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Witchcraft

Author(s): Gerald Brosseau Gardner

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THE "GREEN MAN" IN CHURCH ARCHITECTURE

I have read with the greatest interest Lady Raglan's article upon the "'Green Man' in Church Architecture", in the March number of *Folk-Lore*; she throws quite a new light upon a



A



B

type of design which I had hitherto considered to be mere fantasy. I find that this type of carving is represented in the church of the parish where I live, Eaton under Heywood, near Church Stretton, Shropshire. In the chancel of our church there is an interesting series of mediaeval carved bosses: some representing oak leaves alone; others showing mask-like faces, some of which may well be portraits. Three of these mask faces are surrounded by foliage, stiff and angular (as in sketch A), or by more natural looking oak leaves. One boss (sketch B) represents a grotesque face with oak leaves issuing from the ears, another kind of leaf sprouting from the forehead, and oak leaves and what seem to be oak balls from the mouth.

In view of Lady Raglan's article, it is of interest that these bosses are the *only* examples of mediaeval carving in the church with the one exception of a recumbent effigy.

L. H. HAYWARD

 WITCHCRAFT

Within recent years a box containing what appear to be witchcraft relics has come into my possession. The relics have been

PLATE VI

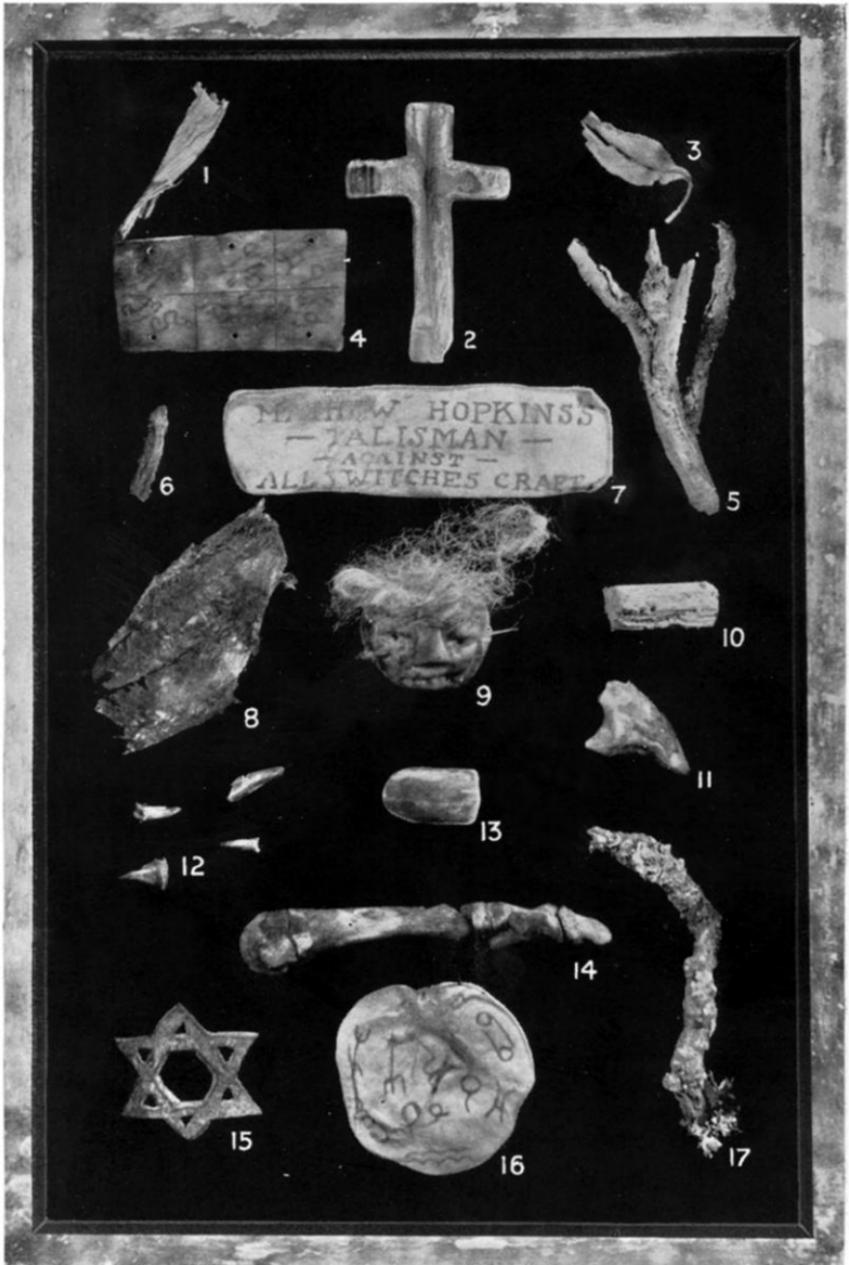


FIG. 1.—CONTENTS OF MATTHEW HOPKINSS'S BOX

PLATE VII

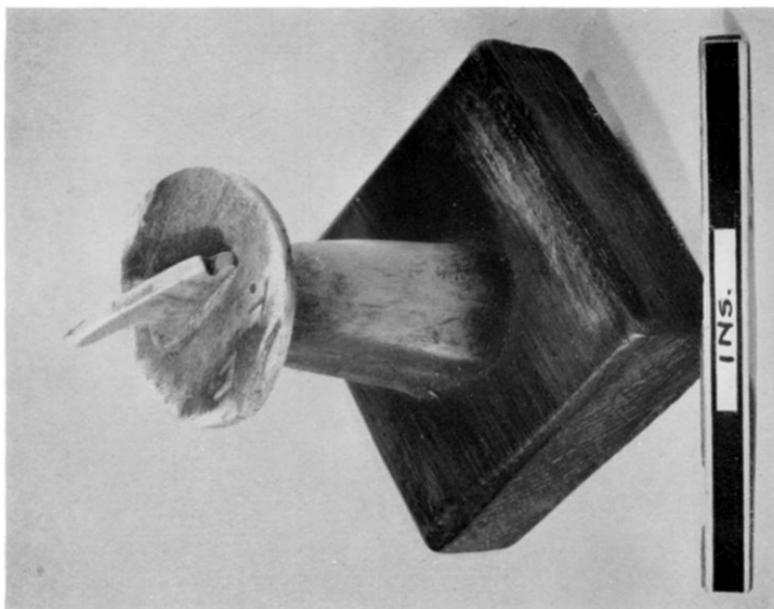


FIG. 3.—WITCHES' MOON DIAL

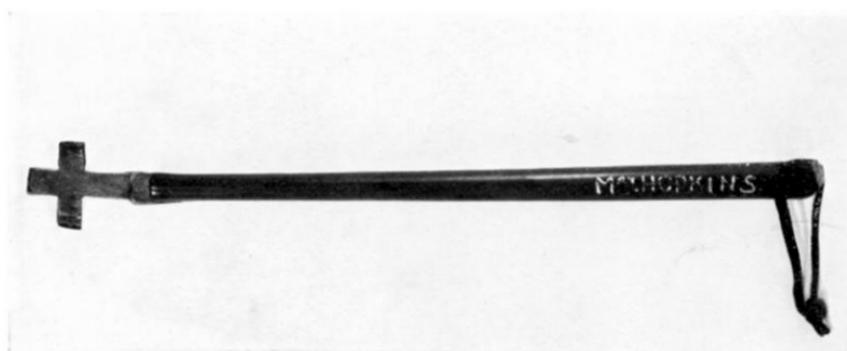


FIG. 2.—MATTHEW HOPKINS'S STAFF

examined by Dr. Margaret Murray, and Fr. Ward of the Abbey Folk Museum, who believe them to be genuine, but that they had fallen into the hands of some one who had made the labels with the wrong date (1790). As they pointed out, anyone faking such things would look up the real date (c. 1645). The contents of the box are as follows :

1. A dried flower. Witch bell (?).
2. A cross apparently made of raw hide and measuring $2\frac{1}{4} \times 1\frac{1}{4}$ inches.
3. A leaf-dried rue.
4. A bone plate measuring $2\frac{1}{4} \times 1\frac{1}{4}$ inches. This is divided into six sections, each containing magic (?) signs. It is pierced with holes along the edges for the purpose of being sewn into clothes, or to a cloth.
5. A branched twig shaped like a cock's foot, probably rue.
6. A scrap of bark from a tree.
7. A piece of parchment with "Matthew Hopkins' talisman against all Witch-craft" printed upon it in ink.
8. This exhibit appears to be dried leaves of plant or tree stuck together with black wax.
9. A wax head having hair and transfixed with an ancient pin.
10. A piece of decayed wood.
11. A piece of (human?) bone with dried skin affixed.
12. Four bird-claws.
13. A piece of horn shaped like a finger-nail.
14. Human little-finger bone (probably that of Mary Holt).
15. Seal of Solomon worked in lead.
16. Circular piece of (human?) skin having written upon it in ink either astrological or magical signs.
17. A twig bearing moss or lichen. May be hawthorn.

I have also a small staff measuring $12\frac{1}{2}$ inches and surmounted by a bone cross $2\frac{5}{8}$ inches high. On the side of the staff the name Matthew Hopkins is cut. To this exhibit there is a label, apparently old, with the words: "Matthew Hopkins' sceptre or tutti-stick, used by him in his travels in the South of England finding and exposing Witches. *Circa* 1790."

On the back of the box is a label, apparently written forty or fifty years ago. It is worded; "This Talisman, made and sold by Matthew Hopkins about 1790, was given to me by my father, Joseph Carter, of Home Farm, Hill Top, near Marlborough, and contains the finger, etc., of Mary Holt, a notorious Wiltshire Witch. Signed S. Carter."

In addition to this box, but apart from it, I have a small dial like a sun-dial, though divided only into seven sections and marked with signs as in Fig. 3. It is made of what appears to be human bone and shows signs of having been buried. It appears to be old and is mounted, possibly by the finder, on a wooden base. With it there is a label, on old paper, in old writing: "Witches Moon-dial, used by them at Moonlight. It is made of human bone, with only seven sections, the Seven Hours of Dread. Found near Weyland Smith's Cave, on the border of Berkshire and Wiltshire."

GERALD BROSSAU GARDNER