ABSTRACT

THESIS: Samhain’s Place on the Sacred Landscape

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Samhain was one of four festivals celebrated in pre-Christian Irish culture. It marked the beginning of the new year and the time when the veil was at its thinnest between the mortal world and the otherworld. With the arrival of Christianity the festival began to change, but did not disappear due to its popularity. The monks and traditional learned class began to record the myths that had been being told for centuries, helping to secure Samhain’s survival, giving us insight into what the festival was like in its early days. This thesis examines the people, places, actions and events that were associated with Samhain as it existed in the myths in an attempt to lay a groundwork for future study into this festival.