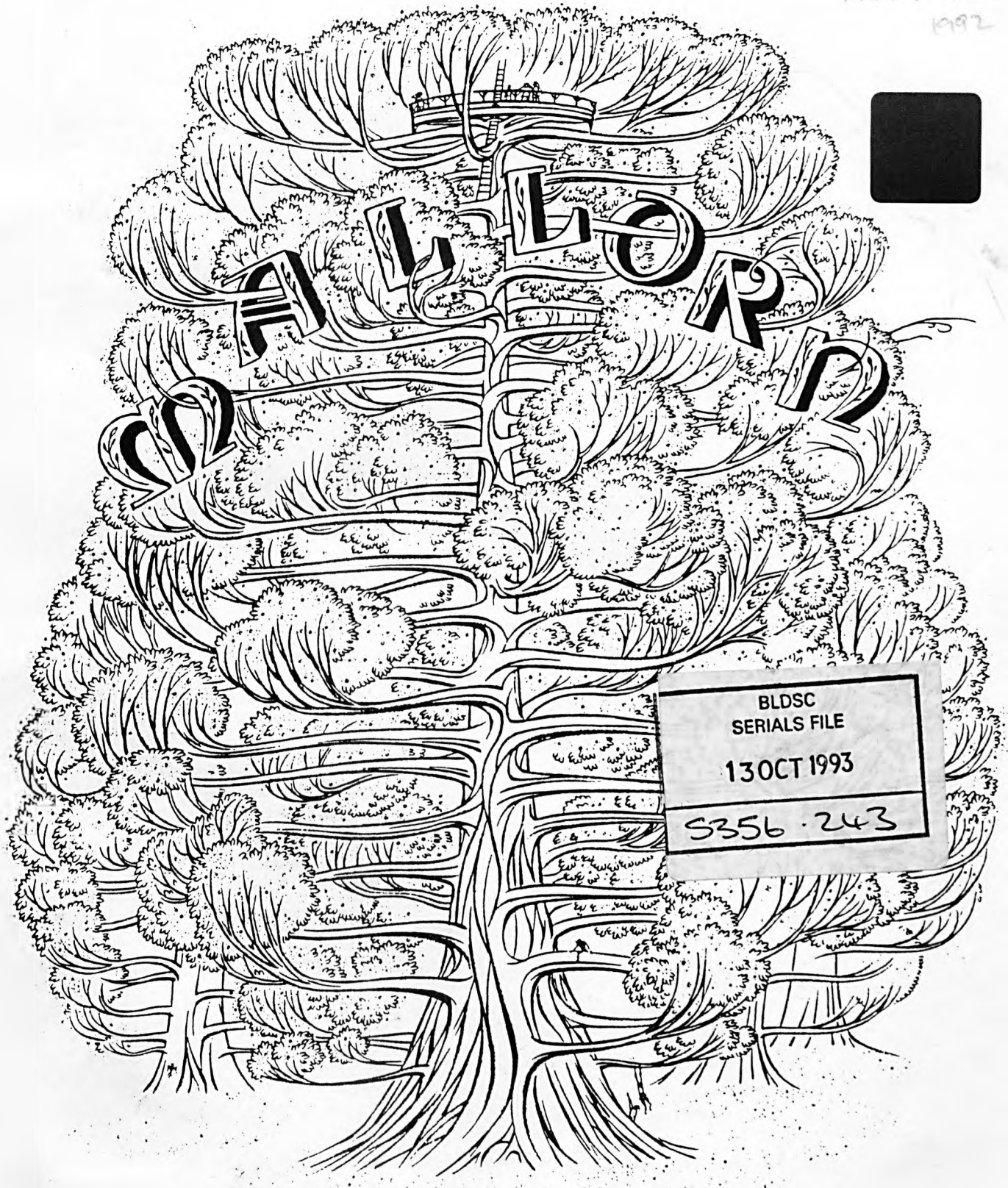

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September 1993

The Journal of the Tolkien Society

The Tolkien Society

Founded in London in 1969, the Tolkien Society is an international organization, registered in the U.K. as a charity (No. 273809), dedicated to furthering interest in the life and works of the late Professor J.R.R. Tolkien, C.B.E. (1892-1973), who remains its President 'in perpetuo'. His daughter, Miss Priscilla Tolkien, became its Honorary Vice-President in 1986.

In addition to *Mallorn*, the Society publishes a bi-monthly bulletin, *Amon Hen*. In addition to local gatherings ("smials"), there are three annual national meetings: the A.G.M. and Dinner in the Spring, the Seminar in the Summer, and "Oxonmoot", a celebratory weekend held in Oxford, in late September.

For further information about the Society, please contact the Secretary: Annie Haward, Flat 6, 8 Staverton Road, OXFORD, OX2 6XJ

Notes for Contributors

PROSE ITEMS (including fiction) should be typed, double-spaced with margins a minimum of 3cm wide, and on one side of the paper only, with your name, the title and page number at the top of *each* sheet. **Even more acceptable are computer discs**: CP/M or DOS, 3", 3¼" or 5", ASCII, Wordstar, Wordperfect, or any version of Locoscript but your disc must be accompanied by a legible printout. If Your text includes any character which may not convert properly (including any with accents, as in, for example, "Manwë"), please substitute these with standard characters not used elsewhere in your text (e.g. %, $, &), and enclose a table showing what they represent (the printout should have the *real* characters, not the substitutions). If your wordprocessor or typewriter cannot cope with characters which you wish to appear, please draw our attention to this.

Handwritten contributions will be considered ONLY if *extremely* legible, and should in any case be in the format outlined above. The editors reserve the right to reject the less-than-completely legible out of hand.

As a general rule, prose items should be between 1,000 and 5,000 words in length (including notes); authors of longer submissions may be required to do some drastic cutting.

Quotations should always be identified. Citation should be made in the Harvard format, and references (including the work's author, [and/or editor, translator, etc., if appropriate], title, place and date of publication, publisher's name, [part and volume number, pages, where appropriate]).

VERSE ITEMS, which should not usually be more than 50 lines, may be presented either in the format indicated above, or in calligraphic form, in which case the specifications for artwork given below should be followed.

ARTWORK should be in black and white, no larger than A4 size, and either the original of the work or an exceptionally high quality photocopy. The artist's name should be written *clearly* on the back IN PENCIL.

GENERAL NOTES: Contributors who want their material returned should provide a self-addressed appropriately stamped envelope, or TWO IRCs.

The editors reserve the right to reject any item, or to ask for changes to be made.

Copy date for MALLORN 32 is **30th September 1994.**

Acknowledgements

The map on page 11 is based on a map by J.R.R. Tolkien (in *The Lord of the Rings*, published by HarperCollins*Publishers* Ltd.)

The runes on page 48 are taken from the cover of *Hobbin* published by Stiðin. ©Stiðin 1990.

The proofs of most of this issue of *Mallorn* for all errors remains with the editors.

Published by the Tolkien Society and printe

Mallorn Thirty

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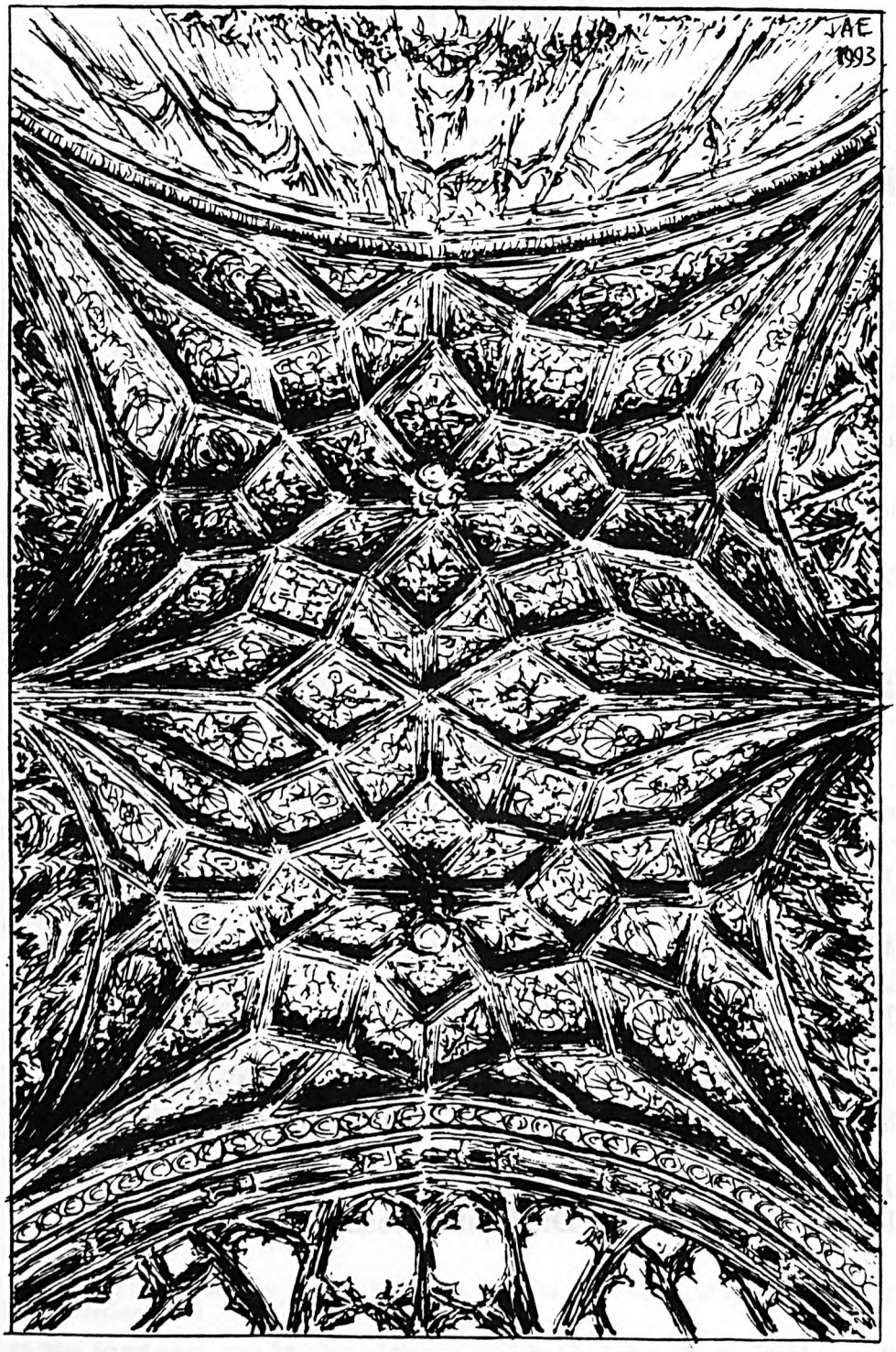


Vaulting in Bishop West's Chapel, Ely Cathedral (see page 27)

Editorial

John Ellison and Patricia Reynolds

The first issue of *Mallorn* "under new management" may be a suitable occasion for reflecting a little on its aims and purpose. These should, and we hope do, embody the aims of the Tolkien Society as they are set out in its constitution, "to promote" interest in and study of "the life and works of Professor John Ronald Reuel Tolkien CBE". They are literary aims *prima facie*, but it is perhaps truer to say that they are educational in a broader sense. If the Tolkien Society has never seemed like or been a "literary society" *tout court*, this just reflects the fact that Tolkien's writings, while they are obviously "literature" in the normal sense, have a rather ambiguous and puzzling relationship to the various kinds of writing which many people would class as "literary". Such people would no doubt exclude the related twentieth-century genres of fantasy and science fiction from the "literary" canon, at least very largely.

The radio programme "Desert Island Discs" requires its victims to nominate a particular book as well as their eight records. Probably no one has carried out exhaustive research, but we have noticed that nominations of *The Lord of the Rings*, when they appear, seem to come especially from practitioners of the performing arts, and noticeably in preference to figures in the literary world. This may be an indicator of something – but what?

The foregoing remarks are inspired by a recently published book (reviewed in this issue[1]), which argues a need to relate Tolkien more closely to the twentieth century "literary mainstream". "It is no use declaring an anathema on modern literature," the author proclaims, "and then worshipping Tolkien in a temple in which he is a solitary idol." That invites a question, are we, in the Tolkien Society, ever guilty of doing just this? Or do we, or many, or most of us, read at all widely outside Tolkien and the science-fiction and fantasy genres with which he is usually associated?

Heaven preserve us, of course, from insisting, or even suggesting, that anyone *ought* to read. say Tolstoy or Dickens – or anything at all – for their souls' good, or because they "ought to". There is no healthier instinct than sales-resistance, and we suspect that Tolkien's occasionally "bolshie" remarks about Shakespeare just show him enjoying a little bit of fun – provoked by the image of the Bard as a bust in a shrine with a great laurel-wreath clapped on its head. Everyone's appreciation has its limits, and much of the humbug about present-day criticism in all the arts, including literature, lies in the critic's pretence of appreciating all works and all items that are "important", i.e. highly spoken of by fellow practitioners. Knowledge is optional – cultural name-dropping is a very effective substitute, but one should of course be careful to avoid cultural brick-dropping[2].

No, the real issue is not whether we read, say, Jane Austen, or the Brontës or Hardy, (or, turning to the twentieth century, Proust, or Joyce, or Eliot – as the author of the book mentioned above thinks many of us do). It is rather whether, if we do do so, do we consider that our reading of other, "serious", authors enriches understanding and appreciation of Tolkien? Or are the two interests not related to each other? And it is the same in regard to experience of other art-forms; if we have it, does our appreciation of them enrich or throw light on our understanding of Tolkien? And if so, how?

We do not have a great deal in this issue by way of correspondence, but we would like to promote more of it in future issues. Can we suggest, therefore, the topic just outlined as a possible theme to begin with? As much variety

[1] Between us, we managed to break the injunction "Neither a Borrower nor a Lender Be!", in case you are wondering how the reviewer got his copy (*vide* p. 45).

[2] To be understood as mentioning the name of you-know-who.

of personal experience, and as many differences of view as possible will be extremely welcome, together with suggestions for further such topics, and of course, letters on all other possible Tolkien-related matters. One of your editors suggested – he would, of course – that we write the letters ourselves and then publish them under appropriate pseudonyms. The imposture lying behind such ascriptions as "Yours,/Disgusted./ Hobbiton", or "Your obedient servant-of-Sauron, 'Pro Bono Mordoviae Publico'/ Minas Morgul" would, however, not escape detection for more than a few seconds.

You will, as it happens, find that quite a lot of the material in the present issue has not been written by the Editors (we'll take the Oath of Eorl on that). And very good it is too – the bits we haven't written, we mean[3]. Please do try to ensure, in self-defence, if nothing else, that progressively less and less of future *Mallorns* have to be provided by ourselves.

One *lacuna* which we tried, very hard, to fill was a review of Wayne Hammond's *Bibliography*. We approached four separate people: three pleaded the pressure of other work or thought themselves unsuitable as reviewers of bibliographies, and one claimed she was too close to the author. We offered her the anonymity of a pseudonym, and when she refused, asked Wayne himself to write the review. As he refused (even under a pseudonym) to tell you that it is a most excellent and useful book, which should be purchased by all who wish to collect and (or?) read the works of Tolkien, and did not say, as we wished him to, that the remarkably few errors and omissions are being published in *The Tolkien Collector*, we regret that no review appears in this volume of *Mallorn*. We would be pleased to hear of volunteers to review the *Bibliography* – or indeed prepared to act as reviewers in general.

The future of *Mallorn* (and *Amon Hen*) will be considered by the Committee, as was reported at the Society's A.G.M. in Nottingham last spring. Before any radical changes are implemented, the membership will be consulted. No change will happen for some time, in any case, as the next edition of *Mallorn* will be the first volume of *The Proceedings of the J.R.R. Tolkien Centenary Conference*. Then there will be another "normal" *Mallorn*, and then the second volume of the *Proceedings*. We hope that frequency will increase beyond the present annual rate, and welcome all contributions for *Mallorn XXXII*. **Copy date for Mallorn XXXII is 30th September 1994.**

[3] The bits we have aren't bad, either!

Erratum

Marie Barnfield has asked us to point out a small error in her paper "More Celtic Influences: Númenor and the Second Age" in *Mallorn* 29. The sentences "Elendil had three sons, two of whom were to found dynasties upon Middle-earth. But the third son sailed towards Aman to ask mercy of the gods and was lost.", to be found on page 11, should read "Elendil had two sons, each of whom founded a dynasty upon Middle-earth. But his father sailed ..."

Elvish and Welsh

David Doughan

What Elvish is, I shall come round to eventually – it is probably safe to assume that the readership of *Mallorn* has some idea of the Tolkienian concept of Elves (though even you, Gentle Readers, may be in for the odd surprise about their languages). But what Welsh is, and who the Welsh are (and were), may be less well known.

The Welsh are of course Celts. It is widely acknowledged that Celts are a feckless yet fey people, usually endowed with The Sight and other such mystical attributes – dreamy, poetic, unworldly, yet possessed of subtle and supernatural powers, as can be observed in people with Celtic names like Morgan, Williams, Parry, Powell and Doughan .... how different from their stolid, dreary, materialistic English neighbours and oppressors! And like most widely-acknowledged facts, this is of course pernicious nonsense. Tolkien describes the widespread myth of the opposition between "the wild, incalculable poetic Celt, full of vague and misty imaginations, and the Saxon, solid and practical when not under the influence of beer." Tolkien continues: "Unlike most myths this myth seems to have no value at all"[1]. In fact, the whole idea of "Celtic" peoples and languages is relatively modern, going back no further than the eighteenth century when scholars like Edward Lhuyd of the Ashmolean were systematising the study of the Brittonic and Goidelic languages (before this, the word "Celtic" was used simply as a synonym for "Gaulish"). What we think of as the stereotypical idea of The Celt only really became current towards the end of the eighteenth century when the Romantic movement was gaining ground; the economically and politically oppressed, and culturally deprived, communities of the north and west of these islands naturally played up to an image which not only attributed a cultural value to them (however erroneously), but one which the more enterprising among them could even make money out of. By the early twentieth century, the mystical "Celtic twilight" overshadowed everything, epitomised as it was by the works of Yeats and "Fiona MacLeod" – a pseudonym used by the not notably Celtic William Sharp[2] for such works as the notorious *Immortal Hour* which in its operatic version by the equally Saxon Rutland Boughton had in the 1920s the sort of success nowadays associated with Andrew Lloyd Webber. Particularly prevalent was the idea of the *Tuatha Dé Danann*, Fiona MacLeod's "lordly ones who live in the hills, in the Hollow Hills – they laugh and are glad and are terrible", which appears to have contributed more than a little to Tolkien's conception of both the Elves and the Valar.

But despite rather forced equivalences between these folk and the *Tylwyth Teg* (the Fair Folk of Welsh popular culture), all this really has little to do with Welsh. Despite popular belief, Welsh myths are not the same as Hebridean Irish myths, and the Welsh language is most emphatically not the Irish language. The two have never been mutually comprehensible, at least in historical times, and though they share a common ancestor, this has to be sought a good three thousand years ago, at a time when a group of what seem to have been Celtic peoples was living around Bohemia, before they spread out over Europe and at least part of Asia Minor, to the dismay of anybody in their path. By the time the Romans took a serious interest in North-Western Europe, the majority of its inhabitants spoke Celtic languages[3]. Those Celtic

[1] *English and Welsh* p.172.

[2] Sharp reputedly used to dress in women's clothes when writing in his Fiona MacLeod persona – "Did he?" said the usually charitable W.P. Ker on hearing of this – "The bitch!" (Lucas, E.V. *Reading, writing and remembering*).

[3] Celtic languages had already had some influence on Latin, probably dating to the period in the early fourth century BC when the Romans were briefly the subjects of an aggressive nation of "Gauls" – the word *gladius*, for example, is probably of Gaulish origin.

languages which have survived the Roman and Germanic impacts, the "insular" Celtic languages, fall into two broad groups. The languages of Ireland, Scotland and the Isle of Man are closely related to each other, and are usually referred to by the general names of "Goidelic" or "Gaelic" – derived from the Welsh "Gwyddeleg", meaning Irish. Welsh, Cornish and Breton are also related to each other (though they are far from mutually comprehensible), and are descended from the language spoken by most British people when the Romans arrived – the Ancient Britons, in fact. The distinction between the Irish and British groups is often called "p-Celtic" and "q-Celtic". What this mysterious formula means is simply that a lot of Irish words have a *c* where Welsh ones have *p* – for example, the Irish numeral 5 is *coic*, while its Welsh equivalent is *pump*. Unfortunately this only applies to certain groups of words – for example, the Welsh for 100 begins with a c (*cant*), as does the Irish (*céad*). The *p* / *c* equivalence was known well enough by mediaeval Irish monks to confuse them in instances like this; when they came across Irish records of a Welsh saint called Cybi, they assumed (understandably but wrongly) that earlier Irish chroniclers had adapted the name to Irish practices, and it should really have been "Pybi" – which is why mediaeval Irish chronicles written in Latin mention an otherwise unknown holy Welshman called Pubeus (let this be a warning to those who meddle in the affairs of comparative philologists, for they are subtle and quick to bugger you up entirely). Thus, Tolkien confounds confusion still further by taking Quenya, a language based on Finnish (which is not even Indo-European, let alone Celtic), and makes it into a "q" language with a relationship to Sindarin resembling that between Irish and Welsh ....

Be that as it may, we have reached the conclusion that the Welsh are fundamentally Ancient Britons who speak with a *p*. However, this *p* may become a *b*, or a *ph*, or even, in certain circumstances, an *mh* – for a distinguishing feature of the Celtic (and not least the Welsh) languages is what is called "consonant mutation". This is a rather involved subject; in effect, it means that in certain circumstances, either for grammatical purposes or for word–formation, the initial consonants of words change in certain predictable ways – which is very interesting, but sheer hell for a learner trying to use a Welsh dictionary. Tolkien generally followed similar forms of mutation to those used in modern Welsh, but with definite differences even in Sindarin (the most Welsh of the Welsh-style Elvish languages). Those who are interested may refer to the comparative schemes of Welsh and Sindarin mutations set out on page 9. (Irish and Scottish mutations differ markedly from these in detail, and Breton mutations are actually *even more* complicated!) Welsh spelling, on the other hand, is far more consistent than that of most languages (certainly than English) – once you know the rules, you discover that divergences from them are extremely few. Stress is also very simple and straightforward; with the exception of a very few highly predictable groups of words which are end-stressed, all Welsh words of more than one syllable are stressed on the penultimate – like Italian, only much more consistently so.

As is well known, Tolkien felt a particular attraction to the Welsh language[4], surpassed only by his love of Finnish, and states outright that Sindarin "is ... constructed deliberately to resemble Welsh phonologically and to have a relation to High-elven similar to that existing between British ... and Latin"[5]. This is true up to a point; like so many of Tolkien's statements there is a wealth of fine print to be understood. In fact, unlike the Finnish-based Quenya, which in basic outline remained more or less the same for more than fifty years, the Elvish languages which Tolkien made "to resemble Welsh" (and not just phonologically), varied considerably over the decades, from the early (Goldogrin/ Gnomish), through the middle (Noldorin, Doriathrin, etc.), to the late (Sindarin, Nandorin and that extraordinarily ingenious halfway-house between Finnish and Welsh phonology called Telerin), with Sindarin being the closest of all to Welsh – though this is again more a matter of phonology and, to a lesser extent, grammar, than anything else. *Pace* Jim Allan, the only Sindarin words which at all resemble

[4] For example, Tolkien's reference to "cellar doors", *English and Welsh* pp. 190-91.
[5] *Letters* p.219 n.


Fool Irishman!
I'll give you
PYBI!
SANCTUS CYBI
SANC TUS PUB EUS

their Welsh equivalents are "Losgar" (W. *llosgi* = burn) and "lhach" (W. *llach* = lash). The main way in which Sindarin resembles Welsh grammatically is in the expression of the genitive (e.g. Welsh: *mynyddoedd* = mountains, *cartref* = home: "the mountains of my home" = *mynyddoedd fy nghartref i*; Sindarin: *ered* = mountains, *bar* = home: "the mountains of my home" = *ered e-mbar nin*). Verb forms, for example, appear quite different. Even phonologically, the resemblance should not be pushed too far – for example, Sindarin does not have the famous and distinctive Welsh lateral *l* as in "Llanelli" – and its word stress pattern is quite different.

However, Tolkien was obviously acquainted with Welsh literary culture, and certainly there are evident connections between his perceptions of Elvish concerns and certain themes which occur in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Welsh poetry. One of these is the theme of the "Looney" (the original title of the poem which eventually became "The Sea-bell"), which crops up frequently in the work of Tolkien's Welsh contemporaries (though the treatment is extremely varied, and never exactly recalls Tolkien's). Among the most notable of these poems is T.H. Parry-Williams's satirical *Dic Aberdaron*, which takes an ironic look at a notorious Liverpool Welsh eccentric of the nineteenth century, a bachelor who lived in poverty surrounded by cats, shunned by "the publicans and sinners of the dock", who devoted his time to learning one language after another – and never used any of them. But, as the poet says,

Os ffolodd ar fodio geiriadur a mwytho cath,

Chware-teg i Dic – nid yw pawb yn gwirioni'r un fath.

(If he played the fool in soaking up dictionaries and stroking cats, fair play to Dic – not every body is stupid in that way[6]).

W.J. Gruffydd is another case. In his gorgeously romantic *Y Tlawd Hwn* ("This Pauper") he celebrates the man with a private vision that cut him off from the world, so that he saw beauty where his fellows called down God's curse on an unclean world, and refused their paths to heaven for the imperceptible music of magic pipes and the buzzing of Arawn's bees in the vineyards under the walls of the legendary Caer Siddi:

A chyn cael bedd cadd eistedd wrth y gwleddoedd

A llesmair wrando anweledig gôr

Adar Rhiannon yn y perl gynteddoedd

Sy'n agor ar yr hen anghofus fôr.

(And before he finds his grave, he will get to sit at the banquets and listen enthralled to the invisible choir of the Birds of Rhiannon in the pearl embrasures that open on the old forgetful sea.)

But that is not Gruffydd's only vision. He also tells of the dreary life of Gwladys Rhys, eldest daughter of the Rev. Thomas Rhys, Minister of Horeb Chapel, with the wind moaning in the pines around the house, day and night enduring her father's cold dullness and her mother's unending talk of services, the chapel committee, prayer meetings, sewing circle and the North Wales Women's Temperance Association:

Pa beth oedd im i'w wneuthur? ... Pa beth

Ond mynych flin ddyheu, a diflas droi

Fy llygaid draw ac yma dros y waun,

A chodi'r bore i ddymuno nos,

A throsi drwy'r nos hir, dan ddisgwyl bore?

(What was there for me to do? ... What but constant dull yearning, and drearily casting my eyes back and forth over the moor, rising in the morning longing for night, and tossing through a long night awaiting morning?)

But one day Someone came towards the house, and she felt Something strange in her heart – the breath of a pleasant breeze from far-off lands; so she set out through the snow, when the wind was moaning in the pines, even though it was Committee and sewing night ....

Am hynny, deithiwr, yma 'rwyf yn gorwedd

Wrth dalcen Capel Horeb – Gwladys Rhys,

Yn ddeg ar hugain oed ... yma

Yn nyffryn angof, am nad oedd y chwa

A glywswn unwaith o'r gororau pell

Ond sŵn y gwynt yn cwyno yn y pîn.

(Thus, wayfarer, here I lie by Horeb Chapel – Gwladys Rhys, aged thirty ... here in oblivion's vale, for the breeze I heard once was not from

[6] The full texts of this and other Welsh poems cited can be found in the *Oxford Book of Welsh Verse*.

far-off lands, but just the wind moaning in the pines.)

In these two poems taken together, there is a striking resemblance to the concerns Tolkien expresses variously in *Beorhtnoth*, in *Niggle*, and above all in *Smith* – although it must be said that not even *Smith* matches the bleak disillusion of *Gwladys Rhys*.

One theme in particular is most striking in its applicability to Tolkien's world – the cultured Welsh-speaker's immediate and inescapable sensation of the ultimate transience of human culture, as expressed most memorably in Waldo Williams's *Cofio* (Remembering):

Un funud fach cyn elo' r haul i'w orwel,
Un funud fwyn cyn delo' r hwyr i'w hynt,
I gofio am y pethau angofiedig
Ar goll yn awr yn llwch yr amser gynt.

(Just one minute before the sun reaches the horizon, one quiet minute before the evening follows, to remember the forgotten things lost now in the dust of former time.)

Williams's justly famous poem reflects on the forgotten things of the human race, the gods no-one prays to any more (or even remembers), the words of vanished languages which were so confident on men's lips and so sweet to hear in the chattering of children, but nobody ever speaks them now, like waves breaking on a desert beach, like the sighing of the wind where there is no ear to hear .... This surely if anything was a theme close to Tolkien's heart.

The Welsh language has one of Europe's most vigorous living poetic traditions; to take just one instance, I cannot think of any poem in English over the past fourty years at least which combines raw emotion, virtuoso technique and subtle organisation as successfully as Eynion Evans's *Ynys*, which won the Chair at the National Eisteddfod in 1983 – and which is written in the complex metres which form part of a tradition going directly back to the sixth-century court poet Taliesin. So who are the cultured Welsh who can fully appreciate this brilliant poetry? About a quarter of a million people, and the number is declining. The Welsh-speaking Welsh, the *Cymry Cymraeg*, have long been resigned to the fact that despite remissions and even occasional reversals, their mother-tongue is in terminal decline. It will probably see even the youngest of them out, but in another century it will most likely be a language found only in the history books and used only in a few cultural reserves, socio-linguistic theme parks, preserved carefully for the benefit of tourists and students of linguistic anthropology. Already almost all even of the staunchest Cymry Cymraeg are effectively bilingual – finding a real monoglot Welsh-speaker under the age of 60 is quite a task – and the language as it is used in everyday communication is full not only of English loan-words[7] but even of English turns of phrase, and idioms literally translated.

Welsh poets and linguists have been fighting this long defeat ever since 1536, and over the last couple of generations have reluctantly come to acknowledge that against the powers which have now arisen (in the West as in the East) there is, ultimately, no victory. So if the Welsh do indeed resemble the Elves, it is not in any "feyness" or supposed mystic super-naturalism, but in the bleak knowledge of cultural decline, of transience, of fading – that they are the Grey People, the people of the Twilight, pausing for one minute before the sun sets to reflect that the Elves at least had the Havens. But what ship will bear the Welsh ever back? So their only recourse is a final defiant stand, making poetry in the full knowledge that in a few years it may be like the wind sighing where there is no ear to hear.

[7] Most native Welsh speakers in everyday conversation have a tendency to use English for even the least technical of vocabulary: "Chi'n gweld, mae'r llâth yn dod miwn drwy'r stainless steel pipes fan hyn ...." "Technical", in this context, often includes numbers, especially dates: "Pan own i'n grwtyn yn nineteen-thirty-five...."

The Earliest Days of Gondor

An experiment in Middle-earth Historiography

Ruth Lacon

Vast though Tolkien's work on Middle-earth was, some areas were barely sketched in. The Professor quite simply could not cover everything, and his own preferences lead him along particular paths. Elsewhere there are frustrating blanks and scattered tantalising hints. This is particularly true of the Second Age, Middle-earth's Dark Age. For both the First and Third Ages we are well supplied with annals and narratives. For the Second Age, however, we have a scant handful of tales and dates, pitifully few for so great a span of years. Yet in this little-known period many interesting things were happening. One of these was the colonization of the area on the Bay of Belfalas and the lower Anduin which would become Gondor. Just how did the Númenóreans manage to colonise an area so close to Mordor, and under Sauron's influence? How did it come to be the stronghold of the Faithful? The bare handful of facts that we have comes nowhere near answering these questions. Combined with the European experience of discovery and colonization, however, these few facts suggest many plausible hypotheses. It could have happened differently but I would like to present my own theory; an outline of a great Númenórean endeavour.

The voyage to Middle-earth was first achieved in 600 S.A.[1] The first major exploratory voyages were undertaken by Aldarion, the son of the then Crown Prince of Númenor, between 730 and 800 S.A.[2] Some of these voyages lasted for years, extending deep into Far Harad. Aldarion also built a haven in Middle-earth, Vinyalondë at the mouth of the Gwathló[3]. As King, Aldarion continued to support exploration but his successors were much less interested. Without royal backing the Númenórean mariners were unable to undertake long voyages or extensive works abroad. Their interests were confined to Lindon and Eriador where Vinyalondë may have been maintained as the centre of a timber industry[4]. Ciryatan, son of Tar-Minastir, is the next known major explorer. He was born in 1634 S.A. and is said to have eased the restlessness of his heart by voyaging east, and north, and south[5].

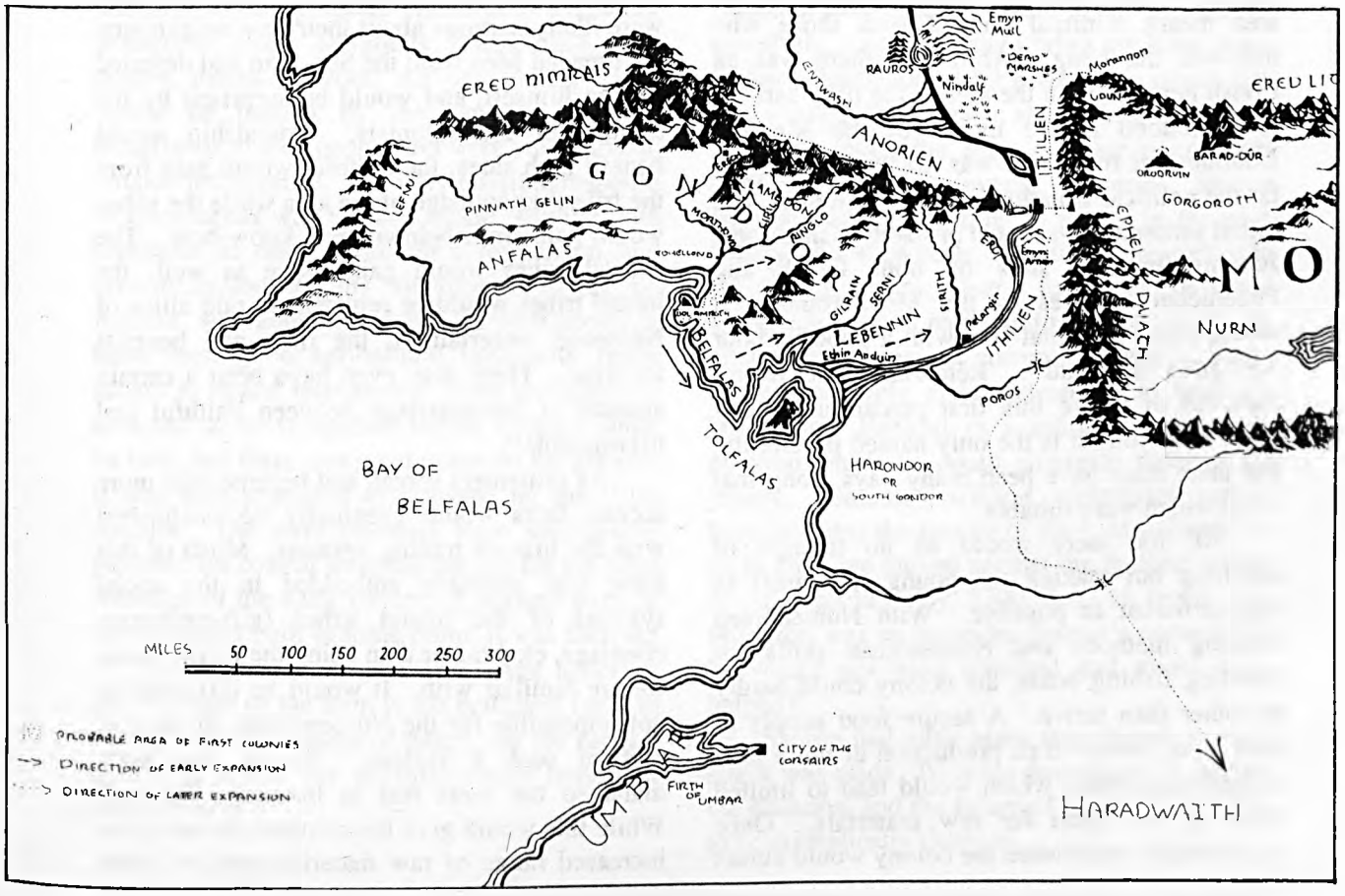
In 1700 S.A. the Númenóreans were seriously involved in Middle-earth for the first time, when Tar-Minastir sent aid to Gil-galad in the war against Sauron. The experience seems to have given them a taste for power in the wide lands to their east. In the last years of Tar-Minastir's rule the Númenóreans began to establish dominions on the coasts, and Tar-Ciryatan continued this policy[6]. Both Tar-Ciryatan and Tar-Atanmir, his son, were proud and greedy men who took heavy tribute from the lands they held in Middle-earth. It was said afterwards that it was in Tar-Atanamir's reign that the Shadow fell on Númenor, but it looks as if the rot had in fact already set in under Tar-Ciryatan[7]. Attitudes do not change overnight; judging by later events in Gondor, political developments on Númenor moved at a leisurely pace only so long-lived a people could afford. Probably it was in this early period of colonization, before the factions had come out into the open, that members of the nascent Faithful established a settlement somewhere on the coast of Belfalas. It would not be a very

[1] *Unfinished Tales* Part II 'A Description of the Island of Númenor', p. 171.
[2] *Unfinished Tales* Part II 'Aldarion and Erendis', pp. 174-7.
[3] *Unfinished Tales* Part II 'Aldarion and Erendis' p. 176.
[4] *Unfinished Tales* Part II 'The History of Galadriel and Celeborn', Appendix D, p. 262
[5] *Unfinished Tales* Part II 'The Line of Elros', p. 221
[6] *The Lord of the Rings*, Book 4, Chapter 4.
[7] *Unfinished Tales* Part II 'The Line of Elros', p. 221.

promising choice but it was to have important consequences.

The main interests of the Númenóreans in Middle-earth lay in Harad: every later reference to the King's Men (or Black Númenóreans) places them in Umbar or further south. There were good reasons for this: going by later descriptions, Harad possessed gold and ivory for certain, and may have had gemstones, spices, exotic woods and fancy dyes[8]. These would draw the Númenóreans as surely as they drew the Europeans to the Indies, to Harad's woe[9]. Further north things were very different.

Eriador had been devastated by the war with Sauron, which may also have destroyed the forests which were once the area's main natural resource[10]. In the Belfalas/Anfalas area the coasts were largely desolate, occupied by only a few – probably poor – tribes[11]. Beyond the White Mountains there may have been much going on. The statement that the Dwarves of Khazad-dûm mined only mithril, being able to obtain all else they needed in trade, implies a vast and rich network[12]. Even before the precious metal was discovered, the technological skills of the Dwarves would bring wealth. Between the coast and the road to Khazad-dûm, however, there were formidable obstacles. First and foremost there were the White Mountains themselves which were almost impassable. There is no mention of any pass being in regular use or of traffic across rather than around the mountains. In contrast, the passes over the Misty Mountains are several times mentioned – though few, they were important[13]. The obvious alternative route was the valley of the Anduin, but this too had problems. The river itself was closed to navigation by the Entwash marshes, the falls of Rauros and the rapids of Sarn Gebir. On land the inland tribes, distant



[8] *The Lord of the Rings*, Book 4, Chapter 4.
[9] Devine, *The Opening of the World*
[10] *Unfinished Tales* Part II 'The History of Galadriel and Celeborn', Appendix D, pp. 262-3.
[11] *Unfinished Tales* Part II 'The History of Galadriel and Celeborn', Appendix D, pp. 262-3
[12] *The Lord of the Rings*, Book 2, Chapter 4.
[13] *The Lord of the Rings*, Book 2, Chapter 2.

relatives and ancestors of the Dead Men of Dunharrow, were numerous and fierce, loyal adherents of Sauron[14]. Whichever tribe held the narrow land between the White Mountains and Mordor would control contact with the North, and must have been both wealthy and well-armed. (One might even wonder if Minas Tirith's inexplicable sevenfold walls were in some way derived from a pre-Númenórean hill-fort on the same site.) None of these obstacles would be insurmountable to Númenórean might and building-skill but they were probably in contact with Khazad-dûm anyway via Lindon. The known riches of Harad would draw attention away from the merely possible attraction of the north.

For the Faithful, however, these seeming disadvantages would be quite the reverse. A desolate coastline could be occupied without having to fight anyone: lack of interest in the area meant minimal contact with those who followed the King. Above all there was an Elvish population in the area at the little harbour of Edhellond at the mouth of the Ringló[15]. Doubtless at first there was no thought of how far the political situation would deteriorate. The initial settlement was most probably a small one. Judging by the sites of both Greek and Phoenician colonies in the Mediterranean, it would be on a coastal site, with a good harbour and good farmland[16]. Remarkably no record survived of where this first precarious colony was. Dol Amroth is the only named possibility, but there must have been many bays along that coast which were suitable.

At first there would be no thought of anything but making the young settlement as self-sufficient as possible. With Númenórean farming methods and Númenórean skills for building fishing boats, the colony could hardly do other than thrive. A secure food supply in turn would allow craft production at more than subsistence levels, which would lead to limited trade in the quest for raw materials. Once successfully established the colony would attract other would-be emigrants and, of all the Númenóreans, the Faithful were the most likely to leave the island. They were a minority in an increasingly difficult position as the rift between them and the King's Men deepened. Not actively persecuted until the reign of Ar-Pharazôn, they must nonetheless have been discriminated against. Just as religious minorities in seventeenth-century Europe fled to America in search of freedom, so the Faithful would have flown to Belfalas[17]. The first colony would have grown, and then other towns would be founded from it, until there was a string of little Númenórean holdings along the coast[18].

At this stage relations with the indigenous peoples were probably good. Holding as they did to older and kindlier ways, the Faithful would most probably deal with the coastal peoples fairly and in friendship. The tribesmen were likely nervous about their new neighbours, the dreaded Men from the Sea, who had defeated Sauron himself, and would be surprised by the attitude of the colonists. Friendship would benefit both sides; the Faithful would gain from the tribes' knowledge of the area while the tribes would gain from Númenórean know-how. The coastal tribes would gain peace as well: the inland tribes would be reluctant to raid allies of Númenor, uncertain of the risks and benefits involved. There may even have been a certain amount of intermarriage between Faithful and tribespeople[19].

As settlement spread and became ever more secure, links would eventually be established with the interior trading systems. Much of this trade was probably embedded in the social systems of the inland tribes (gift-exchange, clientage, etc.) rather than being the market trade we are familiar with. It would be difficult but not impossible for the Númenóreans to become part of such a system. Roman merchants managed the same feat in Iron Age France[20]. While this would give the colonists access to an increased range of raw materials and an outlet

[14] *The Lord of the Rings*, Book 2, Chapter 4.
[15] *Unfinished Tales Part II* 'The History of Galadriel and Celeborn', Appendix D.
[16] Cunliffe, *Greeks, Romans and Barbarians*
[17] Brogan, *History of the United States of America*
[18] Collis, *The European Iron Age*
[19] *The Silmarillion* 'Of the Rings of Power and the Third Age', p. 291.
[20] Cunliffe, *Greeks, Romans and Barbarians*.

for surplus goods, such expansion would by no means be an unmixed blessing for the Faithful. Slowly but surely they would come into conflict with the inland tribes. There would be competition, however unintentional, for scarce resources, and Sauron might well have stirred up his followers against the unwelcome newcomers. Growing wealth would also lead to increasing attention from the King's Men.

We have no record of any war between the Faithful and the natives but absence of evidence is not evidence of absence. Probably there was fighting, and it must have had a considerable effect on the Colony. The Faithful would have had to develop a strong administration of their own to cope first with raids and then open war.

The first victories would raise morale; the Faithful would see themselves in command of their own destiny, not merely as refugees. As time went on, conflict with inland tribes would intensify as the political situation in Númenor worsened. New emigrants would need land, homes, places to work; the old coastal towns would be limited by the capacity of their hinterlands to feed people and were vulnerable to outside interference. The only possible response to these needs was to push inland, solving both problems at once. Pelargir's foundation and growth epitomise this situation. It lay on Anduin, well above the delta, on what seems to have been good agricultural land with ready access to inland resources[21]. Very probably the area had to be conquered before Pelargir could be built, but there was great potential for growth; it was also protected to seaward by the Ethir Anduin. The river channels were most likely passable for coastal shipping but not for the large warships of the King's Fleet. A seaway through the delta was built at some point; it was ascribed to "Númenóreans" by late Third Age histories, but their use of the term is too confused for it to be a reliable indication of date[22]. In the earliest period, defence was probably more important than access.

With the acquisition and successful exploration of the Pelargir area, the scene would be set for further expansion. The areas later known as Lebennin and Dor-en-Ernil were brought under Númenórean control. Probably, somewhat later, the Ithilien/Anórien area was also taken over by the Faithful. This would have been no small achievment but the rewards were high. The land was rich and fertile and control of it brought direct links with the north. Beyond that the Faithful also now had an escape route if the situation ever became intolerable. Umbar, described as a great haven of the Númenóreans, was all too near; a fleet based there would be a real threat if the King ever turned on the Faithful[23].

Through all of this, Sauron made no overt move against the Faithful colonists. At first, with his defeat in 1700 S.A. a recent and painful memory, he would be reluctant to antagonise the Númenóreans. Later it would be obvious that to assault the colonists would bring the King down on him. Númenor's later rulers were proud men who would not have been able to bear the affront of having even the least of their possessions destroyed. For several centuries Sauron concentrated on building up power in the east, hoping to overwhelm the Númenóreans[24]. In the end, of course, Sauron found that he could not match them in battle and had to settle for the alternative strategy of corrupting them[25]. Then, it was positively to his advantage to have the bothersome Faithful in a militarily vulnerable position where he could eliminate them at his leisure. Sauron's wildest nightmares cannot have included the spectre of the Last Alliance, or he might have moved against the Faithful whilst he still could. By 3300 S.A. at latest, Ar-Pharazôn was so far under Sauron's control that he would not have objected and might have helped[26].

Sauron had other plans though and no such attack was made. With the downfall of Númenor the situation, and the future of Middle-earth, was to be dramatically changed.

[21] *The Lord of the Rings*, Map, sheet 4.
[22] *Unfinished Tales* 'Index', entry under 'Serni'.
[23] *The Lord of the Rings*, Appendix B.
[24] *The Lord of the Rings*, Appendix B.
[25] *The Silmarillion* 'Akallabêth', p. 271.
[26] *The Lord of the Rings*, Appendix B.

The Hobbit and Tolkien's Other Pre-war writings

John Rateliff and Christina Scull

Part One

The paper by John Rateliff, which formed the first part of a two-part presentation, not available for this edition of *Mallorn*, covered the history of the writing of *The Hobbit*, giving evidence for its origins in the phrase "In a hole in the ground there lived a hobbit." and in the tradition of story-telling in the Tolkien family.

Rateliff goes on to compare *The Hobbit* to two earlier forms of Tolkien's writing: the mythology and the stories for children. He finds that *The Hobbit* shares a common audience with the children's stories, a similar hero, a bear and a dragon. Dragons also are found in *The Silmarillion*, and there are other species in common.

Concentrating on maps and the Silmaril/Arkenstone parallels, Rateliff argued that in *The Hobbit*, Tolkien drew upon *The Silmarillion* in a liberating way.

Part Two

Christina Scull

According to Christopher Tolkien, *The Hobbit* was probably begun in 1929, and it was eventually published in 1937. During the whole of this period and for many years previously J.R.R. Tolkien had been working on his mythology. He had written various other stories for his children, at least two of which, *The Father Christmas Letters* and *Mr. Bliss*, while having a few interesting links, do not appear to take place in the world of his mythology. *The Hobbit* was also originally conceived as being unconnected, but as it turned out it was not only in many ways influenced by it, but actually became incorporated into it. Tolkien writes about this in various letters. On 14th Dec. 1937 to his friend Selby:

> I don't much approve of *The Hobbit* myself, preferring [sic] my own mythology (which is just touched on) with its consistent nomenclature – Elrond, Gondolin, and Esgaroth have escaped out of it - and organized history, to this rabble of Eddaic-named dwarves ... newfangled hobbits and gollums[1] (invented in an idle hour)...
> (Haggerty Catalogue)

On 16th December 1937 to Stanley Unwin:

> I am sure you will sympathize when I say that the construction of elaborate and consistent mythology (and two languages) rather occupies the mind, and the Silmarils are in my heart... Mr. Baggins began as a comic tale among conventional and inconsistent Grimm's fairy-tale dwarves, and got drawn into the edge of it – so that even Sauron the terrible peeped over the edge.
> (*Letters*, p. 26)

[1] A catalogue in early 1937 had "goblins" but Haggerty has "gollums".

And on 16th July 1964 to Christopher Bretherton:

> I returned to Oxford in Jan 1926, and by the time *The Hobbit* appeared (1937) this "matter of the Elder Days" was in coherent form. *The Hobbit* was not intended to have anything to do with it. I had the habit while my children were still young of inventing and telling orally, sometimes of writing down, children's stories for their private amusement.... *The Hobbit* was intended to be one of them. It had no necessary connexion with the "mythology", but naturally became attracted towards this dominant construction in my mind, causing the tale to become larger and more heroic as it proceeded. Even so it could really stand quite apart, except the references (unnecessary, though they give an impression of historical depth) to the Fall of Gondolin, the branches of the Elfkin and the quarrel of King Thingol, Lúthien's father, with the Dwarves.
>
> (*Letters*, p. 346)

It is indeed in the depiction of Bilbo's comfortable home and way of life that *The Hobbit* is furthest from the mythology. It is generally agreed that the lifestyle Tolkien described is closet to that of a small prosperous English town or village in the eighteenth century or early nineteenth, enjoying a multitude of small manufactures which added to the comfort of life without any of the incipient social and economic problems due to the beginnings of the agrarian and industrial revolutions. It is also a society without fear of outside attack or foreign interference. *The Silmarillion* in all its versions depicts a mythic and heroic world with danger nearly always present which has greater affinity with antiquity and the Middle Ages than with the eighteenth Century. It is true that the elves were great creators and craftsmen but most of the material comforts enjoyed by Bilbo seem too mundane for elvish craftsmen. One must also remember that the introduction of items such as ferhs [C. – what *is* that word?], handkerchiefs, late or post-Medieval in our society, may have taken place at a different stage in Middle-earth. Also, later in *The Hobbit* Tolkien implies that much time has elapsed since the fall of Gondolin so that there might be considerable changes in the style of living. However, a problem arose when he wrote *The Lord of the Rings*. Having once established this comfortable bourgeois setting it became so much a part of the hobbit background (indeed hobbits would not be hobbits without it) that he could not abandon it when he returned to the more mythic and heroic culture in the later part of *The Lord of the Rings* and it had to be fully absorbed into his mythology. Gondor (which recalls Byzantium), and Anglo-Saxon Rohan are closer to the culture of *The Silmarillion*, though their heroes are more human and less powerful than the culture of the Shire and the hobbits. Indeed there is so little difference that it seems incredible that two whole Ages have passed. However, Tolkien joins the two cultures together so carefully that only the mildest feelings of anachronism are aroused by the conjunction of the eighteeenth century Shire and the medieval South. Of course in the history of our own world different parts have been in various stages of evolution at the same time but in *The Lord of the Rings* it is Gondor which is intended, even in decline, to show the greatest degree of civilization, as the heir of Númenor. However, the Shire with all its detail and comforts appears at the beginning of the book when the story moves at a much slower pace. Then when after a long period of travel, we reach the supposedly more advanced culture, the story is moving at such a pace that we have little time to stop for detail. The contrast between Shire and the world outside is indeed close to other fantasy stories, wherein children from our world enter another world or go back in time in our own world. Tolkien introduces this effect within his own secondary world with no disruption of time or space.

Beginning with clothing, Bilbo has pegs for coats, he wears braces, and a waistcoat, a dressing-gown and has pocket handkerchiefs, none of which I would associate with anybody in *The Silmarillion*; Gandalf and the dwarves are more appropriately dressed in cloaks and hoods, other items not being mentioned. I wonder too who might have carried the muff which occurs in the reference to Beorn as a skin-changer. We hear a great deal of the furnishing of Bilbo's home – panelled walls, tiles and carpeted floors, hearthrugs, bedroom mat, a clock on the

mantelpiece, sofas, and even a big lamp with a red shade, far removed from the lanterns used by the Noldor, such as Flinding carried. It all seems so down-to-earth and practical. *The Fellowship of the Ring* adds umbrellas, wastepaper baskets, gold pens and ink bottles, and a bookcase – something that would have been rare in a private person's house in our world prior to the invention of printing; there is no suggestion of printed books in Middle-earth. With the exception of halls of audience we do not hear much detail of furnishings in the mythology or in *The Lord of the Rings* outside the Shire. We do get a description of the room used by Gandalf and Pippin in Minas Tirith but again it suggests a medieval background rather than the more cluttered rooms of the Shire, and the description is very general:

> A fair room, light and airy, with goodly hangings of dull gold sheen unfigured. It was spare furnished, having but a small table, two chairs and a bench; but at either side there were curtained alcoves and well-clad beds within with vessels and basins for washing.

From the details I have of other rooms I could visualize Bilbo's bedroom at Bag End but I have no idea of what the royal bedchamber used by Aragorn in Minas Tirith was like. John Rateliff has commented to me that artists probably have the same problem in visualising interiors since so many choose to depict characters standing by windows thus avoiding having to depict much furniture.

For meals Bilbo has cups and saucers (called crocks in the dwarves' song), glasses, knives, forks and spoons, much of which seems quite modern. Most versions of the mythology are too swift-moving to record such utensils in detail, but in the *Lays* Beleg has a flask of leather, the company at Thingol's table used gold goblets and Turin flung a horn adorned with gold at Orgof. At Nargothrond we hear of dishes and goblets, wine flagons engraved, with gold and silver and cups of wrought silver and gold used by Fuilin. Even in *The Hobbit* the elves used bowls in their feasts, and the butler and chief guard used great flagons. I don't quite see them passing cups and saucers around. When Frodo and Sam eat with Faramir, the utensils include round platters, bowls and dishes of glazed brown clay, turned box wood cups, basins of polished bronze and a goblet of plain silver. In Gondor we hear of a salver with silver flagons and cups, a leather flagon of ale, and wooden platters and cups. *The Silmarillion* and much of *The Lord of the Rings* seem very close. It is the *Shire* in both *The Hobbit* and the early part of *The Lord of the Rings* which is different. It is not only crocks, saucers, forks, and glasses, which we do not hear of outside the Shire, coffee and tea and such homely items as buttered scones are also missing. From the morning letters mentioned in *The Hobbit* and the *postman* in *The Lord of the Rings* who brought acceptances to the party it is clear that the Shire had a regular postal service, unmentioned elsewhere in Middle-earth. Bilbo was used to having his meat delivered by the butcher all ready to cook.

The hobbits themselves of course are also new. They were probably invented as small creatures with whom Tolkien's children could identify and perhaps we learn something from the change in their description. The first edition has "They are (or were) small people, smaller than dwarves (and they have no beards) but very much larger than lilliputians." (p. 12) This was changed to; "They are, or were, a little people about half our height, and smaller than the bearded dwarves; Hobbits have no beards" (p. 10). The change, omitting the lilliputians, makes them seem more human, less remote. They are so much a part of the Shire that Tolkien never wrote them into the earlier mythology. Galadriel was written in and became a person of great importance, and Gandalf and the ents were mentioned, yet Tolkien could not find a place for the hobbits in the First Age. Where could they have lived in that Age and remained hobbits?

In the first edition it was said of the Tooks, "It had always been said that long ago one or other of the Tooks had married into a fairy family (the less friendly said a goblin family)." (p.12) This became: "It was often said (in other families) that long ago one of the Took ancestors must have taken a fairy wife. That was absurd, of course." (p. 10) Tolkien was probably originally thinking of traditional fairies rather than his elves, who are sometimes referred to in *The Book of Lost Tales* as fairies, and he throws no doubt on the possibility. In the third edition

(1966) Tolkien refuted any possibility of such a marriage, though he still used the word *fairy*, not *elf*. At that time he no longer used *fairy* and *elf* interchangeably, nor had he introduced fairies separately from elves into Middle-earth. When he first wrote the passage in about 1929 elves can not have been entirely unconnected with our fairies if those who remained in Middle-earth were to dwindle into our traditional fairies. Nor has he either completely established the significance and rarity of elf-mortal marriages.

No wizards occur in the mythology as it was in 1930, and it seems likely that Gandalf was originally seen as something entirely apart, depending on the traditional wizard with his pointed hat, cloak, long beard, and staff. He is a different figure in *The Lord of the Rings* and gains much in dignity and authority so that he can be described in the mythology as the Maia Olórin. In *The Hobbit* he is introduced as a *little* old man, though later the word *little* was removed. He is interested in trivialities such as magic studs and fireworks, though the interest in fireworks is later seen as reflecting his wearing Narya and his role as a weilder of the Secret Fire, the flame of Anor. He is a slightly comic figure on page 38 exclaiming "Great Elephants!", and on page 41 he is described as having eaten most, talked most, and laughed most. He is unable to read the runes on the swords, which suggests he is much less learned than Elrond, yet in *The Lord of the Rings* he is a master of tongues. He is also a little conceited; on page 105 we are told; "The wizard, to tell the truth, never minded explaining his cleverness more than once." The smoking indulged in by Gandalf, Bilbo, and the dwarves is also unknown in the mythology. Gandalf is a new and somewhat incongruous element which in *The Lord of the Rings* is made over and fitted into the mythology.

There are also some real anachronisms in *The Hobbit*, mainly due to the comments of the narrator. These are absent in the mythology and in most of *The Lord of the Rings*, the firework dragon passing "like an express train" being the main exception. In *The Hobbit* there is also a railway allusion. In the first chapter Bilbo's shriek bursts out like the whistle of an engine coming out of a tunnel. The story of the invention of golf at the Battle of the Green Fields also seems a little out of place. On page 43 the statement is made :

> These parts are none too well know, and are too near the mountains. Policemen never come so far, and the map-makers have not reached this country yet. They have seldom even heard of the king round here.

Tolkien changed it later in 1966 (p. 42):

> These parts are none too well known, and are too near the mountains. Travellers seldom come this way now. The old maps are no use: things have changed for the worse and the road is unguarded. They have seldom even heard of the king round here.

He thus removed the mention of policemen and recent map-making but left the reference to the king. Possibly he was thinking originally of the British conceptions of the King's highway and the King's justice, but *post-The Lord of the Rings* it might have been better to remove the reference to the king since centuries had passed since that area had had a king. Yet on page 67 he repeats the allusion to "great tall mountains with lonely peaks and valleys where no king ruled". Maps were certainly well known in the Shire. Bilbo loved them, and in his hall there hung a large one of the Country Round with all his favourite walks marked on it in red ink. No one ever uses maps in the *Silmarillion* mythology and they are rare in *The Lord of the Rings*. On page 20 Gandalf makes a very unlikely remark when he accuses Bilbo of opening the door like a pop-gun. Elsewhere weaponry in Middle-earth is strictly Medieval – bows and arrows, spears, swords, axes, shields, etc.

Much of *The Hobbit* is, to quote Tolkien, "derived from epic, mythology and fairy story" (*Letters*, p. 31). Such details include the pair of magic diamond studs that fastened themselves and never came undone until ordered, which Gandalf gave the Old Took, and the stories which Gandalf used to tell about dragons and goblins and giants and the rescue of princesses and the unexpected luck of widows' sons. Dragons do occur in the mythology but are not particularly noted there as having a taste for maidens. In the first edition of *The Hobbit* Gandalf says "Smaug could not creep into a hole

that size, not even when he was a young dragon, certainly not after devouring so many of the maidens of the valley" (p. 30) – this allusion to the traditional dragon was later changed to "certainly not after devouring so many of the dwarves and men of Dale." (p. 29). Gandalf himself says they are no longer in heroic times:

> That would be no good, not without a mighty Warrior, even a Hero. I tried to find one; but warriors are busy fighting one another in distant lands, and in this neighbourhood heroes are scarce or simply not to be found. Swords in these parts are mostly blunt, and axes are used for trees and shields as cradles or dish-covers; and dragons are comfortably far off (and therefore legendary)."

With this he both alludes to the traditional idea of the hero killing the dragon and shows that he is not telling such a heroic saga – yet not far into the book the whole atmosphere begins to change. Tolkien notes this in his summary of *The Hobbit* for Milton Walman:

> For in effect this is a study of a simple ordinary man, neither artistic nor noble and heroic... against a high setting – and in fact... the tone and style change with the Hobbit's development, passing from fairy-tale to the noble and high and relapsing with the return.
> (*Letters*, p. 159)

The Trolls who turn to stone are part of the northern folk tradition and legends but the talking purse which like them speaks with a cockney accent is pure fairy tale as are the spells the dwarves put over the Trolls' pots of gold to protect them. The dancing and singing of the elves of Rivendell on midsummer eve probably rely as much on general fairy tradition as to the custom of the elves of the mythology. The song they sing to greet the travellers, which even Tolkien calls "pretty fair nonsense", seems to lack all inspiration, though perhaps no more than "Tinfang Warble". The episode with the goblins in the Misty Mountains recalls the goblins in MacDonald's *The Princess and the Goblin* and it is interesting that in one letter Tolkien says that Victorian fairy-tales did not inspire him with the exception of those of George MacDonald. The ring which makes you invisible is a fairy-tale element, and no such object occurs in *The Silmarillion*. There are also many talking creatures – eagles, ravens, the thrush, spiders, and – although they do not talk to others, there are animals who serve Beorn and communicate with him. Another such element is the enchanted river which gives drowsiness and forgetfulness.

I am now going to consider some of the names, motifs, and ideas which have crept into *The Hobbit* from Tolkien's mythology. John Rateliff has already pointed out that the picture of the Elvenking's gate owes much to the pictures and conception of Nargothrond, and thatt he picture of Mirkwood is adapted from one showing Beleg finding Gwindor in Taur-na-fuin. Indeed the very name *Mirkwood* is similar to *Taur-na-fuin*, meaning the 'Forest under Night'. There are other influences on the illustrations to *The Hobbit*. *Rivendell* has some similarities to *Tol Sirion*, especially in the bridge and its relationship to the buildings, though, of course Rivendell is not on an island. In the drawing of Lake Town the boats have swan-headed prows recalling the ships of the Teleri in the painting "Taniquetil". The picture of the Front Gate of the Lonely Mountain recalls "Glaurung setting forth to seek Túrin". On Thrór's map Tolkien uses ordinary Anglo-Saxon runes for a modern English text. In "Conversation with Smaug" the large pot of gold in the foreground is inscribed in Fëanorian script "Gold th... Thráin accursed be the thief...".

One of the more direct references comes in Chapter 3 when the company meets Elrond:

> The master of the house was an elf-friend – one of those people whose fathers come into the strange stories before the beginning of History, the wars of the evil goblins and the elves and the first men in the North. In those days of our tale there were still some people who had both elves and heroes of the North for ancestors and Elrond the master of the house was their chief.
>
> He was as noble and as fair in face as an elf-lord, as strong as a warrior, as wise as a wizard, as venerable as a king of dwarves, and as kind as summer. He comes into many tales.

While the travellers are at Rivendell he identifies the swords they found in the Trolls' hoard:

> These are not troll-make. They are very old swords, very old swords of the elves that are now called Gnomes. They were made in Gondolin for the Goblin-wars. They must have come from a dragon's hoard or goblin plunder, for dragons and goblins destroyed that city many ages ago. This, Thorin, the runes name Orcrist, the Goblin cleaver in the ancient tongue of Gondolin; it was a famous blade. This, Gandalf, was Glamdring, Foe-hammer that the kings of Gondolin once wore.
> (p. 63)

This history is reiterated when the Goblins see Orcrist:

> They knew the sword at once. It had killed hundreds of goblins in its time, when the fair elves of Gondolin hunted them in the hills or did battle before their walls. They had called it Orcrist, Goblin-cleaver, but the goblins called it simply Biter.
> (p. 75)

Here we have direct references to the events of the mythology and especially the destruction of Gondolin. *Gnomes* is an early name for the Noldor. Orcrist and Glamdring had not previously appeared in the mythology, but they are good Sindarin names. Elrond makes his first appearance in The "Sketch of the Mythology" written c.1926-30, when he is already the son of Eärendel and Elwing, and defined as half-mortal and half-elfin, and it is said of him,

> when later the Elves return to the West, bound by his mortal half he elects to stay on earth. Through him the blood of Húrin (his great uncle) and of the Elves is yet among Men, and is seen yet in valour and in beauty and in poetry.
> (*The Shaping of Middle-earth*, p. 38).

This last seems close to the description of Elrond in *The Hobbit*. The meaning of this text is a little difficult, and implies that Elrond chose mortality, even if perhaps greatly extended, and life in Middle-earth; thus incorporating elements of both his eventual choices – immortality and Middle-earth for a time – and that of his brother Elros chose mortality with long life but in Númenor. The phrase in *The Hobbit* that Elrond was an *elf-friend* does suggest that he was not actually an elf. The "Quenta" of about 1930 states,

> But of these only Elrond was now left, and [he] elected to remain, the half-elven being bound by his mortal blood in love to those of the younger race; and Elrond alone has the blood of the elder race and of the seed devine if Valinor come among mortal Men (for he was son of Elwing, daughter of Dior, son of Lúthien, child of Thingol and Melian; and Eärendil his sire was son of Idril Celebrindal, the fair maid of Gondolin.

This suggests that his descendents, at any rate, were mortal. I was for a time intrigued as to why Elrond, whose ancestry we know from *The Silmarillion*, made no comment that Glamdring had been the sword his grandfather, Turgon of Gondolin. One would have expected him to claim it as a family heirloom. I also wondered what the tales were in which he played a great part, since he is only mentioned in the early mythology and takes no direct actions, while his great deeds in the Second Age are as a leader against Sauron the Ringmaker which were only evolving in the late 1930's. The answer to these questions lies in the letter written by Tolkien to Christopher Bretherton in 1964. The Elrond of *The Hobbit* as originally conceived and the Elrond of earlier ages were not necessarily the same. Tolkien says about Elrond:

> The passage in Ch. III relating him to the Half-elven of the mythology was a fortunate accident, due to the difficulty of constantly inventing good names for new characters. I gave him the name Elrond casually, but as this came from the mythology (Elros and Elrond the two sons of Eärendil) I made him half elven. Only in *The Lord* [*of the Rings*] was he identified with the son of Eärendel, and so the great-grandson of Lúthien and Beren...

I would point out that while obviously Tolkien suggests some considerable time has elapsed since the Fall of Gondolin, this could as easily be centuries and not millennia.

Another reference occurs early in the book when Bilbo says: "Not the Gandalf who was responsible for so many quiet lads and lasses going off into the Blue for mad adventures, anything from climbing trees to stowing away aboard the ships that sail to the Other Side?" This was amended in the third edition to "Not the Gandalf who was responsible for so many

quiet lads and lasses going off into the Blue for mad adventures? Anything from climbing trees to visiting Elves – or sailing in ships, sailing to other shores!" (p.19).

After *The Lord of the Rings* it was impossible to think of anyone casually sailing to the Other Side. The lines between mortal and immortal were clearly drawn. What was the position at the time *The Hobbit* was written? The "Sketch" is the closest in date. The Valar had already strung the magic isles filled with enchantment "across the confines of the Shadowy Seas, before the Lonely Isle is reached sailing West, to entrap any mariners and wind them in everlasting sleep and enchantment". Eärendel did eventually reach Valinor, but there is no debate as to what nature he was, elfin or mortal. After the Last Battle many elves did return to Valinor, and others from time to time set sail, leaving the world ere they fade. The Gods judged that the earth is for Men, but there is no mention of an actual prohibition. The "Quenta" of 1930, which almost certainly postdates this early reference in *The Hobbit*, does have an obscure reference, soon removed, that those of the race of Hador and Beör could leave with the elves for the West. It may be this was a time when the prohibition of Valinor to mortals was conceived less strictly, so that it was possible to suggest hobbit-stowaways on elven ships.

Another reference which has crept in is that the elf-king's wine came from the great gardens of Dorwinion; and this brought deep and pleasant dreams to the chief guard and the butler, Galion, another Sindarin name. This wine already occurs in "The Lay of the Children of Húrin" – given to the child Túrin and his companions by Beleg, served in Thingol's halls. In the re-written Lay we learn that it was made from berries of the burning South, brought North from Nogrod by the Dwarves.

On page 226[2] when Bilbo sees the hoard Tolkien says:

> To say that Bilbo's breath was taken away is no description at all. There are no words left to express his staggerment, since Men changed the language that they learned of elves in the days when all the world was wonderful.

The Hobbit, without being a runaway best-seller, was successful enough in 1937 for Allen & Unwin to ask for a sequel. Tolkien was unwilling. He would have preferred to get his mythology published, but, as he says, "I offered my publishers something good: a complete & heroic history of the Elves – and they clamour for more hobbits. Mr. Baggins had more sense, and properly went into retirement." (Letter to Selby, Haggerty Catalogue p. 4) We certainly must be grateful that Allen & Unwin clamoured for more hobbits, for the result was *The Lord of the Rings*. Tolkien himself must eventually have felt differently, for with the success of *The Lord of the Rings* the public began to clamour for *The Silmarillion*, which was eventually published. Without *The Hobbit* it is likely the mythology would never have been published.

[2] 2nd edition, p. 227 3rd edition.

Tolkien's Art

John Ellison

The impulse which led to this paper's being put together was provided by the exhibition devoted to Tolkien's life and work presented last year (1992) at Oxford by the Bodleian Library. Many members of the Tolkien Society, no doubt, will have visited this, either during the Centenary Conference in August, or subsequently. Many of the exhibits were already familiar, either by repute, or in reproduction. The early manifestation of Tolkien's artistic talent it revealed was, however, quite unexpected as far as I was concerned, and I believe, also was quite a new discovery for most people. It was demonstrated in a number of drawings which he made during his school and undergraduate days, before his career was interrupted by war service. These enable his familiar artwork, all of it produced after his academic career had settled into its subsequent course, to be viewed in a different light.

There possibly are two main reasons why Tolkien's artwork has not always been treated with the attention and seriousness which it demands. The first of these is the situation, referred to above, whereby, up to now, we have seen hardly any of it dating from any earlier period than that of the group of paintings and drawings, principally associated with *The Silmarillion*, and in a different mode, with *The Father Christmas Letters*, that seem to have been made in the middle and late 1920's. Such works as the painting of Taniquetil[1] that appears on the exhibition poster, or "Glaurung sets forth to seek Túrin"[2], for all their charm and decorative effect, are "early" works, in their particular medium, immature from his point of view in a technical sense. Because of their prominence among his published artwork they have been taken to be more representative of his art as a whole than, in fact, they are. He was at this time working on his concepts of the various aspects of his "legendarium" in much greater detail, and embarking on landscape watercolour, for him at this time a new direction and a new field, as a means of realising those concepts visually. These works and others of the same period like them do not represent a talent that was not developed already in other ways.

The other reason is that virtually all Tolkien's artwork from the 1920's on, with isolated and chiefly unimportant exceptions, is related or ancillary to his writings, or appears in a special context like that of *The Father Christmas Letters*. From this time on, he never drew independent scenes of any importance, real or imaginary, and does not seem to have sketched or painted from real life, or out of doors (although his drawings of trees and plants do show close observation of nature). It is now evident, on the other hand, that he did so quite extensively in his 'teens and early twenties. The response that his art as a whole has always evoked, in consequence, has been to see it as a sideline, an accompaniment of Tolkien's real life's work and eventual achievement, interesting and often delightful, but essentially subordinate to all his main concerns. It has not generally been seen as of separate importance and worth studying in its own right. Very probably the former was Tolkien's own view of it, more or less. "The pictures seem to me mostly only to prove that the author cannot draw,"[3] as he commented to Allen and Unwin, when submitting the drawings for *The Hobbit*, prior to its first publication. As we know, Allen and Unwin did not agree[4].

[1] *Bodleian Exhibition Catalogue* No. 209 and cover illustration, *Pictures by J.R.R. Tolkien*, Edited with Foreword and Notes by Christopher Tolkien, first edition, George Allen and Unwin, 1979 No. 31

[2] *Bodleian Exhibition Catalogue* No. 207, p. 68, *Pictures by Tolkien* No. 38

[3] Tolkien, quoted in Carpenter, *J.R.R. Tolkien, A Biography* p. 181.

[4] Carpenter, ibid. p. 181.

Another difficulty arises from the possibility that further examples of Tolkien's artwork exist, apart from those that have been exhibited or published, and it is not clear what proportion of the whole the latter represents; are there many more "discoveries" to be made, comparable with several items in the Bodleian's exhibition? Probably a full assessment will have to wait the appearance of a complete *corpus* or "catalogue raisonné". For the present what can perhaps be done is to look at and reassess the material in the light of what is now available, and consider it both in itself and in its relationship to Tolkien's writings, especially, of course, *The Silmarillion*, *The Hobbit*, and *The Lord of the Rings*.

The first serious indication of Tolkien's artistic talent is provided by a drawing of his boyhood[5]. Entitled "What is Home without a Mother (or a Wife)?", this depicts a domestic scene in a ruefully humorous mood. Despite its technical naïveté (only to be expected from an artist aged twelve), it brings its subject matter to life and characterises it with remarkable vividness for a boy's drawing – the two figures (Tolkien himself and an uncle) emerge as distinct personalities, and their mutual feeling of slight disgust at the task they are performing – darning their own socks – is quite apparent. The gift for expression of character by means of line, seen here in embryo, reappears later on in Tolkien's early artwork, and another item that illustrates it is a card[6] advertising an Exeter College "smoker" designed and drawn by him in his undergraduate days. This appears to show a group of revellers making their way along the Turl after what has plainly been quite an alcoholic lunch – or dinner. The drawing of the miniature figures is crude, but remarkably vivid in the way it evokes the mood of the scene; this is the sort of gift that is possessed, for instance, by the professional cartoonist. The limitations of the figures contrasts strongly with the assured treatment of the details of the buildings along the street frontage and the church behind, and here one can compare a slightly earlier line drawing (1910) of the harbour front at Whitby, Yorkshire[7]. This is a remarkable performance by any standards, and displays a delight in the possibilities of varied surface textures, and a skill in handling them, that is to prove a permanent distinctive element of Tolkien's artwork in all of the media he uses for the rest of his life. He is still a little unsure of himself as regards perspective, and it is a pity that the exhibition catalogue does not reproduce either of the similar, but more mature, drawings, done two years later, of a cottage and of a main street at Eastbury, Berkshire[8]. These have the delicacy and finish of a fine etching; they are so good that one might think them the work of a professional artist, instead of one whose only drawing lessons had been given to him by his mother during childhood. They come from a sketchbook, and it is plain that Tolkien must have been very active as artist and draughtsman at this time, and have produced a large quantity of work.

The War now intervened, and it does not seem as if Tolkien ever did subject drawings like those of Whitby and Eastbury again. The exhibition did, however, include a very interesting sheet of miniature drawings[9], "High Life at Gypsy Green", which depicts scenes from his early family life with his wife and first child. The delicacy and finish of these drawings is not fully apparent in reproduction; they need to be seen at only a few inches distance, but the extent to which they show his gift for vivid and quietly humorous characterization does all the same come through. Tolkien perhaps would have relished (and perhaps anyway realised) a comparison with the marginal decorative figures and scenes, called "babewyns", that are such a feature of manuscript illumination in the later Middle Ages, especially in England; they are considered a particularly English conceit, although they do occur in France and the Low Countries to some extent[10]. The comparison is

[5] *Bodleian Exhibition Catalogue* No. 15, p. 14
[6] *Bodleian Exhibition Catalogue* No. 39, p. 26
[7] *Bodleian Exhibition Catalogue* No. 21, p. 19
[8] *Bodleian Exhibition Catalogue* No. 41, not illustrated
[9] *Bodleian Exhibition Catalogue* No. 64, p. 38
[10] The early 14th century "East Anglian" school of illumination, as represented by the "Luttrell", "Gorleston" or "St. Omer" Psalters, displays a variety of such marginal scenes of everyday life, animals, grotesques, etc. These have been often illustrated, e.g. Janet Backhouse, *The Illuminated Manuscript*, Thames and Hudson, 1979, pp. 47 – 51.

apt also in view of Tolkien's parallel development of his own style of calligraphy, the inspiration for which also came from his mother, whose own calligraphic style, as seen in a letter shown in the exhibition[11], had great refinement. He was, in this instance, consciously harking back to early medieval manuscript sources as an inspiration and precedent, and his interest in this direction also developed early on, as shown in an example in the exhibition dating from his undergraduate days[12].

The course of Tolkien's academic and professional life becomes settled with his appointment at Leeds University, and his removal to Oxford to hold the chair of Anglo-Saxon five years later. This of course is the period of his first really intensive development of the Silmarillion texts; at the same time, with a growing family to entertain, he begins, as a kind of counterpoint to his serious work on the "legendarium", to produce stories and the series of *Father Christmas Letters*. At this time a sudden "bulge" in his artistic output also occurs, associated with both sides of his activity as writer and storyteller. Much of his work at this time is in watercolour, which he does not seem to have taken up much, if at all, earlier than this. The problem that it presents is that at any time in his life he was, reasonably enough, inclined to suit his style to the occasion, and that very often the occasion did not call for elaborately detailed or highly finished work. This was particularly the case with *The Father Christmas Letters* or with *Mr. Bliss*, where such refinement would in any case have been unsuitable, and would have demanded too much of his time for its execution. They required a considerable amount of "staffage" in the form of small figures, or figured scenes, and the execution of these remains, in terms of technique, limited and crude, though always retaining the vitality and vividness evident in earlier work such as the Exeter College "smoker" drawing – the limitations do not matter as the style is entirely appropriate for its purpose. The illustrations for the latter are noteworthy above all for the decorative element they display. Tolkien exploited the opportunities they gave him for the use of a variety of patterns and textures, and for decorative borders, and in a particularly interesting one (1934)[13] (in the exhibition but not illustrated in the catalogue) much of the design has been transformed into a linear abstract surface pattern of a kind which is to recur from time to time in his work, and which reaches its fullest extent in a remarkable late work, "The Hills of the Morning", referred to below. The whole experience of the *Father Christmas Letters* was plainly of value in the impetus it gave to Tolkien's developing sense of design; the "Winter Picture" (1927)[14], for instance, anticipates the post-war book-jacket designs, notably that for *The Two Towers*[15].

As to *The Silmarillion* itself, the watercolours of the period are well represented by the "Taniquetil" and "Glaurung" paintings which display Tolkien's "stylized" approach. Two drawings of the same period[16], [17] clearly reflect his determination to visualise his imaginary world in much fuller detail than he had done up to then, and no doubt provided one means of doing so. These drawings (also published as coloured by another hand) are more elaborate than the contemporary water-colours, and one of them, "Tol Sirion"[18], is more naturalistic. At the same time the penchant for decorative borders and patterning was becoming established as a permanent element of his style in just the same way as it was doing with *The Father Christmas Letters*. The latter of two examples[19], [20], "Lake Mithrim", a miniature landscape enclosed in a border, is a particularly beautiful one, the softly rounded hills being a little characteristic of his landscapes of this time;

[11] *Bodleian Exhibition Catalogue* No. 6, p. 10
[12] *Bodleian Exhibition Catalogue* No. 42, p. 27
[13] *The Father Christmas Letters* ed Baillie Tolkien, George Allen & Unwin 1976, Unwin Paperbacks 1990, letter for 1934
[14] *The Father Christmas Letters*, letter for 1927
[15] *Bodleian Exhibition Catalogue* No. 170, p. 87
[16] *Pictures by Tolkien* No. 35
[17] *Pictures by Tolkien* No. 36
[18] *Pictures by Tolkien* No. 36
[19] *Pictures by Tolkien* No. 42
[20] *Pictures by Tolkien* No. 32

only close inspection of the original can show the care with which the layers of paint have been applied, and the refinement of colour achieved.

The extremes of Tolkien's style at this time are shown by two water-colours made to illustrate the story "Roverandom" shown in the exhibition, which have not been widely known up to now. One of them[21] is a simple stylised landscape typical of his work of the period (the little "babewyns" in the lower border are especially charming). The other one[22] is possibly the most elaborate and accomplished painting that Tolkien ever accomplished: "The Gardens of the Merking's palace". His love of semi-abstract patterning and rich surface texture again displays itself, and the colours have an almost oriental richness and decorative quality; one can easily imagine this as a theatre or ballet design. Certainly there is nothing immature or naive about the technique he has developed for himself here; it would be interesting to know if there was any special reason why he wanted to elaborate this particular scene so carefully.

From this time onwards the figurative element in Tolkien's art disappears almost without trace, whereas the decorative, textural element is to become increasingly important, and, at the end, to take it over almost wholly. This is no doubt one reason why Tolkien, as it seems, never tried to illustrate, or make drawings for, *Farmer Giles of Ham*, *Leaf by Niggle*, or *Smith of Wootton Major*, all of which would have required a predominantly figurative treatment. It may be suggested that his writings display a similar movement, but in the reverse direction. The florid language and elaborately decorative kind of descriptive writing, characteristic of *The Book of Lost Tales*, becomes increasingly "slimmed down" as he continues to write; in the end he attains the command of the kind of descriptive writing typical of *The Lord of the Rings*, evocative, but also economical and straightforward. The gift for characterization in minuscule, so noteworthy in his early art, becomes transferred to Bilbo Baggins, and then to the other Hobbits, and the liveliness and vitality Tolkien gives them contributes to a convincing picture of society and culture in the Shire, and provides, as *The Father Christmas Letters* has done for the early "Silmarillion" watercolours, a counterpoint to the heroic, or "medieval" societies and cultures inhabiting Middle-earth as a whole. It appears that each side of Tolkien's creativity, the artistic and the literary, took from the other that which it needed to make itself complete.

The next phase in the evolution of Tolkien's art is associated with the writing of *The Hobbit* and is principally concerned with landscape, on which he concentrates more exclusively than at any other time in his career. The material mainly consists of the eight drawings included in the original first edition, together with the watercolours produced for the second printing and the first U.S.A. (Houghton Mifflin) edition. There are a number of additional drawings and watercolours, including one or two "working drawings". These works all display a marked stylistic advance on the *Silmarillion* works of the 1920's; as landscapes they are more ambitious and are richer in detail: stylised elements, mountains and rocks, trees and tree shapes are employed more systematically, and with considerably greater confidence and freedom. A picture like "Bilbo woke early with the early sun in his eyes"[23], in the handling of the landscape forms and the sense of distance produced, shows that Tolkien now knows exactly what he requires of the medium employed, and that his technique is now equal to the task of conveying his imaginative intuition. Perhaps the most successful of this group is "Bilbo comes to the Huts of the Raft-elves"[24] which presents such a powerful image that, not surprisingly, it has often been treated as a representative "type" of Tolkien's art as a whole, having been used for a previous exhibition poster, for instance, and also for a record-album box cover[25]. The "Rivendell" painting[26] shows the elements of his style in harmony with each

[21] *Bodleian Exhibition Catalogue* No. 31, p. 29
[22] *Bodleian Exhibition Catalogue* No. 130, p. 59
[23] *Pictures by Tolkien* No. 9
[24] *Pictures by Tolkien* No. 14
[25] The Decca-Argo recording of Nicol Williamson's "dramatic reading" of *The Hobbit*.
[26] *Pictures by Tolkien* No. 6

other; the stylization of the landscape which is built up out of the semi-abstract surface patterns, set off by the decorative border underneath. Tolkien's annoyance at its mutilation by Houghton Mifflin, who sliced off the top and bottom border, is easy to understand.

The Hobbit is, indeed, the one book whose landscapes he illustrated comprehensively. He did not attempt the Gollum episode, but that is essentially a figurative scene, and otherwise virtually all the major scenes are covered. With the period of *The Lord of the Rings*, a notable change of emphasis makes itself felt. The descriptions of place and scenery in *The Hobbit* are fairly limited in scope and extent, and no doubt Tolkien felt a need to "flesh them out", by means of full-scale illustration. With the enlargement of his descriptive powers in *The Lord of the Rings* to their full extent, one has the feeling that the need on his part to visualise every individual scene and landscape has largely gone. Those powers were largely undeveloped in the pre-LotR period of work on the "Silmarillion", and it is the relative lack of convincing description of place and landscape which at least in part accounts for the fact that many people, coming to *The Silmarillion*, after they have encountered *The Lord of the Rings*, find the former such heavy going.

The visual presentation of scene therefore has in *The Lord of the Rings* become a much more *ad hoc* affair. The impression it gives is that Tolkien only drew, or coloured, when he needed to in order to enable him to clarify features of a particular scene or place, as part of the essential task of setting the whole down in words. The partly completed drawing of Minas Tirith ("Steinborg")[27] provides a typical instance; he has taken the whole drawing only as far as he needs to do for his purposes, but the portions of it that he particularly requires to visualise have been very carefully outlined and coloured; the delicate drawing of the detail of the gateway is notable. One likewise finds small "working drawings" interspersed with manuscript drafts (the pass of Cirith Ungol[28]) or odd sheets of examination script pressed into service (Helm's Deep[29]). The best example of all is provide by the varying versions of the tower of Orthanc[30], [31], the detail of which plainly gave him considerable trouble to work out. This produced one of his most beautiful drawings[32], not published until volume 7 of "The History of Middle-earth" Series. Here he clearly wants to visualise the scene as a whole, and not merely the details of the tower itself, and inspection of the original (of which the reproduction gives only a limited idea) enables one to appreciate how swiftly and vividly he sketches the outlines of the ring of Isengard, and also the effect of recession in the distant hills behind.

This phase of Tolkien's art is characterised by his increased use of crayon as a colouring medium, which seems to replace water-colour altogether in his work[33]. He had used this medium previously in one or two of the later *Father Christmas Letters*, and also for one or two "working drawings" for *The Hobbit*, of which one, of Gandalf approaching Bag End[34], shown in the exhibition, interestingly seems to approach the *Lord of the Rings* style. A crayon drawing, "Rivendell looking East"[35] originally thought to belong with the illustrations for *The Hobbit*, is now, it seems, thought on stylistic grounds to date from the period of the writing of *The Lord of the Rings*. The use of the new medium also goes hand in hand with a new kind of stylization in regards to landscape, seen typically in scenes like "Moria Gate"[36] and "Dunharrow"[37]. The

[27] *Pictures by Tolkien* No. 27
[28] *Pictures by Tolkien* No. 28
[29] *Pictures by Tolkien* No. 26. The candidate's writing has been edited out in the published version.
[30] *Pictures by Tolkien* No. 27
[31] *The Treason of Isengard*, "The History of Middle-earth", volume 7 (Unwin Hyman 1989, frontispiece
[32] *The Treason of Isengard*, "The History of Middle-earth", volume 7 (Unwin Hyman 1989, frontispiece
[33] This may well also have been the result of wartime shortage, as was Tolkien's use of unconventional materials like examination scripts.
[34] *Bodleian Exhibition Catalogue* No. 105, p. 48
[35] *Pictures by Tolkien* No. 5
[36] *Pictures by Tolkien* No. 22
[37] *Pictures by Tolkien* No. 29

new style has the air of a kind of visual "shorthand" as though Tolkien was not so much trying to produce fully "composed" versions of the scenes involved as trying to get "total impressions" of them clear in his own mind. The "blocking out" of the mountain sides, and rocks in a series of rectangular or geometrical shapes, as in "Moria Gate", is characteristic, although this technique does go back to drawings of earlier periods as one of Gondolin (not the coloured version) shows[38].

If it seems that by the time of writing most of *The Lord of the Rings* Tolkien was no longer primarily interested in scenic illustrations by means of artwork for its own sake, there are, of course, some important exceptions, and, not surprisingly, these are provided by trees and plants. The crayon drawings of Old Man Willow[39], and of the mallorns of Lothlórien in spring[40], the former given almost an Impressionist feeling, like a late Monet, by the use of the crayon medium, represent a development and refinement of earlier styles as exemplified by the "Tol Sirion"[41] drawing or the painting "Taur-nu-Fuin"[42] (later called "Fangorn Forest") made in the late 1920's.

Another exception is of another kind: this is the crayon drawing of Barad-dûr[43] itself, which is exceptionally detailed and realistic; on close inspection it is evident that even the tooling on the stones is clearly shown. The "exception" in this case proves the rule, for of course Barad-dûr, seen from close quarters in the drawing, is not approached in the text of *The Lord of the Rings*, or even described except in the brief vision that Frodo has of it on Amon Hen, and that Frodo and Sam have of it as they emerge form the Sammath Naur just prior to its destruction. It is evident that it was only the detail of the fortress itself that particularly concerned Tolkien; the surrounding landscape and Mount Doom are roughly "blocked in", in his late style.

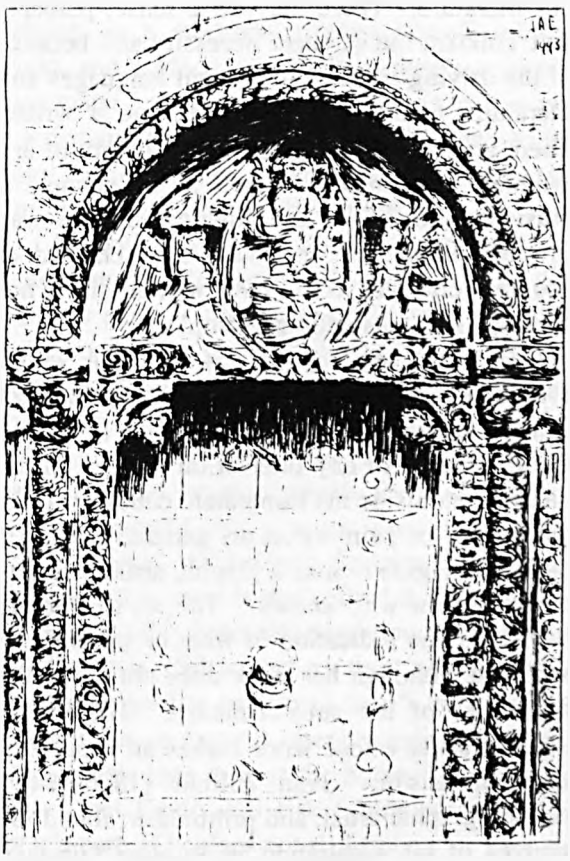
For the remainder of his life, once *The Lord of the Rings* had been finished, he seems to have almost entirely given up the illustrative side of his artwork. When the artist originally proposed for the illustrations to *Farmer Giles of Ham* proved unsuited to the task, he never seems to have contemplated doing the job himself, although happily in Pauline Baynes he soon recognised an artist whose inspiration was closely in sympathy with his own, and who later on was, likewise, ideally suited for the late works, the "Tom Bombadil" poems, and *Smith of Wootton Major*. The throes of publication of *The Lord of the Rings* involved him in the design of book-jackets, of which the splendid design for *The Two Towers* (sadly unused) represents a clear line of descent from pages of *The Father Christmas Letters* such as the"winter picture" referred to above. But there are no "working drawings" for the late works (at least, so far as we know at the moment), and his final period, associated in a literary sense with the development of the *Silmarillion* texts, and the Númenórean material and the Akallabêth, expresses itself almost exclusively in imaginary plant forms and abstract patterns of various kinds. The examples illustrated in past calendars[44] display the endless delight he found in elaborating these, and in adapting them for the designs of "Númenórean" tiles and textiles, and for the heraldic devices distinguishing the various houses and descents of Elves and Men and their branches. From this late period in Tolkien's life there are also the numerous "doodles"[45], which similarly reflect his delight in pattern and texture, and which often display considerable ingenuity and sophistication. One of these, in the exhibition but not illustrated, is of special interest in a context referred to below.

If, perhaps, it seems rather disappointing that *The Lord of the Rings* was not illustrated by the author, in terms of scene and landscape, more extensively than it was, and the late *Silmarillion* writings not at all, it may be that he himself was now happy to feel that the descriptive requirements of his imagined world could now

[38] *Pictures by Tolkien* No. 35
[39] *Pictures by Tolkien* No. 21
[40] *Pictures by Tolkien* No. 25
[41] *Pictures by Tolkien* No. 36
[42] *Pictures by Tolkien* No. 37
[43] *Pictures by Tolkien* No. 30
[44] *Pictures by Tolkien* Nos. 41 and 44 – 47
[45] *Pictures by Tolkien* No. 43

be fully answered by words unaided, and that each individual reader's imagination would have all possible scope for constructing a personal scenic interpretation of that world. This is the feeling that one has on looking at the one late "subject" piece in the exhibition, an unpublished crayon drawing, "The Hills of the Morning" (1961)[46]. A central rayed sun and a dark outline suggestive of far distant hills are incorporated in a purely abstract design that represents a final refinement of the "linear abstract" style developed years before in works like the 1934 *Father Christmas Letters* drawing previously mentioned. This marvellous little work makes a suitable climax and summing up of Tolkien's artistic life; the medium and the delicacy of its execution would make it difficult to reproduce satisfactorily, but its eventual publication would all the same be highly desirable.

A late "doodle", shown in the exhibition, but not illustrated, was titled "Númenórean ceramic" by Tolkien. It is in fact an excellent specimen of "Celtic spiral interlace", which, familiar in the metalwork of the later pre-Roman Iron Age, surfaces in Britain again after the Roman occupation, and reaches its apogee in Anglo-Saxon art, and especially with the Lindisfarne Gospels and the other great manuscripts. This has often been brought forward by art historians as an early indicator of certain special and individual tendencies which distinguish "the Englishness of English art", to employ the title of the famous essay (by Nikolaus Pevsner)[47] that has influenced thought in this direction ever since it first appeared. These have especially embraced a partiality towards the emphasis of flat surface patterning and enriched surface decoration and flowing line, as against the bringing foremost of the "sculptural", "in-depth" attributes of matter and mass in space. Certainly, "the cap fits" perfectly, as far as Tolkien's art is concerned; it is essentially an art of line, surface pattern, texture and graphic design. He leaves the attributes of the three-dimensional form – actual depth and mass in space – more or less unexplored, though if he had ever undergone formal art training, he would no doubt have been encouraged in the opposite direction – probably much against his inclinations. But it does seem remarkably easy to find in English architecture and art of almost any period, most of all in the Middle Ages, illustrations and precedents for the same kind of love of decorative surface patterning and texture; from even one particular building, Ely Cathedral, one can cull a range of examples from the twelfth to sixteenth centuries[48]. And what better reflection of Tolkien's lifelong interest in plant forms and their development in his artwork could one have than the carved capitals of about 1300 in the chapter house of Southwell Minster, "The Leaves of Southwell"[49]?



The Prior's Door, Ely Cathedral

[46] *Bodleian Exhibition Catalogue* No. 215, not illustrated

[47] Originally delivered as the B.B.C. Reith lectures in 1955. First published in book form by Architectural Press 1956, Penguin Books 1964, since then frequently reprinted.

[48] "The Prior's Door" (12th Century), page 28; Wall arcading in the Lady Chapel, circa 1340, page 28; Bishop West's Chapel, vaulting, 1533 (Renaissance detail) page 2.

[49] Nikolaus Pevsner, *The Leaves of Southwell*, King Penguin, 1945

When one looks at Tolkien's artwork as a whole, and considers the wide range it covers and the variety of media he employed at one time or another, it raises a question which so far has not received any answer: what is its significance in comparison with his achievement as author? Or, more simply, what sort of an artist was he? Had he trained formally as an artist (as did Mervyn Peake, though that was a talent of a very different kind), could he have pursued a professional career and become anything like as well-known as an artist as he did as author and storyteller? An independent observer, called on for a verdict on the best of his early drawings, such as "Eastbury" and then on his earliest literary efforts such as "Goblin Feet", or "The Cottage of Lost Play", might have advised him, perhaps, that his real bent was towards art and not literature. There may be a sense, perhaps, that Tolkien, out of sheer necessity and because of the driving impulse of ancient languages and literature, forced himself to become a writer. There are parallel instances in the history of art. Wagner, who forced himself to be become a musician (his initial and lifelong-impulse was towards drama and not music as such, and in another period he would have written plays, not operas), is an outstanding example.

I cannot see, myself, that Tolkien would ever have developed into a figurative or subject painter; for one thing, there seems to be no evidence at all of any interest on his part in the visual arts outside his immediate concerns, or in the history of painting or art generally. But if one can imagine him as a graphic artist or print-maker – then who knows? The art of Pauline Baynes is one indication of what he might have achieved, although her work does not cover the full range of his subject-matter. There is a Russian artist whose work makes an especially apt comparison. Ivan Bilibin (1876-1942), painter, graphic artist, and printmaker, found the sources of his inspiration in Russian fairytale, legend and folklore; a nice correspondence indeed to the sources of Tolkien's inspiration in languages and literature of his own land and the Northern world. Bilibin's art displays the same love of surface patterning and decoration, of forms merging into abstract shapes and patterns, the same feeling for calligraphy. It similarly exploits all the possibilities of decorative borders filled with scenes and figures in miniature. To conceive of Tolkien as an English Bilibin may be a fantasy, but an interesting and attractive one. At least it enables one to end with the thought that it would have pleased him to feel that his art, both in its inspiration and in its realisation, was perfectly at one with his ambition to create "a mythology for England".

Wall arcading in the Lady Chapel, Ely Cathedral

It Bore Me Away: Tolkien as Horseman

Helen Armstrong

When I read *The Hobbit*, I quickly decided that J.R.R. Tolkien knew about, and liked, horses and ponies. This impression increased when I read *The Lord of the Rings*.

But why? In *The Hobbit*, Tolkien writes little about ponies, and names none. In *The Lord of The Rings*, horses are more individually important, though they only occupy a minority of the narrative. But Tolkien the storyteller paints in certain essential details and lets the reader's inner eye supply the rest.

The turning-point in my own introduction to Tolkien came when, in Chapter 4 of *The Hobbit*, we learn that the goblins will eat the ponies. Up to this point, the drama of *The Hobbit* is on a Tom-and-Jerry level; real peril is in the past or future. From this point on, we know that not everything flattened by a falling piano (or troll) will jump up again, and the stakes are raised.

In *The Hobbit*, the ponies (three lots) are a silent presence, sometimes starring in a little drama: frightened ponies, sudden bolts, riders and baggage in the river. But the details already seemed to me, early in my outdoor-riding life, central to the pony-and-rider experience. The shared knowledge that ponies can (and will) take fright at nothing, and will (and do) run happily into water before it dawns on them that it isn't much like grass, found its mark in my heart. The sound of bursting halter-ropes lay far in my future then, but later I came to believe that J.R.R. Tolkien had heard it.

Much of *The Hobbit* is homely in tone; ponies rather than war-horses bring it closer to a young, urban reader. In *The Lord of the Rings*, it is the hobbits that first convey the normality of horse-riding. They ride slowly, leading their ponies uphill like seasoned travellers. The affection between Bill and Sam is developed simply by Sam's attention to the pony and the pony's apparent contentment at his change of scenery. Bill's return to Bree is more horse-like than romantic: Bree is in the lowlands, and Bill's old home, whereas Rivendell is in the moors, and Bill has only been there once.

Unlike *The Hobbit*, in *The Lord of the Rings* individual horses and ponies are nearly always personalised. Two – Shadowfax and Bill – have major parts. The author draws a quick, neat sketch of at least three others, Hasufel, Arod, and Fatty Lumpkin. Two "white chargers", Asfaloth and Snowmane, are given action scenes rather than personal histories. Asfaloth is a storybook "good horse", white, bright, and perfectly under its master's control. Snowmane's main role, in contrast, is to rear up in terror and fall on his rider, but he is named in many earlier scenes, so that we seem to know him by the time he gets his epitaph.

Asfaloth is a conventional fairy-story horse in his gem-studded headstall. Frodo's ride, on the other hand, is the most practical riding scene in the book. Glorfindel 'shortens the stirrups up to the saddle-skirts'. (This would seem to make Frodo perch like a jockey. This could be to help Asfaloth race the Black Riders. On the other hand, it would be most unsafe for a sick rider, and unnecessary for a horse used to greater weight. But if, as I believe, the term "skirt" was also applied to what is now called the "flap", the description (and rider) slot neatly into place.)

Frodo is told to "sit as tight as you can'. Non-riders tend to say "hold tight", but holding saddle, reins, or mane is insecure unless the rider can keep his legs against the horse. The author knows that Frodo will risk falling, despite the horse's care, if he does not sit firmly.

Crossing the ford, Frodo feels "... the quick heave and surge as the horse left the river and struggled up the stony path." This is how a horse climbs: the front end goes first and seems to pull the back end up. This is much more clearly felt than seen.

At the top of the bank, the horse stops. Horses hate isolation, and he knows his

companions are behind him. Instead of fleeing, as we might expect, he swings round and calls out. A translation might run:

> 'This is me. Danger, trouble. Come here to me.'

Probably with a subtext of: "Get lost, you enemies." This is what a horse does when separated from its companions by something threatening.

The horse rears up, which is odd, if Frodo is not to fall. The key here is in the detail: "reared and snorted." What we are seeing, I think, is a half-lifting of his front end, and a cracking of nostrils – a normal gesture of defiance. The rider feels a lift and jolt, but is in no danger of being unseated.

Frodo sits tight until he loses consciousness. Then, despite Asfaloth's intentions, he falls off. The whole sequence is strongly felt through the horse's movements, and feels very much drawn from direct experience as well as observation.

The one area in which I doubt Tolkien is falling. He conveys no sense of hitting the ground from a moving or standing horse. Habitual riders learn to fall with minimum damage, but "Beren's leap" in *The Silmarillion* is an extreme example. An unexpected rearing fall as described would run a real risk of killing Lúthien rather than saving her.

In *The Lord of the Rings*, Shadowfax is the "dream horse", as dreamed by every horse-smitten child, discussed, denied and dreamed again by ancient saddle-galled horsepeople who should know better. Typically an untamed stallion, he comes to his friend's call, allows himself to be ridden without saddle or bridle, and understands what his friend says to him. Between the dream-horse and his rider there is always a special bond.

But if Shadowfax understands the speech of men, he wastes little time in conversation. He comes and goes. He gallops swiftly. Sometimes he whinnies. He does not carry messages, kill rattlesnakes, slide bolts with his teeth, or drag people out of fires. Shadowfax's main role, with his great (but not extreme) speed and unusual stamina, is to carry his rider fast from point A to point B. His behaviour, as opposed to his intelligence, is that of a real, if exceptional, horse. Most remarkable is his stand before the Lord of the Nazgûl:

> Shadowfax alone ... endured the terror, unmoving, steadfast as a graven image in Rath Dínen.'

Col. Alois Podhajsky, then Director of the Spanish Riding School in Vienna, tells in his book *My Horses, My Teachers* (Harrap, 1969) how in 1952 he and his Lipizzaner stallion were faced with a descending helicopter. Feeling the horse tense in terror – in front of 20,000 spectators – Podhajsky takes up the reins and closes his legs tightly, not to hang on, but to remind the horse of his presence and training.

> It was a terrible moment. But Pluto Theodorosta remained motionless on the spot. This hot-tempered Lipizzaner stood like a monument, and only my legs pressed to his flanks felt him tremble.

The horse continued to stand still while the helicopter (a frightening object in any situation) landed nearby.

Tolkien invokes a horse's powerful instinct to run from danger many times. No rider can be sure of holding a really frightened horse, but can only try to reassure the horse by quiet and firm handling. Shadowfax can make this choice rationally for himself, but his outward behaviour is real horse.

I turn now to the Rohirrim. The three hunters see "horses of great stature, strong and clean-limbed". These are not Dark-Age horses, probably averaging under fourteen hands; ponies of that size do carry working men and full loads, but I think that "great stature" means just that. Hasufel easily carries Aragorn, who is also of great stature. These horses are not mediaeval destriers, either. Destriers are not built for speed over distance, whereas the horses of Rohan travel fast.

Horses like those Tolkien describes can still be seen, escorting HM the Queen along Victoria Street, Westminster, from the Station to the Palace. They belong to the mounted cavalry regiments, and are the type of horse that an officer would have ridden or seen during the 1914-18 war.

The Rohirrim, too, are drilled cavalry: "With astonishing speed and skill they checked their steeds, wheeled, and came charging round." A great deal of experience is needed for a troop to do this, steering with the left hand and

to do this, steering with the left hand and carrying lances in the right. Few places other than cavalry riding schools would see such a manoeuvre in this century. I think Tolkien probably witnessed this, but I doubt he rode it. His open admiration for their skill is quite unlike his laconic description of Frodo's dramatic but more commonplace dash across the Ford at Bruinen.

I would guess that Tolkien never rode long and fast across country; or not in an unprepared state. The strain on even an experienced rider can be drastic, and doubly so without a saddle. Yet Gimli, that uneasy rider, rides with Legolas and Gandalf for the best part of two days, and can still stand (and sit) at the end of it.

Tolkien began to personalise horses late in his writing development. *The Silmarillion* treats horses incidentally; they carry riders and (just as crucially) deposit them. Three or four are named, but none has any personal narrative. An awareness of horse culture exists; grazing for herds; the mayhem caused by a group of horses bolting in terror (this may have been something Tolkien witnessed personally, as he uses it several times, from *The Silmarillion* to *Farmer Giles of Ham*); horses calling to one another from a distance (so Aredhel and Maeglin are betrayed). But real concern with the fate of the four-legged in Tolkien's earlier works is given only to Huan the Hound.

The shift from porter to personality seems to have come with *Farmer Giles of Ham.* The unnamed grey mare is no "dream-horse" but she is an "ideal" one; she knows what is going on, has her own opinions, and plays a crucial part in the story. As the lighthearted Hobbit opened the barriers to Tolkien's mythic world, so the comical Farmer Giles seems to have unbolted the stable door. The grey mare is Shadowfax's real ancestor.

Although the "dream horse" Shadowfax is the most important horse in any of the works, that Tolkien's imagination was moved first by mundane riding is, I think, shown by his change of heart (apparently prompted by Rhona Beare's letter of October 1958, no. 211 in *The Letters of J.R.R. Tolkien*) about Asfaloth's harness.

"Chapter I 12 was written very early," he writes. "I had not considered the natural ways of elves with animals." I don't know by what route he came to this understanding; but it seems that his meeting with the dream horse came late in life, and not (as so often) in the first innocence of youth. This would make sense if he learned to ride as a young man, with little previous knowledge of horses. His attitude moved from affectionate but workaday to romantic and visionary as his writing developed. He never, however, became detached from his practical experience.

The conclusion I came to was that Tolkien had personal riding experience in a variety of conditions, but not the more extreme ones. He seemed to be strongly cavalry-oriented. His horsemanship is always aimed at getting somewhere, and he is very aware of the group and individual movement of horses. He knows the danger posed by a panicking mount, and the signs of fear in a frightened one. But Tolkien himself was not a cavalryman; and as far as I knew, his life showed no sign of leisure-riding.

When I asked Priscilla Tolkien about this at Oxonmoot 1990, she told me that her father loved horses, and that he had indeed learned to ride while he was in the army, not as a cavalryman, but as part of his basic officer training. He had had little opportunity to ride since then.

Unlike those who grow up with ponies, he would probably have had no experience of bareback or halter-riding outside school exercises.

The unhorsed could only hear of such things from messengers such as *Champion the Wonder Horse*, who was abroad in the late 1950's on BBC television (guided by a rope halter visible to the wary but quite invisible to a four-year-old). But whether it was Champ, or some other hero-horse that touched Tolkien's imagination between the grey mare and Shadowfax, I have no clues at all.

REVIEWS

The Tolkien Collector: An Occasional Magazine for Collectors of J.R.R. Tolkien. Christina Scull (ed.)

Number Three, May 1993, 24 pages, A5-size

René van Rossenberg

What do you call a person who is desperately seeking for that elusive copy of the Moldavian *Hobbit*, who gets water in the eyes from thinking about owning a first edition *Hobbit* with a mint dust-jacket and who owns at least fifty copies of *The Lord of the Rings*? Well, Christina usually, but, in general, a Tolkien collector. Tolkien collectors come in all kinds of shapes and sizes; from the foolhardy completists, who want it all, to those who collect only translations of *The Hobbit* or only calendars, or games; the list goes on and on, for each collector puts the boundary according to his own taste or, more likely, financial position. Yet what all collectors have in common is their need for special information which magazines like *Amon Hen* and *Mythlore* only partially supply. That is why Christina Scull, a collector of the completist vein, started in 1992 a "collecting and bibliography special interest group" with the endorsement of the Tolkien Society. The magazine the SIG produces, *The Tolkien Collector*, is filled to the brim with useful information.

One of the regular features is the "New, Reissued and Forthcoming" column, which gives detailed information on all Tolkien-related items (books, calendars, artwork, games, figurines, video's, etc.) from all parts of the world. "Tolkien for Sale and Sold" gives extracts from antiquarian catalogues, forthcoming auctions of Tolkien material, as well as material offered by private persons (including fellow collectors). These two columns, together with the editorial, letters to the editor and "Addenda and Corrigenda" to Wayne Hammond's descriptive Tolkien bibliography, form the core of *The Tolkien Collector*. Yet it has even more to offer. Each issue has several articles on various aspects of collecting and the publication history of the works of Tolkien. For instance in issue Three (May 1993) the American Gary Hunnewell tells how he became a collector and in connection with this gives some of the problems facing him with collecting fanzines. Richard Blackwelder gives an account of his research in the differences between the various editions and reprints of *The Hobbit* by Ballantine Books. Issue Three also contains an article on the various artists who made covers for the Dutch editions.

Collectors will need no persuasion to subscribe to *The Tolkien Collector*, for this is the only magazine of its kind and supplies them with exactly the information they need (and it is Tolkien-related, so they need it in the collection anyway). But this latest leaf on the Tolkien tree of magazines is also recommended to those who are not dedicated collectors, for it is very informative and entertaining in its own way.

Subscription per four issues costs £3 U.K., £4 Europe and surface mail world, and £5 airmail world, available from Christina Scull, 1A Colestown Street, London, U.K., SW11 3EH.

Morgoth's Ring: The Later Silmarillion Part One: The Legends of Aman. (The History of Middle-earth X) J.R.R. Tolkien. Edited by Christopher Tolkien. London: HarperCollins, 1993. £25.

Charles E. Noad

In this latest volume of the "History of Middle-earth", we come first to the period in the late forties to early fifties when Tolkien turned his attention back to the myths and legends of the Elder Days after he had finished the greater part of the work on *The Lord of the Rings*. Perhaps it was because of the new perspectives on many aspects of the matter of Middle-earth which that work had revealed, as well as his conviction that *The Silmarillion* should still be published together with *The Lord of the Rings*, that he approached with renewed vigour the concerns of the First Age. But little of the work begun at that time was completed, largely over disappointment that his idea of co-publication of both works was rejected by the publishers. He returned to serious work on the Elder Days in the late fifties, after publication of *The Lord of the Rings*, but by then he had become greatly concerned to systematise and make coherent and consistent the whole scheme of his mythology. He had long harboured doubts about the cosmological structure of his imagined world, and now other considerations took up his attention, such as the nature of Elvish reincarnation, the origins of Orcs, and the powers of Morgoth. He was now attempting resolutions to problems of which some had probably been of concern to him for a long time and on which the writing of *The Lord of the Rings* and subsequent dealing with queries from readers had focussed his mind. But he was not always able to achieve such resolutions, perhaps because he was, up to a point, virtually attempting a reinvention of his mythology, a process destructive of certain of what had been stable features of it practically since its beginning.

This and the next volume of "The History of Middle-earth" will contain Tolkien's later revisions to *The Silmarillion*; but, instead of following a strictly chronological sequence for all the material, a thematic approach is adopted, with the present volume mainly devoted to those texts which concern Valinor, and the next volume those which concern Beleriand (reflecting, as it happens, the subject-division of Parts One and Two of *The Book of Lost Tales*). The material in this volume consists of revised versions of previously existing texts, together with various papers and essays devoted to resolving the problems in his mythology which Tolkien had come to be more keenly aware of.

It should be said that one of the peculiar difficulties in reviewing this volume of the "History" is that many of the "new" narrative revisions given in it are the "old" versions already seen in the published *Silmarillion* of sixteen years ago: that work has itself become a fixed point in the Tolkienian canon, and as the slow textual evolution shown in the "History" approaches its final stages so the diminishing differences between the latest revisions and the now-established work make it more difficult to appreciate the originality of these revisions.

It should also be said that for some of the longer-in-the-tooth readers of Tolkien, especially those who in pre-*Silmarillion* days speculated over those aspects of his work which were obscure and needed elucidation, in this volume Tolkien asks himself and tries to answer many of the questions which were asked at that time. This book contains extraordinary things. I was tempted to subtitle this review: "At last! The hard stuff!!"

First are new versions of the *Ainulindalë*. A revision dated to 1948 or slightly later has two marked differences from the previous, pre-*Lord of the Rings* version: (i) the Ainur are now presented only with a vision of their Music made manifest in the World, rather than that World

itself, with the added condition that they now have to "achieve" the World by their labours; (ii) a change in the nature of the World itself, in that Arda, the habitation of Elves and Men, is now a part of what might be termed a "quasi-astronomical" universe. Moreover, these differences, though not contradictory, are to some extent antithetical, and one wonders why Tolkien brought them both in at the same time. Since the matter of the cosmology of his invented world became a matter of great importance to him, we shall look at it in some detail here.

To deal with the changed view of the World: in the *Ambarkanta* of the nineteen-thirties, the World was quite a small place. The semi-ellipsoidal bulk of the solid earth, with its flat upper surface, was surrounded by the "atmospheres" of Vista and Ilmen: in Vista birds fly, clouds form, and Men breathe; and in the higher air of Ilmen the stars drift and turn about the Earth. Surrounding all this was Vaiya, which is like a thin, cold air above, but a cold sea below, the Earth. And englobing all were the imperdurable *Ilurambar*, the Walls of the World. And that is all, except for the Outer Void beyond.

But in the new *Ainulindalë*, the nature of the World is changed. The conception that the flat Earth of the older mythology should, since it is in a sense meant to be our planet in its distant past, have at some point become round is adumbrated in the earliest texts of *The Fall of Númenor*, and evidently goes right back to the *Ambarkanta* itself. But now considerations about the wider universe in which the Earth is placed emerge. In the new *Ainulindalë*, the Earth seems insignificantly small: "...amid all the splendours of the World, its vast halls and spaces, and its wheeling fires, Ilúvatar chose a place for [Elves' and Men's] habitation...in the midst of the innumerable Stars. And this habitation might seem a little thing to those who consider only the majesty of the Ainur, and not their terrible sharpness...or who consider only the immeasurable vastness of the World..." Elsewhere it is "this little realm...in the midst of the innumerable Stars."

Thus the cosmological scheme at this point pictures a small Earth amidst a much vaster volume of stars. Some confusion is caused by the inconsistent use of "World". Its primary meaning is simply that of the "created material universe" (excluding the dwellings of the Ainur and of Ilúvatar Himself), but Tolkien does not help matters by sometimes using the same term only for the Earth. Likewise, "Walls of the World" (or similar terms) does not appear to have a consistent application.

To go into detail, then, on the revised structure of the World, somewhere between the Earth and the outermost limits of the World are the "Halls of Aman". That these Halls have a local connection with the Earth and do not mean the whole universe (Ea) can be shown by a consideration of Manwë's summons to other spirits to aid him against Melkor's depredations in the yet-unfinished Earth: "...they went down into the Halls of Aman and aided Manwë, lest Melkor should hinder the fulfilment of their labour for ever, and the Earth should wither ere it flowered." Now once the Valar had passed into the unformed material universe in the very beginning, they were unable to leave it: "But this condition Ilúvatar made...that their power should henceforth be contained and bounded in the World, and be within it for ever..." The converse of this must be that no other Ainur could afterward enter into the World from the Halls of Ilúvatar, although this is not explicitly stated. (This implies some kind of ultimate barrier, whether or not called the *Ilurambar*, around the physical universe, which served to isolate it once the Ainur had entered into it.) Hence none could leave it or enter it from outside once the Ainur had gone in at the Beginning. So the spirits that Manwë summoned must have been in the universe at the time, so the "Halls of Aman" does not name the universe as a whole.

So, the Earth, the Kingdom of Arda, is set within the Halls of Aman, and they form only a part of the World, the created universe. But note that much of the *Ambarkanta* scheme is retained: Ulmo still dwells "in the Outer Ocean," i.e., in the lower, liquid part of Vaiya, and Manwë's bird-shaped spirits "bear them through the three regions of the firmament beyond the lights of heaven to the edge of Darkness. Thus they brought word to him of well nigh all that passed in Aman." It is as though Tolkien wanted to keep the original *Ambarkanta* cosmology, but to embed it within a vaster universe of stars.

A cosmological design which is just about consistent with the foregoing points is to take the original *Ambarkanta* scheme and replace its "*Ilurambar*" by a barrier which serves to hold in the lower Vaiya, but is otherwise passable to spirits, perhaps because there is no upper half to it. This would allow, for example, Morgoth and his servants to climb back over it. (Presumably, this "inner wall" would also have to serve as the departure-point for human souls that go beyond the World.) This region, which was the "World" in the old cosmology, is now called the Halls of Aman. But this region is itself a small part of a much larger space in which are the "wheeling fires" and the "innumerable stars" of the World. And still englobing all are the Walls of the World, created by divine *fiat* about the material universe after the Valar had entered into it and in token of their being bound within it until the End. This scheme would be consistent with a number of details: (i) the spirits summoned by Manwë descending into the Halls of Aman to save Arda from Melkor; (ii) Manwë's spirits flying through the three airs; (iii) Tulkas hearing "in the far heaven" (the starry region) that there was battle "in the Little World" (Aman); (iv) Melkor's brooding "in the outer darkness", i.e. in the region of the Stars, after fleeing from Tulkas. It will be dark between the stars; and this is where the outer darkness is in relation to the enclosed Vaiya. On this scheme, Ilmen is no longer the region of the stars, or at least not the principal one. Such a scheme then makes concessions to the astronomical universe, although, since it is set in a period before they have yet been created, it takes no account of the Sun and Moon, a matter to which we shall return. This scheme seems tolerably consistent with that put forward in the cosmology of the new *Ainulindalë*, as also with that in the immediately following version, except for a few more name-changes (including the "Halls of Aman" by "fields of Arda", for instance, when Aman came to be applied to Valinor).

The fact that the Ainur now first see the World only in vision, and then have to "achieve" it, raises a difficulty about the exact nature of their labours in making the World. Previously Ilúvatar had directly transformed the Music made by each Ainu into some aspect of the natural processes of the physical world _ fountains and clear pools of water for Ulmo, for example, although since the violence of Melkor's music affects these, as it does all else, there are also snowflakes and mists and vapours. When the Ainur come into the World they have some power over its natural processes and substances, according to the correspondences already shown them by Ilúvatar, and they exercise this power especially in the preparation of the habitation of the Children of Ilúvatar. Even so, the nature of the relationship between the willed actions of the Valar and what might be called "natural processes" (e.g., "Ulmo governed the flowing of all waters, and the courses of all rivers, the replenishment of springs and the distilling of rain and dew throughout the world" (*The Lost Road*, p.161)) remains obscure. But in the new *Ainulindalë* the obscurity is compounded. Now the Ainur see only a vision of the manifestation of their music. When they enter into the World they find it is still unformed and chaotic, and they must bring order to it: so begin their "great labours in wastes unmeasured and unexplored, and in ages uncounted and forgotten." Are then the processes that lead to the making of the stars and the realm of Arda in their midst all solely brought about by the will of the Valar? Are there no "natural" processes by which such evolution would have happened anyway? It seems difficult to believe that every single action was the result of the action of the Valar. And moreover, if such actions were needed earlier, because of there being no "natural processes" without the Valar, then they would have to keep at their actions continually, for all time. This problem is compounded if they now have to organise a quasi-astronomical universe. It is one thing to consider the making of the World when it was no more than the miniature universe of the original *Ambarkanta* design; on that scale it is believable that the Valar could indeed "make" it. But once one has Arda as a miniscule part of a wider, starry cosmos then the Valar would seem to have a much greater amount of work to do; indeed for the "real" universe, an inconceivable amount. There may well be a solution, but Tolkien doesn't give it. We shall also return to this topic.

Since the World is now, in the quasi-astronomical scheme of this version of the *Ainulindalë*, much larger than it was in the

earlier versions of the cosmology, it seems strange that the making of the World by divine *fiat* was no longer retained: the Valar have much more to do. Perhaps this was intended as a means of distancing Eru from His creation.

The cosmological changes shown in this version of the *Ainulindalë* reflect Tolkien's growing concern with placing the world of his mythology in a cosmological background credible to modern readers. But he had in fact by now already given a much more elaborated expression to this concern in another version of the *Ainulindalë* which, although it precedes the version we have been discussing, is given next in this book. Here, the Earth is round (hence Tolkien labelled this the "Round World Version") and the Sun is in existence from the start: in short, the "real" universe, without any concessions to the existing mythology. The Moon is simply a part of the Earth torn off by Melkor so he can use it as an observation platform. This of course undermines the "arboreal" origins of the Sun and Moon, which was such a central part of the old mythology. But it also raises the question of the nature of the physically manifestable power of the Valar if Morgoth can tear off a piece of Earth to give rise to the Moon. (This reflects contemporary theories on the origin of the Moon: the actions of the Valar resemble natural processes.) One feels that Tolkien was straining hard to incorporate modern astronomy into his myth, without quite believing it himself. Perhaps it was an effect of trying out new ideas without thinking out all of the consequences.

At any rate, he abandoned this line of development for the present, but not for good, as we shall see.

The Annals of Aman, written about 1958, is the revised version of *The Annals of Valinor*. It is significant that even at this late stage the framing device for *The Silmarillion* of its being material which Ælfwine learned in Eressëa from the Elven sage Pengolod is retained. Here, the complex relationship between the Years of Valinor and the Years of the Sun are set out in great detail (pocket-calculators will be useful!). There are a number of new developments in this version, such as the two hitherto unmentioned kindreds of the Elves, those of Morwë and Nurwë (these were Avari, who never took the road West); but the main difference is one of amplification of detail. However, the development of most significance is that these Annals ceased to be merely brief entries in a chronology, but instead degenerated into narrative, and came indeed to be as important in that respect as the *Silmarillion* proper.

The later *Quenta Silmarillion* was developed in two phases: one in about 1951-2, the second about 1958. The first is, basically, more revision and expansion. There is nothing of especial note except that the idea of "children of the Valar" seems, finally, to be dropped. But note that here, too, as in the later revision, the framing device of Ælfwine is retained.

Much more radical change comes with the work on this text in the late fifties. The first chapter of *The Silmarillion* as it then existed was separated off to form the *Valaquenta*. The versions printed here represent Tolkien's final work on it and serve as the basis for the text in the published *Silmarillion*, although, as acknowledged by Christopher Tolkien, he made certain textual changes, mostly concerning the vexed matter of verbal tense, which he now regrets. (There is also the interesting detail that the description of Eonwë as the "mightiest in arms in Arda" was a purely editorial addition to prepare the reader for his role in the Great Battle.)

One of the more significant changes came in with the story of Finwë and Míriel. In all previous versions, Finwë and his unnamed wife had been the parents of Fëanor, Fingolfin and Finrod (>Finarphin), with Míriel herself introduced only in the 1951 version of the *Quenta*; but in a short rider written as part of the late-fifties revision, there is the added detail that "in the bearing of her son Míriel was consumed in spirit and body." She lays herself to rest in the gardens of Lorien and her spirit passes to the Halls of Mandos. Afterwards, Finwë, wishing to remarry, and convinced that Míriel would never return, approaches Manwë for advice, the problem being that Elves are normally limited to one spouse only and that, being bound to the World until the End, their marriage is expected to endure for all that time. After considering the matter, Mandos pronounces on the subject of the

ending of marriage between Elves, Finwë weds Indis of the Vanyar, and they become the parents of five children, two of whom are Fingolfin and Finarfin.

It is difficult to see why Tolkien should have introduced the notion of Míriel dying (in effect) and Finwë remarrying; the most obvious reason, that he wished to provide greater motivation for Fëanor's unfriendliness with his now half-brothers, and so make more credible the effects of Melkor's trouble-making, is perhaps the best. But in view of the extraordinary re-examination of so many aspects of the nature of Elves and their place in the World that Tolkien now embarked upon, it is possible that both the new twist to Míriel's story and the exploration he then made into its implications were both of them the product of powerful underlying concerns.

In *Laws and Customs of the Eldar* (to use the abbreviated title) Tolkien undertook a thorough consolidation of his thought on the nature and fate of the Elves, both within the World and beyond it. In particular much of this work concentrates on aspects of the family life of Elves, including the various names, family-given or otherwise, which an Elf bears throughout his or her life. We learn that Elves mature bodily much more slowly, but mentally much more rapidly, than Men; that pregnancy takes a year; that bearing children takes a good deal out of an elvish woman ("greater share and strength of their being, in mind and body, goes forth than in the making of mortal children"), a point echoed in the observation that "there was less difference in strength and speed between elven-men and elven-women that had not borne child than is seen among mortals"; and that families seldom have more than four children (with Fëanor's seven standing as some kind of record). Specifically we learn much about what can only be called the sex-lives of Elves, and here Tolkien is just about as explicit as he is ever likely to be on the subject. Elves have no more than four children not because they are incapable of producing any more, but because they are the masters of their desires, not the other way round; and in any case the desire once exercised soon fades. It is also notable that, despite the extraordinary detail into which the marriage customs and ceremonies of the Eldar are gone, it is simply the act of physical union which causes two Elves to be considered to be married one to another; and this, as noted, is a union to last quite literally until the end of the world. Marriage is not something to be taken lightly in Tolkien's world.

One of the most notable things here is the concept that Elves *fade* over a long period of time: their bodies will fade away to insubstantiality, having being "consumed" by their spirits. They would in effect be incorporeal spirits who could only make themselves known to others by entering their minds directly and presenting them with a physical appearance. This is a concept which goes back all the way to *The Book of Lost Tales*: "...the fairies fade and grow small and tenuous, filmy and transparent" (II:283). Although the diminution was rejected, the fading remained always present in the background; in the pre-*Lord of the Rings Quenta Silmarillion*, the Elves "had not so long been inhabited by the fire of the spirit, which consumeth them from within in the courses of time" (V:246-7). Yet although this was a concept, then, which Tolkien had not rejected by the time he came to write *The Lord of the Rings*, readers of that work will have become so accustomed to the Elves as they are presented there, that is to say, tall, solid, robust, with nothing in the least "filmy" about them, that Tolkien's reiteration of the notion of their fading must come as a surprise (especially when it is considered for instance in conjunction with Galadriel's speculation about the possible fate of the Elves of Lórien: "...dwindle to a rustic folk of dell and cave", which suggests nothing about fading). Yet so it is, and it must be regarded as a long-enduring and fundamental aspect of Tolkien's conception of the race.

The *Laws* moves on to discuss the complex matter of the fate of Elves after death and their rebirth into the world. This is essentially an elaboration of the matter as it has previously stood. Typically, after meeting with some catastrophe that renders their bodies unfit to support life, their spirits are summoned to Mandos. If they obey the summons then, after a purgatorial period of waiting, they can choose either to stay within the grey confines of Mandos until the End or to seek to be reborn as an Elf into the world, where they will slowly recover

the memory of their previous life. The concept of rebirth lead Tolkien into all manner of complexities, to avoid which he abandoned the concept very late, as we shall see later. The spirits of Elves can choose not to obey the summons, in which case they will roam the world, but only as passive observers. (But these wandering spirits, it should be noted, are quite different from living Elves who have "faded".) The presence of these wandering spirits provides a rationalization for Sauron's title of "Necromancer" in *The Hobbit*: it is possible, but evil, to try talk to these undead spirits: but Sauron, especially, knows how to do this, hence his title.

The *Laws* ends with a resumption of the narrative of Finwë and Míriel. We learn that later, after Finwë has been slain by Morgoth at Formenos and his spirit has joined Míriel's in Mandos, Míriel, accepting Finwë's offer never to seek incarnation again, is allowed after all this time to come back to her body, for, in Valinor, her body has lain in Lorien uncorrupted, so that now she can live in it again. Tolkien doesn't here use the word "resurrection", but it is surely the most appropriate one.

All of the foregoing provides the background to the great debate among the Valar concerning the status of marriage between Elves, one of whom (Míriel) has gone to Mandos and does not wish to return, but whose spouse (Finwë) wishes to remarry. This is a new situation for them, and they feel it is necessary to sort it out. Eventually, Manwë sums up the debate, and Mandos issues his edict which is to apply to all such future situations.

And after this, Tolkien at last returned to the actual story, with the tale of Finwë and Míriel expanded to include fuller versions of the Statute, as well as much more detail on what happened to Míriel, although the matter of her returning to life is not touched on.

In the re-examination of the Elves' nature we have touched on some profound subjects: the sanctity of marriage, the burden of childbearing, and bodily resurrection. These perhaps reflect some of Tolkien's own deep personal and religious concerns.

Those other chapters of the *Quenta* which Tolkien revised at this time, and which bear on Valinor, show various degrees of revision from previous versions, but the principal difference lies in the matter of the Darkening of Valinor.

The theft of the Silmarils and the destruction of the Trees are now carried out separately, with Morgoth performing the former, and Ungoliantë the latter. This was done so that Morgoth would be able to steal the Silmarils from Formenos and escape to Middle-earth, while Ungoliantë was occupied by the Trees, and the Valar by Ungoliantë. However, she catches up with him before he reaches Formenos, and the story converges to its former state.

This completes the account of the work which Tolkien performed on the existing elements of *The Silmarillion*. The work as published reflects the latest revisions to varying extents. The *Ainulindalë* is very closely based on the final text given here, as is the *Valaquenta*, although note the editorial difficulties discussed over the matter of tense. The chapters of the published *Quenta Silmarillion* have a more complex relationship to the revisions published in this volume as well as to *The Annals of Aman*. The latter, as noted, had ceased to be a straightforward chronology and had become the primary vehicle instead for the main narrative. The corresponding chapters of the published *Silmarillion* do not bear a straightforward relationship to the material in the present volume in that (i) there has been some editorial rearrangement of material within and among chapters; (ii) there has been a good deal of compression, often resulting in the omission of material, e.g., the Statute of Finwë and Míriel, and (iii) the latest revision, the new narrative on Ungoliantë and Morgoth, has been omitted altogether, as has the Ælfwine/Pengolod framing device. That the preparation of *The Silmarillion* as published presented extraordinary difficulties in terms of narrative coherence and consistency of tone and detail (quite apart from the purely textual problems) is hardly news, but the material in the present volume serves to more clearly delineate these difficulties as well as to furnish clues to their resolution.

The remainder of *Morgoth's Ring* is taken up with papers written by Tolkien in roughly the late nineteen-fifties (the textual chronology is

here extremely difficult to establish with any certainty) all dealing with the effort to explore and make coherent diverse aspects of the matter of Middle-earth. But since one of these essays ultimately resolved itself into a finished narrative, it is placed at this point in the book and will be discussed here.

This is *Athrabeth Finrod ah Andreth*, "The Conversation of Finrod and Andreth". Finrod is Finrod Felagund, who met the first Men to come west into Beleriand over the Blue Mountains, and Andreth is a "Wise-woman" of Men. Their conversation, which takes place in the days of the Long Peace before the Battle of Sudden Flame, mainly concerns the nature of death as it applies to Elves and Men, and each race's feelings about it, but touches on much else. Andreth believes that Men were born to live for ever, but that it was the malice of Morgoth in their beginning which condemned them to short-lived mortality. Despite Finrod's assertion that the Marring of Arda by Melkor has both hastened the fading of the Elves and the mortality of Men, rather than cause it in the first place, Andreth complains that Elves cannot understand what death means for Men, to which he responds that they are only long-lived, not immortal, and that they too face an inescapable end. After comparing the way that Elves and Men perceive the world, they wonder if the legend of Men's immortality is a prefigurement of their place in Arda Unmarred. Then Andreth speaks of the "Old Hope", a belief that Eru Himself would one day enter into Arda to overthrow the evil of Morgoth. This is surprising, as Tolkien wrote in a letter of 1956, "The Incarnation of God is an *infinitely* greater thing than anything I would dare to write."

Finally we come to what has lain the whole time behind Andreth's words, and we learn of the kind of anguish that cannot be healed within "the bounds of the world." So intense is this passage that one cannot but wonder if there is a personal reference behind it, or if it is simply a particularly successful piece of literary artifice on Tolkien's part.

In keeping with its origin in an essay, the "Conversation" is followed by Tolkien's own Commentary and notes which, together, are nearly as long as the piece itself. The themes they touch on will be discussed in the next section which concentrates on Tolkien's attempts to reformulate certain aspects of his mythology and make them part of a coherent system.

Rather than discuss each individual essay in the final section of the book, "Myths Transformed", it will be more convenient to discuss their content by subject.

Tolkien devoted a good deal of thought to the nature and powers of the Great Enemy himself. In the new formulation, Melkor was in his beginning by far the most powerful of the Valar. When first he entered Arda he was able alone to withstand the assault of all the other Valar. This is a significant difference from earlier formulations wherein he was simply one among other gods, albeit a singularly powerful one. But Tolkien now perhaps felt that the powers and limitations of Morgoth as they developed through time required more elaborate and consistent definition. Morgoth, then, had by far the greatest power; and had he retained this power in his own person he could never have been defeated. But instead he dispersed that power, partly in the making (in whatever sense) of such creatures as Orcs, Trolls and Balrogs as autonomous beings, but principally in a much greater project: the infusion of the very substance of Arda with his evil. Thus was made Arda Marred. And so also, just as the One Ring contained the greater part of Sauron's power, so did Arda Morgoth's: Middle-earth was "Morgoth's Ring". This allowed him to gain greater control over matter in general, so having a deleterious effect on all things composed of matter, such as the bodies of Elves and Men (Arda Marred is almost like a doctrine of Original Sin applied to matter rather than man). But this required an enormous expenditure of power, and had the negative (for Morgoth) result that the greater part of his power was separated from him and that his ability to transform the physical form in which he was incarnate had diminished: by the time of the War of the Great Jewels he was unable to change his incarnate form, and was accordingly fearful of the hurts he could suffer because of that limitation.

Because he had dispersed his power, he could now be defeated: his creatures could be defeated piecemeal, and he himself no longer

had the personal power to daunt the other Valar. To this reviewer, this scheme seems entirely satisfactory: it accords with Melkor's original high status, but accounts for his later vulnerability as an incarnate form: it is intuitively convincing. Tolkien also underlines Morgoth's power by having Finrod, in the *Athrabeth*, say that "there is no conceivable power greater than Melkor save Eru only" (which seems to be contradicted elsewhere in the same piece when he agrees with Andreth's "the Valar are greater then we, but yet no nearer to His majesty."). And later, "Melkor is the *supreme* spirit of Pride and Revolt, not just the chief Vala of the Earth, who has turned to evil." (In other words, *not* the Oyarsa of Thulcandra)

Tolkien was unsure about Morgoth's ultimate fate, largely because at this time he contemplated Arda as existing in a much larger universe. Since the Door of Night did not exist as such (the Wall of Night, if it continued to exist, around Arda did not mark the limits of the material Universe; and the true limits were now impracticably far away for the Valar to transport his body), he is judged and "killed" (by which must be meant that his physical, incarnate form is destroyed) by the other Valar and his diminished spirit extruded from Arda and set to roam the far spaces of Eä – whence in time he may return.

The Valar as a whole are said, like the Elves, to "fade": because the longer the past, the more nearly defined the future, and so the less room for possible change. In a sense this is obvious, but here I think Tolkien is confusing the absolute power of the Valar (the normal exercise of their mastery over the natural processes of the world) with their relative power (the exercise of power in the past rules out possible future choices).

Much light is thrown upon Sauron's powers and motivations. Although of course much less powerful than his master, he would appear to be rather more intelligent; after all, he derived the Black Speech and (as we shall shortly see) created the race of Orcs. His motives were more limited than Morgoth's, and his outlook more cynical. He was not interested in gaining control over the substance of Arda (Morgoth had in a sense already done that work for him) so much as over its creatures; and he believed that the Downfall of Númenor and the removal of Aman from the world meant that Eru had abandoned Arda altogether. When the Istari appeared he regarded them as "a mere effort of defeated imperialists" whose motives matched his own. In the end he made the same mistake as Morgoth by externally isolating the greater part of his powers, this time in the One Ring, with a similar result.

Then there are the Orcs. Tolkien had never been clear in his own mind exactly what they were or how they came to be. The problem was that they appeared to be Incarnates (creatures with souls) made not by Eru, but by Morgoth. But none of the Valar, not even Morgoth at the height of his power, could make creatures with souls of their own. Tolkien played with the idea that Orcs were no more than cunning animals, but rejected it. An earlier idea in the *Quenta* was that Morgoth made the Orcs "in mockery of the Elves", and in the fifties revisions he extended this to their having being bred from the earliest Elves captured around Cuiviénen. But he was not satisfied with this: individuals could be corrupted, but not whole peoples, with the implied heritability. In the end he settled on the concept that the Orcs were descended, at least mainly, from the race of Men, from whom they were bred under the direction of Sauron. This perhaps makes more sense than their being bred from Elves in that since Men are, in a sense, more "free" from the Music of the Ainur than Elves, then this very freedom is also the greater freedom to be corrupted (although it should be noted that Tolkien does not lay any stress in the present book on the idea of Men being free of the Music of the Ainur, "which is as fate to all things else"). On reflection, the true nature of the Orcs (or "Orks", to use the spelling that Tolkien intended to use in *The Silmarillion*), might be fairly complex, a mixture of various of the concepts that he considered, that is, something along the lines of captured Elves, and Maiar in Orc-like incarnations, to begin with (and those that survived the First Age staying in the world for a long time), but with corrupted Men used by Sauron to "bulk out" the race; and of the Orcs that were alive at any one time, a

certain fraction of them operating, puppet-like, under the direct will of Morgoth or Sauron.

Perhaps there is a more personal aspect to this final understanding of the link between Men and Orcs: it may simply have been all too easy for Tolkien to believe that Men could become reduced to an Orc-like condition. He had only to look at the newspaper headlines (as do we).

Tolkien also returned to the subject of Elvish reincarnation. He retained the previous ideas of Elvish spirits being summoned to Mandos, and of their returning after a purgatorial sojourn therein to a bodily existence. But he came to reject the idea of rebirth as the means by which reincarnation could be accomplished. Rebirth obviously leads to all kinds of difficulties about availability of new Elves to be born into, etc. Instead he adopted the idea of the body (the *hröa*) being regenerated from its pattern as preserved in the Elvish spirit (the *fëa*). At first, this was to be accomplished by the action of the Valar; but in a very late essay on Glorfindel of Gondolin, Tolkien came to the "firm and stable view" that it is the spirit that remakes its own body. This, however, is not exactly a physical body but one which seems more akin to the "faded" body of extremely long-lived Elves. Such a body was incorporeal and could pass through matter at will; but it could also at will oppose a barrier to matter, and "if you touched a resurrected body you felt it." Tolkien actually uses the word "resurrection" in this context, and could not have been unaware of its religious overtones. (But this reviewer is quite happy to see the word, since he used it in a piece of pre-*Silmarillion* speculation many years ago!) It seems quite acceptable to integrate this concept retrospectively with Glorfindel's appearances in *The Lord of the Rings*, except for one point, where Tolkien declares that the position in space of such a body "was at will." This is because such a mode of transport undermines the entire plot of the later book, re-posing the question, "Why could not the Eagles simply have flown the Ring to Mount Doom?", in a much stronger form: "Why could not Glorfindel have disembodied himself, appeared at the Crack of Doom with the Ring, then thrown it in?" One answer might be that he could not transport the Ring disembodied.

These "internal" changes are, I feel, accomplished on the whole successfully. They manage to be consistent with what we feel we already know about the mythology (even if some of that knowledge is derived from the now-fixed point of the published *Silmarillion*), and to give contextually and in general intuitively satisfying reasons for why the phenomena examined should be the way they are. All these were things which lay more or less in the direct experience of the characters we meet and so required clarification. But it is when Tolkien shifts to the "external" aspects of his mythology, by which I mean primarily the setting of his invented world within the physical universe as understood by modern minds, that he runs into intractable difficulties.

Some of these difficulties were touched on earlier in the discussion of Tolkien's attempts to revise the cosmology of his imagined universe. His original mythology was set in a small, geocentric universe, most of it taken up with the flat-surfaced Earth. But he was aware that his readership took for granted the image of the modern astronomical universe, wherein the Earth is a globe set amid a star-strewn universe of unimaginably huge dimensions in time and space. As we saw earlier, his revised *Ainulindalë* cosmology essentially embedded the old *Ambarkanta* universe inside an indefinitely large region of stars: large enough to reduce the globe to virtually a point, but not, it may be presumed, of the order of thousands of millions of light-years in extent. Tolkien's later thoughts on the subject attempted to work out the consequences of having a round Earth, as well as embedding it in a "normal" Solar System, and also the possibility of other worlds in the now greatly enlarged universe.

To summarise, the problems Tolkien encountered when trying to integrate the mythology into the astronomical universe were partly due to the sheer size of the Universe in which the world of his mythology had to be set, and partly due to the more "local" problems of incorporating the Earth in the Solar System, but still making an attempt to retain the externals of the mythology, e.g., the Trees illuminating Valinor, the nature of the Sun and Moon and

their relationship to the chronology of the Elves, and so on.

Perhaps the main problem is *size*. It is imaginatively possible to conceive of the Valar undertaking their cosmic-scale "demiurgic" labours on a much vaster scale in time and space before they finally enter Arda, where the main drama of creation is to be played. But as soon as one thinks of this in physical terms, it doesn't feel right: there is a disjunction between the kind of physical power which they have to manifest on an astronomical scale and that which they seem to exercise in the world once the tale of Arda is underway. Thus: "Melkor disarrayed the Sun so that at periods it was too hot, and at others too cold. Whether this was due to the state of the Sun, or alterations in the orbit of the Earth, need not be made precise: both are possible." This is simply not intuitively acceptable: this is giving the Valar far too much power. Again, in the making of the (real) Moon: "...they devised Ithil, the Moon. In what way and with what labours they wrought in deed this great device of their thought, who shall say: for which of the Children hath seen the Valar in the uprising of their strength...?" One has the uneasy feeling here that Tolkien is all too well aware of the incredibility of the power to which the Valar now have access, and attempts to lessen the impact by the almost mechanical use of archaism.

The problem of the extent of the Valar's power is of course greatly exacerbated when the universe as a whole is considered. And therein lies the problem: with the revised *Ainulindalë*, it became the task of the Ainur to "achieve" the World. Had the conception been retained that Eru created the World, according to the pattern of the Music, by divine *fiat*, then there would have been no problem. Omnipotence can set the stage for the conflict between good and evil, that is to say, the Earth, amid an infinite "vast" of stars: being all-powerful, that presents no problem, and all that the Valar would then have to do would be to exercise their powers in and around the Earth itself. Hence a large part of Tolkien's cosmological problem was brought about by the apparently arbitrary decision to have them responsible for making the universe at the same time that it acquired astronomical dimensions.

Integrating the mythology into the more "local" level of the Solar System caused problems of its own. These were connected with the way the Earth was illuminated and with the light of the Two Trees. Thus the Solar System had to exist from the first, and so the story of the origin of the Sun and Moon as the last fruit and flower of Laurelin and Telperion, one of the absolutely fixed and original pieces of the mythology, had to go. His attempts to save some of the appearances of the mythology – e.g., the Trees *had* illuminated Valinor, but Valinor itself was covered with a great dome in which was embedded a simulated firmament of stars – seem like increasingly strained attempts to accomplish something which, in the terms in which it was intended, was impossible, and even if it were done would have amounted to a virtual "demythologising of the mythology". (In connection with the survival of the arboreal origin of the Sun and Moon into *The Annals of Aman*, Christopher Tolkien notes: "The grave and tranquil words cannot entirely suppress a sense that there emerges here an outcropping, as it were, uneroded, from an older level, more fantastic, more bizarre." As far as this reviewer is concerned, that sentence alone is worth the price of the book.)

Surely there is a much simpler solution to the cosmological problem: the purely mythical, geocentric, flat-world, Tree-illuminated cosmology, as fabricated by the Valar, should be retained as "true" until the end of the Second Age, and the inundation of Númenor and the sphericisation of the Earth; after that the modern astronomical universe becomes the "true" one. How the one was antecedent to the other is a deep mystery (other than being brought about by the infinite power of the One) and should be left as such. That way, the appearances of the mythology (which really apply only to the earlier Ages) could be saved, and the modern astronomical universe would be "real" in the later Ages. Perhaps a quasi-mythological aspect could have been retained for the Solar System somewhat along the lines of C.S. Lewis's in his Deep Space books – Tolkien briefly used the "Field of Arda" (not Arbol!) to refer to the Solar System, but this was not pursued.

One of Tolkien's motivations for trying to

Continued on page 49.

Tolkien: A Critical Assessment by Brian Rosebury London: The Macmillan Press Ltd, 1992; New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1992. £35.

John Ellison

It is not surprising that the most successful and highly regarded critical study of Tolkien's work that has so far appeared is the work of a scholar in the same field, versed in the same disciplines. This may have meant, on the other hand, that Tom Shippey in *The Road to Middle-earth* was mainly "preaching to the converted", finding an audience principally among people already familiar with Tolkien's works, and inherently able to understand them. Brian Rosebury, in taking an initial swipe, in his introduction to his new study, at the quality of Tolkien criticism generally, rightly and properly excludes Shippey from his strictures. All the same he does seem, to some extent, to be moved by an impulse to refresh those readers whom Shippey has not managed to reach. His objective is plainly to move Tolkien nearer to the centre of the twentieth-century mainstream, and clear him of the suspicion of being the literary anachronism he has sometimes been assumed to be. "Tolkien belongs to the same century as Proust, Joyce and Eliot, and is read with pleasure by many of the same readers", he claims, hopefully at any rate. From his point of view, the works (or rather *The Lord of the Rings* on which he largely concentrates) can be seen as "modernist" in some sense and also not as far removed in spirit from the "realistic" mode of so much twentieth-century fiction as has often been supposed.

This method of approach requires that the author concentrates on *The Lord of the Rings* as the only "representative" work, Tolkien's other writings being, to some extent, relegated to the sidelines. The latter are dealt with in a single chapter with the generic title of "Minor Works. 1914-1973" (a label that might well have provoked Tolkien's wrath if he could have known of it.) *The Lord of the Rings* is treated in two chapters devoted, respectively, to its conception and to its execution in detail; in practice their material tends to overlap. The author's case on behalf of it as a significant work of art is that its subject matter and overall theme – the systematic elaboration of an imagined world – is at one with its plot and its "episodic" structure. This apparent looseness of structure justifies itself in that its basis is not so much a "quest" (or an inverted one), as a "journey", a much looser concept, which readily permits the diversity of narrative and variety of incident which at first sight seem to set the work so far apart from "the novel". (As Rosebury points out, some novels, accepted as important and significant, are anything but tightly constructed or classically correct as to form). It is Middle-earth itself, in all its richness and diversity, which is the "hero" of *The Lord of the Rings*, and not Frodo Baggins or any other one character within it. The "desire" of its readers, the totality of their expectations and anxiety regarding the outcome, is focussed on the survival of Middle-earth, more or less in the form in which they find it. Victory for Sauron would not merely mean slavery for all its inhabitants; it would impose total uniformity all over it – a "McDonald's" you might say, in every inhabited spot from Barad-dûr to the Grey Havens. The battle of good and evil is expressed in terms of variety, as preferable to uniformity as much as it is in terms of a contest between opposed codes of personal behaviour and morality.

This approach to the author's part rather sidesteps the dramatic surge underlying so much of *The Lord of the Rings*, and its use of the passage of time to create tension and build the narrative up to its climactic points; he says little about this and could usefully have said a lot more. Within the framework he sets himself, however, he is able to mount a skilful and

effective defence of those features that have sometimes provoked the disdain of literary journalists and academics. The alleged superiority of "realism" in fiction to so-called "escapist fantasy" is quickly exposed for the non-issue that it is. *The Lord of the Rings* may not qualify as a "realist" novel, but the presentation of its world involves a high degree of realism; conversely, "fantasy" is a dominant or major element in the make-up of numerous and diverse works which are widely accepted as "serious" novels. As to the more difficult area of Tolkien's English style, or styles, his varying modes of expression, archaic or otherwise, Rosebury succeeds admirably, by means of extended quotation and analysis of selected passages, in demonstrating its, and their, suitability to individual context. Inequalities and lapses there may be, as he admits, but for a remarkably high proportion of the time Tolkien's style of the moment is either a straightforward "contemporary" mode, or, if heightened to any degree, serves to define the particular culture, social level, or type of characterisation involved.

The uncommitted may up to this point accept that *The Lord of the Rings* can be show, to "work" effectively on its own terms as an artistic whole. The author still has to demonstrate that those terms are universally or at least generally acceptable. Here the limitations of his survey begin to assert themselves. In defining the quality of Tolkien's vision of Middle-earth as its "meticulously detailed expansiveness" (a point also made clear by extended quotation), he may also be providing an explanation and justification for those persons who are not "turned on" by such a concept. Most of them will accept that Tolkien's work is not for them and turn to other things. If they are literary critics they will, however, have to rationalise their disbelief by fastening on individual features, such as style and mode of expression, as the basis of their verdict; it would be professional suicide to admit in public that "I just don't appreciate it". In an important and revealing passage Rosebury contrasts Tolkien's description of landscape with Thomas Hardy's as exemplified in the famous first chapter of *The Return of the Native.* Hardy projects human significance into the landscape, whereas Tolkien stands back from it and evokes a human response to it. "Precisely," the unbelievers start to say. "Travelogues are all very well in their way, but they are not what real literature is about."

At this point Rosebury leaves *The Lord of the Rings* behind and turns to the "minor works", and here he is perhaps inclined to lose his way. He is quite aware how easy it is to think of *The Silmarillion* as no more than an interesting and sometimes attractive collection of fragments whose main interest is that they show Tolkien groping forward towards achieving the mature mode of *The Lord of the Rings*, but in the event he does not entirely avoid doing so himself. As he says, the reader moving on to *The Silmarillion* from *The Lord of the Rings* often finds difficulty, not only in coming to terms with the absence of abundant descriptive detail and evocation of scene, but also in understanding the violent and essentially tragic nature of the events and conflicts as they affect individuals caught up in them, and the wholly different tone which results. He deals briefly with characterization and is illuminating on such an ambivalent character as Eöl, but does not really clarify the relationship between the Elves, as they appear in *The Silmarillion*, and the Elves remaining in Middle-earth at the end of the Third Age. This is profoundly important, because without this relationship, the actual significance in human terms of the subject-matter and the drama of *The Lord of the Rings* is easy to miss. The ambivalent, dangerous side of the Elvish personality, shown most of all in Fëanor, has to be understood as implied in the later work, even though it underpins the moral structure of Tolkien's world. The slight impression of breathlessness which is left by this chapter is also evident in the treatment of *The Hobbit* as a transitional work, important rather as a stage in Tolkien's development than in itself. That it has a few weak or uneven passages is hard to deny, but to deal with it as little more than a "trial piece" in preparation for *The Lord of the Rings* is to do little justice to its own attractions.

The author nevertheless has many very useful observations to make on the shorter works individually, and some very positive ones regarding some of the poetry, both early and late. "Kortirion among the Trees" is looked at in the light of the influence of the romantic poets on Tolkien (he who was not supposed to have been

much interested in any post-medieval writer), and it is refreshing to find a lance or two broken in defence of the longer *Lays of Beleriand*; again an extended quotation (from "The Lay of Leithian") is analysed, so as to show the poem's strengths rather than such weaknesses as it has. The chapter as a whole does leave a somewhat scrappy impression, perhaps unavoidably so. The shoe-horning of all Tolkien's shorter works into a critique of forty pages makes one realise how many of them there are.

In his final chapter, "Tolkien and the Twentieth Century", Rosebury turns to the task of relating Tolkien to "the literary mainstream", but he does not succeed in defining this expression with any degree of precision. He begins with a biographical sketch; this mostly recapitulates material familiar to readers of Humphrey Carpenter's *Biography*. Tolkien's generation, reaching adulthood at the time of the First World War was, as he points out, so largely reduced by it, that nearly all the distinctive literary figures of the first half of the century come from the generations immediately before and after it. It may therefore be much easier now than it was some years ago to see Tolkien's writing as a product of its time. For a long time, though, "received" academic opinion has done its best to isolate a selected and "approved" list of authors, and admit them to a pantheon, on whose entrance portal is inscribed the word "modernist". (The same thing has happened in other arts, of course – witness the music broadcast policy of the B.B.C. during the 1960's and 1970's, which refused a hearing to any new music written in any kind of tonal or moderately approachable idiom.) Rosebury suggests that Tolkien's writing has certain essential characteristics – creative use of myth, selective drawing on the literature of the past, religious "intuition" implied rather than expressly stated – which are shared by many "modernist" texts, but equally that it lacks the crucial quality of "irony" common to all of them. (This latter is not one hundred percent true; there is Gollum's moment of "repentance" and Sam's rejection of it, which both itself and in its consequences is supremely "ironic".) This does not seem very conclusive, and the author is on safer and more familiar ground in claiming that *The Lord of the Rings*, even though it is not in any sense a commentary on world events contemporary with its making, was very much shaped by them, and embodies a distinctively twentieth-century approach to power and the political outcome of its exercise. This, however, is hardly a new discovery by this time.

Will any of this prove anything to anyone who is not already disposed to enter into Tolkien's imagined world and accept his view of the real one? The author of this book has, perhaps, not quite "fulfilled his quest" as outlined in the introductory chapter. He has, on the other hand, provided a great deal of thought-provoking reading, and many useful insights for those who are able to brave the book's remarkably steep price, or to beg, borrow or steal a copy.

The Dream of Getting Lost (*Dreymurin um at villast*)

A Review of *Hobbin* – the Faroese translation of *The Hobbit*. J.R.R. Tolkien, translated by Axel Tórgarð, published by Stiðin, 1990.

Hanus Andreassen

First published in *Tíðindablaðið Sosialurin*, 12th December 1990
Translated from the Faroese by the author

The dream of undertaking a journey from the known into the unknown – into a virgin and chthonic *terra incognita* – is probably as old as mankind. The recipe is simple. You travel over mountains and through valleys, across rivers and through woods. As you travel, the feeling of having lost your way never leaves you. Crows and ravens soar over the crowns of trees and mountain tops. These birds of ancient legend give the journey its proper mythical atmosphere or – this being in fact a journey through the halls of the mind – archetypal touch. Returning home after such a journey you have gained a princess or a kingdom or – if at the last moment the treasure slips out of your hands, which frequently happens – at least some wisdom.

The Hobbit, this strange tale which the English linguist and scholar John Ronald Tolkien made up for his children in the evening during the thirties, is such a story. The down-to-earth and home-loving Bilbo Baggins is being lured by Gandalf the magician and the thirteen dwarves away on a journey so adventurous and perilous that it surpasses all enterprises of this kind. They fight *orcs* in caves deep underground. They nearly perish in a battle with big, hairy, fat spiders in a thick wood. They travel on the backs of eagles and for a time find their lodging on dizzying high rock ledges high up in the mountains. The most uncanny part of their journey, in a way, is the trip from the King of the Elves down to Lake-Town. Imagine being locked inside a barrel and set afloat on a river, not knowing whether anybody shall ever knock out the bottom or the lid of the barrel!

The Hobbit is, right out, one of the most exciting books I have read. It is funny, too. It might be mentioned here that Tolkien – the author – is of German descent. His name is derived from the German word *tollkühn* which means "foolhardy" or "rash". And it must have required some rashness – at a period of time when experimenting writers like T.S. Eliot and James Joyce and the army of literary flatterers surrounding them were dominant – to write books which have suspense as their main quality and which are marked by a poetic but in no way experimental style. And Tolkien was certainly taken to task by some *literati*. But if you take a closer look, you find for example threads of thought which awake your curiosity, and demand to be further explored. The concept of the hidden design, for example, is intriguing. The prosaic Bilbo has been chosen to carry out a great plan which he doesn't know. Without knowing it this humble hobbit is the queen in a grand game of chess which is being played by a higher master. The notion is clearly religious. Another thread in the book is the notion of an inspired language existing before the pedestrian every-day languages which are now being spoken in the world. Tolkien touches on this notion when he comes to a climax in the story, the description of the dragon Smaug who lies guarding his treasure:

> *Smákur lá á liðini við samanløgdum veingjum sum ein ómetalig flogmús, ...*
>
> *At siga, at Bilbo vildi missa ondina, røkkur ikki til. Orð, sum síga frá, hvussu lamsligin hann var, eru ikki longur til, síðan menn hildu uppat at tala tað málið, sum*

álvarnir lærdu teir, í teimum døgum, tá ið øll verðin var undurfull.

Smaug lay, with wings folded like an immeasurable bat, turned partly on one side, so that the hobbit could see his underparts and his long, pale belly crusted with gems and fragments of gold from his long lying on his costly bed. Behind him where the walls were nearest could dimly be seen coats of mail, helms and axes, great jars and vessels filled with a wealth that could not be guessed.

To say that Bilbo's breath was taken away is no description at all. There are no words left to express his staggerment, since Men changed the language that they learned of elves in the days when all the world was wonderful.

In the days when all the world was wonderful. This phrase seems to be the key, not only to *The Hobbit*, but to all Tolkien's writing. His books are an attempt to recreate, in poetry, an animated world of legend. It has been said that in order to do this thoroughly, it was his intention to create an Elvish language. As this was not possible, he chose to write a kind of English which is bright and suggestive of green landscapes, with a predominantly Anglo-Saxon rather than Latin vocabulary. Tolkien was well versed in Old English as well as Old Norse, and his books have, in language and content, a distinctly Nordic flavour. The names of the thirteen dwarves, for example, and their cousins and ancestors are taken from the *Völuspá*.

The strangest chapter in *The Hobbit* is probably the one called "Riddles in the Dark". Here we meet Gollum, a creature which I suppose Tolkien himself has made up. He is described like this:

Djúpt her niðri við tað myrka vatn búði Golli gamli, eitt lítið, slímut skepilsi. Eg veit ikki, hvaðani hann kom, ella hvør ella hvat hann var. Hann var bara Golli – svartur sum myrkrið, tvey rund stór, bleik eygu í tí skrámuta andlitinum. Hann hevði ein lítlan bát og róði ljódliga um vatnið, sum var stórt og djúpt og ísakalt. Hann damlaði við sínum stóru fótum uttanborðs, men ongan vørr hann gjørdi. Nei, ikki hann. Hann leitaði við sínum bleiku lampu-eygum eftir blindum fiskum, sum hann greip við sínum longu fingrum, skjótari enn hugsast kann. Honum dámdi eisini væl kjøt. Fjallatussi var góður matur, fekk hann hann. Men hann ansaði væl eftir, at teir ikki komu eftir, hvar hann var. Hann kom á teir aftanífrá og kipti teir.

Deep down here by the dark water lived old Gollum, a small slimy creature. I don't know where he came from, nor who or what he was. He was Gollum – as dark as darkness, except for two big round pale eyes in his thin face. He had a little boat, and he rowed about quite quietly on the lake; for lake it was, wide and deep and deadly cold. He paddled it with large feet dangling over the side, but never a ripple did he make. Not he. He was looking out of his pale lamp-like eyes for blind fish, which he grabbed with his long fingers as quick as thinking. He liked meat too. Goblin he thought good, when he could get it; but he took care they never found him out. He just throttled them from behind.

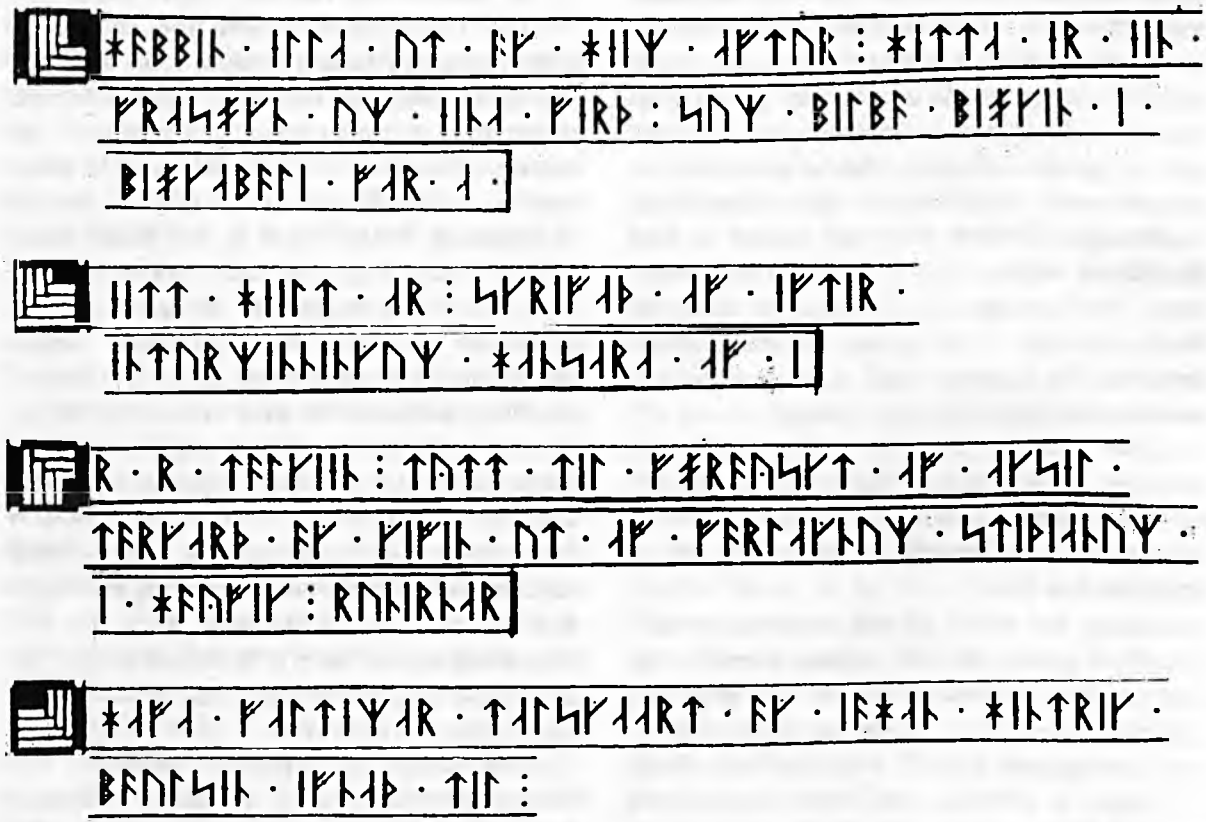
In the contest of riddles Gollum loses to Bilbo, who takes away the fatal ring, again a Nordic notion, this of course being Andvaranaut – the treasure of Andvari – which was later to cause death to Sjúrður Sigmundarson (Sigurd, the son of Sigmund). And more is not heard about Gollum in this story. But later Tolkien had him reappear – with a vengeance. He and his ring of invisibility became the principal notion underlying the gigantic work called *The Lord of the Rings*, published in three volumes 1954-55. Here the reader is taken into a magnificent fairy-tale world, with continents, peoples and different languages. This time another hobbit, Frodo, is the instrument of higher powers. He is being entrusted with the mission of carrying the magic ring into the Land of Shadows, where the evil Sauron reigns, and have it destroyed there. The dilemma is that the ring can obtain power over the good as well as the evil.

The books of Tolkien – primarily *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* – became during the sixties favourite reading among the children of the counter-culture, and they were often quoted, almost like bibles, by the prophets of the messianic and utopian movements of the time. This probably stems from their readability and the fact that the chthonic and virgin universe

they describe obtained a special status in a world which seemed to be controlled by cold and environment-destroying technocrats. On the other hand one may – like once the Danish author Elsa Gress – be surprised that progressive people were so enchanted by these books that they chose for themselves surnames from them[1]. There is no woman in *The Hobbit*, and in *The Lord of the Rings* relationship between the sexes is excluded. Tolkien, the inspired man and scholar, was also a British Victorian.

The Hobbit has been translated into Faroese by Axel Tórgarð. The translation has been carried out in such a way that it never crosses the reader's mind that this is a translation. Which is to say that it is masterly. I don't remember a better and more vivid Faroese translation since *Nornagestur* which was translated by Tróndur á Malarenda. Moreover, the translation has benefited from the splendid language of dragons and myth which is to be found in our collection of medieval ballads – without ever seeming weighed down by this fact. The songs have been well translated and their metre maintained intact as far as I can see. Like Bilbo Baggins Axel has lately been listening more and more attentively to the Tookish heritage in his temperament. This has made him undertake several journeys and carry home to us treasures first from the Hellenic and later from the English literary world. *The Hobbit* is probably the most splendid gift he has so far carried home to us Faroese.

The Hobbit, set up by Hestprent and printed in England, is 255 pages. Pictures and drawings are by the author. It is being published by Stiðin. The cover is ornamented with runes drawn by Valdemar Dalsgaard and Jóhan Hendrik Winther Poulsen. Price 225 DKK.



[1] A reference to the Danish community *Mao's lyst*, whose members bore the surname Kløvedal – from the English Rivendell.

Editor's note:
Axel Tórgarð is preparing a translation of *Farmer Giles of Ham*, also to be published by Stiðin.
The runes on page 48 are taken from the cover: the editor writes "We thought it would be a good idea to compose a Faroese text with the same content as the English one. Therefore we wrote, running to the right from the lower left corner:

> *Hobbin ella út og heim aftur. Hetta er ein frásøgn um eina ferð, sum Bilbo Pjøkin í Pjøkabóli var a / eitt heilt ár. Skrivað av eftir endurminningum hansara av J / R R Tolkien. Týtt til føroyskt av Axel Tórgarð og givið út av forlagnum Stiðjanum í Hoyvík. Rúnirnar / hava Valdemar Dalsgaard og Jóhan Hendrik Poulson evnað til.*
>
> The Hobbit or There and Back Again. This is a record of a journey, which Bilbo Baggins of Hobbiton undertook for a whole year. Written following his memoirs by J R R Tolkien. Translated into Faroese by Axel Tórgarð and published by Stiðin in Hoyvík. Valdemar Dalsgaard and Jóhan Hendrik Poulson have composed the runes.

In actual fact the runes are composed according to one of the very few runes we have in Faroese. This inscription dates from the 13th century... Jóhan Hendrik Poulson ... found out which original Norse dwarf-names Tolkien had used, and therefore we were able to use these original names, adapted to modern Faroese orthography, in our translation. Faroese is in actual fact very similar to the old Norse or Icelandic." (pers. com.)

Continued from page 41.

background for his mythology may have been achieve a more astronomically believable that its cosmological aspects are ultimatelyderived from the Valar, who ought to know what must be "true". Hence the true knowledge of the Valar, which must correspond, more or less, to modern astronomy, requires an overhaul of the original mythology. (Or else, that mythology was mixed up with the lore of Men, thus causing it to be twisted.) But if the mythology had been retained in the way suggested, then the old *Ambarkanta* mythology would be both Valar-derived and "true".

Much, then, of Tolkien's later, post-*Lord of the Rings* work on *The Silmarillion* has been, as we have seen, an attempt to make of it all a consistent whole; and one which, but for the alarming and destructive débâcle he got himself into on the cosmological question, he more or less succeeded in achieving.

This can, I think, be seen if we retrospectively project Tolkien's later understanding of the foundations of his mythology back into *The Lord of the Rings*. What we now learn about the reincarnation of the Elves (if not their "fading"), the true nature of Orcs, Sauron's motivations, and even the Marring of Arda all add a new dimension to our understanding of the work and enhance our appreciation of it. In a sense, then, what Tolkien was attempting to achieve at this time was not just to bring greater coherence to his creation, but to bring about an imaginative congruence between the epics of the War of the Great Jewels and the War of the Rings.

We have also seen that much of this later work involved themes which may have reflected deeply personal concerns: the sanctity of marriage, the burden of childbearing, the resurrection of the body, the humanity of Orcs.

The glimpses we get of *The Silmarillion* as Tolkien intended it are fascinating: apart from the spelling "Orks", the *Athrabeth* Commentary would have been the "last item in an appendix", and the "Great Tales" (i.e., the long forms) of Beren and Lúthien, of the Children of Húrin, and of the Fall of Gondolin would have been given as Appendices. If only...!

So another volume of the "History" has joined the lengthening line of its predecessors. That Christopher Tolkien has yet again undertaken a task in which the most painstaking textual scholarship and critical perception have emerged in a form wherein clarity of exposition is clothed in expressive grace should hardly need to be said by this time; but that shouldn't stop one from saying it.

J.R.R. Tolkien: Life and Legend. An Exhibition to commemorate the Centenary of the Birth of J.R.R. Tolkien (1892 – 1973). Compiled by Dr. Judith Priestman. Oxford: Bodleian Library, 1992. (ISBN 1-85124-027-6) Current price: £14.95 (Catatlogue of the Exhibition to commemorate the Centenary of the Birth of J.R.R. Tolkien, 1892 – 1973).

Christina Scull

The exhibition was one of the highlights of the Centenary year and displayed a wealth of material – not just drawings (many previously unknown), manuscripts of his academic and literary works, and editions of his books in English and translation, but also many personal items. Judith Priestman says in her introduction to the Catalogue that she "tried to strike a balance between 'personal facts' and the 'author's work', allowing the works to speak for themselves in the contexts of the life".

For those who were able to visit the exhibition this Catalogue is a worthy souvenir; for those who were not so fortunate it will allow them to enjoy vicariously some of its pleasures as well as providing much new information. It has 96 pages, with 28 colour illustrations, and over 74 black-and-white illustrations. The colour values are true to the originals with few exceptions but the cream matt paper on which they are printed has deadened the impact, which is especially unfortunate in the case of the watercolours, failing to convey the bright, almost glowing, quality of the originals. There are individual entries for most of the 250 items in the exhibition but some items (mainly illustrations to one work) are grouped together in one entry.

The Catalogue is divided into nine sections; the first four ('Family and Early Life', 'Schooldays and Oxford', 'War', and 'Lexicography and Leeds') treat chronologically the many aspects of his early life – friendships, family relationships, marriage, war service, employment on the O.E.D. and, at Leeds University, early academic writing, together with his growing proficiency as an artist and the beginnings of the created languages, early poems, and the stories and letters he wrote for his children. The next three sections are concerned with his major literary creations and their accompanying artwork and maps ('Mr Baggins', '*The Lord of the Rings*' and '*The Silmarillion*'). The last two sections are again more biographical ('Academic Life' and 'Last Years'). The Catalogue is more structured than the actual exhibition. The display facilities at the Bodley did not always allow the ideal juxtapositioning of the larger paintings and drawings in the upright wall cases with the items in the horizontal cases .

It was very moving to see the originals of personal and family documents mentioned in Carpenter's *Biography*, including the letter Arthur Tolkien wrote to tell his mother of John Ronald Reuel's birth; and the letter the four-year-old Tolkien dictated to be sent to his father (never sent because of his father's death). The latter is reproduced in the Catalogue. Especially poignant is a drawing Tolkien made in the year in which his mother died. He had been sent to stay with relatives and the drawing shows himself and his uncle by marriage sitting by the fire mending their clothes; the caption is 'What is Home without a Mother (or a Wife)'. The Catalogue also relates his romance with Edith Bratt and reproduces the envelope on which they tried out various versions of Edith's new name immediately after the marriage. The impact of the First World War comes over clearly with extracts of letters from his closest friends, including some written only days before they were killed in action.

The exhibition displayed books from Tolkien's library which showed his interest in languages, including C.N.E. Eliot's *A Finnish*

Grammar, Joseph Wright's *A Primer of the Gothic Language* and Chambers' *Etymological Dictionary*. The Catalogue notes an inscription in the last one written by Tolkien in 1973 recording his lifelong interest in philology.

> This book was the beginning of my interest in Germanic Philology (& Philol. in general) [about 1904]. Unfortunately the 'introduction' giving me my first glimpse of 'Lautverschiebung' [that is, consonant-shift] etc. became so well-worn and tattered that it has become lost.

His own created languages and writing systems are represented in the Catalogue by a page from the 'Book of the Foxrook' (a notebook he compiled in 1909 with a code-alphabet and commentary in a language based on Esperanto and Spanish), a postcard written in runes from 1937 and the poem 'Namárië' with notes.

Manuscripts of both his academic work and literary creations were shown. The former included the *Beowulf* lecture and the Anglo-Saxon poem *Exodus* (reproduced in the Catalogue). The latter included examples of the many stages in the writing of *The Silmarillion*, *Leaf by Niggle*, *Smith of Wootton Major*, and *On Fairy Stories*. The Catalogue illustrates 'the Sketch of the Mythology' of 1926 and the 'Quenta Silmarillion' originally written in the mid-1930's but with later amendments, and the beginning of *Leaf by Niggle*. Most of the manuscript material of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* is at Marquette so only a few pages were exhibited. The Catalogue reproduces a very early page of sentences relating to *The Hobbit*, and 'The King's Reckoning' from Appendix D of *The Lord of the Rings*.

Tolkien said that when writing works like his it was essential to have a map, and his maps were well represented in the exhibition: early and late versions of Thrór's map, and the Wilderland map from *The Hobbit*, the first 'Silmarillion' map and the first map for *The Lord of the Rings*. Details of the last two are reproduced in black and white.

This was the third exhibition in Oxford to display Tolkien's artwork. The 1976 exhibition at the Ashmolean had 82 items, 35 from *The Hobbit*, 33 from *The Father Christmas Letters* and 14 from *The Lord of the Rings*. The 1987 exhibition at Bodley contained 28 items from *The Hobbit*, all but one of them shown in 1976. The 1992 exhibition displayed 46 previously exhibited items and 44 new items (21 known from Calendars, *Pictures* or other publications). To the best of my knowledge the Catalogue reproduces 17 items for the first time.

The earliest item (illustrated in black and white in the Catalogue) comes from Tolkien's first sketch-book and shows a childish drawing of 'seaweeds & starfishes'. A complex pictorial code-letter, which the twelve-year old Tolkien sent to Father Francis Morgan, is reproduced full-page in colour. Pen and ink sketches he made on holidays in his late teens show his growing proficiency. The Catalogue reproduces a very able drawing of the harbour at Whitby made in the summer of 1910.

He used pencil and crayon for one of the most fascinating items in the exhibition: 'High Life at Gipsy Green', c.1918, is a page of light-hearted vignettes depicting scenes from his early married life. A great deal is fitted into quite a small space and at the exhibition one felt the need to examine it closely. It is reproduced but only in black and white and the reproduction is very soft so that the details do not show up clearly.

The twelve items from *The Father Christmas Letters* showed him working in watercolour and in crayon. The brilliant and yet often subtle colours he used in the watercolours were quite breathtaking in the originals though that does not really come over in the reproductions in the Catalogue. The Catalogue reproduces, full page in colour, the 1939 crayon drawing which was not included in *The Father Christmas Letters*. This shows Father Christmas striding down a path between Christmas trees, preceded by North Polar Bear with a flaming torch. It is less detailed than many of the earlier ones and suggests that Tolkien may not have had had as much time to spend on it. The catalogue also reproduces intact both Polar Bear's Christmas card in 1931 and the 1932 illustration, whereas in the book elements of these were printed on different pages.

His drawings of the two bogeys imagined by his second son, Michael, are also reproduced in colour. By drawing **Maddo** (the armless gloved hand that crawled down the curtain) and

Owlamoo (a sinister owl-like figure that perched on high furniture) Tolkien hoped to exorcise his son's fears.

It was exciting to see his two watercolour illustrations for the unpublished story 'Roverandom', both reproduced in colour in the Catalogue. 'The Gardens of the Merking's palace' is one of his more beautiful and complex drawings, depicting an underwater scene in brilliant colour.

All items illustrating the *Silmarillion* material were being shown for the first time though most have appeared in calendars and *Pictures*. I was overwhelmed by the use of colour in 'Halls of Manwë on the Mountains of the World above Faerie' and 'Glaurung sets forth to seek Túrin'. The former is reproduced adequately on the cover of the Catalogue but it was very well reproduced on the poster for the exhibition. The exhibition enabled one to appreciate the exquisite detail of the late *Silmarillion* heraldic motifs, several of which are reproduced in the Catalogue in colour, with Tolkien's inscriptions.

The two *Hobbit* illustrations being exhibited for the first time were known from *Pictures*. I was pleased to see the five watercolour illustrations for the book again as they are the very best of his artwork, and so far no reproduction has done them justice. The Catalogue reproduced the drawing for the dust jacket for the first time – still current and undated after nearly 56 years.

Several of *Lord of the Rings* items had not been exhibited before, though most had been published in *Pictures* or elsewhere. The Catalogue does reproduce for the first time two designs for dustwrappers (but only in black and white). For this book the illustrations Tolkien made (often to help him work out the story) are in crayon and pencil rather than watercolour but they show a much more delicate and sensitive use compared with his earlier works in this medium.

Unfortunately the Catalogue does not reproduce one of the surprises of the exhibition – the late (1961) crayon drawing 'The Hills of the Morning'. This work led me to the thought that while I regret the many literary works Tolkien left unfinished, the best of his artwork makes me regret that he did not do more to help us visualise his world.

I would urge everyone interested in Tolkien to buy this Catalogue both for the information that it contains in the various entries and for the many illustrations. It is made even more useful by the good index, unusual in an exhibition catalogue.

Letters

Dear Editors,

I was very impressed by the scholarly nature of the articles [in *Mallorn* 29], none of which were "dry and boring". Especially Helen [Armstrong]'s "Dressed to Kill" – absolutely brilliant, I really enjoyed the article especially because of the way it acted as a link between *Mallorn* and *Amon Hen*, well the letters page of AH at least! The tongue in cheek 'horsey' narrative was great as it carried the intellectual content of the narrative without detracting from it.

Maria Kamenkovich's piece was interesting and, when viewed in concert with Vladimir Grushetsky's talk on Translating Tolkien at the conference, illuminating. I think Tolkien would not have been displeased at the effect of LotR on the Russian fans as far as reviving their spiritual lives, and can we please see more of the Iachimov illustrations?

As to the revelation of the work of 'Jar' Tolkien I believe that if we refer to Shippey this small piece could be seen as an asterisk poem of the mechanics of *draco nobelis* and stems entirely from an early period in Jar T's notes on Arda and its fauna. This could provide a link to the real purpose of the beings inhabiting the sun and moon: celestial puppeteers, an idea which was adopted later but with the beings still being left to inhabit their spheres due to their mythical station as progenitors of hobbit songs and poesy. The mechanics of Sauron's smoke projection has often puzzled me and Alex [Lewis]'s piece provided some interesting points for discussion for future smial moots.

Ian Collier

Contributors

Hanus Andreassen is a translator into Faroese: he has translated *Othello*, and his latest work is "The Dead", one of the stories from James Joyce's *Dubliners*.

Helen Armstrong has a serious interest in mythogenesis and the serial re-emergence of archetypes, and has recently accused Brunhildë of horse-rustling.

Christina Scull was a schoolgirl when she first read *The Lord of the Rings*, but did not join the Tolkien Society until 1981. Her main interest is Tolkien Bibliography, to which her book-cases bear witness. She has spoken at many Tolkien seminars and conferences, in Britain and abroad. The Society's Archivist since 1987, and was joint Chair of the 1992 Centenary Conference. More recently she was elected Officer without Portfolio.

David Doughan is a Welsh-speaking Englishman of Scottish-Irish ancestry, and a former editor of *Quettar*, the bulletin of the Tolkien Society's Linguistic Fellowship.

John Ellison's origins are in history (Medieval) and archaeology (principally Iron Age and Roman Britain) – for strictly utilitarian reasons he works in a law office in the daytime. Other concerns are music (classical, romantic and early twentieth-century), some kinds of literature (but not others) and more recently drawing and painting in watercolours.

Ruth Lacon is a scientist by training, but a historian, artist and writer by inclination – currently employed as a clerk by an insurance company! She's Scottish (despite a mixed-up accent that sometimes gives people ideas to the contrary – *not* a survivable mistake) and a member of Fornost Erain Smial.

Charles Noad acts as Bibliographer for the Tolkien Society. His proofreading skills are utilised by Christopher Tolkien in the "History of Middle-earth" series, and by grateful editors in the Tolkien Society. His other interests include William Blake and astronautics.

René van Rossenberg is a leading light in Unquendor, the Dutch Tolkien Society. He is a great collector of Tolkien.

Consonant mutations in Welsh and Sindarin

"Soft" Mutation

Welsh		Sindarin	
C Caerdydd	G I Gaerdydd	C calen	G Parth Galen
P Powys	B I Bowys	P paur	B Cele-brimnor
T Talybont	D I Dalybont	T tíriel	D palan-díriel
G Gorsedd	[*zero*] Yr Orsedd	G Gondor Gûl	[*zero*]/G Harondor Morgul
B Blaenau	F [=*V*] I Flaenau	B beleg	V Arveleg
D Dyfed	DD [= *th in "this"*] I Ddyfed	D dol	DD [= *th in "this"*] Fanuidhol
M Maesteg	F [=*V*] I Faesteg	M megil	V Arvegil
LL Llanelli	L I Lanelli	LH lhach	L Bragollach
RH Rhaiadr	R I Raiadr	RH Rhûn	R Amrûn
[*S* [*Sabrina*	*H*[1]] *Hafren*]	S sîr	H Nanduhírion

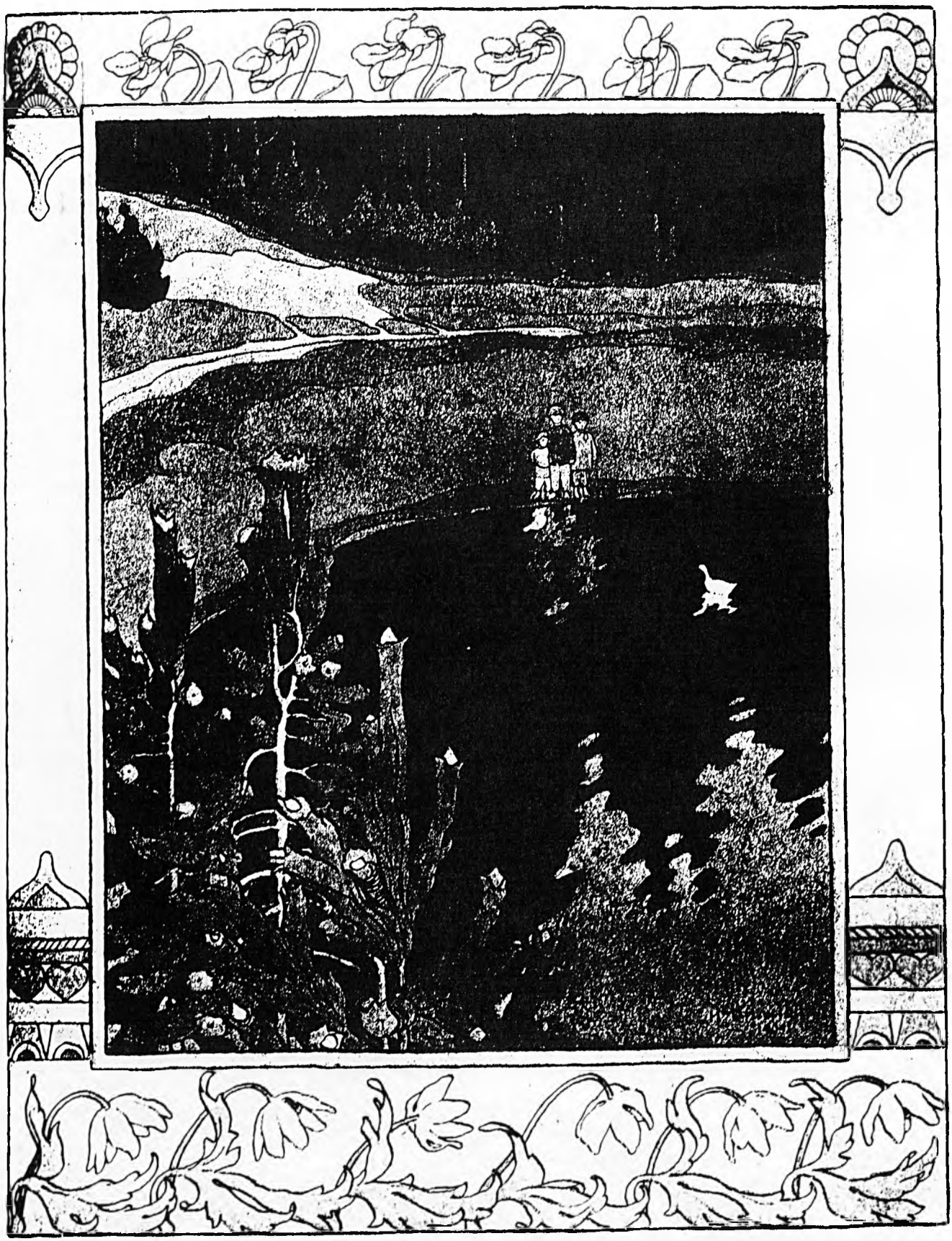
Nasal Mutation

Welsh		Sindarin	
C Caerdydd	NGH yng Nghaerdydd	C cuinar	G i guinar CH i chuinar
P Powys	MH ym Mhowys	P periain	PH i pheriain
T Talybont	NH yn Nhalybont	T tîw	TH i thîw
G Gorsedd	NG yng ngorsedd	G gaurhoth	NG i ngaurhoth
B Blaenau	M ym Mlaenau	B bar	MB e-mbar
D Dyfed	N yn Nyfed	D daedelos	ND e-ndaedelos

Spirant mutation (Welsh only)

C Caerdydd	CH â Chaerdydd
P Powys	PH â Phowys
T Talybont	TH â Thalybont

[1]Note: this example does not occur in modern Welsh grammar; it is only found in historical word-formation.



ISSN 0308-6674