

# **THE PATH OF DRUIDRY**

**WALKING THE ANCIENT GREEN WAY**

**BY PENNY BILLINGTON**

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Weather conditions: \_\_\_\_\_

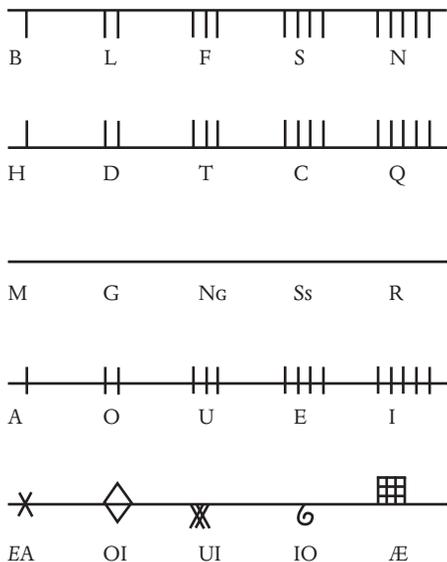
*Late—brief greeting whilst kettle boiling: beautiful sunny morning—breathed in golden energy, imagined it sinking through my body.*

*Midday—getting overcast. Agitated from work—three minutes observing breath—eyes drooped, tuned in: blind cord rattling, pigeon cooing, breeze cold on cheek, car noises. Imagined breeze clearing self; breathed out annoyance.*

*Evening—washing up; saw sunset from window and reminded of exercises. To backyard and stood on earth. Day's tensions sank through feet, stretched arms to sunset and imagined touching fiery sky. Felt like a tree.*

Element	Earth	Air	Fire	Water
Qualities	Stability, fruitfulness	Clairty, the intellect	Vigor, energy, spirit	Love, cleansing
Totem Animal	Bear	Hawk	Stag	Salmon
Angel	Uriel	Raphael	Michael	Gabriel
Season	Midwinter	Spring	Summer	Autumn
Festival	Alban Arthan	Alban Eilir	Alban Hefin	Alban Elfed
Time of day	Midnight	Dawn	Midday	Evening
Time of life	Old age	Youth	Prime	Maturity
Gender	Female	Male	Male	Female
Direction	North	East	South	West

October/November	Samonios	Seed-fall
November/December	Dumannios	The darkest depths
December/January	Riuos	Cold-time
January/February	Anagantios	Stay-home-time
February/March	Ograonios	Time of ice
March/April	Cutios	Time of winds
April/May	Giamonios	Shoots-show
May/June	Simivisionios	Time of brightness
June/July	Equos	Horse-time
July/August	Elembiuos	Claim-time
August/September	Edrinios	Arbitration-time
September/October	Cantios	Song-time



The twenty letters are divided into four groups of five:

B	Beith	Birch	New beginnings
L	Luis	Rowan	Protection
F	Fearn	Alder	Oracular, protective
S	Saille	Willow	Lunar rhythms
N	Nuin	Ash	Linking the worlds, communication
H	Huathe	Hawthorn	Transformation, enchantment
D	Duir	Oak	Strength, courage, doorway to the mysteries
T	Tinne	Holly	Warrior, energy, challenge
C	Coll	Hazel	Wisdom, intuition
Q	Quert	Apple	Beauty, healing, regeneration

M	Muin	Vine/bramble	Harvest
G	Gort	Ivy	Bravery, persistence
Ng	Ngetal	Reed	Change, challenge, action
S	Straif	Blackthorn	Cleansing, no choice
R	Ruis	Elder	Breaking down, the end and the beginning
A	Ailim	Silver fir	Long sight, new start
O	Ohn	Furze	Vitality, new impetus
U	Ur	Heather	Maturity, power, harvest
E	Eadha	White poplar	Sensitivity, inner awareness
I	Ioho	Yew	Forces of destiny, eternity

Later, five more letters were added to these:

Ch	Koad	Grove	A sacred place, all knowledge available
TH	Oir	Spindle	Sweetness, sudden intelligence
PH	Uilleand	Honeysuckle	Hidden secret
PH	Phagos	Beech	Old knowledge, writing
XI	Mør	The sea	Travel, maternal links

## GLOSSARY AND PRONUNCIATION GUIDE



**Alban** (*Al-ban*) The “light”; title of the four solar festivals of the year.

**Alban Arthan** (*Al-ban Arth-an*) The light of Arthur; midwinter solstice.

**Alban Eilir** (*Al-ban Ay-leer*) The light of the earth; spring equinox.

**Alban Hefin** (*Al-ban Hev-in*) The light of the shore; midsummer solstice.

**Alban Elfed** (*Al-ban Elv-ed*) The light of the waters; autumnal equinox.

**Albion** (*Al-be-on*) Earliest known name for Britain.

**Anglesey** Island off the northwest coast of Wales; site of the slaughter of the Druids by the Romans.

**Annwn** (*Ann-oon*) The deep place from which all life springs. The Otherworld, where magic is the norm.

**Aquae Sulis** (*Aquay Soolis*) The city of Bath, Somerset, England; famous for its hot springs.

**Arawn** (*Ar-ow-n*) The king of Annwn.

**Arberth** (*Ar-berth*) A mystical mound in southern Wales, of ritual significance to the rulers of Dyfed.

**Arbred** (*Ar-bred*) The world of the five senses, in which we live.

**Arianrhod** (*Ah-ree-ann-rod*) The daughter of Don and niece of Math, who was tricked into giving birth and disowned her son.

**Avagddu** (*Av-ag-thee*) “Utter darkness.” The nickname of Morfran, Cerridwen’s ugly son (the story of Taliesin).

**Avalon** The magical Isle of Apples where the wounded King Arthur was taken; associated with Glastonbury as its earthly equivalent.

**Awen** (*Ah-wen*) The flowing spirit of inspiration; the invocatory chant of many modern Druid organisations. Ceremonially sounded as three long syllables: “Ahhh...oooo...ennn.”

**Beltane** Ancestor of our May festivals, of fertility and growth; the most magical time of year to the ancient Welsh.

**Bladud** (*Bla-did*) Legendary king of Bath, cured of leprosy by bathing in its famous hot springs.

**Blodeuwedd** (*Blod-ay-weth*) “Flower face.” Maiden conjured from flowers to be Lleu’s wife.

**Boudicca** (*Boo-dikka*) Female chieftain of the Iceni tribe, who led a revolt against the Romans.

**Bran the Blessed** Giant king, one of the sons of Llyr who led a disastrous war against the Irish to rescue his sister.

**Branwen** Tragic matriarch and daughter of Llyr, whose son was killed by his uncle.

**Brehon laws** Ancient Irish law system, outlawed in the Seventeenth century.

**Brythonic** A branch of ancient Celtic language; the root of Cornish, Welsh, and Breton.

**Caer** (*Kay-er*) Fort or castle.

**Caer Arianrhod** The court of the silver wheel: the Corona Borealis constellation.

**Celtic cross** Equal-armed cross, surrounded by a circle.

**Cerridwen** (*Kerr-id-wen*) Initiating goddess with a magical cauldron.

**Chalice Well** Source of red-tinged water in Glastonbury, significant in that area's complex mythology.

**Cigva** (*Keeg-va*) The wife of Pryderi.

**Coligny** (*Colony*) **Calendar** Ancient Gaulish Celtic solar/lunar calendar, discovered in the late 1800s.

**Court of Don** (Welsh: *Llys Don*) Cassiopeia; the constellation commemorating Don.

**Don** Sister of Math, wife of Beli, and mother of Arianrhod, Gwydion, and Gilvaethwy.

**Dyfed** (*Duv-ed*) Ancient kingdom of South Wales.

**Eisteddfod** A sharing of bardic poetry and song; traditionally a Welsh competitive arts competition.

**Elphin** (*Elf-in*) Rescuer of Gwion Bach (Taliesin) from the weir.

**Euhages** (*U-haa-gez*) Latin source word for modern term "Ovate."

**Evnyssien** (*Ev-niss-ee-en*) Half-brother to the Children of Llyr who foments trouble with the Irish; twin of Nyssien.

**Foot-holder** Official court position in mediaeval Wales.

**Gilvaethwy** (*Gil-vayth-wee*) Younger nephew of Math.

**Goewin** (*Goy-ween*) Virgin foot-holder to Math the ruler.

**Goidelec** (*Goy-delic*) A strain of ancient Celtic language that evolved into Irish, Gaelic, and Manx.

**Gorsedd** (*Gor-seth*) A meeting, or meeting place, of ritual significance.

**Gronw Pebyr** (*Gronoo Peb-air*) Lover of the flower bride Blodeuwedd.

**Guenevere** (*Gwin-ev-ear*) King Arthur's queen.

**Gwawl** (*G-owl*) Rhiannon's suitor in the Otherworld.

**Gwern** (*Gw-ern*) Branwen's son, killed by his uncle.

**Gwion Bach** (*Gw-ee-on Back*) “Little Gwion”: Cerridwen’s servant, who is transformed into Taliesin.

**Gwydion** (*Gwid-ee-on*) Magician nephew of Math.

**Gwynedd** (*Gwin-eth*) The kingdom of Math, Snowdonia, northern Wales.

**Gwynvyd** (*Gwin-vid*) The realm of the starry heavens, one of the Celtic three worlds.

**Hafgan** (*Hav-gan*) “Summer song” or “summer white”; the king who threatens the kingdom of Annwn.

**Harlech** (*Harr-leck*) Mid-Wales coastal town; principal court of the ruling sons of Llyr.

**Imbolc** (*Im-olc*) Festival of the first promise of spring, first day of February.

**Iolo Morganwg** (*Yollo Morgan-oog*) Inspired scholar of ancient Welsh, who produced much material on Druidry.

**Island of the Blessed** Ireland.

**Island of the Mighty** Britain.

**Leylines** Lines of energy crossing the earth, marked by ancient stones and monuments.

**Lleu Llaw Gyffes** (*Hll-eh-oo Hll-ah-oo Guff-es*) Arianrhod’s son, sponsored by Gwydion and Math. (The Welsh double-L has no English equivalent sound. Produce it by placing the tip of tongue behind top front teeth and blowing gently through the sides of the mouth.)

**Llyr** (*Hll-ear*) Sea god; founder of the ruling family of mid-Wales.

**Lughnasadh** (*Loo-nass-ah*) Festival for the cutting of the grain at the beginning of August.

**Mabinogion** (*Mab-in-ogg-ee-on*) Collection of tales from the earliest Welsh manuscripts.

**Manawyddan** (*Man-a-with-an*) One of the sons of Llyr, who married Rhiannon.

**Math** (*Maa-th*) Ancient ruler of Gwynedd, whose feet could only touch the ground in times of war.

**Matholwch** (*Maa-th-ol-uck*) King of Ireland, who married Branwen, daughter of Llyr.

**Nwyfre** (*Noo-eve-ray*) “Firmament”; interpreted by modern Druids as the all-pervasive vigorous energy of life; also the name of an ancestral sky deity.

**Nyssien** (*Niss-ee-en*) Half-brother to the Children of Llyr “who created harmony and peace”; twin to Evnyssien.

**Ogham** (*O-ham*) Irish tree alphabet with magical significance, preserved on Celtic monuments.

**Ovate** A Druid trained in divination and natural lore.

**Posidonius** Ancient scholar who travelled widely and wrote about the Druids and early Celtic society; his lost works are referred to by other classical commentators.

**Primrose Hill** Site in London of the revival of the Druid Gorsedd by Iolo Morganwg in 1792; still used by modern Druids.

**Pryderi** (*Prid-erry*) Son of Pwyll and Rhiannon, who was stolen by magic at his birth.

**Pwyll** (*Poo-ith*) Ruler of Southern Wales, exchanged kingdoms with the lord of Annwn for a year; husband of Rhiannon.

**Rhiannon** (*Ree-ann-onn*) Otherworld bride of Pwyll, she underwent penance when her son was stolen; later wed Manawyddan.

**Samhain** (*Sow-en*) Celebrated now as Halloween; three days around October 31 when contact between the worlds becomes easier.

**Sarn Elen** (*Sa-rn Ell-en*) Welsh goddess of the trackways.

**Sovereignty** Kingship that implies the concept of a recognised harmonious relationship between a ruler and the land.

**Taliesin** (*Tal-ee-ess-in*) “Radiant brow”; Gwion Bach’s name after initiatory experiences that made him a preeminent Bard.

**Terrestrial zodiacs** The ancient landscape altered to mirror the heavens; a theory disproved, but still with mystical resonance.

**Totem animal** An animal, bird, or fish with which a Druid has made a special relationship, whose qualities can aid him or her.

**Triads** Ancient Welsh wisdom concerning the history of the Islands, preserved in three lines, supposedly as a memory aid.

**Vesica piscis** Deeply symbolic geometric shape formed by the overlapping of two circles, as in a simple Venn diagram.

**Votive offerings** Objects left ritually; usually referring to offerings cast into water; widespread amongst the ancient Celts.

**Wheel of the year** The seasonal cycle, divided by eight ritual celebrations at approximately six-week intervals: based on some ancient sources.

## Welsh Pronunciation Guide

### *Consonants*

b, d, h, l, m, n, p, t: Pronounced the same as in English

c: Hard as in “k”

ch: Similar to the “ch” sound in the Scottish word “loch”

dd: Soft “th” as in the English word “the”

f: Similar to the English letter “v”

ff: Similar to the English letter “f” as in Fred

g: Hard as in the English word “grip”

i: Similar to a double E, as in the English word “week”

ll: Sound made by placing the tip of the tongue behind the top front teeth and blowing gently through the sides of the mouth

ph: Similar to the “ph” sound in the English word “phantom”

r: A rolled “r” aspirate vibratory sound

s: Hard as in the English word “sin”

### *Vowels*

First syllable of a word is normally long, last syllable of a word is normally short.

a: Short as in “bat,” long as in “smart”

e: Short as in “let,” long as in “same”

i: Short as in “sing,” long as in “see”

o: Short as in “lot,” long as in “lawn”

u: Similar to the “i” sound in “list” but with greater emphasis.

w: Short as in “look,” long as in “swoon”

y: Several sounds that change in accordance to complex grammatical rules but similar to the “u” sound in the English word “under”