Isolated But Not Alone
Glen GoodKnight
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In This Issue

In this issue, we have an article demonstrating parallels between the Anglo-Saxon poem Beowulf and J.R.R. Tolkien's The Hobbit. The article is from Bonniejean Christensen, who is currently on leave from her position as a Professor of English at the University of North Dakota, teaching medieval studies in Sarasota, Florida. She is serving as Curate at St. Wilfred's Episcopal Church in Sarasota.

Carla Faust Jones gives us an article describing a computer analysis of "The Dark Tower." She is a full-time technical writer with an engineering firm, as well as working on a graduate degree at the University of Florida's College of Journalism and Communication. She is a long-time admirer of C.S. Lewis, and in 1978 had the pleasure of visiting Oxford, England. Her article will be of special interest to those who have read Kathryn Lindskoog's new book The C.S. Lewis Hoax (which is reviewed in this issue.)

We also have another insightful paper on Dorothy L. Sayers’ Lord Peter Wimsey from Nancy-Lou Patterson. Her scholarship is once again ornamented by her own artwork.

Among the other offerings we have for you is an article on Ursula K. Le Guin’s Always Coming Home, a consideration of Thackery's The Rose and the Ring, and a comparison of Tolkien's The Hobbit and De La Mare's The Three Mulla Mulgars. Also Angelee Anderson gives us an article on Charles Williams' concept of The City.

The front cover is by Paula DiSante. She is a native of Michigan and a graduate of the University of Michigan. She is currently enrolled at the USC Film School in Los Angeles, California. The back cover is by Tom Loback whose distinctive style is a pleasing addition to the art that appears in Mythlore.

— Sarah Beach

EDITORIAL

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My sincere personal thank you goes to all of you who took the time and responded to the Members' and Mythlore Questionnaire that was sent out with the last issue. If you haven’t yet responded, I urge you to do so as soon as possible, so your feelings and responses can be counted with the others.

It seems that for the majority of Mythopoeic Society members, Mythlore is their sole contact with the Society. How I wish more of you would overcome your initial hesitancy -- there are many reasons: time, traveling distance, on-going commitments, inertia -- and come to the annual Mythopoeic Conferences (see pages 66 and 67). Those who have, have found what originally seemed like an effort, before attending, to be a richly rewarding pleasure. Some have and will discover this pleasure, but some will not. Having no Discussion Group in their area, this journal is for most their only contact with others who share our special interests. This is a responsibility I take seriously. Mythlore seems very well liked by those who have responded, and the recent improvements are noted and appreciated. There were not many suggestions for improvement. Some conflicted with others -- example: more Tolkien, Lewis, and Williams (TLW); more non-TLW. Both these desires cannot be mutually fulfilled -- even overlooking for the moment the purpose of this journal. Other suggestions will be seriously considered, and gone into further, along with a report on Questionnaire results, in the next issue.

I’m thinking especially of those of you for which Mythlore is your only contact with the Society, and may feel isolated from the rest of the members and readers. I understand this feeling very well; it led to the founding of the Society in 1967. Whether we are involved locally with others who share the Society’s interests or not, we all have the pleasure and satisfaction of having read and being able to read mythopoeic literature, and knowing we’re not alone in this. We are united with others in many places through our shared love of the literature. For this sole reason, many of you have expressed your appreciation of the existence of the Society and Mythlore.

To provide greater facility in communicating needs and wants, we are experimenting with Classified Ads in this issue -- see page 10. The desire for this has been expressed before, and if there is a reasonable response, we will continue this feature. (continued on page 21)
carries out the same theme; to him good art is a product of "common observation and plain understanding" (p. 28), an ability to pierce the veil of illusion and see the facts for what they are. So it is that, when under Simon's spell, Richard thinks of Jonathan's painting with revulsion. "Art, he thought, should be persuasive." (p. 99) As Simon is persuasive, he might have added. To Williams, proper persuasion consists in speaking what is true, and leaving Truth to speak for Himself.

That is why, for this reader, Williams' vision of the Kingdom as expressed in his art is so persuasive and powerful. T. S. Eliot has said that most religious poetry is bad poetry because it expresses what the poet thinks he ought to feel and not what he feels in fact. There is none of this dishonesty in Williams. His paintings not only are an expression of perpetual happiness as the earth counts happiness for the community of Christ's saints; being one of their number, he speaks from experience of the joy of co-inherence but also of the sacrifice it requires, of the delight of contemplating the King's beauty in all He has made but also of the necessity of refusing one's whole heart to any lesser beauty than His. With common observation and plain understanding he records his glimpses of the splendour of heaven, and shows us plainly that all ways which lead there run past the Cross. Thus when Williams tells us of the nature of the love for which the Kingdom's citizens are destined, we know that he speaks as one who has counted the cost and found it worth the exchange. On his witness, we can believe that the very horror of the wilderness is a shadow cast by the Glory of the City, that the fearful eye of All Hallows is a herald of the never-dimming Day of the Church Triumphant. With him and all saints we may earnestly pray, "Thy Kingdom come ... in earth, as it is in heaven." (Matthew 6.10)

Endnotes

5 Cavaliero, p. 143.
7 See Descent, p. 98.
10 Arthuriad", p. 335.
13 Heaven, quoted by Cavaliero, p. 132.
16 Quoted in Axis: The Newsletter for Christian Writers and Artists of Science Fiction and Fantasy [Santa Ana, CA], 1, (Summer 1985), 26.