

A SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

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EVIDENCE OF PRE-ROMAN INHABITANCE

Tacitus' Agricola attests that there was a "moon stone" on the island which, according to the locals, had been there since "before Caesar came to the white cliffs".

According to Sir Walter Scott's Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft, the island has been continuously a site of worship since Pre-Roman times. Unfortunately, Scott's reference is only oblique, including the site in a list of many such to demonstrate the widespread pre-Roman religious practices of the British Isles.

In 1882, the Brichester Herald published excerpts from Ignatius Donnelly's Atlantis: The Antediluvian World "including passages of great local interest". These passages apparently were not included in Donnelly's actual book (they may not even have been written by Donnelly), but they include explicit references to the island along with a complex theory that the island had been visited by Atlantean elders, "the same precursors who taught Egyptians the art of their writing and their worship of strange suns".

EVIDENCE OF ROMAN ARCHITECTURE

See Tully's Roman Temples of the British Isle. If compared to the archaeological sketches held by the Severnford Historical Society, there are clear indications of Roman influences. Roberts' objection that the octagonal sanctuaries are only to be found upon the continent are specious.

RELIGIOUS PERSECUTIONS

592: An obscure monastic chronicle of the Severn Valley refers to a "fertility temple" on the island.

1309: After King Edward II, under orders from Pope Clement V, arrested Templars in England, among the accusations made within the trial records is that the Templar had "unnatural relations" with a witch who lived on the island.

It seems unlikely that a reference to "one of the cunning folk" living on an "island in the midst of the Severn, near Severnford" in the mid-15th century could refer to the same witch.

The Templar trial records also indicate that the order had built a temple in the Severn Valley in the late 13th century, for which there is ample evidence in Temphill. These accusations were not fictional.

1690: Testimony at a witch trial in Berkeley refers to a supposed witch cult that met on the island and "invoked elemental spirits of water".

Reports of strange lights in the air and water around the island continue through the 18th century. In 1790, according to Severn Sermons, a Collection of Holy Thought, Nevill Rayner, a clergyman in Severnford, declared that God had "struck down" the cult, which was apparently no longer gathering on the island. In 1826, Rayner went to the island to "rid my flock of evil". He was found in his church the next day, alive but mutilated.

The leader of this supposed "island cult" is named by the same priest, in a different sermon, as "Thomas Lee of Goatswood". Various stray "witches" are reported as visiting the island between 1790 and 1860.

MODERN TROUBLES

1803: Joseph Norton reportedly goes to the island to worship. Soon after he was found mutilated in Severnford.

According to a reporter in the Brichester Herald, Norton was raving about "going too near the stone". He was later taken to the Mercy Hill Asylum.

1804: An article in the Brichester Herald reports on recurring stories in Severnford regarding pale objects floating over the island. The objects are said to be "vaguely globular" and inexplicably disturbing.

1856: An unknown tramp steals a boat in Severnford and spends the night on the island. He returns to Severnford raving about something "fluttering at him". He is not seen in Severnford again.

1866: A prostitute was strangled and dumped on the island, but regained consciousness. She was taken off the island by dockside workers and transported to Brichester Central Hospital. Two days later, she was found horribly mutilated in the hospital ward. The attacker was never located.

1870-1880: A recrudescence of rumours about pale globes on the island.