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60s Grannie's Tales

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Those founders and early adopters on Pagan Witchcraft of my generation tended to have stories about their grandmothers. So I thought I'd start with my own grandmother story.

In the 1940s, right after the war, when I was a little kid growing up in a grimy Appalachian steel town in western Pennsylvania, my granny -- Blodwen Catherine Davies, who was born in Swansea in 1886 and came to America as a young girl -- warned me and my brother that if we stayed out late after dark we'd be 'stolen by the Witches'.

My brother & I were deeply impressed. We talked it over at great length, and decided that whatever 'the Witches' might be, it wasn't -- completely -- impossible that they'd be giving young kids a better deal than what we on offer in the middle class America of the 1940s.

So he and I took to sneaking out our bedroom window in the middle of the night and hanging out — in as obvious and ostentatious a manner as we could manage — in the darkest corners of our neighborhood, waiting to be carried away by the Witches.

For all I know, my brother may still be waiting.

Me, I finally decided to make up my own kind of Witches to run away with, and the rest, as we say, is (early Craft) history, and you can read about our adventures in any number of good books about the earliest days of Magical Witchcraft in N America.

We were all still standing around in the dark. But now we were, or so we fancied ourselves, the dreadful agents of cultural change that our parents (and grandparents) had once warned us about.