIRD

1. As regards the Council, its workings and voting patterns, I stand with Richard. As long as there is a Grove at Carleton, let it originate from Carleton.
2. For one thing, I don't trust the postal system, and a travelling chair could result in lost mail and more confusion than we have already.
3. No amount of organization is going to compensate for irresponsibility on the part of council members. Therefore, Dick's resolution is sound, and should cover most of your objections.
4. As far as higher orders are concerned, could it be that you aspire to a higher order and are blocked in your ambition by the present system?
5. Let me remind you that it is in the Third Order that our power and our duty lie.
6. Service, not personal honor, should be our concern, however that service may choose to manifest itself. Follow the leadings, and you can't go wrong.

Chapter the FOURTH

1. I am afraid that I regard your suggestions for increasing the number of Third Orders and Groves with some amusement, especially your suggestion to ordain (or re-ordain) those who are already "Priests and Priestesses in other Neo-Pagan traditions based upon similiar Philosophies."
2. If the philosophy is similar, and the person in question has already received a call to the ministry, so to speak, the re-ordination to Third Order seems slightly redundant.
3. It's like saying "you have to be confirmed in our church before you can take communion with us."
4. In my opinion, you are trying to make holy those things which are, by their very nature, already holy—to those who have eyes to see.

Chapter the FIFTH

1. In short, Brother Isaac, it seems to me that you are trying to complicate the simple, making something dreadfully serious out of an idea that was conceived originally in a light spirit.
2. If you must, in order to be true to your conscience, schis, go with my plessing.
3. I, for one, must continue as I have begun, believing that life is, after all rather absurd, and he/she who takes anything too seriously is likely to end up looking nothing more than ridiculous.
4. "May the long time sun shine upon you, all love surround you, and the pure light within you guide you all the way on", wherever that may be.
5. Peace, and the light, be with you.

Gerre Goodman MacInnes
September 3rd, 1974 c.e.



The Epistle of Norman

(Carleton Apocrypha Only)

Chapter the FIRST

1. Dear Isaac:
2. I don't know in advance what I'm going to say, and I really don't know where to begin. I guess I'll start by saying that I don't think that there is really any alternative to schism on *your* part. As I see it, RDNA can accept almost anything, but if you feel that you can't accept the other practitioners of the rite, in their infinite variety, then you must leave us for your own peace of mind.
3. Believe me, unless Druidism has changed tremendously in the several years I have been in only nominal touch with it, we will never require you to leave us!

Chapter the SECOND

1. The RDNA was never intended to be a religion, except in the "dictionary" sense, a strictly legalistic thing; since Carleton required everyone to attend religious services, we started our own religion, Druidism was not, at the time, intended to be anything except a joke.
2. As it developed, we wound up with quite a bit more than we had ever intended to create. I have used the catch-phrase that our disorganized religion appealed to those who couldn't stomach organized religion.
3. Seriously, though, we seemed to have struck a responsive chord in quite a few people. Dick Smiley was one I especially remember, for whom Druidism came to be an intensely serious business—we worked hard to keep it light-hearted!
4. One of the basic ideas which we hit hard on (partly to be acceptable, partly because it meant quite a bit to us *per se*) was that Druidism was not intended to be replacement for any religion—no one was expected to deny any other faith (Christian, Jewish, what-have-you) to call himself a Druid; everyone who partook of the waters was automatically a Druid. (This means our membership includes such disparate entities as John Nason⁷ and Bard Smith⁸, the latter an ordained Episcopal priest.)
5. We established the FIRST three orders because that was the way the service was written! Fisher was our 3rd order, and represented to everyone originally that he had gotten it all (including his ordination) from someplace he had been in school. Actually, of course, he invented it.
6. The higher orders came about equally haphazardly; Frangquist and I wanted to play a bigger role, so we invented the idea of the higher orders to ease Fisher out and let someone else be ArchDruid! We gave him the honor of being Patriarch of the 4th order, and thereby "accidentally" wound up with the higher orders for ourselves!

Chapter the THIRD

1. To return to the question of your schism (repeating that I've been out of touch with what Druidism has been doing from about 1970 on):
2. Druidism is wide enough to embrace almost anything you want to do; if you feel it constrictive, then schism is best. I fear that you are getting away from the RDNA I know—and if you're going to make great changes, then there is no question that to continue to call it the RDNA is doing a disservice to the RDNA we have known.
3. I am not frightened off by the Neo-pagan label. The only thing disturbs me about it in connection with RDNA is that we never conceived of ourselves as pagans! Druidism was a supplement or a complement to other religions.

4. I must admit that I have ceased to practice any other religion (unless you count church at Christmas and Easter) and *do* still occasionally have a Druid service (usually improvised, since I never remember to have the book with me), but the only time I have used the term "pagan" to describe myself has been when the Mormon missionaries were at the door. (And I recommend the effect *that* produces!)
5. My biggest concern is that Druidism will be submerged, will be merely another quaint alternative ritual for those who are grabbing a straws in an effort to be different. I am still convinced that for most of the practitioners thereof, neo-paganism is either a fad or a self-conscious revolt against mummy and daddy.

Chapter the FOURTH

1. We somehow created more than we knew when we created the RDNA.
2. For many, what we were saying was that they were feeling; we articulated the inarticulate feeling that many had, which I once described as "Look around you—there must be something bigger than we are."
3. We called it the Earth-Mother; the worship of the Earth-Mother was a symbolic way of saying thank-you to the forces that created the earth and us.
4. The other god-names were just trappings, as far as I know. Several of us got rather deeply into research at on point, and much of the trappings came from that period. In my mind, at least, and I think I speak for most of the others, we were just using alternative names for the Earth-Mother.
5. Again with the qualification that I don't know recent RDNA developments, I will have to admit that I laughed out loud when I read your description of Druidism. Two reasons impelled it.
6. The FIRST was that you were so far from (beyond?) what we envisioned when we started it; the second was the incredible amount of jargon that seems to have accumulated.
7. Don't take me wrong; I just can't take the RDNA seriously!
8. Look to the origins, and you will find a college prank.
9. Look to the early years, and you will find a "philosophy" or whatever you want to call it, that somehow appealed to a lot of people who were searching for some sort of meaning in the world.
10. (I suspect that our strongest appeal was to that bright sort of person you find at Carleton, who has all of a sudden begun to realize that they don't have all the answers—and that nobody else does either.)

Chapter the FIFTH

1. Finally, I want to stress one crucial fact in the development of RDNA; it just happened!
2. We had some literally incredible events (such as the prediction of the death of Kennedy, which is hinted at in Latter Chronicles 5:12ff., and scared the hell out of us; or the efficacy of the Druid curse, which after being used two or three times, with effect, made us decide to let the secret of it die with us who know it).
3. We almost convinced ourselves sometimes that we were playing with some power greater than ourselves. But we also always managed to keep the perspective; even at its most serious moments, Druidism kept one slightly askance eye on itself!
4. Today I still call myself a Druid, although I no longer call myself a Christian; I can't accept the story of Jesus as the Christ.
5. But all that Druidism asks of one is belief in the tenets. You can come up with all sorts of deep and jargonistic statements, but you can't get away from the tenets;
6. North American Reformed Druids believe that one of the *many ways* (emphasis added) in which the object of man's search for religious truth can be found through Nature, (which we personify as) the Earth-Mother. Nature, being one of the primary concerns

in man's life and struggle, and being one of the objects of creation (we never bothered about the implications of that; a creator) is important to man's spiritual quests.

7. Druidism isn't to me what it would seem to be to you. Perhaps you are right, but, being as close as I am to the origins, I can't forget what it meant then, and what it evolved into in the FIRST few years. You can't; I can't!
8. This has been a long and rambling epistle—I apologize. As I said, I didn't know when I started where I was going; I'm still not sure that I have covered all the bases, but it's after midnight, so I'll quit.

May the blessing of the Earth-Mother, the never-changing All-Mother, be upon you in whatever you do.

Norman Nelson
10 Geimredh XII
10 November 1974

The Book of Changes, PART TWO

[The aftermath from discussion on the letter
in The Book of changes, part one]

(Berkeley Apocrypha Only)

Chapter the SECOND

1. The reactions to this missive were, as usual for Reformed Druids, varied.
2. Out of the 33 copies mailed, some were returned by the Postal Service as undeliverable. These were: D. Wesley Hubbard, Marta Peck and Richard Smiley.
3. The following member of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu objected *vigorously*: Diane Erbe (Adr. of Carleton), David Fisher, David and Deborah Frangquist, Gerre Goodman MacInnes, Thomas McCausland, Renata Seidel, Ellen Conway Shelton (Adr. of Ann Arbor) and Richard Shelton."
4. The following members of the Council agreed with the basic concepts outlined: Michael Bradley (ArchDruid of Chicago), Joan Carruth, David T. Geller, Charles Hixson, Robert Larson (ArchDruid of Berkeley), Cathy MacQuilling, Stephen W. A. McCalley, Steven Savitzky, S. Vokhvy Sterba and E. David Ugglia (ArchDruid of Stanford).
5. The following member of the Council sent no reply at all: Thomas Carlisle, Phillip Cooper, Stephen Corey, Victor Henney Jr., Robert Hirsch, Laura Kiigimagi Keeting, Glen McDavid, Don Morrison and Gary (of Schenectady) Zempel.
6. The following member of the Council sent as his reply a definite "maybe": Norman Nelson.
7. Thus it was that a majority of those who managed to communicate about the contents of the letter, including four ArchDruids of the Groves known to be active in July, 1974 c.e., desired that changes of the general sort outlined be made.
8. However, these Druids were divided into two factions: those who were of the majority, who favored the staging of a coup d'etat and those, who were of the minority, who favored a full or partial schism.

Chapter the THIRD

1. Now the ArchDruids who desired changes conferred with their Groves at Services and with eachother by telephone and mail, and came to these conclusions.
2. That two new organizations would be formed which would, for at least a while, be semi-autonomous branches of the RDNA; and that these groups would be known as the New Reformed Druids of North America (NRDNA) and the Schismatic Druids of North America (SDNA).
3. That the name NRDNA would probably wind up being used by those Druids who wished to continue to acknowledge the Council of Dalon ap Landu; to wit, those who favored a *coup*.
4. That the name SDNA would likewise probably wind up being used by those who favored a full or partial schism from the Council of Dalon Ap Landu.
5. That a new Council to be known as the Provisional Council of ArchDruids would be formed for at least a while, and that this Council would consist of all willing ArchDruids and ArchDruidesses of all active branches of the Reform that might exist or be formed in the future.
6. That all Groves would continue to retain their traditional autonomy.
7. That the purpose of the Provisional Council of ArchDruids would be to confer with and represent their Groves for the consider-

ation of various matters of import and controversy.

8. That among these matters would be those of: new Constitution(s) and By-Laws, the continuation or ignoring of the Higher Orders, the possible need or ethical reasons for the institution of defrocking procedures, and the final decisions concerning the future political structure and inter-relationships of the various branches of the Reform.

[To be continued in The Book of Changes, part three]

The Epistle to the Myopians

(Berkeley Apocrypha Only)

000. To all the orders of Druids, peace; from Joan, priestess and Druid of the Order of Dalon Ap Landu, and Preceptor of the Grove which is in Berkeley.
00. May the Lord of the Groves guide my hand in this writing. Blessed be the Earth-Mother who bringest forth all life.
0. May the Earth-Mother keep David the Fisher in Her sight and bless him, for this is all his fault.
1. Priest and Patriarchs, hear me! Druids of much ilk, hear me! Worshippers in the Groves, hear me! Brothers and Sisters, Children of the Mother, followers of the way called Druid, attend unto my words and ponder them!
2. Much have I read the *Chronicles* and wondered at the beauty of them, and at the signs the Earth-Mother has shown, and still I am disquieted.
3. Much grief it is to me to see in the *Chronicles* words that do not indicate balance and harmony, nor true knowledge of the Ways of the Mother, and I wonder greatly that none have seen it.
4. Behold the Ways of the Mother, for all of them are good, and not just half of them.
5. If the Mother would bring forth life, FIRST She must commit the seed to the grave, and bury it in the darkness, and surround it with effluvia, and the bodies of Her children of past seasons. If the plant would survive, and bring forth new plants to the glory of the world, FIRST must it put its life into its seeds and die unto the world.
6. In this the great Mystery of the Mother is seen, that we are wont to call Defeat is turned to the *sine qua non* of Victory. Harken unto my words and consider them, for there is a sadness in the Reformed Druids that wisdom would see turned to joy!
7. Fear not the waning of the Moon, lest ye would never again see Her wax. It is not a time of Evil, but of simplification and consolidation unto the seed, and though, lo, we see around us only growth and youth and wealth praised, many of the troubles we Druids are trying to escape from arise from this fallacy—that half the work of the Mother is Evil. From it arises plagues upon the Earth. If Man is good, Woman is Evil. If Light is good, Darkness is evil. If Getting is good, Losing is evil. If Summer is good, Winter is evil. If the Spirit is good, the Body is evil. Long would my Epistle be if I listed them all.
8. Hence we praise the summer and reject the Winter, all unknowing that by doing so we reject the seed the mother would plant in the darkness of our hearts and compost with out “defeats” and our unfulfilled longings.
9. Fear not *Geimredh* nor *Earrach* therefore, nor disregard them, nor cease to worship them. Call upon Belenos to return with all your hearts, but with all your hearts accept the answer of the silence and the dark. Accept not in despair, nor in hope, but in peace and certitude: yea, even in joy. Though the Mother seem turned to Hag, it is not so: She’s just a bitchy pregnant woman. Though the Lord seem merciless Hunter, it is not so: He slays the old that the new might find birth. Without *Samhain*, *Beltane* would not come. Therefore rejoice even in the gathering dark, for it is the Repository of Mysteries and the Progenitor of Wis-

dom.

10. In our shortsighted desire for Life, we have disrupted the whole Biosphere, the living mantle of the Mother. In our attempt to defeat Death, we have created a true waste. Of all the Mother’s creatures, we alone may be able to accomplish that defeat, and the world would not live but die. Then indeed would Arawn weep, for there would be no young children or tender blossoms to play upon His knees.
11. I am a warrior. I am a gardner, and a medicine-person, and a student of Life. That I worship, as I know you do. We have reclaimed the right-brain wisdom of the past. Let us not out of hand reject the left-brain wisdom of the present. It is only without each other that either becomes evil, and they do not contradict each other. Though all around you desire Life without Death, fall not into that trap, though your body and your senses much desire it; or the ways of the Mother and plans of the Lord of the Groves will be lost unto you and you shall be at odds with yourself until the end of your days. Blessed be the Lord who has given me to understand this. Blessed be the Lady who givest life.

Joan Carruth, D.A.L.
25 *Mean Earraigh*, 14 y.r.
Year of the Bison, c.e.
[circa March 25th, 1976 c.e.]

The FIRST Epistle of Robert

(A New Addition to the Apocryphas)

Chapter the FIRST

1. Dear Siblings in the Earth-Mother,
2. Now that Brother Isaac has gotten off his duff, it is time for me to do the same. I have been waiting for the publication of the expanded works of Druidism to send this letter, and now that this event is imminent, I feel that it is time to do some organizational work and mayhap some fence-mending. To these ends this missive is addressed.

Chapter the SECOND: PERSONAL

1. From my communications with Isaac, it would seem that he has stirred up a minor hornet's nest with his proposals. Good. That was the intent. Now that he has you thinking about the RDNA as more than a quaint club and has you concerned (or so I hope) about its future, perhaps something can be accomplished.
2. Unfortunately, I get the impression that some of you regard our moves as a power play and a perversion of the Reform. As far as I am concerned (and, I am sure, Isaac), nothing could be farther from the truth.
3. Some of you may have also reached the conclusion that Brother Isaac and I agree on the ideas that he has presented. Again, not so.
4. Isaac has a touch of the zealot in his make-up (sorry, Isaac, but it's true, you know). Though he keeps it under control, he is much the activist.
5. I, on the other hand, am more conservative and concentrate on personal mysticism. Let me take the main areas of disagreement that have arisen among us and state my views on the questions.

Chapter the THIRD: WHAT IS REFORMED DRUIDISM?

1. Above all, it is different things to different people. Rather than supplying a set theology, mythos, ethos, or whatever, Druidism supplies a basis from which each individual Druid defines his own mythos, ethos, etc.
2. This very characteristic is what sets us apart from most other "odd-ball" groups. In a way, we are a religion, since we worship certain vague deities in or rituals, but most things that distinguish a religion, such as set dogmas, are lacking in Druidism and should remain so.
3. Rather than looking upon Druidism as a religion or a philosophy, let us look upon it as a way to achieve or augment a religion or philosophy.
4. Druidism is neither polytheistic nor monotheistic; if anything, it is vaguely pantheistic. Most of the early members of the Reform were either Christian, like the FIRST Patriarch, or agnostic.
5. What they held in common was a commitment to the search for "truth" and a belief that "truth" must come to each from within rather than being forced upon one from without.
6. For these reasons, I am opposed to Isaac's attempted redefinition of Druidism as "pagan", though I can see practical advantages and despite my personal pagan orientation.
7. Though I have found much personal religious truth and experience in my researches into Celtic (especially Irish) paganism and mythology, these are my "trip" and I have no wish to impose it on others.
8. Emotionally I am drawn to Isaac's proposition, for many of the groups he mentions have views very similar to that of Druidism, but I consider such a definition as over-restrictive for Reformed Druidism as a whole. For individual Druids and groves, how-

ever, it's a different matter.

Chapter the FOURTH: ORGANIZATION

1. By the reaction to Isaac's proposals it would seem that the fiercely individualistic spirit of the Reform is still alive and well in many of us. We remain mavericks, though it is to be hoped that we have mellowed a bit with age.
2. The organization, however, is sick.
3. For this sickness we all must bear some blame. We've gone our individual ways and failed to keep in touch. Though natural, this lack of communication and the intermittent nature of the Carleton grove have combined to yield a total lack of cohesion.
4. Most members of the Council of Dalon ap Landu are known to each other by name at best, and at times it's been impossible to register new members due to the Carleton grove's being in a state of suspended non-animation. Obviously, such a state cannot be allowed to continue if the Reform is to regain its health.
5. The council of Arch-Druids is an attempt to alleviate these problems. As I have been tentatively appointed chief of the council for its FIRST year of existence, it behooves me to delineate what I hope and expect the council to be and do.
6. The main task of the Council of Arch-Druids will be the maintenance of communications between groves. The council's duties will be primarily organizational.
7. "Theology" will remain the province of the full Council of Dalon ap Landu. Since it is virtually impossible to get anything through the full council, we may expect nothing in the way of change in the basis of the Reform.
8. However, increased communication should lead to increased cohesion and understanding and, hopefully, new ways to "awareness" for us as we exchange ideas.
9. To increase communication, I propose that the chief of the Council of Arch-Druids write at least one report a year detailing the state of the Reform in each of the groves. To do this, he will, of course, need information from each of the groves.
10. Therefore, each member of the Council of Arch-Druids should be required to write at least one report a year on the state of his grove to the chief of the council, who would correlate these reports into the general report.
11. Eventually, I would like to see the council operate as a clearing-house for organizational problems of groves, favorite meditations, philosophy, and general Druidical ravings, but FIRST we must achieve the communication.
12. I suggest Samhain as an appropriate time for the general report and a month earlier for the reports of the individual Arch-Druids to the chief. This year let us get an idea of the problems we may have to resolve. All Arch-Druids will receive a note from me in September to request a report. Next year we'll try to get this thing really off the ground.
13. Since the Council of Arch-Druids will not concern itself with policy decisions, I see no reason for any Arch-Druid to remain out of it, be he RDNA, NRDNA, or SDNA and I suggest that the general report be sent to all Arch-Druids whether they have declared themselves in on the council or not, and whether or not they have sent in reports. If they don't want to read it, they can throw it away. Though addressed to Arch-Druids, this report would be available to any Third Order Druid on request for the cost of printing and postage.
14. The Council of Arch-Druids could also provide a safeguard against the failure or suspension of the Carleton grove. Each Arch-Druid should report new ordinations to the chief of the Council of Arch-Druids as well as to the Arch-Druid of Carleton, thus giving us a back-up list of members of the full Council of Dalon ap Landu.
15. In case of suspension of activities by the Carleton grove, the chief of the council of Arch-Druids could temporarily become

head of the Council of Dalon ap Landu until such time as the Carleton grove should be reconstituted. Thus, proposals to the full council could be made and votes taken even should the Carleton grove be in abeyance.

16. Since some apocrypha have not been sent to all priests, I would suggest that all new apocrypha be sent to the chief of the council, too, for distribution to the various groves, so that at least the most active members of the priesthood would have them.
17. The chieftainship of the Council of Arch-Druids would rotate yearly among the Arch-Druids of all established groves in order of seniority. However, the chieftainship should be restricted to Arch-Druids of groves that have been in continuous operation for at least three years. At present, this order would be Berkeley, Stanford, Chicago; though by the time Chicago's period of office was up other Arch-Druids could be eligible.
18. Due to the intermittent history of the Carleton grove and the responsibilities of the Arch-Druid both to the full council and to studies, it might be advisable to skip Carleton in the succession. In fact, any Arch-Druid who felt unable or uninclined to accept the chieftainship should be allowed to pass it on to the next on the list.
19. Within the Council of Arch-Druids, each Arch-Druid would have an equal voice and each grove would retain its autonomy.
20. If a grove chooses to declare itself pagan, Buddhist, Jewish, Episcopalian, or even Pentecostal, that's its right and its own business, though it should be made clear that it's the individual grove's orientation, not that of Druidism in general.
21. If we ever got as big as the Catholic church (fat chance), it would be nice to be able to say to someone who did not like one grove, "Well, try the one down the trail a ways, they're on a different trip."
22. Within the basic tenets of the Reform, all sorts of development are possible and desirable. The more ways we develop, the more we will be able to offer those who cannot find their "awareness" within the context of the standard religions.
23. To paraphrase Mao Tse-Tung, let a thousand branches grow from the oak trunk of the reform.
24. But for the Mother's sake, let's keep the branches connected to the trunk.
25. Go mbeannai an Mhathair sibh go leir. (May the Mother bless all of you.) I look forward to your comments, ideas, and Bronx cheers.

Yours-in-the-Mother,

Siochain (Peace)

Robert G. Larson,
Arch-Druid, Berkeley Grove
May 26th, 1976 c.e.

The Epistle of Richard

(Carleton Apocrypha Only)

Chapter the FIRST

1. Dear Reverend Brother Isaac:
2. As I read your last letter, there grew an uneasy feeling that somewhere, somehow, there has been between us a small but important failure in communication.
3. After all that several of us have written you. I am frankly amazed that you can still even suggest that any of us want to stifle your spiritual growth, or want or need to denounce or destroy those with whom we disagree. Nothing could be further from the truth.
4. The very foundation of Reformed Druidism is that each person must have the freedom to pursue his own religious inclinations. Druidism encourages people to do precisely that, and fully expects that the various paths that result will be a very diverse collection.
5. But to contain all those paths, Reformed Druidism has eschewed dogmatism and has limited formalism to a bare minimum.
6. This squares well with the sentiment (which has been present from the beginning) that formalism frequently tends to stifle spirituality.
7. So, as an institution, Reformed Druidism will offer the individual little more than encouragement and a wide variety of suggestions, from which each person must proceed in his own manner.
8. It is expected that each will in some sense go beyond what little the Reform offers as an "official line." But the specifics one brings to one's own faith will inevitably go beyond what the Reform as a whole is willing to commit itself to.
9. So you see, the uproar that followed your general letter to the Council stemmed not from disagreement with your spiritual beliefs, but rather from your suggestion that they—and a great deal of formalism—be adopted by the Reform as a whole, "officially", as it were.
10. That, clearly, was impossible—not only because many of use don't share these beliefs, but also because such institutionalization of belief and practice flies in the face of the generality that the Reform has always stood for.
11. It is clear that you and others do feel the need for more formalism. That's an observation, not a judgment; formalism isn't bad per se—it's just that you must watch it like a hawk, or as likely as not, it will take over.
12. But since you do feel this need, I think your schism was the right course. By institutionalizing this formalism, you have created something new that goes beyond Reformed Druidism.

Chapter the SECOND

1. If I may draw an analogy. I would say that Schismatic Druidism is to you what Episcopalianism is to David Fisher; a personal path that satisfies your religious needs, and which has been influenced for you by Reformed Druidism.
2. I, too, have (or am attempting to find) a personal path that goes beyond the Basic Tenets.
3. This is not to say that you or David or I cannot be Reformed Druids; but when you do Schismatic Druidism, you are doing something different.
4. You are surely right when you say that Reformed Druidism is not a stone monument. But I don't think that the Oak is the right symbol either.
5. Reformed Druidism is really a frame of mind, more a way of looking at religion than a religion myself. To borrow an idea from Robert Graves,⁹ Druidism is like mistletoe, grafting itself onto other, pre-existing trees.

6. Thus David brings his Druidic outlook to Christianity, and you bring yours to paganism.
7. In this sense, I don't think it correct to describe Schismatic Druidism as an outgrowth or evolved form of Reformed Druidism; it is rather the result of applying Druidic ideas to the religious inclinations that you brought with you or found among other individual Druids.
8. It is true that the forms of your religion bear more resemblance to those of Reformed Druidism than to those of Christianity—but that's simply because Schismatic Druidism developed after Reformed Druidism, and in its light, while Christianity developed long before.

Chapter the THIRD

1. You mention that you have encountered hostility and indifference toward your book.
2. I'm sure that some people you contacted *did* feel that you were trying to ram this down our throats, and certainly you can understand hostility in that case.
3. Also, you realize by now that Schismatic Druidism is utterly foreign to many in the Reform, and some feel that you are doing the Reform a grave disservice by publishing the *Chronicles* in the company of all this "Neo-Pagan Gobbledygook".¹⁰
4. There is fierce resentment in some quarters of the association between the terms "Druidism" and "Neopaganism" that your book will create in the minds of the public—an association that saddles us with religious baggage that is not ours.
5. Your insistence on appropriating the title "*The Druid Chronicles*" does nothing to ward off that association—or to alleviate the resentment.
6. Personally, I will be satisfied if you will be scrupulous in indicating who goes with what, as you have promised to be, though you can understand my concern that you describe us accurately to the world at large.
7. And as I have indicated before, I would be much happier if you could find a different title.
8. As for indifference, there are of course indifferent Druids; but some lack of enthusiasm may stem from a reluctance to shell out five bucks just to get the *Chronicles*, and with the text altered, at that. I'm afraid that is an attitude you will have to get used to.

Chapter the FOURTH

1. When the "Council of Arch-Druids" was proposed, we agreed to participate, but counterproposed the title "Conspiracy of Arch-Druids", to keep us mindful of the implications of what we are doing. Its connotations are precisely germane to this situation.
2. Any activity above the grove level carried on behind the back of the Council of Dalon ap Landu (as this is) is questionable at best.
3. Even though it seeks merely to improve communication and oil the formal machinery of Druidism, such an attempt to bolster form and organization is a potential source of red tape and should be watched carefully and vigilantly.
4. And any notion that the Arch-Druids have any authority whatsoever to speak for the Reform is, in a word, un-Druidic, and should be firmly rejected.
5. Indeed, only after you wrote us last spring did it dawn on us how much importance you place on groves and Arch-Druids, as opposed to just plain old Druids.
6. Many of us do not regard grove activity as particularly important. Participation in a grove is only one way among many, even within Druidism. Being a Druid, even an active Druid, need not involve attending services of any kind.
7. And one of our concerns is that Druids not active in groves not be forgotten.

Chapter the FIFTH

1. In your draft you attribute to us "traditional" Reformed Druids the notion that it is a mistake to structure one's beliefs. I doubt many of us would go so far. If beliefs are not structured, what are they but incoherent? It is *formalization* that you will find us wary about.
2. Even so, we will not say it is a mistake for you individually to formalize *your* beliefs, whether in a Neopagan fashion or otherwise. We do not believe that Neopagan Druidism *per se* is a step backwards; we do feel that as with *any* formal religion you must be careful with it, and it does not seem to me that your position and ours on this are very different.
3. Also, we are concerned not so much with "the abuses of the sorts for which monotheistic religions are so well known" as with the stagnation of spiritual development. For the latter is by far the more serious disease, and is the one from which all the others arise.
4. (And I must say that the anti-monotheism in your book comes close to being a disease—it is certainly un-Druidic.)
5. Some of us would go further. I have observed, as a Druid and later as a priest, that for many the big step is not the formalization of belief, but rather the prior attempt to translate religious experience and emotion into belief.
6. Our rational selves seduce us into believing that spiritual experience cannot have value or "validity" (a *rational* category, after all) until it is recast into rational belief. But belief, once formulated, draws attention away from the underlying experience to its own rational claims, clamoring to be proven true—or denounced as false.
7. Myth that arises from profound experience has a power to reach deep into our souls. But myth all too often congeals into belief and creed—the original experience becoming secondary and contingent upon the truth of the mythology.
8. I have come to feel that for me and many others, this process of deriving belief from religious experience is irrelevant to spiritual growth, and frequently gets in the way. Therefore it is a process I try not to perform.
9. If pressed, I might say that *I do not believe* that there is one god, or many gods, or no god, or that we cannot know whether there is a god.
10. For me, these are, in that delightful eastern phrase, "questions not tending to edification."
11. *The wind's breath catches my ear;
I cannot speak what it says.*
12. *The hawk's flight commands my eye;
my tongue does not read its mystery.*
13. *The oak's bough enfolds my heart,
its incantation not mine to pronounce.*
14. *The mountain's peak exalts my very being;
I gaze at the abyss on every side and
wordless, shiver at my smallness and mortality.*
15. *The dark of night brings me face to face
with the dark wisdom of the soul;
by dawn's light I can but dimly recall it.*
16. *O tongue, where is thy subtlety!
O word, thy mastery!*
17. *God's presence I will not speak—but sing!*

Peace,
Richard Shelton Arch-Druid of Ann Arbor
[circa May 1976]

The Epistle of Midsummer

(Carleton Apocrypha Only)

An Epistle to the Druids assembled at Carleton
On the Occasion of Midsummer

In the Fourteenth Year after the Establishment of the Reform

Chapter the FIRST

1. Greetings and salutations in the name of the Earth-Mother; may she always nourish you from her bounty.
2. And may the radiance of Belenos brighten your spirits, and may he give you strength from his power, on this his greatest day.
3. It gives us great pleasure to greet you today, especially because you are gathered at that great and hallowed seat of Reformed Druidism; Carleton.
4. For us, Carleton and Druidism are inextricably intermixed. We cannot say which has made the greater contribution to the other for us; Druidism to the fond memories we have of Carleton, or Carleton and its very atmosphere to the delights we found in the Druid experience.
5. We have not met you face to face. Yet were we present there with you today, and it saddens us that we are not, we would meet as old friends. For we have sat under the same trees on the same hilltops at Carleton, and there we have met each other in the Mother.
6. But chiefly we are pleased to greet you for the mere fact that you are there to be greeted.
7. In the early days of the Reform, we took no thought for the future. We did not dream that Druidism would touch the lives of so many, nor last for so long.
8. We sought only to proclaim the Mother and assert our right to do so.
9. When we paid least attention to finding new Druids, new Druids found us.
10. While we gave little thought to organizing, an organization appropriate to our needs evolved.
11. When rules were changed and our very reason for being seemed to vanish, we turned to the Mother and in her we found new meaning.
12. There is a paradox; if you would seek to save Druidism, you will lose it; but if you seek the Mother and what she can teach you, Druidism will grow and prosper to her glory and to your benefit.

Chapter the SECOND

1. We would do well to remember this in these days. For word has come to us on the wings of great birds that once again the Reform is threatened with schism.
2. This is no new thing. You may read in the Early Chronicles how at the very dawn of the Reform there was the threat of schism.
3. The schismatics were then led by Jan [Johnson], who wished to impose on other Druids practices and doctrines which were repugnant to them.
4. But Jan had the Mother in his heart, and he did relent that there might be no schism but rather peace and unity in the fellowship of the Druids.
5. Thus he demonstrated the true spirit of the Reform and established a tradition far more important than those he had FIRST sought to establish.
6. Therefore seek peace, harmony, consensus, unity; for that is the Druid way.

Chapter the THIRD

1. You may ask; "Should we include these schismatics in the fellowship of the Reform?" You cannot do otherwise.

2. Druidism is open to anyone who wishes to be part of it, however imperfect in understanding. We require only the tasting of the waters-of-life and an affirmation of the Basic Tenets.
3. No one can add any other test. No one can add to the Basic Tenets. [Law 4-6 -Ed.]
4. We are given to understand that these schismatics use words like "outsider" in their writings. That is an error. The words "outsider" and "insider" have no meaning for Reformed Druids. You cannot exclude anyone.
5. You may ask; "Were there not Anti-Druids?" Indeed there were, and likely are, and no doubt will be.
6. They are distinguished by their acts of violence against Druidism and their complete lack of understanding of Druidism.
7. They are Anti-Druids by their own choice; they have not been excluded by the Druids. Anyone may exclude himself from the fellowship of the Druids, but you must not sit in judgment.
8. There is no need to name the Anti-Druids (they were not named in the *Chronicles*), but you will know them when they appear.
9. Again: you cannot exclude anyone. Whoever would exclude others is excluded.
10. You may ask; "Should we recognize the orders of the schismatics?" Do they recognize yours?
11. All who have vigiled on the bosom of the Earth-Mother, who have tasted the waters-of-life, who have inscribed the Basic Tenets on their hearts, and who have received their orders from the hands of an Arch-Druid in the Council of Dalon Ap Landu, they are priests of Dalon Ap Landu.
12. All such persons you should recognize as priests, provided only that they also recognize all others.

Chapter the FOURTH

1. You may ask; "Is it not possible that the Council could become perverted and transform Druidism so that we could not recognize it?" But what authority does the Council have except what all Druids accept?
2. If the Council does what glorifies the Mother, what establishes unity and harmony among Druids, and what promotes enlightenment, then rejoice in the work of the Council and do not concern yourselves with factions.
3. But if the Council does what does not glorify the Mother, what causes dissension and conflict, and what becomes a stumbling-block for Druids, then it is not the True Council. Then the Council will have passed away.
4. For it is an institution and like all institutions it will pass away, though we know not whether the time be near or far. And when it passes away, do not grieve for it, but rejoice in the Mother who will abide.
5. And do not be concerned for the future of the Druids, for they too will abide, at least for a time. Even so, the Mother will be glorified in new and wondrous ways, for she is ever changing even as she remains the same.
6. You may ask; "How can we preserve the True Council?" That is a question not tending to edification.

Chapter the FIFTH

1. Therefore, have hope, glorify the Mother, greet each other in her name, quarrel not, seek enlightenment, and remain steadfast in the Reform.
2. Then the Mother will renew and refresh you, and sustain you and grant you her peace.

David Frangquist
Priest of Dalon Ap Landu
Patriarch of Belenos

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Priest of Dalon Ap Landu
Priest of Belenos

The Second Epistle of Robert

(A New Addition to the Apocryphas)

Chapter the FIRST

1. Dear Siblings-in-the-Mother:
2. Enclosed you will find a Xerox of the final version of the evolved works of Druidism. Except for a few illustrations, this copy is complete. Please make your corrections as soon as possible and return them to me by July 20 at the latest.
3. Since we have included something to offend almost everyone, objections to content will not be considered; the only corrections made will be those pertaining to fact and general proof-reading....
4. [Followed by visual description of DC(E).]

Chapter the SECOND

1. ...I wish to take this opportunity to answer some questions which were raised by my last missive.
Brother Shelton suggests "Conspiracy of Arch-Druids" as a title for the provisional council.
2. While I feel this title to be in keeping with the self-mocking style of Druidism, I also feel that the word "Conspiracy" has implications and connotations contrary to the aims of the council (at least as I seem them). Therefore, I intend to continue to call it the Provisional Council of Arch-Druids.

Chapter the THIRD

1. As far as the "sexist" language issue is concerned, I tend to agree with Dick, being what our late unlamented president would call a "strict constructionist" in the matter of language. What we are seeing now is egalitarian euphemism similar to the sexual euphemism of Victorian times, and I feel that it too will disappear as its causes disappear.
2. In many cases, it's a good example of not being able to see the forest for the trees.
3. However we are living in the present, and it behooves us to bend to the winds of the present.
4. "Our predecessors of old did take up the sword and fight with those who afflicted them, but they were defeated. Wherefore, we must not take up the sword, but remain tolerant and patient in our afflictions that there might be peace."

Chapter the FOURTH

1. Sister Shelton implies in her letter that there is little real need for the Provisional Council, as most of my proposed functions are supposed to be taken care of by the Arch-Druid of Carleton. True, with emphasis on the "supposed".
2. The Provisional Council may well become a "goosing" agency more than anything else. I have never maintained that there was a spiritual malaise in Druidism, only that its organizational structure was not all that could be desired.
3. The Provisional Council is an attempt to resurrect Druidism as an organization (or disorganization). I would also point out that in the years to come most new priests will probably not be ordained from the Carleton grove, but from one of the other groves. It's a simple matter of arithmetic.
4. The Provisional Council will, I feel, give these new priests more of a feeling of belonging and access to other Druids. Talking with your Arch-Druid is a lot easier than trying to communicate by letter either directly or through the Carleton grove.
5. With an effective council of Arch-Druids, each Arch-Druid will have input from all the groves to enable him to advise and give answers to other Druids and those who are interested in Druidism, so that it won't be a matter of "Well, this is the way we

think here".

6. Nor do I wish to rule out input from Druids not associated with a grove. Input from all Druids would be welcomed. However, since the Provisional Council will address itself mainly to the organizational problems of groves, input from grove members or those who have tried to organize grove, whether successful or not, would be particularly valuable.

Chapter the FIFTH

1. Sister Shelton also asks what would be included in the proposed grove reports. Most of the information would have to do with size, frequency of services, problems encountered, solutions, orientation, etc. Any special services which an Arch-Druid wishes to communicate to other Arch-Druids could also be included.
2. Lastly, there would be a place for Druidic ravings on such subjects as "Whither Reformed Druidism?", "What should the RDNA be as an organization?", etc. These suggested topics for ravings (not a complete list) will accompany my request for a grove report, which you should receive in late August.

Chapter the SIXTH

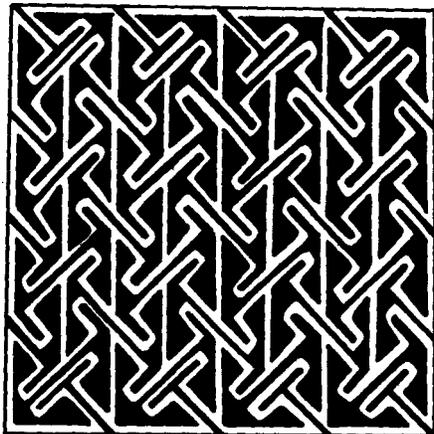
1. Finally, in answer to Brother Morrison, I will now relate this incredibly ancient Druid fable which I have just written.
2. Ahem.
3. Once in the long ago there were three Druids, and very fine Druids they were, too. It came to pass that each of them inherited a piece of land with a large rock on it.
4. Now the FIRST of these Druids went to his land and looked at his rock and immediately fell in love with it.
5. To make his rock even more beautiful he fell to rubbing and buffing it until it bore a bright polish.
6. Every day he would rub and buff it till it almost outshone the sun, so bright it was.
7. The people who lived nearby would often come to see the rock and say what a wonderful, bright rock it was being.
8. Now eventually the Druid died and went to the Sidhe hills as all good Druids do. But the wind and rain did not die.
9. Slowly it was that the rock lost its polish, but lose it it did. No longer did the people come to see the rock, now neither wonderful nor bright, for of what interest is a mere rock except to geologists?
10. The second of the Druids went to his land and looked at his rock and thought what a wonderful statue his rock would make.
11. So he took a hammer and chisel and carved a statue of his god out of it. Paint he put on his statue, and gold and jewels also, until it looked exactly like his idea of his god. And the people who lived both near and far came to marvel at the statue and worship at it, saying such things as "You could swear that it's alive, that it's being."
12. To which the Druid would reply, "It is."
13. Eventually the second Druid too died and went to the Sidhe hills where all good Druids go. But the wind and rain did not die, nor did human nature change.
14. Thieves came and stripped the statue of its gold and its jewels. Wind and rain completed the destruction, until the statue once again resembled nothing so much as a rock.
15. And the people stopped coming to marvel and to worship, for, after all, who wants to worship a rock after he's had the most wonderful statue in the world?
16. The Third Druid went to his land and looked at his rock. Then he climbed upon it and looked about him, liking what he saw.
17. He planted flowers, trees and bushes about the rock and lichen on it. Every day he would herd his cows and sheep on the land about the rock, sitting on or resting against it.
18. As time went by, the flowers, the bushes and trees grew and the

lichen covered the rock, giving the Druid an even more beautiful view and a softer seat to watch his herds from.

19. So beautiful did the Druid's land become, that people came from far and near to sit with him and watch the deer and fox play and the flowers bloom, for it was said to be the most beautiful and peaceful place in the world.
20. The time came when the third Druid died and went to the Sidhe hills where all good Druids go. But the flowers did not stop growing, nor did the bushes and trees and lichen.
21. Still did the deer and fox play in the Druid woods, and still were cows and sheep herded about the rock.
22. The Druid's name was forgotten, but some people still came to sit on his rock and look at his woods, for it was yet the most beautiful and peaceful place in the world.
23. An so it remains to this day.
24. Beannachtai na Mathar libh. Siochain

Robert, ArchDruid, Berkeley Grove

28 Mean Samhraidh, 14 y.r.
(July 2nd, 1976 c.e.)



The Second Epistle of Isaac

[A Discourse by Isaac on his **personal** understanding of Magick]

(Berkeley Apocrypha Only)

Chapter One: The Baby and the Bath Water

1. Sisters and brothers, the purpose of this missive is to make clear some matters concerning the subjects of Theology (the study of more than one God) and Hierurgy (the practice of sacred workings) insofar as they relate to ritual.
2. For there appears to be a great deal of ignorance about these subjects among Reformed Druids and more than a little hostility towards the very existence of ritual at all.
3. And this is understandable from those who have been raised in a monotheistic culture, especially since the religious leaders of that culture long ago lost what knowledge they once had about the proper use and purpose of ritual.
4. So that today the rituals of the Established Religions of the West have almost no power and very little positive use; but on the contrary, have been perverted into tools of manipulation and tyranny.
5. Now since all of us growing up in monotheistic cultures have been taught from birth that the only "real" religions are the Western ones, and since it has always been made deliberately difficult for us to get accurate information about non-western religions, we have naturally tended to reject the non-monotheistic religions we do not know along with the monotheistic ones we are familiar with.
6. This shortsightedness has been planned, for the powers that we would rather have us as atheists and agnostics rather than as non-monotheists, for thus we are still playing their game by their rules.
7. Also as intellectuals, we have been raised to have a knee-jerk reaction to such terms as "Magic", "the occult", "ritualism", "the supernatural", etc., so that we can only think about these subjects in the ways that we are supposed to.
8. For a full understanding of these terms by intellectuals, and eventually large numbers of other people, would spell the death of organized Western religion (though it would have little effect on the non-monotheistic systems).
9. *What I have to say in this Epistle are, of course, only my opinions.* {Emphasis added by Editor} But they are the opinions gathered from a career of studying many forbidden subjects and learning to think that which a Westerner is not supposed to be able to think.
10. For I have studied magical, religious and psychical phenomena from all around the world and have learned that the overwhelming majority of cultures in which these strange beliefs and occurrences appear happen to agree upon the same basic theories of magic and religion.
11. Granted, the explanations offered by these non-western thinkers may seem a little strange to Western philosopher and theologians, as well as their students, but historically speaking it is the Western monotheistic thinkers who are out-of-step.
12. And I will submit that monotheism, far from being the crown of human thought and religion, as its supporters have claimed for several bloody millennia, is in fact a monstrous step backwards—a step that has been responsible for more human misery than any other idea in known history.
13. And I will suggest that, in rejecting all religion and ritual because of disgust with the only religions known to you—the monotheistic ones—some of you have thrown out the baby with the bathwater; just as you were supposed to do.
14. And I will further ask you, sisters and brothers, to read my

words with as open of minds as you can, for whether you wind up agreeing with me or not is really not important; but you will at least understand my motivations and concepts, and those of my colleagues in the Neopagan movements.

15. Perhaps you will come to understand that we are not irrational, anti-intellectual, “back to the caves” fanatics, but that rather our philosophies are the equal in complexity to any ever invented in the West.

Chapter Two: Reality and Non-Reality

1. In order to understand the original ideas behind most magical and religious rituals, one must begin with the fact that the Gods are real.
2. Their type of reality is not that of a block of wood or of anything physical that we are familiar with, but a kind of reality it is nonetheless.
3. This may seem somewhat confusing to the dualists among us, so I will attempt to explain this rather complex matter.
4. The theological system that framed the philosophical structure of Western Civilization and conditioned westerners as to what was logically thinkable, is basically a “conditionally monotheistic dualism”.
5. That is to say, while claiming to be monotheistic, it is in fact *polytheistic*, with the Father, the Son, the Holy Ghost, Mary and Satan (Allah and Shaitan, in Islam) as the major deities, with a host of lesser deities called Saints, Demons and Angels—all of whom are divided into two grand armies: the Good Guys and the Bad Guys.
6. Dualism is the metaphysical view that the cosmos is divided into two irreconcilable forces, usually described as Good and Evil; frequently, it is stated that the Good God is the God of the Spirit (and therefore everything nonmaterial is good—except of course the Bad God and his minions, who are also spirits) and the Bad God is the God of the Material World (and therefore everything material and fleshly—including all the female deities of the Earth, such as our Earth-Mother—is irretrievably evil).
7. Unlike the Oriental systems, there is no overlap between Good and Evil, White and Black, Light and Darkness.
8. Now while Western theology claims that Satan/Shaitan is weaker than Jehovah/Allah, nevertheless, in their day-to-day statements, most Western theologians ascribe to the Bad God all the miraculous powers usually ascribed to the Good God (or his representatives, such as Jesus or Mohammed); in order to be able to explain the “counterfeit miracles” performed by the members of other faiths.
9. It is obvious to any Pagan theologian that Western theology is basically dualistic, with the forces of Good and Evil pretty much evenly balanced; it is equally obvious that these theologians managed to force Western philosophy and metaphysics to become strictly dualistic as well.
10. Pushing Aristotle (and later Descartes) as the supreme logician, Western theologians created a worldview in which every object of perception or conception was either Good or Evil, True or False, Right or Wrong, White or Black, Real or Unreal.
11. The entire cosmos was sliced into two warring halves, and whoever refused to accept this worldview was automatically ascribed to the Evil half and executed as a menace to civilization.
12. All of this, mind you, is somewhat different from the views that have been held by 99% of the human race, throughout history, and probably for a million years before history began.
13. Polytheists have a tendency to develop logical systems based on “multiple levels of reality” and on the magical Law of Infinite Universes: “every sentient being lives in a unique Universe”.
14. What is true for one person in one situation may not be true for another person in a different situation, or even for the *same* person in a different situation.

15. ‘Truth’ is defined as a function of convenience (the magical Law of Pragmatism, also used in most engineering and scientific activity: “if it works, it’s true”); Truth does not exist in a comprehensible form as an eternal essence.
16. The simplest example of this is your favorite table: slam your fist down on it.
17. After yelling with pain, you will notice that, on the level of ordinary mundane reality, that table is quite solid.
18. Yet we all know that, on another level of reality (one we all believe in, even though we’ve never seen an atom), that table is 99.9999% empty space—as is your hand.
19. For the table is simultaneously solid and not solid, depending upon which level of reality we care to consider.
20. A beautiful perfume in my universe may be a terrible stench in yours; to a colorblind person, red and green may appear the same; sound is a false concept to a person born deaf—he or she has to be taught to perceive that which does not exist to his or her senses.
21. The wonderful theories of relativity being so proudly produced by modern physicists were known millennia ago by Pagan philosophers and mystics; the only reason relativity came as such a shock to our scientists was because the Western worldview does not allow for ambiguity or relativity—everything is either Absolutely Eternally True or Absolutely Eternally False (“He who is not with me is against me”, “The lukewarm I vomit forth from my mouth”, “Kill them all, God will know His own”, etc.).
22. This is not the place for an extensive analysis of Western Religion; but it is necessary to point out these matters rather bluntly, in order to allow one to think the unthinkable by reasoning out that which Aristotle says is impossible to reason out.

Chapter Three: The Reality of the Gods

1. Now, with the preceding background, we may come to the fascinating point where metaphysical relativity intersects the realm of theology (one may use the term “polytheology” if the slight change in the usual spelling of “theology” is upsetting).
2. For the Gods are both real and unreal, “true” and “false”, depending upon which level of reality one cares to deal with.
3. Taranis, for example, is on the physical level merely a quaint myth of our Celtic ancestors.
4. On the euhemeristic level, He may be the memory of a once famous and powerful warrior and weather magician.
5. On the intellectual level, He is an Archetype of thunder and lightning, as are Thor, Perkunas, Indra, Perun, the Thunderbird, and other deities.
6. But what if you invoke Taranis several times to start storms and *each time you get a storm?*
7. They must then face the fact that, on *some* poorly understood level of reality, Taranis is a real, living entity—one you can interact with.
8. I would say that Taranis is, in fact, like all gods and goddesses, a powerful Archetype in the collective unconscious of humanity; this collective unconscious (Jung’s term) is what I have called elsewhere “The Switchboard” (in *Real Magic*), C. Taliesin Edwards (the leading theologian in the Neopagan movements has called “The Da Mind” (in his *Essays Towards a Metatheology of the Goddess*), and that others have called by a variety of names.
9. I would assure you that this gigantic interlocking net of Archetypes *exists* on what, for lack of a better term, has been called the *psychic* level (or sometimes the “spiritual” level, but that term tends to confuse matters more than it helps).
10. It is the source of the divine power used in *all* religious rituals—including those of the monotheists who think they are communicating with a Supreme Being.
11. Further details can be found in the above cited writings, but for now let it suffice to say that *all* the Gods and Goddesses, Angels,

- Demons, Saints, Avatars, Buddhas, etc., *exist*—they are real.
12. They exist as, if nothing else, many powerful circuits of psychic energy in a gigantic web linking every living sentient being on this planet Earth.
 13. And although it became fashionable in Western Religion to promote local tribal gods to the rank of Supreme Being (through a process known as *hyperapotheosis* or “The Palestinian Heresy”), most theologians would insist that the Most High God/ess is only a distant parent to the Gods and Goddesses of Earth, no matter how grand the claims of religious partisans.

Chapter Four: Earthly Deities and the Supreme Being

1. Followers of Reformed Druidism who are horrified by being associated with Paganism will be surprised to learn that traditional Pagan attitudes towards a Supreme Being are highly similar to those held by most Reformed Druids towards Be’al.
2. Most Paleopagan and Neopagan systems of theiogy tend towards a belief that the High God or High Goddess lives very far away and is not concerned with the actions of mortals; although He/She/It may have been the original parent of the tribal Gods, nonetheless, the High God/dess is not usually described in anthropomorphic way.
3. The Most High God/dess is neither male, nor female, nor even neuter; He/She/It has no human emotions or other characteristics whatsoever.
4. In accord with the mystics from around the world, theologians will assert that any statement made about the Most High God/dess is bound to be incorrect, simply because He/She/It is Infinite and human minds (no matter how “divinely inspired” they may think they are) are all too finite.
5. Human languages are not equipped to deal with Infinity; neither are human emotions.
6. The Gods and Goddesses of Earth, on the other hand, *are* anthropomorphic—they laugh and cry, become angry or vengeful, feel love and hate, can be tricked and taught, send mercy or punishment, etc.—and this is precisely *why* They are loved.
7. These are the entities that humans actually reach in their rituals, although westerners usually fool themselves into believing that they have reached the Supreme Being.
8. Theologians would insist that none of the deities worshipped by westerners are as powerful as They are claimed to be—but They are powerful enough to produce magical effects (“miracles”) once in a great while, and that is more than sufficient to allow those who are ignorant of the magical and psychic sciences to claim each of the Gods worshipped as the Supreme being.
9. And since occultists and theologians are executed as quickly as possible by monotheists, there is no one around to contradict the leaders of whatever religion is the One True Right and Only Way in a given culture.
10. Now the official partyline of Western theology for five thousand years has been that “all Pagan deities are demons in disguise”, and that it was an insult to the Supreme Being to worship any lesser deities.
11. Naturally, this came as something of a surprise to the Pagans, who were more likely to say that “All Gods and Goddesses are of the Most High, and in honoring Them do we honor the One.”
12. Western dualism, however, forced its theologians to insist that all the deities they met in their missionary work had to be turned into Saints or Demons immediately.
13. The closest that Neopagans seem to come to the direct worshipping of a Supreme Being (outside of one Egyptian monotheistic cult, and there seems to be some controversy as to whether or not they count as Neopagans) will be found in the cult of “The God and the Goddess”.

14. Known as *duotheism*, this belief system states that the Ultimate Godhead is bisexual, or hermaphroditic.
15. As direct emanations form “The Star Goddess and Her Consort”, there is an Earthly Goddess and God (referred to in Neopagan Witchcraft, for example, as a Moon/Earth/Sea Goddess and a Horned God of the Wildwood and the Sun).
16. This Earthly God and Goddess are the rulers and at the same time the quintessence, of all the male and female deities of planet Earth.
17. Every god or goddess of this planet is seen as an “aspect” or “face” of these Two, who are in turn the humanoid aspects of the Most High God/dess.
18. But most Neopagans are perfectly willing to admit that the dolphins might have an Earthly Dolphin God and Goddess, and that beings of another world might have deities of their own Who would be just as “real” as our own are, though totally inhuman.
19. It’s a big cosmos—and the universe is perfectly capable of counting higher than two.

Chapter Five: But What About Ritual?

1. Now as a Reformed Druid, I am entitled to believe any sort of nonsense, simple or sophisticated that I care to, and you will no doubt be happy to allow me that right.
2. But you may be wondering what all of this intellectual discussion has to do with the positive or negative values of ritual; therefore, I will turn to that subject as quickly as possible.
3. But *FIRST* it is necessary to explain some of the terms I will be using in the forthcoming discussion, for Heirurgy (which means the work of worshipping) is a complex subject and cannot be understood without the use of fairly precise terms.
4. “Magic” is the art of science of getting one’s psychic talents to do what one wants; in other words, “Folk-parapsychology”.
5. A “ritual” is any sequence of ordered events designed to produce a desired effect.
6. A “magical ritual”, therefore, is a psychodrama designed to facilitate the generation of psychic energy and the focused disposition of that energy, in order to accomplish a given result.
7. A “counterfeit miracle” is an identical magical act or paranormal phenomena performed by a person working in a religious context of which you *don’t* approve (this is often referred to as “evil black magic done with help of demons”).
8. A “religion” is a combination of a philosophical system and a magical system (as mentioned in *The Epistle of David*) which is oriented primarily towards higher beings, period. There’s no need to go all goopy and mystical about it.
10. An “active ritual” is one designed to have an effect upon a situation or entity outside of oneself (praying for rain, for example, or faith healing another).
11. A “passive ritual” is one designed to change oneself; to receive or store psychic energy rather than sending it elsewhere (doing a self-healing, for example, or becoming possessed by a Holy Spirit).
12. As a general rule, the **major** distinction in psychic technology between magical and religious rituals is that magical rituals *usually* involve few people and are actively oriented, while religious rituals *usually* involve large numbers of people and are passively oriented.
13. Because the majority always define cultural reality, it is easy for a theologian who is dishonest to claim that the ritual activity involving large numbers of people is somehow morally superior and qualitatively different from those rituals involving a minority.
14. So what really goes on at a religious ritual? Not, what do the people *think* is going on, nor what their theologians and priests may *tell them* is going on, but *really*?
15. Actually, the art of Priestcraft (which is what we are, after all,

discussing) is rather simple—so simple in fact that the overmystification of the psychic technology involved is what led to the term having such a bad aroma.

16. The answer to the question of what really happens at a religious ritual will be answered in Chapter Seven, using the Reformed Druid Order of Common Worship as our example; but FIRST we should consider the tools of ritual.

Chapter Six: The Tools of Ritual

1. In a typical magical ritual various techniques are used to get the magicians(s) into the proper frame of mind to release psychic energy in a focused manner, including the following:
2. "mandalas" or "yantras" (known in the West as "pentacles" or "sigils") which are pictures or diagrams illustrating the type of energies being dealt with. ...
3. "mantras" or "incantations", which are sound sequences which have both physical and psychological effects....
4. "mudras" or "gestures", which are postures having physical and psychological effects....
5. props (chalices, swords, wands, etc.)....
6. scenery (the decoration of the ritual room with appropriate colors and textures)....
7. costumes (special clothes or the lack of them, worn during the ritual)
8. intoxicating methods and methods for otherwise altering the state of consciousness including breathing exercises, sexual techniques, alcohol, tobacco, other drugs, physical exercises and other methods.
- 8b. Each and every single one of these techniques and supporting elements shows up in religious rituals as well.
9. The mandalas may be two-dimensional paintings, icons or tapestries, or else they may be three dimensional statues or idols (an "idol" is someone else's religious statue); in any event, they stimulate the sense of sight.
10. The mantras are, of course, the prayers, psalms, litanies and hymns used to stimulate the sense of hearing.
11. The mudras can include kneeling, genuflecting, kissing of sacred objects, saluting the Four Quarters of the sky, etc.; these are for the kinesthetic senses.
12. The props are frequently the same as those used in magical rituals—chalices, pointing sticks, plates of precious metals, altars, etc.
13. As for scenery, every temple or church building is decorated in whatever manner the congregation feels is most powerfully spiritually (i.e. "holy").
14. Naturally special costumes are worn by the clergy and laity alike, such as skull-caps, black shirts with white collars, prayer shawls, white robes, maniples, etc.
15. In Western Religions these days, the principal drug used to alter the state of consciousness is wine, though Oriental Religions frequently use cannabis, Voodoo uses rum, and Native American rituals will use tobacco, peyote or magic mushrooms.
16. Is it only a coincidence that religious ceremonies make use of exactly the same ritual tools as those used in ceremonial magic?
17. It is perhaps true, as some have claimed, that the ceremonial magicians are "actually" worshipping demons and deliberately stole the techniques from the organized religions in order to blaspheme and desecrate them?
18. Bullfeathers!
19. Ceremonial magicians shamans, witches and medicine-people have been around for millennia—since long before the rise of our modern organized faiths.
20. They were using those techniques then because they worked, a fact the organized religions know full well—because each of the organized religions was originally a tribal religion run by just such a local shaman or witchdoctor or prophet.

Chapter Seven: The Magic of Druid Worship

1. As you no doubt might imagine, brothers and sisters, I have been alternately amused and angered by comments about how easy it is for ritual to "independently acquire magical properties of its own."
2. My amusement was based upon my own knowledge that any effective religious ritual will already have magical properties or it won't work at all.
3. Whereas my anger was not directed at the speakers of the derogatory comments, for they had no way of knowing otherwise, but rather at the theologians and philosophers of the West who have so carefully assured that intelligent men and women will somehow separate magic from religion in their thinking.
4. As we have seen, what goes on in a religious ritual is exactly the same thing that goes on in a magical ritual: the manipulation of psychic energies by humans for human benefit.
5. The details of the technology may be a little different, but the forces used are basically the same.
6. In order to make my wild sounding statements a bit clearer, let us examine the Order of Common Worship in use by the various Reformed Druid movements.
7. Like all religious rituals, it opens with an Invocation, asking the deities to take notice of our presence and simultaneously initiating a form of unity between the members of the Grove.
8. In most religions, this is a far more elaborate part of the ritual and is designed to really make the group-mind (a telepathic resonance set up between a number of people thinking similar strong thoughts about a single subject) as strong as possible.
9. Note also that the Reformed Druid Invocation used includes a "confession of sins", another common element in opening prayers, designed to remind the people of their dependence upon the Gods.
10. Next is the Processional and the Hymns or Incantations of Praise, designed to "uplift" our emotion; i.e., to get us emotional and to focus that emotional/psychic energy towards the Earth-Mother and Be'al.
11. When the Sacrifice is offered, we are not only intellectually making an offer to the Gods, but we are also sending life force from the severed tree branches we are sacrificing (in a similar fashion, those religions that sacrifice animals are using that exploding life force to strengthen the psychic energy being aimed at the Gods).
12. We are in effect, by sacrificing anything living, taking advantage of the life force broadcast by any dying entity (see some Kirilian motion pictures of sliced plants, for example), and using it, along with our own psychic energies (the "sacrifice of our hearts") to "feed" the Gods.
13. This is a basic principle of Pagan theology, that the Gods need human worship as much as the humans need the blessings of the Gods; for every time you think emotionally (positively or negatively) about a deity, you feed more psychic energy into the collective unconscious about that deity, and reinforce its energy circuit.
14. This is why one can legitimately say that the Christians in the West (not so much in Russia and Eastern Europe) actually worship their Devil—because they think so much about Satan that they give Him tremendous power, certainly as much as they give to their Jesus.
15. Satan's power, like Christ's power, comes from human thoughts and human psychic energy, and not particularly from the Supreme Being—but both of these two Gods have more than enough psychic power to produce occasional magical effects.
16. Formalized worship services are not usually the time when the deities are fed the most psychic energy, for that is a day-by-day process; instead, the energy raised and sent to a deity in a typical religious ritual acts primarily as a catalyst: it is there to trigger a

- return flow of psychic energy, to be used for magical purposes under the direction of the priest or priestess leading the rite.
17. Now this kind of mechanistic approach to deity is distressing to most nonpagans in the West (though the Ancient Greeks or the modern Hindus would understand it perfectly), and it is, of course, an oversimplification; for there are thousands of variables involved in even the simplest exercise of psychic talents, and the response from the deity is not always as expected.
 18. Is this the “free will” of the deity acting, or merely incompetence on the part of the worshipers? Perhaps it is both.
 19. In any event, once the triggering energy has been sent via the Sacrifice to the deity (Who is usually visualized as “up there” somewhere, even if immanent as well), there is usually a response.
 20. In Reformed Druid ritual, it is the presiding Druid/ess who listens for the answer, and joyously announces (at least during the Summer Half of the year) that the Earth-Mother has accepted the sacrifice and is ready to bestow Her blessings upon the Grove.
 21. In other words, a message has been sent and acknowledged.
 22. As in most religious rites, a Catechism then follows; though in Reformed Druidism this is a very brief one indicating the unity of belief among the members of the Grove concerning the Waters-of-Life.
 23. The purpose of this is to further tune the group-mind, so that it will be ready to receive the psychic/spiritual energy sent it by the Gods (or, to put it another way, to open the group-mind to the reception of a message and a source of energy that is always available, if one merely tunes in and listens).
 24. The presiding Druid/ess then Consecrates (psychically charges) the chalice, making it a focus for the energies of the Gods and the Grove to meet, just as in many other religions.
 25. As the holy waters are drunk, each member of the Grove is linked more tightly to the Gods and to each other.
 26. The intoxicating effect of the whiskey or wine is meant only as an additional shove to open any closed doors left in a member’s mind; it symbolizes the fires of the spirit as it burns in us and serves to break down the conscious resistance to the Other Worlds.
 27. Now is the time, in most other religious rites, when something active would be done by the spirit-filled Grove; a prayer would be said and repeated, to focus the linked and strengthened energies of the Grove—i.e., a “spell” would be cast (although that dirty word might never be used).
 28. In Reformed Druidism, however, that energy is usually used for more passive purposes; to facilitate introspection and meditation, for the improvement of one’s spiritual growth.
 29. However, there is nothing to prevent a presiding Druid/ess from inserting a healing spell or a crop-growing prayer just before the pouring of the Libation (“To Thee we return....”)
 30. After the Communion is over, the presiding Druid/ess usually goes directly to this Libation, which has the dual effect of both strengthening the link between the members of the Grove and the Earth-Mother, and of “grounding out” the circle of energy generated in the ceremony.
 31. This grounding and internalization of energy continues through the Meditation and Sermon. The last remnants of the energy are directed into the members of the Grove by the Benediction which, as in all religions, is designed to scatter the last blessing of the Gods over the people, while assuring them that their ritual worked and will accomplish their long term goals (this is known technically in ceremonial magic as “follow through” and is very important).
 32. Now I know that this entire discussion of religion and magic has come as somewhat of an annoying shock to many of you, especially perhaps to those brothers who were the creators of the rite we have just been discussing.
 33. But the fact is that, by accident or design, consciously or under

the direct inspiration of the Earth-Mother and Be’al, they managed to create a ritual that follows the standard patterns all over the world for contacted supernatural entities and obtaining benefits from Them.

34. It is not a very powerful ritual as it stands, but with loving care and performance by individual Groves willing to put in a lot of work (“Hierurgy”) it can produce as much in the way of spiritual force and fulfillment as those of the Established Religions and more than most.
35. With proper vestments, tools (like sickles, chalices, etc.), music and song, choreography and rehearsal (a good set of Bards helps here), Reformed Druid rituals can be as spiritually uplifting as any.
36. But rituals are another one of those things in life where “what you get out of it depends on what you put into it”.
37. Heirurgy is hard work; but it’s worth it when you have sick friends, failing crops, a long drought or spiritual malaise.

Chapter Eight: Conclusion (finally!)

1. The purpose of this Epistle has not been to convert anyone to my particular world view, but rather to share that worldview in detail with my brothers and sisters in the Council.
2. For many of you have expressed bewilderment at my words and actions.
3. And I have wanted you to be able to at least understand where I am coming from, whether you agree with me or not; for I am not alone in my beliefs, bizarre as they may seem.
4. There are thousands of us in this country, and millions around the world, and for the FIRST time in hundreds of years of genocide against us, we are beginning to grow in numbers again, as the Gods return to claim Their own.
5. And we firmly believe that whether rituals become a stumbling block or a steppingstone to the stars is entirely dependent upon the discipline, knowledge and wisdom of those performing the rituals—not upon the rites themselves.
6. Blessed be the Most High Goddess, Who was and is, and is to come, always, now, forevermore, throughout all eternal space and time.

Peace!

Isaac Bonewits, D.A.L., Be.
Samradh, 14 y.r. (circa July 1976 c.e.)

The Book of Changes, PART THREE

[The Voting Results of the Isaac Affair]
(Berkeley Apocrypha Only)

Chapter the FOURTH

1. Now other tentative decisions were made by the four ArchDruids with the majority consent of the Third Order members of their Groves; and these were as follows:
2. That no Reformed Druid should speak for the beliefs or nonbeliefs of *all* Reformed Druids, save to mention the Basic Tenets outlined in *The Book of the Law*, and that members of each branch of the Reform should speak only for themselves.
3. That the general definition mentioned in the letter of July 18 (Chapter 1, verse 6, above) for the RDNA might be used by the SDNA and/or the NRDNA instead.
4. That it be specifically mentioned to all Reformed Druids that they may find affiliated, subordinate or allied Orders, of whatever sort desired, to enhance their experience of Reformed Druidism.
5. That the suggestions made in the letter of July 18 (Chapter 1, Verses 8-12, above) concerning missionary work and the ordaining of new Third Order Druids might be followed by the NRDNA and/or the SDNA.
6. That the new addition of *The Druid Chronicles* being prepared by Isaac Bonewits and Bob Larson should be edited to remove obsolete passages and sexist phraseology, but that the original readings (for the benefit of those who prefer them, as well as for historians) of all passages changed drastically would be retained in *The Book of Footnotes*.
7. That the revisions to *The Druid Chronicles* as well as all associated materials to be published with them, would be agreed upon by the Provisional Council of ArchDruids *before* printing, and that in cases of disagreement, the original readings of each controversial passage would be retained in the body of the text, and the alternate readings be placed instead into *The Book of Footnotes*.
8. That copies of *The Druid Chronicles* would subsequently be printed and made available to all Reformed Druids, as well as to other interested persons, at a reasonable cost; save only that (a) copies of the ordination ceremonies to the Third Order would be available only to members of that Order, and that (b) copies of the ordination ceremonies or other rituals of the Higher Orders (as well as any other Orders founded) would be available only to members of each Order, unless the leader of a given Order were to say otherwise.
9. That editions of the original RDNA *Orders of Common Worship* for the Winter and Summer Halves of the year, as well as the original RDNA Second and Third Order ordination rites, would be printed intact; although individual ArchDruids and Groves might alter or rearrange these liturgies as desired (save only that nothing be actually removed from the Third Order ordination).
10. That copies of special rituals for the celebration of High Days, weddings, funerals, child namings, etc., would be incorporated into each new edition of *The Druid Chronicles* as they became available and/or were composed by individual members of the Third Order.
11. That the FIRST Chairperson for the Provisional Council of ArchDruids would be Robert Larson, DAL, Be., ArchDruid of Berkeley and veteran of Carleton.
12. That the final proposals concerning the various matters of controversy and import would be submitted by the Provisional Council of ArchDruids to a vote of all Third Order members of all

existing Reformed Druid Movements in or before *Foghamhar* 15 y.r. [i.e. August 1977 c.e. -Ed.]

13. And that all concerned should abide gracefully by the decisions of the majority, or else feel free to form their own separate groups in mutual respect.

Chapter the FIFTH

1. Now all these events herein recorded [in *The Book of Changes*, -ed.] did occur in August of 12 y.r. and the decisions were originally meant to take effect as of the following *Samhain* (the beginning of 13 y.r.)
2. Indeed the Twin Cities did decide upon a partial schism at that time and did call itself the Schismatic Druids of North America.
3. And they did because they felt that it was unfair to present themselves as representative of all Reformed Druids, and because they were unhappy with what they felt was the negatively anarchistic structure of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu.
4. Still did they wish to remain in communication with the other branches of the Reform, so they did determine that their current and all future ArchDruids would become members of the Provisional Council of ArchDruids and that the ordination ceremonies to the Third Order of the SDNA would consist of the same elements and words used by the RDNA, with additions, so that the members of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu.
5. But none of the other decisions reached by the four ArchDruids and their Groves did take effect, because no one was notified of them.
6. This was because the ArchDruid of the Twin Cities Grove, who was supposed to print and mail this addition to *The Books of the Apocrypha*, was busy with a new job and a new wife.
7. And he was living on Central Druid Time.
8. Thus this Book was not printed and distributed to all the members of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu as it was supposed to be.
9. And so no one outside of the four active Groves knew that the Provisional Council of ArchDruids had been formed, or that 13 y.r. was supposed to have been "The Year of Changes".
10. And that year was over and gone before this book was ready to be printed and distributed.
11. And it is now, as of this writing, *Samradh* of 14 y.r. (1976 c.e.) and the official notice has still not yet been properly distributed.
12. And behold in June of 14 y.r. was born yet another Grove and Branch of the Reform; for then was founded the Arch Grove of the Hassidic Druids of North America in the city of St. Louis, Missouri.
13. And in that same month did Eleanora Auvinen become the ArchDruidess of the Twin Cities Grove of the SDNA, for the former ArchDruid did move back to Berkeley, California, there to preside over the Mother Grove of the SDNA.
14. Now therefore, because, because of all these things which have occurred and not occurred, has this last Chapter been added to this Book, and have the FIRST four Chapters been edited to eliminate or expand various dating references.
15. And this *Lughnasadh* 14 y.r. edition of *The Druid Chronicles*, in which this Book appears for the FIRST time, is being read and approved by the entire Provisional Council of ArchDruids prior to publication.
16. And therefore this Book is also being read and approved by the members of that Council, and shall be taken to be the proper and official notice of their actions and intentions in these matters.
17. May the Earth-Mother and Be'al bless us and guide us through this period of evolution.

Peace!

[The end of as written in July of 1976 c.e. -Ed.]

A Cup Filled to the Brim with Druidism

(A New Addition to the Apocryphas)

Chapter the FIRST

1. Dear Brother Isaac,
2. I received my copy of the *Druid Chronicles (Evolved)* on the 23rd of September, and wish to congratulate you on an excellent job.
3. It is obviously a labor of love, and I want you to know that I appreciate the effort that you have put into it.
4. Highpoints for me are the *Mishmash*, your *Epistles*, and the *Druid Getafix*, whom I met in Germany, where he goes by the name of *Miraculix*.
5. I hope you will not be too stunned if I say that by and large I agree with many of the philosophies put forth in your *Epistles*. I am, after all, one of those stuffy RDNA, a fuddy-duddy third order Neo-Christian etc.

Chapter the SECOND

1. I think it might be best for you to settle yourself with a nice cup of tea, (lavender is quite good for headaches) as I intend to ramble on at some length and hope to give you several points to mull over.
2. Copies of this are being sent to those members of the Councils whom I deem either interested or obligated by form, present or future ties of friendship, an/or professional association to wade through my philosophical and theological opinions.
3. I might say first that I am still a bit cross with you for not answering my last two or three letters.
4. I understand that you are a very busy man, but I am a very busy woman, and if I take the time to set down my thought (in long-hand, yet!) it seems to me that you have an obligation to answer, especially the questions.
5. I do thank you for your recommendation of *Dion Fortune's* book, and despite its faint air of psychic paranoia, I am finding it most interesting.
6. At any rate, I sincerely hope to receive a reply from you on this missive sometime before Midwinter. I have been sorely tempted to work some kind of spell over it to insure that happening, but I really do believe in non-meddling, and so will merely trust in your conscience.
7. I am moved to share with you (And with the others: let no one feel distressed that the original of this letter is going to Isaac. It is just that he was the catalyst this time.) the place in which I find myself, hoping that it will help to create a bond of understanding and seeking between us, and perhaps contribute to the knowledge and growth of others.

Chapter the THIRD

1. To keep from confusing the issue we will stick to your definitions as expressed in the DC(E) as much as possible
2. I would like to note that my husband Brian, who is an Anthropologist (no doubt a cult in itself, by some definitions) has observed that you are playing fast and loose with both the terms 'Christian' and 'Pagan' as they are generally understood.
3. To illustrate this point, let us consider Quakerism, which you have labeled 'Neo' Christianity; many Friends, myself included, consider Quakerism to be closer to the 'original' sect than the practices of Roman Catholicism, which you place in the 'Paleo' category.

4. There are other things about that 'Neo' category which bother me: Christian Scientist, for instance, fit much more comfortably into 'Neo Pagan' by your definitions, yet most C.S would definitely consider themselves Christians.
5. On the other hand, many Universalist-Unitarians are emphatically non-Christians, while many spiritualists, who are sometimes very dogmatic in their approach to Christ and the Bible, are positively pagan in their approach to psychic phenomenon.
6. I think that I must say that maybe you don't know all that much about Christianity and that perhaps you have done to that group exactly what you accuse them of doing to you- throwing the baby (in the case, perhaps the Holy Babe?) out with the bath water.

Chapter the FOURTH

1. Having stirred up that matter, I will proceed to the next topic: my current position in all this.
2. According to your definitions I find myself in the curious position of being both Neo Pagan and Neo Christian.
3. To explain this, a brief history lesson is necessary: I was born and raised Roman Catholic, became a born again Christian ala Billy Graham at the age of 15, served as a pillar of the Methodist Church in high school, discovered Zen, Siddhartha, yoga, T.M., and drug-induced mystical experiences during my first two years at Carleton, along with my growing interest in Druidism.
4. I began to evolve into a Quaker at the same time of the Cambodian Incursion in 1970.
5. Druidism has remained dear to my heart at the same time, although my involvement has been more with the Quakers due to the lack of other Druids and the marked propensity we seem to have for moving around every nine months. (That makes it rather difficult to find enough like-minded people to get a Grove going!)
6. I was attracted to the Friends for several reasons. They have historically placed the responsibility for the search for religious awareness squarely on the head of the individual.
7. They allow (encourage) considerable latitude in translating the traditional Christian doctrines; there are many Quakers who are not Christians.
8. They consider both men and women equal in the eyes of God.
9. They are socially involved and believe their concerns to be a part of their religious life, and not something separate.
10. They have put the emphasis back on meditation and dismissed the ritual and trappings that had become empty shells for most people.
11. Druidism, on the other hand, fill spiritual needs that Quakerism does not.
12. I would be less than honest if I denied my heritage. The ritual and symbolism speak to my former selves, as many pagans as Christians.
13. Both Quakers and Druids are basically anti-dogmatic and joyful in their approach. Both have accumulated enough traditions over the years to distinguish them from other groups; from each other, and from the purely individual approach to the questions of life.
14. The two systems are complementary as far as I'm concerned; they act as a system of check and balances, keeping the participant in a constant state of uproar and making it impossible to ever become too comfortable about religion.
15. If I were to succumb to the nutshell tendency, I could say "I am a Druidic Quaker" or, "I am a Quakerly (or Friendly) Druid." However that doesn't make it by a long shot.
16. Brian has rightly stated that I am Gerre, and my beliefs are what they are; a part of me.
17. To categorize does a disservice to anyone who would seek to really understand me or my beliefs.

Chapter the FIFTH

1. Part of my responsibility as a person is to articulate my religious position and interpret it to those who come in contact with me in a way they can understand.
2. The search is barren if not interpreted; another way of saying 'faith without works is dead'.
3. Adherence to tenets is meaningless if the individual involved can't define what that adherence involves and what degree of truth they are willing to accept about those terms.
4. Blind faith has no place here: as a skeptic I tend to look askance at those who claim to be willing to die for their beliefs, but who cannot explain in some detail and with thoroughfulness exactly what those beliefs entail.
5. One really ought to know what one is dying for; it seems a waste of time to sit around afterwards and wonder, not to mention the karma involved!
6. Better to be a thoughtful non-believer.
7. At this point the only belief that I am willing to die for is the conviction that the individual has a right and a responsibility to formulate hi/her own beliefs without being dictated unto, whatever they may be. Only in this way can we be free enough to follow the paths of awareness and come to an understanding of what it all means to us.
8. In view of this I must agree with you about the short-sightedness of the monotheistic traditions. It does seem to me, however that your total rejection of that tradition is unfortunate. Some of my most meaningful and mystical experiences have come directly from the Christian tradition.
9. I say unto you, Isaac, that magic does not have to be skyclad to be magic, but can come in the guise of the communion, the stained glass windows or the Rosary of the Catholics, the hymns and the baptismal font of the Protestants, or the tremendous power of the gathered meeting of the Society of Friends.
10. Amulets and talismans can be just as powerful and hold just as much potential for the user when they represent the Christian Saints as when they represent the Ancients.
11. Do you really believe that the worship of the Virgin holds less power than the worship of the Mother for the true believer? The same spirit answers, the same results occur.
12. You tell St. Francis, St. Teresa, St. Bernadette that miracles (magic) don't happen in monotheism. You tell the hundreds healed by faith that their healings weren't real because they appealed to Jesus of Nazareth and not to Grannos or Diancecht.
13. Verily I say unto you, Isaac, you are a victim of the forces of anti-faith if you would condemn Christianity as totally negative and life-denying.
14. I agree that many things have been done in the name of God that ought not to have been done, but atrocities have ever been committed by humans on other humans in the names of their gods.
15. To humankind is given free choice, and to blaspheme in that way is part of the choice and the karma.

Chapter the SIXTH

1. Although the names and forms of the gods have changed over the ages, anyone who is really paying attention can draw parallels between the 'old' gods and the Judeo-Christian God. I have always thought that it was Hera trying to get even with Zeus—imagine demanding all that attention!
2. I think you would agree that magic is meaningless (or ineffective, anyway) unless the participants are all in the same (or very similar) space.
3. The traditional Western ritual which you claim powerless has tremendous potential for magic and can be quite useful in focusing the participant's energy.

4. The sole stumbling block to the realization of this potential is guilt and self-abnegation.
5. It seems that this element was introduced by humans and not by the gods; while humbleness of spirit may be a good thing, guilt and low self-esteem are not, and have proven to be effective barriers to human-divine communication.
6. We have a right to be here.
7. We are part of the universe, and are worthy to be called the daughters and the sons of gods.
8. We are part of 'the burning oneness binding everything' that Kenneth Goulding describes so beautifully in the Nayler Sonnets.
9. I'm sure that you are familiar with Heinlein's Stranger in a Strange Land with its 'Thou art God, I am God' philosophy.
10. We all possess the potential to be magical, to make magic, to hold and use the power. Only our sense of guilt and powerlessness keep us from our heritage.
11. The Ancients (ha, the Good Old Days!) were no better than we are: if they held and wielded the power as it ought to be, we wouldn't be paying back the karma now.

Chapter the SEVENTH

1. I don't feel brash or blasphemous in stating things this way. Too many times have I felt 'at one with Be'al in the great dance of time' to believe otherwise.
2. One of the third orders once told me that I was the Mother personified, and he was more right than wrong.
3. Beset as I am by the dross left by centuries of negativity, by fear, guilt, hatred, still and always have I sought the mystic, the magical, the other-worldly contacts in my religious search.
4. In my lives I have gravitated always towards the awareness that would place me in rapport with my innate powers. This search has been sometimes more, sometimes less successful.
5. This life has been a complex search both for what has gone before and what is to come after.
6. I feel a sharp sense of urgency; a great need to consolidate the masses of information that I know I possess.
7. I need to reawaken the knowledge; the herb lore, the meditational techniques, the physical and psychic disciplines I once exercised.
8. I must do this before it is too late, before the chaos catches up and hurls us back to the very beginnings again.
9. Something slipped up this time around, and I have a feeling that it was meant to be so, and that someone has arranged a time out, so to speak, form the usual cycle for the express purpose of re-evaluation and consolidation.
10. Being not foresighted in this life (at least not on a regular basis) I have no way of knowing how long this will last or whether I will ever be given another chance.
11. Therefore, I cannot and will not deny any of the experiences that are mine. Even the negatives are helpful—they have enabled me to see the shape and manner of the traps and given me the information need to avoid the ensnarement.
12. I will be free, and none can keep me from it save myself. I am the savior and the saved, the priest and the penitent, the master and the slave. I have the keys to the locks in my soul.
13. I give thanks in humbleness of spirit that I am, and rejoice that the awareness that I am has been given to me by the powers that be.

Chapter the EIGHTH

1. Isaac, be not so defensive in your search. You are loved and accepted by many!
2. Be not so concerned that we accept you Neo-Pagan credentials. Of course you know whereof you speak! Don't be such a fuss-budget about it!

3. Too much do I see you pouting in the corner, poking in rage at those who disagree with you. Their paths are as valid as yours; their karma is their own.
4. Don't put others down because they chose to go back to Christianity. The 'falling away' of the brethren worries you too much. In the end we all take up the search for awareness in the ways that best suit us.
5. Our duty, joy and privilege is to learn from one another, to love one another, and to share with one another whatever we can in good conscience share.
6. With you I can share the traditional practice and discussion of magic.
7. With the Agnostics I can share the questions, the search, the levity and the skepticism that have made my own growth so meaningful.
8. With the Quakers I share the meditational silence, social activism, and contacts in the Christian Community of which I still consider myself a part.
9. Drink the whole cup. Don't quibble about the color or shape of the chalice, or who has supplied the wine. The source is the same for all of us. The same earth grows the grapes everywhere.

Chapter the NINTH

1. You are my brother.
2. I would give you wholeness and completeness in the search, and not have you cutting off your nose to spite your face.
3. We are One, whether we are engaged in the Mass, the meeting, the Coven, the practice of ritual intercourse, the long-drawn-out philosophical discussions that begin and end nowhere.
4. The secret is to recognize the oneness and to define it in as many ways as possible to keep from rejecting valid parts of ourselves.
5. Love is All.
6. Love me, Isaac.
7. Love David Fisher and Richard Shelton and Pope Paul and Billy Graham and Orthodox Rabbis and American Indians and the Dali Lama and the Buddhists and the Hindus and the Puritans and the Hedonists and Jesus and Be'al and Astarte and the Virgin Mary, and recognize that we are all One.
8. All together, and apart, and the power, be it of one god or many, is ours; meaningless unless we recognize the ridiculousness of artificial limits.
9. Be at peace, for there is no peace except in the knowledge that the only answer lies in the questions and that the only permanence lies in change, and the only truth lies in the constantly shifting changes of the universe, which is perfect love.

Chapter the TENTH

1. It strikes me as dangerous to deliberately alienate anyone who does not share your present beliefs, as that person may hold the key to the next step of your own search for awareness.
2. Nor is it good to alienate those behind you on the road, for you may be their key, and it would not be good to be the instrument which got in the way of them experiencing the truths that you hold.
3. Therefore let us be gentle with one another and with our beliefs, and let us not be bitter or hostile towards any system of beliefs or practices, for there are sisters and brothers in that space who still believe or who will believe, and if we put negative energy into hating a system 'for what it has done to us' we are only harming our brethren, who are seekers even as we ourselves, and who deserve only our love and positive energy.
4. Say good-bye to the old beliefs and let them go, but do not curse them, for they had their place and their purpose, and to deny them is to deny a part of ourselves.

Chapter the ELEVENTH

1. We have all been hurt so much!
2. We have been so closed to one another.
3. Alas for our generation, for we have come so close in so many ways, and yet in our defensiveness we have shut ourselves off from each other, and we shout the truth but have forgotten how to listen to the inner voice.
4. Quakers hear the inner voice; each person hears it differently.
5. There are as many true voices as the stars in the sky, and each voice is valid, loving, supportive, caring for all that is.
6. The trick is to hear that voice, to see with the inner eye. Satori, nirvana, astral projection, visions: all part and parcel of the same exercise.
7. Possession works—if we let it. If we seek it. If we listen, and recognize it when it comes to us.
8. The inner voice is as valid as the voice of thunder. Each can be frightening or welcomed, depending on the state of the recipient.
9. May we be ever open to the voices, whatever their form.

Chapter the TWELFTH

1. I must, at this point, question your mention of de-frocking. It is my conviction that to frock or de-frock is a decision resting entirely with the individual.
2. No action on the part of any temporal body can take away a genuine call to the ministry.
3. The loss of a collar, staff or ribbon will not lessen the power of the magic or ministry exercised by the individual in question.
4. Only the person to whom it comes can decide the shape and manner of a religious vocation.
5. It cannot and ought not be defined or rejected by anyone else.
6. If I feel moved to speak, I speak.
7. If I feel moved to write Epistles, I write.
8. Though it may seem that no one is paying attention, it proves to have been what someone needed to hear.
9. The power that is in me can do no other—I might as well try to keep the sun from setting.

Chapter the THIRTEENTH

1. Now will you help me?
2. Where shall I go from here in my studies?
3. Which of your excellent bibliography shall I read first and why?
4. I am now asking your opinions, and the opinions of my other readers.
5. If some of you have decided that I'm stark raving bonkers, well, you suspected it anyway, and I do still love you, and isn't that the most important thing after all?

Chapter the FOURTEENTH

1. I must make one correction in your records.
2. I was also consecrated in the Third order in the winter half of the year. I vigilled at Carleton on a perfect late April night in 1970.
3. On discovering that I had never been 'properly' sealed unto the Second order (Mother alone knows why not) Brother Richard and I decided that we had better do the whole thing over again for the records, although I think that both of us count the first vigil and ordination as the true and valid religious experience that it was, and the other merely the filling of the expected forms.

Gerre MacInnes Goodman, October 10th, 1976

Salutations

Salutations on this day of Oimelc!
The Magnolias stand serenely in this winter wind.
The pines shrug their branches
Snow drops to the ground
Unable to smother the spirit
Of Evergreen.
The Cedar whispers it's valiance
The quiet sentinel while other
Creatures and Flora
Wait for the name of Spring to
Brush past them, awakening them
From their sleep.

-Peace, Peace, Peace.

Dale Fierbe
Feb. 1, 1977 c.e.



The Speaking of Beliefs

(A New Addition to the Apocryphas)

Chapter the FIRST

1. Dear Friends,
2. We are here to celebrate the creative powers of the earth-mother, of nature.
3. To celebrate the wonder of nature.
4. To think of any sunset, any rock, any river whose beauty and symbolic power have existed in your past.
5. Feel the force of those experiences with nature and to let it become a force to help build and sustain you.
6. The force of nature is represented to us here in this fire.

Chapter the SECOND

1. We're here to celebrate and feel the power of a group.
2. There is true power in a circle.
3. Circle is unbroken, is continuous.
4. We are all equal here and able to send energy in a complete way to each other in this unbroken circle.
5. We are not in rows or in single file and I am not speaking to you from a pulpit, but from within the circle.
6. An essential force of this circle is human love.
7. Without love, support, understanding, and giving, our ritual here tonight and our existence here at Carleton would be empty.
8. Let us keep this always in mind in our daily lives and during our ritual, that love and support is essential to our humanness and to our survival.

Chapter the THIRD

1. We are also here to celebrate the masculine and feminine natures of the universe to recognize their dual presence in each of us, their cosmic interplay, their equality and interconnectedness.
2. To think of the ying and the yang.

Chapter the FOURTH

1. We are here to celebrate not just the nature outside of us, but also the nature within us.
2. We all have tremendous forces and powers which are not let out in daily life.
3. They are physical forces of motion, we find them in dance and making love.
4. They are mystical forces of intrigue, we find them in deep, searching eyes, in beautiful faces.
5. They are our natural feelings of power, of helplessness.
6. We all have tremendous psychic powers of change and tremendous helplessness and vulnerability and we have to admit this.
7. In the same vein let us not idolize one thing over another.
8. One pointedness, whether it be of heroes or of ideas, is not our way.
9. Rather, let us celebrate the unique beauty of each season; weather, tree, mountain, and mood.
10. This extends to religion.
11. To regard each religion as unique and wonderful in its own right.
12. Especially to practice tolerance, the tolerance of all peoples, all objects, all religions.

Chapter the FIFTH

1. Finally, we are here to celebrate the cycles of life.
2. To celebrate the circle in all we see, the cycles of seasons, the cycles of childhood, youth and old age, and to celebrate each in its own right.

Heiko Koestler
Farm House, Carleton College
Autumnal Equinox 1987

The Third Epistle of Robert

(A New Addition to the Apocryphas)

An fh'rinne in aghaidh an tsaoil. (the truth against the world.)
—old druid motto (really)

Everything you know is wrong.—The Firesign Theater

Chapter the FIRST: Greetings

1. Dear Siblings in-the-Mother,
2. Go mbeannai an Mh†thair sibh go léir. (May the Mother bless all of you.)
3. I wish to convey to you some thoughts that occurred to me while I was helping edit this edition of the Chronicles. I believe they may well give you something to meditate upon as you progress along your druidic path.
4. Of course, some of you may well think I'm crazier than ever.
5. Be that as it may, I ask you to think about my ponderings, which result from both long study and sudden illumination. (It is longer than I intended, but it just grewed.)
6. I believe you'll find them interesting and, I pray, helpful.

Chapter the SECOND: What am I?

1. To those who are uncouth enough to ask my religious persuasion I normally reply that I am a devout pagan. However, I've always felt ambivalent about the term "pagan" or "heathen".
2. On the one hand, I prefer the tolerant and inclusive attitude of the vast majority of "paganisms" toward other belief systems to the exclusive and intolerant attitudes that have historically adhered to monotheistic and dualist creeds.
3. Also, most paganisms are pretty vague about their concepts of deities, which I find suits my druidic view very well.

Chapter the THIRD: The Term "Pagan"

1. On the other hand, "pagan" has periodically had a pejorative taint, and the present is one of those periods.
2. This pejorative context did not originate with the Christians, but with the ancient "pagan" Romans. "Pagus" in Latin means "countryside", and urban Romans considered "pagans" to be "hicks".
3. "Pagan" religion was looked down upon by the adherents of the more "sophisticated" State polytheism, much in the way that High Church Episcopalians look down upon Holy Rollers.
4. Also, Roman soldiers used "paganus" as an insulting term for civilians. This usage was picked up by the "soldiers of Christ" who used it as a generally pejorative term for non-Christians. "Pagan" has vacillated between being neutral and being pejorative ever since.
5. During the 19th century it was used in both ways when colonialists applied "pagan" or "heathen" to any non-European people, culture or belief system.

Chapter the FOURTH: The Term Neo-Pagan

1. Nor do I find "Neo-Pagan" truly acceptable. "Neo-Pagan" is a term first applied pejoratively (surprise!) to pre-Raphaelite artists which was later adopted as a self-description by another artistic group in the early 20th century.
2. The history of this latter group is curiously similar to that of the RDNA. It started as essentially a group of people who liked to take nature walks but had no real interest in restoring pagan religion.
3. One of its members was Francis Cornford, a follower of one

Jane Ellen Harrison, who was a pagan reconstructionist, basing her reconstruction on Frazer. These people influenced others, including Margaret Murray, whose work underlies wicca.

4. An interesting parallel to us, isn't it?

Chapter the FIFTH: Neo-Pagan Pantheonizing

1. Parallels and linguistic connotations aside, one of the problems I find in "Neo-Paganism" in its current context is its tendency to over-define and personalize deity concepts.
2. In this "Neo-Paganism" models itself after the polytheistic pantheons of "established" mythologies, such as those of Greece and Rome, and tries to extend this structure to other vaguer pantheons, such as those of the Celts or Norse.
3. In this attempt they make the same mistake that the Romans did in their attempts to describe Celtic gods in terms of Roman deities.
4. Such a description seizes upon one aspect of a deity and equates it with a familiar god who has a similar aspect, even though it may be the only one the two gods have in common. The result is rather like a Christian identifying all healer entities with Jesus.
5. The attempt to structure Neo-Paganism is a mistake that confuses paganism with polytheism. They are not totally synonymous.

Chapter the SIXTH: Folk Religion

1. Paganism or heathenism is, as the terms imply, folk religion.
2. As such, paganism is an accumulation over time of a myriad of traditions and beliefs, which are sometimes contradictory and always confusing to those outside the belief system or culture (and often to those in it!)
3. One should not look for consistency in paganism, such a search will lead only to confusion and frustration.
4. While some structuring exists, and a loose hierarchy of deities often emerges, paganism is essentially an organically grown melange of beliefs with roots deep in the past. It is religion built from the bottom up.
5. Deities are numerous and each has many aspects, often overlapping. Most deities are localized.
6. For instance, there are some 400 deities recorded in the Celtic "pantheon", the vast majority of them mentioned only once, similar concepts and representations appearing under different names in different locales.
7. While the basic concepts may well be seen to be universal, the deities are different for each has different accretions overlaying the basic concept.

Chapter the SEVENTH: Organic Religion

1. It is this very organic quality which leads me to believe that paganism is "truer" in human terms than "revealed" religions such as Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism and their like. Such cults are fine as parts of a greater whole, but when they become the whole, much human quality is lost.
2. The organic quality of paganism usually leads to its being open to new cults and religious concepts.
3. The average pagan of ancient times found no difficulty or contradiction in belonging to many cults. While he would respect and venerate all god concepts and spirits, he would only worship those which he believed impacted on his life or in which he had a particular interest. (Household gods, craft patrons, ancestral spirits, etc.)
4. Intellectual and curious pagans would always find themselves attracted to new cults.
5. The normal pagan did not differentiate between religious and secular life as we do today. Rather, religion was an integral part

of life and imbued all its facets, as the spirits and gods were imminent.

Chapter the EIGHTH: State Religion

1. Structured polytheism and mythology, on the other hand, were constructs of the state and literature.
2. Though built from native beliefs, they were constructed from the top down rather than from the bottom up.
3. The political powers, priestcrafts and writers took one concept/god/myth from here, another from there, a third from yonder, etc. and set up a hierarchy and accepted mythology.
4. Essentially a state religion was built artificially. Similar deity concepts are amalgamated and their powers and responsibilities more rigidly defined.
5. For instance, under the Romans many local chieftain/thunder gods were amalgamated and called Jupiter or Jove, using their original names or localities as subtitles. Differences between the original deities were either submerged or particularized to a sub-cult.
6. The gods became eminent rather than imminent and adopted homes such as Mount Olympus.

Chapter the NINTH: Religious Persecution

1. Such a state religion, while still tolerant of other beliefs, has much tighter boundaries to its tolerance than does paganism.
2. While pagans found no difficulty in including the state-based religion in their belief systems, messianic and revelatory exclusivist cults did.
3. Though conflicts between cults are not unusual in paganism, and such conflicts could lead to “theological debate by other means” (to paraphrase Clausewitz on war) such conflict rarely disrupted normal life for long; some accommodation would be reached.
4. However, with a state religion in place, some cults found themselves in conflict with the state, which led to the sporadic banning and/or persecution of the cults.
5. The most famous of these persecutions (because the cult eventually won) was that of the Roman state against the Christians.
6. While the Christians are the most famous example of Roman persecution, they are hardly the only example, nor are they the first. That honor probably belongs to the Dionysian cults.
7. The Roman state, as the era’s biggest control freaks, had real problems accepting ecstatic and mystery cults—they were just too disorderly. Mithraism, Egyptian mysteries, Great Mother cults, and, of course, the druids among others were all banned or persecuted at some time.
8. Note, though, that these persecutions of religious cults were for political reasons, and usually occurred when the state was having troubles. They were essentially scapegoating operations.
9. As such the severity varied greatly according to the time and place, and many magistrates made great efforts to avoid punishing members of proscribed cults.
10. Of course, once a Christian sect won power, it banned pagan worship and persecuted both pagans and other Christian sects. That, however, is another sad story, one of persecution for religious reasons using state power.
11. Other examples of religious persecution for state purposes include Confucianist China against Buddhism, Shintoist Japan against Christianity, the Nazis against the Jews and Gypsies (and the other pogroms against the Jews), the U.S. government against Native American religions (still going on), and the Egyptians against the Aten cult.
12. This last example, however, is better seen as a case of revenge for Akhematon’s religion-based persecution of the polytheistic Egyptian priestcraft.

13. Other persecutions for religious reasons include the Christian church against the German, Slavic, and Baltic paganism (among others), Islam against pagans (Islam has historically been tolerant toward other “people of the book”, i.e. Christians and Jews, but has always been intolerant of paganism.), the Crusades, the Inquisition, the medieval witch-hunts, Communism against all other religions (counting Marxism as a religion), and Cromwell against the Irish Catholics.
14. The RDNA may well evolve into a true pagan religion given a few centuries; it certainly has the openness to do so, but it can only so evolve if it continues to avoid over-structuring its belief system in a Neo-Pagan manner.

Chapter the TENTH: Christian or Pagan?

1. For further illustration of the dichotomy between paganism and polytheism I’m making (and just for the fun), let’s apply it to present day Christianity.
2. Catholicism can be seen as polytheistic with a triune god at the top, a mother cult, and myriad subsidiary deities (the saints).
3. Belief and structure are imposed from the top. The same is true of Eastern Orthodoxy and High Church Anglicanism.
4. Mainline Protestantism is a mixture of polytheistic structure and pagan belief. Fringe Protestantism, such as the Holiness Church, Primitive Baptists, snake handlers, Christian Science, etc. are essentially intolerant pagan cults.
5. (Well, I’ve always been a hillbilly at heart.)
6. Most pagan of all are the African-American churches, especially the small denominations which freely mix Christianity with African traditions.

Chapter the ELEVENTH: Getting out of bed in the morning.

1. Having talked about my concept of paganism at much greater length than I originally intended, I will now take on the concept of “ritual”.
2. Some of us consider ritual a hindrance in our druidic paths, Isaac is a ritualist par excellence, and the majority don’t care about it.
3. I believe that everyone is using an overly tight definition of ritual. In truth, ritual is unavoidable.
4. The second time a baby cries and is fed, changed, or cosseted a ritual is born, both for the supplicant (the baby) and for the deity (the adult).
5. Ritual pervades human life, though it is normally unperceived.
6. For instance, we each have our own ways of starting the day. If we must rush, leave something out, or do things out of order we get upset. We have “gotten up on the wrong side of the bed” because our “morning ritual” has been disrupted.
7. Similarly, each of us has his own way of doing every habitual task, our personal rituals, though the individual differences are often masked by the similarity of the tasks.
8. But if we try to do a task in a different way, we’ll usually screw up. At the least we’ll feel we’re doing something wrong until we learn a new ritual.

Chapter the TWELFTH: Unconscious and Conscious Ritual

1. Most of these rituals in our lives are carried out unconsciously, of course.
2. If we had to think our way through every task, life would be much more difficult, if not impossible.
3. The ritualization of a task puts the body on automatic pilot, freeing the mind to concentrate on the goal of the task or to think of other matters.

4. Ritual can thus best be seen as an enabler and liberator rather than as a hindrance and encumbrance.
5. The freedom of mind brought by ritualization applies to both unconscious and conscious rituals.
6. Whole conscious ritual is not as necessary to life as is unconscious ritual, it is a normal human tendency and desire.
7. To suppress this desire is to suppress a part of our humanity.
8. Indulgence in conscious ritual, however, raises an important question. Will we control the ritual, or it control us?

Chapter the THIRTEENTH: Internalizing ritual

1. Any conscious ritual, such as the druid liturgy, should be memorized and, preferably, rehearsed until the officiant can run through it in his sleep.
2. An officiant who does not do this, for whatever reason, does a disservice to both himself and the congregation.
3. The ritual will stumble and will not feel right. If it doesn't feel right to the congregation and the officiant, its results will be at best problematic.
4. A ritual must be done right to be truly effective.
5. This is one reason for a ritual's increasing power with repetition.
6. To use a theatrical parallel, an actor who must concentrate on remembering his lines and blocking will be unable to give sufficient attention to his actual performance, which necessarily will suffer.
7. Internalization of ritual permits the officiant to concentrate upon actually performing it and accomplishing its goals.
8. Instead of restricting his freedom, internalization enables the officiant to better pace the ritual and to improvise meaningfully in response to events and the congregation, leading to greater interaction on both physical and psychic levels.
9. The end result is a better more purposeful ritual.
10. A parallel to what internalization of ritual accomplishes can be found in traditional music or jazz.
11. The musician has internalized the basic tone; he knows where he's been, where he is, and where he's going at all times without having to think about it.
12. This enables him to experiment—to ornament the tone and improvise around it as he plays—while maintaining the tune's basic structure.
13. The result is that every playing of the tune is both different and the same, increasing its meaning and personalizing it, and giving greater entertainment to both the audience and the musician.
14. What an officiant is trying to accomplish with a ritual varies with both the ritual and the officiant.
15. Some may try to invoke actual powers, external or internal; others may seek to increase the sense of togetherness in the congregation.
16. In the standard druid liturgy I believe that the entire purpose is summed up in the line "cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditation".
17. It is in the meditation, after all, that each druid pursues his understanding of the Mother in his own way in the group setting.
18. A well-run service can assist this pursuit, which is really the thrust of Reformed Druidism.
19. So, fellow druids, do your rites right—each in your own way.

Chapter the FOURTEENTH: Facts and Myths

1. So much for old business, now on to new(ish) business.
2. On a deep level myth is truer than fact.
3. "Facts" are ephemeral; they change as new facts are found or current thinking is revised. Myth is much longer lived.
4. We all know that the Washington and the cherry tree story is

false—it was invented by Parson Weems.

5. Yet the story has entered the American mythos.
6. Intellectually we discount it, but it still affects us and inspires us.
7. Similarly, few today believe in the literal truth of ancient myths (in fact, it's likely that few ancient pagans believed in their literal truth), but we can still be moved by them.
8. Biblical debunkers and fundamentalists make the same mistake about the factual content of the Bible.
9. Whether certain events happened or not, whether the Bible is factually true, doesn't matter. To a believer the Biblical myths rings true; even to a disbeliever it is moving.
10. Facts speak only to the intellect; myth speaks to man's heart and soul.
11. With the longevity and tenaciousness of myth in mind, I will now address some myths about the RDNA, myself, the Berkeley grove, the Celts, and the ancient druids.

Chapter the FIFTEENTH: Celtic Culture in the Early RDNA

1. In his history of the RDNA Brother Michael reaches some conclusions on the Celtic influences in the founding at Carleton of the original grove to which I would answer, "Yes, but..."
2. He is correct in saying that the Celtic trappings were there only to lend the name "druids" some legitimacy, and that reading were from various religious traditions with a heavy Zen influence (especially when Frangquist was Arch Druid).
3. My own interest in Celtiana was actually sparked by my involvement with the RDNA, probably due to my innate tendency to seek out the roots of ideas.
4. At Carleton, however, I knew Celtic culture only through song and poetry, both in English.
5. At that time (1963/64 c.e., 1/2 Y.R.) little was generally available on Celtic society or religion.
6. What was available usually relied upon classical sources and was either pretty basic and sketchy (and often wrong) or highly speculative.
7. Being a language freak, I started my research by learning Irish which further sparked my interest.
8. Then the flood of Celtiana which persists to this day began.
9. For the most part I've swum in the more serious scholarly and semi-scholarly stream of this flood while dipping into the meta-physical and speculative eddies.
10. (Some of this stuff is quite good, much of it has some good perceptions, and some is downright ridiculous. Caveat.)
11. As I learned, I shared with others of my acquaintance. As a result, the Celtic veneer became thicker in the Berkeley Grove, but it was never more than a veneer.
12. For services I stuck to the original liturgy with appropriate additions for the High Days.
13. Meditations were often taken from the Chronicles.
14. The Celtic thing was my personal search, but I never consciously attempted to impose it upon the grove as a whole, though I welcomed fellow seekers.
15. (Thus my involvement with Clann na Brocheta.)
16. Some seem to think I became some kind of druid evangelist.
17. Nothing could be farther from the truth. While it is true that I desired a somewhat higher profile for the RDNA, my purpose was not to recruit, but to enable those who were searching for their religious footing to find us more easily.
18. I believed, and still do, that the RDNA has something to offer to such people—the same thing many of us found in it, a chance to define their own religious beliefs without preaching, pressure, or persuasion in a supportive group.
19. I've always found active proselytizing repugnant, however worthy the cause.

20. My attempt to increase the organizational co-ordination of the RDNA was similarly motivated.
21. The goal was to enable the most organizationally active druids and Arch-Druids to better serve other's searches for awareness by setting up a forum for discussing problems which groves and individuals encounter.
22. The hallmark of the Third Order is service, after all. This should be especially true for Arch-Druids.
23. One of the problems a priest runs into after setting up a grove or becoming an Arch-Druid (especially when the members are not living in close proximity and are not well acquainted with each other as at Carleton College) is that grove members look upon the AD as an authority figure (at least at first).
24. One of the problems of hierarchy.
25. This in turn rather constricts the A-D's search for "awareness", unless he wishes to hopelessly confuse the congregants.
26. A similar problem to that of Zen "masters" and "students."
27. How can you lead another to "awareness" if you're looking for it yourself, when they have to reach their own "awareness"?
28. You can tell them this, but it is often difficult to get through their own preconceptions. (Gee—you're the teacher, so teach!)
29. What I found myself doing (and, I suspect, other A.D.s too) was using their preconceptions to aid my own search, hoping they'd grow in their awareness, too—or at least become aware of their unawareness.
30. Thus, at least partially, the growing Celtic flavor, though I would often take my readings from meditations.
31. The Celtic flavor was always more window-dressing than substance, though.
32. When a congregant asks a metaphysical or philosophical question, the priest should always encourage the congregant to find his own answer.
33. If an answer is insisted upon, the priest should make clear that the answer is only his opinion.
34. All in all, Arch Druid can be a very comfortable position, I you go for anything deeper than having a good time sitting under the oak.

Chapter the SIXTEENTH: Those Amazing Celts

1. Despite what I have written of Celtic influence on the early RDNA, I would suggest that it was unknowingly greater than intended.
2. This influence was inevitable, for the Celts made many contributions to our own culture, though these are usually overlooked.
3. Certainly we seem to have evoked the Celtic talent for disorganization.
4. Much to their sorrow (and our loss) when they ran up against the Romans, Germans, Saxons, and Normans, the Celts in their own culture rarely displayed much talent or desire for tight organization.
5. Celtic society, though structured and somewhat hierarchical was essentially libertarian and individualistic with a distinct tendency to surface anarchy.
6. To those who may wish to build a tightly-run pagan religion or organization I would suggest that Celtic deities and society are poor models to invoke.
7. Try the Romans, Greeks, or the Germans (though Himmler sort of ruined the lasts).
8. The picture that most people have of the Celts is that of a savage, bloodthirsty people who fought naked.
9. This myth is largely the result of Roman writings and can be laid to cultural differences, racism, and propaganda.
10. The centralized and orderly Romans found themselves repelled by the disorderly Celts, who refused to be quietly enslaved.
11. Romans had been racially traumatized by the Celtic sack of Rome early in their history, and the Celts frequently allied themselves

- with Rome's enemies, notably Hannibal.
12. Celts wouldn't play the Roman game.
13. Instead of pitched battle, Celts preferred raid and ambush.
14. Instead of whole armies facing off against each other with a resultant general slaughter, the Celts preferred individual combat, which might or might not escalate.
15. The fact is, the Celts simply had different cultural values from the Romans (and later the English).
16. The picture is now emerging of the Celts is that of a sophisticated society with a technology that was in some ways more advanced than the Romans', especially in agriculture and iron-working.
17. In fact the yields produced by Celtic agriculture were the best in Northern Europe prior to the development of modern agriculture.
18. Many roads in Gaul and England which are credited to the Romans have proved to have substantial Celtic foundations.
19. The conflict between Celtic and Roman aesthetics can be plainly seen in their art.
20. Celtic art was complex, elaborate, and intricate but was largely non-representational. Roman art was mostly severely representational.
21. Perhaps worst of all to the Romans, Celts had little concept of private land ownership—land belonged to the tribe, not the individual, and no concept of primogeniture.
22. They even "allowed" their women to fight in battle and participate actively in their society and would even follow female leaders.
23. Surely such a people must be total savages!
24. True, the Celts had their savage side, but don't all societies?
25. True, some warriors fought naked. In fact, some Scottish Highlanders stripped for battle as late as 1745.
26. The reason was both religious and practical.
27. Symbolically, fighting naked relies upon the gods and upon one's own skill for protection, and better displays that skill to the gods.
28. Practically, a wound is less likely to infect without dirty cloth pressed into it.
29. If you didn't have armor, which was rare and expensive, you were better off fighting naked and unrestricted.
30. Also, cloth is expensive, mon! (Scots joke)
31. True, the Celts were head-hunters.
32. Again the reason was religious, and the practice may only have been that of one warrior cult.
33. But the Romans enslaved conquered peoples and humiliated and murdered their leaders, not to mention their gladiatorial games and mass executions.
34. The English displayed the heads of executed felons until the 18th century and taught the Amerindians the quaint custom of scalping.
35. Who were the savages anyway?!
36. Certainly the Irish considered the English uncouth savages.
37. The same culture clash that led to their misunderstanding and fear of the Celts made both the Romans and English oblivious to or unable to acknowledge the Celtic contributions to their own cultures.
38. Many Latin writers and poets were in fact Romanised Celts from Cisalpine Gaul and Iberia.
39. Some Roman emperors, even, were Celts by descent.
40. Many "English" writers were really Irish, Scottish, or Welsh and thought of themselves as such. (I may be British, laddie, but I am NOT English!)
41. The most basic contribution to English culture is usually totally overlooked. It lies in the language itself.
42. Lexicographers will tell you that surprisingly few English words are derived from Celtic languages.
43. They're right, especially considering the long contact between

the peoples.

44. The Celtic contribution is more basic and is found in the structure of the language itself.
45. English relies heavily upon the progressive tenses for the subtlety and flexibility of its verbal system.
46. These tenses are not found in either Anglo-Saxon (or other Germanic languages) or Latin.
47. In Celtic languages, however, such tenses are those most used, sometimes almost exclusively. (As I recall, linguists count some 26 tenses in Irish Verbs. This may be an undercount if various compound constructions are taken into account.)
48. All in all, then, Western culture owes a great unacknowledged debt to the Celts.

Chapter the SEVENTEENTH: Inter-related Religions

1. I would also suggest that there is a greater relationship between Celtic paganism, Hinduism, Christianity, and even Zen than is usually realized.
2. Let us look again to the roots, Celtic paganism, like all European paganisms except those of the Basque, the Magyar, and the Finns, evolved from the same Indo-European root as did Hinduism.
3. Hinduism gave birth to its own salvation cult, Buddhism, one sect of which became Zen. So Zen is actually a very distant cousin to Celtic paganism.
4. In the centuries before Christ, Judaism was influenced by both Hellenism and the dualist ideas of Zoroastrianism, another salvation cult outgrowth of Indo-European paganism.
5. These influences can be seen in both the messianic idea and the increased emphasis on Satan as a worldly power.
6. Buddhist ideas were also penetrating Judaism at this time.
7. All this influx of ideas led to the development of Jewish mystery cults, such as the Essenes and Christianity.
8. During its early years of development, Christianity absorbed yet more Greek influence, along with Egyptian ideas which were themselves heavily Hellenized by this time.
9. Many influential early Christian theologians were from Alexandria or God, both places where persecution was relatively light.
10. Most of those from Gaul were, of course, Celts, and it is likely that some druidic beliefs and philosophies found their way into early Christianity.
11. Therefore, we should not be surprised when we find similar ideas expressed in all these religions and cultures.
12. Nor is it a total coincidence that some early Irish Christians wrote epigrammatic poetry similar to haiku, or that some surviving druidic teachings resemble Zen koans, for there is a root connection.

Chapter the EIGHTEENTH: Who were those old Druids?

1. The standard myth about the druids is that they were the primitive Celtic priesthood who conducted bloody rites in the deep woods and practiced human sacrifice.
2. The revisionist myth sees them as the priesthood of a nature-revering Celtic paganism, but discounts the human sacrifice as Roman propaganda.
3. Both those myths are based upon the Romantics' misreading of classical sources and ignorance of Celtic sources and society.
4. To take the human sacrifice question first, I know of only one Irish source that mentions such a practice, and there it is presented as a heretical aberration.
5. Surely, if human sacrifices were common the early Christian monks would have used the practice to discredit the druids.
6. Even Julius Caesar does not claim that the druids conducted such sacrifice; he says merely that the Celts would not sacrifice

without the presence of a druid.

7. To me, this implies that the druids were required mainly to see that it was done right.
8. Caesar also admits that most sacrificial victims were convicted felons and prisoners-of-war, the enslavement or execution of whom was common in all early societies.
9. Physical evidence of Celtic human sacrifice, though extant, is sparse.
10. We are led to conclude that human sacrifice was not a common practice, and probably only took place in times of great danger, if at all.
11. Such acts may have been a hankering back to earlier practice, much like the constant Roman theme of returning to the practices of the early republic. (We have deserted the way of our ancestors and must return to them if we wish to avert disaster.)
12. Certainly the ancient Irish and Welsh law texts that have come down to us prefer restitution to punishment. Capital punishment is unknown.
13. The myth that the druids were a priesthood has, in fact, no basis in either classical or Celtic sources.
14. Though they certainly had sacral duties, we must remember that religious duties were an integral part of every pagan's life.
15. In fact, neither classical nor Celtic writings refer to the druids as priest, and one, Dio Chrysotom, distinctly differentiates between them.
16. My own opinion is that some druids had a priestly function, but most did not.
17. Their privileged, sacred status is explained best by the druids' many important functions in Celtic society. They were the Celts' poets, seers, judges, doctors, philosophers, teachers, and repositories of tradition (Historians and genealogists).
18. No one druid practiced all these professions, of course.
19. Even the most primitive societies have specialists, and the Celts, as I have shown, were hardly primitive.
20. In historical Irish society all these trades ran in families, members of which were trained in the family trade from an early age, with some cross-training through the custom of fosterage.
21. It should be noted that in early Irish society all these professions were open to both sexes.
22. Only after the victory of the Roman Catholic church over the Celtic church, a victory due more to organization than theology, did women disappear from the professional class.
23. It is as a professional and intellectual class that we can thus best define the ancient druids, and it was as such that they won the respect of both Greek (who found most of Celtic society as frightening as did the Romans) and early Christian philosophers.
24. This concept invites comparison with the brahmin caste of India, and this comparison has often been made.
25. It is likely the brahmins and the druids (and perhaps the Persian magi) had a common root in early Indo-European society.
26. Certainly many parallels exist between the Celtic and Hindu societies, and both mythological and even musical similarities exist.
27. If we look upon the druids as an intellectual caste, rather than as a priesthood with repugnant practices, Roman antipathy towards them is better explained, for a society's intellectuals are always the first target of a conqueror.
28. We can also see that the original druids did not die out with the coming of Christianity (there are mentions of them as late as the 9th century in Irish texts). Rather they metamorphosed and maintained many of their positions under a new name.
29. In Ireland, they were known as the *aos d̄f̄na* (people of art/learning) who retained much of the sacred status and privilege of the druids.
30. It is likely that the early Celtic Christian church owed some of its beliefs and philosophy to the druids, which it would later

- reintroduce to the continent through missionaries.
31. Pelagius, either a Briton or an Irishman, was specifically attacked as trying to “revive the natural philosophy of the druids” for his stands against the doctrine of original sin and in support of free will.
(He believed Augustinian predestination theology led to immortality.)
 32. He was finally condemned as a heretic after long political manipulation by Augustine and his followers.
 33. It is certain that the knowledge preserved in Ireland which made it a magnet for those seeking education during the Dark Ages was not only Roman, Greek, and Christian, but also druidic.
 34. We can only mourn the loss of knowledge caused by St. Patrick’s boasted destruction of 180 druidic books and by England’s later banning and destruction of Irish books, even as we deplore the destruction of the library of Alexandria by Christian zealots and Mayan books by the Spanish priests.
 35. Truly all these acts were crimes against all humanity.
 36. If we wish to stretch a point, it can be argued that the original druidic caste did not totally die out until England’s final suppression of the bardic schools and the brehon law in the 17th century.

Chapter the Nineteenth: So where does that leave us?

1. If we accept the original druids as an intellectual caste, we can see a parallel with early Reformed Druids. For what were we at Carleton if not a somewhat mischievous group of intellectuals?
2. But surely I’m not suggesting that any real connection to the ancient druids existed, am I? Certainly not.
3. But, as I have shown, Western thought may well owe an unconscious debt to the druids.
4. No, certainly not—but I’ll leave you with a short bit from a story from the Life of St. Guénolé, a 6th century Breton saint, by Wrdistan, a 9th century monk.
5. The story recounts the meeting of St. Guénolé with the last Druid in Brittany!
6. After the events of the story and a brief theological argument which is essentially a draw, Guénolé offers the Druid refuge in his abbey.
7. The Druid declines and takes his leave, saying, “Do not all tracks lead to the same center?”
8. How druidic!

Peace S’och†in Heddwch

Is mise,

Robert D.A.L., Be.
Spring Equinox XXXIII Y.R. (1996 c.e.)

The Book of Lacunae

(A New Additon to the Apocryphas)

Chapter the FIRST

1. I believe Gerre would agree with me that, “It’s a gift to be simple, it’s a gift to be free”.
2. In my personal form of Druidism, I consider this cliché to be an unspoken Third Basic Tenet.
3. Despite my quest for simplicity, you may have noticed that I have put together this huge tome.
4. Without exaggeration, I have probably spent more time collecting, analyzing, and commenting on Reformed Druidic laws, customs, rituals, letters, and calendars than anyone else. Has this helped me?
5. I have read thousands of our pages, interviewed scores of Druids from every Branch, and spent the better part of three years of my precious youth in this process. As Garfield said, ‘Big, fat, hairy deal!’
6. Do you know what I’ve really discovered?
7. I think that I now know less about Reformed Druidism than when I started, and yet this is good.
8. Do you understand this?

Chapter the SECOND

1. Many was the long hour that I wended my way through the twisting trails of Carleton’s Arboretum; down footpaths of which only the trees and I knew.
2. I would go to those quiet woods to escape the noise of student life in the Goodhue Dormitory.
3. Although I walked in the hoary homeland of Druidism, I was not always Druidical; instead I often puzzled over the intricacies of the Reform’s organizational history, with a stubborn drive to somehow “prove” my form of Druidism.
4. Then suddenly!, I’d be distracted by some noise or scent, and I’d be totally enraptured by the starry sky of a Minnesota night; watching my tiny friend, Pleiades, try to escape from big old Orion.
5. In a moment such as that, I would forget about Provisional Councils, Ribbons, and Higher Orders.
6. I would then truly be a Druid; gawking in abject awe, trying to comprehend the Universe in all of its unimaginable vastness and layers of complexity; yet all the while knowing that it was impossible.
7. I would sometime try to compensate for such “limits” by trying to master something so banal and unimportant as the vagaries of our Council’s voting methods. But that is, truly, the work of the dying.

Chapter the THIRD

1. Do you know how I now regard most religions?
2. It’s much like story telling, “One mouth speaking and many different ears listening.”

Chapter the FOURTH

1. My dictionary (AHD) defines a grove as “a small wood or stand of trees that lacks dense undergrowth.”
2. If the undergrowth creeps into a grove, it will no longer be a grove, but it becomes a woodland.
3. Woodlands are better than gravel pits, but realize that the old trees will now be more difficult to be discerned or even to be approached, and the youngest saplings may be choked of life-

giving sunlight.

4. I sometimes wondered if this desire to remove undergrowth underlied the practice of the ancient Druids when they removed mistle-toe vines from their oak trees, in order to protect their grove's simplicities from parasitic complexities?
5. Likewise, tend ye thus to your groves, not in designing complexities, but in seeking simplicity.
6. Do not fear innovating to suit temporary needs, but be aware of the tenacious nature of traditions, once they become established.

Chapter the FIFTH

Chapter the SIXTH

1. It is a delicious irony that we, as a simplistic group, have accumulated so much hokey literature.
2. This collection from 33 years of Druidism contains about 800 leaves. Yet I tell you, verily, that a single shrub can match this feat within a year.
3. Perhaps the ancient Druids never wrote down any books about their beliefs, because Nature doesn't write in words, but in a rich tapestry of changing interrelationships and new experiences.
4. This book will probably never change, although you may very well change between your readings.
5. Unlike this book, there are billions of shrubs which will grow, produce offspring, die, and return to the soil. This book will only sit on a shelf.
6. Would you rather be "of the shrub" or "of the book"? Would you rather be "now" or "the past"?

Chapter the SEVENTH

1. At the site of Carleton's first Druid service, on Monument Hill, there is a four sided marble obelisk.
2. On one side is an inscription commemorating the first Christian service held in Northfield.
3. On the second side, a man chiseled in a reminder that the first marriage in Northfield was held here.
4. On the third side are details about the first Christian baptism of a baby in the whole region.
5. But the fourth side is smooth and blank.
6. Richard told me this side tells about Druidism.

Chapter the EIGHTH

1. Bruce Lee once told a story about a professor from a large university, who visited a Zen Master to seek more wisdom and to have a tea ceremony.
2. Now, he actually went there to impress the Master with his thesis on the Diamond Sutra, which is a difficult work. The Master listened patiently to him and presently he said, "Let us have some tea".
3. The Master carefully poured the hot tea into the professor's cup, but then would not stop pouring. The tea began to overflow and spill over onto the fine *tatami* mats, thereby ruining them.
4. The professor finally could restrain himself no longer and he cried out, "The cup is full, no more will go in!"
5. The Master smiled, and replied, "You, like this teacup, are full of your own opinions and theories. How can you hope to benefit

from my words, unless you first empty your cup?"

Chapter the NINTH

1. A bowl's true usefulness requires emptiness, although you could still try to use it as a hammer.

Chapter the TENTH

Chapter the ELEVENTH

1. It is one of the remarkable aspects of "awareness" that with every breakthrough of understanding, I realize more about the flawed or irrelevant nature of so many dogmas that I carry around.
2. Yet, I am not disturbed by this.
3. Truths have risen and fallen amongst the many cultures of the world, and yet new systems will always arise and pose new solutions to us. We must be ready to choose wisely, or even to contribute.

Chapter the TWELFTH

1. Do you know what most people have told me that they most fondly remember about their days of active participation in a

Grove?

2. It's not something they can put into words.
3. Richard Shelton, may his camel herds thrive, told me that he had spent far too much of his time in Ann Arbor explaining what Druidism *was not*.
4. I have heard similar words from most Arch-Druids, and many of them as a result have despaired of passing on the awareness that they achieved at Carleton College (or elsewhere) to other seekers.
5. But where did you get your awareness? Did it come from the words of an Arch-Druid or did it come from just being out there with Nature, perhaps with other Druids being present, so many years ago?
6. We can only try to help those who want our help. An unwanted gift, no matter how beautiful it may seem to us, is a burden unto the receiver.
7. But what is this obsession with proselytizing? Some evangelists are like problem drinkers; they do not set responsible limits on their vice and they do not know when its time to leave the bar.
8. Do not consider yourself a missionary out to spread "the truth", for that is not our way. Rather be like a humble traveler and teach wisdom to yourself. Ask good questions and listen to the answers.
9. But if your interests and pursuits of "awareness" should only find wooden ears and you receive a cold shoulder from your Grove, and yet you still need to talk, then go ye into the woods and talk to the trees.
10. For though a tree's ears are wooden, and their shoulders are cold, at least they will listen patiently and provide welcome support for your weary back.
11. When it is time, people may notice what is wise in your words, no matter where you are at the time; whether it be at a Druidical circle in a deep wood, at a New York coffee shop, in the classroom, at the assembly plant, at a hospital, or even (God forbid!) in distant lands during a bloody war.
12. Verily, the Earth is our Carleton College, and all of us are merely pupils in her classrooms. We have to tune our ears to her lectures and occasionally focus away from the voices of other students who murmur around us and pass notes to each other.
13. Let us boldly ask questions in our classes, listen to our classmates, do the best on our exams, exceed our homework's teaching objectives, play hooky, enjoy the games during recess periods, go on field trips, and work together on class projects.
14. Some say that we forget 90% of what we learned in College, but do not forget that there is no end of to lessons that can still be learned out there.

Chapter the THIRTEENTH

1. I have also heard complaints that too many Reformed Druids are "going back" to a monotheistic faith, or moving on to another religion.
2. Why do you now seek to bind other people solely to the ways of Reformed Druidism?
3. Many of us joined Reformed Druidism, not because it was the only way to find spiritual truth, but because we agreed that it was "one way, yea, one way amongst many".
4. I would also remind you that many of us never officially "left" our previous religions, because Reformed Druidism does not require us to abandon our previous affiliations or commitments.
5. When people judge that they have sufficiently explored our ways, who are we to begrudge them a chance to explore yet more ways?
6. I consider Reformed Druidism to be a spiritual way-station for pilgrims who are seeking for spiritual truths. They come from everywhere, they stay until rested, and they eventually go somewhere.

7. If we have been good caretakers of this way-station, they will remember our hospitality and perhaps they may return for a visit, but certainly they will fondly remember us and our ways.
8. May our gift of Druidism to these travelers not be a heavy ball and chain that will bind them to our ways, but rather may we give them a set of wings and a telescope to aid their journeys.
9. Perhaps you are worried that their relationships with the Earth-Mother will deteriorate or disappear under another religion?
10. Look ye at the Greenbook and note ye how every religion of the world has wisdom in it, and that at least one voice in every religion has incorporated a respect or reverence for Nature.
11. If the people have truly met the Earth-Mother while they were with us, then when they leave they may naturally gravitate towards such voices.
12. Finally, I would ask you if such a preoccupation with other people's spiritual welfare is perhaps an indication that you are avoiding the tending of your own spiritual growth?

Chapter the FOURTEENTH

Chapter the FIFTEENTH

1. I tell you that when you develop "awareness" you can gain wisdom from every word, every book, every encounter, and from every possible silence.
2. No longer will you need to keep to the outer structures of Reformed Druidism, except as one keeps a beautiful painting on a living room wall; yet one still goes outside for a breath of fresh air, and to see what the squirrels & foxgloves are up to today.

3. If your copy of ARDA distracts you from the rest of Reality, then it is only worthy of recycling.
4. Keep it simple, stupid (KISS).

Chapter the SIXTEENTH

1. Indeed, after reading the ARDA, some of you may wish to adopt all those old customs, or perhaps even to revive the Reform's organization above and beyond the Grove level (i.e. a new Council).
2. Please, do not be surprised if you find that most of the older Reformed Druids (and myself) will refuse to participate in such a revival.
3. It is not because we disdain the past forms of Reformed Druidism, for I and the others will always be glad to advise you and help you on your journey, but consider this story:
4. "Chuang Tzu was fishing in the P'u when the Prince of Ch'u sent two high officials to ask him to take charge of the administration of the Ch'u State."
5. "Chuang Tzu went on fishing and, without turning his head, said: "I have heard that in Ch'u there is a sacred tortoise which has been dead now some three thousand years, and that the Prince keeps this tortoise carefully enclosed in a chest on the altar of his ancestral temple. Now would this tortoise rather be dead and have its remains venerated, or be alive and wagging its tail in the mud?"
6. "It would rather be alive," replied the two officials, "and wagging its tail in the mud."
7. "Begone!" cried Chuang Tzu. "I too will wag my tail in the mud."

Chapter the SEVENTEENTH

1. That's about all that I can think to write about, but you can find more of my thoughts in the selections of Volume 2 and 3 of the Green Book.
2. I hope that this Apocrypha has shown to you the problems of Druidism, or of even knowing what is Druidism! "The never-ending search for religious truth" must continue for me, as it will for you.
3. Blessings of peace be upon you!

Michael James Anthony Ulhail Scharding
Grand Patriarch of the Ancient Order of Bambi

Day One of Samradh
Year XXXIV of e Reform
May 1st, 1996 c.e.

Some Final Thoughts

(Carleton Apocrypha Only)

1. In creating the RDNA, we took as our basic philosophy what I usually sum up as, "Take a look around you at nature—there must be something bigger than we are!" For many people, this came to be a deep and abiding sort of faith. Many who could not stomach 'organized religion' were attracted to Druidism, which was most definitely a disorganized religion.
2. RDNA never asked people to renounce their own religion, but was rather supplementary to the "standard" religions. If you read the Tenets, you will see this. For some, Druidism remained supplementary; for some, it became primary; and for the majority, I believe, it was an interesting experiment which was soon dropped and probably forgotten.
3. It is difficult from my perspective, remembering the beginnings of our "joke," to know what Druidism means to those who encountered it in later years, after the founders were gone. It has remained viable, which means that we must have tapped some sort of fundamental need in people; it is taken quite seriously by quite a few, which means that we created something deeper than we originally intended.
4. To all who have experienced it, in the various Groves which have been established or through the telling of the story, THE BLESSINGS OF THE EARTH-MOTHER BE UPON YOU.

Peace! Peace! Peace!



A Conclusion

It would be false for me to imply to you that everything was milk and honey amongst the Druids after the *A Cup filled to the Brim with Druidism* in 1976 until the *Book of Lacunae* in 1996. There were quite a few more broadsides fired between 1976 and 1982, but rarely with any great amounts of debate or essays of introspection. Most of the surviving essays from that period are found in the Part Twelve collection of Druid Chronicler newsletters. I just feel that the Druids stopped writing really interesting letters, or they were just repeating, in less flowery prose, most of the points that we have already covered. The further study of other letters in the Archives is always available to you.

Please remember that the authors of the Apocrypha can not be considered as speaking for anybody in the Reform but rather for themselves alone. The Apocrypha was a collection of opinions about how Druidism has been experienced by various Druids, at different times, in various ways. Each is but “one way, yea, one way among many.”

May the Blessings of the Earth-Mother be apparent to you everyday of your life.

Sincerely,
Mike the Confused

End Notes for the Books of the Apocrypha

Essentially, this is a collection of small commentary by Isaac Bonewits (IB), Richard Shelton (RMS), Norman Nelson (NN), and Michael Scharding (MS).

The Book of Faith

1 David Fisher, retired and became a somewhat embarrassed Instructor in Christian Theology at a Southern University. He is now an ordained Anglican Priest and occasionally wishes that everybody forgot about the Reformed Druids. –IB

8 All original sexismis have been left intact. –IB

9 “Every form of religious ritual is magickal.” –IB

10 Others do, however. –IB

Epistle of David the Chronicler

1:1 To Norman Nelson from David Frangquist; written originally in Aug. of 1964. –IB

1:5 Nelson was in what was then known as the “missionary quandary”: if all three officers were needed to consecrate the Waters, and if consecrated Waters are necessary to create First and Second Order Members, how could a single Third Order Druid/ess star a Grove? This was later solved by a vote of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu (see Records). “I held my own services during the Summer of 1964 at our cabin in the Black Hills of South Dakota. My sister acted as Preceptor in an abbreviated Grove.” –NN

The Missionary Quandary was settled by the Council in 27 January 1965 Missions (a). When celebrating with no 2nd Order present, the priest has the entire congregation give the responses in unison. –RMS

1:7 The Episcopal Bishop of South Dakota, who was staying in an adjacent cabin. –IB

1:8 As David Fisher mentions in the Book of Faith, “none of us at first thought the RDNA would continue: it had started out as a joke to protest the religious requirement, which was now accomplished. Given the perspective of ten more years, I know we created more than we suspected. The self-mocking ritual to which David Frangquist refers (in chapter three below) was what led to my comments about play-acting.” –NN

2:1 A summer scout camp in Northern Wisconsin where Frangquist was a counselor that summer. –RMS

2:8 “The Grove there died out after two years, when Hirsch and Holding moved out of the area and lost touch.” –Frangquist.

2:10 “In the Fall of 1964, I started a Grove at Vermilion, South Dakota (where I was in Graduate School) and found much the same results as described in this chapter.” –NN

3:1 “Another way in which this is frequently stated is that a religion is a combination of a magical system and a philosophical system, although there is usually a mention of an

orientation towards Higher Beings.” –IB

3:3 See note to The Book of Faith 8 above.

3:7 There is a great deal of disagreement among Druids concerning this and the subsequent references to the negative aspects of rituals. For a totally opposite opinion, see The Second Epistle of Isaac. –IB

3:11 This can prove difficult, as we know very little about the Ancient Druids. Some Reformed Druids now hold that any Paleopagan religion may serve as proper inspiration for new rituals. –IB

The Outline of the Foundation of Fundamentals.

Written by David Frangquist in 1970 c.e. [Shouldn't that be 1966? –MS] The note of the Book of Faith 8 above applies here as well. “This particular book can be said to represent the original philosophy behind the founding of the RDNA (insofar as any one person's opinion can) better than any other Book currently in the Apocrypha. Which may go a long way towards explaining why so many of the older members of the RDNA were so upset at the ideas that later led to the forming of the various offshoots.” –IB

The Discourse of Thomas the Fool

III: 1 See Customs XI. See the End-Notes for Customs XI. –RMS

The Wisdom of Thomas the Fool

2:2 A reference to the Consecration of the Waters of Life in the Order of Worship. –MS

2:3 This is his own interpretation. –MS

2:4 The Wisdom of the Waters appears to be his own creation. –MS

2:8 Druid numerology perhaps? The Seven-Fold powers are called upon when consecrating the Waters of Life and the Thirteen-Fold mystery was discussed deeply in the Discourse of Thomas the Fool. –MS

The Book of Changes

1:6 For an explanation of all these terms, see *The First Epistle of Isaac*. –IB

1:11 “At the time of the writing of this letter, I knew of only the Berkeley and the Twin Cities Groves as still active. I later found out that the Chicago and the Stanford Groves were also still alive (the first vigorously and the second barely).” –IB. It now turns out that the Ann Arbor Grove was also in existence at this time, however, their ArchDruids did not disseminate this news widely. It is also claimed that the Carleton Grove was also active. (see notes to 1:13, below).

1:12 Although it is confusing to monotheistic theologians, Neopagans apparently suffer no difficulties in being clergy in several religions at the same time. It should be noted, however, that at least one ArchDruid of the RDNA has emphatically stated his belief that being a priest/ess in a Neopagan religion does not automatically constitute a conviction or qualification to be a Third Order Druid/ess in the RDNA. –IB

1:13 It certainly seemed to be defunct at the time,

however, your Editor [IB] is now told that it actually was not officially defunct at all, merely less active than in the past (though there is some disagreement among Druids as to what constitutes an “active Grove”). One ex-ArchDruid of Carleton has offered this explanation for his position that the Carleton Grove has never actually been defunct: The Grove has seen several lean years, he says, but with one exception, its continuity has never been broken. This exception was the Great Interim in 1968, which lasted only a few months but caused multiple difficulties. ArchDruid Thomas Carlisle left Carleton during the Winter, leaving behind an active Grove with no one to lead it. David Frangquist helped start it up again the next Spring, “but much tradition and lore had been lost and it took us nearly two years to recover them, “ through much correspondence with David Frangquist and Norman Nelson (most of it now in the Carleton Grove Archives). Since then, personal friendships and a concern for the Grove's continuity has led to deliberate efforts to keep continuity going, which have been for the most part, successful.

He notes officially, the Grove still exists during the Summer Vacation and that (even if there are no meetings) the ArchDruid still gets much work done. The “chaos of the last two years” (1972-74) was caused by all but one of the Third Order Druids deciding to take a year off and go abroad at the same time, so that interest on campus lagged. But “the tradition at Carleton is” that anyone elected ArchDruid/ess stays as such until a new one is elected, so the Grove continued to officially exist as an “active Grove.”

In any event, at the time this letter was composed, the author had received a written note from Carleton indicating the demise of that Grove (“The Druids are dead, long live the Druids!”) –IB

1:18 As this verse obviously show, this letter was not edited at all, except to correct spelling and punctuation. It was felt that historical accuracy was of more importance than felicitous phrasing in this Book. –IB

1:27 It is important to note that verses 2-27 of this chapter were written before The First Epistle of Isaac, but that Chapters 2-4 were written shortly afterwards (and were meant to go out with it). As explained in Chapter 5, things didn't work out as expected.

2:8 The Berkeley, Chicago and Stanford Groves wanted a coup, while the Twin Cities Grove wanted to Schis. –IB

3:8 A matter insisted upon by the ArchDruid of Chicago, as necessary to further the existence of Reformed Druidism. –IB

4:4 At least one Bardic Order has been founded since then, the Order of Oberon, by Br. David Geller. A Healing Order called the Order of Diancecht is being started by Sr. Joan Carruth and an Order for the practice of Pagan Ceremonial Magick, called the Order of Merddyn, by Adr. Isaac Bonewits. –IB

4:6 Actually, the only drastic removal of material done by Bonewits was the removal of Customs 8:13-15. The other editing was primarily the altering of sexist phraseology. –IB

5:11 “It is a remarkable tribute to the basically antipolitical character of Reformed Druidism that even we revolutionaries tend to be incompetent at politics.” –IB

5:12 This was founded by Isaac Bonewits, who

stopped en route from his previous position as ArchDruid of the Twin Cities to his subsequent position as ArchDruid of the Mother Grove which was also located in Berkeley. Sr. Vicki Rhodes became the new ArchDruidess of the Twin Cities and was a member of the PCoADs. Hasidic Druidism is a Branch of the Reform out of the SDNA, consisting of Neopagans of even greater piety (see the writings of the Hasidic Druids) The name of the "Arch Grove" was chosen because (a) they did not want to name their Grove after a Christian Saint, and (b) because of the magnificent 630 foot Arch that is the symbol of the City of St. Louis. The HDNA has agreed to continue to use the same ordination ceremonies as those of the other Branches of the Reform (with its own additions), so as to retain the Apostolic Succession; and to encourage those who are interested in Reformed Druidism, but not Hasidic style, to get in touch with the other Branches. –MJS

5:15 Isaac was notified just before the DC(E) went to the printers, that Richard Shelton, had founded a Grove in Ann Arbor, MI during the summer of 1973. –IB

5:16 The PCoADs did not as of August of 1975, include ArchDruids Shelton (Ann Arbor), Morrison (Carleton) or Corey (New York 2). Therefore these have not approved of this Book of Changes nor of the DC(E), although Shelton and Morrison did provide publication feedback. –IB

Historiography of the Books of the Apocrypha

A.K.A. The Dirty Laundry of the Reformed Druids

Note to the Reader

According to the American Heritage Dictionary, a historiography is: "The writing of history based on a critical analysis, evaluation and selection of authentic source materials and composition of these materials into a narrative subject to scholarly methods of criticism." Essentially I am writing a history of Reformed Druidism by discussing trends shown in the letters of past Druids, and I expect you to disagree with me and write to me why you disagree. These analyses of the contents of the Books of the Apocrypha put them into a historical context and timeline, making them more meaningful. If you have no prior familiarity with Reformed Druidism, you might find this historiography confusing and boring, and you might be better off by first reading my "History of Reformed Druidism". After that, you may be more interested in the historicity of the Apocrypha.

The Book of Faith

This book was written by David Fisher, the founder of the RDNA, on 4/12/64. Fisher at this point was ending his junior year at Carleton and felt deeply that he was going to enter the Episcopal Seminary after graduation in 1965, which he eventually did. He was slightly worried by how Reformed Druidism had taken on a life of its own, and that he may have founded a full-blown religion. There may have been some anxiety that the review board of the Seminary might frown on his Druidical activities. Fisher knew that Nelson and Frangquist would be succeeding him as ArchDruid in May and November, respectively, and that Frangquist was currently writing the *Druid Chronicles (Reformed)*. Fisher wanted to add some commentary to the *Chronicles*, perhaps to keep readers from taking the Reform too seriously. The *Book of Faith* was Fisher's attempt to reconcile all these points and leave some guidance as the Reform left his guardianship.

The *Book of Faith* was never appended to the *Druid Chronicles (Reformed)*, which people felt should be kept as a self-sufficient document. The *Book of Faith* has been looked upon in many ways by different people. Some saw it as more meddling and control-attempts by David Fisher, others as a valuable lesson. Whatever their opinion, it has been one of the more widely read letters in the Reform, and it provides a rare insight into the mind of David Fisher. It is the only real document of any size left to us from Fisher's pencil. It is also a good book to read when a Druid feels that their faith is under assaults of credibility. Outside of the three Apocryphas, the *Book of Faith* has never been published.

The Epistle of David The Chronicler

This book was written at the end of the summer of 1964 from David Frangquist to Norman Nelson. Norman Nelson had been a summer stand-in ArchDruid of Carleton, after Fisher stepped down, from April of 1964 to September of 1964, at which point Frangquist became ArchDruid of Carleton until April of 1966. Norman Nelson had graduated in June of 1964 and moved back home to South Dakota. As mentioned in the End-Notes, above, the grove in question was his cabin. He later started a grove at Vermilion, S.D., at his grad-school.

David Frangquist was writing this letter after having published *The Druid Chronicles (Reformed)*, and Frangquist was about to begin his two year Arch-Druidcy of Carleton. In many ways, Frangquist was a major shaper of how Druidism would develop at Carleton for decades. Frangquist wrote the *Druid Chronicles (Reformed)*, as-

sembled the Green Book, (and with his wife Deborah Gavrin Frangquist) restarted the Carleton Grove on at least three occasions, been a mountain of resources & advice to countless Arch-Druids, and has played a major role in the Isaac Affair. This letter, therefore could be construed, with the Druid Chronicles, as showing Frangquist's view of Druidism at the beginning of his Arch-Druidcy. It is a good statement on how and why a Third Order Druid should undertake a missionary Grove. I, myself, wish that my own Druidry had been so far advanced after only one year! Like the Book of Faith, the Epistle of David the Chronicler has never been "published" outside of the three Apocryphas.

The Outline of the Foundation of Fundamentals

David Frangquist wrote this on June 6th, 1966 at the close of his ArchDruidcy at Carleton. Dick Zempel was taking over at this point. David had just completed the last touches on the Green Book and was probably thinking back on his two productive years at Carleton. It is difficult to know how many levels of humor are buried in this work, even the dating 6/6/66 is a joke. Outlines are the most strict forms of thought, yet there is no strict binding of Reformed Druidism in this Outline. Frangquist appears to have had a love-hate relationship with form and officialness. Many of his other early letters show him spoofing officialness and talking strictly with his tongue in his cheek. This is perhaps the last of these jokes. Outside of the Apocryphas, this has never been published, although it seems to have been widely-read.

Leabhar Toirdhealbhaigh

These poems was written by Robert Larson in the spring of 1967 before his Archdruidcy while of Berkeley (1968-1976). The title is Irish for "Book of Torvel" and could be pronounced as "Lyow-ur Turuli(g)" (it could also be pronounced "kkakzpopziddkaltzt", but that would be very silly). At the time of its publishing in 1975 for DC(E), Robert was in the SCA and ran under the name "Toirdhealbhaigh MacLorcain, mainly to bedevil any herald attempting to pronounce it. The grove jokingly called me Turlock MacGargle (At least, I think it was a joke.) Earlier, I might have called it "Leabhar Aedha", later "Leabhar Chathail", or whatever." Robert Larson is an old Carleton Druid, present during the birth of the RDNA, although like Frangquist, he only joined the RDNA after the initial weeks. Robert Larson, like I mention in his biography, never graduated from Carleton, but left midway through Frangquist's ArchDruidcy. Larson had drunk deeply of Carleton Druidism and was a proto-hippie. He was also deeply interested in Paleo-Celtic material, far beyond any of the other Carleton Druids in the original Grove. Larson was the one to introduce much of the Celtic flavor into Berkeley Druidism and start its leanings toward Celtic Neo-Paganism (which Bonewits later accentuated). However in Larson's own life, Druidism was a quiet and contemplative activity, as is shown in this poem. His reference to being Arch-Druid of Clann-Na-Brocheta was a foreshadowing of his founding the Orthodox Druids of North America in 1977 with a group of Celtic reconstructionist entertainers (who performed at the Northern California Renaissance Pleasure Faire). That group met occasionally for outdoor parties (Paddy's day, Bealtaine, Solstice) usually on Mount Tamalpais in Marin County, all dressed in costume with lots of swords around. This poem was rarely seen by Pre-1976 Druids outside of Berkeley. It is of a similar flavor to Letter to My Brothers.

The Discourse of Thomas the Fool

This document was probably only known to the Carleton Druids of the 1970-1978 period, or the Age of Shelton, as I humorously call it. The author was Thomas McCausland (CL70: Shelton) and it was probably written as a sermon after May 1970 but before June 1971. It is perhaps one of the most mystical pieces of writing to ever come

from the Carleton Druids. It is also a very rare example (along with The Wisdom) of a detailed opinion of a Carleton Druid upon their own literature. I suspect that many sermons and discussions have been made orally by dozen of Druids about the Book of Meditations of DC(R) or the Green Book, but this is the only example in writing that we have. Thomas experienced what I call, "Way Deep Druidism". It is a pity that we only have two of Thomas' sermons, because I really like them. The Discourse was only released in the Carleton Apocrypha and Isaac probably never knew of its existence.

As was explained elsewhere, the Thirteenfold mystery, is a powerful poem composed by Amherghin the Druid, as described in the well known "The Book of Invasions of Ireland". Most Druid groups in America agree that is very special meditational poem. The version possessed by the Reform was translated from the original Gaelic by Prof. John Messenger. It is a poem of union with Nature, and of full self-Awareness. It is commonly used in the Invocation phase of the Order of Worship.

The remainder of the Discourse concerns itself with trying to describe Be'al. Be'al, as is mentioned elsewhere, is one of the strange terms used in Reformed Druidism. The Book of Meditations in DC(R), which Thomas must have read many times, devotes chapters in trying to describe Be'al, and acknowledges its failure. Although it may be related to the Irish Bel, I suspect most Druids use the term "Be'al", because it sounds like "be all", as in "the be-all and end-all". It is a neutral term, perhaps, for what Christian Mystics call "God", or perhaps "the Holy Spirit". No one agrees with me on a definition.

The Wisdom of Thomas the Fool

Again, written by Thomas McCausland, but we know the specific date of August 25th, 1970. It is another rare letter, because it examines the underpinnings of liturgical terminology of the Reform. It was probably put in the Carleton Apocrypha by Richard Shelton as a Zen-ish experiential counterbalance to Isaac's meticulous and dogmatic examination of the Order of Worship, as was shown in *The Second Epistle of Isaac*. Indeed, this is a very Zen-Druidic piece which is filled with Carleton Druidism, in my opinion. Sometime in the early 70s, an abbot (Eshin Nishimura) from a Japanese Zen monastery taught courses on meditation and religion at Carleton. Thomas attended every one of them.

One detects more clearly here, than in The Discourse, the unusual tone of fervency—perhaps even an evangelistic overtone? This would not be due to fear that Carleton Druidism was in one of its "down-phases". Richard Shelton was in the middle of his prosperous two year Arch-Druidcy at Carleton and he had groomed Glen McDavid as his successor. If anything, this was a time of Druidic Renaissance. Some Zen masters have been very intense in their attempts to "awaken" their pupils out of ignorance; perhaps this is what Thomas is trying to do?

The purpose of this sermon is about "True Names", a term that I have not heard used anywhere else. However, I suspect that Thomas was deeply inspired by the Zen in the Book of Meditations from DC(R), as was shown in the Discourse. Perhaps the idea of "True Names" was taken from Med. 1:11, where Frangquist (on his Third Order Vigil) heard his "name" called three times? With that verse, Thomas may be interpreting "name" to mean the inner reality & consciousness of Frangquist, what Reformed Druidism calls "Awareness". Thomas's discussion of "True Names" seems to have a similar purpose as the Zen master's question; "What was your original face (or name) before you were born?"

As is common with Carleton Druidism, Thomas wonderfully attacks the role of ritual in Reformed Druidism (see the Book of Faith and Epistle of David the Chronicler). Thomas appears to be putting a heavy stress on the importance of Vigiling, which I believe all Druids should do irregardless of whether they choose to accept the burden of the Third Order. Another interesting reference is 3:7, that "The Patriarchs know your Name." That is a very strange statement.

He is, uniquely, also playing here with a bit of numerology.

Letter to My Brothers

This was written by Steve Savitzky who was ArchDruid of Carleton from 1968 to 1969. He was the last Carleton Druid to have personally met one of the Founders. Steve went onto to found the long-lived Stanford Grove (a.k.a. the Southern Shores) in California. The original copy of this letter is not extant, and has only been published in the Carleton Apocrypha. Compare it with Leabhar Toidhealbhagh.

Book of Changes, Part One

As was mentioned elsewhere, I broke this Book into three parts, in order to facilitate the model of a dialogue. This first part contains the letter sent by Isaac Bonewits to the many members of the Council on July 18th, 1974. I fully describe the impact of this letter in my "History of Reformed Druidism in America". Essentially, the last three Arch-Druids of Carleton had been lax in their Chairship of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu, and Isaac had assumed that Berkeley & Twin Cities were the only groves left. Isaac by this point had fully embraced Neo-Paganism, which few of the other Druids had ever heard of, and he wished to redefine the Reform into a Reconstructionist Neo-Pagan religion. There were other Reconstructionist Neo-Pagan religions at the time such as Nordic, Egyptian and Greco-Roman; but no exclusively Celtic ones (except possibly Celtic Wicca). Thinking the rest of the Third Orders had "given up" on Druidism, he wanted to make the simple necessary changes for reconversion of the RDNA.

This was not the first time that members of the Council had heard of Isaac. Most knew that Isaac had been ordained to the Third Order in 1969 by Larson. We have letters of communication with Isaac between McDavid, Frangquist and Shelton from the early 70s which are congenial and discuss his interest in the occult. Surprisingly, during those early years, Isaac disapproved of proposals for incorporating more hierarchy or dogmatizing the Chronicles. This letter must have seemed a complete about-face to the Druids in 1974 who thought that they had known Isaac.

The problem was, as the letters point out, that Carleton and many other groves were still operating, just not talking. Also, the Druids not active in Groves, disagreed with the idea that they were lesser Druids than Grove-active Druids. In short, Isaac should have tested the waters before starting a hurricane in a tea-cup. A few reconnaissance letters could have avoided most of the acrimony that the Isaac Affair brought up. It is also my opinion from hindsight, that Isaac really had little idea of what Carleton Druidism was, because he only had really known Larson, who was not one to aggressively correct the mistakes of others.

This one letter, along with the First Epistle of Isaac which came a month later, rudely awoke the slumbering Druids throughout the Reform. It galvanized them to reaffirm their distaste of several aspects of organized religions. This is probably one of the most important letters every written in the RDNA, at least from an Archival perspective, because it generated controversy and a flood of letters which give us a good idea of the minds of Reformed Druids in the mid-70s. It also gave us a chance to see their condensed Druidic instruction to Isaac, what would normally take years of living at Carleton to absorb naturally. The resulting letters also show, pretty effectively, what Druidism WAS NOT.

As the following letters will explain, there were several aspects of Isaac's letter that disturbed them, primarily: a need for definition, an interest in evangelizing (and quickly at that), swapping priesthoods with non-Druidic Neo-Pagans to assure the survival of the Apostolic Succession, an assumption that Druidism for everyone is really Neo-Paganism, sexist language (on the Reform's part), a desire for stronger National organization, a feeling that Carleton Arch-Druids were not suited for the Chair of the Council, that the Higher Orders

should be restarted, the issue of majority (instead of unanimity) for settling votes in the Council, the incredible haste of the voting proposal deadline (within 3 months, by November 1st), and what appeared as the dogmatizing of the Druid Chronicles. All very alarming, considering that it all came from out of the blue.

The Epistle of Renny

Renny was the second female Archdruid at Carleton, and had taken over from Steve Corey, who had left a mess. Now normally Renny, titled "the Silent", is not one given to anger. Much of the bitterness in this letter, which I am uncomfortable with, is due to the fact that she did not access to a copier and would have to distribute handwritten copies of Isaac's July 18 1974 letter to dozens of past Carleton Druids in time so that a vote could be done by Isaac's imminent deadline.

Her complaints (unbrotherly tone, undemocratic presentation, haste for growth, and concern with restrictive definitions) were commonplace among the replies to Isaac's original letter, and were not assuaged by the First Epistle of Isaac that soon would follow it, as you'll soon see. It should be remembered that Isaac probably didn't really expect a response from Carleton, thinking it was moribund.

The Epistle of Ellen

Ellen Conway wrote this on almost the same day as Renny's Epistle and the Words of Green. This is not unusual since, Richard Shelton and Ellen Conway were good friends, Carleton Druids of the early 70s, and were then studying together at University of Michigan at Ann Arbor. She would later marry Richard. She also founded the Ann Arbor grove and worked hard with Richard to control the Isaac Affair. Here we see the first instance in the debate about the primacy of the Basic Tenets and the need to distinguish between personal beliefs and Reformed Druidism. I suspect that Ellen's comment on Neo-Paganism, probably did not sit well with Isaac.

The Words of Green

This was a letter from Richard Shelton to the entire Council on 8/14/74 to begin an actual discussion of Isaac's two letters, something that Isaac's letters had neglected to do (instead of putting things up for a near-immediate vote). Its title comes from the fact that Richard used green ink when mimeographing copies for people. Shelton, as I mention in his biography, was similar to Frangquist and myself in that we three have a deep long term dedication to preserving the existence of Druidism at Carleton. We three also were involved in producing some of the literature of the Reform. At the time of writing this, his wife, Ellen Conway was currently ArchDruid of the Ann-Arbor Grove (where they were in grad-school); to which Shelton succeeded her. Since Shelton had written to most of the Druids up to this point, it was natural that he would be the one to put the "Carleton Response" into a dignified order. In many ways, Shelton's letter quickly turned Isaac's seemingly belligerent letter into an intensely interesting debate.

An ironic background fact to this letter, was that Shelton had naively proposed the Codex of Form back in the summer of 1969 which had sought to clarify the literary history of Druidism, formalize certain definitions and to clarify the structure of the Council to enable legislation to proceed more smoothly. Isaac at that time, along with Larson and Frangquist, had felt that such codification was too restrictive on Druidism. Now here in 1974, Isaac was seeking codification (among many of the items on his agenda) and Richard was opposing it! Richard was also the only Chair of the Council, besides Frangquist, to oversee the successful passage of legislation through the Council. In fact, Shelton was probably one of the few Druids who understood how the Council worked!

As you can see, Richard succinctly crystallized some of the important points of objection; the non-necessity for extensive self-defini-

tion, the inherent non-authority and humbleness of the priesthood in Reformed Druidism, the need to apply Reformed Druidism upon one's own personal religion (and not vice-versa), and the need to dialogue in a calm manner befitting Reformed Druidism.

The First Epistle of Isaac

As Isaac mention in his endnotes to DC(E), that this Epistle was written after the letter in the Book of Changes Part One, and that the First Epistle was intended to have been mailed with that letter. The Letter was mailed out, and the Epistle followed about four weeks later in late August of 1974, although we do not have an original copy in the Archives. This delay may have caused even more discord, because the July 18th letter was too curt to really explain Isaac's intentions, and, arriving all by itself, may have negatively pre-disposed the Druids to any further mailings from Isaac (not that the First Epistle improved their opinion of Isaac). Isaac apparently had already gotten some strong feedback before he had a chance to mail out the First Epistle, and you can see some "Damage Control" being performed through out this Epistle to soothe irritated Druids (see Chapter One). It is likely that he had already received letters from Ellen Conway '72, Richard Shelton and Renny Seidel (who was then currently the ArchDruid of Carleton). Isaac is therefore especially carefully to explain Neo-Paganism, because it is unlikely that any non-Berkeleyite knew much about this term which was created in 1970 or so. Reformed Druids upto that point had faced many verbal attacks from outsiders that they were practicing "paganism", and now here was one among them who was claiming that it was!

As I discuss in my History, Isaac has a knack for analyzing and micro-labeling things into categories, although he can also be very creative and satirical. Isaac wrote a book, "Real Magic" in 1971, after his graduation and became famous for receiving the first degree in Magic in the entire world. The First Epistle, along with the Second Epistle, shows how Isaac put his sharp mind to examining Reformed Druidism and to show how easily the forms and purposes of Reformed Druidism could be interpreted as being complementary with Neo-Paganism. This was nothing really new, in principal, to Reformed Druidism. Since the beginning, Reformed Druids have always related Reformed Druidism to their own religion; whether it be Christian, Jew, Zen, Taoism, atheism, ect. What was new to most Reformed Druids, was that Isaac was claiming that Reformed Druidism **was the same thing as** Neo-Paganism because it practiced magic, worshipped (what he felt were) authentic gods and goddesses, and had its own scriptures and priesthood. As the responding letters pointed out, many Reformed Druids considered these to be mere outer trappings around a basic common activity and experience of Awareness.

Gobbledegook and Red Tape

I always enjoy reading Gerre Goodman's letters because she constantly reminds us of the need for simplicity in our Druidism. Gerre was at Carleton during Richard's and Glenn's Archdruidcy, but she never really played a big role as a leader. Isaac never got this first letter or her second one, or if he did, he soon forgot about it (based on my talks with him). Which is a pity, since hers was one of the most calming letters that he could have received.

The Epistle of Norman

This letter was written by Norman Nelson to Isaac (and others) on November 10th, 1974. As I mentioned earlier in the notes to the Epistle of David the Chronicler, Nelson had been deeply involved in the original founding of the RDNA at Carleton, a stand-in Arch-Druid for a few months, led many services at Carleton, helped to found the Higher Orders, was a Patriarch of the 5th order, had run at least two official missionary groves, and was a general resource for confused Druids. It was apparently rare for Norman to intrude upon

the folly of others, much like Larson, but he decided to step in after receiving Isaac's letters. Norman would later help Isaac's preparation of The Druid Chronicles (Evolved), by providing commentary about the early Days of the Reform.

Norman's letter has a few prominent themes; the value of humor in the Reform, the role of "dis-organization", the independence of Reformed Druidism from allegiance with any other religion/philosophy (including Neo-Paganism), its applicability to any religion or philosophy, the unimportance of external trappings, and the viable existence of solitary Reformed Druidism outside of Grove activity. Perhaps, not readily apparent, was the understanding attitude that he conveyed while still holding to his own opinion; the hall-mark of good Druidical communication.

The Book of Changes, Part Two

The Book of Changes was written by Isaac near July of 1976 as he was doing the final preparations for printing the Druid Chronicles (Evolved). "Changes" is essentially his look back on the early half of the Isaac Affair, which never really ended until he started ADF in 1983, and to relate to the world his analysis of the situation in mid-1976. Chapter two shows the voting results of his July 18, 1974 letter. The issue of voting methods is covered more fully in my History of Reformed Druidism. Essentially, I believe that most of the Druids had come from Carleton (about 80% of the voters) and many declined or abstained (abstaining is particularly Druidic in that it is a show of independence from organization). It is questionable if anybody "won" since each side was using different standards of "winning"; the Carleton contingent believing in unanimity and Isaac believing in majority-rule, or at least 2/3. Those Druids who did agree on some points (esp. the current ArchDruids of Carleton origin) were primarily concerned that greater communication was required amongst members of the Council, so that future debates would not be so bitter, and founded the New RDNA.

As I've stressed before this split into three branches is confusing. The New RDNA (NRDNA) was primarily a collection of Third Orders who wanted greater communication and organization than the RDNA felt was necessary. This first variant of the NRDNA primarily existed as long as the Provisional Council of ArchDruids existed (up until about 1977) to discuss possible issues to bring up for vote with the Council of Dalon Ap Landu. The Schismatic Druids of North America were predominantly, if not officially, a Neo-Pagan enclave headed by Isaac. When the NRDNA & Provisional Council fell into disuse after 1977, the remaining Post-Larson Berkeleyites and the SDNA Mother Grove assumed the abandoned name of the NRDNA, with the provision that non-pagan members would still have equal rights. Therefore be aware of the existence of essentially two versions of the NRDNA, especially in the inter-regnum year of 1976-1977, when the transformation of the NRDNA took place.

Indeed as Chapter Three explains, most people agreed on what the existing traditions of voting and hierarchy was, but wished to discuss possible adjustments to organization, liturgy and other minor points.

The Epistle to the Myopians

This was written by Joan Carruth on March 25th 1976. The title means "Letter to the Near-Sighted", which I think was appropriate. She was an Arch-Druid or at least a Co-ArchDruid of Berkeley from around 1975 to 1981, with various gaps. She was one of Larson's protégés and a close friend of Isaac, although she would eventually oppose Isaac's full plan of transforming the NRDNA. She also at various times edited the Druid Chronicler magazine and proposed the modest organizing referendums of the Coalition Council of the Order of Dalon ap Landu in the late 70s (that were more modest than Isaac's) when Carleton Druidism had once again lapsed. From my interviews with her, she is an aggressive debater and a leader of people. An overabundance of leadership was one of the factors lead-

ing to the Diaspora of Berkeley Druidism. She currently runs the Birch Grove in New Hampshire.

Her Epistle is part praise of the universe and partly a reminder to the Reform that the world around us (The Earth-Mother) exists above and beyond the dualism of monotheistic thinking. As with Isaac's letters, the issue of ecological awareness and feminism is encouraged. She brings up a good point that Carleton Druidism, or rather most of the US, had to change from a nodding appreciation of Nature to a responsible stewardship of the Earth. It is a valuable lesson to us all. The letter had also been mailed independently of the *Druid Chronicles* to many members of the Council.

The First Epistle of Robert

This missive was written by Robert Larson and postmarked as May 26th, 1976. For more information on Robert Larson see the *Historiography* on "Leabhar Toirdhealbhagh". Larson wasn't one to butt in other people's business, but there comes a time when you must step in between the combatants and heal the peace. Larson, a printer at this time, was in the process of preparing the *Druid Chronicles* (Evolved) for publication.

There are several points of interest for the historian about Robert's two epistles. It is one of the few glimpses into the originator of Berkeley Druidism, an old-time Carleton Druid, and the ArchDruid nurturer of the Berkeley Grove from 1968 to 1976/7. From the sheer literary output, one would assume that Isaac was the most dominant spokesman for the Berkeley Grove. After a dozen interviews with other Berkeleyites, it appears that Isaac was merely the most vocal amongst them. The people might have listened to Isaac, but they followed Robert. There was scattered interaction between Frangquist, Shelton, Sherbak, Savitzky, Carruth and Larson upto the mid-70s. Larson's was the quiet, steady voice of Berkeley.

In this letter we get an idea of what form of Druidism was being taught in Berkeley, and why so many of the Berkeley Druids resisted Isaac's changes over the next decade. It also provides us with an eyewitness description of Isaac's behavior that we don't have elsewhere in our records. This letter gives more depth to NRDNA than Isaac's letters alone would have provided to us.

Robert's First Epistle is essential discussing his idea of a Provisional Council of Arch-Druids among the original NRDNA, but also being open to the RDNA. Its purposes are plain and simple; dissemination of news, record keeping and a safeguard for keeping communication open amongst the Council; in case the Carleton ArchDruidcy should go into remission. In those circumstance, the Chair of the Council of Dalon ap Landu would annually rotate around the members of the Council of Arch-Druids, until Carleton got back on its feet. The letter spends a great deal of time re-affirming basic Reformed Druidic ideals of traditional disorganization and independence, which Larson understood as a member of the original Carleton Grove.

The Epistle of Richard

This was written by Richard Shelton sometime in May of 1976 to Isaac, but circulated to others. Richard was then the ArchDruid of Ann-Arbor, Morrison was firmly ArchDruid of Carleton, and Isaac had left Minneapolis to return to Berkeley. Richard had spent the last year and a half as a reference source for Isaac, and Isaac had spent the last 18 months putting the *Druid Chronicles* (Evolved) together with Robert Larson. The initial rift between the two Druids had narrowed as they worked together and talked more. Isaac, at some level, had come to the general assumption that he was the odd-man-out in the Reform and was using the *Druid Chronicles* (Evolved) as a kind of self-inspection tool to work out a blue print for a new Druidic Neo-Pagan religion. Apparently the previous letter from Shelton had picked a raw nerve, probably telling him that most of the Carleton RDNA wouldn't be interested in the DC(E), which was Isaac's new baby.

Shelton provided a useful look back at the Isaac Affair and tried to explain this to Isaac. He reiterated that the Reform needs to avoid formalism, must keep itself separate (but applicable) to other religions, the need for sober and responsible discussion, the avoidance of Arch-Druid "kingship" over the lower Orders, the independence of each Grove, and the omnipotence of the individual within Druidism. Is it well known to all the Druids, that the publication of DC(E) (and Isaac's further public interaction) would forever form a connection in the public's mind between "Neo-Paganism" and "Reformed Druidism". Up to this point, most outsiders didn't know squat about Druids, and this vagueness had been a boon to Reformed Druidism. In all likelihood, even without Isaac Bonewits, a Celtic form of Neo-Paganism would have adopted the name of Druidism and influenced public perception of the word Druid.

The big debate of this time period was the provisional Council of ArchDruids which was, as described above, an attempt to improve communication between the Groves. One of the points that the Sheltons were especially worried about was idea of the Chair of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu being chosen from members of the Council of Arch-Druids. Shelton, amongst others, feared that without the influence of the Carleton environment upon the current Chair of the Council, that the Council might actually abandon the traditional ways of Druidism and start willy-nilly passing legislation or definitions that would force older-Druids to drop out as minority losers.

The Epistle of Midsummer

This was written by David Frangquist and Deborah Gavrin Frangquist to be read, in their absence, at the Midsummer service at Carleton's Monument Hill on June 21st, 1976. Don Morrison was the current Arch-Druid and many of the older Druid alumni were returning for their class Re-unions. It was also the hope that Isaac Bonewits would come down from Minneapolis to heal some bitter wounds. Unfortunately, Isaac had to leave Minneapolis a few weeks earlier and return to Berkeley, postponing the final reconciliation between him and the Carleton faction for 17 years when he returned to Carleton in April of 1994. The atmosphere at the time of the reading of this Epistle was a bit frantic. The last two years had seen some fierce debating, unsettling accusations, the schisming of the Reform, the soon-to-be-published DC(E) which threatened dogmatization of the Reform and the realization that the Carleton ArchDruidcy was a shaky institution at best with an uncertain future viability. The movement felt exhaustion, distrust and nervous confusion. Wounds needed healing.

Realizing this, David & Dee brought up the essential foundations of Druidism to re-enforce the strength of the listener's Druidism. They reaffirmed the listener's memories of how Carleton and Reformed Druidism overlapped so heavily as to be indistinguishable and pleasant. Druidism served its purpose by helping the present Druids, which was sufficient now, even if the organization disappeared tomorrow. The present was all-important, by looking ahead you defeated the purpose of Druidism. Druidism existed to ourselves outside of labels, definition, or the opinions of others. The Basic Tenets were dredged up again as the only basic definition for Reformed Druids, irregardless of whatever else they later professed. Finally the Council was recognized as a tool for communicating within the Reform, but not as the only sign of the existence of Reformed Druidism, which would live in the hearts of every Druids. If the Council changed its purpose, such as to become a tool to divide the Druids, then they should ignore it and continue on with what they believed was the Reform.

Soothing as this letter was, the debates on the Council of Dalon ap Landu and the provisional Council continued on for another two years until most Carleton Druids promptly decided to drop the issue completely. Druidism among enrolled Carleton students kind of disappeared after a few years too. The West Coast NRDNA, pretty

much was left to its own devices not so long after this point. Contact between the RDNA of Carleton and the NRDNA was resumed in 1992, but has been consistently spotty since then.

The Second Epistle of Robert

This letter was written by Robert Larson on July 2nd, 1976. As mentioned in the First Epistle of Robert, Robert has emerged from silence and had entered into the debates of the Reform, providing us with an opinion of a Berkeleyite besides Isaac. It was also written after Robert had assumed the Chieftainship of the Council of Arch-Druids. As far as I know, no one officially succeeded him in that role after the first year. Due to the instability of the times, the Council of Arch-Druids collapsed along with many groves. Most of the communicative and record-keeping functions proposed for the Council of Arch-Druids were undertaken by Isaac & Joan Carruth with the publication of the Druid Chronicle newsletter for the next three years, then by the Pentalpha magazine, and finally by the Druid Missalany newsletter.

Robert acknowledged the Sheltons' objections to overformalization, but pointed out several practical points to the Council of Arch-Druids. Most of these points have been repeated before. An interesting prediction was that most of the future Third Orders would not be from Carleton. Had the NRDNA not stumbled at the end of the 1970s, this might have held true. By my estimates, there has been a 50/50 mixture of post 1976 priests coming from the NRDNA and Carleton.

Most delightful, he gives us a story that can be examined on many, many levels. I love stories.

The Second Epistle of Isaac

This was written by Isaac Bonewits in the summer of 1976, probably in late July 1976, two years after the First Epistle of Isaac. It is generically addressed to the Council, but it is uncertain if he actually mailed it or if he merely published it to be read in the DC(E). The first half of 1976 had been filled with a resurgence of letters between Druids, after an interestingly quiet 1975. It appears that the Second Epistle, was Isaac's way of explaining himself in full-blown-detail, to clarify his terms, to prove his competence, to drive home his point that Reformed Druidism could indeed be easily converted into a Neo-Pagan religion, and to better express his world view. Like Chapter Eight explains, he has acknowledged that the Epistles would not change many peoples' view of Reformed Druidism, but at least they would understand what he was going through.

Most of the themes of the Epistle are apparent to the reader and need little review here. What is perhaps interesting is the fact that the First and Second Epistle are very good examples of how the Neo-Paganistic worldview could be interpreted by a Reformed Druid. Like Gerre's letter, each Druid often reinterprets their own religion after their experience with Druidism. One should not assume that all the Neo-Pagans of the NRDNA from 1976 until the present are in agreement with Isaac in his world view, just as no one would assume that David Fisher's view of Christianity is identical to Norman's or even my own. Isaac's Epistles are perhaps best read alongside of Larson and Carruth's to give the reader an idea of the opinal diversity amongst the Neo-Pagans in the NRDNA.

The early seventies were the nascent years of the Neo-Pagan movement, which had emerged from Wicca and the occult scene. As with any new-born religious movement, there were some people who were interested in defining and shaping their own movement, and Isaac was amongst the forefront. Isaac, since around 1972 when Neo-Paganism first identified itself, had been deeply involved in this movement and is still considered a knowledgeable expert on the Neo-Pagan movement today. With this in mind, one may reinterpret the Epistles as his way of laying down a path for future Reformed Druids to investigate the possibilities of the Neo-Pagan movements. In fact, the entire Druid Chronicles (Evolved) serves this purpose

well. Indeed, the original Druid Chronicles (Reformed) and the Green Book appear to be laying down a path oriented towards the East and towards personal philosophy. Isaac would, however, continue to encourage the Neo-Pagans of the NRDNA to redefine Reformed Druidism as a Neo-Pagan movement, adopt the strength of a clear religious structure and (perhaps more importantly) follow Isaac. Most of the Neo-Pagans chose not to go with Isaac, for reasons I detailed in my History. Suffice it to say, many objected in the same way the Carleton Druids did.

The Epistles also foreshadowed the kinds of questions that Isaac was dealing when he sabattacked in 1979 (to return briefly in 1981). He had begun to formulate the structure and rules of what would become "Ar nDraiocht Fein" (ADF), a definitively Neo-Pagan religion, in 1981 to 1983. Although Isaac did go on to formulate an unquestionably definable religion in ADF, it should be noted that each Reformed Druid essentially did so also in that they either returned to their religion in a new interpretation or formed a new solitary religion or philosophy. Isaac's religion, merely had more followers than the mostly solitary religions/philosophies of the other Reformed Druids. Something to think about.

The Book of Changes, Part Three

As Isaac describes in Chapters four and five, everything was in a big confusing mess during the summer of 1976 when everybody was working on the DC(E), published in August. Procedural steps had been skipped, diplomacy dropped in favor of speed, and issues voted upon before opinions had solidified. The next couple years saw a grudging acceptance of DC(E) as a reference tool for secluded groves, as a fountain of trivia, a nostalgic look upon the early traditions, and a recruiting tool for the NRDNA. Interestingly enough, it was the publication of DC(E) that permitted the reconstruction of Carleton Druidism in 1985, after yet another cyclical collapse.

The Provisional Council, as mentioned earlier, didn't operate effectively after 1976 due to Grove-closings through the country. The idea of a majority vote in 4:13, was never widely accepted, even inside of the second NRDNA. The long term result of the Provisional Council of Arch-Druids was that everybody had come to the conclusion that their Groves were independent, as were all the individuals in a Grove. Indeed what authority does an organization have, except what you give to it? Somehow the anarchic underpinnings of the Reform would continue to pester Isaac within the NRDNA, until he finally quit in 1981 and went to make a fresh start with ADF. Interestingly enough, the same problem cropped up again in ADF, but in a more manageable form.

A Cup Filled to the Brim with Druidism

This letter was written by Gerre MacInnes Goodman on October 21st, 1976 to Isaac, but circulated widely amongst her friends and enemies. Gerre Goodman was a participant of that Druidic renaissance that occurred under Savitzky-Shelton-McDavid during the height of the Vietnam War. Her letter comes after the Druid Chronicles (Evolved) had been published and all the sides were getting tired.

Her letter was a letter of healing. It is also a deeply personal letter and self examination, not uncommon amongst Reformed Druids, but very topical to the debates of her time. Her message is simple, love and tolerance; although that message has been harder to practice than to preach. One can see in this letter, one more attempt to break Isaac of his now legendary habit of categorizing and labeling everything around him. With labeling comes exclusion, with exclusion potential experiences are denied, with experiences denied spiritual growth may be stymied. The letter also shows another attempt by yet another Reformed Druid to analyze their own religious heritage with fresh eyes, but being cautious not to redefine Druidism as their newly re-discovered religion that they now have joined. Druidism is a tool, not the final products. Like Isaac, she feels that Druidism is related to her own Christian religion, much as Druidism is

related to his Neo-Paganism. While she may go further into “oneness” than most other Druids, it still an admirable example. The last vital note for the researcher is her opinion of the impossibility of defrocking or excommunication with the Reform, an activity vital for a serious organization to maintain its sense of separateness.

Salutations

A pleasant, brief poem from Dale, a Carleton Druid. I cannot remember who she wrote this to, probably Morrison, Shelton or Frangquist.

The Speaking of Beliefs

Written by Heiko Koestler, who with Alice Cascorbi, helped to restart Carleton Druidism in the mid 80s. This speech, originally in crude outline, is from the Fall Equinox ritual of 1987. Heiko was one of the first Carleton Druids to self-identify himself as a Pagan. The Druids at Carleton since 1985 have shown a greater interest in liturgy and magic, but still moderate by most standards. Although Heiko is a bit more ceremonial than most, you can see that little has really changed in the message at Carleton over the missing years. I therefore suspect this continuity has less to do with oral transmission by fellow Druids than with the natural beauty of the arboreatum, the friendliness of the rural landscape, and the respectfully fierce academic discipline of Carleton College.

The Third Epistle of Robert

Well, this was quite a long one! Robert wrote this epistle on the Spring Equinox of 1996 to discuss his reaction to my General History in Part Eight or ARDA. In particular he was intent on providing a much simpler alternative vision of Paganism, as opposed to Isaac’s more grandiose schemes that eventually became Ar nDraocht Fein. Neo-paganism can search for the simple, seemingly chaotic roots or it can choose to build as complex a structure as many of them are trying to escape from.

I wonder if he was inspired by my comment that the early Founders were impressed by the anarchic resistance of the Celts and Druids to centralized government and religion. As he well puts it, the Monotheism isn’t necessarily the problem with religious persecution, but rather it is the organized aspect of some religions when married with the power of the state. While such a match may increase a religion’s resources for helping people, it can also magnify the ability of the occasional petty religious individuals to crush and repress the views of minority dissentors. While his message may seem a bit harsh and rough compared to his normally quiet contemplation, it should be remembered that freedom of religion has not always been achieved without struggle. Compared to some of the persecutions mentioned by Robert, the state of the early RDNA at Carleton seems rather tame and bearable.

It is also refreshing to see the old topic of ritual being brought up again in such an unusual way. I feel that Larson’s view is pretty much in between my disdain for ritual and Isaac’s fascination with the issue. For Larson it is a matter of practicality. The lines in 15:23-34 were lifted from another letter I received from Larson on that Equinox, and which I felt should have been included with the Epistle proper. A final topic that I enjoyed reading about was the interconnectedness of religions, how they adopt and borrow from each other, even if they won’t admit it.

The Book of Lacunae

Some wild ramblings written by Michael Scharding between December 30th 1995 and May 1st 1996, ironically about the same time (unbeknownst to Mike) that Isaac was preparing to announce the end of his Arch-Druidcy of ADF. How cosmic can you get? This was Michael’s weak attempt to stick his foot into the Apocryphaic tradition, to add a happy note to the end of the Apocrypha, and to bridge

the twenty long lacunal years of Apocryphal-style letter writing from 1976-1996.

The term Lacunae (Latin *Lacuna*, meaning a gap or a space) as you may guess refers to the holes in my logic, or to the emptiness of Form, the need for leaving “personal” time, the virtues of simplicity, hearing the pauses in a stream of music, and in the blank chapters of this epistle. You may imagine whatever you wish to exist in those blank spots. If you like these blank spots, look around through ARDA, I’m sure you can find more empty spaces to stare at.

Some Final Thoughts

This was Norman’s conclusion of the Carleton Apocrypha.

¹ i.e. The Druid Chronicles, for which this book was once intended. Many Druids would not use the word “canon” in this context.

² See the Btl entry for this verse.

³ A summer camp in Wisconsin where David worked as a counselor.

⁴ See Cus. 8 and Med. 4.

⁵ Cus. 11.

⁶ Tao The Ching. Chapter 17.

⁷ President of Carleton College when Druidism was founded.

⁸ Professor of Religion at Carleton, and later Dean of the College. For a time he served as the faculty advisor for the Carleton Grove.

⁹ From his introduction to *The Sufies* by Idres Shah.

¹⁰ Gerre Goodman, in a letter to Isaac dated 9/3/74.

