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PART TWO

And it's
all in the
cards...

Catholic girl becomes witch queen in Manchester coven

WITCHES DANCE PAGAN RITUALS UNDER MOON

Story by **CHRIS ROBINS**

Pictures by **BARRY DIXON**

AS the wind rustled the trees in the dark night, four naked witches stood within a circle marked by white rope.

Two men crouched round a flaming cauldron. Another man and a girl held a sword to the sky and invoked "the gods and goddesses of the north, south, east and west."

I watched the amazing scene under a moonlit sky . . . while people slept peacefully in their detached houses only a mile away in exclusive Alderley Edge.

And I was told that until her initiation, the queen witch was a Roman Catholic.



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ON THIS NEW

UNDER the soft lights, the cards go down . . . in Manchester's Piccadilly Club. Night life is under way. Turn to Page 16 for special article by Val Shaw.



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Round the cauldron at 3 a.m.

I was told, too, that one witch in the coven is a Methodist minister at a Manchester church.

The witches had come to this little hollow on the eve of the Summer Solstice to perform a rite.

They had travelled by night from their coven headquarters in Manchester for the weird ceremony that followed an invocation.

The girl, a witch queen, stood before the cauldron, and said: "Great one of heaven, power of the sun, we invoke thee in thine ancient names. Michael, Balin, Arthur, Lugh, Herne. Come again as of old into this land."



Sword at breast in ritual . . .

The queen, 18-years-old Maxine, was a tall and beautiful blonde with dark, deep-set eyes.

Until her initiation last November she was a Roman Catholic. Her widowed mother did not know that she was a witch until a few weeks ago.

Her mother immediately called in the police, who tried to persuade the daughter

Continued on Back Page

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UNDER the soft lights, the cards go down . . . in Manchester's Pleadilly Club. Night life is under way. Turn to Page 16 for special article by Val Shaw.

A bit off the top shakes the Navy

MATE, it was enough to make you choke on your rum tot. The very thought of it — taking a bit off the top of the mast.

For when H.M.S. Puma, the Royal Navy's anti-submarine frigate, sails up Manchester Ship Canal next month three feet will have been taken off the mast.

The reason: She can't clear all the bridges.

The 2,300-ton ship will be on a five day recruiting drive in Manchester, and will be flying all her flags, pennants and bunting.



Said a naval spokesman, "We have to take three feet off the top of the mast because the bridges are so low.

"It's all very sad. Crews on other ships will be going around saying that at least someone has managed to cut us down to size."

Said the spokesman: "As soon as we clear the last bridge, a sailor with a spanner will climb up — and the mast will be back to full size."

FIVE DAYS IN COMA: P.C. DIES

Manchester police Constable Roger Dunkerley, 24, died in Ashton General Hospital yesterday.

On duty last Thursday at Manchester Road, Droylsden, his motor cycle collided with a car. He received multiple injuries, including a fractured skull, and never regained consciousness.

P.C. Dunkerley, who was not married and lived at Hazel Grove, had been in the police force for nearly six years.

In 1962 he broke his neck in a motor cycle accident at Stockport when going off duty. He was in hospital for several months.

**The amazing
ritual by
night at
Alderley Edge**

WHITE MAGIC

Continued from Page One

from witchcraft. Priests performed an exorcism and sprinkled Maxine with holy water.

The witch queen told me that since her mother's discovery, the parish priests had been praying for her redemption. An Anglican friend had asked the Bishop of Manchester, Dr. William Greer, to do the same.

The witch queen has left home and is living in a flat.



Within the magic circle . . .

After her initial speech, she handed a wand to her high priest. He plunged it into the cauldron saying: "Spear to the cauldron, lance to the grail, spirit to flesh, man to woman, sun to earth."

The high priest told me that he is a 39-years-old professional witch.

He is Maxine's fiance and plans to marry her in a witch rite known as "Hand fasting" when she is 21.

"I'm the elder of this coven," he said. "What used to be called the devil in the old days."

40 witches in all

He founded the coven three years ago and has gathered to it 40 witches from all over Lancashire.

The other two men were a 21-years-old clerk and a 22-years-old draughtsman.

The ceremony, involving incantations and mysterious signs, drew to its close. The cauldron fire was stamped out.



**Queen of
Heaven,
Queen of
Hell —
Lend your
power
unto
the spell . . .**



Sword, chalice and wand beside the cauldron . . .

be a witch and so she initiated me."

Only those that the goddess selects can become witches, and witches never solicit converts. People come to them, ask to join, and if the goddess gives consent they may join.

"Working" is the name given to the rites by which they invoke power.

Great cone of power

"We are able to raise the great cone of power," said the high priest of the witches. "With this we can cure disease, alter personality and luck or gain wealth.

"Our laws forbid us to use the powers for evil. This is the difference between us and black magicians.

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SALE

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Arms upraised in ritual . . .

We had witnessed something rarely seen by the uninitiated. We had seen what local residents have often rumoured — a gathering of witches on Alderly Edge.

Earlier in the evening we had sat in the coven waiting for the secrecy of darkness — while the high priest spoke of witchcraft.

He said: "There are 40 witches from all over Lancashire here. And in the last 17 months I have initiated four newcomers.

From all walks of life

"They are from all walks of life, professionals and bricklayers."

"One of them is a Methodist minister from a Manchester church."

He explained that "Wica," the cult of witches was a religion of "perfect love and perfect trust."

"No-one has to give up their beliefs to become a witch."

In Maxine's case, he said, it was the action of her mother and the reaction of the priests that made her give up Catholicism.

He said that he, the first practising witch in Manchester, had been initiated by his grandmother when he was seven years old.

"I was disturbing her working," he added, "She realised that the goddess wanted me

power

unto

the spell . . .



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"We do not practise black magic for evil. We use white magic for good."

Although other witches in the coven have jobs he is a full-time witch.

"Like a Christian priest I am on call to those who want me day and night." He explained that he lives from a private income.



Witches dance round the flames.

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