

BELLADONNA'S POSTBAG

MALCOM EDWARDS 6, Rushcroft Terrace, Baildon, Yorkshire.
 BDI76 DA. records the formation of a new Smial under the name of ENTMOOT, but notes that as this appears to be already in use, they must choose another name. The first ENTMOOT is on my records as being under the leadership of D.A. Sawyer, of the School of Oriental and African Studies, Malet Street, London W.1. but nothing much has been heard of this Smial for some time - any response, please, from this direction? So meantime I think Malcom Walker's Smial might claim the title with some modification, e.g. Northern Entmoot.

He writes: "Our first proper meeting was quite successful and the talk flowed on into the night. We have no definite plans for 'activities' other than our bi-monthly meetings for talk and discussion." He commends Dave Weldrake's article on Dragons, and his poem. He continues: "Mallorn 2 was very good I thought, and I was very surprised at the various references to religion in LotR. ... It was a pleasant surprise because being an Anglo-Catholic, which is not much different from Roman Catholic, I was able to appreciate the analogies when I first read LotR. I do not mean to say that Tolkien purposely constructed the analogies; they just happened as he drew on his experience when creating his secondary world. Although LotR does not set out to be a religious book, it ends up being one of the most religious books I have read. Nowhere else in fiction (other than C.S. Lewis) is black so black and white so white. All things are either good or evil; there are none of the various shades of 'grey' which befog our minds these days."

"'People are either for him or against him' (JRRT) - there seems to be no inbetween- and those who are for him have similar ideas and interests. And so it has proved. Perhaps mankind is not yet lost, nor can be, while there are people who can move beyond mere physical existence and imagine a better world... a world conjured by that tremendously magical and evocative phrase in the Hobbit: 'Long ago in the quiet of the world...' But is it purely from man's imagination that such a vision springs? Might it not be a little preview, a glimpse of 'THE ONE'?"

DAVE WELDRAKE :

"The time has come," the Weldrake said,
 "To talk of many things -
 Of Elves - and Rings - and Shadowfax -
 Of Ages Three - and Kings -
 And if the Hobbits all smoke pot,
 And settling constitutional things."

"Do you think maybe I ought to apologise to Edward Lear?"

Yes, you certainly ought - seeing that "The Walrus and the Carpenter" was written by Lewis Carroll!

JANE KEEP of the NUMENOREANS SMIAL, of Pinner, writes:
 "A Short Story."

"Long, long ago (much longer than the Greenway) lived a dwarf bean (that's rather like a human/baked bean (delete according to mood) 'cept it's liable to sprout. ((not leaves or auxiliary buds you Biological Omo, but hairy feet and beards))(I might add ((being unable to subtract)) that dwarves are longing ((but I thought they were short and fat! Do be quiet!)) for the day when they can grow hairy inches (FEET... INCHES... Groan!) Anyhow, that's not part of the story/apartment (really these jokes are flat (Flat, apartment, story!(Extra groans emitted)) Anyhow as I was saying this queer bod (Su says I ought not to say that) ((What? Where?)) (Go back to sleep) was living in a boot-iful

house... (They have yet to invent SHOE-tiful mouses (or mice as the matter might be)) when ~~one morning he~~ opened the door and fell flat (very difficult procedure as the poor little chap ((little's not the word)) was 161 round the tum ((centimetres, gimpy (2nd cousin to Gimli))) Anyway the poor chap bashed his snorkel as everyone nose. (Heavens, I feel decidedly weak ((more serious illness than feeling decidedly day)) Wheeze splutter... I've had enough... choke... I'm getting out of here, everyone's mad, crazy.. help!! HELP!.... "

But quite sanely the Numenoreans, who have a nice feeling for geneology, consist of FAROWYN (Helen Kerley) and EOMIR (George Kerley) descendants of Faramir and Eowyn; HIRLUEN of Pinnath Gelin (Jane Keep) 'a decendant of Hirluin who arrived in Minas Tirith with Dol Amroth but was killed during the battle'; and **EMRIEL** (Alison Pelling) a descendant of Lothiriel and Eomer, and thereby Lady of the Mark and entitled to dispute the claim of Eomir to Rohan. A very distinguished family.

VINCENT CURRAN (Bilbo) writes : "Generally the Mallorn gets better, especially the cover illustrations, the 'Dead King Rises' being in my opinion very good." ((Not in mine, but 'chacun a son gout'. BT)) "One thing I didn't like in the layout of the last Mallorn was the inclusion of small illustrations right in the middle of the print - it made reading somewhat erratic, I think they could be better put at the sides of a page." ((Here I do agree with you. BT)) "On the musical side I am trying my clumsy hand at composing a tune for the Dwarves' song in The Hobbit; 'Far over the Misty Mountains cold' etc. - but one bar in a week is not all that encouraging." ((Ent pace, it seems? Not hasty... BT))

Vincent has every hope of reconstructing 'Bilbo's Smial' at the De La Salle College, where he goes very soon. Good luck to it!

CLIFF CUMMING of 18, Stradbroke Street, Norlane, Victoria 3214, Australia - our first Australian contact - is very keen, but feels his isolation. If anyone happens to know of any Tolkien enthusiasts 'Down-under' do please put him in touch. He would like to form a 'Down-under' Smial. Anyone like to burrow through to him? He also writes :

"Something which is receiving a great deal of publicity at this time is the fact of pollution and its effect on the ecology. I am quite sure that Sam, being a great lover of the land and of gardens and of Elves who abide in Woods, would have some pertinent things to say about this matter and the effect it was having upon his beloved trees and plants." He adds to this:

SAM'S LAMENT FOR THE PASSING OF THE ELVES.

These dying woods no longer echo their names
For all is changed since the absence of their faces.
Although my memory will soon be dulled
Their absence still causes pain.
Those Elves I loved.

For, no longer leaves
And bark, blackened by a plague
More foul than Sauron's breath,
And limbs with sores, inflicted
Not by Orc axes or swords,
Drive away the singing voices
Until all that remains is Fangorn's dread."

I agree and I think that we should all concern ourselves with the question of the pollution of the countryside. We are perhaps too small for a pressure group, but what we can do we ought. Let us consider if there is anything that we can do, besides lamenting. There is too much Orc-work in evidence all round us...

HAL BROOME of 2002, Adeline Street, Hattiesberg, Miss., 39401, USA. wrote to me as far back as April (sorry!) with a musical script of a setting for 'Far ver the Misty Mountains Cold', which I have not yet had a chance to try out. He comments on Mallorns I and II : 'it might be a little better on handling and postal budget, if the pages were a wee bit smaller (but more numerous of course!)" He also mentions some good reviews, 'Tolkien and the Critics' edited by Niel D. Isaacs and Rose A. Lambardi, of University of Notre Dame Press, London. In particular he mentions the article by Dr. Charles Moorman, dean of English at an American College, of, and from, whom we may expect to hear more. Hal also commends 'Deryni Rising' by Katherine Kurtz, and 'Bud-in-the-Mist' and 'Red Moon and Black Mountain' by Joy Chant.

In a later letter, he says that the Istari Smial is broken up, as so many of its members have left college - a state of affairs only too general just now - but that they hope to keep the name of 'Istari' for a corresponding group, and also form a new Smial.

Hal is anxious to know if anyone knows the names of the rest of the original Council of the Istari - there were, as we know, Gandalf, Radagast, and Saruman, but who were the remaining two? Unfortunately I am fairly sure, Hal, that they were never named. They might, as you say, come into the Silmarillion.

As an original valediction, he gives me: 'May Smaug never give you mouth-to-mouth resuscitation.' Well, amen to that!!

NEIL L. BURGESS of 30, Aughton Street, Ormskirk, Lancs. writes: "It has recently come to my notice that there is a Liverpool-based magazine also called Mallorn, which publishes poetry and stories and has been going since about Summer 1970.

"I would like your views on the large colour posters that have been produced in their thousands, of 'Middle-earth' characters. Gandalf looks like a dwarf, Shadowfax looks as if he should be pulling a milk wagon! The one of Bilbo is just beyond description. Could these possibly be the work of Pauline Baynes? If so I'll never be able to take the illustrations in 'Tom Bombadil' as serious again. The only poster that seems to be the Pauline Baynes I know is the poster of 'Middle-earth' itself, which is quite excellent.

"Could you possibly tell me if there is a 'Smial' in the Liverpool or Ormskirk area?"

((There may be another Mallorn, but we have, I think, established some claim to the name by sending copies to the British Museum. As to the posters - most people seem to agree on these! Not good enough - but I'm glad to say they are not by Pauline Baynes, except for the map of Middle-earth - is that the one you mean? - which is signed. You should contact J.D.Collins, whose address you already have. Belladonna.))

HARTLEY PATTERSON sent me this review of a play by the Oxford Experimental Theatre Club, published in the Financial Times of July 5th. I wish we had heard about it in time to be there. Follows a short extract from the review:-

"....Bilbo Baggins's journey begins with the invasion of his home by Gandalf the magician and the Dwarves. None of them are very good at looking after themselves, except for Gandalf, and their quest for the Dwarves lost inheritance takes them through some of the same theatrical terrain as Ibsen's "Peer Gynt" - Tro ls, Mountain Kings, Goblins, Spiders, and the best monster of all, Gollum, a slimy under-water scavenger.... Bilbo Baggins is a less demonstrative hero than Toad, of Toad Hall. He is more of a Mole, "scrabbling about", to use the original expression, in the confusions of ordinariness..."