

ANNIE ABBOTT
AND THE
DRUID STONES

ISABELLE & MICHAEL NELSON

About the cover

This deliciously beautiful art, is the work of world-famous artist Raina Hopkins. Raina lives in Cornwall, England where she designs and produces some of the finest art of this kind. We are delighted that she has agreed to provide this one, originally titled the 'Sun Goddess', and for 'Annie Abbott and the Druid Stones' represents the 'Keeper of the Light'. Thank you Raina!

You may find more of her work on the website, [Deviant Art](#).

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Annie Abbott and the Druid Stones

The Annie Abbott Adventures
Book One

Isabelle & Michael
Nelson



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Forward

Every year since I was very young, as soon as the school year was out for the summer, (and sometimes before it was out), my father would plan an adventure for just the two of us. Sometimes to the Northwoods of Wisconsin or Minnesota, the Florida Keys, or Big Sur, California. My Dad believed that life was about broadening your horizons, and learning as much as you could in the time you were granted.

Our ‘adventures’ were exciting and most of the time, educational. I believe they helped me to see the intricacies of the environment and the life forms that inhabit it. This book mirrors some of the lessons these experiences taught me—and then goes deeper. To see the life in all things and feel the life that surrounds you is to know real magic.

We are all Annie Abbott in one way or another.

Isabelle Anne Nelson

There is one kind of magic that is easily available to everyone; learning. Learning is a magical experience. It is fuel that drives the meaning in our lives, and makes our journey interesting and exciting.

All the places mentioned in this book are real and can be visited if one would wish to. We never stop learning, we only stop being interested.

Michael D. Nelson

Annie Abbott and the Druid Stones

Mike Abbott climbed down the steep attic steps, a stack of small boxes in his arms. Staggering while balancing the heavy stack, he hurried to the kitchen, where he dropped the three boxes with a loud thump onto the table.

“What was that noise?” Annie, Mike’s twelve-year-old daughter exclaimed, rushing into the room, the book she had been reading immediately forgotten. “You scared me.”

Mike sat down on one of the wooden kitchen chairs to catch his breath. Sweat had beaded on his forehead, and his hair was festooned with dusty cobwebs from the attic.

“I was looking for something up in the attic,” Mike regarded the boxes, “I didn’t know what these were. They were tucked way back in under the eaves in a little alcove I’d never noticed before. I don’t recall ever seeing them.”

Annie looked at the three cartons. They appeared to be very old. The tape holding the seams and edges had yellowed, separating itself and rolling at the edges. Two of the boxes were fairly large, the last no bigger than a shoebox.

“They’re all pretty heavy, but that smallest one, that one weighs a ton.” Mike was finally catching his breath.

Annie picked up the littlest one. It was a lot heavier than she had expected. It took both hands to lift it and look at the bottom. There was nothing on it or anywhere else that gave a clue as to the contents. The other two boxes were the same. Anonymous in all regards. Annie’s detective spirit immediately twitched.

“What do you think’s in it Dad?” She asked as she tried to shake the heavy box. And before he could voice an answer, “Can we open ‘em.”, “Let’s open ‘em.”

“Let’s finish what I was going to do before I found these first.”

“C’mon Dad! Let’s just take a peek. C’mon Dad, it’s a real mystery! Let’s just open one then, then the other two later?”

“Ah, I give up.” He’d dealt with Annie’s curious spirit before. “As old as they look, I can’t imagine that it’s anything very important, but I’m a little curious too, which one?”

“Let’s open the little one. It’s *so* heavy. It’s got to have a clue about what’s in the other two.”

“That makes sense, I guess.” Mike took out his pocket knife and carefully cut the tape securing the top. Even before he had closed the knife and replaced it in his pocket, Annie was already folding back the flaps and diving in.

“Look at these old newspapers Dad; they’re so old they’re falling apart.”

“Wow!” Mike peered at the old sheets. “Look at the dates on these! This one is from the year nineteen-eleven and...Oh my Gosh!”

“What! What Dad?”

“This is the wedding announcement for my grandfather, Conor Padraig Abbott to Margaret Siobhan McKillip!”

“Let me see please? Wow! Married on June 21st; that’s the summer solstice! They were married at Stone Church on Washington Island. Where’s that?”

“Washington Island is in northern Wisconsin. On the Door County Peninsula, to be exact. I don’t think I ever heard about a stone church though. Washington Island is where my father was born,” said Mike, wonder in his voice. “I didn’t know anything like this still existed.”

“It says the best man was somebody named Jean Luc LaBeaux. Did you ever know him?”

“Way before my time Annie, but Jean Luc LaBeaux is a name I’ve heard of. A legendary brawler. Something about him being a ‘Keeper of the Peace’ or a lawman in the wild days of the north woods. Hmm, wonder if it was the same guy. Oh well, what else is in there?”

Annie dove back into the little box. “Oh WOW!” With two hands she lifted out the huge and ancient Navy Colt revolver, almost dropping it on the table in her haste to be rid of it.

“What is that! I had no idea something like that was in this house.” As he looked closely at it. “At least it’s not loaded.”

“The bullets are still in the box Dad. See?” Annie tipped up the box on its side.

“Oh great! Just don’t you worry about that right now,” he moved the lethal weapon to the other end of the table, “what else is in there.”

“This.” She lifted out a small metal strong box by the handle on its top. “I’m almost afraid to open it.”

She wasn’t fooling anyone; she couldn’t wait to get it open. Her father felt the same way. They both fumbled to open the small latch, and holding their breath, tipped back the lid.

“I don’t believe it!” Mike Abbott rocked back in his seat, completely flabbergasted. Annie’s eyes were as big as saucers as she looked at her father’s face.

The rest of the box contained only three things. Two of these were exactly alike. The third was a small envelope addressed simply to ‘The Finder’. The other two things, ingots of solid gold.

With fingers that trembled, Mike opened the ancient envelope carefully. Inside was a fine piece of stationary, addressed in a fine hand:

The Finder

Greetings, I Conor Padraig Abbott leave this earthly coil a frustrated man having not finished the task that the Lord has set before me. The great treasure of my house still eludes me and alas my body can no

longer support the search. I am in hopes that you are a true searcher, and gifted intellectually in ways that I did not possess. In this box you will find the means to afford to continue my search, and the means to defend it should the treasure be found. These contents are reward enough if your steadfastness be wanting, but I exhort you to continue in my endeavor and make it your own.

The other two containers, should they have remained together, contain all the many clues and maps such that I have been able to gather in my lifetime, along with my diary.

May your search be fruitful. Follow the signs, and trust your instincts. And good luck to you.

C. P. Abbott

Annie looked at her father and his eyes met hers. They both smiled. Finally, an adventure for both of them.

The diary of Conor Abbott

Thursday June 22nd, 1911, Mid-summer's eve

We gathered, myself and my clansmen, at the stone church at evening time. The moon was in the final crescent and so had set earlier than the sun. Then came the elder and the thirteen. The great elder of our clan and the crones gathered in a circle around us, and the elder spoke of knowledge and wisdom, our divine task. The crones each individually came forward and presented both a promise and a curse to my bride. Foolishly or wisely, she accepted their gifts, forever to be one of the wise and a part of their circle. We pledged our troth and danced in the moonless night. In the morning we were husband and wife and the elder and the thirteen had gone.

And from that moment we are set with a task. She to pursue the great truths hidden within the Book of Spells, and I to seek the treasure of the ages with only my wits and her gifts. We begin this life together, she with beauty and confidence that I can only hope to measure up to.

The final words of the Druid were, "Seek the stones and feel their life. First before all things, feel the life in all that you see and touch. Only then will the steps to the great mystery become clear to you. Seek the stones that bear the mark."

"What does that mean Dad?" Annie looked up, confused. "What kind of 'mark'?"

"Well Annie, I think it means that we need to go to Door County, Wisconsin, and Washington Island at the end of it. I think we need to seek the stones."

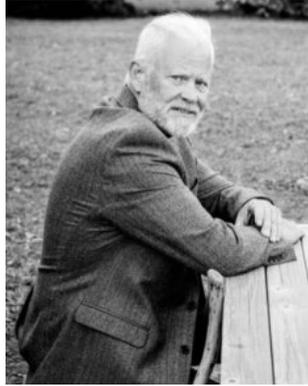
"Oh boy! When?"

"It's summer break at the school, so soon."

About the Authors



Isabelle Nelson is a current Junior at Saint Ambrose University double majoring in English and Secondary Education with a minor in ESL (English as a Second Language). Her plans are to become a high school English teacher and later teach English abroad. She hopes to pursue her master's degree following a few years of teaching. She has always loved to read and recently discovered her passion for writing. She credits her love of it to her parents and many educators who have supported her endeavors with the craft.



Michael Nelson is a retired physician who also writes under the pen name Michael Deeze. After thirty-eight years in a rural house-call practice, he retired to pursue hobbies, and be near his adult children and grandchildren. In his spare time, he decided to write down some of the deeply personal memories of his life before practice, and the wonderful experiences of a house-to-house practice with he and his team in the Amish communities of northern Wisconsin.

This is the fourth novel for him, and in his opinion the most fun because he shared the work with his young daughter. “Imagine the treasure of working with your treasure to produce treasure. What a gift.”

Coming soon, as the story continues

The Ghost of Vaughn House

A blanketing heavy fog hung just below the level of the streetlights softening the surrounding light and creating bright glowing halos of white around each one. At the foot of the hill a grove of ancient magnolia trees dripped moisture in the cool still air. In the small hours beyond midnight no sounds disturbed the peace.

From beneath the shadows of the spreading magnolia trees three shadows were in motion. The three figures were moving quickly, separating and spreading out into the open space ahead of them, moving forward in a crouching run their demeanor one of caution and haste as they hunted.

Moving soundlessly, the hunters searched and listened in the fog ahead, alert for any danger. They moved separately but in the same direction, slowly working their way up the vast expanse of lawn. Objects beyond the fog could not be seen but were felt. The stealthy hunters disappeared into the cold mist.

As they faded from sight another dark shape, only a shadow, flowed forward from the deeper darkness. The shadow, darkness against the darker space of the surrounding tree trunks appeared huge moving slowly, flowing forward. At the edge of the shadows, it stopped—waiting. The figure was almost imagined more than seen, its presence malevolent, the subject of a children’s nightmare. It waited for the three to return.

A wailing police car, its flashing lights reflecting off of the overhead vapor howled by on a nearby street. As it did, the dark shadow dropped to the ground, just another shadow beneath the massive trees.

Within moments, all was silence again.

Annie rose from behind the massive dark form of the dire wolf. “It’s okay. This happens a lot around here.”

“I have not walked among the mortals for an age. They have multiplied.” Bracken’s rumbled voice echoed in her brain.

“Yes, and with each generation, they grow more detached from others and increasingly ignorant.” Annie knew that the words were true, even if they were not hers. The voice went on, “But their doom is our doom.”

“The elves have moved far forward. Should we follow?” Bracken was wary.

“One last sprint Bracken. We’re so close, I can feel it. Should we fight or should we flee? Tonight, if we must, we fight! Let’s sprint my friend, catch up to the elves.” Annie pulled her hood over her head and loosened the sword at her belt. Leaping astride the great wolf she leaned forward and whispered in his ear, “let’s sprint!”