

# Apple

By Susa Morgan Black

OBOD Druid, FSA Scot



Somerset Apple trees at Chalice Gardens, Glastonbury

Botanical name: *Pyrus malus* or *communis*

Family: *malus/communis*

Ogham: *Quert*

Scots Gaelic: *Crann Ubhall, ubhal-fiadhaich, Cuir*

Irish Gaelic: *Crann Úll, Aball*

Welsh: *Afallen; pren afalau, Afal*

French: *Pomme*

## Description

The Apple tree is the oldest cultivated tree in Europe. (Haganeder, pg. 177)

### Crab Apple (*Malus spp.*)

The original British apple tree is a Crab Apple – a deciduous tree that flowers in April and May with a distinctive five pealed white or pink flower that gives off a wonderful scent similar to honeysuckle. The tree seldom grows larger than twenty-five feet high. Apple blossoms are a favourite of bees, who thrive on the nectar. These bees, and other insects help pollinate the apple trees. (Paterson, page 115) Unlike modern cultivars, the Crab Apple is a thorn bearing tree. (Pennick, page 52)

Crab Apple trees are cultivated in orchards, but also can grow wild in hedgerows and near the fringe of woods. The bark of the Crab Apple is gnarly and angular. The leaves are heart shaped, glossy and a medium green shade. (Paterson, page 107) (Hopman, page 87)

The fruit are developed by autumn and ready for harvest, some continuing to fruit into winter. Crab Apples are smaller than modern cultivars, around an inch diameter, and ripen into yellow or red fruit. This sour fruit is called a *pome*. (Paterson, page 108)

### Wild Apple (*Malus sylvestris*)

The Wild Apple is native to Europe and Western Asia. It has a short trunk and can grow to forty feet high. Bearing white flowers with a pink blush, this Apple tree blooms in early Spring. The fruit matures in summer, and is larger than that of a Crab Apple, averaging three and a half inches across. The apple has a star shaped core that is often used in Druid and Witches rituals as a natural “pentagram. (Hopman, page 87)

“The sweet scented apple blossom opens in late spring. The fruit ripens in September – the apple month.” (Gifford, page 94)

### Somerset Apples

The County of Somerset in Great Britain, is long famous for its apples. There are over 156 varieties that trace their history to Somerset. The ancient name for Glastonbury was *Avallon*, which means “The Isle of Apples” in the ancient British language.

Somerset is still famous for its apple orchards, apple cider and apple wines. Current apple cider varieties now produced in Somerset are classified into different groups. Sharp apples have high acidity and low tannins, whereas bittersweet varieties are have low acidity and are higher in tannin.

- Sharp: the Frederick apple
- Bitter-Sharp: the Kingston Black and Stroke Red apples
- Bittersweet: the Yarlington Mill, Dabinet and Hangdown apples
- Sweet: the Court Royal and Sweet Coppin apples

In Glastonbury, cider apples trees have been planted in the Wellhouse Lane Orchard at Glastonbury Tor by the National Trust and Glastonbury Conservative Society. The National Trust Regional Office can be contacted at +44 (0) 1985-843600 for more information.

## History

Man's relation to apple trees dates back to prehistoric times. The Common Apple or Wild Apple (*Malus sylvestris*) is native to Europe and Western Asia. Petrified remains of apple slices on saucers have been found in tombs dating back over 5,000 years. The Greeks and Romans planted apple trees throughout their respective empires. The healing properties of apples were recognized by traditional healers wherever the tree appeared.

According to Pliny, there were 22 varieties of apple trees world wide. Now, there are estimated to be over 2,000 varieties. The Crab Apple is Britain's only indigenous Apple tree (similar to current Cider Apple trees), but every invading settler brought in their own local varieties. The Crab Apple is a member of the Rose family, which includes other magical British ogham trees, such as Rowan, Hawthorn and Blackthorn, as well as other fruit trees such as the Cherry, Plum and Pear trees. (Paterson, page 106)



In Scotland, the Crabapple is the plant badge of Clan Lamont, whose Highland territories were around Cowall and Argyll.

←Clan Lamont Crabapple Plant Badge



Clan Lamont Family Crest→

## Johnny Appleseed

John Chapman (born in Leominster, Massachusetts on September 26, 1774; and died in Fort Wayne, Indiana, at aged 70, on March 18, 1845), also known as "Johnny Appleseed", planted a popular American variety, the *Jonathan Apple* across the American wilderness in the late 1700s and early 1800s. His apple orchards in New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, and Kentucky still exist, and some of the original trees he planted over two hundred years ago, still bear fruit. (Gifford, page 94)



Johnny Appleseed has transcended history and become a fixture of American folklore. He was reputed to be a kind, gentle man whose dream was to plant apple orchards throughout the land so that none, neither European nor Native American, would ever go hungry. A rugged individual, he walked barefoot and slept outdoors, with a Bible and a pocket full of apple seeds. In folk tradition, he is described as barefoot, wearing clothing made from sacks, with a tin pot for a hat, which he also cooked in. His kindness extended to animals, and there are tales of him playing with snakes and bears in the wilderness.

As an American child, we all learned to sing the Walt Disney *Johnny Appleseed* song in school playgrounds. To read the lyrics and hear the tune, refer to:

<http://linux.remotepoint.coem/songs/lyrics/johnnyappleseed.html>

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## Folk Art

A popular item of American and British folk art is the Apple Doll, which can still be seen in craft festivals and country stores throughout America.

To make one, you peel a large apple, leaving a little skin at the top and bottom to encourage the apple to dry in a rounded head shape. Carve shallow features, such as eyes, wide apart, for the head will shrink as it dries. Core the apple head and place it on a dowel or stick, letting it dry for three to four weeks. Form the body with cloth and wire, attaching the dried head. Yarn can be used for hair.

For further information on making apple dolls see: <http://pages.prodigy.net/pmatson1>

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<sup>1</sup> Johnny Appleseed by Susa M. Black



Apple tree my father planted in their back yard in Sonoma, California

### **Judeo-Christian folklore**

In Judeo-Christian mythology, the apple is the tree of forbidden knowledge, which gave Adam and Eve their knowledge of good and evil. It is now believed that the original fruit referred to in the bible was a fig or pomegranate, but when the legend traveled to Western Europe, the fruit was replaced by their sacred Apple.

### **Norse Folklore**

In Norse tradition, the Apple is the tree of immortality. The Goddess *Idunn* was the keeper of the apples, which she fed the Norse Gods and Goddesses to keep them forever young. Apple wands were also used in Norse love rituals. To the Norse, apples represented long life, wisdom and love.

### **Greek Folklore**

The Earth Goddess, Gaia, gave Hera, the Queen of Heaven, an apple tree when she married the Chief God, Zeus. That tree was kept in the Garden of the Hesperides, guarded by the dragon, Ladon. One of Hercules' tasks was to fetch an apple from that tree.

Paris signaled his judgment of the fairest of the Goddesses by giving Aphrodite, the Goddess of Love, an apple.

### **Polish Folklore**

In ancient Silesia (now part of Poland), the apple tree was a "dream tree". Sleeping under the tree could induce dreams, or merely placing an apple under her pillow on New Year's

Eve, would induce a midnight dream in a young woman, of her future husband. (Altman, page 190)

## European Folklore

On the dark side, in Medieval fairytales such as *Snow White*, the Queen (a powerful sorceress) used a magic apple to curse the young Princess into terminal sleep. The Medieval church believed enchanted apples could be given to a victim to cause demonic possession.

## British and Celtic Folklore

In Celtic tradition, the Otherworldly Avalon was also known as the *Avallach*, the Isle of Apples, ruled by Fairy Queen, Morgan le Fay. (Freeman, page 196) This is the land of fairies and the dead, where King Arthur was taken to be healed by his sister, Morgan. Like their cousins to the North, the Celts attributed the power of healing and youth, or rebirth, to apples. Apples are one of the magical trees, part of the Celtic Ogham tree alphabet, known as *Quert*.

In Herefordshire, April, 1768, twelve women bearing Apple tree branches walked in the funeral cortege of Velters Cornewall of Moccas. The apples probably symbolized the British after-life. (Pennick, page 52) Apples are sometimes buried in churchyards in an effort to feed the dead. Apples also symbolize rebirth.

In Ireland the quest for wisdom was realized by pursuing the white doe under a wild Apple tree. (Pepper)

In Medieval Irish story Connla the Fair, an Irish prince, fell in love with a beautiful Faerie woman, who arrived on the Irish shore in a crystal boat. She offered him an apple from the world of Faerie, and he took the fatal bite, and was hers forever. They set sail for her magical island where the trees bore both fruit and blossom, and winter never came. There, they ate an ever replenishing stock of apples, which kept them young forever. (Freeman, page 197)

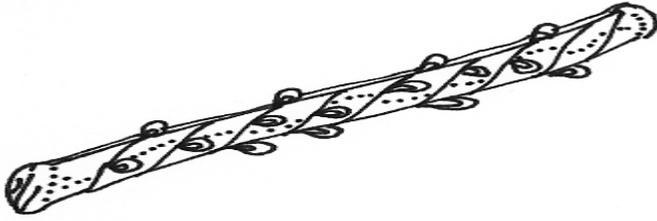
An Otherworldly apple tree magically makes music, which can dispel "all want or woe or weariness of the soul." (Freeman, page 197)

In Irish lore, the God *Óengus* offered three miraculous apple trees from the magical woods, *Bruig na Bóinde* (New Grange), as a wedding gift for the one of the Milesians. One was in full bloom, one shedding its blossoms, and one in fruit. (Mountfort, page 103) The deliberate felling of an Apple Tree was punishable by death in ancient Irish law. (Gifford, page 97)

In the Welsh *Câd Goddeu* (The Battle of the Trees), the Apple is described as the noblest tree of them all, the tree that symbolized poetic immortality. (Gifford, page 97)

## Druid Folklore

The sacred Druid plant, *an t-uil-ìoc* (Mistletoe), is often found on Apple trees, making it an especially holy tree to the Druids, along with the Oak.



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In the Irish Druid tradition, the Silver Bough is cut from a magical Apple tree, where silver apple shaped bells played a mystical tune, which could lull people into a trance state. Druids could make contact with the Otherworld during a trance enhanced by this silver apple bough.

The Apple Tree is closely linked to Druids, in their aspect as magicians and shamans. The tree is often used when the Druid undergoes a magical transformation or journeys in the Otherworld. In *The Voyage of Bran*, an Otherworldly woman appears with an apple branch laden with bells, entrancing Bran with wondrous tales of the Otherworld. So enraptured is he by this damsel with the magical apple branch, that he sets sail immediately for the enchanted shores, having epic adventures on his journey. (Blamires, page 142)

“In Druid lore, the essence of three sacred apples growing on the Tree of Knowledge came from three drops that fell from Cerridwen’s cauldron, which correspond with the Druid’s most holy symbol, the Three Rays of Light.” (Gifford, page 99)

The Druid Merlin was purported to work in a magical Apple Grove guarded by birds, revealed to him by his master, *Gwendollegu*. He was said to receive the gift of prophecy from the Faerie Queen, conferred through the consumption of one of her magic apples. Merlin was also said to take shelter under an apple tree during his bout with madness.

Thomas the Rhymer, of Erledoune, in 13<sup>th</sup> Century Scotland, was warned not to eat the Otherworldly Apple offered by the Faerie Queen, or he would be unable to return to mortal life.

*Bards* (poets) and *Ovates* (shamans) carried apple branches, (with bronze, silver, or gold bells), called the *Craobh Ciuil* (Branch of Reason) as symbols of their office. (Blamires, page 142). “As with all trees whose fruits are the basis of alcoholic drinks, the apple tree has close associations with divine inspiration and poetry.” (Gifford, page 94)

*La Mas Ushal* was brewed at the end of October in preparation for the Druid’s “Day of the Apple” on November 1<sup>st</sup>. This recipe has come down to us as the Wassail Bowl, made from baked or roasted crab apples, brown ale or cider, honey, cloves, cinnamon, nutmeg, brown sugar, and ginger.

## Celtic Apple Traditions

Traditional Scottish and Irish Halloween party games included bobbing for apples in a tub or cauldron full of water. Several apples are placed in a tub of water, then participants attempt to grab the apples with their teeth. Another game is to hang an apple from a string, and attempt to grab it with your teeth.

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<sup>2</sup> Drawing by Cedar Sposato

Apples are customarily a part of the "Dumb Supper", a silent Feast of the Dead given on Samhain Eve. Participants set a place, with broken crockery, at the head of the dining table for the ancestors, and not a word is spoken during the Dumb Supper. I've been to ceremonies where servers walk in backwards, and never look directly at the place set for the dead. After the feast is over, the left over food and broken crockery is ceremonially taken outside, into the woods, for the spirits to consume on this wild Halloween night. This is a powerful ceremony of communion with the dead. Any apples on the tree unharvested after Samhain is left for the spirits.

Apples are much in evidence in *Samhain* rituals of prophecy. Peeling an apple in front of the mirror and throwing it over the left shoulder, a young maiden can recognize the initial of her future husband.

### Wassailing



In Great Britain it is customary to "wassail" the oldest apple tree in the orchard on Twelfth Night (either January 6<sup>th</sup> or old Twelfth Night on January 17<sup>th</sup>) to ward off evil spirits and beseech the trees to produce a fine harvest of apples the following spring. The oldest tree is named "Apple Tree Man", and is the guardian of all the trees in the orchard. There are many traditions connected with this rite, including shooting through the branches to ward off evil spirits, and pouring apple cider through the roots. Toast soaked in apple cider is placed in the branches for the Robins, who embody the spirit of the apple trees. Celebrants drink warm cider and sing traditional Wassail songs. Wassail probably comes from the Anglo Saxon words, *wes hal*, meaning "good health".

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Wassailing still takes place on the old Twelfth Night – January 17<sup>th</sup> – in Somerset. Visitors can participate at the Glastonbury Museum.

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<sup>3</sup> "Wassailing the Apple Tree by Susa M. Black

The last apple is often left on the tree at harvest time, for the Apple Tree Man, to ensure a good harvest the next year. (Paterson, page 116)

Traditional Gloucestershire Wassail Song:<sup>4</sup>

*Wassail! wassail! all over the town,  
Our toast it is white and our ale it is brown;  
Our bowl it is made of the white maple tree;  
With the wassailing bowl we'll drink to thee.*

*Here's to our horse, and to his right ear,  
God send our master a happy new year:  
A happy new year as e'er he did see,  
With my wassailing bowl I drink to thee.*

*So here is to Cherry and to his right cheek  
Pray God send our master a good piece of beef  
And a good piece of beef that may we all see  
With the wassailing bowl, we'll drink to thee.*

*Here's to our mare, and to her right eye,  
God send our mistress a good Christmas pie;  
A good Christmas pie as e'er I did see,  
With my wassailing bowl I drink to thee.*

*So here is to Broad Mary and to her broad horn  
May God send our master a good crop of corn  
And a good crop of corn that may we all see  
With the wassailing bowl, we'll drink to thee.*

*And here is to Fillpail and to her left ear  
Pray God send our master a happy New Year  
And a happy New Year as e'er he did see  
With the wassailing bowl, we'll drink to thee.*

*Here's to our cow, and to her long tail,  
God send our master us never may fail  
Of a cup of good beer: I pray you draw near,  
And our jolly wassail it's then you shall hear.*

*Come butler, come fill us a bowl of the best  
Then we hope that your soul in heaven may rest  
But if you do draw us a bowl of the small  
Then down shall go butler, bowl and all.*

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<sup>4</sup> From Hymns and Carols of Christmas website:

[http://www.hymnsandcarolsofchristmas.com/Hymns\\_and\\_Carols/wassail\\_wassail\\_all\\_over\\_1.htm](http://www.hymnsandcarolsofchristmas.com/Hymns_and_Carols/wassail_wassail_all_over_1.htm)

*Be here any maids? I suppose here be some;  
Sure they will not let young men stand on the cold stone!  
Sing hey O, maids! come trole back the pin,  
And the fairest maid in the house let us all in.*

*Then here's to the maid in the lily white smock  
Who tripped to the door and slipped back the lock  
Who tripped to the door and pulled back the pin  
For to let these jolly wassailers in.*

## **Deities**

Apples are associated with many European Deities:

Celtic Deities: Morgan le Fay, Cerridwen, Olwen

Norse Deities: Idunn, Freyja

Greek Deities: Aphrodite, Dionysus, Apollo, Hera, Gaia, Athena, and Zeus

Roman Deities: Pomona, Diana, Venus, Cupid, Jupiter

Middle Eastern Deities: Ishtar, Shekinah, Astarte, Ashtaroth



## Magic

An apple cut in half through the middle reveals the witches' five pointed star, so apples are also a symbol of magic. In the *Word Ogham of Cuchulain*, the apple is described as an "emblem of protection" (Blamires, pg. 143). The pentacle in its center is a potent talisman of protection.

For a love ritual, charge a small piece of rose quartz to your purpose, then place it in a red bag. With pink ribbon, tie the bag on a branch of an apple tree where it will not be disturbed. When your wish is fulfilled, bury the amulet near the tree, or throw it in the nearest body of water. A similar spell can be done for health or prosperity, by using a green stone (green quartz, emeralds, jade, aventurin, tourmaline, or peridot). Put it in a green bag, with green ribbon, and tie it onto a branch of your apple tree.

Apple trees can be used as "cloutie trees". Find a ribbon or strip of cloth that represents your deepest wish, and tie it into the branches of an Apple tree. As the cloth weathers away, your wish will come true.

One of my teachers, Raven Moonshadow (from the Reclaiming Collective), asked his class to inscribe their apples with magical symbols representing wishes they would like to manifest in their lives. After throwing their apples in the tub, students attempted to bob for their own apples, to make their spell come true.



Apple tree products can also be used in potions, oils and incenses. Apple juice is a fine substitute for wine in the "cakes and wine" segment of a Witch's ritual, especially for those who cannot drink alcohol. Apple blossoms are used in love sachets. Apple blossom oil can be included in many magical blends to bring love and health. (Apple oil is usually a synthetic oil made of chemicals blended to smell like apple. To make it more "real", add nine apple seeds to this oil or saturate apple blossoms in oil, adding the synthetic oil for scent, so the end product is a combination of synthetic and natural product. Parts of the real plant can be added to synthetic oils, if you cannot obtain the real thing.)

The most powerful way to use the aroma of the apple blossom is to do your magic under a blossoming apple tree!

### Otherworld Journey with Apple

On a warm summer afternoon, the lovely scent of apple blossom lures you to leave the familiar roadway, hike through the woods, cross a cool stream, and discover a hillside apple orchard. Tired, you plop down under the oldest tree in the orchard – wizened and gnarled, but still bearing the distinctive pale pink blossoms. The fragrance is delicious, and drowsy with the heat and aroma, you begin to drift off to sleep.

The sound of gently tinkling bells awakens you. You open your eyes, and above you, the tree is miraculously laden with fruit and flower. The apples shine with an inner glow, and you are consumed with a desire to taste one. Reach high as you might, you cannot reach the

apple on the lowest branch. You must climb the tree. With a mighty leap, you catch the lowest limb and swing your body into the tree. Climbing limb by limb, branch by branch, higher and higher to reach the elusive glowing apple. The end of the branches are belled, the lower ones in bronze. You hear their deep tones as you climb up beyond them. You feel a breeze as you climb higher, and note the branches end in gently tinkling silver bells. The wind blows stronger as you climb, you struggle to hang on, and note the clear ring of tiny golden bells.

Looking down, you cannot see the ground, but only the long trunk stretching down, through the branches. Looking above, all you see are the delicate green leaves, pink blossoms, and far above, the glowing apples. Suddenly, you realize that your whole world is an apple tree, and you are caught in a timeless journey between its boughs.

Crawling out on a stout limb, you try one last time for an elusive apple. Stretching your arm while you grip the limb with your legs, you are just able to reach it, and snap the stem from the branch. The apple is in your hands, almost throbbing with life. Carefully, you withdraw to the safety of the trunk. You bite into the fruit, and are overwhelmed with the tantalizing taste, ranging from bitter sharp to sweet. The flavor fills your head, then all your senses, and travels down your body until you are filled with light.

You are one with the tree, no longer afraid of the strong wind, or of falling. You can see down the trunk into the roots and realize the common ground you share with this tree, and all trees. You feel the tree's history intermingled with your own tribe, for the apple has fed human beings with its magic fruit from time immemorial. The myths of the Apple Tree are the central myths of your race, it is one of the mighty Fairy Trees. You look high up into the canopy of this tree, and see the future. For this tree carries us with it into the future. Then you remember, to the Celts, the apple is the Tree of Knowledge.

Once again, you find yourself at the base of the tree. You are awake and refreshed. You look beside you and notice an apple wand with nine tiny bells fastened to it. You express your gratitude to Old Man Apple Tree, and leave a gift of yourself behind, perhaps a promise to plant an Apple Tree in your vicinity.

## **Ritual**

Apple wands are the perfect tools to invoke any of the Gods or Goddesses associated with it. If you are particularly attracted to a specific God/dess, put aside your apple wand to be used only in invoking that deity. Holding the wand above your head, have the members of your Grove or Coven circle around you, chanting the name of your deity, calling that force down into you. This will aid you in channeling the deity Herself. I am a priestess of Morgan (who is also known as Morgan la Fay, Queen of Fairies, Queen of Witches, Queen of Ghosts, the Lady of the Lake, Sea Priestess, Sovereign of the Land, and the Triple Goddess). I use my apple wand to invoke Her presence as Healer, Mistress of Avalon, and Keeper of Sacred Knowledge. I could also use the apple wand to visit the shades of the dead who reside in Avalon.

At Samhain, prepare a *dumb supper* for the participants, and set a plate, cup and utensils at the head of the table. Using your apple wand to draw an invoking pentagram, call forth the shades of the dead, by name, from Avalon, inviting them to share the feast. Serve the dead a portion of everything that is offered at the feast. In some traditions, we walk in backwards and never look directly at the place set for the dead. Afterwards, place the food and drink from their plate outside, for the Pookas. In other traditions, the crockery is broken and buried afterwards, or left in the woods. Some years, we have kept solemn and holy silence through the feast, other years, we have limited our talk to recollections and toasts to our beloved dead. Be sure to include an apple in your feast in honor of the Isle of Apples.

## Ogham



The Ogham name for Apple is “Quert”. According to the *Word Ogam of Morainn Mac Moín*, Quert means “Apple is shelter of a hind, lunatics of hinds”. Apple is associated with wholeness. (Mountfort, page 99)

According to the *Word Ogham of Óengus*, Quert is the “force of a man”, or the epitome of health and vitality in a man or woman. The apple is located in the heart of the ogham grove, and is the source of life. It is from the apple that we receive healing, renewal, regeneration and wholeness, especially after being wounded, exhausted, or ill. (Mountfort, page 100)

Pulling the ogham stave Quert is a mandate to rest and heal yourself from strife, illness, fatigue, or injury. It is an invitation to regain your sense of wholeness and connection with nature. Associated with the holy isle of Avalon, the apple represents rest and healing, recovery, and a peaceful relaxing Otherworld journey to the magical isle presided over by the Morgan le Fay and Her Druid priestesses. The Apple is associated with the Lady of the Lake, a mystical Faerie who taught the healing arts to mortals. The Welsh *Physicians of Myddfai* were said to have been taught by the Lady of the Lake.

Apple may also signify that you have the ability to heal others, and point out a pathway of learning for you.

Pulling the Apple stave, you are invited to work with “the divine madness of the shaman.” It calls you to journey to the Otherworld by its many names - *Avalon*, *Avallach*, *Tir na Og*, *Eamhain Abhlach*. Apple also represents the spiritual warrior who fears not to travel beyond the mortal realm to face death, sacrifice and hardship, in order to benefit his or her tribe. The apple represents shelter and protection on these intense shamanic journeys. (Blamires, page 143) In modern terms, Apple invites you to dare to be different in order to discover your own truth. The apple offers protection, strength, comfort, and respite for your ordeal.

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<sup>5</sup> OBOD Message Board Gallery



## <sup>6</sup> Healing

“An apple a day keeps the doctor away.”

“To eat an apple before going to bed, makes the doctor beg for his bread.”

Our ancestors relied on the apple to stay healthy. Many folk legends associate the apple with beauty, long life, and restored youth.

Green Man Essence: “Apple (*Malus domestica*): “detoxification”. Helps the elimination of toxins on all levels and brings in spiritual energies. Transforms negative emotions.”

Bach Flower Remedies: the Crab apple cures self dislike, despondency, obsessions, fussiness, and anxiety.

“Apples strengthen the whole metabolism, balance the digestion, stimulate blood production as well as the metabolism of fats, and cleanse the system. They also have diuretic, febrifugal and relaxing properties, and stimulate the appetite” (Haganeder, page 177)

Apples contain sugars, amino acids, magnesium, iron, potassium, carbohydrates, vitamins C, B and B2, phosphates, tartaric acids, pectin, and mineral salts. They are prescribed for intestinal infections, constipation, mental and physical fatigue, hypertension, rheumatism, gout, anemia, bronchitis, urine retention, hepatic disorders, gastric and kidney malfunctions, hoarseness, coughing, and excess cholesterol in the blood. (Hopman, page 89)

Apples can be eaten raw, juiced, or even made into a poultice for inflammations. Apple cider vinegar has tremendous restorative properties. My mother makes a daily preparation of apple cider vinegar diluted with warm water. She’s 95 years old and still going strong.

In folk healing, rubbing two halves of a sliced apple on a wart, then burying it, will eliminate the wart.

Mashed rotten apples can be used as a poultice to treat sore eyes. (Altman, page 140)

According to Scottish herbalist, Mary Beith, a decoction was made of apples and rowan berries, sweetened with brown sugar to cure whooping cough in the Highlands. (Darwin, page 151)

A Welsh remedy from the Physicians of Myddfai: “For all sorts of agues, write on three apples on three separate days. In the first apple, ‘*O nagla pater.*’ On the second apple, ‘*O nagla filius.*’ On the third apple, ‘*O nagla spiritus sanctus.*’ On the third day he will recover.” (Pughe, page 51)

*The Physicians of Myddfai*

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<sup>6</sup> OBOD Messae Board Gallery

Many years ago, a Welsh farmer from Blaensawdde, near Llanddeusant, Carmarthenshire, fell in love with the beautiful faerie of the lake - *Llyn y Fan Fach* – where he set his cattle to graze in the Black Mountains. She consented to marry him on the condition that he not strike her three causeless blows (*Tri ergyd diachos*). The love struck farmer agreed and took his faerie bride back to the village of Myddfai, where they made their home. She bore him three sons, but over the years, the forgetful husband struck her a reproving tap on the shoulder for crying at a wedding; an angry shake for laughing at a funeral, and a third time in jest. She instantly disappeared and returned to her mountain lake, leaving her bewildered and devastated husband behind. In time, her sons grew to manhood. And although her husband never saw her again, she could not abandon her sons, and often met with them, teaching them the faerie lore of healing herbs. As grown men, they became celebrated healers throughout Wales, known as the Physicians of Myddfai. They passed their knowledge down through the generations, and their descendants are said to still practice herbal medicine in Wales to this day. (Freeman, page 194), (Pughe, xxii)

Specific apple treatments from *The Spirit of Tree*, by Fred Hagender:

Condition	Preparation
Diarrhoea	2 to 4 finely grated apples, three times a day
Intestinal Stimulation	Fried or baked apples
Liver & Kidney Stimulation	Fresh and fried apples
Sore throat	Fried apples
Bladder & Kidney Stimulation	Apple skins
Nervous System tonic	Apple skins
Fever Reduction	Apple skins
Warning	Do not eat cooked or raw apples in the evening, as they may start to ferment in the stomach overnight.

### *Healing with the spirit of the AppleTree*

The Next time you feel ill, imagine that you are lying on a straw pallet at the crest of Glastonbury Hill in Somerset. It is winter, and below you the apple trees in the orchard are bare of blossom, leaf and fruit, exposing the gnarly trunks and twisted branches. The hill is covered in snow, which cools your fever. Beside your pallet you find a stout apple walking stick. You rise from your sickbed, pulling yourself up with the staff, and slowly travel down the hill. As you descend, you notice that it has grown warmer, the snow has disappeared, and it has turned to spring, with the bright green apple leaves beginning to unfurl. Further down, you note the delicate pink and white clusters of flowers, giving off the sweet aroma of apple blossoms. You take this scent deep into your body as it warms and heals you. Further down, you note that the small, round, hard apples have appeared within the branches, and as you travel to the base of the hill, the trees are in full fruit – red luscious ripe apples.

A dark haired woman dressed in red waits for you near the oldest tree in the orchard. She pours you a libation of healing apple juice, and offers a plate of crisp sliced apples. As you partake of this wonderful feast, you feel the healing properties of apple strengthen you sinews

and organs, refreshing you and healing you. The lady gestures a soft patch of grass under the tree and invites you to take your rest. You lie under the shadow of the Old Apple Man, and fall into a deep healing sleep.

When you wake, you feel completely well, and realize you have visited the holy island of Avalon.



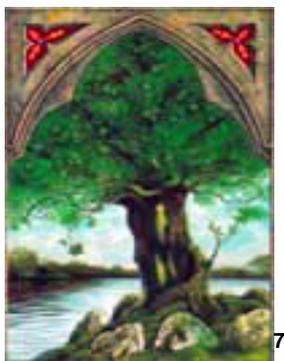
Author playing harp under an Apple tree in Avalon (Chalice Well Gardens)

Apples are particularly good for any form of healing magic. They can be used to invoke a healing goddess into a Witch or Druid, who then can employ "laying on of hands" on the patient. For long distance healing, the apple wand can be used as a catalyst to send the healing energy to the patient, or can be charged with healing power and given to the patient at a later date. The patient, lying on the floor, could have the wand lying over their solar

plexus or heart chakra, to help him/her take in the healing energy the group is raising. There are unlimited variations and ideas for using the energy of Apple to heal.

### Simple Apple Treats

- One of my favorite afternoon snacks is a sliced apple and a good sharp cheddar cheese. The two flavors complement each other marvelously!
- Spicy Apple Sandwich: Spread creamed horseradish sauce on two slices of bread. Layer the filling in slices of apple and your favorite cheese. I usually use sharp cheddar. Grill the sandwich until the bread has browned and the cheese has melted. Absolutely delicious!
- Apple Salad: Try mixing spinach leaves, raisins and sliced apples, with a lemon juice, olive oil and apple cider vinegar dressing!
- Apple Cider: In a saucepan, place 4 cups of apple cider. Add ½ teaspoon allspice, 1 tsp. cloves, and a cinnamon stick. Cover and cook over medium heat until the brew starts to boil. Reduce heat to low, and let it simmer for 15 minutes. Remove the spices and serve. That's the simple basic recipe, but there are all kinds of variations! You can add other liquids – about a ¼ cup of orange juice, pineapple juice, and lemon juice. You can sweeten it with brown sugar, ginger, or raisins.
- Cold Apple Cubes: On a hot summer day have an ice tray with frozen apple cubes prepared as a cold treat for your children!
- The Internet has hundreds of apple recipes, from simple to complex! Search for apple casseroles, jellies, tarts, breads, pies, beverages, wines, etc.



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### **Resources:**

Traditional varieties of cider apple trees have been planted in **Wellhouse Lane Orchard** at **Glastonbury Tor** by the **National Trust** and **Glastonbury Conservation Society** in order to restore the orchards that once grew around the Tor. Contact +44(0)1985 843600 for the National Trust Regional Office.

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