

OBITUARY

IT IS WITH VERY GREAT REGRET THAT WE HAVE TO ANNOUNCE THE DEATH OF MRS JESS FOSTER ON JANUARY 28th 1979.

JESS FOUNDED THE PENDRAGON SOCIETY IN WINCHESTER IN 1959 AND HAS BEEN THE CREATIVE FORCE BEHIND IT EVER SINCE.

SHE WAS TRULY LOVED BY MANY PEOPLE ALL OVER THE WORLD IN SUCH A WAY THAT IS GRANTED TO FEW HUMAN BEINGS.

THE PENDRAGON SOCIETY WILL NATURALLY CARRY ON THE WORK SHE STARTED.



PENDRAGON
This issue: Guinevere.



CORRESPONDENCE SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO: THE GENERAL SECRETARY, PENDRAGON SOCIETY, GARDEN FLAT, 22 ALMA RD. CLIFTON, BRISTOL BS8 2BY

EDITOR: CHRIS LOVEGROVE, PRODUCTION: CHRIS LOVEGROVE
KATE POLLARD, NICK BRISTOW, ROGER WEBSTER.



EDITORIAL

HARP EYES among you will have spotted the numbering mistake (not deliberate) last issue. Rest assured, this is Volume Twelve, Number Two.

Since January several things have happened, which will now be reported here. A caretaker committee has been elected by as many members as we could contact to run things till an AGM later this year. The officers are Chris Lovegrove (Chairman), Nik Wright (Vice Chairman), Kate Pollard (General Secretary) and Rita Moreno (Treasurer). Open committee meetings/général meetings are being held, generally on the first Sunday of the month (for the venue contact Kate). A new constitution has been thrashed out, and the aims revised to reflect the slight change in emphasis in recent years (members will be receiving a copy of this).

Feb 18: We had a social with a buffet lunch (thanks to Julie Downes and Peter Weeks for putting up with it all!) followed by a film by Rita Moreno of the 1973 Bristol 600 festival (including embarrassing footage of certain members masquerading as a dragon) and a rather esoteric film of Mr Charles Laughton masquerading as a hunchback pointing out the sacred geometry of Notre Dame to baffled tourists.

March 18: A small party measured up the original circular church marked out in the ruins of the later Temple Church in Bristol; a report will be appearing in a future issue.

March 23: Roger Webster and Colin Walls gave an invited talk on the Society to the Atlantean Society in Cheltenham, to which thanks are due for providing the opportunity.

April 7: Over a dozen members visited the site of the Roman lead mines at Charterhouse-on-Mendip, courtesy of Mr T. Elkins. Vince Russett, editor of *Picwinnard* magazine, joined us there and gave us the benefits of some of his local knowledge and research. A fuller report later.

PROJECTS

You will have noticed that this flurry of activity emanates from Bristol. Although the Society is Bristol-based it is not solely for the benefit of Bristol members. There are members not only in the rest of Britain but also in continental Europe, the States, Down-Under and elsewhere. There are ways in which you can get involved.

First of all, we'd like you to use the magazine to contact members in your part of the world, to correspond, meet, collaborate on local projects, form regional groups... If you want to contact Pendragons with your particular specialisation or in your particular area send us your details and we'll publish them or send on correspondence. Secondly, we'd like to suggest some projects for you to get your teeth into. Remember, the essence of Arthurian chivalry was the quest, so turn the page for some pointers if not the actual sketch-map...



PROJECTS: hummadruz/Templars.

PROJECT 1 / HUMMADRUZ

arthur's Stone is Herefordshire's only remaining dolmen. Though unfortunately unlikely to be Arthur's last resting-place, Sid Birchby has written about it in Newsletter No 6 (Dec 78) and in a letter to The Ley Hunter No 81 (1978), mentioning a strange phenomenon connected with it. This was reported in The Sunday Express for 30 Nov 75: "A Mr Donald Wood of Dorstone, Herefs., heard 'a faint high-pitched buzz' late one evening in a power-cut due to a heavy storm. It became almost continuous at home, at work, and in his car. His wife heard it just as clearly... An old friend... now hears it at his North Finchley home..."

Sid comments: "This is not just a silly-season news item, but an instance of a phenomenon recorded many times over a period of centuries. Nobody knows what it is. Most people refuse to admit its existence, unless they have heard it..."

"The common factors of the Hummadruz are as follows:-

1 Often heard on hills in summer, but also not on hills in cold weather.

2 Not insects, machinery, aircraft, ear defects, or the wind on the heath.

3 Some hearers are musically-trained, others are poets or authors.

4 Some reports are near prehistoric sites or green roads."

Those interested in this Hummadruz Project (hummadruz = low drone, hum or buzz) should contact Sid Birchby asap (40 Parrs Wood Ave, Didsbury, Manchester 20), enclosing an s.a.e. Help is requested under the following headings:

a Library research in newfiles, notes & queries, journals etc.

b Follow-up of contemporary reports or personal experiences.

c Publicity in suitable periodicals.

d Theories on connections with other fields.

PROJECT 2 / TEMPLARS



The next issue of Pendragon is due at midsummer, and we should like to use the Knights Templar as the theme due to their indirect association with this period of the year.

Up and down the country are monuments to the former influence of the Templars, in buildings, placenames and legends. Can you do some research into their local associations in your area, and then let us know the fruits of your investigations? Why Templars? Well, they are reputed to be linked with the Grail in medieval tradition, and very thinly disguised as guardians of the Grail in Wolfram von Eschenbach's Parzifal.

A bit of research for our London members to be going on with: Sid Birchby (that man again) once mentioned that the London Temple is supposed to have what is termed a "marigold" window. Could anyone supply a photo/sketch/information of this window? An unresolved query prompts this particular inquiry.



THIS ISSUE

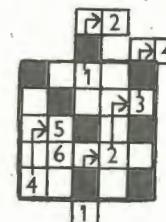
Since the spring equinox (when this issue was due) was called Lady Day in medieval England, it was decided to base this number on the theme of Guinevere, queen to King Arthur. Not only did Lady Day vie with January 1st and Christmas Day for the honour of New Year's Day in English tradition, but it also marked the beginning of the Spring season which, as various articles show, was especially associated with some aspects of Guinevere. She, in common with many other characters in the Arthurian legends, is a very enigmatic figure whose motivation in the medieval developments of her story is not as simple as at first appears.

THE KNIGHT'S MOVE

In the last issue I asked if anyone had any observations concerning the connections between magic word-squares, magic number-squares and the pentangle of Sir Gawain.

PETER RATAZZI has kindly sent us W.S. Andrews' Magic Squares and Cubes (1917, republished by Dover in 1960). This illustrates an interesting method for building a 5x5 magic square involving the use of the "knight's move" in chess (a move of two cells straight forward in any direction and one cell to either right or left).

In the example shown below (Fig 1) the knight's move is two cells upward and one to the right. When a move is blocked, the next number is written below and the knight's moves then continued, and so until the last number is written in the last cell (Fig 2).



10	18	1	14	22
11	24	7	20	3
17	5	13	21	9
23	6	19	2	15
4	12	25	8	16

In common with other odd magic squares, the sum of each of the horizontal, perpendicular and the two corner diagonal columns is 65; and the sum of any two numbers diagonally equidistant from the centre is 26 (twice the number in the centre cell). For other properties of this kind of square, the interested reader is referred to this fascinating book.

Remembering that the number 5 is particularly associated with the (almost) perfect knight, Gawain, in a 14th cent poem, I am reminded that the cultured knight was expected to excel in games played on a chequered board, such as the pre-13th cent Moorish/Spanish game of Alquerque (El-quirkat) played like the game of Draughts but on a 5x5 board. Occasionally knights are depicted with a chequered shield (the heraldic term is checky), but why does motor-racing use a chequered flag?

A medieval illustration, said to be of the author of Perzival, Wolfram von Eschenbach, shows a device reminiscent of the knight's move in chess mentioned above (Fig 3).

C.L.



The Prophetic cryptogram, by MICHAEL BENKERT



MICHAEL BENKERT's interpretation of the Cryptogram when transliterated into Akkadian-Hittite syllable-symbols is that it could become a Messianic prophecy devised by the Chaldean Magi, predecessors of the "Three Wise Men" (see Pendragon XIII/1).

I must say that I have found myself very considerably intrigued with the matter of the squared cryptogram, and have found my memory stirred with some of the issues that seem to be involved. The fact that it is in the Roman alphabet does not disinherit from a more ancient lineage. It could easily be written in the Linear Babylonian, Hebrew, Persian or in the Greek alphabets, and I suggest that in the Hittite hieroglyphic symbols it could have been expressed thus:

+	Λ	◇	○	○
Λ	Λ	Λ	Λ	○
◇	Λ	Λ	Λ	◇
○	Λ	Λ	Λ	Λ
○	Λ	Λ	Λ	+

It will be appreciated that the symbol for a Hittite letter, such as A for example, was a bull's head when used as a letter, but when A was a word in its own right, meaning water, the symbol became

became a water pot; and hence one symbol for a word could replace the symbols of its constituent letters.

In the event that others may like to pursue the ideas further, I thought that I would like to give some of the historical background to the Prophetic period.

REBUILDING THE TEMPLE

The connection between EA, the God of Creation and of the deep waters, and Jesus Christ is reached by cross reference to ancient historical sources. In Babylonian theology, EA was the Father of MERODACH, called MARDUK by the Hebrews, and whose assistant in turn was NEBO, or NABU in the Hebrew.



Cyrus is quoted by the Hebrew historian Josephus in his Antiquities (Book XI Ch 1) as issuing a decree throughout Asia which ran:

"Thus saith Cyrus the King: Since God Almighty has appointed me to be King of the habitable earth, I believe that he is the God which the Hebrews worship; For indeed He foretold my name by the Prophets, and that I should build Him a house at Jerusalem, in the country of Judea."

Josephus says that Isiah was the

Prophet concerned.

Cyrus accordingly sent from Babylon many Jews, furnished with his own money, to rebuild the Temple at Jerusalem; but after his death his son Cambyses came to the throne.

Cambyses obstructed the work in league with the Cuthaeans who had been brought by Shalmaneser out of Persia and Media and then resettled in Samaria.



Cambyses died and was succeeded by Darius who, as Josephus records (Book XI Chs 3-4) was the son of Hystaspes and was in fact appointed to be King.

Darius had already vowed to God to return all the Temple vessels and treasures of Solomon again to Jerusalem (that had been plundered thence by Nebuchadnezzar when he sacked Jerusalem and had the Israelites taken captive to Babylon); and when his help was sought by the Jews who were being hindered in re-building Jerusalem and the Temple, he made search and found the "book" of Cyrus at Ecbatana that gave Cyrus' orders for the re-building of the Temple at his expense. Darius thereupon set in motion the necessary arrangements to expedite the work and to cause the former obstruction to cease.

The personal beliefs of Cyrus concerning EA's son MERODACH (or MARDUK as the Hebrews called Him) are also stated on the Cyrus Cylinder, now in the British Museum, and which, translated, records, inter alia:

"...The Gods who dwelt among them left their dwellings, in anger at having brought (them) into Babylon. MARDUK turned (his face) to all their habitations

which were in ruins and (to) the population of Sumer and Akkad, who were like men dead, and he had compassion.

He scoured all the land for a friend, seeking for the upright prince whom it would have to take his hand. He called Cyrus, King of Anshan. He nominated him to be ruler over all. He made the land of Guti, all the warrior band of Manda, submit to him... He gave orders that he go against His city Babylon. He made him take the road to Babylon, and He went at his side like a friend and comrade. His vast army, whose number like the waters of a river cannot be determined, with their armour held close, moved forward beside him.

He got him into Babylon without fighting or battle. He averted hardship to Babylon. He put an end to the power of Nabonidus the King who did not show him reverence. The whole population of Sumer and Akkad, princes and governors, bowed to him (Cyrus) and kissed his feet..."

The Cylinder further records the words of Cyrus:

"...I am Cyrus, King of the world, great king, mighty king, King of Babylon, King of the land of Sumer and Akkad...

When I, well disposed, entered Babylon, I set up the seat of dominion in the royal palace amidst jubilation and rejoicing. MARDUK, the great God, caused the big-hearted inhabitants of Babylon to... me. I sought daily to worship Him...

At my deeds MARDUK, the great Lord, rejoiced, and to me, Cyrus the King who worshipped Him, and to Cambyses my son, the offspring of my loins, and to all my troops he graciously gave His blessing, and in good spirits before Him we (glorified) exceedingly His high (divinity)..."

The foregoing short extract from the Cyrus Cylinder was taken from what must be regarded as one of the most erudite and scholarly works in contemporary publication, namely Documents from Old Testament Times edited by D. Winton Thomas and published by Thos.



MARDUK

CONCLUSION

It was common knowledge that the Temple was to be re-built in Jerusalem so that Judaism could be in full operation there when the Messiah was born in accordance with ancient prophecies, but at the time the full picture was known only to a few, no doubt. As has been seen, however, both Cyrus and Darius made no secret of their divine inspiration on which they based their decrees and actions, and the Magi of their day would have no difficulty in finding out the course that events were taking. They would also be aware that, as in the case of Cambyses and the Cuthaeans, there were others who took an outright antagonistic position to these preparations, but that, in view of the divine sanction behind them, their final progress and destiny would never be in doubt.

reviews

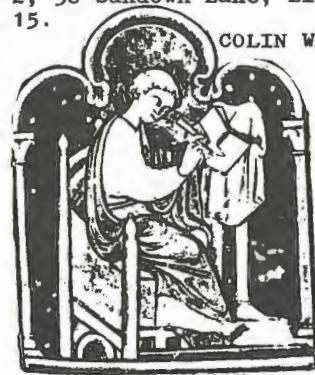
WARK

WARK is a reviewzine. It reviews fanzines, comiczines, and even semi-prozines. The terminology is somewhat distasteful, but the contents are extremely appetising. In issue 13 is a veritable feast of reviews. Fantasy, Fortean phenomena, feminism and Earth mysteries are covered. The centre of interest is obviously fantasy, but the other areas are

studied sympathetically. In the Earth mysteries section are reviews of Ancient Skills & Wisdom Review, The Journal of Geomancy, Albion and The Ley Hunter. I'm sure many Pendragons will already be familiar with these, but for those who aren't Wark gives addresses and prices, as it does for all magazines mentioned.

Production is good, with small illustrations and designs to break up the print, and a very original cover. It must be essential reading for fantasy fans, and I'm sure others will find it worth 30p from Rosemary Pardoe, Flat 2, 38 Sandown Lane, Liverpool 15.

COLIN WALLS



THE ONCE AND FUTURE WORM

THE ONCE AND FUTURE WORM is from the egg of The Middle Earthworm, its Tolkienism now faded. Presented in newsletter format, it is an amusing publication, if a little over-involved with itself, a sort of Private (Third) Eye. Contributors are concerned with folklore, Cathars, Jungian psychology, and a marked interest in university magazine-style jokes.

Available from Archie and Beryl Mercer, Lyonesse, Post Office Lane, Mount Hawke, Truro, Cornwall.

NIK WRIGHT



guenevere and the may queen.



by

SID BIRCHBEY

Her reputation is bad from the start. She was, says Geoffrey (1), a girl of noble Roman birth brought up by the Duke of Cornwall. Arthur made her his queen, and left her and his nephew Mordred in charge of Britain when he went abroad to fight the Romans. Instead, Mordred seized the crown, and lived adulterously with her. Arthur returned and slew Mordred at the Battle of Camblan, but was himself mortally wounded. Guinevere became a nun at Caerleon, and the Round Table was ended.

Later, French writers embroidered the tale. Chrétien told of her affair with Lancelot, which has no basis in Welsh myth, and the Vulgate Merlin made Mordred to be not only Arthur's nephew but also his son by his half-sister (2). Such stories may be politically-biased attempts to denigrate Arthur at a time when the Normans had made him a national hero in their struggle with France (3).

A less-partial view is seen in Lanzalet, a poem written ca 1195 by Ulrich of Zatzikhoven, who said that it was based on a book brought to Germany by a Norman knight who was a hostage for Richard Lionheart. There is no reason to doubt that there was such a book, for even Ulrich's rough and confused text displays material drawn from Welsh and

Irish myth. "We see", says Loomis (4), "several elements from the biography of the Irish god Lugh, as well as a Welsh version of the abduction of Guenevere; the latter drawing on sagas about Cuchulainn the son of Lugh, his rescue of Fand from her enemies, and his encounters with an axe-bearing giant with a replaceable head."

In Lanzalet, Lancelot helps Arthur to rescue Guenevere from a king who abducts her. There is no suggestion that Lancelot is her lover; he is loyal to his King. This abduction motif occurs in other Celtic legends: an Irish warrior steals Isca from Mark's court, the Irish fairy king Mider abducts Queen Etain, or Guenevere is carried off to Glastonbury by King Melwas. As Maynadier remarks (5):

"It seems next to certain that (these) abductions are variants of one and the same early Celtic legend... Doubtless some such legend of a great queen, or perhaps a goddess, stolen from her husband, was current among the Celts in the earliest times."

We are now travelling back in time far beyond the medieval romances and into a mythic world where Guenevere's infidelity takes on another aspect. Names become signposts: Guenevere, the white vision, is also Etain, the Dawn or shining one, whose other name Be Find means the white or shining woman. Mider's name is cognate with Medrod, the Welsh form of Mordred. Lancelot, the man with a spike, is a medieval French rudery.



Tales of abducted queens bring to mind Orpheus and his lost Eurydice, or Proserpina carried off by Pluto whilst picking flowers in Sicily. Guenevere is in fair company amongst the May Queens: "So it befall in the month of May Queen Guenever called unto her knights of the Table Round; and she gave them warning that early upon the morrow she would ride on Maying into woods and fields beside Westminster" (6). There she is taken away by Meliagrance, son of Bagdemagus whom Chrétien calls the king of the land from which no man returns; that faery world to which Mider takes Etain, and Pluto, Proserpina. After many adventures, Lancelot rescues her, and as Malory approaches the point where they fall in love and bring about "the most piteous history of the morte of King Arthur", he writes the phrase "as the French book says". With this, we leave the world of primal myth for that of courtly scandal.

If Guenevere, the White Vision who rides out on a May morning, reminds us of those other ladies who did so, of Rhiannon and the Fair Lady of Banbury on their white horses, we can no longer call her faithless or promiscuous. The night of Beltane or May Eve was never a solemn one, nor a time for Christian morality, and the lads and lasses who went out to gather garlands deceived nobody. It was only later when "to call a girl Guinevere in some parts of Wales was as much to say that she was no better than she should be" (7). And why should she be any better?

At Beltain, the faery folk were abroad, and lovers who went into the woods were led astray in more ways than one. In A Midsummer Night's Dream we see what happens. Whether that Sir Meliagrance who abducted Guenevere was really Oberon, one cannot say, but the May Queen has many consorts, and if they are Pluto or Mider or Cuchulainn, they may also be Meliagrance. The Spring-goddess myth takes different forms. In some, a mortal rescues her; in others,

she makes her own deal with the faery king. It's not important.

In the Northern pagan religion, where our May Queens began, an image of the goddess Earth was taken round in a cart at Spring-time, attended by her priest (8) and in 8th century Northumbria there was a similar custom. Bede says (9) that April was formerly called Rhed-month, after the goddess Rheda to whom sacrifices were made at that season. Rheda is Celto-Latin for a 4-wheeled wagon, so that Rhed-month means Cart-month.

Was Lancelot the May Queen's consort? It's not unlikely. He is first mentioned ca 1170 in Chrétien's poem The Knight of the Cart. Lancelot and Gawain ride out to rescue Guenevere from the giant Meliaguant. Their horses are slain in an ambush, and a dwarf with a horse and cart offers to take them to the giant's castle provided that Lancelot rides in the cart. He does so with some hesitation and is jeered at when he arrives. Chrétien explains that in those days the only cart in many towns was the tumbril which carried felons to their deaths. Guenevere, when rescued, is annoyed because Lancelot had hesitated. Women!

Chrétien's story seems to be a garbled version of a Spring-goddess procession in which Guenevere is cast as the May Queen. Alas, there is no room in the myth for King Arthur. Was he dubbed-in later, like King George of the mummers' plays? If so, why? Does there have to be a flawed and lame king in all the romances? We may have explained Guenevere to some extent but Arthur, no.



GUENEVERE & THE MAY QUEEN:

REFERENCES

- 1 Geoffrey of Monmouth History of the Kings of Britain (ca 1137)
- 2 Anon: a corpus termed The Vulgate Merlin (France ca 1210-30)
- 3 S.L.Birchby The Lancelot Wars ("Pendragon" April 1978)
- 4 R.S.Loomis The Development of Arthurian Romance (London 1963)
- 5 G.H.Maynadier The Arthur of the English Poets (Cambridge 1907)
- 6 T.Malory Morte D'Arthur (ca 1470)
- 7 J.Rhys Arthurian Legend quoted by Maynadier.
- 8 Tacitus Germania (ca 97 AD)
- 9 Bede Opuscula Scientica (C8)

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Thus the lady, who should have been returned, was returned, in peace and goodwill...

(From Record XX Arthur of Britain by E.K.Chambers, Sidgwick & Jackson 1927 & 1966)

Castle of Air.

This is Michael Beckett's reproduction of his own work. Drawing on information already set down by John Michell, Mr Beckett makes comparisons between the Great Pyramid and the megalithic geography of Southern Britain. He starts with the dimensions of the earlier building on the site of Glastonbury Abbey and extends his ideas to the geographical siting of Avebury and Stonehenge.

Although the reproduction leaves much to be desired and the diagrams are sketchy, these 26 pages of foolscap may be of interest to those who wish another view of landscape geometry.

Price £1.00 inc p&p from Michael Beckett, 5 New Lane, Leeds 10.

NIK WRIGHT



And thus it was besieged by Arthur the tyrant with a countless multitude because Guennuvar his wife was violated and abducted by the aforesaid wicked king (Melwas) and taken there to a place made impenetrable on account of its defence by reeds, rivers and marshes.

The rebellious king (Arthur) had sought the queen for a whole year before he heard of her whereabouts.

To this place he marched with the whole army of Cornwall and Devon; war was prepared between the antagonists.

Seeing this, the abbot of Glastonria, his clergy and Gildas the Learned went between the battle lines, advised their king Melwas to make peace and return the abducted lady.

THE Romance Of Guinevere



Where do the towers of Camelot and fair
Tintagel crumble?
Where do those tragic lovers and their bright-
eyed ladies rot?
We cannot tell, for lost is Merlin's magic,
and Guinevere - call her not back lest she
betray the loveliness time lent a name...
Nor pry too deeply lest you discover the bower
of Astolat a smoky hut of mud and wattle,
Find the knightliest lover a braggart, and his
lily maid a slut."

* * *

So many words to choose from, but where to begin to tell the story of Guinevere?

Welsh legends say that Arthur had three wives each bearing the same name. "One was the daughter of Gwryd Gwent, another of Gwythr ap Greidol and the third was the daughter of Gogyrwan Gawr, the giant."

In the medieval romances Guinevere is the daughter of Leodegrance. "Gwenhwfar the golden haired, daughter of Laodegan the giant, bad 'worse when great' runs one of the Welsh Triads, but unfortunately as these headlines were all that survived, we do not know what the tale revealed.

Guenhumara, the Celtic form of Guinevere, means White Shadow, and we know that Arthur's colour was white. His great feasts were at Pentecost, the feast of the Holy Spirit, the feast we know as Whitsuntide. The Holy Spirit: the White Phantom: Guinevere...

But where do legend and probability lead us? We know of Guinevere that she was fair, and that she was a King's daughter - all the tales agree. And it would seem that she became Arthur's queen only after the warring had ceased.

Arthur, established in his kingdom, no longer a young man, sought or was offered a political alliance, a joining of tribes rather than a lovematch. Was Guinevere perhaps a Saxon princess, a pledge of peace between Briton and Saxon after the great battle of Badon? Her dowry, a hundred knights to serve her lord. So she came, a stranger to Arthur's court, resented by many who would have wished their king had chosen from their own kind. And Lancelot, was he too not an alien, a mercenary, a Saxon?

She went a-Maying, and got kidnapped. "Queen Guinevere was fond of Maying in the woods, and one day in that fair month she called her knights, and told them that on the morrow she would go a-Maying... Leave off your arms, she said, we will all be clad in green, in velvets and silks, for it is the spring of the year, and all hearts should be merry as birdsong.

"Ten knights went with the Queen. They made an early start for she meant to be back with King Arthur by ten of the clock... "When Sir Meliagrance heard of the Maying ride, he smiled darkly to himself... Let him have the Queen safely in his castle with the great doors barred, and the archers on the ramparts, and he feared no rescue."

But rescue came in the shape of Lancelot. Then comes May again, and despite sly innuendos and veiled warnings she summons Lancelot to her Bower.

Outside, Sir Modred, Arthur's baseborn son, and Sir Agravaine and others of their faction surround the bower, convinced that once capture Lancelot and Arthur will no longer be able to ignore his treason. Being impatient lest he escape they make a great noise hammering at the door...

...In the resulting chaos, as knights tumble into the room, Lancelot escapes, but Guinevere chooses to stay behind - perhaps an echo of her real position, a political pawn? King Arthur returns to face his knights, and seeing the trail of death and destruction about Guinevere's Bower cannot refuse to enforce his own law: Guinevere's treason will be punished by death.

The Queen is led out to die, and her crime and the sentence are read aloud for all to hear. And Guinevere, 'knowing now that they would have her speak... She walked away from Gawaine, with her head still lifted up; And on her cheek of flame, the tears dried quick.

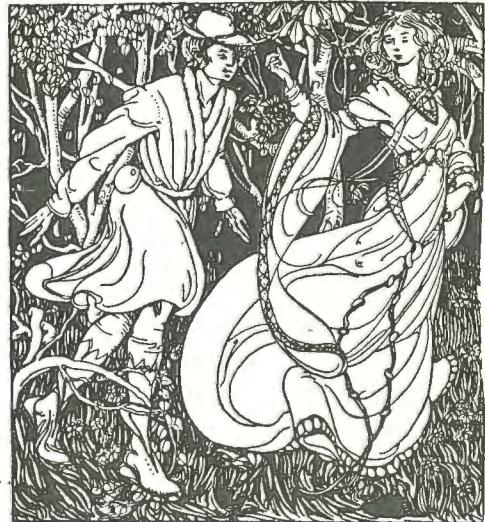
"It chanced upon a day that Launcelot came
To dwell at Arthur's court: at Christmas-time
This happened; when the heralds sung his name,
" 'Son of King Ban of Benwick,' seemed to chime
Along with all the bells that rang that day,
O'er the white roofs, with little change of rhyme.
"Christmas and whitened winter passed away,
And over me the April sunshine came,
Made very awful with black hail-clouds, yea
"And in the Summer I grew white with flame,
And bowed my head down - Autumn, and the sick
Sure knowledge things would never be the same..."

She would not speak another word... joyfully
Her cheek grew crimson, as the headlong speed
Of her roan charger drew all men to see,
The knight who came was Launcelot at good need.'

Lancelot thunders down like a sickle among the corn. Friend and foe, armed and unarmed, all fall beneath his swinging strokes. Sir Gawaine's brothers, reluctant unarmed guardians of the Queen are killed, but Lancelot and the Queen have gone. The death of his nephews and knights, and the loss of his queen, force Arthur to pursue Lancelot, but although there are battles and sieges there is no result, for Lancelot will defend himself but is reluctant to injure his erstwhile lord.

Finally peace is agreed and Arthur receives his queen back in all honour. But Lancelot must stay out of Britain.

The peace was not lasting. Sir Mordred and Sir Gawaine and the younger knights would not let it be. Mordred could see power within his grasp and soon Arthur was leading his army to lay waste Lancelot's lands. Sir Mordred was left to rule Britain and the Queen was left in his charge. Soon he was scheming to keep the power, and came the day he told Guinevere that Arthur had been killed fighting Lancelot.



Y Aries



"We have news of a great battle, Arthur is dead, and as I'm the heir I shall assume the kingship, and I think you will make me a suitable queen."

Did Mordred really desire his father's wife or was this another pointer to her true position? Secure Guinevere to wife and her people will continue the treaty? But Guinevere escapes and seeks sanctuary; and Arthur, hearing of Mordred's treachery, is once more in Britain.



What was to have been a parley turns into a battle, and Mordred, together with the Kentish army - Saxons? - are beaten and Arthur in the moment of victory is destroyed by his dying son.

Lancelot, arriving too late for the battle, but hearing that Arthur is dead, goes in search of Guinevere. 'Nay, he knew nothing now, except that where The Glastonbury gilded towers shine, A lady dwelt, whose name was Guinevere... He rode on giddy still, until he reach'd A place of apple-trees, by the thorn-tree Wherefrom St Joseph in the days past preached. Dazed there he laid his head upon a tomb, Not knowing it was Arthur's, at which sight One of her maidens told her, "he is come," And she went forth to meet him...'

"Christ! Help me to save his soul!" pleads Guinevere, till Lancelot goes away. Then she too steals away, 'and so she went to Amesbury, and there she made herself a nun, and wore white clothes and black veil, and great penance she took as ever sinful lady in this land'. And so Malory ends his tale of Guinevere the Golden, but we go on, for when the monks opened the tomb of Arthur at Glastonbury "amongst the bones was a mass of golden hair, that fell to dust when a too hasty hand would have touched the gold, and all that was mortal of Guinevere vanished forever".

But was Guinevere mortal?

"When King Arthur was mortally wounded he was fetched by three Queens; though their names are not specified in Malory, we can supply them from the Grail Legend.

"The first, Blanchefleur, is the earth in Springtime, washed clean, but unsown.

Therefore she is represented as a virgin.

In summer she becomes the great mother or the voluptuous Queen of Love.

We know her as Ceres, Aphrodite, and Guinevere.

Finally she becomes the earth in winter, hideous, revengeful, barren. Her names are Hecate, Proserpine, Juno, and Morgan le Fay."

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GUINEVERE: a saxon hostage?

C.D.GUERIN

AS AN EXAMPLE of the sort of etymological game with which I have been amusing myself, may I put forward a theory concerning the origin of the name "Guinevere" or "Gwenhwyvaer".

1 THE CELTS OF THE CONTINENT seem to have experienced difficulty in pronouncing the hard teutonic V sound (written W) particularly at the beginning of a word. Examples:

Teutonic	Pronounced	English meaning	French spelling
Wilhelm	Vilhelm	William	Guillaume
Werra	Verra	War	Guerre
Wespe	Vespe	Wasp	Guespe, Guepe

My own ancestral tribal name:

Werins	Verins	Latin: Varini	Guerin
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2 The impediment seems to have been shared by the CELTIC BRITISH:

Latin or Teutonic	=Celtic
Votadini	Manau Guotodin
Venedotia (N. Wales)	Guined (Gwynedd)
Venta Silurum	Caer Gwent (Guent)
Wallop (Hants)	Guoloph
Vortiporius	Guortepir

Even Vortigern's own particular area of Wales is named Guertigerniaun on the OS map of Britain in the Dark Ages.

3 So now we come to GUINEVERE. Applying the apparent rule shown above, the name becomes Vinevere. Replacing the V with the written W we get Winewer. If we cheat a little this could be written Winna Wer and still be pronounced in the same way. I have been assured by a student of Anglo-Saxon that this could be translated as "enemy blood-price" or "hostage".

If you accept this possible origin of the name, does it not put Guinevere in a different light? The Hostage demanded at some time after Badon by Arthur -- the possibility of more than one Guinevere -- the persistence with which Guinevere was at one time or another kidnapped or courted -- for he who held Guinevere could control the Saxon.

As to why the name "Winna Wer" passed into Celtic British in preference to her true name is also explicable: Superstitious and primitive tribes do not like to give names away. It confers powers upon the recipient. Frazer's Golden Bough deals with this point at some length. No doubt, at the time she was handed over as hostage the British asked her what her name was.

No reply.

"What do your people call you?"
"Winna Wer..."



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EASTER LIGHT.

by

JESS FOSTER

TWENTY YEARS AGO, when we were all ignorant and inquiring, we were mystified as to why the early Churches should have finally parted brass rags over the date of Easter which to most modern citizens seems comparatively unimportant. Discussion was brisk and exclusive and ever since those days the same key words have kept on cropping up as though they were there for us to stumble over from time to time. A book called The Rabbi Jesus resurfaces a lot of old question marks and offers answers to those who are interested.

The author maintains that the Pharisees and the Sadducees held different beliefs concerning certain fundamental dogmas but at least both groups observed the same lunar calendar and were strict in observing festivals and feast days on the same days of the week, month or year.

The Essenes, however, were just as meticulous in their observance of a solar calendar, and the author maintains that the Essenes were in no way confined to Qumran but had so many lay brothers and members living amongst the working community in Jerusalem and elsewhere as to equal the Pharisees and Sadducees in numbers if not in prestige. The Essenes called themselves Sons of Light. Whereas others turned themselves towards the Temple to pray, Essenes turned to the East. St John and all the Cathars who preached his gospel so assiduously referred to themselves as Sons of Light.

Scholars have argued about the date of the Wedding Feast and why it was held on a Tuesday. According to the solar calendar was the usual and accepted day for celebrating weddings. Jesus said he did not intend to annul one jot or tittle of the law yet he performed forbidden acts on the sabbath: according to his Qumran reckoning it was, in fact,

a week-day.

One author, Millar Burrows, has raised similar questions about dates when writing of the Last Supper:

"The difficulty consists in reconciling the first three Gospels with St John's. The Passover meal was held on the night of the 14th Nisan. According to the Synoptic gospels Jesus's Last Supper was a Passover meal on the night of 14th Nisan and he was crucified on 15th Nisan. In the Gospel according to St John he was crucified on the 14th... This reckoning has led some scholars to claim that the fourth Evangelist had no idea of Jewish usage and custom and so was probably a Greek or under Hellenic influence. If, however, the Rabbi Jesus wanted to celebrate the Passover according to the Qumran solar calendar custom he could only do so on the right date because before then there was no unleavened bread without which the Seder night of the Passover Feast could not be celebrated."

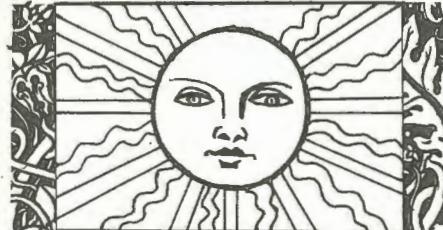
Another author, Hermann Raschke, says that anything becomes different in the light of the Qumran calendar:

"We may assume that Jesus, who was openly opposed to the Pharisees and Sadducees, and presumably had contacts with the Qumran sect through his Rabbi, John the Baptist, used the Qumran solar calendar, so that his Seder feast took place one day earlier than that of the official priesthood in Jerusalem."

Reading The Rabbi Jesus with all its additional confirmation from the Dead Sea Scrolls, pulls us again into the stresses and traumas of Montsegur and all the solar measurements of that alleged treasure house. To Christians the dates could be more significant than the colour scarves of Nottingham Forest and Arsenal.

If you live in that world at all you must belong to one side or the other. Accept the solar cal-

endar and a great many other things will fall into place. Happily, too, an enormous amount of scholarly argument can be thrown out as it becomes quite obviously irrelevant. The date of Easter proves to be a pivotal point and not a mere triviality.



Dating Easter: a note.

EASTER, and its related Jewish feast of Passover, is an attempt to reconcile solar and lunar calendars:

1 It must fall within a month (originally a lunar length of time) of the spring equinox (March 22). This equinox also has a confused relationship with the Feast of the Annunciation (March 25), called Lady Day in medieval England, now commercially known as Mother's Day.

2 The Passover was celebrated on the night of the first full moon after the spring equinox (the 14th day of the Jewish lunar month Nisan). This is a moveable feast therefore by solar reckoning. The early traditional date for Easter, favoured by the Celtic Church, was the third day after the full moon.

3 The point at issue with the Roman Church at the time was this: whether Easter should be celebrated on the Sunday following the third day.

Why change? was the attitude of the Celtic die-hards. Why the fuss? was the Roman reply. And why not for convenience on the same day of the year, every year? say modern World Calendar reformers.

But, indeed, why the fuss? Passover was fixed on the night of the full moon for the practical reason that in more tropical latitudes the moon can give the maxi-

mum light for communal ceremonies and sacrifices. Perhaps even the near-conjunction of moon--earth--sun was regarded or felt as critical.

Three days later the traditional Easter might conceivably still receive this benefit, but a Sunday Easter occurring up to a week later (the moon's third-quarter) would clearly be much less crucial or significant.

The Western world uses an almost exclusively solar calendar. The Moslem world is reliant on a lunar. There are other examples of differences between lunar and solar "mentalities".

On one extreme, women (over half of inaptly-named Mankind), seamen and lunatics (strange bedfellows!) are regulated to a greater or lesser extent by periods related to the moon's cycle.

On the other hand the business world, political theorists and the Metrical Board would like the cogs of time to move in a more circumscribed, predictable way.

Unfortunately for both extremes there is at least a third factor operating to complicate matters even further -- the earth itself. The earth's rotation neither coincides with its passage round the sun nor with the moon's phases. Hence the problems in devising the "perfect" calendar.

Perhaps there was something in the inherent conservatism of Celtic Christianity that refused to yield to St Augustine's Roman practices that was instinctively correct. Acceptance was slow: Northumbria 664, northern Ireland 696 (sixty years after southern Ireland), Wales not fully before 809, and Devon and Cornwall not until the tenth century. This slow change must surely be eloquent of something more than just blind resistance to new-fangled usage for the sake of convenience?



SNAKES, SERPENTS & dragons..... & king ARTHUR

DAVID STRINGER writes: The length of this writing is due to my concern to set the Arthurian aspect I bring in into the context of a much wider "battle of religions", as both the sungod and white-goddess cults were "international" and part of world-wide social changes... If some parts of this seem to be left dangling in the air, it is because it is an explanation rather than any final hypothesis.

MYTHOLOGICAL REFERENCES TO sacred snakes, serpents & dragons may be confusing, all having a similar form as Totemic Creatures, & all seemingly attached to various fertility cults, with the differences being that Dragons are fiery & energetic & move through the Air & Alight (Dragonlines), Serpents seem to rise up from oceans or other waters (the serpent in Eden twined round the "Tree of Life" rises from the Waters beneath the Earth where the Tree has its roots -- see also Yggdrassil, Scylla, the Loch Ness Monster, Leviathan), while Snakes are very much of the sensuous Earth/land itself & its fertility. In short a Totemic trinity, embodying different aspects of - what? Of all three, only snakes have a physical counterpart while the other two are fabulous beasts, like the Griffin or Phoenix.

In Cornish, An Gorthfyl (snake) is both masculine & feminine by gender whilst An Sarf (Serpent) & An Dryk (Dragon) are feminine by gender. One might ask does this gender of the word indicate more about their original significance? We also have Kivel (worm) which does occur at an old sacred site by the Fal Estuary dedicated to St Michael (a Dragonslayer): Penkevil -- snakes & worms being interchangeable as earth-totems.

The double gender of "snake" ties in with the pattern that actual physical sexuality requires both the sexes, as presumably all physical fertility. Snakes are seen on the Arms of ISIS, the sensual sun fertility goddess (alias Ish-tar) as round the arms of the Cretan "Mother Goddess" -- & are

so easily explained as symbols of the physical level of existence. Serpents -- such as appear on the coat of arms of Morgannale-fay's champion & son by King Arthur -- & Dragons -- which appear on Arthur's shield as son of Pendragon, being opposed in the Battle of Camalann -- both being more fabulous excite more amazing speculations! While monster-watchers search the oceans for survivals of prehistoric Serpentine beasts, Dragons give rise to all manner of suppositions, from twirling cloud-formations to spaceships arriving in prehistoric times, visions stimulated by the confluence of magnetic Energy lines -- none of which we shall discount, being concerned not with Dragons by themselves, but as part of the above totemic trinity! From the "form" of the totem alone the serpentine or snaking is the most obvious shape to represent life from microcosm to macrocosm. Streams, young green branches, landscapes & water-currents "snake", DNA molecules coil, Clouds (*yiz* Air-currents) & Galaxies twist & writhe around each other, waterspouts & whirlpools spiral & The Seasons cycle! Thus, as totem of various aspects of the Life-force, this is the most powerful of symbols in our Myths!

When the Levite Aaron is alleged to have turned a stick into a Serpent in the Old Testament, it is not surprising that Pharo should have feared, for Egypt's most powerful deities were The Sungod Ammon-Ra (whom the Pharo represented on earth) but the snake/Serpent was emblematic of the fertility goddess of the Nile, ISIS, without which Egypt

would die of famine. From which one may deduce that the Levite Aaron was an initiate of the old female cult that was strong amongst the peasants and so of social power as great as the

Pharaoh's. This was more than a mere conjuring trick!

We start from Egypt in attempting to define this trinity (Fig 1, The Birth of Isis):

SKY	deity, male	KEB	DRAGONS	extraterrestrial forces
EARTH	deity, female	NUT	SNAKES	fire, fertility/sex
WATERS	Keb and Nut give birth to: sister-brother /lovers in the Waters	ISIS/OSIRIS	SERPENTS	primordial energy in the maternal Waters

i.e. Transcendental visionary experiences (Dragons);

Basic creative reproduction and diversification (Serpents and snakes) and the nature and knowledge thereof.

So far, no fantastic element appears -- one could reduce this trinity to the four original elements FIRE/EARTH & WATER in the medium of AIR. Let us follow this triad a little further.

The female nature of both transcendent and basic reproductive aspects indicates a primitive matriarchal society where women were both the knowledgeable ones

and child-bearers (shamanesses plus mothers) while snakes were both sexes (Isis plus Osiris &c, a pattern that recurs in other both-sexed creative demiurge patterns!); the men doing their bit and presumably going out to do a few of the more heavy or dangerous jobs as required. In a peaceful world, they would have little power, if all their weapons were called upon to do was stick wild boars and bears -- while a warlike state of society would put them in a position to overthrow this female-control, as it did'. In ourselves we might postulate:

EGO	Conscious Mind/Will	cerebral/conceptual	Sublimated Energy (Intellect)
ID	Subconscious Mind	cerebellic-body	Sensuality (Feelings)
X	Unconscious Mind	intuition-related	Source Energy

The nature of the society defines and is defined by which energy centre is dominant in the pattern of our lives: whether we are ruled by Dragon, snake or Serpent aspects of the trinity.

There are two symbolic trees in Eden: THE TREE OF LIFE (sensual) and then a second, THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD & EVIL (psychic/visionary). This could be explained as follows:

In legend, the groves of the Tree of Life are supposed to be of 'apples';

apple-blossom is good for bees, as well as feeding us; the Bee is one of the emblems of the fertility goddess; hence the sanctity of the fruit comes from that of the sacred in-

sect!

The Mother Goddess in question is Hheva (= Old Testament Eve), pre-10,000 BC; her sacred island is Avalon (Hhevalon); hence Aval comes to mean apple!

In Genesis we start out with our first protohumanoid with intelligent curiosity, Eesh (Man) and Eesha (Woman), who eat of the sensual Tree of Life (and have a basic sensual fertility religion) until Esha encounters a Serpent by name of Neyesh, which means - qabalistically - a flow of energy coming from the manifestation of the source of life in physical existence -- i.e. a visionary experience that

transforms Esha from a mere esha into a priestess with knowledge, until the deity becomes female, Hheva (qabalistically the untapped female energy made pregnant). This can be said to be a tale of how the females of humanity became the first initiates of an advanced knowledge.

Neyesh has all the qualities attributed to Dragonlines (energy flows), and also rises from the Waters, thus entwining both Dragons and Serpents in a kind of Yang/Yin coupling -- Dragons as fiery and energetic being the Yang element, while Serpents, being of water, are the Yin. The Seeress of the cult is also the sensual being (= the snake). In the Beginning, all three were in one.

Thus, we shall here conclude, that while sexuality (the snake) is vital to the reproduction of individual existences through which the Energy must operate, being one manifestation of that Energy the Serpent is obviously not to be confused with the snake, and in the Beginning also includes the Dragon. Or, in other words, conceptual power and knowledge arises from an intuitive sensitivity to the natural 'law' with which it is in harmony, belonging in a simple agricultural society, with little attempt to gain power over others with any 'magic' available. The original experience is of an Energy which is neither gender -- attempts to give a male or female nature to a deity afterwards indicating a later power struggle between matriarchal and patriarchal societies. That is, it is propaganda!

We next come to the Arthurian Legends...

This article will be continued in a future issue.



REVIEWS

The Ley-hunter's Manual.

by Alfred Watkins (Pentacle Books, Bristol) £2.25

Published originally in the wake of The Old Straight Track, Alfred Watkins wrote this as a guide for potential 'ley hunters'. It deals briefly with the history and substance of the 'old straight roads' and gives instructions on finding and following the old tracks.

It is a slim volume, literally a manual; though it is pleasantly evocative of the rural antiquarianism of fifty years ago, sadly the new paperback edition is more than twenty times its original price!

N.W.

Available from Pentacle Books, 6 Perry Road, Bristol 1.

Feng Shui.

by E.J. Eitel (Pentacle Books, Bristol 1979) £2.50

This is the second reprint of the Rev Eitel's 1873 work, the previous edition being in 1973 and now almost unobtainable.

Feng Shui has its roots in Taoism, an ancient "religion" that can be seen as a way of living in harmony with the environment. From the same root come some of today's other popular Chinese imports - acupuncture, I Ching, Chinese yoga and so on. The Feng Shui branch apparently dealt with the Buildings & Public Works side of things. The siting of dwellings, the most propitious place for a business, the location of the most harmonious spot for a tomb or shrine... To this end, the movement of the stars and planets, the various lines of the I Ching, combinations of the five elements, and other inscrutable indicators of subtle influences would all be taken into careful account to determine the prevailing "Breath of Nature". This being established, a structure of the correct proportions could be erected.

As with most power-wielding regimes, it became unbalanced, and Eitel dismisses the Feng Shui he encountered on the grounds of gross superstition and piety -- official corruption, and predicts its eventual decline. Certainly in modern China any thoughts of Feng Shui seem to be eclipsed by the desire for steel-works, tractors and a general trend towards industrialisation. However, acupuncture, a close relative of Feng Shui, has been found in some cases to be effective, and is attracting interest in some medical circles. Unlike acupuncture, I don't really see Feng Shui catching on in a big way with Architects and Planners for quite a while yet!

Regrettably I feel the book is a bit over-priced considering the production, but that aside this is a book that should be read by anyone interested in "Earth Mysteries".

MIKE POLLARD

Bodylife.

For Arthur and arthritis, B for backache and bodylife. This book made its appearance just before the first Festival for Mind and Body, and seemed to embody some of the spirit of that time.

The principle of Bodylife is simple: getting to know your body from the inside as well as through anatomical dissection and theory. The author, Arthur Balaskas, suggests that relaxation is a basic human need and that it is hampered by stiff joints and aching muscles. By examining the natural movements of the body he arrives at a method that can ease some of the stresses of modern living.

The book is in two parts. The first deals with the theory and gives clear basic information on some of the body's functions, the awareness of the body in space, and a chapter on "making friends with your pain". The second part is the practical bit, using movements derived from physical therapies, orthodox yoga "postures"

and the martial arts. Included are movements for pregnancy, movements for the elderly (there being no age limit) and the most constructive approach to backache I've yet found. Also included are some "exercises for the office" which could raise a few eyebrows in the typing pool. A section on "How people benefit" I found a bit twee to say the least; and what with an introduction by trendy R.D. Laing and the "girly" pic on the front cover, some people might be put off opening the book. However, if you want something positive to do about your aching back, or if you feel discomfited about being unable to touch your toes, this book might interest you.

Bodylife by Arthur Balaskas is published by Sidgwick & Jackson, London 1977, price £3.50 (paper).

M.P.

NOTICEBOARD.

Kate Pollard writes that some members who mistakenly feel they are less literate than others are probably put off contributing ideas to the magazine if they are not in the form of an article. So, we are introducing a "noticeboard" page (can you think of a better title?) to air your apparently disjointed observations that might be added to by other members. (This would be in addition to the contacts column mentioned earlier in the editorial.) To kick off, a note from ALISON SKINNER, Bath:

"In looking through some old folders of magazines I find I have some back issues of Torc magazine which you may remember was produced from Glastonbury in the early Seventies. Do you think there would be a place for it in somebody's archives? I will very willingly send them on either to you or anyone else you think might like to keep them. I've got the run of Nos 4-6 and 8-15."

Anyone interested? We'll pass on requests in the first instance.

LETTER: Cult Objects.

From STEPHEN BANKS (wintering in "Sun Cottage" in the Cape, S.Africa):
A few days ago we visited a cave inland along the coast, where the South African Museum were digging. They had found three burials under an occupation layer representing many hundreds of years. One of the burials was beneath a cairn, and headless. It looked to me like some important person whose 'noble head' had been taken to be 'entertained'. Which brings me to my thoughts of a next book. This may be called "Cult Objects" and deal, in the form of short stories, with some of the things in museums which appear to be religious but nobody there wants to say how and why. If any Pendragons can help me I would be delighted to hear - and even if they don't know of any cult objects I would be equally pleased.

We plan to visit England from late June to early September, returning here by ship via Ascension and St Helena...

(Ed: We will be pleased to pass on any correspondence on cult objects)

JESS FOSTER.

From DIANNE BINNINGTON, Talley, nr Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire:

One day, twelve years ago, I was sitting in the launderette in Alma Road reading *Beowulf* when a figure loomed over me, and a husky voice enquired, "Are you reading that for pleasure or for study?". "Pleasure", I replied. "Aah!", chortled the figure and introduced itself. It was Jess Foster, and I was captivated forthwith. Mission accomplished, she left, with instructions to her young companion to bring me along as soon as I was finished there.

I staggered along Alma Road with my washing, whilst the companion, who was called Monty, nattered away about something called the Pendragon. On arrival at No 22 I was regaled with tea and such furious talk about a king called Arthur that I found it difficult to digest either. I left in some confusion, but soon returned with a friend, in order to get a second opinion. We were in agreement, something was obviously going on, and it seemed good, although at that time we couldn't pinpoint what was really happening.

We never quite became Pendragons, other things involved us then, and have since, but after that first meeting I never lost contact with Jess. And what had at first merely intrigued, grew into the friendliest course of instruction and inspiration imaginable.

She forever had a 'clue' to hand, and her very practical, but indirect, form of help for the young lay in her art of knowing which 'clue' would suit whom. Ever inspiring those around to be off questing, she skillfully uncovered an ideal, and helped each person to transform an apparently dull world for themselves.

Jess aged, and I grew older. Our talks were rarely about leys, cathars etc etc. We were moving on. We began to meet as two friends, two women, the older and the younger. My instruction continued, but it didn't need Arthur any more. She continued to inspire and fortify, but she was getting tired. Imperceptibly, she was pulling out, gathering herself. She admitted to a world-weariness and we talked of death. I asked her directly how she felt about it and she said, "Well, I've never been to New Zealand, but I'm sure it will be a great adventure". "Pass it on!"

The Arthurian society, by Mike Warris

A small gang of marauding Saxons on their way home with the loot (female) are ambushed by an equal number of Celts. The lines form.

Both sides are well armed -- helmets, swords as well as spears, and heavy wooden shields. Swords on shields crackle like a fusillade.

The men, well-armed, fight like professionals. They don't run away, but they keep their lines and don't take risks. It's two days to the nearest surgeon, and when you get to him he's a carpenter with a smattering of Latin.

Now the two leaders meet to settle scores. They circle round, hack, feint, parry, then Arthur comes over Cerdic's guard, and Cerdic falls.

The Saxons are dismayed, leaderless, and slightly outnumbered. The Celts take them at a rush and wipe them out.

All this can be seen around Leicestershire, at carnivals, fetes and the like, performed by the Arthurian Society. One show was at Sapcote, the site of a Roman villa burnt by Saxons and said to be haunted. The society also does research into the history of Arthur, and the Matter of Britain generally. For instance, Leicestershire in Arthur's time was called *Thernllwig*, "Bad Kingdom" (as in Wern Halog*) -- the home of all outlaws, riff-raff and broken men, later absorbed into Mercia.

The Arthurian Society is one of a dozen mock battle groups up and down the country. Choose your own weapons, your period and your fantasy -- Roman, Arthurian, Viking, Medieval (mostly semi-professional), Civil War, Napoleon, American Civil War, or Second World War.

The participants take it seriously, live their roles. It's the outside world who wear fancy dress. For several thousand young people, the legends and history of Britain are real.

What do we get out of it? Bruises, but a lot of fun. We travel around the country and see the inside, non-public bits of ancient buildings. We get comradeship -- but something more than the comradeship of a rugger team. The war-bands cover a broader age-range, include women and children. We are confederations of Anarchists, all slightly unusual, standing back to back against the great grey suburban world, putting some colour into the garden-gnome fanciers' (and our) lives. We are, in short, something between a church of heretics and a tribe.

Our kit just doesn't exist on the mass-produced market. It has to be made by ourselves, improvised. If our complicated, mass-producing, mass-thinking civilisation, as seems probable, is due to expire with the oil in 2010, then groups like ours will be well-kitted to survive.

*Wern Halog = Polluted Alder. This is the name of the farm-house members stayed in during one season's dig on the Gower. It was demolished and the site "developed" the year after.



Irish Folk Music, 2.

VINCENT RYAN

The recent phenomenal interest in Irish music, its origins, a definition of folk-music, and references to singing and harping in old Irish manuscripts were described in Part 1. It closed with a brief mention of the collapse of the bardic schools and the great flowering of lyric poetry in the eighteenth century.

The Jacobite Wars blazing out in 1688 after the Gaelic gentry had welcomed James with Irish dances raised the hopes of the bards for the last time; Fianna Fail, soldiers of destiny they were called by David OBruadair, the last and perhaps greatest of them all. By 1693 when all was lost, the Irish soldiers left in their thousands... the flight of the "Wild Geese", as the exodus was known. For the next century, such was the exodus of the best that a half million men died in the Irish Brigade of the French army and vast numbers joined similar brigades in Spain, Austria, Russia and many countries around the globe. A Nolan became supreme commander of the Hapsburg armies and a Lacey that of the Russian armies. Wellington was to remark "Damn the laws that made men such as these our enemies".

The laws he referred to were known as the Penal Laws. They reduced one of the proudest and most ancient nations in Europe to the level of Biblical servitude. The Law in the words of one of its chief exponents did not "presume such a person as an Irish Catholic to exist". The whole native governing class went into exile or became hewers of wood and drawers of water. Education for Catholics was banned. Anglo-Ireland of the C18 was as indifferent to the traditions of old Ireland as a European trader is to the native language in China or Burma.

The abject poverty of the times is well recorded. Since the Cromwellian Wars and settlements the puritan axes had been felling the forests and woods; a particularly poignant folksong dates from that period:

now,
Céad A dheanfaidh feasta gan Adhmaid ("The last of our forests is hewn/
Tá deire na cotilte ar Lar?" Oh, what will we do now for
wood?")

Less than 5% of Ireland is afforested - a country that was once known as the land of forests!

At that time Europe was dominated by the classical learning of ancient Rome or Greece. In England Shakespeare was considered "low". If England could neglect Shakespeare, small wonder that the Anglo-Irish saw little worth in the Bardic and Ossianic traditions.

Through the largest part of the old Irish poetry of that Ossianic tradition runs the recurring theme of the beauty of Nature. Against the ugliness of life and their sense of lost nationhood after the flight of the Catholic nobility was this beauty; beauty was a primal power to them: it could control the elements, halt the wind, turn the tide and diminish the sun.

That beauty is reflected in the dazzling alliteration, assonance and internal rhyming of the poetry and songs of David OBruadair and Egan ORahilly. They were soon to become wholeheartedly one of the suffering outlawed people. They abandoned the old syllabic lines of poetry and adopted the stress form of metre in the songs of the people. They produced some of the loveliest poetry and songs in the Irish language. As they cast aside the old rarified tradition they joined the great new generation of poets and composers to sing from their hearts with an exalted purity and directness about love, war, patriotism, satire, politics, nature, drink, work, lullabies, religion, comedy and tragic-

dy. The poets vied with each other in beauty of language... and they had haunting melodies to match them. The nostalgia for the old Gaelic order and the hope of its restoration was idealised in the image of a beautiful woman. The personification of Eire as the disrowned wandering queen burned with an intensity of significance that gave the songs imperishable appeal (that image electrified audiences 80 years ago in Yeats' Countess Cathleen).

Egan ORahilly's song GILE NA gILE do CHONNARC AR AN alfi n-uALNEAS:

The Brightness of Brightness
I met upon the way in lone-
liness;

Crystal of Crystal in her grey-fleckt blue eye shining;
Sweetness of Sweetness in her voice without complaining;
REDNESS and WHITENESS in her glowing cheeks were blended.



Irish Bronze
Age instruments

ecl. molto

Bhain tú thoir dhíom ag-us bhain tú

thiar dhíom. Bhain tú'n gheal-ach ag - us bhain tú'n

Tempo L. ghrian diom. Bhain tú 'n croí seo bhí 'stigh'n mo

chliabh dhíom Ag-us is rí-mhóré m'eag - al - a gur bhain tú Di-a dhíom

You have taken the East from me; you have taken the West
from me;

You have taken what is before me and what is behind me;
You have taken the moon, you have taken the sun from me;
And my fear is great that you have taken God from me!

(Anon C17 poem, Domhnall Og, trans. Padhraic Pearse)

Although we know who composed the words for hundreds of folksongs, poets such as OBrudair (d 1698), ORahilly (d 1726), OTuamu (d 1775), OSullivan (d 1784) and MacCraith (d 1790) and many others, they were nonetheless folksongs. They were the songs of the people and are still sung up to the present time. With some exceptions we do not know whether most of them were set to existing songs or had new tunes composed for them; but the melodies generally have a large compass - a range of a twelfth is



C18 harpist

quite common. Florid ornamentation and a wonderful impulse and variation of the rhythm combine to give them a haunting ethereal quality. Many of the tunes now have English words. But the great Cambridge scholar and translator, Robin Flower, found Gaelic verse essentially untranslatable: "There was something unconquerably native and original in the Irish contributions, and inbred tone and quality that comes from another tradition than the common European, and that gives the peculiar edge to these poems."

Yeats, Lady Gregory and Synge presented aspects of the Gaelic tradition during the first decades of the century. But they had done it second-hand through the translations of Douglas Hyde, Standish O'Grady and others. Yeats, as he grew older, came closer and closer to the tradition through translations of Frank O'Connor and James Stephens. "We remembered the Gaelic poets of the 17th and 18th centuries wandering after the flight of the Catholic nobility, among the boorish and the ignorant, singing their loneliness and their rage; James Stephens and Frank O'Connor made them symbols of our pride."

Bishop Percy's publication of *Reliques of Ancient Poetry* sparked off a great interest not just in Britain but in many European countries as well in their native ballads and folk-songs. In Ireland the collecting of folk-songs gathered momentum with the publication of Edward Bunting's collection in 1796. The great collectors were Edward Bunting, Henry Hudson, George Petrie, William Forde, John Pigot, Rev James Goodman and Patrick Joyce. Between them they collected 10,000 tunes, many of them with the words. There are a million and a half pages of manuscript in the offices of the folklore commission in Dublin, and most of them still await proper editing.

Apart from folk-songs those manuscripts contain a vast amount of dance music and ballads. We know from innumerable descriptions that every village in Ireland of the C18 had a piper and regular visits from a travelling dancing master. 6000 individual tunes have come down to us, jigs, reels and hornpipes, and many tunes for sets, half-sets, polkas and other dances. Most people are now quite familiar with the sound of Irish dances. The jig (in 6/8 and occasionally 12/8) and the hop or slip jig (in 9/8 time) are the oldest forms of dance music surviving.

Irish ballads are enormously popular today. Many date from the C19 and are somewhat akin to the broadsheet ballads of English urban areas. Of course to the purist many of these hardly count as traditional music.

Some readers of *Pendragon* may not know that many eminent Continental scholars thought that Ireland and its culture held much of whatever evidence could be uncovered of the great pre-Roman Celtic realms. In the early C19 the Bavarian Zeuss defined the place of the Celtic languages in the Indo-European system. Later in the century D'Arbois de Jubainville investigated the stories of the Tuatha De Danaan and defined the racial mythology. He emphasised particularly the antiquity of Irish culture. Windisch in Germany published a grammar of Old Irish and a vocabulary of Middle Irish. Strachan of Scotland, Zimmer and Stern in Germany, Pedersen in Scandinavia, Pokorny in Austria, Dottin and Loth in France, Dunn in America, all laboured to throw the light of modern knowledge on the vestiges of that almost forgotten civilisation so important in the moulding of the European mind. Perhaps the greatest of all was Kuno Meyer who opened up Irish nature poetry, Fenian literature and similar phases of Irish literature.

The tragedy for Irish, and indeed English, Scottish and Welsh, folk-music was that the excellence of scholarship and scientific approach was not matched by collectors, musicians and musicologists until it was almost too late; and, in the opinion of many, too late.

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