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DRAGON

A legend who would be king

A new true look at the mystery man of Camelot

'King Arthur identified' claim dismissed by exper

AR DRYWYDD Y BRENIN ARTHUR

On the trail of King Arthur

Newsletter of theDRAGON Society for people interested in the life and times of ARTHUR and the cultures of DARK AGE Britain

Welcome to DRAGON 4. 3 / 4,

and to new members who have joined since the last issue, greetings, and I look forward to hearing your comments about the magazine.

As you can see, to make up for lost time (I will take these long holidays in Japan, won't I!) this is a double issue. We have the usual collection of articles, though with special reference to Rosemary Sutcliff and Professor Bedwyr Lewis Jones, reviews, news and views, and (hurrah!) some items for Scrolls. Unfortunately, due to the pressure of work I have been able to finish an article on the Dark Age novels of Rosemary Sutcliff and make two book reviews. These will appear in the next issue.

Now as you probably know dragons are very hungry creatures (I am not quite sure whether dragons are reptiles or not - in answer to Beryl Mercer) and this DRAGON is no exception. Our reptilian friend is, at this moment, suffering from an acute case of malnutrition and, unfortunately, if this dragon doesn't get enough to eat it will surely die. Very, very few articles are coming in and without articles DRAGON will not be able to be produced. The problem has now become rather serious and it could lead to big changes. If enough articles are not forthcoming following this issue, I will be forced to make one of two decisions. The less drastic of these is to change the number of magazines produced - this could mean 1 or 2 issues per subscription (instead of four) with supplements in between - or to close down the magazine and therefore the society.

It is completely up to YOU as a member of DRAGON. I personally do not want to kill off the magazine considering we are stilling getting new members. Therefore I would ask members for the last time to try and produce some more articles, reviews, or smaller items. I am not speaking to those of you who regularly contribute but to those who have never written an article or sent in anything at all. I will announce in the next issue (yes, there will be a DRAGON 4.5) what the situation is and what decisions have been made. I, therefore, would very much appreciate YOUR opinion.

But so as not to end on a sad note - I wish you all Joyous Best Wishes for the Festive Season ahead - Nadolig Llawen a Blwyddyn Newydd Da - Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! (Now don't you forget - don't go asking people for the usual pair of socks or smelly stuff - ask for pens and writing paper so you can produce food for a Christmas dragon!)

Rosemary Sutcliff

by Sandra Garside-Neville

Two photographs of Rosemary Sutcliff dating (left) from the 1960s, courtesy of Oxford University Press, and from the mid-1980s taken by Sandra Garside-Neville and Kurt Hunter-Mann.

She was born in a blizzard on the 14th December, 1920. The place was East Clandon in Surrey - in her autobiography 'Blue Remembered Hills', she is rather rueful about having been born in Surrey, feeling that the West Country was really her home. Her father was in the Navy, though there were many doctors amongst her ancestors, plus a few farmers and Quaker merchants. As a young child she had Still's Disease, a form of juvenile arthritis. The effect of this lead to many stays in hospital for remedial operations. As a very young child, the arsenic in her medicine caused her to have hallucinations - she saw a black panther, wolves and snakes despite not knowing what they were. However, years later, she was to meet them in Kipling's books.

Due to her father's postings she moved frequently - living in Malta, Steatham (London), Chatham Dockyard, Sheerness Dockyard and North Devon. She had an uneasy relationship with her mother, but admitted that 'very few of the worthwhile things in this world are all easy'. Her mother disciplined her rigorously, so that the child Rosemary would take her spankings in proud silence, and later in life found it very difficult to cry, believing it shameful.

Her mother read to her very willingly, and never got tired. Rosemary was reared on a diet of Beatrix Potter, A.A. Milne, Dickens, Hans Andersen, Kenneth Grahame and Kipling. Kipling in particular proved very influential, with the three stories of Roman Britain which were the beginning of her passion for the Romans

and resulted in 'Eagle of the Ninth'. She was read Norse, Celtic and Saxon legends, and also historical novels which her mother loved. Surprisingly, Rosemary did not learn to read until the age of six.

After the great period of travelling, the small family, finally settled down to live in the Devon area. For Rosemary, these years alternated between hospital and school. One of the hospitals had a Guide pack - the only badge that Rosemary won was the Artists Badge. In the hospital library he found a book that proved to be the treasure of her childhood. Called 'Emily of New Moon' it was a Canadian book that followed a girl's adventures and her attempts to be a writer. When she left hospital she left it behind, and then much later tried to trace it, but did not know the author. It was eventually found for her in the 1970s by a Canadian friend who was doing a piece on the work of L. M. Montgomery. The writer of 'Anne of Green Gables' was also the author of 'Emily of New Moon'.

Rosemary left school at fourteen, and went to Bideford Art School. She passed the City & Guilds examination and was advised to make the painting of miniatures her profession. Now that she was considered an adult, any operations she had took place in nursing homes. These she found very lonely, mostly having the companionship of aged ladies, when she really needed friends of her own age. She was eighteen when the Second World War broke out. Her father went to command convoys, while she and her mother stayed in Devon. She had a miniature displayed at the Royal Academy, and not surprisingly, the subject was a knight in 15th century armour. About the middle of the War, Rosemary 'got the itch to write'. She felt cramped by the small canvas of miniatures, and turned to writing to gain a larger vista. The first story she can remember writing was 'Wild Sunrise' a story about a British chieftain faced with the invasion of the Romans. In her autobiography she stated that she was happy that the story is now lost as she felt that it was badly written, having too much of herself in it. The next story was set in the 18th century, the loss of which she did regret, concerned a little girl sent to stay with her Great Aunt who befriends an embittered young man. Some of its themes found their way into 'Eagle of the Ninth'.

Not long after the end of the War Rosemary wrote a re-telling of Celtic and Saxon legends which she showed to an old friend. He sent them to Oxford University Press. Although they rejected the manuscript, they requested that she write a version of the Robin Hood story.

It was during this period that she met Rupert, who had been an RAF pilot. He was married, but showed a clear interest in Rosemary. They spent the summer together, but in the autumn he went to a job in London. They corresponded throughout the winter, but when he visited in the spring of the next year Rosemary had a sense of foreboding. It turned out that Rupert had met another woman whom he eventually married when his divorce came through.

Rosemary had finished 'The Chronicles of Robin Hood' and sent it to be typed up. It took 18 months for the manuscript to be returned to her, during which time she had written 'The Queen Elizabeth Story' and sent it on to Oxford University

Press. This book was of a subject choice of her own, and she found it a delight to write. It was accepted, and the two books were eventually published in the same year, 1950.

This is where 'Blue Remembered Hills' finishes, but she stated that from 1950 onwards she kept a diary, and that she met Rupert again twenty years later. There was clearly the inference that another volume of autobiography was likely to appear.

1954 saw the publication of 'Eagle of the Ninth'. It marked the beginning of her mature voice and revealed her ability to bring the past clearly to life. She was bought nationwide fame by its serialisation on BBC Radio's Children's Hour, and much later it was made into a television series. Her Dark Age novels are to be discussed in the next issue of this magazine.

In 1960 'The Lantern Bearers' won the Library Association's Carnegie Award. 1978 saw Rosemary awarded the Children's Rights Workshop Other Award for her book about Boudicca 'Song for a Dark Queen'. This award is normally given to authors who are more self-consciously anti-sexist. She was given the OBE in 1975, and the CBE early in 1992.

As a adult, Rosemary settled in Arundel, Sussex. She tended to write in longhand three drafts of her novels, often writing 1,800 words per day on a single folio sheet. Her pen was 'fattened' and cushioned so that her hand could guide it. She wrote over fifty books, some of which were translated into 15 languages. She was writing the morning that she died, and had completed the second draft of a novel, with two awaiting publication.

It is likely that the combination of illness, and the early constant travelling helped Rosemary Sutcliff develop her formidable powers of observation, and bring about a vivid inner life some of which she translated to the written word. Her autobiography shows her to have had a wry sense of humour and a determined spirit, which is reflected in her books. It is difficult to imagine the field of historical novels without Rosemary Sutcliff's books - they always ring true, are poetic, yet gritty. It is lucky for us, that despite her disabilities that Rosemary Sutcliff lived to the age of seventy one.

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Lively, P. 'Obituary - Rosemary Sutcliff', THE INDEPENDENT, 31st July 1992
Moss, E. 'Chronicler of occupied Britannia', THE GUARDIAN, 27th July 1992
Sutcliff, R 'Blue Remembered Hills', The Bodley Head, 1983
'Obituary -Rosemary Sutcliff', THE TIMES, 25th July 1992

Bibliography of Rosemary Sutcliff's works

1950	The Chronicles of Robin Hood	1952	Brother Dusty-Feet
1950	The Queen Elizabeth Story	1953	Simon
1951	The Armourer's House	1954	Eagle of the Ninth

1955 The Outcast
1956 The Shield Ring
1956 **Lady in Waiting**
1957 The Silver Branch
1958 Warrior Scarlet
1959 The Lantern Bearers (Dark Age)
1959 The Bridge Builders (originally a short story in Another Six)
1959 **The Rider of the White Horse**
1960 *Houses and History*
1960 Knight's Fee
1960 *Rudyard Kipling*
1961 Dawn Wind (Dark Age)
1961 Beowulf (reprinted in 1966 as Dragon Slayer)
1963 **Sword at Sunset** (Dark Age)
1963 The Hounds of Ulster (Cuchlain Saga)
1965 *Heroes and History*
1965 *A Saxon Settler*
1965 The Mark of the Horse Lord
1967 The High Deeds of Finn McCool
1967 The Chief's Daughter
1968 A Circlet of Oak Leaves
1969 **Flowers of Adonis**
1970 The Witches' Brat
1971 Truce of the Games
1971 Tristan and Iseult
1972 Heather, Oak and Olive: (three stories including The Chief's Daughter, A Circle of Oak Leaves, A Crown of Wild Olives)
1973 Capricorn Bracelet
1974 The Changeling
1975 We lived in Drumfyvie or "We lived in Drumkeen" (written with Margaret Lyford-Pike)
1976 Blood Feud
1977 Shifting Sands
1977 Sun Horse, Moon Horse
1978 Song for a Dark Queen
1978 Is Anyone There? (a book on the Samaritans, editor with Monica Dickens)
1979 Light Beyond the Forest
1980 Frontier Wolf
1981 Sword and the Circle
1981 Road to Camlan
1981 Eagle's Egg
1983 *Blue Remembered Hills*
1983 Bonnie Dundee
1986 Roundabout Horse
1986 Flame Coloured Taffeta
1987 **Blood and Sand**
1987 Little Dog Like You
1989 Little Hound Found
1990 The Shining Company (Dark Age)

also

1964 The Fugitives (in Miscellany One, edited by Edward Blishen)
1967 The Man Who Died at Sea (in The House of the Nightmare and other Eerie Stories, edited by Kathleen Lines)
1970 The Making of an Outlaw (in Thrilling Stories from the Past for Boys, edited by Eric Duthie)
1970 Swallows in the Spring (in Galaxy, edited by Gabrielle Maunder)
1975 Ghost Story (a screenplay with Stephen Weeks)
1986 Mary Bedell (play)

(Adult fiction in **bold**, non-fiction in *italic* and rest are juvenile fiction.)

Rosemary Sutcliff

An Interview
by Sandra Garside-Neville and Kurt Hunter-Mann

This article first appeared in DRAGON Vol. 2 No. 1 in early 1985. Sandra and Kurt visited Rosemary Sutcliff at her house in Arundel, Sussex. (This interview has been slightly abridged.)

KHM: Can you tell us something of your early life, and in particular the contribution it may have had to your writing? We have read your autobiography and I was wondering how you often had this eye for detail, that you mention in one or two places in the book. I wondered if that affected the way you do seem to write a very plausible story, that could've happened and does not involve magic, etc.

RS: Yes, I suppose it did. Certainly my eye for detail was born as a small child because I'd been ill, and I spent a good deal of time sitting, looking around. My eye for visual things was brought out by being an art student. I was taught how to look at things, and I found that a great deal of use.

KHM: Why did you think there was a need to change from producing detail in painting to writing books?

RS: Because in painting (I only learned to paint miniatures) I did find it cramping.

KHM: Would you have prefer to maybe have painted on a larger canvas?

RS: I think I possibly would have, but I'm afraid I would not have been a terribly successful painter. To this day, I would've liked to work on a big canvas - I loved the squidginess, texture and brushwork which you loose working on miniatures. I opted out, and to writing enormous battle-scenes instead.

KHM: I'm glad you did. What sort of novels do you like to write best of all.

RS: Do you mean children's ones, or adult ones?

KHM: In general, your first novels were very much about the Middle Ages.

RS: The first ones were always Tudor (with exception of Robin Hood), and all the earlier ones were for very much smaller children, and mostly for little girls. Then I began to get my own voice, and I started on 'Eagle of the Ninth', which was the first Romano-British book. I began to get this thing about the legions, and went on from there, on to the rough stuff - lots of battles, lots of soldiers - which they've nearly all been ever since.

KHM: Why are you interested in the Romans and the Dark Ages?

RS: In the case of the Romans, my mother read 'Puck of Pook's Hill' to me when I was a child. That was the start of it all - those truly marvellous stories of the Roman Wall. I didn't understand a thing about it, of course. My mother read me various other historical books, Victorian ones about Roman times. They rang bells with me, they were marvellous. From then on I got interested, and started to read up on the Romans myself, and on Roman Britain in particular.

KHM: And from there you were lead on to the Dark Ages?

RS: Yes. You keep on going backwards and you come to the Dark Ages. I always had this thing about King Arthur, and that means getting into the Dark Ages. I have this fascination

about the Dark Ages because they are still very shrouded in mists, and the clash of arms you can't quite see.

SGN: And there is plenty of scope for the imagination.

RS: Plenty of scope for the imagination, which is always best because you can get bogged down in the extent of detail if too much is known about the subject. You're afraid to move in case you're contradicting known fact.

SGN: What do you think of King Arthur? What are your ideas about him?

RS: I still feel very strongly that he must have been a real man, somewhere in the middle of it. Personally, I think we're all curious about a great hero who got overlaid, got lost. There was somebody, in some sense of the word, and I believe that very strongly of Arthur. It is possible that it was two men, or three men, but I would like to think it was one man to which all of these things were drawn, like a sort of magnetism.

SGN: Many novels written about the Dark Ages and Arthur are written by women - Mary Stewart, Marion Bradley, yourself. Have you any idea what draws them to this period in particular?

RS: I've never really thought about this. I think possibly women are more in touch with the sort of intuitive side of things; the side that isn't so black and white, because we're to do with having babies, phases of the moon and that kind of thing. We're very much in touch with this side, which is really unknown, and which you feel with your innermost being, and not with your head.

SGN: What do you think draws women to write about the Dark Ages?

RS: I think it's this - It's something which is not known, and you can't sort of get it down to black or white. Incidentally, of course, women are mostly the best historical writers. It's some kind of quirk in the female imagination which makes us able to empathise with the feelings of the time and place.

SGN: Since writing 'Sword at Sunset' in 1963, have any of your ideas about the period changed at all?

RS: No, I don't think so.

SGN: You think Arthur ruled all of Britain?

RS: Yes, I still believe that. To me, that is the picture that makes most sense. There are lots of others who have completely different ideas. They are all fascinating to read, but they don't shake my own theory - I think mine is right.

(Ed. Rosemary wrote a letter to me in the early 1980s about her only adult Dark Age book:
"'Sword at Sunset'...is one of the most dear among my books. I wanted to write it for so many years, but always knew that I was not yet up to it, and must wait. And eventually,

quite suddenly, on one particular day during a spell in hospital, I knew that the time was ripe. But even then I made about four false starts, until, again quite suddenly, I realised that the story demanded to be told in the first person singular. After that it came and came and came, for nearly two years without a pause. I've never been 'ridden' by a book in that way before or since; it was almost as though the whole thing was out of my hands and I was simply being used. Most odd.

"Now I have lately finished a Malory-based 'traditional re-telling' for children. It seemed strange to be using the same material in such a totally different way."

The books she was talking about were 'Light Beyond the Forest' [1979], 'Sword and the Circle' [1981] and 'Road to Camlan' [1981].)

SGN: Are you likely to write another novel set in the Dark Ages?

RS: I should think it very likely. Probably a children's novel, this time. But I want to write another Dark Age novel.

SGN: What sort of area?

RS: I think I'd like to do one coming up to the fight at Catraeth; the Lothian, the Gododdin. I'd like to do something based on that. Though really what, I don't know - it's an idea floating around in my head.

(Ed. The idea grew into the novel and was published in 1991 as 'The Shining Company'.)

SGN: What are your interests besides writing?

RS: Travelling, dogs, horses - I love all horses. I always have dogs. *(Ed. Rosemary had two Chihuahuas when Sandra and Kurt visited.)* I don't have hobbies, I have crazes. I get sudden crazes for things like crocheting; which I do like mad, until it wears off, and then I get another craze.

Rosemary Sutcliff Memorial Service

On the 3rd November 1992 I attended a memorial service for Rosemary Sutcliff at 11.30 am at St. James's Church, Picadilly, London. I don't know how many people were at the service but it seemed that most of the pews were filled - there was even a tramp sleeping at the back. I must admit I recognised some of the faces in the congregation but couldn't put names to them. On entering the church everybody was greeted by the sound of bagpipes, seemingly Rosemary's favourite musical instrument. 'Blue Remembered Hills - An Air for Rosemary Sutcliff' was being played by Steáfan Hannigan.

The service began with bidding prayers from the Revd. Ulla Monberg and the first of five hymns was 'Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of Creaton'. I must admit that I have no liking for religious music with an organ playing and so little of the service had much effect on me. However, I was moved by the addresses given by Murray Pottinger, Penelope Lively and Rosemary Sutcliff's

godson, Anthony Lawton. Reading from the Bible were given by Sarah Palmer and the Revd. Peter Trafford while Jill Black quoted from 'Sun Horse, Moon Horse' and John Bell recited 'A Song to Mithras' from Rosemary favorite author, Kipling.

From Murray Pottinger the congregation was told that before her death Rosemary had been working on a new venture concerning the retelling of some famous tales - one being Homer's Odyssey to be illustrated by Alan Lee - and that she had finished a book for small children which is the publishers.

I felt very privledged to have been invited to attend this memorial service.

THE ARTHUR OF THE WELSH

Bedwyr Lewis Jones examines a new study of the Arthurian legend which for centuries has captivated the imagination of Europe and the English speaking world.

(Prof. Bedwyr Lewis Jones died suddenly on the 29th August 1992 but before his death he sent the following review the journal NEW WELSH REVIEW No. 18 [Vol. 2 No. 2] Autumn 1992. The following is reproduced by kind permission of the editor Robin Reeves. Prof. Jones was to have given a lecture, entitled "Whose Arthur?", at Bodelwyddan Castle, Clwyd, on the 31st October 1992 - maybe this will in some small way make up for not having the chance to hear him lecture on this most interesting subject.)

The rise of Arthurian romance in French and subsequently in other literatures is one of the 'marvels' of European cultural history. Where did this *matiere de Bretagne* come from? How did it spread? Why did it captivate the imagination of medieval Europe and consequently of the English speaking world? How is it that on a visit to America in 1991 my campus lectures on Welsh legend and myth were crowded by avid readers of *The Mists of Avalon* firing inquisitive questions about the origins and meaning of Arthurian literature?

The Arthur of the Welsh sets out to answer these questions. In it twelve scholars survey all the Welsh and Celtic Arthurian material that has been preserved in Welsh and in Latin from the ninth to the fourteenth centuries. The book supersedes the first chapters in *Arthurian Literature in the Middle Ages*, edited by R.S. Loomis in 1959 for the Oxford University Press, in the light of very considerable advances made in the study of medieval Welsh literature during the past forty years. It is primarily a volume for specialists, the contributions varying from ten page compendia of current opinion on individual Welsh tales such as the three Mabinogion 'romances' to forty page dissertations backed by a hundred and fifty or so footnotes.

Where did the vast body of Arthurian tale and tradition begin? One obvious answer is "With Arthur himself". But that only begs the further question, "Who was Arthur?" No simple answer is offered in this book. Thomas Charles Edwards, the author of the first essay on 'The Arthur of History', after weighing the early evidence , can only conclude "that the historian can as yet say nothing of value about him."

It is the only possible conclusion. The search for the historical Arthur has engaged too many scholars in the past; it is as fruitless and impossible a quest as the search by Arthurian devotees for the site of Camelot or for Arthur's supposed grave.

But history is as much about what people believed to have happened in the past as about what actually took place. People, certain people in Wales and in other neo-Brythonic communities in Cornwall and in Brittany, believed that an Arthur had lived. They adopted a view of the kind of figure he was and what he was able to achieve. It is these later views of Arthur which is the unifying subject of this book. We are presented with a number of different Arthurs: the heroic Arthur of the Welsh bards in Patrick Sims-Williams' treatise on 'Early Welsh Arthurian Poems'; the superman figure of the Welsh story-tellers or cyfarwyddiad in Brynley F. Roberts' essay on Culhwch and Olwen, The Triads, Saint's Lives; the imperial Arthur of Geoffrey of Monmouth in the same author's introduction to that medieval Latin best-seller, The History of the Kings of Britain; the mocked at Arthur of the Dream of Rhonabwy - an imaginative, satirical tale by a medieval Welsh Monty Python - in an excellent essay by Ceridwen Lloyd Morgan. We also learn from J.O.H. Jarman and Rachel Bromwich how originally non-Arthurian ingredients such as the figure of Merlin and the love-story of Tristan and Isolt became attached to Arthur's entourage. Finally J.E. Caerwyn Williams and Rachel Bromwich provide us with a wealth of information about the transmission of elements of Arthurian tradition to the Anglo-Norman world by Breton and other agencies in the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

The Arthur of the Welsh offers a fuller, more detailed presentation of pre-French-romance Arthurian tradition than is available in any other single book. It is authoritative and will remain so for the next half century. And yet questions remains - as always. Why did Arthur achieve the fame he did in Wales before 800 A.D.? Why Arthur rather than some other figure from post-Roman early-Anglo-Saxon times? And why was his renown embellished in Cornwall and possibly in Brittany as well as in Wales? The battle leader projected by the early Welsh bards must have filled a necessary political role at one time or another in all the Brythonic lands. Some ruling Welsh dynasty must have promoted him, just as the Normans, and later still the Tudors, were to promote their adapted versions of Arthur to suit their particular political needs. On such matters this volume has little to say. Speculation and interpretive historical sweep are not part of its editorial brief.

Once Arthur had achieved his messianic prominence as a battle-leader amongst the Welsh, it follows that he became a magnet attracting story motifs and mishmash of all kinds. That in turn led Geoffrey of Monmouth and the author of that other masterpiece, the exuberant tale of *Culhwch ac Olwen*, to adopt him as the pivotal figure in their respective works. But why, why should this leader of men from the Celtic fringe and other stories which had become attached to him captivate the imagination of Europe and inspire continental authors as he did? Rachel Bromwich rightly points out that Norman-French was the lingua franca of a twelfth century Norman and Angevin Empire stretching from Edinburgh to the Pyranees. There

was a common cultural market ready to be exploited. But what exactly was it that appealed? Was it that mysterious atmosphere in Welsh tales derived from the pagan Celtic view of the Otherworld? Was it that the notion of an extended Arthurian family - Arthur's men, and the prominence of female characters in Welsh tales offered exactly the right kind of novel myth needed by authors seeking to deal with the new concepts of chivalry and courtly love? Whatever it was, T. Gwyn Jones's words in his 1909 *Gwlad y Bryniau* ode remain strikingly true:

> *Tithau a'th ramant weithion a'i meddwaist,*
> *Oni liwiaist y byd â'th chwedleuon.*
> (Wales may have been conquered by the Normans but through them it coloured the world with its tales)

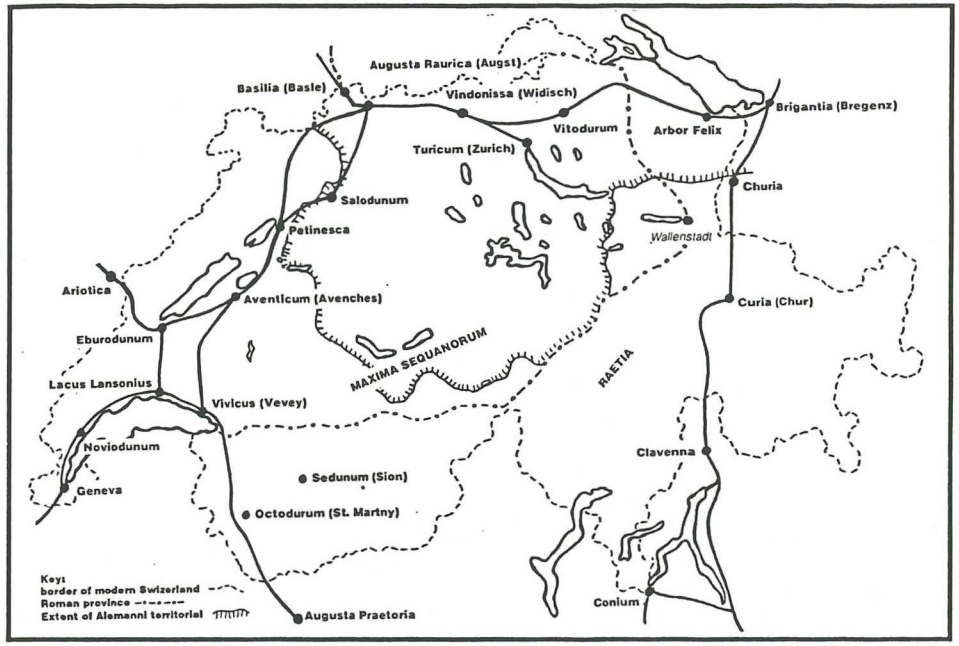
The development of an Arthurian legend in Wales and other Brythonic lands and its spread throughout Europe and beyond is the story of the growth of a legend. The Gwyn A. Williams who will answer the challenge to write the story will find *The Arthur of the Welsh* an essential, invaluable source.

THE CROSSROADS OF EUROPE

by Charles W. Evans-Günther

Last September (1991) I took a short holiday in Switzerland. My reason for going was to try and find out something about my ancestors - my great-grandfather came from Switzerland. I made Basel my base and there met and discussed my problem with Herr Franz Walther Kummer-Beck, a genealogist who lives in the city. With his advice I approached the authorities in Aarau for permission to visit their archives in Rheinfelden. My family is Catholic, so I presumed my great-grandfather was also Catholic and this narrowed the search down. Unfortunately, I could find

nothing so rather than start all over again in search of Protestant ancestors, I decided to use my remaining few days to see more of the Basel, visit Roman remains at Augst and take a trip south to Sion. I discovered a wealth of archaeological material in museums in Basel and Zürich for the Dark Ages. During the latter part of the Roman period and after the Roman authority broken down Switzerland experienced the movement of various German tribes. This had a lasting effect on the country.



Switzerland is today divided into cantons of which some are German speaking, some French and others Italian and Romansch. In Roman times Switzerland was roughly divided between the provinces of Raetia and Maxima Sequanorum. Two of the largest Roman cities were Augusta Raurica and Aventicum, both of which, with many other Roman centres, were destroyed by Germanic tribes who swept through the country in the third and fourth centuries. Today Augusta Raurica, which had a population of around 20,000 and an amphitheatre that could sit 8,000, is a small town called Augst and Aventicum, now called Avenches with a population of about 2,000, had 50,000 inhabitants. Other Roman towns survived - Geneva for instance grew into a even larger city, while the small fort of Basilia became the city of Basel. One of the main tribes responsible for the destruction of Augusta Raurica and Aventicum were the Alemanni, who proved to be a thorn in the side of the Romans for centuries. They were successfully defeated by Probus in 277, by Constantius around 350, Julian in 357 and by Gratian in 378, yet they never gave up. They continued to move south and west eventually taking over eastern and central Switzerland. Their ambitions in the west were halted first by the Burgundians and then later by the Franks. The territory they eventually settled in became more or less the

German speaking part of the country.

The western part of Switzerland was also occupied by an other Germanic tribe - the Burgundians. They seemed to have come from the north of Poland and, like the Alemanni, moved south and west. They first established a kingdom for themselves on the Rhine - some believe in the region of Worms, and tradition after the defeat of King Gundabar gave rise to the Nibelungenleid and King Gunther. The Romans used the Burgundians as allies against the Alemanni and settled them in south-eastern France and southern Switzerland around Geneva. Though they worked for the Romans in various parts of the Western Empire they eventually set up capitals in Lyons and Geneva - the king in the former and his heir in the latter.

One of the most famous kings of the Burgundians was Gundobad who succeeded Ricimer as emperor-maker. He accepted a Roman style of live and his people followed suit. Though not a Christian he was not adverse to the religion and his sons became Catholics, as did his people. The Alemanni were also Christians but members of the heretic Arian sect. Gundobad murdered his brother Chilperic and exiled his children. One, a daughter called Clothild, married the Frankish king Clovis, whose son laid claim to Burgundy defeating and murdering Sigismund son of Gundobad. From then on, despite Godomar brother of Sigismund defeating the Franks in 524, Burgundy came under the power of the Franks. The acceptance of the Roman way of life and the dominance of the Franks laid foundations for the establishment of the French language in Switzerland.

The Italian language came into Switzerland at a relatively recent date but Romansch goes back before the Alemanni, Burgundians or the Franks. When the Romans defeated the Helvettii in the first century BC Celtic people continued to live on in Switzerland. They developed a society with its own cultural mix of Roman and Celtic in a similar way to that of the Romano-Britons. When the Germanic tribes overran Switzerland one part of the country held on to its Romano-Celtic past longer than the rest. This is what was called Kauderwelche with its main town being Chur. Here we can see the use of the German word for "Roman" or "foreigner" - this being the "Welsh of Chur". These "Welsh" can be found in such names as Waldstetten, Wallstadt, Waldsee and Walhenheim (also similar names can be found through England). What the Carolingians called the "Romani" the Germans called "Walchen". The "Welsh" of eastern Switzerland held on to their native tongue, which was a mixture of Latin and Celtic, throughout the Dark Ages and the Mediaeval period eventually becoming Romansch.

Today Switzerland's languages consist of Swiss German - 75%, French - 20%, Italian - 4% and Romansch - 1%.

I found a considerable amount of interesting archaeological material in Basel and Zürich and saw some interesting Dark Age remains at Kaiseraugst (near to Augst and the site of a late Roman fort and church), but what about Arthur? Well, to my surprise I have found a couple of references to Arthur in or near Switzerland. A Scottish poet had Arthur ". . . on the Lammen-day to Lucerne he wendez . . ." and fought the Roman Emperor at St. Gotthard. Also in a French romance Arthur fights the Chapalu (a monstrous cat related to the Welsh Cat Palug) on Mont du Chat in Savoy not far from the modern Swiss border. What's more while on a visit to Sion, in the south of Switzerland, to my surprise I came across Arthur - at least King Arthur. I had been drawn to Sion by its strange twin peaks and never though I would get there due to the search for my ancestors. In the town are two hills with fortifications on both

summits. I had seen pictures in books and this, together with something I will come to later, made me want to visit the town. On one hill is a castle and on the other a 12th century fortified monastery called Eglise fortifiée de Valère. The monastery has been a museum since 1883 and in one of its exhibition halls are the remains of a wall painting depicting the Nine Worthies - one of whom is King Arthur.

As a footnote to Sion I would like to point out an idea found in "The Holy Blood and the Holy Grail". I have little faith in Baigent, Leigh and Lincoln's overall theory but what follows seems rather logical. Percival or Parzival, who searched an found the Holy Grail, is said to come from Sinadon in Wales. Sion is a very ancient place with remains going back well into Prehistoric times but it was established as a town in Roman times under the name of Sedunum or Sidonesis. It is the capital of a canton which is part French speaking, part German - Valais, which in German is Wallis. I have long been convinced that the Grail legend originated in Europe rather than Britain and here is the possibility of Percival being from Sion in Wallis, in the heart of Europe - at its crossroads. Who knows?

Bibliography

(Finding histories of Switzerland proved rather difficult and the ones I found were rather dated)
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Die frühmittelalterlichen Gräberfelder von Basel Rudolf Moosbrugger-Leu 1982
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ROME, BRITAIN AND THE ANGLO-SAXONS
Nicholas Higham Seaby 1992, ISBN 1-85264-022-7, £18.50

Popular histories of Britain tell of a cruel invasion by pagan Anglo-Saxons massacring the population and destroying the remains of Roman culture. The Romano-Britons fled in fear to the wastelands of Wales, Cumbria and Cornwall. This scenario is what is accepted by the casual reader of history in the same way that people think Arthur was a king, lived in Camelot and had a round table full of knights in shining armour. However, in recent years a new picture has been emerging due to the re-assessment of the documentary evidence and a new interpretation of archaeological excavations.

Consisting of over 260 pages, more than 50 illustrations, a 23 page reference / bibliography section and a 4 page index, Rome, Britain and the

Anglo-Saxons is one of the most interesting books to be published this year. Dr. Nicholas Higham, a senior lecturer in history at the University of Manchester, is also responsible for a number of other books, contributions to journals, lectures on various related subjects to this period and has taken part in a number of interesting excavations. His interpretation of the archaeological and documentary evidence has produced a fascinating and, to some, controversial publication.

This is not an easy book to review since it contains a considerable amount of information and would best be read to get the full benefit of Dr. Higham conclusions. It consists of eight chapters ranging from the decline of Roman society to the establishment of the dominance of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms. The book is rounded off by a summary of Dr. Higham's hypothesis and a large number of references for those who wish to take their studies a little deeper. He concentrates primarily on the early years of the growth of the Anglo-Saxons kingdoms showing the transition from Romano-British. Of particular interest is the way he reinterprets the writings of Gildas - The Ruin of Britain. This document has had a chequered career from being considered gospel (giving rise to the historical perspective mentioned above) to being considered completely inaccurate. Having read Dr. Higham's book I felt it necessary to look at Gildas yet again.

Dr. Higham suggests that a certain amount of weight should be put behind the statements of Gildas since it is likely that his more recent history would be known to his audience and therefore would have to be accurate. A number of aspects covered by Dr. Higham includes the famous "groans of the Britons". This is usually dated to some period between 446 and 454 when Aetius was consul for the third time. However, the author suggests that Gildas was using an oral tradition and could have known that a letter was sent to Aetius and Aetius had been three time consul. It doesn't mean that he was in this office when the call for help was sent to him. The Saxons, according to the Gallic Chronicles had taken over Britain, or at least part of it, by 441 and so Dr. Higham suggests that the call for help was earlier and that the Saxon mercenaries came into Britain around 430, rebelling about ten or so years later. He goes on to point out archaeological evidence to back up this possibility. He suggests that though Gildas did exaggerate the effect this rebellion had on Britain, he was basically correct.

One point that I found myself disagreeing with Dr. Higham was the suggestion about the sites of pilgrimage from which British 'citizens' were cut off. Gildas mentions St. Alban of Verulam and Saints Aaron and Julius of Caerleon. Even by the late sixth century Caerleon would still be open to pilgrims. In Gildas the site is called the City of Legions and there were at least two places with this name - Chester in Cheshire, near the North Wales border, and Caerleon in South Wales. Whether Gildas was writing in the mid sixth century or earlier, as Dr. Higham suggests, I cannot see

either site being out of reach. All I can say is that since the Romans called one Deva and other Isca and the Romano-Britons later called them both City of Legions, that maybe for a period all Roman fortresses were given this appellation. In this case one of the Roman forts in Saxon territory could be the place of the martyrdom of Aaron and Julius. Maybe York or Lincoln could be considered?

This aside I think that Dr. Higham put over his theories very well, especially when he suggests that the general population continued to be of British origin long after the Anglo-Saxons came to dominate England. It was mainly only the aristocracy that changed. The British people of the eastern part of the country may have been willing to give up their ethnic roots to become Saxons because of the advantages that came compared to the decaying Roman civilisation. Later laws show that there were still considerable numbers of British people as part of society, and not everybody was a slave. British language may have more or less disappeared, the inhabitants adopting the language of their new leaders. Dr. Higham compares this phenomenon to that of the adoption of Latin as a language in Gaul despite the Romans being grossly out numbered by the Gallic population and of the establishment of Irish as the common language of Scotland.

The overview is that the Anglo-Saxon succeeded in places where the infrastructure was not of the kind that clung to the old Roman ways. Where the Romano-Britons had reverted to a pre-Roman style of life or, at least, reorganised their society into a warrior orientated hierarchy, this proved a more successful formula and they survived Anglo-Saxon domination. It would seem that the Saxons didn't wipe out the British but transformed them into first an Germano-British society and later into the English. There was violence no doubt, but there is no evidence of an wholesale slaughter of the population and deliberate destruction of the cities. Roman civilisation had already begun to fall apart much earlier than the arrival of the Anglo-Saxons or even the wars with the Irish and Picts. The scenario that Gildas wrote of seems to be close to archaeological evidence - it is the way you interpret this material that makes the difference.

Where does Arthur fit into all this? He doesn't! For instance Dr. Higham puts little importance on the battle of Badon. If you read the passage once again you may see what the author is suggesting. "...This lasted right up till the year of the siege of Badon Hill, pretty well the last defeat of the villains, and certainly not the least. That was the year of my birth;..." It may have been the campaign that brought peace to Britain not one specific battle. Badon may have only been mentioned because it happened the same year as Gildas birth. However, he does suggest that Ambrosius Aurelianus could have been "a member of the Continental Roman aristocracy, perhaps one of the great landed magnates of western

Europe ..." comparing him to the Romano-Gaulish aristocrat Ecdidius who fought against the Goths.

I have in this review concentrated mainly on Dr. Higham's comments about Gildas, but there is much more to this book and I feel that, in the future, this will be one of those sources so often quoted. There is a considerable amount of information on the archaeological aspects of the settlement of the Anglo-Saxons, showing the possible peaceful encroachment rather than genocide. I could not but suggest that this publication should be read by everyone interested in the subject of the Dark Ages. You will not find much about Arthur in this book but what you will find may well open your eyes (if they haven't been opened already)!

KING ARTHUR - THE TRUE STORY
Graham Phillips and Martin Keatman Century, 1992
ISBN 0-7126-5580-8, £15.99

I have always been dubious about titles which claimed to be "true" - whether it be book or film - Marilyn Monroe - the True Story, etc. However, don't let the title of this book put you off - maybe it was the publisher's idea to give this publication such a label of finality. If this is the true story then the search is over! This book propounds that Arthur has a secret identity - not a new idea and therefore is one in a long line of theories that claims to have found the mystery behind the name. Most of this production, which seems well researched and written, follows the standard pattern of publications on the subject of Arthur. I feel that the former part of this book is a good introduction to anyone coming into the field of Arthurian studies, though a number of Phillips and Keatman's ideas are debatable. Chapter 12 is titled "Roots" and here I see the roots of problems to come but it is with chapter 13 (unlucky for some) that things really start to go astray.

"King Arthur - The True Story" consists of about 200 pages with a six page chronology, four page bibliography, six pages of index and fourteen black and white photographs. It seems, in the main, to be an intriguing publication and is reproduced in an interesting format - each chapter ending with a summary of the information discussed. There can be little doubt of the work put into this book and it is very different from Messrs. Phillips and Keatman's previous books - "The Green Stone" and "The Eye of Fire", both of which deal with the supernatural and claim to be fact rather than fiction. (My own interest in the above two books stems from them claiming that they concern events which partially took place in Flint. To be fair I still am not quite sure I believe in these claims.) "King Arthur - The True Story" is a piece of historical investigation - maybe one could put it in the term of Robert B. Stocker (the author of "The Legacy of Arthur's Chester") - this is a detective story.

At the beginning the ideas which Phillips and Keatman come up with are all fair game for researchers. These include such things as Vortigern's dominion over Powys, Ambrosius Aurelianus' connections with Dinas Emrys and Gwynedd and the method of calculating the date the Battle of Badon - 44 years before writing (around 540s) or 44 years after the Saxon rebellion in 449 - in each case the Welsh Annals date of 516 doesn't fit. With the latter the authors go for Bede's suggestion and make Badon take place in 493.

In chapter 12 emphasis is put on the importance of Gwynedd and its dominance in the 5th and 6th centuries. Phillips and Keatman point out that Nennius may have suggested in his famous chapter 56 that though Arthur was a king "he was not a native Briton" and relates this to the Votadini since they were from beyond the Wall and "were not Britons". Another interesting reference from the "Roots" chapter is that the name Uther Pendragon meant the "terrible head dragon" and that the Red Dragon was adopted by Gwynedd in the 5th century. There is no evidence that the Votadini ever adopted the dragon as a symbol and "pendragon" means "chief warrior / leader" but it wasn't a title though it was often used in poetry to indicate a great leader. It is wrong to consider the Votadini to be anything other than Britons. As far as is known the culture and language of the Votadini was little different from that of any other Brythonic tribe in Britain at that time. That Arthur is mentioned in the epic "Y Gododdin" (which concerns the Votadini who stayed in Scotland) does not mean that Arthur was a member of Votadini tribe rather that he was a paragon of valour and warriorhood. Another aspect of the Votadini and particularly the family of their leader Cunedda is the importance put on the name-element "Cun" or "Cyn" by the authors. This they say is a link with the Cunedda family but it is a highly dubious statement since the name-element is very common and found in many different genealogies. Great emphasis is then put on the meaning of the name Arthur and links it with one of the five kings mentioned by Gildas in his "De Excidio Britanniae". Cuneglasus is described as a bear and "driver of the chariot of the bear's stronghold". This seems to be the focus of Phillips and Keatman's theory and it isn't a new one except they then name who they believe "the bear" to be. However, the reader has to wait two chapters before being told who Arthur really was.

From the Votadini they look at Powys and Viroconium in chapter 14 pointing out that Gwynedd held control over this area. Their reason for this is that a gravestone with the name Cunorix has been found near Wroxeter and since the name-element "Cun" is present he must have been of the family of Cunedda. This is rather weak to put it mildly. Viroconium is without doubt interesting with its late Roman period revamping. Like much of this book the word "if" is used a lot - if Arthur was the son of a

Votadini king, if Arthur was of the royal line of Gwynedd, if his name meant "bear", "if Arthur's stronghold was in Powys it would have been Viroconium" and so on. The next chapter continues in the same vain - making assumptions - this time about Medraut or Mordred being a composite character possibly based on Mark-Cunomarus (note the "Cun" element) who allied with Cerdic fought Arthur at Charford, and Maelgwn - the Maglocunus of Gildas. Maelgwn we are told to get into power killed his own uncle. The authors suggest that there is often a confusion between Mark and Medraut in Welsh Literature and one or the other ruled from "Kelliwic" in Cornwall. As far as I am aware in early Welsh Literature it is Arthur who rules from "Kelliwic".

Chapter 16 is titled "The Real King Arthur" and all the elements are brought together. Arthur is connected with Gwynedd and the family of Cunedda, Cuneglasus (later known as Cynlas) is called the driver of the chariot of the bear's stronghold and Maelgwn killed his uncle to become king. Logically the person who fits this bill or "Warrior X", as the authors call him, is Owain Ddantgwyn (in Wales originally known as Eugein Dantguin - later Owain Danwyn). Owain was from Gwynedd, a son of Einion Yrth and grandson of Cunedda, father of Cuneglasus and uncle of Maelgwn - being brother of Cadwallon Llawhir, Maelgwn's father. This sounds quite good but the trouble is that the authors do not seem to have continued their research further into Owain. Genealogical records show that Owain Danwyn was lord of Rhos and in the Harleian MS. 3859 he is found as part of a tree of 13 generations from Cunedda to Hywel ap Caradoc - from the 5th to the 9th centuries.

Also history shows that there is a hill fort near Llandrillo yn Rhos, Clwyd, now called Bryn Euryn but once called Dinarth or Dineirth - being "din-arth" - "bear fortress / refuge" or "din-eirth" - fortress / refuge of bears". The latter suits the Gildas' Latin "receptaculi ursi" very well - "receptaculum" is a place of refuge, shelter or retreat (often a military term). However, it could be Gildas describing Cuneglasus' fortess as being a place of evil - bears being vicious creatures and synbols of man's beastly nature. It is quite true that Owain Danwyn (White-tooth) was uncle of Maelgwn but if you read Gildas in the original Latin, which is more precise than English, the reader will find that Owain was Maelgwn's paternal uncle while Gildas wrote that Maelgwn killed his maternal uncle. According to the Bonedd yr Arwyr genealogy Maelgwn's mother was Meddyf daughter of Maeldaf who is mentioned in a tale similar to King Canute about Maelgwn and scholars have suggested that there may have been some dynastic in fighting behind the story.

Another point worth making is that Gildas had a reason for calling various kings by animal names. Constantine was "the tyrant whelp of the filthy lioness of Dumnonia...he most cruelly tore at the tender sides and

vitals of two royal youths...",- Aurelius Caninus was a "lion-whelp", Vortipor was like a leopard "spotted with evil", Cuneglasus was like a bear and Maglocunus was the "dragon of the island...last on my list, but first in evil...". Gildas did not use Celtic symbolism but that of the Bible where wild animals tended to cruel and savage representing man's immorality and evilness. While to the warrior a bear was a proud, strong beast and a dragon a symbol of leadership to Gildas it was a whole different set of images. In Christian symbology the dragon was a symbol of evil or the Devil, the leopard stood for sin, the bear representeded lust and greed and lion, though often connected with Christ, in some cases it walked by the side of Satan devouring sinners.

Once Phillips and Keatman believe they have discovered the true identity of Arthur they go on, in the final chapter, to talk of "The Arthurian Dynasty". Here they make a series of jumps from one family tree to another giving the impression that lords of Powys were part of Owain Danwyn's dynasty. On page 174 there is a diagram giving dates, characters and areas - Under Mercia and Northumbria various Anglo-Saxon kings are listed while under Powys there is Owain Ddantgwyn, Cuneglasus, Brochfael Ysgithrog, Cynan Garwyn, Selyf, Cyndrwyn and Cynddylan. The impression that there is some relation between these - there isn't - except that Brochfael's sister married Maelgwn. Brochfael, Cynan and Selyf were descended from Cadell Ddyrnllug not Owain or Cunedda, and Cynddylan was the said to be the son of Cyndrwyn but the tree stops there. The authors, to be fair, don't actually say these families are linked rather they are heirs of Arthur. What Phillips and Keatman have hit on is the stanza in Marwnad Cynddylan (The Death Elegy of Cynddylan) which calls someone - possibly Cynddylan and his brothers - "Great Arthur's whelps". The authors translate this as "heirs of great Arthur" - but strictly speaking the term used means "son of" or "descendent of" - this is more specific than "heir". One problem is that Cynddylan and his father are given no genealogy and there is no connection found between Brochfael or Owain's family. Equally no connection can be found between Arthur and Cynddylan. The other problem is that the poem can only be found in 17th century manuscripts and that Arthur is actually mentioned is rather ambiguous.

The theory put forward by Graham Phillips and Martin Keatman is very interesting and it adds to the many faces of Arthur, but it doesn't seem to prove that they have found the true story of Arthur or who Arthur really was. Certainly, though there is precious little on Owain Danwyn, there is enough to show that it is very unlikely that he was Arthur. I feel that this search for Arthur's secret identity - like Batman's Bruce Wayne or Superman's Clark Kent - may well be a waste of time. Maybe we should accept Arthur as Arthur and concentrate on the evidence around that name. The authors of this interesting book contribute some discussion

points to the study but in my opinion they have not ended the search. Many Welsh people, like myself, would warmly welcome Arthur as a fellow citizen of Cymru but no one as yet proven that Arthur lived in Wales. However, please read "King Arthur: The True Story" and make up your own minds.

KING ARTHUR'S PLACE IN PREHISTORY
- THE GREAT AGE OF STONEHENGE
W.A. Cummins Alan Sutton, 1992, ISBN 0-7509-0186-1, £16.99

Over the years there have been numerous ideas about Arthur - I guess we all have our pet theories - but this is the first time I have come across Arthur being placed in 2,500 B.C. Most theories have Arthur either in the fifth or sixth centuries - one did have him as an ancient Briton fighting the Roman invaders and during the Victorian era it was suggested that he was in really a sun god - but Dr. W.A. Cummins believes he has detected the presence of a King Arthur in the Bronze Age.

"King Arthur's Place in Prehistory" is just over 200 pages long, has a 9 page index, 4 page bibliography and 25 black and white illustrations (including photographs and line drawings). Most of the book concerns Stonehenge with reference to the history of the site, its Greek connections and how it and other large monuments were built. In fact I found the chapter on the cutting and setting up of these large constructions quite fascinating. However, it is the connection between Stonehenge and the writings of Geoffrey of Monmouth that makes this book worth reviewing.

When I started reading it I thought this must be a harebrained idea but as I got into the book I found it quite intriguing. The first two chapters look at Arthur in the context of the early documentary evidence. Dr. Cummins, like us all, has to struggle with the perennial problems of Gildas, Nennius, the Welsh Annals and Geoffrey of Monmouth. He rightly points out the lack of Arthur in Gildas but notes the similarities between Arthur and Ambrosius Aurelianus. He believes that there was a real Dark Age Arthur but that the only references to him are late and possibly based on a battle-listing poem. Dr. Cummins suggests that the only safe reference in the Welsh Annals is the battle of Camlann in which Arthur and Medraut perished - the Badon reference he says is a later inclusion probably based on the battle-listing poem or Nennius. He goes on to put forward the idea that Geoffrey of Monmouth's Arthur is influenced the career of Ambrosius Aurelianus, Magnus Maximus and, possibly, a great king who ruled over the Wessex Culture during the Bronze Age. The Dark Age Arthur may have acted like a magnet has taken on the guise of someone from ancient folk memory.

Next we have Merlin and Aurelius Ambrosius and the building of the Giant's Dance. Dr. Cummins suggests that this section of Geoffrey's

"History of the Kings of Britain" tells the tale of a great king called Ambrius who with the help of Merlin constructed Stonehenge III in the Bronze Age. An oral tradition may have passed down over the generations until Geoffrey placed the events in the Dark Ages. From there he goes on to look at the famous or infamous events in the reign of Vortigern who called in the Saxons to help him. Using again Geoffrey he shows that it is possible that another folk memory of a great king having dealings with a new people finds himself amidst a massacre. Geoffrey has this terrible event taking place at the Cloister of Ambrius, which Dr. Cummins says is another name for Stonehenge. Archaeology points out, we are told, that the Wessex Culture came to a sudden end and Dr. Cummins puts forward the theory that their leaders were massacred at Stonehenge by a Bronze Age people in the same way the chieftains were killed by the Saxons in Geoffrey's 'History'.

There can be no doubt that the Wessex Culture was something very special having connections all over the British Isles and connections as far away as the island of Delos in the Aegean Sea. Could this be the Golden Age? Diodorus told of a spherical temple with a great and wealthy city nearby. The capital of Arthur was, in Geoffrey's work, the magnificent City of Legions - Dr. Cummins links this city and Stonehenge with Diodorus' spherical temple and the great city.

Is it possible that there had been a tale of the building of Stonehenge, the rule of a great king and the massacre of chieftains at Stonehenge that was passed down as an oral tradition over thousands of years? Could Stonehenge have been built for a King Ambrius and the architect Merlin? Could the tales have been laid over later characters like Ambrosius Aurelianus, Vortigern and Arthur? I cannot answer these questions. Certainly, I find his Dark Age scenario acceptable but I can not really see the connections with Arthur. Merlin in Geoffrey's 'History' has nothing to do with the adult Arthur - he predicts his birth and helps Uther come in contact with Igraine, Arthur's mother to be, but after that Merlin disappears. There is no doubt that Merlin is shown to have had contact with Vortigern, Aurelius Ambrosius and Uther Pendragon but I am sure that a title something like "King Vortigern's Place in History" would have meant nothing to the average reader. There may well be something to Dr. Cummins' theories of Stonehenge.

This an interesting, even intriguing publication and it may add to the growing theories about Arthur. It is well researched and well written - in fact I found it incredibly easy to read - but I think for those interested in the search for Arthur of the Dark Ages, this should be treated very carefully. I would of considered it a fun book if it wasn't for the impression that Dr. Cummins has taken this all very seriously. You may find this book worth reading, though at £16.99 it is a bit expensive, unless you are a very dedicated collector of Arthuriana.

KINGS AND KINGDOMS OF EARLY ANGLO-SAXON ENGLAND
Barbara Yorke Seaby, 1990, 218 pages, £18.50

Following 'The Origins Of Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms' edited by Steven Bassett, 1989 (reviewed in DRAGON 3.10) and 'The Earliest English Kings' by D.P. Kirby, 1990, (reviewed in DRAGON 3.11), Dr. Barbara Yorke has now provided a third study summarising the fruits of recent academic research into early and middle Anglo-Saxon England. This work has been published mostly in learned journals or collections and its presentation to a wider audience is thus welcome. Furthermore, each of these three books has taken a different approach to the subject, and thus are reasonably complimentary.

Barbara Yorke's distinctive approach is to individually examine the political history of each of the six major Anglo-Saxon kingdoms - Kent, Essex, East Anglia, Northumbria, Mercia and Wessex - and their royal families, in turn. The period concentrated on is AD600-900, although an introductory chapter deals with kingship prior to AD600. A final section then synthesises and draws conclusions from the evidence in respect of the nature of kingship, the relationship of kings to the nobility, and the church, and the rest of the royal family, and the resources and powers of the kingship. Sixteen tables illustrate family trees and regnal lists.

Therefore the book consists of a series of parallel regional studies rather than an overall survey of Anglo-Saxon history. It will be of particular use to a reader interested in a particular region or regions, allowing comparison and contrast with other kingdoms. Of course, the individual kingdoms always had close relationships - friendly and unfriendly, political, religious and cultural - with other kingdoms, and this is duly acknowledged.

This study is, generally, a summary of recent research and thus does not enter into involved arguments and discussion of the evidence. Nevertheless, it is very comprehensively referenced (with nearly 1200 reference footnotes) for the reader who might want to explore a topic more fully. Although detailed, the text is always easy to follow, and the author puts across her views clearly and effectively.

There is a welcome recognition of the significant part archaeology can now play in the direct illumination of the political history in documented periods. Thus, for example, the Sutton Hoo treasure, Offa's Dyke, and the planned town of Hamwih (Southampton) are very clear indicators of the resources and powers available to an Anglo-Saxon king. This point is underlined by the captions to the 14 photographic illustrations, mostly archaeologically related; each caption states what point the author is trying to illustrate by use of the photograph.

Barbara Yorke demonstrates well how resourceful early Anglo-Saxon kings had to be, since a great deal of the kingdom's success depended

directly on the royal personality. The king had to husband and effectively manage his lands and wealth to establish patronage and influence. He had to supply good government and military protection to maintain the support of his people. He needed a governing structure of sub-kings, nobles and councillors, but he had to ensure none was too powerful that a coup could be mounted. He had to control to his own kingdom's advantage its relationships with other kingdoms and the church, and possibly outside forces such as the Britons, the Franks, the Picts and the Vikings. The histories of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms provide illustrations of how successful or otherwise kings were in achieving these goals. Between AD705 and 808, the kingdom of Northumbria saw 16 reigns; 4 ended in murder, 2 in abdication, and 6 in deposition and sometimes exile. Although this period was regarded by contemporaries as a time of decline, the wonder is that it was not the norm.

Nick Grant

A POPULAR DICTIONARY OF CORNISH PLACE-NAMES
O.J. Padel Alison Hodge, 1988

Place-names are a potentially fascinating subject, both because of the intrinsic interest in discovering the original meaning of a name, but also because they often embody elements of local history unrecorded elsewhere. Cornish place-names exemplify these points; they are distinctive because most are in the Cornish language not found in any other area, and many enshrine the names of Celtic saints active in the 5th-7th centuries AD. Well-known examples include St. Ives, St. Mawes, Padstow, and Perranzabuloe. Cornish place-names thus form an important source to be studied in the history of the early Christian period.

Despite this, however, place-names can also be a rather forbidding topic, because of the complexity, difficulty, and minutiae of detail involved in their study. Fortunately O.J. Padel's book is an excellent introduction to the subject. This book follows an earlier scholarly work 'Cornish Place-Name Elements', and the author has also previously published a number of interesting articles about the Arthurian legend in south-west England.

The dictionary of place-names itself occupies the bulk of the book, some 130 pages covering over 1,000 place-names. Each succinct but informative entry lists earlier forms of the place-name, its meaning, and the language and elements of the name, together with notes about the development of the name and its historical background, if appropriate. There is also a 50-page introduction , which forms a very lucid and clear discussion of the subject. It covers the languages involved, the elements of the place-names, how the place-names developed, and the problems and complexities of place-name study. Finally, there are indexes of the place-

name elements and the personal names that appear in the place-names listed.

This book should be of interest to the reader who might want to just dip in to discover the meaning of an individual place-name, but it is also detailed enough to satisfy the more academically-minded reader.

Nick Grant

THE ROMANO-BRITISH PERIOD AND CELTIC MONUMENTS
J. Romilly Allen Lanerch Publishers, ISBN 0947992 95 2, 144 p/b. £4.95

If you've ever wondered what might have been the 'image of the Holy Mary, the everlasting Virgin' that Arthur carried on his shield - or was it his shoulders? - at the battle of Guinnion fort, this might be the place to look.

It's the second in a series of paperbacks encompassing J. Romilly Allen's Rhind lectures of 1885 on **Early Christian Symbolism in Great Britain and Ireland** and it's the one directly focussed on the Dark Ages. It contains two lectures, both of them fully illustrated with Romilly Allen's own classic line-drawings. The first deals with the continental examples of early Christian symbolism and provides a useful introduction to the second which addresses the British material. There's a wealth of reference here and Romilly Allen's art is in a class of its own. Here are the earliest Christian symbols found in these islands, some of them probable survivals from the age of Arthur, carefully recorded by a master draughtsman when they were in a much better state of preservation. It's all hardcore-DRAGON country and excellent value for money in our own economic 'Dark Ages'.

There's no space or scope to summarise it all here, but all the examples I've ever come across - and many that I haven't - are discussed and illustrated. It might just be worth adding that the omnipresent image is the chi-rho monogram, which turns up again and again from Kirkmadrine to Cornwall ... on the cross-slab from Ninian's Whithorn right through to the dedication stone, precisely dated 685 at St. Paul's, Jarrow.

That 'image' on Arthur's shield? My money would go on the chi-rho every time ....

John Marsden.

THE SUMMER STARS A Historical Novel
Alan Fisk Gomer Press 1992, ISBN 0-86383-895-2, £8.95

This is the tale of the poet Taliesin, told through his own words in the last years of his life in Ynys Witrin (Glastonbury). It tells of his lowly birth as Gwion, his rise as the poet Taliesin and his life at the courts of Maelgwn Gwynedd, Urien Rheged and Owain. The journal of Taliesin also tells of his adventures with an Irish bear trainer, a Saxon slave (whom he marries), life in Dark Age London and Kent and his sojourn at the fated monastic

settlement at Bangor Is-Coed.

At first it sounds an interesting novel but, for me, it got into trouble almost immediately. Mr. Fisk has Taliesin using Christian Era calculations for dates: "...I was born in the year 530." Unfortunately, this system did not come into Britain until after the Synod of Whitby and was not popular until after Bede's writings. Other points include the mention of villages which belong more to the Middle Ages than the post-Roman Dark Ages. The British did not live in villages until a much later period and, though the chieftain re-occupied the hill forts these did not become towns in the normal sense of the word. Mr. Fisk set the period with named historical characters such as Urien Rheged, yet ignores Cynan Garwyn and Gwallawg ap Lleenawg, to both of whom Taliesin is said composed poetry. In fact Gwallawg is described as Lord of Elfed (Elmet) in the poetry but only appears as Gwallauc of Forth in The Summer Stars. Instead Mr. Fisk creates the fictional King Andaur as Lord of Elmet.

I consider this novel to have failed to put over a picture of the period and often falls down on narrative, spending too much time going into historical explanations of events. It combines the history and myth but doesn't tell a good story. I became irritated with lack of story and it could have been about anyone. We learn nothing of bardism and little more about the period than you can read in Nennius or Gildas (in fact Gildas makes a guest appearance). I see this book as a lost opportunity. Having recently read a lot of Rosemary Sutcliff's Roman and Dark Age works this publication does not come up to the same standard.

THE BLEEDING LANCE: MYTH, RITUAL AND THE GRAIL LEGEND
Alby Stone Heart of Albion Press, ISBN 1 872883 17 6 £2.95

This is third booklet published by the Heart of Albion Press written by Alby Stone. In the last issue of DRAGON his "Splendid Pillar" was reviewed - and this is a similar publication consisting of 52 pages, with card cover, A4 folded, five pages of references and notes, a three page bibliography and seven illustrations.

The Bleeding Lance (or Spear) appears in most of the Grail stories but is according to Mr. Stone of greater antiquity than the romances of the 12th and 13th centuries. The Lance is carried in procession together with the Grail in the presence of Perceval and the Fisher King for the first time in Chretien de Troyes' "Perceval, ou le Conte de Graal". Unfortunately, this story was not finished. Mr. Stone shows that the Lance has obscure origins going back to Celtic tales from Ireland. These pagan elements were taken up by Chretien, and later writers, and given a Christian element. The Lance is often connected with Longinus and is even believed to have been a real spear head found in various parts of the world including the Vatican and

the Habsburg Treasures in Vienna

Though this is without any doubt a useful booklet to the student of Arthuriana and especially the Grail studies, it concentrates more on the pagan aspects of the Lance while seemingly ignoring a number of obvious facts. While the Lance is male symbol, the Grail is definitely female, and it is interesting how many important parts are played by women. However, in "Parzival" by Wolfram von Eschenbach, which seems to finish off Chretien's tale, it shows that once the hero has asked the Fisher King - Anfortas - the question: "Dear Uncle, what ails you?" - the king is cured and the Lance disappears from the scene. A little later the Grail procession is repeated and there is no mention of the Lance. This must mean that the Lance was only relevent to the Fisher King - his wound and so on.

For those interested in the Grail tales this is a useful, interesting little booklet - well worth buying and can be obtained from Heart of Albion Press, 2 Cross Hill Close, Wymeswold, Loughborough, LE12 6UJ.

PENDRAGON Vol. XXII / 4 Autumn 1992

Once again Eddie Tooke and team have produced yet another interesting issue of PENDRAGON. Amongst its articles this time are "London's Camelot" and "The Quest for the Historical King Arthur", a short piece on Rosemary Sutcliff, book reviews including "The Way of Merlin" and "The Arthur of the Welsh", a series of thought provoking letters and Fred Steadman-Jones' collection of news, events, etc. in "Talking Head".

My only criticism of PENDRAGON comes with David Pykitt's "The Quest for the Historical Arthur". He suggests that Arthur is Athrwys ap Meurig and that Arthwys is Arthfael, a Welsh holyman who settled in Brittany. It is impossible to go into any detail in this small space but the link between all three names are very slim. The date of Athrwys must be the seventh century using backtracking from a descendent called Morgan ap Caradog who lived in the second half of the 12th century. The connection between Arthfael and Arthur is equally dubious. What is a pity is that really Athrwys and Arthfael should be studied independently in their own right rather than as the secret identity of Arthur.

NEWS and VIEWS

Tandderwen and Cunedda

Two interesting articles have appeared in journals recently. In STUDIA CELTICA (34 / 35, 1989 / 90) R. Geraint Gruffudd wrote "From Gododdin to

Gwynedd: reflections on the story of Cunedda". The second comes from the ARCHAEOLOGICAL JOURNAL (148, 1991) and consists of a joint effort by K. S. Brassil, W. G. Owen and W. J. Britnell on "Prehistoric and Early Medieval Cemeteries at Tandderwen, near Denbigh, Clwyd". These articles may be of considerable interest to those studying the migration of the Votadini to North Wales.

The story of Cunedda tells of how he came with eight sons and a grandson from Manaw Gododdin - around the Firth of Forth - to expel the Irish out of N. Wales. His sons and grandson were given lands and their names to those lands - e.g. Rhufon's land became called Rhufoniog. However, the historians are not in agreement as to whether the migration was a real event or not. The tale may be just a way of explaining the names of various areas. Was there a migration from Scotland to Wales or was it a legend?

Geraint Gruffudd puts some weight to the likelihood of Cunedda but points out that proof is difficult to acquire. He uses both manuscript and archaeological evidence to discuss the possible historicity of the migration. Amongst the archaeological evidence he points to Dinorben and Tandderwen. While discussing Tandderwen he points out a number of unique place-names in the area - *esgeibion* - "bishop's land" and *segrwyd* - "solitary place". He also points out that the graves found at Tandderwen are possibly parallelled by graves found in Scotland - though "confined to Pictland". What then is the actual archaeological evidence?

The report of the excavation of Tandderwen, which took place between 1985-1988, is published in the ARCHAEOLOGICAL JOURNAL and covers 51 pages including an appendix, bibliography and illustrations. Most of the article concerns the Prehistoric period but the sections on the Early Medieval cemetery are of some interest. Information on Tandderwen has already appeared in DRAGON Vol. 2 No. 12 and an article by Ken Brassil in Vol. 3 No. 1. At that time carbon dating had not taken place but this report has much to say about the results. Of the 39 east-west aligned graves eight are surrounded by a square ditches and one square ditch containing three graves. To the south of the graves is an large area also surrounded by ditch but containing no late graves. Only a small amount of material capable of being carbon-dated has been found and this comes from the remains of wooden coffins. The result of the dating is AD 510 $\pm$ 60 and AD 860 $\pm$ 70. When calibrated it is suggested that the finally possible dating for these graves are 560 - 670 and 886 - 1012. This immediately causes a problem when it comes to comparing these graves with those of other examples. However, since only two manifested material that could be dated it is possible that earlier dates could be given the other graves. Could this be a royal site or a religious cemetery with the important deceased surrounded by lesser burials? Similar graves have been found at Llandegai, Gwynedd, Capel Eithin, Anglesey and Plas Gogerddan, Dyfed. However, on further investigation they show differences which cannot be ignored. Comparisons have also been made with graves of the Iron Age in eastern Yorkshire and to graves in Angus and Perthshire area. Equally, problems arise with these - since the Yorkshire ones are pre-Roman and the Pictish ones, if that's what they

are, have been dated from only one grave which dates from the first or second centuries AD.

It is easy to jump to conclusions and say that the graves at Tandderwen show evidence for the migration of the Votadini but the archaeologists tend to be more cautious. The article ends with the following statement: "In summary, comparisons can be drawn with the cemeteries of eastern and northern Britain and within Wales itself, but until more and better-dated sites have excavated and published, the considerable uncertainties surrounding the cultural background of the unusual, later cemetery at Tandderwen cannot be resolved."

Arch Gwenfrewi - A detective story

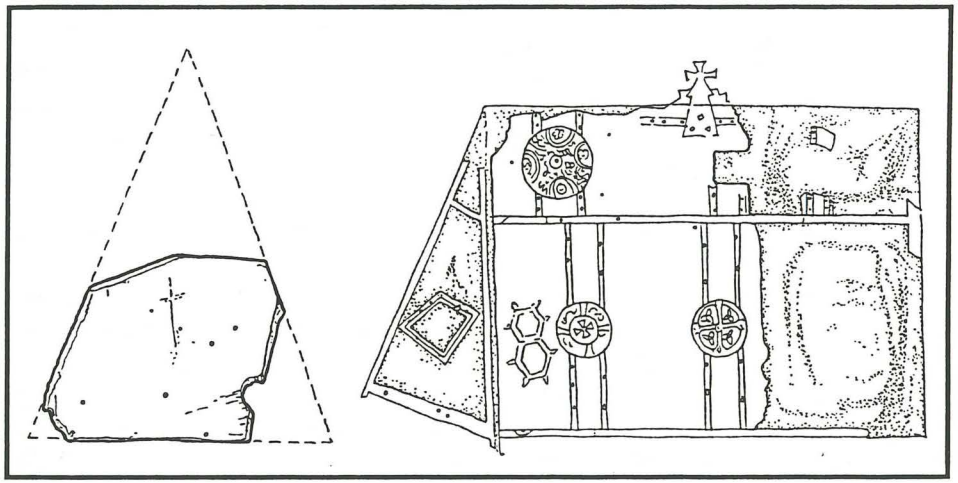
There is a story that once in the late 6th or early 7th century a holy man named Beuno was given land by Tefydd ap Eiludd in the area of modern day Holywell, Clwyd. Tefydd was a member of the house of Powys, was married to Beuno's sister Wenlo and had a daughter named Gwenfrewi, better known today as Winifred. While Tefydd and Wenlo were away from their house at Beuno's chapel listening to him giving a sermon, a local chieftain called Caradoc ap Alauc tried to abduct Gwenfrewi. She managed to escape and ran to Beuno's chapel but the man followed her. In a rage he decapitated the maiden and her head rolled into the chapel. Beuno cursed Caradog and he melted "as wax before fire", so the story goes. The holy man then placed Gwenfrewi head back on her shoulders and she came back to life with only a fine white line around her neck to show for her experience.

It is more than likely that this tale dates back to pagan times but there may have been a real Gwenfrewi. She probably lived in the area but later became a nun and moved to a small community in Gwytherin, Clwyd, about seven miles east of Llanrwst. It is said that after her death (or second death!) she was buried at the local cemetery. Five hundred years later, in 1138, her bones were taken from Gwytherin to Shrewsbury by Benedictine monks. However, by this time the veneration of Gwenfrewi had become a cult. The story tells that where her severed head landed a spring appeared and later cures were given by God to those who washed in its waters. The Well is first mentioned in 1093 and the first evidence for pilgrims going to the Well at Holywell was in 1119. However, the cult was confined to Wales and the Marches until 1358 when it spread throughout England. The Well however fell into ruin and had to be rebuilt in the late 15th century. Today, the Well is still visited by pilgrims but most of the architecture is from the 18th century - the church having been rebuilt in 1769.

While Holywell became a cult centre - the Well being called one of the Seven Wonders of Wales or the Lourdes of Wales - and Shrewsbury was believed to have Gwenfrewi's bones, Gwytherin claimed to have retained some relics of the holy

woman, but what they were can not be clearly defined. Edward Lhuyd, who visited Gwytherin in the late 17th century, wrote about a "Kappel Gwenfrewi" and made a crude sketch of something called "Arch Gwenfrewi yn eglwys Gwytherin yn swydh Ddimbech" - "The shrine of Winifred in Gwytherin church in Denbighshire". However, this reliquary casket seems to have disappeared during the early 19th century.

In 1991 "The Archaeology of Clwyd", edited by John Manley, Stephen Grenter and Fiona Gale, was published. In the chapter on The Dark Ages by Nancy Edwards mention was made of the reliquary at Gwytherin and an illustration showed a better picture produced by Edward Lhuyd recently found in the Bodleian Library, Oxford. This sparked off the interest of a local historian who went in search of the lost reliquary. Mr. Tristan Gray Hulse found reference to remains of the casket in a little book entitled "St. Winifrede; Or, Holywell and its pilgrims" published in 1874. It told of a Jesuit priest, Father John Griffith-Wynne, who in 1844 bought a piece of wood for one shilling from the sexton of Gwytherin church, who claimed it was a fragment of the reliquary of St. Winifred. He donated the piece of wood to the Catholic church of St. Winifred in Holywell. This remained in a safe until Mr. Gray Hulse contacted Father Lordan in June 1991 and inquired about its existence. Mr. Gray Hulse's discovery appeared as an addendum to a very interesting article by Lawrence Butler and James Graham-Campbell in the Antiquaries Journal, Vol. 70, ("A lost reliquary casket from Gwytherin, North Wales"), in the Archaeology in Wales, Bulletin No. 31 and in the Autumn 1991 Clwyd Archaeology News.



The fragment of wood measures roughly 119mm maximum height, 123mm wide and 12mm thick. There are a number of holes and cuts in the wood, the most prominent ones being part of a circular hole to one side and a cross incised near the centre. There are three metal rivets still in the fragment and five more rivet holes suggesting something was mounted on the wood. Following examination it has

been suggested that it had been piece of the reliquary of St. Winifred - Gwenfrewi - once located at Gwytherin. The fragment formed part of the triangular gable end of the reliquary which has been estimated to have measured 260mm in height and 205mm wide. Comparing these estimates to the drawing of the reliquary by Lhuyd suggests, according to Butler and Graham-Campbell, that the illustration is one quarter size. They having also studied the sketches (the crude one in Parochialia, a copy found in the Bodleian Library and a copy of a copy made by Moses Griffith in the National Library of Wales) identified possible Anglo-Saxon influence on the ornamentation. Carbon-dating of the fragment had been proposed but it would seem that this is now not going take place. Whatever the results would have been they could not be cross-checked by dendrochronology because of a lack of rings. It is therefore likely, based on the Edward Lhuyd illustrations, that the original reliquary, and therefore the remaining fragment, could have dated from the 8th or 9th century AD.

Celts in Delyn

A dayschool was held at the Hotel Victoria, Holywell, Clwyd as part of the Delyn Festival 1992 on the 10th October. The lecturers included Mr. Ken Brassil, Dr. Mark Redknap and Dr. Nancy Edwards. The event was supported by the Extra Mural Department of the University of North Wales, Bangor. Items on the agenda included the Iron Age Celts, the Christian Celts and Archaeology of the Saints.

All three talks were very interesting but it was the final one which was particularly stimulating. Mr. Brassil, of the National Museum of Wales, spoke of the society and economy of the Iron Age Celts and how he felt that the image we have of them owes more to Roman propaganda than fact. Dr. Redknap, also of the National Museum, looked at various aspects of Dark Age society and economy. Most of this talk concentrated on finds, showing that this was basically an aceramic period. He also spent some time on recent archaeological digs, especially the crannog at Llangorse Lake.

However, it was the final lecture that I personally found to be the most interesting as I know little about the subject. Dr. Nancy Edwards, of the University of North Wales, Bangor, gave a fascinating talk about the archaeology of Early Celtic Christian Britain. She pointed out the types of evidence, including documentary, hagiographical, oral history and archaeology. The look at various sites showing the burial rituals of the period was very interesting, especially the way it was possible that lesser mortals tended to be buried in the vacinity of a saintly person's grave. Example of such ritual were looked at in some detail.

Dr. Edwards also talked about portable shrines and other religious objects such as bells, croziers and books. Of particular interest was the reliquary believed to have been kept at Gwytherin and to have contained something connected with

St. Gwenfrewi (Winifred). She talked a little of the discovery of the fragment of the shrine mentioned the previous article in this magazine. I later asked her about the dating of the piece of wood and was told that carbon-dating was not adequate and it could not be cross-reference with the help of dedronochronoly. It could only be dated by comparing the illustration made by Edward Lhuyd, in the seventeenth century, with known designs of the eighth and ninth centuries A.D.

Though the dayschool was at times a bit chaotic and the mid-morning meal was the best, I enjoyed the day and learned something.

The King Who Returned Twice

On Saturday 31st October 1992 at Bodelwyddan Castle a very interesting talk was given by Mr. Dafydd Glyn Jones, a senior lecturer at the Department of Welsh Language and Literature, University of North Wales, Bangor. The original lecture was to have been given by Prof. Bedwyr Lewis Jones, whom the lecturer praised and described as a man of commitment and passion.

Mr. Jones began first by mentioning the supposed burial of Arthur at Glastonbury showing that the King of England preferred Arthur firmly placed in a grave. He then went on to tell the tale of Craig y Dinas. Here we hear of Arthur and his knights sleeping in a cave waiting to be woken in time of need. (This gives me the strange mental image of one of those fire-alarms which are covered with glass and you have to break them. In this case it reads "Break to wake".) A wiseman guides a shepherd to the cave and shows him the sleeping heroes but warns him if he causes a certain bell to ring the knights will wake-up, then he should say something like: "Go back to sleep, the time has not yet come!" In the cave were also two piles of treasure - one of gold and the other of silver; the shepherd was told he take as much as he wished but only from one pile. The young man took plenty of gold but greed made him return to the cave, he accidentally struck the bell and the knights awoke crying "Is it time?" but the shepherd forgot what to say. He was beaten up, the gold taken from him and he was never able to find the cave again. There are similar stories but later Arthur is made to sleep in the Vale of Avalon waiting to come back and deliver the English in their time of need. Who then will Arthur support the English or the Welsh?

To some Arthur is the most famous Welshman in history. However, he was not quite a Welshman and not quite in history. Mr. Jones explained this statement in pointing out that the Welsh language and culture was only evolving in this period and didn't coalesce until the mid 6th to mid 7th centuries. Arthur is usually position in time during the second half of the 5th century and so this is a little too early to class him as Welsh. Also most of what we know of Arthur comes from the 9th century and by then he was already a folk-hero. So Arthur is really on the very fringes of documented history.

Though at first Arthur belonged to folk-lore and occasionally appeared in

poetry by the 12th century, the tale of Culhwch and Olwen had been written and within less than 50 years Geoffrey of Monmouth had composed his History of the Kings of Britain. This then, suggested Mr. Jones, was the first coming of Arthur into Welsh literature. At this point the lecturer told the story of Culhwch and Olwen, making comparisons between Arthur's varied unusual followers with the characters who appeared in the bar scene from "Star Wars". This first coming began with Culhwch but bloomed with Geoffrey's work spreading out right across the Norman world. Arthur appeared in various guises - from the warrior of ancient poetry, the primitive hero of Culhwch, the king of Geoffrey to the idle, monarch on the sidelines of the French tales until, in Wales, he became satirised in The Dream of Rhonabwy. This was last time Arthur appeared in any new literature in Wales. There were adaptions but nothing original. Mr. Jones quoted from Sir Ifor Williams who said that Arthur took a trip abroad and returned in Paris fashions. This was the end of the first return of Arthur.

In 1902 the National Eisteddfod of Wales was held in Bangor and it was decided between W. Lewis Jones, Head of the English Department, and John Morris Jones, Head of the Welsh Department, both of the University of North Wales, what were the set subjects for the competitions. These included the passing of Arthur and Tristan and Isolt. The chair was won by T. Gwyn Jones with a marvellous piece of poetry on the passing of Arthur that is still so powerful that Mr. Glyn Jones said "the feeling would be too much for me to quote from it." Nevertheless there is still no Welsh T.H. White, no Welsh Mary Stewart, no Welsh Rosemary Sutcliff. Today, Arthur's place has been taken over by characters from the Four Branches of the Mabinogi - Pwyll, Rhiannon, Pryderi, Brân and Branwen, Gwydion, Blodeuwedd and Lleu. But in 1986 R.M. (Bobi) Jones published "Hunllef Arthur" - a massive tome of 230 pages, 21,000 lines of poetry telling of the sleeping Arthur's nightmare. He has Arthur meeting many famous characters from Welsh history including Llywelyn the Last, Dafydd ap Gwilym, Owain Glyndŵr, Henry Tudor, Twm Shon Catti, Charles Edwards, Henry Morgan, Robert Recorde, Dic Penderyn and David Lloyd George. Many of these person had duel characters like Twm Shon Catti who was a bandit and a magistrate, Henry Morgan who was a pirate and a governor or David Lloyd George who enjoyed bashing the English but also wanted to be accepted by the English. At one point in this epic Arthur appears as plain Arthur Jones - but he is being baited like a bear ("arth" = bear) in what could be a TV study, circus or the National Eisteddfod. The poem begins with "Genesis" - the death of a dream and the beginning of a nightmare - and end with "Datguddiad" (Revelation) - the nightmare continues.

Mr. Dafydd Glyn Jones saw this as the second return of Arthur. From the time of Arthur it was 600 years to the establishment of the Arthurian stories - the first return, and from the Dream of Rhonabwy - the end of original Arthurian tales in Wales - it was 600 years till the second return. If Arthur sleeps in a cave, finished Mr. Jones, and someone rings the bell waking Arthur from his long sleep - "Let us hope that when he wakes he picks the right side!"

I found Mr. Jones' lecture very interesting and certainly enjoyed his comparisons between Arthur's men and the "A Team" and "Star Wars" and also how he pointed out the similarity between Henry Tudor's defeat of Richard III, whose emblem was a boar, and the hunt of the wild boar - Twrch Trwyth in Culhwch and Olwen. It was a really excellent day with the added bonus of meeting Fred Steadman-Jones, Chairman of the PENDRAGON Society, and his wife.

ARTHUR IN ELMET

Early on the 14th November, 1992, I made the hazardous journey from west to east across the spine of Britain to the lost land of Elmet - last bastion of the Celtic nations in the east, lost to Edwin of Northumbria in the first decades of the seventh century. My reason for spending most of the day on various trains was to attend the University of Leeds Department of Adult Continuing Education's dayschool Images of "Arthur: The Making of a Myth".

The day was divided into three parts - the first session was with Dave Weldrake, Education Officer, West Yorkshire Archaeology Service, in the morning, and after lunch two sessions - the first with Dominic Tweedle, Deputy Director, Yorkshire Archaeological Trust, and the second with Mr. Weldrake again.

The morning began with Dave Weldrake trying to trace the character of Arthur from his Dark Age roots into the Middle Age and was entitled "Arthur: The Last Roman?". He began by shooting through a series of slides - a travelogue he called it- soon dispensing with one piece of machinery but occasionally turning on a tape player to read various quotes. Mr. Weldrake covered the basic texts needed to discover anything about Arthur - Nennius, the Welsh Annals, the Life of St. Germanus, Gildas, the Gododdin and Geoffrey of Monmouth. He seemed at times to have problems with the acoustics in the rooms and members of the dayschool would have to ask him to speak up. Nevertheless, he put over the information in a style less dusty than some academics tend to do. Amongst the things that I particularly like was his explanation of the Welsh Annals - as Easter Tables used as a sort of jotting pad, pointing out the dubiousness of the entries connected with Arthur.

When it came to Gildas and the lack of Arthur but the reference to Badon, credited to Arthur in both Nennius and the Annals, he suggested that one possibility would be that Gildas felt no need to mention the victor's name in the same way that we today would have taken it for granted that Stormy Norman Schwarzkopf was the commander in the Gulf War. Another may have been that Arthur, unlike Ambrosius Aurelianus, was British and Gildas was haranguing the Britons because of their sins against God, and good Briton might ruin his address.

He also looked briefly at the battles listed in Nennius showing that little or nothing can be certain. This problem continued through Arthur's victories on to his defeat at Camlan (a few times Mr. Weldrake got Badon and Camlan mixed up). However, on a number of occasions he made the tentative suggestion about

connections between Arthur and Lincoln, and Lincolnshire. He suggested that Arthur may have been the last leader of a Roman organised army but that there was doubt all along the line. There were a fair number of questions from the audience and Mr. Weldrake did well in answering them.

Lunch was spent eating prawn salad sandwiches and chatting with Sandra Garside-Neville and Kurt Hunter-Mann who were also attending the dayschool. Later we discussed the possibility of the Badon '95 Conference, which is progressing quite well and will take place over a weekend in York about three years from now.

After lunch Dominic Tweedle, with extensive use of slides, discussed the archaeological evidence for this period. He began by saying that even if the archaeologist was to find an object with the words "Arthur owned this" they could not be sure that it was the right Arthur. What is known about the period has been interpreted in various ways and if we were listening to a similar lecture one hundred years ago it would be very different.

He continued with a discussion about the Germanic elements in the Roman Army and showed that though they did exist their presence was too early to fill in the gap there is for post-Roman period. Though there are blind spots he pointed out that archaeology is beginning to show a great intensity of Christianity in Late Roman Britain. He talked about a series of sites indicating that the greatest intensity could be found in the north, central and south-east of Britain. From there he went on to mention the continuity of Roman settlements - particularly Wroxeter, where Prof. Barker had carried out a painstaking excavation of the layers above the Roman period. There is evidence for the re-use of the hill forts and suggested that this could either mean the collapse of the Roman society , reverting to an earlier tribal system or the reuse of defended sites. Archaeological evidence shows that Britain continued to trade with Gaul and the Mediterranean.

Leaving the Romano-Britons Mr. Tweedle discussed the movement of the Germanic tribes from their homeland on the Continent. Archaeology in these areas show that many of the villages were expanding until the fifth century - it is thereafter presumed that these tribes migrated to somewhere else - Britain and northern France. Evidence from both pottery and metalwork show similarities between the peoples of northern German and Britain. Many Anglo-Saxon sites have now been excavated and though these show something of their social organisation there is no indication of a coherent invasion. Archaeology shows that there some very wealthy people being buried but there is evidence of less wealthy burials as well. Also the presence of Celtic style objects such as hanging bowls show that there must have been some form of trade between the Anglo-Saxon and the Britons.

Dominic Tweedle ended his talk by suggesting that the Anglo-Saxons had no intention of destroying Roman society and pointed out that kings like Raedwald, of Sutton Hoo fame, deliberately copied Roman styles. Maybe the Anglo-Saxons saw themselves has the heirs of Roman civilisation. There followed a series of questions concerning the adoption of the English language, DNA studies and whether the Saxons were settlers or invaders.

Following a coffee break Dave Weldrake discussed the development of the Arthurian myth from Geoffrey of Monmouth to Malory. He showed that much of what the general public consider to be Arthurian cannot be found in the history and only appears in the later tales. He discussed Marie de France, Chretien de Troyes, the Tristan stories, Wolfram von Eschenbach and the Holy Grail. He went from there is show that these tales development at the same time as the Crusades. Finally, he discussed Malory and showed that there was more to say about chivalry and social trends than about Arthur. Comparing Malory's Morte D'Arthur to these stories composed in the previous two or three hundred years, these were more like folk tales while Malory's was the first English novel.

What I notice about the final session was the complete lack of Welsh references. There was no mention of Culhwch and Olwen, the Mabinogi or any of the later romances or the satirical Dream of Rhonabwy.

Overall this was quite an interesting day with a few high points and some food for thought. It was nice to be in the company of people who have similar interests and also to meet Sandra and Kurt again. Following the dayschool I was happy to recruit three new members and two more possibles.

Stolen Property

Some members may remember Alan Wilson and Anthony 'Baram' Blackett - and that is going back a few years to an article in Vol. 1 No. 7 (1983), a review of their books in No. 8 (1984), and review of a later book by them and article in Vol. 2 No. 5 (1986). There have been odd mentions of them since but things have been very quiet recently, until now. Let me just refresh your memories, or introduce you briefly to Messrs. Blackett and Wilson. In 1983 this team published a series of books which claimed that Arthur was really Athrwys ap Meurig, a king of a part of South Wales that is roughly equivalent to old Glamorganshire and Monmouthshire. Their notoriety doesn't come from their theories, which seem to have possibly originated in the late 18th century, but the way they went about promoting their ideas. They claimed in an introduction to one of their books (the page was later removed on the request of the distributors) that they were being persecuted and treated like Russian dissidents. The academics and authorities (such as the University of Wales, Welsh Books Council, HTV, etc.) were trying to stop them publishing their finds. From personal experience and from talking to others who have come in contact with them, any problems they had were of their own making.

The quiet came to an abrupt end when Mr. Alan Wilson, aged 60, and Mr. Anthony Blackett, aged 33, were sent before Cardiff Crown Court earlier this year. The story begins when the Rev. David Jenkins of St. Donats Church locked up the Stradling Chapel on the 29th December 1991. A regular visitor to the church, Mr. Colin Pascoe, on the 1st January discovered the remains of fire in the chapel. A bonfire had been made of hymn books and chairs and the visitors book had been

defaced with the initials SCFC - presumably Swansea City Football Club. However, soon it was realised that the fire and the defaced visitors book was a red herring and a more serious crime of robbery had taken place. Three valuable 16th century oil paintings depicting members of the famous Glamorganshire Stradling family, worth between £30,000 and £40,000, were missing. The South Wales Echo, 3rd January, reported the crime and stated that an international alert had gone out.

On the 17th January the police searched a house in Ty Draw Place, Roath, Cardiff - the home of Messrs. Wilson and Blackett. There the police discovered the three missing paintings in a special packing case under the bed in a room let to a lodger. Wilson was arrested but claimed he knew nothing of the theft and that someone must have broken into the house and hid the paintings under the lodger's bed. Later Blackett was interviewed by the police and admitted buying the paintings 'legitimately' for £3,000 from a man named John or Johns in the Owain Glyndŵr pub, St. Johns Square, Cardiff.

In June, Cardiff Crown Court accepted Alan Wilson and Anthony Blackett's pleas of not-guilty of breaking into St. Donats Church, stealing the three rare paintings and causing criminal damage, but Anthony Blackett changed his plea to guilty of receiving stolen goods. Wilson was released while Blackett was remanded on bail and sentence adjourned until after further reports. Three months later Blackett, despite trying to change his plea to not guilty, was sentenced by Judge D. Watkin Powell and sent to prison for 15 months. (The sentence was reported in the South Wales Echo and The Guardian on the 3rd September, 1992.) Though this was Blackett's first offence both Wilson and Blackett had been in trouble with Cadw - Welsh Heritage, who protect historical monuments in Wales, a few years ago.

What was the importance of the three paintings to Blackett? Did it have anything to do with their Arthurian research? Who knows?

(Many thanks to Nick Grant for pointing out the piece in The Guardian and the South Wales Echo for kindly sending me photocopies of articles on the above.)

Old English Charm?

"There is an Old English charm for the recovery of lost cattle which invokes assistance in locating them and calls for divine intervention to prevent the thief from hiding the beasts from their owner. *(Ed. I wonder if it works with stolen paintings!)* One line in particular has always puzzled me: a reference to 'Garmund, godes ðegn' Garmund, the servant of God. Now Garmund is a perfectly acceptable Anglo-Saxon name made up of two elements 'gar' (spear) and 'mund' (protection). Naturally I wondered who this Garmund might be; in the context of 'God's servant' I looked for an archbishop or leading clergyman of the same name, but without success. My thoughts then turned to pre-Christian ideas, associating 'spear-protection' with the power of Woden, the

spear-wielding god of magic and the dead. Perhaps spear-protection could be a personification of his attribute - probably that of favouring certain warriors and protecting them from serious injury in a long and exemplary military career.

"I was quite surprised to learn, however, that Garmund is not Anglo-Saxon at all! The name is the Welsh 'Garmon' - though what a Welsh name is doing in an English charm I could't imagine. The influence of Welsh on Old English is usually considered to be negligible. But I later discovered another twist - Garmon itself is only the Welsh version of the late Latin personal name 'Germanus' (meaning brother or cousin). The reference to 'Godes ðegn' then became clear - St. Germanus of Auxerre, whose visit to Britannia in the 420s is often adduced as evidence of a period of peace at that time while the British held the borders against all comers.

"As far as I am aware there is no English cult of St. Germanus, so his mention in this English charm is both striking and unusual. Why would anyone expect this Frankish-based cleric to help him retrieve stolen livestock, I wonder? If anyone has further information or thoughts on this subject, I would be most interested to hear."

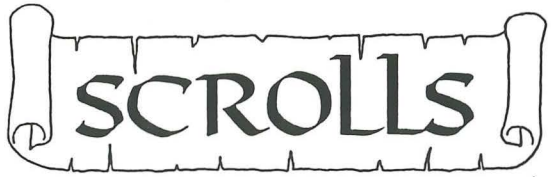
Many thanks to Steve Pollington for this interesting piece of detective work.

WOMEN PRIESTS

On Wednesday 11th November 1992 the General Synod of the Church of England voted to ordain women to the priesthood. This was a momentous decision for conservative England which had fallen behind other countries where women priests had been celebrating the mass and sacraments for many years. A few nights before BBC Television broadcast a programme in the Everyman series entitled "The Hidden Tradition" which looked at the possibility of women priests in the Early Christian Church. A number of experts discussed and disagreed on the actuality of women in the priesthood However, some interesting images were shown of what could have been women celebrating the Holy Eucharist, praying and even being called priests and, in one case, bishop. The experts, such as Catherine Kroeger and Giorgio Otranto, showed that there had been women priest and were countered by other experts, including Fabrizio Bisconti, that those women who were priests were not mainstream Christians but heretics.

Interestingly, unlike the Mediterranean countries areas like Gaul and the British Isles - the Celtic lands - held women in greater esteem and they were of higher status in the society. In the early 6th century the bishops of Rennes, Tours and Angers complained about two peripatetic Breton priests, Lovocat and Catihern, who were allowing women called

conhospitae to help in the celebration of the mass. While the men gave out the bread, the women distributed the wine. Of course they were looked on as heretics. While Rome considered women to be "the Devil's gateway" did the Celtic style of Christianity give women equal rights in religion as Jesus had once done?



At last some letters! Here are a selection of communications from members related to previous issues of DRAGON and in one case this actually issue. The first letter is from Beryl Mercer, from Mount Hawke, Cornwall and it concerns an article in DRAGON 4.1:

"With reference to Steve Pollington's article on 'Anglo-Saxon Pronunciation'...some years ago I decided to have a try at learning Old English...(but) having nobody to 'practice' on, I reluctantly gave up.... I used two books, neither of which is mentioned by Steve, and I wonder if he knows about them:
A Guide to Old English (revised with texts & glossary), by Bruce Mitchell & Fred C. Robinson; pub. Basil Blackwell, 1982; and
Sweet's Anglo-Saxon Primer, 9th edition; revised throughout by Norman Davis. First published in 1882 by Oxford University Press; 9th edition first published in 1953; first published in paperback, 1980."

Thanks to Beryl for that piece of information. The next letter is from Andrew Smith, Oxford, is about a piece in DRAGON 4.2:

"It was charitable of Reg Dand to put a good word in for Ronald Millar's 'Will the real King Arthur please stand up?' but I remain unconvinced that it has anything to other apart from humorous travelogue - this is one of the (rare) instances when I find myself in agreement with Geoffrey Ashe. Millar's scholarship is second-hand and slipshod, his arguments weak, his identifications merely fanciful, but some of his anecdotes are 'amusing'.

"Ashe's identification of Arthur with Riothamus (which was given far too much space in the Arthurian Encyclopaedia) is, of course, equally fanciful and unsubstantiated. To judge by the things one reads, one cannot repeat too often that there is NO good historical evidence for a 'High King' among the Britons - the notion is a modern one, introduced by analogy with the Irish High King, which is itself historically suspect for the period in question."

Andrew in a a more recent letter preempts my review of "King Arthur: The True Story" in this very issue:

"I have now read Phillips & Keatman's book and found it a deal better than I was expecting. However, it seems clear that they do not possess (yet, at

least) the necessary skills to tackle the task they have set themselves, nor have they kept up to date with archaeological thinking (about such places as Tintagel & Castle Dore, for example), despite the claim on the jacket. I was reminded of a newspaper cutting containing a review of a book by Harold Bayley's which came my way. It concluded, 'We think Mr. Bayley has a great deal to learn before he can presume to teach.' Sixteen pounds is a lot to for a 'brave try'.

"When there are other, good, books available (Barber's 'King Arthur: Hero & Legend'; even Chambers' 'Arthur of Britain'), I would not recommend this book to anyone as an introduction to Arthurian matters. Apart from the central argument - which proceeds only by jumping to conclusions but also by 'creeping certainty': something mentioned as a possiblity becomes a probability at the next appearance and thereafter is treated as proved (their use of chapter-end summaries facilitates this) - their account of virtually everything is skewed by their ignorance or misunderstanding. Sometimes this leads to statements that are opposite to the truth, as when we are told that Geoffrey's Gawain derives from a French 'folk hero' called Walwanus. Again, they say that Geoffrey's identification of Badon with Bath comes from Nennius - in fact, the passage they quote to prove this is from John Morris's imaginative edition of 1980. Morris inserted the word there (without justification) from a series of chapter headings in two 13th century manuscripts, which represent a redaction that draws on Geoffrey's History. And so on.... My fear is that people will be mislead by Phillips & Keatman's book into all sorts of false beliefs."

I think that various people reading the above mentioned book will have various opinions - in this issue you will now have read two impressions. Our next scroll comes from Chris Gidlow, from Faversham, Kent, and is a strong criticism of one of the reviews in DRAGON 4.2:

"Could I counter the laudatory approach to Bromwich and Evans' 'Culhwch ac Olwen' which pervades your last issue? It compares very unfavourably in size, price and usefulness to 'Trioedd Ynys Prydein', which is odd as Bromwich had some one to help her and a grant from the Vinaver fund this time round. You only have to compare the very perfunctory notes on names to this one to the invaluable ones in the Triads. At random, compare Moruran eil Tegid's treatment in both. Twenty eight words deal with him in the text of 'Culhwch ac Olwen' of which he gets 12 lines of notes (14 if you count discussion of the word 'eil' under a different character). Twenty words referring to him in the Triads yield 51 lines of small print, with full translation of every Welsh passage, including the one from 'C ac O'. Asking price for the Triads was £25 as well.

"I suppose it would be a bit much to expect a full translation, though we did get one for the Triads. However, only rampant Welsh chauvinism can justify refusal to translate any Welsh words in the English introduction. Issues such as the important differences between the White Book and the Red Book must remain obscure. One example: '[W] asserts Ysbaddaden's dominance over

Arthur with the significant if ambiguous words, dan uy llaw i y mae ef (733)'. If they were significant, a translation would not have been amiss. As Bromwich and Evans are (presumably) English speakers we can only put this down to utter perversity.

"To add insult to injury, passages from the Historia Brittonum are always translated in full. This is in spite of the fact that anyone reading the book can reasonably be expected to be able to put their hand to a translation of at least the Carn Cabal bit. Richard Barber and Geoffrey Ashe always give translations of it in their popularist books.

"For additional obscurantism, the St. Germanus episode is quoted from 'the Vatican Recension' (not 'Version' as they give it), although the Harleian makes exactly the same points, with slight grammatical differences. In the scholarly world outside the University of Wales, Latin is much more widely known than Middle Welsh. These Welsh fanatics should realise that the origin and development of the Arthurian legends is a subject importance to people far beyond the 500,000 Welsh speakers.

"My advice is to wait for someone to use this new text as the basis for a proper 250-page study in English and buy that instead. Read 'The Arthur of the Welsh" in the meantime."

Chris adds:

"Bromwich and Evans do have some interesting things to say really. I just get annoyed that every Arthurian book you buy these days, from 'Lancelot du Lac' to 'Arthurian Literature in the Middle Ages' has been dishonestly converted into multi-volume hardbacks at inflated prices. Llanerch DTP is the only one producing cheap paperbacks of things that might be useful to us. The International Arthurian Society could have used its influence wisely to get us a big paperback of the old ALMA. Out of date it may be, but certainly more worth having than Loomis' newly reprinted 'The Grail' or any up to date stuff by Norma Goodrich."

Everyone has their right to opinions - this is the reason for having this Scrolls section. I certainly agree with Chris about Llanerch Enterprises and I have been trying to do a short article on them for sometime, maybe I can produce a small piece for the next issue. Finally from Brigid Wright, of Asterton, Shropshire, near the awesome beauty of The Long Mynd, a few notes of interest:

"An item on Central Television mentioned some local news concerning Wychbury Hill, Worcester. There is the site of a Roman fort believed to have been used by Arthur found near by. Also Arthur is supposed to have been buried where there is a group of six tombs, with stone facings, etc. found under yew trees. The site is due to go under a motorway. A local man is excavating.

"Of local interest to me - Heath House, Clungunford (near Craven Arms & Clun). Have you heard of Simon Dale who was murdered two or three years ago? Simon Dale had dug under the foundations and believed he had found

evidence to connect it with Arthur. The area is not far from Roman Leintwardine. The house is now on the market. His former wife Baroness de Stampl was jailed for fraud but cleared of murder. Simon Dale was a known and respected scholar and spent much of his life researching the local area which is rich in Roman sites. I don't suppose we will know what he did find."

Many thanks to Brigid and all those have contributed to this issue's letters section. I would welcome comment on any of the above dispatches. Keep the old scrolls coming as in the last few issues have been devoid of letters. If you wish to have a personal reply then please enclose a stamped addressed envelope, thanks.

WHAT'S ON

Archaeology of Dark Age Britain

a series of 10 meetings, Mondays at 7.00 pm, from 18th January 1993 at Henllan School, Henllan, Clwyd Tutor: David Longley Fee: £17 (£13.50)

For further information contact: Extra-Mural Daprtment, University of Wales, Bangor.

Celtic Christianity

a series of 10 meetings, Tuesdays from 1.30 - 3.30, beginning on the 12th January 1993 at Manchester University Humanities Building Tutor: Margaret Worthington, BEd., AIFA Fee: £21 (£14.00 / £7.00) Course no.11205

Celtic Spirtuality

a series of six meetings on Thursdays from 10.00 am to 12.00 noon beginning on the 21st January 1993 at Manchester University Humanities Building Tutor Celia Deane-Drummond, MA, PhD Fee: £12.60 (£8.40 / £6.00) Course no. 15211

Synod of Whitby

A dayschool from 10.00 am - 4.00 pm on 23rd January 1993 at The Cathedral, Manchester 3. Tutor: Dr. Nick Higham Fee: £14.40 (£11.40) - including sandwich lunch and coffee Course no. 12801

King Arthur - Myth, Romance and Reality

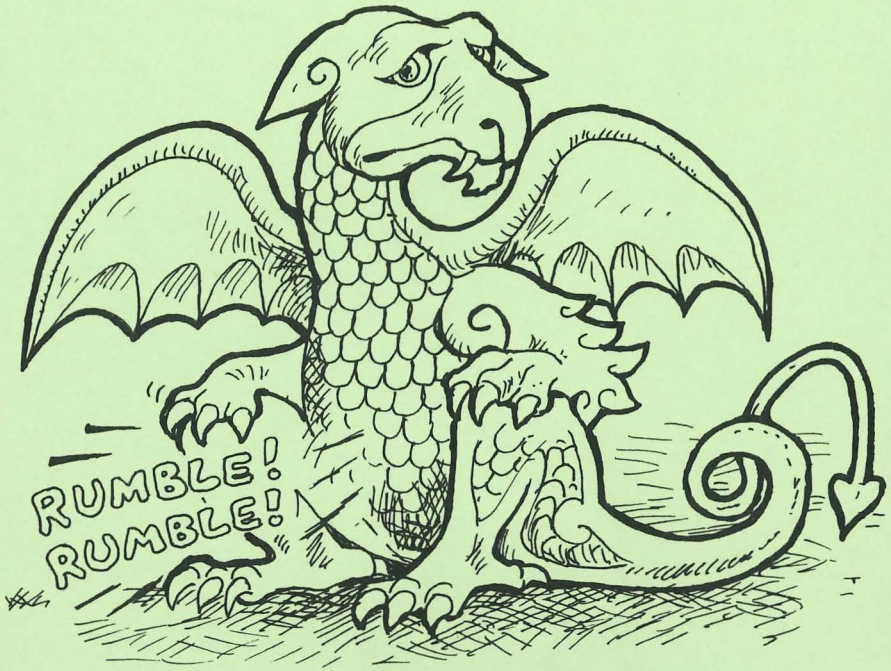
A two day look at Arthur from 5.00 pm13th February to 3.45 pm 14th February 1993 at Holly Royde, 56 - 62 Palatine Road, West Didsbury, Manchester 20. Tutors: Margaret Worthington, BEd., AIFA and Carole Weinberg, MA, MPhil., Fees: Resident £39.25 (£36.25 / £35.25) Non Resident £34.75 (£31.25 / £30.25) Course no. 11620L

Celtic Spirituality

a two day look at the spiritual traditions of Celtic Britain at Holly Royde, 56 - 62 Palatine Road, West Didsbury, Manchester 20. Tutors: Oliver Davies, PhD and Fiona Bowle, PhD. Fees: Resident £60.65 (£55.75 / £51.95) Non Resident £55.65 (£50.75 / £46.95) Course no. 15611

For further information on the above five course contact: The Enrolment Secretary, Department of Extra Mural Studies, The University, Manchester, M13 9PL.

PLEASE FEED ME



DON'T FORGET DRAGONS HAVE TO EAT TOO

The cover of this issue depicts a number of articles that have appeared locally concerning Arthur, books on Arthur, comments on Arthur and, diolch yn fawr i'r Cymro, a piece about your editor. It would be nice to see such response in many other parts of the country and in nation wide newspapers. Unfortunately, there are many more important things that make the news.

DRAGON c/o Charles W. Evans-Günther
9 Earls Lea, FLINT, Clwyd, CH6 5BT, N. Wales, U.K.