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Regarding "The 'Polish Inkling,'"

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Additional Keywords

Przemysław Mroczkowski; Inklings

NOTES AND LETTERS

REGARDING "THE 'POLISH INKLING'"

DESPITE ŁUKASZ NEUBAUER'S FOOTNOTE on p.156 of his article in *Mythlore* #137 (39.1, Fall/Winter 2020), Przemysław Mroczkowski did not make an error in claiming that the day of the Inklings' habitual pub gatherings in 1957–58 was Monday. Neubauer has missed a reference in Scull and Hammond's *Reader's Guide* (1.575 [2017]) that the day of the pub meetings was changed from Tuesday to Monday in 1954. This was for the convenience of C.S. Lewis's schedule when he began spending his weekdays in Cambridge after taking a professorship there (Carpenter, *Inklings* 231). Thus, despite Neubauer's claim, Lewis was able to be a regular participant, and all available evidence suggests that he was. But was Tolkien?

For Mroczkowski to know the correct day is circumstantial evidence that he attended pub meetings. As he would have done so as Tolkien's guest, Scull and Hammond's note (cited by Neubauer), that Tolkien is not recorded as attending such a meeting after 1954, is of importance. But he still could have attended on occasions we have no record of. Humphrey Carpenter in *The Inklings* states that Tolkien "often appeared in the Bird and Baby" in Lewis's earlier Cambridge years (231-32), and in his biography of Tolkien states that Tolkien made "occasional visits to the 'Bird and Baby'" even after his retirement in 1959 (236). Carpenter offers no documentation for these statements, but Mroczkowski's recollection offers a thin chain of possible evidence supporting Tolkien's appearances at the pub.

Attending the pub gatherings would not make Mroczkowski formally an Inklings: the Inklings were those who attended the evening meetings which had ceased some years earlier. The pub meetings included some who did not even know of the evening group, and perhaps Mroczkowski was among that number.

Yours,
David Bratman

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