

'Self-Weeks, W'

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SELF-WEEKS, W

1916

H.M.M. OFFICIAL

18 November 1916.

Dear Sir,

On behalf of the Museum, please accept our cordial thanks for the three votive offerings you so kindly sent us which are duly to hand this morning. They will form an interesting addition to our collection, and I much appreciate your kindness in presenting them.

Faithfully yours,

C.J.S.T.

W. Self Weeks Esq.,
Westwood,
Clitheroe, Lancs.

WESTWOOD,
CLITHEROE

Nov. 13. 1916

Dear Sir,

I enclose, as promised, the following:-

- (1) Piece of twig from one of the bushes surrounding St. Helen's Holy Well near Tadcaster Yorkshire with votive offering of a piece of rag attached. This I got myself ~~off~~ on 7th September 1907. There were at that time hundreds of pieces of rag attached to the bushes near the Well. You will find an account of the well in Lower Wharfedale by Edmund Bogg (York & the Sampson London John Heywood 1904) p 247-250. There is also an account of this Well in the Temple Magazine for January 1908 by Frederic Lees & Robert Barnes.
- (2) Piece of Velvet Ribbon tied as votive offering to the bushes growing round St. Maughold's Holy well in the Isle of Man. I got this myself in the summer of 1902. I also got some pins & buttons from the well ~~itself~~ but these I have unfortunately lost. Speaking of the Manx Holy wells, Mr E. W. Moore (The Folk Lore of the Isle of Man London D. Nutt 1891 p 120) says "The devotees would drop a ^{small} coin into the well, drink of the water, repeat a prayer, in which they mentioned their ailments, and then decorate the well - or the tree overhanging it, with flowers & other votive offerings, usually rags. They believed that when the flowers withered, or the rags rotted, their ailments would be cured".
- (3) Cow's hair deposited as votive offering on the altar of the Chapel of St. Herbert near ~~St. Herbert~~ Hazelgrove Brittany, on the day of the Saints Pardon, to secure immunity of the herd from disease during the ensuing year. I got this myself a few ~~days~~ years ago. It was, when I got it, covered with dirt & cow dung, & I have washed & disinfected it. You will see these offerings of cow hair to St. Herbert mentioned in any good book on Brittany

The Curator
Wellcome Historical Medical
Museum
Wigmore Street London

Yours truly
H. J. Wells

H.M.M. Official.

25 October 1916.

Dear Mr. Self Weeks,

Very many thanks for so kindly sending me a copy of your paper on witch stones and charms which I have read with great interest. It is very kind of you to remember to send it, and it is quite an addition to our knowledge of ~~that~~ use of the hole-stones in connection with nightmare in the north of England.

I shall be very glad to have the piece of rag which was used as a votive offering at the holy well at St. Helens, and also the piece of ribbon used at St. Manghold's well in the Isle of Man, together with the piece of cow hair from Brittany, to add to our collection of charms and amulets. They will form an interesting addition to our collection, as we have no other specimens of the kind. Any other objects of this nature you can add from Lancashire at any time from duplicates in your collection, we shall be most glad to have.

With many thanks for your kindness,

Faithfully yours,

C.J.S.T.

WESTWOOD
CLITHEROE

Oct 21, 1916

Dear Sir,

I send here with a copy of the Paper on Witch Stones of charms in the Clitheroe district which I promised you. You must excuse my not sending it before but I have been very busy since my return.

I saw in the Museum a piece of slate with a hole in it which had been given as a votive offering at a Holy Well in Ireland.

If ^{of} any use for your Museum, I can give you a piece of rag which had been ^{as a votive offering} tied ^{to} the Bushes round the Holy Well of St Helen near Tadcaster, Yorkshire. You will find an account of this rag well in "Lower Wharfedale" by Edmund Bogg of York (Samson, London John Heywood 1904) page 247. At page 209 is a reproduction of a photograph of the well, with the rag hanging on the bushes, taken in 1900. There were hundreds of fragments of rag there when I visited it in 1907. It was then I got the above souvenir, which is still attached to a piece of the twig.

I can also give you a piece of velvet ribbon which had been tied as a votive offering to the rushes that grow round St. Maugholds Holy Well in the Isle of Man. I got this in 1902.

I can also give you a piece of cow hair offered at the Pardon of St. Herbert at his Chapel at Huelgoal Brittany to secure ^{immunity} immunity from disease to the owners cattle during the ensuing year.

All the above are genuine as I can personally vouch

If you don't care to ~~show~~ exhibit them in your collection do not hesitate

to say so, but if you will add them to your collection, I will send them as I
have duplicates. I do not, however, want to part with them unless you are
going to make use of them.

Boggs' book you can no doubt see in the Peabody Museum.

Yours faithfully
Wm Self-Weeks

The Keeper
Worcester Historical Medical Museum.

Self-Weeks.