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Missives to Mythlore

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Missives to Mythlore

Authors

Bill Linden, Paula Marmor, Mary Ezzell, Helen Maurer, Jim Allen, Christopher J. Henrich, Ed Fitzgerald, and Jim Carleton

MISSIVES TO MYTHLORE

Bill Linden, 83-33 Austin Street, Kew Gardens, N.Y. 11415

On Logres: "Loegr" is the Cymric name for England. In the History of the Kings of Britain, this appears in the form "Loegria". Geoffrey derives it from the legendary king Locrine, who recieved it when Brutus divided Britain. Similarly, he derives Albany (Alba-Scotland) from Albanact and Cambria from Camber.

On a recent espionage mission to P'o-L'u, I found that the formation of the Miserific Society is having undreamed-of repercussions. The Emperor is furious because he was not included on the board, and is talking of sending some of his most vicious, most famished octopods after "those decadent northerners". He also threatened to publish an article on "What Straik and Wither Really Did to Filostrato".

Tungerong-larry-ong!



Otterbourne, in a 15th(?) century manuscript, records a king of Mercia named Bilba ("Latinized" as Bilbam; cf. his Penda for the usual Penda). The royal house of Mercia also boasts an Eomer. For both of these, see Jacob Grimm's Teutonic Mythology.

On my article this issue: my thanks to J.R. Christopher for pointing out that Ask and Embra are alternate names for Tor and Tindril; or rather that Perelandra addresses them in those names: see Perelandra, p. 206 (paperback).

Paula Marmor, 8330 Pierce Dr., Buena Park, Calif. 90620

On Ruth Herman's Arthurian questions: if I am reading my notes correctly, and not mis-interpolating my authors, the Fisher King first occurs under that name in Chretien, in the Perceval, whence he was borrowed by Wolfram for Parzival. Robert de Borron's Rich Fisher of his Joseph of Arimathea is apparently based on Chretien, also. See R.S. Loomis, The Development of Arthurian Romance.

Logres as the name of Arthur's kingdom is also first used by Chretien (as Williams said). The name occurs rather frequently in the pre-Malory Vulgate Cycle, appearing in each of the three books I have translation of (The Prose Lancelot, Mort Artu, The History of the Holy Grail, included in Sir Lancelot of the Lake: A French Prose Romance of the Thirteenth Century, trans. Lucy Allen Paton, New York, 1929.)

Geoffrey of Monmouth doesn't specifically mention Logres, but he does mention a kingdom of Loegria or Loengre, in the east of England, named after Locrin or Locrine, son of Brutus. The Evans/Dunn translation (the Dutton paperback) in Bk. II chap. I has "Loegria (England)" and proceeds to use "England, to wit, and Northumberland," the J.A. Giles translation of 1848 has "Loegria and Northumberland." In a footnote to Richard of Cirencester, Giles mentions the Welsh triads as preserving the name of a/people, the "Loegrwys (Loegrans)," that came to Britain from Gascony. See Giles, Six Old English Chronicles, London, 1848; also E.K. Chambers, Arthur of Britain, and Loomis' Development.

On my own article: some people out there may have noticed a certain amount of historical bungling. Forgive an over-zealous trivialist. The corrections in detail would take more space than their relevancy merits, but I will say that Stoops of the Angle should be Stoops of Dunland. And Bag End was built by Bilbo's father, so it almost certainly was simply a play on Baggins and "bag end," meaning cul-de-sac. Of course, Bungo may have been aware of the origins of his name...

Some additional amendments: the name Took may come from either of two Anglo-Saxon un-compounded names I have run across, Toki, whence modern Tookie, and Tukka, whence Tuck (but this looks more like Tuk). The meanings of both names are lost to us. See C.M. Matthews, English Surnames.

The name Frodo (O. Norse Froe i, OHG Fruti) means "wise," specifically, "wise in ancient lore." And Thomas of

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Talking of people who like Lewis and Chesterton and certain others, I am also fond of those who defend what Mr. James D. Clark (in Mythlore Autumn 70) calls the Christian West. But I have noticed a further "syndrome" of writers who are often liked by those who love Lewis. For cool, civilized logic, Rose Macaulay: there the reason is obvious enough. For others, it is harder to pin down the reason, but they do occur very often in the same libraries: Kipling, Tswain, John Dickson Carr (for mystery readers), Angela Thirkell (for those who like pleasant nonsense). Straight childrens' books: Arthur Ransome. Fantasy (of course): E. Nesbit, Alan Garner, E.R. Eddisson, Mervyn Peake, Ellistree Treavor. For no particular reason, but he usually turns up: Swinburne--the poems about lonely places, not about grapes and red haired women. Likewise James Thomson ("The City of Dreadful Night"). Psychic research: Stewart Edward White's Betty books. For those opinion allow them to enjoy her, or who are very tolerant in deed, Ayn Rand.

I would like to invite correspondence with anyone else who shares this syndrome, more or less, with those who like CKC et al, or indeed with any readers of Mythlore.

Helen Maurer

October 7, 1971

You all deserve compliments on the appearance and content of Mythlore. It seems to get better all the time. Also, it is interesting to see how the Society has grown, from the two branches which existed when I first came in contact with you to the seventeen listed in the last issue plus the special interest groups. How are they coming these days? It all sounds great and tends to cause moments of yearning for the West Coast.

I want to make this short, but there are a couple of things that are plaguing my curiosity? Just what is the relationship between the incomplete "The Noises that Weren't There" and Williams' last novel All Hallows Eve? Or is this something that is not known and which raises other people's curiosity too? Is there a possibility that the idea for "Nois-



es" might not be the final novel that Williams had projected, but is there any evidence to substantiate either view? In reading the first two chapters one is struck by the similarities and overlaps between the two works. There is the matter of characters: Jonathan Drayton the artist who, unwittingly or not, manages to portray more than the surface of things. In *All Hallows* his girlfriend is Betty, but in "Noises" he is married to Marjorie. (Now I must confess that it's been awhile since I read *All Hallows*, and my feelings to it at that time were ambivalent. Embarrassingly enough, I have forgotten what ultimately happens with Betty. Is it indicated or implied that she will eventually marry Jonathan or what? Rather than trot off to the library to look this up, I'll just ask!) Then there is Mrs. Leclerc, mentioned in the first chapter of "Noises". What is her relationship to Simon of *All Hallows*? Just as a sideline, is there any particular reason for Williams' choosing the name "Leclerc" for his personifications of evil? I make that word plural from a sneaking suspicion that Williams did not intend for his "Mrs. Leclerc" of "Noises" to be a sweet, innocent little old lady. There is the wartime or post-war setting for each story, a house (the same house?) which figures strongly as a setting for evil in each, and the importance of Jonathan's paintings as physical embodiment and pictorialization of what, I guess, can be described as metaphysical states as much as anything else. Well, that is not too coherent, but perhaps my meaning gets through. The beginning of "Noises" also seems to bring in the idea of persons living juxtaposed to persons/things/intelligence(?). non-lingin, both worlds. Needless to say, I am eager to

know what will happen in Chapter III, whether it will continue to collow and reinforce patterns established in *All Hallows Eve* or whether it will unexpectedly depart from them.

We recently had the opportunity to spend two weeks in England, where we rented a car and tottled around the countryside. It was the first time either Edy or I were able to see much outside London, and the experience was quite interesting. I was pretty well preoccupied with the pursuit of medieval England — people, places, etc. connected with the 15th cen. — but we both made observations which may be interesting to students of Tolkieniana. (Probably know already to many of you.) The rolling hills and well-tilled fields of rural England looked to us as if they'd come straight out of the Shire. Also, although it isn't wise to make sweeping generalizations, we kept encountering much that was hobbitish in the people we met. Our landlady in York, for example, gave us breakfasts that were huge even by English standards, and then in the evening when we had returned from the day's adventures there she was with tea and biscuits again. Aside from established meal times and traditional teas, it seemed that the slightest excuse was reason enough for coffee or tea and a snack. Another thing is the tendency toward an insular outlook which has been talked about so much that it has become a stereotypic part of the British character. Not just of England-the-island, but of England as expressed by one's particular community or region. Mabey the push to join the Common Market will change some of this, but at least for the moment we found lots of instances of the old attitude alive and well. The idea of civility between people is normal behaviour (and, conversely, that rudeness is not) also seems to typify the attitudes of both English and Shirefolk. We really noticed this coming from New York! The last thing that comes to mind just now is the delight in genealogies which one can find in England and among hobbits. While the average man in the street may not care too much about who his ancestors were, you run into quite a bit of attention to family trees when you start hearing about (or reading about) anyone who is some kind of personage.

Jim Allan

Orilla, Ontario, Canada

I was very glad to at last receive MYTHLORE'S 7 and 8 today. They were absolutely beautiful, both in art and article. Keith Masson's discussion of Tom Bombadil was particularly good, one of those impressive pieces of analysis and appreciation that leave almost nothing to be said by later writers. I will add, however, my guess as to why Tom did not destroy all the Barrow-weights, or put an end other evils such as the old willow and the sentient trees of the Old Forest. I think the clue is in Gandalf's words, "Many that live deserve death. And some that die deserve life. Can you give it to them? Then do not be too eager to deal out death in judgement. For even the very wise cannot see all ends."

Tom, like Gandalf, is wise enough to know he has not the wisdom to rule and decide for all the creatures of the land what is best. Best for who? Should he, for example,

kill all the foxes to protect rabbits? As Goldberry says, the assumption of ownership of the land and its creatures to tend and rule them justly "would indeed be a burden". Tom acts only against such dangers as "chance" to menace himself or his friends, and for the rest, lives and lets live.

Claire Howard's article said quite a few things about Catharine R. Stimpson's book that I agree with. However I think that she missed the point of what was bothering Professor Stimpson, that is, the presentation of invalid and false concepts of proper human relations as though they were valid, concepts such as the noble lineage, the divinely appointed king, the setting of limits on what man was meant to know and do, and the proper place of women, and the lower classes. Undoubtedly, at least in my opinion, Catharine R. Stimpson would have been better to have written her pamphlet as a study of the ideology of Tolkien's works. By writing it as a literary critique she wrongly combines literary criticism, and her own subjective reactions to Tolkien's ideology.

A few remarks about Logres may be of interest. In Welsh tradition, as far as I know, Lloegyr was the name used for England. It may indeed have been the ancient name for southern Britain before the Saxon invasion, and the later Welsh used it as such in the Mabinogion and Elsewhere. In Geoffrey of Monmouth Britain is divided, precisely as was the Britain of his day, into England, Scotland, Wales, and Cornwall. But as he cannot use these modern names for supposedly pre-Saxon kingdoms, he substitutes instead archaic and Celtic names, calling them respectively Loegria, Albania, Cambria, and Cornubia. His early Britain also resembles the Britain of his own day in that it is the King of Loegria who is the most powerful king.

Usually he holds hegemony over the lesser kings and dukes of Albania, Vendotia (North Cambria), Dimetia (South Cambria), and Cornubia. Never does one of the kings of the other countries rule over a King of Loegria. Thus Arthur appears predominantly as a Loegrian king. However his battles and the cities in which he holds court are for the most part located in the north and west of Britain, not in the south-east. London is not even mentioned. This agrees with the names associated with Arthur in both Welsh and early French tales. In Welsh legend his chief cities are Kelli Wig in Cornwall and Carlion on Usk in South Wales. In French tales they are Carlion, Carant (=Carwent), Carduel (=Carlisle), Camelot (=Cadbury Castle in Somerset?), and Carnarvon. In no Welsh tale is he called a ruler of Lloegyr, or associated with it.

In early French poems concerning Arthur his country is usually called Bretagne, that is Britain, and is often confused with Bretagne in the west of France, now called Brittany. Thus in Chretien de Troyes' *Erec et Enide*, the chief city of Erec's father in Carnant (=Carwent in Wales) but his coronation takes place in Nantes in B. Brittany. Obviously Chretien or his source has identified the two. Similarly in Chretien's *Yvain* one travels overland from Carduel in Gales (=Carlisle in Wales!!) to the forest of Broceliande in Brittany. And in late Arthurian tales Loonois (=Lothian), Tristan's native land, was confused with the district of Leon in Brittany adjoining the district of Cornouaille. The result is the fictitious land of Leonois, Liones, or Lyones adjoining the insular Cornwall

which nineteenth century antiquaries identified with the legendary drowned land of Lethowstow of Cornish folk tale.

To prevent the confusion of Bretagne the ancient name for the island, and Bretagne in France, some minstrels would have explained that Arthur's Bretagne was the country now known as Angleterre, that is, England. This identification appears in the opening lines of Chretien's *Cliges*, in a description of Arthur's host, Chretien distinguishes the men of Bretagne, still equated with England alone, from those of Wales, Scotland, and Cornwall. (Vv. 1473-1490)

These two factors, the influence of Geoffrey, and the tendency to picture Arthur in the model of the then English kings resulted in the increased tendency of the Arthurian romances to make Arthur, well still overlord of all Bretagne li Grant, specifically the King of Loegria. Loegria was written in French as Logres.

C.S. Lewis is, as far as I know, the first to use Logres in other than a geographical sense. He probably chooses to do so because the modern reader would have come across the name only in connection with the Arthurian legend, and therefore it has connotations of a magical, uncanny, yet bold and romantic England very different from that of the present day, or indeed from any of recorded history. In Williams Logres is civilized Roman Britain as opposed to the wild uncivilized remainder of the island. Williams' concept of an Arthurian order, of Arthur's court being the centre of a humanizing, civilizing movement, derives from Tennyson, who first makes a moral and intellectual difference between



Arthur and the other island kings. In the medieval romances Arthur is, in general, pictured as incredibly rich, incredibly generous, and presiding over an unbelievably noble court graced by the best knights in the world; but as a person he generally appears rather unperceptive--even stupid--, easily misled, totally conventional, apathetic, and sometimes cruel. His ideals and morals differ not a whit from those of the neighbouring kings and dukes.

Concerning the Fisher-King: he appears in Malory as Pellam the Maimed King, sometimes confused with his son or brother King Pellias. In the earlier versions of the Grail quest the Fisher-King is much more important and prominent. His wound is sometimes explained as accidental, but more often as a result of some sin.

One of these earlier versions may explain why it is from his sister in India that Ransom gains the title of Fisher-King. Most versions which tell anything of the Grail after the quest is achieved make Perceval the last of the Grail Kings, and removes the Grail forever from the world of men. One version only tells a different story: the Parzival of Wolfram von Eschenbach. According to Wolfram, after Parzival (= Perceval) achieved the quest, healed the Fisher-King, and succeeded to the position of Grail King, he and all the retinue of the Grail moved from their former home to the newly gained kingdom of Feirfiz, Parzival's half-brother, in India. There after Parzival's death, his eldest son Kardeiz ruled in his place.

Christopher J. Henrich

Bronx, New York.

Perhaps someone can identify the following quotation for me (from "The Funeral of a Great Myth", in C.S. Lewis's Christian Reflections)

It has great allies;

Its friends are propaganda, party cries,
And blge, and man's incorrigible mind.

I would like to know more of whoever can write verse like that.

In this essay, Lewis was able to consider a set of beliefs which he thoroughly disagreed with, recognizing their attractive features while stating the case against them. It might be valuable to analyse myths, such as (perhaps) existentialism, with which one profoundly disagrees; of course it is very difficult. But then, this is what existentialists or literary Marxists must do to read Tolkien; anyone who succeeds in understanding a repugnant point of view will feel some sympathy for Catharine Stimpson, who apparently tried it and failed. (See "The Vented Spleen.")

Ed Fitzgerald

Irvington, New York.

I think that Mythlore is excellent. Zuber, Barr, Bergstrom and Kirk make a strong base which you build on wonderfully. I've grown very familiar with their styles through Mythlore and Orcrist 3 and other zines, but they all come up with surprises now and then.

I have never really gotten involved with Charles Williams, although I did attempt Many Dimensions earlier this year. (I never got through it--outside causes I think.) The Williams chapter interested me though, and I may try him again soon. The Society seems very big on him, so I suppose I'll have to.

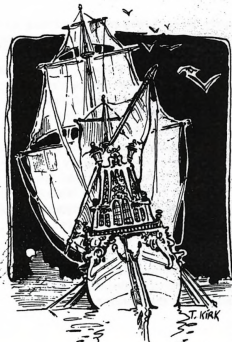
Having received so many issues together allows me to follow along with the zines progress, to grow with it so to speak. I do not think that offset destroyed the flavor or the fannishness of the magazine. It simply makes it easier to follow and more compact. Indeed, there are advantages in mimeo. For instance, I can't picture Carandaith or Niekas as offset, they're too informal for that. But Mythlore seems to me a balanced blend of the fannish and the scholarly, Car-

andaith and Orcrist mixed if you wish. The offset is a blessing, as necessary for Mythlore as art was for Orcrist, both were increased in their effectiveness for me.

To return a bit to Charles Williams, Galen Peoples' summary of War in Heaven seems to suggest parallels between it and That Hideous Strength, i.e. St. Anne's vs. Belbury, Fardles vs. London; Prester John's coming down and the Oyeresu descending; the Company of Logres and the "modern counterpart of the Arthurian fellowship" etc. Having never read the novel, I could be way off base, but the relationship that the two men shared could account for any (if there is in reality any) coincidence.

The textual quality that you present is excellent. Bernie Zuber's features (the column and fanzine reviews) are lively, your editorials are interesting, the articles are informative. Although I am no Williams fan (from non-acquaintance not from dislike) I enjoy Lewis and (of course) Tolkien, so that there is always something I receive from every issue. There is only one thing that saddens me. Dick Plotz in a Tolkien Journal which I recall, talked about the need for a centralized magazine for Tolkien facts, information and articles. His hope was, of course, for TJ to fit that need. Lamentably, it seems to have failed. TJ come out irregularly, and the past 3 issues have been joint, not TSA accomplishments as such but Mythlore-or-Orcrist-TJ's. I suppose this was an attempt to fulfill that need for centralization. But now, apparently, neither Mythlore nor Orcrist plan to do it again, so that TJ is all alone. I'm afraid it has come to what Dick Plotz feared. He mentioned the possibility that one would have to buy Tolkien magazines from all over to get the whole picture. I have come to that. Carandaith, Orcrist, Mythlore, TJ, Niekas, Best of Entmoot, Unicorn, Locus, they all vie for the Tolkien fans interest. True most have more than a strict Tolkien focus, but they all contain material which a Tolkien lover values. This is what saddens me. Mythlore has become a very impressive member of the group, appearing more regularly, showing much initiative both in it's editing and content and in the operation of the Mythopoeic Society. It may in the future come to be the most important Tolkien related fanzine around. I wish you much luck.

((Thank you for your kind and encouraging remarks about Mythlore. I whole heartedly agree with you, and probably with Richard Plotz, that it would be very nice if there could be one central Tolkien periodical that would contain all that there would be written about him and his works. There is only one person who could be the editor of this periodical: Professor Tolkien himself. No one else can presume to be the editor of the definitive Tolkien magazine. There is too much material to be put into one periodical, unless it had many, many pages, and came out monthly; and there is a sufficient diversity of viewpoint to prevent monopoly. How-





ever I would like Mythlore to be recognized at the leading Tolkien periodical available, and invite the readers to help it become so by providing articles, letters, and urging their friends to subscribe as well. —Editor)

Jim Carleton, La Mirada-Whittier Branch.

I thought Tim Kirk's Map of Narnia to be quite good, as far as it goes. He unfortunately leaves out many place names, for example: Chippingford, The Shudderin Wood, Glasswater Creek, Tummus's House, etc.

Speaking of Narnia, I am a Lewis-freak and have many of his works. I am re-re-re-reading The Narnian Chronicles and as yet cannot remember anywhere where it is flatly stated that Narnia is a flat world, and yet everyone claims it is! All the different reasons for it being flat are not conclusive and all the cases against it being flat are too heavy to ignore. If you take the case of the sun getting bigger as the Dawn Treader nears Aslan's country, this is one of the best reasons for a flat world, but not very convincing. True, on a sphere, no matter how large, as you travel towards the sun it will never get larger. Even so, for the sun to get larger at all, as stated in that book, the world must be many millions of miles across. And if it is that close and large, it would be much too hot to support life. Not even Aslan would be able to stand that heat, I feel. Secondly, a planet with regular day and night must either rotate on its axis, or must be stationary and have the sun revolve around it. The latter is impossible, from two points of view. First, the planet would have to be extremely massive to be able to swing a sun around it. This is impossible, as there could be no life as we know it on that planet; all terrestrial life would be crushed. Also, a flat world would never be able to sustain the gravitational attraction that would be necessary to keep the sun from pulling the planet into it, since most suns are quite powerful. As a further point, since the gravity on a flat world would be so low because there is no center of gravity, I would find it hard to believe that it keep a large enough atmosphere around it to sustain life. In short, a flat world would have very many problems in even keeping itself in orbit around a sun, let alone keeping a sun revolving around it. (For further helps and explanations, see the writings of Galileo, Newton, Copernicus, Fred Hoyle, and The Universe by Isaac Asimov). In addition, the existence of Bism shows that there is not just a surface layer but several others below it. Now you could say that Narnia is a cube, but that is just as bad as a plane.

((I think you are seriously missing the point here. Lewis had followed much of Medieval Cosmology in the making of Narnia. Read The Discarded Image by him, and then see that there isn't especially non-scientific in this fantasy world. To my knowledge Lewis doesn't have to say "Narnia is flat" nor does he need to: he does have Reepicheep say that he imagined the world like a great round table, which seems to be demonstrated later in the book. Caspian is surprised to find out that the Pevensies come from a round world, and by doing so he strongly implies Narnia is not round. (See Ch. XV of Dawn Treader) If it's not round, what shape is it? My sketch suggests my idea, that it is a shallow cone, which allows for the realm of Bism below, and allows the sun to pass underneath at night, to follow the universal primitive concept of what happened each night.))



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MYTHRIL

This is the product of the Inklings II Writer's Workshop. It features original fiction and poetry, plus illustrative artwork. The second issue is now out. Single issues are 75¢, and subscriptions are four issues for \$2.25. The group effort in producing the publication is admirable, and the quality of the material surpasses expectations.

PARMA ELDALAMBERON

This means "The Book of the Elven Tongues" and is the Journal of the Mythopoeic Linguistic Fellowship. It is interested in imaginary fantasy languages and all matters linguistic and philological, especially the divers tongues of Middle-earth and the Low Worlds. Single issues are 50¢. There are no subscriptions. Copies can be ordered from Paula Marmor, 8339 Pierce Drive, Buena Park, Ca. 90620, or from the Society.

NARNIA CON PROCEEDINGS

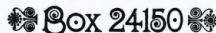
This is the product of the Conference on Narnia held on the anniversary of Lewis' birth in 1969. It contains nine papers on Narnia, plus poetry and a bibliography. Copies are \$1.

MYTHCON I & II PROCEEDINGS

MYTHCON I PROCEEDINGS is the product of the 1970 Tolkien Conference III/Mythcon I. It contains 17 lengthy papers on the three authors and other writers of fantasy, plus a con report, which add up to 60 pages. Copies are \$2.50.

MYTHCON II PROCEEDINGS is the product of the 1971 Mythcon II. It contains nine lengthy papers on mythopoeic literature, plus reports on several of the panels and events, and a Bergstrom cover. Copies are \$1.50.

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