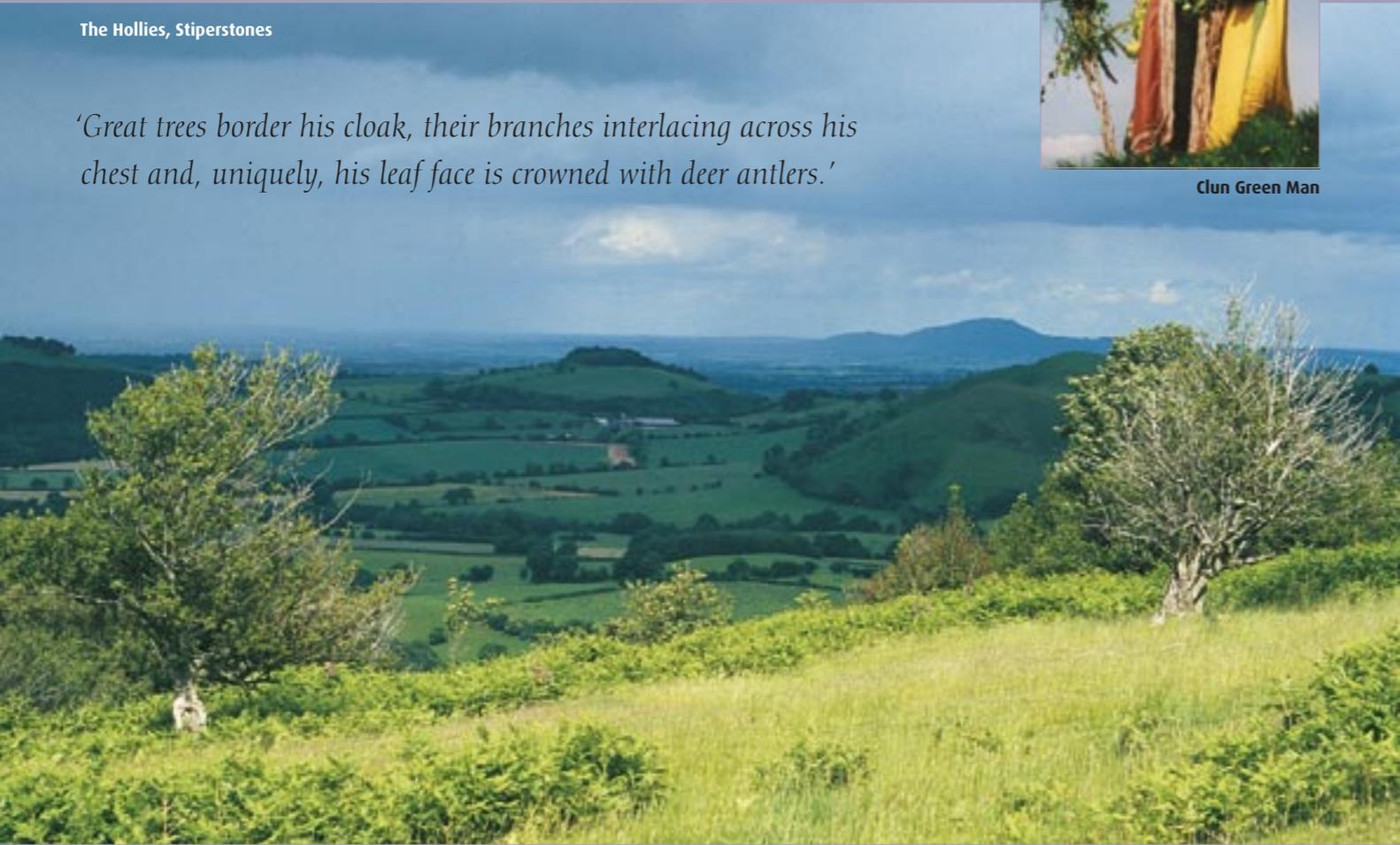


'For I am among thee and maketh things grow'

The Hollies, Stiperstones

*'Great trees border his cloak, their branches interlacing across his chest and, uniquely, his leaf face is crowned with deer antlers.'*



Clun Green Man



Ancient yew tree, Church Preen

*One of the most beautiful sights in Shropshire*

Visible from miles around, this avenue of ancient beeches strides up Linley Hill and follows the ridge. The trees and the landscape are a perfect marriage. There is sadness as well as beauty, as these near 300-year-old trees approach their end. For our great-great-great-great grandchildren the Linley Beeches Support Group are planting replacements.

In a small valley protected from storm and pollution is once-neglected Walcot Wood. The National Trust is preserving nearly 50 veteran oaks. These 400-year-old, unusually shaped trees were into their second century when Clive of India bought the estate. Each tree is managed individually for its unique collection of lichens. The wood is on the Shropshire Way and a visit can be combined with Bury Ditches hill fort.

Brook Vessons, on the northern slopes of the Stiperstones, has a whole cluster of giant trees. You can see six of Britain's broadest mountain ash trees, including the supreme champion. Within just 100m (328 ft) of the rowans are the biggest birch, the biggest holly and the biggest crab apple tree in Shropshire.



Linley Beeches



Walcot Wood

The Clun Green Man personifies our union with the animal as well as the vegetable world. He represents past centuries of living in harmony with the landscape.

We inherit our trees from our ancestors. Some are the descendants of the first trees to colonise the Shropshire Hills after the last ice age. The earliest example of our union with nature is a 'living giant'. The yew in All Saints churchyard, Norbury is one of the ten largest in Britain, 10m (33 ft) in girth. David Bellamy, the botanist, reckons it to be at least 2,700 years old, twice as old as the church. We owe it therefore to pagans. A mile away but nearly 2,500 years its junior to the Norbury Yew is...