



Magick moments in a Charlwood glade

"King of Woods" refutes "witchcraft" story

BY W. J. LOCKE

WITH warm Spring sunshine and the song of the birds to add charm to a peaceful rural scene, I drove along the Charlwood-Newdigate road the other morning to seek out a man whose name has been linked with "the unholy medieval practice of witchcraft." Soon I reached the entrance to an unpretentious, neat little house which stood no more than 50 yards from the road. Over adjoining double gates was the legend: "Dumblecott Magick Productions."

I knocked at the door of the house—a converted lodge—and came face to face with a charming lady who described as nonsense the story in a national newspaper which credited her as being a "witch maiden" and one who played an important part in witchcraft rites allegedly conducted in a wood of elder trees no more than 400 yards from where we were standing.

My knock had been answered by Miss Mary Cardell, 50-years-old psychologist, who relaxes at this retreat in the heart of the Surrey countryside with her brother, 72-years-old Charles Cardell, also a psychologist and well known for his writings on the occult and allied matters.

Chatting with Miss Cardell, I found it hard to visualise her as a "witch maiden." Attractively dressed in slacks, brilliant scarlet blouse and matching hat,

she looked considerably younger than her years. Knowing that herbal cosmetics are among the commodities manufactured by Dumblecott Magick Productions—of which she and her brother are directors—I asked my hostess if these cosmetics played any part in helping her to retain her youthful complexion and figure. "I use no make-up whatever," she told me. "But you can say that I am a firm believer in Moon Magick."

In anticipation of my next question, Miss Cardell told me she could say nothing at this stage about Moon Magick.

King of the woods

Our conversation was interrupted when the door was flung open with a flourish and I came face to face with Charles Cardell, an imposing figure of a man with deep-set penetrating eyes offering a warm greeting from beneath the wide brim of his near-Stetson. This, then, was Rex Nemorensis, self-styled "King of the Woods."

I had been invited by Charles Cardell to attend a Press conference—as it happened, I was the only newspaper man to turn up—at which he proposed to issue a statement flatly denying an article that had been published in a London evening newspaper alleging he conducted devil-worshipping ceremonies in the nearby wood on his land.

With a minimum of ceremony, Charles Cardell invited me to accompany him to the wood to see for myself what, it had been alleged was "a temple of witchcraft and Black Magic." I was escorted across open farmland, past several workshops and a laboratory in which herbal cosmetics are devised, and to the threshold of a typical woodland glade.

To one side of the well-trodden entrance was a freshly-painted notice: *It read: "Admittance: Witches-2s. 6d.; Press-5s." I was ready for this sort of thing, for Mr. Cardell had made it clear he had not taken the evening newspaper report seriously, and intended to "go all out for laughs."*

A little further along the path, other notices had been put up. One said: "Witches Retyre-ing Room"; another "Broomstick Park"; and a third "Take 13 Steps to Moon Magick." This last one puzzled me (if there was a joke, I failed to see it.) But when I asked for an explanation, Mr. Cardell gave me a



mysterious smile and promised information "later".

Silver arrow

Amid the clusters of elder trees, there were forest trees and I noticed protruding from a mature oak a large steel arrow, set at an angle of 45 degrees to the ground and about 12-ft. above ground level. Beneath the arrow a plaque had been nailed to the tree, and in neatly executed carving had been inscribed the well known poem beginning "I shot an arrow into the air, it fell to earth I know not where."

At the foot of the plaque was the inscription, *Paran Hurder Meest*. Mr. Cardell translated for me: "It will all come right in the end." He was quick to point out that this particular exhibit in the wood was a serious one, and he added that the poem was a favourite of his.

I went deeper into the wood, richly carpeted with primroses and with a narrow stream meandering gently through it. On to another large oak—and further mystery. For running down the trunk were seven small plaques each bearing the letter "D". Below the

seventh "D" was a roughly carved wooden fish with the words "Moon Magick" painted across it.

Pressed for an explanation, Cardell would merely say: "The *Ds to Moon Magick* are the philosophy of the Moon Magick, are seven words, each beginning the letter D."

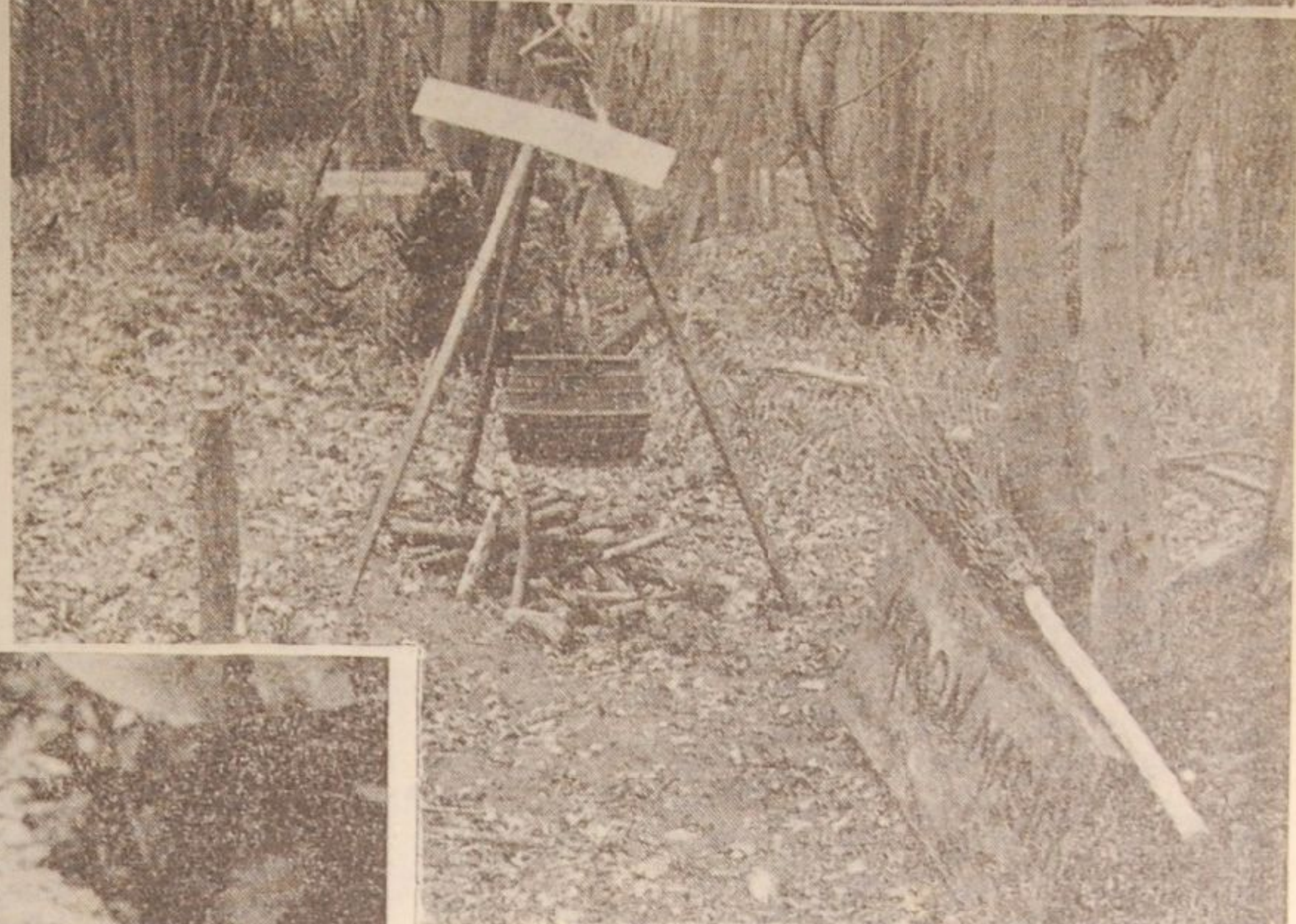
As my mind puzzled over matters, I looked ahead and saw a row of large flat stones on which sand had been spread, and on which had been placed a shrunken head (or at least a reasonable facsimile), imitation spade, a bowl of water, a bone and a candle.

In another corner of the wood I saw a cauldron suspended over a pile of ashes; elsewhere there was a large sphere tinted silver with a notice on a side pronouncing "The Crystal Ball."

Macabre sight

The most macabre joke of all, however, was yet to come. In the setting itself were a pair of upturned red knee boots. In that setting, one has to keep a close rein on the imagination





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As my mind puzzled over these matters, I looked ahead and saw a table of large flat stones on which sand had been spread, and on which had been placed a shrunken head (or at least a reasonable facsimile), imitation spiders, a bowl of water, a bone and a crystal ball.

In another corner of the wood I saw a cauldron suspended over a pile of ashes; elsewhere there was a large glass sphere tinted silver with a notice alongside pronouncing "The Crystal Tells All."

As I returned to the embrace of the warm sun shining from a cloudless sky and left the shadowy, still wood behind, Mr. Cardell told me that when he had cleared all the "gimmicks" away, he would set up a museum of witchcraft and magick in the wood.

He added that he and his sister owned 40 acres of the surrounding land, but did nothing with it during the winter. Shortly he would be planting gladioli corms, and, later, sell the flowers to Covent Garden.

Recently he and his sister had been working on the final chapters of a book due to be published soon. Entitled "Magick is our Business", it will include sections under chapter headings such as "The Psychic Garden of Weeds"; "The Great Witch Cult"; "Magic and Sorcery"; "Ghoulies and Ghosties"; "Hypnotism"; and "Consciousness".

After my conducted tour of the wood, I was invited into the Cardells' home and was struck by its cosiness and comfort. In a study well stocked with books on a variety of subjects, Charles Cardell handed me a typewritten statement categorically denying the "witchcraft in the wood" story which had been printed.

The statement pointed out that he and his sister were professional psychologists with consulting rooms at 63, Queen's Gate, London, and specialised in paranoid schizophrenia as caused by dabbling unwisely in the "occult" arts.

Above the signatures, both offered

£1,000 to any Press representative who could prove that they dabbled in black magic, devil-worship, fertility rites or in any form of indecency whatsoever.

I had been a passer-by, I had stopped, I had taken refreshment. I had also met two remarkable people . . . and my eyes had seen some interesting things.

★ Footnote: Throughout my story I have been careful to spell "magick" thus. This was at the express request of Mr. Cardell, who stressed that to spell it without the "k" signified "black magic."

Macabre sight

The most macabre joke of all, however, was yet to come. In the stream itself were a pair of upturned rubber knee boots. In that setting, one had to keep a close rein on the imagination . . .