

# Cecil Williamson

*Founder of The Witchcraft Museum, Boscastle, Cornwall*

*Check out his profile in the current Witches' Almanac*

CECIL WILLIAMSON deserves to be better known to the witchcraft community, an instrumental figure of the modern Wiccan/witchcraft movements. He was the creator of the Witchcraft Research Centre and a superb collection of artifacts that took him through fifty years of controversy. Today he is still remembered for the unique museum, a favorite with both tourists and locals in Cornwall.

## *The Witches' Swing*

Cecil Williamson was sent to an upscale prep school in Norfolk and then to Malvern Collage in Worcestershire. He did not "fit in," as the boys termed it, and was the victim of constant bullying throughout his childhood. After receiving a black eye and bruising from a bully named Bulstrode, the school cook took pity on Cecil and introduced him to a local wise woman. She taught him some effective spell-craft. "One day I wandered up the road to her rather nice cottage and she introduced me to the witch's swing. To make this, you find a

tree with a suitable bough and get some rope and make a swing. But there's one extra thing, and that is to make yourself a little bonfire and put lots of grass on it so that it reduces the flame and produces a column of smoke. So you sit on the swing and as you swing backward and forward through this column of smoke you use a mantra for whatever your wish is. In my particular case I said:

*Take through the smoke,  
Bulstrode away  
Take Bulstrode away  
Take Bulstrode away  
Bulstrode away  
Bulstrode away*

You go on doing that for not less than twenty minutes. Bulstrode did not return from the school holiday – that time he had a skiing accident.

## *Gerald Gardner vs. Cecil Williamson*

In 1946 Williamson met Gerald Gardner in the Atlantis Bookshop, London. Over the next few years they were to become friends and business partners, but the relationship ended in mistrust, fighting and bitterness. There follows a playful letter written during an amiable time:



*My dear Cecil*

*I have been trying to get A Charter from the Druids. Apparently they will give me one if I can get 3 other other members to make a start. Now, do you know any likely people? And is there anything in this neighbourhood where we could perform any ceremonies. I could take it on, then resign & hand it over to you if you like. Being a Crowned Druid they will give me a Charter to start with, & that gives us some sort of legal standing so to speak. The trouble is, I know nothing about the Druid system, but neither do they. They're all High Sounding Statements with nothing behind them. It's just what sentimental folk would invent in the 18th Century, so if you can get us four pretty girls to play Ring a Ring of Roses while the press photographers take snaps it will be OK. All the best to you all for Xmas & the New Year.*

*Yours,  
Gerald*

