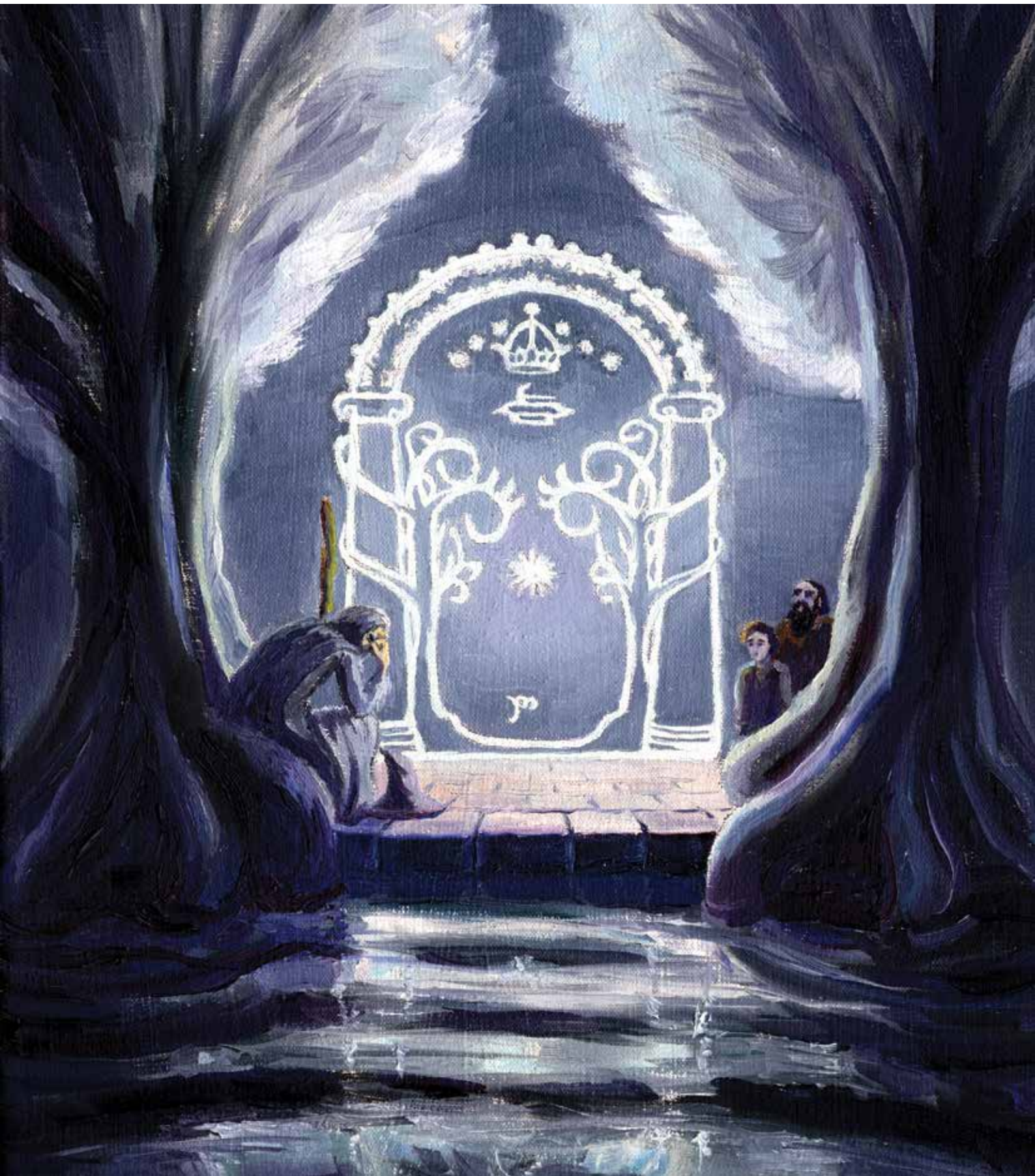
Issue 48 • Autumn 2009

Mallorn

The Journal of the Tolkien Society



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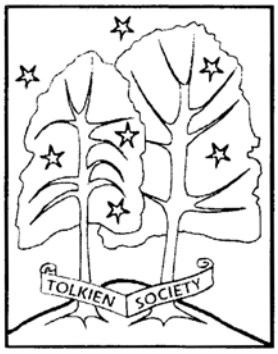

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The Journal of the Tolkien Society

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Mallorn is the Journal of the Tolkien Society, and appears twice a year, in the Spring (copy deadline 25 December) and Autumn (21 June). It considers reviews, comment, scholarly articles, original poetry, artwork and fiction (excluding fan fiction). Unsolicited material is welcome, but contributors should decide prior to submission to which category their manuscript belongs, and electronic submission is strongly encouraged. Full details on the preparation and submission to *Mallorn* are available on request from the Editor by email (mallorn@tolkiensociety.org) or by mail to 89 Connaught Road, Cromer, Norfolk NR27 0DB, UK, on receipt of a stamped addressed envelope (if in UK) or two International Reply Coupons (if outside the UK).

The Tolkien Society Founded in London in 1969 the Tolkien Society is an international organization registered in the UK as a charity (No. 273809) dedicated to furthering interest in the life and works of Professor J. R. R. Tolkien, CBE (1892–1973) who remains its President in perpetuo. His daughter, Miss Priscilla Tolkien, became its honorary Vice-President in 1986. As well as *Mallorn*, the society publishes a bimonthly bulletin, Amon Hen. In addition to local gatherings ('Smials') there are annual national meetings: the AGM and Dinner in the spring, Summermoot and the Seminar in the summer, and Oxonmoot, a celebratory weekend held in Oxford in late September. For further information about the society please contact Sally Kennett, 210 Prestbury Road, Cheltenham, Glos GL52 3ER or visit http://www.tolkiensociety.org.

Tolkien of the many names

John Garth

The Legend of Sigurd and Gudrún offers fascinating new insights into Tolkien's creative processes — in particular how Norse myth haunted him. By that I don't just mean it inspired him to write something in a similar vein; I also mean it disturbed and horrified him so much that his own legendarium turned out to be more like a reaction against it. Out went the amoral Aesir; in came the angelic Valar. Even in *Sigurd and Gudrún*, where Tolkien is ostensibly trying to retell an Old Norse story faithfully, his Odin is a far cry from the many-faceted original, whose contradictions are so extreme that even a god can barely contain them. Indeed, as Christopher Tolkien nearly says, the Odin in these poems his father wrote around 1930 is more or less Manwë in costume: an august figure with one eye (!) always on the final battle of good against evil.

But for me, the publication of *Sigurd and Gudrún* also brought to mind another masquerade arguably inspired by Norse myth — in this case one in which Tolkien himself was the actor. It took place some 20 years earlier, in 1909, when he wanted a nickname — or codename, rather — to use in his 'Book of the Foxrook', a teenage exercise in code and Esperanto. The name he picked was Lutro, Esperanto for 'otter'. I wonder whether it was chosen simply for the animal's quick, crafty, secretive connotations: fitting enough for someone engaged in making up codes. It has also been suggested plausibly (by Patrick Wynne and Arden Smith) that Otter was Tolkien's nickname in Animalic, the language he had developed with his Incledon cousins. But Otter also happens to be the name of the third member of that tricksy brethren composed of the dragon Fafnir and his dwarf brother Regin in the story of Sigurd, which Tolkien had first encountered as a child in Andrew Lang's *Red Fairy Book*.

Despite the fact that in his 'New Lay of Sigurd' he would characterize the brothers and their father Hreidmar as 'demons', it seems possible that Tolkien in 1909 took his *nom de plume* directly from this Otter of the Eddas and sagas, who memorably spent his time frolicking beside a waterfall in the form of (no prizes here) an otter, before being killed by the even tricksier Loki as a tasty meal. The murder prompts the payment of a weregild (gold was known in Old Norse as the 'otter's ransom'), which sets in motion the curse of the Nibelung ring, so this minor character plays a pivotal role in the story.

The only other source of inspiration that suggests itself for the 17-year-old Tolkien's Otter alias is Ohthere, a seafarer who brought King Alfred strange tales from the Arctic Ocean in the Old English *Orosius* (the relevant passage is a standard student text in *Sweet's Anglo-Saxon Reader*). Ohthere is an Anglo-Saxon name, but the sailor was actually Scandinavian and in Norse would have been called Ottárr or Ottar. It is not hard to believe that Tolkien, even five years before he created Éarendel/Eärendil, might have identified with the ninth-century shipman: the sea voyage is a standard item of furniture in many people's imaginations, but I suspect for young Ronald it was imprinted with especial force from the time he left South Africa in a steamer at the age of three, never to return.

There are, however, two obstacles — neither absolute — to the idea that Otter harks back to Ottar/Ohthere. First, although Ottar sounds a bit like Otter it does not mean the same thing at all (rather it is thought to descend like Ohthere from a older form signifying 'feared warrior'). Second, Tolkien's copy of *Sweet's* (preserved in the Bodleian Library) is dated 1911, the year he went up to Oxford, and two years after he wrote 'The Book of the Foxrook'. All we can say for sure, then, is that when he picked out his Foxrook codename he was

well aware of the Otter of the Sigurd story.

Quite why Tolkien might have identified with this short-lived figure is difficult to guess; it seems rather a self-pitying choice (but then again he was a teenager at the time). At any rate, his imagination was a rich thing indeed, and his use of nicknames and bynames — not only for himself, but also for his friends and for the characters in his stories — was virtually a compulsion. It seems quite characteristic that in a school production of Richard Sheridan's *The Rivals* he should revel in the part of Mrs Malaprop, a role that makes an artform of bestowing alternative names on things — the difference between Sheridan's character and Tolkien being that his alternatives are almost always strikingly appropriate. Tolkien could not, *would* not stop himself from making up names. As a result he had so many names to dispose of that everyone he met, as well as everyone and everything in his writings, ended up with a surfeit of them.

Name-giving runs right through his first published work, *The Battle of the Eastern Field*, which is actually about a rugby match. Written (or 'edited', purportedly having been found in a waste-paper bin) under the opaque pseudonym 'G.A.B.', the 1911 poem parades the rugby players in a set of classical *noms de guerre*: Ericillus of the sands, Falco of the Bridge, the Corcii, Cupid. One figure doesn't fit the Roman mould: 'Great Sekhet'. In *Tolkien and the Great War*, I guessed that this illustrious tackler with his 'flaxen crest' was Tolkien's best friend Christopher Wiseman: he was tall, blond and, crucially, as his widow told me, had always been a keen Egyptologist. I'm pleased to learn from Maggie Burns's research in *Mallorn* 46 that my aim was true: in his own copy of the poem as printed in the *King Edward's School Chronicle*, Tolkien pencilled Wiseman's name alongside the reference to Sekhet. Burns thinks the fact that Sekhet was a female god may point to some lost school joke, but I suspect it may show simply that Egyptian myth was not really Tolkien's forte (whereas he was a fan of H. Rider Haggard's *She*, which mentions Sekhet without specifying her sex).

In its largely Roman nomenclature *The Battle of the Eastern Field* is closely related to another set of articles in the *Chronicle*: the reports of the school's annual Latin debate. Each participant went by a Latin name and, for those interested in such things, hours of fun may be had working out who is who. The headmaster, Robert Cary Gilson, is P. Roscius Carus Helveticus, his surname being a reference to his exploits as a keen Alpinist. His son, Robert Quilter Gilson, no mountain climber, is belittlingly distinguished from his father only by the addition of diminutive infixes: Roscius Carellus Helveticulus. T. K. Barnsley, another sometime member of the T.C.B.S. (the clique formed by Tolkien, Gilson *fils* and Wiseman), was usually known as Tea-Cake in euphony with his initials, so his Latin name was T. Placenta Horreo (*placenta* being a kind of flat cake and *horreum* being a barn).

Tolkien's use of nicknames and bynames was virtually a compulsion.

Surrounded by all these school friends precociously spouting Latin, it hardly needs to be said that Tolkien went one step further. In 1910 he spoke in Greek under the name of Eisphorides Acribus Polyglotteus — roughly 'Tolkien the many-tongued' (the *eisphora* was an Athenian toll, and *acer* is Latin for 'keen, sharp'). At another of these debates, bursting with linguistic joie-de-vivre, Tolkien is reported to have spoken in Gothic, presumably to the utter bafflement of his fellows; this was probably in 1911, when he went by the geographically appropriate name of Portorius Acer Germanicus (*portorius* being another kind of tax or toll).

The T.C.B.S. pursued this love of aliases in their juvenile correspondence, in which Wiseman was 'the Prime Minister' or 'Beelzebub', and Tolkien was 'the Home Secretary', 'the Archbishop of Evriu' or

'Gabriel'. Partly the habit seems to reflect a general urge not to call a spade a spade when you can call it something more pompous instead (at one moment of Anglo-Saxon inspiration, Rob Gilson invites Tolkien to stay under his 'roof-tree'). But partly the nicknames belong to the same mode of playful conspiracy that lies behind 'The Book of the Foxrook' with its Esperanto, its code-writing, and its author's Otter pseudonym.

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Tolkien's naming compulsion has infected his fans too. The Tolkien Society was founded, of course, by Belladonna Took, aka Vera Chapman. Just as some members like to dress up on special occasions as Galadriel or Treebeard or Legolas, others adopt Middle-earth names for all their Tolkien-related social transactions. And it's not an necessarily an indicator of frivolity: one highly scholarly Swedish Tolkienist typically calls himself Beregond. Tolkien, despite his own taste for names as colourful as his waistcoats, perhaps had mixed feelings about the burgeoning of Middle-earth nicknames among his fans. He once complained about someone calling a powerboat Shadowfax, but he wrote helpfully to a fan who wanted to name her herd of bulls 'Rivendell'. If only we knew what he thought of London's psychedelic 1960s hangouts Gandalf's Garden and Middle-earth.

Nowadays dogs named Frodo abound but I know one couple who only just stopped themselves giving the name to their firstborn son (he got away with Freddie instead). Other Tolkien-minded parents have been unable to restrain themselves. Meeting a Dutch society member once at Oxonmoot, and eyeing his ID badge, I mistakenly asked what his real name was — yes, truly, Frodo lives. (Since my daughter Lorelei was born last December, some people have hazarded a guess that her name must come from some obscure Tolkien tale; but although I agree it has a beautifully Elvish air it is in fact from German folklore, with perhaps a nod to the Cocteau Twins.)

In Middle-earth itself, people rarely seem able to make do with just one name. Bynames may be adopted as a disguise, like Frodo's Mr Underhill, given in derision, like Gandalf's Stormcrow, or bestowed in acclaim, like Aragorn's Wingfoot. How many of Aragorn's other names can you remember? Strider, Elessar — even the non-addicted *Lord of the Rings* reader will recall these. There's a good chance that readers of *Mallorn* will also be able to list six or seven more. That probably still won't cover all those names for him (or for Trotter, his hobbit avatar in early drafts) that didn't make the final cut but are preserved in *The History of Middle-earth*.

And anyone who has read *The Silmarillion* will know that head-spinning feeling that comes from having to commit to memory the names of individuals, races, places, swords and the like in Quenya, Sindarin, English and sometimes Dwarvish. Even a single language may be generously furnished with synonyms galore for subjects of particular interest. My favourite is the Elves' distinctly impolitic list of insults for us mortals, which only just stops short of calling us the Gallumphing Idiots.

Tolkien imbues his characters with his own love of pseudonymy. Bilbo's address to Smaug is a bravura performance, giving multiple false identities — Ringwinner, Luckwearer, Barrel-rider and others — like so many masks. (Why didn't he take the same wise tack with Gollum, I wonder, rather than providing his full name and address as if talking to a policeman? As Frodo reflected frequently, no doubt, it would have saved everyone a whole lot of trouble.)

Throughout Tolkien's mature writings, however, the giving or taking of names is far more than a game of substitution. It becomes part of the story, and also a way

of exposing key themes — or indeed a theme in itself. Gollum himself goes by a pseudonym not of his own choosing, a mere gulp of neurotic sound that I suppose first struck Tolkien because of his frogginess; but it is by giving him back his birth name Sméagol that Frodo restores him to a semblance of humanity. The entire tale of Túrin hinges on an attempt by its hero to escape his curse and conquer fate by operating under a string of false identities, none of them terribly becoming: Blacksword, Bloodstained Son of Ill-fate, the Wronged. And of course Túrin's story demonstrates — just about as painfully as any story can that is not written by Thomas Hardy — the danger of this habit of going by aliases, which culminates in Túrin's unwitting incest with his unrecognized sister. In a savage irony that must have made Glaurung smile amid his death throes, the pseudonym that dooms Túrin means Master of Doom.

But let us return to our old friend Otter, because here I think we see one of the roots of Middle-earth exposed almost to its tip. Whether or not the character in the Sigurd story inspired Tolkien's nickname in 1909's 'Book of the Foxrook', the latter surely has a connection with Ottor Wæfre, the 'true' Anglian name of Eriol, who hears the stories of the Elves in *The Book of Lost Tales*. *Wæfre* means 'restless, wandering' and *ottor* is simply Old English 'otter'. Other evidence suggests Eriol/Ottor was partly intended as a cipher for Tolkien himself. A 1917 inscription on the cover of the 'Gnomish Lexicon' locates Eriol in Tol Withernon, surely evoking Withernsea, where Lieutenant J. R. R. Tolkien was posted in the 3rd Battalion of the Lancashire Fusiliers at the time. One of the entries in the lexicon mentions Fladweth Amrod, 'Nomad's Green', doubtless to indicate Gipsy Green where the Tolkiens lived for a while in 1918. Oxford is Taruithorn, and, of course, the Lonely Isle itself was meant at this stage to be England. These are just a few indicators of an autobiographical strand in Tolkien's very early writings about what he later called Middle-earth. His brother Hilary, his wife Edith, and even his guardian Father Francis Morgan can be discerned behind ephemeral figures in the legendarium as first devised. In this respect the project simply continued his youthful propensity for nicknaming.

And what of Tolkien's later writings? Pseudonymous Inklings inhabit *The Notion Club Papers*, where John Jethro Rashbold is clearly Tolkien himself (*tolkühn* being German for 'foolhardy'). I also wonder whether he named Smith of Wootton Major partly in tribute to his dear T.C.B.S. friend G. B. Smith, killed by a stray shell on the Somme battlefield in December 1916. In one letter he even admitted that Faramir's character contained echoes of himself as an army officer.

However, *The Lord of the Rings* is far too big and complex a book to be in any demonstrable way a *roman-à-clef*, the kind of story in which the characters are just real people under false names — any more than it is an allegory of the Second World War. The same is doubtless true of *The Hobbit* or *The Silmarillion*. I suspect Tolkien came to regard the *roman-à-clef*, like allegory, as an unhappy example of "the purposed domination of the author". One-to-one identifications between invented characters and real individuals would only serve to limit what his readers could get out of his fiction, especially as most of us are strangers to the people in Tolkien's life. Far better that we take Bilbo or Fëanor or Éowyn for themselves, measuring them against our own experience and understanding. Whatever the strength of Tolkien's early impulse to populate his invented landscape with figures drawn from life, and however valuable it may have been as a springboard for his creativity, the evidence suggests that even by the time *The Book of Lost Tales* was in full swing, around 1919, that impulse had already lost its force. In artistic terms, that is entirely for the better.

John Garth is the author of *Tolkien and the Great War*. His nicknames are not recorded.

The death of Harry Patch

SIR — I am sure that many heard and read on 25 July 2009 of the death of Henry (Harry) Patch aged 111. He was the last 'Tommy' — the last survivor of those UK soldiers who fought in the trenches on the Western Front in the First World War. He was, therefore, the last of those comrades in arms of J. R. R. and Hilary Tolkien. Harry Patch served in the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry; and he was one of five members of a light machine gun crew when he was badly wounded and three of that crew killed on 22 September 1917 in the Battle of Passchendaele[1].

There are other connections with the Tolkien brothers. Hilary Tolkien was also serving at Passchendaele with the Royal Warwickshire Regiment when he was slightly wounded[2]. Another survivor of Passchendaele died a week before Harry Patch: Henry Allingham, on 18 July, aged 113. He served in the Royal Naval Air Service, later the Royal Air Force, and was the last known survivor of the Battle of Jutland in 1916, aboard the seaplane carrier HMT *Kingfisher*[3]. J. R. R. Tolkien's friend Christopher Wiseman also took part in that battle, aboard the battleship HMS *Superb*[4].

Their deaths remind us that the First World War is now as remote in time from us as the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars were from them. They reminded me of a passage in a book on the Napoleonic legend[5]:

> In 1901, a French journalist travelled to Warsaw to meet the last known soldier of Napoleon. Lieutenant Vincent Markiewicz had served in the Emperor's Polish regiment, and then in his Guard, and at the ripe old age of 106 he had survived every one of his French comrades.

All of the previous people, despite having survived enemy action, have fallen to what Abraham Lincoln called 'the silent artillery of time'.

There was a passage in Harry Patch's autobiography that, when I read it, made me think of one in *The Lord of the Rings*; and I recalled it when I heard of his death[6]:

> There was a routine to staying alive. To calm nerves almost all men smoked, and if they could get enough cigarettes they would chain-smoke. To hide any glow from the pipe I smoked I turned it upside down, placing my thumb over the tobacco so it didn't fall out. During the day I could always get under a groundsheet with a cigarette or pipe so no telltale smoke rose above the parapet.

It reminded me of this moment when Théoden and his company arrive at Isengard, see the devastation caused by the Ents, then see two hobbits, one of them smoking[7]:

> There they saw close beside them a great rubble-heap; and suddenly they were aware of two small figures lying among it at their ease, grey-clad, hardly to be seen among the stones. There were bottles and bowls and platters laid beside them, as if they had just eaten well, and now rested from their labour. One seemed asleep; the other, with crossed legs and arms behind his head, leaned back against a broken rock and sent from his mouth long wisps and little rings of thin blue smoke.

Fellow Tolkien fans and Tolkien Society members may be interested to know of the deaths of these last survivors of the First World War; and that they are now, we hope, reunited with all their old comrades, both famous and ordinary.

Murray Smith

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3. Allingham, H. & Goodwin, D. *Kitchener's Last Volunteer: The Life of Henry Allingham, the Oldest Surviving Veteran of the Great War* 88–89 (Mainstream, 2009).
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5. Hazareesingh, S. *The Legend of Napoleon* 260 (Granta, 2005).
6. Ref. 1, page 106.
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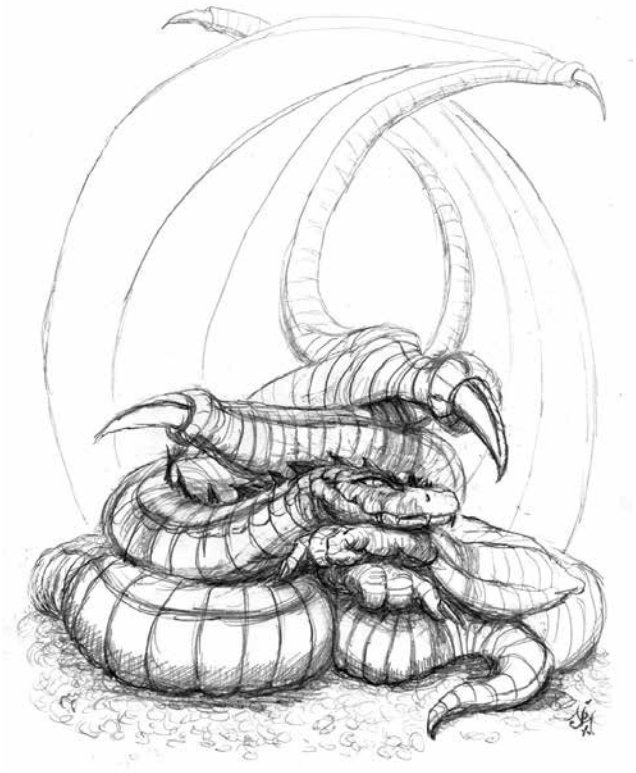


Smaug
Jef Murray

A year in study

HENRY GEE

Tolkien Studies: An Annual Scholarly Review, Volume 6
Edited by Douglas A. Anderson, Michael D.C. Drout and Verlyn Flieger
x + 363 pp, West Virginia University Press (2009) , ISSN 1547-3155, $70.00

Scholarly journals demand something of the reader. No slouching on the sofa here: a dress code is required, and, occasionally, correctives to ensure a posture, erect yet dignified, conducive to scholarship with a capital 'S'. This is why I have always found *Tolkien Studies*, the annual journal now old enough to go to school — and, certainly, to know how to hold a knife and fork — somewhat intimidating. For I am one of those slovenly backsliders that likes reading in a supine state, preferably while being fed grapes by flying babies. (The somewhat crumpled state of my own copy of *Tolkien Studies Volume 1* testifies to a bathtime accident). The very appearance of each handsome volume seems to promise the prolix and incomprehensible. From my own perspective as a stray from the crisper world of science publishing, *Tolkien Studies* always threatened, in my own mind, the capacity for students of the humanities to say very little, and take an awfully long time about it, adding for good measure not one but as many as three sets of footnotes, references and bibliography. At this point the image of Mozart would appear, in the guise of his character in Forman's film of *Amadeus*, to execrate operas on classical themes. Who would really rather not chat with his hairdresser than Hercules? Why, these characters are so lofty you'd think they'd shit marble.

With such trepidation I adopted an erect pose (I was on the train) and crept up on volume 6 of *Tolkien Studies* by stealth. I dipped my toes in the water with Cynthia Cohen's paper 'The Unique Representation of Trees in *The Lord of the Rings*', which told me that the ents are not so much walking trees, but giants that came to resemble them. Sheep, as Tolkien said, grow like shepherd. A seemingly trivial nicety, perhaps, but one that bears on the process whereby Tolkien created Treebeard — first as a regular giant, before the character assumed his more obviously arborescent character.

By then courageous enough to venture in above the knees, I turned to Jill Fitzgerald's essay 'A "Clerke's Compleinte": Tolkien and the Division of Lit. and Lang.'. Fitzgerald discusses Tolkien's own exasperation as a philologist and teacher at the division of English curricula into 'language' (Old and Middle English, up to and including Chaucer, concentrating on philology and morphology) and 'literature' (from Chaucer onwards, concentrating on criticism). Even in Tolkien's time as a teacher (from the 1920s onwards) the defenders of Lang. were already fighting the long defeat. Tolkien expressed this in 'The Clerke's Compleinte', a lovely pastiche of Chaucer of which I had hitherto known nothing. Yes! I had learned something, and, despite the archaic boards in which the essay was trapped, it was funny.

Now confident to wade into the waters, yea, even past that sensitive region just above the waistband, I felt man enough to tackle 'The Music and the Task: Fate and Free Will in Middle-earth', a set piece of criticism from the pen of Verlyn Flieger. I admit I had steeled myself for a long run-up, as some of Professor Flieger's previous effusions, notably her book *Splintered Light*, had made my head spin. Not this essay, though. The problem of fate versus free will in Tolkien's legendarium is something like the elephant in the room — everyone knows it's there, but it's so knotty that nobody really wants to get to grips with it. Problems of fate, destiny, chance and choice are central to Tolkien's legendarium throughout *The Silmarillion*, and at key moments in *The Lord of the Rings*. One recalls Aragorn's agonized decisions at the Falls of Rauros, and Samwise's decisions as he left Frodo seemingly for dead to take on the burden of the Ring by himself. And then there is the scene at the Council of Elrond when Frodo, in a small voice, declares that he will take the Ring to Mordor — and one can almost hear the cogs of the cosmic clockwork grind into a new alignment, as if in answer. Unafraid to address these crucial issues, Flieger takes them head-on. The result is nothing short of a critical masterpiece, somewhat eclipsing Tolkien's own notes on the subject that follow, edited by Carl F. Hofstetter.

Yes! I had learned something, and, despite the archaic boards in which the essay was trapped, it was funny.

Now gambolling freely (*Tolkien Studies Volume 6* is lovely, once you're in) I enjoyed Stuart D. Lee's exegesis on *The Wanderer*, and how Tolkien applied lines of this ancient poem on the transience of existence to points throughout his life, whether as inspirations for Rohirric

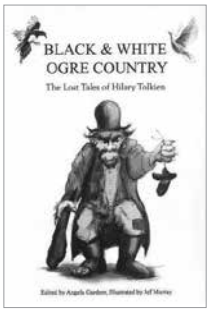
verse, or as a specimen in his own valedictory address.

There is much else to enjoy in *Tolkien Studies Volume 6*. There is a mass of scholarly book reviews, an appreciation by David Bratman of the Year in Tolkien Studies (the year is 2006, so only two and a half years out of date) and a bibliography of Tolkien studies for 2007 (such is the leisurely pace of annual publication). To be fair, each volume of *Tolkien Studies* serves as a chronicle of the entire field, not just as a repository of peer-reviewed criticism, so it should be seen as a directory as much as a journal. Nevertheless, it seemed somewhat galling to find the latest reference to *Mallorn* to be Zak Cramer's essay in *Mallorn* 44. It's a great essay, to be sure, but *Mallorn* 44? That's, like, so First Age.

Henry Gee is the editor of *Mallorn*.

Views of a lost world

JOHN GARTH



Black and White Ogre Country: The Lost Tales of Hilary Tolkien
Edited by Angela Gardner, illustrated by Jef Murray
88 pp, ADC Press (2009)
ISBN 978-0955190018, £9.99

When he died in 1976, Hilary Arthur Reuel Tolkien left a small notebook containing jottings about his childhood with his famous brother and his own later life. This is the core of *Black and White Ogre Country: The Lost Tales of Hilary Tolkien*. It is brief: bulked out by the addition of Jef Murray's lively illustrations and a 'short biography' with photographs and pictures by and of Hilary, it still makes for a very slim volume (more substantial material will appear in a larger biographical book, of which more below). So what do these 'lost tales' comprise, and why should we care about them?

The first section, 'Bumble Dell', describes the small world of the boys, with its mills and its 'ogres' — the irate landowners who chase and terrify them. The second, 'Black and White Witches', tells of a woman who can turn you into a lump of stone and another who is kindly and dispenses sweets from her shop. Then, under the heading of 'Other Stories', an undifferentiated series of reminiscences runs from childhood all the way to the Second World War, with descriptions of acquaintances and pets, a haunted house, Hilary's time in the trenches, and his fruit farm in the Vale of Evesham.

This is a bygone era, trains are curiosities, and cars, when they finally appear, merely amuse in their tendency to break down or fall apart.

In fact the 'tales' — probably jotted down late in Hilary's life in response to questions from his brother's biographer, Humphrey Carpenter — are barely narratives at all. Rather they are long-preserved memories distilled as a sequence of small, bright and disconnected miniatures. The book's subtitle, evoking *The Book of Lost Tales*, is primarily a practical choice that will help sales. Yet it also rightly points to a kinship — like an acorn's to a full-grown tree — between H. A. R. Tolkien's account of his childhood world and J. R. R. Tolkien's fully fledged subcreation. The make-believe doubtless reflects Ronald's input as well as Hilary's: children's play is collaborative, and an elder brother could be assumed naturally to take the lead, especially if he was later to become a byname for the power of the imagination. We also have Carpenter's word (presumably from Hilary himself) that it was Ronald who named the flour-dusted young miller at Sarehole 'the White Ogre'. Arguably this makes these writings as valuable as any straightforward memoir. When we look for illumination of the mind behind *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Silmarillion*, it is the imaginative life itself that we strive to grasp, even when we try to catch it in a net of biographical detail. The way Hilary's writings turn fact into fantasy should be borne in mind by anyone debating how far JRRT's inspiration lay in lived experience.

Immediately we are plunged into the dilemmas that loom large in a child's mind. You go paddling, then the Man takes your shoes away as some kind of punishment, so you either face him to get them back, or go home without them — and either way you get a thrashing. It is a world in which justice and injustice seem equally severe and equally opaque. It is a timeless childhood world of small ambit, filled with diurnal or seasonal joys and terrors: a world of habits — one is tempted to say of hobbits. For the late nineteenth-century rural environment is entirely in accord with the world of Sam Gamgee, and Hilary's voice is as wryly and lightly humorous as Shire-talk.

The Tolkien brothers inhabit this world in person, making whistles out of reeds as Sméagol's gentler kin would have done on the marges of the Gladden Fields. Nature is a source of comfort, delight, temptation, peril and even protection (in the form of a swan that routs an irate park keeper). The hazards are Shire-sized: drowning in the millpond and being chased by angry adults. The ogres of the title are a farmer and a miller not far removed from Maggot and Ted Sandyman. A Black Witch adds a dash of occult darkness and provides the final component to make the first few pages of Hilary's narrative a kind of prototype of

the hobbits' journey from Bag End to Buckland. I am left reflecting that *The Lord of the Rings* is Tolkien's most truthful work, rooted as it is in a version of his own childhood shire, Warwickshire, the standard against which all the marvels and sorrow that come later are gauged.

Even Sauron the Great himself may be foreshadowed here — as a cat. Sauron, you will remember, evolved from Tevildo, Melko's demonic cat servant in the whimsical first 'Tale of Tinúviel'. In Hilary's jottings we encounter the bad Black Witch's "even worse black cat", Black Angel, devourer of sardine sandwiches wrongfully wrested from small boys. Against the evil enchantress and her cat, in a classic Tolkienian dualism, are ranged a White Witch with a white cat and a dog — called Moses, not Huan, but equally capable of seeing off monstrous little felines. Another cat mentioned later (this one is Hilary's own) is called Satan. It seems the boys shared a tendency to identify cats with devilry, also seen later in Tolkien's story of Queen Berúthiel.

This is a bygone era, with trips to church by pony and cart. Trains are curiosities, and cars, when they finally appear, merely amuse in their tendency to break down or fall apart. But the coming age of machines, with its drive for innovation, efficiency, speed and lucre, sounds the death knell of the boys' world as Bumble Dell is filled in: "The Great Western Railway filled in our Bumble Dell in order to get from Brum to London quicker than the other railways." "Slowly the country of Black and White Ogre and Black and White Witch was in danger of disappearing altogether." Here Hilary's elegiac words parallel those of the foreword to the second edition of *The Lord of the Rings*: "The country in which I lived in childhood was being shabbily destroyed before I was ten, in days when motor-cars were rare objects (I had never seen one) and men were still building suburban railways. Recently I saw in a paper a picture of the last decrepitude of the once thriving corn-mill beside its pool that long ago seemed to me so important." Ogre Country is long gone and "might as well have never been there, for it is almost demolished", Hilary writes — but (just like parts of his brother's legendarium) this sparkling little book preserves some of its spirit.

Cerin Amroth

Phyllis Berka

There is no mention of school, which seems to have made as little mark on Hilary as he made on it (the *King Edward's School Chronicle*, which has plenty of references to his big brother, ignores him until after his schooldays are finished). From boyhood games in the woods, the narrative leaps to 1914, and war. Hilary's account of his military service is brief and humorous in a typically British way, cutting vast terrors down to a manageable size. The Second World War is signalled by the military planes overhead, the soldiers eating Hilary's plums from their helmets, and the smell of cordite drifting in from bomb-blasted Coventry. In between the wars, Hilary's early years setting up as a farmer are recounted as a nostalgic idyll. "Is anything as beautiful for anyone now?" he asks.

The rather vague disconnectedness of all this, though tantalizing in the extreme, also adds to the poignancy. Past history has the quality of legend, in the shape of an oak tree Charles II hid in, or a witness to the Crimean War, or a dog named Lord Roberts of Kandahar. A foreshortening of the view in retrospect, together with the lack of dates and detailed reference points, makes for a sense of a life lived in reverie. Unsurprisingly, we read in the short biography at the back of the book that Hilary's family saw him as "a dreamy child, who preferred being outside to doing his school work".

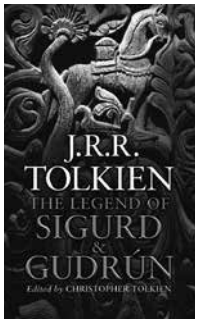
The biographical section also includes a number of previously unseen images: a strikingly beautiful studio photograph of their mother Mabel; a shot of Hilary home from war but still in his army uniform; camera portraits of him and his wife Magdalen; and a couple of family pictures showing JRRT. There is also a vibrant, naive depiction of a cottage by Hilary, who evidently shared his brother's delight in painting and drawing. Undoubtedly the best aspects of editor Angela Gardner's potted biography are the excerpts from original letters, notably one in which J. R. R. Tolkien describes how he had managed to expunge November the Fifth of its anti-Catholicism by making it a winter's-onset festival and part of "a 'continuous birthday' jamboree" for his sons (all born between 22 October and 21 November).

On the strength of *Black and White Ogre Country*, Gardner's fuller book on Hilary Tolkien (due out some time this year or next) should be very interesting indeed. As she writes here: "He was the person Ronald wrote to when his fame and commitments seemed too much for him." *Wheelbarrows at Dawn*, as it is provisionally titled, should include further extracts from his hand among the dozens of family letters on which it is based. There will also be further artwork by Hilary and many more photographs — including the only known signed photo of JRRT and the only known previously unpublished photograph taken by him. But even if it only serves as a taster for the main course, *Black and White Ogre Country* deserves a place alongside Priscilla and John Tolkien's 1992 book *The Tolkien Family Album* as an intimate look at J. R. R. Tolkien's life and world from a close family member.

John Garth is the author of *Tolkien and the Great War*.

Tales of the past

JOEL FRANZ

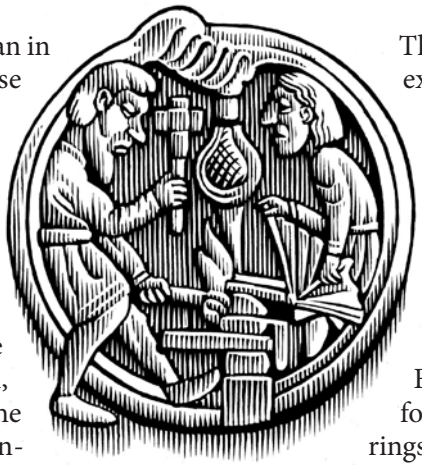


The Legend of Sigurd and Gudrún
J. R. R. Tolkien
Edited by Christopher Tolkien
384 pp, HarperCollins (2009)
ISBN 978-0007317233, £18.99

The Lay of the Völsungs and the Lay of Gudrún are tales cast by Tolkien as bravura pieces of freewheeling poetry with fluid form, colour and vivid personality. The individual lays have a potency to transport one back in time to experience the flame, the wrath, the ruin, the gold and the heroics at the core of these tales.

The Lay of the Völsungs tells of the heroics of the fathers of this esteemed and great family. From Odin, to Sigmund, to Sigurd, the last of the line; the betrayal of Andvarri, and the taking of his gold by the Norse gods, and the slaying of Fáfnir the fiery worm. The seeming chaos of the verse is apt in the telling of the lives of the Völsungs. For Sigmund's death by the hands of Odin, even though it was so he should fight in Odin's host at the end of the world, is a horrendous blow — so tremendous that the Völsungs lose their lands, and their last son is made a wanderer in lands not his own. For though Sigurd is the last of the Völsungs he is also the hero of the world: as such Odin sends him a Valkyrie as a bride befitting such a warrior. Yet, Brynhild is even still a warrior clad with sharp steel, for she refuses to marry any man lest he be the strongest warrior in all the land, and that is the undoing of the house of the Völsungs. Sigurd leaves his ancestral lands to prove to Brynhild that he is truly the greatest warrior, and finds himself in the lands of the Niflungs.

Through a series of battles and feats of heroism, Sigurd becomes the sword brother of the Niflung Lords and marries their sister Gudrún. However, throughout these adventures, Brynhild is not forgotten, and word of her flows through the land as a queen of terrible beauty who kills all men who come to woo her. Upon hearing of this awesome woman, Gunnar, lord of the Niflungs, sets out with Sigurd


Bill Sanderson/HarperCollins

and Högni his brother to claim this woman in marriage. But fate is cruel. Gunnar's horse becomes lame and cannot leap through the burning walls of Brynhild's house. Gunnar then beseeches Sigurd to claim his wife for him, and following the theme of his life of never breaking an oath, Sigurd rides through the fire, and claims Brynhild as his brother asks.

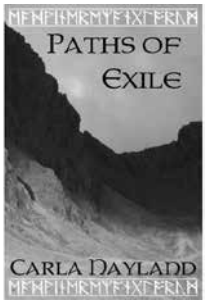
Needless to say, Brynhild does not take the betrayal of a perceived husband well, and violence and death mar the end of the poem. Sigurd's death is followed by Brynhild's own suicide, his brother's woe, and the end of the world, and the possible fall of Valholl at the end of time.

The tale doesn't end there however. Notes explain and elaborate on many points that readers of Tolkien's works will find intriguing in both poems — and this leads to the Lay of Gudrún, which tells of Gudrún's life after Sigurd's death. This poem revolves around, in essence, the theme of greed. From the desire of Atli (the Hun) for Niflung gold, comes a marriage with the Niflung House. From greed for Fáfnir's gold, Atli intends a trap of death for the Niflung Lords. And greed for golden rings is yet the cause for Atli's son's death, and huge pyres to consume his flesh and blood.

Joel Franz is a university student, National Debate placeholder, aspiring law student and Tolkien enthusiast.

A taste of a foreign country

DAVID DOUGHAN



Paths of Exile
Carla Nayland
221 pp, Quaestor2000 (2009)
ISBN 978 1 906836 092, £9.99

Paths of Exile is a historical novel. Historical novels are often looked down on as 'genre' literature — like science fiction and fantasy writing — usually by those whose preferred genre is 'mainstream' novels concerning modern life, sometimes characterized, perhaps not altogether fairly, as sex and drugs in suburbia. This is itself a genre that is confined within pretty tight parameters and if, as is often claimed, genres of literature are like ghettos, the mainstream in many ways looks like a gated community of like-minded people separating themselves from the possibly dangerous folk outside. This restriction is unlike science fiction and fantasy, in which authors have extraordinary freedom in selecting places, characters, themes and even modes of being (although it's a pity that so many authors in these genres stick to well-trodden paths).

Historical novels are more restricted than these, but still allow authors considerable scope in selecting period, place and culture, writing style, social milieu and the characters that inhabit them. They may, like Patrick O'Brian in his Aubrey–Maturin books, opt for a comparatively recent and well-documented period and setting, right down to actual forms of speech and recorded idioms. This not only requires massive research but is also highly restrictive, and the end result is not all that different from the mainstream (although the stories tend to be more eventful). There is also a risk, in hands less expert than O'Brian's, of descending into pastiche. At another extreme, there are the stories set in the 'Arthurian' period — Britain in the late fifth and early sixth centuries, for which documentation is almost non-existent — or Mary Renault's Theseus stories, for which written documentation is just about entirely in the form of myth, and such disciplines as archaeology have to be called in. Here the danger is of too much freedom leading to an undisciplined approach, and a cavalier pick-and-choose attitude to what evidence there is.

Like most historical novels, *Paths of Exile* lies somewhere between these extremes. It is set in England — in eastern Yorkshire and northern Derbyshire — in the early seventh century, a period and place that are relatively well documented, and has a hero who is a real historical character. It concerns the early life of Edwin (in the book spelt Eadwine), a well-attested seventh-century king of Northumbria, who is mainly remembered nowadays for the story of the sparrow flying through a hall that led to his conversion to Christianity. However, although there are reasonably good accounts of this time and place, mainly by Bede, there are also considerable gaps in the record. So although there is a fairly full record of Eadwine's kingship and how he achieved it, there is a lacuna of a good ten years previously, when according to Bede, he wandered as a fugitive — and that's the situation we are in with *Paths of Exile*.

The story begins with Aethelferth's conquest of the kingdom of Deira, and Eadwine's flight, in the company of a few followers, pursued by Aethelferth's men and agents. The rest of the book shows him going from one temporary place

of respite to another, sometimes barely evading capture.

The story is generally well told, and the historical setting is credibly realized. It is clear that Carla Nayland has done her homework very well on the historical record. Of course there are quibbles. Nayland gives Eadwine a part-English, part-British upbringing, making him very usefully bilingual. I don't think there is any actual definite evidence for this, but in the period and place it is far from incredible, as what is now northern England was split into several small Anglian and British kingdoms, often at war with each other — for example, at one stage Eadwine is making for the British kingdom of Elmet (roughly West Yorkshire), but is uncertain whether its king will help him or Aethelferth.

Nayland manages to write good modern English without sounding anachronistic.

One problem for authors of historical fiction, certainly in this time and place, is names of places and people. Records vary according to what language the account is in, and how far distant from the events, as well as from whose point of view. Eadwine's name is variously spelt as Edwin mentioned above, and also Aeduini; Aethelferth is also known as Athelfrith; Elmet is also called Elmete and Elfed — and so on. In an afterword, Nayland gives a brief justification for her choices, including one or two idiosyncratic ones. For example, she refuses to call the local British populations or their language Welsh, insisting instead on "Brittonic" — but as characters have names such as Luned, Gwen and Blodwen, a certainly inconsistency may be suspected. Additionally, one of Eadwine's followers is a Pict, who is made to speak fairly broad modern Scots (pedants will have a field day with that) — and every now and then a bawdy song called 'Attacotti Nell' (!!) is sung. Still, by and large Nayland manages to write good modern English without sounding anachronistic, no mean feat when representing the heroic warrior culture of the period, and the intense relationship between a leader and his own war-band.

There are a few relatively minor matters in the narration that slightly irritated me: every now and then we are given the workings of Eadwine's mind in more detail than is strictly necessary, and Nayland is not shy of displaying her erudition. Also, more seriously, at one point, when Eadwine is passing himself of as a British minstrel, his loyal followers seem to disappear, only to reappear later. This is unusual, because their characters are quite well drawn and well differentiated. But despite the above I found it quite an easy read; it was involving and occasionally exciting. So, could I put it down? Yes, I did, several times, but I had no difficulty picking it up again.

The book ends with Eadwine and his companions setting off to a new refuge, which obviously begs for a sequel. If one is indeed forthcoming, I'd be happy to read it.

David Doughan is a gentleman of leisure.

Hunting Peter Jackson

CHAD CHISHOLM

The Hunt for Gollum
Produced and directed by Chris Bouchard
A short film from Independent Online Cinema, distributed free at www.thehuntforgollum.com

The Hunt for Gollum is the story of Aragorn's quest to capture Gollum in the forest of Mirkwood before the forming of the Fellowship. The storyline is drawn from *The Fellowship of the Ring* when Gandalf, Elrond and Aragorn want to find Gollum in order to learn more of the Ring of Power and how much Sauron knows (an 'intelligence-gathering' operation). The film takes place in the shadows of the larger story: war in Middle-earth, the rising of Sauron and the hope to come.

Independent Online Cinema (IOC) and director/producer Chris Bouchard began production in 2007, and filming was done in Epping Forest, Essex, UK. The IOC describes *The Hunt for Gollum* as "an unofficial not for profit short film", although viewers can visit its website and donate or invest in future films. Viewers may occasionally be tempted to believe (for reasons to be discussed later) that Bouchard's film is connected with Peter Jackson's New Line Cinema productions, but *The Hunt for Gollum* was created by independent filmmakers who are fans of J. R. R. Tolkien.

Until the last scene, Bouchard uses Hitchcockian representations of Gollum, giving us elusive images of his hand, quick and distant glances of the creature, and then as a whimpering bulk in a large sack. However, Gollum's mysteriousness is no loss because the film is really about Aragorn. Adrian Webster continues Viggo Mortensen's adaptation of Aragorn as the reluctant hero who must be encouraged to embrace his destiny by Arwen Evenstar (Rita Ramnani).

Anyone looking to *The Hunt for Gollum* for a further exploration of Tolkien's mythology will probably be unsatisfied. Although the film draws on the short recount from the Council of Elrond that was truncated in the Peter Jackson

www.thehuntforgollum.com

film, there is only a shadow of the deeper legendarium, when Aragorn asks his ancestors for guidance. The film also ends before Gollum's escape from Mirkwood (which could have been visually spectacular). Nevertheless, value for the film might be found, if not among Tolkien purists, then among the growing number of *Lord of the Rings* film fans.

Novelist and critic Umberto Eco argued[1] that movies become cult classics when they "provide a completely furnished world so that its fans can quote characters and episodes as if they were aspects of the fan's private sectarian world, a world about which one can make up quizzes and play trivia games so that the adepts of the sect recognize through each other a shared experience". Such movies have, according to Eco, an "archetypical appeal". As a result, viewers are able to "break, dislocate, unhinge" the film so that they can remember it "only in parts". Thanks to Tolkien's fastidious mythological detail, Jackson had lots of archetypical material with which to fill his films. For example, images of shadows and light are more than literary symbols, but are useful as visual contrasts between, say, good and evil, or hope and despair.

The Hunt for Gollum borrows more from Peter Jackson than from Tolkien because Bouchard uses what Eco calls "intertextual frames" that the viewer recognizes through an established textual/cinematic history. An obvious instance is the portrayal of Aragorn, someone who needs, as Joseph Campbell writes, "magical intervention … to plunge the hero into the unknown", the intervener being, of course, Arwen. This interpretation of Aragorn is Jackson's, not Tolkien's. Twice in *The Search for Gollum*, once before Aragorn sets out on his quest for Gollum and seems momentarily daunted by the wilderness of Mirkwood, and later when he falls wounded to a poisoned orc dart and is about to surrender to sleep and death, luminous visions of Arwen come to him, whispering his legacy as "the heir of Elendil", resurrecting his resolve, and helping him to carry on. This is Bouchard's most telling intertextual connection, but his film is filled with countless others, including the film's duelling soundtrack. Bouchard is an accomplished music composer, and he provides dramatic shifts in musical expressions — soft and faint at one moment, loud and heroic the next — that give a Wagnerian feel to the film that might have some viewers at war with their volume-control remote.

Strider's appearance, the woodland copses and mountain vistas, the juxtaposition of the Elves and whispers of evensong, the rapid death of 20 orcs, Gollum's voice and final appearance, even the Nazgûl's shriek are all intertextually connected to Jackson's trilogy. The reason for this, Eco

www.thehuntforgollum.com

suggests, is that for directors to solve certain problems of production: "When you don't know how to deal with a story, you put stereotyped situations in it because you know that they … have already worked elsewhere." And with a gross revenue of nearly $2.9 billion at the American box office, this was an easy gamble for Bouchard.

However, if *The Hunt for Gollum* does have a flaw, it is that it follows Jackson's adaptation perhaps too closely. Although some interesting bloopers at the film's credits suggests that the filmmakers could have had a Jackson parody in mind, the film overall seems to belie this because, as these connections suggest, *The Hunt for Gollum* is identical to Jackson's in its use of motifs and archetypes. There might be other fans, aside from me, who are interested in seeing a different film interpretation of *The Lord of the Rings*: perhaps an Aragorn based on Tolkien's hero; perhaps something that goes in an experimental direction?

Nevertheless, whatever its critical shortcomings, *The Hunt for Gollum* is an exciting work for film fans and represents for Tolkien enthusiasts another step in the popular culture evolution surrounding *The Lord of the Rings* and the Middle-earth legendarium. Eco discusses what he calls "magic intertextual frames" in which "we are interested in finding those frames that not only are recognizable by the audience as belonging to a sort of ancestral intertextual tradition but that also displays a particular fascination". Bouchard's film suggests that Jackson's films have already initiated this intertextual tradition. Now filmmakers are studying and adapting in their own efforts.

Therefore, when viewers settle down to watch *The Hunt for Gollum*, they soon will find themselves absorbed into a "preestablished and frequently reappearing narrative situation" that is comfortable because, as Eco claims, we instantly are affected by a "vague feeling of a déjà vu", which is a pleasure most of us seek in choosing to experience film. With this in mind, I hope that Bouchard and the producers at IOC will consider other unproduced stories such as those of Tom Bombadil and Old Man Willow. And in the meantime, all of us should enjoy *The Hunt for Gollum*.

Why not? After all, it's free.

Chad Chisholm has authored articles and books on several topics, including literary criticism, pedagogy, local history, film and comedic studies. He teaches at the University of Texas at Arlington and lives near Fort Worth with his wife Emily and daughter Gracie.

1. Umberto, E. Casablanca: Cult Movies and Intertextual Collage in *Modern Criticism and Theory* (eds Lodge, D. & Wood, N.) 460–470 (Pearson Education, 2008).

What's in a name?

PAT REYNOLDS

The Tolkien Name in History
77 pp, Ancestry.co.uk (2008), £15.99
The Suffield Name In History
89 pp, Ancestry.co.uk (2008), £15.99
The Origins of JRR Tolkien in Bloemfontein
Okkie de Jager, Maggie Burns and Oliver Suffield
The Post Office Stone ***37****(1), 16–20 (Postmark and Postal History Society of Southern Africa, 2007), £17.00*

The Tolkien Name in History is something of an oddity for the Tolkien aficionado or scholar. It is, remarkably, not a book printed to capitalize on the Tolkien name, nor the product of a study of the Tolkien name, nor the Tolkien family. It is one of a series of books produced by Ancestry.co.uk, Britain's largest genealogical site. One can also buy *The Reynolds Name in History* or, indeed, *The Suffield Name in History*.

All these titles (and hundreds more) are sophisticated versions of the 'your child's name in here' books: you get the same basic text, with 'Tolkien', 'Reynolds', 'Suffield' or other name appearing throughout. Importantly, this does not just occur in narrative passages, but in graphs and map-based presentations of data.

The introduction, therefore, sets the stage not for a Tolkien study, but for an introduction to what Nick Barratt calls[1] "personal heritage" — that intersection between genealogy and social history, where family and community history, business history, industrial history and topographic history collide with emotion.

Then there is a 'Tolkien Timeline', which stretches from 1800 to the present. The low numbers make the book's promptings to consider social history through the lens of a single family name rather silly (average age of death of Tolkiens in 1861 was 1!). However, the fact that 1925 was the most common year for Tolkiens to emigrate to the United States, and the commonest names for marriages of Tolkiens between 1984 and 2005 was a tie between Michael and Christopher, pushes past statistical averages to the individual in a way that most books in the series cannot. For comparison, the most common name for Suffield marriages was John (number 2, nationally). I cannot compare age of death or emigration by year, as the statistics chosen for each book are eclectic. This is somewhat frustrating, as I would imagine that the intended readers might well be interested in comparing both sides of the family.

There are then generic sections about British surnames, and a section titled 'Immigration', which is entirely about emigration (with details of the *Mauritania* — one Tolkien). There are also scattered sections about 'Migration', which curiously largely seems to be social history, with mention of such things as the Irish potato famine and the Industrial Revolution, but no clue to the migrations that they occasioned until pages later (buried under the title 'What's in a Name?'). There is one map showing that in 1920 there was a solitary Tolkien in the United States — in Multnomah County, Oregon. Background is given on range of topics such as English counties, the Victorian way of death and coats of arms.

The Tolkien Name in History presents basic historical information about Britain in a very accessible way.

There being more Suffields than Tolkiens, there is more history, and thus *The Suffield Name* runs to 89 pages, beating *The Tolkien Name* by 12. However, the extra pages cover the fact that Suffields migrated to more countries. One very small gripe is that the term 'scholar' is not explained (it means 'schoolchild') in the table of occupations — readers may be misled into thinking that because 'scholar' was the most common occupation of Tolkiens at one point, they were all professors (one was — a professor of music).

Interspersed are maps and tables showing patterns of Tolkien births, marriages and deaths in various counties and years, and the general occurrence of Tolkiens on maps from 1841 (three Tolkiens in Clifton, Gloucestershire) to 1901 (twelve Tolkiens in Worcestershire/Gloucestershire and London/Surrey/Kent). The accuracy of these is somewhat suspect — it is not true, for example, that only one Tolkien was recorded in the 1861 census.

Both books conclude with a chapter on researching family history. Like the rest of the books, it is written in accessible language, with a great mix of illustrations. None, of course, are of Tolkiens or relate to the Tolkiens (or Suffields). But to criticize this is to criticize this book for being something it never attempted to be.

A criticism that is valid, however, is the treatment of immigration. The surnames of Scandinavian, Dutch, German and Italian origin are covered on page 13 (of both books). But Jewish and Gypsy names are not — yet these are peoples who have been migrating to Britain for hundreds of years. Empire, transforming global and capitalist "network of people and things"[2], is curiously absent from these histories. Slave ownership does get examined in *The Suffield Name*. Non-white migrants have to wait until page 45 for recognition (Patel, we are told, was the 40th most common surname in the United Kingdom in 1998), and the 'recent' nature of 'immigrant names' presence is emphasized. 'Famous migrants' focuses entirely upon migrants to the United States, including white people from Italy, and Christians moving from Nazi Austria — a missed opportunity to capitalize on some of the stories presented in BBC Television's *Who do you Think you Are?* such as newsreader Moira Stewart, and others such as nurse Mary Seacole (a contemporary of Florence Nightingale).

I would recommend *The Tolkien Name* to anyone teaching Tolkien to children, or to people who are not comfortable with reading in English, because it presents basic historical information about Britain in a very accessible way, with lots of Internet links to take the interested student further. The good teacher will be able to use biographical material about J. R. R. Tolkien to point out where he and his family fit into this picture.

However, for the Tolkien scholar, this book just presents a research agenda. And some curious trivia — among other oddities: Tolkiens born between 1984 and 2005 have, with just two exceptions ('Daisy' and 'Benjamin') been given a name beginning with a vowel or 'H'.

For its original and intended purpose — an introduction to personal heritage — the price tag of £15.99 for a 77-page book feels excessive.

The Post Office Stone[3] is, similarly, a publication that does not have the Tolkien fan as an intended audience, being a South African philatelic journal. The authors of 'Tracing the Origins of JRR Tolkien in Bloemfontein' are respectively a philatelist, a Tolkien historian and a family member — together providing breadth and balance. This short, abundantly illustrated paper includes several pieces of information that will be of interest to Tolkien readers curious about the early family history, as I imagine the information on the 'Bloemfontein Squared Octagon' will similarly appeal to philatelists.

But the real treasure in this article is the selection of postcard views and photographs that are included. The reproduction quality is high. The images provide, at the micro level, the context for the sending of a Christmas card from the Oranje Frij Staat (Orange Free State), and at the macro level, the context for Tolkien's earliest memories. The two are encapsulated in the tiny fragment of a postcard, blown up, showing the face of a black woman passing the Bank of Africa, just under a sign for 'Xmas Cards'. I feel that the text perhaps suggests (erroneously) that all coloured postcards were coloured by individuals in their leisure time — when many were hand-coloured in factories. My copy of this volume cost £17, which does not feel excessive.

Pat Reynolds is the archivist of the Tolkien Society.

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3. The title refers to the practice in the Dutch Cape Colony of large harbourside stones under which post was left for the passing shipping to take on to the East Indies or back to the Netherlands; see Scully, W. C., *A history of South Africa: from the earliest days to union London* 16 (Longmans, Green & Co., 1915).

The desire of a tale-teller

MAGGIE BURNS

Scouting for Buller by Herbert Hayens (1904)[1] and *The Lost Explorers* by Alexander Macdonald (1906)[2] are adventure stories for boys. The two books are of interest to *Mallorn* readers because they were selected by J. R. R. Tolkien as his donations to King Edward's School Library in 1911 (ref. 3). They may also shed light on issues raised by two articles in *Mallorn* 47 that have, in turn, inspired this article. The first piece is Dale Nelson's article on H. Rider Haggard[4] in response to Tom Shippey's Editorial in *Mallorn* 45 noting that there has been little consideration of the influence on Tolkien of nineteenth- and twentieth-century authors[5]. What did Tolkien enjoy reading as a boy? The stories by Hayens and Macdonald may give some clues. And these stories in their different ways lead to the second inspiration for this article: Franco Manni's discussion of history in Tolkien's stories[6]. In the foreword to the second edition of *The Lord of the Rings*[7] when Tolkien wrote that he disliked allegory he continued: "I much prefer history, true or feigned, with its varied applicability to the thought and experience of readers." 'Feigned' history is a concept that needs clarification. Generally history is a record of events that actually took place, story describes an imaginary sequence of events. To feign usually means to pretend, history therefore should not be feigned.

The library at King Edward's School, 1933.

'True' history

Today, history requires accuracy and is unsympathetic to 'feigned' additions. As the writing of 'true' history itself changes and develops, it is worth considering what 'true' history may have been for Tolkien and his friends at the start of the twentieth century. Arthur Conan Doyle's books were very popular at King Edward's School. Tolkien had certainly read Conan Doyle's *The White Company*, as it was on his list of books suitable for two Mexican boys for whom he was responsible in the summer of 1913 (ref. 8). However, I will not discuss Conan Doyle's fiction here, but a contemporary work of history by him: *The Great Boer War*[9]. One of Tolkien's donations, *Scouting for Buller*, was set in the Boer War.

When the Boer War broke out, Conan Doyle volunteered and served as a doctor with British troops in South Africa. As the troops reached Bloemfontein in the Orange Free State in March 1900, there was a major outbreak of typhoid (enteric) fever. This was a subject of personal interest to Tolkien as his own father had died there of typhoid fever in February 1896. As Conan Doyle commented: "Enteric fever is always endemic in the country, and especially at Bloemfontein." Many British soldiers died; Conan Doyle was working in the field hospital to try to save them. *The Great Boer War*, which he wrote on his return home, was acclaimed in reviews as a standard history of the war. It seems to have been popular as there were many reprints. As there was a copy in the school library, it is very likely that Tolkien read it. Conan Doyle's history is well-written, with telling phrases — for example, in the first chapter, when he explains the background to the conflict, he writes: "The Government had the historical faults and the historical virtues of British rule. It was mild, clean, honest, tactless and inconsistent."

Conan Doyle's writing offers an example of the character of 'true' history for readers at the time the book was published. Some scenes in *The Lord of the Rings* reflect elements of Conan Doyle's account of the Boer War. Individual warriors are praised, and leaders are important: "Small, brown, and wrinkled, with puckered eyes and alert manner, Lord Roberts in spite of his sixty-seven years preserves the figure and energy of youth." Conan Doyle describes battles and forced marches for the soldiers, with little or no food and water. Such events are illustrated with anecdotes that vividly convey the experience of the protagonists. Baden-Powell had held the besieged town of Mafeking for months; when the Boer commander Eloff surrendered just before Mafeking was finally relieved. "'Good evening, Commandant,' said Powell to Eloff; 'won't you come in and have some dinner?' The prisoners — burghers, Hollanders, Germans and Frenchmen — were treated to as good a supper as the destitute larders of the town could furnish."

Conan Doyle's history is full of tales of heroic exploits by soldiers, and, perhaps more importantly for Tolkien and his friends, of officers. Often these were tales of self-sacrifice.

Lord Roberts's only son was an aide-de-camp in the war. At the Battle of Colenso in 1899, he and a couple of other officers responded to a desperate appeal for volunteers to rescue the British guns that were about to be captured by the Boers. He died, and was awarded the Victoria Cross. Immediately before this, four gunners had perished trying to save their gun; this is the final part of Conan Doyle's description: "The third threw up his hands and pitched forward upon his face; while the survivor, a grim powder-stained figure, stood at attention looking death in the eyes until he too was struck down. A useless sacrifice, you may say; but while the men who saw them die can tell such a story round the camp fire the example of such deaths as these does more than clang of bugle or roll of drum to stir the warrior spirit of our race." This was the subject of one of the only two illustrations, in colour, in *Scouting for Buller*. Both words and picture carried a powerful message to the youth of Britain.

Conan Doyle's moving history helps to explain what would follow at the start of the 1914–18 war. Much has been written about Tolkien's experience of war; John Garth has told in detail what happened to Tolkien and his friends[10]. Their records, including the history of the school's Cadet Corps and the Officers' Training Corps, are available in the *King Edward's School Service Records*[11], the *King Edward's School Chronicle*[12] and the *Old Edwardians Gazette*[13]. But it is still difficult to wholly understand the motivation of huge numbers of young men in Birmingham, a middle-class, working-class mostly nonconformist city, in August 1914. They flocked to enlist for fear that the war might end before they could take part. There had been an appeal to their imagination in the war stories they read. But added to this, in Conan Doyle's and other histories was the information about a real war in their own lifetime, a war in which young officers were heroes. This stirred 'the warrior spirit of our race'.

When looking at 'true' history there are difficult-to-define boundaries between history and legend in ancient stories. There are examples in the Greek and Latin texts that Tolkien studied at school; Livy for instance gives an account of the recent history of Rome, but also tells the story of the suckling of Romulus and Remus by a she-wolf. Tolkien discussed this process briefly in *On Fairy-stories*[14], taking a story about the mother of Charlemagne as an example. Here he makes a comment that is of general use when discussing 'feigned' history: "The opinion that the story is not true … must be founded on something else: on features in the story which the critic's philosophy does not allow to be possible in real life." This article does not assess ancient or medieval stories for the nature of history, however the concept of what is 'possible in real life' gives a useful criterion for judging semi-historical tales of Tolkien's time.

Army 'biscuit' might be the forerunner of 'dwarf-bread' in The *Lord of the Rings*.

'Feigned' history

One type of 'feigned' history was common during Tolkien's youth. A number of the books for boys written before the First World War combine history and story; being about events and battles that have happened, but with fictional characters playing a significant role. Tolkien was a sub-librarian in his last year at school and, in the final term, librarian[12]. He would have had to issue some titles repeatedly. Librarians' reports suggest that the librarians felt that the works of Walter Scott and Charles Dickens were ideal reading matter. Which authors were the boys actually reading?

The following librarians' laments come from the *King Edward's School Chronicle*.

December 1904: "Although not wishing to depreciate the good work of Mr. Henty, he thinks that for members of the Modern 5th to take out the works of no other author, shews distinctly childish taste."

December 1905: "All the 80 books classed as 'Doyle', 'Haggard', 'Fenn' and 'School Stories' were frequently in actual circulation simultaneously."

October 1911: "The sub-librarians demand that no more Henty, Haggard, School Tales, etc., be kept in the Library than can be read out in one breath."

March 1914: "School stories, Henty, Conan Doyle and the usual favourites have lost none … of their popularity with the School at large."

February 1915: "Doyle and Wells are still the favourites, though Haggard, Henty, and School-tale writers are read extensively."

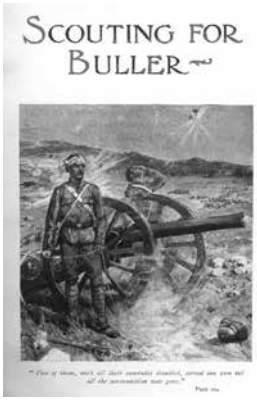
And from December 1915, in a satirical piece by Thomas Ewart Mitton, a younger cousin of Tolkien's, when the German Army has invaded and has reached King Edward's in Birmingham: "Sub-librarians were running to and fro from the great Library. Each was carrying some precious M. S. S. to a place of safety. I observed that the works of Doyle, Haggard, Henty and Ballantyne were given primary consideration." (The German invaders were repulsed by the 'deadly asphyxiating stinks' coming from the school Science Building, so the invasion failed[15].)

We know that Tolkien enjoyed Rider Haggard, and Nelson has shown many links between Tolkien's work and that of Rider Haggard. *Kim* by Rudyard Kipling was another book Tolkien felt suitable for his Mexican charges in 1913. A 1923 King Edward's School library catalogue[16] lists in the fiction section 21 books by Rider Haggard, 37 books by George Alfred Henty, 19 books by Conan Doyle and 15 titles by R. M. Ballantyne, and many other fiction authors. But, as Shippey points out[5], there was a vast range of boys' reading material and boys' adventure stories that Tolkien could have read.

Some donations to the library appear in the King Edward's School Lists[3]. Most were from adults, a few from pupils, some from men who had just left the school. In 1908–09 Tolkien donated two books by G. K. Chesterton: *Orthodoxy* (1908) and *Heretics* (1905). These are books of essays in flamboyant Chestertonian style. Chesterton's writing entertains, but it is also both educational and spiritual. Other pupils donated works of fiction; in the same year R. Q. Gilson gave *The House Prefect* by Desmond Coke, and H. S. Astbury gave *With Kitch-*

ener in Soudan by G. A. Henty. The majority, possibly all, of the other books donated by adults were non-fiction. Again in 1909–10, R. Q. Gilson and E. R. Bloomfield each donated a fiction title; and in 1910–11 R. Q. Gilson and F. Scopes, fellow sub-librarians, donated several fiction titles. One gift from F. Scopes was *With Buller in Natal* by G. A. Henty[17,18].

George Alfred Henty's books are interesting because they represent a range of popular adventure stories for boys. It is highly probable that Tolkien had read some Henty. Henty was a prolific writer of the late Victorian period; a popular writer in the *Boy's Own Paper*, as well as writing many novels for boys. His stories follow a pattern. They are set at a time of war from some point in the world's history; a fictional teenage boy or boys becomes involved with those fighting, and plays a heroic role; the teenage boys, although active participants in war, always seem to survive. Before the First World War, Henty's books were popular with boys, and adults certainly approved of them. Many of the Henty titles in the collection in Birmingham Central Library have bookplates inside showing that they had been given as school or as Sunday School prizes.



The following year Tolkien gave a second boys' story about the Boer war, *Scouting for Buller*[1]. Tolkien as librarian would know that Henty's book was in the library. It may be useful to ask why he donated a boys' adventure story on exactly the same topic as one in the library. *Scouting for Buller* describes the same battles, and also has a boy hero. A comparison of the two stories may give an indication of the type of 'feigned' history that Tolkien preferred as a youth.

War stories

Tolkien, born in Bloemfontein in the Orange Free State, probably took a particular interest in the Boer War. He was only three when he left but had some memories. His father stayed behind because of business and political problems; had he travelled with his family to England in 1895 he might not have died when he did. Tolkien remembered hearing his mother talk about South Africa with relatives when he was a child. Her meagre income came from the shares in South Africa that her husband had purchased before he died. He wrote to Christopher Wiseman in November 1914, "I no longer defend the Boer War!"[8], which suggests earlier interest and partisanship.

Although Tolkien would have greater reason for knowing about South Africa than did his friends, most of them would have known something about the Boer War. Both of the titles discussed here are aimed at boy readers. Hayens as the narrator addresses "my boy readers". Henty does so more indirectly; when the bank manager says to Chris: "You are all men", Chris replies: "We are all boys". Other writers popular with boys had taken part in the Boer War; Conan Doyle is mentioned above; Rudyard Kipling had worked on an army newspaper. Boys would have known the name of Baden-Powell including his resistance in Mafeking. He had contributed articles to the *Boy's Own Paper* when serving in India. In the 1890s he had written a handbook on 'Army Scouting for Cavalry' and this was accepted for publication in 1899. 'Scouting' was seen as a skill essential to the army rather than a leisure activity for boys. *Scouting for Boys* was published in 1908; the Tolkien brothers must have read it as it was reported in the *Oratory Parish Magazine* in 1909 that three patrols of scouts, under the brothers Tolkien, had "marched in the wake of the Boys' Brigade on Easter Monday".

With Buller in Natal was published in 1901 before the Boer War had ended. The story ends just after the relief of Ladysmith. The sequel, *With Roberts to Pretoria*, was published not long before Henty died[19]. This was not in the King Edward's library, so I will focus on *With Buller in Natal*. In the short preface, Henty states that he has tried to "reconcile the various narratives of the fighting in Natal". He adds: "Fortunately this is not a history, but a story, to which the war forms the background." The story is about Chris and his friends, teenage sons of rich local engineers and landowners of English stock. They offer to scout for General Buller. They do this in semi-independent fashion, and seem to be free to carry out the tasks that appeal to them. The group of boys themselves elect Chris to be captain of their troop; not normally a way of becoming a captain in the British Army. They are successful in every task, and eventually leave the army to rejoin their parents, before the war has ended.

Henty's narrative technique was uneven. It was his practice to use a variety of resources when writing his stories. This could mean opposing points of view that were not always reconciled: for example, in *With Buller in Natal*, the Boers are all villains at the start then later after a battle "kindly Boers" give water to wounded British soldiers. There is an omniscient narrator; the language of much of the book reads like a newspaper report of that time. Even when Chris as the leader of a group is speaking to his friends there are many long sentences with an assortment of subordinate clauses. Henty gives detailed descriptions of the battles from the standpoint of an observer rather than a participant. Two of the boys are wounded, but not seriously. The battle hospital sounds luxurious. It is mentioned that soldiers have died, but none of them are close to the teenage heroes, and therefore not to the reader. The portrayal of the Boers is unconvincing; as mentioned above, they are described as villains for the most part.

By contrast, *Scouting for Buller* is written in the first person. Much of the book is dialogue and the language is simple, the phrases short. The hero is Frank West, a young man of English descent living on a farm in Transvaal with an Irish friend, Terence. Both of his parents are dead. His father's death is a mystery that involves a neighbouring Boer family. Frank is close friends with the son and daughter of that family, and their story and the resolution of the mystery are interwoven with the story of the war. Frank becomes a scout like Chris and his friends, but it is clear that he is 'under orders', as are the other soldiers.

Resurrection

Jef Murray

A comparison of the two books shows that although both deal with the same historical events, there are significant differences between the probability of events described. In Henty's story, the landscape is described in sufficient detail to know how a battle took place, but there is no sense of the difference that a hill, a river or a sudden change in the weather might make to a man fighting. In Hayens' story the weather and landscape play a role; a horse may nearly fall over a precipice or fog may save the day for soldiers under attack. Food is always of interest to fighting men. Henty states that soldiers have biscuit to eat, and that is that. Hayens describes how the soldiers react — with good-humoured dismay — on such occasions. Army 'biscuit' might be the forerunner of 'dwarf-bread' in *The Lord of the Rings*.

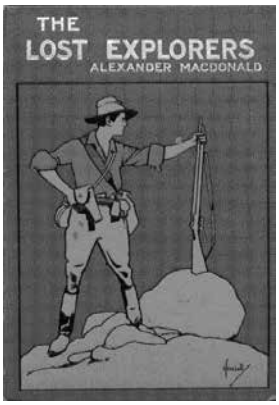
There is emotion and humour in Hayens' book, which is lacking in Henty's account. The men who are killed are close to Frank, and he suffers. When Frank joins the troop of Barker's Scouts, a soldier he had just got to know, Old Mac, is shot and he mourns his death. A companion throughout the story is his magnificent horse, Bay Ronald; he dies near the end. Frank grieves for his comrades, yet he also grieves when he sees Boers being shelled: "My heart sickened." But there is humour as well. The soldiers often swap jokes and make fun of each other. Frank manages to capture a small group of Boers on his own by pretending he is with other soldiers, by dint of shouting orders to them and replying to the orders in a different voice.

There are small circumstantial details in Hayens' story that enhance the impression that the author is giving the reader a picture of the war as it happened. Frank, when close to Ladysmith, meets a young man who turns out to be a war correspondent. No name is given, but it is tempting to see this as a portrayal of the young Winston Churchill, as he was present at the relief of Ladysmith. There were admittedly many war correspondents; in the preface to his history Conan Doyle acknowledged that he had used their writings in addition to his own experiences and names 14 of them, Churchill being one. Hayens would have heard of Churchill's adventures; when back in England, Churchill toured the country giving talks about his experiences. He gave a talk at Birmingham Town Hall in November 1900 (ref. 20). However, Hayens is describing Frank's experience, and Frank does not know the name of the man he met by chance.

The second book donated by Tolkien, *The Lost Explorers* by Alexander Macdonald, was another boys' adventure story, first published in 1906. The author was born in Scotland in 1878, and travelled in Australia when young. His story may be considered history, not as a well-known historical event, but because it is based on personal experiences. In the preface he writes: "I have given a tale of gold-digging and of exploration — a tale, for the most part, of events that have actually happened. My characters are all drawn — however crudely — from life; my descriptions are those of one who has seen and felt in a similar environment. My boys in the story were real boys." As Tolkien wrote[21] in 1956, Letter 181: "I take my models like anyone else — from such 'life' as I know."

Macdonald also wrote travel books, which contain many of the events told in *The Lost Explorers*. One of these, *In Search of El Dorado*, was published in 1905, dedicated "To my mother". The preface, written at Elcho Park, Perth, states: "I desire to assure all readers of this book that the scenes here depicted and the events described may be taken as faithful representations from life. I would also add that the geographical descriptions throughout are accurate in detail." *In the Land of Pearl and Gold* was published in 1907. In this preface Macdonald assures the reader: "a book of travel should be accurate". However the preface concludes with a sentence that suggests imagination has played a role[22]: "One or two of the adventures … have not yet reached the conclusions which perhaps the last lines suggest. But hope ever leads."

The boys in *The Lost Explorers* are in their late teens and are called Robert 'Bob' Wentworth and Jack Armstrong. They work for an engineering firm in Glasgow. Reading about the Scottish Australian explorer James Mackay visiting Glasgow they decide to travel to Australia. When booking their tickets they meet Mackay and he takes them under his wing. The first part of the story describes their hunt for gold, in which they are successful. Some of their experiences are reflected in the history of Kalgoorlie and its development as a gold-town. Macdonald himself had visited Kalgoorlie and written about it. There is a gold rush and an exciting contest with the evil-natured prospector Macguire, including a race through the desert to register a claim. Some of the achievements accredited to Bob were true of the 1890s gold-miner Paddy Hannan, who had a town named after him temporarily; and the Canadian miner Larry Cammilleri who discovered that the quartz did not carry the gold, but the lode matter composed of ironstone. Thereafter the first battery was established, and the miners and diggers prospered.



The second part is foretold in the preface: "The last few chapters in the book are based on an explorer's natural deductions. We all, who have forced a painful path over Central Australia's arid sands, hope — ay, believe — in the existence of a wonderful region in the vague mists of the Never Never Land." Mackay's small group struggles across the Australian desert coping with thirst and hunger, and with battles with the natives. They find the mountain, hidden by sulphurous fumes, and inhabited by unusually intelligent and aggressive natives. There they also find the 'lost explorers', given up for dead by Mackay.

This last part of the story has the air of fantasy suggested by the name: Never-Never. Some scenes recall parts of *The Hobbit*[23]. The chart to find the mountain is as vital to their search as is Thorin's chart. Although the mountain in the Australian desert does not hold a dragon lying on a hoard of treasure, it is itself formed of rock from which treasure can be won, precious stones and a gold-bearing lode so rich that plates and everyday equipment are made of gold. The natives who attack appear from a tunnel through the mountain, coming out of a cleft, as do the goblins in the Misty Mountains. At first the explorers cannot understand where they appeared from, but then they find the door, like the door into the tunnel to Smaug's lair. And the explorers' experience groping through the tunnel in the dark is similar to Bilbo's experience when alone in the tunnels under the Misty Mountains. Tolkien takes some of his plot materials Rider Haggard, he may also have taken some from Macdonald.

The description of the landscape and of the gold-diggers' life is vivid, as Macdonald draws on his own experience — he was a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society. Bob navigates precisely across the desert with a sextant according to the chart they had been given. He can make accurate calculations, and compensate for problems with the chart. His knowledge and experience from the engineering works helps him develop the vital process to extract gold from the clay in which it is found.

The treatment of the 'natives' by all the writers, Macdonald, Hayens and Henty, is interesting — and politically incorrect, in modern terms. The English in South Africa claimed that their regime was better for the Zulus and other native tribes than was that of the Boers. Henty's language seems more correct by our standards, the servants are described as natives or blacks. But in Henty's book there is no sense that the natives have, or might have, a life of their own. They are purely servants to carry out Chris's orders. At one point he tells them they may go and watch the battle if they wish.

By contrast the 'natives' who feature in the books donated by Tolkien are enemies who should be respected. Hayens calls them natives or 'niggers'. Nigger is not necessarily a pejorative term; during a battle a young doctor is praised for saving lives with the words: "He's a nigger to work!" The 'niggers' in Hayens book have a life of their own. Terence points out[24]: "We've both walloped the niggers and stolen their land." Frank comments: "What a splendid chance for the natives to rise!" The natives are skilled guides, but able to disappear in an instant when they wish. In Macdonald's story the natives or 'niggers' are fierce opponents, to be feared if not respected. Those living in the mountain are said to be descendants of a superior tribe.

History — true or feigned

In terms of history, both of the books donated by Tolkien, and also Henty's novel, are based on historical events. *Scouting for Buller* and *With Buller in Natal* both tell part of the story of the Boer War. Macdonald states that most of *The Lost Explorers* is based on historical episodes. Historical events are telescoped into a shorter space of time, so that they can all play a part in one story. The Boer War novels are 'feigned' in that imaginary characters are added to the history of real battles. In both Macdonald's and Hayens' stories some imaginary characters are not simply added, but take over the roles played by historical characters. The gold-diggers are mentioned above, for example. In the Boer War

there was a Captain de Montmorency who formed a group of scouts that grew in size and reputation. He died near the end of the war, and is probably the model for Captain Barker whom Frank follows, and tries desperately to rescue near the end of *Scouting for Buller*.

The boundaries between story and history start to blur. Conan Doyle's history records heroic sacrifices. Hayens describes how Frank nearly dies trying to save Captain Barker. In the First World War a friend of Tolkien's from the school debating society, W. H. Ehrhardt, went to rescue another Old Edwardian, Sanders, who had been shot by a sniper. He was shot himself in the same way; a third Old Edwardian, Emile Jacot, then managed to get them both back behind the lines at the risk of his own life[25]. It may be wondered how far nature was imitating art, and how far story and history affected the beliefs and subsequent behaviour of men at war.

Hayens makes the suffering of war vivid, of the soldiers killed, of the families they leave behind.

When history is 'feigned', then the scenery and events may be expected, as Tolkien wrote, to be possible in 'real life' and to follow the everyday laws of nature. Thus when Tolkien spent time on the revision of *The Lord of the Rings*, he took care to ensure that in all the geographical areas covered by the story, the moon was waxing and waning in accordance with the date. The concept of 'real life' can be applied to Hayens' story about the Boer War. He makes the suffering of war vivid, of the soldiers killed, of the families they leave behind, and also the soldiers who have to live the rest of their lives with injuries from which they never recover. Moreover he shows how men at war may fall victim not to the enemy's guns, but to disease — Terence fights bravely, but then succumbs to and nearly dies of typhoid fever. The first part of Macdonald's story follows the rules of nature, for example the kind of geological formations that may contain gold, the way in which to navigate across a desert, and the type of vegetation that contains water. The miners' dialogue flows naturally, and their way of life, clothing, food and so on, seem to be portrayed realistically.

Thought and experience of readers

Tolkien was choosing books to be read by boys still at King Edward's, younger than himself, so would consider the value of the overall message as well as the quality of the story itself.

One such message was patriotism. The works of both Henty and Hayens suggest that it is a noble thing to fight, as did Conan Doyle in his history. Shippey has referred to the 'Henty ethos'. It is harder now for us to understand Hayens' repeated praise of the British Army, always brave and gallant; and of the greatness of the Empire, but he is showing boys the ideals for which they might fight when older, and at that time probably most accepted this. Tolkien wrote to his friend Christopher Wiseman that he was a patriot[8]. Through his life, as he experienced war, this feeling would develop. It did not mean unquestioning belief in and support for one's fatherland or motherland. It could mean making sacrifices for and showing loyalty to the people of one's homeland, as Frodo does for the Shire in *The Lord of the Rings*. And at the end this could be love for another homeland, one that 'lies beyond the circles of the world'.

Another value expressed by the books was the love of our fellow-men. *The Lost Explorers* ends with the successful adventurers saying: "greater by far than gold or gems is the love of our fellow-men". This theme is important to Tolkien's writings, man should not lust after gold and treasure. It is the message of the poem *The Hoard*[26], and of *The Hobbit*, when the dwarves are about to fight their future allies because of their desire for the treasure that Smaug had taken from them. Greed for gold corrupts. *In Scouting for Buller* and *The Lost Explorers*, treasure is important insofar as it can help other human beings. Frank helps Boers in need as well as British; at the end both he and his Boer friend Barend declare that they will spend their money to help widows and orphans. In *The Lord of the Rings*, when Sam returns he shares his gift from Galadriel with everyone in the community by distributing it carefully across the Shire so that every plant grows more strongly and beautifully.

If you can get hold of them, the books discussed here are enjoyable to read, Conan Doyle's history as well as the stories. They are satisfyingly long: *Scouting for Buller* has 400 pages, *The Lost Explorers* 380. In the foreword mentioned above[7] Tolkien said that his prime motive when writing *The Lord of the Rings* was "the desire of a tale-teller to try his hand at a really long story that would hold the attention of readers, amuse them, delight them, and at times maybe excite them or deeply move them". The titles discussed here would easily fulfil most of these criteria, so do read them if you come across them.

Maggie Burns is at Birmingham Central Library.

Acknowledgements I would like to thank Wayne Hammon and Christina Scull, Tom Shippey and Murray Smith for reading this article while I was working on it, and for their comments and suggestions. And I would like to thank Murray Smith for suggesting that Conan Doyle's work deserves further consideration as an influence on Tolkien. I would also like to thank staff at King Edward's School, particularly Phil Lambie, Martine O'Neill and Jean Allen, for their help with queries about the school's history and with arranging visits to the school.

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Frodo as the scapegoat child of Middle-earth

LYNN WHITAKER

On recently rereading the Ursula Le Guin short story, *The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas*, I was struck by the possibility of using Le Guin's theme of the child scapegoat as a lens through which to examine the character of Frodo in *The Lord of the Rings*. While stopping short of terming this a 'queer reading' strategy (as I lack the counter-culture objective normally allied to such practice), I should stress that the reading offered here is, deliberately, at least partially oppositional or 'against the grain' of an ordinary construction of the text. I do not, therefore, suggest that this analysis in any way divines Tolkien's 'true' or unconscious meaning; instead, I hope that, by adopting an alternative reading strategy, additional insight may be gained into the power of the Frodo character.

First published in 1973 in the original fiction anthology journal *New Dimensions* and reprinted in 1976 in Le Guin's own collection of science-fiction stories, *The Wind's Twelve Quarters*[1], Le Guin's tale (or 'psychomyth' as she terms it) makes for very uncomfortable reading. It tells of the utopian city of Omelas and of its intelligent, joyous people. That the people are not, "simple folk, not dulcet shepherds, noble savages, bland utopians", is central to the moral and narrative impact of the condition of their ideal existence: the happiness of Omelas is dependent on the misery and suffering of one child kept imprisoned in a basement.

The description of the child is affective, gross in its abject nature and gross in its nearness to the mark of actual child poverty and abuse:

> Perhaps it has become imbecile through fear, malnutrition and neglect. … The door is always locked; and nobody ever comes, except that sometimes … one of them may come in and kick the child to make it stand up. … "I will be good," it says. "Please let me out. I will be good!" They never answer. The child used to scream for help at night, and cry a good deal, but now it only makes a kind of whining … and it speaks less and less often. It is so thin … its belly protrudes … It is naked. Its buttocks and thighs are a mass of festered sores, as it sits in its own excrement continually. (ref. 1, p. 281)

Most gross of all, perhaps, is the implication of the reader's complicity in this suffering, reinforced by Le Guin's use of direct address to the reader throughout:

> Do you believe? Do you accept the festival, the city, the joy? No? Then let me describe one more thing. (ref. 1, p. 280)

> Now do you believe in them? Are they not more credible? But there is one more thing to tell, and this is quite incredible. (ref. 1, p. 283)

Like the citizens of Omelas (who each know of the child's existence), the reader also accepts — the story cannot be unread — the existence of the child and of its constituent role in the happiness of the state and its individuals:

> They all know it is there, all the people of Omelas. Some of them have come to see it, others are content merely to know it is there. They all know it has to be there. Some of them understand why, and some do not, but they all understand that their happiness, the beauty of their city, … even the abundance of their harvest and the kindly weathers of their skies, depend wholly on this child's abominable misery. (ref. 1, p. 282)

That Le Guin chooses a child figure (and stresses that, in contrast to the urbane and knowing adults, it is an unwilling and unwitting participant in the 'bargain' by which Omelas thrives) is central to the power of her version of the scapegoat archetype. The original Biblical scapegoat — the goat to which Aaron transfers the sins of the Israelites and that is then execrated, ejected from society — imports the key notions of being helpless, unwitting, innocent, blameless and isolated: key notions that are all the more powerful when applied to a child figure. In many media texts the figure of the child stands as useful shorthand for innocence, and the abject child stands for the abuse of that innocence, a victim of the adult world. We are all familiar with this through images of war, disaster and tragedy wherein the lone child symbolizes collective suffering (and collective accountability). As journalism professor Susan Moeller writes, in her book *Compassion Fatigue: How the Media Sells Disease, Famine, War and Death*[2]:

> An emaciated child is not yet associated with the stereotypes attached to its color, its culture or its political environment. Skeletal children personify innocence abused. They bring moral clarity to the complex story of famine. Their images cut through the social, economic and political context to create an imperative statement. (ref. 2, p. 98)

I would argue that the "imperative statement" is that of 'Be guilty. Do something. Help me. Remember me.' It applies equally to the war child and the famine child (and easily attaches to the 'doomed youth' or 'lost boys' of Tolkien's First World War generation, especially those most tangibly scarred reminders, the lads who 'came back from the front but not from the war'). Omelas is not ignorant of such an imperative but remains a utopia precisely because its citizens feel compassion but not guilt: they wish to help but know they are powerless, so they either choose to accept, "the terrible justice of reality" (ref. 1, p. 283) or they choose to leave (the eponymous "ones who walk away from Omelas"). Le Guin's message of hope for humanity is that there are always some who choose to walk away.

The victimized, powerless child is not the Frodo offered by Tolkien — Frodo is middle-aged; he volunteers for the quest; he makes a willing sacrifice, and his choice (though arguably uninformed) would not have been otherwise — but nonetheless there is much additional poignancy and understanding to be gained in reading Frodo as a child figure. (And, indeed, Peter Jackson's casting of the child-like Elijah Wood in the role of Frodo in the film adaptation capitalized on this.) If anything, a more obvious candidate for the scapegoat child of Middle-earth might be Gollum, as I will discuss later.

To a certain extent, however, in constructing Frodo as an orphaned character, Tolkien himself (also an orphaned child) is exploiting the mythic power of a child archetype. Tolkien makes Frodo an orphan for mainly narrative reasons — a neat plot device by which Frodo is heir to Bilbo's estate (including, of course, the Ring) — but the figure of the orphaned (or homeless, estranged, abandoned, kidnapped or otherwise isolated from parental governance) child resonates at a deeper level. We do not describe adults as 'orphans' — it is applied only to the childhood state and carries with it notions of vulnerability and wretchedness along with liberation and autonomy. The trope of isolation from parents or of exclusion from the family unit or home — whether literal or metaphorical — is almost a prerequisite for a successful child protagonist in both children's and non-children's media (Harry Potter, the evacuated Pevensies, Lyra Belacqua, Lolita) and is a staple metaphor for the child's self-aware autonomy within the fairy tale, as Bettelheim writes[3]:

> As in many fairytales, being pushed out of the home stands for having to become oneself. Self-realisation requires leaving the orbit of the home … The development process is inescapable; the pain of it is symbolised in the children's unhappiness. (ref. 3, p. 79)

Jack Zipes would go still further, arguing[4] that the trope of (child) abandonment is a major motif in all literature, constituting a legitimation of child abuse (ref. 4, pp. 39-60). In Frodo the trope is doubled: he is an orphan, estranged from his first home, and then again left, this time by his adoptive parent, Bilbo, and forced from his second home, Bag End. (In fact the trope is more than doubled as Frodo can ultimately never remain with any 'family' or 'home'.) Thus Frodo is readily understood as a child figure.

It is easy to characterize all hobbits, in general, as 'child-like', (at least in that they are like the children of adult nostalgia and romanticized pastoral projection, not the 'feral' children of the ASBO and the hoodie) as suggested by Tolkien's description of their physical characteristics and personality traits in the prologue (all page references are to the 1995 single-volume HarperCollins UK paperback edition):

> For they are a little people, … . Their height is variable, ranging between two and four feet of our measure. … They dressed in bright colours … but they seldom wore shoes … Their faces were as a rule good-natured rather than beautiful, broad, bright-eyed, red-cheeked, with mouths apt to laughter, and to eating and drinking. And laugh they did, and eat, and drink, often and heartily, being fond of simple jests at all times … They were hospitable and delighted in parties, and in presents, which they gave away freely and eagerly accepted … A love of learning was far from general among them. (Prologue, pp. 1–2)

Within the internal text, hobbits are easily mistaken for children, as illustrated by Aragorn's exchange with Eomer, "They would be small, only children to your eyes" (Book III, Ch. 2, p. 424) and they are frequently treated as such, especially by adult (male) authority figures (for example, Theoden's refusal to let Merry ride to war, Gandalf's rebukes of Pippin in Moria). Likewise, the term 'Halfling', accepted throughout as non-pejorative, connotes not only the physical size of hobbits but perhaps also their liminal status as something between adult and child. The Shire too, as a realm protected unbeknownst to the innocent hobbits, can

be read as an infantilized state, looked after and guarded by 'grown-ups' who collude to keep their real function hidden from their charges (like the magic of Santa Claus). Aragorn articulates this concept at the Council of Elrond:

> "Strider" I am to one fat man who lives within a day's march of foes that would freeze his heart, or lay his little town in ruin, if he were not guarded ceaselessly. Yet we would not have it otherwise. If simple folk are free from care and fear, simple they will be, and we must be secret to keep them so. (Book II, Ch. 2, p. 242)

But it is Frodo's quest and his ensuing transformation to vulnerable, helpless, and innocent victim on which the fate of Middle-earth rests that make him bear closest comparison with Le Guin's scapegoat child figure, rather than his status as an orphan, a hobbit and a resident of the Shire. Throughout the quest, Frodo is increasingly infantilized, dependent on Sam to be fed, watered, clothed and sheltered. The title of Book IV, Chapter 10, 'The Choices of Master Samwise', signifies the point at which Frodo's reliance on Sam's choices and decisions is irreversible, so that by the time we reach Book VI, Chapter 3, 'Mount Doom', he is completely incapacitated. The scene is given additional emotive affect by Tolkien's contrasting images of the happy child (playing in the Shire) and the abject child (what Frodo has become):

> Sam looked at him and wept in his heart … 'Come on, Mr. Frodo dear! Sam will give you a ride. Just tell him where to go, and he'll go.' … Whether because Frodo was so worn by his long pains, wound of knife, and venomous sting, and sorrow, fear, and homeless wandering, or because some gift of final strength was given to him, Sam lifted Frodo with no more difficulty than if he were carrying a hobbit-child pig-a-back in some romp on the lawns or hayfields of the Shire. (Book VI, Ch. 3, pp. 919–920)

Especially in this chapter, when Frodo and Sam are pushed to the limits of their endurance and are at their most vulnerable, Tolkien presents us with many instances of physical affection between Sam and Frodo: for example, sleeping side by side, hand in hand; Sam kissing Frodo's hands, caressing his brow. It is easy — perhaps necessary even — to read these actions as non-sexual (or perhaps pre-heterosexual would be a more accurate term for the dominant construction of the asexual child) and as signifiers of idealized and pure love. Here both hobbits are understood as children, perhaps siblings (a parent–child relationship could also be substantiated but at odds with the construction of Frodo as orphan adrift in the wild), and Tolkien thus iterates the conflation of innocence and childhood as an idealized state. This innocent and juvenile state is the corollary of the Judaeo-Christian mythos of expulsion from paradise wherein (sexual) knowledge = guilt = corruption. Although Le Guin subverts this mythos, in that it is not the lack of knowledge that upholds her paradise of Omelas but rather the lack of guilt at that knowledge, both elements — knowledge and non-guilt — must be present. As with the Judaeo-Christian

"Stand by the grey stone when the thrush knocks," said Elrond, "and the setting sun with the last light of Durin's day will shine upon the key-hole"

When the thrush knocks

Becky Hitchin

version, 'knowledge' in Omelas still occurs as a precursor of adolescence, that is, at the time of sexual curiosity:

> This [the existence of the scapegoat child] is usually explained to children when they are between eight and twelve, whenever they seem capable of understanding; and most of those who come to see the child are young people. (ref. 1, p. 282)

> At times one of the adolescent girls or boys who go to see the child does not go home to weep or rage. (ref. 1, p. 283)

Poignant contrast is therefore created between the new knowledge of the young people and the imbecile nature of the child. The scapegoat child can never properly come in to knowledge, can never fully mature: it is both the *a priori* and continuing condition of his imbecile scapegoat status — and this also is Frodo's fate.

I would argue that it is the irreversible and ineffable nature of Frodo's corrupting depredations that most align him with the unchanging and eternal scapegoat child archetype and it is this that seems the most cruel and terrible 'justice' of his sacrificial role. Sam, Merry and Pippin will all go on to enjoy home and family, to enjoy adulthood, but Frodo cannot. Middle-earth is saved by Frodo, but not for him, and it can only be thus, as explicitly stated in the final chapter when Frodo departs for the Undying Lands. It is not enough that he destroyed the Ring; he must give himself up, too:

Sam, Merry and Pippin will all go on to enjoy home and family, to enjoy adulthood, but Frodo cannot.

> I have been too deeply hurt, Sam. I tried to save the Shire and it has been saved, but not for me. It must often be so, Sam, when things are in danger: some one has to give them up, lose them, so that others may keep them. (Book VI, Ch. 9, p. 1006)

Sam's sense of loss here is heightened by the sense that his parting from Frodo is untimely, unfair, "I thought you were going to enjoy the Shire, too, for years and years, after all you have done" (Book VI, Chapter 9, p. 1006), and this evokes the notion of child death, of an individual being cut down 'before his time'. Both Bilbo and Sam also leave for the undying lands, but it is not 'before their time'. This is the terrible paradox of Frodo's sacrifice: he remains forever 'a child' because he leaves 'before his time' and yet he must leave because he can no longer go back to the state of child-like innocence that was 'before'. The Ring has, as of fact, corrupted Frodo, and, as with Gollum, even its destruction could no longer recuperate him.

For the Gollum character, too, could easily be understood as a scapegoat child, his squalid, wasted physicality and abject condition bearing direct comparison to Le Guin's description. Gollum, too, is orphaned or estranged from his family and society, as Gandalf explains to Frodo:

> The ring had given him power according to his stature. It is not to be wondered at that he became very unpopular and was shunned (when visible) by all his relations. They kicked him, and he bit their feet. He took to thieving and to muttering to himself, and gurgling in his throat. So they called him Gollum, and cursed him, and told him to go far away; and his grandmother, desiring peace, expelled him from the family and turned him out of her hole. (Book I, Ch. 2, p. 52)

But where the comparison breaks down is in Gollum's accountability for his own situation: the seed of evil that is within him and that is acted upon to acquire the Ring by murder (and on which the ring confers power 'according to stature') distinguishes Gollum from the scapegoat child who starts from a position of innocence. Tolkien's creature is one whom we should pity but not one whom we consider an innocent victim.

This balance of pity and blame was, for me, problematic within the film trilogy's depiction of Gollum, the technical marvel of the achievement and the power of Andy Serkis's performance notwithstanding. In becoming a visible, material reality, Gollum was transformed to a creature deserving of even greater sympathy than Tolkien's more chilling, "ghost that drank blood" (Book I, Ch. 2, p. 57). Almost in the same way that the visible child of the charity ad evokes a stronger effect and response than the non-visible knowledge that such a child exists in the far off, 'other' somewhere, the film Gollum, visually evocative of both a holocaust survivor and an abandoned dog, was signified as a victim of evil and inhumanity more than a perpetrator: the film Gollum didn't seem like a creature who, "slipped through windows to find cradles" (Book I, Ch. 2, p. 57) as such an action would seem independent of the power of the Ring.

Our pity for the film Gollum is based mainly on our understanding that his situation is predicated on the irresistible force of the Ring rather than predicated on his own disposition towards evil that the ring amplifies: by negating personal choice this version of Gollum is neither blameworthy nor blame-free. And so, the film Gollum cannot be read as a scapegoat, despite the surface resemblance to the archetype.

Neither Tolkien's Gollum nor the film interpretation therefore have the initial state of innocence required for the scapegoat archetype to function (although for differing reasons) but Frodo (ultimately corruptible and so ultimately corrupted) starts from a position of innocence and pure heart, making the role of scapegoat possible — and utterly poignant, relying as it does on a perversion of that innocence. For the child scapegoat archetype works precisely because of that inexorably corrupted innocence.

This is the true and vile potency of the child scapegoat archetype (and where this reading is most against the grain of Tolkien's conception) as it brokers no element of redemption within its scope of 'blameless blame', depending, as it does, on a de facto paradoxical construction of both corruption and the idealized child state of innocence. Nothing that the scapegoat child can do can change that — the child's cry

of "I will be good" is irrelevant to its incarcerated, castigated state. The child of Le Guin's tale could not be liberated on account of its own action or inaction, nor is it there as a punishment for anything that it has done or neglected, but, by being there, it is become — within the unique terms of the mythos, and under the terms of the unwitting sacrificial role — an abomination, a corruption, a creature of blame. And that blame or corruption is irreversible, as the citizens of Omelas come to accept:

> But as time goes on they begin to realise that even if the child could be released, it would not get much good of its freedom: a little vague pleasure of warmth and food, no doubt, but little more. It is too degraded and imbecile to know any real joy. It has been afraid too long ever to be free of fear. (ref. 1, pp. 282–283)

The child is and must be 'blameless' in the ordinary sense (to engender our rightful and necessary compassion) but just as the child soldier — or the child victim of sexual abuse, or the child of original sin in pre-Enlightenment thought — must be considered innocent and blameless, lacking in the capacity to be accountable or responsible for their violated state, so too are they corrupted in having knowledge or guilt beyond the proper sphere of the child.

What, then, have I gained in looking at Frodo through the lens of this archetype, if it cannot ultimately be squared with Tolkien's message of the importance of choice, personal accountability and the infinite possibility of redemption? I think that my appreciation of and compassion for Frodo's bravery and suffering has been increased. This is because analysis of his sacrifice as unwitting or unwilling (in that it is unavoidable or inexorable, part of a greater archetype and mythos) mitigates the potential reading of Frodo's actions as not fully brave or unselfish. By this I mean that, given the chance to save the world by one's sacrifice, who wouldn't volunteer? Who wouldn't give their life for the cause? Who wouldn't elect to be the scapegoat for humanity — and earn a place in the Undying Lands along the way? Faith in the volunteer scapegoat is the logical adjunct to Le Guin's faith (which she accredits to American philosopher William James in her introduction) that there will always be some who "walk away from Omelas" and reject the terms of its happiness; so is it really so brave of Frodo to sacrifice himself? The traditional reading mitigates such diminution of Frodo's role by building the true value of his sacrifice and heroism around the slim odds of its success, but the 'scapegoat reading' mitigates it by making Frodo the innocent and inescapable heir to the sacrificial role and thus his ensuing misery and castigation constitute inexorable and irreversible corruption. Now that sacrifice, which negates the possibility of personal redemption, is bravery indeed.

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The Stone of Erech and the Black Stone of the Ka'aba: meteorite or 'meteor-wrong'?

KRISTINE LARSEN

Among the distinctive qualities of Tolkien's writing is his ability to seamlessly interweave scientifically accurate descriptions of the natural world into his legendarium. Even when astronomical and geological events are couched in the language of myth, such as the catastrophic changes in the world that occur whenever the Valar and Melkor engage in battle, there is much that is clearly recognizable as 'natural' and 'scientific'. As such, Tolkien's writings parallel the 'real world' patterns of geomythology. According to geologist Dorothy Vitaliano, geomythology is the study of the scientific motivation behind seemingly fantastical and mythological stories passed down from generation to generation[1]. By analogy, one can speak of 'astromythology', which searches for connections between mythic descriptions of heavenly battles and such phenomena as meteors, comets and auroras. A concrete example in the works of Tolkien is his use of meteors and meteorites. As recounted elsewhere[2,3], I have found no clear pattern to Tolkien's usage of meteors in the legendarium. In some instances they are clearly meant as metaphor, as in the case of the King and Queen of Númenor who "fell like stars into the dark" at the destruction of their land[4] or artistic licence (such as in

the poems *Why the Man in the Moon Came Down Too Soon*[5] and *Habbanan Beneath the Stars*[5]) or as being emblematic of Melkor's nefarious powers in Arda Marred[6].

Tolkien's usage of meteorites seems to be more consistent, in terms of their relationship to the deaths of dragons, whether the references be explicit, as in the case of Túrin's sword Anglachel[7], or conjectured[2,3], as in the example of Bard's famous heirloom black arrow in *The Hobbit*[8] and Eärendil's defeat of Ancalagon in the War of Wrath[7]. The identification of Bard's arrowhead with meteoric iron is based not only on the well-established connection between meteors, meteorites and dragons in classical mythology[9,10] but also on its noted colour, which is reminiscent of the appearance of the fusion crust that is created on the exterior of a meteorite as it falls through Earth's atmosphere[11]. The connection between the fall of Ancalagon and meteorites is asserted based on Tolkien's description of how before sunrise brilliant Eärendil "cast him from the sky; and he fell upon the towers of Thangorodrim, and they were broken in his ruin": a poetic description of a mighty meteorite tumbling to the earth and destroying the landscape in the creation of the resulting crater[7].

One additional explicit reference to meteorites can be found in the legendarium in *The Return of the King*, in the description of the mysterious Stone of Erech. The object is first mentioned in Aragorn's history lesson on the Paths of the Dead. According to common lore, it was upon that black stone that the "Kings of the Mountains swore allegiance" to Isildur, an oath that was broken, resulting in Isildur's cursing the men to never rest until fulfilling their oath. According to the prediction of Malbeth the Seer, at the appointed hour the now-dead oathbreakers would once more stand before the stone and finally make good on their promise to fight for the house of Isildur[12]. Aragorn further describes it as a black stone that was set up on a hill, and that it "was brought, it was said, from Númenor by Isildur"[12]. When Aragorn arrived at the appointed place with the Army of the Dead, it is described[12] as a "black stone, round as a great globe, the height of a man, though its half was buried in the ground. Unearthly it looked, as though it had fallen from the sky, as some believed; but those who remembered still the lore of Westernesse told that it had been brought out of the ruin of Númenor and there set by Isildur at his landing. None of the people of the valley dared to approach it, nor would they dwell near; for they said that it was a trysting place of the Shadow-men." Taken at face value, this passage seems to suggest that although the stone appears to be a meteorite, it has a more mundane (albeit equally symbolic) origin, as one of the few remaining artefacts of the doomed island to have been brought into Middle-earth by the sons of Elendil. If this is true, then if the stone were brought into the astronomy department of a local university in these times it might be referred to as a misidentified meteorite, or a 'meteor-wrong'. However, one of the central lessons of the *History of Middle-earth* volumes is that very few of the details of the published canon are written in stone (pun intended), and that many aspects of the tales have changed in the retelling and retooling. It is possible that the true origin and identity of the Stone of Erech is more astronomical than geological, and that in leaving the door open for such an alternate interpretation, Tolkien has once more mirrored a mystery of Middle-earth on a similar such conundrum in our own history — the famous Black Stone of the Ka'aba.

We should not ignore the obvious parallels between the Stone of Erech and Mecca's holy relic.

Stones from the sky

Throughout history, stones that have been observed to fall from the sky have been the source of wonder, fear and many times open worship[13,14]. The Needle of Cybele was a brown, conical stone that was worshipped in Rome as an image of the goddess. It is said to have fallen from the sky in an earlier time on the border between Phrygia and Galatia[15]. Fragments of the iron meteorite that created the 'Meteor Crater' in Arizona were treated as sacred objects by Native American tribes in the area[16]. An observed meteorite fall during a pagan festival in the Sirente Mountains of Central Italy some 16 centuries ago led to the hasty conversion of the local population to Christianity[17]. More recently, a meteorite seen to fall on 16 November 1492 was taken as a sign from heaven by Emperor Maximilian. A piece of the meteorite is still displayed in the town hall of Ensisheim, Germany, where according to legend it is said to be the transformed body of a local town official who had been thus punished for his cruelty[15,18]. In the eighteenth century, separate meteorite falls in Japan and Siberia were venerated by local citizens, the former as stones fallen from the Milky Way and used by the goddess Shokujo as weights for her loom, and the latter by Tartars as a holy artefact fallen from heaven[14,15].

The most sacred location in the Islamic faith is the Ka'aba of Mecca. This cubic granite structure, dressed in a fresh black embroidered cloth each year, not only marks the direction of daily prayers, but is also the central point of the holy pilgrimage or *hajj* that each Muslim is required to complete at least once in their lifetime. Set in the eastern corner is the Black Stone, or *al-hajar al-aswad*, which marks the beginning point of the seven-fold circumambulation of the structure that is part of the *hajj* ceremony. Those fortunate enough to walk close to the stone kiss or rub it, while others salute it as they pass by. Koranic tradition affords the stone a supernatural origin, although as is often the case of sacred texts there are multiple versions of the legend. In one tradition it was the body of Adam's guardian angel in Paradise, who had been turned to stone after Adam's exile to earth. The stone was brought by Adam to Mecca, where he built the first temple or Ka'aba, and the stone is thus considered a symbol of the original covenant between God and all Adam's descendents[19]. It is said by some that because of the stone's angelic origin, it will act as a witness for the faithful who have honoured it when the Day of Judgement arrives[20]. After the destruction of the first Ka'aba

Black ships

Jef Murray

in the Noachian Flood, tradition states that it was rebuilt by Abraham and his son Ishmael. The site of the original temple was revealed to them by the "Divine Peace", who appeared as a dragon-shaped cloud[19]. It is here that we find two further alternate origins for the stone. According to some scholars, the stone was found by the patriarch when searching for suitable building stones on the hill of Abū Qubays, whereas other traditions state that the Archangel Gabriel revealed the stone to Abraham. It is said to have originally had a white colour, but became black due to the sins of humankind or the touch of sinners[19]. Abraham's temple was subsequently destroyed, and the Prophet Mohammed set the stone into the corner of the current temple and began the tradition of the *hajj* as it is now known. The stone has had an unfortunate history since that time, having been broken by fire, kidnapped by heretical sects, and smashed by an invading soldier. Each time the pieces were reset into the Ka'aba with cement or resin of some kind and held in place with a silver collar. In its current state, the initial size of the stone cannot be determined, as only eight bonded pieces, the largest the size of a date, and totalling a surface area of 320 square centimetres, can be seen[21].

The geological nature of the stone has been a source of debate, compounded by the fact that as a holy relic it has (understandably) not been subjected to laboratory testing. As a result of the many traditional accounts that connect its origin to 'heaven', many authors from the early nineteenth century to the present have presumed an astronomical origin, namely a meteorite[13,22]. For example, a 1900 review of meteorite folklore confidently stated[15]: "There can be, however, little doubt that it is a meteorite. Not only did it according to tradition fall from heaven, but it is described by travelers as having a black color and basaltic character, qualities which correspond exactly to those of meteoric stones." However, based on eyewitness descriptions of the stone, as well as its response to handling in the past, geologists have largely ruled out a meteoritic origin for the stone. For example, it cannot be an iron meteorite, as it would have long-ago rusted and disintegrated due to constant touching, and in contrast to historical reports of the stone's ability to float, it would be dense enough to unequivocally sink[23]. Based on its visual appearance and presumed hardness, Dietz and McHone posit that the stone is a terrestrial agate[24]. A compromise hypothesis suggests that the stone is made of impactite glass, created by the melting and fusing of desert sand (and perhaps meteoritic debris) in the heat of a large meteorite impact. The Wabar meteorite craters, located approximately 1,100 kilometres from Mecca, would be a logical source for such a stone[21].

Origins of the Stone of Erech

Just as the mundane origin of the Black Stone of the Ka'aba is debated by scholars, so can we engage in a similar (albeit completely theoretical) exercise with the Stone of Erech. As with many aspects of the legendarium, the characteristics of the Stone of Erech underwent significant revisions during the writing of the trilogy. For example, in draft C of Book V,

Chapter 2, later called 'The Passing of the Grey Company', we read[25] that "there are other Stones yet preserved in this ancient land. One is at Erech." Christopher Tolkien concludes that it was his father's original intent that the Stone of Erech be one of the *palantíri*[25]. It is therefore clear that the suggestion of a meteoritic connection is a later addition to the storyline. For example, it is also absent in the draft outline to what became the chapter 'The Last Debate'. Here Tolkien wrote that the stone was "according to legend brought from Númenor" and a *palantír* was still located in the ruins of the tower[25]. Later in this draft (and some revisions), Gimli recounts a similar origin of the Stone, as "old tales tell"[25]. No mention of it looking like to fell from heaven appears thus far. It is in a later revision that we finally hear of the stone looking "as if it had fallen from the sky", a revision that was retained in the published version of the trilogy[25].

This is not the first time that an object in the legendarium was afforded a meteoritic origin in a later revision. Anglachel, the sword of Túrin, became meteoritic only after a 1930 revision in *The Quenta*, a decade after the first version of the tale appears[3]. I have speculated elsewhere[3] on possible reasons for Tolkien's addition of a meteoritic origin for the sword, concluding that a confluence of events *circa* 1930 (including a surge in public interest in and popular-level writings about meteorites and impact craters) may have sparked Tolkien's interest in adding references to meteorites in the legendarium. Given that Tolkien was revisiting *The Silmarillion* texts while completing the trilogy, it is not unreasonable to presume that upon rereading the story of Túrin, the importance of the folklore of meteorites returned to his mind, and including the possibility that the Stone of Erech might have (some say) fallen from the sky merely added to the mystique and 'otherworldliness' of the stone and the oath that bound the Army of the Dead.

But we should not ignore the obvious parallels between the Stone of Erech and Mecca's holy relic. Besides their black appearance, and suggestions that they might be meteorites, both stones serve as tangible and enduring signs of a solemn oath. At the battle with the Haradrim, Aragorn orders the Army of the Dead to fulfil their oath[12] with the call: "Now come! By the Black Stone I call you!" The Stone of the Ka'aba will likewise call the faithful in the final battle of Judgement Day. The appearance of the dragon-shaped cloud in one version of the Ka'aba's origin is also intriguing, as it reminds one of Tolkien's use of connections between meteorites and dragons (as described above). Some scholars have explained the tradition that the Stone of the Ka'aba is a meteorite as being a result of a simple misunderstanding of the word 'heaven'. A stone from heaven, in a religious sense, is not a rock from outer space, but a divine gift from beyond the natural world[24]. One can argue that Númenor, while technically not one of the 'Blessed Lands', is certainly a divinely created island, a parallel to the Garden of Eden, and from which humans were banished upon their 'fall' (their vain attempt to invade the Blessed Lands and become immortal). Just as the Stone of the Ka'aba is said (in some versions) to have been brought out of Paradise by Adam, in *The Silmarillion* we read that the Faithful (Elendil and his sons) saved "many treasures and great heirlooms of virtue and wonder" from the destruction of Númenor, "and of these the most renowned were the Seven Stones and the White Tree"[7]. No explicit mention is made of the Stone of Erech, therefore we are bereft of direct evidence that the Stone was indeed one of these heirlooms and not, as some say of both this stone and the relic of the Ka'aba, a rock that fell from the sky.

Did Tolkien draw upon the Black Stone of the Ka'aba as a model for the Stone of Erech? Given Tolkien's well-known use of astronomical allusions in his writings, and knowledge of myriad cultural, religious and mythological traditions, it is certainly not out of the realm of possibility. At the very least, the relic of Ka'aba may have consciously or unconsciously influenced his later usage of an alternate ('hearsay') meteoritic origin for the Stone of Erech. However, as with the origin of the Stone of Erech itself, this question may permanently remain entrenched in the realm of speculation.

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Questing for 'Tygers': a historical archaeological landscape investigation of J. R. R. Tolkien's real Middle-earth

PAUL H VIGOR

> Thror's Map and the map of Wilderland in *The Hobbit* [add] nothing to the story but decoration and a 'Here be tygers' feel of quaintness. (ref. 1)

Recent, thought provoking observations by Shippey[2] and Lacon[3] regarding restricted research agendas and unanswered questions, suggest that, 54 years after the first publication of *The Lord of the Rings*, Tolkien studies — as led, for the most part, by scholars of English Literature and of Medievalism[4] — may be approaching a state of cognitive impasse. Why might this be? According to J. R. R. Tolkien[5]: "Many young Americans [and, subsequently, academic and general readers of many other nationalities] are involved in the stories in a way that I'm not."

Many of those seeking to discover, and cross Tolkien's 'bridge of time'[6] in search of real Middle-earth sources and inspirations, seem predisposed to focus upon specific, favourite — invariably early medieval and fantastic — aspects of this author's multifaceted whole, and to disregard so much of the rest. Dare one suggest that too much fantasy, not enough fact be identified as the fatal flaw in Tolkien studies as currently practised? Although it is, of course, reasonable to concentrate one's attention on certain preferred — safe — issues or topics[2], Tolkien scholars should, from time to time, be prepared to abandon their comfort zones. Those who express sincere aspirations to pass beyond the Edge of the Wild, to locate, enter and explore Tolkien's sub-created Wilderland, must be willing and able to think, research — and walk — past five decades of academic and popular paradigm; to get involved in Tolkien's stories in the ways that he was, himself.

This paper was conceived, in the first instance, as a brief preamble to an ongoing, unorthodox exercise in literature-led, historical archaeological landscape investigation and interpretation. Thus, I will — at this time — resist the customary practice of specifying the identities and locations of a corpus of apparently random Tolkienesque hill forts, burial mounds, standing stones, ancient trees or familiar place-names that may 'remind' one of Middle-earth. Given the fluid nature of this investigation and the innovative, practical methodology it seeks to develop, detailed disclosures of techniques and places would, I fear, be premature. The initial purpose of this paper is to encourage free-thinking Tolkien scholars to consider, explore and exploit the potential of multidisciplinary modes of thought; to reflect upon unorthodox ideas and hypotheses; to seek out unrecognized or misunderstood sources of information; and to develop fresh research agendas — to break Tolkien studies free of what might be termed 'the Beowulf paradigm'. To illustrate the potential of a proactive, historical archaeological approach to Middle-earth source investigation, and, hopefully, whet appetites for what will follow, I propose to incorporate historically and archaeologically informed — but not geographically sensitive — original reinterpretations of Tolkien's Minas Ithil/Morgul and Orodruin/Mount Doom.

The Questing for 'Tygers' project, initiated in December 2005, comprises a versatile, historical archaeological landscape investigation methodology specifically developed to investigate and interpret Tolkien's convoluted, peculiar, but invariably methodical form of literary composition — an early form of cultural landscape investigation. The Questing for 'Tygers' methodology — an unorthodox evolution of otherwise orthodox historical archaeological practice — requires that candidate Middle-earth locations, once identified and validated by close, desk-top analysis and pedestrian field survey, be reported and discussed in detail — and in a strict, linear progression. Although certain facets of this methodology are eminently suitable for reportage in short papers and articles, books provide a more appropriate medium for the presentation of extended, detailed discussions and interpretations. My ultimate goal? Two reasonably priced, combined commentary and trail guides: the first following Bilbo's trek to the Lonely Mountain; the second following Frodo to Mordor. It is my intention that these volumes should refocus popular, academic and critical attention upon Tolkien and his Middle-earth fantasy travel sagas, as Michael Ward's radical *Planet Narnia* (2008) hypothesis has succeeded in refreshing and redirecting C. S. Lewis/Narnia scholarship.

In search of landscape

Efe Levent has suggested that the fantasy genre, of which J. R. R. Tolkien was a pioneer "has long been a no-go zone for every self-respecting scholar of literature"[7]. Such academic disengagements can present interesting research opportunities to nonconformist, original thinkers from other disciplines. Ruth Lacon has identified a number of deliciously thorny issues that may benefit from a robust, multidisciplinary — pedestrian — approach to Middle-earth source investigation. An approach that will break with established Tolkien studies practice by identifying, then separating primary historical, archaeological, geographical and cultural source evidence from secondary, unreliable, fantasy transformations; to divide the meat from the mushrooms. Consider this: 50 years have passed since the first publication of *The Lord of the Rings*, yet most Tolkien

source investigators seeking to understand and explore the expansive, rural, three-dimensional, tangible landscapes of Middle-earth seem confined in perpetuity to the suburbanized, two-dimensional backdrops of southern Birmingham. So, Lacon asks: why does Tolkien cover his source tracks so thoroughly? How may we access the deeper patterns of Tolkien's creative process? What is Tolkien's thinking with regard to history? How does Tolkien transform existing source material into his own storylines and plots? And finally[3]: why does the heroic poem Beowulf seem to exert so little influence upon Tolkien's Middle-earth writings? Lacon's excellent questions will guide this ongoing project.

And so we shoulder our backpacks, grasp our sticks, and step into the Road …

The compost heap

I have long been intrigued by Tolkien's oft quoted "leaf-mould of the mind" metaphor[8], and troubled by his biographer's confident assertion that: "one learns little by raking through a compost heap to see what dead plants originally went into it"[9]. A nice, juicy, stratified midden represents an invaluable archaeological resource. A midden, if excavated and analysed with care and close attention to detail, can yield abundant information. This informed approach to finds recovery is equally applicable to orthodox field archaeological excavations as it is to unorthodox literary source excavations — such as Tolkien's mental 'compost heap'. The excavator is required to know where to look, how to look, and what to look for.

How does Tolkien transform physical, geographical source material into his storylines and plots?

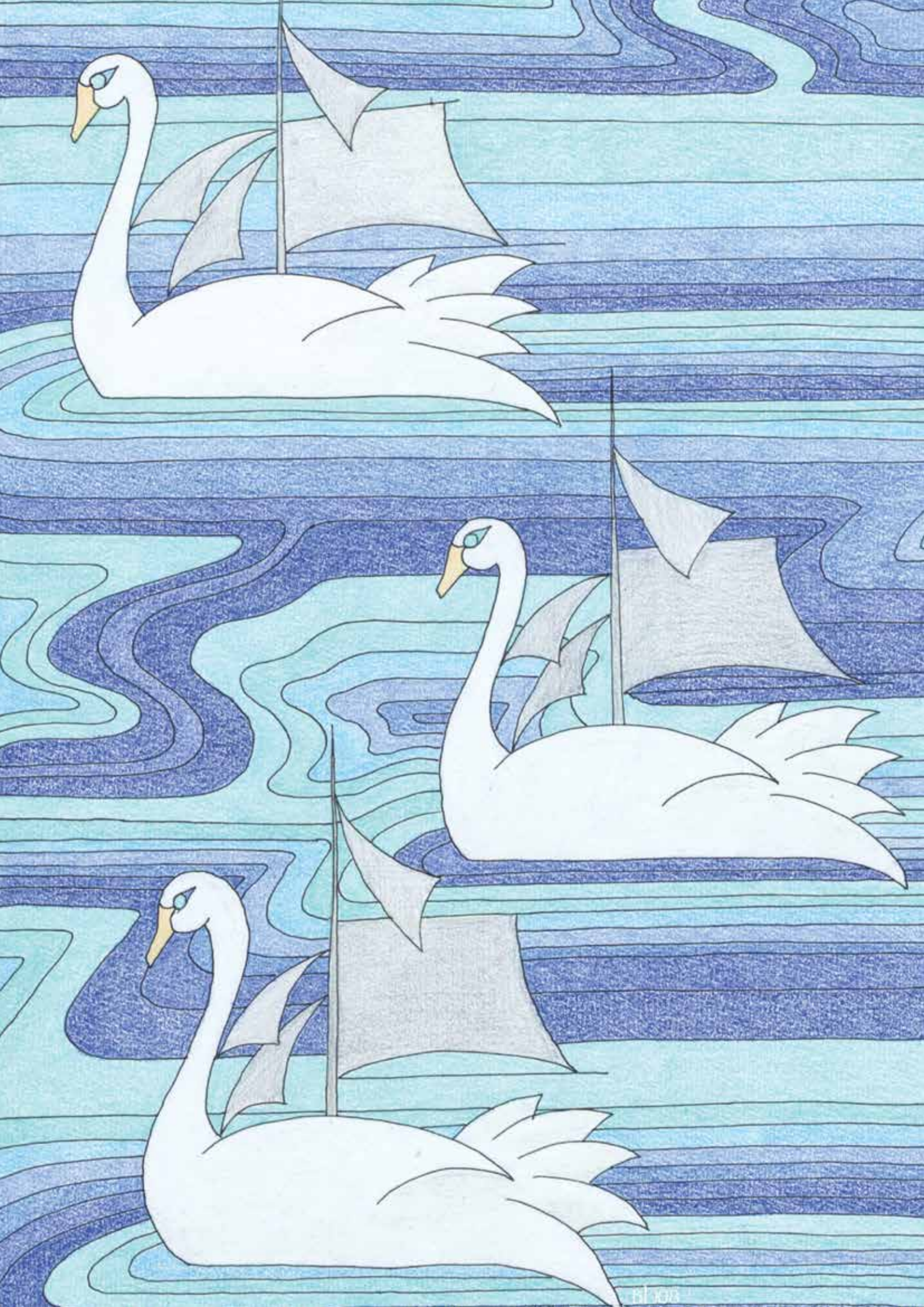
Tolkien "deplored the feeble modern understanding of English names, English places, [and] English culture"[10]. It is not inconceivable that Tolkien wrote *The Lord of the Rings*, in part, to test this "feeble modern understanding" hypothesis upon his literary friends and, subsequently, the academic and general readers of his published Middle-earth travel tales. Thus, Tolkien's Hobbit writings, like C. S. Lewis's secretive, planet-inspired Narnia cycle[11], may incorporate a complex, source-based riddle-game[12]. Tolkien challenges his readers to disprove his hypothesis by asking them: 'Where is my Middle-earth?'

Tolkien, who might be described as an enthusiastic day-walker[13], wrote out his Middle-earth fantasy travel stories for oral presentation to the Inklings. When 'at home', the Inklings gathered in to read aloud — then criticize — one another's submissions. However, certain poetically minded Inklings liked to embark upon extended, literary-creative tramping tours/pedestrian-poetic pub crawls — for the duration of which they entitled themselves 'The Cretaceous Perambulators'[14]. Thus, Tolkien seems to have written, delivered orally and eventually published two elaborate fantasy tramping tales intended to appeal to an informed, literary-minded tramping audience. It would seem that the sometime perambulating Inklings failed to recognize Tolkien's tramping point? Levent observes that *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* read like maps[7]. Indeed they do. However, in both written style and content, Tolkien's Middle-earth walking sagas repay even closer comparison with popular, contemporary (1920s–1940s) accounts of long-distance, cross-country walking, cycling and motoring tours conducted within the British Isles. Tours undertaken by a generation of generally forgotten travel wordsmiths including H. V. Morton, S. P. B. Mais, H. H. Symonds and A. J. Brown.

Consider this: two of the traditional objectives of a bona fide tramping expedition were the keeping of a detailed daily journal and the preparation of rough sketch maps depicting the route followed[15]. As a perfectionist thinker and author, Tolkien had to get his facts right. Ongoing, verifiable archaeological field survey, guided by close textual, cartographic and place-name analyses, indicates that Tolkien — probably travelling to and from his starting and finishing points by railway — day-walked the routes, and visited and researched the places he described and mapped in *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*. Readers wishing to chase inspirational 'tygers' across Tolkien's real fantasy landscapes have no choice but to lace up their boots and put in the academic and pedestrian 'hard yards'.

With apologies to L. P. Hartley, Middle-earth is, like the past, a foreign country: Tolkien did things differently there. An open mind, a keen eye for detail and a willingness to engage with, and to decode, Tolkien's real topographical, cultural and philological ciphers — to understand, and recreate his multidisciplinary working/walking methodology — is prerequisite to becoming fully conscious of the true immensity of Tolkien's Middle-earth sub-creation. Alas, there are no short cuts to Gondor: researchers accepting the challenge to locate Tolkien's 'bridge' are required to undertake close analyses of evidence and sources relating to specific English places, built structures, place-name translations and landscapes (archaeology, philology, cartography, geography); and geographically relevant, often obscure, elements of local English culture (history, theology, religious doctrine, mythology). Such detailed research provides the only reliable means of identifying and, more importantly, validating candidate real Middle-earth locations. Candidate locations may be confirmed or refuted by rigorous desktop investigation and field-testing against Tolkien's own research methodology; his cartography; and his visually descriptive texts. Thus, locations are identified by informed 'finds analysis' and 'field-walking', rather than by unsupported personal belief, popular opinion or suburban myth.

How does Tolkien transform physical, geographical source material into his storylines and plots? Orthodox Middle-earth geographical source investigations — usually focused upon red-brick, southern Birmingham and environs — tend to encompass a curious fusion of biographical details, personal belief, suburban myth, fantasy invention, and random locations that happen to remind the viewer of Middle-earth. The wider English West Midlands landscapes with which Tolkien was so familiar, and about which he wrote with such passion



in the 1920s–1940s, were factual not fictional. They comprised both intact rural idylls and former country landscapes that had been despoiled and scarred by heavy industry. Many of these rural and post-industrial landscapes were changing yet again, becoming 'tram-ridden'[16], suburbanized rookeries. Within Tolkien's sub-creation, real landscapes and structures currently lauded as important survivals of early industrial and social archaeological heritage positively invited robust transformation: they tended to re-emerge as the diabolical works of evil men, renegade wizards and dragons[17].

The mouth of hell

Perhaps the most accessible case study with reference to a geographical landscape transformation concerns the development of Tolkien's burning mountain, Orodruin. Field survey and desktop investigation indicates that the fantasy construct Orodruin comprises a fusion of a real geographical feature — a hill located in a smoke-polluted valley, an amended (Tolkienized) Early English place-name translation, a local historical legend concerning an ancient battle, and a specific form of symbolic medieval ecclesiastical and secular art. Inspired by its place-name, Tolkien's Orodruin may be identified as a hell mouth.

An ancient visual image, the hell mouth was an awe inspiring, powerful component of medieval Christian wall art and secular theatrical stage sets. A hell mouth could be depicted as a gapping mouth into which damned souls were dragged by demons. An alternative form comprised a conical, crenellated tower with a door set in the side; through this door the damned were hauled to endure eternal torment. Tolkien's Orodruin hell mouth took the form of a cone-shaped, volcanic mountain with a door cut into its flank. This door provided access to the fires of hell — the very fires in which the Ring of Power was forged by Sauron[18]. Medieval hell mouths had an alternative name: they were also referred to as dooms[19]. Thus, Orodruin is also known as Mount Doom.

Tolkien seems to have favoured the graphic medieval imagery of hell mouths or dooms, consequently others may be identified in the landscapes of Middle-earth. Tolkien's hell mouths usually comprise mountains of ill repute, pierced with doors and/or tunnels, with something nasty lurking inside. Further potential Middle-earth hell mouths include: the West-door of Moria (beneath Caradhras the Cruel); Shelob's Lair (beneath Ephel Duath, the Mountains of Shadow); the Door under Dwimorberg (the Haunted Mountain); and the enchanted door of Erebor (the Lonely Mountain, lair of the dragon Smaug).

An impressive medieval, Midlands-located hell mouth image may be observed upon the Hereford Cathedral *Mappa Mundi* (made in Lincoln or Hereford *circa* 1300)[20]. A veritable compost-heap of potent medieval visual symbolism and fantastic imagery, the *Mappa* depicts its doom as a heavy, iron-strapped, open door in the side of a hill; a door leading to a subterranean chamber within which dwells a fearsome dragon[21].

How does Tolkien transform standing archaeological source material into his storylines and plots? A test case of one tower, two names might be considered. The tower in question is Minas Morgul/Ithil. Minas Morgul/Ithil was one of the Two Towers — the other being Minas Tirith/Anor. According to long-established, popular tradition, the towers of Minas Morgul/Ithil and Minas Tirith/Anor were inspired by Perrott's Folly and the chimney of the Edgbaston Water Works — both of these structures are located in southern Birmingham. However, it should be noted that Tolkien chose not to endorse this belief[22]. It endures just the same.

Archaeological landscape investigation may provide an explanation for Tolkien's apparent reluctance to confirm any creative interest in the two towers of Edgbaston. Field survey indicates that Tolkien's two towers were inspired by two Anglican church towers located many miles from Birmingham. According to Humphrey Carpenter[23]:

> Tolkien had a deep resentment of the Church of England which he sometimes extended to its buildings, declaring that his appreciation of their beauty was marred by his sadness that they had been (he considered) perverted from their rightful Catholicism.

Tolkien's bleak description of Minas Morgul/Ithil exudes a personal passion that seems to extend far beyond the requirements of pure fantasy; a passion that seems especially out of place when applied to a mid-eighteenth century folly and an industrial chimney. Thus:

> A long-tilted valley, a deep gulf of shadow, ran back far into the mountains. Upon the further side, some way within the valley's arms, high on a rocky seat upon the black knees of Ephel Duath, stood the walls and tower of Minas Morgul. All was dark about it, earth and sky, but it was lit with light. Not the imprisoned moonlight welling through the marble walls of Minas Ithil long ago, Tower of the Moon, fair and radiant in the hollow of the hills. Paler indeed than the moon ailing in some slow eclipse was the light of it now, wavering and blowing like a noisome exhalation of decay, a corpse-light, a light that illuminated nothing.(ref. 24)

It would seem that Minas Ithil represents this particular church building as a pre-Reformation, Roman Catholic place of worship; whereas Minas Morgul describes the same building in its post-Reformation guise as an Anglican parish church. Tolkien seems to be making a personal, doctrinal comment about the true light of Roman Catholicism being extinguished by Protestant Anglicanism. Alas, from an Anglican perspective, this name change is all the more disturbing since Minas Ithil became Minas Morgul after its capture by the Nazgul[25]. Consequently, one might speculate that King Henry VIII, the instigator of Protestant Reformation and monastic dissolution in England, may be identified as Tolkien's model for the Lord of the Nazgul — the Witch-king of Angmar.

The Morgul fate of this village church may have been sealed decades before Tolkien took an interest in it: apparently, this building represents an especially notorious example of grievous Victorian ecclesiastical 'restoration'.

I will bring this missive towards a conclusion by quoting Tolkien's signature tramping poem *The Road Goes Ever On*.

The Road goes ever on and on
Out from the door where it began.
Now far ahead the Road has gone,
Let others follow it who can!
Let them a journey new begin,
But I at last with weary feet
Will turn towards the lighted inn,
My evening rest and sleep to meet. (ref. 26)

Most readers interpret this poem as referring to journey's end, to death. I prefer a less gloomy understanding: 'The Road goes ever on' seems to incorporate both a challenge and an invitation from author to reader: 'Let others follow [me/Tolkien] who can!' and: 'Let them a journey new begin'.

Those who accept Tolkien's challenge, step on to the Road and go ranging the greenways that lie beyond the Edge of the Wild, will discover the fate of early-Seventh Age Middle-earth[27] — 54 years after the first publication of Frodo Baggins's account of the War of the Ring. In 2009, the fume-choked air of Mordor has cleared; the tunnel under 'the Hedge' remains passable but damp; picnics are enjoyed and ball games played upon the Pelennor Fields where Theoden fell; and the ruins of Cair Andros have become a popular tourist attraction. Alas, but the descendants of Saruman have also been busy[28]: in defiance of Gimli's environmental concerns[29], industrial stone quarrying has damaged the Hornburg; a resurrected, resurgent Isengard has dominion over Fangorn Forest and Amon Hen; and a restored red eye stares once more across the wide realms of Rohan, Gondor and Ithilien.

The golden rule followed by those traversing unknown, or unfamiliar territory is: always trust your map and compass. Alas, for more than 50 years fantasy-led academic and private researchers seeking to understand and navigate the wide landscapes and complicated lore of Middle-earth seem inclined to mistrust Tolkien as a cartographer, and ignore him as a trail guide. The Questing for 'Tygers' project seeks to rectify this doleful situation by engaging academically and physically with the author of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*. To interpret and follow — on foot — Tolkien's maps, and be guided by his texts and sources — trusting that Tolkien's own road to Middle-earth, so carefully mapped and described, will, eventually, lead open-minded, academic thinkers and thoughtful readers back to Mirkwood, the Lonely Mountain or "even further and to worse places?"[30]. This paper, and those to follow, should, one might expect, focus fresh, critical attention upon J. R. R. Tolkien and his walking tales of Wilderland. At the very least, the historical archaeological landscape investigation methodology pioneered for this project, and the growing cache of findings and ideas said methodology has generated to date, should keep subject-specialist Tolkien scholars — and thinkers drawn from many other fields and disciplines — busy for decades. My conclusion? Middle-earth is full of 'tygers' — if you know where to look, how to look and what to look for.

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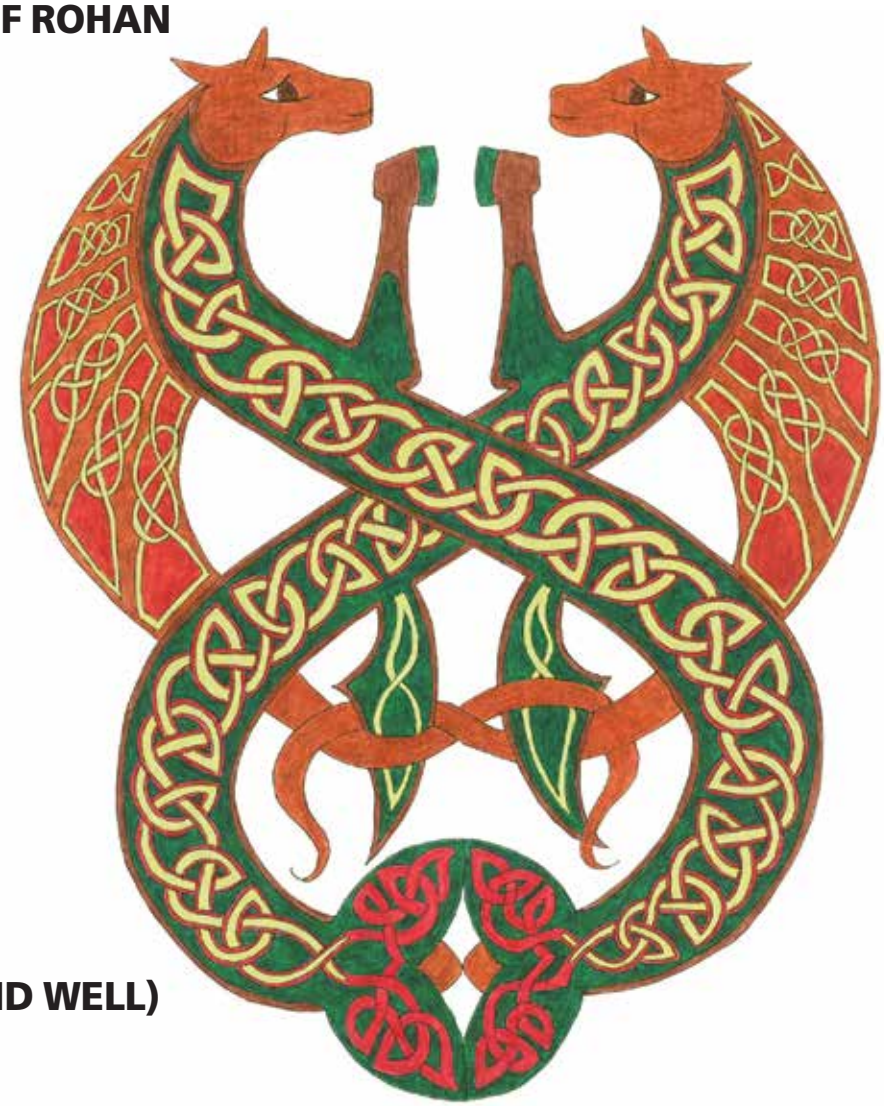
DAWN OVER THE WOLDS OF ROHAN

Carol Brownlow

sunbursts before emnets
greening the vast grasslands
a scent keener than sleep
drinking in the crystal
of sparkling dew
and steeds
swifter than vague shadows
fleeting across the mind
in a dream of horses
raising like mist vapours
into substantial things
thund'ring unshod hooves
whin'ying unbridled neighs
that laugh across emptiness.



Rohan print

Becky Hitchin

SAREHOLE DREAMS (TOM BOMBADIL ALIVE AND WELL)

Jodi Storer

The old forest comes alive:
Willow, barrow and other perils to fear.
A mythical land from bygone years,
inspiring Middle Earth dreams and legendary schemes,
Of honour, glory and a daring quest;
With old Tom, watcher of leaf and tree, coming out best.

Is this Tom now, striding from the woods?
No mud, no rain, no mark on him at all.
Only bright yellow, blue and green, walking so tall,
A song in his heart, goodness all around.
I feel my soul lifting right up into the misty sky.
Soaring high over rain clouds to a faraway world,
With elves and dragons; goblins, wizards too,
Casting not one glance at man's hullabaloo.

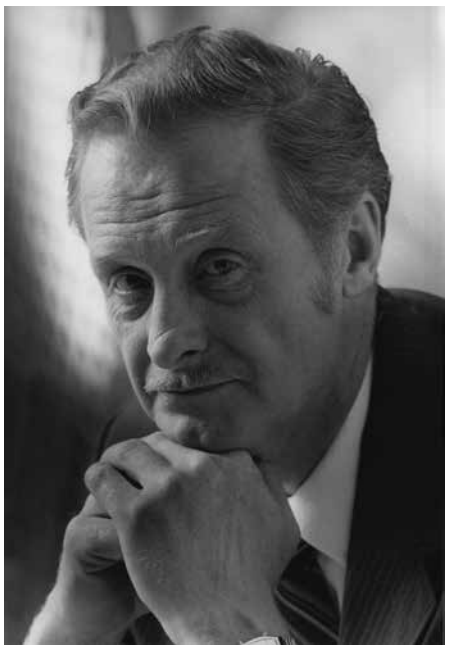
I don't want to leave.
The Shire, here and now, is where I long to be.
Can I linger forever to let my mind see
The essence of beauty in these pathways of green?
Well, maybe not, but I'll be back some day
Just to see if Tom still goes on his merry, carefree way.

CUIVIENEN

Carol Brownlow

when under the starlight was fearless
reflected refracted shining back
into the diamond firmament
of Varda's net from the sable mere
mirrored gems of silver adamant

silent it was then when elven eyes
first pierced this beauty beneath the dark trees
and wonder sighed and trees soughed in soft wind
giving voice to that silence while the mere
lapped in waves on the shore beguiling



David Eddings
(1931–2009)

It was a sunny afternoon in June. Windows were open, birds singing in the garden outside. Faint music could be heard from the amusement park a few miles away. I was 15, and meant to be revising for my A-levels. Biology, chemistry and physics.

Of course, I wasn't. I had discovered David Eddings a month or so before, and I'm afraid that revision took an absolute second place to the entrancement of the Belgariad and Mallorean. How could numbers and formulae take my attention away from stable boys with mysterious powers, beautiful sorceresses, cunning thieves and pouty princesses?

I'll always associate David Eddings with those wonderful sunny days when everything was new, where a whole day could be spent curled up on a comfy bed, reading and reading until you looked up and the sun was setting and the book was finished between your fingers.

David Eddings was born in Spokane, Washington, in 1931. He graduated from high school in 1949 and from college in 1954 with a BA majoring in speech, drama and English literature. He grew to love Chaucer, Malory and medieval romances — even adding a paragraph of pure Middle English into one of his books. He then entered the US Army, wanting to be posted to Korea, but ending up in Germany, in charge of a platoon of 63 men. It was one of his most harrowing experiences, but he managed to keep his men all alive (apart from the one who ran away). After returning to the United States, Eddings went back to his education and graduated with an MA from the University of Washington in 1961.

On 27 October 1962, he married Judith Leigh Schall, who was to become his life-long companion, co-author and inspiration until her death in 2007.

Eddings' first published book was an outdoor adventure novel called *High Hunt*, but it was not until he had then written *The Losers* and a number of other "monumentally unpublishable" books, and had almost decided to give up fiction writing as a career, that a chance encounter with *The Lord of the Rings* set him in a different direction. "I was heading toward the back of the store, where they kept the serious fiction," he recalled (in *The Rivan Codex*), "and walked past the SF rack. Down on the bottom shelf was a copy of *The Two Towers*, the second volume of *The Lord of the Rings*. I looked at it and thought, 'Is this old turkey still kicking around?' … I turned the title page and saw this book was in its 73rd printing. This gave me pause for thought."

He stopped working on his current fiction project and went back to look at the doodles he had been making of an imaginary world. About a year later, the bases of the Belgariad and Mallorean were in place.

Pawn of Prophecy was quickly followed by the four other books of the Belgariad, and five more in the follow-on series, the Mallorean. These brought us protagonists that encompassed honour, humanity, humour and humility. Belgarath, Polgara, Garion, Silk. Each of Eddings' characters encompass values we enjoy and admire, from Silk's deviousness to Polgara's perfection of womanly virtue and power. Even Zith the snake was personable.

Silk was David Eddings' own favourite character, and we can see from any of the deft turns of wit he shows in the books why he is loved by his creator, and so many readers.

> "What was that?" Belgarath asked, coming back around the corner.
>
> "Brill," Silk replied blandly, pulling his Murgo robe back on.

"Again?" Belgarath demanded with exasperation. "What was he doing this time?"

"Trying to fly, last time I saw him." Silk smirked ...

"He doesn't really have all that much time." Silk glanced out over the edge.

From far below — terribly far below — there came a faint, muffled crash; then, after several seconds, another. "Does bouncing count?" Silk asked.

Belgarath made a wry face. "Not really."

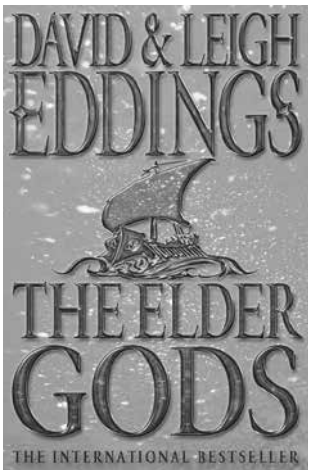
"Then I'd say he didn't learn in time." Silk said blithely.

Magician's Gambit

However, it was not from the Belgariad/Mallorean that Eddings' favourite character appeared. Aphrael, the child-like, mischievous goddess and younger sister to Sephrenia, came from his next two series of books. These were the Elenium and the Tamuli, another set of epic quest novels, this time two trilogies instead of the previous two sets of five books.

These were followed by something refreshingly different, *The Redemption of Althalus*, and then two prequel novels to the Belgariad, now officially co-authored with Leigh. *The Rivan Codex* was their last book set in the world of Belgarath and his descendants.

In 2002, the Eddings wrote a contemporary novel called *Regina's Song*, set on the streets of Seattle, before returning to fantasy for *The Dreamers*, published in four volumes.



This turned out to be the Eddings' final series. Leigh died in February 2007 following a series of strokes, and, perhaps unsurprisingly, David did not publish anything from that date onwards until his recent death.

David Eddings was a story-teller, above all else. He delighted in creating tales that appealed to many, that made people pick up a book who might otherwise not have been interested in reading. He remained self-effacing about his achievements through his life, satisfied in his role as a teller of tales — books with a quest, a 'magic thingamajig', a hero, a fair princess, a wizard of great power and mystery (and quite often, a liking for too much ale). Evil antagonists abounded through his works, mad gods and their henchmen, who could most often be identified by names involving a proliferation of Zs or Ks. His characters were written with a quick wit and eye for detail, they had real lives through the books. They stopped for lunch, they forgot their tinderboxes, they had to eat stew again and again, they were all too often attacked by fleas and bitten by bedbugs. We all could smile at them, smile with them, understand their day-to-day toils.

David Eddings admired Tolkien, calling him Papa Tolkien or Poppa Tolkien; names both affectionate towards his work and his status as a founding father of the modern fantasy movement. In many ways they were similar in their academic leanings. David Eddings loved Middle English, loved writing in Middle English, loved mediaeval romance, and singled out the *Saga of the Völsungs* among his inspirations. He refused to talk down to an audience, preferring correct but difficult words to any lesser alternative. He thought that kids should be taught mythology. He had word games in his novels — my favourite of these concerns Sparhawk, of the Pandion Knights. For those untaxonomically minded, the generic name for the osprey — closely related to the sparrowhawk — is Pandion. Spearhafoc was an Old English name, and one man of that name rose to be Abbot of Abington and Bishop-Elect of London, as Sparhawk rose through the ranks of the Pandions to be their Acting Preceptor.

We know that Eddings read at least *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Letters of J. R. R. Tolkien*, from which he seemed to gain a significant amount of his opinions about Tolkien the man. "There's no doubt the man's a giant," he wrote in *The Rivan Codex*. "The thing is that Poppa was such a giant in the 60s that he seems to have established the parameters of what fantasy is."

The parameters he attributes to Tolkien, however, I find somewhat surprising. "Papa Tolkien … was probably even prissier than Queen Victoria," he also wrote in *The Rivan Codex*, saying that Victorians were known for only considering females as genteel, untouchable creatures who didn't "exist below the neck — you have the beautiful hair and eyes but that's about it". I think Éowyn at least might be somewhat perturbed by this statement, as would Elanor and Rosie about his assertion that female Hobbits only existed in two forms — matronly ladies and "female Hobbit puppies".

Maybe I'm too much in love with Tolkien's work, but I don't see this prissiness. I see a man of his times, an Oxford don writing a fantasy epic. His scenes with women are most often gentle, but his admiration for his female characters shines through. Arwen, Galadriel, and if anyone thinks they are shown only down to the neck, they should reread Lúthien and her seductive dancing. It's true that Tolkien had many more male friends than female, but the female friends he had, he admired greatly. He loved as passionately as anyone else, held Edith up on a pedestal, his mother also. Their values and beauty flow through his works. And I think it's a great shame that David Eddings seems not to be able to have seen that.

But even if he did miss the true beauty and vivacity of Middle-earth, David Eddings gave us so much: his imagination, his story-telling, his worlds. And for that, he will always have a special place in the hearts of fantasy fans throughout the world.

Becky Hitchin used to be a palaeontologist but got better.

Royal blood

SHELLY LI

The commission letter, one of three hundred, arrived at the Mariano House on a windless summer afternoon, while Santon was sitting out in the front yard waiting for his two teenage sons to return from school.

Their neighbours, the Fairfaxes, watched over their fence with feigned sympathy as Santon tore open the letter and read it. Then, without saying a word, he went into the house and showed the letter to his wife Philippa, who nearly fainted at the kitchen table.

"What will we do?" she asked Santon, choking on the tears crawling up to her eyes.

Santon grabbed his wife's hand, gave it a reassuring pat. He looked out the window, feeling the warmth of the sun illuminating his face. To some households, being picked to fight and slay a Dastyx in the name of the prince was the single greatest honour in the city of Kaila.

But as a young man, Santon Mariano had been to the countryside, and the sight of his first Dastyx haunted him to this day.

Santon's two sons entered the house while he and Philippa were in the middle of discussing the contents of the letter.

Rai, 13 years old and the youngest of the Mariano brothers, marched right past his parents and went upstairs without uttering a word.

"What happened to Rai?" Santon asked Adrian as he sat down at the kitchen table.

"Oh." Adrian smiled and tossed his hair to the side, sweeping the dark curls out of his eyes. "Rai was beat again today. The teacher caught him talking during a lecture."

He took one look at the solemn expression on his father's face, the bloodshot eyes and seared cheeks on his mother's, and frowned. "Is something the —"

Adrian's words ceased when his eyes fell upon the dark green envelope on the table. The royal seal stamped on it was broken open.

He scanned the rest of the table, bypassing the dessert plates and the sewing basket until he found the corner of a letter peeking under his mother's arm.

"What's this?" he said, reaching for the letter. Neither of his parents stopped him.

The letter was short and to the point.

Adrian felt a numbness mushrooming in his chest as he set down the letter, rubbed the shock out of his eyes.

"Wow," he said finally, looking from his mother to his father. He didn't know what to say, though really, there was only one response. "I guess I'll be joining the royal army."

"You will do no such thing," Santon snapped, grabbing the letter from Adrian.

"I must," Adrian said. He looked over at the stairs, from which his brother's footsteps had long cooled. "Rai is too young."

"But you are only 16, young as well!" his mother said, and covered her face in her hands.

"Well, better that I go than him. I'm the logical choice." The more Adrian thought about it, the more sense it made. Rai was a bit wild in school, but time would tame him. Besides, his brother had always been brighter. Rai obtained higher marks in school, and was always fast to catch on to difficult subjects.

And Adrian was his big brother. It was his duty to protect Rai, at all costs.

"Adrian, please," Santon said. "Neither of my sons is going off to fight the Dastyx. They're dangerous creatures."

"If I kill one, I will bring honour to the Mariano family."

"And if you fail, we will not even have the honour of possessing a body to bury." With pain sitting on his face, Santon sighed and said: "You and Rai will both stay in the city."

"If you disobey a royal order, Prince Onfroi's soldiers will come to our door and imprison you." Adrian stood up from his chair, pointed at the commission letter on the table. "This is not an invitation to a birthday party, Father. We have no choice in the matter. Either Rai goes to the countryside to join the army, or I do."

Silence fell over the room as Adrian stared down at his father, his father at him.

Outside, he could hear the high-pitched laughing of children as they skipped down the cobbled path, not giving a single thought to the future that waited across the road. There were the chirping of birds, returning to Kaila to build their nests and nurture their young.

"Adrian, you've always wanted an education," his father finally said.

Adrian's stomach twisted, but he pushed the feeling down and said: "What I am making is a small sacrifice compared with what my family will suffer if we do not heed this order."

He set a hand on his mother's shoulder, trying to ease the sheets of tears flooding down her face. "Come, Mother. I leave in three days. Won't you fill the rest of my days with smiles?"

Three days went by in a flash of embraces and tears, and soon Adrian was packing to leave.

When he stepped off the public transport carriage with his bag to greet his army escort, he did not expect to meet someone like Captain Radclyff. A man in his early forties, Radclyff's black hunter's jacket hung off a tall, skinny frame. He peered down at Adrian, who was a good six inches shorter, with slanted eyes of charcoal-black.

"Adrian, is it?" Radclyff mumbled. He did not extend his hand, and Adrian thought it best to keep his to himself as well.

"Yes," Adrian answered. "And you must be my escort." Besides him and the man standing before him, there was nobody in the area — this was the outskirts of Kaila, where dangerous things happened to the careless.

"It looks like it." Radclyff took a step back, eyeing Adrian up and down. "Wow. You're a young one."

And before Adrian could formulate a reply, Radclyff turned and walked towards the edge of the forest behind them. "Now, on to the first order of business …" He disappeared into the foliage of a pine tree and came back with their transportation.

Only, the creature drawing the carriage was not a horse, or anything that Adrian had ever seen before.

"This, my friend, is what you'll be killing," Radclyff said, giving the creature's stomach a few pats. "A Dastyx. The fiercest animal around these parts."

Adrian walked around the carriage in a full circle, soaking in the details of the creature. The Dastyx's body was the longest part of it — about the length of three grown men. Knotted with muscle, its four legs planted the Dastyx to the ground. But its face …

Adrian frowned and pointed at the black iron mask covering the face of the Dastyx. "Why does it wear a mask?"

Radclyff threw Adrian's bag into the carriage and walked back over to Adrian, staring in awe at the creature before

him. "You want to get swallowed whole by a Dastyx? Because if you do, I can gladly take this mask off and let the acids inside its stomach dissolve you into a pile of slime."

He tossed his head back and chuckled. "Come on, get in the carriage. We have to get to the camp soon."

Adrian did as he was told, though his head was still spinning with questions. "If we're supposed to kill the Dastyx, then … why is this one living? Isn't it a danger to people?"

"This one's not dangerous," Radclyff said. "We shoot tiny traces of poison into it at night. If the Dastyx attempts to escape, it'll die before it reaches Kaila."

"So why do you go through all the trouble to keep a Dastyx alive then?" Adrian climbed onto the carriage and shut the door behind him.

Radclyff leaned out the front window of the carriage to grab the reins. Not wanting to be whipped, Adrian scooted over to give Radclyff more driving room. "My, my, you have much to learn," Radclyff said as the carriage took off. "When we get to camp, you will learn the other uses of the Dastyx — they may be monstrous little bastards, but the royal family values them at the highest prices."

"So, is it better to kill a Dastyx or capture it alive?"

Radclyff snorted and tugged on the reins. The Dastyx ran even faster. "If you can capture a Dastyx, boy … Price Onfroi will reward you with anything under the sun."

Adrian nodded. "Have you ever captured a Dastyx then?"

"To this day, no one but members of the royal family has ever been able to take a Dastyx alive."

Adrian stared out the front window, watching the Dastyx thunder down the countryside trail, a cloud of dust gathering under its feet.

He had one more question. "Who captured this Dastyx?"

"Prince Onfroi."

Rain pitter-pattered over the ground as Adrian stepped out of the carriage with his bag. The sodden fire pits in the middle of the camp were filled with mud, and the fruits and flowers of the gardens were blurred with sheets of water, but the world in front of him looked beautiful nonetheless.

Two women, both in their mid-forties, approached the carriage.

They came over to the Dastyx, grabbed its reins and led it away. "Come on, you big beast," one woman said, patting the side of its stomach. "It's time to draw some blood.

"What?" Adrian couldn't help but ask. "W-Why are you taking blood from a Dastyx?"

The two women stared at him, then looked back at each other before laughing out loud. "Because, while the royal family often drinks the blood of a dead Dastyx, Prince Onfroi prefers his drinks to be warm and pulsing. He likes the fresh taste." And they walked away.

Adrian watched as they disappeared around the corner of the camp, his mouth agape. "Were they being serious?" he asked Radclyff.

Radclyff chuckled as well. "I told you that you would learn a lot here," he said.

"But why is Prince Onfroi drinking Dastyx blood?"

Radclyff sighed and said: "It's not just Prince Onfroi. The entire royal family must drink it. There's something in the blood of a Dastyx that calms them."

A shiver travelled down Adrian's spine.

"Let me help you out, Adrian, and give you some general guidelines to follow," Radclyff said as he walked, with Adrian trailing close behind. "Although you belong to the royal army now, you are above the average army grunt. You are a Dastyx hunter. Do not forget."

"I won't."

"Good. Now, when standing in a room with someone who outranks you, do not speak unless spoken to. If you cross paths with any member of the royal family, kneel and do not look the duke or lord or baron or whoever in the eye. And lastly …" Radclyff pointed to the girls wearing bright summer dresses, carrying baskets in their arms — they couldn't have been any older than Adrian. "Keep your eyes to yourself. Understand?"

The corners of Adrian's lips twitched, and he nodded. "I understand."

"I hope you do. Because if you don't follow any one of the things I just told you, you will be thrown into the stockade — and that is not a pleasant place to be."

The words soaked into Adrian's head like the beads of rain that permeated his hair. He scrubbed his hands through it, pushing the water out, but once his hair was damp, more rain would drizzle down and ruin his progress.

"Oh, right." Radclyff gave Adrian a look of disapproval. "We need to get you a haircut."

"Why?"

"Well, you can keep that mop on your head if you wish." Radclyff shrugged. "It's just more for the Dastyx to burn."

Adrian raised his eyebrows, but stayed silent.

"Now, let's drop your pack off at your living quarters and take you to get a sword," Radclyff said. "Tomorrow you will get your uniform, once you start training with the Dastyx hunters your first hunt is only three months away."

The blacksmith, a mute man in his late seventies, handed Adrian sword with a heavy gold hilt — if there was still a currency in the city of Kaila, the value of the sword would be able to buy a castle.

"What's this?" Adrian asked Radclyff, running his hand along the foreign words carved on the blade.

"It's written in the tongue of the Kailan Ancients, long before Prince Onfroi took over the throne," Radclyff said. "The blacksmith carves the same thing on every sword. It says: 'Remember the mutilated world.'"

Adrian nodded and said, "Thank you" to the blacksmith, even though the old man could not hear it, and left.

Radclyff let out a yawn as they exited the blacksmith's tent. "I'm going to bed," he said, looking up.

After two hours, the rain had finally stopped, though the ground still felt soft and unstable under Adrian's feet.

"But it's still early," Adrian said, glancing at the summer sun sinking down the hill, burning the sky with strokes of orange and pink.

Whether or not Radclyff heard him, he was unsure, because all his escort said was: "If you're hungry, the mess hall is straight down this path, next to the chapel. You can't miss it."

"Wait. How do I find my way back to my living quarters?" Adrian said as Radclyff walked away.

"You're not a mute like the blacksmith, sonny," Radclyff answered. "Ask around."

Adrian sighed and turned to survey the surroundings of the camp. Even from here, he could see the statue of Prince Onfroi sitting on top of the chapel, with lights hitting its face from four sides.

His stomach grumbled. His last meal had been breakfast, which he didn't eat much of. He hadn't been able to, with his mother bawling next to him and his father standing over the table, telling Adrian just how much of a mistake he was making.

As he walked towards the mess hall, Adrian's eyes swept over the people he passed. With the information he had gathered from Radclyff and from his own observations of the camp's inhabitants, he guessed that the man-to-woman ratio was about three-to-one. Many men walked around in their army clothes of blue and green, whereas only a few wore the black uniforms of a hunter.

Adrian rested his hand on the sword swinging at his side, next studying the rusted wagons sitting outside the lines of houses — although by Kailan standards, they were no bigger than shanties. Some carried flowers of all colours, others were piled high with dirt and fertilizer.

As to the houses themselves … if Adrian walked close to the edge of the path, he could hear voices muffled by walls and doors. A few times he caught a glimpse of a face staring out the window, but just for a fleeting second or so. It seemed that everybody in the camp always had something to do, somewhere to go.

Adrian's thoughts suddenly crashed back together when he tripped over something, almost falling flat on his face.

"Hey, watch it!" a voice said.

Pulled back to the present, he blinked and noticed the girl he had just ploughed over — she was maybe a year older than him. The flowers in her basket lay scattered over the ground.

"I'm so sorry," Adrian said, and bent down to pick up the flowers.

"Don't bother," the girl said. "Those were Proprias. I just picked them from the forest. Proprias die the moment they make contact with the ground a second time."

Adrian frowned, and he stood back up. "Really?" he said. "That's an odd kind of flower. Why would you —" He stopped short when his eyes focused in on the girl's face, less than twelve inches from his.

At first glance, the girl would not stand out from the crowd. She had one of those baby faces, with a small mouth and rosy cheeks.

But looking at her up close, Adrian could almost feel himself drowning in those soft blue eyes, could almost feel the institution of time disappearing at the ends of her flowing blonde locks.

The girl's sigh broke his trance. "Well, I guess I have to go back and pick more Proprias," she said, picking up the basket and walking away.

"Wait," Adrian said.

She stopped.

"It's getting really dark, and it's dangerous in the countryside. You shouldn't be going out at this hour."

The girl smiled, making Adrian's heart race with an unsteady beat. She looked at him from head to toe, sizing him up before saying, "What's the matter, city boy? Scared of the deep, dark forest?"

Adrian couldn't help but smile back, all prior thoughts abandoned. "No, that's not it," he said. "I'm just saying that, if you leave camp now, at least let me go with you."

"You think I can't take care of myself."

"I think that everybody needs company."

After a pause, the girl nodded. She said, "I'm Hannah."

"Adrian Mariano."

"Well, Adrian Mariano," Hannah said. "Let's not waste any more time."

And so Adrian followed her down the main road and out the iron gates, heading for the edge of the forest.

"So you're into exotic flowers, I see," Adrian said as they travelled deeper into the forest. He should have been searching the ground for the Proprias he had destroyed, but he couldn't manage to take his eyes off her.

"Gardening in general, yes."

Adrian nodded and said nothing more.

"You're silent," Hannah noted, though she didn't look up at him.

"Good observation."

"There must be something on your mind then."

Adrian smiled as he followed her across a creaky wooden bridge extending to an even thicker part of the forest. "Why would you say that?" he said. "You don't even know me."

"That's true," Hannah said, stooping down to examine a patch of pink and purple flowers in the ground. "Hey, I found them!" Adrian watched her brush the area with such careful strokes, meticulously digging up the wet dirt around the Proprias.

As she moved the flowers into her basket, she said, "I may not know you, Adrian, but I know people in general. I know when someone is holding his or her tongue."

The girl was smart, Adrian had to admit.

"And, just so you know, I detest people who do not speak their minds."

Adrian chuckled, folded his arms across his chest. "You want to know what was on my mind?" he said.

"Dying to know."

"When you mentioned your hobby of gardening, I thought of something that my father told me when I was young."

"Yeah?" Hannah said, extricating the last Propria from the ground. "What did he say?"

"He said that women use gardening as an excuse not to spend time with their families." Adrian smiled, fighting down a sudden pang of longing, spreading through his chest. He hadn't even been away from Kaila for a whole day, and he was already feeling homesick.

He shook the feeling off and stared at Hannah, who had stood up but didn't turn around.

The silence that followed blanketed the entire forest.

And then, finally, Hannah spoke. "Well, you father just might be right." She turned around and pierced him with a look that froze every part of his body. "I don't spend time with my family. Because they're all dead."

"Oh." Adrian backpedalled a few steps, his gaze shifting to the basket in Hannah's hand — now that the sun had completely left the sky, he could hardly see anything. "I-I am so sorry. I didn't know."

Hannah formed a smile that made Adrian's stomach twist with self-disgust. "Let's go," she said. "We need to get back to the camp by curfew, or the gates will close."

"We have a curfew?" Adrian asked as he followed her back up the path from where they had come. "What time?"

The deafening roar drowned out Hannah's response, shaking the ground like a harrowing heart murmur.

It took a full ten seconds for both Adrian's mind and body to unfreeze, for him to become aware that he was still breathing and standing. "What was that?" he whispered, barely moving his lips.

He could see the film of fear in Hannah's eyes as she said, "A Dastyx."

Adrian's knees felt weak.

"Come on," Hannah said, grabbing Adrian's hand and pulling him forward. "We have to go."

They ran, tearing through the forest so fast that the trees around them looked like nothing but looming shadows, their branches like twisted and crippled black arms under the moon's light.

All Adrian could hear was the muddy pounding of his boots as they hit the ground, one after another, ripping into the earth like it was wet flesh. His heart thundered against his chest. He tightened his grip on Hannah's hand, for fear that, if he let go, he would never make it back to the camp alive.

They crossed back over the wooden bridge without slowing their strides.

And then Hannah stopped.

As Adrian collided with her, he felt the coldness of her body, shaking against him.

"Hannah, why'd you stop?" Adrian said. Though there was already a layer of sweat between their connected hands, he wouldn't let go. "We have to —"

The low growl cut him off.

Slowly, Adrian's eyes looked up. He saw nothing.

Darkness pressed in on all sides as he and Hannah stood there together, waiting.

"Adrian," Hannah whispered, giving his hand a squeeze.

Adrian didn't have enough life in him to squeeze back.

"Adrian, I think it's directly in —"

The creature stepped out of the shadows, jaws snapping and snarling. Its eyes, catlike and yellow, glowed in the darkness. There were a few wounds on its back already, slashes that couldn't have been more than a day old.

Neither of them had time to run. The Dastyx lifted one of its front legs and, with one sweep, sent them flying backward through the air. Their interlinked hands separated, but they landed next to each other in the dirt.

"Oh, God," Adrian said, watching as the Dastyx marched towards them, each step dispatching a rippling effect of convulsions in the ground.

He closed his eyes, catching a flash of everything beautiful in his life — the fishing detours by the lake that he and Rai would take on the walk to school; the concert music flaring through the autumn air of Kaila; the yellow rays of countless mornings, peeking under the rafters and seeping through second floor windows.

In the abyss, he felt a movement at his side, then the soft sound of a sword being unsheathed.

Adrian's eyes snapped open just in time to watch Hannah attack the Dastyx, her tiny hands clutching the gold hilt of his sword.

Her first blow nicked the side of the Dastyx's leg.

Adrian's heart turned cold as he stared at the little lines of green liquid running down the creature's side.

Dastyx blood.

The intensity of the Dastyx's eyes grew stronger, and it opened its mouth and launched at Hannah.

"No!" Adrian shouted, finally finding his strength and scrambling off the ground. But he knew that he wouldn't reach her in time.

Hannah dodged the jaws of the Dastyx by only a few inches, swung the sword over her head.

Adrian saw the pale glint as she slashed downward.

More blood spilled to the ground, this time from the chest — though Hannah had failed in slicing into the heart.

The Dastyx roared again. The noise sounded closer to a whimper.

He reared up on his hind legs and pounded his claws at her, fire roaring out of his mouth.

She managed to twist away at the last second, avoiding the flames and deflecting most of the impact. But the Dastyx's stinging claws brushed over her shoulder nonetheless.

She cried out in pain and staggered back.

Adrian watched, helpless, as she switched the sword to her other hand, almost dropping it on the ground.

To his relief, the Dastyx had retreated a few paces as well, recovering from the pain of Hannah's previous blow.

But Adrian could see the stony look in Hannah's eyes. She wasn't done.

When the Dastyx glanced down to look at its own blood, Hannah flipped the sword and, aiming it at the Dastyx's throat, drove the weapon in with a bloodcurdling war cry.

As the Dastyx stumbled back and forth, Hannah backed away and watched, waiting.

When the Dastyx finally fell, Adrian thought that the ground would give way. He looked up at Hannah, who stood staring down at the creature's carcass.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In the distance, he heard the shouting of men.

Squinting deep into the forest, he tried to locate where the noises of the search party were coming from.

Soon he saw the burning glow of torches, illuminating the figures of ten to twelve Dastyx hunters.

Panting, Hannah walked forward and set a hand on the sword's hilt. It pulled out with a viscid groan.

She paused for a moment and then looked over at Adrian.

"Adrian," she said, walking toward him. She held out the sword, covered in bubbling Dastyx blood. "You killed the Dastyx."

Adrian took the sword, confused. "What?" he said. "No, you killed it. You …" He chuckled, feeling embarrassed now. It turned out that Hannah didn't need his help one bit — if anything, he had been her burden. "You saved my life."

"No, you don't understand," Hannah said, touching his arms, smearing Dastyx blood all over them. "I knew how to kill the Dastyx because, sometimes, I spy on the hunters when they're training. If they find out that I've been secretly learning the army's fighting tactics, they'll throw me into the stockade."

Adrian took a step back. He understood now.

"You wouldn't want to see me behind bars, would you?" Hannah said.

He shook his head and said, "Of course not."

The voices in the distance were growing louder, as were the sounds of the hunters' footsteps.

Hannah smiled and leaned into him, pressing her lips to his.

A blast of heat shot into him, coursing through his body like liquid fire.

He wrapped one arm around her little waist, as the hand holding the sword fell limp at his side.

Their mouths melted into each other, the tips of their tongues met.

But the moment was fleeting, for Hannah soon pulled away.

"Oh my prince," a man's voice said.

Adrian looked up to find Radclyff standing there, with the other hunters behind him.

Radclyff walked over to the dead Dastyx on the ground, circled around and gave it a hard kick.

It didn't move.

"Collect the blood while it's still warm," he said, and two men from the group came forward and set to work.

Then Radclyff's eyes found Adrian. "You killed it?" he asked.

Not daring to look at Hannah, Adrian answered, "Yes."

"Good man!" Radclyff exclaimed, clapping Adrian on the back. "Your first day here, and you've already killed a Dastyx. Without training, without help …" His laugh chilled Adrian's bones. "You are going to be great, Adrian."

Adrian said nothing, and after a moment, Radclyff moved on. "Alright, let's get back to camp, celebrate Adrian Mariano's victory."

As Adrian walked back to the camp with the hunters, he searched for Hannah but couldn't find her anywhere.

No doubt that she had snuck away while Radclyff was talking to him.

Though she was no longer beside him, the taste of her lips still lingered in his mouth.

Shelly Li writes science fiction and fantasy. She lives in Omaha, Nebraska.

Wisdom

BEN GRIBBIN

It all began after a visit to my dentist. I have a private dentist, one of the best in the world. I won't give you his name, because it would be wrong. But be assured that I have made enough money through my various businesses to have the best. I visit my dentist every month, partly for the reassurance, but also to remind myself that there are places in the world that are perfectly clean. I went in with my wife, always. She was 30 years younger than I was. She was my fifth wife. My first wife, Katherine, had died. She was the only one I ever loved, so I won't bother telling you about the rest. But it had got to the point where I hated this wife, although I knew she was beautiful. She was a status symbol and, like a new car, she was expensive to run, and I tried to get full value where I could. As well as this, I was aware that the dentist admired her teeth, and looked forward to our visits because of her smile.

"The most perfect smile I have ever seen," he would gush. "Like something from Raphael. What I wouldn't give for those teeth," he would say. "You are a very lucky man." Then we would leave her in the waiting room. I didn't want the dentist to ever hear her speak. He was an intelligent man. It would only be after we had gone out of earshot that I would reply to him, and my reply was always the same.

"I'll cut you a deal, sometime," I would say. "I'll give you a trade." Then we would both laugh together, cleanly and in a businesslike manner.

If the dentist admired my wife's teeth, so I admired his assistant nurse. The dentist's surgery was perfectly clean — his instruments, his tools; and so was the nurse's uniform, as she bent down to fasten the bib for me, her clean and white uniform, the clean and white breasts beneath. God she was beautiful. Intelligent, witty, gentle when she touched me. And so that made the shame all the more terrible when the dentist said, in front of the nurse whose name-badge said Alison Sand, that for the first time I would need both major

surgery and a filling. He could do the filling now, a simple minor wedge of metal in my wisdom tooth. But it was the tooth beside that was really bothering him. Almost at the far back. I would need to have it taken out. I shouldn't worry, he said, it was a perfectly normal eventuality for a man of my age. I should arrange the appointment myself with the receptionist, for some time in the next month. I had my filling done in silence. I shook his hand gracelessly, all the strength and comfort washed out from my body. I paid the bill and I made my appointment with the receptionist. I was falling apart.

I slept alone, I always had. If I ever made love — I still liked to think of it as making love, even then — I afterwards lay beside my wife until she was asleep, and then I walked into the other bedroom, which was cleaner and smelled more honest. Making love with my wife always made me feel hollow — I could feel the need for jewellery when I touched her — and I was glad to get to my own bed. I lay down there and I held myself and I thanked my body for making it through another day with me. Then later I slept — an empty sleep if I was lucky. But that night, shortly after I fell asleep, I heard a crying in my dreams. It was like an old man's crying, the same sound as my father had made when he knew that he was dying but wanted to remain calm. It was quiet and constant, and when I awoke I still heard the memory of that sound of crying, and it stayed with me all the day, as though I had dreamt of nothing else that night. It was horrific and yet something I hoped for, something I knew would come again. And so it did, that night, as I lay in bed slack-jawed and exhausted. It was a crying in my head. I closed my eyes and listened to my skull. Soon, the crying slurred into speech.

"Don't let her leave," I heard the voice say. "I cannot bear to be alone."

"Who?" I asked. I did not worry that I was mad. I have always been sane.

"My wife of 30 years. My only love."

He spat out the words, it seemed to me, with something like cynicism. It made me laugh, the way my wife laughed when she was uncomfortable with intelligent conversation.

"Who are you?" I asked.

"Your wisdom tooth."

"Why have you never talked before?" I asked.

"I never had a tongue before," replied my wisdom tooth. "I have a tongue of metal, now. A cold and heavy tongue, it's true, but still it is a tongue. Don't let her leave me. She causes me pain, now. More and more pain. But I cannot bear to think of being alone, nobody beside me in the night. "

"You have the others," I said to him. But I knew it was pointless to say this. He only had one, and she was closest to him. We only ever have the one who is closest to us.

"I only have her," he said. "I am stuck with her now. I cannot bear to be alone."

When I slept that night I was sad because I understood everything that the wisdom tooth had said. I, too, could not bear to be alone, no matter how much pain I was caused. It was appearance as well, I understood that much. He could not bear for his part in my mouth to be spoiled. I telephoned my dentist the next day, and explained part of the situation. My teeth, I said, were causing me considerable difficulties at night. I would like an emergency appointment for that day. Something had to be done, and fast. I could not bear the crying in my skull.

I did not go with my wife; I knew how she was, how she would find such things incomprehensible. But I explained to my dentist as soon as I saw him. There is a voice in my head, I said. And God knows I'm not mad, because I've always been sane. My dentist frowned.

"It's possible," he said. "I've read about it. How fillings can pick up radio waves. Quite incredible."

"These aren't radio waves," I said. "This is a life." I opened my mouth, for the dentist to look. But as he bent down, with his mirror in his hand, he heard the voice for the first time. I think, if anything, he was more surprised than I was, which I found odd given that he was a professional.

"Don't let her leave me," my wisdom tooth said. "I can't bear to be alone."

The dentist gave a little start, like a child seeing something new. He called in his assistant from the next room.

"Alison!" he said. She came in, and smiled at me. When she realized something was out of the ordinary, though, she put on her serious manner, and walked forwards. The dentist realized it was his turn to talk.

"But it — she — is rotten," he said, speaking directly into my mouth. "I have to take it out."

"She is all I have," said my wisdom tooth. " She may cause me pain" — something in his voice snagged and faltered — "but she is all that I have."

The dentist looked at me.

"I am sorry, both for you and for your tooth," he said to me. "But I have my duty and my honour as a dentist to consider. And I am afraid that I cannot allow a tooth that rotten to remain within a mouth. The pain will only get worse — for both of you. You must return for the operation in a week." He gave an abrupt sniff. "I hope you understand this."

"I understand," I said. My tooth made a sound like exhalation for a moment. When it spoke there was a great deal of sadness in his voice, but also some relief.

"I understand as well," it said. "And I must confess the pain is hard to endure. But I cannot bear to be alone. Perhaps you will understand that. I cannot bear to be alone."

"I can see that," the dentist said. "But you must both come for the operation next Saturday." He opened the door to see us out. "And if you are afraid of being alone, why don't you bring your wife? She has such a wonderful smile."

That week went more slowly than any other since childhood. During the day, my tooth was silent; it had learned enough to know that ordinary men and women might find it strange, and that I might find it an irritation, if it tried to speak over me as I went about my daily business. I also did not want my wife to discover the truth, and I knew that if she heard it talk she would tell everyone the secret. Not through malice, but rather through stupidity, which was something

infinitely more despicable. Nonetheless, I would make love to my beautiful wife every night that week, which was difficult and sometimes tiring, but took my mind off my fears for a moment. Afterwards I would go to the other bedroom and I would lie there and listen to my tooth talking to me, telling me memories of times that we shared and that I had forgotten.

Indeed, as the week went on it became more and more cheerful in its conversation, and seemed more fully consoled about the fact that it was losing its partner. As it observed to me, sometimes, in the night, she really wasn't much in the way of conversation. And she was definitely losing her looks. She just wasn't worth the bother, it concluded. As for myself, I was not beyond trying certain tricks and techniques to keep my wisdom tooth happy. I would give it an extra dab of toothpaste every evening, and on its request I stopped using mouthwash, which I had been using for years but which — the tooth declared one night in bed — hurt its enamel. I would caress it with my tongue, taking care not to touch the tender tooth beside. By the end of the week I had come quite to love my wisdom tooth, and I would smile in the evening when it asked if I would draw back my lips so that it could examine itself, make sure its filling was still in straight. We had become friends, and I had grown used to its idiosyncrasies, as one does when one is forced to live in close quarters with anyone. We consoled each other in our mutual grief.

On the morning of the operation I awoke at eight. I walked into my wife's bedroom, where her trinkets and stuffed toys all were, and I looked at her asleep. Her perfect smile was covered now, and she was sucking her thumb. There was a thin trail of saliva coming down her cheek and onto the pillow. Looking so infantile in her sleep, she reminded me of the fact that I was decaying, and there was no evading the fact. The time for love was up. There was no escaping it, I thought. She was young, and she was beautiful. I could not bear to be alone.

She got up soon after that. She adjusted her hair and she adjusted her smile. She shook herself into a beautiful, figure-hugging red dress. Because she knew that she was driving me to the dentist, she did not even eat her usual fibre cereal. She drank a slim-shake and then got in the driver's seat of the red, fast car. We would have arrived exactly on time if she had been content, as I was, to park on a double yellow line and accept the circumstances. I have always hated being late for unpleasant occasions; it only prolongs the agony.

When we walked into the dentist's I took a deep breath, aware for the first time of the reality of my fear. The sense of fear reminded me of so much of my life, my early life in particular. I felt so invigorated by the feeling that I gave a little, delicious shudder. I was exhilarated to see that Alison was there, at this time, when the fear made me feel young again. The dentist shook my hand vigorously, as though he were trying to shake it painlessly free from my body.

"Delighted to see you," he smiled. "And, of course, your radiant lady wife." My wife smiled her beautiful smile, and I could see the dentist's eyes light up. "Will you both come this way," he said, pressing on my shoulder. We both walked into the operating theatre, where there was a clean blanket on a mattress. All of the tools had been prepared, I was told. "Yes, yes," said my dentist. "Everything present and correct." He gave me a piece of paper to sign. I don't know what it said, if anything. He pulled back my shirtsleeve and, slightly above my watch, he put the needle in. He was still talking to me when I passed out.

These anaesthetics are remarkable, but they of course make you queasy. When I woke up I was uncertain of where I was for a moment. I suppose you get more intolerant of these things as you grow older. But the first thing that I heard — the closest thing — was the sound of my wisdom tooth talking. It was making gentle, delighted, crooning noises — noises that sounded strange coming from its crude, old man metallic tongue. As I came to more thoroughly, I found that it was singing. It was not singing to itself, though. Beside it, still present, was a tooth. No, not still present. This tooth was painless, and unfilled. It was not rough to the tongue. As I opened my eyes, I realized what was wrong with it. The only thing. It was slightly smaller than any other back tooth in my mouth. When I opened my eyes, I saw that the dentist and his assistant were smiling and listening to the song. Seeing that I was awake, the dentist — looking thoroughly proud of himself — extended his hand and shook mine ferociously, even though I was still confused.

"We've removed your tooth." He gave a smile that showed nothing about him. "I trust that you will agree that we have found a more than adequate replacement."

He helped me into my coat. Alison took my hand, as though I were a child, and led me downstairs. The fresh air stirred me awake a little. She led me to my car. When I was there, I decided I would bend down to look at myself in the car mirror. The tooth was definitely smaller than my own, but it added so much to my smile. At last, I knew where I'd seen it before, and I gave a childish jump of delight at the horror of it all. Alison saw me as I turned, smiling, and she laughed. I suppose it was at that moment that I fell in love with her.

Alison gave up her job shortly after that, to look after the house full-time. But when I go to the dentist he never fails to ask about her, and about the tooth. I always let my wisdom tooth reply; it is so much more effusive in its praise that I could ever be. It thanks me often, in the night, for what has been done, for having a true love at last. She doesn't speak, he says. But God she is beautiful. And sometimes, lying in bed together on Sunday mornings, I ask Alison about her time working with the dentist. She has a lot of funny stories to tell me, but I hardly ever talk about my own case, unless just to remember the moment when we fell in love. When I do remember, I take care never to ask what they did with the rubbish. I'm far too polite for that.

Ben Gribbin has an MPhil in creative writing from Trinity, Dublin, and used to work as a blurb writer for Penguin (he did all the blurbs for the latest Penguin editions of Shakespeare). He lives in Lewes with his wife and baby son, and hopes to develop his fiction writing.

Rivendell reality

JOHN GILBEY

Rivendell — the very name captures so much, bringing to your mind pictures of thundering water, achingly beautiful woodlands and steep wet rock that would take many thousands of words to expand upon adequately.

It is a name that preys on my imagination. It represents to me a place of refuge, safety, a fastness against a changing world — safe at least, until it must be sacrificed to a higher end.

Since first reading of Rivendell as a small child, I have had a recurring dream in which I stumble across the place — guided by some unconscious force — and become a guest at the House of Elrond. I am welcomed by the Elven folk, taking sanctuary from this century and, perhaps, the burgeoning human society that overruns it.

This probably says much more about the dodgy state of my psychology than about the writings of Tolkien, but I found myself utterly bemused recently when I discovered myself walking in — what has become for me — Rivendell itself.

Since first reading of Rivendell as a small child, I have had a recurring dream in which I stumble across the place.

I was in the glorious state of California, meeting people with schemes for even higher technologies and with startling new concepts of digital delight oozing from every pore. By the end of the week I was exhausted. I needed trees, space and some peace — so I booked a trip to Yosemite National Park with a small tour company. Next day, a tiny van running on bioethical diesel screeched up to my hotel some time before dawn and we headed off across the Bay Bridge, over the Oakland Hills, past the Altamont wind farm and then through the flat, brown expanse of Central Valley — gripped in severe drought. After four baking hours, our engagingly quirky guide pointed ahead. Out of the haze was emerging the great, lofty chain of the Sierra Nevada.

Our entrance to Yosemite Valley was startling. Even having seen the pictures I was shocked by the height of the valley walls, the great expanses of granite falling sheer to the flat floor with its tree-lined river meandering placidly through beautiful flowered meadows. To my left, the stunning mass of El Capitan glowed in the morning light, and a few miles ahead stood the wholly unearthly profile of Half Dome — a vast, bald, fractured granite structure that towers over the valley end.

Despite its dramatic scale, Yosemite Valley is small — only about ten miles long and less than a mile wide. By American standards it is minute — almost invisible — yet to a northern European it seems familiar almost at a genetic level.

Parking the van under a grove of pines we tramped off along the Merced River towards the upper valley snaking away to the east. The woods deepened and the valley walls wrapped comfortingly around us. The trail rose sharply, a struggle at 5,000 feet, until it crossed the deep ravine below Grizzly Peak.

Looking up, we saw the twin summer plumes of Vernal Falls (see the picture opposite) and heard the dull roar of falling waters. Approaching the falls, I realized how good the timing of our guide had been. Above the steep, flower-strewn meadow at the base of the falls rose a perfect rainbow — or fallbow, I guess. An hour earlier or later and I would have missed it — but I didn't.

That image will now always remain with me as the living embodiment of both Yosemite and Rivendell. Two places — both real, both mythical — that are now irretrievably combined in my mind.

Eventually, I had to drag myself away and face the journey back to real life, meetings and flights. As I walked back down the trail to the valley floor, I met a Park Ranger, guardian of this paradise, back-packed and armed against bears, striding up the path somewhat in the manner of an Elf-lord.

"Beautiful day, isn't it?" I ventured. He looked slightly puzzled, as if inured to the magnificent scenery around him, then he eased his hat back and swept his gaze across the valley.

"Yessir," he said, "yessir, it is."

John Gilbey is a writer and photographer who lives in west Wales. He took the picture opposite, as well as the one on the back cover, and various others scattered throughout this issue. Weddings, Bar-Mitzvahs, no job too small.