THE BLOOD OF THE BIRCH



Legends from Noricum

told by ladruido

Christian Brand

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Imprint

Texts: © 2026 Copyright by Christian Brand
Cover: © 2026 Copyright by Christian Brand

Responsible for the content:
Christian Brand
AT-3340 Waidhofen an der Ybbs, Michelbauer-Siedlung 10
www.druvides.info

Printing and Distribution: Free Edition DRUVIDES

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The Blood of the Birch: Ogma’s Gift

The Birth of Script as a Sacred Ward

Lay fresh timber on the hearth, my friend. Let the flames leap higher, for the tale I am about to weave for you reaches back into an age when the word was yet wind and thought was yet mist.

Draw closer. Do you feel the chill at the nape of your neck? It is the breath of the Otherworld, reaching for the unwary. Yet here, within the firelight, you find shelter. You are here to listen, to watch, and to feel the deep order of creation.

I speak to you of Ogma of the Sun-Face. I tell you of how pure spirit kissed sluggish matter, and how from that union the first craft of the written stave was born.

The Father of Thought

In the days when the Tuatha Dé Danann still walked the emerald hills, Ogma was a giant amongst the gods. They named him "Grianainech", the Sun-Faced, for his mind shone so clear that it drove out the shadows of ignorance, doubt, and fear. He was a warrior, to be sure, and his spear knew no dread. Yet his true strife was not against flesh, but against the great forgetting.

Ogma saw how the wisdom of the bards drifted away like smoke in an autumn gale. He saw how the deep insights of the druids sank with

them into the soil. He understood that the spirit requires an anchor if it is to endure the tempestuous sea of time.

Often he sat alone in the sacred groves. He heeded the murmur of the leaves, the cracking of the ancient boughs, and the whisper of the deep roots. He saw that nature itself speaks a tongue—a sacred tongue of form, pattern, and rhythm. And so he made his resolve. He would build a bridge. A bridge between the fleeting world of thought, the solid world of things, and the eternal world of truth. He set out to make the unseen seen.

The Mother of Form: Blade and Hand

Here, my friend, lies the deepest secret of this lore. Listen well, for it alters everything you think you know of working in this world.

Ogma stood before a young birch, its white bark gleaming in the moonlight. In his right hand he held a keen blade of bronze. He looked up to the firmament and spoke: "I am the father." With that, he called upon the spark, the inspiration, the unblemished spirit descending from the primeval source. Ogma embodies the will that seeks to order and create.

Then he looked down upon his hand, clasping the hilt with firmness, and upon the edge poised to cut. He spoke: "You are the mother." For spirit alone remains powerless without resistance, without the surrender of form. The hand that guides and the blade that parts the bark—they are the womb that receives the thought. They are the matter that affords the roving spirit an enduring stead.

And so the sacred union was wrought: spirit met deed, and deed met wood. From this coupling the child was brought forth: the Ogham.

It was no gentle daubing of passing pigments. It was an act of begetting. It was a deep cleaving. The blade bit into the living wood, the bark gave way, and the birch sap welled up, clear and pure as tears of sudden knowing. Ogma carved no lifeless marks; he carved life-force, will, and craft. Thus spirit, deed, and matter bound together into creation's first carved word.

The First Message: The Shield of Seven Boughs

What do you suppose was the first word ever cut into the flesh of the earth? Was it a passing greeting? A dry tally of grain? No. Writing was born as a weapon. As a shield against the creeping dark.

A shadow had fallen upon the house of the god Lugh, the many-skilled. His wife, who embodies the very soul of the land, stood in peril. The gates to the Otherworld stood wide, and the beings of the deep—the lords of greed and cold—stretched their fingers towards her. Seven times, so whispered the shadows, would they attempt to tear her from this world.

Ogma beheld this with his inner eye. He knew that cold steel would fail here. He required a ward that ran deeper than any blade. He chose the birch, Beith. It is the tree of beginning, the besom that sweeps the ill away, the white lantern in the dense thicket. It stands for cleansing, for shelter, and for the eternal turning of the new tide.

Ogma took a bough of this birch. He set the blade to the wood. Seven times he notched the mark for Beith. A single stroke to the right. Cleave. Cleave. Seven times. The number seven is sacred; it is the rhythm of the moon and the threshold between the worlds. By notching the virtue of the birch seven times into the timber of the birch, he roused the sleeping spirit of the tree. He bound the ward to the very grain of being.

When Lugh received the bough, he did not merely scan it with his eyes. He ran his fingertips over the seven scars in the wood. He felt the warning hum in his blood: "Guard the lady. The birch keeps vigil. Seven shields against seven assaults. What is bound into the wood cannot be unstitched by the web of shadows."

Lugh understood. He heeded the warning, kept his watch, and shielded the soul of the land. The ill broke against the might of the carved ward. The script had prevailed where raw force would have faltered. The Ogham had woven reality itself.

The Teaching: Draíocht—The Working

Look now into the embers, as they slowly pale and turn to grey ash. What does this ancient lore teach you in these hollow days?

We live in an age where words have become cheap. Cast out by the million into the digital din—devoid of weight, devoid of toil, devoid of soul. Men have forgotten that every stroke of writing is an act of working, a shaping of creation’s order.

Ogma teaches us: true script demands resistance.

- The mind must be clear.
- The hand must be steady.
- The intent must be pure.

Only then does that take shape which weathers the gales of time. When you write, when you speak, you work Draíocht. You mold the thoughts of the one before you. You can shelter like the birch or tear like the blackthorn. Writing binds the heaven of your vision to the earth of your deed. It is the hinge upon which your will turns into form.

The Seed for the Night

Carry this with you as you leave the hearth and step back into your world: remain mindful of the weight of your notches. Your words are not fleeting; they leave scars upon the souls that receive them.

Before you send a message, before you pass a judgement—halt. Remember Ogma. Ask yourself: does my word serve shelter, truth, and life? Or does it merely feed the hollow noise of the machine?

Do not write to chatter. Write to weave reality. Go now in peace. The birch keeps watch, the bard falls silent, and the night is yours.

Bītu skep (May the world weave it in harmony with the cosmic order)

Sources and References

These sources also serve, among other things, to delve deeper into the subject matter. They can therefore also be referred to as educational material.

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- Mini-book series: Keltische Weisheit heute;
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Images by DRUVIDES

Appendix

www.druvides.info

Druvides
Keltische Spiritualität leben

Our goal is to preserve, maintain, and pass on the teachings of Celtic wisdom. We strive to promote the knowledge of all people who feel drawn to Celtic culture and Druidry. Our primary focus here is on the importance of self-knowledge as revealed in the Celtic tradition. We promote and respect the Druids as the guardians of their tradition and wisdom.

The Celtic worldview is a lived philosophy of life. In contrast to today's conventional linear worldview, we live and experience a constantly changing, spiritual view of the world. We are fully aware of the eternity of the present moment. The divine order of creation is our fundamental law. We always ensure that all people can develop their full potential in freedom and self-determination for their own well-being and thus for the good of society.

Further information can be found on the DRUVIDES website - **www.druvides.info**

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Christian Brand, known as “ladruido,” is an author, philosopher of life, and Druid. His lifelong quest for the meaning of existence led him through various spiritual traditions before he began to engage deeply with his own cultural roots.

As the founder of DRUVIDES, he is actively committed to preserving and disseminating Celtic knowledge. He currently lives in Austria, where he leads a life closely connected to nature and shares his insights through books and blogs.

Further information about Celtic culture, Druidism, and the author can be found on the website: **https://druvides.info**