Dragon

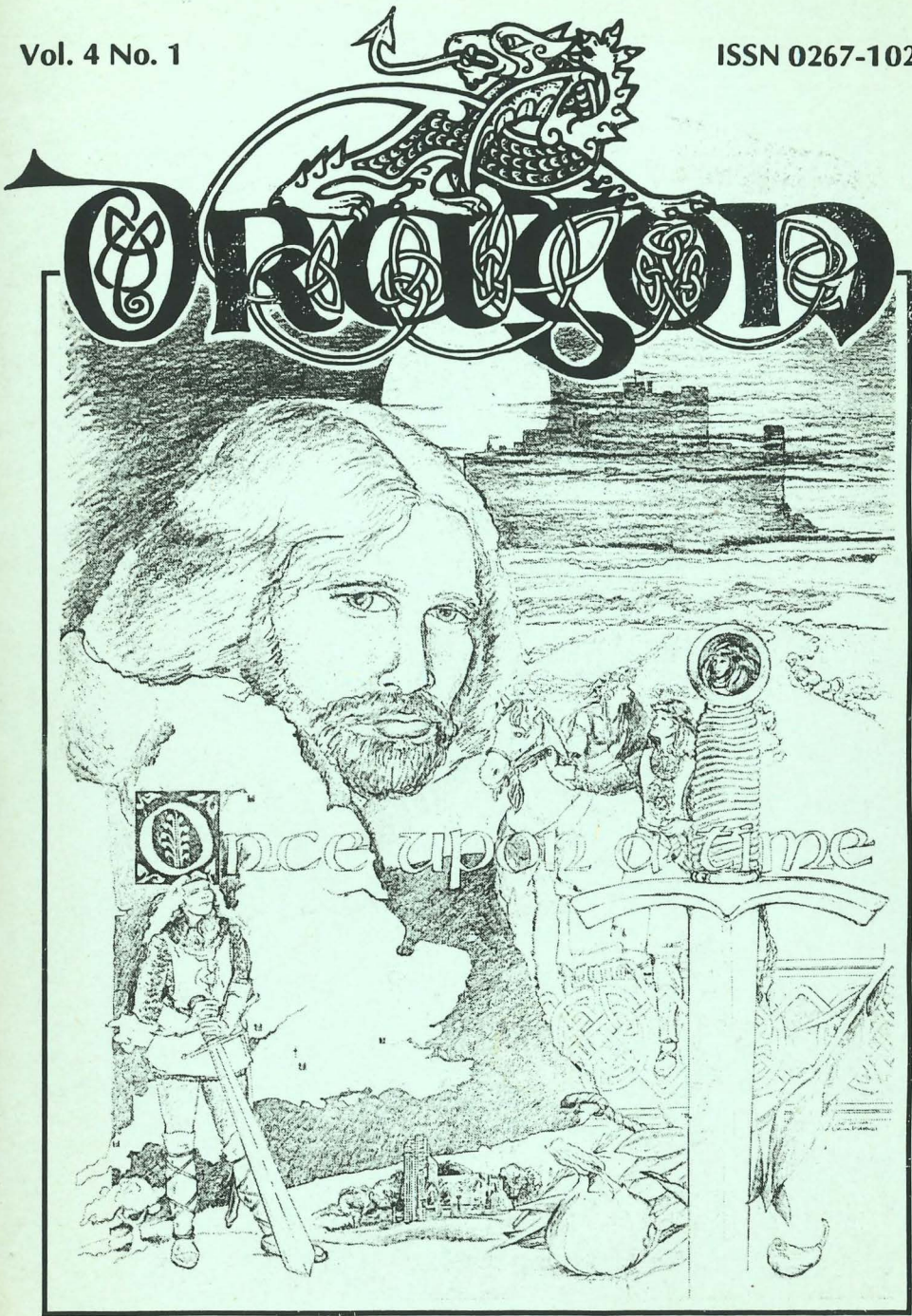Once upon a time

Dear friend,

welcome to a special anniversary issue of DRAGON - we as a society are ten years old this year. So to commemorate this there is a short review of the last ten years and two free gifts. The first is a piece of yellow paper to stick over the mistake in the last issue, i.e. the internal reference to season and issue number. And I also hope you like the second free gift. Anyway, Happy Birthday to us all

I must begin this issue with an apology for not getting it out earlier - February would have been ideal but I had planned a European issue and was waiting for articles. Unfortunately, I only received one article that would have fitted, so I have decided not to give this issue a theme. The articles included, however, will be of some interest to you. I had had a call for something on the pronunction of Latin and Anglo-Saxon, so here are three articles on the two mentioned languages plus Welsh. That more or less covers the main languages of Dark Age Britain. It would be nice to have something on Irish and Pictish in the future. Any offers! I am very grateful to John Gregory, John Marsden and Steve Pollington for their kind help.

I would like to thank Nick Grant for his interesting piece on the Glastonbury Cross and hope that this article may help in putting the myth of Glastonbury in its proper place. It is very likely that the grave of Arthur, the Cross and the Isle of Avalon are all fakes - certainly when it comes to Glastonbury. And as for Avalon, I think you must look into the minds of our ancient ancestors - to the Otherworld - rather that a specific geographical site.

I hope you don't mind that I have hogged some of the space in this issue but it was necessary to fill space, so I wrote a piece on Lucius Artorius Castus, who may have had somekind of connection with the name Arthur. I will leave the reader to decide on whether this article works.

Finally, I hope you will join me in sending our heart-felt sympathy to Mrs. Doris Wright, and family, for the loss of Reginald Wright. He we will be sorely missed but his music and his ideas will go on. Reg's contribution to the discovery of Arthur may turn out to be quite important and I hope that someone will take up a where he left off.

Now please read on:

The cover is taken from an illustration produced and kindly sent to me recently by one of our members - Diane Glewwe of Germantown, Maryland, USA. Thanks, Diane!

DRAGON

A look back over ten years

Doesn't time go fast when you are enjoying yourself! Who would have believed that when DRAGON started it would still be going ten years later. So for this anniversary I would like to make a short review of a dragon's career.

It all began following a series of articles on Arthur in "Military Modelling" written by Geoff Mills and illustrated by Richard Scollins. I had been interested in Arthur and the Dark Ages for some time and wrote to the magazine saying that it would be nice to see an Arthurian Club - not knowing that PENDRAGON, The Arthurian Society and The International Arthurian Society already existed. Military Modelling advertised in its Noticeboard that I was interested in starting a club and gave my address. Within a couple of weeks about a dozen people had written to me. So I sent out a flyers putting forward the aims of a society which I was calling DRAGON - a symbol that represented many of the cultures of the Dark Ages. (By the way it had little to do with the Red Dragon of Wales whose origin can not be traced to earlier than the 15th century.) The response was good, so I put together a small, eight page magazine in January 1982 and send it out to all those who showed some interest the following month.

So much as gone on since then that it is very difficult to sum up everything. The first few issues began to establish DRAGON and slowly the membership increased. Various subjects have been looked into and numerous books have been reviewed. A good number of very interesting articles have been received from members - a solid core of whom have stuck with DRAGON right from the beginning. Many thanks to these members - they know who they are so I will not embarrass them by naming them. There have also been many theories - some very intelligent while some were downright unscrupulous. Personally, my worst encounter was with Messrs. Wilson and Blackett, a team who were claiming they had found Arthur's grave in S. Wales. Their letters were full of insults directed at Welsh academics, the English and myself - I was called a traitor to my race for disagreeing with their theories. Far more amiable was (is) Geoffrey Ashe with his interesting ideas about Riothamus and Arthur, which published first in detail in the journal "Speculum", then in two books - "Kings and Queens of Britain" and "The Discovery of King Arthur". There have been other theories including Tom Clare's Cumbrian Arthur, the Eastern Arthur from Richard White, Norma Goodrich's Northern Arthur, Reginald Wright's Arthur in County Durham and my own two-pennies' worth - Arthur in the Midlands. Finding Arthur may well be an impossibility but it is a lot of fun trying. Of course, we have not concentrated wholly on Arthur - the Dark Ages has still many aspects worth discussing and researching. On the lighter side (no pun meant!) in DRAGON Vol. 1 No. 6 we saw the first of The Tales of the Two Ells - a series of cartoons written and illustrated by Roger Willcox. (The title came after having spelt Roger's surname with only one "l" on a number of occasions.)

Apart from articles and theories there have been lots of news sent in by members

ranging from the ridiculous to the sublime. Members have made considerable contributions to lighting up the Dark Ages. Amongst the membership we have a number who have had their works published including Kathleen Herbert, with her excellent series of Dark Age novels set in Northern England, John Marsden and his beautifully illustrated books on Bede and Columcille, and Steve Pollington with his book on Maldon. There is also Graham Sumner who has had many of his paintings on the Roman period accepted and displayed at museums. On the down side with have over the years lost some excellent contributors - Paul Johnstone, who had been writing articles for archaeological and history journals for decades, Arthur J. Young, the author of "The Swords of the Britons" - an excellent book on the possible strategy of the battles of Arthur, and recently Reg Wright, whose obituary appears later in this issue. And the academic world lost two outstanding scholars on this period - J.N.L. Myres and Kenneth H. Jackson.

The magazine itself has had its ups and downs over the last ten years with technology changing from an electric typewriter to the personal computer. Nevertheless, there is always the human element and I must continue to take full responsibility for the spelling and grammatical mistakes that appear in the magazine. These days I have the added help of "wordspell" but it cannot pick up bad grammar or words that are correctly spelt but have the wrong meaning. Also, there are many people who have offered help and thanks must go out to those. I am grateful to Dave Martin and Ian Morrison for the printing, the Clwyd Library Service - especially Mike Hill (who is also a member of DRAGON) and Hedd ap Emlyn - for their help with research and to those who have contributed articles, reviews and illustrations over the years. The old dragon is always hunger and constantly needs food, and it is with the support of the membership the creature is kept live and well. In recent years it has become harder to find material for the magazine but I am usually saved in the nick of time with articles from old faithfuls. It would be nice to have a large backlog of articles and it would be excellent to get more from members in the United States, who now make up a considerable percentage of the membership.

DRAGON began with about twelve members and the first issue cost a grand total of £9.00 to produce and send. By DRAGON *7 the membership had increased, the number of pages had gone up and the cost of printing and postage was now £21.00. At the end of the first volume I sent out 40 issues of DRAGON at a total cost of £24.00. By now the membership consisted of 28 in Britain, 11 in the USA and one in Austria (in fact this was a joint membership made up of a group of Viennese). Today, the number of members is nearer seventy and the cost of printing and postage is between £60 and £70 per issue. Up until the last issue the magazine was printed by Dave Martin but, unfortunately, he has had to pack up and so I have to find another way of getting DRAGON produced. I guess that the cost per issue will now cost nearer £80 but I have no intention of increasing the subscription fee until I have seen how the next few issues proceed. In Volume 4 No.2 there will be a contents list for volume three and a complete list of members. If you do not wish your address to appear on the membership list please let me know as soon as possible.

Talking about members - they come from all walks of life and a variety of ages, though the average is around the 20 to 40 something. I was born in 1948 and my occupation for most of my working life has been a graphic designer in the Clwyd Education Department. My other interests are Welsh history, Japan, American Indians, Spaceflight, books and comics. Members' occupations include teacher, author/authoress, archaeologist, civil servant and so on. Following Vol. 3 No.1 membership profiles were printed in a series called Arthurophiles. Unfortunately, not many people have written in, so if you would like to write your autobiography (short, please) and get it into DRAGON drop me a line or two.

Though in many ways the magazine has been somewhat of a success (well, we're still here!), meetings - which we call DRAGONMOOTs - have proved to be less successful. We have had meetings in Glastonbury, Chester, York, Shrewsbury and London - the latter being the most successful. It would be nice to have a 'moot this year, so if anyone has any suggestions please let me know. I do have planned a visit to the United States in 1993, postponed from this year due to pressure of work, so I hope to meet as many American members as possible during my stay. Please take note

Photo from last year's 'moot (left to right): Steve Pollington, Jason Garfield, Kathleen Herbert and Jim Gunter.

and many thanks to those you have already responded positively.

To end as we began - time has flown and there have been many interesting articles and letters written by members. It is impossible to look at them all, but I must say that looking back and rereading the issues, I am surprised how professional a lot of the articles have been. I am grateful to all those who have supplies plenty of food to keep the dragon alive. One aspect that is always useful is news, so I will end this short review with some news of events to come.

COMING EVENTS

THE MABINOGION

A lecture given by Professor Gwyn Thomas
2.30 p.m. Saturday 11th April 1992 at The Green Room, Scala Cinema, High Street, Prestatyn, Clwyd. Contact Mrs. Read, Flintshire Historical Society, 50 Hafod Park, Mold, Clwyd, CH7 1QW or phone 0352 752582.

ARTHUR'S BRITAIN

Thursday 30th April - Monday 4th May 1992, starts from the Embankment Tube Station at 9.00. Cost £260.
I went on a similar tour a few years back and enjoyed it very much.
For further information contact Citisights of London, c/o Old Operating Theatre Museum, 9a St. Thomas St., London, SE1 9RY.

CELTICA - CYMRU WALES is organising a series of very interesting lectures, all of which I would love to attend if they were not situated in various part of Wales. Nevertheless, I will certainly be trying to get to those closer home.

GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH

Mr. Oliver Padel
14.00hrs - 15.30hrs, Saturday 25th April 1992 at The Kings Head Hotel, Monmouth.

KING ARTHUR AND MEDIEVAL LITERATURE

Dr. Brinley Roberts
14.00hrs, Saturday 16th May 1992 at The Old Examinations Hall, Old College, Aberystwyth.

THE GRAIL

Dr. Ceridwen Lloyd Morgan
14.30hrs, Saturday 27th June 1992 at the Canterbury Building - Room 4, St. David's University College, Lampeter.

ARTHURIAN FOLKLORE

Dr. Juliette Wood
14.00hrs - 15.30hrs, Friday 24th July 1992 at the St. Asaph Room, St. David's Hall, Cardiff.

MYTHOLOGY OF ARTHUR

Dr. Anne Ross
19.30hrs, Friday 25th September 1992 at the ECTARC Building, Llangollen.

WHO'S ARTHUR?

Professor Bedwyr Lewis Jones
14.00hrs, Saturday 31st October (Celtic New Year's Day) 1992 at Bodelwyddan Castle, near Rhyl, Clwyd.
If anyone is interested in going to any of these lectures they should contact CELTICA, c/o Wales Tourist Board, Brunel House, 2 Fitzalan Road, Cardiff, CF2 1UY, or phone 0222 475242.

Members may find Llangollen interesting as a venue for a DRAGONMOOT since there are many interesting places to visit within walking distance, even more by car or public transport, and there is pleasant accommodation in the area. So please contact me with comment about the above or any other suggestions.

REGINALD WRIGHT

(1913 - 1991)

"I would rather die than be incapable of thought."

In the short period I knew Reg Wright, through his letters, I grew to admire his tenacity, his will to make life more than humdrum and his belief that promoting Arthur was important. I didn't agree with everything he said but his overall ideas have merit. I first came across Reg, and his ideas, in an article - "Crimdon as Camlann" by Paul Screeton, PENDRAGON Vol. XX/1 Winter 1989. The two page article ended with Reg's address, so I wrote to him and consequencely bought two of his books - "A History of Blackhall Rocks and Blackhall" and "A History of Castle Eden Lore in search of King Arthur". This led to an article entitled "The Wright Stuff" in DRAGON Vol. 3 No. 8. From then on I often corresponded with Reg, who told me more of his theories and about his ventures. I don't know alot about Reg but I am sure that his theories deserve further investigation. It is interesting to see that Reg's work has appeared in The Encyclopaedia of Arthurian Legend, reviewed later in this issue. The last letter I had from Reg was in February 1991 and at that time he said he was about to have an operation, he was obviously ill but still talked about his King Arthur Prayer and local coverage of the

subject. Then in December I had a sad letter from his wife Doris telling that Reg had died on the 24th October 1991.

Reg was born just before the First World War in the little seaside village of Dawdon, near Seaham in County Durham, and brought up in a way of life amongst coal mines and pitmen (his father was a miner) that has now more or less disappeared. He was a man who just would stand still and had many interests. His greatest love, however, was music. He had played in a dance band when he was younger, had been for twelve years organist at Hesleden Church, travelled the country demonstrating electronic organs and had composed music for television. Amongst his musical accomplishment was having a piano concerto premiered in the presence of Miss Friedland Wagner, grand-daughter of the famous composer, and had composed pieces such as the music for A.J. Cronin's "The Stars Look Down", a military march dedicated to H.M.S. Warrior, "A Christmas Carol" sung by the pupils of Hartepool Lynnfield Primary School and a brass band marched entitled the "Big Meeting" (Durham Miners' Gala), which became the offical music of the Durham coalfields.

His other interests included poetry, some of which had been published, and local history. He had also had published a sort of pensioner's philosophical jottings, titled "Excuse Me", a collection of proverbs and a leaflet on King Arthur and Durham. Travelling had played a big part in his life and twice he had been on promotional journeys. The first was in November 1982 when he set up a marathon trip of 1,287 miles around Britain in in 23hrs 59mins by British Rail. Eight years later on 10th-11th October 1990 Reg did 1,261 miles around Britain in 22hrs 15mins by National Express Coaches. While on the latter he tried to promote his King Arthur Day and King Arthur Prayer.

Reg's writings on Dark Age County Durham have brought light on to one corner of the country that was belived never to have had connections with the Arthurian scene. Evidence does shows that this area resisted colonisation by the Angles for some considerable time. However, the reason for this cannot be clearly ascertained - could it be the Angles didn't see much prospect in this area for their farming communities or was it because a strong leadership of the Romano-Celtic people kept them at bay. Could that leader have been Arthur? Further research on this subject should be done and I hope will be done.

In one of his books Reg wrote: "No legendary folklore is as dull, or as far fetched or as distant from our place of residence if we are willing to look for its origin." To Reg the past seemed to be alive and he put a lot into his studies. As his wife said: "He led a very busy and full life up to the last year of his life." At his cremation in Durham one of his proverbs were read out: "Someday I will be seperated from the light and the dark; the wind and the rain; the earth and the sky; to become part of something unconquerable - I know not what."

Reginald Wright has made himself a place in the minds and memories of many.

In one of the latest books on Arthur - The Encyclopaedia of Arthurian Legend by Ronan Coghlan, 1991 (see Review section), there is the following:
"The name Arthur may be (and according to K.H. Jackson certainly is) a form of Artorius, a Roman *gens* name, but, according to J.D. Bruce, it is possibly of Celtic origin, coming from arto viros (bear man) see Welsh arth gwyr (T.R. Davies)." *I certainly don't agree with the Celtic derivation of the name - in Welsh "gwyr" is plural! However, since writing an article in DRAGON Vol.1 No.8 and suggesting that Arthur could be derived from *Artorix, I have been able to find the intermediary form of the name which Prof. David Ellis Evans indicated would to have to exist; the sequence being - *Artorix → *Arthyr → Arthur. Therefore, I now have to bow to the belief that the name Arthur is of Roman origin. The use of Roman name was quite common during the early post-Roman period as can be shown by the Cymricisation of such names as Constantine → Custennin, Ambrosius → Emrys and Tacitus → Tegid to mention but a few. What then of the name Artorius? Below I would like to look at the subject again and expand somewhat on the name.*

GENS ARTORIA and LUCIUS ARTORIUS CASTUS

by
Charles W. Evans-Günther

One of the oldest references to the name Arthur having possible Roman connections comes from Joseph Ritson's Life of Arthur (1825). In this, while discussing the name, he points out the similarities between the mediaeval Arthurus or Arturus and the mention of an Arturius (sic) in one of Latin writer Juvenal's Satires. More recently Heinrich Zimmer suggested a Latin connection with the name Arthur in his *Gottingische Geleherte Anzeigen* (1890): "...this Arthur is a Roman name Artur or Artorius...". John Rhys in *Studies in Arthurian Legends* (1891) also put forward the possibility of a Latin origin: "...that his name Arthur was either the Latin Artorius, or else a Celtic name belonging in the first instance to a god Artur; for the Latin Artôrius and the god's name...could equally yield in Welsh the familiar form Arthur." Possibility the earliest to bring in Lucius Artorius Castus was Charles Oman in his *England before the Norman Conquest* (1910) when he writes: "The name is undoubtedly Roman, like that of most British princes of the period: leaving out of count numerous Artorii in the Classical Dictionary who had no connection with this island, we know of one who held high command in Britain in the third century, and went, at the head of 'Vexillations' of horse and foot, from the legion at York and other garrisons, to put down an insurrection of the Armoricans. This C. Artorius Justus (sic), whose monument has been discovered in Illyria, may have left numerous relations or freedmen in Britain."

In the 1920s more was written on the subject, first from J.D. Bruce in *The Evolution of the Arthurian Romance* (1923), followed closely by Edward Foord in *The Last Age of Roman Britain* (1925) and Kemp Malone in his much quoted *Modern Philology* article (also 1925) "Artorius". In 1927 E.K. Chambers also agreed with the previous writers in

Arthur of Britain (1927). A couple of years later A.R. Burn while discussing British troops on the Continent in *The Romans in Britain* (1932) points out and translates one of the inscriptions found in Illyria, mentioned by Oman and Malone. Today, it is accepted by most scholars that the Latin name Artorius is without doubt the origin of the name Arthur (see K.H. Jackson in R.S. Loomis' *Arthurian Literature in the Middle Ages,* 1959). The family (gens) Artoria was said, by some scholars, to be Etruscan in origin (according to Malone) though J.J. Wilkes in *Dalmatia* (1969) suggested Central or Southern Italy. Marcus Artorius is the earliest recorded member of the family, though they may well have been more before him. He was physician to Octavianus (later Emperor Augustus) and drowned after the Battle of Actium in AD 31. Tactitus in his *Annals*, Book XV, ch. 71, mentions an Artoria Flacilla who was exiled in AD 65 together with her husband Decius Novius Priscus because of his friendship with Seneca. The Jewish writer Josephus in his *Jewish Wars* VI tells a tale of one Artorius a cunning Roman soldier at the Siege of Jerusalem in AD 70. The soldier saves his own life when cornered by flames on the roof of a building at the expensive of one Lucius who he cons into catching him when he jumped. Juvenal, already mentioned above and writing around AD 100, talks about a certain Artorius in his *Satires* III, 29. He describes him as one of those who turn white into black, clean drains, carry corpses to the pyre and "put up slaves for sale with the authority of the spear." Another gens Artoria was Aelius Artorius who was a centurion in the X Fretensis Legion which was stationed in Jerusalem during the AD 150s. Others who may be members of this family include L. Artorius Pius Maximus of Ephesus, who was appointed legate at Heliopolis, Palestine, in AD 286, proconsul a year later and Prefect of the City of Rome in 298. In 352 a C. Artorius Proculus held the senatorial office of rhetor, public speaker for municipal assemblies. Also possibly included could be C. Artorius Germanianus and Artorius Iulianus Megethius. However, it is Lucius Artorius Castus who is often mentioned in the same breath as Arthur - mainly because of his British connections as we have seen from above.

Following the publication of Th. Mommsen's *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, two inscriptions found at Pituntium, in the district of Epetium, near Spalato in Dalmatia (Podstrana, Croatia), released to scholars the career of Lucius Artorius Castus. Reproduced in full below are these inscriptions as found in Kemp Malone's article Artorius.

> **Dis L . Artorius Castus . Centurioni legionis Manibus III Gallicae . item Centurioni legionis VI Ferra tae . item 7 leg . II Adiutricis . item 7 leg V Ma cedonicae . item primo pilo eiusdem praeposito classis Misenatium praefecto legionis VI Victricis . duci leg cohortium alarum Britanici miarum adversus Armoricanos . Procuratori Cente nario provinciae Liburniae iure gladi . Vi vus ipse sibi et suis st**

(the sign '7' = centurioni)
and

> **L . Artorius Castus primipilaris Leg V Macedonicae praep Cl Mis pr aefectus legionis VI Victricis**

The inscriptions are difficult to date and various scholars have given various dates. Let us look at translations of these autobiographies on marble:

Dis Manibus Lucius Artorius Castus, Centurion of the III Gallica Legion, Centurion of the VI Ferrata Legion , Centurion of the II Aduitrix Legion, Centurion of the V Macedonica Legion, Senior Centurion in the same Legion,......Commandant of the Fleet at Misenum,......Prefect of VI Victrix Legion , Commander of Legionnaires, Cohorts, and Cavalry Regiments of the Britannicimian (sic) Army against the Armoricans, Governor of Liburnia with the Power of Capital Punishment, in his own lifetime for himself and his, and.....
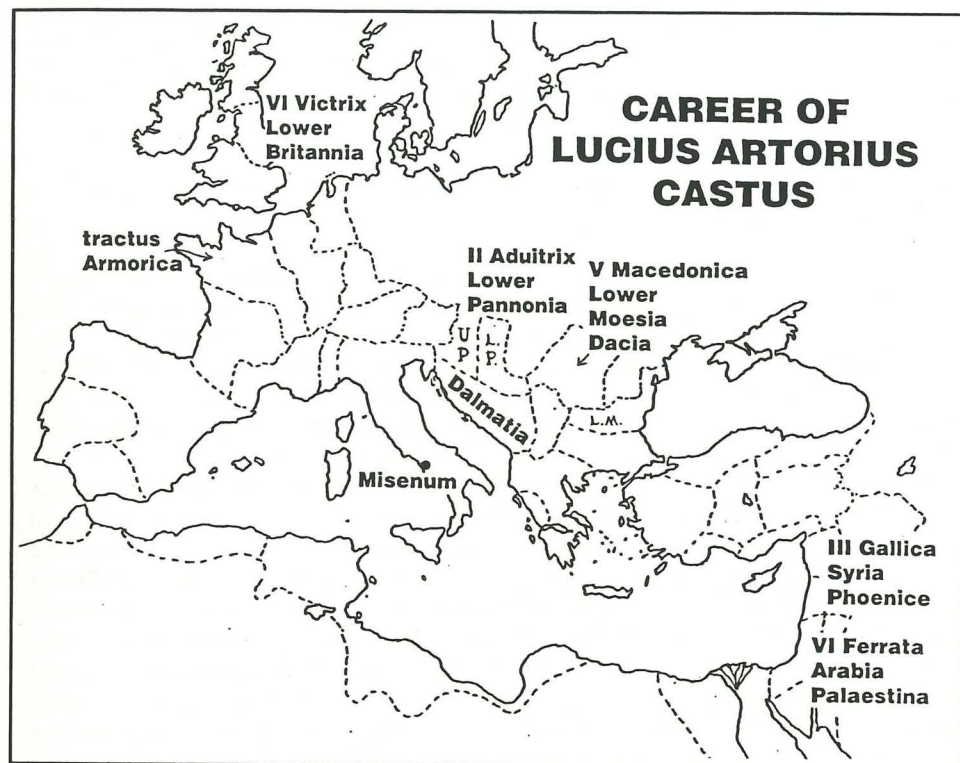and
Lucius Artorius Castus, Senior Centurion of Legion V Macedonica, Commandant of the Fleet at Misenum, Prefect of Legion VI Victrix....

Following on from this it might be interesting to look at the various legions and where they were at roughly the time of Artorius, but, as stated before, this cannot be pinpointed accurately. Nevertheless, let us look at Artorius' various positions mentioned above. Artorius began his military career in the III Gallica, which spent most of the Roman Imperial period in Syria with one year in Moesia, returning to Syria in AD 69 and ending up stationed in Syria Phoenice during the 3rd century AD. From there he moved to the VI Ferrata which also was in Syria, though it spent some time in Arabia in the 2nd century AD and was in Syria Palaestina at the beginning of the 3rd century. After this he was Centurion of the II Aduitrix, which had been formed from marines at Ravenna in 69 and from Britain in 85, stationed in Lower Pannonia during the 2nd and 3rd centuries (probably at Aquincum, Budapest). Next he became Centurion, and later Senior Centurion, of the V Macedonica Legion, which had spent most of the period stationed in Eastern Europe in Moesia, with a brief period in Judea returning to Lower Moesia after AD 71 and was in Dacia in the early 3rd century, though by 275 the province of Dacia had been abandoned and the Legion was probably back in Moesia. Following this he became Commandant of the Fleet at Misenum, near Naples in Italy (considered to be one of the most important posts in a knight's career). From there he moved to the far north-west and became Prefect of the VI Victrix Legion. For the early part of the 1st century this Legion was stationed in Spain, but moved into Lower Germania after AD 70 and then to Eboracum (York), Lower Britannia, in AD 122, where it stayed until the 5th century. It was at York that Artorius must have been put in charge of a mixed unit and sent to Armorica, Brittany. After this he was made Governor of Liburnia, North Dalmatia (Yugoslavia), which had been part of the Roman Empire from 1st century. Artorius is likely to have been a knight - of equestrian rank in Roman society - since only knights could become senior

centurions. This outline of his career is typical of his rank but there are some anomalies which be looked at later.

On retiring, according to J.J. Wilkes in *Dalmatia* (1969), Artorius settled on property in the Polijica area of Salona, where descendants continued to own land. His career seems to have ended there, having no recorded connection with the nearby city and there is no further mention of him or any relatives. The big question is when did Lucius Artorius Castus live? Kemp Malone put Artorius' career to the first half of the 2nd century AD. He has him first fighting in the Jewish Wars (132-135) under Iulius Severus. Then follows the pattern shown above with the Armorican uprising dated to 150 AD, after which Artorius retires. Malone liken this to Arthur's career and suggests: "...the only historical character with which Arthur can with any plausibility be connected is the 2nd century L. Artorius Castus." Further suggestions have been put forward by various scholars and they seem to be split between the AD 180s and AD 280s. To get a clearer picture it is necessary to look briefly at both these periods.

CAREER OF LUCIUS ARTORIUS CASTUS

VI Victrix Lower Britannia

tractus Armorica

II Aduitrix Lower Pannonia

V Macedonica Lower Moesia Dacia

U.P. L.P.

Dalmatia

L.M.

Misenum

III Gallica Syria Phoenice

VI Ferrata Arabia Palaestina

In or around AD 180 the inhabitants beyond the Antonine Wall attacked, killing a general and cutting his troops to ribbons. This, according to Jack Lindsey, was the beginning of troubles in Britain that lasted for 27 years. The Emperor Commodus sent Ulpius Marcellus to deal with this problem in the north of Britannia (though he may already have been governor of the province). By 184 Commodus added the title Britannicus to his

name and a coin was struck to commemorate a victory. However, the campaign continued and a second victory coin was struck in 185. Despite his success Marcellus was accused by Commodus for inciting the troops to mutiny and P. Helvus Pertinax was sent to clear things up. About this time a rising took place in the Gallic province of Lugdunesis under the leadership of a deserted soldier named Maternus. The rebellion spread south and regular troops were sent in to quell the uprising. Maternus now aspired to the purple causing a rift in his followers who betrayed him and he was beheaded. Meanwhile, in Britain Pertinax had stopped the troops from proclaiming their own emperor - a legate called Priscus. However, like his predecessor, his treatment of the troops brought about his retirement. Further troubles occurred under the governorship of Clodius Albinus. Could the rebellion in Lugdunesis, under the leadership of Maternus, have been the reason for Lucius Artorius Castus taking troops into Armorica? Support for this comes from a number of scholars, including Patrick Galliou and Michael Jones in *The Bretons* (1991, see the Review section). My personal opinion of this period is that there was too many problems in Britain to allow regular troops out of the country. There was a lot of dissatisfaction in the British legions and to send them against equally unhappy rebels may have seen them joining their adversaries.

Commodus   **Diocletian**   **Maximinian**

Roughly a century later life seemed to have been more stable in Britain, for the moment, but in Europe things were beginning to smoulder. Already troubles in Gaul had seen immigration to a safer Britannia and during the reign of Emperor Carinus (AD 283-5) the growing climate of rebellion burst into flames. Under the leadership of Aelianus and Amandus, the countryside became plagued by the Bacaudae, a mixture of deserters, slaves and peasants. They were particularly centred on the tractus Armoricanus - the land between the Seine and the Loire, more or less modern day Brittany and Normandy. At this time a Dalmatian soldier named Diocles was proclaimed Roman Emperor and called Diocletian. Despite a bad press because of his persecution of the Christian sects, he proved to be a brilliant organiser. With a number of bold plans he secured the borders and set about re-organising the State government and army. His most revolutionary idea was the setting up of two emperors and dividing the Empire into East and West. For many years the Emperor had held the title Augustus and his heir Caesar, now Diocletian changed the system appointing a co-Augustus and each with a colleague under the title Caesar. Even before this he had appointed a Panonnian named Maximian his Caesar and put him in charge of the western part of the Empire. In 285 Maximian, a competent

general, moved into Gaul to put down the uprisings and secure the Channel from the growing problem of pirates. The same year Diocletian took the title Britannicus Maximus for reasons not recorded but presumably connected with some victory in Britain. Maximian proved to be very successful and crushed the Bacaudae uprising earning for himself Diocletian's thanks followed by his elevation from Caesar to Augustus. About the same time Maximian made a bad mistake by putting one Carausius in charge of the Classis Britannia, the Roman Fleet which protected the Channel from ports on both sides. But he proclaimed himself Emperor and separated Britain from the rest of the Empire. This continued until in 293 Diocletian appointed Constantius as Caesar to Maximian, who was defending the Empire's borders from Germanic tribesmen. Constantius, and his son Constantine, invaded Britain and put an end to Britain's independence with the defeat of Allectus, who had already murdered Carausius and proclaimed himself Emperor.

Apart from the problems arising from Carausius' usurpation it would seem that up to 286 Britain was relatively calm. This indicates to me to be a far better time for British troops to go over the Channel and play a part in the putting down the rebellion in Armorica. And it is interesting that, according to the Croatian inscriptions, Artorius became Governor of North Dalmatia after he commanded a unit that went to Armorica and Diocletian himself was from Dalmatia. Could this have been a gift from the Emperor for a job well done? (What hasn't been discussed, and it probably isn't the time or the place, is the morals of the uprisings in the 180s and 280s. We hear only one side of the troubles - maybe the rebels had a just cause - who knows?)

So here we have two possibilities - I leave it to the reader to decide on which period Lucius Artorius Castus lived. Each period indicates troubles in Gaul and military action was taken on both accounts. I prefer the second period because the first seems to me to be rather unstable. Both periods seem to be possible but there are anomalies with which make it difficult to choose one or the other. The earlier uprising under Maternus (known as the War of the Deserters) was far more widespread than Armorica, spreading well into Spain with assassins being sent into Italy to murder Commodus. But according to P.A. Holder the office of camp prefect, which Artorius held, disappeared after the reign of Severus Alexander in the first half of the third century. This would indicate that Artorius would have had to have lived before this change. However, the uprising led by Aelianus and Amandus, in the 270s and 280s, is closely connected to Armorica, as are the Bacaudae. This together with the point that Artorius, who was likely to have be of equestrian rank, became a governor in Dalmatia and there had only been senatorial governors in Dalmatia up till AD 247, gives weight to Artorius in the third century. So you can see that it is not quite so simple to accept one date or the other. For the moment the dates of the career of Lucius Artorius Castus must be left open.

Finally, before closing the subject - the question of whether there is any connection between Lucius Artorius Castus and Arthur exists? There are those who actually think so. We have seen that Kemp Malone believed that there may have been connections. In fact he goes further to say Arthur is a myth based on Artorius. Aside from this theory could Arthur have been descended from Artorius? - Charles Oman hints at this. Or was it just the adoption of this Roman name? Most of the names taken by Dark Age characters were specifically connected with Romans who were in Britain in recent times,

but it is possibly a name could have survived from the 2nd or 3rd centuries AD. You might say but that is easily possible - names used in pre-Roman Palestine are still being used now. The difference is that we have a culture based around a Church that kept alive Biblical names and also a very literate society. At the period and throughout the Middle Ages most people could neither read or write and I do not mean just the peasants. Finally, could the story of a unit led by Lucius Artorius Castus fighting in Brittany have given rise to the story of Arthur's invasion of France told by Geoffrey of Monmouth? This and other questions I must leave to the reader. What do you think?

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TALES FROM THE TWO ELLS or NEW LIGHT ON THE DARK AGES by ROGER WILLCOX

What follows are three articles on the way languages may have been (or are) pronounced. All three languages are branches of Indo-European: Latin from the Italic branch, Anglo-Saxon or Old English from the Germanic and Welsh from the Celtic branch. It is not so strange therefore that the pronunciations tend to be very similar. The first two languages are basically dead, though there are those who use them - such as scholars and priests - but only Welsh is still a living langauge - together with its close relation Gaelic and even closer Breton. I hope you will find these articles of some interest and use.

THE SOURCES AS THEY SPOKE

guidance on Latin pronunciation

from
John Gregory

What can we know of the sound of a language as old as Latin?

Lacking recording or precise scientific descriptions, we cannot recover the exact sound of the spoken language, with its subtle variations of stress and intonation, but within these limits a useful and approximate reconstruction can be made from evidence of several kinds. Ancient grammarians give descriptions of the different sounds, and these are often helpful. When, for example, Marius Victorinus (4th century AD) says that 'we produce the letter **f** with a soft breathing, pressing the lower lip against the upper teeth', we recognise a similar sound to the English **f**; but some other descriptions are too imprecise to be much use. It is interesting, for example, that no ancient or medieval Latin grammarian explained accurately the feature of voicing, which distinguishes **b**, **d** and **g** from **p**, **t** and **c**. Other important source information are the spellings of scribes and stonemasons; the representation of sounds of foreign words borrowed by Latin, and of Latin words borrowed by foreign languages; puns and plays on words in Latin literature; the development of the modern Romance languages; and 'laws' of linguistic change observable in many languages.

The sound represented by **c** will serve as an illustration of how these seperate strands of evidence may be drawn together. Was its sound always the same, or did it vary, as in Italian, French, English, according to the following vowel? Quintillian (1st century AD) tells us that it was pronounced the same before all vowels, and sometimes inscriptions substitute **k** for **c** even before the front vowels **e** and **i**. Similarly, its regular equivalent in Greek is kappa (**k**), as in Kikeron for Cicero, and Latin words borrowed by Celtic and Germanic languages as late as the 5th century AD preserve the same sound (Welsh ciwdad from civitatem (city) for example). The classical historian Livy records on old formula for recording a decree of the Senate, 'censuit consensit conscivit', whose solemn impact would be weakened if the

first **c** was pronounced differently from the others. The conclusion is that the **c** always had a velar articulation, or 'hard' sound, at least until the 5th century AD, and that the 'softening' before **e** and **i**, heard in Italian cento and French cent (from Latin centum, 'hundred'), occurred later. This fronting of an earlier back consonant before the front vowels - those in which the front of the tongue is raised towards the palate - is a pattern of sound change familiar from other languages.

What follows is intended as a general guide to the pronunciation of classical Latin, roughly 100BC to AD100 - the age of Cicero and Caesar, of the historians Livy and Tacitus, and of the great poets Lucretius, Vergil, Horace and Ovid. Some important changes in Late and Medieval Latin are also noted.

The consonants may be sounded as in English, with the following exceptions:

c and **g** were always 'hard', except that **g** before **n** (as in magnus) was prounced like ng in English 'hang'.

Final **-m** was not so much a distinct consonant as a nasalisation of the preceding vowel, as in French; in verse such a final syllable was elided, like a vowel, before a following vowel.

r was trilled, as by Scottish speakers of English.

s was always voiceless, as in English 'sit'.

v was pronounced like the English **w**, being a consonanted use of **u**. There was a consonant use of **i**, pronounced as **y**, as in the initial sound of Iulius, but modern printed books sometimes represent this by **J**. The Norman French pronounced it like our **j**, and imported this pronunciation into English.

Double consonants (eg. annus) are sounded as double, as in Italian. The combination **ch**, **ph** and **th**, properly used for loan words from Greek, should be pronounced like an emphatic **c**, **p**, or **t**, and **not** as in English.

In Late Latin, but beginning in the first century AD, the spelling of **b** and **v** was often confused, indicating that both had developed into a bilabial spirant (similar to an English **v**, but with the lips touching). Later still, **v** acquired the labio-dental articulation of the English **v**.

The sound of **h**, a light aspirate which in the classical period was often dropped by uneducated speakers, was subsequently lost, and does not survive in the Romance languages. The letter was still taught in schools, however, but mediaeval spelling like nichil for nihil ('nothing') show that its original sound had been forgotten.

The separate vowels of Latin are all sounded (eg. pace is two syllables), and they preserve their quality even when unstressed. This contrasts with modern English, as illustrated by unstressed vowels like 'development'. In classical Latin each vowel has a long and a short sound, as follows:

a as in **father**, or **cup** (**not** cap)
e as in French **ai**, or **pet**
i as in **feet**, or **fit**
o as in French **eau**, or **pot**
u as in **pool**, or **put**.

There are three common diphthongs:

ae as in **die**

au as in c**ow**

oe as in b**oy**.

In later Latin, differences in length were lost, and there was a shift of some vowel sounds. Long **e** became similar to **i** (as in fit); this can be deduced from the development of Latin <u>verum</u> and <u>pira</u> into the Italian <u>vero</u> and <u>pera</u>. Also, long o became similar to short u (as in put).

The three diphthongs developed into pure vowels, as follows:

ae became open **e**, as in French fête, and later similar to short **e** (as in pet).

au became **o**, as in fort, and later similar to short **o** as in pot.

oe became similar to long **e** (or French ai).

These changes are also reflected in the Romance languages: for example, compare the Latin <u>mel</u> and <u>caelum</u> with their Italian forms <u>miele</u> and <u>cielo</u>.

The stress of a Latin word falls on the penultimate syllable if its vowel is long or followed by more than one consonant; such syllables are called 'heavy'. So we stress <u>amáre</u> and Augústus. Otherwise, when the penultimate syllable is 'light', containing a short vowel not followed by more than one consonant, the stress is on the preceding syllable (eg. Tibérius). The rhythms of classical Latin verse depend on patterns of heavy and light syllables, and verse continued to be composed on this metrical principle long after the classical period - by the Venerable Bede, for example; but much mediaeval Latin verse is based on stress, like English verse.

John Gregory is the accomplished scholar who provided the translations from Latin for John Marsden's The Illustrated Bede and The Illustrated Columcille. His own very usefull introduction to The Neoplatonists was published last year by Kyle Cathie Ltd.

ANGLO-SAXON PRONUNCIATION

by
Steve Pollington

The following is a brief guide for the reader who just wants a little help with the often daunting Old English names met with in the early literature and histories. It is important to bear in mind that the speakers of this language were English, and that the language itself was not very different from that of today. There are very few aspects of Old English grammar, etc., which have not survived into the modern period, though often they appear as very formal, or only in regional dialects.

When pronouncing an Old English (OE) word, the stress usually comes on the **first** syllable: the name *Alfred* has the same stress pattern now as it had then.

This is helpful for an English speaker of English, but variants such as b'NARD for Bernard (BER-ned) have to be consciously altered. The main exception to this rule of first syllable stress is very common and productive prefix *"ge-"* which is never stressed: *"gewitt"* (knowledge, understanding, wit) is "ye-WIT".

The consonants of OE are often pronounced very much as in the modern language. The following can be given normal English pronunciation:-

B D L M P T W

The following are also pronounced as in modern English, but are very rare in Old English texts:-

K X Z

J and Q did not exist in OE: the sound Q was spelt CW in words like *cwic* "quick, alive".

C had the hard sound of K, never the sound of S. Before I and E it was pronounced something like the modern CH: *col* "cool", *cinn* "chin"; there are an handful of exceptions to this rule, where OE has an E replacing an earlier O, as for example in *cene* "keen, sharp". The modern pronunciation is usually a guide if the word has survived.

H at the beginning of a word (initially) was pronounced as now (e.g. *heorte*, heart) but it was also used within words (medially) or at the end (finally) to spell a sound like the last sound in Scottish "loch", and this often survives into the modern spelling with -gh-: *niht* "night", *flyht* "flight".

F was pronounced at the beginning or end of a word like the modern letter, but inside a word it was voiced to a V sound: *feoh* "fee", *lif* "life", *seofon* "seven". But when it is doubled it always has the unvoiced sound: *offrian* "to offer".

S (similarly to F) was initially and finally S, but medially voiced to Z: *seofon* "seven", *læs* "less", *risan* "to rise".

In combination with C, the sound was like SH: *scip* "ship", *wæsc* "wash, moving water". When doubled it has the soft sound: *præsse* "army".

Ð and Þ are letters we no longer use; they would both be represented by TH in our spelling. Like F and S, they are initially and finally unvoiced as in thin, hath, and medially they are voiced as in bother: *ðoht* "thought", *bæð* "bath", *laðan* "to loathe". Again, when doubled it is always unvoiced: *smiððe* "smithy".

G is a letter with at least three values. At the beginning of a word it has its ordinary modern sound: *gatu* "gates". Medially and finally, it has a sound similar to that in "loch", but voiced: *sagu* "saying, speech", *fag* "hostile"; particularly when it is in final position, the sound is sometimes softened to the H equivalent, and the spelling varies between G and H: *stah/stag* "he climbed". But whenever it occurs before E or I, or after I, it has a sound near to modern Y: *gear* "year", *gield* "yield", *blodig* "bloody", (this -ig suffix is the origin of modern adjectives ending in -y). The digraph CG may represent a double G (*frocge*, "frog") or it may have been the sound well spell J (*brycg*, "bridge").

Unlike modern English, where a number of spelling traditions have been unhappily brought together and produced chaos, OE spelling is generally very

regular. All the letters have to be pronounced, though sometimes these are digraphs (two letters written to represent one sound, like the modern "th") e.g. SC, CG. There are a few OE consonant clusters at the beginning of words which appear strange to the modern reader, though when they are pronounced they have a certain grandeur and charm which adds to the effect of the language. Among these are:

CN pronounced K+N *cniht* "boy, knight"

FN pronounced F+N *fnaest* "blast, wind"

HN (a soft breathing before the nasal consonant) *hnutu* "nut"

GN pronounced G+N *gnornian* "to mourn, wail"

HL (a voiced L, like Welsh LL) *hlæst* "track, path"

HR (a soft breathing before the trill) *hring* "ring"

HW (a voiceless W, as heard in Scots English) *hwær* "where"

WL pronounced W+L *wlanc* "proud"

WR pronounced W+R *wreon* "to cover"

The vowels of OE are a tricky area, and the following is a rough guide which will serve for practical purposes, but the diphthongs in particular are not easily reconstructed:

short	long
A as in bud (Southern English)	as in bard
AE/Æ as in cat	as in has (with full stress)
E as in bed	as in bayed, bade
I as in bid	as in bead
O as in body	as in board, bored
U as in booed	as in bud (northern English)
Y as in French *su*	as in French *sur*

(The two Y sounds can be reproduced in English by pronouncing the corresponding I sound and rounding the lips at the same time.) AE is an early spelling of the sound which later appears as Æ.

Vowel length is usually marked in printed texts by a macron (-) over a long vowel, with short vowels unmarked. In manuscripts there is usually no mark for length at all.

Diphthongs are vowels which glide from one to another without a break: the standard pronunciation of "I, eye" starts like the vowel in bard and glides to the vowel in bead - try it for yourself! Although diphthongs look ferociously difficult, you have to remember that modern English uses many of the OE ones, and others that the Anglo-Saxons would have found equally mystifying!

EA something like the sound in bared, Baird, with long and short variants where the first part is either the vowel of bed (short) and bade (long).

EO similar to the above, but with the glide towards O rather than A.

IE similar to the sound of beard with long and short variants.

IO similar to the above but with the glide towards O rather E.

Finally, it is worth stressing that, for example, C+H is not a digraph in OE and

has to be pronounced separately: the name *Cwichelm* is *Cwic + helm* and pronounced pretty much the as in the modern quick-helm, not quitch-elm. It is necessary to beware of words like *hatheorte* "quick-tempered, rash" which is *hat* (hot) + *heorte* (heart), and where t and h just happen to stand next to each other. The above is a brief guide to the standard West Saxon system which is most often met with in histories. There are a good many regional variants, as well as spelling changes in the course of the period, which don't warrant detailed treatment here. Just as an example, the early name *Uualchstod* occurs also in standard West Saxon as *Wealhstod*.

The interested reader should consult a reliable grammar for a better understanding, and the following are recommended:
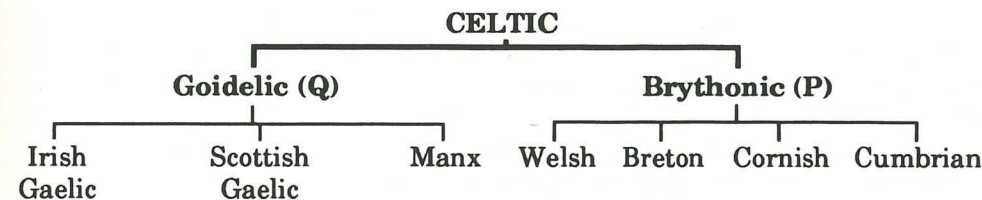
"An Old English Grammar" Randolph Quirk and C.L. Wrenn (old but useful)

"Old English Grammar" Alistair Campbell (detailed and definitive, but not for beginner).

"O bydded i'r hen iaith barhau"

by Charles W. Evans-Günther

Welsh is one of the Celtic branches of the Indo-European languages having the same roots as Sanskrit, Iranian, Greek, Latin, German and even English. The Celtic languages are divided into two groups:

CELTIC

Goidelic (Q) — Irish Gaelic, Scottish Gaelic, Manx

Brythonic (P) — Welsh, Breton, Cornish, Cumbrian

The latter of the two Brythonic have disappeared, though there has been an attempt to revive Cornish. The differences between Goidelic and Brythonic are considerable and there also differences between the branches of Brythonic. However, a closer look at the three existing languages, despite various outside influences, shows similarities in vocabulary. For example: hill = *menez* (Breton), *méneth* (Cornish), *mynydd* (Welsh); moon = *loar* (B), *lor* (C), *lloer* (W); and man = *den* (B), *den* (C), *dyn* (W). There are, of course, many other similarities - like numerals and days of the week - but there are equally differences both in vocabulary and grammar. A comparison of the three languages indicates a common origin which dates back to the Dark Ages - probably to the fifth or sixth centuries. Interestingly, both Breton and Cornish have not changed in the same way as Welsh - in particularly the double "l", so difficult for English speakers to pronounce, was never adopted. So in Brittany, near the city of Quimper, there

is a small village called Langolen and in North Wales, Llangollen - both meaning the church of St. Collen (possibly *Colen in its older form).

Finding out about the earliest form of the Brythonic language is very difficult and can only be based on names found in Latin chronicles. The same is true of the Dark Age Brythonic, which gave rise to Breton, Cornish and Welsh. Here we only have names found on inscriptions, quotes from Latin texts, such as Bede and Asser, and the occasional glosses on certain manuscripts. Possibly the earlier piece of Welsh can be found on a stone at Towyn, Gwynedd (dated to the 8th century) and reads, according to Sir Ifor Williams: *"Cengrui cimalted gu(reic) adgan ant erunc du but marciau."* *"Cimalted"* seems to be the Old Welsh for the Modern Welsh *"cyfalledd"* - a joining, and connected to *"gu(reic)"* which is more or less *"gwraig"* - wife or woman, we have a married woman. Translated the line is said to mean - Ceirwy wife of Addian (lies here) close to Bud (and) Meirchiaw. The oldest example in manuscript form is believed to be the Juvencus Poems, which are glosses to a Latin copy of the Gospels, now kept at Cambridge University, and dating to the 9th century. The Juvencus glosses consist of two sets of poetry - one of night stanzas and the other of three. From the shorter of the two the first stanza reads -

niguorcosam nemheunaur   henoid mitelu nit gurmaur   mi am : dam ancalaur
(the : seems to replace a missing word which is believed to be franc).

At first glance it looks very different from Mediaeval or Modern Welsh, but on careful investigation Welsh words, like *henoid - henoeth - heno* = tonight, or *telu - teulu* = family, can be recognised.

A translation of the above stanza could be:
I shall not talk even for one hour tonight,
My retinue is not large,
I and my Frank, round our cauldron.

One of the other ways of seeing what Dark Age Welsh was like is to compare early names with their later, and modern, equivalents:
Anaraut - Anarawd, Brocmail - Brochfael, Cinmarc - Cynfarch, Dinacat - Dinagad, Enniaun - Einion, Fernmail - Ffernfael, Guenhaf - Gwenhaf, Higuel - Hywel, Iutguaul - Idwal, Loumarc - Llywarch, Mailcun - Maelgwn, Nimet - Nyfed, Osmail - Ysfael, Petr - Pedr, Rotri - Rhodri, Selim - Selyf, and Urbgen - Urien. From this can be seen changes in various letters, e.g. 't' becomes 'd', 'c' becomes 'g', 'm' becomes 'f' and 'f' becomes 'ff', 'l' becomes 'll', 'r' becomes 'rh' and so on. Further changes took place in the Middles Ages but nothing drastic and the language can be still read. Take for instance this famous stanza:
Bet y march. bet y guythur. bet y gug-
aun cletyfrut. Anoeth bid bet y arthur.
This would read in modern Welsh:

Bedd i Farch, bedd i Wythyr,
Bedd i Wgon Gleddyfrudd,
Anoeth byd bedd i Arthur.
(note the mutations of M to F and G dropping)
A grave for March, A grave for Gwythyr, A grave for Gwgon Red-sword, A world's wonder (mystery) a grave for Arthur.

Therefore it can be seen from the above that, though the spelling may have changed somewhat over the years, the similarities are very close. Welsh has changed, like any language, but comparing it with Cornish, Breton and Old Welsh, and since most books on the Dark Ages use later versions of names, etc., it safe to use the present form of pronunciation.

In Welsh there are seven vowels (with 14 diphthongs) and 21 consonants plus the adopted 'j'. As in most languages the letters have different sound values depending on their position in a word or being effected by another letter (usually vowels on consonants). Added to this, in Welsh, there are mutations which change the letter or the sound of a letter. This is not easy to explain, but as shown in the above stanza of poetry the 'm' can change into a 'f', while the 'g' is dropped completely; other examples include 'll' becoming 'l' but it gets more difficult with 'b', 'c', 'd', 'g' 'p' and 't'. Leaving these aside let us look at the sounds.

Vowels

Basically there are two lengths - long(l) and short (s) -
a as in hard (l) and ham (s), e like a in lane (l) and as in then (s), i is like 'ee' in tree (l) and i as in pink (s), o is like the oe in toe (l) and the o in gone (s), w is like oo in zoo (l) and look (s). The u and y are more difficult and are pronounced differently in North and South Wales. However, both sound either like the ea in bead (l) or the i in pin. The vowels can also be changed by the use of a circumflex such as the *"to bach"* (little roof) - ^. For instance, using two adopted words, gem is pronounced as it is written, with a hard g not like the English gem [jem] (which came from the French), but gêm is pronounced somewhat like the English game, which it means. There are other circumflexes but to go into them all would take a lot of time and space.

Next we have a series of diphthongs and these include:
ae, ai, au, ei and eu which all sound a bit like 'eye', aw which is like 'ow', ew which can sound like like 'ow' or the ew in 'dew' depending on the word, iw, uw, and yw are all also like the ew in 'dew', and oe and oi are like the oi in 'oil'. Finally there is wy and this can sound either like the ooey in a load of old 'hooey' or as in the name Gwyn like the wi in win.

Consonants

The consonants in Welsh are more or less the same as in English, but there are the exceptions:-
b as in boy, c as in cat (there is no soft c, as in circle, only the hard c and in the past some scholars have substituted k for c - in fact Breton has no c only a k), ch is like the Scottish loch or German Johann Sebastian Bach (never like in

church), d as in dog and dd is like the English th in breathe; f is like the v in love while ff is more or less the English f as in film; g is always as in garden but never as in gentlemen, and ng is like ng in sing; h as in hat, j as in jam or Jones, l as in ladder but ll has no English equivalent and can be pronounced by placing the tongue in the position to say l and then hissing like a snake (usually through one side or the other of the mouth); m as in man, n as in name, p as in pet and ph as in philosophy; r as in radio but is always pronounced and trilled as in Spanish, while rh is the same but with an added strong emission of breath; s is as in sit, never as in nose but when followed by i becomes sh as in shop; and finally t as in town and th as in think. Some of them can rarely be found standing as they are but are used in mutations, e.g. rh becomes r and p can become ph.

Before finishing let us have a look at some names and places you find connected with the Arthurian tales:

Arthur - in Welsh the u is a little like an i, therefore Arthir, Gwenhwyfar (Guinevere)- Gwen-hoo-ee-var, Cei (Kay) is like the name of the English letter K when a Cockney says it, Gwalchmai (Gawain) - Gwalch-my (my as in my book) and don't forget the guttural ch, Bedwyr (Bedivere) - Bed-oo-ee-r, and Culhwch - Kill-hook but the k is the guttural ch. Gwynedd - gwin-eth, Powys - powis, Dyfed - dove (as the bird) ed with the d sounding a little like a t, Camlann - Kamlan, Celliwig -Kell-ee-wig, not forgetting that it is ll not two ls, and so on. With these hints you should have no trouble pronouncing Welsh names and places, except maybe with the 'll' and 'ch'. Something a Welsh word may look like an English word but you must remember to pronounce every letter. For example, *bore* does not mean to make a hole but morning and thefore should be pronounced - bo-re, and *haul*, which means sun and not to pull, should be pronounced high-el. It must be remembered that in Welsh, like all the Celtic languages, together with Latin and Anglo-Saxon, the 'c's and 'g's are always hard, so Celtic is never pronounced like the Scottish football club but always Keltik.

Unlike Latin and Anglo-Saxon, which are no longer in use, Welsh is very much a living language. It is believed that around 600,000 people speak Welsh everyday in Wales, many people who were born in Wales and don't speak the language, are now learning it, and there are Welsh speakers who live in other parts of Britain and abroad (Patagonia, Argentina, for instance). Wales has always been proud of the preservation of her language and this is way this article is entitled: "O, may the ancient language live on", a line taken from the Welsh National Anthem.

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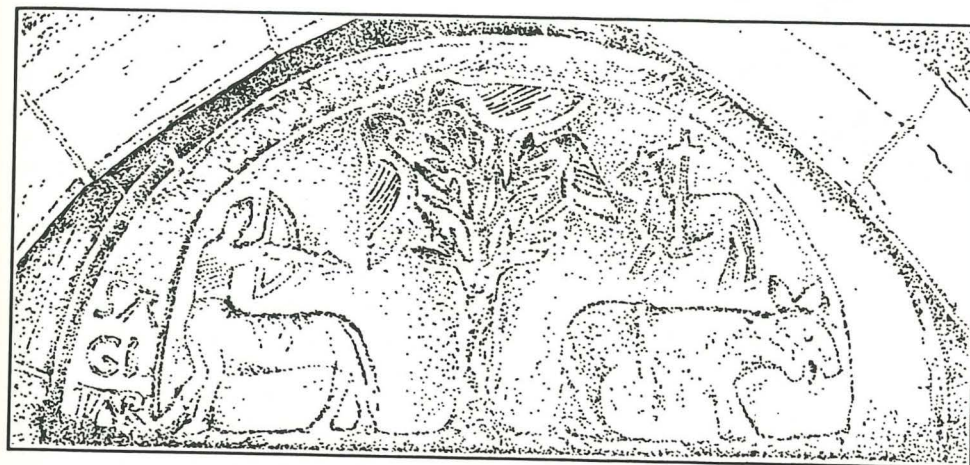Williams, Ifor The Beginnings of Welsh Poetry, ed. by Rachel Bromwich, 1972
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THE GLASTONBURY CROSS
- A CLUE TO ITS DATE
by
Nick Grant

In James Carley's book "Glastonbury Abbey" there is a brief reference (p.178) to an inscription on a Norman tympana (a pediment over a door between the lintel and the arch) at Stoke-sub-Hamdon parish church. This inscription is reported as bearing close similarities to that of the Glastonbury Cross. This lead cross was allegedly discovered during the excavation of Arthur's grave in 1191, and first illustrated by Camden in the 1607 edition of his 'Britannia'. It has been lost since the 18th century.

Carley's reference seemed an interesting clue worth following up, particularly as the lettering on the cross has been regarded as the most curious aspect of the exhumation. One might expect the lettering to be of 6th century type, if the cross was genuine, or of 12th century if it was a contemporary forgery. However, previous opinion on the subject has centred around the inscription

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HIC IA
CET S
  EPV
LTVS·IHCL
ITVS·REX
ARTV
  RIV
  S·IH
  IHSV
  LA·A
  VALO
   HI
    A

   SA
   GI
   TAR
   IVS
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being similar to those of the late Anglo-Saxon period. Radford (1968, p.100) says that the form of the lettering on the cross were proper to the 11th century or earlier, not the 12th century. Alcock (1971, p.77) states that the lettering was certainly not 6th or late 12th century, and the best comparisons were with inscriptions on late Saxon coins, of the 10th-11th centuries. Barber (1972, p.130) says the lettering is not unlike 9th century inscriptions in style. Radford and Swanton subsequently (1975, p.43) agreed with Alcock that the lettering compares with that on late Anglo-Saxon coinage. Both Radford and Alcock draw particular attention to the H-like Ns and square Cs in this context. Ashe (1982, p.69) agrees that the lettering is not in the style of the 12th century, and notes that Radford and Alcock say it is most like lettering of the 10th and 11th centuries, but also ascribes Kenneth Jackson with the view that the lettering could be as early as the 6th century.

Stokes-sub-Hamdon is approximately 15 miles south of Glastonbury. The tympanum is over the north doorway of the nave of the parish church, and bears a relief carving depicting at its centre a tree of life with three birds plucking the fruit. On the right is the Angus Dei supporting the cross. Below on either side of the stem of the tree is a figure, labelled 'SAGITARIVS' (on the left side) shooting an arrow at a lion labelled 'LEO' (on the lintel). There appear to be faint traces of other lettering on the lintel; earlier this century an M and V could also be read. Leo and Sagittarius may stand for summer and winter, or strength and evil (Pevsner, 1958, p.304, Keyser, 1904, p. 46). The tympanum seems to be fairly conclusively dated to the 12th century. The style and imagery is parallelled by other Norman tympana, and nave and chancel (and font) of the church are of Norman date.

Furthermore the first reference to a rector occurs in 1174 X 1180. However, it does appear likely there was an earlier church on the site, since one window, near the west end of the nave, incorporates possibly Saxon carving of a dragon, man and interlace ornament (Dunning, 1974, p.246-7).

Although the Stoke and Glastonbury inscriptions have only nine letters in common, similarities are obvious. The bar across the top of the As, the serpentine Ss, and the pointed tails of the Rs are all distinctive features of the lettering on both inscriptions. The remaining letters have a similar angular style but are not as distinctive enough to the closely comparable. However, the T and A of the Stoke inscription are ligatured as are the T and V of the Glastonbury inscription. Notwithstanding those similarities which the Glastonbury inscription bears to late Anglo-Saxon inscriptions (and these similarities are undoubted), it is therefore true to say that the Glastonbury inscription can be parallelled by an inscription roughly similar in date to that of the cross's alleged discovery in the late 12th century. The case against the cross's genuineness must be strengthened by this fact.

As a sideline, it is interesting to note that Stoke-sub-Hamdon had close connections with Glastonbury in the pre-Conquest period. In 1066 the Count of Mortain held three estates in Stoke; two of these had formerly been thegnland, held of Glastonbury abbey, and part at least may earlier have been royal property. Between 924-939 Athelstan gave land at Stoke to Aelfric, who is said to have given it to the abbey. An estate of five hides is also said to have been given to Glastonbury by Uffa, a widow. Finally, a lost charter of Ethelred (978-1016) granted land at Stoke to a thegn Godric, which as passed to Glastonbury (Dunning, 1974, p.238).

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⊕ REVIEW ⊕

BROGYNTYN MANUSCRIPT 8
Translated and transcribed by Rosalynn Voaden, with Introduction by Fecility Riddy
The Porkington Press Ltd. 1991, £475.

Yes, it does cost £475 - that is four hundred and seventy five pounds. It is a limited run of 500 copies and recently I had the opportunity to have a good look at it in the Clwyd Library Headquarters. (The Library purchased it after selling off some surplus stock.) Now for the humble reader, like you and I, this is far beyond one's book budget but for a library or university it could be very useful, since it has the text in three forms - the original text reproduced in colour, a printed text in the original language and a modern translation.

The manuscript is bound in red leather with gold inlay of Lebanon cedars (logo of Porkington Press) down the spine and the coat of arms of Lord Harlech on the front cover. Inside can be found a wallet containing a colour reproduction of the actual manuscript, rips and all. The book itself is edged with red leather and has a sword and dragon inlay. The text within is printed in black and red on acid-tree paper.

The contents of the text seems to be from the Arthurian part of Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia Regum Britanniae. Unfortunately, the beginning of the manuscript is missing and the text begins at the Battle of Bath. It is followed, strangely enough, by Merlin's prophecies beginning: "Sire" quoth Merlin, "in the Year of the Incarnation of Jesus Christ, 1215, a lamb shall come out of Winchester...." It goes on to tell more or less the same tale as Geoffrey's until the battle of Camlan, after which "Arthur was brought to Avalon, that is to say, to what is now Glastonbury Abbey, in the 22nd year of his reign; in the year of the Incarnation of Our Lord Jesus Christ, 546." From then on things are a little different with the mention of Adelbright, the Dane, being king of Norfolk and Suffolk and Edelf, the Briton, being king of Lincoln, Lindsey and all the lands up to the Humber; Curan son Havelock and his cousin Conan standing in for Geoffrey's Cerdic while Britain is wasted by Gurmonde; and Brocivall fighting Elfride of Northumbria at Leicester rather than Chester. After that Cadvan is crowned king at Leicester, his son Cadwallon fights Edwin and he in turn is succeeded by Cadwallader - the last British king of the Brogyntyn MS and the History of the Kings of Britain.

I suppose that this rather expensive volume could be useful to scholars of 15th century manuscripts but I do not see the need for all the costly binding (some of which didn't look too good) and inlay. It adds nothing to what is known of the tales of Arthur and gets rather confused later on when it adds some new characters to the story and relocates Aethelfrith's famous battle of the City of Legions, of which Bede calls Chester (Legacaestir, c. 730 AD), to Leicester (Legrecestria, 1130 AD). Or did the copyist know something we don't? One thing that still confuses me is what Gildas wrote about the shrine of Saints Julius and Aaron of the City of Legions being beyond the reach of pilgrims - meaning it was cut off from the Romano-Celtic part of Britain. I would have thought that Celtic pilgrims would have got to Chester, or the other possible site - Caerleon, without much problem. Could there have been more than one City of Legions - one having been Leicester and another Chester or Caerleon? (Your comments would be welcomed!)

A DICTIONARY OF IRISH MYTHOLOGY
Peter Beresford Ellis
Oxford University Press, 1991 (orignally by Constable and Company Ltd., 1987), ISBN 0-19-282871-1, £5.99.

Here are 240 pages of interesting reading about the Irish legends with some characters you may be familiar with and many new to you. There can be little doubt that these Irish stories, whether they be pure fantasy or based on real people, have affected the legends of mainland Britain and even farther afield. Did you know that the legends of Tristan and Iseult and Lancelot and Guinevere have their origins in the older tale of Diarmuid and Grainne? Or that the famed sword Excalibur may have its roots in Caladbolg - the sword of Fergus Mac Roth. Arthur's famous weapon is called Caledfwlch in the story of Culhwch and Olwen - later it was called Caliburn and eventually Excalibur. (Strangely enough, there must have been a spelling mistake in the publication as Caladbolg is printed Caladcholg! But who am I to criticise!)

Apart from their affect on British stories (and French), the Irish tales may have a greater antiquity with their origins in a Celtic past. For instance, the hero Lugh (pronounced Lew) can be found in Welsh legend as Llew Llaw Gyffes and in the names of Celtic town in Britain, France and Germany - Luguvalum (Carlisle), Lyon, Leibnitz and so on. I think you might find this a useful and intersting book.

THE ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF ARTHURIAN LEGENDS
by Ronan Coghlan
Element Books Ltd., 1991, ISBN 1-85230-199-6, UK £10.95, USA $18.95.

Consisting of 234 pages with 8 maps, 12 illustrations by Courtney Davis, 11 pages of sources and bibliographical details, plus a lengthy introduction, you will find this a rather useful and certainly fascinating book. With an A to Z of characters, sites and objects connected to the Arthurian tales, there is something for everybody here. It ranges from Aalardin, a knight who married Arthur's grand-niece, to Zitus, the name for Arthur in the Sanish Anales Taledanos. And in between are many items of myth, folklore and possible fact. There are topographical sites like the annalistic Badon to the folk-lorish Alderley Edge, and characters like the ancient god Cernunnos to real people including Aelle and Cerdic.

Of course, it is impossible to get everything in such a book but Mr. Coghlan makes a very good attempt to fill this publication to overflowing. This is an excellent book with plenty of interesting bits and pieces. I, personally, love to just dip into such encyclopaedias and see what comes up (history is important, of course, but legends can also be fun). How about Mule sans Frein - the bridle-less mule who is brought to Arthur's court by a damsel who asks for a knight to find the missing bridle, Kay tries and fails but Gawain succeeds. And there is Tom a' Lincoln, the illegitimate son of Arthur and called the Rose Red Knight. These, and other tales, do more for me than the long epics of King Arthur and his Knights

with the love affairs of Lancelot and Guinevere and the treachery of Mordred.

Mr. Coghlan's book is very much up to date and touches on a number of recent theories about the historical possiblities of Arthur. Sites are from all parts of Britain (and beyond) - including County Durham - with Arthur's Tor from Reg Wright's "A History of Castle Eden Lore in search of King Arthur", 1985. As well as being up to date, it does a good job of the Welsh sources with reproduction of genealogical tables. One of my only criticism of this tome is the inconsistency of spelling - Karadoc should be spellt Caradoc, Kelliwic - Celliwic, Kustenhin - Custenhin and so on. Despite this, here is an excellent and useful book whether you are interested in history, topography, folk lore or high legend. The Encyclopaedia of Arthurian Legends has all these plus the addition of intriguing illustrations by Courtney Davis.

THE BRETONS
Patrick Galliou and Michael Jones
[Part of the "People of Europe" series] Basil Blackwell Ltd., 1991, ISBN 0-63-16406-5, £25.00

If you ever go to the National Eisteddfod of Wales you might see, as part of the ceremonies, a small sword called Yr Hanner Cledd (The Half Sword) carried. This is divided into two halves lengthwise, one half of which is kept in Wales , the other in Brittany and is only put together at a joint Gorsedd of Bards of the two countries . It is said to represent the spiritual unity of King Arthur's sword over Wales (Cymru) and Brittany (Breizh). These links are deep and strong, whether it be myths, backgrounds or language. Though their languages have similarities, different influences have changed them - nevertheless, links continue.

Galliou and Jones survey the history of Brittany in this book of 350 pages, 40 b/w photographs, 26 figures (including maps), 23 page bibliography and 23 page index. Of course not all of the book is of interest to members but the first 140 pages cover the history from pre-historic times to the Carolingians. During this period Brittany became a Celtic speaking area, first dominated by Celtic tribes such as the Ossimii and the Venetii, the Romans, immigrants from the South-West of England and Wales and later by the Franks. During the Roman period the area became known as Armorica and though today it is called Breizh (Brittany) the coastal region is still designated Armor while the hilly, wooded interior is known as the Argoat. Brittany, like Wales, has always been fiercely independent from early times with the Bacaudae uprisings to their leaders like Nominaë and their strong support of the French Revolution. This independence has given Brittany a cultural identity of its own and birth to many interesting characters. There has been people like Riothamus, Nimonaë, the Conans, the powerful Anne of Brittany, great knights like Betrand du Gueslin, revolutionaries such as the Marquis de Pont-Calleck, the writer Jules Verne and Brittany has even had a man in space - Jean Loup Chretién - who has flown on Soviet space missions.

So if you are interested in Brittany and its history, you will find this a fascinating book. But if you only want to read about the Dark Ages this publication covers this period. Like Britain, the Dark Ages were a formative period for Brittany.

THE WAY OF MERLIN: The Prophet, the Goddess and the Land.
R.J. Stweart
The Aquarian Press, 1991, ISBN 1-85538-113-3, £7.99.

I think everyone of us has heard of Merlin and some of us know that Merlin was created by Geoffrey of Monmouth, but here Merlin has given rise to a mystical way. Unfortunately, like Arthur, Merlin has been used and misused for many reasons - some good and some not so good. I would put this use of the Merlin of this book in the not so good catagory. Geoffrey of Monmouth mentioned Merlin in his "History of the Kings of Britain" but hardly connected him with Arthur, though later in his "Life of Merlin" he talks about playing a part in Arthur removal to Avalon. The latter Merlin is nearer the possible reality with a Merlin on the Cumbrian-Scottish border. The Welsh Annals say that there was a battle at Arderydd and Merlin went mad. More can be gleaned from poetry credited to a Myrddin. Geoffrey based his later book on this Myrddin but in the Latinisation of the name was forced, for reasons of decency, to change it to Merlinus. I do not think that Geoffrey, being a bishop in the Roman Catholic Church, would have appreciated what Mr. Stewart has done with Merlin. Why can not people be satisfied with the existing systems which are already very adequate. Trying to pretend that Merlin fits into the Cabalaistic system of esoteric Judaism or making Tarot cards with Merlin and other Arthurian characters seems such a waste of energy to me.

Apart from the entangling of Merlin into a mystical system, Mr. Stewart's interpretation of history seems to me rather innaccurate. Take for instance this line from the Forward: "If you seek a wise old Merlin to guide your every step, he is not in this book (according to his biography written in the twelfth century but drawing from much earlier sources) the aged Merlin retired from active service, refusing to judge or advise the young warrior chiefs of Dark Age Wales." This is myth! There was no 'aged Merlin' in Dark Age Wales - the only possible genuine character was a poet or druid living in Strathclyde in the second half of the 6th century. Welsh connections are based on Geoffrey of Monmouth's misuse of a legend about a fatherless boy who was called to be sacrificed by the wisemen of Vortigern. This boy was called Ambrosius - Emrys in Welsh. The source for the story was Nennius' "History of the Britons" and there is no mention of either Merlin or Myrddin in this work.

I disagree with this use of history and possible historical character - and wonder why it is necessary. Despite this, I suggest you read the book (get it from the library) and make up your own mind. I would appreciate your comments.

Next follows reviews of two rather complex books.

THE NINTH CENTURY: World History in the Light of the Holy Grail
by Walter Johannes Stein
Temple Lodge Press, 1991 (originally 1928), ISBN 0-904693-32-5, £22.50

Rather late to review a book written sixty odd years ago you would think - but it has only recently been reprinted, going out of print quite fast, and is otherwise only found in German. I bought this to help with a study I am making on Arthurian connections with Nazi Germany, and thought you may like to hear a little about it.

This 366 page dissertation, with 38 illustrations, 22 pages of notes and a 23 page index

was originally meant to be the first in a series written by a teacher at the Waldorf School in Stuttgart and a follower of the mystic Rudolf Steiner. It is in the book's relationship to the beliefs of Steiner that lies the biggest problem in understanding the information reproduced. Nevertheless, this is a fascinating book.

If you study the Grail story written by Wolfram von Eschenbach - Parsival - you will find that the author talks of the events of the tale taking place 11 generations before the time of writing. This puts the story of Parsival roughly in the 9th century - thus the title of Stein's publication. From my own studies of this subject I have recognised that there is more to this than meets the eye. It is the second of the Grail stories - completing Chretién de Troyes' Comte du Gral, and seems to be describing a possible new religious belief during the late 12th-early 13th centuries. Superficially it sounds Christian but there is without a doubt differences. The most striking is that of the position of women in the story. Often the woman in Medieval stories is the poor damsel in distress, the adulteress wife or the evil witch bent on destroying the hero, but here women plays important parts throughout the story. When Parsival reaches the Grail Castle he observes a procession and holding the Grail is a woman. Women also play considerable roles in the rest of the story and the search for the Grail. At this time the Church did not allow women to play any real role in anything to do with their religion. And when the position of women began to chage in Southern France with Courtly Love and the Troupadors, it wasn't long before the Church linked this to heresy. (It is interesting that today women are demanding their rights to play a part in religious ceremonies - particularly in the Church of England. I am not a Christian but I know the New Testament quite well and can see that Jesus had many women followers.)

Stein (and Steiner) place great emphasis on blood - particularly the blood of Christ. (Interestingly, so did Adolf Hitler, who in his speeches talked about the Grail of pure blood - pure Aryan blood that is and not mixed with 'evil' Jewish blood - but that is another story!) To Stein the secret of the Grail is based on the magical happening at the crucifixion of Christ when his 'divine' blood flowed from his wounds on to the Earth changing it mystically. Stein believed that stories about the blood of Christ relate to the Grail and that during the 9th century important events took place which may have given rise to a new version of the Christian religion. In his book he talks not only of this but explains in Anthrosophical (the philosophy started by Steiner) terms the story of Parsival. All this is quite fascinating but I am not sure whether it is important or not. It has little to do with Arthur (who I believe as nothing to do with the Holy Grail, anyway) or the Dark Ages, but I thought you may be interested in knowing that such a book exists and you might want to look it up. I do actually see here a genuine mystical background unlike the material in Robert Stewart's Merlin book which sounds contrived. Ask you library to get you a copy to read.

KITEZH: The Russian Grail Legends
by Munin Nederlander
The Aquarian Press, 1991, ISBN 1-85538-037-4, £17.99

Apart from the historical Arthur and the early legends, I have always had a great love of those larger than life heroes of Old Russia - roughly what is now the Ukraine, the western part of the Russian Federation and Belarus (its hard to keep up with changes in Eastern Europe). When I read of this book I was intrigued because I have known most of the bylini (heroic tales) for many years and though I had seen parallels between "King

Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table" but not the Grail legends.

Unfortunately, like the previous publication, the background of the book is Anthroposophism, with the same belief about the Earth having been transformed by the 'divine' blood of Christ. The terms used are often not explained and this makes for a rather difficult read. Much of the material is theory and I am unimpressed by the use of Root Races and the like, which reminds me of the misuse of terms like Aryan used by the Nazis. Not that Steiner's followers are dangerous or evil - far from it, I have nothing but praise for the Steiner Schools. However, many of the ideas cannot be proven and are very difficult to reconcile with what we know about the history of the human race. Nevertheless, let us have a brief look at these Russian Grail legends.

Knowing many of the stories from Russian legends I was happy to see them retold - especially the ones I haven't heard before. And the stories are enjoyable - or, let us say, would have been if they were not precised and the analysised in Anthroposhical terms. The book itself consists of 272 pages, 6 illustrations, 2 maps, 2 pages of notes, a two page bibliography, a glossary and a four page index. The cover is nicely decorated with artwork from two of my favourite Russian artists - the front by Illya Bilbin and the back by Nicholas Roerich. The first half of the book concerns the magical city of Kitezh, which was a sort of Russian Atlantis. Much of this part of the book is new to me. There is also, so I'm told, a rare reproduction of an article by Valentin Tomberg but it is particularly obscure because of the terminology. The second part of the book concerns the Bylini - the hero stories. My interest in these stories began after I read Russian Tales and Legends by Charles Downing (beautifully illustrated by Joan Kiddell-Monroe) back in the 1960s. And I must admit I prefer them to the high legends of Mallory and the like. While Mallory has a fourteen century Arthur (even with cannons) the bylini are set in real time when the real Prince Vladimir actually lived, though the stories are themself fantasy.

What disappointed me about this was the way in which Mr. Nedelander told the story in short form and they vertual repeated it while expaining its mystical meanings. The Russian heroes don't search for the Grail - it is under their feet -it is Mother Russia, made holy by the blood of Christ. From an Anthroposhical point of view this may make some sense but I am far from convinced that there is any connection between the Grail legends and these Russian tales. It cannot be denied that the stories of Prince Vladimir and his Bogatyri are strongly rememiscent of that of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table but they have grown up independent of each other. Anyone can read anything into anything - the Bible, the Grail Legends, "Wind in the Willows" or "Lord of the Rings". This I call 'Von Danikening' from the man who wrote "Chariots of the Gods". I compared a number of the tales with copies I have and found differences. Take for instance The Cure of Illya Muromets (one of my favourite characters) - from invalid to super hero. Illya has been bedridden for 30 years when 3 kaliki, medicant monks, visit him and cure him. He then becomes Russia's most famous bogatyr - hero. Nederlander says: "These three kaliki represent the forces of the triad of divine essential charactersitics as they are converted to Christianity" and that Illya is the "spirit of the people who will develop Manas" and he "fights the dragons of cultural decay". My version has the three kaliki being in reality Christ and two of his apostles in disguise who cure Illya. I prefer the story of the invalid cured by Christ and how he becomes a national hero rather than Nederlander's mystical symbols. Of course, I could be completely wrong and all ancient tales do have symbolic, mystical meanings. But call me naive I enjoy them just as stories.

Though this is an interesting publication, I feel its relevence to Arthurian studies are rather tenious and certainly the Grail legends bare little similiarity to these old Russian

stories. But don't take my word for it - read it and judge for yourself!

THE MAKING OF ENGLAND: Anglo-Saxon Art and Culture AD 600-900
Edited by Leslie Webster and Janet Backhouse
British Museum Press, 1991, ISBN 0-7141-0555-4, exhbition price: £14.95

This 312 page, large format book was published as a catalogue of items displayed by the British Museum for the exhibition of the same name. Consisting of numerous photographs (in b/w and colour) and line drawings it catalogues 279 items. Areas covered include the change from Pagan to Christianity, the development of the state, new learning, the Church and Northumbria, England and the Continent, Mercia's supremacy and the Age of Alfred. Each area is divided into sections on different items - manuscripts, metalwork and coins, together with bone, sculpture, wood, glass, textiles and Church and secular architecture.

You will wonder at the intricacy of the artwork, whether it be the marvellous manuscripts, superbly decorated caskets or fine broaches. Some of the manuscripts date back to the 6th century and there are copies of the original Bede and a 11th reproduction of Beowulf.

Amongst my favourites are the Gospels of Lindisfarne and Lichfield - both of which show the fusion of Anglo-Saxon and Celtic art to produce a marvellous hybrid.

However, there is much more to see in this excellent publication. If you visited the exhibition this makes a great keepsake and it is a good piece of reference material anyway. If you didn't get to see the exhibition this book will go a long way to make up for what you missed. Well worth the price, and you can't say that very often!

DRAGONS: their history and symbolism
by Janet Hoult
Gothic Image, 1990, ISBN 0-906362-09-1, £4.95

I remember when I first visited Glastonbury - I was very disappointed. However, finding an interesting bookshop, called Gothic Image, in the High Street made up for things somewhat. Amongst the books I bought there was a little paperback entitled "A Short History of Dragons" by Janet Hoult. It consisted of 40 pages with a section on Arthur, and now, ten years later, it has been revised and expanded into 58 pages with more illustrations, chapters and a little more on dragons and Arthur. So if you are interested in dragons (and who isn't?), then you may find this a useful little book. (In the next issue Helen Hollick may have an explanation about why people thought dragons existed.)

And finally two TV programmes from last year:

OUTSIDE TIME
by Emyr Humphreys
Ffilmiau Bryngwyn for Channel 4, 1991

Written by eminent Welsh writer Emyr Humphreys this four part series concerned Y Pedair Ceinc y Mabinogi - The Four Branches of the Mabinogi. It was filmed in Gwynedd, on Anglesey and near Caernarfon, and at Valle Crucis Abbey, near Llangollen, Clwyd. The stories are told in a mixture of voice over and drama. However, what makes this interesting is the juxtaposition of the retelling of the Mabinogi and the fictional account of how the legends became overshadowed by the Norman version of Arthur. The plot concerns three basic characters - two brothers - a storyteller and a scribe - and a Norman abbot. Narrating and acting the part of inspiration is a fourth character.

Told over four weeks starting on the 13th August 1991, the series began with The Prince goes hunting and tells the story of Pwyll and Rhiannon; the second was The Cauldron of Rebirth and was about Branwen and Bendigaidfrân; next was The Making of Arthur and told the tale of Pryderi and Manawydan and the final one, entitled The Alternative Hero, completed the previous tale and retold Math son of Mathonwy. The sub plot then has the storyteller trying to keep the stories alive in his memory - we meet him reciting characters from Culhwch and Olwen, and his brother, a scribe in a monastery, trying to preserve the old tales alive by writing them down, advised by Inspiration. Meanwhile, the Norman abbot searches for a hero fit for Norman kings. The scribe defends the old tales while his brother is taken in by the glory of having a Welsh hero becoming more than just a Welsh hero and the abbot transforms that Welsh hero into a Norman king - emperor - conquering not only the invaders (who were only Anglo-Saxons anyway!) but also part of Europe. We are told that the Norman success caused the eclipse of the Mabinogi and its loss for six centuries.

This was an intriguing series showing the possible rise of Arthur from genuine hero to a piece of Norman propaganda. One criticism was that, while at Dinas Emrys, the storyteller stated that it was Merlin who told Vortigern of the dragon fighting beneath the hill and qualifies it by saying that it could found in Nennius. There is a story in Nennius but there is no mention of Merlin - this was Geoffrey of Monmouth's interpretation. A good Welsh storyteller would have known the legend accurately - it should have been the Norman abbot who twists the tale not the storyteller.

Despite this I found the series was very interesting.

MERLIN OF THE CRYSTAL CAVE
based on The Crystal Cave and The Hollow Hills by Mary Stewart
BBC, 1991.

This six part serial, which began on the 17th November 1991 and ran till the 22nd December, was a retelling of the tale of Merlin based on Mary Stewart's books. Starring George Winter, as the adult Merlin, Robert Powell, as Ambrosius, and Kim Thomson as Merlin's mother, the series more or less follows the original books. Like the previous TV programme it was filmed in North Wales (Snowdonia and Denbigh Moors) and gave specific credit to the People of North Wales.

For those who haven't read Mary Stewart's four Merlin books, the TV serial tells the story of the childhood of Merlin, an illegitimate child growing up in Dark Age Maridunum, with the intrigues of his uncle Camlach and his training under the wise old Galapas. There is little than can be called magic but there is a touch of psychic abilities. As Merlin grows up he taken to Brittany where he meets his real father, Ambrosius. Then, a young man, he returns to Britain as a spy and there is caught by Vortigern who is Ambrosius' enemy. It is as an adult he predicts the two dragons in the pool beneath Vortigern's castle, and then plays a part in his defeat. The story ends as it began with the young Arthur, guided by Merlin, pulling the sword from a stone marked "Mithrea Invicto" and becoming King of Britain.

Visually the series was very interesting but more because of its numerous anomalies. Stirrups were generally used and armour was way out of date - in fact too ancient rather

than too Mediaeval. Nevertheless, Ambrosius looked good and his armour looked about right for the period. It is a pity that many of the older stories are ignored and the later or even modern, versions are used. Geoffrey of Monmouth's Life of Merlin was probably closer to the old Welsh stories than this rather mixed up and sanitised version.

ARTHURIAN COLLECTION

Last but certainly not least, some news about the Arthurian Collection which is now kept at the Library Headquarters, Clwyd Library and Museums Service, on the Clwyd Civic Centre campus. Even though it has only recently moved from Llangollen, it is already attracting some interest. So far there have been three newspaper articles and a piece on the radio. Follwong the visit on the 29th January of 18 Americans, who were on a two week Celtic Studies course, the Arthurian Collection got some well deserved publicity. The local newspaper - The Chronicle - featured a short article on the visit and the Collection, accompanied by a photograph of the two eldest visitors, their tutor and yours truely. I had been asked to help out with a talk on the Collection. An introduction to the library service was given by Reference librarian John Rhys Thomas and a talk on Welsh library services and the rare Bible Collection came from Hedd ap Emlyn.

The Daily Post, a Liverpool based paper but catering for N. Wales, also came to report on the visit but ignored the visit and wrote a strange little article entitled "Holy Grail Quest in a library". Its leading sentence read: "Clues to the location of the legendary Holy Grail could lie in the vaults of a North Wales library." Another paper, The Wrexham Mail, earlier this month (March), also had this introductory sentence: "The legend of King Arthur and his brave knights of the Round Table lives on locked away in a library vault in Clwyd." Sometimes try as you might, whatever you say comes out garbled. People have still got the wrong idea about Arthur - there certainly more than King Arthur, Knights of the Round Table and the Holy Grail. Still, as they say, any publicity is good publicity!

The Arthurian Collection, if you don't already know, was started by Ned Harries, Flintshire County Librarian, and donated to the Library in 1952. It consists of nearly 2000 different titles covering a wide range of aspects from history, literature and art to the stories old and modern. The Collection is kept in temperature monitored room (possiby atmospheric control may be added in the near future) and, because some of the books are rather rare, is kept locked. The room will be opened on request. If you are interested in visiting, and maybe doing some research, please contact the Reference and Information Service, Clwyd Library Service, Clwyd Civic Centre, Mold, Clwyd CH7 6NW, Tel. Mold (0352) 752121 ext. 2495. Unfortunately, the Library is not open on Saturdays.