

A Treasury of Druidic Triads

# **A Treasury of Druidic Triads:**

By

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Edited and produced by Geoff Boswell  
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## Dedication:

This Lesson on the Sacred Triads was written in dedication to The Druid Network's Bobcat (Emma Restall Orr) who is:

Peaceful, Knowledgeable, and Wise.



## Introduction:

It is said *“Concerning three things that hide: an open bag hides nothing, an open door hides little, and an open person hides something”*. This is a triad of course, a Welsh one I believe. This lesson by The Druid 3X3 is lovingly crafted to explore the history of triads, their range of erudition, and more importantly, the lessons they hold for us in modern society. To that end, in expressing his passion so effectively, the author is indeed exposed as an open person who does not hide his love of triads and of the wisdom, strength and understanding they have afforded him.

As a glimpse into the world of triads and their uses, this is indeed an open door, and whilst not pretending to be exhaustive, hides little in the way of being a footstep that we can follow if we wish to share in the depth of human expression that they convey.

This open bag then hides nothing but carries much. From the authors own insights and interpretations, to creative use of modern triads, into the range of sources and resources we can delve into if we wish to know more, this bag carries us on. As a work in itself it is commendable, as a tool for supporting the learning of druidry and as path way to walk upon I commend it.

*Geoff Boswell, The Druid Network, April 2010*

## The Background of the Triads:

The information of this lesson on the Ancient Triads of the British Isles was researched and composed for the benefit of those seeking wisdom, knowledge, and history of the Neolithic peoples of the British Isles, or as it was originally referred to as "Prydain" by the Welsh in their ancient Triads.

In times before the Romans, it is conjectured that the Druids were a spiritual caste of nature reverencing priests who used triple wisdom sayings to relate lessons of how to live a life of goodness in wisdom, prosperity and happiness. The history of the Druids go back many centuries before the Romans came and whose origins are believed by some to go back as far as approximately 500 BC, although some believe that they could go back even further to the times when the sacred Stonehenge was built.

Theirs was an oral based culture that memorised their histories using their triple wisdom to sayings. They did have the tree based Ogham Tree Script writing, but that alphabet was used for business, property ownership, and titles as was not easily reproduced as this was the time in history before Gutenberg's invention of the printing press.

Triads were important mainly because the ancient Celts also worshipped the number three because they felt that it represented the trinity, for instance of the family in that when you put man and woman together getting a child. It was also important to have some way of paying respects to the forces of Mother Nature, the spiritual meanings of their pantheon of Gods, Goddesses, and Spirits, and how to have good relations with each other in the Celtic tribes in which they lived. For it was without such things that the social fabric of their society was not secured and they became vulnerable to her own bestial desires and would fail to keep in touch with the natural rhythms of the cycles of life, nature, and the changing seasons. This was especially important for people who did not have modern niceties such as central heating, advanced ways of preserving food, and depending on each other's cooperation in growing the crops that they depended on. They used triads to preserve their cultures word of law in the common law justice system that they established for themselves.

On the topic of the Celts, the very word "Celt" is a misnomer as there was never a central "Celtic" empire. They were in fact a tribal people where each person was a member of one of the various independent tribes. On occasions, these tribes - with common language and culture - would band themselves together in times of great need such as facing a common enemy, to bring or celebrate a harvest, or in a case of a natural disaster. They actually had no sense of national identity as we modern peoples understand today. It was the Romans and then the Christians who brought "neo-Platonic" ways of thinking and with neo-Platonic thought, everything existed separately unto itself, absolute and independently

which is rooted in a realm of unchanging and eternal realities independent of the World as perceived by the senses. With tribal thought, everything was connected, and individuals were considered as a part of the whole natural Mother Goddess as well as the earth. The tribal customs and beliefs of the Celts were built upon what is perceived by our natural six senses. This manifests itself into the rules mirroring what is perceived to be the laws of nature and the perceived order of the cosmos. To get a grasp into the tribal ways of thinking, all you have to do is look at the ways of thinking of other tribal units in other parts of the modern world, such as the North and South American Native peoples, the Aborigines of Australia or the Zulu warrior tribes of Africa.



Those who have studied the Celts must have sometime noticed the importance that the '3' had for them. Even the laws and wisdoms of the Celtic peoples were expressed in tripartite form. The ancient Celts also had a common law justice system that was equal in scope for and to all men, women and children in their culture. Their old Brehon laws and customs of the Irish and Welsh were preserved in their triads in regards to the guidelines that everyone was to behave towards each other. Their kings and queens had to rule in relation to how their subjects wanted to be ruled, thus they had to keep the people of their tribes happy, or they would become quickly deposed if they were murderous, scandalous, or liars. Furthermore queens ruled in their own right alongside kings on an equal standing. It was not until the coming of Christianity that women began to lose their equitable legal standing in their Celtic Culture. This is evidenced by their eventually becoming banned from the field of battle, the last fighting queen having been Boudicca, the last Warrior Queen of the Welsh who made a famous last at Watling Street. This signalled Roman rule, and when Rome adopted Christianity as its state religion then women throughout the empire started to lose their rights to equal protection under the law by the encroaching Christians, especially after Gwenddolau at the battle of against the encroaching Christian armies. Before the coming of Christianity, women were able to own and inherit property, own weapons and participate in major decision making.

It is actually an alleged fact that most of the old ways of the Celts preserved by being simply hidden with the traditions of Christianity. With the triads, it was simply a matter of having their contexts changed by one or two words, bringing the old pagan ways into line with the new Christianity.

Knowledge was also a sacred thing, for the Celts believed that knowledge was a trust given to us by the Gods of nature which must be passed from generation to generation. That is why the Welsh triads always speak of the importance of knowledge and imparting it to the next generation. But information that is

detected by ones senses is not knowable until it is recorded somehow and therefore must be organised in some way for the information gathered by the senses to become knowledge. And the Celts came upon using triadic poems to record that information to make it knowable and recorded for future generations.

I have actually have had an affinity for triads as I have used them all my life when writing letters of personal, business, or poetic natures. I would always make a statement of fact followed by at least three reasons why my statement was a fact. I always had it in my opinion that if you stated something to someone and you followed it with at least three facts for why your statement was true, at least one of those three facts might be agreeable to the person writing it. I actually am a believer in reincarnation and since I have always used triads so much, I do believe that I may have been a druid in a far off past life who used and triads as part of my daily living.

The first records of Druidism were recorded into writing by the invading armies of the Romans under Julius Caesar who wrote of their sacred groves, their knowledge of herbs, and their sacred rituals. It has been recorded that this information was somewhat tainted due to the fact that Caesar did not wish to write of the Druidic culture in any sort of flattering light as they were an enemy that the Romans wanted to defeat, overthrow and crush. They then slew all the Celtic druids that they could find, destroyed their groves and erased their way of life in a similar fashion as they did a lot of other cultures of Europe and around the Mediterranean Sea in those times. I have had correspondence with a scholar on triads who states that the Gaels may have used triads, but when Julius Caesar defeated Vercingetrix at the Battle of Alyssum, that Caesars destruction of their Gallic culture was so complete that nothing of any Gallic triadic records survived destruction.



However, the bards of druidism, using their stories, myths, and poetry, preserved the histories of the druids orally until it could be written down by Catholic monks in the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries into the sacred scrolls. There was the Welsh Triads of knowledge were recorded in the Red Books of Hergest and the Irish Triads of Wisdom were recorded in the Yellow Book of Lecan, the Book of Ballymote, the Book of Húi Maine.

These scrolls were preserved until scholars were able to decipher them and publish them such as the Welsh Triads, which were used to record their people's knowledge and histories. Much of which records the tales of King Arthur and the various people who served him and made his life what it was. This was first done by John Rhys and J. Gwenogyrvan Evan's "The Text of the Mabinogion and Other Welsh Tales (1887) and was also translated to be published by Rachel Bromwich in her book "Trioedd Ynys Prydein", which was published in 1963.

## A Treasury of Druidic Triads

Kuno Meyer was able to take hold of the ancient Irish Scrolls and was able to translate them from the ancient Gaelic to English and published his 1906 book "The Triads of the Irish". This book recorded all the ancient Celtic Triple Wisdoms of the Irish, Scottish and Manx, much of which is now in use by modern druid circles to this day. It was then that it was found that that the triads spoke of the laws of nature and all sources say that the Celts had a very religious faith in their spirituality with their laws and customs geared towards understanding the "Order of Nature", which was in keeping to ways of tribal thought.

There are a lot of triads that deal with the subject of virtue and being virtuous and being proud of being virtuous. One of the only English words that can symbolise the Celtic idea of virtue is "Excellence". The Celts strove for such excellence This is evidenced in their Triads of Wisdom, Knowledge and Histories, a bulk of which various invaders such as Romans, Anglo-Saxons, and Normans have maintained because they were recognised as being excellent laws.



Then there are modern compositions of Triads to address issues of our modern living. I myself have written many such Triads and even have an affinity for of poetic prose that I call the 3X3 Triads of Wisdoms.

My goal in writing this lesson on triads is to teach to the reader the histories of the triads, what they meant, and how they impart knowledge and wisdom to us all. It will go in three main sections.

First, I will write about the Welsh Triads of Knowledge based on the 1887 book by John Rhys and J. Gwenogyrvan Evan's "The Text of the Mabinogion and Other Welsh Tales". Secondly, I will write about the Ancient Triads of Wisdom of the Irish based on the 1906 book by Kuno Meyer. And thirdly, I will write about the modern triads of today in which I will publish three of my 3X3 Triads of Wisdom.

Following each of the triads are followed by footnotes and please read them over. They are to help one to understand the triad's true meaning and how they were constructed.



## The Welsh Triads of Knowledge:

Upon examining these triads, I found that they are based on actual people of Welsh history and/or legend and I have researched each person and have written a short synopsis of their stories to go after the triad that mentions them. These triads record the names and stories of these kings, knights and heroes, and even pays homage to the lowliest of occupations as well as the highest.

In most of the triads, there is reference to a place called “Prydain”, which is Welsh for the Islands of the British Isles. And “Cymry” was the Welsh word for anything Welsh. It was actually the Welsh who were the original Neolithic peoples that were the first to occupy and settle England, Ireland, Scotland as well as the rest of the British Isles.



It was in the Middle Ages during the time of the romantic tales of King Arthur that his and other stories of the Welsh were first recorded in writing. This is evident since most of the Welsh Triads of knowledge deal with the Arthurian legends and stories, although there are few that tell of prior histories of the Welsh and the times of the Roman conquests.

( “\*” : refers to someone for whom no record of their history could be found)



### TRIAD 1 –

*”Three Tribal Thrones of the Island of Prydain: Arthur as Chief Lord at Menevia [St David's], and David the Chief Bishop, and Maelgwn Gwynedd as Chief Elder. Arthur as Chief Lord in Celliwig in Cornwall, and Bishop Betwini as Chief Bishop, and Caradawg Vreichvras as Chief Elder; Arthur as Chief Lord in Penrionyd in the north, and Cyndeyrn Garthwys the chief bishop, and Gurthmwl Guledic the Chief Elder.”*

Celliwig refers to the first known location associated with King Arthur and in translates from the Welsh to “Forest Grove” and is said to be associated with the

Cornish town of Callington. It is also said it could be associated with the town of Gweek, which is a harbour town at the mouth of the Helford River



### TRIAD 2 –

*“Three Generous men of the Island of Prydain. Nudd the Generous, son of Senyllt; Mordaf the Generous, son of Serwan; Rhydderch the Generous, son of Tudwal Tudglyd.”*

All three generous men’s surnames were all Hael. Nudd’s and was said to be a descendant of Magnux Maximus, who was a Welsh hero who was a contestant for being the Roman Emperor of the Western Empire. Nudd is also associated with the British God Nodens, the God of Healing.

Mordaf was considered one of the Saints of Wales. There is brook called Morda by one of the townships in Wales called Oswestry which is said to be named after this generous man.

Rhydderch was known for being a Northern British king who fought against the Anglo-Saxons.



### TRIAD 3 –

*“Three Fair Princes of the Island of Prydain. Rhun son of Maelgwn; Owain son of Urien; Ruawn the Pefyr\* son of Deorath Wledig.”*

Rhun the Tall was the King of Gwynedd, which is now regarded as one of the several Welsh successor states and his capitol was Deganwy Castle.

Owain was a Prince of the kingdom of Rheged, which is thought to be somewhere between Northern England and Scotland and is said to have died in battle after a short reign when fighting against his father Urien’s old enemies Morcant Bulc of Bryneich and marked the end of Rheged as an effective power in Northern England..



### TRIAD 4 –

*‘Three Naturalists of the Island of Prydain. Gwalchmai son of Gwyar; and Llachau son of Arthur; and Rhiwallawn Broom-Hair.’*

Gwalchmai, translated from Welsh, actually refers to Sir Gawain, Knight of King Arthur's Court.

Although it is generally believed that Mordred was the only Son of King Arthur, it is recorded that King Arthur had two other sons and Llachau was one of them.

Rhiwallawn Broom-Hair was also a son of Urien Rheged and was thus the brother of Owain who is mentioned in Triad #3.



### TRIAD 5 –

*“Three Pillars of Battle of the Island of Prydain. Dunawd son of Pabo Pillar of Prydain; and Gwallawg son of Lleenawg; and Cynfelyn Drwsgl (the Leprous).”*

Dunawd was also a King of Scotland and was known for being a steadfast Pillar in Battle.

Gwallawg was a Pillar of Battle who partook in the Battles of Agathes, Bretwyn, Aeron, Arddunion, Coed Beit, Gwensteri, Terra, Coel Oledyfein, Eiddyn and Gafran. He was also known as being King of a land called Elmet which later became the West Riding of Yorkshire.

Cynfelyn Drwsgl was known for being carried to the Battle of Arfderydd on the back of horse named Corvan with two other warriors.



### TRIAD 6 –

*“Three Bulls of Battle of the Island of Prydain. Cynfarch Cat Caduc son of Cynwyd\* Cynwytyon; and Gwenddolau son of Ceidiaw; and Urien son of Cynfarch”.*

Gwenddolau was known for being the leader of Longtown, Cumberland whose fortress may have been the old Roman fortress at Netherby.

Urien was one of Wales's most brave heroes and had fought in many battles and is associated with many other heroes of Welsh mythology. His Kingdom of Rheged was located somewhere in Northern England near the Scottish border.



### TRIAD 7 –

*”Three Bull-Princes of the Island of Prydain. Elmwr son of Cadeir; and Cynhafal son of Argat; and Afaon son of Taliesin. The three of them were sons of bards.”*

There is no mention of Elmwr, but it is most likely from him that we get the name Elmer, but Cadeir is mentioned as being King Arthur’s personal Squire who armed the King for battle.

Cynhafal is the Welsh patron Saint St.Cynhafal who made Enlli Gawr which created the name for a place called Isle of Enlli, or Bardsey. The Church of St. Cynhafal is located at Llangynhafal, Ruthin in Wales.

Afaon is named as a battle-leader and a lawgiver is not named as the leader of any region, thus it may be that he was a battle-leader in the Roman and post-Roman sense of a Duz Ballorum, or someone who was Second in Command of a Roman Army.



### TRIAD 8-

*”Three Humble Princes of the Island of Prydain. Llywarch the Old son of Elidir Llydanwyn; and Manawydan son of Llyr Half-Speech; and Gwgon Gwron son of Peredur son of Eliffer of the Great Retinue.”*

Llywarch the Old was a 6th-century prince of the Brythonic kingdom of Rheged and was said to be the first cousin of Urien Rheged and may have ruled a Kingdom in his own right.

Manawydan, in Welsh mythologies, was one of the *Plant Llŷr*, which was a race of giant gods, and is one of the landless chieftains of Britain. He is also the tutelary god of the Isle of Man where is also known as Manannán mac Lír.

Gwgon Gwron was the son of a Warrior who had fought in the Battle of Arfderydd and as with the other Humble Princes, worked it out that the more you have, the more that can be taken from you, so they therefore decided to abdicate their rights to their thrones in order to be able to live lives of Peace and Tranquility.



### TRIAD 9 –

*”Three Princes of Arthur’s Court: Gobrwy son of Echel Mighty-Thigh; Cadreith son of Porthawrgaddu; and Fleudur Fflam.”*

Gobrwy appears as one of King Arthur’s Advisors in the tale of The Dream of Rhonabwy.

There has been a saying of Cadreith that has been preserved, “Hast thou heard what Cadreith sang, The son of Porthawr, with the warlike speech: “God Love Not The Despairer.”

Fleudur is said to have been a fierce warrior, and is listed among Arthur’s men in Culhwch ac Olwen, which forms part of what has become known as the Mabinogion which is featured in both the White Book of Rhydderch and the Red Book of Hergest.



### TRIAD 10 –

*”Three Princes of Deira and Bernicia. Gall son of Disgyfdawd\*; and Ysgafnell son of Disgyfdawd\*; and Diffydell son of Disgyfdawd\*. The three of them were sons of bards.”*

Deira was a kingdom in Northern England during the 6th century AD. It extended from the Humber to the Tees, and from the sea to the western edge of the Vale of York. It later merged with the kingdom of Bernicia to the north to form the kingdom of Northumbria.

Bernicia was an Anglo-Saxon kingdom established by Anglian settlers of the 6th century in what is now southeastern Scotland and North East England.

Although the name of the Great King of Deira and Bernicia Disgyfdawd has been handed down to us, nothing of the histories of him or his three Sons is known.



### TRIAD 11 –

*”Three Bloody-Speared Bards of the Island of Prydain. Tristfardd, bard of Urien; and Dygynnelw, bard of Owain; and Mainferdic, bard of Cadwallawn, son of Cadfan; and they were sons of Morgant\*.”*

Tristfardd was the Chief Bard of Urien of Rheged and was also known as "Tristvard" the Sad Bard.

Dygynnelw was also a Bard of Urien of Rheged, but unfortunately, all of his poetry has been lost with only his name surviving to this day.

Cadwallawn, for whom Mainferdic is named a Bard, was a great Warrior who fought in fourteen great battles and sixty skirmishes. A great poem about Cadwallawn is in the Red Book of Hergest XV.



### TRIAD 12 –

*"Three Supreme Servants of the Island of Prydain. Caradawg son of Brân; and Cawrdaf son of Caradawg; and Owain son of Maxen Wledig."*

Caradawg was a Welsh Hero who was named as the son of Brân Fendigaid and defender of Britain in his father's absence. He died broken hearted when the villain Caswallon used a cloak of invisibility to sneak in and kill the other protectors of Ynys y Cedyrn.

Caradawg's Son Cawrdaf entered a monastery after retiring, serving under St. Illtyd. His Feast Day is December 5<sup>th</sup>. There is a church dedicated to Saint Cawrdaf in the Welsh Town of Abererch, which is few kilometres from the sea.

Owain was the son of Maxen Wledig, who slew the Rome-designated Emperor of the West, Gratian, after leaving Britain to invade Gaul. Owain is said to be buried under the White Tower in the Tower of London complex.



### TRIAD 13 –

*"Three Fleet Owners of the Island of Prydain. Geraint son of Erbin; and Gwenwynwyn son of Naf; and March son of Meirchiawn."*

Geraint is said to have died at Longport in Somerset. Geraint's men are described as the 'brave men of Diwineint' (being Dumonia or Devon).

Gwenwynwyn is said to be one of Arthur's foremost champions. He is said to be the offspring of Arianrhod as well as Naf and thus this makes him a deity and his attributes made him a sea or maritime god as well as hero.

March is known for being leader of the Scandinavians who, from the 9<sup>th</sup> century onwards, and they become considered as the best seafarers of that time.

**TRIAD 14 -**

"Three Strong-Crutch'd Ones of the Island of Prydain. Rineri son of Tangwn\*; and Tinwaed Faglaw; and Pryder son of Dolor of Deira and Bernicia\*."

Not much is known of each of these Heroes, but I did find a reference to Tinwaed Faglaw being someone who was also known as "Baghand". I might take it that these heroes may have had some sort of disability and they became known for overcoming that disability. Another famed Norse hero is Tyr, so was the God of Justice who had his hand bitten off by the Fenris Wolf.



**TRIAD 15 -**

*"Three Fettered Men of the Island of Prydain. Cadwaladr the Blessed; and Rhun son of Maelgwn; and Rhiwallawn Broom-Hair."*

To be fettered refers to someone who had to be made immobile by having their ankles strapped together. According to this triad, they all had problems with not being able to ride horses unless they were strapped to the horse with their ankles tied around the crupper of the horse. A modern day person who had to be fettered was Germany's last Kaiser Wilhelm the 2<sup>nd</sup>, who had troubles staying on a horse due to having trouble keeping his balance.

Cadwaladr was so tall that no horse could hold him and a special saddle had to be constructed which effectively fettered his feet.

Rhun was fettered because of his great stature as no horse could be obtained that was suited to him and had to have two golden plates placed beneath his knees.

Rhiwallawn was fettered because of his great stature as no horse could be obtained that was suited to him. As a result he had to place fetters of gold around the smalls of his legs and across the cruppers of the horse.



**TRIAD 16 -**

*"Three Knights of the Island of Prydain. Caradawg Vreichfras; and Menwaedd of Arllechwedd; and Llyr Lluydauc\*."*

Caradawg, named in Triad #1 as one of King Arthur's Chief Elders. It is said that this is the Hero that was actually involved in famed the beheading game which occurs in the tale of Sir Gawain and the Greene Knight.

Menwaedd could also refer to Menw mab Teirgwaedd who also a Mage as well as a Knight.



### TRIAD 17 -

*"Three Hostile Ovates of the Island of Prydain. Greidiawl Galovyd, son of Enfael Adran; and Gweyr of great manliness\*; and Drystan son of Tallwch."*

I was actually amazed that the Hostile Ovate Thomas the Rhymer, who laid the curse of the Weeping Stones on Fyvie Castle was not included in this Triad.

Greidiawl was known as a battle leader who may have been someone who went into raging battle frenzies that left him nearly invulnerable. Could have been where Marvel Comics got their idea for the Incredible Hulk came from.

Drystan was known as a Magician who could shape shift and was known for slaying Dragons. He was also known for being one of King Arthur's Three Enchanter Knights.



### TRIAD 18 -

*"Three Red-spotted Ones of the Island of Prydain. Arthur; and Rhun son of Beli\*; and Morgant the Wealthy\*."*

Red Spotted Ones perhaps refer to someone who was known for having lots of freckles on their face. King Arthur is named among them, so he might have had a lot of freckles.



### TRIAD 19 -

*"Three Battle-Leaders of the Island of Prydain. Drystan son of Tallwch; and Hueil son of Caw; and Cai son of Cenyr of the Fine Beard. And one was diademed above the three of them: that was Bedwyr son of Bedrawc."*

Drystan is also known for being one of the Hostile Ovates, he was also known for being a master of the triad of skills of Hunting, Harping and Deception.

Hueil was a Knight of King Arthur's Court, but was known for never submitting to a Lord's hand and was estranged from Arthur after he betrays him. It was after making jokes about Arthur that Hueil is taken before the court and condemned to death.

Cai is known for being of King Arthur's best companions, and in some stories, is depicted as being Arthur's step-brother. His legend is that he could change his height at will, becoming a giant at times of trouble or battle.

And this one of the few triads that is actually a quatrain where a fourth hero is added, and that is Bedwyr. He is also known for being Cai's best friend as well as one of King Arthur's best companions along with Cai. He was also known for having great speed in battle and being armed with his magical spear which is used one handed as he had only one hand.



#### TRIAD 20 –

*"Three Heroes of the Island of Prydain. Three sons of Haearnwedd the Wily: Gruddnei\*; and Henben\*; and Edenawg\*."*

I could not find any record of the stories of his children, but there is a famous saying of Haearnwedd, which goes: "Where there is hatred, force is stronger than justice".



#### TRIAD 21 -

*"Three Arrogant Ones of the Island of Prydain. Sawyl High-Head; and Pasgen son of Urien; and Rhun son of Einiawn."*

Sawyl High Head was son of Pabo the Pillar, was also known as Samuil Penisel, was a Brythonic king of the sub-Roman period.

Pasgen fought in the Old North to protect his father's realm, though the later poems do not portray him in a particularly flattering light. His name is probably derived from the Cymric root pasg 'well fed', indicating that Pasgen may have been a chubby baby.

Rhun, who was possibly, related to the Rheged line, but that is not for certain. The reason why he was added to this Triad of Arrogant Warriors has been lost due to records being destroyed.



### TRIAD 22 -

*“Three Obstructors of Slaughter of the Island of Prydain. Gilbert son of Cadgyffro; and Morfran son of Tegid; and Gwgawn Red-Sword.”*

So named for having compassion on the battlefield, preserving Life when possible, which is an act of Good Wisdom.

There is not much known of these Heroes, but Gilbert was also known for having a Legendary Horse “Rhuthr Eon Tuth Blaidd”.



### TRIAD 23 -

*“Three Powerful Swineherds of the Island of Prydain. Drystan son of Tallwch, who guarded the swine of March son of Meirchiawn. And Pryderi son of Pwyll, Lord of Annwfn, who guarded the swine of Pendaran Dyfed in Glyn Cuch in Emlyn. And Coll son of Collfrewy, who guarded Henwen, (the old sow) of Dallwyr Dallben,”*

Drystan was known for guarding the Swine of March with such tenacity that he even prevented King Arthur from being able to take hold of one.

Pryderi is known for going missing as an infant and causing the legendary Rhiannon to be unjustly punished for the crime of killing the infant. The town of Emlyn, whose swine Pryderi guarded, still stands to this day in Western Wales.

It was Coll who had the most things happen while guarding Swine, for when one of the female swine Henwen had gone off to Cornwall, she went into the Sea and came out of the sea at Aber Tarogi. She then brought forth a grain of wheat there and found bees. Then she went to Llonwen in Pembroke and brought forth barley as well as more bees. Then she went to the Hill of Cyferthwich where she found a wolf cub and a young eagle. It was then that Coll gave the eagle to Brynach, an Irishman of the North, and gave the wolf cub to Medwaed of Allechwedd. From there Penrhyn went to Arfon and found a kitten which Coll took and gave to Palug of the Menai



### TRIAD 24 -

*”Three Enchanters of the Island of Prydain. Coll son of Collfrewy; and Menyw son of Teirgwaed; and Drych son of Kiwdar.”*

Coll, who is mentioned as the Three Great Swineherds, possessed semi-divine attributes and may once have been the Mage-god of the hazel tree.

Menyw was also one of the Knights of Arthur’s Court who was included into armies so that he could cast a charm or illusions over the enemy so that they might not resist them so that his side would be able to have their ways. This could be where the idea for the Star Wars Jedi’s Mind Trick came from!

In researching Drych, I found that “Drych” is actually the Welsh word for “mirror”, and actually the name of a Welsh Newspaper in North America. This could indicate that Drych was some sort of magician who I think was a master of disguise, looking like anyone or anything he wanted to.



### TRIAD 25 -

*”Three Great Enchantments of the Island of Prydain. The Enchantment of Math son of Mathonwy; and the Enchantment of Uthyr Pendragon ; and the Enchantment of Gwydalen the Dwarf\*.”*

Math was the Noble Lord of Gwynedd which is a North West County of Wales and was an Arch Magician.

Uthyr Pendragon was also the legendary Father of King Arthur and also another hero known as Madawg.



### TRIAD 26 -

*”Three Faithful Households of the Island of Prydain: The household of Cadwallawn son of Cadfan, who were with him seven years in Ireland; and in all that time they demanded no pay nor compensation from him; And the household of Gafran son of Aeddan, who went to sea for their lord; And the third, the household of Gwenddolau son of Ceidyaw at Arfderydd, who continued the battle*

*for forty-six days after their lord was slain. The number of the households of each of those men was one-hundred-forty men.”*

There is a poem in Welch in that Cadwallawn crosses the Iwerdon Sea, and “Iwerdon” is the Welsh Word for “Ireland” and brings 20 Songsters with him, which probably refers to Bards.

Gafran is said to have fought in a battle overseas in which he became vastly outnumbered on a hillside overlooking the sea. While he saved himself by negotiating a settlement for himself, he left his group to their own devices and they ended up throwing themselves into the sea than ending up becoming enslaved. After that, he actually became known as “Gafran the Treacherous”

It was at the battle of Arfderydd in which the pagan Welsh King Gwenddolau lost against the encroaching Christian armies. His Bard Lailoken was said to have gone mad at this defeat, and went off to the Forests to grieve and after a time of meditation, became the famed magician Merlin.



### TRIAD 27 -

*”Three Faithless Households of the Islands of Prydain. The household of Goronwy the Radiant of Penllyn, who refused to receive the poisoned spear from Llew Skilful-Hand on behalf of their lord, at the Stone of Goronwy at the head of the Cynfal; and the household of Gwrgi and Peredur, who abandoned their lord at Caer Greu, when they had an appointment to fight the next day with Eda Great-Knee; and there they were both slain; And the household of Alan Fyrgan, who returned back by stealth from their lord, on the road at night with his servants at Camlan, and there he was slain.”*

It is for being able to take hold of Llew’s Wife Blodeuwedd, that Goronwy uses a poisoned spear to slay Llew in the back.

The Battle of Caer Greu is said to have happened in 580 in which Eda was killed and the result was that the Kingdom of Ebrauc ceasing to be a British Kingdom. Ebrauc was a Brythonic kingdom of sub-Roman Britain, based on where the city of York now stands.

Camlan, from which Alan Fyrgan retreated from, was the last battle of King Arthur, which he fought against Mordred. It is found that Alan Fyrgan was actually a 12<sup>th</sup> Century Duke of Brittany who may have had a name similar to who was originally named in this triad.

**TRIAD 28 -**

*”Three Pass Retinues of the Island of Prydain. The retinue of Mynydawg of Eidyn; the retinue of Melyn son of Cynvelyn; and the retinue of Dryan son of Nudd.”*

Mynydawg was known as being a mountaineer who was of the Fort of Eidyn. In a poem about Mynydawg, it is said that of his retinue of Three Hundred Three Warriors were all but three were cut down and killed while fighting the invading , became ultimately victorious of the thousand Saxon heathens that they were sent to defeat. Eidyn is known know as the Scottish capital City of Edinburgh.

Melyn was also known as Bylon son of Cynvelyn and fought in the warfare of the Welsh Hero Caradawg.

Dryan was part of the pagan armies that fought alongside Gwenddolau unsuccessfully at the battle of Arderydd, which may be now known as Ettrick Forest.



**TRIAD 29 -**

*”Three Men who performed the Three Fortunate Assassinations of the Island of Prydain. Gall son of Dysgyfdawd\* who slew the Two Birds of Gwenddolau. And they had a yoke of gold on them. Two corpses of the Cymry they devoured for their dinner, and two for their supper; and Ysgafnell son of Dysgyfdawd\*, who slew Edelfled king of Lloegr; and Diffydell son of Dysgyfdawd\* who slew Gwrgi Garwlwyd. That Gwrgi used to make a corpse of one of the Cymry every day, and two on each Saturday so as not to slay on Sunday.”*

All three assassins were all sons of Dysgyfdawd and other than their fortunate assassinations, nothing else is known of them.

Gwenddolau is the last pagan King who fought unsuccessfully against the encroaching Christians at the battle of Arderydd. The two brown birds mentioned were guardians of his treasures of silver and gold. So the triad refers to how Gall took hold of Gwneddolau’s treasure after the battle of Arderydd.

Edelfled was a King of the Saxons who came and made incursions into the lands of the Welsh. The word Lloegr actually refers to the Saxons homeland of England.

Gwrgi Garwlwyd was a warrior who, whilst in the service of Edelfled, developed a taste for and enjoyed the taste of human flesh, allied himself with Edelfled so that he could invade Wales and cannibalise them.



### TRIAD 30 -

*'Three Unfortunate Assassinations of the Island of Prydain. The axe-blow of Eidyn son of Enygan on the head of Aneirin of Flowing Verse, Prince of Poets; and the axe-blow of Llawgad Trwm Bargod Eidyn on the head of Afaon son of Taliesin; and the axe-blow of Llovan Llawdifo on the head of Urien son of Cynfarch.'*

Aneirin was considered the epitome of poetic inspiration and was referred to as being a type of poet called a "gogynfeirdd", which existed between the first half of the 11<sup>th</sup> century and the loss of Welsh independence in 1282.

Afaon is named in Triad #7 as one of the Bull Princes. His assassination may represent the internal strife between the Brythonic kingdoms of the Old North that eventually led to their downfall and their eventual conquest by the Saxons. This is pointed out in the movie 'Braveheart' when William Wallace complains of the Scottish nobles quibbling over "the scraps left from Longshank's table".

When Urien, the great King of Rheged, was assassinated, he was already a very old man and had already achieved great legendary victories fighting the encroaching Saxons.

Of the assassins themselves, there nothing much recorded about them, although Eidyn is also the ancient name of Edinburgh.



### TRIAD 31 -

*"Three Unfortunate Hatchet-Blows of the Island of Prydain. The Blow of Eidyn on the Head of Aneirin; and the Blow on the Head of Golydan the Poet; and the Blow on the Head of Iago son of Beli."*

In this triad, the method of killing is stated and the great poet Aneirin, who is mentioned in the previous Triad #30, is killed with an axe. Aneirin is referred to in this line of poetry that I found: "Aneirin gave measureless inspiration".

Golydan the Poet is also known for striking a blow upon the head of Welsh Hero Cadwaladr although it is also said that Cadwaladr may have died of the Plague in 682.

Iago was the King of Gwynedd, which is a Northern Province of Wales. It is also said that he may have actually abdicated and spent the rest of his life as a clerical monk in a monastery somewhere.



### TRIAD 32 -

*"Three Hosts that departed from this Island, and never returned. The first went with Elen of the Hosts and Cynan her brother, The second went with Yrp of the Hosts, who came here to ask for assistance in the time of Cadial son of Eryn. And all he asked of each Chief Fortress was twice as many men as would come with him to it; and to the first Fortress there came only himself and his servant. And it proved grievous to have given him that. Nevertheless that was the most complete levy that ever went from this Island, and no man of them ever came back. The place where those men remained was on two islands close to the Greek sea: those islands are Gals and Avena. The third host went with Caswallawn son of Beli, and Gwenwynwyn and Gwanar, sons of Lliaws son of Nwyfre, and Aranrot daughter of Beli their mother. And those men came from Arllechwedd. They went with Caswallawn their uncle across the sea in pursuit of the men of Caesar. The place where those men are is in Gascony. And the number that went in each of those Hosts was twenty-one thousand men. And those were the Three Silver Hosts: they were so called because the gold and silver of the Island went with them, as much as they could"*

Elen was the wife of Magnus Maximus, who was the Caesar Emperor of the Roman Western Empire, and she provided him with a host of soldiers to travel off to conquer Rome. She appears to be associated with Roman roads and to this day some of these Roman roads are known as Sarn (au) Elen (The Causeways of Elen).

Yrp's destination of conquest was a place referred to Lychlyn, which in the Welsh language refers to Scandinavia.

The Third Hosts destination, whilst being after Caesar, was Gascony, which is an area of southwest France that was part of the "Province of Quyenne and Gascony" prior to the French Revolution.



### TRIAD 33 -

*"Three oppressions that came to this Island, and not one of them went back. One of them was the people of the Coraniaid, who came here in the time of Lludd son of Beli, and not one of them went back. The second Oppression was the Gwyddyl Ffichti, and not one of them went back. The third Oppression was the Saxons, and not one of them went back."*

The Coraniaid was a Dwarfish race whose magical hearing was so acute that they cannot be attacked because they can always hear their enemy coming from miles away. There is a legend that the Welsh Britons found that when a certain insect is crushed up and mixed with water then sprayed on the Coraniaid will kill them. They are said to have originally come from Asia.

The Gwyddyl Ffichti are said to have settled and became the Picts of Ireland, Scotland and the Isle of Man.

The Anglo-Saxons came to these isles and became the English (AEnglish) of England (AEngland), who were eventually overthrown by William the Conqueror in 1066.



### TRIAD 34 -

*"Three Concealments and Three Disclosures of the Island of Prydain. The Head of Bran the Blessed, son of Llyr, which was buried in the White Hill in London. And as long as the Head was there in that position, no Oppression would ever come to this Island; The second: the Bones of Gwerthefyr the Blessed, which were buried in the Chief Ports of this Island; The third: the Dragons which Lludd son of Beli buried in Dinas Emrys in Eryri."*

Bran was wounded in the foot with a poisoned dart which reminds one of the legend of the Greek hero Achilles. He survives long enough to instruct his seven surviving companions that his head be cut off and buried at the White Mound of Caer Lunnein which is now present day London. At Brân's death darkness fell

## A Treasury of Druidic Triads

across the face of Britain and all the crops failed. They brought the head back to Harlech where it continued to talk and entertain them. For fully seven years they knew nothing but joy and happiness. Eventually though they had to make their way to London . However, they sojourned on the island of Grass Holm where the head regaled them once more and they lived there for eighty years, entirely unaware of the passage of time until one of their number opened the door facing Cornwall and the spell which was upon them was broken. Dejected, the companions made their way to London where they buried Brân's head, aligning him so that he faced the continent as a protection against invasion. And this brought about the legend of the ravens of Tower Hill that if they fly away then Britain will fall to invasion.

Gwerthefyr was also known by the name of Vortimer and was said to have been poisoned by his step-mother. On his deathbed, he instructed for his bones to be buried in various parts of Briton to be a talisman against further Saxon invasions, which is said to have worked for a time.

The Dragon refers to the Red Dragon of the coat of arms of Wales and Dinas Emrys refers to the famed ancient Hill Fort of Amborsius which is a rocky and wooded hillock near Beddgelert in Gwynedd, north-west Wales. Rising some 76m above the floor of the Glaslyn river valley, it overlooks the southern end of Llyn Dinas in Snowdonia.



# The Irish Triads of Wisdom:

As the Welsh Triad #33 describes, there were a three peoples described as oppressors who to came to Prydain and who never went back. One of them is called the Gwyddyl Ffichti, and they became the Irish, as well as the Scottish and the Manx. Although the Welsh did occupy the lands of Prydain before the Gwyddyl Ffichti came, it was actually the Irish who invented the method of using triads to record the guidelines of law that maintained the social contract of their society. The triads that the Irish lived by have been found to predate the coming of the Romans by many centuries and it may appear that the Welsh took the Irish idea of composing Triads of Wisdom and started using it to record the histories of their lands, peoples and culture. It is with these triads that if life is lived by them, one should have peace, harmony and happiness in it. Originally deciphered from Gaelic by Kuno Meyer in 1906, the triads in this lesson are updated with our modern day vocabulary.

Along with each of the triads, I have written a short description of what various parts of the triad means.



They begin:

## Triad #1 -

*“Three conditions for which one may be un-seated: for performing murder or warfare, for telling a falsehood, for divulging a secret which he or she holds.”*

Unseated also refers to becoming dethroned. When someone of authority starts to create harm by killing, lying, or betraying secrets, it is therefore a wise thing for the society in question to put that despotic leader out of business. There are many times in history when this has happened. But unfortunately, there are also many more times in history when this sort of thing should have happened, but the peoples of that society were too afraid of harming coming back to them for them to do something about it.



## Triad #2 -

*“Three things which ought not to be revealed: injurious truth, the disgrace of a friend, the secrets of the coven or grove.”*

There are actually times when the truth might cause harm, and if it disgraces a friend or reveals the secrets of the sacred circle of a coven or grove, then the truth should not be revealed. It takes wisdom to know when a truth is harmful or not.



**Triad #3 -**

*“Three virtues of Wisdom: to be aware of all things, to endure all things, to be removed from all things.”*

This Triads states that it is wise to be aware of all things and to be able to endure such things as peacefully as possible, but it is also wise when to know when one should remove oneself from harmful situations.



**Triad #4 -**

*“Three Spiritual Instructors of Mankind: mastery of self, mastery of world, mastery of the unknown.”*

The Ancient Celts believed in spirit guides and that they are there to provide one with instruction on how to master oneself in the world and how to control the fear of the unknown wisely.



**Triad #5 -**

*“Three things a Person is: what he thinks he is, what others think he is, and what he really is.”*

The ego causes oneself to think of what they are, but that others might think of it otherwise. Only to the rest of the natural world does he appear as he really is, and that is reflected by how our animals, pets and nature react to him.



**Triad #6 -**

*“Three things that make re-birth (reincarnation) necessary for a person: his failure to obtain wisdom, his failure to attain independence, his clinging to the Lower Self.”*

This also refers to what failures that a person makes which keeps them from achieving the perfect enlightenment. If one does not achieve good wisdom in knowing how to live life without causing harm, to be able to live independently, and clings to the materialism of our present incarnation, then one is then said to be doomed to keep coming back to repeat the previous lives experiences until they achieve the enlightenment necessary have perfect enlightenment.



**Triad #7 -**

*“Three signs to be controlled above all else: the hand, the tongue, desire.”*

The hand, tongue and desire are where a lot of harm can come from. Nothing can cause perceived harm faster than certain gestures of the hand, words of the tongue, and acting on unhealthy desires.



**Triad #8 -**

*“Three signs of cruelty: to needlessly frighten an animal, to needlessly tear plants and trees, to needlessly ask for favours.”*

Frightening an animal that actually trusts you is cruel. Needlessly tearing plants is disrespectful to nature and to needlessly ask for favours can cause people to think you are unworthy of any future favours, so only ask for favours when they are only absolutely necessary.



**Triad #9 -**

*“Three people deserving of admiration: those who love on the beauty of the Earth, on little children, on a great piece of art.”*

When one shows love for the earth, to children, and art, they are being wise and therefore deserve admiration for showing such wisdoms.

**Triad #10 –**

*“Three signs of compassion: to understand a child's complaint, to not disturb an animal that is lying down, to be cordial to strangers.”*

Compassion is one of the best virtues and that is best expressed by endeavouring to understand a childish complaint, even when it comes from an adult. It is compassionate not to disturb the rest of any animal, including your fellow human and being cordial to strangers is also compassionate.



**Triad #11 –**

*“Three things to be avoided by the Wise: expecting the impossible, grieving over the irretrievable, fearing the inevitable.”*

Thus, it is not wise to be a perfectionist, grieving to much over something irretrievable including death, and having fear for what is going to be inevitable such as getting old.



**Triad #12 –**

*“Three things lovable in a person: tranquillity, wisdom, and kindness.”*

When one has tranquillity, wisdom and kindness, they are then more lovable than someone who is disruptive, rash or cruel.



**Triad #13 –**

*“Three duties of an excellent person: to cherish their mate and children, to love their country, and to obey the laws of their people.”*

Cherishing our family members, all living things of the lands of their country, and obeying the rules of one's peoples social contracts are excellent qualities that should also be cherished in a person.

**Triad #14 -**

*“Three things besides which the baneful cannot be: conformity to law, knowledge, and love.”*

The baneful are people who are exceedingly harmful. They tend not to conform to law, refuse to listen to good wisdom as well as good knowledge, and they tend to not appreciate love when it comes to them.



**Triad #15 -**

*“Three joys of the happy: avoidance of excess, peace, and loyalty.”*

Avoiding excess is how people tend to appreciate the good qualities of life. And it is hard to be joyful if one does not have peace or the loyalty of a good friend or mate.



**Triad #16 -**

*“Three tendencies of a person's lifetime: hope, love, and joy.”*

People tend to have tendencies, such as to have hope for the future, having good love in their lives, and joy is where we get our healing energies from.



**Triad #17 -**

*“Three things that unlock thoughts: drunkenness, truthfulness, and love.”*

Nothing causes one more to unlock your thoughts, be it harmful or otherwise, than when one is drunk. Of course, when one has truth to tell, then one tends to unlock those thoughts. And when one is in love, one tends to unlock their thoughts to the person with whom they are in love with.

**Triad #18 -**

*“Three things that bring a person the love of their neighbours: to be a peacemaker, to be a helper, and to be a guide.”*

Those are the qualities that all Druids should have to gain the respect of the people that depend on them, and that is to bring peace to their community, being helpful, and for being a guide to higher states of wisdom.



**Triad #19 -**

*“The three foundations of friendship: respect and trust, understanding and forbearance, a loving heart and helping hands.”*

This triad actually has Six Words of Wisdom. Without ‘Respect’, then one cannot ‘Trust’ their friend. Without ‘Understanding’, one has trouble ‘Forgiving’ their friend’s faults. And it is through a ‘Loving’ heart that one can show how much of a ‘Helping’ hand they can be.



**Triad #20 -**

*“Three things, for which thanks are due, because that is as easy as a reward: an invitation, a gift, and a warning.”*

One should always give thanks for when someone gives you an invitation, a gift, and a good warning for even though they are all easy to give, they are also easy to take away.



**Triad #21 -**

*“Three qualities unbecoming of anyone: being impertinent in asking, hard in giving, and ill in opinion.”*

When one is excessive in asking for too much, they become known as being a bit of burden. When one is hard in giving, then they may be useless to all, including

those that may actually love them. And no one likes someone who has nothing but bad things to say.



**Triad #22 -**

*“Three things that cause one loss of invitation: eating too much, speaking too much, and asking too much.”*

When one asks for too much from a friend, neighbour and even a family member, then that person will not be considered worth inviting anymore.



**Triad #23 -**

*“Three things never to bring one who has been your host: harm, contention, and ill repute.”*

Bringing harm, contention and ill repute to someone who has been your host is like biting the helping hand that has fed you.



**Triad #24 -**

*“Three reasons for keeping silent: against saying the thing one should not, against speaking in the way that one should not, and against speaking in the place one should not.”*

Speaking out for someone else without their permission can cause one to become known as being a troublemaker. This triad basically the old saying about if one has nothing good to say, then don't say anything because if one replies harmfully, then a cycle of harm is created that can be never ending.



**Triad #25 -**

*“Three reasons for speaking, come what may: for instruction against ignorance, council against strife, and truth against harmful falsehood.”*

There are times when speaking out can be the only way to dispel the harms of ignorance, strife and when lies are being said. It takes good wisdom to know when to speak out for such things and when not to.



**Triad #26 -**

*“Three things that do no hurt against anyone: concealing ill manners, controlling passion, and destroying ill intention.”*

It is a wise person who knows how to conceal ill manners, controlling harmful passion, destroying one's ill intentions that could cause a harmful situation.



**Triad #27 -**

*“There are three things that one should give freely to guests: gracious accommodations, friendly conversation, and insured safety.”*

One should always be willing to make a guest comfortable and that is providing good accommodations, happy cheerful conversation, and being insured of have a good warm safe bed at hand.



**Triad #28 -**

*“The three foundations of happiness: contentment, hope, and belief.”*

In order to have happiness, one has to be content in their life, hope for the future, and belief in your fellow humanity to be peaceful.



**Triad #29 -**

*“Three things which the happy will gain: prosperity, honour, and ease of conscience.”*

This is a triad that requires all three to make someone happy. There are many people who are rich & prosperous but who have not been happy. They need good honour and good conscience in order to have happiness too. That means having to do things honourable and nothing harmful to gain their prosperity in order to be truly happy.



**Triad #30 -**

*“Three things all should strive for: oneness with their Gods, peace among neighbours, and just judgement.”*

The Gods that are referred to have oneness with are the various sacred elements, the natural cycles of life and Mother Earth. Peace is not only necessary toward your human neighbours, but also your animal and plant neighbours as well. And the best just judgement you can have is Druidic restorative justice.



**Triad #31 -**

*“Three to whom it is right to give food: the stranger, the solitary, and the orphan.”*

This triad points out the people who are the most likely to be poor and in need of compassionate aid. They are people with whom random acts of kindness are best done to.



**Triad #32 -**

*“Three things by which excellence is established: taking all things in moderation with nothing in excess, abidance to oaths, and acceptance or responsibility.”*

One is considered excellent when one is able to do or take things in moderation, when one does not betray to ones oaths, and when one takes responsibility for ones actions. Without good moderation, one can then end up becoming known for becoming chained to the spiritual essence of the Devil.



**Triad #33 -**

*“It is easier to determine the truth when these three prime evidences are existent: physical items which tell their story, trustworthy witnesses who tell their story, and concurrence with known truths.”*

Druids were known as judges for their communities and this triad dictates some of the rules of evidence of the common law restorative justice system that they used to perpetuate and such rules of evidence are still used in our modern day justice systems. One needs good physical evidence, testimony from people who are trusted to tell the truth, and also good circumstantial evidence.



**Triad #34 -**

*“Three things from which one should never be moved: one's oaths, one's gods, and the truth.”*

The things not to be moved are referring to that they should not ought to be altered without very good reason. Sometimes circumstance might dictate things be altered on occasion, but not done lightly. But ones oaths, nature Gods, and their truths should always be defended for ensuring of peace, harmony, and contentment in oneself.



**Triad #35 -**

*“Three things that strengthen a person to stand against the whole world: seeing the quality and beauty of truth, seeing beneath the cloak of falsehood, and seeing to what ends truth and falsehood come.”*

These are the three things that should be strongly upheld without oneself, even when one ends up having to take a stand against a whole community. One has to uphold truth, reveal lies, and to ensure that the ends of both truth and falsehood create good and nothing harmful.

**Triad #36 -**

*“There are three things excellent among worldly affairs: hating folly, loving excellence, and endeavouring to constantly learn.”*

One should have hatred for follies such as having too much egotism, vanity or greed. Excellence in art, craftsmanship, and justice should always be loved. And one should always have the wisdom necessary to learn from lessons of life.



**Triad #37 -**

*“Three manifestations of humanity: affectionate bounty, loving manners, and praiseworthy knowledge.”*

Affectionate bounty refers to having cooperation from your peers, romance from your mate, and good companionship from ones friends. Loving manners are what you should do onto mate, your parents and children. Praiseworthy knowledge is what you need to make constructive criticisms, creating peace in our community, and being able to help others in their struggles in Life.



**Triad #38 -**

*“Three things that spring from following lawful goodness: universal love from the Wise, worldly sufficiency, and a better place in the life to come (reincarnation).”*

When one is good, then people who are wise should show universal love for you, you will always have sufficiency as well as independence in this world, and rewards you receive will be a better life during your next incarnation.



**Triad #39 -**

*“Three things without which there could be nothing good: truth, valour, and generosity.”*

Without having the valorous bravery to be truthful and generous to others, one will not receive anything good in their lives.

**Triad #40 -**

*“Three manifestations of excellence: the honouring of parents, the respecting of the aged, and instructing the young, and to this a fourth, defending of infancy and innocence.”*

Here is a triad that is actually a quatrain. Being able to have honour for ones parents is excellent, so long as they are truly honourable. The aged should always be respected if they have lived a life which created good and nothing harmful. The youth should also be instructed and encouraged to be wise as well as knowledgeable and compassionate. And the fourth line refers to always making sure to defend the innocence of youth and keep them from becoming evil, harmful, and hateful.



**Triad #41 -**

*“Three reasons for supplicating the Mighty Ones: because it is a pleasure to you, that you may be a friend to those who are wise, and because your soul is immortal.”*

One should only serve the Gods of your liking only if it is a pleasure to you. Nothing can ruin a spiritual experience more than doing something that does not bring pleasure to you. Always endeavour to be friends to those who are wise. Everyone wise needs friendship in order to bring to them their just rewards. And it is from the spirituality of the Gods of nature that one gets to have a soul that is immortal.



**Triad #42 -**

*“Three ways to lose excellence: to become a servant to one's passions, to not learn from the examples set by others, to indulge to excess.”*

To become a servant to one's passions chains one to the spiritual essence of the Devil. One should always learn from the examples that are set down by others, be those examples constructive or harmful. And to indulge in the excesses of life is taking too much from nature without putting something good back in return.

**Triad #43 -**

*“Three things that always lead to deception: the love of a person too strong in sensuality, the good will of one’s superiors, the promises of one cursed with ill luck.”*

Nothing can cause a man to become deceptive than in being in the pursuit of someone who is overly beautiful, comely as well as sensual. Some people will do almost anything to keep the good will of their superiors and that could lead to deceptive behaviours in order to hide their weaknesses from their superiors. And nothing causes one to become deceptive faster than when one is trying to hide their bad luck.



**Triad #44 -**

*“Three persons from whom you should keep yourself: he who praises you too much for easy deeds, he who speaks against you for his own benefits, he who boasts of deeds never done.”*

These are the three people from whom one should keep yourself away from, the flatterer, the liar who bares false witness, and the braggart.



**Triad #45 -**

*“There are three things: wisdom, loss, and remorse. He who does not have the first shall have the other two.”*

If one is not wise, then they will always suffer loss and remorse for not knowing to accept the pains of life’s trials and tribulations.



**Triad #46 -**

*“Three signs of a bad man: bitterness, hatred, and cowardice.”*

Nothing causes hatred faster than always being bitter about bad tidings being cast around about you, which is going to happen in ones life from some source or another at one time or another. And to be a coward is someone who is too afraid to speak the truth from fear of offending.

**Triad #47 -**

*“Three things that never end well: a lie, envy, and deception/guile.”*

When one lies, it is said, something dies somewhere in the world. To be envious is to covet what is not yours, causing bitterness. And to deceive can cause distrust in what you say in the future.



**Triad #48 -**

*“Three people easy to do without: they who do not benefit to any, they who bring no joy to any, and they who keep not peace with any.”*

If you don't benefit any, bring no joy to others, or don't keep peace with others, then people will find it more easy to have nothing more to do with you than having you.



**Triad #49 -**

*“Three things hateful to the Mighty Ones and to human kind: a weak look, a deceitful tongue, and a mischievous spirit.”*

To have a weak look describes someone who does not know how to make good in life despite adversity. Being deceitful brings hatred for not being considered trustworthy. And being mischievous in spirit causes one to act unwisely which brings hatred from the Gods of nature.



**Triad #50 -**

*“Three roots of every evil: covetousness, falsehood, and arrogance.”*

Money and materialism brings the evil of covetousness. Not being able to admit ones weaknesses brings the evil of falsehood. And arrogance causes one to behave unsafely for not only oneself but to others as well.

**Triad #51 -**

*“Three joys of the lawless: gluttony, fighting, and fickleness.”*

The lawless enjoy taking too much from their community. The lawless always enjoy creating fighting amongst friends, and they can not be pleased as they are always fickle in that they always want things their own way.



**Triad #52 –**

*“Three chief things that deceive people: fair words, desire for gain, and ignorance.”*

Fair words are the words spoken just to please the listener. When one desires to gain, they will do anything including deceiving others in order to get it. And ignorance is when one knows what is true and what is false and therefore they make themselves easy to be deceived.



**Triad #53 -**

*“Three nourishments of arrogance: recklessness, wealth, and excess”*

Having too much wealth and excess can cause a person to become reckless in how they behave towards others.



**Triad #54 -**

*“Three things that attack the weakest: enemies, wealth, and pride.”*

Enemies of your community are the ones who will attack the weakest first. Wealthy people will tend to treat the weakest without compassion. And pride in always wanting to get their own way causes one to harm the Weak.



**Triad #55 -**

*“Three things better forsaken by those who love them: sport, carousal, and strife.”*

It is paying too much attention to sporting events, having carousals (wine, women and sarong based events), and having too much strife in ones life that causes one to not think of what is actually Important in life.



**Triad #56 -**

*“Three things of which only the happy and wise beware: the breaking of oaths, drunkenness, and vanity.”*

One then shows how peacefully happy and wise they are when they are able to live their lives without breaking oaths, having to drink to become happy in drunkenness, and being happy with how they are without becoming vain about things.



**Triad #57 -**

*“Three things that follow sloth: evil deeds, evil report, and evil end.”*

When one is slothful, one is being lazy and ends up not doing anything of much worth for his community. In order to get what one wants in life while being lazy, one has to then become evil in their deeds, then having a reputation for being evil, and that will end in nothing but evil.



**Triad #58 -**

*“Three strange things in the world: loving war more than peace, loving excess more than sufficiency, and loving falsehood more than truth.”*

These things of loving war, excess and falsehood are inventions of humanity and are therefore strange to our world.



**Triad #59 –**

*“There are three people accursed: they who work against the Laws of Nature without concern, they who know nothing of the Mighty Ones and do not seek to learn, and they who know much and do not share their knowledge with any other.”*

Those who are our corporate industrialists are those who are accursed for they always take too much from nature. They do not learn from their mistakes. And those who do not share their knowledge are ones who do not benefit anyone and are therefore accursed as well.



**Triad #60 -**

*“Three kinds of people worthless to them who are just and honest: the drunkard, the perjurer, and the traitor.”*

To those who are just and honest, these sorts of people are those who will most likely to let them down or cause them harm, and that is the one who spends most of his time being a drunkard, the one who is a liar, and a person who betrays a trust.



# Other Triads of History, Other Cultures and Modern Day:

Of course, triads were something that not only the Celts of the British Isles used. There were other cultures that had used triads as well. For instance, there is an Arabic triad that a friend showed to me that goes:

*Three things come not back:*

- *The Spoken Word,*
- *The Sped Arrow,*
- *And the Neglected Opportunity.*



I recently went to a Buddhist Temple for a Chanting Ceremony during the time that I was doing my research for this lesson and during their chants; I discovered that there was a Triad of Wisdom in the chant that I found very interesting. It was the part of the service called the "First Watch of the Night ("Shoya-raisan-ge"), which was compiled by the Buddhist Scholar Shant-Tao.

It goes:

*"Without a stock of goodness from past lives,  
One cannot hear the Name of the Buddha;  
Arrogant, corrupt, and indolent people  
Cannot readily accept this teaching.*

There is a Celtic triad of the Irish that makes a similar statement in my opinion:

*"Three roots of every evil:*

- *Covetousness*
- *Falsehood*
- *Arrogance."*

And also, I discovered the number Three is also important to Buddhism in their walking meditations. Every 45 minutes or so, after a recitation of their Buddhistic philosophies, the Priest Ikuta Sensei-San would lead a walking meditation about the hall of the temple. This represented one spiritually walking towards enlightenment. The thing is, the walking meditation towards enlightenment is taken three steps at a time.

## A Treasury of Druidic Triads

It went:

*Take Step with the Left Foot,  
Take Step with the Right Foot,  
Take Step with the Left Foot,  
Put Right Foot next to Left Foot and stop,  
Then take about 3 seconds to meditate,  
Then take the next Step with the Left Foot.*



Triads have been used to create some well-known hendiadris metaphorical triple sayings that have become staples in our present-day language such as the famed cliché “for Wine, Women, and Song”. There are others such as the motto of the revolutionary French Republic’s “Peace, Order and Good Government” and the Military Academy Westpoint’s “*Duty, Honor, Country*” or the US FBI’s “Fidelity, Bravery, Integrity”. Abraham Lincoln used a Triad in his famed Gettysburg Address when he stated that the Government should be “of the People, by the People, for the People”.



Lenin and the Bolsheviks used a Triadic Motto for their Revolution in Russia when they said “Peace, Land and Bread”.



The Japanese used a Triad during their boom years for foreign illegal immigrant workers who performed work that was “Kiken, Kitsui, Kitanai” which meant “dangerous, difficult, or dirty”



Sometimes, triads were used poetically with the first letter of each word being the same, such as when President Roosevelt used a triadic motto for his New Deal program: “Relief, Recovery, and Reform” in 1930s America. And the Suffragette

movement used a late 19<sup>th</sup> century slogan of German society which went “Kirche, Kinder, Kuche” which meant “Church, children, kitchen”.

Triads appear on currency as well, such as what appears on the German Deutsche Mark coin, “Einigkeit und Recht und Frieheit” which is the modern German State motto which means “Unity and Justice and Freedom”.



Shakespeare used triads in his play ‘Henry V’ with the quotation: “Cry God for Harry, England, and St. George!”



There have been variations of some well known triads such as the cliché “Wine, Women, and Song” which is a triad used for a long time in many languages of the world, such as:

- British Navy – Rum, Bum, and Concertina.
- Bengali/Hindi/Sanskrit - “Sur, Sura, Sundari” (music, wine and woman)
- Czech - "Vino, ženy a zpěv" (wine, women and song)
- Danish - "Vin, kvinder og sang" (wine, women and song)
- Finnish - "Viini, laulu ja naiset" (wine, song, and women)
- German - "Wein, Weib und Gesang" (wine, woman and singing)
- Italian - "Bacco, tabacco e Venere" (Bacchus, tobacco and Venus)
- Norwegian - "Piker, vin og sang" (women, wine and song)
- Polish - "Wino, kobiety i śpiew" (wine, women and song)
- Swedish - "Vin, kvinnor och sång" (wine, women and song)
- Spain- "Naipes, Mujeres y Vino, Mal Camino" (cards, women and wine, bad ways)



And there are times when triads have been made up for modern day uses such as what the Druids of the Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids composed for one of their Bardic Grade Gwers courses, such as one composed by the neo-Druid

Iolo Morganwg, which is posted in their Bardic Grade Gwers #8, Page 119. It goes:

*Three Task of the Druid:*

- *To Live Fully in the Present,*
- *To Honour Tradition and the Ancestors,*
- *And Hear the Voice of Tomorrow.*



I, myself have been a vehement composer of triads of wisdom and have taken to composing something that I call the “3X3 Triad Of Wisdom” compositions, which I mainly compose for the occasions of the sacred Sabbaths of Samhain, Imbolc, Beltane, and Lughnasad. I got the term 3X3 from a pagan Spell of the Bellyrmine Jar in which the I found a line that went “By The Power Of Three Times Three, So Mote It Be!”.

Here are three of them.

I wrote this one on the plane while flying back from my 2006 Pilgrimage to Stonehenge that I call “When On a Summer Solstice Pilgrimage” :

*When on a Summer Solstice Pilgrimage -*

- *One should pay respects to the spirits of one’s ancestors*
- *One should retrace the footsteps of one’s past incarnations.*
- *And to free oneself of ones negative emotional energies.*

*Where to celebrate the Summer Solstice -*

- *At three different places of tranquillity.*
- *Where one can cleanse and purify oneself.*
- *And at a peaceful place that can be enjoyed with others.*

*What to wish for at a Summer Solstice Gathering -*

- *Peace between your fellow gatherers.*
- *To be able to share good spiritual energies with others.*
- *And to have gratitude for help received from others.*



## A Treasury of Druidic Triads

*By paying respects to the spirits of your ancestors –*

- *You then give gratitude for the mortal shell of your present incarnation which they provided you with.*
- *You acknowledge the traditions they have passed down to you.*
- *You learn wisdom from their records and histories.*



*When retracing your past incarnation's spiritual path –*

- *You learn wisdom from their records and histories.*
- *You gain insight on where your capabilities are based on.*
- *You come to accept what your limitations are.*



*By cleansing oneself of one's negative emotional energies –*

- *One is then spiritually free.*
- *You gain peace within yourself.*
- *And ones past life's evils can then be overcome.*



*When practicing your ancestor's traditions –*

- *You become spiritually attuned to the cycles of life.*
- *You then gain respect for the good Karmanic energies of others.*
- *You gain good bonding with friends and family.*



*Where are Three Great Places of Tranquillity –*

- *The Glastonbury Tor Tower.*
- *The Avebury Circle of Stones.*
- *And at Old Sarum Castle.*



*How to overcome the evils of one's past life –*

- *Acknowledge the problem of one's past evils.*
- *Gather into a circle of people who are fighting the past evil together.*
- *Then gain the strength to cast off the yoke of that Devil's power.*



Here is my 2006 Samhain 3x3 Triad of Wisdom, which has come in handy when someone has suffered a Personal Loss and started Grieving:

Respect For The Dearly Departed:

*How one pays respect to the dearly departed:*

- *With sorrow and respect*
- *Admire their good deeds and achievements*
- *Be happy and rejoice at having known them*

*Even if you did not know them:*

- *They had an impact on nature and the Earth*
- *They were agents of change*
- *Their souls are also creations of the Wheel of Life*

## A Treasury of Druidic Triads

*If the dearly departed created negative emotional energies:*

- *Those energies are recycled for better purposes for the future*
- *You can clear and release with consecrated Holy Water*
- *The spaces in which was spawned those emotional energies can be cleansed*

*One feels sorrow for the loss because:*

- *You miss their influences in your life*
- *The circle that they were part of is broken*
- *You can not benefit from their help in life*

*By acknowledging their achievements:*

- *You set an example for the future*
- *You are making a promise to preserve their work*
- *And that you will carry on their endeavours*

*When rejoicing in having know them:*

- *You are having gratitude to the Goddess for having created them*
- *You are creating good Karma for the departed soul*
- *You are showing the happiness they gave to you.*



*When paying respects to this turn of the Wheel of Life:*

- *One should ask for peace from the sacred quarters*
- *The power of deity is sanctified*
- *That reverence for Mother Nature is acknowledged*

*By setting an example for the future:*

- *You acknowledge the lessons of the past*
- *Using the present remembrance to set the example*
- *And with good example, the future is preserved*

*During such remembrance, the soul is refreshed by:*

- *The refreshing vibrations of music*
- *The quenching affect of drink*
- *And be nourished with good food*



And this is my 2008 Imbolc 3X3 Triad of Wisdom Composition on What Are The True Religions:

*What are the true religions –*

- *The ones that provide good guidance in life.*
- *The ones which reveal the power of nature.*
- *And the ones which allow freedom of will.*

*What are the purposes of religion –*

- *To understand the world around us.*
- *To appreciate the cycles of life.*
- *And to be able to have peace.*

*What false Religions Do –*

- *They keep people in ignorance!*
- *They cause harm unto others!*
- *And they endeavour to enslave!*



*With good guidance in life –*

- *The fruits of plenty are enjoyed.*
- *Many happy relations are founded.*
- *And the needs of others are satisfied.*

*Where is the Power of Nature –*

- *In the cleansing forces of storms.*
- *In the sprout of a new seedling.*
- *And in the solar rays of the sun.*

*With freedom of will –*

- *Negative emotions are cleansed away.*
- *One enjoys a happy life.*
- *And one gets closer to Mother Nature.*



*New beliefs are like new seedlings because –*

- *They need care and cultivation to grow.*
- *They get stronger with age.*
- *And they eventually spread seeds of new knowledge.*

*To prevent ignorance –*

- *One needs the knowledge of the ages.*
- *Better wisdoms must be exercised.*
- *And with the free exchanging of new ideas.*

*When satisfaction is achieved –*

- *Feelings of bad Karma are dispelled.*
- *The need for greed is abated.*
- *And nothing more is taken from the Earth.*



## Conclusion:

I hope you have all found this lesson on the Sacred Triads of Druidry interesting and enlightening. I have found that in order to have peace in one's life, it is a good idea to always have more than one way of looking at the various situations, errors, and experiences in life, and the best way to go about that is always have around Three ways of looking at things. You have to consider if things are right, wrong or neutral in regards to the harm that something can cause and be able to adapt to each way in a good peaceable way. That way, you will always be able to do what thou wilt, whilst harming none.



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