

# NO WOODLAND

# WITCH, SAYS MISS MARY

*Daily Mirror, October 10th, 1967.*



Miss Mary Cardell after the hearing yesterday. She is claiming damages in a libel action.

A "SHRUNKEN HEAD" was handed to a High Court jury yesterday in a case involving allegations of witchcraft and devil worship deep in an English wood.

The head, made of cloth and hair, was one of the exhibits in a libel action brought by 54-year-old Miss Mary Cardell.

Miss Cardell claimed damages for alleged libel in two newspaper stories—one headed "Witchcraft In The Wood," and the other "Devil Worshippers By Night In Surrey Wood."

She denied that she was the "Beth the Witch Maiden" who was said in one of the stories to have taken part in a forest ritual.

The newspaper, the London Evening News, claimed that the stories were not defamatory, that Miss Cardell was not identified and that the reports were true.

Miss Cardell claimed that because of the articles a businessman with whom she had been friendly for years had stopped sending her money, and reduced the amount he left her in his will from £8,000 to £2,000.

### Clear

Her counsel, Mr. Anthony McCowan, said that the jury might think a Mr. Roy Howard, who once worked as a handyman on Miss Cardell's farm but then was sacked, was "the villain of the piece."

Mr. Howard might have laid on a special ceremony in the woods for the newspaper, he said. And it was clear that he had given them a lot of information.

The first story began: "Deep in the dark heart of a remote Surrey wood the unholy medieval practice of witchcraft was revived in all its satanic ritual."

"Incense drifted through the wood, heavily sealed by barbed wire as for two hours a dozen cowed figures went through a ceremony of devil worship."

Both stories, he said, referred to the shadowy figures being led by a man who called himself Rex Nemorensis, self-styled "King of the Woods," and a London psychologist in public life.

### Sister

They referred also to his sister, known as Beth the Witch Maiden, carrying a lamp of incense on the end of a long pole in her capacity as Diana the Huntress, symbolising the goddess of fertility.

Mr. McCowan said that the man Miss Cardell regarded as her brother was a psychologist who wrote articles under the name of Rex Nemorensis.

He explained that Miss Cardell and her "brother," Mr. Charles Cardell, were not related, but had lived together for thirty years on a brother-and-sister basis, and had both changed their names to Cardell.

Mr. McCowan added that

## 'Shrunken head' shown to the jury

Miss Cardell and her "brother" ran a business called "Dumblecott Magick Productions."

They had once set up a mock witchcraft glade in their wood, as a publicity stunt for a "Moon magick beauty balm."

Miss Cardell, of Charlwood, Surrey, said that the "shrunken head" was to advertise the balm.

"We had dressed up the wood as a humorous tableau," she said.

Her "brother" tried to help gullible people who believed in the world of the occult, she said.

Once they had taken out a bogus "Magick" advertisement, to try to contact

people who claimed they could levitate.

Sir Peter Rawlinson, Q.C., for the newspaper, said that Mr. Cardell had written to Mr. Howard saying: "In thirty days from now I have to meet the Vent and plead your case. In plain language, save your neck."

### Shouted

Miss Cardell said that she knew nothing about a group called the Vent.

When Sir Peter suggested that ceremonies had taken place in her woods, with people wearing ceremonial robes, she shouted back: "Never, never, never!"

The case continues today.