

Spring 3-15-1989

Reviews

Nancy-Lou Patterson

David Bratman

Wayne G. Hammond

Follow this and additional works at: <https://dc.swosu.edu/mythlore>



Part of the [Children's and Young Adult Literature Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Patterson, Nancy-Lou; Bratman, David; and Hammond, Wayne G. (1989) "Reviews," *Mythlore: A Journal of J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, Charles Williams, and Mythopoeic Literature*: Vol. 15: No. 3, Article 14.
Available at: <https://dc.swosu.edu/mythlore/vol15/iss3/14>

This Book Reviews is brought to you for free and open access by the Mythopoeic Society at SWOSU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Mythlore: A Journal of J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, Charles Williams, and Mythopoeic Literature by an authorized editor of SWOSU Digital Commons. An ADA compliant document is available upon request. For more information, please contact phillip.fitzsimmons@swosu.edu.

To join the Mythopoeic Society go to:
<http://www.mythsoc.org/join.htm>



Online Summer Seminar 2023

August 5-6, 2023: Fantasy Goes to Hell: Depictions of Hell in Modern Fantasy Texts

<https://mythsoc.org/oms/oms-2023.htm>



Reviews

Abstract

Tree and Leaf, including the poem Mythopoeia. J.R.R. Tolkien. Reviewed by Nancy-Lou Patterson.

Lenten Hands: My Childhood with Joy Davidman and C.S. Lewis. Douglas H. Gresham. Reviewed by Nancy-Lou Patterson.

C.S. Lewis: His Literary Achievement. C.N. Manlove. Reviewed by Nancy-Lou Patterson.

The C.S. Lewis Hoax. Kathryn Lindskoog. Reviewed by David Bratman.

J.R.R. Tolkien: Man of Fantasy. Russell Shorto. Reviewed by Wayne G. Hammond.

Howard Pyle. Lucien L. Agosta. Reviewed by Nancy-Lou Patterson.

Reviews

Mythopoeia Etc.

J.R.R. Tolkien, *Tree and Leaf*, including the poem *Mythopoeia*, with an Introduction by Christopher Tolkien (London: Unwin Hyman Ltd., 1988), 101 pp. ISBN 0-04-440254-6.

This "second edition" makes *Tree and Leaf* into a triad, adding to Tolkien's absolutely essential essay "On Fairy-stories" and his only allegory, "Leaf by Niggle," which were first "brought together" under the joint title in 1964, a third work, the full version of the poem *Mythopoeia*, which has never before been published, although as Christopher Tolkien says in his Preface, "my father quoted fourteen lines from it in the essay." (p.5)

As his *Letters* revealed, Tolkien's lifeworks consist in a series of complex secondary creation. That is, Tolkien's art is about art, and he knew it. The intricate palimpsests of his writing as they emerge not only in his life time but under the hand of his perfect editor, his own son, comprise the most complexly self-referential and intertextual set of writings outside of the Bible.

Tolkien was intensely and even anxiously aware of what he was doing. All three of the works which now comprise *Tree and Leaf* embody his wisdom about the process of creating, and this second edition is even more essential than the first.

In addition to throwing additional light upon Tolkien, however, the book also offers further insight into the famous conversation between C.S. Lewis, on the eve of his conversion to a fully Christological Christianity, with J.R.R. Tolkien and Hugo Dyson. *Mythopoeia* was written by Tolkien as a commentary upon that conversation and is dedicated to Lewis as "one who said that myths were lies and therefore worthless, even though 'breathed through silver.'" (p.97) The poem could well form, the Manifesto of The Mythopoeic Society! Readers who have travelled to Narnia and do not know the young doubter to whom Tolkien penned his poetic rebuke, will have reason to thank Tolkien for revealing the truth of myth to Lewis on that night.

A couple of lines in *Mythopoeia* put it in a nutshell:

He see no stars who does not see them first
of living silver made that sudden burst
to flame like flowers beneath an ancient song. (p.98)

and perceptive readers will find Lewis' thanks in *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, in which, after Eustace declares that "in our world ... a star is a huge ball of flaming gas," the old star Ramandu responds to him, "Even in your world, my son, that is not what a star is but only what it is made of." He owed a great debt to Tolkien, and he knew it!

— Nancy-Lou Patterson

Snow First and Then Christmas

Douglas H. Gresham, *Lenten Lands: My Childhood with Joy Davidman and C.S. Lewis* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1988, 225 pp. ISBN 0-02-545570-2.

C.S. Lewis and his wife Joy Davidman Gresham Lewis have been the subject of a number of recent studies and biographies. *Lenten Lands* is not intended to replace them. Instead it is a striking and unique memoir written from the point of view of a man who was the stepson of C.S. Lewis and the son of Joy Davidman, the one and only Mrs. C.S. Lewis. Approached with copies of *And God Came In*, *Shadowlands*, *Jack* (and I think, *A Grief Observed*, which Gresham describes laconically and poignantly as "true") in hand and already absorbed, it will be immensely enlightening.

After all, a man is seen with very open eyes by his stepson, especially by one whose father (William Gresham) was still very much alive throughout his mother's second (and last) marriage. We open the book in hopes of new revelations and are not disappointed. Among the treasures for those who want to know all about Lewis, there are much expanded versions of his war experiences, sounding as if he had indeed recounted them to his stepson, as one who had a right to inquire and to be answered in full. These episodes are harrowing, pathetic, and ironic, having the sharp taste of reality.

The portrait of Joy Davidman is a loving son's description of a brilliant, valiant, richly loving woman, mother, and wife. The description of her enthusiastic reorganization, rescue, redecoration, and spirited defense of the Kilns from the depredations it had suffered at the hands of the two aging bachelors—Jack and Warren—who thought that tobacco ash was good for the rugs, is delicious!

Gresham's narrative has long passages of poetic description of good weather and bad, good lodgings and

bad, good years and bad, as he recounts his memories. He tells of his early childhood in rural New York State – "snow first and then Christmas" – (p. 5) both bringing delight; of deepening shadows of his father's alcoholism; of his mother's escape to England and of her return to England, to stay, with her sons; of his attendance at an execrable British school (in a pathetic repetition of Lewis' own unhappy school days) mixed with cheerful holidays which included Jack and Warren Lewis; of his mother's illness and his profound contact with the one called "He" (p. 73) in Headington Quarry's Holy Trinity churchyard, in which he was allowed to choose a reprieve for her; of the marriage of "Mother and Jack" which he describes as a love-match from the beginning; of the "simple, quiet, stunningly beautiful miracle" (p. 75) of her recovery; of his "real home" (p. 79) at the Kilns; of the short years of happiness there; of the approaching night of his mother's returning illness; of her death; and of Jack's sorrowful dignity:

"Jack," I finally said, "What are we going to do?" He looked at me, his compassion for me showing through his own grief. "Just carry on somehow, I suppose, Doug," he replied, and this we set out to do. (p. 127)

The narrative continues toward Jack Lewis' own death which occurs when Douglas is eighteen. Interestingly we read here the simplest, clearest, sweetest, most comprehensible and attractive description ever written of the brief advent of Walter Hooper, during which he and Douglas were "despatched to Cambridge" to sort and remove "all the books and papers," a period of several days when, between sessions of carrying "box after box of bound volumes," Hooper is left alone, "wading through the masses of hand-written pages" while Douglas cheerfully goes canoeing on the nearby river.

After Jack's death and during Warren's steep decline into the final throes of his alcoholism, Douglas withdraws, pursues agricultural studies, makes new friends, and eventually meets and marries his wife Meredith, to whose home in Tasmania they go, taking up for the remainder of his life, with wife and large family, the cheerful country existence which has been the foundation of his childhood.

There are things of which we learn almost nothing, of course, especially Lewis' other stepson, Douglas's brother David. There are touches of light in his portrayal of Fred Paxford, and of the shadow in his portrayal of the Millers. The narrative indeed possesses the Lenten mood which its title – taken from the profoundly moving epitaph Lewis wrote for his wife – promises. But his prophetic words – first snow and then Christmas, "which not only echo but reverse the phrase in *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* – "always winter and never Christmas" – describe the final tonality of his book, of which he says in his Preface, "As a result of this exercise I have realized that my childhood was not a time of testing and torment, but a privilege, a gift of education and experience greater than some of us gain

in a lifetime." (p. x) It is just as the religion chosen by his mother and stepfather tells us – Lent first and then Easter!

– Nancy-Lou Patterson

To Create Other Worlds

C.N. Manlove, C.S. Lewis: *His Literary Achievement* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1987), 242 pp. ISBN 0-312-00899-6.

In 1975, C.N. Manlove published *Modern Fantasy – Five Studies*. In all five of its essays, as I said in my review in *Mythlore*, "he first praises the work and then ... finds it wanting. Can they all be ultimately flawed?" One of these essays was on C.S. Lewis' masterpiece *Perelandra*. It is nice to note that Manlove's newest book on fantasy, a superb study of C.S. Lewis: *His Literary Achievement*, bears on its cover a splendid painting by James Christensen of the Lady of *Perelandra* gazing from the sublime landscape of that planet, in what is certainly the most beautiful cover ever given to a work about C.S. Lewis. The contents are equally delightful and I am happy to report that Manlove offers a handsome reversal of his previous judgement on *Perelandra*. Indeed, all the works in the study – *The Pilgrim's Regress*, *Out of the Silent Planet*, *Perelandra*, *That Hideous Strength*, *The Great Divorce*, the "Narnia" books, and *Till We Have Faces*, are given not only superbly detailed readings but meticulously articulated approval.

Manlove begins by asking "What was C.S. Lewis trying to do in his fiction? His object was to create other worlds, for his and his readers' delight." (p.1) After modestly and accurately praising the recent efforts of Peter Schakel and Brian Murphy to address Lewis' art as art, Manlove sets out, as he tells us, "to show that Lewis is to be valued not only as a Christian with a brilliant mind and moving insights who wrote fantasy, but also as a writer of science fiction of often considerable merit and subtlety in its own right." (p.x)

This is the book Lewis students have been waiting for, a full, detailed, and extremely sympathetic analysis of Lewis' art. Because it is my favorite book, and because other critics have (to me incomprehensibly) so often failed to appreciate it, I enjoyed the chapter on *That Hideous Strength* the most. But I have learned endless new things from this study; it is a rich and rewarding feast of explanation and understanding. I wish that each of the Narnia books had been given a chapter as long as those accorded to each of the Ransom novels; perhaps Manlove needs to read and reread before his comprehension flowers fully.

He makes one shocking error, in beginning his section on *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*: "This book describes the discovery by first one and then three other children of a door into a strange new country called Narnia, through the back of an old wardrobe in an empty spare room of a rambling old country house," he writes, as we

(like him perhaps) snooze along with him, and then, he continues, to our astonishment, "owned by their uncle, where they have gone for the holidays." (p.126) Holidays Indeed! The very first lines of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* are these: "Once there were four children whose names were Peter, Susan, Edmund, and Lucy. This story is about something that happened to them when they were sent away from London during the war because of the air-raids." This is a far cry from having "gone for the holidays"! And the "old Professor" (as Lewis describes him) is not their uncle but an "odd-looking" person whom the children have never met before, and to whom they refer as "That old chap." It is not until *The Magician's Nephew* that we learn any more about Digory Kirk, as the Professor proves to be, and the Uncle in the Narnian Chronicles is Digory's, not the Pevensie children's. This slip made me think about the role of displacement and separation as the initiating factor in all seven of the opening sequences of the Chronicles, events in the lives of the children which make them vulnerable to, or open to – take your pick – the eruption of the Narnian (or in Digory's case Charnian) sequences.

In another, more minor slip, refers to "The Dark Tower" as a short story, which according to its editor, it is not. These are, perhaps, small matters, mere curiosities in what is otherwise a very well argued evaluation of Lewis' literary skills. Far from being "ultimately flawed," C.S. Lewis: *His Literary Achievement* is a fine critical achievement, as is highly recommended.

— Nancy-Lou Patterson

Established Wisdom

Kathryn Lindskoog, *The C.S. Lewis Hoax*, illustrated by Patrick Wynne. Portland: Multnomah Press. 175 pp. ISBN 0-88070-258-3

There are a lot of books about C.S. Lewis – biographies, literary criticism, source studies analyses of his apologetics, and more – but not only is this one unique, its readers will hope it remains unique, whether agreeing with its argument or not.

The publicity matter for this book has been coy about revealing its contents. "Today, some twenty five years after Lewis' death, part of the industry surrounding his name is a hoax," says the publisher, without elaboration. The book itself is not coy at all. Kathryn Lindskoog makes a serious charge: that the most prominent of all Lewis scholars has been seriously derelict in his duties.

In the introductory chapter, Lindskoog outlines her case. The rest of the book is devoted to providing evidence. There are several assorted specifics, but they mostly fall under these headings:

1. Some posthumously published Lewis works, notab-

ly "The Dark Tower" and "Encyclopedia Boxoniana", were not actually written by Lewis;

2. Walter Hooper, the editor of Lewis' posthumous books, has shown poor scholarship in accepting these works as genuine and in allowing certain facts about Lewis' life to be distorted;

3. Hooper has misled readers, or allowed them to be misled, into over-emphasizing his own role in Lewis' life and as keeper of his papers.

This is a startling and disturbing list, as it challenges some of the basic assumptions about Lewis which have been the basis for scholarship on him. (The specific facts about Lewis' life referred to in number 2 above include questions of the purpose behind and the consummation of his marriage to Joy Davidman.) For further specifics and for the arguments in support of these contentions I refer you to the book itself. For my own part I find some of Lindskoog's points extremely penetrating and compelling, especially those relating to Hooper's personal role in Lewis' life.

Lindskoog, who has written extensively on Lewis before, does not claim to have proved her case, though as the book is a polemic, an argument for the prosecution, she presents her case as if it were proved, which may disconcert some readers. But her stated purpose is not so much to convince readers as to elicit an explanation from Mr. Hooper for the peculiar circumstances which she describes.

Consider the charges concerning Hooper's importance in Lewis' life. They'd corresponded earlier, but Hooper actually knew Lewis for less than nine months – how much less is not entirely clear, as Lindskoog points out. She charges Hooper with "Forging a Friendship", with at times giving the impression he'd known Lewis much longer than he did, and cites several statements that give that impression, some of them by Hooper himself. The most effective evidence for this charge is the cumulative effect of quotes on pp. 75-77 from Hooper's introductions to the many posthumous Lewis collections he has edited. One wonders how many of the nicely phrased anecdotes could have dated from the no more than three months which he served as Lewis' secretary.

Another disturbing matter Lindskoog raises concerns the provenance of the then-unpublished Lewis manuscripts which Hooper has since had published. She plainly disbelieves Hooper's story of fortuitously rescuing numerous manuscripts from a bonfire soon after Lewis' death. She raises doubts in the reader's mind about the circumstances in which Hooper acquired some manuscripts and personal items during the time he worked for Lewis. Her main witnesses in these matters are unpublished diaries and letters of W.H. Lewis, C.S.' brother, who, it emerges, did not like or trust Hooper at all. Warnie was his brother's usual secretary, but he was

away on vacation during the summer Hooper filled that role. Lindskoog startled me by stating that Warnie never actually met Hooper until after his brother's death. I was sure Warnie'd mentioned meeting him at an Inklings pub session in a diary extract in the biography of Lewis written by Hooper and Roger Lancelyn Green. I checked; it was Green's diary.

There are also some excellent criticisms of Hooper's work as Lewis' posthumous editor, especially in an appendix concerning *Boxen*, a collection of Lewis' juvenalia, and also in his introduction to a new edition of *The Screwtape Letters*, as well as some hidden changes made in the text of that book itself. I shall not expound on these and the other charges in detail here, as I should only be repeating Lindskoog's arguments, but encourage you to read the book for yourself.

All of this said, I find *The C.S. Lewis Hoax* to be flawed as well as fascinating. Though short and engrossing, it is difficult to follow in its entirety. Lindskoog covers so many points that she skips back and forth, citing the same evidence and similar charges in different chapters. Several times the same statement is made twice in different words. (She explains at least three times (pp. 23, 44, and 147) why the chapter on *Boxen* is an appendix.) This is poorly organized, and confusing. Readers not well acquainted with existing biographical accounts of Lewis will probably become lost, and even the expert might appreciate a better organization. Since the biographical questions depend on contrasting various statements made at different times by different people, I wish there had been more direct comparison. Using the Green and Hooper biography as a constant baseline against which to measure other statements would have helped.

Sometimes Lindskoog oversells her points. She is course correct that "The Dark Tower" is not at all up to the standards of Lewis' published fiction, but it's hardly surprising that first drafts of an abandoned work should be distinctly poorer than books the author eventually published. That is surely why he abandoned them. Her detailed criticism of the style of "The Dark Tower" adds little to her questions of manuscript provenance, and of plagiarism by a possible forger (which are both suspicions only). Nor can I find as much significance as Lindskoog places in the peculiar emphases of a documentary film about Lewis' life, or the factual distortions of another, fictionalized, film account.

Lindskoog has gone over posthumous Lewisiana with a fine-toothed comb, and pointed out discrepancies and unsupported statements. Such a revisionist effort should be prepared with the expectation that it will be subjected to the same fine-toothed comb itself, and there I find this book occasionally wanting. Not necessarily false, but unsupported or misleading. For example, on p. 92 she cites (with source) Hooper as stating that *A Grief Observed* was

"partly fictional" in its account of Lewis' marriage. She then rebuts him with the statement, "In contrast, Warren Lewis claimed that it described his brother's marriage exactly. It was Lewis's most personal book." Fine, but no quote or source for this statement is given. (*A Grief Observed* is also mentioned on p. 106, in a quote from Sheldon Vanauken who scoffs at the idea that the book could be anything but autobiographical. That there is more to the question than that is shown by an article by George Musacchio in *Mythlore* 45 offering cogent arguments that in the book Lewis was exaggerating for effect.) On the next page, p. 93, as further evidence for Hooper's view of the marriage, she states (with source) "Walter Hooper claimed that in 1930 C.S. Lewis identified himself as one who cannot ever marry." Going to the source (the Green/Hooper biography), I find that in context this statement is clearly about Lewis' views at the time. I don't see evidence that Hooper means that Lewis age 31 should be responsible for the actions of Lewis age 57, and it's unfair of Lindskoog to imply otherwise. The statement on p. 93 should have been left out.

Lindskoog's citations are mostly very meticulous, but there are several other cases of fascinating statements that need more evidence, or places where she's gone beyond what her evidence can show. (Her evidence that W.H. Lewis "was himself again" five months after his brother's death is a letter he wrote to her, printed on p. 54, in which he gets one date wrong and can't remember two others.

SUBMISSIONS

Mythlore welcomes submissions of articles, art, letters of comment, poetry, reviews and other relevant material. See page two for the addresses of the appropriate editor when making submissions. All written submissions (except letters) must be in one of two forms:

- (1) Typewritten submissions should be double spaced. Two copies should be submitted, including the original.
- (2) IBM compatible formatted 5.25" floppy disk, with a text print out (to verify format). The files should be straight ASCII files unless the material has been written using *Word Perfect* (4.2 version or later), *Microsoft Word* (4.0 version or later), *Wordstar*, or *Volkswriter III* (1.0 version). Most material produced on a Commodore 64 (using a 1541 disk-drive) is also acceptable. Additionally we can receive articles by phone modem. Disk submissions save *Mythlore* time and money. In effect this represents a much appreciated contribution, and is encouraged whenever possible.

The preferred style for articles is the *MLA Handbook*, except that short citations such as *ibid.*, *op. cit.*, and author and page number, are best incorporated in parentheses in the text. Any additional questions concerning submissions should be addressed to the Editor.

This is perfectly excusable, but hardly evidence for any particular mental capacity.) All these criticisms are picayune, but picayune criticisms are the clay from which this book has been shaped. An author who challenges the established wisdom should guard her own defenses, and I fear that her necessarily potshot attack on Hooper's credibility will be answered, if it is at all, by a similarly potshot attack on her own. Her arguments deserve better than that.

This short book has been put into a well-designed volume by the publisher, and reading it is punctuated by the special pleasure of the illustrations (cover portrait and chapter headings) by Patrick Wynne, who is gifted with both a fine artistic ability and a clever sense of humor (Screwtape heading off to America on p. 71 is especially good).

—David Bratman

★ Check Your Label ★

Please look at the mailing label on the envelope your copy of *Mythlore* was mailed in. The number following your name indicates the issue your subscription is due to expire. If that number is 57 or 58, please renew now to avoid any interruption to your continuing issues.

Mythlore Subscription and 1st Class & Air Mail Rates

Individual subscription is \$13 for 4 issues, or \$25 for 8 issues.

The Library/Institution rate is \$16 for 4 issues, or \$30 for 8 issues.

1st Class Mail Delivery for 4 issues in the United States is \$7 extra; in Canada, \$8.

Overseas Air Mail Delivery to Europe and Latin America is \$15 additional for each 4 issues; to Asia and Australia is \$20 additional for each 4 issues. Those outside the USA may pay by check or money order of their national currencies, so long as *current* exchange rates are observed.

MYTHLORE, P.O. Box 6707,
Altadena, CA 91003 USA.

Tolkien Sighs

Russell Shorto, *J.R.R. Tolkien: Man of Fantasy*, foreword by G.B. Tennyson, drawings by Bill Negron (New York: Kipling Press, 1988), viii+48 pp., ISBN 0-943718-07-4.

When we meet J.R.R. Tolkien in this biography for children he is sighing as he corrects examination booklets. The World War had brought Oxford, like the rest of England, "rushing into the twentieth century" with noisy motorcars and "brash modern houses," and Tolkien is "daydreaming, as he often did, of simpler times, of a place where the problems of modern life did not exist." Suddenly he writes his famous words: *In a hole in the ground there lived a hobbit*. For J.R.R. Tolkien it is a Great Moment, the start of his career as a writer of fantasy. For Russell Shorto it is the moment in which he introduces the major theme of his biography – Tolkien as escapist – and established the tone of the book, dramatic and sensational.

From Oxford, 1928 we flash back to Tolkien's idyllic days in Sarehole, where he would swim in the mill pond with his brother Hilary. Then we go farther back, to South Africa, where Tolkien is bitten by a spider. Russell Shorto enlarges that childhood trauma into a lifelong "bad feeling," quoting as evidence the description of Shelob in *The Two Towers*. Next we return to England, where Tolkien discovers a love of language and of "tales of adventure and daring." He wishes "above all things to be able to go back to that time when the clang of armor sounded as knights jousting in cold morning air." Instead his "pleasant, cozy childhood" ends abruptly with the death of his mother.

So Russell Shorto proceeds, telling the life of Tolkien in snapshots of sorrow and joy: young Ronald's love for Edith Bratt, his student days at Oxford, the Battle of the Somme, the writing of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*, the phenomenal success of those books in Britain and America. Often, however, Shorto does not seem as interested in the life of Tolkien as in his troubled times. World War I is mentioned pointedly in Shorto's opening chapter; later nearly a page is devoted to explaining its causes, and several paragraphs to the brutality of trench warfare; parts of two pages are given up to a photograph and drawing of soldiers; a photograph of Englishmen celebrating the 1918 armistice occupies one full page, a portrait of Adolf Hitler another. Certainly the World Wars had a profound effect on Tolkien, but not so much that they should be given this much attention in a book of fifty-six pages. Perhaps it was felt (wrongly, I hope) that young readers would be bored by a life of a quiet Oxford philologist without a heavy dose of the violence they are accustomed to see on television.

Though language, and myth, and faith are not ignored by Russell Shorto, as motives for Tolkien's fantasy writings, they are eclipsed by his desire to escape a world brought low by war and technology. "The whole world

was changing [in the period of World War II], and J.R.R. Tolkien, who didn't like it one bit, dealt with it in the only way he was able to. He abandoned the ugly new world, and made one of his own." Or as Shorto later puts it, Tolkien created Middle-earth "because the modern world was a place that was too difficult and too unpleasant to remain in all the time." Tolkien's desire to escape was real — he elaborates upon the idea in "on Fairy-Stories" — but it is a note which Shorto sounds too loudly and too often, and which he moderates only near the end of his book when he remarks that Tolkien "knew that the simple life in his tales was not reality." (In fact it was rarely simple.)

J.R.R. Tolkien: *Man of Fantasy* fails on many counts. It is narrow and anecdotal. It confuses the Coalbiters with the Inklings. It contains twenty-four illustrations, most of which cannot be explained except as "spice." (It hardly seems justified to include a portrait of Lewis Carroll only because Tolkien read *Alice* "eagerly," and a portrait of F. Scott Fitzgerald because Tolkien was not part of the "Lost Generation.") It gives no encouragement to read works by Tolkien other than *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*, and no guidance to works about Tolkien except Foster's *Guide* and *The Tolkien Scrapbook*. Young readers interested in the life of J.R.R. Tolkien will be best served by the excellent biography by Humphrey Carpenter, which will lead them to a richness of works by Tolkien which Russell Shorto only begins to mention.

— Wayne G. Hammond

Ore-Images

Lucien L. Agosta, *Howard Pyle* (Boston: Twayne Publisher, 1987), 162 pp. ISBN 0-8057-7493-9.

Readers of *Mythlore* seem to combine their reading of Tolkien, Lewis, Williams, and their various associated British writers with a wider reading of late twentieth century fantasy written to a large extent in the United States. While such readers may be well aware of the great precursors of the Oxford Mythopoeists, such as George MacDonald and G.K. Chesterton, they are less likely to be aware of the precursors of American fantasy, with the notable exception of Frank L. Baum.

A major candidate for restoration of the canon would certainly be Howard Pyle, not only because he was the founder of the Brandywine School, whose greatest contemporary successor is Andrew Wyeth, but because of his superb illustrations and classic retells of *The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood* (1883) and *The Story of King Arthur and His Knights* (1903) as well as his fairy tales, such as those in *The Wonder Clock* (1885), and his medieval adventure tales, including *Otto of the Silver Hand* (1888) and *Men of Iron* (1892).

Lucien L. Agosta's Twayne's United States Author

Series volume on Howard Pyle offers a useful study of the art and writing of this neglected American mythopoeist. Writing with both appreciation and well measured critical consideration, Agosta whets our appetites to sample Pyle's fantasy worlds which explore not only sweet Arcadian havens but the harsh realities of medieval life, and reach not only to *The Garden Behind the Moon* (1895) which Agosta compares with George MacDonald, but also plunges deeply on the downward paths of "This 'nether man that lies within us,'" (*The Rose of Paradise*, 1888, quoted in Agosta 1987: 135), as Pyle, a Quaker who read Swedenborg and wrote pirate tales, so frankly put it.

Of Pyle's many works, only those for children are still in print, and these are perhaps especially favored because of their marvellous illustrations, which Pyle almost singlehandedly raised from hackwork to the level of fine art. Agosta's discussions of Pyle's illustrations are especially fine: he has a clear and accurate eye and writes perceptively and intensely of these most lasting portions of Pyle's oeuvre. In one place he specifically and convincingly contradicts Bruno Betelheim: "The pictures of a great illustrator like Pyle can actually train a child to see, can shape taste, providing the ore-images from which a child can forge a richly visual imaginative life. Rather than stifling the imagination, they can liberate it." (p.84)

— Nancy-Lou Patterson

While a number of the Reviews are written by NLP, our Reviews Editor, those written by readers are also very welcome. See page 2 for NLP's address for Reviews submissions.

BACK ISSUES OF MYTHLORE

All *Mythlore* back issues are available. An (x) indicates scarce or xerox copy. Issues 1,2 (x) \$3.50 ea.; #3,4 (x) \$3.00 ea.; #5 (same issue as *Tolkien Journal* #12) \$2 ea.; #6-9 (x), #10 - current issue (except #42 & #44) \$3.50; #42 & #44 (short, supplemental issues,) 5.25 ea.
Special Offer: A complete set of issues 1-50 (a \$160.00 value) for \$130.00, which includes postage. Send your orders for back issues to *Mythlore*, 1008 N. Monterey St., Alhambra, CA 9180

☆☆☆ Art Submissions ☆☆☆

Mythlore welcomes the submission of new artists to its pages. Both full page and column pieces are encouraged. Full page art should be 7.25" wide x 9.25" tall — it may actually be larger, but in the same proportions. Column art should initially be 5" wide x 6 to 8" tall, which can be photographically reduced to fit the printed size of the columns and pages. Material inspired by or illustrating the works of Tolkien, Lewis, or Williams is especially sought, but other mythological and fantasy inspired artwork is also welcome. Write directly to the Art Editor, Sarah Beach. See page 2 for her address.