

# An Annotated Chronology and Bibliography of the Early Gardnerian Craft

(a work in progress)  
 by **Roger Dearnaley**  
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There has been a great deal of debate about the early history of the Gardnerian Craft (and thus of Wicca as a whole). Unfortunately, this debate has produced a great deal more heat (and smoke) than light. For example, one of the major "contributors", Aiden Kelly, has since been shown to have seriously distorted and misquoted the extracts he gives [\[Kelly '91\]](#) from Gardner's earliest known "Book of Shadows" ("Ye Bok of Ye Art Magical") in order allow him to "prove" his position, which renders the rest of his "scholarship" highly questionable, at best. [\[Frew '97\]](#) Another, E.W. Liddell (a.k.a. Lugh), has published a set of claims that range from the intriguing to the highly implausible. (Indeed, in his introduction to the book "The Pickingill Papers" [\[Liddell '94\]](#) where his claims are collected, he says he doesn't believe all of them himself — he explains that he was merely collating and forwarding material from other witches who wished to remain anonymous!). In fact, most writers on the subject seem to have an axe to grind of one sort or another.

So, let me first admit to my own biases. I would like to believe that the basic structure of, and perhaps even some of the litany of, the Gardnerian Craft predates Gerald Gardner (other than in the form of published sources from which he borrowed), but I am not willing to do so without some proof. We know that Gardner (and Doreen Valiente) admitted to extensively modified the wording of whatever material he was given, [\[Valiente '89\]](#) and I suspect that at least part of any material he was given may not predate him by more than a couple of decades. We know the sources of most of the actual words used in the standard version of the Gardnerian rituals: it is a patchwork of Aradia, Crowley — principally the Gnostic Mass and "Liber Legis" (actually more likely "The Law of Liberty" [\[Medway '99\]](#)), The Key of Solomon, Masonic ritual, Carmina Gadelica, Kipling and various other sources. [\[Valiente '89\]](#) This does not prove that this ritual wasn't based on an earlier ritual, but suggests that if so, either the earlier ritual did not have a set wording (perhaps it was of an improvised or inspired nature, such as some modern Wiccans use), or else that Gardner (or whoever made the changes) was, for some reason — perhaps his interpretation of an oath, perhaps a matter of taste or style — unwilling to continue to use the old wording. Gardner himself claimed that the original rituals he was given were "very fragmentary", [\[?Valiente '89?\]](#) and certainly the Sabbat rites were much developed during Dorren Valiente's period. One thing we can be certain of is that Gardner's version of witchcraft, and ones derived from it, seem to be the only ones that have enjoyed explosive growth, and that all the various published witchcraft traditions that claim to predate Gardner show evidence of extensive borrowing (at a minimum) from Gardnerian Wicca.

## The Chronology

**1877:** Thomas St. Q. Clutterbuck, age 38, marries Ellen Anne Morgan in Lahore, India. [\[Valiente '84\]](#)

**Jan. 19th, 1880:** Dorothy Clutterbuck is born, child of Thomas St. Q. Clutterbuck, Captain in the 14th Sikhs, and Ellen Anne Clutterbuck. [\[Valiente '84\]](#)

**21st Feb., 1880:** Dorothy Clutterbuck is baptized in St. Paul's Church, Umbala, India. [\[Valiente '84\]](#)

**1889:** Thomas St. Q. Clutterbuck retires from the British Army in India. He and his family presumably soon move back to England, where they seem to have settled in Oxfordshire, probably at Whitchurch on Thames. [\[Heselton '99a\]](#)

**Friday 13th June, 1884:** Gerald Brosseau Gardner is born in the parish [\[Heselton '99b\]](#) of Great Crosby, [\[Valiente '89\]\[Heselton '99b\]](#) in Blundell Sands [\[Valiente '89\]\[Buckland '71\]](#) (or Blundellsands [\[Shah '60\]\[Heselton '99b\]](#)) in Lancashire [\[Howard '97\]](#) in the north of [\[Buckland '71\]](#) [\[Shah '60\]\[Buckland '71\]](#)

England, the third of four (or by one account one of five sons ) of William <sup>[Buckland '71][Heselton '99b]</sup> Robert <sup>[Heselton '99b]</sup> Gardner, a timber merchant and Justice of the Peace. The family was originally from Scotland, but has run a timber business in Liverpool since 1748, and has a long-standing connection to the sea, including the Royal Navy, and the Customs Service. While upper-middle class and outwardly respectable, the family seems to have had some rather unconventional aspects, including in its history several cases of bigamy, possibly smuggling, and a couple of accusations of witchcraft, as well as an Admiral and an adventurer of the British Raj. <sup>[Shah '60]</sup>

**Winter 1888:** Gardner, aged four, travels abroad to Nice in the care (or lack thereof) of his Irish nurse "Com" (Josephine McCombie). This is to be the first of many such journeys to Nice, the Canary Islands, Accra on the Gold Coast, and (mostly) Madeira in Portugal, taking up much of Gardner's youth: he seems to have returned to England only in the summers, which were spent mostly at Blundellsands, with some visits to London and the Isle of Wight. As a result, he never went to school, and (since Com apparently neglected his education) had to teach himself to read and write, at about age seven (1893). About this time he also took up collecting edged weapons, a life-long interest of his, and soon after read "There is No Death", by Florence Marryat, a Spiritualist book, which convinced him both of the survival of the soul after death and of the non-existence of Hell. <sup>[Shah '60]</sup>

**1887:** "Kabbala Denudata. The Kabbalah unveiled" several books of the Zohar, translated (and edited) by S.L. "MacGregor" Mathers from the Latin translation of Knorr von Rosenroth is published.

**1889:** "[The Key of Solomon the King](#)", translated (and edited) by S.L. "MacGregor" Mathers is published in a limited edition of 500 copies.

**1899:** "Aradia: Gospel of the Witches" by Charles Godfrey Leland is published.

**1900:** Com moves to Ceylon to live with her husband, David Elkington, who she had married two years previously. Gardner goes with her, and starts work as a trainee planter on David's tea plantation. About this time, Aleister Crowley and Arnold Bennet were staying in a nearby bungalow. <sup>[Shah '60]</sup>

**1900:** The Order of the Golden Dawn begins to break up, with the revolt of the London temple against Mathers' leadership. Over the next couple of decades, various splinter and daughter organisations sprout, flourish for a while, and then fade.

**1902:** Gardner takes a job at the Nonpareil Estate tea plantation. <sup>[Shah '60]</sup>

**Between 1902 and 1905:** Gerald's parents visit him in Ceylon, accompanied by an American relative called Jenny Tompkins. Gerald's father buys some land to plant rubber trees on, and Gerald is appointed manager of the estate, though he also continued to work as a tea planter. <sup>[Shah '60]</sup>

**1904:** The Goetia (part of the [Lemegeton](#) or Lesser Key of Solomon) edited by S.L. "MacGregor" Mathers and Aleister Crowley is published by Aleister Crowley, under the title "The Book of the Goetia of Solomon the King. Translated into the English tongue by a dead hand ... The whole ... edited, verified, introduced and commented [or rather, written] by A. Crowley" (Crowley and Mathers had fallen out: the original translator, if the work was not in fact originally composed in English, was certainly long-dead, but the editing was at least as much Mathers as Crowley).

**1905:** Gardner returns to England on leave. While there, he joins the Legion of Frontiersmen, a kind of private militia; makes the acquaintance of the Surgensons, some somewhat bohemian relatives who had a mild interest in the supernatural (one occasionally saw faeries, another read palms); and discovers that his grandfather, Joseph Gardner, had had a second wife who was supposedly a witch, and had taken his grandfather to secret meetings in the hills. <sup>[Shah '60]</sup>

**Between 1905 and 1908:** Gardner takes up Freemasonry, joining the Sphinx Lodge, 113, I.C. in Colombo, Ceylon. <sup>[Shah '60]</sup> He reached at least third degree (Master Mason), possibly as far as the Royal Arch. A number of elements in Wicca resemble Freemasonry, including the phrases "So mote it be", "Merry meet, merry part, and merry meet again", "The Craft", the word "charge" for a expository speech, and some motifs and techniques used in the initiation rites, particularly the first degree rites. <sup>[Jones '99]</sup>

**1906:** "[Puck of Pook's Hill](#)" by Rudyard Kipling is published.

**1908:** Gerald's father, unable to keep up the payments on his rubber plantation, sells it. Gerald moves to Borneo (travelling via Singapore), where he takes a job on a rubber plantation. While there (1908-1911), Gardner makes friends with the local headhunters, the Dyaks, and attended an number of "seances" held by a pawang (witch-doctor) using a girl as a trance medium. [\[Shah '60\]](#)

**1908:** Thomas St. Quintin Clutterbuck, then in his late 60's, moves to the Christchurch area near the New Forest in the south of England. Dorothy Clutterbuck, aged 28, presumably accompanies him. [\[Enfys '98\]](#) By another account, she stayed in Oxfordshire and only moved to Christchurch after her father's death in 1910. [\[Heselton '99\]](#)

**1909:** "[The Key of Solomon the King](#)", translated (and edited) by S.L. "MacGregor" Mathers is republished (retypeset but with the same illustrations).

**1909 to 1913:** Volume 1 of Aleister Crowley's magazine "The Equinox" is published, including "The Temple of Solomon the King".

**1911:** According to Gregory Tillett writing in "The Australian Wiccan", the "Order of Twelve" is founded. Later, during World War I (1914-1918) it is disbanded. [\[Howard '97\]](#)

**1911:** Gardner, having caught and partially recovered from malaria, decides to move back to Ceylon. He visits Brunei, and then Malaya, where he gets a job on a rubber plantation. He catches blackwater fever, which is often fatal, but he recovers. [\[Shah '60\]](#)

**1911, 1913:** Parts one and two of "Book 4" by Soror Virakam (Mary d'Este Sturges) and Frater Perdurabo (Aleister Crowley) are published.

**1912:** Gardner, through an American called Cornwall who had "gone native", starts studying the magic of the Malays, Saki (Malaysian pygmies), and Borneans. He also moves to a different rubber plantation. [\[Shah '60\]](#)

**1916:** Gardner returns to England on leave. Unable to pass the physical to enter the military, he works as a hospital orderly in Liverpool until, with the onset of cold weather in the autumn, his malaria returns and he is forced to return to Malaya. [\[Shah '60\]](#)

**1919:** Volume 3 Issue 1 of Aleister Crowley's magazine "The Equinox" is published in Detroit, including "The Gnostic Mass" and "The Law of Liberty".

**1920:** Due to falling rubber prices, Gardner loses his job on the rubber plantation. By this time he also owned a plantation of his own, and for the next three years he eeks out a living there, spending much of his time studying native lore, magic, and weaponry with Cornwall. [\[Shah '60\]](#)

**1920:** The "Order of Twelve" is revived, and at some point changes its name to the "Crotona Fellowship of the Rosy Cross" or the "Crotona Rosicrucian Fellowship" or the "Rosicrucian Fellowship of Crotona". [\[Howard '97\]](#) The full title may have been the "Crotona Fellowship of the Rosicrucian Order". [\[Heselton '99b\]](#) (Crotona was the name of the Greek settlement in southern Italy where Pythagoras founded his school of the Mysteries and mathematics). It was run by George Alexander Sullivan (a.k.a. Frater Aureolis, a.k.a. Alex Matthews, a.k.a. Muser [\[Caddy '96\]](#)) who was by Shah's account a flamboyant and rather pretentious character. [\[Shah '60\]](#)[\[Howard '97\]](#) Judging by the publication data of Sullivan's poetry, pamphlets and plays, it seems to have been based in Liverpool until around 1934-1936, and then moved to Christchurch, near Bournemouth on the south coast. Philip Heselton believes that this in fact ocured in 1935. [\[Heselton '99b\]](#) Gardner's memories of the Crotona Felowship (from his involvment in the later 1930's) seem a little unreliable, as Shah gives the names as the "Corona" Fellowship and Frater "Aurelius" (unless these are Latin puns: Aurelius means golden and the corona is the gas around the edge of the sun, which would fit, albeit sarcastically, with the images Gardner gives of them). [\[Shah '60\]](#) For a different light on the Crotona Fellowship and Alexander Sullivan, see the (auto)biography of Peter Caddy, one of the founders of Findhorn. [\[Caddy '96\]](#)

**1921:** "The Witch Cult in Western Europe" by Margaret Murray is published. She had been discussing her ideas in lectures for several years previously, since about 1917. In her autobiography "?????" she credits the idea that medieval witchcraft was a surviving primitive fertility religion to a conversation with someone she met while visiting Glastonbury in about 1915. It would be very interesting to know who this was (at this time Glastonbury was a spiritual centre that attracted visitor and imigrants from all over Britain).[??] Similar ideas had been proposed by ??.

**1923:** Gardner finds work as an inspector of rubber plantations (enforcing rubber production quotas aimed at reducing the supply of rubber to keep the price up).[\[Shah '60\]](#)

About 1923: (Gardner is convinced of the theraputic effects of sunlight.)??

**1926:** Gardner is appointed inspector of the government-licensed opium shops around Singapore. Around this time he takes up amateur archeology, and over the next decade makes many groundbreaking dicoveries, proving the existence of a Malaysian civilization predating the coming of the Portugese in 1687 and dating back to about Roman times, and also discovering the remains of the city of Johore Lama.[\[Shah '60\]](#)

**1927:** Gardner returns to England on leave. While there, he (after taking elaborate precautions to prevent the possibility of fraud) visits three Spiritualist mediums chosen at random in London, and receives messages that (once he discovers who they are from), convince him of the reality of life after death and the possibility of white europeans making contact with the spirits of the deceased. He also meets Donna Rosedale, a nurse; they fall in love at first sight, and are married within the week, just before Gardner would have had to leave England (marrying entitles him to another two months' unpaid leave, which they spend on honeymoon in France on the way back to Malaya).[\[Shah '60\]](#) During his time in England, Gardner applies for and on 28th July receives a 3-month reader's ticket to use the British library to research Welsh and Basque folklore, giving his address as 139 Cromwell Road, S. Kensington. Surprisingly, despite the fact that after the Second World War he lived a couple of hundred yards from the British Library, and is believed to have frequented the British Museum (in which the Library was then housed), they have ben unable to find any record of him ever applying for another Reader's Ticket.[\[Hopson '99\]](#)

**1929:** "Magick in Theory and Practice" (part 3 of Book 4) by Aleister Crowley is self-published by him in Paris in a limited private printing available by subscription only.

**1931:** "The God of the Witches" by Margaret Murray is published.

**1932:** Gardner, on leave, visits an archeological dig at Gaza in Egypt, prehistoric caves in France, and England. While in England he tries several more Spiritualist mediums and concludes that most of them are fakes, and tries but fails to locate any nudist clubs.[\[Shah '60\]](#)

**1933 or 1935:** Mabel Besant-Scott, the leading[\[Valiente '89\]](#) British Co-Mason and daughter of the leading Theosophist and Co-Mason Annie Besant, joins the Crotona Fellowship, and soon becomes its co-leader.[\[Howard '97\]](#) Apparently a number of other middle-class intellectual occultist co-masons followed her from London and/or Southampton to the New Forest area to join the Crotona Fellowship.[\[Shah '60\]\[Valiente '73\]\[Heselton '00\]](#) Philip Heselton is of the opinion that this in fact happened around 1935?1937 (which would fit better with Sullivan's publication history), and that while she was a respected member she was not its co-leader.[\[Heselton '99b\]](#)

**1933:** The "Street Directory for the Extended Borough of Christchurch" shows Dorothy Clutterbuck and Rupert Fordham living at Mill House, Lyminster Road, Highcliffe (England).[\[Valiente '84\]](#)

**1934:** Gardner makes a trip to Saigon in what was then French Indochina, and to Hangchow in China.

**1935:** Dorothy St. Q. Clutterbuck (aged 55) marries Rupert O. Fordham in Kensington, London.[\[Enfys '98\]](#)

**1936:** "Kelley's Directory of Bournemouth, Poole, and Christchurch" shows Rupert Fordham living at the Mill House, with no mention of Dorothy Clutterbuck.[\[Valiente '84\]](#)

**1936:** "Kris and Other Malay Weapons", Gardner's schollarly work on the Malay dagger and the folklore and magical

beliefs surrounding it, is published in Singapore.

**January 1936:** Gerald Gardner, aged 52, retires from the British Customs Service in Malaya and returns, at the urging of his wife Donna (nee Rosedale), to England, via Cyprus, Palestine (where he took part in an archeological dig at Lachish that discovered a joint temple to Yahweh and Asteroth), Turkey, Greece (at the Greek Orthodox Easter), Hungary, and Germany, and so to England, where they take a flat in Charing Cross Road, London (a center of the antiquarian bookshop trade). Shortly after returning, Gardner catches a cold, which he is slow to recover from. His doctor suggests he take up naturism (as nudism was then known), and he joins a naturism club in Finchley, north-west of London, near Barnet. [\[Shah '60\]](#)[\[Howard '97\]](#)

**1936:** "The Goat-Foot God" by Violet Firth (a.k.a. Dion Fortune) is published.

**Winter 1936:** Gardner, who had intended to spend the winter at the same dig in Palestine, is forced to change his plans and goes to Cyprus instead. He recalls a previous incarnation there, and (it is not entirely clear in which year, since he visited Cyprus several times) starts writing a novel on the subject later published as "A Goddess Arrives". [\[Shah '60\]](#)

**Winter 1937:** Gardner returns to Cyprus. [\[Shah '60\]](#)

**1937/38:** The Hampshire Electoral Lists show Miss Clutterbuck changing her name to Mrs. Fordham. [\[Valiente '84\]](#)

**1938:** "The Sea Priestess" by Violet Firth (a.k.a. Dion Fortune) is published.

**June, 1938:** "The First Rosicrucian Theater in England" opens in Somerford (between Christchurch and Highcliffe), under the auspices of Mrs. Mabel Besant-Scott (daughter of Annie Besant). [\[Valiente '84\]](#) It is a project of the Crotona Fellowship, and was the brainchild of G. Alexander Sullivan (a.k.a. Frater Aureolis [\[Caddy '96\]](#)[\[Howard '97\]](#) who either was, or had aspirations of being, a Shakespearean actor under the stage name Alex Mathews. [\[Valiente '84\]](#) It staged plays on subjects such as druidism and Pythagoras, and lectures on hypnotism, practical occultism, and esoteric Christianity. [\[Howard '97\]](#) These plays seem to have been rather dreadful, at least in the opinion of Gardner's wife. [\[Shah '60\]](#) There is a photo of one of these plays reproduced in "The Witch's Way" by the Farrahs; Doreen Valiente thinks that one of the figures in it 'just might be' Gerald Gardner, [\[Valiente '84\]](#) but alas it is almost certainly the wrong play, since the costumes in the photo are classical Greek while the one play that Gardner was in was about mediaeval monks turning to diabolism. [\[Shah '60\]](#)

**1938:** Gerald Gardner and his wife move from their flat in London to Highcliffe, near Christchurch, on the south coast of England, just to the south-west of the New Forest. [\[Howard '97\]](#) Highcliffe and Christchurch used to be in the New Forest district of Hampshire, but are now in Dorset, since the border was moved. [\[Caddy '96\]](#)

**End of 1938:** Gardner comes upon the Rosicrucian Theatre, attends one of its plays (about Pythagoras), frequents the place for a while, and ends up joining the Crotona Fellowship, despite (judging by Shah's account) apparently being profoundly unimpressed by Frater Aureolis. (Indeed, in Shah's book he gives Aureolis's name throughout as "Aurelius", i.e. "golden", and calls the Crotona Fellowship the "Corona" (i.e. the halo of gas around the sun) Fellowship; I suspect these are deliberate and rather sarcastic Latin puns, not lapses of memory, on Gardner's part.) During 1939 he falls in with a particular clique there, whom he describes (through Shah) as follows: "They seemed rather brow-beaten by the others, kept themselves to themselves. They were the most interesting element, however. Unlike many of the others, they had to earn their livings, were cheerful and optimistic and had a real interest in the occult. They had carefully read many books on the subject: Unlike the general mass, who were supposed to have read all but seemed to know nothing." [\[Shah '60\]](#)

**Winter 1938 or 1939:** Gardner returns to Cyprus again. Shah states that this was in 1939, but in view of the fact that the Second World War had started by then, 1938 seems more plausible. [\[Shah '60\]](#)

**Late 1930's:** Gerald Gardner is claimed by Greer and Cooper to have joined the Order of Woodland Chivalry, an organisation started in 1916 by Ernest Westlake, centered at Godshill in the New Forest (about 15 miles from Highcliffe), and devoted to woodcraft for children and adults (rather like a less militaristic version of the Boy Scouts). The Order of Woodland Chivalry had some rather Greek pagan leanings (their patrons were Pan, Artemis, and Dionysus), and was inspired by the Woodcraft movement started in the USA by Ernest Thompson Seton, which in turn

had some strong influences from various Native American tribes. [\[Greer&Cooper'98\]\[Hardman&Harvey'95\]](#) The rituals of parts of the Order of Woodland Chivalry apparently contained such Wicca-like elements as ritual outdoor nudity, the casting of a magical circle with a fire at the center, and the invoking of spirits from the four directions, starting in the east and ending in the north. [\[Hutton '98\]](#) Unfortunately the only hard evidence of a connection between Gardner and the Order of Woodland Chivalry of which I am aware is that he was seen by Brian Labworth at a public O.W.C. meeting in the late 1950's: Brian Labworth apparently does not know whether he was then a member or just one of the many guests present. O.W.C. rituals are much more similar to modern Wiccan rituals, apparently due to borrowing from the same sources, than they are to what Gardner was doing in the 1940's and early '50's. [\[Frew '99\]](#)

**Sept., 1939** ("a few days after the War started", i.e. a few days after 3rd Sept. 1939 (declaration of war), or possibly 1st Sept. (invasion of Poland) or 31st Aug. (beginning of British mobilization and civilian evacuations from London): Gerald Gardner is initiated into a witch coven at the Mill House, Highcliffe, which is owned by Dorothy Clutterbuck, and a quote from Gardner strongly implies that she was present — presumably she is his initiator. [\[Shah '60\]](#) Dorothy Clutterbuck was also a pillar of both the local Conservative party and (by some accounts) the Anglican church. [\[Enfys '98\]](#) (Oddly enough, the date implies that the ceremony took place mid-week on a waning circa quarter moon, not near a quarter or cross-quarter day; yet later initiations into Gardner's own coven seem to have mostly taken place on quarter or cross-quarter days. It is, however, only about 2-3 weeks after Old Lammas, if one uses the pre-Julian calendar, as many country folk continued to do. Or perhaps the timing of the ritual was simply dictated by the possibility that one of the participants might soon be called up for Service.) Gardner's and Shah's accounts of the coven are that it consisted partly of the clique Gardner had fallen in with, of middle class educated co-masonic occultists who had associations with the Crotona Fellowship and were among the people who had followed Mabel Besant-Scott to the Christchurch area in the mid-'30's, and partly of local people, some of them New Forest country folk. It is implied that Dorothy Clutterbuck was in the former group. [\[Shah '60\]](#)

My priestess and I have visited the Mill House — it is a very large and lovely house, originally an old brick mill which has later (probably in 1908) been renovated and extended in a slightly Elizabethan "country" style, set on secluded wooded grounds in a small steep-sided and heavily wooded little valley with a stream or small river that leads down to the sea. The grounds have a very magical feel, almost fey, and there is a smallish paved area in the garden with some Art Nouveau-style statuary of a lady flanked by two supporting male figures which would be an excellent ritual site. The house itself is haunted (both in our experience — my priestess perceived a young man in early twentieth century clothing — and, as we later learned, also by repute), and is currently the home of a charming English couple who are aware of the interesting reputation of one of its previous owners.

**Christmas 1939:** Gardner plays a joke on the Crotona Fellowship. He gives a silver bracelet to a girl to wear, engraved with curious symbols. A psychometricist member of the Fellowship examines it, and pronounces it to be very old, and to have belonged to an ancient Egyptian priest. Frater Aureolis then examines it, and pronounces that "It is Ancient Celtic - older than anything you know". Gardner then reveals that he had the bracelet made, and that the inscription is in a cipher (possibly Theban?) of the noted medieval German magical writer Cornelius Agrippa, who Aureolis had claimed to have been (not in a former incarnation but literally: according to Gardner/Shah he claimed to be immortal and to have taken on a long string of identities over the ages, including Pythagoras, Francis Bacon, and Agrippa). Shah says that this was the last time Gardner attended the Crotona Fellowship meetings. [\[Shah '60\]](#) However, we know that Gardner appeared in a play put on by the Crotona Fellowship in Bournemouth in 1940, so the break cannot have been sudden and total. <sup>[??]</sup> Peter Caddy does not mention this claim of immortality, but does say that Aureolis had had many famous former incarnations. [\[Caddy '96\]](#) This prank would seem to support Gardner's claim that, with the exception of the small clique he had fallen in with, the level of occult knowledge in the Crotona Fellowship was low. It is also notable that there is just about enough time between September 1939 and Christmas 1939 for Gardner to be loaned a copy of Agrippa's seminal "Three Books of Occult Philosophy" (possibly in the pirated edition published by Barrat in ???), read halfway through to the part on occult alphabets (Agrippa is heavy going), think of his prank, and get the bracelet made up.

**1940:** "Kelley's Directory of Bournemouth, Poole, and Christchurch" shows Mrs. Fordham living at the Mill House. [\[Valiente '84\]](#)

**1940's:** According to Shah, The Crotona Fellowship founders after the death of Alexander Sullivan (who had claimed to be immortal!) [\[Shah '60\]\[Howard '97\]](#) on 3rd June, 1942. [\[Caddy '96\]](#) However, according to Peter Caddy, the Rosicrucian Order still [\[Caddy '96\]](#)

existed in Christchurch in 1946 and 1947, under the leadership of William Bullock. Some of its books and papers were eventually donated to Southampton University.

**1940's:** Gerald Gardner is said to have joined a pre-existing traditional witchcraft coven in Cheshire. [\[Howard '97\]](#)

**1940's:** Gerald Gardner is said by several sources to have joined a pre-existing traditional witchcraft coven near St. Albans in Hertfordshire. [\[Howard '97\]](#)[\[Liddell '94\]](#) [Valiente ??] This may well be a garbled version of the fact that Gardner's own coven was based in the late 1940's and the 1950's in Bricket Wood, near St. Albans.

**1945:** According to Fred Lamond, Gerald Gardner purchases a few acres of land in Hertfordshire on which to develop a nudist club as cover for his coven meetings (this was presumably the Five Acres nudist club near St. Albans). He appoints a salaried administrator to run the club on his behalf. [\[Lamond '97\]](#) It would be very interesting to check the local registry of land transactions.

**1947:** Gardner, Edith Woodford-Grimes, and possibly some other people create a company called "Ancient Crafts, Ltd." to pool their capital to buy a ????

**Mid to late 1940's:** According to Mike Howard, Gerald Gardner established his own covenstead at Brickets Wood near St. Albans in Hertfordshire, north of London. This at first met in a converted chicken shed, but later Gardner purchased the "Witch's Cottage" (which Gardner claimed, apparently falsely, to have once been George Pickingill's — of "Pickingill Papers" fame [\[Liddell '94\]](#) — from Canewdon, but which actually came originally from Herefordshire) from the Folklore Museum in nearby Barnet in Hertfordshire. This museum was run by Gardner's old friend and colleague from Malaya, the eccentric (and sex-positive) 'Father' J.S.M. Ward, who was also a prominent Freemason and a Bishop in the so-called "Orthodox" Catholic Church (which was anything but). Since Father Ward fled the country due to scandal to 1946, to move to a piece of land owned by Gardner in Cyprus, was made bankrupt by a failed libel case against a Sunday newspaper, presumably the same year, and died in 1949, it is tempting to suspect that this purchase occurred in or around 1946. The "Witches Cottage" was relocated to some wooded wasteland owned by Gardner adjacent to the Five Acres naturist club, to which Gardner and several other members of the coven belonged (though several leading members of the club did not approve of his activities, at least later [\[Valiente '89\]](#)[\[Lamond '97\]](#)). Gardner's High Priestess for this coven was presumably Mrs. Woodford-Grimes (a.k.a. "Dafo"), who had supposedly been Maiden of Dorothy Clutterbuck's coven and who became Gardner's first High Priestess. [\[Howard '97\]](#) The construction and maintenance of the grounds and buildings of this club, and apparently its day-to-day running, was done by Jack Bracelin. [\[Bourne '92\]](#)

**About 1946:** Gerald Gardner receives permission, presumably from Dorothy Clutterbuck, to start writing "High Magic's Aid". [\[Shah '60\]](#)[\[Crowther '93\]](#) According to Idries Shah, the manuscript was written during 1946, though it was not published until 1949. [\[Shah '60\]](#)

1946?: Babylon working by US OTO ??

**May 1st 1947:** Gerald Gardner is introduced to Aleister Crowley by Arnold Crowther (later husband of Patricia Crowther: they married in 1960). Crowley was then living in 'Netherwood', a guest house in Hastings in Sussex, to which he had moved in January, 1945. On their first visit they were accompanied by a Miss Eva Collins. Crowley met Gardner (alone) at least three more times, on May 7th, 14th, and 27th. Crowley kept several different diaries, one of which included details of everyone he met: these are the only dates in 1946 or 1947 on which a visit by Gardner is mentioned. The May 1st entry gives Gardner's full name and title, as was Crowley's habit for the first time he met someone, the other entries are shorter. Unfortunately the diary peters off a few months later, possibly due to Crowley's declining health (he died on the 1st of December, 1947), so it is conceivable that Gardner could have met Crowley on further occasions shortly before his death. [\[Crowley '47\]](#) There are persistent accounts in Wiccan circles that this meeting happened in 1946 (Mike Howard says March 1946 [\[Howard '97\]](#)), not in 1947. These seem to all go back to two sources: Idries Shah, who presumably got it from Gardner, [\[Shah '60\]](#) and Arnold Crowther's wife Patricia Crowther, who gives the 1946 date in several of her books (e.g. [\[Crowther '81\]](#)[\[Crowther '93\]](#)). Patricia Crowther, having seen the Crowley diary, now believes that she must have been mistaken, and that May 1st 1947 is in fact the correct date (see her account at <http://www.jps.net/season/Neighbor/crowlydi.htm>). Everyone else involved is, alas, unavailable for comment.

Crowley and Gardner apparently got on well (though Cecil Williamson, never a very reliable source, claims that they

later fell out). Gardner purchased from Crowley (accounts of the amount paid vary: Gerald Yorke claims about 300 pounds) a charter to found a camp of Crowley's (then-near-defunct) magical group, the O.T.O., and was granted an honorary 4th-degree initiation in it. This charter seems to have been mostly in Gardner's handwriting, though signed by Crowley, and was later displayed at Gardner's museum of Witchcraft and Magic on the Isle of Man.<sup>[Valiente '89][Greenfield '92]</sup> (It has been suggested that this document confused some visitor into thinking that Gardner's handwriting was Crowley's and was thus the source of the persistent rumor that there was a copy of the Book of Shadows in Crowley's handwriting on display — which Doreen emphatically denies ever having seen<sup>[Valiente '89]</sup> — presumably they saw a Book of Shadows in Gardner's handwriting, possibly "Text A", and noticed that it matched the handwriting on the charter signed by Crowley.<sup>[Greenfield '92]</sup>) Letters between Gardner and ??? suggest that during 1947 Gardner did indeed attempt to start an O.T.O. camp, apparently without success.[??] Gerald later used this charter to justify to Doreen Valiente his right to use some of Crowley's wording in the then-current version of the Gardnerian rituals.<sup>[Valiente '89]</sup>

There are also persistent rumors (mostly from O.T.O. sources) that Gardner and Crowley knew each other earlier than this, possibly even as early as 1936,<sup>[Greenfield '92]</sup> but if so it is difficult to explain why they should have gone through a charade of appearing to not know each other when Arnold Crowther introduced them.<sup>[Valiente '89]</sup> These seems to have as their origin a silver cigarette case with a note inside saying "Gift of G.B.G." that was supposedly among Crowley's effects. Philip Heselton has suggested that, if this is so, "G.B.G." might instead stand for the "Great Brotherhood of God", an O.T.O. daughter-organisation.[??]

It is also possible that Gardner and Crowley may have encountered each other briefly in Ceylon in 1900, when Gardner was aged 16, but if so it seems unlikely that they discussed anything occult or formed any lasting acquaintance. Gardner seems to have made something of a study of Crowley, and, if Shah's account can be believed (and it may simply be proaganda intended to dissociate Wicca from Crowley's bad reputation), Gardner seems to have regarded him as being mostly a charlatan.<sup>[Shah '60]</sup>

**After May 1st 1947:** (Rewrite??) According to Ronald Hutton, Gerald Gardner is loaned, by Gerald Yorke, to whom he was introduced by Aleister Crowley, a copy of the S.L. "MacGregor" Mathers translation of "The Key of Solomon the King". Supposedly he starts copying parts of it into a leather-bound book, which he titles "Ye Bok of Ye Art Magical", and later copies into the intervening spaces the first known version of the core rituals of Gardnerian Wicca, including the three initiation rites, the full moon rite, and sabbats for the cross-quarter days.<sup>[Hutton '98]</sup> According to Don Frew, who has for some while been making a detailed study of "Ye Bok of Ye Art Magical", it does indeed contain solomonic material, and while much of it does seem to descend from the Mathers translation, Gardner was not copying from a printed copy of this but from a manuscript version descended (at least in part) from the Mathers translation. Possibly the source was a manuscript in the possession of someone in Dorothy Clutterbuck's coven. It is notable that this solomonic material contains a few references to witches; Don Frew has suggested that there may have been a solomonic "Outer Court" group and that students who expressed an interest in the references to witches might find themselves being initiated into the coven. The solomonic material and the Wiccan material are interspersed in a way that makes it clear that, while the solomonic material mostly predates the Wiccan, there was a period in which they were being copied in simultaneously. The Wiccan material, along with various other things, were later copied into what is often called "Text A" of the Gardnerian Book of Shadows, which seems to have been more of a work-book than a formal liturgical manual, and which seems to have been used in the writing of "High Magic's Aid". If this is correct, and if the manuscript of "High Magic's Aid" was mostly written in 1946 as Idries Shah claims, then the chronology proposed by Hutton would have to be incorrect.<sup>[Frew '99]</sup>

The Wiccan material in "Ye Bok of Ye Art Magical" is transcribed in a deliberately rather cryptic form. The words are powerful but unpolished, and contain a lot of material derived from the published works of Crowley, Kipling, Leland and others.<sup>[Frew '97]</sup> I have not had the opportunity to see the original of "Ye Bok of Ye Art Magical", but I have studied a good transcript of much of it, and in carefully comparing parts of it with the original printed sources from which the material evidently descends I have found several small pieces of evidence that would seem to support Don Frew's thesis. Firstly, the text contains many scribal errors, more than one would reasonably expect to find in a first-hand copy, and some of them are quite glaring, suggesting that a text was being deliberately copied with no changes, errors and all. Secondly, many of the scribal errors are of sorts that could more plausibly be made when copying from a handwritten copy than a printed one (this is particularly clear with the errors in the lists of Cabbalistic names, which are effectively strings of nonsense syllables, and thus easy to make almost any sort of error in). However, the Key of Solomon material



in "High Magic's Aid" is not descended from "Ye Book of Ye Art Magical", since it has entirely different sets of errors in it, and contains material not found in "Ye Book of Ye Art Magical"; evidently by the time "High Magic's Aid" was published Gardner had had access to a printed copy of Mathers translation of "The Key of Solomon", as Hutton has discovered.

Winter 1947: (Gardner in America)

**1st Dec, 1947:** Aleister Crowley dies. [\[Valiente '89\]](#)

**1948:** The first edition of "The White Goddess" by Robert Graves is published. (It was apparently written in 1946, and an amended and enlarged version was published in America in 1966.)

**1949:** "High Magic's Aid" by Gerald Gardner (under his magical name, "Scire") is published by Michael Houghton (a.k.a. Michael Juste), proprietor of the Atlantis occult bookstore near the British Museum in the West End of London. It reveals, in fictional form, several details of the "Gardnerian" initiation rite (Gardner was in the habit of giving it to people to read before he initiated them), and propounds a religion which is recognizably an early version of modern Wicca, including worship of both a Goddess and a God. One of the characters is a male mediaeval ceremonial magician whose magic is described in some detail: it is recognizably taken mostly from the S.L. "MacGregor" Mathers translation of the Key of Solomon (additional sources include the "Legemeton" or Lesser Key of Solomon, Agrippa's "Three Books of Occult Philosophy" (or a source derived from it, such as "The Magus"), and a ritual derived from Golden Dawn sources and published in part three of Crowley's auto-biographical series "The Temple of Solomon the King", which was published in "The Equinox" Vol. 1 No. 3). Another character is a young and inexperienced female witch. [\[Gardner '49\]](#) The plot bears a more than passing resemblance to that of "Ivanhoe" by Walter Scott (which was a favourite of Gardner's when he was young [\[Shah '60\]](#)). The manuscript was typed by Michael Houghton's friend Dolores North (a.k.a. Madeline Montalban), who at one time was known as the "Witch of St. Giles", after the St. Giles Circus area (now Centre Point) where she lived in the West End of London, though here later magical style (she founded "The Order of the Morning Star") seems to have been ceremonial magic, and she was later openly hostile to Gardner. [\[Howard '97\]](#) (My impression from combining various accounts is that Gardner tried demonstrating trance induction by means of scourging to her; she apparently decided that being tied up and tickled with a feather duster was not a valid magical technique, and seems to have concluded that Gardner was incompetent.) At the time Gardner was living nearby in a flat on Ridgmount Gardens, off Tottenham Court Road, in the West end near the British Museum. [\[Frew '99\]](#)

**1949:** Jack Bracelin's Book of Shadows is claimed to date back to this year. At least one copy of this still exists. [\[Phillips '91\]](#) Unless his Book of Shadows somehow predates his initiation by many years, this would seem to disagree with Doreen Valiente, who describes him as having been a "relative newcomer" to the coven in the summer of 1957. [\[Valiente '89\]](#)

Winter 1949??: (Gardner in Cyprus) ??

**1950:** Cecil Williamson founds the Folklore Museum of Superstition and Witchcraft at the Witch's Mill in Castletown on the Isle of Man. Shortly afterwards Gardner turned up, and later rented a cottage at 77 Malew St., Castletown, and became the "resident witch" during the summer seasons. [\[Howard '97\]](#) The museum actually opened in 1951, with Gardner as resident witch performing the opening ceremony. [\[Valiente '89\]](#)

Circa 1950: (Gardner in America) ??

**12th Jan., 1951:** Dorothy St. Quintin Clutterbuck, "spinster of independent means, daughter of Thomas St. Quintin Clutterbuck, Lieutenant-Colonel, Indian Army (deceased)" died aged 70 in Highcliffe. [\[Valiente '84\]](#) Many of what seem to have been her magical tools, including her coven sword, were later put on display by Gardner at his museum in Castletown, Isle of Man: the museum guide-book written by Gardner claimed they had been loaned by her relatives. [\[Valiente '84\]](#) A more detailed account has it that they were loaned by Mrs. Woodford-Grimes (a.k.a. "Dafo"), via Gardner, to Cecil Williamson, the original owner of the museum, and were later acquired by Gardner as part of the museum. [\[Valiente '89\]](#)

**1951:** Around this point by some accounts Gardner is supposed to have split with his original Dorothy Clutterbuck coven and founded his own. [\[Buckland '7?\]](#)

**June, 1951:** The Witchcraft Act is repealed and replaced by the Fraudulent Mediums Act. Witchcraft ceases to be illegal in the United Kingdom. [\[Valiente '89\]](#)

**April, 1951 and 29th July, 1951:** Two articles in "The Sunday Pictorial" (a tabloid newspaper) discuss the forthcoming opening of Cecil Williamson's museum in the Isle of Man. They mention that Williamson knew at least a dozen witches, a coven of which, from the south of England, included a woman schoolteacher and a Civil Servant (presumably Mrs. Woodford-Grimes and Gerald Gardner respectively), who would perform rites there once the museum was opened. [\[Valiente '89\]](#)

**July, 1951:** An article in "The Sunday Pictorial" (a tabloid newspaper) features the Castletown witchcraft museum. In this article "Dr. Gerald B. Gardner" is described as "a member of the Southern Coven of British Witches". [\[Howard '97\]](#)

Winter 1951: (Gardner in West Africa) ??

**27th September, 1952:** An article by Allen Andrews in "Illustrated" (a popular illustrated weekly) on Cecil Williamson's museum mentions that the "Southern Coven of British Witches" met in the New Forest area. The article also claims that witchcraft groups exist in a number of places around the South Coast, in Liverpool (Cheshire), Barnet (North London, near Hertfordshire, about 8 miles from Bricket Wood), Cumberland, and near the Rollright Stones in Oxfordshire. (The Barnet and Liverpool groups, at least, may have been acquaintances of Gardner, or even members of his coven.) Doreen Valiente, a young student of the occult, reads this article and writes to Cecil Williamson, who passes the letter to Gerald Gardner. [\[Valiente '89\]](#)

**Late Autumn, 1952:** Doreen Valiente first meets Gerald Gardner at the house of Mrs. Woodford-Grimes (a.k.a. "Dafo", a music teacher) in Highcliffe. Mrs. Woodford-Grimes told Doreen that she was no longer active in witchcraft. [\[Valiente '89\]](#) This is supported by the fact that Gardner seems to have rapidly made Doreen his High Priestess after her initiation in 1953.

Winter 1952: (Gardner in West Africa) ??

**Midsummer Eve, 1953:** Doreen Valiente is initiated into Gardner's coven by Gardner at the house of Mrs. Woodford-Grimes (a.k.a. "Dafo") in Highcliffe. [\[Valiente '84\]](#)[\[Valiente '89\]](#) Gardner had come down from the Isle of Man to attend the Druid midsummer rite at Stonehenge (which Doreen accompanied him to the day after her initiation). Doreen recognizes a good deal of Crowley-derived material in the initiation rite, and some "Aradia"-derived material. Later that year she met the 8 or 10 members of Gerald's coven, most of whom were members of the Five Acres nudist club. [\[Valiente '89\]](#)

**Between 1952 and 1954:** Gardner eventually badgers Cecil Williamson into selling him the Folklore Museum of Superstition and Witchcraft, which Gardner renames "The Museum of Magic and Witchcraft" and to which he adds his considerable personal collection of weapons, amulets and charms. [\[Howard '97\]](#) Cecil Williamson moves to London and founds another such museum in Windsor High St., and later relocates it to Bourton-on-the-Water and then later to Boscastle, in North Cornwall. The museum in Boscastle still exists, under new management.

**1954:** "Witchcraft Today" by Gerald Gardner is published.

**Summer 1955:** The "Sunday Pictorial" (a tabloid newspaper) starts publishing a series of articles identifying witchcraft with Devil-worship and animal sacrifice. Rumours about telephone tapping and interference with letters spread through the new Wiccan community, and Gerald Gardner and Doreen Valiente throw out all old correspondence that might have implicated anyone else if there had been a police raid. [\[Valiente '89\]](#)

**1956:** "Moon Magic" by Violet Firth (a.k.a. Dion Fortune) is published.

**Summer 1956 to late 1957:** Various tabloid newspapers do a series of expose's confusing witchcraft, Satanism, and black magic, and making allegations of links to ritual murder. There are calls for the Witchcraft Act (or something like it) to be re-imposed. Doreen Valiente spends about a year investigating and debunking the various allegations, and the results of her investigations are later published by Gardner in "The Meaning of Witchcraft" (1959). During this period,

various members of the coven, principally Gerald Gardner, but also Jack Bracelin and his girlfriend "Amanda", continue to give interviews to the tabloid press, and seem surprised when their interviews are twisted into tabloid sensationalism. The publicity causes an upsurge both in people contacting Gardner's coven, and apparently an increase in interest in Satanism. [\[Valiente '89\]](#)

**Late 1956 or early 1957:** Gardner, suspecting the salaried administrator he had appointed of deliberately running the Five Acres nudist club into the ground in the hope that Gardner will sell it to him at a low price, sacks him and appoints Jack Bracelin (described as "his right-hand man in the coven") to administer the club. Subsequently the sacked administrator makes trouble for the club, claiming that it is becoming a hotbed of witchcraft and loose living. [\[Lamond '97\]](#)

**Autumn 1956:** Fred Lamond reads "Witchcraft Today", writes to Gardner, meets with him at his flat in Holland Park in London, and later meets other members of his first coven, including Jack Bracelin (described as "Gerald's Man Friday"). [\[Lamond '97\]](#)

**February Eve, 1957:** Fred Lamond is initiated into Gardnerian Wicca (along with one other person). The ritual takes place in a cottage (presumably the Witches' Cottage at Bricket Wood) and is performed by an "acting High Priestess" (presumably "Dayonis", who is named after the witch heroine in "A Goddess Arrives"). [\[Lamond '97\]](#)

**Summer 1957:** Doreen Valiente and Ned Grove [\[Phillips '91\]](#) leave Gardner's coven, which by that point includes Jack Bracelin (then a "relative newcomer", according to Doreen Valiente) and his girlfriend "Amanda". [\[Valiente '89\]](#) Doreen gives her principal reason as being Gardner's love of publicity (no matter how bad) and increasingly autocratic style, [\[Valiente '89\]](#) but it has been suggested that Gardner's desire to replace her with a younger High Priestess may also have had something to do with it. [\[Phillips '91\]](#) A portion of the Gardnerian Book of Shadows commonly known as the "Ardains", which lays out in an archaic form of English various rules that the witches must obey, including then duty of a High Priestess to step aside for a younger successor, is widely assumed to have been written (in pseudo-archaic style) by Gardner at about this point. <sup>[?Valiente?]</sup> However, its style is actually highly varied, with some pieces looking quite archaic and including may correctly used old words and phrases, others seeming entirely modern, or modern with a couple of specific archaic phrases inserted. There is evidence that some parts of the document was in Gardner's possession before 1957, since some are paraphrased in "Witchcraft Today", and some are found (as separate passages) in "Ye Bok of Ye Art Magical". It seems possible that Gardner may have assembled these pieces, and perhaps made a few additions of his own, in 1957, but that some of them are older, possibly even much older. <sup>[?NWC chap?]</sup>

[For those interested in the later history of Wicca, I particularly recommend "The Rebirth of Witchcraft", by Doreen Valiente (1989) [\[Valiente '89\]](#), "A History of Wicca In England: 1939 - Present Day", a talk given by Julia Phillips at the Wiccan Conference in Canberra, 1991. [\[Phillips '91\]](#), and "Dancing With Witches" by Lois Bourne (199?) [\[Bourne '9?\]](#).]

Beginning of 1958: ?? [\[Lamond '97\]](#)

**November 1958:** "Dayonis" is Gardner's High Priestess, Jack Bracelin and Fred Lamond are active members of the coven, and there are also two coven members who live in Winchester. [\[Lamond '97\]](#) Later High Priestesses of Gardner's include "Florannis" (who seems likely to have been Lois Bourne), Rae Bone, and "Olwen" (Monique Wilson), and possibly "Tanith".

[I think I need to extend this to cover up to 1960 (publication of "Gerald Gardner: Witch!") so that Shah's motivations/biases are more comprehensible.]

## The Bibliography

[Bourne '9?]' "Dancing with Witches", by Lois Bourne (199?).  
????

[Buckland '71]' "Witchcraft From the Inside", by Raymond Buckland (1971, 1975).

Buckland apparently knew Gardner mostly from their correspondence, and only met him in person a few times, well

after the events he describes. His evidence is thus less direct than some other sources, and contains a number of discrepancies with other sources, most of which look as if they could be the rest of misunderstandings or oversimplifications.

[Buckland '7?] "Witchcraft Today: Introduction", by Raymond Buckland (late 1970's), printed in the US Magickal Child edition (late 1970's) of "Witchcraft Today" by Gerald Gardner (1954).

Once again, Buckland apparently knew Gardner mostly from their correspondence, and only met him in person a few times, well after the events he describes. His evidence is thus less direct than some other sources, though some of the discrepancies are here corrected.

[Caddy '96] "In Perfect Timing", by Peter Caddy with Jeremy Slocombe and Renata Caddy.

The (mostly auto-) biography of one of the founders of the Findhorn New Age community includes several pages describing his early spiritual training with "Doctor" Sullivan's Crotona Fellowship of the Rosicrucian Order. Sullivan is described as a great spiritual teacher, and Caddy goes on through-out the rest of the book to make numerous references to how indispensable his Rosicrucian training under Sullivan was to the rest of his life (he places quotes from it at the beginning of every chapter: they seem mostly to be along the lines of "positive thinking"). While this initially seems to contradict Shah's account of Gardner's impressions of Sullivan, it is possible to discern in Caddy's hagiography of Sullivan some of the pretensions which seem to have so failed to impress Gardner. The fact that Caddy was 19 when he first met Sullivan, while Gardner was 54, makes this rather easier to credit.

[Crowley '47] One of Crowley's diaries (he kept several different ones) for 1947.

The original is in the possession of the O.T.O. in America. A typescript transcript is at the Warburg Institute of the University of London. Patricia Crowther gives an extract from the relevant entries on the Web at <http://www.jps.net/season/Neighbor/crowlydi.htm>. According to this, Crowley met, Gardner, Arnold Crowther, and a Miss Eva Collins on May 1st, 1947, and Gardner (alone) on May 7th, 14th, and 27th. (It has been suggested by some that the mysterious "Miss Eva Collins" could be a pseudonym for Patricia Crowther. This fits well with her earlier accounts of her life, those published while Arnold was still alive, though it is flatly contradicted by those she published after his death.)

[Crowther '93] "High Magic's Aid: Forward", by Patricia Crowther, printed in the Pentacle Enterprises edition (1993) of "High Magic's Aid" by Gerald Gardner (1949).

An account of how "High Magic's Aid" came to be written, written someone who by some accounts was a member of Gardner's coven in the 1950's.

[Crowther '81] "Lid off the Cauldron", by Patricia Crowther.

Patricia Crowther says that she first met Gardner in 1956, and was initiated into Wicca in 1960??. This book contains a chapter of first- or second-hand historical detail about Wicca in the late 1950's, plus another chapter about Gardner.

[Enfys '98] Informal discussion at the Pagan Federation 1998 National Conference.

[Frew '97] A talk given by Don Frew, Anna Korn, and one other person at Pantheacon in 1997.

The primary topic of this talk was "Ye Bok of Ye Art Magical", which is now in Toronto in the care of Richard and Tamarra James of the [Wiccan Church of Canada](#), and which Don Frew et al at this point had been studying in detail for many years. Their researches are still unpublished.

[Frew '99] Private communication from Don Frew.

[Gardner '49] "High Magic's Aid", by Gerald Gardner.

The earliest published material on Gardnerian Wicca, given in fictional form. Despite its early date, the religion contains all the basic elements (including a God and a Goddess, despite some commentator's claims to the contrary) and is recognizably "Gardnerian" Wicca. Whenever Wicca was developed, it was evidently fundamentally complete by 1949.

[Greenfield '92] "A True History of Witchcraft", by Allen Greenfield (1992).

This document written by a member of the O.T.O. contains some interesting information and a great many surmises and suggestions. Various versions of this can be found at various places on the Web, including

<http://www.oakgrove.org/GreenPages/bos/1781.txt>, <http://www.monmouth.com/~equinoxbook/true.html>,  
<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Acropolis/9377/AllenGreenfield-HistoryOfWicca.html> and  
<http://www.witchhaven.com/shadowdrake/WiccaHistory.html>.

[Greer & Cooper '98] "The Red God: Woodcraft and the Origins of Wicca", by John Micheal Greer and Gordon Cooper, published in "Gnosis" #48 (Summer 1998).  
(Summarize Frew's demolition if it.)

[Hardman & Harvey '95] Essay by Ronald Hutton in "Paganism Today", by Charlotte Hardman and Graham Harvey (1995).

Hutton has since (in '98) said that he feels any possibility of a connection between Gardner and the Order of Woodland Chivalry is less likely than he thought at the time he wrote this, and that he has found no evidence to support it. In "The Triumph of the Moon" (1999), he backs even further away from this idea.

[Heselton '99a] "New Light on Old Dorothy" Talk given by Philip Heselton at the Pagan Federation 1999 National Conference.

Philip Heselton has written a book on Dorothy Clutterbuck, Gerald Gardner, and the connections between them, and had just sent off the manuscript to Capall Bann (see below). In this talk he mostly discussed the evidence from Dorothy Clutterbuck's "diaries": two books of poetry written by her in 1942 and 1943, one poem per day, and illustrated by beautiful watercolors by her companion Christine Wells, and apparently intended as a sort of "coffee-table book" for visitors to look at. He pretty convincingly demonstrated that Dorothy Clutterbuck loved nature, wrote a lot about faeries and unnamed ladies personifying natural forces, was aware of the old pagan festivals (the ones from before the Julian calendar change), knew her herbs, and was religious but had no interest in Christ (there are plenty of mentions of God, heaven, and angels, some of St. Francis and the Archangel Michael, but none of Jesus or Christ, not even for Christmas or Easter either year). She also seems to have had a fascination with roses, which she uses in her poetry very often, even when it is apparently inappropriate.

[Heselton '99b] Private communication from Philip Heselton.

[Heselton '99c] "???", by Philip Heselton, published in "The Cauldron" #?? (1999).

[Heselton '00] "Wiccan Roots — Gerald Gardner and the Modern Witchcraft Revival", by Philip Heselton, submitted to Capall Bann and hopefully to be published some time in 2000.

Philip Heselton has very kindly sent me a copy of the manuscript, and I can highly recommend it (as soon as Capall Bann publish it). This is a fascinating and extremely well researched book, containing a great deal of previously unknown material. Topics covered include Gardner's early life, the Crotona Fellowship, the evidence for the New Forest coven (Philip has found about half-a-dozen people for whom he has evidence suggesting that they may have been members), Dorothy Clutterbuck's books of poetry, and Gardner's relationship with Crowley and the O.T.O. Philip is apparently planning another book covering the Bricket Wood period.

[Hopson '99] Private Communication from John Hopson, Archivist at the British Library.

[Howard '97] "Gerald Gardner: The Man, the Myth & the Magick", by Mike A. Howard, published in four parts in "The Cauldron" #83 through #87 (1997).

A fascinating and detailed essay on Gerald Gardner, including material drawn from many obscure sources, published in four parts in Mike Howard's magazine "The Cauldron", which has published a good deal of other interesting (and sometimes controversial) material on the history of the Craft. This essay does however contain a few discrepancies with other sources, and care needs to be taken in evaluating the many pieces of second- and third-hand evidence that Howard presents.

[Hutton '98] "The Story of Modern Witchcraft", a talk given by Ronald Hutton at the Pagan Federation 1998 National Conference.

Ron Hutton (a professional historian at the University of Bristol) was at the time just finishing a book on the history of witchcraft in Britain from 1800 to the present day (see below), and this talk corresponded to one chapter of it. In the talk he revealed that he has evidence strongly suggesting that "Ye Bok of Ye Art Magical" was first written in or after 1947,

since he had found evidence that Gardner borrowed a copy of Mathers translation of "The Key of Solomon" from Gerald Yorke at that time. Hutton did not discuss Don Frew's alternative theory, that Gardner had already written most or all of "Ye Bok of Ye Art Magical" by this point, and that the Key of Solomon material in it was copied from a manuscript (possibly in the possession of the New Forest coven) which was itself derived from the Mathers "Key of Solomon"; and that Gardner in 1947 was borrowing a copy of the Mathers text both to see the original and to help in his writing of "High Magic's Aid", which was published in 1949 and Gardner is believed to have started writing in 1946, and which contains a lot of Solomonic material derived from Mathers which is not in "Ye Bok of Ye Art Magical".

[Hutton '99] "The Triumph of the Moon", by Ronald Hutton (1999).

This is a major work on the history of the Neo-Pagan Revival in Great Britain, from its roots in the social changes of the 19th and early 20th centuries, through the contribution of Gardner, the appearance in the 1950's and 1960's of other craft traditions such as those of Robert Cochrane and Alex Sanders, and on up to the present day. It is carefully aimed both at the Neo-Pagan reader and at a scholarly audience, being clearly written, well researched, and meticulously footnoted, and taking no firm view on the existence or nonexistence of the supernatural. Hutton, as befits a historian, has a particular knack for explaining, and discussing the history and development of, ideas which he evidently does not himself believe a word of. He also shows a refreshing willingness to not reach firm conclusions about what really happened when the available evidence is insufficient. While I do disagree with Hutton in the detail of his assessment of the most likely explanation for where Gardner got his version of Wicca from, both of us agree that the case is still out, and the broad sweep of Hutton's scholarship is masterful. I learnt a considerable amount about my own religion from this book.

[Jones '99] "Masonic Wicca", a talk given by Steve Jones (who is not a Mason, but is a Buffalo) at the Pagan Federation 1999 National Conference.

Jones was careful to point out that the Masonic elements in Wicca could have come from Gardner, or from J.S.M. Ward, or from the Co-Masons in the Crotona Fellowship and whom Gardner says were in the New Forest coven, or even earlier. He also said that while there are quite a lot of similarities to the first three degrees of Masonry, he could find none with the further "side" degrees.

[Kelly '91] "Crafting the Art of Magic", by Aidan Kelly (1991).

This collection of frequently circular arguments based on (conveniently) inaccurate quotations was unfortunately mistaken for scholarship by some people (see <http://goddess.knotwork.com/articles/kelly.spider> for a further discussion of Kelly's scholarship). In it Kelly purports to prove that Gardner invented the whole thing, and thus that Gardner's tradition was no more valid than the one Kelly had helped create in the 1960's. It has been claimed that this book was more accurate and more scholarly before Llwellyn got their hands on the manuscript, which would fit with the pattern of Llwellyn's publications on Wicca since the mid-1980's; having not seen the original manuscript, I cannot say whether this is in fact the case.

[Lamond '97] "Religion without Beliefs", by Frederic Lamond (1997).

While primarily a fascinating comparison of Wicca with other major world religions and an exposition of how their differing theologies and world-views have different sociological effects on the culture containing them, this also contains some historical anecdotes from the period in the late 1950's when Fred Lamond was in Gardner's Bricket Wood coven.

[Lamond '98] "Shades of Light and Dark - Wiccan/Pagan successes and failures of the last 40 years", a talk given by Fred Lamond at the Pagan Federation 1998 National Conference.

[Liddell '94] "The Pickingill Papers: George Pickingill & the Origins of Modern Wicca", by W.E. 'Bill' Liddell (a.k.a. Lugh), first published as a series of articles (1974-1988), published in one volume edited and with an introduction by Michael Howard (1994).

A collection of unsubstantiated claims about Essex cunning man George Pickingill (1816-1909) and his relationship to Gerald Gardner, ranging from the intriguing to the unbelievable (indeed, Liddell even says he doesn't believe all of them himself). Some Gardnerians have chosen to believe them, since they include claims that Gardner was initiated in more than one traditional coven, while others are unwilling to put credence in them. I tend towards the later school, particularly since the claims are neither internally self-consistent nor supported by a shred of hard evidence, and some of

them are highly implausible.

[Medway '99] Private communication with Gareth Medway at the Pagan Federation 1999 National Conference.

[Phillips '91] "A History of Wicca In England: 1939 - Present Day", a talk given by Julia Phillips at the Wiccan Conference in Canberra, 1991.

The text of this talk was published on a UseNet newsgroup, and can now be found at various locations on the Web, including <http://www.fortunecity.com/roswell/streiber/0/history.html>, <http://www.iit.edu/~phillips/personal/philos/wichis.html>, and <http://www.xenon.net/~kris/wicca/wway/history.html>. Julia Phillips assembles some interesting information (most of it about periods a little later than those covered here). Her account is inaccurate in a few minor details (such as dates of first publication of various books), but otherwise seems fairly well researched. I would love to get in touch with Julia Philips.

[Shah '60] "Gerald Gardner, Witch", by "Jack L. Bracelin" (1960).

Gardner's biography. This book was actually written by Idries Shah, the famous Sufi Grand Master, and was published by Shah's private press under Jack Bracelin's name, presumably to avoid confusing the Sufi community. <sup>[Valiente '89][Bourne '97][Lamond '98]</sup> Lois Bourne claims that this book was carefully slanted so as to cause maximum annoyance to ?Cardell?, and Lamond also gave the impression that it was not always a reliable source. Certainly it does not seem to be completely impartial: for example, no mention is made of the fact that Gardner's museum in the Isle of Man was actually founded by Cecil Williamson, and only later sold to Gardner.

[Valiente '73] "Gardner, Gerald Brosseau", entry in "An ABC of Witchcraft" by Doreen Valiente (1973).

Earlier, and thus less informative, than most of the other sources in this bibliography, it is none the less an excellent summary.

[Valiente '84] "Appendix A: The Search for Old Dorothy", by Doreen Valiente, printed in "The Witch's Way", by Janet and Stewart Farrar (1984).

The first hard evidence for the existence of Dorothy Clutterbuck was discovered by Doreen Valiente between Samhain 1980 and Beltaine 1982. Her account of how she did it makes fascinating reading, and she carefully includes details of how to verify her discoveries in various official records.

[Valiente '89] "The Rebirth of Witchcraft", by Doreen Valiente (1989).

A major study of the recent history of the Craft, by someone who has been part of much of it, who knew many of the major players personally, and has an open mind and relatively few axes to grind. A seminal text.

## Conclusion

So, did Gardner invent modern Wicca, or does date back to the middle ages? There really isn't enough evidence yet to be certain. My suspicion is that the answer may lie somewhere between these two extremes: to some extent it predates him, but perhaps only by a few decades. The scenario I find most plausible on the current evidence runs something like this: in 1939, just after the start of the War, Gardner was initiated into some form of Co-Masonic group associated with the Crotona Fellowship, which had an interest in witchcraft and folk magic (and possibly also mediaeval ceremonial magic, with some admixtures from Crowley and the Golden Dawn). This organization included Mrs. Woodford-Grimes and (almost certainly) Dorothy Clutterbuck, and may only date back to the arrival of the co-masons in Christchurch in 1933, or may date back as far as just before the First World War. At the end of the Second World War, in 1945 or possibly 1946, Gardner started his own coven in Bricket Wood near St. Albans, attached to the nudist club there. By 1949 at the latest (when "High Magic's Aid" was published <sup>[Gardner '49]</sup>) both the religion and the litany that Gardner is practising bear a strong resemblance to modern Gardnerian Wicca. "Ye Bok of Ye Art Magical" may date to somewhere between 1947 and 1949, <sup>[Hutton '98]</sup> or may date back to about 1939, <sup>[Frew '99]</sup> in which case the inclusion in the rituals of material from Crowley, the Key of Solomon, Kipling, and Aradia <sup>[Valiente '89]</sup> may predate Gardner's involvement. <sup>[Frew '99]</sup> It is noticeable that most of the published sources used in these rituals all seem to have been published in the period between 1889 to about 1913, and much of it is from quite obscure sources, which might have been difficult to obtain by the 1940's. Indeed, there is a distinct lack of material the "Ye Book of Ye Art Magical" from after about 1913, despite

the existence of several promising potential sources, such as the writings of Margaret Murray, Dion Fortune, and "The White Goddess", all of which were published between 1920 and 1946, and were liberally plundered by later Wiccans. Shortly after Gardner initiates Doreen Valiente in 1953, she becomes his High Priestess and helps him rewrite the rituals, removing or rewriting some Crowley material and adding some from Carmina Gadelica.