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# SECRETS OF BRITAIN'S WHITE

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**S**OME people are with witches from birth, they say. Some are initiated by a spouse. But the majority enter witchcraft by word of mouth or through occult magazines.

Anybody can become a practitioner of this ancient cult. All they need is a little know-how and the tools of the trade.

Two new books—*Lid Off The Cauldron* (Fredrick Muller, £6.95) by Patricia Crowther, and *Eight Sabbats For Witches* (Robert Hale, £6.95) by Janet and Stewart Farrar—will spell out all you've ever wanted to know about witchcraft.

Patricia Crowther, a practising witch since 1960 and High Priestess of the Sheffield Coven, says: "Every person who wishes to become a member of the Craft must be brought in by an already initiated witch; otherwise the initiation is not valid."

Witches believe in reincarnation. If you were a witch in a previous life, they say, you will be drawn back into it.

**More and more people are making modern-day magic. But it can rebound on them**

Another certain method of entry is to be born into a family of witches.

"Many of the secrets are communicated orally," says Patricia Crowther. "They are never committed to paper."

### NATURE

You must have a genuine desire to worship the

old gods of nature to become a witch.

Any other motive—such as morbid curiosity, desire for power over others, or the intention of using magic for material gain—will be doomed to failure.

Witches are initiated naked and must swear to keep the secrets of the craft.

The initiation introduces them to the ways of working White (beneficial) magic—but "re-birth" isn't complete until they have passed through all grades of advancement.

In the second stage—the concept of symbolic death and resurrection—they are "re-born" with new spiritual knowledge

and a new magical personality and name.

The basic purpose of witchcraft, say devotees, is to develop a greater understanding of one's inner being—which demands years of dedication.

Co-authors Janet and Stewart Farrar estimate that the active adherents of Wicca (as witchcraft is called by devotees) now number tens of thousands and are increasing.

You can put together a do-it-yourself witchcraft kit and form your own magic circle.

You'll need a black-handled knife about 9ins. long, a wand, a cauldron, a five-pointed star-shaped image and a red cord.

### FULL-MOON

The wand should be cut from a hazel tree, on a Wednesday at full-moon (in the witches' calendar, both tree and day belong to Mercury).

A gypsy-pot makes an ideal cauldron when celebrating the fire festivals but an ordinary black bowl will do.

A round or square piece of metal, or a large flat



Patricia Crowther, a High Priestess of the Sheffield Coven, in her ceremonial robes

# WITCHES

stone, will serve as a base on which to draw your star, symbolising man the magician.

Finally, you'll need a red cord, or three strands of red, white and blue, plaited together.

The cord, say the experts, can be worn round the leg like a garter during magical rituals, "absorbing your own vibrations and aura."

Now you're ready to work magic—inside your "magic circle."

This can be drawn on the floor or carpet in chalk—but it must be 9ft. in diameter.

Your altar can be a table or chest. You'll also need five candlesticks: one for the altar, and one for each of the four points of the circle.

## INCENSE

Other magic aids include incense—joss-sticks are the most common form used—a bowl of water, a supply of salt (for making the circle holy), a sprinkler (usually a sprig of herbs tied together) and a sweet-toned bell for invoking the ancient gods, known to witches as the "kings of the elements."

Witches are quick to point out that witchcraft has nothing in common with black magic or sacrificial blood rites.

Black magic, they stress, is the use of the mind's powers to harm others. But witchcraft, they insist, exists to do good.

As Patricia Crowther puts it: "If a witch intentionally sets out to harm anybody, he (or she) would not only be breaking a strict law, but would also put himself in jeopardy, as the magic performed would rebound on him three-fold."

You have been warned.