

# The Celtic Well Mailing List

## Recommended Reading List

The list moderators recommend the following as reliable sources of information about the Celts and Celtic religion--ancient, medieval, and modern--or related fields. One of us or someone whose opinion we respect has read every book listed here. The books listed here are well-written, serious studies of their respective topics. Although we may not agree with every opinion expressed in these books, the authors draw defensible conclusions from the available evidence. The list does not include books on personal spirituality of any persuasion, although you may find inspiration in many of the volumes listed here.

We have tried to list only books that are currently in print. In a few cases, the only good sources were out of print. In such cases, we recommend that you try a college-type library or a source for used books such as [www.abebooks.com](http://www.abebooks.com), [www.interloc.com](http://www.interloc.com), or [www.powells.com](http://www.powells.com). NOTE: Some titles appear under more than one heading.

If you would like to recommend a book for inclusion here, please send a the title information and a short review to one of the list moderators.

Francine Nicholson: [fnichol@inisci.com](mailto:fnichol@inisci.com)

Mara Riley: [lindo@radix.net](mailto:lindo@radix.net)

Lisa Paitz Spindler: [lsspindler@radix.net](mailto:lsspindler@radix.net)

>\*\*Outstanding

\* Highly recommended

# Out of print or out of stock with no reprint date

### General Celtic Studies

#### **Introductory Level**

\*Barry Cunliffe, *The Ancient Celts*

Miranda Green, *Celtic Myths: the Legendary Past*

Miranda Green, *Dictionary of Celtic Myth and Legend*

\*John Koch and John Carey, *Celtic Heroic Age*

James MacKillop, *Dictionary of Celtic Mythology*, Oxford UP, 1998

\*Ruth Megaw, Vincent Megaw, *Celtic Art: From Its Beginnings to the Book of Kells*

\*Brinley Rees, Alwyn D. Rees, *Celtic Heritage: Ancient Tradition in Ireland and Wales*

Anne Ross, *Pagan Celtic Britain*

\*Shan Winn, *Heaven, Heroes, and Happiness: The Indo-European Roots of Western Ideology*

### **Intermediate Level**

Bettina Arnold and D. Blair Gibson, *Celtic Chieftdom, Celtic State*

Michael Hechter, *Internal Colonialism: The Celtic Fringe in British National Development, 1536-1966*, 1975, Univ. of California Press

Benjamin T. Hudson, *Prophecy of Berchan: Irish and Scottish High-Kings of the Early Middle Ages*, 1996, Greenwood Press

Kenneth Jackson, *Studies in Early Celtic Nature Poetry*, 1935, Cambridge Univ. Press

Donald MacAulay, *The Celtic Languages*, 1992, Cambridge Univ. Press  
Miranda Green, ed., *The Celtic World*

J. P. Mallory, *In Search of the Indo-Europeans: Language, Archaeology, and Myth*  
\*Sabatino Moscati (Editor), *The Celts* (September 1991) Rizzoli Intl Pubns; ISBN: 0847814076

Venetia Newell, ed., *The Witch in History: Essays in Honor of Katharine M. Briggs*, (originally published in 1973 as *The Witch Figure* by RKP, but reprinted here by Barnes & Noble in 1996, includes the essays, "The Divine Hag of the Pagan Celts" by Anne Ross & "Some Instances of Image-Magic in Great Britain" by Christina Hole

David Ranki, *Celts in the Classical World*  
S. O. Tuama, ed., *The Gaelic League Idea*, 1972, Mercier Press

### **Advanced Level**

Jean Louis Brunaux, *The Celtic Gauls: Gods, Rites and Sanctuaries*, Seaby, London, 1988 (trans. from French)

Jean Louis Brunaux, *Les Religions Gauloises*, 1996 (not yet trans. from French)  
Séamas Ó Catháin, *The Festival of Brigit: Celtic Goddess and Holy Woman*, DBA, Dublin, 1995

### **Pre-Christian Celtic Religion**

Introductory Level

H. R. Ellis Davidson, *Myths and Symbols in Pagan Europe: Early Scandinavian and Celtic Religions* (December 1989) Syracuse University Press; ISBN: 0815624417

\*Miranda Green, *World of the Druids*

Miranda Green, *The Gods of the Celts*

Miranda Green, *Celtic Goddesses: Warriors, Virgins, and Mothers*

Stuart Pigott, *The Druids*

\*\*#Marie-Louise Sjoestedt, *Gods and Heroes of the Celts*

Intermediate Level

Sandra Billington (Editor), Miranda Green (Editor), *The Concept of the Goddess*

\*Walter L., Jr. Brenneman, Mary G. Brenneman, *Crossing the Circle at the Holy Wells of Ireland*

\*Miriam Robbins Dexter, *Whence the Goddesses: A Source Book*

\*Miranda Green, *Animals in Celtic Life and Myth*

\*Miranda Green, *Symbol and Image in Celtic Religious Art*

Miranda Green, *Sun-Gods of Ancient Europe*, 1991, Batsford

\*\*Bruce, Lincoln, *Death, War, and Sacrifice: Studies in Ideology and Practice*

\*Bruce Lincoln, *Myth, Cosmos, and Society: Indo-European Themes of Creation and Destruction*

Bruce Lincoln, *Priests, Warriors, and Cattle: A Study in the Ecology of Religions* (Hermeneutics, Studies in the History of Religions ; V. 10)

F. Marian McNeill, *Silver Bough* (3 vols.), 1957, William MacCellan

\*Anne Ross, *The Life and Death of a Druid Prince*

### **Celtic Mythology and Literature**

#### **Texts**

\*T.P. Cross, C. Slover, eds. & trans., *Ancient Irish Tales*

\*Patrick Ford, trans., *The Mabinogi*

Jeffrey Gantz, ed. & trans., *Early Irish Myths and Sagas*

Isabella Augusta, Lady Gregory, *Cuchulain of Muirthemne: The Story of the Men of the Red Branch of Ulster*

Isabella A. Gregory, *Gods and Fighting Men: The Story of the Tuatha De Danaan and the Fianna of Ireland*

\*Kenneth H. Jackson, *A Celtic Miscellany*

\*Thomas Kinsella, trans., *The T/ain: Translated from the Irish Epic T/ain Bo Cuailnge*

\*\*John Koch and John Carey, *Celtic Heroic Age*

Gerard Murphy, *Early Irish Lyrics : 8th-12th Century* Published 1998

### **Commentary and Analysis**

James Carney (Editor), *Medieval Irish Lyrics With the Irish Bardic Poet: Selected and Translated. With, the Irish Bardic Poet: A Study in the Relationship of Poet and Patron* Published 1985

Myles Dillon , *Early Irish Literature* (Celtic Studies) 1994

Miranda Green, *Celtic Myths: The Legendary Past*

Proinsias MacCana, *Celtic Mythology*

James MacKillop, *Dictionary of Celtic Mythology*

\*\*J.F. Nagy, *Conversing with Angels and Ancients*

\*\*#J.F. Nagy, *Wisdom of the Outlaw*

Daragh Smyth, *A Guide to Irish Mythology*

\*\*Maria Tymoczko, *The Irish Ulysses* Published 1997

Also see entries under Pre-Christian Celtic Religion

### **Breton Social & Cultural History**

Patrick Galiou & Michael Jones, *The Bretons*, 1991, Blackwell

### **Irish Sources**

#### **General**

F.X. Martin (Editor), T. W. Moody, *The Course of Irish History*

R.F. Foster (Editor), *The Oxford History of Ireland* (August 1992) Oxford University Press; ISBN: 019285271X

#### **Prehistory**

Peter Harbison, *Pre-Christian Ireland: From the First Settlers to the Early Celts (Ancient Peoples and Places)*

\*Barry Raftery, *Pagan Celtic Ireland: The Enigma of the Irish Iron Age*

Niall Sharples, Alison Sheridan (Editor), *Vessels for the Ancestors: Essays on the Neolithic of Britain and Ireland in Honour of Audrey Henshall* (June 1992) Edinburgh Univ Pr; ISBN: 0748603417

### **Medieval--General**

N.B. Aitchison, *Armagh & the Royal Centres in Early Medieval Ireland*, 1994, Cruithne Press/Boydell & Brewer

Daibhi O Croinin, *Early Medieval Ireland: 400-1200*, 1995, Longman  
Liam and Maire de Paor, *Early Christian Ireland*

Michael Richter, *Medieval Ireland: The Enduring Tradition*

### **Medieval--Special Topics**

Thomas Bartlett (Editor), Keith Jeffery (Editor), *A Military History of Ireland* (October 1997) Cambridge University Press; ISBN: 0521629896

\*Lisa M. Bitel, *Land of Women Tales of Sex and Gender from Early Ireland* (April 1998) Cornell University Press; ISBN: 0801485444

Peter Cherici, *Celtic Sexuality: Power, Paradigms and Passion* (March 1995) Tyrone Pr; ISBN: 1884723012

\*Fergus Kelly, *Guide to Early Irish Law*

\*Gearoid MacNiocaill, *Ireland Before the Vikings*

Kenneth Nicholls, *Gaelic and Gaelicized Ireland*

Donncha O Corrain, *Ireland Before the Normans*

\*#Nerys Thomas Patterson, *Cattle Lords and Clansmen: The Social Structure of Early Ireland* (April 1994) Univ of Notre Dame Pr; ISBN: 0268008000

Patrick Power, *Sex and Marriage in Ancient Ireland*

Also see the entries under Celtic Christianity.

### **Modern**

John Ardagh, *Ireland and the Irish : Portrait of a Changing Society* Reprint edition (March 1997) Penguin USA (P); ISBN: 0140171606

Jonathan Bardon, *A History of Ulster* (August 1993) Dufour Editions; ISBN: 0856404764

John Conroy, *Belfast Diary: War As a Way of Life* (June 1995) Beacon Press; ISBN: 0807002178

R. F. Foster, *Modern Ireland, 1600-1972* (February 1993) Penguin USA (P); ISBN: 0140132503

Christine Kinealy, *The Great Calamity: The Irish Famine 1845-52* (April 1997) R. Rinehart Publishers; ISBN: 157098140X

J. J. Lee, *Ireland, 1912-1985 : Politics and Society* (March 1990) Cambridge Univ Press; ISBN: 0521377412

Cecil Woodham-Smith, *The Great Hunger: Ireland 1845-9*

### **Irish Social Customs and Folklore**

Conrad M. Arensberg, *Irish Countryman: An Anthropological Study* Published 1959

Kevin Danaher, *Folktales of the Irish Countryside*

Kevin Danaher, *Irish Country People* Published 1990

\*Walter Y. Evans-Wentz, *Fairy-Faith in Celtic Countries* (May 1990) Citadel Press Book; ISBN: 0806511605

\*Robin Fox, *The Tory Islanders: A People of the Celtic Fringe* (June 1995) Univ of Notre Dame Pr; ISBN: 0268018901

Henry Glassie, ed., *Irish Folk Tales (Pantheon Fairy Tale and Folklore Library)* Published 1997

\*\*Henry Glassie, *Passing the Time in Ballymenone Patrick Logan, Irish Country Cures*

Patricia Lysaght, *The Banshee: The Irish Death Messenger*

\*Peter Narvaez, *The Good People*

Tomas O Crohan, *The Islandman*, orig. 1937, Oxford Univ. Press

Sean O Suilleabhain, *Irish Wake Amusements* 1997

Peig Sayers, *An Old Woman's Reflections: The Life of a Blasket Island Storyteller*, orig. 1962, Oxford Univ. Press

Lady Wilde, *Irish Cures, Mystic Charms, and Superstitions* (March 1991) Sterling Publishing; ISBN: 0806982004

Sir William Wilde, *Irish Popular Superstitions* (December 1995) Sterling Publishing; ISBN: 0806906499

### **Irish Language and Literature**

Turlough Faolain, *Blood on the Harp: Irish Rebel History in Ballad*, 1983, Whitson Publishing Co.

Robin Flower, *The Irish Tradition*, orig. 1947, Oxford University Press  
Damain McManus, *A Guide to Ogam*, 1991, An Sagart

Brian O Cuiv, ed., *A View of the Irish Language*, 1969, The Stationary Office, Dublin

Daithi O hOgain, *Fionn mac Cumhaill: Images of the Gaelic Hero*, 1988, Gill & Macmillan

### **Scottish Sources**

#### **Scottish History (Highland/Gaidhlig Focus)**

John Bannerman, *Studies in the History of Dalriada*, 1974, Scottish Academic Press

John Bannerman, *The Beatons: A Medical Kindred in the Classical Gaelic Tradition*, 1986, John Donald

David Craig, *On the Crofters' Trail: In Search of the Clearance Highlanders*, 1992, Jonathan Cape, Ltd. (anecdotal social history with interviews & stories)

T.M. Devine, *Clanship to Crofters War: The Social Transformation of the Scottish Highlands*, 1994, Manchester Univ. Press

I.F. Grant and Hugh Cheape, *Periods in Highland History*, 1997 (orig. 1987), Shephard Walwyn

Ian Grimble, orig. ed., *Trial of Patrick Sellar: The Tragedy of the Highland Evictions*, 1962

Isabel Henderson, *The Picts*, 1967, Thames & Hudson

James Hunter, *Making of the Crofting Community*, 1976

James Hunter, *The Claim of Crofting*, 1991

James Hunter, *The Scottish Highlanders: A People and their Place*, 1992

Charles Maclean, *Island on the Edge of the World: The Story of St. Kilda*, orig. 1972

E. Richards, *A History of the Highland Clearances: Agrarian Transformation and the Evictions, 1746-1886* (2 vols.), 1982 & 1985, Croom Helm

Ronald Williams, *The Lords of the Isles: The Clan Donald and the Early Kingdom of the Scots*, 1997 (orig. 1984), House of Lochar

#### **Scottish Gaidhlig Language & Language-Focused History**

Nancy C. Dorian, *Language Death: The Life Cycle of a Scottish Gaelic Dialect*, 1981, Univ. of Pennsylvania Press

Victor Edward Durkacz, *The Decline of the Celtic Languages: A Study of Linguistic & Cultural Conflict in Scotland, Wales & Ireland from the Reform to the Twentieth Century*, 1983, John Donald

William Gillies, ed., *Gaelic and Scotland: Alba Agus a'Ghaidhlig*, 1989, Edinburgh Univ. Press

N. Macdonald, *Gaelic: Looking to the Future*, 1985, Andrew Fletcher Society  
Kenneth MacKinnon, *The Lion's Tongue: The Story of the Original and Continuing Language of the Scottish People*, 1974, Club Leabhar

Derick S. Thomson, ed., *Companion to Gaelic Scotland*, 1994 (rev. pb edition), Gairm Publications

C.W.L. Withers, *Gaelic Scotland: The Transformation of a Cultural Region*, 1988, Routledge

### **Scottish Social Customs and Folklore**

Mary Beith, *Healing Threads*

A.J. Bruford & D. A. MacDonald, *Scottish Traditional Tales*, 1994, Polygon

J.F. Campbell, ed., *More West Highland Tales* (2 vols.) orig. published in 1940 (vol. 1) & 1960 (v. 2); reprinted in 1994, Birlinn in pb reprint editions with facing Gaidhlig-English pages

\*Alexander Carmichael, *Carmina Gadelica*

I.F. Grant, *Highland Folk Ways*, 1961, Routledge, Kegan & Paul

Norah Jones, *Power of Raven, Wisdom of Serpent*

Angus MacLellan, transl. by John Lorne Campbell, *Stories from South Uist*, 1961, Routledge, Kegan & Paul

Joe Neil MacNeil, ed. by John Shaw, *Tales Until Dawn/Sgeul gu Latha*, 1987, McGill-Queen's University Press (old Cape Breton tradition-bearer & storyteller, dual lang. on facing pages)

David Nutt, *The Fianns: Stories, Poems, and Traditions of Fionn and his Warrior Band* (No. IV in the Argyllshire Series of Waifs & Strays of Celtic Tradition) ed. by orig. 1891

#Anne Ross, *Folklore of the Scottish Highlands*

Margaret Fay Shaw, *Folksongs & Folklore of South Uist*, 1977, Oxford University Press

Derick S. Thomson, *An Introduction to Gaelic Poetry*, orig. 1974, St. Martin's Press

## **Welsh Sources**

### **Welsh History**

John Davies, *A History of Wales*

### **Welsh Language & Literature**

Rachel Bromwich, ed. & trans., *Trioedd Ynys Prydein: The Welsh Triads*, 2nd ed. (Includes extensive notes on all personages and places mentioned in the Triads)

Janet Davies, *The Welsh Language*

Patrick K. Ford, trans., *The Mabinogi and Other Medieval Welsh Tales*

Gwyn Jones and Thomas Jones, trans., *The Mabinogion* (includes the Romances and the Native Tales that Ford leaves out)

Meic Stephens, ed., *Oxford Companion to the Literature of Wales*

### **Welsh Culture & Folklore**

Dafydd Jenkins, *The Law of Hywel Dda*

T. Gwynn Jones (OOP), *Welsh Folklore and Folk Customs*

Trefor M. Owen, *Welsh Folk Customs*

## **Celtic Christianity**

### **General**

\*Lisa M. Bitel, *Isle of the Saints: Monastic Settlement and Christian Community in Early Ireland* (January 1994) Cornell University Press; ISBN: 0801481570

#Kathless Hughes, *The Church in Early Irish Society*

\*#Kathleen Hughes, *Early Christian Ireland: Introduction to the Sources*

\*James F. Kenney, *The Sources for the Early History of Ireland: Ecclesiastical : An Introduction and Guide* (December 1993) Intl Specialized Book Service; ISBN: 1851821155

### **Special Topics**

Bede, *Ecclesiastical History of the English People With Bede's Letter to Egbert and Cuthberts Letter on the Death of Bede* (Penguin Classics), D.H. Farmer (Editor), (May 1991) Penguin USA (P); ISBN: 014044565X

\*#Aubrey Gwynn, *Medieval religious houses: Ireland: with an appendix to early sites*

Peter Harbison, *Pilgrimage in Ireland: The Monuments and the People* (Irish Studies) (April 1995) Syracuse University Press; ISBN: 0815602650

Mary Low, *Celtic Christianity and Nature: Early Irish and Hebridean Traditions* (February 1997) Edinburgh Univ Pr; ISBN: 0748607722

Liam de Paor, *Saint Patrick's World*, Four Courts Press, Dublin, and University of Notre Dame Press (US publishers), 1993. ISBN 1-85182-144-9

Edward C. Sellner, Susan McLean-Keeney (Illustrator), *Wisdom of the Celtic Saints* (January 1993) Ave Maria Press; ISBN: 0877934924

Charles Plummer, *Lives of the Irish Saint*

### **Other Topics**

#### **Indo-European Heritage**

Carl Darling Buck, *A Dictionary of Selected Synonyms in the Principle Indo-European Languages* (June 1988) University of Chicago Press; ISBN: 0226079376

\*Miriam Robbins Dexter, *Whence the Goddesses: A Source Book*

Miranda Green, *Animals in Celtic Life and Myth*

\*Bruce, Lincoln, *Death, War, and Sacrifice: Studies in Ideology and Practice*

\*Bruce Lincoln, *Myth, Cosmos, and Society: Indo-European Themes of Creation and Destruction*

Bruce Lincoln, *Priests, Warriors, and Cattle: A Study in the Ecology of Religions* (Hermeneutics, Studies in the History of Religions ; V. 10)

Emily Lyle, *Archaic Cosmos: Polarity, Space, and Time*, 1990, Polygon

J. P. Mallory, *In Search of the Indo-Europeans: Language, Archaeology, and Myth* (April 1991) Thames and Hudson; ISBN: 0500276161

Jaán Puhvel, *Comparative Mythology* (October 1989) The Johns Hopkins University Press; ISBN: 0801839386

\*Shan Winn, *Heaven, Heroes, and Happiness: The Indo-European Roots of Western Ideology*

#### **Anthropological Dimensions of Ritual**

Catherine M. Bell, *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions* (October 1997) Oxford University Press; ISBN: 0195110528

Catherine Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice* (April 1995) Oxford Univ Pr (Sd); ISBN: 0195076133

Claude Levi-Strauss, Wendy Doniger, *Myth and Meaning* (March 1995) Schocken Books; ISBN: 0805210385

Claude Levi-Strauss, *The Raw and the Cooked: Introduction to a Science of Mythology* (March 1983) University of Chicago Press; ISBN: 0226474879

Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (Lewis Henry Morgan Lectures) (April 1995) Aldine De Gruyter; ISBN: 0202011909

### **Celtic Cultural Revival**

Sharon McDonald, *Reimagining Culture: Histories, Identities and the Gaelic Renaissance* (December 1997) New York University Press; ISBN: 1859739857