

A WOMAN'S  
BOOK  
OF HERBS

ELISABETH BROOKE

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**TO MY MOTHER**

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## Tree calendar

from *The White Goddess* by Robert Graves, pp. 165–204

The tree calendar was believed to be a relic of druidism, orally transmitted. It was also used for divination. Each letter was named after a tree or shrub.

From the *Song of Amergin*, said to have been chanted by the chief bard of the Milesian invaders as he set foot on Irish soil (1268 BC) (see Graves, pp. 205–6)

Dec 24–Jan 20 Birch	B	Beth	I am a stag of seven tines
Jan 21–Feb 17 Rowan	L	Luis	I am a wide flood on a plain
Feb 18–Mar 17 Ash	N	Nion	I am a wind on the deep waters
Mar 18–Apr 14 Alder	F	Fearn	I am a shining tear of the sun
Apr 15–May 12 Willow	S	Saille	I am a hawk on a cliff
May 13–Jun 9 Hawthorn	H	Utah	I am fair among flowers
Jun 10–Jul 7 Oak	D	Duir	I am god who sets the head afire with smoke
Jul 8–Aug 4 Holly	T	Tinne	I am a battle waging spear
Aug 5–Sep 1 Hazel	C	Coll	I am a salmon in the pool
Sep 2–Sep 29 Vine	M	Muin	I am a hill of poetry
Sep 30–Oct 27 Ivy	G	Gort	I am a ruthless boar
Oct 28–Nov 24 Reed	NG	Ngetal	I am a threatening noise
Nov 25–Dec 22 Elder	R	Ruis	I am a wave of the sea

The letters add up to 13 which is the number of full moons in a year and a number sacred to witches.



# PART 1

## INTRODUCTION

This book is intended to be a celebration of healing plants and of women healers. I hope it is both poetic and practical. It can be read as a story of European plant life and as the collective memory of European people that has built up over the centuries. It can also be read as a mystical journey.

The book can be used by those who practise witchcraft and spellcraft for correspondences, planetary or wicca, or as a practical guide to the use of herbs to heal mind, body and spirit. Plant life is vital for our survival on this planet. We need plants for the oxygen we breathe, as well as for food, shelter, clothing, and even for the pages of this book. Yet despite our great dependence on plants, we know very little about them, apart from how they work physically.

In the 1930s Dr Bach, a homeopath, did some pioneering work on the more subtle characteristics of plants, and his discoveries formed the basis of thirty-eight remedies, using plant essences, for the treatment of varying emotional states.<sup>1</sup> With this book I hope to take his work a stage further and add a flavour of my own.

In the world today the notion of plants as teachers has become alien, but people in ancient times knew that certain plants had magical properties and would, for example, plant borage in a garden where courage was needed, or put a bay tree outside their houses to protect the occupants from burglary. The nature of a plant was known to a great many people in many countries and cultures, an indication that the plants had an internal wisdom or meaning of their own

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which, if enquired into in the right spirit, would reveal itself.

I came to write this book through a number of routes. First, there were the women in my family, my mother and grandmother, both of whom had a great love of plants and whose houses and gardens were always overflowing with cut flowers, seedlings and blossoming flowerbeds. My first memories are of collecting fallen rose petals from my grandmother's rose garden and making my version of *pot pourri*, quite unaware of what I was doing. Years later I discovered that roses are ruled by Venus in Libra, both of which feature strongly in my astrological natal chart. Even as a child I had an intuitive knowledge of what was good for me.

As an adult, I found myself wanting both to work with people and to be with plants. I studied to be a herbalist, but after four years of ploughing through acres of text books I had hardly seen a plant. After graduation I realised I would have to look further for the knowledge I sought. I studied in more esoteric fields: wicca, astrology, tarot, healing. I developed psychic skills and began to work intuitively with plants, and to my delight discovered there were vast areas of knowledge to be found within each plant. In sharing these skills with other women, it became clear that there was a common source of knowledge emerging from the plants. The women, of whom there are now too many to mention by name, left these workshops feeling they had gained an intimate knowledge of the plants they had worked with, and they become empowered and inspired. Most of us women never forgot the way we had learned; we had transcended the dull process of learning by rote and instead learned through experience. This gave us a real understanding of the healing potential of plants, which previously had been limited to using familiar herbs for first-aid purposes. Sometimes the messages received from plants were urgent and specific. For one of our first meetings we arranged to meet at Samhain (31 October), which is the time when the veils between the worlds – that

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which separate the world of the living from the world of the dead – are thinner than usual. For that reason I decided to work with magical herbs – datura and skullcap – to see what would happen.

I knew that it was important that this information should be disseminated and that I should try to write some of it down for a wider audience. This was several years ago; unfortunately my phlegmatic temperament put the idea on the backburner until the loud knocking of my conscience was so insistent that I could no longer ignore it.

The writing of this book has taken me to places I would never have imagined. I have learned another language, discovered a whole branch of astrology. With the discovery of the decumbiture method – using astrology for diagnostic purposes – I was able to uncover, piece by piece, the European traditions of herbal medicine which instinctively I knew had existed but which no one seemed to know about. By chance I came upon a group of astrologers who have kept alive these traditions, and under the watchful eye of their members I was able, laboriously, to refine and develop my skill until I could use it in my everyday practice. This in turn led me to read Culpeper in the original, and one summer I ploughed my way through all his extant works.<sup>2</sup> From these sources I was able to piece together an understanding of the European tradition of herbal medicine.

The principles of European medical astrology, vital to the tradition of herbal medicine, are briefly outlined below.

There are four humours: choleric, phlegmatic, sanguine and melancholic. These are connected to the four elements: fire, water, air and earth. The four humours describe four types in physical, emotional and mental terms. No one can be described as a pure type; we are mostly a mixture of two or sometimes three humours, with one predominating. The herbs, acting as they do through the planetary qualities of hot, cold, moist and dry, balance imbalances of the humours. Thus if a person has too much fire, herbs can cool the fire, using cold, moist remedies. Or they can work to balance out the element fire with hot and dry herbs, thus normalising



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the choleric humour. Long-term treatments tend to be of the latter kind. Treatment of like with like is called treatment by sympathy, while treatment with the opposite is called treatment by antipathy. Herbs under one planet sometimes seem to have the qualities of another, which is somewhat confusing. For example, the herbs of Venus are mainly hot and dry when one would expect them to be cold and moist like Venus. Similarly, many of the herbs of Mercury, which one would expect to be cold and dry are in fact hot and dry. Why is this? Going back to the two methods of treatment, it can be seen that the majority of the herbs of Venus and Mercury work by antipathy in the sense that they counter the cold illnesses which affect the uterus and the nervous system.

Expressing the energy of fire, the choleric woman is enthusiastic, energetic, intuitive and passionate. Choleric women are initiators, performers, visionaries. Fiery types find the ordinary, mundane world a puzzle and a bore. Often accused of being self-centred and dramatic, more than any other type they tend to mythologise life, fighting causes, acting out life's dramas, pursuing spiritual and philosophical goals. Impetuous and enthusiastic, they have a tendency to ride roughshod over those who are more cautious and thoughtful, dismissing their doubts, contemptuous of their fears, only to find their lack of foresight has once again got them into hot water. Known for their bad temper and impatience, the choleric woman often finds herself in conflict with society, tilting at windmills, challenging the status quo. Women in particular are not encouraged to be independent, assertive, extravert. For all its brashness, fire is easily extinguished, especially by water or earth. Fiery people have to learn to temper their great energy and excitement and become more sensitive and responsive to those around them.

Water is flowing, adaptable, powerful and deep. Phlegmatic people feel. Their emotional life is paramount. Often they surround themselves with a family or clan for the feeling of security and connectedness this gives. Sensitive

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and empathetic to others, they sometimes lose a sense of who they are or feel invaded or taken over by others. Often very psychic, phlegmatics make good listeners and are to be found in the healing professions. Because of their great sensitivity they are fearful and timid, lacking the courage to assert themselves and always tending to put others first. Easily disorientated, the phlegmatic has to learn to be less empathetic and more direct about her needs and wants. For this reason, phlegmatics are sometimes accused of being manipulating; they find it hard to confront and make demands. Their emotionality and emphasis on relationships are devalued in our society. Phlegmatics tend to be carers, mothers, those who are less concerned with their own desires than with the needs of the underprivileged and those who suffer.

The sanguine woman is concerned with ideas and communication, connecting people, places and concepts. The sanguine type fits best into our culture with its emphasis on the rational, the lightweight, speed and optimism. Airy types usually have an impressive list of friends, even though these friendships may seem superficial to a phlegmatic or melancholic. Moving rapidly through people, situations, relationships and physical space, their energy is legendary. Often accused of being distant and at times cold, the airy type dislikes, and is often deeply threatened by, emotional displays. Airy types like things to be logical, predictable, but emotions are seldom expressed in this way. Sanguine types often run from involvement or deal with their relationships by having several lovers at the same time, coolly able to lie to or deceive their partners. They are more interested in ideal relationships than in the nitty gritty of emotional involvement. Positive, friendly and open, airy people love groups, gatherings, anything social, especially if it has a good cause or altruistic purpose. The lesson for airy people is to learn to connect on a deeper level with people.

Pessimism is the predominant emotion of the melancholic type. She will take things carefully, step by step, unable to

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take the choleric risks of fire or hope for the best like the sanguine woman. The melancholic earthy type has an important role to play, her pessimism helps to counter the volatility of fire and air, to give them reasonable boundaries, to structure their ideas and put in the groundwork needed for any scheme to take off. Melancholics are found leaf-letting, on phone lines, writing pamphlets, negotiation wage deals, on committees. Melancholics do the duller, less glamorous routine work that their fiery and airy sisters have no time to concentrate on. This can cause resentment, and melancholics harbour slights long and hard. The positive attribute of memory can be detrimentally used to brood on the wrongs they think others have done to them, which is a form of self-imposed mental torture. Like a dog with a bone, they can gnaw on a chance remark or imagined insult and worry enough to make themselves ill, getting more and more depressed and resentful. There is a lot of fear in the melancholic but it is a different kind of fear to that of the phlegmatic. It is more a fear of ridicule, of being wrong or foolish. So they will hold themselves in, bound in Saturn's straight-jacket, lest they make the wrong move. Melancholy is a very English humour – the stiff upper lip; not reacting; very correct; with social nuances outsiders are baffled by, such as dishonesty and pretending to like someone and be interest in them, but privately scorning them. Yet the melancholic often has a very fine mind. The correct use of the mind is the lesson here; to use great mental faculties constructively, to use organisational skills and logic to 'hold' the more mutable humours. Analytical psychotherapy is ideal for melancholics, as this discipline provides 'logical' constructs for the terrifying emotions, and helps them to understand these emotions and be less at the mercy of their ebb and flow.

There are four functions: attraction (fire), digestion (air), retention (earth) and expulsion (water). Attraction is seen as bringing into the body all that it needs in terms of food, water, air, etc; digestion is the separating and assimilating of these substances; retention is the storage and refining;

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and expulsion is the act of getting rid of waste from the body.

There are also four realms: imagination (fire), feeling (water), thought (earth) and judgement (air). Imagination is the ability to intuit the future; feeling to relate emotionally; thinking to analyse rationally and judgement to see issues from a wider perspective.

Throughout the book I have used the traditional system of medical astrology which predates the discovery of the so called trans-Saturnian planets: Uranus (discovered in 1781), Neptune (1846) and Pluto (1930). For this reason, none of the planets mentioned are ruled by these planets, neither are these planets included in the humoral system. Modern astrologers have tried to 'place' these planets in the physical body. I am for the most part unhappy about this; most of the information seems speculative and repetitious. Thus some of the material in this book may be at variance with contemporary astrological thinking.

Each of the seven planets (that is, the Sun, Moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Saturn and Jupiter) have specific and individual characteristics. They also have qualities in common. The Sun and Mars are hot and dry, and have the qualities of fire: action, intuition, burning, energy. They are associated with the choleric humour, and signify illness such as fevers, itchy rashes, burning, stabbing pains, any condition where the body feels hot and dry. The Sun rules the heart and the vital spirit of the body, that is, the energy which each person is born with, the circulation of the blood, together with the eyesight. Mars rules the gall bladder, red blood cells, the sense of smell and the muscles. Venus and the Moon are cold and moist. They have the qualities of water: receptivity, feeling, cooling and blending. They are associated with the phlegmatic humour, and show illnesses such as catarrh, discharges, accumulations of fluid in the body, menstrual problems and any illness where the body is cold and damp. The Moon rules the fluids in the body, such as the lymph glands, tears, and breast milk, as well as the menstrual cycle and womb. Venus rules the reproductive

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organs in the woman, the complexion and the hair, the kidneys and the veins. Mercury and Saturn have the qualities of coldness and dryness and are associated with the element earth. Earth provides structures, is slow moving, sensation-orientated and cooling. Saturn rules the bones, the ears, the teeth, the spleen and the skin. Mercury rules the brain and nervous system, reflexes, sight, the thyroid gland and respiration. The melancholic humour rules depression and illnesses associated with the brain, the bones, hearing, the nervous system and breathing. Jupiter represents the element air and its qualities of expansion, lightness, thinking, warmth and moisture. The humour is sanguine and is concerned with conditions of growth (benign and otherwise), digestion, dispersion and nutrition. Jupiter rules the liver, fat cells, blood plasma, the hip joints and growth. Examples of sanguine illnesses include obesity, anorexia, liver disease, benign and cancerous growths.

Each of the herbs is ruled by a planet and has its characteristics or virtues. A herb treats illnesses ruled by the planet. Herbs ruled by Venus, for example, are often used to treat menstrual problems, and herbs of Mercury treat the lungs. In discovering the affiliation of each herb to its planet a deeper understanding of the nature of the plant is possible.

For the purpose of this book, a person's Sun sign or Moon sign (if known) will provide clues to the most suitable remedy.<sup>3</sup>

The word *chakra* comes from the Sanskrit, meaning wheel. Chakras are energy centres found in the etheric body. The etheric body is the term used to describe the energy field which surrounds the physical body and is its template. For example, physical illnesses can be seen in the etheric body, or aura, before they appear in the physical body. The seven chakras are connecting points in the etheric body where different kinds of energies collect and are expressed. Herbs work on individual chakras, some working on several.

The first three chakras reside below the diaphragm. The

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base chakra, at the base of the spine, is concerned with survival instincts, security and grounding. Many roots work from this chakra, pulling the energy downwards, stabilising and centring. Examples include comfrey, liquorice, juniper and bearberry. The next chakra, for women, is the womb. Here the energies of reproduction and sexuality are expressed. The Chinese say a woman's soul is here. Physically and emotionally, issues concerned with child-bearing, fertility and creativity are expressed in the womb. Pennyroyal and lady's mantle act on this chakra. The solar plexus chakra is concerned with communication and expression of 'gut' feelings: fear, anger, passion and desire. (The solar plexus, a network of nerve tissues and fibres, resides at the pit of the stomach.) Many of our everyday relationships operate from here. Herbs of the solar plexus include chamomile, dandelion, lavender and centaury.

These first three chakras are said to be concerned with our more instinctual nature, our survival mechanisms, the more 'selfish' range of human emotions. Chakras are said to be opened or closed. For most people, the three below the diaphragm are open.

The four chakras above the diaphragm, the heart, throat, third eye and crown chakras, express energies of a more collective, integrated type. The heart chakra is about love, impersonal love. We express this chakra when we feel and express the more profound human emotions: joy, compassion, acceptance. Remedies which work with the heart chakra include rosemary, melissa, hawthorn and lime flowers. The throat chakra is concerned with self-expression and creativity. There is a connection with this chakra and the womb. Sexuality can be expressed as a purely reproductive impulse or as the greatest and most intimate of human experiences. Working magically with sexuality involves the raising of energies from the womb to the throat chakra. Plants include sage and centaury. The chakra in the middle of the forehead, the brow chakra, the third eye, is concerned with vision, clear seeing, clairvoyance and will. People who meditate are opening and developing this

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chakra. Witchcraft and other magical work can be performed from here. Mugwort is the best known herb for this. The seventh chakra, the crown chakra, or thousand petalled lotus, relates to our divinity. This is where spiritual energies enter the aura. Situated at the top of the head, this is the last chakra to open. Spiritual beings, the Buddha, Christ, saints and mystics, are often depicted with a glowing light here. Meadowsweet enhances the activity of the crown chakra. Our spiritual evolution can be seen as a journey through these seven focal points.

This is a European herbal, in part because I am a European, albeit with strong links to the continents of Africa and Asia, but also because I felt it was important to put the European philosophical beliefs alongside the more developed systems of the Americas, India, Asia and Africa. Not with the aim to show that one perspective is of more value or interest than another, but for the sake of completeness. I believe that if the different systems are studied, common themes will emerge, that is, theories of health and disease which carry around the world. These may change because of cultural and climactic conditions, but I expect a general agreement will be found on the cause of illnesses. Astrology, for example, is found in the healing traditions of India, China and the Americas. The astrology may differ but the principles remain constant and a connection is made with the movements of the planetary bodies and health. The elements, whether three, four or five, are also a common source of reference. What struck me, as a new practitioner of herbal medicine, was the absence of a European tradition. Had there been one? If so, where had it gone? And why had it disappeared? The answers to these questions led me to study herbal and astrological history.

Clearly there had once been a herbal tradition, the last important writings on which occurred around the middle of the sixteenth century in Europe, notably in the work of Nicholas Culpeper. Had there been a woman's tradition? Reading *A History of Women in Medicine* by K C Hurd-Mead

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and M Lipinska's *Histoire des femmes medicinal*, as well as Lindsay River and Sally Gillespie's *Knot of Time*, it was clear there had in fact been women physicians for millennia. (I write about this in my own *History of Women Healers*, to be published by The Women's Press in 1992.) From the queens of Egypt 6000 BP<sup>4</sup> to Greek and Roman women, including Trotula, a herbalist who practised and lectured at the great medical school at Salerno, to Hildegard of Bingen<sup>5</sup> and the women physicians in mediaeval France excommunicated for practising medicine.<sup>6</sup> At one time in Europe the idea of a woman doctor was neither strange nor unusual, and although many of them have not left written records of their work<sup>7</sup> it is clear from contemporary writings that they did exist and that their practices flourished. So what happened?

There was the witchcraze. Between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries AD, there was a public campaign against witches in Europe, spearheaded by the Catholic Church but also supported and encouraged by the legal and medical professions. In 1484 *The Malleus Maleficarum* was published.<sup>8</sup> Europe was in turmoil. Not only had an estimated one-third of the population died from the plague but the old social order was crumbling. New alliances were being made and the rich and ambitious were bidding for power. The richest and most influential force at the time was the Church, which itself was in disarray. There was an internal struggle taking place between those who believed in poverty and unworldliness and those who were interested in secular power. There were also popular revolts against the strict rules of the church, and 'witch' was to those times what 'Communist' was to the West until recently. A campaign was organised, fuelled by both religious zeal and the need to find scapegoats, a campaign of such ferocity that Matilda Gage<sup>9</sup> estimates nine million witches were put to death in Europe in the three centuries that followed. The vast majority of these 'witches' were women. Some were probably innocent older women, single women, 'difficult'



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women<sup>10</sup> and many of these were healers, herbalists and midwives.

A very complex system was developed to determine whether or not a woman was a witch, had been bewitched or was using witchcraft. In all cases the final word lay with the Church, the law and the medical profession. Illnesses which could not be treated by male physicians were said to have been caused by witchcraft, and if such an illness should be cured by anyone other than a male physician, the cure had to be through diabolic means, that is, with the aid of the forces of evil as perceived by the Church.<sup>11</sup> Midwifery became the focus of great male hysteria and it was said that: 'no one does the Catholic church more harm than the midwife.'<sup>12</sup>

If these women were in any way involved with healing, they would have taken into account the current philosophies and teachings of medicine, in so far as they would have been available to a largely illiterate population. Empirical knowledge would have been passed down from mother to daughter, and no doubt they would have used the phases of the moon and the seasons, if not the more complex sciences of astrology. The humoural system, in everyday use at this time, as can be seen from contemporary literature, would also have been incorporated in their work. Women's knowledge was not often written down and so was not available to outsiders (that is, men). This created a great deal of resentment and jealousy. Such women would have been the modern intuitives: healers, masseurs, herbalists. They would have worked with nature, gently encouraging the vital spirit rather than attacking disease with powerful and deadly remedies. They would have used medicine to mitigate the suffering peculiar to women; they employed painkillers and anaesthetics to help to ease the pain and labour of menstruation and childbirth. This, however, was in direct opposition to the teachings of the Church which maintained that pain and suffering in childbirth was the curse of Eve.

The tradition of women as healers had been in existence

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from very early times. Women had been physicians to aristocrats and to fighting troops and had also been wisewomen, midwives and nurses. But from the fourteenth century onwards their rights to study at universities and to study and practice medicine were eroded. At the same time they were under the threat of death if they did anything which could be described as witchcraft. Astrology came under the heading of witchcraft, and in some circles still does today.<sup>13</sup> No wonder, then, that the traditions of herbal medicine 'died', along with its practitioners.<sup>14</sup>

Does this history have any relevance to women healers today? I believe it is of the utmost importance. Women are allowed into the ranks of medicine as long as they are prepared to toe the line. Few 'out' lesbians or radical feminists survive long in any branch of medicine, whether orthodox or complementary, let alone those who choose to work from a more spiritual perspective. If women are allowed into medicine at all, it is only because we are seen to conform to the white, male, Christian orthodoxy.<sup>15</sup>

As healers we know this. As long as we work within patriarchal structures (whether orthodox or complementary) and accept conditions as they are, we are tolerated.<sup>16</sup> But if we push too far, make demands for real change, we see the barriers go down. We become marginalised, silenced by ridicule or contempt; we are starved of cash and resources; we are threatened. Women know this. If we are physicians and healers we have to juggle our consciences within the reality of the market place. We have to learn to negotiate the medical minefield. We have to learn how to keep our integrity as feminists, as lesbians, and how to do the best for both our clients and ourselves. How to nurture and be nurtured; how to break down the artificial barriers which exist between healer and patient; and how to maintain those barriers which are necessary for our own self-protection; and how to balance material gain with intellectual and emotional output. In short, we have to create our politics.

With the burning times as our heritage, we are aware of

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the need for caution and circumspection, for we understand that misogyny and homophobia are still very much in evidence. We have to be silent, hidden, careful and yet at the same time be outspoken, fearless and inspired. There is much unravelling to be done in our common European history and many wounds to heal. The process will be long and painful. Our work as healers can be seen as a revolutionary act.

Contact with nature, that is, how we notice, feel for and work with our natural surroundings, is our life blood. As women we are connected to the ebb and flow of the seasons by the tidal nature of our own rhythms. Our ability to move and adapt from one situation to the next is inherent. Our menstrual cycles demand that in the course of one short lunar month we change, shift and melt into different realities and embrace different experiences. We have a closer, more empathetic tie to nature and her rhythms than men.

Herbs are the legacy which was left to us by our wise foremothers. Even within the most polluted city, plants flourish, growing by the sides of roads, peeking out from brickwork or tarmac. Their tenacity is awesome and their adaptability a lesson to all of us who feel alienated and frightened by the way we live now. Plants give life to the dead highways and byways of our land, they open our hearts and make our spirits soar. In times of grief the sight of a bud bursting into life can give hope of happier times. They are our wise companions on this planet and they have much to teach us.

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### Notes

1. Dr Edward Bach realised that many of the physical ailments he was treating had their basis in the emotions. The remedies are discussed at length in Philip Chancellor, *Handbook of the Bach Flower Remedies*, Daniel, London, 1971.
2. Culpeper was a herbalist and an astrologer who practised in and around London in the 1650s. He was a man of the people and championed the cause of the lay healer. The College of Physicians, the ruling body of medicine, tried to discredit him but failed to do so.
3. For an explanation of which planets rule what signs, refer to *The Knot of Time*, by Lindsay River and Sally Gillespie.
4. BP= Before the Present. This is a method of dating which does not use Christianity as a main source of reference.
5. Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179), known as the Sibyl of the Rhine, was Abbess of Rupertsberg Abbey, near Bingen. She wrote fourteen books, including *De Simplicis Medicinæ* and *Causæ et Curae*.
6. For example, Jacoba Felice, born in 1280, who was charged with illegally practising medicine, was found guilty and prohibited from working under pain of excommunication. There was no evidence of medical malpractice produced at her trial in 1322; her crime was simply to have been a woman physician.
7. There are few medical books written by women, partly because many women were unable to write, education being denied them, and partly because books that were known to have been written by women have been lost or destroyed. Most of the works of Trotula, for example, which are mentioned in contemporary writings, have not survived.
8. The *Malleus Maleficarum* was a document published by two monks outlining the way a witch could be identified, and heralded the beginning of a campaign of terror against witches – who in fact might simply have been anyone opposed to the Catholic church.
9. See Matilda Gage, *Women, Church and State*, first published in 1893, second edition published by Arno Press, New York, 1972.
10. *Smeddum* was a Scottish term used to describe witches and women who were wild and difficult to control. See C. Lerner, *The Witch Hunt in Scotland*.
11. See the *Malleus Maleficarum*, part I, Q II.
12. See The Rev. Montague Summer, *Malleus Maleficarum*, Pushkin Press, 1928, pp. 45-6.
13. 'I read with incredulity the attempt by some . . . to reverse the

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clock and drag our profession back into the dark ages of superstition, astrology and alchemy. The successful struggle to free medical herbalism from this incubus of darkness . . .' This quotation is taken from *Greenleaves*, the journal for the National Institute of Medical Herbalists, in December 1988. The article was written by F F Hyde, President Emeritus of that body.

14. Cultures do not in fact die. They simply go underground until the time is safe for them to surface again, even though patriarchy would have us believe otherwise.

15. The case of Wendy Savage versus Hackney Health Authority and the disciplinary actions on radical midwives is very relevant in this respect. See, for instance, *Nursing Times*, 8 June 1988, vol 84, no 23, pp 16-18: '... of the 20 registered independent midwives (most of whom work in London), 7 have been subject to disciplinary action in the last year.'

16. Here it is worth noting that the same patriarchal structures exist within complementary (that is, alternative) medicine as they do within mainstream medicine. Unfortunately they are only alternative in the sense that they are different disciplines. Many think complementary medicine is anti-sexist and anti-racist. This is far from the truth.