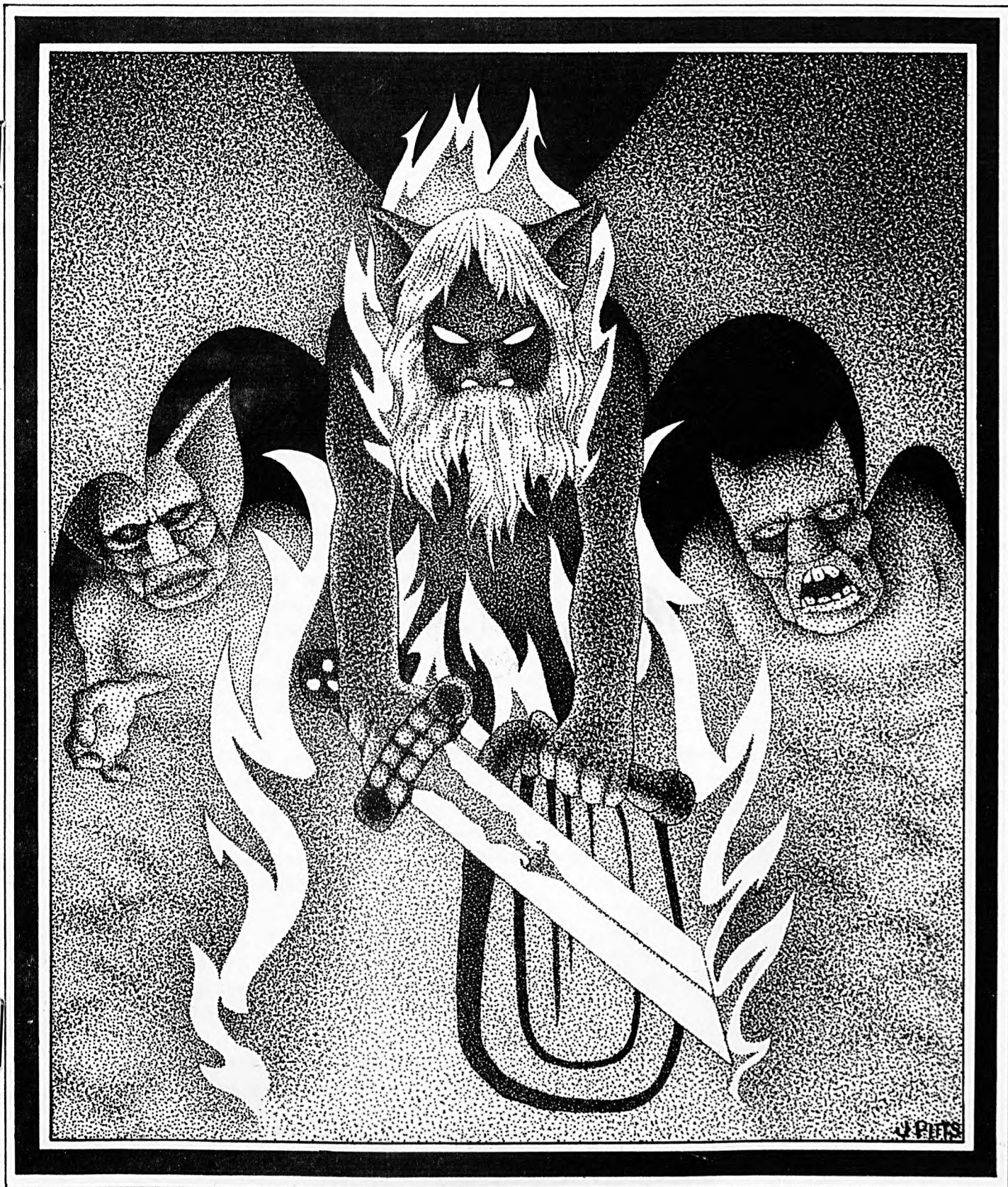


Mallorn

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THE TOLKIEN SOCIETY

The Tolkien Society was formed in 1969 to provide a focal point for the many people interested in the works of Professor J R R Tolkien, and most especially in THE HOBBIT and his epic THE LORD OF THE RINGS.

At first a small, localised group, it soon became a national society. A small news-sheet was started, called BELLADONNA'S BROADSHEET, whereby communication among all members became possible.

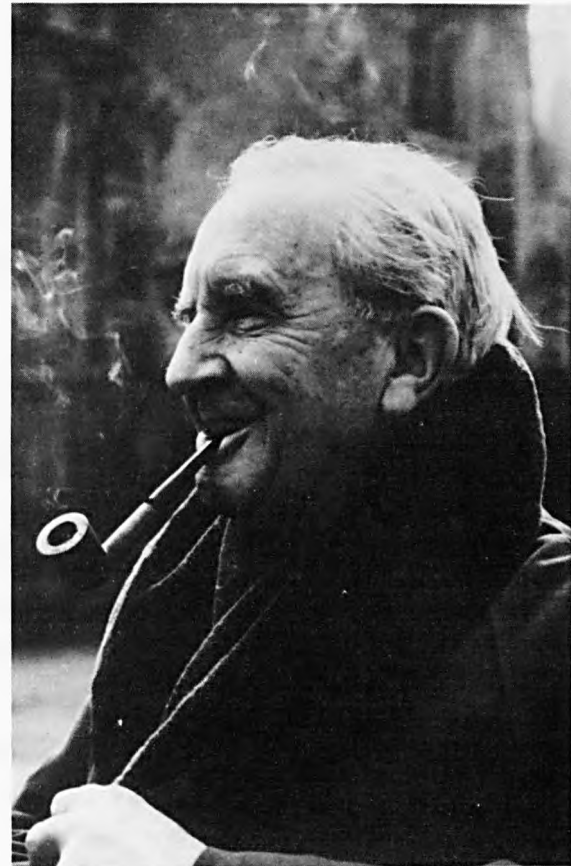
Such was the interest with which the members responded, contributing their own artwork, articles and poetry, in addition to the usual news and letters, that a larger journal was found to be necessary. This journal, MALLORN, is still the highspot of the Society, wherein the works of Tolkien are discussed, with members submitting articles on such matters as Middle-Earth heraldry, genealogy, language, Tolkien and his critics, plus subjects allied to the works of Tolkien in the wider field of heroic fantasy literature. Poetry, book reviews and letters are also included in this profusely illustrated magazine.

Since then, the Society has grown considerably, with members in Australia, Canada, the USA, Europe and other countries, and in addition to MALLORN, a bulletin, AMON HEN, keeps members in touch with one another, as well as supplying up-to-date news of Society events, Committee meetings, etc., along with book reviews and short articles. The Society is, of course, in close contact with other allied societies such as the Mythopoeic Society, and exchanges publications with them.

In June 1972 Professor Tolkien honoured us by agreeing to become our Honorary President, offering any help he was able to give. Since his much regretted death he remains our Honorary President 'in perpetuo' at the suggestion of his family, with whom we continue to enjoy friendly relations.

The Society organises two national meetings each year: the AGM and Dinner, usually held in London; and the 'Oxonmoot', a weekend in Oxford spent visiting places of interest to the Society. Regular meetings are held in London and elsewhere - information regarding these can be obtained from the Secretary.

The annual subscription is, at present (1976), £2.50, \$6 US, \$4.50 Aus. This covers all regular Society publications issued during the year of membership, including surface postage worldwide. Airmail subscription rates are \$12 US, \$10 Aus. Subscriptions should be sent to The Membership Secretary, 36 Valley Road, LIVERPOOL, L4 0UD. Please make all cheques, money orders, etc. payable to 'The Tolkien Society'. General enquiries should be addressed to The Secretary, 110 Breakspears Road, LONDON SE4 1UD. Please enclose S.A.E.



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THE GREAT WATERS



Mallorn 6

The Journal of the Tolkien Society.

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Tolkien Society: Inquiries should be sent to the Secretary:

Mrs V. Chapman, 21 Harrington House, Stanhope Street, London N.W.1.

The subscription rate for 1973 has not yet been settled - it will be under £1 and will include a six-weekly Bulletin but not Mallorn, which will be on a separate subscription at a reduced rate to members.

The Treasurer is Archie Mercer, 21 Trenethick Parc, Helston, Cornwall.

THOUGHTS OF INANITY,

A Sort of Editorial.

Here, at last, is Mallorn 6! I apologise for its lateness - two and a half months - especially to the Numenorian Smial members who must have been waiting for me to get this issue out, so that they could get on with their own issue (Mallorn 7). The great delay of this issue has been awaiting the last few items to arrive; now they have and here it is. Anyway, to make up for the delay, I have made this issue the largest to date, giving you much more for your money and, I hope, you find it all of interest, although that is something that you will have to tell me in your LOCs.

I suppose all members of the TS will have had and read John Martin's bulletin Henneth Annun 1. I honestly hope that this issue, contrary to John's opinions, will not be the best issue ever - I hope that future issues will be first class magazines, much better than anything before. But, as John states, this will all depend upon 'you'. Membership participation has always been pretty poor in this Society, I am sorry to say, with each issue of Mallorn sporting the same names - of those who have bothered to contribute. I agree with John in that we cannot expect paying members to put themselves out in producing material for their own magazine, but if you do not, who will? One can 'always' come up with the attitude, "Somebody else will always do it," but that is an attitude that does not always work, and it is not working now! Oh well, I suppose that it is all a matter of conscience. Anyway, if you do have any contributions for the magazine, please send them to another Jon - Jon S. Simons, 11 Regal Way, Harrow, Middlesex, HA30RZ.

Returning to this issue of Mallorn, you may have noticed that it is not the foolscap size of the last few issues, but the A4 size of Mallorn 1, although it is twice as thick as that issue. Why? Well, when I first offered to edit this issue I said that I did not like the foolscap size and wanted to make the mag smaller and a much neater thing. I was asked whether A4 was alright and I said yes! Whether this will be the standard size for all future issues of Mallorn will have to be seen as stencils are by no means cheap articles, and economics are economics!



There have been various other changes, as well as the size, in this issue - the absence of "Belladonna's Postbag"; the removal of the "Letters to the Editor" from its prominent frontal position to the back of the mag; the absence of short, superficial book reviews; and the absence of Mrs. Chapman's serial, to have been continued herein. The reason for the first two of these is found in Mallorn 5 -

a third of the magazine is taken up by letters; this renders the magazine more of a glorified letter column rather than a journal. We have a bulletin, and it should contain all correspondence not associated with the contents of Mallorn. Also, the letter column right at the front of the magazine renders the remaining pieces of the magazine as being quite superficial; hence, the LoCs have been relegated to the back of this issue. As for the other two changes: I find short book reviews, as found in previous issues, meaningless personal opinions - as can be seen over the difference of opinion in the letter column over "Bored of the Rings"; Belladonna's serial, as echoed by the opinions in the letter column, I did not find to my taste and so have dispensed with it for my issue. If you wish it to be returned, please write and let us know.

Before I finish with this issue, I must thank those people who contributed to this issue but are not members of the TS - Jim Pitts, Alan Hunter, Brian Talbot and Mike Cruden. All gratefully contributed, although they did not have to do so. I appreciate their help. As part return, I would like to mention that Mike Cruden has his own magazine, Sector. The format is much the same as this magazine, in quarto size, although the emphasis is towards fantasy in general and cartoon strip fantasy in particular. It is an intelligent little magazine of articles, reviews, artwork and letters and is available from Mike for 15p at 8 Swinbourne Grove, Withington, Manchester 20.

While on the subject of other publications, I have given my own magazine, Balthus, a mention on page 11. I wrote that piece some time ago and, on reflection, it is a bit 'overdone'. To date, Balthus has gone down pretty well with its readers and the artwork is of a fair standard - in fact, the cover of Balthus 2 by Jim Pitts, the cover artist of this magazine, won the Ken McKintyre Memorial Award of 1971. Anyway, those interested in it can possibly guess from this magazine what to expect in my own magazine.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING: This will be held on Saturday, February 17th at the Sherlock Holmes Hotel, Baker Street, London. The meeting will be followed by a festival Dinner, at which we hope to have some distinguished and interesting speakers. Dinner and meeting will cost £2 per head, inclusive of tips but not wines. Members will meet informally from 4pm. onward and tea will be available; the business meeting will commence at 5pm. and Dinner at 7.30pm. Those who wish to attend, please write before January 20th with the fee of £2 to the Secretary (address on page 1). Members wishing to attend the A.G.M. but not the Dinner will be admitted for a small charge, but admission to the Dinner by ticket only.

- Jon M. Harvey.

Wanderer of the



Mike Cruden

Illustrations by Jon M. Harvey

The characters of J.R.R. Tolkien's "The Lord of the Rings" can be placed into two character groups: that pertaining to the ordinary characters, chiefly the hobbits with whom children and the children within us can easily identify because of their childlike personalities and physical appearance; and the super-characters who possess the extraordinary powers or knowledge which sets them above the rest. Throughout Tolkien's trilogy, however, both character groups tend to blend together somewhat. The ordinary mortals - if one could dare to apply that term to a hobbit - attain super-mortal characteristics while the loftier characters acquire some of the humanity of their lesser comrades. There is a similarity to Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress" in as much that certain of the characters are personifications of human qualities: Gandalf is good, Sam is faithful, Frodo is persevering and so on; but Tolkien never lets the characters become mere caricatures. He always tries to add something to make each stand out as a character in his own right, but one of those who stands out the most is Aragorn, the Strider.

Aragorn is first mentioned in the trilogy in context with the search for Gollum. Gandalf describes him as "the greatest traveller and huntsman of this age of the world", and we are told that he came out of "great perils" to give his information. Thus he is established immediately as an heroic figure. Although most of the trilogy's characters undergo transmutations of one sort or another, Aragorn's are the greatest: from the sinister, lowly Strider to the noble Aragorn, King of Gondor. He is certainly one of the most developed characters of the book, with an ever-present aura of despair that surrounds him and which disappears only

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in the final stages of the trilogy. This despair is explained in the appendix about Aragorn by the fact that he is in love with the Lady Arwen, an elf-lady who must relinquish her immortality if she is to wed him: "His face was sad and stern because of the doom that was laid upon him"; in asking her to marry him he is asking her to die.

Aragorn is, it is later revealed, one of a strange folk called the Rangers, who "were believed to have strange powers of sight and hearing, and to understand the languages of beasts and birds", quite extraordinary people, in fact. His first actual appearance in the story, in the Prancing Pony inn, is very sinister. He is described as "a strange-looking, weather-beaten man sitting in the shadows", and, we are told, "he wore a hood that overshadowed his face, but the gleam of his eyes could still be seen as he watched the hobbits". This shroud of hostility around Strider adds to the general dark atmosphere of menace that Tolkien had built up at that stage of the story. To have immediately introduced Strider as a path-finding friend would have greatly reduced the tension, perhaps ruined it. Also, his misleading introduction adds to Strider's general intrigue. Frodo himself reckons Strider to be a rogue, as do Sam and Mr. Butterbur, the innkeeper, both of whom advise Frodo against him. However, Gandalf's letter clears his name and then some of the power of Aragorn is revealed: "He stood up and seemed to grow taller. In his eyes gleamed a light, keen and commanding". This is a hint of the true Aragorn, future king, dignified, noble and powerful, who contrasts strongly, thus emphasising his nobility, with the sinister and rather shabby Strider. Gandalf's rhyme about Strider sums up his character and his role in the saga admirably:

"All that is gold does not glitter,
Not all those who wander are lost,
The old that is strong does not wither,
Deep roots are not reached by the frost,
From the ashes a fire shall be woken,
A light from the shadows shall spring,
Renewed shall be the blade that was broken,
The crownless shall again be king."

At first everything about Strider was ominous. He had a formidable appearance and he obviously had a certain amount of knowledge about the dangers which had to be faced, and so was full of grim portends of doom for the coming journey, and sometimes for the world. Nevertheless, after the initial uneasiness around him is dissipated he manages to instil in Frodo and the others a quiet confidence in his own abilities which reassures them and makes the reader feel that he is one



of the more competent and resourceful persons in the story, though at first this is almost entirely through his connections with Gandalf and the latter's recommendations of him. Strider gives the group the direction and purpose it lacked before and it is he who plans their best paths because of his deeper knowledge. Whereas the hobbits were obviously and hopelessly outmatched by the Dark Forces, we are made to feel that Strider has more than a chance against them.

He also has a deep and intimate knowledge of the lore of Middle-Earth as evidenced first by his tale of Tinuviel, a tale which is more than slightly connected to Aragorn's own story. Some more of Strider's power is revealed in his attempts to heal Frodo's wound. He has a thorough knowledge of the properties of the weapon that made the wound and he shows himself to be somewhat of a scientist with his knowledge of the healing herbs. Strider is almost a universal man; that is to say, he is knowledgeable and skilful in all arts and sciences which, of course, places him as one of the 'super-characters' of the trilogy. He has knowledge that the ordinary characters do not have and can do that which they cannot. In fact, his power as an agent of good is possibly second only to that of Gandalf himself. Frodo, when talking to Gandalf about Strider says that, "he reminds me often of you". He respects him, although, "he is strange and grim at times", and he was "afraid of him at first". Aragorn is portrayed as he truly ought to be on the night of the feast at Rivendell; "his dark hood was thrown back and he seemed to be clad in elven mail, and a stone shone upon his breast". This is a hint of the majesty of the Aragorn who is of a race of kings, "the last remnant in the North of the great people, the Men of the West, Chief of the Dunedain".

It is also during this episode that the Lady Arwen is first mentioned. Earlier Aragorn had said that Rivendell was "where my heart is" (although, unfortunately, he later says that his heart is at Lothlorien). At this stage, Aragorn was actually betrothed to Arwen, but the betrothal probably happened only a short time before he met Frodo and his company. Hence, he would still no doubt be anguished that he is indirectly causing the death of the one he loves.

It seems that the part Aragorn plays in the war against Sauron was predestined. He himself often refers to his fate, and Boromir, the warrior from Gondor who became a member of the Fellowship, said he had a dream in which he heard the words, "Seek for the sword that was broken", and that sword, which once belonged to Elindil, one of the principle fighters in the first battle against Sauron, is now Aragorn's. Thus, Aragorn accepts that he is destined to go to Minas Tirith: "It is not my fate to sit in peace."

Aragorn contrasts strongly with Boromir. Both are warriors, yet one is all humility whereas the other is proud and sometimes arrogant. Compare, "and those who shelter behind us give us praise. By our valour the wild folk of the East are still restrained", with, "Travellers scowl at us, and countrymen give us scornful names", yet Aragorn still performed his duties as a Ranger. Aragorn departed from Rivendell "clad only in rusty green and brown", but Boromir sounds his war-horn and goes forth with a flourish instead of with the secrecy desired. He refuses to "go forth as a thief in the night". His pomposity serves to emphasise Aragorn's humility, which is proved much later when he refuses to reclaim his kingship of Gondor.

There is no doubt that Aragorn is co-leader of the Fellowship with Gandalf. He takes an active part in the planning and direction and is often the one who sees or senses the danger in a situation. When Gandalf 'dies' at Khazad-Dum - later to be 'resurrected', the religious imagery stressing his goodness and godliness - Aragorn assumes leadership immediately: "I will lead you now". Although he is not as powerful as Gandalf, Aragorn obviously has many capabilities and his right to leadership is unquestionable. It is almost as though he is a disciple of Gandalf's, yet the gap between them is not so great as disciple-master, so perhaps it would be truer to compare Aragorn to Jesus and Gandalf to God. There is also the obvious fact that the first letters of Gandalf's and Sauron's names are the same as those of their counterparts - God and Satan - which emphasises the nature of the trilogy as an expression of the battle between good and evil, light and dark. The war against Sauron is reminiscent of God's battle against Satan and his rebellious angels when he was first cast out of heaven.

Aragorn, however, is far from all-powerful and at Lorien he is troubled and doubtful because of the decisions he must make; "I am not Gandalf, though I have tried to bear his part". In fact, from the passing of Gandalf until his return, Aragorn does not lead the Fellowship, but guides them. He freely acknowledges that his council may be wrong and is always prepared to listen and accede to the advice of the others. It is almost with relief more than gladness, that he

greeted Gandalf on his return: "Beyond all hope you return to us in our need". The burden of leadership has passed from his shoulders back to the more sturdy ones of Gandalf.

At Edoras another problem confronts Aragorn, that of the Lady Eowyn. Despite the fact that he and Lady Arwen are betrothed, something deeper than a mere affection definitely seems to develop between him and Eowyn. Perhaps Tolkien



felt that his leading man needed a leading lady to complete the picture of the dashing hero and, since Arwen was too distant in time and place to be associated with Aragorn at that point, he brought in Eowyn. Eowyn does complement Aragorn to a certain extent in that they are the male and female principles united. In any case, something akin to love does develop in them both: "Aragorn, for the first time in the full light of day, beheld Eowyn, Lady of Rohan, and thought her fair, fair and cold, like a morning of pale spring that

has not yet come to womanhood. And now she was suddenly aware of him: tall heir of kings, wise with many winters, grey-cloaked, hiding a power that yet she felt", and later, "as she stood before Aragorn she paused suddenly and looked upon him, and her eyes were shining. And he looked down upon her fair face and smiled". Later, however, he appears to remember Arwen and his duty towards her. He makes it obvious whom he would choose if, in fact, it did come to making a decision: "Were I to go where my heart dwells, far in the North I would now be wandering, in the fair valley of Rivendell". Eowyn's love for Aragorn must have been quite temporary for she later falls in love with Faramir, the brother of Boromir.

During the parts of the trilogy where two stories are being told concurrently, Aragorn is undoubtedly the hero of the parts featuring him and his comrades. He has all the qualities of the traditional, conventional, Arthurian hero; the love of a fair lady, bravery, daring, regality and chivalry. In fact, Tolkien has admitted his indebtedness to Malory and his Arthurian legends. It is Aragorn and Eomer whose fighting prowess appears most impressive at Helm's Deep. "So great a power and royalty was revealed in Aragorn, as he stood there alone above the ruined gates, before the host of his enemies." Aragorn's fighting skill does seem exaggerated at times, to add colour and excitement, and he also appears to possess

invulnerability, for once or twice he is overcome with Orcs, yet escapes unscathed.

At various intervals in the trilogy Aragorn hints, or states outright, that he is slowly but surely progressing towards his destiny. This progress seems to build and double on itself until the final climatic events, namely the battle of the Pelennor Fields and Aragorn's coronation. During the period of revelations we are made more and more aware of Aragorn's true stature, both through his own self-realisation, when he claims the Palantir, for example, and through others' changing attitudes towards him. Gandalf, in his wisdom and perception, is the first to realise what heights of grandeur Aragorn has reached and will reach and is thus the first to accord him the due honour; he bows to him as he hands him the Palantir. That this honour is justly merited is perhaps shown most of all by the fact that the title of the third volume, "The Return of the King" - more religious symbolism - refers to Aragorn's reclaiming of the kingship of Gondor.



Throughout the first two volumes of the trilogy it is made clear that Aragorn's future is preordained by fate and that his fate as Isildur's heir is bound up with the war against Sauron: "The light of Anduril must now be uncovered in the battle for which it has so long waited" - Anduril being Aragorn's sword, - which seems to have embodied within itself much of its owner's being. That Sauron fears Aragorn is clear by several remarks from Aragorn: "Sauron has not forgotten Isildur and the sword of Elindil", and later, "To know that he lived and walked the earth was a blow to his heart". Also, it is notable that Aragorn's existence was kept secret for many years, as revealed in the appendix: "But he was called Estel, that is 'Hope', and his true name and lineage were kept secret at the bidding of Elrond, for the Wise then knew that the enemy was seeking to discover the Heir of Isildur, if any remained upon earth".

Aragorn does indeed play an important part in the battle against the Dark Lord. He leads the Dunedain, of course, but also it is only he who has the power to summon the Men of the Mountain to fulfil their oath to his ancestor, Isildur, even though they have been dead for many years. He is featured prominently in one of

the most dramatic parts of the trilogy, that is when his ships appear on the horizon and he leads the relief, which is almost a rescue, of Pelennor: "Before all went Aragorn, with the Flame of the West, Anduril, like a new fire rekindled". The 'new fire rekindled' did not only apply to Anduril, but also to Aragorn himself. This dashing, heroic figure was a far cry from the Strider of old. Yet, even in his hour of triumph, Aragorn shows the humility which is an ever-present aspect of his character, when he refuses to take back the kingship of Gondor until bidden to do so by the Lord Stewart of the city. The coronation itself is essentially extremely humble, although the descriptive picture of Aragorn is the quintessence of nobility. Gandalf hails him as the "King of Gondor and Lord of the Western Lands" who "has taken back all his ancient realm".

Another facet of Aragorn is shown at the Houses of Healing in Gondor, when he is the only person who has the ability to save Faramir, Merry and Eowyn. The miraculous way in which he virtually wills the three of them back to life is extremely symbolic of Christ's miracles.

The supreme climax in the saga of Aragorn is his marriage to the Lady Arwen. Its great importance to Aragorn is shown in his words, "A day draws near that I have looked for in all the years of my manhood"; words which contain some of the heartaching yearning he had to undergo because he dared to fall in love with the Elf-Queen. Although the atmosphere at the coronation is one of noble restraint, Aragorn appears to forget his regality for the wedding and gives way to the pure unrestrained joy of a man on his wedding day: "And Aragorn, the King Elissar, wedded Undomiel in the City of the King upon the day of Midsummer; and the tale of their long waiting and labours was come to fulfilment."

Aragorn does not die during the story of "The Lord of the Rings", but his eventual death, which is the doom of all men, is referred to: "I shall die", "...and when those who are now in the wombs of women are born and grown old, I too shall be old". In fact, in the story he is allowed a poetically romantic farewell. There is an aura of sadness around the various departures in any case, but Aragorn's is particularly touching, yet majestic, as befits his role of the heroic king: "and when after a while they turned and looked back they saw the King of the West sitting on his horse with his knights about him. Then Aragorn took the green stone and held it up; and there came a green fire from his hand". The manner of Aragorn's death is, in fact, recounted in the appendix. It is dignified and majestic, as his life. The last of Aragorn's powers is his ability to "go at my will", and this he chooses to do before he reaches senility. In fact, in death some of his past greatness returns to him: "the grace of his youth

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and the valour of his manhood and the wisdom and majesty of his age were blended together".

Thus, Aragorn progressed through various stages, identities almost, from Strider to King of Gondor. He is perhaps most interesting in his role as Strider because of the sinister element he has at that point. Aragorn the heroic swashbuckler is rather conventional, but our interest is still maintained by the various references to the mysterious fate towards which he is hastening. He eventually emerges as the noblest character of the book, but unfortunately becomes somewhat too noble and thus suffers from being flat and two-dimensional. However, just as the hobbits give the story much of its charm and reader identification, so Aragorn and the other loftier characters give the story its high heroic significance and emphasise the theme of the struggle between good and evil. Finally, as well as comparing Aragorn to Christ, one can also compare him to King Arthur. Aragorn has his Guinevere, his Excalibur and his league of knights. Unfortunately, Aragorn, like Arthur, is too noble and, therefore, unconvincing. At the end he has no faults or shortcomings whatsoever. When he took over from Gandalf one could sympathise with him because of his self-doubts, but Aragorn the King does not need sympathy. Also, Aragorn lacks the dry humour and warmth of Gandalf who, though more powerful, is much more human. Even Aragorn's speech is cold and formal at the end, all of which leads to the conclusion that as Aragorn gradually gains in status he loses in humanity.



BALTHUS: Fantasy Literature & Folk-Lore.

This magazine, as the subtitle indicates, mixes the best of fantasy with that of folk-lore, producing biographies and bibliographies of Abraham Merritt, Arthur Machen, Alan Garner and the magazine, *Fantastic*; articles on Lin Carter's Lemurian stories, Colin Wilson's "The Occult" and the Wild Hunt; and fiction from the pens of the SF writer, Mark Adlard, and the SF/Fantasy writers, Eddy C. Bertin and Robert J. Curran, as well as poetry and letters from such as Lin Carter, Poul Anderson and Ken Bulmer. All this in the first three issues - fully illustrated by some of the best artists around - and more! Per single copy, 20p (60¢, USA); subscriptions, 60p for three issues (\$1 for 2 issues, USA), available from Jon M. Harvey, 18 Cefn Road, Cardiff, CF4 3HS.

WISH

I wish
before trees lift up their arms
to stand for a moment
by the bonfire
in open fields
to let the smoke seep into the brim of eyelids
and lead me back to childhood

I wish
to walk with such belief
as when mother:
say your prayers
get up its almost midday
no school today

And in the evenings
to spy on the ringing silences
look on like the moon
ripe in the stream
listen to the litany of trees
and swim

I wish
yet the river grabs our hands
time greens our names

In the valley of waiting
wishes die
rain washes names away
lifting them into arcs of light
spilling green slashes
until they die
covered by the sky
death in its stony way
kills dreams -
yet they don't cool

enduring in the trees
with arcs of folding arms
reconciled with water and sun
not here in trees surviving
thick with joy whose expanses
angels measure with song
and where clocks are kneeling

just there
in the brightness of declined silence
hands eyes and hearts
under mundaness
hungry streaming roots
are the beginning.

- Lisa Conesa.

The Races of Middle-Earth

Archie Mercer.

Illustrations by Brian Talbot

Ever since I first read "The Lord of the Rings" I have been puzzled by the variety of racial types mentioned therein, and their relationship to each other and to ourselves. Now, following my latest re-reading of the work and of "The Hobbit", I think that I have at last managed to sort them out to my reasonable satisfaction. What follows is my provisional analysis of the picture, at any rate, in its basic outline.

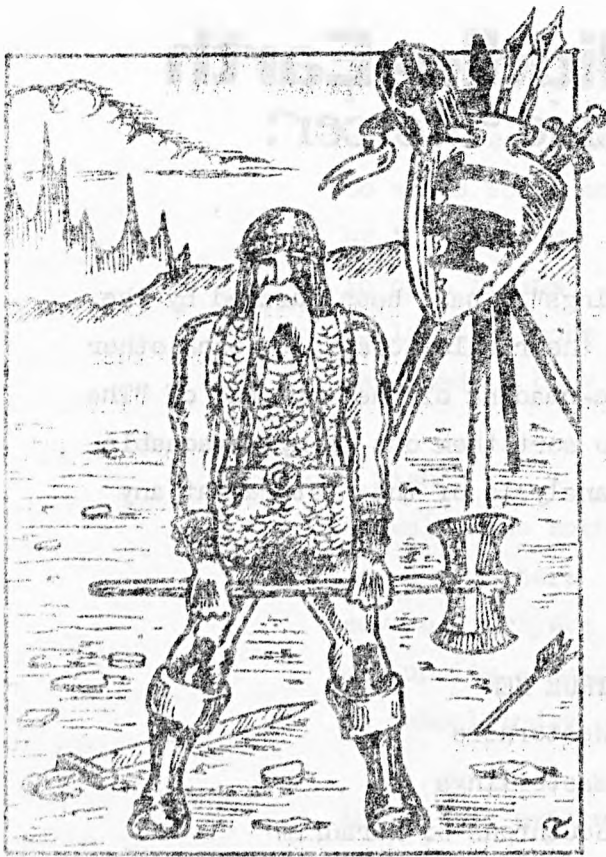


1. TRUE MEN
 - Westerners
 - Easterlings
 - Southrons or Haradrim
 - Numenoreans
 - Lo/ssoth
 - (Axe-bearers?)

This category includes all those races which I would assign to the modern species, 'Homo sapiens'. By "westerners" I mean both the men who inhabited Middle-earth before the Numenorean take-over (for instance the Dunlendings) and those who arrived later (for instance the Rohirrim). The Easterlings and Haradrim, or Southrons, are not strictly of Middle-earth, but are included for good measure.

Likewise, the race which I've dubbed "Axe-bearers", which figures in the final stages of the War of the Ring and is described as being on the small side, bearded like dwarves, and wielding battle-axes. These seem to be distinct from ordinary Easterlings, and may in fact be more closely related to the dwarves.





2. SORT-OF MEN

Dwarves

Hobbits

Pukel-men ("wild men")

Orcs, great and small

Uruk-hai

(Southern troll-men?)

(Variags?)

Here I list the races that appear to belong to the genus 'Homo', but not to the species 'sapiens' - though this is no reflection on their intelligence, but simply a matter of comparative biology. I have included the orcs in this section, partly because of the hint that they may be inter-fertile with humans, and partly because so many of today's humans tend to resemble them in behaviour - which

come to much the same thing, really. In fact, the Uruk-hai, who apparently have an admixture of human ancestry, at least could well be assigned to 'Homo sapiens', were not such an assignment contrary to Tolkien's intention. The race I refer to as "Southern troll-men" is described as being black-skinned and red-tongued and of a certain trollish aspect - I have placed it here by way of compromise, between 'Homo sapiens' on the one hand and outright trolldom on the other. The Variags lived in Khand, but since their racial name bears no resemblance to that of their country I am assuming that they were noticeably different and not simply Khandimen. Oh yes, Gollum comes in here too, because he was a Stoor and thus a hobbit.





I have also tentatively placed the River-women here. Not much is recorded about this, therefore, mysterious people, but since two individuals - a mother and her daughter - are mentioned, they, or it, would appear to qualify as a race, and one moreover of a vaguely elvish nature. Whether this race include River-men as well as River-women, or whether the women habitually took their mates from other races, or whether indeed they were parthenogenetic, is not revealed.

3. ELVES

Elves in general
(River-women?)

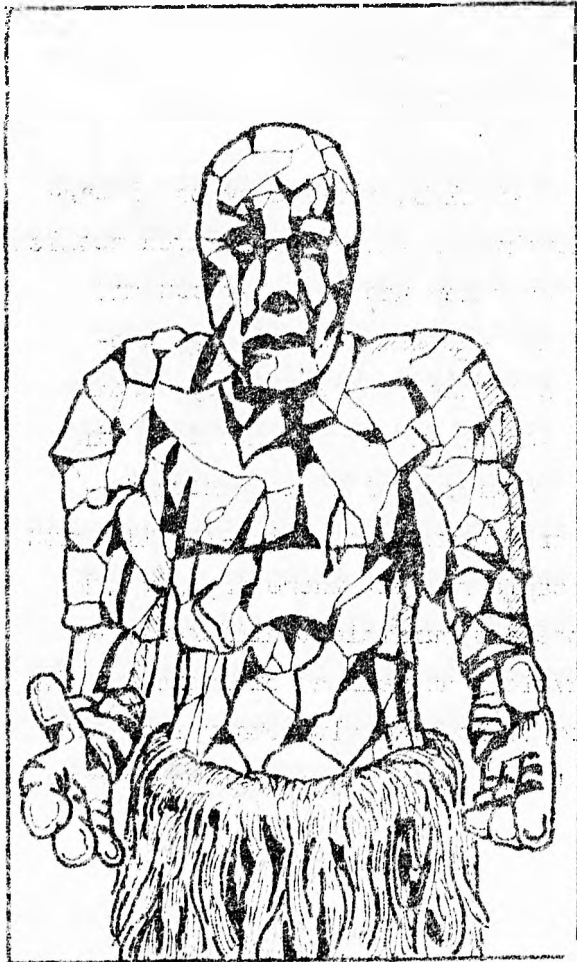
I am still bewildered by the inter-relationship of the various elven peoples so I have taken the easy way out and lumped East-elves, West-elves, High-elves, Wood-elves, Grey-elves, Sindar, Eldar, Noldor and their immediate kin under the title "Elves in general". Elves are known to be inter-fertile with 'Homo sapiens', but there is, I think, nevertheless sufficient difference - metaphysical as well as biological - for them to be removed altogether from the genus 'Homo' into a genus of their own.



4. ENTS

Ents obviously form another distinct genus - which may indeed lie outside the animal kingdom altogether and be related more closely to such types as the Huorns, the semi-sentient trees of the Old Forest, and similar manifestations of vegetablehood.

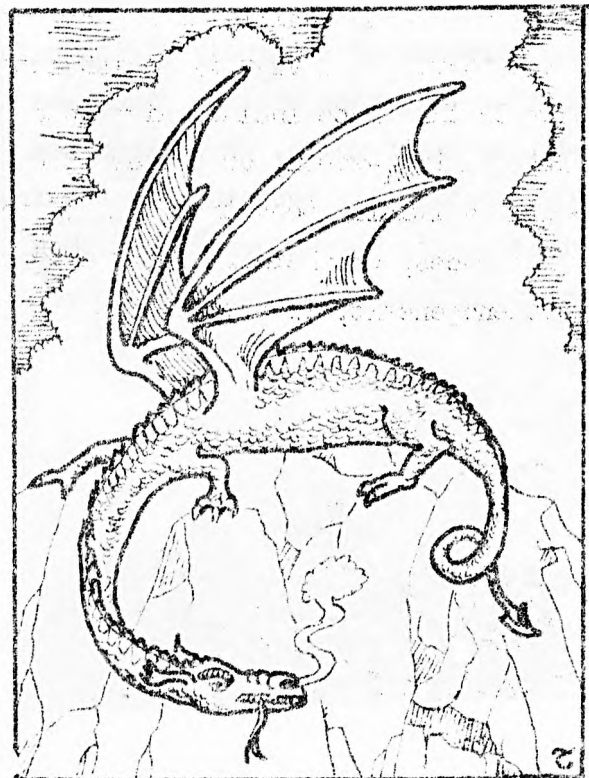




5. TROLLS ETC.
Cave trolls
Hill trolls
Snow trolls
(Stone giants?)

Trolls, in their turn, belong, if anywhere, to a sentient branch of the mineral kingdom. The books differentiate between trolls that are or are not immune to sunlight, and also mention snow trolls. I have placed the Stone giants with the trolls on the grounds that they seem to fit nowhere else. They are only referred to in "The Hobbit", and the reference may possibly have been intended simply as a poetic metaphor for a thunderstorm. They are further mentioned in the subsequent dialogue, however, and I have taken this to mean that the Stone giants are indeed a race.

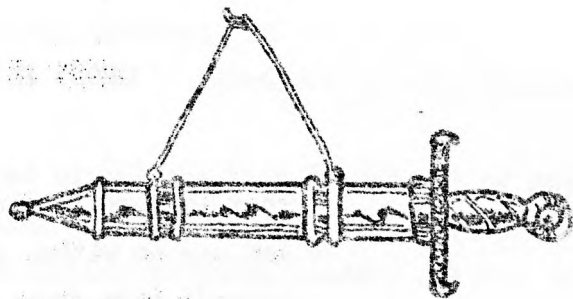
6. TALKING BEASTS AND BIRDS
Wargs
Eagles
Ravens and other members
of the Corvidae
Dragons
Spiders of Mirkwood



And here we are back in the animal kingdom, but amongst genera heretofore unconsidered. All the species I have listed under this head can communicate with anthropoid beings in the languages of the anthropoids and/or vice versa. This list is probably far from complete, because further species of animals keep suggesting themselves - thrushes, Shelob,

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the mearas of Rohan, Beorn's tame animals; it is difficult to know where to stop. Then, of course, there is Beorn himself: as a skin-turner, possibly he belongs to Category 2, another species of the genus 'Homo'.



7. NON-RACIAL CATEGORIES

Istari
Nazgul
Bombadil
(Balrog?)

This heading is mainly a catch-all for whatever is left over. The Istari and the Nazgul have been removed by their respective superior author/ities from whatever races they once belonged to, to constitute pseudo-races that are, however, non-viable. The same might possibly be said, come to that, of Sauron himself. Bombadil is strictly a 'one-off' type - although he has taken a mate from among the river-women, there is no record of his having bred from her, or from anyone else. And I am assuming that a Balrog, whatever its nature (animal, vegetable, mineral or abstract) is a special creation incapable of furthering its line.

There are doubtless other races and possible-races that I have overlooked; at times one seems to stumble on a new one on every other page or so. However, I offer the above analysis as a sincere attempt to reduce the racial situation in Middle-earth to some sort of coherent order.

((Anything in the above analysis that is followed by a question-mark and is in brackets is not so definitely in the category I suggest for it as are the unpunctuated races.

- Archie Mercer.))

GHOST IN THE SUN

They left me in the darkness of the sun
And saw me wither as I burned
Without them there,
A melting cinder,
Foolish tinder
That they spurned.
I will take my just revenge of them,
Those faithless spirits of the cluster,
I will suck the moonlight from their spines,
Plumb egoistic mines
And shatter all their bluster.
The universal dead will rise again to
Haunt the spirals of the vortex,
Chant a dree and fearful curse
That I nurse
In the volutes of my cortex...
Like a crackling ring about the sun
My matter vapours in a dance of motes,
A million white hot devils dancing
On a pinhead prancing
While God is making notes...
My star it passes in the night
And trails a shadowed spectrum tail
But like a phoenix I will rise,
Return,
Incandescent I will burn,
A solar gale,
And catch them in my blazing gusts...
Ah, to fry the bowels of those I hate!
And tell them as the flame winds fall,
Immolating all,
That contrition is too late, late, late.....

- A.R. Fallone.

Prior to reading this work I had been led to believe that it was one of great power and significance, a true classic, a book that all deep thinkers should possess and cherish. Complex, maybe, but rewarding to those readers willing to disentangle the philosophical puzzles. However, after my first, and what I trust will be my last, reading I must confess to a feeling of profound disappointment and dislike. The promised power was there in faltering flashes, the significance seemed shallow and the thinking, as opposed to the fancy, that had gone into it was small. Its complexity is of the rag-bag, rather than the woven sort - by this I mean ideas thrown together without system or theme, not knitted together. Take that sort of complexity apart and you are left with what Maskull finally faced - Nothing. The central gimmick of new senses growing overnight on the hero became progressively more strained as the tale wore on, until it became obvious that this was done purely as an exercise in strangeness and an attempt to fit the earthman into the philosophical patterns that he came across. Treated with intelligence and it would have been fascinating, but, as it is, all one gets here is a somewhat uneasy earthman with odd and assorted appendages and eyeballs growing here and there, but basically remaining an earthman for all that.

Lindsay's fancy runs a bit dry, for he finds quite soon that he can conjure up no more than variations on the optic scene for Maskull to experience. This is not the only time during the book when one wishes Lindsay had had more science, for with a little more knowledge on his part many embarrassing mistakes could have been avoided and he could have, perhaps, used all the electromagnetic spectrum and the ESP senses in his pilgrim's progress. Constantly throughout this book, one thinks that this or that piece or character could have been done better by someone who wrote regularly in SF or Fantasy, that the work could have become a masterpiece in truth in the hands of a more capable writer; but, to give Lindsay his due, few of the experienced writers in this field aim so high in their fiction, perhaps because they are so experienced. But, having aimed so high, having attempted such a major 'opus', Lindsay must be judged by equally high standards and, by these standards, I judge him to have failed. The ultimate resolution that was evidently meant to be of cosmic force seemed to me only a justification for mortification of the body, never a very profitable hobby - pain used in the way the ascetics of India and the Medieval saints used it, to curb the desires of the body and liberate the spirit.

Mr. Lindsay, about whom I know nothing, except that he died young, according

to my reading of the internal evidence scattered through this book, must have been a man with highly developed volumptuous urges and emotions, but brought up in such a way that he could not bring himself to give in to them - an iron control that constantly warred with his natural desires. If a man dares to write a novel, he lays bare, at least, a large portion of his soul to the eyes of the world, and the world can judge him as a man most easily from his works. I believe that he externalised his inner conflict in the forms of the vile, beautiful, slobbering, graceful, lustful Crystalman who starts this novel as a god and ends it as a devil; and Krag, who starts the novel as some sort of devil and ends it as more of a god, or demigod. Krag is yellow, brutish and ugly at first and almost right to the end, but the final switch, when Maskull's soul, Hightspore, is guided to the Tower where he finds the 'true' state of the cosmos and its meaning, reveals Krag to have been right all along and an emissary of the source of purity that fights constantly within us all for freedom from the vile flesh in which it is imprisoned by Crystalman. Pain and suffering are adjudged noble and an aid to freeing the fineness in man from the shackles of pleasure, which is but a shallow and passing thing that lures one into sloth, lust and vain posturing. And yet, one is told at the end that Krag & Co. are losing and that Crystalman is bound to win in time - perhaps an echo of Lindsay's own realisation that he could fight his natural urges for only so long before giving in. Perhaps I am wrong in my amateur psychoanalysis of the author and do him or his shade an injustice, but somehow I do not think so, for it would take a writer parsecs better than Lindsay to cover the tracks made by his own psyche. Lindsay's view is a very narrow one, likely to appeal only to those readers who feel guilt and shame at enjoying life and wish, consciously or unconsciously, to 'pay' for what they enjoy. Lindsay seems to see Pain and Pleasure as two universal objective forces - literally in Capital letters. I think it must be obvious that they are nothing of the sort, being completely subjective. Pain is the warning alarm of impending or actual damage to the body, an overstimulation of the nervous system designed to make us do something fast about stopping the cause from continuing. Pleasure is another sort of nerve stimuli, of perhaps a lower intensity, routed to a different part of the brain and designed to act as a reward for the body doing something creative, ie., the sex act is the ultimate creative work the human body can do.

So, one must equate Pleasure with Creativity and Pain with Destruction. In no way can we alter this equation to read Pain is Creativity and Pleasure is Destruction because our own bodies, which are our only instruments of perception, deny this by their very nature. If it were agonisingly painful to have sex, then the human race would never have got started. If it were fantastically pleasurable

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to tear ourselves limb from limb, then we would all have done so long ago! To say that pain is the noble thing and pleasure is to be denied and despised is to fall into that dismally familiar trap into which 'Saints' have fallen all down the bloodstained ages - if the medicine is nasty enough it is bound to do your soul good. In normal life restraint is clearly necessary, but repression is equally clearly not. Extremes harm! This is what I think Lindsay feared and is the real message that he waves in the face of the readers. For example, the attitude of the hero, Maskull, to women was very strange - not once during his peregrinations does he have normal relations with a female, although he had ample opportunity, and indeed, he refuses all such with something approaching fear. There is also excessive emphasis on 'manliness' and how praiseworthy it is - frequently Maskull is drawn to beings who seem feminine, but have masculine characters, or vice versa. It is significant that Maskull gains pleasure and, later, shame from absorbing another man into him. This was Digrung, the brother of a woman for whom Maskull had had desire earlier and who resembled his sister closely. It is meaningful that only in the masculine form could Maskull take the woman and it was only with a man that he found pleasure and experienced deep guilt afterwards. It would be wearisome to detail further aspects of the book and go into more pseudo-Freudian analysis of the author's evidently tortured id. For those who care to exert themselves to this end there is ample material.

I am reluctant to have to criticise so adversely a book I had looked forward so much in reading, but I had no idea how perverse its basic message would be - one of contempt for all that is human and humane in people, denigration of warm, open feelings, full of hollow laughter at love and beauty. During each stage of the pilgrim's progress philosophies are set up as shys to be knocked down one by one, each one showing its predecessor to have been merely a hollow cocanut, without the milk of truth. In their place all Mr. Lindsay offers is his Paen to Pain, a gospel of despair and of the hopelessness of all human aspirations and dreams. I have no great opinion of the human race myself, but I remain convinced that it has the seed of an aweinspiring and mighty destiny in it that, with luck, will flower at some far future time.

Reading this book was like listening to an atonal discord; I now need much sweet music to drown its cacophany. But this was so nearly a great book, or could have been, perhaps, if the author had waited ten years before writing it, instead of when he did. I can understand how it might haunt those more in tune with its inner message, but it is one spectre I do not wish to have hanging about at the back of my mind, poisoning me.

- A.R. Fallone.

The Huntsmen of Fiction



Illustrations by Alan Hunter.

Jon M. Harvey

INTRODUCTION: Those of you who have read the second issue of my own magazine, Balthus, will know that in that issue I wrote at some length upon the lore and legend of the Wild Hunt and related legends, freely sprinkling the dissertation with actual tales of these legends, all set in Britain. The original concept of that dissertation was to investigate one aspect of folk-lore, that is, the Wild Hunt, with respect to its use in fictional literature. I disposed of this idea, deciding to go into the folk-lore of the Wild Hunt at greater depth and, later, follow that article up with one of the Hunt's use in fiction. This is that article.

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The possible origin of the lore of the Wild Hunt, as Poul Anderson has stated*, lies back with the carrying off of the spirits of the dead by some supernatural being. In Greek mythology this being was Hermes (named Mercury in Roman myth) and in the Nordic or Teutonic pantheons it was Odin or Woden. The Wendigo is a well-known Northern American being and the Aztec's had their own death goddess, Tlazolteotl.

From these developed the supernatural concepts of the Furious Host and the

* "Ashes to ashes, dust to dust" No. 2. The letter supplement to Balthus.

Wild Hunt, both concepts lying close together, so much so, that they overlap and merge to an extent that it is difficult to separate their effects in many legends. The Furious Host, as its name implies, is a clamorous host of unrestful spirits, more often than not foretelling of bad luck and death to those who hear them. Such as the Banshee is a member of the host - the pure, earlier Irish form of the Sidhe Bean being simply a conductor of the deads' spirits, as was Hermes, and the much altered, Anglicised version of a screaming hag being directly sprung from the Furious Host.

The Wild Hunt developed as such on the European continent in the form of Odin or Woden. The leading of the dead away on the night wind became wild debaucheries after wood nymphs and the spirits of fallen witches. The screech of the wind whipping through the tops of the tall Scandinavian forests was believed to be the cries of the dryads as they were pursued along the tree tops by a mounted Odin in hunt.

With the coming of the Christian religion many of the old legends were adapted. King Herod is said still to pursue the spirits of the babies he had slain, the Wandering Jew became a silent death portent, other Jews that were at the Crucifixion are said to haunt Cornish tin mines as the 'Knockers' while they are also supposed to inhabit the aerial bodies of the Seven Whistlers, although, as I have been told*, in some parts of England only six are ever to be seen and that the appearance of the seventh will foretell doom to Britain. There is also Gabriel's Hounds or Gabriel's Rackets, named after the noise they make - a pack of giant dogs that circumscribe aether. But, the most popular character for the role of the Wild Huntsman is Old Nick, chasing after the spirits of the doomed. The Devil was very early on associated with the Horned Beast and so, in his role as the Huntsman, he has been seen many a time - a horned horseman followed by a pack of horned, fiery-eyed hounds.

When the Wild Hunt was first used in fiction is impossible to say. Hunting has always been a very popular sport and so fantasies have long been built up around the hunt and number quite a few. Lord Dunsany wrote a number of such fantasies, such as "Thirteen at Table" and the unicorn hunts in "The King of Elfland's Daughter". Going back to the thirteenth century there are the hunts in Edmund Spenser's "Faerie Queen". Back even further is the Welsh Arthurian legend of "Culhwch and Olwen" in which there is the hunt of Twrch Trwyth; and so on. The first true use of the Wild Hunt in fiction, as far as I know, is in "Tregeagle:

* "Dark Horizons" No. 2. A review of Balthus 2 by Rosemary Pardoe.

or, Dozmare Poole" by John Penwarne which is a romanticisation of the old Cornish legend of Tregagle in which Tregagle's doom is to be hunted as sport by Satan:

"And styllle, as the Trav'lere pursues hys lone waye
In horroure, at nyghte o'er the waste,
He heares Syr Tregagle wyth shriekes rushe awaye,
He heares the Blacke Hunter pursuing hys preye,
And shrynkes at hys bugle's dread blaste."

To be able to list all the stories in which the Wild Hunt, the Furious Host and all their various derivations are used is an impossible task. To search for such stories all fantastic literature ever written would have to be read and analysed, which is no mean task for any person, if not an impossible one. I have no hopes of attempting such a study, nor would I want to. I can only fall back on my meager readings in the fantastic genre and bring to notice those stories I can remember. The most important fact is that, considering the amount of written material I have consumed, the number of stories I can remember to contain some aspect of the Wild Hunt, let alone counting those that must have slipped my mind, is quite large, which only ascertains the fact that the use of folk-lore and legend in general in fantasy is quite substantial.

Above I have mentioned death portents; if we take out all the stories in the fantastic that contain some sign or some sort of familiar that portends trouble or death to some person then there would be a great gap left on the bookshelves. The portent is one of the main stays of the fantastic. The portent is never a stable creature, changing from story to story, disguised, even hidden in some cases, in the most elaborate manners. In Arthur Machen's "Green Round" the protagonist, Hillyer, after visiting a site of a fairy circle - the fairies in Machen's stories always being malign, malformed creatures - finds himself possessing a familiar that he does not see until near the end of his story, but which is described inconsistently by other people as varying between a horrible dwarf and a dark dog. This familiar manages to get Hillyer beaten up, thrown out of his rooms and nearly drives him mad. Much like a poltergeist, this familiar breaks windows and smashes vases and picture frames. On the other end of the scale is August Derleth's "The Shadow on the Sky" in which the portent of doom is the shadow in the sky, a shadow thrown across the clouds depicting a hanged man, the fate which comes to the unfortunate person who sees the shadow. This latter story is much like Poe's "The Judge's House".

Other variations of the death portent are such things as a beckoning hand appearing in different stories in such odd places as out of an empty ottoman in



which the protagonist of the story is finally compelled to climb into as if it were a coffin. The lid slams down and he finds that the ottoman is really to be his coffin. In some stories the hand is severed and in one particular story it is joined by other severed parts of the human anatomy, including an eye ball that watches as it drives the poor person who sees these ghastly relics to beat a hast retreat...through a fourth floor window.

The great majority of these portents are of a traditional form, as found in many folk tales, but there are more modern forms of portents, using modern technology and the products thereof to

manifest themselves. Two writers who have used modern forms of the portent to a fair extent are Fritz Leiber and Ray Bradbury. While Fritz Leiber's "The Hound" may harken back to traditional forms, his "Smoke Ghost" does not. He starts this latter tale off with an anxious person telling his secretary that beings of the supernatural, such as ghosts, nowadays would not be as those of earlier times. They should be 'updated', and goes on talking of the forms they would now take, trying to convince himself by his own words to his secretary how ridiculous such things would be, but he has already seen the smoke ghost:

"A phantom has resolved, myself to haunt.

It is a modern ghost, adroit and sly -

No thing of gauzy mist, or rattling bones,

Or clanking chains, or marrow-freezing moans

It's futile to gesticulate and cry:

"Bogone, accursed specter! Out, avaunt!"

To no such antics is this ghost inclined;

It occupies a corner of my mind."

L. Sprague de Camp "The Ghost".

Even more outre in their modernity are his stories, "The Black Gondolier" and "The Man who made Friends with Electricity". Both of these stories are bizarre in as much as in each there is a person who claims that a certain utility of modern technology, both a source of power, possesses sentience - in the former

story it is oil and in the latter, electricity. Within both stories these power sources double as their own portents; in the former story, which is set in Venice, New Mexico, an oil town, some unknown entity of oil is the Black Gondolier; in the latter story, the person is told of his own doom by the crackling electricity in the high voltage pilons above his house.

One of the greatest users of the traditional form of death portent is Joseph Sheridan LeFanu. He wrote a number of horror/fantasy stories based in Ireland in which he used basic ideas of folk-lore, such as witches, lycanthropy, death portents, curses, ghosts and other supernatural phenomena, constructing his own folk-lore which to exploit within his stories. Such tales are "A Legend of Dunoran", "The White Cat of Drumgunniol" and "Wicked Captain Walshaw". "The White Cat" is a good example of his tales as it exploits quite a few of those supernatural phenomena - a witch is wronged by a certain family and places a curse upon them that the male offsprings will die before their appointed times. The men-folk are foretold of their deaths by the appearance to them of a white cat which is the transformed spirit of the witch.

Now to turn to the Wild Hunt itself. Throughout fiction the Hunt has turned up in many forms in both prose and poetry. In poetry I know of only a few pieces that use the Hunt. One of such is John Penwarne's "Tregeagle" as cited above. Traditional pieces mentioning the Hunt are quite a few, ranging from Alexander Montgomerie's "Scottish Fairy Rade" to Villemarque's "Chants Populaires de la Bretagne". Even Wordsworth mentions the Hunt in its different facets:

"He the seven birds hath sees that never part,
Seen the seven whistlers on their mighty rounds,
And counted them! and oftentimes will start,
For overhead are sweeping Gabriel's hounds,
Doomed with their impious lord the flying hart,
To chase for ever on aerial grounds."

The most famous piece using the Wild Hunt must be John Masefield's "The Hounds of Hell" in which St. Withiel battles against the hordes of Hell:

"The saint stood still until they came
Baying to ring him round:
A horse whose flecking foam was flame;
And hound on yelling hound.
And jaws that dripped with bitter fire
Snarled at the saint to tear:
Piled hell-hounds, balder than the geier,
Leaping round him everywhere."

Other such poems are fairly scattered. Stanley McNail has used the Hunt, the rising of the dead, death portents, and the satanic hound in a few of his poems:

"Prepare yourselves, prepare yourselves,
For doors that open by themselves;
For trunks that lock without a sound,
For paw-marks of a great black hound..."

"What The Voice Said".

"...She bloodied her mouth, and gashed her face,
And rode a black hound to the trysting place."

"Three Sisters".

Joseph Payne Brennan uses the Greek Goddess Artemis (Roman Diana) in one of his poems. Goddess of hunting, she once caught a secret lover watching her at her toilet. She changed him into a white stag and let her hounds chase it down and tear it to pieces. The white stag has featured predominantly in the lore of the Wild Hunt, being symbolic in its way:

"The White Huntress

Never grows weary;
Her swift hounds
Race on phantom feet,
Tireless, never swerving.

She is inscrutable
She is never seen
Till the chase is ending,
Till the traveler turns
At the sound of silent baying.

He sees the pale hounds leaping,
And the tall white lady
Striding swiftly.

In her blind embrace
The blazing sun goes white."

"The White Huntress".

Though not strictly a 'fictional' piece, there is also the "Gurresange" by J.P. Jacobsen, a notable Danish poet and novelist of a century ago. This piece is based on the legend of the King Valdemar, possibly the fourth of that name, who, after an unfortunate series of events, was doomed until Judgement Day to

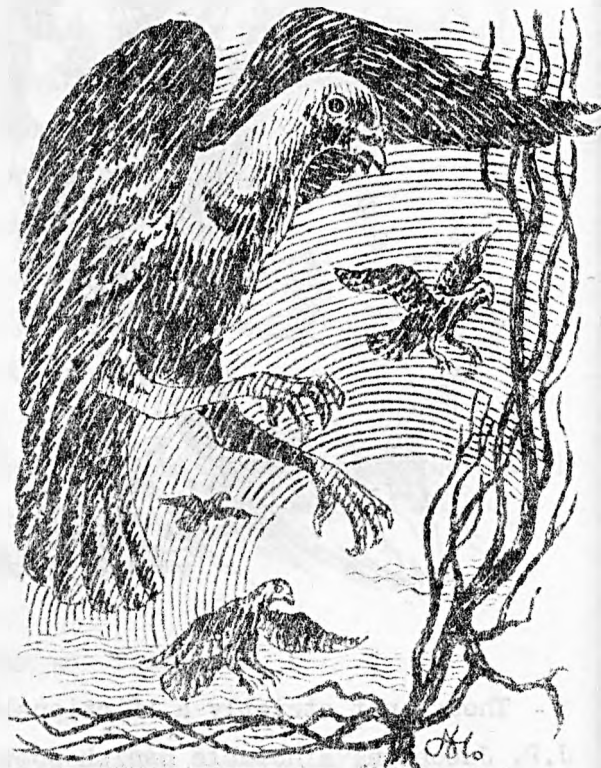
hunt each night with his men and hounds around the castle of Gurre. The following piece is from a translation of the "Gurresange" by Poul Anderson recently printed in the magazine, Amra:

"...Night raven swinging
And darkly winging,
And leafage foaming where hoofs are ringing,
So shall we hunt ev'ry night, they say,
Until that hunt on the Judgement Day".

Within fictional prose the Wild Hunt finds much more of a voice for itself. As I have said above, the Hunt takes on many forms, such as the host of the dead, originating from the early development of the lore. It appears in this form in such stories as Arthur Machen's "The Bowmen" in which St. George with the ghosts of the bowmen of Agincourt suddenly appear to give aid to the failing British soldiers at Mons in the First World War. Similarly, Ray Bradbury's "The Crowd" uses a spectral horde who somehow appear at car accidents as spectators. A reporter discovers them and realises who they are. To keep their secret they have to kill him, which they do in a car accident. As he lays there dying, the reporter sees their faces among the onlookers and realises that he will soon be among their number.

In very much the same way as the Seven Whistlers and the Whippoorwills supposedly contain the souls of the dead and act as death portents, so do Robert Erwin Howard's chilling "Pigeons of Hell":

"I've see men who swore they'd seen a flock of pigeons **that** were perched along the balusters just at sundown," said Buckner slowly. "Higgers, all of them except one man. A tramp. He was buildin' a fire in the yard, aimin' to camp there that night. I passed along there about sundown. He said something about seeing them pigeons. I came back by there the next morning. The ashes of his fire were there, and his tin cup, and skillet where he'd fried



pork, and his blankets looked like they'd been slept in. Nobody ever saw him again. That was twelve years ago. The niggers say they can see the pigeons, but no nigger would pass along this road between sundown and sun-up. They say the pigeons are the souls of the Blassenvilles, let out of hell at sunset. The niggers say the red glare in the west is the light from hell, because then the gates of hell are open, and the Blassenvilles fly out."

I suppose that I should mention Algernon Blackwood's story, "The Wendigo" upon which August Derleth modelled his addition to the Cthulhu pantheon of gods, Ithaqua. Although the Wendigo, in its legendary form, is part of the lore of the Wild Hunt, Blackwood's rendition of him is entirely divorced from that lore. In fact, although Derleth's Ithaqua is not truly a fictional piece of the Wild Hunt, it does have stronger ties with the Hunt than does Blackwood's Wendigo.

The first branch of the "Mabinogion" opens with Pwyll, Prince of Dyffed, out hunting. Whilst pursuing a stag he meets another hunter with a pack of shining white hounds with red ears. This huntsman is Arawn, Lord of Annwn, the Celtic Hades. Thus, Arawn the hunter is the Welsh collector of the souls of the dead. In Welsh legend Arawn is not an ogre, but a just being, though with thirsts of his own, as have most other deities. He is certainly nothing like Arawn of Annuvin, Lord of the Land of the Dead, who appears in Lloyd Alexander's five Taran books and in "Coll and his White Pig". Arawn of Alexander's books does not hunt himself but has Huntsmen, the Cauldren-born and the aerial gwythaints - the latter comparable to Gabriel's Hounds. In "Coll and his White Pig" a stag lures away the Huntsmen of Arawn from the prison of the oracular pig, Hen Wen, by letting them hunt him - harking back to the lore of the Wild Hunt.

In Arthur Machen's superb novelette, "The White People" Arawn again appears in a fairy story related within the novelette. Arawn appears to claim the soul of a young girl soon after her wedding. Though the concept of the fairy story is familiar, it is used to add to the culminating sense of evil throughout the novelette. The fairy story is therefore left in a mysterious, obscure form, outlining none of the motivations of Arawn or the other characters. This is also found in the other three fairy tales told within the novelette. The second of these stories is a typical Wild Hunt tale in which a young hunter is led by a pure white stag down into Annwn. Arawn's female counterpart, Mab, Queen of the fairies, is met in this tale.

One novel that I could not help but mention herein is that of Sarban's "The

Sound of his Horn". This fantasy begins with a break from a P.O.W. camp in Germany. An escaping naval officer is accidentally hit by some strange rays that, not only transports him a hundred years into the future, but into a parallel world where Germany won the Second World War and where the whole of Europe has been transformed into a game reserve. The person in charge of the reserve is one Count Hans von Hackelberg. For the Grand Huntsman the Count is aptly named as Woden, in the hunt, was often surnamed 'Hackelberg', an old word signifying mantle weaver because, at the hunt, he always wore a broad-brimmed hat and a wide mantle.

This description of Woden in the hunt also fits Oden as we find him in Poul Anderson's tragedy, "The Broken Sword" in which he appears at times in the Wild Hunt. Freda foolishly makes a bond with Oden to aid her, the reward he wants, she does not realise at the time, is to be the illegitimate son conceived between her and her brother, Skafloc:

"About midnight, far away, she heard a horn. Something of its scream ran cold through her. The horn sounded again, louder, nearer, through skirling wind and grinding surf. She heard hounds bay, like none that she knew. Hoofbeats rushed through the night, filling the sky with their haste.

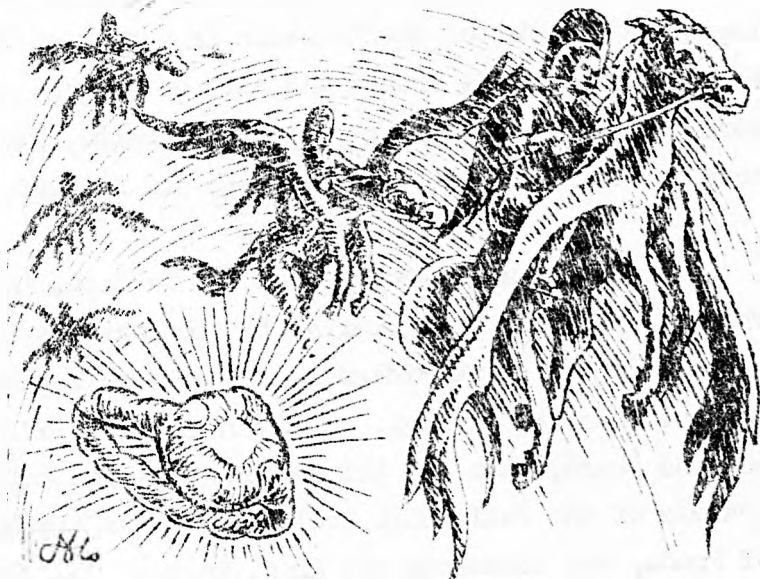
The Asgard's Ride, the Wild Hunt - Freda lay in a shroud of fear. How could it be that no one else stirred? Her babe wailed at her breast.

The wind rattled the shutters."



In Alan Garner's "The Moon of Gomrath" there is a wealth of lore of the Hunt used - the Einheriar, who were the bodyguard of the Norse gods; the Herlathing, a name derived from the band of King Herla; Garanhir, the stalking person, the horned beast; and so on. As a coincidence, in William Croft Dickson's "Borrobil", the two children who enter the past through the Beltane ring are told a tale by Borrobil, explaining the sound of invisible horses that pass them by. The tale is identical to that of King Herla's, although Herla is replaced in the tale by a king named Eochaid. Now, Eochaid is found to be a

king of Ulster folk-lore and a tale is told of a chess game between him and a king Midhir. Midhir happens to be one of Alan Garner's Wild Hunt.



Tolkien's "Lord of the Rings" uses much folk-lore from the Norse, Teutonic and Celtic cycles of myth. It is not surprising, therefore, that it also incorporates the Wild Hunt into its plot. Yet, the Hunt does not appear once, but in three different forms. Two of these forms can clearly be appreciated, but I do not think that the third form may be as obvious as the others without some explanation.

The most obvious of the three forms is the Nazgul, the Black Riders, the Nine. Much like Lloyd Alexander's Arawn, the Nazgul do the hunting for Sauron. The Nine are perfectly formed as the Wild Huntsmen. Also, the fact that they take to the air on those winged creatures, much like the Valkyrie of the Norse legends - collectors of doomed souls they epitomise.

The second form is the troupe of the dead, the Men of the Mountains; those not yet dead until they fulfil the oath they broke, to fight against Sauron:

"Over the land there lies a long shadow,
westward reaching wings of darkness.
The Tower trembles; to the tombs of kings
doom approaches. The Dead awaken;
for the hour is come for the oathbreakers:
at the Stone of Erech they shall stand again
and hear a horn in the hills ringing there.
Whose shall the horn be? Who shall call them
from the grey twilight, the forgotten people?
The heir of him to whom the oath they swore.
From the North shall he come, need shall drive him:
he shall pass the Looer to the Paths of the Dead."

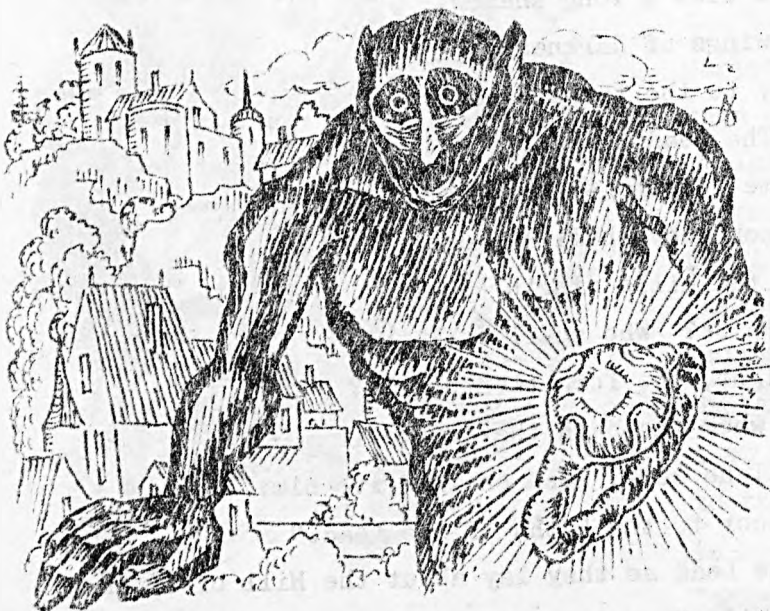
And so Aragorn awakens the Sleepless Dead as they lay about the Hill of Erech. This again is a strong form of the Wild Hunt intermixing the march of the dead

with those doomed never to rest, as in the case of King Valdemar. In fact, the legend of the Men of the Mountain is very much like that of Earl FitzGerald who is supposed to ride around the Rath of Curragh until the silver shoes of his horse are worn as thin as a cat's ear, with which his spell will be broken by a horn sounded by a miller's son with six fingers on each hand.

Thirdly, there is Gollum who is, in fact, in the form of a death portent. Physically, he is very similar to two portents in the lore of the Wild Hunt who supposedly stalk the Midlands and Northern England - the Padfoot and the Skirker - as well as the Gwyllgi, or Dog of Darkness of Welsh lore. The similarity does not end there, when one thinks upon Gollum's actions in "LotR"; throughout the travels of the Fellowship Gollum is like a familiar, closely dogging the heels of Frodo, who possesses the Ring, in much the same way as does Hillyer's familiar in Machen's "Green Round".

Finally, could any conclusion be drawn from the fact that Boromir's horn was once the possession of Vorondil the Hunter who hunted the wild kine of Araw, a name that could have its derivation from Arawn, Lord of Annwn?

Aspects of the Wild Hunt go on still further. In Carl Jacobi's story, "The Coach on the Ring" the Hunt takes on the form of a spectral coach which is a death portent. Spectral coaches and headless horsemen, although not obviously, are part of the Wild Hunt/Furious Host. It is as the driver of a spectral coach that Sir Francis Drake enters the lore of the Hunt. In a more modern form, the Hunt also appears in Joseph Payne Brennan's story, "The Hunt" and in Saki's story, "The Hounds of Fate", the Hunt in the latter story becoming merely a metaphor for the fact that your fate will hunt you down no matter what you do or where you go.



As can be seen from the few examples given herein, the Wild Hunt is greatly represented in fantastic literature and it only remains for it to be asked, how much does fantastic literature rely on folk-lore and legend?

DESOLATION

I Such emptiness here
that even the shadows
thrown by clouds
are an event
on the grey sand

Down there the waters spill
not knowing the heat
which way to go

By the road side
a few trees stand
waiting
for the stream
which returns each spring

Up there under the rocks
some nameless graves
What else could they find here
in the silence
but death.

II You left coals of hellish fire
burning my mouth
smouldering in my memories

Then turned away
with a smile
ordering me to sing hymns of despair

Hope like a terrible golden bird
sinks its claws
and destroys the peace I once had.

- Lisa Conesa.

❁ Belladonna ❁

Goes to a Party



Twelve noon, June 27th. 1972, and Belladonna, nervous and dressed in the utmost of respectability, hesitates outside the office entrance of Allen & Unwin's in Museum Street. A notice on the door warns trade callers that this entrance is closed to deliveries and ordinary business. She peeps inside; there are tables spread with noshes and nibbles, but nobody there. Belladonna doesn't quite like to be the first, so she goes away and kills time browsing at bookshop windows.... Returning about five minutes later, she sees that the party has begun, so she goes in. A number of nice young people, mostly women, are there, and it is evident that they are members of the staff - one of them provides Belladonna with a glass of sherry. The walls and the showcases are adorned with well-known maps, photos of the Professor, and other encouraging signs - several of Pauline Baynes' fine spikey black-and-white designs meet the eye.

There is a stir at the inner door and here comes the Professor, escorted by Mr. Rayner Unwin. The Professor is a cedar-brown man, like a wood-carving, brisk and cheerful, though a bit lamed with lumbago. Belladonna happens to be his first contact.

"I represent more than a hundred of your most ardent readers and am known among them as Belladonna Took."

"Belladonna?" he says. "Ah, well, she made a good end...."

There is evidently a mistake of identity here.

"No, no, not Lobelia Sackville-Baggins! Belladonna Took, the mother of Bilbo...."

"Ah, yes...." the penny drops. "Very poisonous plant, belladonna. Get it

all over the place, where I'm living. The birds bring the seeds in from the Physic Gardens which is close to me - " We ramble off on consideration of the 'belladonna atropos', less lethal, he thinks, than the Woody Nightshade, as it is less attractive. Belladonna has been instrumental in getting 'belladonna atropos' uprooted in Regents Park..., but we are getting rather far away from the main subject. Belladonna asks the Professor if he will consent to be the Society's honorary President. "Certainly," he says, and Belladonna gives him information of how the Society functions, the problem of our wide distribution, etc. Then other people present have to claim his attention.

Mr. Raynor Unwin, tall, urbane, well-dressed, with the unmistakable air of authority, then introduces Belladonna to Mr. Ian Ballantine, the American publisher of the Tolkien books as well as of the Ballantine Adult Fantasy books which reach us here through Pan Books. Mr. Ballantine looks like what we always imagine as the American business man: short, rather dark, bespectacled, and very affable; with him is Mrs. Ballantine, who is understood to be equally important and active in the firm - she also might be the typical American lady, beautifully hairdressed, in neat black-and-white with a black-and-white wampum necklace. She has a nice story to tell - the scene is an American park in winter, snowy and bleak. Four depressed persons, including herself, reluctantly walking their dogs in the wintry landscape, a scene that might be Breughel...; the four draw closer together, shivering, still depressed. Then, as they get within earshot, Mrs. Ballantine remarks, "The sort of day that all hobbits should be snug in their holes..." "Hobbits?" and, hey presto, the group has caught fire! Immediately, there, in the snow, begins a Hobbit-gossip that lasts a couple of hours!

Mr. Ballantine asks Belladonna if she has seen the "Come to Middle-Earth" poster and, learning that she has not, takes down her address.

Belladonna is next presented to Mr. David Grimshaw, the head of the Science Fiction department of A.&U. He is young, energetic and, as might be expected, a man of today. Belladonna explains to him that the Tolkien Society does not really cover SF, but that some of its members are also enthusiasts in that direction and that there is a great deal of infiltration through Fantasy. He shows himself interested in the Society and promises further contact - next year's Con, perhaps?

Belladonna finds an opportunity to ask Mr. Rayner Unwin that very burning question: "What about the "Silmarillion"?" The only reply is an expressive

shrug of his slim shoulders - it is anyone's guess.

A handsome Tolkien Calendar is being shown around, but Belladonna does not manage to get a look at it, and gathers that it will not be on the market for a long time yet.

Eventually, Belladonna contrives a final word with the Professor. He is, he says, glad to be settled in Oxford again, but even there he finds it hard to get privacy. Oxford, he says, is full of crime and criminals. Some truly execrable person, calling on him with a hard-luck story and not succeeding in obtaining any money out of him, slipped in and stole his M.B.E. medal and some of his late wife's jewellery - things of the greatest sentimental value. (All Tolkienists will sympathise with him and find it hard to express adequately their detestation of this theft)... Belladonna is oppressed by the sense of precious opportunity slipping away; but how can one tap the fountain of wisdom at a sherry-party? "If I can help your Society in any way," he says, "I will."

Then, Mr. Rayner Unwin firmly escorts him away, and the party is over. He is just as one would imagine him - shall one say, a jovial and well-seasoned Ent? Yet, not so ponderous... Or Bilbo, in Rivendell? Some elderly people carry an aura of their age, not so the Professor - still less is he 'stretched' at all. In spite of being in some pain with lumbago, he appeared to be as hearty as one of the sound old trees that he loves.

Some time after, Belladonna found herself the happy recipient of one large "Come to Middle-Earth" poster, one complete set of the Ballantine three-volume paperback "LotR" in a beautiful decorated case and the Tolkien Calendar, all not from America by the kindness of Mr. Ballantine. The Calendar, which is for 1973, should be available later this year and will be a 'must' for all TS members. It is a beautiful production, containing a number of pictures by the Professor himself, all of strange haunting beauty. I particularly like the one called "Bilbo comes to the huts of the Raft-Elves"; also, there is a nice whimsicality in his picture of Smaug - a hint of self-portration? There is also a very good portrait of the Professor laughing.

Belladonna also received a photo of the great occasion, showing herself with a sherry-glass upraised, looking regrettably like a combination of Cicely Courtneige and Margaret Rutherford. In the background a shadowy figure that just might be the Professor, but it is hard to be sure with flashlight photos. But this figure appears to have Spock ears.... Now, I wonder???



ON LEAVING THE MAIN SEQUENCE

Under skies of yellow, red and green
The temple flares and flaring, calls,
Its spire a sunbolt knifeedge keen,
Its priests attired in orichalcum shawls.
A Phoenix leads the ultrasonic chant
And round the prayer wheels scream,
Prayers that dying Sol might grant,
Might shake Him from His blazing dream.
For He is turning red and growing,
Eating up the planets, one by one;
Old, old Earth is next for burning,
Cindered by the ever hungry Sun.
Those who will not leave their world
Have made an image of the Solstar,
Him whose flyflots' now unfurled,
Helios in his incandescent car.
Worship, worship, oh you golden fools,
Raise up the crystal chalices of fire,
Beseech His mercy with your jewels,
You think old sins attract His ire...
Nothing done in your coruscating fane
Nor your cantors brazen throated songs
Can halt the immolating bane
That will melt the copper of your gongs....

- A. R. Fallone.

Hobbit Mail



Dave Weldrake, 9 South View Terrace, Hill Head, Halifax Road, Dewsbury, Yorks.

Shall we begin somewhere in the lettercol of Mallorn 5? I think the Wintu Indian's remarks cited by Bob Borsely are very apposite; he's wrong to suggest that the spirit of the earth will get its own back. It's dead or dying. The only consolation it's got is that if it goes it takes us with it. If we poison the planet with out waste products it'll stop supporting life and put an end to the poisoning.... too late, as usual.

Anyway, onto other matters. About Moorcock's books; I can't say I would 'rave' over the Elric books, but I do like them. I don't think this is being 'sick in the head', as Hartley reports Moorcock's beliefs now to be. The symbiosis/conflict between Elric and Stormbringer fascinates me as does the paradox of a being of Chaos fighting on the side of the forces of Law. I reckon it fascinates Moorcock too, or else why should he keep returning to the theme? If he doesn't like the Elric idea I suppose he must only write books about Elric to make money out of us poor 'sick' people that do like Elric. And if that isn't sick, what is?

In view of all this you might be surprised to know that I half agree with Will Haven's summation of Moorcock's heroes, but I don't see this as grounds for condemning Moorcock. The kind of people that he chooses to write about are his own affair. What matters is whether he writes about them well or not. It is style we ought to assess Moorcock on, not our individual preferences for the characters concerned and, if the ending of "Stormbringer" manages to force the appropriate reactions out of Will, I reckon that Moorcock's done his job.

Praise(?)/comments about my article in Mallorn 4 duly noted. I'll try and do better next time. To James Ead, I can only say he'd better measure the size of his Cornish friends. The reprints that I have of extracts from "Popular Romances of the West of England" by Robert Hunt, a book first published in 1871, always refers to the piskies as the 'Small People', so who am I to disagree with the Cornish? Mind you, I suppose it would be better to be wary of them; I wouldn't trust anybody with tails, and all Cornishmen are born with them.

About the 'baby-snatching'. I did mention it briefly in my article, but I didn't want to give it too much scope since I was trying to keep the article fairly close to ideas found in Tolkien. I have got a few examples of 'baby-snatching' recorded in my files, but I cannot, after a cursory inspection, find a specifically Cornish example. Perhaps James can enlighten me there. I'm always happy to hear traditional tales.

John Abbott's article was quite amusing, though I think it should have been retitled "Refugee from a Nazgul" (and who indeed wouldn't flee from a Nazgul?)

Of the books reviewed I have only read one, that is "Bored of the Rings" by the Harvard Lampoon and I totally, absolutely and unconditionally disagree with Jonathan Brown's assessment of it. I reckon that he either has no sense of humour or, more likely, is one of these people who regard LotR with an almost religious awe and cannot stand the idea of anyone mocking such a 'work of art'. I found the book hilarious, especially the parody of the scene at the Prancing Pony. If I had a copy of the book now I'd re-review it and supply you with quotes, etc., to back up my point of view, but unfortunately I haven't.

The shields of Middle-Earth article was quite interesting too. Goodness knows how people can assemble such piles of data from one book. It's amazing! While prattling on about heraldry, does anybody know what Elrond's coat of arms was? It ought, as I mentioned in my article, to have been a leopard for that is the heraldic device signifying humans with fairy ancestry, or half humans, but Tolkien doesn't mention this at all. In fact, if I remember aright, he doesn't mention Elrond's shield at all, or does he? If someone knows, maybe they could let me in on the secret.

((I will refrain from replying to your views on pollution as mine, like your own in your original letter, are fairly lengthy.

Your comments about the 'sickness' surrounding Moorcock and his books

precisely echo mine. Thanks for saying them as it saves me the trouble. I have said this before, and will say it again - Moorcock's heroes are stereotyped! They are unbalanced, homosexually disturbed and so set and inflexible in their transition between one character and another that they bore me. I believe that the concept of the Eternal Champion was formed not merely to link Moorcock's heroes together, but to cover up the lack of distinction between them.

As for your comments about Cornishmen, Dave, being born with tails; I can assure you that I - who am half Cornish, half Welsh - have no glimmer of a tail; neither do any of my numerous all-Cornish relatives. I believe this nasty rumour originated from those foreigners who came over with that usurper, William the Conqueror, just to belittle the 'true' British. I am afraid that your statement about the piskies always being referred to as the 'Small People' in Robert Hunt's book - which was, by the way, originally printed in 1868, I believe, in two volumes - is wrong. When Hunt refers to them both it is because he does not know which of the two 'distinct' fairy races is to be named in each situation. I would suggest you look into the origin of the Small People as it is quite fascinating. As for James Ead's comments about the piskies being of different sizes, even as tall as a man, again it is wrong. To all accounts that I have heard, piskies are small creatures - what James may be referring to, though, are the 'Spriggans', who are supposedly the diminished ghosts of giants whose mischiefs are much like those of the piskies.

As for 'baby-snatching' and 'changelings', there are quite a few tales of such in Cornwall, though I must admit, few bear a distinctive Cornish flavour. Anyway, if you are interested, I will let you have copies of those I know. There is also a long and interesting chapter about Changelings in a book by an S. Hartland, "The Science of Fairy Tales", which I would recommend to you.))

Sam Long, Box 4946, Patrick A.F.B., Fla. 32925, U.S.A.

Mallorn 5 didn't come up to the standards of its predecessors; nevertheless, it did bring out some interesting points, like Sam's "Troll Sat Alone on his Seat of Stone" going to the tune of "Fox goes out on Saturday Night". I'll have to remember that one and, in exchange, say that "A Elbereth Gilthoniel" goes well to the tune "Greensleeves", if the very last line is repeated.

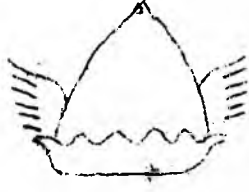
Jonathan Brown's review of "Bored of the Rings" completely misses the point. For my part, I found it terrifically funny. As lampoons go, it's reasonably well done, and since the business of lampoons is to turn their subjects inside-out and upside-down, I think they succeeded right well. The book is not meant to be
40.

taken seriously. And it is not a comment on life in America today - it is a spoof, not so much of Tolkien's work than of the cult that has grown up around it. It is true, however, that many folk on the Eastern side of the Atlantic may miss some of the subtler points because most of the names have been changed into American trade names. The book is great fun, if read in the spirit it was written - irreverently.

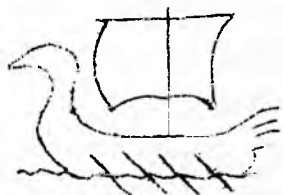
The article on "Shields of Middle-Earth" is pure hogwash! The author betrays his ignorance of both heraldry and LotR. ((The author of the piece has the Christian name of Helen)). I wrote an article on "Heraldry in LotR" which appeared in my own Qwertyuiop 2 and in Mallorn 1 and which I shall summarise here:

(1) Rohan's arms were a green shield with a running white horse. The same arms can be seen in red and white on the inescutcheon in the Royal Arms of the Hanoverian kings of Britain. I feel sure that the horse would have been painted over the boss. True, the horn was much used in Rohan, but there is no mention of it on a shield.

(2) Mordor's arms would be the Eye of Sauron, but the bordure is unnecessary and uncanonical. Morgul bore the death's head moon on black. Sauron's badge was the White Hand (on black).

(3)  The crown on the flag of Gondor is the Gondorian crown, a winged jeweled helmet, probably not too unlike the headgear of the ancient Russian boyars or present Ethiopian magnates. There is no mention of a mound for a Tree to stand on.

(4) The arms of Dol Amroth, closely described when Frodo and Sam are brought before Aragorn in Book 6, Chapter 4, viz, "a ship swan-prowed faring on the sea". There is no mention of a chevron. Imrahil's



standard would contain badges, a ship and a swan, and thus would he lead his men into Minas Tirith. There is difference between a standard, which contains the

badges of an armiger, and a banner, containing his arms. It is the Royal Banner (not standard) that flies over Windsor Castle when the Queen is in residence.

It must be remembered also that the era described in LotR seems to have been a pre-heraldic era, roughly corresponding to the 11th century AD in Western Europe, where personal arms had not yet been invented, but where badges and other cognizances were in use, and where monarchs used more or less standard devices. The earliest arms we know of date back to Henry II in the late 12th century.

Archie Mercer, 21 Trenethick Parc, Helston, Cornwall.

Hooray, hooray, hooray for Sloop John B. (Abbott)! The man's something of a genius, both literarily and artistically. His scattered artwork really does brighten up the issue in a way that few people's does, and his sense of humour is one of the best things to happen around Tolkien-fandom in years. His "Flaws" article frequently had me howling. Obviously he, and not H. Lampon Esq., should have been the one to produce a comic take-off of LotR.

"Sir John de Creke" set me to wondering what was the difference, if any, between satire and allegory. I came to the conclusion that, basically, satire is one of two main ingredients of allegory, the destructive ingredient. If the allegorist wishes to ridicule his subject, then it's satire. If he wishes simply to enhance the understanding of it from a sympathetic viewpoint (the Narnians would fit here, I think) then there ought to be another word, but for the time being I'll have to call it 'constructive allegory'.

The above part, Sir John strikes me as a singularly tactless knight. Fancy entering a lady's bedroom, then promptly telling her he couldn't stay because he sought the most beautiful lady in the world. Without even covering himself by a "present company excepted", or some such! He was lucky in his choice of hostess - many would have sent him out with a traditional flea in his ear!

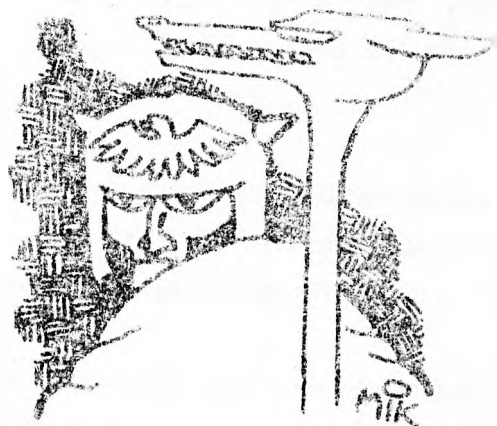
Re. "Bored of the Rings", I think Jonathan Brown's taken up an untenable position. There's nothing whatsoever wrong with 'cashing in on the success' of the Tolkien trilogy - or of anything else. Tolkien is not being deprived of anything that is rightfully his - in fact, if anything, his sales are liable to be increased by such activity. If his book is good enough for various other people to make money out of it indirectly, that they wouldn't have been likely to make otherwise, then that stands to Tolkien's credit. Nobody's the loser, and the world is made richer. This is, of course, entirely irrespective of the qualities of the lampoon under discussion. I found it rather 'cheap' myself, though several people whose taste I respect tell me they enjoyed it, and even had their understanding of the original slightly increased by comparing the two stories.

Tony Fallone, 79 Salvington Road, Durrington, Worthing, Sussex.

My first comments are on Mrs. Vera Chapman's "Sir John de Creke". So far as I am concerned, this was not the best start to a fiction spot in Mallorn, even if the work in question could be called 'fiction' - it reads more like a moralising tract. Tolkien himself has written that he has a dislike of allegory and I doubt



whether he would be very pleased at something like this appearing in a journal devoted to his works. I share his distaste for it, and especially for such stark allegory so thinly disguised as a tale. From a medieval writer such as Mallory, it might be forgiven - although I seem to recall that at his crudest he was never so unsubtle - but from a person ostensibly living in the twentieth century it is unforgivable. I say 'ostensibly' because the attitudes revealed are more those of a Victorian moraliser than of a modern woman worried about the way things are going today. Belladonna believes that "Do what thou wilt is the whole of the Law" as promulgated by Aleister Crowley is the credo of a large section of the



younger generation. I don't believe that this is true, as no group of people have ever lived or could ever live their lives wholly chaotically. Sons and daughters can never erase the influences of their parents - no one grows up in a vacuum and, therefore, no one can escape the influences of a quite sane society. Like it or not, the rules and taboos of our civilisation are ingrained during our childhood and stay with us until

we die. Belladonna also attacks hypocrisy, crooked businessmen, making money from drugs and vice, gun running, pollution, wasting ones substance without thought of tomorrow and common or garden thievery, not to mention a final stab at those who seek to analyse and compare religions. And all this in only the first episode of a proposed serial! I dislike, along with allegory, being lectured, which is pretty much the same thing, when I had assumed I was reading something for entertainment. Most of all, I dislike being lectured as though I were an infant, ignorant of right and wrong. I am sure that the members of this Soc. are sufficiently mature not to require such naive reminders of the pitfalls of life, and most definitely not in a magazine aimed at the analysis and appreciation of a work of entertainment untainted by overt preaching.

A novel like John Myers Myers' "Silverlock" can be digested with pleasure and its message taken down whole and ruminated upon with benefit, because it is a fine story and a subtle one and the gradual change in the lead character is a believable and admirable change, relevant to anyone, anytime, although set in a landscape of utter fantasy and myth. I am sure my soul was improved far more by reading that than by ploughing through, say, C.S. Lewis, or picking through "Sir John de Creke". Another allegory that I can read with pleasure is "The Chymical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreutz" an alchemical conglomeration of weird and wonderful symbols that dazzle and bewilder and then charm one. There is no charm in "Sir John".

I don't agree with Hartley about Lin Carter's "Look Behind the LotR"; I think it is quite scholarly and well researched and certainly not something any TS member could knock up on a rainy afternoon. He could have gone a little deeper than he did, but perhaps he had some sort of deadline for the book and had also tried to keep it clear enough for newcomers to fantasy to understand. The synopsis of the trilogy - with mistakes, I admit - would alone be pretty daunting to any of the uninitiated.

I am with Roger Johnson on Moorcock - I think he is a magnificent writer when he wants to be and when he allows himself enough time. But, I also agree with Will Haven about the character of his heroes - they are all bent to some degree, but fascinating with it!

I shall certainly not buy "Bored of the Rings" after reading Jonathan Brown's review. To some I may seem slightly cynical, but from his account the book is despicable, written by the ultracynical and orcish. I wouldn't sully my neurones.

((And so the battle rages over "Bored of the Rings". To end this lettercol I want to put my own oar in, just so that more confusion may reign. I reviewed the book about two years ago (at least, when it first came out) in the mag, Seminar 2. The review was short and not very good, but I still hold the same view of the book as I did then - that, as a parody, it is very poor! Do not think of me as 'one of these people who regard LotR with an almost religious awe' as I am certainly not! My interests are wide and varied, and one of them just so happens to be S&S, of which genre the LotR is. The Harvard Lampoon have written a number of parodies to different 'established' works. Most of these parodies worked, for me, because they did not just take a certain work and alter it to put in a few funnies; they wrote new works in the style of the originals - some nearly as good as those originals; the James Bond parody springs to mind - emphasising, wittily, faults and eccentricities of both writer and his characters and also injecting their own brand of humour into it. Not so, "Bored of the Rings", which is basically a swipe from the LotR, with brash humour of the lowest American form. Now, start tearing me apart.))

