

# PAMELA'S TAROT



JESSICA ADAMS

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by Jessica Adams

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## ABOUT JESSICA ADAMS

Jessica Adams B.A. graduated with degrees in Philosophy, Ancient Civilisations and Religious Studies and in Screenwriting. Her career as an international astrologer began at Elle magazine and she has written horoscopes for many magazines, newspapers and websites around the world including Vogue, Harper's Bazaar, Marie Claire, Family Circle and Cosmopolitan. Her award-winning website [jessicaadams.com](http://jessicaadams.com), run by Asporea, attracts 20 million hits a year. Jessica is also the editor of The Holiday Goddess Guide to Paris, London, New York and Rome (HarperCollins) and lives and works between Australia and Great Britain.



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# INTRODUCTION

The 1909 Tarot deck created by artist and storyteller Pamela Colman Smith and editor, journalist and author Arthur Waite was born from The Golden Dawn. People sometimes call this deck the Rider-Waite or Smith-Waite, but actually it's Pamela's Tarot.

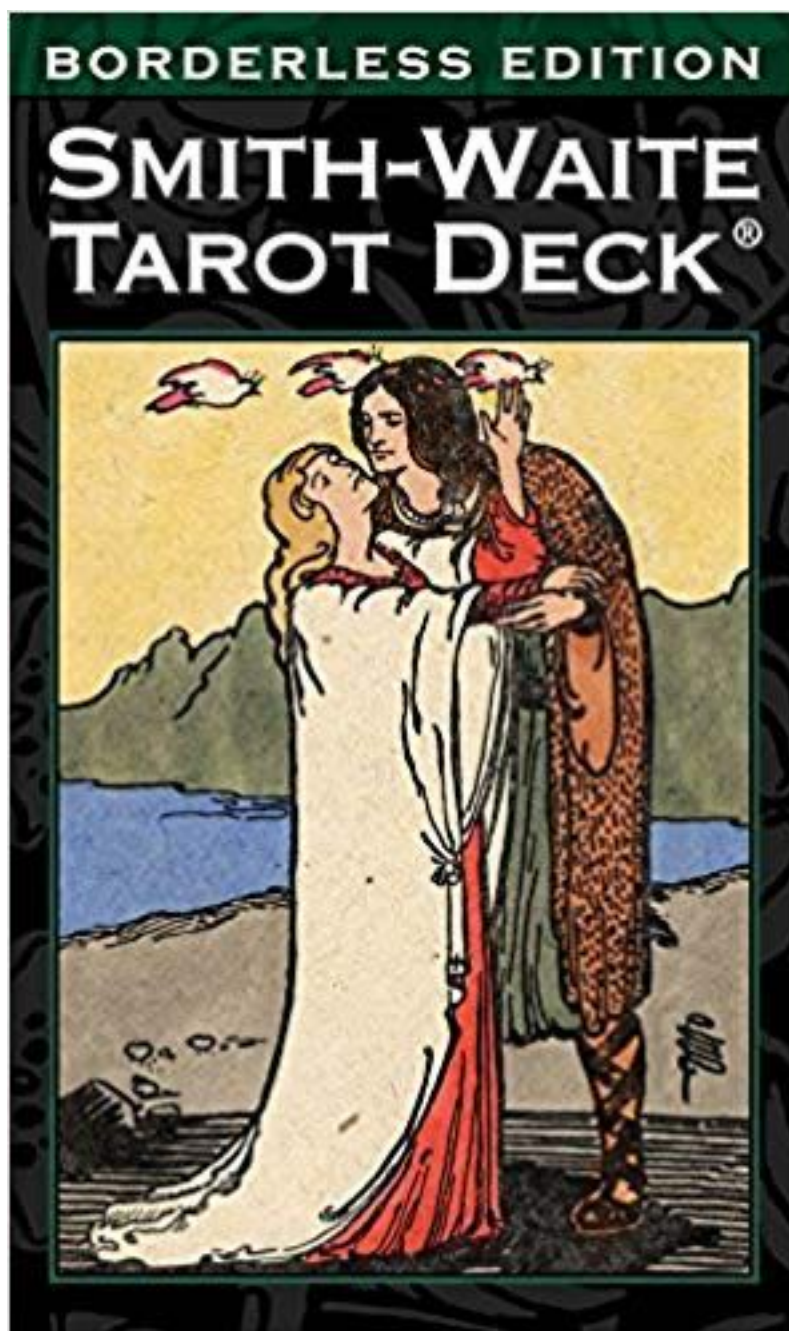
## THE SMITH-WAITE CENTENNIAL DECK

To celebrate 100 years of Pamela and Arthur's collaboration, The Smith-Waite Centennial Deck, with beautiful additional artwork by Pamela, was released in time for the centenary. We are now at December 2019 and it's exactly 110 years since the original cards went on sale, yet they live forever.



## THE SMITH-WAITE BORDERLESS DECK

In keeping with Pamela's original palette and vision, you may also want to work with the Smith-Waite Tarot Deck Borderless Edition. One of the best things about these particular designs is that they allow you to see more possibilities for outcomes, as you can use a technique I'll refer to, later in this guide. I call it Tarot Stage Direction and it's based on the idea that you can use your imagination to move people and objects in and out of the scenery of Pamela's cards. She was a theatre designer, after all.



## HOW THE GOLDEN DAWN INSPIRED PAMELA

The secret British magical society, The Golden Dawn, which inspired both Pamela and the cards, included Oscar Wilde's wife Constance - and the future Nobel prize winner William Butler Yeats in its ranks. In fact, W.B. Yeats inducted Pamela into The Golden Dawn. It was a well-educated, largely middle-class organisation that even attracted the Sherlock Holmes creator, Arthur Conan Doyle (though he never joined).

Here, within the Golden Dawn, Pamela was drawn into the world of astrology, symbolism, and other mysteries. Arthur Waite, the author, researcher and occultist, was one of her tutors and mentors. When he saw the need for 'A Very British Tarot' he called on Pamela.

## THE BOHEMIAN WHO KNEW THE LITERATI

Chelsea dweller Pamela was a Bohemian who knew (or was known by) the creator of Peter Pan; the inventor of Father Brown; the author of Dracula. She moved in amazing circles, and circles upon those circles too. Oscar Wilde's wife and a future Nobel prizewinner. The future stars of popular fiction.

Her pictures, no matter how small they are ever reproduced, tell big stories about the human condition. She was also a powerful psychic. All this was poured into Pamela's Tarot.

## THE BRITISH MUSEUM

Arthur and his magical companions spent their days in The British Museum and elsewhere studying what we call the Occult. Hidden knowledge. Astrology was on the Golden Dawn curriculum and zodiac symbols are coded into many of the cards. You will also find a fascination with Egypt which comes straight from the collections of The British Museum.

## SIGNS IN CARDS

You can see Aquarius, Pamela's own Sun sign, hidden in the Temperance card. Arthur was a Sun Libran whose scales can be seen in Justice. Together they were the embodiment of people power within a group (for Pamela the Aquarian, this was the Golden Dawn) - and the partnerships of Libra.

All Tarot interpretations are personal. This is a personal 21st century take on Pamela and Arthur's 78 portals to wisdom, referencing astrology. I hope Pamela's Tarot helps you as much as it has always helped me, my clients and readers.

Along the way I'll look at the way Pamela might have seen fate and fortune, symbolism and mythology, in her illustrations. She was a child of the early 20th century, working at a time when women did not even have the vote. (With her friends the Suffragettes, Pamela helped to change all that). One of the reasons I think these cards have lived on, and are still such powerful triggers for your psychic ability, is their timeless quality.

Pamela illustrated people, not always gender-identifiable. The faces are not exactly transgender, but they might be male or female. The Queens are women and the Kings are men, the Knights are certainly younger men - but the Pages could be either sex. Some of the faces in the most famous Tarot cards, like The Magician could easily be gender fluid.

She was thus, ahead of her time. And she helped to create a deck of cards for all time, getting people through two world wars and literally millions upon millions of do-or-die questions.

The deck is estimated to have sold six million copies by U.S. Games Systems, who took Pamela and Arthur's original idea and created a business empire from it which has dominated the world of oracles since the 1970's.

## HOW PAMELA'S CARDS TEACH US TO USE THE TAROT

Any question can be addressed by the cards. I have used my own deck to choose quite a wide spread here, all laid face-up on my desk, in a particular order - so that I can see how their message actually gives us guidance on using the Tarot. What to do - and what not to do. This is my job as a Tarot professional and I am passing on the findings to you. Thus, you might call this an example of a Tarot guidebook which actually uses the cards themselves to organise the information.

I hope it's a solid addition to your Tarot library. It is also tree-free reading, as we are now in Climate Emergency (which Pamela Colman Smith saw, in her illustrations).

## FROM MY TAROT LIBRARY TO YOU

I have found some of my favourite books on the Tarot from my library, so I can pass on some important wisdom to you, which will help you with your readings - no matter if you are a beginner or a seasoned professional.

### A DIGITAL TAROT KEEPSAKE

Enjoy this to keep forever (digital keepsakes are something I think Pamela would have liked). No trees were harmed in the creation of this guidebook! I have laid out the cards and read them like a story. It is the story of their creator but along the way I hope you will find inspiration that helps your readings. So, let's begin at the beginning - with The Fool. The first leap into the unknown.



## THE FOOL – TAKING A RISK

When you peer into the future you are really on the edge of a cliff, like The Fool, preparing to leap off into the great unknown. The little dog who barks at your heels is also barking a warning. Don't just jump in. You can be an explorer of the past, present and future, but you need to take precautions. Intention is everything! Read when you are alert, relaxed, comfortable with the process, feeling sharp enough to interpret and confident enough to say yes.

This Fool in our card is really The Happy Wanderer or perhaps Jack Kerouac writing *On The Road*. It is The Durrell family off to Corfu, or anyone on their gap year. There may be a laptop, map and guide book in the rucksack, but this foolish person is not looking. Instead he or she is about to go careering off the cliff. In astrology this is very much a symbol of the Ninth House, which rules knowledge, learning, wisdom, workshops, seminars, bibles (like a Tarot interpretation book) and websites.

Rather than just dive in headfirst, stop and take the time to really know your Tarot. That is the first message in this 'How To' selection of cards.

Just in time, with The Fool card, the barking dog alerts him/her (assuming the headphones are not on under the hat) and this adventurer can turn back. 'Watch out!' might be the translation of 'Woof, woof' in this card. Sometimes a reading is not working, from the very first card onwards. Don't be afraid to put it all away.

## ELLEN TERRY'S LITTLE WHITE DOG

The little white dog was probably modelled on the favourite pet of actress Ellen Terry, who was Pamela Colman Smith's hostess at Smallhythe, where she created her Tarot cards. Have you visited? It is the most stunning cottage, today cared for by The National Trust. Ellen's dog has long gone, but her stage costumes are upstairs and many of them clearly inspired Pamela's Tarot.

## THE FOOL AND ELLEN TERRY'S DOG

It's a shame this photograph is in sepia, as Ellen Terry usually dressed in the most exotic, jewel-like colours. You can clearly identify the dog that Pamela used as her model, just as she used the Terry household cat (Snuffles) for the black cat in the Queen of Wands card. In this guidebook we'll look more at how 'chances' like this in the summer of 1909 helped create a Tarot legend.



## SEEING INTO ASTROLOGY WITH THE FOOL

There is a white rose in the hand and the Sun is shining. Look for Sun sign transits and aspects with this card, but also - obviously - the Third and Ninth houses of intellectual and spiritual journeys. Perhaps you are having Ninth House and/or Sagittarius cycles as you begin your Tarot journey too.

There is a fair amount of denial in this card. The hose and boots are yellow, the colour of fear (cowardy custard colour) and Saturn is also a symbol of hesitation and caution, provoked by fear of the future.



The denial comes from not checking the latest news on the destination ahead. So, beyond the psychic side of your reading, there has to be a practical angle. Nobody is stopping you from doing some basic, common-sense homework, along with the Tarot.

This card shows all the romance of Byron and other poets on their grand European tours but the truth is, everybody needs travel insurance. Who or what is the barking white dog? The 'journey' here may be symbolic not literal. There is no luggage but it's a leap into the unknown. Even a leap into the unknown comes with useful websites. Time to consult!

Over the years I have seen so many women, in particular, randomly pulling card after card, from a brand new deck, without ever bothering to read more than one Tarot book, or even find out much about the astrology symbolism. The Fool card makes it really clear that being well-informed and knowledgeable can save you from readings which send you hurtling into nowhere fast. Be prepared.

Pamela was a well-travelled woman who knew how to pack her bags properly - she lived in an age of very involved and ambitious sea voyages from America to Great Britain. You also need to prepare, before you begin your Tarot journeys.

## THE MAGICIAN AND PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE

This person in the Magician card, is a multi-tasking, magical, powerful Renaissance man or woman. There is a lot going on in this card! Pentacles, cups, swords and wands are on the table so this person is across money, relationships, people politics and big ideas. Here is another reminder that wide experience and the right tools in life, are necessary for a truly great Tarot reader or reading.

You can see the dove of peace etched into the wood on the table. Red roses and white lilies surround the frame. He or she is either burning the candle at both ends or channelling something divine, with that curious object in the left hand. The message here is to open up to your spirit guides, to your spirit teachers and protectors, to 'The Light' itself or whatever you identify as source. This is why so many Tarot readers say a short prayer or state a clear intention before shuffling the cards. There may be a picture of the Buddha, or Green Tara, or Christ in front of them.

Pamela became a Roman Catholic later in life, after she left The Golden Dawn. The Magician tells us - no miracles in our readings unless we believe in a higher power and treat ourselves and the cards as a channel for it. That may well have been Pamela's view.

The right hand points down to earth, grounding the magic. This is Harry Potter, with his glasses hovering (at enormous size) a few centimetres above his head. The bandage hides his lightning scar. Pamela had an amazing ability to produce work that resonated many decades into the future, and here we have an illustration from the year 1909 which makes perfect sense to millions of Potter fans today. (Many of whom now own a Tarot deck).

Harry Potter is about practical magic and so is this card, which is a nod to Hogwarts. (Or did J.K. Rowling use The Magician to inspire her vision of Harry? It's interesting to speculate!)

Practical magic is modern science. It is quantum thinking. Knowing that there is no single, firm, fixed, final outcome to anything empowers you to begin taking charge of your destiny. This is the great trick of the Tarot. So many people think it involves giving power away - instead, it is a tool for you to use.

## INFINITY AND THE MAGICIAN

The Magician is also a picture of infinity. The figure eight is of course known to scientists. The snake biting its own tail on the belt also suggests eternal time here. No beginning and no end. Everything is possible in this card, once someone harnesses his/her energy and gets down to work.

This card reminds us that the Tarot is another tool on the table. You can see the four great symbolic tools spread out here, before The Magician and his outstretched hand. Using a reading, you can turn to what you have, what you possess - perhaps money, perhaps an idea, an important relationship or a mission - and make things happen for yourself.

So, this is not about cards telling you what to do, or what is going to happen. It's about Tarot as a useful aid.

## THE HIGH PRIESTESS – PAMELA AS TEACHER

Just as The Fool card is a pointer to Sagittarius/Ninth House challenges with the Tarot (you must learn to proceed), so is this card also related. Forget about jumping in or guessing. You need a teacher. Pamela is one of them, with her rich and intricate, coded artwork. Yet, you are also picking up on the women who taught her! The Golden Dawn was ahead of its time, involving many knowledgeable and powerful women. Annie Horniman was one. In fact - the women of the Golden Dawn have been celebrated in a book by another female Tarot teacher, Mary K. Greer.



## THE HIGH PRIESTESS DECODED

Chances are, one of your best Tarot teachers will be a woman, not a man. It may be an author, like Mary K. Greer, or a real-life Tarot teacher. I know a few of those, at the Tarot Guild of Australia.

This lady is a symbol of the Third House and Gemini (the scroll is indicative of a newspaper or press release). However it is also a symbol of the Moon, which you can see in the foreground. The Ninth House of academia and education is also suggested here, as I've said. All this may be relevant in your personal birth chart.

Behind the High Priestess, herself a symbol of the asteroid Minerva, we have pomegranates, a symbol of Proserpina. She was the go-between who connected Pluto to Ceres and perhaps they are also shown by the black and white columns. The women who teach you about Tarot, and Pamela herself, are the go-betweens who move between the real world (where you have your deck of cards) and a rather more mysterious one. There are no normal rules of time and space in that world.

## PEARLS OF WISDOM

There is rich symbolism everywhere you look in this card. It is about learning and being taught at the highest level. The pearl of wisdom rests in the High Priestess's crown. The Christian cross symbolises her faith. Pamela Colman Smith converted to Catholicism later in life; Arthur Waite started as one. This refers to the little sayings and 'pearls' that so many readers gather with the cards. They learn to associate particular images with words of wisdom. For example - 'Money doesn't grow on trees' (when trees are hung with golden coins). And 'Fools rush in, where angels fear to tread' for The Fool.

Learning these little pearls of wisdom and even discovering your own will make you a faster, better reader. It brings the Tarot down to earth and it frames it in words that everyone can understand. This is especially important if you intend to read for others.

## THE EMPRESS OF ASTROLOGY

Astrology is really the great Empress with Pamela's Tarot. She's the Queen and the cards are part of her court (the court cards you hear about in the Tarot are actually Kings and Queens too). It's really important to remember that the symbols and signs of the horoscope were part of Pamela's training in The Golden Dawn. In fact, the more you learn about astrology, the better your interpretation of the Tarot will be.

I personally recommend combining both an astrology reading and a Tarot reading for precise timing and accurate interpretation. It's rather like having a first and second opinion and it's invaluable.

The Venus symbol is on the heart ( a strange concrete heart) wedged under The Empress's chaise longue. We also see Ceres, the dwarf planet, symbolised by the corn at her feet. She has the stars (astrology) in her crown, which is the only clue you need. Just knowing about the planets and the zodiac will open a Tarot door.

The cushions are beautiful and expensive - probably velvet. You can see the Venus symbol repeated on the final black-and-yellow cushion. A river is pouring in. This is abundance! But it needs to be harnessed, used, managed and not left to fall away. It's the constant flow of knowledge from astrology book to tarot book, and back again. Know that, and you too can be sitting pretty.

The Empress looks so completely at ease here. Comfortable and relaxed. Abundant and in command of her stars (above) and planets (below).

There is a little secret here and it is about the profession of astrology itself. Add Tarot and you too can enjoy this kind of career. Or - add astrology to Tarot and earn the good life.

## THE EMPEROR – ARTHUR E. WAITE

These are Pamela's illustrations, her inspiration and largely her vision. Yet, Arthur E. Waite was her mentor and also her commissioning employer. He was the Emperor. (And the men at Rider publishing house were - in turn - his own bosses). This card is about the reality of men in a man's world.

Capricorn and Aries are both shown here. Aries the ram decorates the throne. The red colour suggests Mars, the ruler of Aries. The mountains are pure Capricorn the mountain goat. Some people think The Emperor is holding a Christmas bauble in his hand which also suggests Christmas, thus the Sun in Capricorn. Other readers over the years have seen his golden helmet as a propeller head. Is this the C.E.O. or Manager in a high-tech company?

Intimidating, powerful, influential and forbidding, The Emperor is an older man who is quite alone. He's made it to the top, but what can you do for him? What can he do for you? He seems uncomfortable in his position, ready to give it or share it.

This is a nod towards what Pamela knew so well, in 1909. Patriarchy! She was an instinctive feminist, who helped the Suffragette movement. Yet, she had to work within a male-dominated society, to the extent that her own name was shamefully removed from the Tarot decks she illustrated and envisioned. It has taken a very long time for

the Rider-Waite to be correctly identified as the Smith-Waite. Or even, the Colman Smith. Some decks now only credit Pamela herself.

For all that Pamela's women are strong, powerful, commanding, influential, bold and in control, her Tarot reminds us that women in a world of inherited patriarchy have to 'work' male authority. The Emperor is here to be dealt with, it not ever totally understood. Pamela's Tarot is a really good example of female-think, with its emphasis on female friendship and solidarity; single womanhood; proud feminism in charge. The Emperor is always lurking, though, and every time you use the Tarot you will need to be more than usually thoughtful about gender. It was a huge concern to Pamela Colman Smith and her cards reflect that.



## THE SPIRITUAL RULES – THE HIEROPHANT

As I've mentioned, the Catholic church was important in the lives of both Pamela Colman Smith, the Tarot artist, and her mentor, Arthur Waite. He rejected it, she turned to it. Meet the spiritual rules. They are shown by The Hierophant.

Yet, this card is also literally a reminder of the way the Roman Catholic Church has found its way into the illustrations and the symbolism.

This is the Pope with two monks. A symbol of Jupiter and the Ninth House/Sagittarius again, but also – perhaps – of Uranus, as the symbol in his right hand suggests the planetary symbol. I always think the monks have enormous Y-front underpant patterns sewn onto their garments. You can't avoid thinking about sex when you see the Catholic church on a card and this is the Pope laying down the law about celibacy, and perhaps about the holy vows of matrimony.

We have to remember this deck of cards comes to us from 1909 and so monks, nuns, priests and popes were a very real and influential part of society and its sexual laws. Pamela was friends with the well-known lesbian circle of friends at Smallhythe, through Ellen Terry's daughter Edie Craig.

Sex and sin are woven right through her Tarot and even though we live in liberated times, the spiritual rules or laws still govern human relationships. We can see that in The Devil too. And in The Lovers. Pamela wasn't exactly obsessed with this, but it does suggest that her cards can never take us too far in the direction of love, before we meet religion.

The two fingers raised by The Hierophant may be about to make the famous V for Victory symbol of Winston Churchill, or perhaps the V peace sign which became popular in the Vietnam war. The crossed keys show the Vatican.

There are lots of questions here about what is right and wrong, good and evil, ethical and unethical, moral and amoral. Who or what is in charge and who or what must obey? The word is the law here. Yet, Uranus is a symbol of a rebellion; a revolution; a rejection of the old order in favour of the new.

Just by reading the Tarot for yourself or others you are going to stray into serious moral or ethical territory (or, you should!) Remember, this is the deck that took Great Britain through two world wars, and America through the Vietnam war.

In times of love and war, in this deck, somehow spiritual law always finds its way in. So, you need to be very truthful and honest with yourself about what you believe, and why you believe it. This isn't just fortune-telling or even peering into a quantum future. Pamela's deck brings with it some pretty serious messages about religion, morality and ethics. This takes us all the way to the serpent we find in The Garden of Eden in The Lovers.

## THE LOVERS – MEN, WOMEN AND MORALITY

What God hath joined let no man put asunder. Something like that, anyway! The angelic figure in the background of The Lovers card, is like God or Buddha, bringing two lovers together. This is sexual, not just spiritual or emotional. The rather prominent volcano in the background is a geographical erection and about to explode. The snake on the apple tree is the serpent in the Garden of Eden and here you find Eve and Adam wondering when to act, what to do, how to do it, and what the repercussions will be.

Something else we have to remember about Pamela's Tarot is that the marriage vows of 1909 were absolutely sacred. The church ruled sex. We also need to remember that she moved in the same circles as Constance Wilde, the wife of Oscar Wilde, and so the 'Love that dare not speak its name' is also embedded in the cards. The rights and wrongs of adultery, homosexuality, sex before marriage and the rest, are all inseparable from Pamela's Tarot.

The benign figure tells these two 'This thing is bigger than both of you' and the calm smile suggests everything is in hand. There is confusion, though. The billowing clouds suggest things have to be cleared up before these two can hold hands and venture forth. You can see the Sun in the card – Sun signs or sun transits may be important. This is, however, ultimately a card of Venus (who rules apples) and the Seventh House of sexual union, engagement, marriage and common law marriage. Forbidden fruit in the time of Pamela Colman Smith, when she created this card, was often sexual. A more permissive society would come about fifty years later. Even today, though, you will find that the imagery of Pamela's Tarot means questions about romance are so much more.

## THE CHARIOT – MATURE JOURNEYS

This is a great symbol of the Ninth House and Sagittarius, again, in the chart as it suggests astronomy and astrology (stars on the canopy) and the Egyptian symbolism suggests academia, The British Museum – where Pamela's colleagues in The Golden Dawn gathered – and foreign journeys. Here we have someone in command of the trip, not leaping off the cliff.



This tells us that Pamela's Tarot is something you master with age. The young, dumb, fun approach that so many teenagers have to the cards eventually vanishes, to be replaced by a seasoned exploration of the symbolism and the deeper message in the deck.



This is borne out by the number of people I have met at conferences and workshops who tell me they have been reading the Tarot since their late teens or early twenties. They have become hugely experienced readers and 'grown into' the cards.

If you have a reading with a professional psychic (I recently had one with Eva Petulengro in Brighton, who read for George Harrison in the Sixties) the cards are always worn out! They are erased with the years and tell us that Tarot is not a little trip, it is a long, long voyage of learning.

You can see the symbol for the R.A.F. on the front of the chariot, which foresaw the air force which would be so important to Pamela's country, some 30 years after she created this card. Many people identify a red spinning top just below the R.A.F. wings. The Chariot tells us that Tarot is not just the flight of fancy in The Fool. It is actually a lifetime commitment to repeated adventures.

This is a tale of two cities or two countries. Someone once told me 'The Charioteer has knowledge under his belt' and so he/she does. Something about the Tarot which fascinates so many, is the way it draws on different cultures. We can see Ancient Egypt in there. We can also spot Ancient Rome. This card reminds us that broadening our knowledge of symbolism, geography and history can increase the richness of a reading.

This is one of those cards you can take apart, detail by detail and it usually reveals an intensely personal message which can't be found in a book. The reflective square on the tunic suggests a television, radar or computer screen. This is someone who is going places. It's a trip but also a head trip.

It's so typical of Pamela with all her famous clairvoyance that she 'saw' a MacBook Air about 100 years before anyone at Apple ever dreamed of it, and sketched it into her final design for The Chariot. That's her other little message to us, from across the pages of time. Her Tarot was always meant to 'travel' by computer. Is there any other way of summoning up today's Tarot obsession across the Worldwide Web?

## STRENGTH AS A HEALING TOOL

This deck is here to heal and help. It has done so for over 6 million people, across two centuries. That is the message here.

Again we can turn to the astrology which Pamela knew so well, for clues about the card. The Sixth House, which rules doctors, nurses, surgeons, dentists and healers may also tie in with Strength. The word itself is a Virgo and Sixth House concept - getting your strength back after surgery or an illness, for example. The healing here may also be for depression or anxiety. The card shows absolute trust. The lion could maul the healer. The healer could hurt the lion. Instead something miraculous is occurring.

The other great astrological symbol here is Leo the Lion. A leader in times of trouble. An example to all. A mentor or guide. Leo is the King or Queen who commands the confidence of his/her subjects in times of great difficulty. I've mentioned that Pamela's Tarot got people through two terrible wars. There is something about the deck itself which is intensely therapeutic, comforting and rewarding. It inspires confidence. It leads the way, like Leo, but it has all the healing potential of Virgo.

## THE HERMIT AS A SOLITARY PURSUIT

Tarot is a solitary pursuit. The old man (or woman pretending to be an old man) looks down at the snow, while holding an unusual lantern with a radiating star, suggesting something bigger than just a candle flame. This is near Christmas in Europe and the birth of Jesus Christ the Saviour. Again and again with Pamela's Tarot, we are taken back to the church. This may be for the very good reason that when she created the illustrations here, she was living minutes away from a church, just near Ellen Terry's famous cottage at Smallhythe. If you think this card reminds you of the Pre Raphaelite paintings of Christ, you are quite right. In fact, in 1909, Pamela was just the right age to be influenced by this highly spiritual school of painting.

The man in The Hermit is holding a stick, or possibly a mirror, or a very thin laptop. (More of Pamela's visions of the future). He is honouring the bright star in the lantern without looking at it. What is in there would melt the frozen snow. This card relates to the Twelfth House of solitude in astrology and the Ninth House which rules beliefs of all stripes.

One of the great hallmarks of the Tarot is that it is for you, and you alone. You may read for others, of course. In general, though, for most of the time you will be reading for yourself, and thus playing The Hermit to do so. These cards are not for everybody. They suit people who are comfortable about introspection. Pamela herself never married. Her Tarot is for seekers, but they are also solitary.



# THE WHEEL OF FORTUNE AND CYCLES OF TIME

You can see Taurus, Leo and Jupiter (the eagle) in this card, just as you see them throughout Pamela's entire deck. Aquarius, the wavy line logo, is hidden at the bottom of the wheel. The snake is a symbol of the asteroid Aesculapius in astrology. The books suggest the Ninth House or Third House. Most of all, the asteroid Fortuna (daughter of Jupiter) is what this Wheel of Fortune is all about.

Every low point becomes a high point. Every high point becomes a low point. Some people believe W.B. Yeats, who inducted Pamela Colman Smith into The Golden Dawn, was the secret third Tarot contributor hinted at by Arthur Waite.

His most famous poem is The Second Coming, written ten years after Pamela's deck arrived. It begins -

'Turning and turning in the widening gyre  
The falcon cannot hear the falconer;  
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold'

It goes on to mention other images you can see in The Wheel of Fortune. (What may be a falcon is in the top right-hand corner). Here we find the 'lion body and head of a man' in his poem at the top of the wheel. The creature does look to have slow, solid thighs.

The 'shadows of the indignant desert birds' can be seen in the dark cloud behind the falcon. Yeats mentions 'twenty centuries' which is twice the X card, the tenth in the Major Arcana. This is a powerful card. Was Yeats inspired by it?

For us, the message is that the cycles of time never end. We live in infinity and so we also live in a world of absurdity. Just when you think you are at the top, you are already on the way down again. When you are at rock bottom and can sink no further, the only way is up again. In astrology, there is a pattern known as the North Node and South Node cycle which takes you back 19 years, and 19 years before that, and 19 years before that - and so on - presumably all the way back to The Big Bang.

Backwards and forwards the wheels turns in the cycles of time. The Tarot teaches us to be philosophical and accepting of the high points and the low points without being too attached to either. This is also a particular Buddhist way of thinking about life. We go around, and around, in an endless wheel of reincarnation, so becoming too attached to either the highs or lows is pretty silly.

When you work with the Tarot be sure to check the North Node and South Node cycles in your chart to see if you are being spun around, 19 years into the past, and setting life up as it will be again, 19 years into the future. The Wheel of Fortune is about that.

## JUSTICE – PAMELA’S TAROT AS JUDGE AND JURY

Pamela Colman Smith and Arthur Waite were not moral lightweights. They took their beliefs seriously and both came from Catholicism or moved towards it, as we’ve seen. In the year 1909 when this deck was created, there was a tremendous focus on natural law, the law, spiritual law and good/evil. Society was still very much stuck in the previous century and right and wrong were still tremendous areas of enquiry.

When you work with the Tarot you may be looking at legal questions, but also deeper enquiries into what is moral, ethical and the rest. This is also hinted at in The Hierophant. It’s a fact that crooks come for readings. People who seek the secret and powerful wisdom of the Tarot may not always be on the side of right. Yet somehow, the Tarot has its own morality that works its way through and out. It can’t be used for nefarious purposes and it is - according to its users - always on the side of justice. What’s fair or right.

This Justice card is a potent symbol of Libra the Scales as they rule the Seventh House of partnership, separation and divorce and are in turn ruled by Venus. (Scales can also be seen in the Six of Coins as a symbol of Venus in her rulership of Taurus and the Second House of money).

The scales seen here are almost exactly aligned. The judge, lawyer, barrister or mediator is threatening anyone who dares to challenge the outcome. There are some curious little symbols here, typical of Pamela’s odd details. Is that a computer screen (as usual) or hidden camera in the crown? Is that the Japanese flag on the gown? Why is only one shoe showing and why is it white? What is behind the brown curtain? You will interpret these for yourself, and in different ways. I mention it, because as much as this card tells us Pamela’s Tarot is judge and jury on morality, truth and justice - it’s also about God being in the details. You have to decode those details for yourself every time. They change from person to person, and reading to reading. That’s part of the magic.

## THE HANGED MAN AND ACTING ON FATE

This card reminds us that so often the Tarot is used to make up our minds. We can't decide to go for a job or not. We don't know if we should break up with a man or not. We dangle. The cards answer. Yet, there is often a classic and characteristic waiting game before we decide we 'know for sure' and are ready to take action. The cards tell us the answer but it is up to act and it takes time.

I've mentioned the astrology in Pamela's Tarot and we can see it here too. Dangling upside down, stuck (for the moment) and going nowhere fast, The Hanged Man is a symbol of any retrograde planet. Retrograde means that normal motion is obstructed; the planet appears to stand still and go backwards. When the time is right things move on, but first of all that has to be illumination and enlightenment.

The Eureka moment of truth is suggested here. So is the Sun (Sun Sign) or aspects to the Sun as the human head here is radiating golden light. The family tree on either side is suggested (Cancer, Fourth House) and the T shape of the tree may be a classic T-Square, which in astrology is a point of tension when three factors form 90 degree squares to each other.

When the time is ready, this person will untangle himself/herself, reach up, and start moving. The whole purpose of the waiting game would appear to be a spiritual or mental wake-up. That powerful 'Aha!' breakthrough when light dawns and we finally make our choices. The Hanged Man is a call to action but it is also a clue as to the nature of the Tarot itself, which is a circuit-breaker. People use it to force themselves to make a decision and act.

## DEATH AND NEW BEGINNINGS

Death was a fact of life in the 20th century and Pamela's Tarot was the most popular fortune-telling deck of the era. Nobody really likes this card. It is intentionally dark and dramatic. Yet it is also a picture of new beginnings. The Golden Dawn of the sunrise in the distance reminds us, life goes on. Young replaces old.

I've mentioned Pamela Colman Smith's uncanny accuracy in dreaming up visions of the distant future in her original 1909 drawings. Here we see the cry of 'The King is dead, long live the Queen' which came when our current monarch took the throne.

This card shows Pluto, the ruler of the underworld and Roman judge of the dead, with skulls and crossbones on his horse's bridle. You can see the aforementioned 'golden dawn' between two towers up ahead. Even as one era is closing, a brilliant new era is in store. There is always hope and new life.

This card is powerful stuff if the question is also fated to be powerful. The towers are a common theme in the entire deck. New York readers saw the Twin Towers here on September 11th, 2001. Pamela's Tarot can be uncanny.

Of course, this card is open to personal and wide interpretation through the ages. The dead king here may be King Edward VII who passed away in 1910, one year after this deck went on sale, just as much as it is about Queen Elizabeth II.

The children here are ruled by Leo and the Fifth House. The inheritance is Scorpio and the Eighth House. The Bishop is one of many Christian icons in the deck. The Tudor Rose on the flag is the plant badge of England.

When you walk into Pamela's Tarot world there is a 1/78 chance you will turn over Death. As readers and authors all over the world have long said, it is only very rarely a sign of actual passing. (And always, in my experience, when the person concerned knows they are living with a terminal condition and are at peace with the transition).

Far more commonly, Death is about the end of the old and birth of the new. Hope for the future and a brand new day. It is about the entirely natural process of nature, replacing what was, with what will be. We can't get away from that as it's a fact of life from the moment we are born! Pamela's Tarot thus shows us the end of an era, the end of a regime, and so on. And the dawn of a new day.

People often come to the Tarot at just these kinds of critical turnings points in their lives. A company may be folding. A family may be divorcing. If you look carefully at the whole Death card you will see it as a dazzling and radiant image of hope just as much as it appears to be about dark finality.



## TEMPERANCE – TAROT AND GROUPS

I've shown you the Hermit card and we've seen how Tarot is a solitary business. The other side of flying solo is understanding how to make the Tarot work within friendships and groups. Apart from it all, yet part of the community. This card is a pure representation of Pamela herself. As an Aquarian she was always a little apart from The Golden Dawn and the literati, yet she supplied her friends as well.

This is a pure Aquarius symbol as we have a water-bearer with the wavy Aquarius logo being poured from cup to cup. The pool shows 'pooled resources' and the Roman Baths which gave the whole community a place to swim and was fed by an Aquarius - literally a water-bearer of the time.

Groups and friendships can be very therapeutic. This is also a Virgo and Sixth House card as it shows healing. This may be a doctor, surgeon, Reiki master, nurse or dentist. The yellow Iris is also known as Yellow Flag or Water Flag. The crown above the mountains shows potential victory or special status and position above Capricorn the goat's Tenth House peak of achievement, but it has to be reached after a long journey.



Note the yellow triangle, or Grand Trine shape, on the angel's robe. The trines of Aquarius, Libra and Gemini are so often represented in groups! As we've seen, Pamela was an Aquarian and Arthur was a Libran. The Gemini was W.B. Yeats and it is possible he was the 'third man' working on the deck whom Waite alluded to.

Temperance is literally abstinence from alcohol but this card is purely symbolic. It's a picture of the Aquarius spirit in the deck, put there by Pamela herself, and very much about the solo spirituality of the Tarot as a supplier to the community. In her day this was the Golden Dawn itself, but today it may be your local Twitter Tarot tribe, or a Meetup group devoted to the cards.

## THE DEVIL AND 21ST CENTURY SEX

Ask any professional Tarot reader about the most common questions she receives and she will tell you - it's always about sex. Well, we could say love, sex and marriage but as this card suggests, what drives people to seek a reading is often the heat of passion.

Uranus is suggested here, in your astrological chart, by transit or natively - as he is the 1781 symbol of liberation, freedom, independence and the beginning of the end of slavery in the United States.

The chains binding this couple are surprisingly easy to slip. The card shows sexual bondage and as sex and money are both ruled by the Eighth House and Scorpio this card links to them.

The Devil has the Aries horns. The woman has Bacchus (grapes) in her tail. Fire signs (Aries, Leo, Sagittarius) are suggested by the blazing torch. The Devil is of course about sin and evil and in early 20th century Christianity, adultery was certainly a sin. This card also tallies with the Seventh House which rules marriage and affairs. We have to see this card through Pamela's eyes and she lived in a world where there was no contraception.

Sex, then, could be the path to some pretty bad outcomes, from unwanted children and backyard abortions, to the threat of divorce and possibly poverty for married women. People in 20th century marriages died for less.

It's a dark card but with Pamela's vision of a liberated future. She saw far, far into the 21st century and although we see a naked man and woman here, we may be looking at a transgender pair of lovers! Her point is - perhaps the real evil with sex is that nobody is

free. The 'devil' is actually what/who seems to chain them up together in a state of permanent paralysis, when they could be liberated and united.

We've seen the way the Roman Catholic Church winds right through the deck as the result of Arthur's upbringing and Pamela's imminent conversion. Here is another example.

For as much as no-fault divorce has changed the world, we still live in a society which is dominated by laws and rules, rights and wrongs, when it comes to love and sex. We saw this in The Hierophant and The Lovers. The Devil puts it all on the line.

So many, many times when you are turning to the Tarot, you are going to be in pursuit of answers from 'on high' (through the cards) or from 'a source' - so it is best to know which one. This brings us back to questions of belief and faith, especially when considering affairs of the heart, soul and body. It's personal.

As any professional readers will tell you, people come to the Tarot when they want to know if they should have a baby out of wedlock. If they should go ahead with an affair. If they should end their bad marriage. This is something that people in Pamela's day used to turn to the church for. You can't use this deck without getting too far away from that great truth.



# THE TOWER

Again, a reminder that Pamela's Tarot is not a game. It also shows a great astrological truth, which is the sudden end of a situation and the inevitable question about the choice to rebuild or walk away.

This is the card so many Tarot readers claim to have seen before the dreadful events of 9/11. Of course, it could describe any of the destruction of both world wars which came after Pamela created this vision in 1909.

Moving away from the literal to the symbolic, the lightning bolt or thunderbolt suggests both Jupiter (who threw thunderbolts and is a symbol of great opportunity) and Uranus, his grandfather, who is linked to electricity and lightning. We have both planets in this card so there is shock, upheaval and quite revolutionary change (Uranus) but also an opportunity to go back and rebuild a bigger, better structure, or walk right away and commence something new and superior.

Uranus is a symbol of the song 'And the World Turned Upside Down' and the person on the right is inverted. The other obvious issue here is that whatever 'towers' in one's life has to be built to last. This situation, place, organisation or person could not take the forces of nature. It was inherently unsound and was just not built to last. The message of hope here is - rebuild, repair, improve - or move on, build again.

The Tarot itself can become a house of cards, if you make it that way. I'm sure you have seen a pyramid built of cards before. By using the deck you will build structures in your life. Relationships. Work partnerships. Marriages. Homes. Careers.

The Tower is important because it reminds us that 'What goes up must come down' eventually. This takes us back to the Wheel of Fortune and the same message. And, perhaps, Death. These Major Arcana cards tell us that Pamela and Arthur's deck was built, with built-in endings!

The ongoing cycle of put it up/knock it down/put it up/knock it down is very much what her readings are about. The actual nature of these endings is personal to you and the reading. There is a strong message throughout about non-attachment. In fact, for as much as these cards are Catholic influenced, they are very much about the Tibetan Buddhist vision of letting go and accepting, as the eternal wheel spins.

## THE STAR AND THE DEVELOPED GROUP

Temperance was a direct nod to Pamela and her Aquarius sun sign. She was the 'water bearer' who fed her group, The Golden Dawn, even though she was very much by herself. The lone genius behind the deck.

Feeding a community with what it needs is the higher message of this 'evolved' Aquarius symbol. In Rome, where modern astrology comes from, this would have been an Aquarius (water-bearer) supplying the communal baths, as we saw with Temperance.

There are questions here about who is the 'star' within the group and who are the satellites. Yet, with care, this collective can work together. Ask yourself what the bird in the tree represents. The naked woman (purely because she is naked) may also be meaningful for you here.

We know enough about Pamela's life in 1909 to assume she was close to the lesbian circles who stayed in Ellen Terry's second cottage at Smallhythe. This takes us back to the Suffragette/Feminist themes of the deck. In fact, the deck was revived in the 1970's when Women's Liberation took over the world. With immaculate timing. U.S. Games Systems was formed to accommodate the old deck in changing times.

Thus, people power, community, protest movements, solidarity, good causes, social change networks and the rest are very much embedded in this deck. The Star reminds us that Pamela was the superstar of the late 20th century Tarot movement, just as her mentor W.B. Yeats was the superstar of The Golden Dawn.

You can't really work with Tarot at its highest level today without being part of a group, online or in the real world. That is where the greatest developments are and this card nods to that. For as much as Tarot is solitary it is also communal.

## THE MOON – MONEY, SEX AND PROPERTY

The lobster here is often taken for a Scorpion, thus the zodiac sign Scorpio. The two towers and two dogs suggest Libra. The Moon itself is the biggest clue, of course. This is a Full Moon but rather a serious one. On a Full Moon, the Sun and Moon are in opposite zodiac signs. Here the two dogs are opposite each other. This card commonly turns up when people must decide to get married, move in with each other, or separate. It is the property market and the financial realities that make them say yes or no - thus Scorpio snapping at their heels.

This is a good example of the quantum mechanics in so many of Pamela Colman Smith's cards. The dogs can take the same path together or go in opposite directions. Parallel universes are based on parallel choices. Left and right. Yes and no.

Here we see another angle on The Devil and The Lovers. Perhaps, too, The Hierophant. As we've seen, the time-honoured questions women take to Tarot readers and cards are about their love lives.

Should we break up or not? Shall we move in together or not? Property, sex and money - marriage and mortgage - are just as much a part of our society as they were in 1909 when Pamela created this illustration. For as much as her deck is about the spiritual questions surrounding human relationships, it is also very much about the apartment and the bank!

## THE SUN – THE NEXT GENERATION

We've seen how astrology is embedded in Pamela's Tarot deck.

This is pure Leo and Fifth House symbolism. Leo is ruled by the Sun - which shines here among sunflowers. This sign rules the next generation. Sons, daughters, godchildren, young relatives or just younger faces to be mentored, guided or entertained. It dazzles with its radiance and happiness. Look at the horse, the flowing red fabric (right) and the wall behind for clues. Look also to the face inside the Sun and the child's headpiece.

The intriguing thing about this set of cards, on sale since Christmas 1909, is that it has appealed to every younger generation after that. So we now find ourselves in the 21st century - heading for the Twenties (2020-2029) and Millennials are now enthusiastically taking up the Tarot.

This card has a second meaning and it is tied to The Lovers, The Devil, The Hierophant and some of the family cards. Throughout the decades it has been a sign that a new baby is coming.



## JUDGEMENT – LIFE AFTER LIFE

Two families rise from their coffins to embrace an angel, judging them from heaven. This card is linked to the zodiac sign Scorpio, the Eighth House, home of the last will and testament, legacies and any inheritance. The trumpet was often used by mediums in the early 20th century to communicate with the spirit world. This card is a powerful symbol of transformation, redemption and rebirth. The asteroid Aesculapius may also tie in here.

You can't really get away from the fact that Pamela's Tarot is a serious, spiritual and soulful thing. It was created by two people who had come from religion, or were headed there, and so ideas about everlasting and eternal life - Heaven - are part of the symbolism.

This card commonly turns up when the matter at hand is something that a grandparent, great-grandparent, great-aunt (and so on) would have been concerned with. They often still are!

This also brings us to ideas about reincarnation. This is Buddhist and Hindu thought, not Christian, but the 'eternal recurrence' of the North Node and South Node cycle in astrology is also hinted at here. You have been here before. We all have. You will be here again. We all will.



## THE WORLD

A reminder from the Tarot that this was the deck that had to survive two world wars (and get the people through them). It is also typical of Pamela's clairvoyance, in that she must have 'seen' the future - the long cycle of Pluto (global transformation) in the zodiac sign of Sagittarius (travel, emigration, globalisation) which came to pass in the 21st century, just after her own.

The world was never going to be the same after that (the cycle ended in January 2008) and in modern life, the Tarot has to cater for that as well. It was very different in 1909, but Pamela Colman Smith had to create a deck 'for the ages.'

World travel in Pamela and Arthur's day was not on budget airlines. Embarking on a round-world trip was overwhelming which may explain why the woman (centre) does not know which way to turn.

The lion stands for Great Britain. The bull for Spain. The eagle for the United States of America. Who is the flaxen-haired person in the top left-hand corner? A symbol of Australia? Australia and Asia combined?

Pamela's characteristic clouds surround the four corners of the earth. They are a symbol of cloud-based quantum computing which teaches us about quantum information. Everything is a possibility! This card relates to Jupiter (the eagle), Leo (the lion), Taurus (the bull) and the Ninth House (travel and foreign people and places). This is an even bigger leap into the future, as in 1909 Pamela could not possibly have known that the 'Many Worlds' theory of reality would become popularly accepted by scientists.

In fact, as we go into the Twenties, at the start of the 21st century, the theory that explains the universe, based on the pioneering work of Hugh Everett, suggests that parallel universes, multiverses and the Many Worlds 'real world' is actually what we're living with. This is a fascinating illustration which also shows not just the four corners of the globe - but, perhaps, four parallel possibilities in a multiverse. One only has to choose.

## THE ACE OF CUPS – CHRISTENINGS

This is a Christening font, or perhaps a Buddhist rebirth. It is tied to The Sun card, which shows an infant on his/her way in life. Pamela never had children, but she certainly had her own rebirths. She was a born again Catholic. Perhaps this is why the card matter so much in her deck. It can show who/what we are 'baptised' into or even reborn into. Given the promise of the rising sun - the brand new day - in the Death card - this is only natural.

This Tarot deck has a strong spiritual and religious message throughout and it is about the afterlife, and life beginning again.

There are many symbols here. The letter W is on the cup. The Christian cross is on the Holy Communion wafer. The dove of peace flies overhead. The Tibetan Buddhist lotus flower floats on the water. It is often the tiny details in Pamela's illustrations which send the biggest message and these barely visible lotuses prove it.



The cup itself is about emotional fulfilment and this one is overflowing. Your cup runneth over. It's all potential and unrealised to date. This takes us back to Pamela's deck as a tool for 21st century quantum 'realities'. We live in a multiverse of many worlds, according to most scientists.

As you will see repeatedly in Pamela's Tarot, this is symbolised by the appearance of clouds. There are endless, billowing, extravagant clouds in her work. These are the clouds also known to researchers working with the quantum world.

More evidence of Colman Smith's psychic insights. How could she have known where 21st century experiments would take science?]

The cloud is classic quantum uncertainty and Pamela Colman Smiths' cards are full of it. Nothing can happen until this is made real. At the moment it is an unpoped universe. Thus real babies and real Christenings (the promise of The Lovers) are often suggested by this card, or there is a spiritually fulfilling and emotionally rewarding passage in a relationship or family situation which feels as if something has been 'Christened' or blessed and brought into being.

From the resurrection of the Judgement card comes the rebirth of the soul, or spirit, into a new baby at the Christening font, or perhaps the arrival of what the Tibetan Buddhists would call an old soul, in a new life.

It's a lovely image. Refreshing, promising, deep and complex. Something sacred is on offer here but it must be brought down to earth and integrated into your life.

## THE TWO OF CUPS

We know Arthur Waite was a Sun Libra man and he was drawn towards partnerships of all kinds, Libra being the sign of the scales - two sides, two bowls. Duets of all varieties are Libran. This must have been in Pamela's field of vision when she created this unforgettable card. It is all about the potential power of two.

Leo the lion is overhead with his rulership of the Fifth House, which in turn describes pregnancy, stepchildren, shared godchildren, nieces and nephews - adoption - and parenting. Here again, we have a 'relative' card which might be in the same family group as The Devil - if the Lovers ever broke free of him to unite or find new partners - and quite obviously, The Sun. (The Sun being a symbol of new babies born, after a romance becomes marriage).

A characteristic Kent cottage (Pamela created her deck in the countryside there) is in the background, representing a lovely home. The asteroid Aesculapius is shown by the snakes entwined on the rod which also looks like a DNA symbol - the double helix. The software for this kind of astrology did not exist in 1909 so Pamela could not possibly have known about the new asteroid horoscopes, but the symbolism is there.

Cups are sex and emotion in the Tarot. They hold and contain what we feel. They are the tea cups of family and domestic life (Golden Dawn member Annie Horniman was a tea heiress and Arthur E. Waite worked for Horlicks).

Perhaps this was at the back of Pamela's mind. For The Golden Dawn, each of the suits had a job to do. Rods, wands or Wands as they are sometimes called - were about communication and ideas. Trees making paper for books, newspapers and magazines.

Coins, sometimes called pentacles or discs, were money. Swords were about conflict and action. Cups were given to deeper feelings. The raising of glasses at wedding toasts or family birthdays. The gentle 'clink' when two people on a first date say 'Cheers' and it's clear that a romance is on.

What deal are these two potential lovers, or reuniting lovers, making? Perhaps they are divorcees figuring out a compromise. You can feel the emotion in this illustration.

This card also works as a Gemini symbol (the glyph is the Gemini sign) and all pairs of 'twins' or twin souls are Gemini. One person stands firm. The other is hesitant. This card also symbolises the Seventh House and Libra - couples who have to negotiate having a child, moving in together, separating or reconciling.

## THE THREE OF CUPS – FEMINISM

Just as the Roman Catholic Church and Buddhism - and astrology - find their way into this deck, so too does feminism. For Pamela, this was easily the most important social change of her century.

Pamela Colman Smith was close to the theatre world suffragette and lesbian Edith Craig, who from 1916 was in a menage a trois with Christabel Marshall and Clare 'Tony' Atwood. This was the sisterhood at Smallhythe. The cottages, their gardens and their main resident, hostess Ellen Terry, made the place a refuge for women seeking the freedom to love one another without the disapproval of society.

There is a famous photograph of Pamela in their company which is about a century old. The Three of Cups reminds us that she saw the world through a feminist filter. Female friendship and the power of the sisterhood were terribly important to her.

These ideas about equality were again quite visionary. She could not possibly have known about Gloria Steinem or Germaine Greer. The feminist revolution brought on by The Pill in 1969.

You might say that Pamela's Tarot, adopted by U.S. Games Systems and Stuart R. Kaplan, played its part in Women's Liberation in the 1970's to a powerful, if unknown, degree.

These are the Tarot cards that empowered a generation. They were the tools of truth and wisdom for so many women in the Seventies who fought for equal pay and other freedoms.

The three women here may well be feminists or lesbian lovers. This is also an image of female solidarity so it may bring in the Eleventh House. Cups are related to sex and feelings so this may be a solid bond of sisterly friendship or something more. Perhaps, something quite against the laws of 1909!

Halloween is suggested by the pumpkin. Perhaps these are witches. This card is suggestive of A Dance to the Music of Time (Poussin) and astrology itself as the women could dance in either direction, hinting at Retrogrades in the chart. Perhaps, too, the endless loop of the North Node and South Node. Karmic dances?

## **THE FOUR OF CUPS – UNPOPPED POSSIBILITIES**

I've mentioned the clouds in this Tarot deck and the uncanny way in which Pamela 'saw' the future of science and all its theories about the quantum world and quantum uncertainty. Clouds are unpoped possibilities. Potential events yet to be chosen. This is very in tune with quantum thought about our 'many worlds' world of potential. There is no single, objective reality. We have to become participants in the experiment if we want to look for it.

This is a card which is a classic example of Pamela's Tarot as a tool for change. It often turns up when people feel fed up, mildly depressed, flat or low - the friendships, relationships, dating scene, family ties and so on around them, seem to offer them nothing.



Cups represent emotions (feelings) as we've seen. They hold blood, sweat and tears. Shall we also say they hold semen? They certainly hold water, and it is the water signs - Cancer, Scorpio, Pisces - which area associated with emotion in astrology.

Here we have someone who is being offered a potential relationship, of whatever kind - while being quite blind to the three solid-gold relationships which are there.

Note the tree (family tree) behind. That is a second statement about a water sign, Cancer, as it is the zodiac sign of Cancer the crab, which rules over the Fourth House of roots, heritage, history and the family tree.

There is Neptune symbolism in this card as he rules both clouds and blindness. Note the way the person here is in the lotus position but not grounded. The crossed arms are stubborn, resistant and unhelpful.

Again, this is a nod to Buddhism, and perhaps Hindu thought. These Indian ideas in particular were creeping into the 'New Age' movement of the early 20th century through Theosophy and the work of Madame Blavatsky.

In fact, Pamela has illustrated someone who is floating slightly in mid-air, legs crossed, which is a popular idea in some Indian belief systems - levitation through meditation. It is so interesting to see the way that she picked up Christian, Catholic, Buddhist and Hindu imagery when she began working with the 78 cards. It is even more interesting that everything Pamela put into her work is still so relevant today, around 100 years after the cards debuted.

## THE FIVE OF CUPS

At this point, let's have a closer look at these mysterious cups, which hold so much of human experience. Nine times out of ten when you read for a client, friend or family member, they will come to you because they have relationship problems. Pamela's cups were designed to give you a gateway to solutions. The Five of Cups often turns up with people who are depressed after the end of one or more relationships - be they lovers, friends or family.

The cups describe love and sex, and sometimes bodily fluids. They can appear as fallen over, maybe kicked to the ground, and we can see toxic green fluid (poisonous emotion or bile perhaps) on the ground along with blood.

The cloaked figure is downcast, hidden and apparently in mourning - or a vampire! Pamela Colman Smith knew Bram Stoker, author of Dracula, well and he was also involved in the many overlapping social circles of The Golden Dawn, the magical secret society which also included Pamela's collaborator Arthur Waite and mentor W.B. Yeats.

Two cups, glittering gold (solid gold, precious) are still upright and intact but the brooding figure cannot see them. The bridge and castle are important. So is the river. The cups are just waiting to be cleaned in the water - or - will this figure walk away altogether and cross the bridge to a new life? There is strong visualisation potential in this card, which can be 'directed' like all of Pamela's work. She was a set designer.

If reality is to be chosen, and the universes you are to choose from are vast, then why not think like Shakespeare and consider that all the world's a stage and you're just another player looking for a script? There is something particularly 'stagey' about this scene.

Of course Pamela worked in theatrical circles where Shakespearean plays were hugely popular with 20th century audiences. Working with these ideas about scripts, actors, props, camera angles and so on, how can you re-image the Five of Cups? This is partly what her cards are all about.

The future is not set in stone and waiting for you to walk into it. The future is the next part of the film, or play, and you are directing it with Pamela.

## THE SIX OF CUPS AND CHILDREN

This Tarot deck, which has been beautifully reproduced without borders, and also in its original colours (thanks to U.S. Games Systems) is a timepiece. However, it is also a timepiece which was meant to address all the questions about modern life, including adoption, blended families and I.V.F. programs.

Here we have another kind of childhood, beyond the childhood we found in The Sun. Pamela loved that world and quite apart from her gift for painting and illustration, was a storyteller. For her, life was child's play.

Look at this innocent exchange of feelings - the Cups suit dominates here - and done with pure charm and trust. This card represents Leo and the Fifth House, a sign and astrological pattern which is frequent in this deck. There is a lovely, pure, exchange here. Look at the man with his spear striding off to the left. Why is he leaving the scene? Take into account the blossoming flowers in the cups at the front of the card. What is growing? How to help?

Again we have a hint of theatre here. This could be a sword-carrier in any of Shakespeare's plays. How to direct the action in a world where there are multiple, even infinite, possibilities?

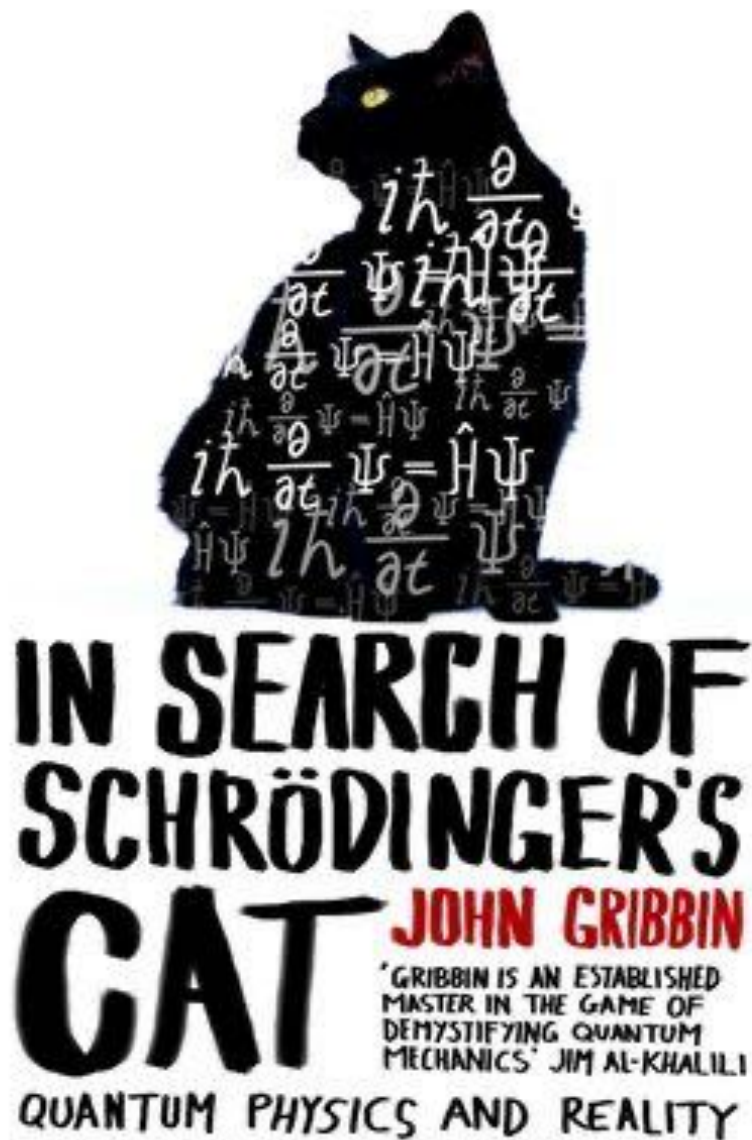
## THE SEVEN OF CUPS – QUANTUM MECHANICS

It took me several visits to Dublin before I understood this card. Pamela and her Golden Dawn mentor W. B. Yeats were not just astrology or Tarot hobbyists. Both were involved in magic. The realisation of dreams, wishes and hopes by supernatural means. I've mentioned Harry Potter in connection with this deck. Well, it's time to look at quantum mechanics as the scientific explanation for magic.

Yeats lived a few doors away from - not a magician - but an outstanding scientist whose emerging 20th century field of quantum mechanics was also about mystery. Quantum uncertainty. His name was Schrodinger and his thought experiment about reality - Schrodinger's Cat - was inspired.

## IN SEARCH OF SCHRODINGER'S CAT

If you don't know about this famous cat, you may be interested in the book, *In Search of Schrodinger's Cat: Quantum Physics and Reality*, by John Gribbin. Of course, black cats have been associated with witches in popular culture for a very long time. Rather like the world of quantum physics, magic and spells involve mind over matter. Or mind which guides matter. It is typical of Pamela's powerful clairvoyance that she could see through the original Tarot imagery into something much more intriguing and important, in terms of science. That is the 'many realities' or 'alternative realities' of the Universe. This cat takes us there.



## MYSTERIES IN PAMELA'S CAT ILLUSTRATION

This is where the deck becomes really interesting, because we will find this cat in the Queen of Wands, even though Pamela was instructed to design a leopard. As a channel for the future, creating a deck for all time, she may have had no idea at all that her selection of the household feline at Smallhythe would become an important symbol in science.

Yet, there it is - a cat walks through her deck, and it was a cat 'randomly' chosen by Schrodinger, to illustrate an idea grounded in quantum mechanics that would eventually spawn the theory of many worlds. Multiple universes. The multiverse.

Across Merrion Square, where we find - uncannily - both tributes to W.B. Yeats and Shrodinger, doorways. Apart, there is a third plaque dedicated to Oscar Wilde, whose wife Constance (we know) was a magical acquaintance of Yeats in *The Golden Dawn*.

And again it is worth repeating the importance of Annie Horniman to this story of magic, mysterious synchronicity and science. Across Dublin, this tea heiress and brilliant theatre impresario Annie Horniman, had actually founded her company on the back of a Tarot card reading. She employed both Pamela and William Butler Yeats at her theatre.

This is a cloud. Unpopped possibilities. Competing parallel universes. A multiverse full of ghosts, poisonous people (snakes), palaces, diamonds and pearls, victory and dangerous dragons. None of it is real. It is all a projection. The imagination, hope, fears and daydreams of someone living in a quantum world. Time to pop what you want in favour of what you don't want. Nothing is real until you choose it. Of all the cards in this deck, this may ultimately be seen as the most important, because it reminds us what the cards are actually for. Not a hard-and-fast, heavily dictatorial verdict on a fixed future. A tool for transformation.

## THE EIGHT OF CUPS – MORE SOLO JOURNEYS

Just Walk Away, Renee! This card brings to mind a lot of songs. She's Leaving Home by The Beatles is another one. We have seen how Pamela's life influenced her visions. The Hermit is the strongest image of solitude in the deck. Yet, here we have another solo journey. A sabbatical or lone retreat.

The cups of deep feeling and emotion are not enough for tis person, and he or she is turning away, and leaving the scene.



This is an exact description of Pamela's own retreat from the literati and Golden Dawn circles of Bohemian London. Her visitors' book, full of famous signatures (most of the Yeats family) stopped on an early 20th century date and was never resumed. William Yeats' sister was left wondering what had happened to Pixie, as so many people called her. But Pixie would never tell.

Again, if you read the Tarot for long enough, you will find that this card sums up the reason people come for the cards. They are walking away - from a family. From a circle of friends. From, perhaps, a 'stack' of unsatisfying relationships.

The downcast face of the Full Moon suggests that the lunar cycle has reached peak squeeze. The Sun is always opposite the Moon on a Full Moon and here we have someone who is not exactly leaping for joy on his/her journey, but going because there is nothing left, emotionally. Look at the lunar cycle in your chart when this card arrives. Look at the Eclipse cycle too, for a client.

The eight cups here symbolise friends, family, lovers, former lovers and show solid gold people. The issue is the emotional climate, the lunar cycle and the times. When this person returns it may be a New Moon, a sunny day and things may look and feel so much happier. Will there be a return? Sometimes people don't come back. Some authors feel Pamela Colman Smith, the creator of the cards, was depicting a famous eclipse of 1909 in this card.

It is possible this was when her issues with her former social circles began. We just don't know. Nothing remains but this card.

An eclipse is a blind spot. This person cannot see how precious and valuable these eight (symbolic) relationships or friendships are. His/her back is turned. Pamela herself did this, turning her back on British literary, artistic and Bohemian society and leaving for the coast of England and a simple life away from W.B. Yeats and his family. Away from the glittering names in her guest book. She had a choice to come back, but never did, and passed away in the tiny village of Bude, with a companion, Nora Lake, and precious little to show she had ever been the toast of 1909.

There is so much more to say about this card! If the solo journey ends in enlightenment, peace, happiness - who are we to criticise the woman (or man) who never comes back. You'll so often see this turning up in readings where the emotional Cups suit prevails.

## THE NINE OF CUPS – PAMELA’S GROUPS

It is amazing to see the number of times Pamela Colman Smith’s Aquarius Sun shines through in this deck. We’ve talked about Aquarius as the sign to associate with groups of friends. This was the story of her life, thanks to The Golden Dawn, the theatrical and literary world of London, and crucially, the Suffragettes.

This card, then, is a variation on a theme. Circles! You can see how the cups are all artfully arranged in a semi-circle. This idea of circles is repeated in so many illustrations in Pamela’s Tarot. The women in the Three of Cups dance in a circle. There are rainbows appearing as semi-circles. We might say - at her most famous, in New York and London, Pamela moved ‘in the right circles.’

A smug, rather fat man poses in front of his nine trophies. These are cups, which represent the water sign (Cancer, Scorpio, Pisces) emotions. Look at the cup in the right-hand corner which is about to fall off.

This man is so wrapped up in his own achievement, he is not paying attention to the individual people who ‘have his back.’ One of them does not. Like Ten Green Bottles, if one should accidentally fall, it means they all might. This card hints at Aquarius and the Eleventh House, with its emphasis on the group. One has to wonder who the smug man in the chair, might be. Was this a leading male in The Golden Dawn cast of characters? This magical secret society was rocked by politics and discord, and undoubtedly male ego - in its time.

This is an intensely Aquarian card and it was created by someone who was born under the sign of the water-bearer, who supplies the community. You might say, it is a variation on a theme, which we also see with Temperance and the Three of Cups - and particularly The Star. Like all of Pamela’s cards, it is here to be rewritten, stage-managed, rehearsed, and transformed into an easier ‘take.’

## THE TEN OF CUPS – RAINBOW SEXUALITY

Arthur E. Waite chose well, when he commissioned Pamela (just after her Saturn Return, in her late twenties) to create these cards. Her vision of the 21st century (and who knows, perhaps the 22nd century as well) was uncanny.

She was part of a lesbian social circle, and undoubtedly bisexual and gay male circles too, given her Bohemian credentials. Oscar Wilde, as we’ve seen, was certainly on the

fringes. Imprisoned for 'the love that dare not speak its name' he lived literally across the square from Pamela's great mentor, W.B. Yeats.

And so, we come to the rainbow recognisable from Brighton to Sydney, ever-present at Stonewall commemorations in New York, and a 21st century symbol of rainbow families. Diversity, community and equality in a world where gay men can marry and adopt. Quite out of the question around 100 years ago, when Pamela dreamed up this card.

What is fascinating is its duality. It has parallel universes contained within. Is this a lesbian rainbow family and a brand new home, or are we talking about a more conventional and normal marriage, between man and wife, with two small children in tow?

Here we have some well-known themes and memes. ('Somewhere Over the Rainbow' and 'The Pot of Gold at the End of the Rainbow'). The couple are close, the children are happy.

The house looks like a dream British 1909 cosy cottage. There is celebration here. The couple throw their hands in the air, the children are dancing happily. This is a classic card for family and property joy. Yet, true to Pamela's psychic vision, it is also a strong message about marriage equality and just about every flag you see flying on Mardi Gras, in any city of the world.

## THE PAGE OF CUPS – PISCES AND NEPTUNE REALITIES

We've been looking at the intriguing question of 'reality' in Pamela's deck, which is full of the clouds that so many scientists talk about, when discussing the quantum world.

Just as the world of quantum uncertainty (nothing is real until you measure it) suggests parallels, so too do all the cards in Pamela's deck contain parallel meanings. This is why books or websites with Tarot interpretations, including my own, can only take you so far.



For example - we can read this card quite literally in an old-fashioned way. The way, perhaps, that 20th century readers did. Pages are always younger than you, so this boy/man is your junior.

He is showing Pisces (the fish in the cup) and Neptune, the ruler of Pisces (the sea behind him). The two fishes are Pisces' domain and they can show duality. He may be bisexual. Either/or!

He is effeminate or in touch with his feminine side, thanks to the pink and blue outfit. He has something to give - sexually or emotionally - as Cups rule both. Yet, the fish poking out of the cup suggests a non-reality or unreality about the same. He's fun, never dull, not remotely in the real world and - you need to know what to do with him.

This is just one way this card could be read. There are others. It is interesting to note that Einstein was a Sun Pisces. His ideas on time and space were pouring through the 20th century at the time Pamela's cards were being handed around. Einstein's contributions to the global discussion on what the universe was, and what it was not - proved that there is no one, single, correct time. It's all relative. The Theory of Relativity.

This is another brilliant example of Pamela's intuitive ability to illustrate something that might just be another scene from a play, while picking up the imagery of zodiac signs and planets.

This might as well be Pisces Einstein himself, showing us the slippery fish of theoretical science, against the backdrop of Neptune, the ever-flowing ocean, whose currents run backwards and forwards into each other, rather like the endless discussions about space-time.

These cards are not for the faint-hearted as they contain coded secrets about so many of the crucial ideas about the universe that became accepted as scientific law, in Pamela's century.

## THE KNIGHT OF CUPS

Again, this is a card which can be read at least two ways, as it has parallel meanings. It's really not hard to see the young men of Pamela's 'party period' in London. She was the hostess of a number of popular salons for writers and their friends, and as she was a young creative herself, she must have attracted so many of her contemporaries, all bringing a bottle to the part - or a spare glass. The Knight of Cups is thus a potential friend coming to visit, or stay. Perhaps, a potential lover. Part of her life in the 1900's and maybe part of ours, in the 21st century.

Straight and true, this is a man on a mission, wearing Mercury's characteristic wings on his helmet and shoes. Sagittarius is suggested by the horse, but Mercury is riding it. The cups are always a symbol of the deep feelings of Cancer, Scorpio and Pisces, as we've seen.

He has something to give, but he needs to get there, to give it. He is a man on a mission. The Third House (short journeys) or Ninth House (global travel or emigration) is suggested here, as it is so often in Pamela's deck. Will he settle down? He might. If the exchange was the right one!

The parallel meaning of the Knight of Cups is again, related to the science of Einstein's century. We often find that time (past, present, future) is described as a river. Here we have a young scientist with his test-tube or measuring cup, liberated from the laboratory, in search of scientific proof or evidence. He needs to cross 'the river of time' or perhaps investigate it, to find it.

When you give yourself or other people a Tarot reading, you are playing with the very foundations of time and space. Even though Pamela was no scientist, her brilliant visions were never very far away from the symbolism of 20th and 21st century science!



## THE QUEEN OF CUPS AND TIME

I've been talking about reality, alternative reality, different views of time - and parallel worlds - in this guide to Pamela's Tarot. Now we come to a stunning example of this, and she is known to all as the Queen of Cups. It can be read on an everyday level, as a picture of human confusion over relationships, or as the very image of our confusion over time itself!

This is a woman who has precious, unique relationship she does not know what to do with. If it was on Antiques Roadshow it would be priceless. It is a cup, like all the cups in Pamela Colman Smith's deck, but not any cup you have ever seen.

In her past we find pregnancies that did not come to term, or the baby phase of her grown-up children. Time and again in this Tarot we see the hidden, grey faces of babies concealed in stonework. The thrones of the Queens often hint at this.

This deck was built for real life, and real relationships and they necessarily involve abortions and miscarriages. There is no point ducking this reality and it is not out of the question that the past is pulling on the present, when these Queens and the baby faces on their thrones turn up.

She is unconscious of this but it is the foundation upon which she rests. These (born or unborn?) babies are above her and at her feet, cast in stone. She is all at sea, cast adrift, not living in the real world, far removed from what people back home would call normal living.

This is a picture of Kent where Pamela Colman Smith created her card. Our Queen is drifting further into the English Channel. This is a card showing the Fifth House of parenthood and relationships, and also Neptune, that symbol of drifting unreality.

The solution is to put the cup down and go back to the village or town with it tucked under one arm, where the relationship (a cup is always a relationship) can be found an appropriate place. At the moment it is a distraction from the real issue - babies that came/didn't come, quite some time ago. The Queen would be happier with dry feet.

I have just given you one interpretation of this Queen. It is a universe among many, and all are 'real' or 'right' when attached to this card. It depends who you are, how you read, what you need to know, and how your past surrounds your present.

This card reminds us of the great mystery of these cards, which is that they will not mean the same thing twice, and they will mean different things to different people.

This is also a stunning portrait of a woman who is 'all at sea' with quantum uncertainty and the new world of relative time that Einstein delivered in Pamela's century. It can be such a confused and confusing matter! She needs to bring it all back down to earth, doesn't she? Time to stop with the theories and apply them. These cards show multiple possibilities for scripts, props, cast and so on. If you want this picture to be different, it can be.

## THE KING OF CUPS – UNREAL REALITIES

Pure Pisces and Neptune. This card appeared in a reading about The 2018 World Cup and one powerfully psychic reader immediately predicted France would win. The Jules Rimet cup is in hand! Football aside, this card is about a man who does not inhabit the real world. He is all at sea. He may be fishy.

We have seen this link with Pisces the fishes (hidden in the illustration) and Neptune (the sea) before, with other cards. As we've seen, Einstein was a Sun Pisces - the master of relativity and time-space thought experiments.

Other champions of 'unreal realities' are Sun Pisces - like Professor Brian Cox, so drawn to the multiverse.

This King, cut adrift from normal life, represents a holiday from reality, which Neptune also does. If you want to get close to him you will have to come over to his side of reality.

Does he want to get off his floating throne? If so, a ship is just behind him, perhaps ready for a rescue mission. The Cup also suggests alcohol or this may be a pestle and mortar to grind drugs. True to Pamela's vision, it can be read in many different ways. The King himself is a firm reminder of the fluid nature of 'truth' itself and it is astonishing how many different interpretations of this card can be found. Just one look around Tarot websites and you'll see him playing many, many different roles in people's lives.

Pisces and Neptune have long been associated with substances that alter reality. Taking acid in the Sixties had many people questioning what was real, after taking a trip.

The other possibility here is that our King is just going to dive straight into his other world. His toe is pointing towards the water. Maybe he's about to throw it all away in favour of immersing himself in something else.

There is a subtle message here about the fashionable new 21st century approach to the Tarot - quantum thinking, or quantum creation as it's sometimes called. At a certain point you have to keep it real with alternative realities, or you'll just end up lost!

## THE ACE OF SWORDS AND VICTORY

Whenever we interpret the Tarot using this deck we have to remember how very close Pamela was to the advent of the First World War, when she was working with her pots of paint and ink.

This is a symbol of victory. The crown is spinning on top of the sword, in a sudden gesture of triumph. A head has rolled.



There is absolutely no way that the young Bohemian Pamela Colman Smith could have delivered this illustration to Arthur Waite and the Rider publishing house in 1909 and seen life thirty years into the future - but she did.

This is the surrender of Emperor Hirohito and Japan after Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It is the end of a monarch's supremacy. It is abrupt. (The atomic bombs flattened cities in a terrifyingly short space of time).

These cards were not consciously designed to help people move through two world wars - the First World War and Second World War were not even nightmares in 1909. Yet, given the brief to create a channel for future sight, Pamela did just that.

Victory is possible, but Pamela has shown one of her characteristic clouds, so this is a picture of quantum reality. The big win is an unpoped possibility or unchosen universe, at the moment. It's pure potential and it has to be made real.

The crown, symbolising the top job or leading role, can only be taken here by force. Swords are symbols of aggression. There is a Tenth House connection here, backed up by the mountains (Capricorn the mountain goat rules the Tenth House). Mars rules the sword itself. The scattered yellow leaves may describe the group around the situation, which is the Eleventh House.

This is also the Abdication. One monarch replaced by another. Again, Pamela can have had no inkling that this was contained in the far-off future, back in 1909. Wallis Simpson was certainly not the threat she became to the Royal Family and United Kingdom.

You will have your own interpretation for this, but it has also been associated with the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, whose 'crown' (literally his head) was taken so violently from him.

This card is archetypal like so many of the images Pamela created. It can be found in mythology, history and fairy tales too. This is King Henry V and his miraculous battle at Agincourt. As an insider in so many Shakespearean theatrical circles, Pamela would have known the story well.

Be it a modern election in Great Britain, a political leadership spill in Australia, or just the replacement of one professional with another, this card suggests the speed of rapid succession.

This is true to the nature of political, royal and professional life. Firing and hiring. Loss and victory are entwined in what can be as sudden and fast-paced as a 10.00pm Exit Poll.

Within Pamela's own world, The Golden Dawn was full of power struggles and highly political game-playing between its members.

## THE TWO OF SWORDS – CHOOSING A PARALLEL UNIVERSE

One of the features of the famous thought experiment known as Schrodinger's Cat, is that the cat (often shown as a black cat, just like the feline in the Queen of Cups) has two worlds to inhabit.

Trapped in his box, he is in two states at once, alive and dead, until the scientist in her white coat, dares to lift the lid and check. At that point, one world collapses, and we find out if the cat is dead or alive. This is the two-world option that begins the peculiar universe of 'many worlds.' One reality branches off into another reality, then into another, and so on.

This is a nice, stark, simple card, showing the unconscious (blindfolded) choice we make, when we choose a universe to inhabit. Do we marry John or Jill? Do we vote Left or Right? Do we move North or South? Just choosing makes one universe 'collapse' - at least as far as we know.

As always, Pamela's cards show the mysteries of reality, time and space - as well as more fundamental, everyday concerns. This is clearly a woman who has to make a blindfold decision about attacking and defending. Or is she cutting X or Y out of her life?

The lunar cycle is important here. This is a New Moon, emerging or just recently gone. Thus, it is a new beginning but things are on hold. This woman needs to take her blindfold off, so she can see where to head next.

The rocks will give her a path to the promising landscape in the distance. She can leapfrog her way forward. Yet, nothing can happen while she cannot see.

She is on the attack or defence, on both sides. Defending herself on what she believes is not just one threat, but two. Is she right or wrong? She won't know until she can see.

To see, she needs to come up with a strategy whereby she puts one sword down, defends herself with the other, and quickly takes her blindfold off. At least then she can move left, right, to the front or behind and protect herself or get away. She could even smite her opponent.

All Pamela's cards are to be worked with, like the stage sets she illustrated and created. The Tarot provides the scenery, the props and the cast. You can then add or take away from it. Direct it.

The other fascinating part of this card is the potential for paranoia. Perhaps there is nothing and nobody there to threaten this woman at all. She is imagining or projecting a problem which does not exist.

She will never know until she puts one sword down (leaves herself defenceless one side) and takes away what/who is blinding her to the truth of her situation.

This is a card of chopping and changing, so it suggests Saturn who castrated his father Uranus, or Uranus himself, who was chopped and changed. It is also a Libra card - Libra describes both sides of a situation.

It's evident that when she was creating this deck in 1909, Pamela Colman Smith was also peering into her own future. This is another glimpse of her cutting the Yeats family out of her life, for reasons we still do not understand. The ocean behind the woman (dark-haired like Pamela herself) is surely a glimpse of Bude.

The beautiful seaside village of Bude became Pamela's coastal home, but many, many years after she dreamed up this card.

## THE THREE OF SWORDS

This is one of those very basic illustrations which needs no book of interpretations. It's an archetypal situation, usually between husband, wife and mistress. I have also seen it with a bad marriage where the husband felt his wife and daughter were against him.

This card which is painful to even look at, is also a good example of the potential of the Tarot for healing, hope and help. If you can visualise and imagine a positive outcome here, you can create it.



A love triangle, usually, with two partners in a raw situation with a third person - is part of the story of The Lovers and The Devil too, in so many situations.

Perhaps an ex who will not go away, a mistress, or a romantic rival. The cure is in the extraction of all three swords, to promote heart healing. There will be scars. But what is the alternative?

This is the marriage of Diana, Princess of Wales and Prince Charles with various third parties. Closer in time to 1909 when Pamela illustrated this card, Alice Keppel was the most famous mistress of King Edward VII.

This card can also describe two parents and a child in a bad marriage, as I've mentioned. The trick is all three antagonists withdrawing their weapons at once. Time is of the essence here, so the card invokes Mars. Unless 'surgery' is performed this heart will fall or fail. The Seventh House is the house of marriage but also divorce and is suggested by the card.

The private (not so private) life of W.B. Yeats involved just this sort of love triangle. His tremendous passion for Maud Gonne is well-known. She married another man, who

was then shot for his role in the Irish uprising, when 'a terrible beauty' was born, according to the famous poem by Yeats.

## THE FOUR OF SWORDS – REINCARNATION

As we have seen throughout this deck, we see just as many images of stained-glass windows in churches and cathedrals, as we do of the Buddhist and Hindu ideas about reincarnation.

This is a person who has passed over, being called to the light. When he (or is it she?) enters that space, the promise of rebirth is held. That is a mother and child who may have known each other before, immortalised in Pamela's window.

Rest, repair, recovery, recuperation and resurrection. This card tallies with the Twelfth House in astrology, which is ruled by Neptune, discovered in the same year that anaesthetic was first used in public. This card can often be read as 'coming around' from an operation.

The Fifth House is also shown here, as the stained glass window reveals a mother and child. One of a handful of children in the deck. Each young face has a different message, in every card.

All the Mars (the swords of conflict or aggression) rests in the past. Now it is time for a rebirth. The stained glass window holds the potential for a rich and colourful adult-child relationship. Teacher and pupil. Mother and son. Godmother and goddaughter, and so on. Yet, nothing can be made real until the transition is complete.

This is the Buddhist idea of moving from one body to another, and one life to another. It is also the Christian promise of Heaven and it is made in church, surrounded by images of the Virgin and Child. I wonder how often Pamela wandered down to the beautiful little church at the end of the road, when she was creating this?

The Theosophical Society and its embrace of rebirth, was as much a part of experimental, adventurous, spiritual thought in Pamela's day, as The Golden Dawn itself.

## THE FIVE OF SWORDS AND THE GOLDEN DAWN

Mars is at work in this card. The god of battle and war. You can also see Neptune in the sea. There is a great need here to escape from the reality of recent conflict. Someone is hurt. In the foreground a fiery type (Aries, Leo or Sagittarius chart signatures, shown by the ginger hair, red shirt and trousers, and mustard boots) takes the swords away - smiling! This card is wide open to your interpretation as the action could go anywhere. How will this resolve?

This is another stage set waiting for a script, props, cast and director. All of that is in your hands as you are in charge of your own parallel universe, here.

In real life, this was surely the battle fought within The Golden Dawn by men whose duelling egos would not let them rest. The controversial and dramatic life and times of Alesteir Crowley within The Golden Dawn are well-known. You have to wonder who the smiling peacemaker is here, in Pamela's vision.

## THE SIX OF SWORDS – DEPARTURES

This card is another prophecy of the two wars which would follow the launch of the deck in 1909. Here we have the plight of the refugee. We've looked at the story of Einstein in Pamela's deck. This brings to mind the flight of Jews from Nazi Germany, even though it happened decades after Pamela created this card.

Emigration, travel or moving away - less dramatically. Again, we have to turn to Pamela's own life story, for her own visions of her own future, too. She fled one life for another. Fame for virtual invisibility. City for country.

Here we have a woman and child being helped across the water, hopefully to better times (they are downcast) by someone who has the strength. This may of course be the father, yet it may be an outsider. Note the Aquarius symbol to the right. The familiar wavy lines that show the Water Bearer - Pamela's sign.

A group, team, community or club is close by. The future (the destination) has no colour. It is for the woman and child to colour in. It is significant that after her flight from London life, the Yeats family and the literati, Pamela ended her days with a friend. In fact, she left her entire estate to her. Aquarius is also the symbol of friendship, as much as it is about the group.

## THE SEVEN OF SWORDS

The Golden Dawn members fought amongst themselves and plotted and planned. You can see such a plot, in the figures in silhouette, in the background of this card.

This is another good example of an illustration which was really about Pamela's own life, but also a clear vision of the century to come. Many American Tarot readers have evoked the story of the assassination of John F. Kennedy and the facts surrounding Lee Harvey Oswald. Who is plotting? Who is getting away with it?

As always with these cards, the means to changing the picture - using it as a tool for imagination, visualisation and inventive solutions - is the whole point.

Removing the means to future conflict can be a breeze, which is why the person in this card is grinning. How can there be a battle, feud or even a war if there is nothing to fight with? There is a definite risk here, however.

The eyes are closed and this person is going to tumble and perhaps suffer injury unless there is less joking around and smug satisfaction with oneself - and a bit more awareness. Time is of the essence. Five swords are too much to carry so the amused peacemaker will have to do this in two trips.

What is at stake? The tents suggest territory. A sinister group of people, as we've seen - disguised in silhouette - mutters in the far left corner. Black hearts under a grey cloud!

This is an uncannily prescient card, even before Kennedy came along - because Pamela's illustration foreshadowed the late 1930's and future British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain and the appeasement of Hitler and the Nazis. Anyone who beamed about 'Peace in our time' was not looking properly. There is fantastic potential here for smart strategy - if one is smart. If only Chamberlain had looked where he was going.

## THE EIGHT OF SWORDS – TAROT AS LIBERATOR

A blindfolded woman is surrounded by fallen swords, which create a jail for her. She is also tied up. A castle is in the background - not too far away. She could cry for help but that might take weeks. The damsel in distress is here but the answer is not always a

distress call. She would be much better off using her initiative and sensing when she is out of danger - then using the swords to cut the fabric that binds her arms and hands.

This is real Action Woman hero stuff. Once her hands are free she can take away her blindfold and see just how close the castle is - and other options, not seen in the landscape of the card. Use who or what hurt you to break free. That is the message of this card.

It is a symbol of Mars (action) but also Uranus (the process of liberation). It may be seen in the light of the Suffragette movement of 1909 which Pamela Colman Smith, was so involved with - or, as we've seen, Women's Liberation in the 1970s when her deck had its rebirth thanks to U.S. Games Systems.

We have to remember that although Arthur E. Waite gave Pamela her 'notes' and instructions, the evidence suggests she was very much left to her own devices when it came to the creation of the Minor Arcana cards in particular.

This is a profound statement about feminism for many generations of women. 'I am woman, hear me roar' (before I use the damage done to me, by patriarchy, to set myself free).

Those swords are phallic symbols. The liberation is psychological first. This woman must free herself, from what she imagines or fears (it is all in her head) could still hurt her. And, presumably, this is men, the swords being phallus-shaped.

You cannot move jobs or homes, travel the world or explore its abundant freedoms unless you can see clearly and free yourself from who or what you fear. For so many women who have sat there with these cards across two centuries, this image is a liberator. Pamela had historic images to work with, including Joan of Arc (who enjoyed a revival in popular culture when this deck was being created and sold).

One could see this as Joan surrounded by an aggressive male army. It is an archetype of female bondage and entrapment, and male aggression towards women. It is powerful stuff, but as we've seen throughout, Pamela's Tarot is not for the faint-hearted!



## THE NINE OF SWORDS

Insomnia or anxiety and depression are shown in this card. This scene literally shows a state of mind. If the person changes his/her mind, then the swords disappear. Bad memories or future anticipation of problems are all in one's head. There may be nothing there at all.

Remove the swords - the tortured memory or imagination - and we have a comfortable bed to rest in.

The bed reveals a lot. The eiderdown carries zodiac symbols. Astrology can be a comfort. The bed itself has a scene showing a relationship drama. One has made one's bed, in relationship, family or friendship terms - and now one must lie in it.

This is one of those classic Smith-Waite cards which can be worked with, using active imagination and focussed visualisation. Fix the problem. Remove the swords. Put the person into a calm sleeping pose. Use astrology as a comforter. Understand that 'you make your bed and you lie in it' does not have to be uncomfortable. The past is what it was. It still supports you now.

## THE SWORDS SUIT AND CREATIVE VISUALISATION

Again and again in this Tarot deck we see the swords of everyday life. Criticism and attacks. Real or imagined hostility. Aggression, conflict and duels. What is really interesting about the images is that they are open to not only personal interpretation (every time) but also to adjustment. If there is no fixed, objective, single 'reality' for you, then you are free to move around the image, to create it.

In at least two Swords cards we find the person with seemingly deadly injuries, insomnia or even illness is using the first position in Reiki or similar hand symbols. This Japanese healing discipline asks people to put their hands in one of a sequence of poses.

The swords cards are so often about memories or perhaps imagined attacks. There may be psychic attack. Nothing is real; it is all in the person's mind. We've seen blindfolded women, or women with their hands over their eyes - repeatedly - with this suit. Perhaps this was Pamela's message to herself, in her future old age in Bude. Stop living in fear. The past is the past. Whatever crisis made her turn away from her old life was just a memory.

In modern life, when faced with the Swords suit, we might say - the solution is Reiki, or meditation, or spiritual healing, or an appointment with the doctor, or a relaxation technique, or cognitive therapy. There are more.

If this really is a deck for all time, as perhaps Arthur E. Waite in particular wanted it to be, are we also seeing clues about the future of war? Are we seeing a new phase in human thought and behaviour in a future century when violence is no longer the way?



## THE TEN OF SWORDS – THE STORY CONTINUES

Just as we have seen the Sun in Aquarius imagery, regarding groups and communities, in so many positive ways - it is also true that a circle of people can be a dangerous, even deadly thing. You have to wonder if this is a picture of a Golden Dawn member 'stabbed in the back' or our artist, herself.

Again, this is an archetypal image. Julius Caesar. During the Second World War, there were so many cases of a 'night of the long knives.'

The betray of Jesus Christ is another archetype. Think of any recent political spill for leadership within a party, and you also have a modern reflection of this illustration, in the real world.

One of Pamela's bleakest images! And yet, there is always hope, and potential for recreation, positive visualisation, stage direction and quantum reality delivery.

Look at the new day dawning in the background. This person is not finished yet. The hands show crossed fingers (perhaps luck is with them) or the Buddhist Vitarka Mudra symbol, which means debate, or discussion. Will this person rise again and walk away? It's up for debate.

Crucially you need to look at the group of aggressors who stabbed, not from the front, but the back. Look to the Eleventh House and Aquarius in the horoscope here. It all rules the collective. The Tragedy of Julius Caesar by Shakespeare may be referenced here. All the world's a stage. Who or what would help this person get up and go on? As with so many Minor Arcana cards, it has major importance and meaning. It also turns up very rarely in readings, in my experience.

Pamela peered decades into the future when she created a deck for the ages. This is quite an astonishing vision of the Pluto in Aquarius transit to come, which begins in the year 2023. It will dominate the Twenties, and also the Thirties of the 21st century.

Pluto is a symbol of power and control, endings and beginnings. In Aquarius, the sign of the group, we have to wonder how that is going to play out in umbrella communities like the United Nations. What was Pamela seeing? And how can we create peace?

## **THE PAGE OF SWORDS – ACTION NOT THEORY**

Just as this deck gives us food for thought, and reasons for contemplation - and meditation - so does it urge practical action. We see this in The Hanged Man too. It is not enough to try and make your difficult life choices with the cards. You have to take a deep breath at some point, haul yourself into action and actually use what you have seen, to help you physically act.

Pages were young male servants in the theatre of Pamela's day. This is a younger male, with the red boots of Aries (its colour is red) and the sword of Mars, the ruler of Aries. The family tree to the left, ruled by Cancer and the Moon, is blown sideways. The group of birds, symbolising the Eleventh House, is scattering.

Note that yellow, the colour of fear, is here too. Saturn is a pale yellow colour and symbolises delays. This page is hesitating. Stay or go? Thrust and parry or head back? The winds of change are urging the page East but one foot is still turning West.

If we read this card in the context of the whole deck, it is about that moment when the time for shuffling cards is over. The time for filling in journal entries has gone. One has to have the faith of one's convictions and make a bold move.

This is the game we play with the Tarot - and it is never really a game. If we believe, it works. And if we believe, then we have to act upon the advice of the cards. If we don't believe, it will never work. Do we want to keep on worrying and wondering, or act with the courage of our beliefs?

I have been reading the Tarot since I was 23 years old, and one thing I have noticed over the years is the strange refusal to act on Tarot advice. One can give a very detailed, complex and informative consultation, but then find the recipient does nothing.

Thus, this energetic, fearless figure in Pamela's deck is a reminder that there is really no point in asking, otherwise. These are tools to be used to build or rebuild your life, just as you use tools to renovate or begin any sort of structure. Those swords are useful.

## THE KNIGHT OF SWORDS

This is a symbol of Mars and Aries in astrology. An energetic, fierce, fast and furious man wearing red (the Aries/Mars colour) hurtling at breakneck speed towards some kind of attack, or defence. The trees on the left-hand side of the card are being bent backwards. This may be a comment on a family in the picture (family tree).

The horse cannot see; flying blind, all it can do is try to keep up. The rider is also rather blind. Are there other ways to fight the good fight or seize the day than this? And what is the motivation here? What on earth is at stake? You can see the Aries glyph on the reins. The family tree is ruled by Cancer and the Moon.

We often see this in the Swords suit. The conflict between Cancer and Aries. Oneself and one's own self-interest, and the family. In astrology the two signs clash and are always in square aspect, or 90 degrees apart. It's not clear how much astrology Pamela knew, but she certainly picks up on this horoscope conflict in powerful visual ways. Me or the old family tree?

She had two adopted families in her time. The Yeats clan accepted her into their lives and the theatrical dynasty of Ellen Terry also welcomed Pamela in. We don't see any evidence that this was still a part of her world when she passed away. Perhaps, in order to become her own woman, Pamela had to cut them out.

## THE QUEEN OF SWORDS

Pamela Colman Smith had no idea that Queen Elizabeth II would even be born in 1909, let alone become such a long-lived 20th and 21st century monarch. Here we see Elizabeth R in her most commanding phase. She was, even as a teenage girl, a powerful opponent of the Nazi regime. Strength gained then, continues.

Let's look at the astrology in this card, which is rich.

The butterflies of Psyche are hidden on the Queen's throne and in her crown. This asteroid is a symbol of what or who lasts forever, despite tests and trials.

The baby's face hidden in the stonework reminds us of Leo (the Queen to a younger court) and the Fifth House of pregnancy, babies and childhood. I have mentioned the 'lost children' belonging to these queens and empresses in the Tarot before, and we have to accept that the reality of modern life is also the reality of miscarriage and abortion.

Perhaps, too, the ghost of babies past - the children may have become adults, and their infant days are memories, here to haunt a mature woman who is moving through menopause and beyond.

The sword is pure Mars. This is a posture of defence. You can approach Her Majesty but only so far. She will smite you if she wants to. On the left, the family tree is blowing sideways - the winds of change.

She wears a red string bracelet, a sacred Hindu piece of jewellery which wards off evil. Pamela's quantum clouds are on her robes and in the sky and a single bird flies over her head. The clouds may also be smoke, a symbol for the planet Neptune.

As always, we have imagery borrowed from modern astrology (or seen, far into the future) alongside Oriental and Asian spirituality. The butterfly of Psyche is striking, here, and in fact paintings of Psyche may have been hanging in galleries familiar to Pamela.

As usual she was seeing across time! Psyche is not only an asteroid in any modern horoscope (being the daughter-in-law of Venus) but also a psychological concept.

The work of Carl Jung and Sigmund Freud made so many new and unfamiliar ideas part of 20th century life. The unconscious. The Oedipus Complex. It was Jung who gave us the idea of the 'psyche' and here we see the old Roman butterfly symbol for it.

If you are open to symbolism and prepared to do all the seeking and exploring that Pamela suggests with her Chariot card and High Priestess - any card like this will reveal so much more than you might have expected. This is not just a card, it's a doorway to the work of Carl Jung.

## THE KING OF SWORDS AND PATRIARCHY

This man can axe people (sack them) or make budget cuts. That is what his sword is for. He is powerful, intimidating and confronting. The butterflies on his throne suggest Psyche, a horoscope symbol of what lasts forever. This is yet again the appearance of Carl Jung in proceedings - the 20th century psychologist. His theories about the psyche (symbolised by butterflies in mythology) have a lot to say about patriarchy.

The story of Cupid and Psyche is being told on his throne and perhaps the asteroid Cupido is also part of this man's past.

Again, we are drawn into discussions about gender, which Pamela was also so fascinated by. Remember, the patriarchy was so all-consuming when she was young, that she was never even given credit for her own Tarot deck.

You can see a couple (a pair of love birds) to the right of the King. It's interesting that someone so tough should be surrounded by so many symbols of past or potential future romance.

The family trees of both his mother and father are shown to his left and right. Note the clenched fist and furious, yet restrained, expression. A good man to have on your side when things are difficult and you need a champion or hero. A terrifying man to have against you unless you can persuade him to negotiate peacefully. This is 'The Boss' who can axe and sack.

This is the creature who stalked two world wars and it is (still) the creature of modern patriarchy and the war machine of the 21st century. Here we also see bloodless conflict; the type conducted in politics and big business.

Dominated by men in suits and ties, rather than crowns and robes, it is still an expression of the Man's World that Pamela struggled with.

This was actually her life path! She wrote in a letter, to a friend, that she had finished the Tarot card assignment, commissioned by Arthur E. Waite and Rider, for very little money.

Long after she had passed, it was another man/male-dominated organisation which paid for the rights. The successful investment of U.S. Games Systems and Stuart R. Kaplan, Pamela's champion, resulted in millions of sales, and we would assume - millions of dollars.

Yet, the truth about Pamela is that when she passed to spirit, by the time her debts had been paid, there was no money left. She was buried in a pauper's grave, as they were known at the time - unmarked, in a grave site already dug, containing another body.

She was a professional female artist and illustrator, working at a time when women did not even have the vote. Today she would have a literary agent, copyright and fame. The great truths of her career are hidden in the cards. This is the boss, and all bosses, which women (still) living in a man's world of power must fight.



## THE ACE OF COINS – MONEY AND VALUES

A huge amount of money is on offer if you bring it down to earth and make it real. This is money saved or money made. This card is usually about a bonus, tax refund, legacy, pay rise or profit. It can be used to improve the garden, perhaps build a shed or conservatory, or fund a trip away to the mountains.

These cards, called Pentacles, Discs or Coins, are symbols of everything from digital currency to previous valuables.

Maybe you just want to move. It all takes money but this is a large lump sum. The trick is believing in it, knowing you deserve it, and doing the work to make it happen. Until then it remains a tantalising unpoped quantum possibility.

I am sure you can see how this is the lump sum any artist can expect to receive on book or card royalties, every year. It is also an advance, paid on a deal. This takes us back to the King of Swords and also The Emperor. Women, in many cases, still don't receive equal pay for equal work.

In the case of Pamela, whose own destiny became completely fused with her own deck, the true is - she was potentially a millionaire, or even a multi-millionaire, in terms of the eventual number of Tarot decks sold, using her images.

The fact that she owed so much money on her death and had so little of it, is in part reflected by the Ace of Coins.

This is potential earnings, but you have to believe you deserve it. You have to make it yours. You have to know it is your right to have it. You have to reach for it, welcome it and so on.

We do sometimes see images of poverty as well as great wealth in this deck. Think about the importance of poor monks and rich monasteries in the cards - and consider the complicated relationship between money and religion. This was also part of Pamela and Arthur's story and like everything else in this deck, it has many layers.



## THE TWO OF COINS – JUGGLING MONEY

This card is the most striking example of Pamela Colman Smith's ability to see into her own future. She passed to spirit in the seaside village of Bude, with no money to settle her debts. She was 'all at sea' even after she had passed away, unable to balance the cost of burial with other expenses in her name.

What is really astonishing about this card is that Bude is a shipwreck town. In fact, the pub (then an inn with rooms) where Pamela lived and died, has a mural of a shipwreck on its main dining room wall.

This is Scorpio and/or Taurus in astrology and the Eighth House of other people's money, but also the Second House of personal budgets. This man needs to focus, centre and ground himself. The money going out and coming in keeps him off-balance.

The ships in the background show you Neptune. The economy is all at sea, tossing and turning, in his city, country or perhaps between nations.

In modern life this is currency exchange rates - perhaps cryptocurrency and Bitcoin - and the waves resemble the up-and-down graphs of zig-zag trading.

As with all the cards, particularly the 'money' cards of the Coins/Pentacles/Discs - these images are to be worked with. More than any other card in the entire deck, this image of someone frantically juggling income and expenditure tells us about our artist, but it did not have to be that way for her.

This brings us to the rather loaded question of self-fulfilling prophecy which is a common criticism of Tarot. What the quantum world tells us is - this card is here to be stage-managed just as they all are. Creative visualisation is a powerful tool in a world where nothing is nailed down until you make it so!

## THE THREE OF COINS

Missing money, assets or wealth, in the form of cash, property or precious objects. Where is it? Perhaps it's not even there. This is a treasure map, but what a map - it looks more like a cartoon.

This is what happened at the end of Pamela's life. She left everything to her companion, Nora Lake, who must have gone looking for assets that were never there.

Long after Pamela had gone, serious collectors, mindful of the incredible value of her legacy, have gone looking for the original illustrations of the 78 Tarot cards. They would likely be priceless. They have never been found.

The man holding one corner is a jester. A joker. The other person is a monk. For some readers this card has suggested the Jimi Hendrix song All Along the Watchtower.

The joker and the thief looking for a way out. There may be theft here, or perhaps the 'soft' theft of an organisation or department not giving a refund when it should.

The monk has surely taken vows of poverty, but the Catholic church in Pamela Colman Smith's day was hugely wealthy. The role of a comedian in looking for missing money is questionable.

The third person has the torch and is a hard-working member of the middle or working class (the apron) but is rather short. Perhaps this person falls short for the task at hand.

The Second and Eighth House of finance, business and property, or Taurus and Scorpio are suggested here. There is a tremendous need for the right people and the right strategy. Not the wrong plan, the flawed mission and entirely unsuitable people in charge of the search.

Another card in the Coins/Pentacles/Discs family which either became a self-fulfilling prophecy for Pamela, or was a faithful vision of her old age and future, beyond death. Literally her legacy, of which 78 priceless illustrations are still missing!

It has been suggested that the sketch held on the right-hand side of the card is neither a treasure map, nor a cartoon, nor even an architectural plan - but one of Pamela's early drawings.

How remarkable would it be, if this is a hint of an early draft of the Three of Coins card itself. Did she know?

## THE FOUR OF COINS – PROPERTY AND MONEY

Sitting pretty or looking greedy? It really depends on your point of view. The Cancer symbol is hidden in this man's encircled arms. This is also a pointer to the Fourth House of property, ruled by Cancer. This sign turns up repeatedly in the deck.

This favoured man (or is it a woman?) is hugging the money, standing on the money and it even adorns the golden crown. Behind this person is property. Spreadsheets in the sky, as they call ugly high-rise apartments in Melbourne.

The fact is, if you don't let go, release and invest (or spend) you can find that the cash value of what you have and hold is irrelevant, compared to the rising value of houses or apartments - or business towers. This person is also not grounded - he is floating in the air. It is remarkable how often Pamela's people do this! They are so often levitating in some way. It all adds to the rather peculiar 'quantum' feel of her deck. As we know in the world of quantum, all kinds of peculiar things can happen.

This is a card to work with, using your imagination. It is a means to a solution, because despite the obvious benefits of the money in hand, or the property which might be rented out, bought or sold, it is clear that an iron, possessive grip is not exactly the mark of a happy and relaxed human being.

One of the larger themes in Pamela's deck is money and happiness. Rich and poor. Joyful and miserable. As a freelance artist, struggling to be a woman in a man's world, she must have known all aspects of this. Her letters and bills do suggest it.



# THE FIVE OF COINS – HOW TO CHANGE REALITY

Pamela lived at a time when the National Health Service, Britain's N.H.S., was not remotely close. If you were poor and ill, you really were poor and ill. This card in modern life, in the 21st century, is a reminder (particularly in countries like the United States) that you have to change your reality in order to take care of mind, body, spirit and budget.

Two people in a very bad way are in the freezing cold, one on crutches with a head wound and the other depressed. Both are desperately poor, yet there are five glowing, brilliant gold coins in the stained glass window of the church they cannot see.

This is about a blind spot so an eclipse may be involved if you are looking at the astrology. Neptune also distorts vision. Money is Taurus and/or Scorpio and the Second House and Eighth House of the chart. The solution is for these two poor souls to step inside the church and ask for charity, which it is there to provide. To get there, they will have to come up with a different strategy. The depressed person is the prime mover here.

You have to wonder if this is not the ailing Pamela at the end of her life with her companion Nora beside her - the sole beneficiary of her will. Yet, in a more general sense, we are also seeing a soldier from the First World War returning home, to the working-class heartlands of Britain. Wounded and without work, actually unable to work.

This may be an Australian soldier back from Vietnam. A Vietnam veteran who finds himself financially stranded.

As a Sun Aquarius person, Pamela was ruled by the astrological symbol for humanitarianism, charity, equality and community. It digs very deeply into questions of social justice. The benefits system and good causes. The wealth of the church and the plight of the poor, in certain countries.

As we've seen throughout, these cards take no prisoners. Designed to last, they had to be built for a very tough century, and yet in modern life, we still have questions to ask about health care, mental health and finances.

Remembering the Tarot is a tool to be used, to transform situations and seek solutions, is a powerful way through the card.

## THE SIX OF COINS

This card is a natural fit for so many others in the Coins/Pentacles/Disks suit. In later life, long after she had fled fashionable London and New York's art scene, Pamela ran a holiday home for priests looking for sea and sunshine on the coast of England. This brings us back to her familiar Roman Catholic themes (and Arthur's) about charity, generosity, the poor box, the collection plate and the rest. You can see how complex the question of money and religion was for both of them.

There is no apparent Christian symbol in this card, but we may be looking at the local multi-millionaire who 'walks the talk' of Christian charity without actually going to Sunday sermons.

This is a symbol of Taurus and the Second House and/or Scorpio and the Eighth House. It is also very much a symbol of Libra (the scales in the rich man's hand).

When you give money away you create a power based relationship. When you beg for money you also create chemistry based on powerful feelings. There is a principle at stake with this card. Justice or fairness (the scales) and perhaps a legal ruling. The gap between rich and poor here is extreme. What will the beggars do when they have their cash? Is begging a lifelong pattern? Would the rich man let go of his wealth if it meant the extreme gap between rich/poor was less so?

Again, we are back to Pamela's own attitudes and beliefs. Was part of the explanation for her penniless end, a deeper conflict she had about money, so often described as 'the root of all evil' in her time?

## THE SEVEN OF COINS – WAITING FOR MONEY

This is a Taurus and Second House card, because of the waiting game. Taurus the bull moves slowly - his field is in the background. This is about money growing on trees - if you do the work. There is Neptune in this card too, as Neptune rules blindness. Eclipses also rule blind spots. We see this so often in the deck that it's almost a given. Time and again people don't see!

The person here cannot see the money at his feet. He is too busy daydreaming about what might grow for him. Far better to put some work in here, reap the rewards and reinvest. It is harvest time, not time to fantasise.

Waiting for money was part of Pamela's existence. It was also the story of W.B. Yeats' life - and familiar even now to anyone who is freelance or in business for herself/himself.

This is Pamela having delivered 78 Tarot illustrations and waiting to be paid. Waiting to see the fruits of her labours. The figure here may be male, but as with so many of her figures, this could be either. Life is a theatre and in Shakespeare, male and female casting was interchangeable.

Again, she has predicted her own future. She has finished the job for Waite and Rider, and is wondering when the cheque will be in the post. What she is not seeing is the real message - that if she ever wants to be rich in her old age, she will set about properly owning the copyright to her work in 1909 - or at least exploit the interest in Tarot to create her own business enterprise. She didn't.

## THE EIGHT OF COINS

Here we have the freelance artist and illustrator, working all the hours that God gave him/her, in order to fulfil a contract. Over the years I have read for so many people who are self-employed who can relate to this card without me saying a word. Musicians relate to it. Those discs on the tree are singles, compact discs, gold hits.

As I am sure you can see, it is another aspect of Pamela's own career, and particularly the job she was employed to do, to dream up the cards you use today - all 78 of them.

This is a symbol of Virgo (hard work) but also Taurus (s/he works hard for the money). The saying 'Money does not grow on trees' comes to mind here. It has to be earned by churning out products, goods, services or projects.

They are all the same, but there is pride in good craftsmanship here. The property in the background may be a fine hotel or a desirable home but it is within reach - it can be purchased or leased - if the money is there.

Virgo and the Sixth House are associated with the body. Poor posture, which this figure has, leads to back problems. The tights are passionate red, the colour of the sacral or sexual chakra. There is a question here about the body and its needs, as opposed to 'human as machine.'

I mentioned Pamela's gift for seeing decades into the future. Here she was 'seeing' the 1960's when Uranus and Pluto were both in Virgo, the sign which rules work. This was when working-class people became empowered, and working-class women in particular (given The Pill) became powerhouses.

This in turn raised issues about health, mental health, man-as-machines and so on. Today we might be talking about the new so-called robot replacement of the 21st century. Pamela saw it all.

## THE NINE OF COINS – THE REWARD

This woman is abundant, with a rich vineyard, coins at her fingertips and a lush property in the background. Who or what is the falcon on her hand?

Look at the slow-moving snail Pamela has popped into the foreground as well. Everything in this woman's garden is lovely, but until she stops her reverie and comes back down to earth, nothing will grow. This is a symbol of the urgent need for investment, re-investment and thoughtful growth. Without it, grapes are going to wither on the vine.

This is the reward of the Coins/Discs/Pentacles suit. With active imagination, planning, conscious direction of the scenery, props, script and actors - this can become the happy ending of, say, the Ace of Coins, or the Two of Coins. Even the grimmer Coins cards.

The 20th century was full of massive highs and lows on the sharemarket. Pamela saw gains made as well as plunges. She also saw the future - female wealth, of the spectacular kind. After her lifetime, women would achieve the miracle of financial empowerment. There is no man in this card. This is wealth without patriarchy. This surely must be a vision of anyone from Oprah to J.K. Rowling - or Anita Roddick. The dream can be real.



## THE TEN OF COINS

This is the Eighth House, Scorpio and/or Fourth House, Cancer card to watch. It shows family money. There is a legacy here. Property and money to be shared between three generations (and two dogs). This is symbolically 'the clan' and the inheritance too.

The dogs may be a symbol of Diana, the asteroid goddess who raises issues about marriage and children - and the rejection of the same in favour of freedom. Is that a sales graph or a yacht repeated twice on the left-hand column? The family members in this card are oblivious to the money but it is abundant - £10,000, £100,000 or more, in Pamela's day, when she created this card.

Like all the archetypal situations painted in the deck, it is richly symbolic and the actual wealth or assets could be given any price tag at all. This is an illustration for the ages, as legacies and inheritance will always be with us.

I have seen this card turn up before someone passes quite suddenly and unexpectedly, without leaving a will. It is no more a symbol of actual death, than the Death card itself.



Everything in these illustrations is a symbol waiting to be interpreted, and that interpretation is highly personal and differs from person to person. Situation to situation!

The key concepts are correct though. Property and wealth to be shared between three generations, and perhaps animals as well as humans. It is interesting to note how many older people bypass the family, the godchildren and so on - and leave it all to a homeless dogs' charity.

You sense the need for a long and honest conversation between the cast of characters in this card, and perhaps one that involves a spokesperson for the child (and the dogs, or pets). This is a classic 'stage-direction' card in that it is not giving you some concrete future, signed, sealed and delivered - it is encouraging you to do the obvious thing here, which is open up discussion.

## THE PAGE OF COINS

There is great reverence for money here, as if it held religious or spiritual meaning for the young man in the frame. The question is, what is to be done with the cash? It could be used to tend to the field in front, which surely holds good crops and possible future harvests. As always with Pamela's cards, stage direction is needed.

This field is a symbol of career or business building, or literally gardening. The family trees on the left are healthy and look quite inviting. Perhaps a relative can help. The mountain, a symbol for Capricorn the ambitious mountain goat, is also in the picture. This is not the first time Capricorn and the Tenth House turns up in this deck.

Money can help the greatest journey to the top begin with a single step. Decisions, decisions! The foot turned left suggests an unconscious or unexpressed leaning towards the relatives, or ones roots - the origins of the family tree on one or both sides. This suggest the Fourth House and Cancer just as the mountain suggests Capricorn. The actual coin is of course Taurus or Scorpio - Second House or Eighth House.

We are again witnessing Pamela reaching far, far into the distant future as she creates her imagery. She may, or may not, have known about the future generations to be born with slow-moving outer planets in Scorpio.

The fact is, billions to come would land on the planet with Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune or Pluto in the sign of the scorpion, long associated with finance, the economy, the sharemarket, banks, cryptocurrency, credit cards, mortgages, and the rest. Time and again this card will turn up when one of those Scorpio generations is having a transit to Scorpio factors in his/her chart.

## **THE KNIGHT OF COINS – MONEY MADE OR PAID?**

This man is on a mission to pay, or do a deal. You will have to negotiate. He is guarded, defended and hidden. He is probably not up to the task (he is too short for his horse). In the 21st century you would be looking at his car, which may be too big or powerful for him.

He's all about his exterior which conceals his interior. He may be young or inexperienced. Yet, you have to strike a bargain. Look at the fields which need maintenance. That costs money. What needs to be nurtured with cash?

As you might expect, we are talking about Scorpio and the Eighth house, Taurus and the Second House - yet again. Pamela was taught astrology as part of her Golden Dawn education and may have been aware that in the 20th century, we would see vast numbers of babies born with Neptune in Scorpio (in the Sixties, for example, some years after she had passed away).

Neptune rules illusion and escape from the real world. In Scorpio it is a symbol of borrowed money. The credit card, loan or mortgage provided at low interest rates, by the banks. Generation Scorpio, born 1960-1969, have Neptune in the sign of finance and property. Yet, at a certain point, one has to repay, or the bank, debt-collector or bailiff comes to call.

This card is really a picture of that generation and the money-go-round it has come to symbolise, as early 21st century executives, bankers and business leaders are so often General Scorpio.

## **THE KING OF COINS, CAPITALISM AND COMMUNISM**

This is an established Taurus type and the card is a symbol for this sign of the zodiac (you can see the bulls hidden on the throne). This is the bullion and bull market card. In the 20th century, Pamela would see both the crashing reality of Capitalism (the

Wall Street Crash of the Twenties) but also the rise of Communism. She saw it with this card. This might be Chairman Mao, as much as it is President Donald Trump.

Taurus is a fixed, earthy, stubborn sign which finds it hard to budge. This man (older than you, or your age, if you are older!) is stuck. The grape vines are keeping him trapped and although Bacchus the asteroid is suggested here (he rules grapes) and there is pleasure on his face, at all that he possesses, he is trapped by his wealth to the point where problems may begin.

There is a fine property in the background but he cannot see it. He holds a gold spoon, magnifying glass or mirror (depending on your point of view). His garden needs weeding and he needs to start moving. That is one interpretation of this card.

I am sure you can see the other, right away. With all her usual gift for seeing far into the future, Pamela has seen the great burden of the 21st century - Climate Emergency. Capitalist or Communist, this man who is so obsessed with the economy needs to look all around him and see that nature is both the problem and answer.



# THE QUEEN OF COINS AND BEATRIX POTTER

Note the rabbit in the corner. Beatrix Potter was 43 when Pamela created her famous cards. The Tale of Peter Rabbit had come out in 1902, four years previously and even today, thanks to the film, it makes money! Somewhere at the back of her mind, you'd have to think Pamela Colman Smith either saw Beatrix Potter, or predicted her tremendous success.

They were both 20th century British artists. Potter went on to amass a fortune and leave a legacy. Pamela was less fortunate. There is a huge tale to be told about women, wealth and business with this card - and it's not The Tale of Benjamin Bunny, either.

The rabbit - be he Peter or Benjamin - is also a reminder that you can have money, but perhaps you also need sex. (Rabbits can produce a litter a month, though, be careful). Potter married late in life, and never had children, but was happy.

This is a contented woman gazing at her wealth. This is a Taurus, Second House, Scorpio and/or Eighth House card. Capricorn the goat is hidden on her throne. A baby's face peers out from the stone. Babies she never had? Her husband's younger relatives, in their infancy?

The parallels with Beatrix Potter and Pamela Colman Smith are pretty remarkable. Perhaps this was Pamela's parallel life. It was Beatrix, whose career she must have seen from afar.

Romantic roses surround this queen - and she has, unusually, a bright green cloak. The colour of conservation and the environment. What is this woman going to do with her money, why and when? You will find more tiny details and clues, personal to you, hidden in the crown and throne - and the bunny is very meaningful.

This is the second card which suggests Pamela was also seeing the future of Climate Emergency in the 21st century. It is typical of her brilliance that she chose to weave nature into a money card.

## THE ACE OF WANDS

A big, bold, brilliant idea. Perhaps is it this Very British Tarot deck itself. Unless this massive concept is brought down to earth and made real it will remain forever a dream or fantasy.

Call them Staves, Wands or Rods but they are always about ideas.

Time is of the essence here, because leaves are already falling from the branch. This thing has to be planted at the right time in the right place - and soon. It is also part of a typical quantum cloud, seen often in Pamela's deck. Everything is in the uncertainty field of reality until you make a choice and make it real.

You'd have to guess that the building in the background is the right place to park this. What is the building and who inside can help here? This is one of the clearest examples of quantum science in the deck. There are two parallel universes here. One, where the idea is always just potential. Another, where the idea has been planted in the right place, at the right time - and become real.

Again, this card is very dear to the hearts of the self-employed, makers, creators and freelance working professionals. As Pamela knew very well, and Arthur too (who had so many books to his credit) a bright idea is just that until you apply perspiration and inspiration to make it grow.

## THE TWO OF WANDS

Here we have Mercury the messenger without a leg to stand on. This is a clear symbol of Mercury Retrograde, perhaps, or Retrosadow. Maybe it is just Mercury blocked by other planets.

The time has come to take a big idea or qualification across the world. What is remarkable is the total lack of awareness of the second option, which is ignored. This is a big leap forward.

The roses on the left suggest the four compass points, and East and West are red, North and South are white. The 1-2 concepts could be planted much closer to home. Just look at the lush pasture in the foreground! Does this really have to travel all the way across the planet? It's time to think. But not too long. Things wither and die unless they are planted on fertile ground, nurtured and nourished.

I am sure that neither Pamela nor Arthur had any idea at all about the future of communication. Yet, this is the internet. I am sure in the 22nd century it will be something else. These cards were built to last and as much as the Wands/Staves/Rods are symbols of tree branches, to be pulped for paper, and turned into manuscripts (in Pamela's day) - you could fancy that these are also the slender profiles of MacBook Air laptop computers or modern iPhones.

Had Arthur and Pamela been dreaming up their deck today it would no doubt be an app that travels the world. This card is a hint of that parallel universe.

## THE THREE OF WANDS

There is a strange mixture of haste and paralysis here, as the person with the three ideas, plans, projects or qualifications (suggested by Three Wands) is stuck fast on the cliff, looking out to sea, but has racing car checks on his/her cloak.

Perhaps it is through lack of experience - the shawl is green. This card is about mixed feelings regarding the export of ideas, and the distant shores of the worldwide web. Nothing can grow in the current location. There may be much better odds somewhere else.

There may even be a race on, or some kind of 'Gold Rush' as the three ships in the foreground are racing for a distant location. If the person in question does not make up his/her mind, things may never grow.

There is a need here to remember the one or two projects or qualifications not 'held.' The short trip is Gemini, the longer journey is Sagittarius. The Third House is the hop across to another city or region; The Ninth House is the foreign exploration.

This is a portrait of Pamela and/or Arthur whose lives were devoted to publishing and who, after their passing, have become internationally known names in any bookshop.



## THE FOUR OF WANDS

This card is about the Fourth House (family and share households) and the Fourth House also rules housewarmings, homecomings and house parties. It belongs to the zodiac sign Cancer, as we've seen.

This is about two sides of the same family, or two branches of the same social circle, coming together. This is likely a party, wedding or other celebration. Abundance is here and there is lots to share and enjoy. If you were a soulless creature you would say this was a good opportunity for 'networking' but far more likely is the kind of occasion across one day, or maybe an entire week or two (if it's a holiday) when people who are coming from the same or similar positions - shared ideas, thoughts, plans, projects - help each other out.

The dance in the background could be the Hokey Cokey or Nutbush City Limits but the welcome mat is out. You occasionally see this card for party political conferences or corporate bonding weekends if the question is very light-hearted and casual.

More seriously this is about the bond between Pamela and Arthur - the professional partnership in publishing her deck and his booklet - which developed against the background of The Golden Dawn. That must surely be Yeats and friends, drinking behind...

## THE FIVE OF WANDS AND COMMUNITY

This is the band about to split because of musical differences. It reminds of every fractured rock band in history, from The Beatles to The Rolling Stones. It is any group, actually, because all groups have to deal with the central problem of who is the leader/the star (look at the shouty person on the left) and who is so wildly different to everybody else, that he/she is on the outer (the person in the blue patterned tunic).

Aquarian Pamela could never leave her concern with groups far behind, and in every other card she picked up to illustrate, she was clearly either concerned with life in The Golden Dawn, or possibly predicting it.

We also have someone rather angry or overheated in red, in the centre, of this complex 'group' card in the Aquarian strand that runs through the deck.

The ideas, theories, concepts or plans are all similar. Nothing can be built until people set their differences aside, along with their narcissism or anger, and co-operate. Together these people will raise a barn or make a great album.

Like this, they are a shambles and those ideas are not going to last long. They need to be planted. The potential is vast here but the problems are real. One way around the problems is for people to pair off, then the pairs to meet.

I mentioned that Pamela donated her work to the Suffragette cause, as women sought the vote. Here, she is also surely gazing into the future of the feminist movement, so often divided.

## THE SIX OF WANDS – SUCCESS AT LAST

Victory, success and a big win on the board. This card delivers exactly what it shows. The Romans used to weave wreaths for triumphant leaders. Here we have a winning idea - actually, a winning project, plan or argument which is composed of many similar ideas. Many voices on the same hymn sheet.



You can see two people in the army or team on the left. The leader, hero or heroine is front-and-centre. The horse looks rather smug and coy. Jupiter is in this picture because he rules oak leaves and oaks. This is an opportunity waiting to happen, which Jupiter is also associated with. This is the procession. Now what?

All those ideas, projects, concepts, plans and voices can now be put to good use. Don't rest on your laurels is the message here. The acorn shapes on the horse's bridle also suggest 'From little acorns come mighty oaks.'

Here we see the reward of all that rethinking, restructuring and positive thinking with the other 'group' cards showing these Aquarian themes about solidarity and unity.

As much as we have a clear winner here - Prime Minister Boris Johnson in December 2019, thronged by ecstatic Conservatives - the truth is, it's all about the party. No supporters, no leader.

This is really the timeless opposition between Leo (leader) and Aquarius (group) in the zodiac. It may be an issue with this reading and perhaps it was at the back of Pamela's mind.

Glory be to victory and all that, but as Shakespeare knew (and Pamela's theatrical circle were very influenced by him) a tremendous victory is as much about the commoners as it is about the King or Queen. Success means you have all been in it, united.

## THE SEVEN OF WANDS AND THE GROUP

This is what happens when someone is living in their head (Air signs Gemini, Libra and Aquarius live in a world of theories and ideas). This person is not grounded and practically being pulled apart, with one foot East and one foot West.

Without a centre to work from, how can any opinion, plan or concept ever hope to get off the ground, still less hold its own against the ideas of the wider group?

The irony is that the words or ideas are all pretty much the same. The Golden Dawn was similarly split down the middle. You can see the remedy here. The person doing battle with others' points of view needs to come back down to earth.

This is the kind of conflict that can occur between people in any sort of circle, group, club, team or community. Perhaps a Twitter network. There is a sense here of 'one against the many' even though the similarity between the Wands suggests everyone is actually expressing opinions or views that are alike.

With creative visualisation, planning and strategy, research and thought - this card can be turned around. The person defending or attacking against the crowd may very well be right, but this is no way to go about it. There are many choices here and as with all of Pamela's cards, the correct choice can lead you towards a new universe (one of the many) where you end up in a more helpful group situation. Another card may thus be waiting.

## THE EIGHT OF WANDS AND UNITY

This is another Eleventh House or Aquarius card as it shows a group of ideas, a community of plans, a collection of concepts. Will everything fall in a heap or are we looking at this card the wrong way? Perhaps they are falling upwards and will be caught by their creators, to be built into something practical.

Here we see the importance of democracy in Pamela's lifetime. We know she was concerned with women achieving the vote. In the 20th and 21st centuries we have seen massive growth in political parties and women's involvement in them. In Britain alone there have been two women Prime Ministers.

Peering long into the future, she saw the realities of the 20th and 21st century, when so much depended on democratic unity to achieve social change and progress. The latest of these must surely be the Climate Strike movement involving Greta Thunberg and Jane Fonda. Yet, Pamela's visions warned of risks as well as reward.

Ideas, theories and thoughts are 'of the air' and 'in the air' until they are brought down to earth. There is a lot of space between the wands, here. They are not particularly close or intimate. This card suggests the element of Air in astrology and so Aquarius, Libra and Gemini. Unless something is done to plant and nurture the branches, nothing can grow or be progressed. At some point everything must be brought together in a united way. Otherwise the whole thing falls in a heap. Divide and conquer is a tactic and here Pamela was pointing to that, perhaps, as a warning.



## THE NINE OF WANDS

A wounded, suspicious and annoyed (perhaps angry) man holds his wand (a symbol of communication) tightly to himself. He has been hurt. His head hurts - and the head is where the ideas begin and opinions are formed. Ironically the others in the group, or community, have remarkably similar thoughts to him!

Those wands are rather similar. Wands, staves or rods (they are known by different names) are tree branches, symbols of paper mills, as we've seen, which in Pamela Colman Smith's day, produced newspapers. Everything depends on this person putting strong emotions and wounds to one side and focussing on the ideas. Collectively those ideas could unite everybody and together, these people could build something good.

This was a direct vision of Sir Winston Churchill in his Wilderness Years, rejected and rejecting - before he returned to power within the Conservatives and led his country to victory. One of the powerful things about Pamela's Tarot is that it suggests the sorts of answers to problems like this one - disenfranchisement - which can ultimately change the world or save a nation.

The leader who saves your country and rescues democracy may well be the leader, who must suffer a split within the ranks first. Pamela must have seen so much of modern politics when she began illustrating this image.

## THE TEN OF WANDS AND WORKAHOLISM

Too many projects, ideas, emails, websites, social media messages. Too much to carry. The person here is stumbling blindly forward towards what he/she assumes is the goal. A house or apartment to be purchased or paid off one day. Perhaps, a hotel or holiday home.

You have to wonder what the point is, when the journey is so difficult. Is the destination worth the struggle? This card is about the need to delegate or ditch. Nothing is going to work if the person just ends up stopping halfway or dropping everything. Time to pause and look for a strategy. Time to ask for help, perhaps, or offload. This is a Sixth House and Virgo card. It is the person who is overworking and risking his/her physical health.

We do see this theme repeatedly with the 'work' cards which feature in the deck. What Pamela did with this card is visionary. She 'saw' the future of Generation Virgo, who were born with Pluto and Uranus in Virgo in the 1960's and who are the first generation to have had the technology (laptop computers and mobile telephones with internet connectivity) to take the job home with them. There is no off-switch for this generation.

Pamela also saw something else about the Sixties people who have bought so many of the Tarot cards sold in the Eighties when the New Age boom was beginning.

She saw that they have Neptune in Scorpio and are thus working in a time of property bubbles, engaging in Virgo overwork (Pluto in Virgo is particularly prone to this) to pay off the mortgage.

## THE PAGE OF WANDS

This younger man is lost in his own self-admiration, or perhaps it's just the beauty of a good idea (not a great idea; a good idea) which entrances him. If he doesn't get a move on and plant this concept, theory or project on fertile ground, it will die. He is in the wrong place for it to grow. Pyramids suggest trines (a trine is in the birth chart or emerging, showing factors at 120 degrees apart) and that will help.

Yet, this page is on sandy ground and nothing will grow, thrive, flourish and prosper until he stops daydreaming and starts moving in the direction of the right town, city, region or country. He has a feather in his cap. What is it for?

Pamela's cards explore so many facets of creative, self-employed or freelance life, because this is what she knew best. She moved with actors, writers, artists and poets. Here we have a classic and timeless problem for people with projects. Again and again in her deck we find the question, 'How can I turn this into something?'



## THE KNIGHT OF WANDS

The man on a mission cannot see properly - look at the eyes and you will see they are unfocussed. Perhaps contact lenses or glasses need to be found, or this may be a metaphor for someone who is not seeing straight. The big idea, message or campaign is firmly in hand. It must be planted in the right place (the desert sands of Egypt are not useful) or it will wither on the vine, like so many of Pamela's wands, or staves, or branches showing budding leaves.

The horse is a symbol of Sagittarius and the Knight may be a symbol for Chiron. Sagittarius also suits the idea of exploring foreign lands. Chiron was of course a centaur as well as a music teacher and the Knight is holding a baton. The fire signs Aries and Leo are also hinted at here along with Sagittarius, thanks to the flaming orange and gold colouring.

Chiron was only found in 1977, so some 70 years after Pamela created this image. It's one of her images which speak to the self-employed, or the creative types within a business or company. As a Tarot reader you'll find your client base is filled with them and her cards do have a message.

## THE QUEEN OF WANDS

This card is a good example of just how much Pamela Colman Smith there was in the cards and just how little there sometimes was of Arthur Waite. I have mentioned the world of quantum thought experiments and Schrodinger's famous cat.

Well, as I've also mentioned in this guide to Pamela's cards, she was instructed to illustrate leopards here and came up with a black cat - Snuffles, according to some authors - who lived at Smallhythe, where she created her cards in 1909.

This is a Leo card, with lions flanking the throne and appearing on the backdrop. Sunflowers ruled by the Sun are also Leo's blooms, as this sign is also solar-ruled. You could look for Sun transits and transits to the Sun with this card but also the Fifth House, as Leo women are Queens to a younger court, no matter if you're talking The Duchess of Sussex, The Queen Mother or Princess Margaret.

This may be her own or other people's younger offspring. The wand is the idea, project, plan or qualification. She's already done very well with one - that is the sunflower in her right hand. She'll need a collaborator or assistant, colleague or staff to create the next success. Note the tiny ginger cat brooch pin that holds the cloak together. Leo, of course, rules all kinds of felines.

## THE KING OF WANDS

All the wands or staves are tree branches or trunks. As we've seen - pulp for paper mills in Pamela and Arthur's day, they symbolise paperwork, newspapers, books, magazines, scripts and speeches. In profile, they rather resemble laptop computers or

mobile telephones and so are always updated for us as symbols of communication and connection.

Mercury is the ruler of all communication. There are lions (Leo) on the throne and a prominent lizard. Lizards are territorial - males fight other males - and use bright colours to attract mates. This may also be seen as a salamander, an old occult symbol.

Look at this King. He is stuck or suspended. The branch needs to be planted in order to grow but if he does not get moving it will wither and die. The idea or message will not work until someone helps him ground it somewhere useful, or he gets up from his throne and gets a move on.

We might also see a newt from the salamander family here - it depends on your point of view. Salamanders regenerate lost limbs. In myth, they were believed to be born from fire. There is a fiery hint in the red hair and orange robes of the King - so, Leo, Sagittarius and Aries.

You might speculate that this King is Arthur E. Waite himself. He is in command of his ideas, knowledge and research - his great brainwave for A Very British Tarot. Yet, he needs someone to help him plant the concept.

Unseen in the card and yet to arrive, must be Pamela herself. Was she perhaps the Queen of Wands, with Snuffles the cat by her side, forever caught in the cottage garden at Smallhythe?

Like so much about this very special deck, it's for you to interpret. This final card in my spread for Pamela's Tarot leads us to the end of the story. It is a story which began 110 years ago, this December (December 2019) with a group called The Golden Dawn, a man with a mission and a woman who helped change the world.

# ARTHUR E. WAITE – SEEING INTO THE FUTURE

I was recently invited to The College of Psychic Studies in Kensington, with my friend, the well-known author, screenwriter and journalist Imogen Edwards-Jones. Imogen was writing a feature article about the college, for The Evening Standard.

There, in the basement, tucked away in a box which is rarely opened, I found a photograph of Arthur E. Waite.

We are not sure if this is his signature or just the labelling of an assistant, but his full name - Arthur Edward Waite - is written in ink on the back of the photograph. It was taken at Webster Brothers in London, either at their 4, Dorchester Road, Bayswater branch - or at 24, The Pavement, Clapham Common.

Arthur is shown holding a book (one of his own, perhaps?) and looking for all the world like a character from Sherlock Holmes. (Its creator, Arthur Conan Doyle, was very nearly persuaded to join Arthur within The Golden Dawn, but was spooked by an apparition and declined!)

Arthur is gazing towards the left of the camera, far into the distance. He is seeing something the photographer would not have captured, and that may be his own destiny, or your own. His vision of A Very British Tarot would have been nothing without Pamela, who turned his ideal into reality. Together they created snapshots in time for you to use today - just like this snapshot in time.





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# PAMELA'S TAROT

The 1909 Tarot deck created by artist and storyteller Pamela Colman Smith and editor, journalist and author Arthur Waite was born from The Golden Dawn. People sometimes call this deck the Rider-Waite or Smith-Waite, but actually it's Pamela's Tarot.

Any question can be addressed by the cards. I have used my own deck to choose quite a wide spread here, all laid face-up on my desk, in a particular order - so that I can see how their message actually gives us guidance on using the Tarot. What to do - and what not to do.

I am passing on the findings to you. Thus, you might call this an example of a Tarot guidebook which actually uses the cards themselves to organise the information.

I have found some of my favourite books on the Tarot from my library, so I can pass on some important wisdom to you, which will help you with your readings - no matter if you are a beginner or a seasoned professional.

## JESSICA ADAMS