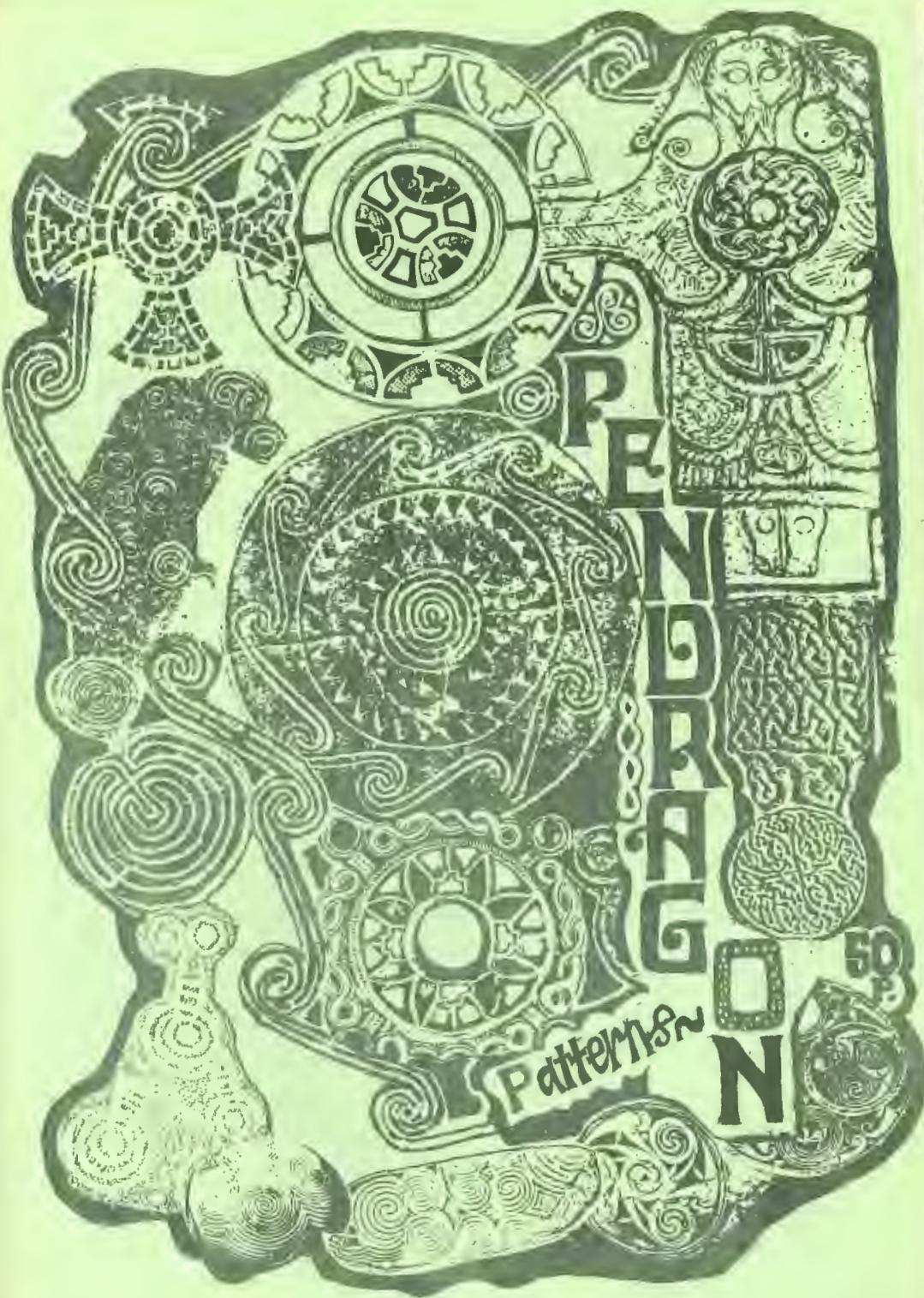


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ISSN
0143-8379
VOL XIII
NO 3

PENDRAGON

the journal of the pendragon society



SUMMER
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Patterns
edition

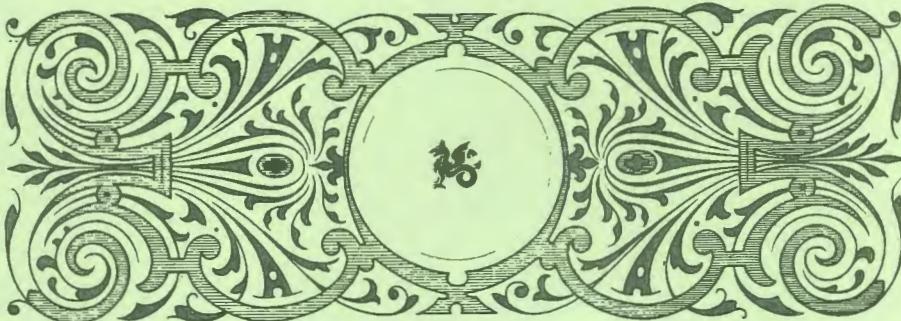
Editor: Chris Lovegrove, Production: Kate Pollard, Roger Davie Webster
Correspondence: The Secretary, 27 Roslyn Road, Redland, Bristol BS6
6NJ. Annual subscription of £2.50 includes the quarterly journal. The
Society is concerned with Arthurian history and archaeology and the
mystery and mythology of the Matter of Britain. © Copyright 1980 the
Pendragon Society and individual authors. All opinions stated are
those of the writers concerned.

This particular edition concludes some serialised articles: Rick
Plews on how Arthurian stories reflect preliterate attitudes, Michael
Benkert on how the Chaldeans may have prophesied Christ's birth and
death, and David Stringer's reinterpretation of Arthurian tales as the
clash of Neolithic and Bronze Age cultures.

Other articles reflect personal obsessions with patterns of triangles,
squares and circles: hopefully there's something for everyone here!
(Anyone interested in trying out Chris Turner's Henge please contact
us and we'll see what we can arrange.)

Remember the next featured theme will be Cornwall. Please keep your
contributions, however small, rolling in and we will try to use them
all.

If your subscription has expired, a cross will appear in this box



- 2 Stone Age Mentality, 2 (Rick Plews)
3 Review (Mark Angliss)
7 Snakes, Serpents, Dragons and King Arthur (David Stringer)
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continued p15
11 Henge: How to build a ritual enclosure (Chris Turner)*
17 Triangles: King Arthur from *Le Morte* to the Present (Paddy Slater)
21 Letters (Val Duerden, Rick Plews, Michael Baigent, Adrian Watts)
25 More reviews (Chris Lovegrove)
*Meet CHRIS TURNER & HIS HENGE on the PENDRAGON stand at OXFORDSHIRE
"THINK 80" Festival, Cheltenham Town Hall, on August 30th & 31st.
ROGER WEBSTER & CHRIS LOVEGROVE will be giving a talk at the
Accompanying LECTURE SERIES*

REVIEWS

Elizabeth Fowler & others Earlier Medieval Sites 410-1066 in and around Bristol and Bath, the South Cotswolds, and Mendip (Bristol Archaeological Research Group Field Guide No 3A, 1980, 95p)

Having just given the publication details, there is very little left to add except to say that this is an excellent booklet for what it sets out to do, i.e. to list the Celtic and Saxon sites of the area with relevant notes and a full bibliography. The main criticism is the lack of map(s) which distinguish and give a visual focus to any text (e.g. Radford & Swanton's Arthurian Sites in the West, Univ of Exeter 1975). Of sub-Roman (C5), post-Roman (C6) and Celtic Christian sites there is still precious little, but Wansdyke is re-assigned to the Arthurian period; and Saxon ecclesiastical and secular sites, both major and minor, are also summarised with great clarity and with OS map references.

Chris Jesty Panorama from Glastonbury Tor (Jesty's Panoramas, Bridport, Dorset, 1980. 40p available from Gothick Image, and elsewhere)

No more scrabbling around with flapping maps by the Tor trig point, or exasperating conversations like "Is that it, there? - that dark clump - second bump on the skyline - above that junction - no, that junction..." This handy-sized folding booklet (in plastic envelope) shows all there is to see -- and more! If you're into terrestrial zodiacs, the areas covered by the constellation effigies are indicated, and if you're into leys, the so-called Dragon Path linking St Michael's Mount (Cornwall), St Michael's (Brent Tor), St Michael's (Burrow Mump), St Michael's (Glastonbury Tor) and Avebury circles is marked (and also shows they're not exactly in line). Features on the horizon are all labelled, with distances, and the extent of the "Isle" of Avalon clearly delineated. There are some well-researched notes (though ra-

ther uncritical, and sometimes rather misleading in their brevity) and for lack of space some of them find their way onto the Panorama. An essential companion for your pilgrimage up the Tor, and thanks to the author for bringing it to our notice.

Atlantis, Past and to Come (Atlanteans Association Ltd 1978, 70p, by post 80p from The Atlanteans, 42 St George's St, Cheltenham GL50 4AF)

This 41-page booklet is in five parts - an introduction by Jacqueline Thorburn; Stephen Taylor on whether Atlantis was factual or legendary (with lots of suggestive data); Helio-Arcanophus (founder of the Atlanteans) on his psychic memories; Joyce Mitchell on the future for Atlantean beliefs; the final part being a short but useful bibliography.

I found the second and fourth parts the most interesting for the circumstantial evidence they provide that orthodox opinion on the non-existence of an Atlantic continent is not always firmly grounded. The third part (which, incidentally, gives the meaning of the founder's name) suggests that the key to Atlantean occult powers is in England: "the Sword of Mikael - or the Excalibur of Arthur."



STONE AGE MENTALITY

RICK PLEWES

The Dream of Rhonabwy in the Mabinogion. This is a fine Zen tale. Arthur and Owein are playing a kind of chess and we are given much detail about the colour of this flag and everyone's shoes and their horses and the cloth of their mantles until one begins to suspect a shaggy dog is afoot within the pages. The chess is interrupted by messengers who arrive and tell Owein that Arthur's servants are harassing Owein's Ravens. Owein complains to Arthur. Arthur replies, "Your move." This happens three times with all the colours added to their swords' scabbards and the ravens' blood and gouged-out eyes. Then Arthur's servants arrive amidst more and louder noise and complain that Owein's Ravens are now defeating Arthur's warriors. "Get on with the game" says Owein. The essence of the teaching is very similar to the Bhagavad Gita, where Arjuna complains he doesn't like the civil war he finds himself in the midst of, and is told in no uncertain terms to go back and get stuck in and stop worrying about the apparent consequences in what is fundamentally an illusion anyway. But just in case you missed the point the bard's final words with regard to this hitherto oral tale are: "And here is the reason why no one, neither bard nor storyteller, knows the Dream without a book - by reason of the number of colours that were on the horses, and all that variety of rare colours both on the arms and on their trappings, and on the precious mantles, and the magic stones."

What we can learn from this is an attitude towards essential teaching, that it could be basically funny and sacred at the same moment and that as in the best of Zen sacred cows are for kicking.

Verse is an oral attitude, for the techniques of rhyme and scan and so on are mnemonics. With literature it is no longer necessary to

shape words in such a way that each grouping cues the next and on. Witness the final departure of modern verse from these tricks toward what is truly literate poetry. Word games yes, but not as an aide-memoire. To translate well an ancient text I don't believe it is desirable to imitate the verse style, because that style was contemporary when it was written but is no longer. The precise meaning of words is more important. Disregarding then the verse translation of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, which leaves the text a little on the brittle side, the story itself is another (in places quite funny and even bawdy) tale carrying the sacred essence of ancient wisdom. I shall disregard any Christian overtones as it will become quite obvious that the roots of the tale lie in the Bronze Age at the latest. I shall also disregard the theme of sexual temptation because it confuses the issue in point, though I would not pretend it is not an essential part of the tale.

THE FAIRY MOUND

It is the technique of enlightenment with which I wish to deal here. There are many beheading games played in British and Irish legend and here we have the ritual of the shaman exposed to view, a how-to-do-it-textbook poem displaying most of the main details of initiation, as practised by the users of long barrows during the period since their earliest introduction and before, right up until the Dark Ages. As proven at West Kennet and Hetty Pegler's Tump, the long barrows seem to have been in common use for a thousand years and in some cases two thousand years plus. The barrow is not just a burial place any more than a church is, despite the frequent occurrence of burials within and around churches. The barrow is a quite distinct construction of an entrance

to the Mother Earth, who was at that time the goddess. The barrow is a simulated cave and crypt and can be seen as a logical progression for a people who had not long since emerged from caves as their principal dwellings. It may also be a response to living in a country where caves do not occur naturally in large numbers. That is not to say that barrows are not to be found plentifully in cave-riden lands, but that man having grown accustomed to conducting his religious affairs in the deep security and silence of underground chambers, continued to do so even when he had to construct these chambers himself.

The young knight arrives at "a fairy mound apparently, a smooth-surfaced barrow by the side of a stream... The knight went to the barrow, which he walked round inspecting, wondering what in the world it might be. It had a hole in each end and on either side; it was overgrown with grass in great patches. All hollow it was within, only an old cavern... 'O God, is the Chapel Green this mound?' said the noble knight..."

The story of the Green Knight begins with the Christmas feast at Arthur's court where the Green Knight arrives and challenges anyone present to a beheading game. Whoever cuts off the Green Knight's head has to turn up at the Green Chapel in a year's time for a return shot, and if no one responds then you're all sissies. So Gawain agrees and cuts off the giant's head. The Green Knight picks it up and walks off with it repeating the details of the return match. Now the essential details which occur repeatedly in this kind of initiation story include that the teacher starts by being a vast giant whose head can be cut off without any apparent harm. This becomes clear when we see the other half of the game, part two. Gawain, after much travelling, temptations with sex etc, meets the Green Knight at the previously described long barrow. The Green Knight is in the process of sharpening his axe on a grind stone. Certain stones in some long barrows have been shown to have been

used as whetstones. Then the Green Knight goes to execute Gawain, but refrains from more than tapping him on the neck, and then the teaching begins.

ENLIGHTENMENT

In Gawain there is much ado about Gawain's carry-on with the Green Knight's wife, but this is confusing because we can't easily see to what extent Christianity has altered the material for its own purposes. However, Christianity never touched line 2445 in which the Green Knight, having taken off his monstrous garb, reveals himself to Gawain as a normal size man in a green giant suit. At once Gawain, who has been living in awe of this monster whose head he cut off apparently without harm, understands how the trick is done. The Green Knight reveals his real name and his allegiance. He says the barrow is the temple of the Goddess Morgan, of whose religion Merlin is an adept, and gives some circumstantial detail of the religious political situation. Gawain of course, having suddenly lost his fear and gained an insight, has been psychically manipulated very skilfully onto a very high plane of consciousness. And it is in this carefully contrived situation that we see a Zen-like-initiation taking place. The technique is perhaps heavier than Zen but this depends upon the standard world consciousness current at the time. The atmosphere of atheistic scepticism that prevails today may allow less preparation before before previously well-held conceptions are totally dispersed, whereas in neolithic Britain the depth of magical perception may have hindered the enlightenment wherein the initiate is to see himself as being as much god as anything else in the universe. We can feel Gawain's joy and laughter as he prepares to leave his teacher who has answered all his remaining questions, and treated him as an honoured friend and an equal. The role of Morgan played by the Green Knight's wife is not too clear but we may guess that Eskimo hospitality was more commonly practised then than today.

The poet meanwhile has had great difficulty in getting his message clearly across without being censored by the Christian priests; however, he did name the Goddess and her chief priest Merlin. In other tales the general construction of the enlightenment / initiation rituals is very similar:

In Bricriu's Feast, which is thought to be the origin of Sir Gawain, the Giant reveals himself to be the popular figure of CuRoi Mac Dairi after he has refrained from beheading CuChulain.

In The Lady of the Fountain we find a Big Black Man, not smaller than two men of this world, who stands on top of a barrow and shows himself to be a great shaman, having knowledge of the movement of all animals and control over them. After a battle Owein cuts his head open and the giant runs away. Owein finds that in this case he has to marry the giant's wife and don the black suit himself, which he does for a while. This story is not so clear on the whole and has other elements in it; nevertheless one can see the essential connections of the giant who is in fact not much incapacitated by the loss of his head, i.e. is a normal mortal with a giant suit on, that he hangs out issuing challenges on a barrow, and that anyone who defeats him is at once elevated to the same position or similar.

THE QUEST

We know that even today shamans throughout the world don enormous masks and fancy suits as they perform their ritual dances. We can reasonably assume that children in such tribes believe in their reality just as they believe in Father Christmas in our society. In a tribal situation where the religion is powerful and superstition total (as opposed to the feeble backup system which Santa Claus gets) we may assume that the age of enlightenment about who is inside the monster suit is delayed considerably. It may well last until puberty when in most primitive societies the youth of both sexes are initiated. In Abo society the youth is encouraged to go walkab- 4

out in order to be forced into deep introspection which gives him real balance for the rest of his life. I suggest that the hunt for the Holy Grail is quite simply a complete system in which people of spirit and intelligence are encouraged to explore their own selves while also being given some tips about the nature of reality and their supposed illusory existence within it.

The Grail itself, despite its overtones of Christian mythology, does originate in the Celtic motif (and probably pre-Celtic) of the inexhaustible cauldron of plenty. This is a good way of describing the entire universe, life and consciousness. You can't destroy it or empty it. It's always there to see if you want to look. You can hide from yourself in it. When life troubles too much it helps to focus on this total reality in which troubles are no more than changing scroll work on the surface of the cauldron. Of course there are levels and levels of understanding. The Galahads are rare, that go straight to the point and vanish. Most of us stagger home with a bag full of treasure stolen from the underworld and find that few of the people we show it to can appreciate it.

It may be that this is the true root of the troubadour / trouvere appellation: the seeker becomes a finder, trouvere, and passes on the teaching. The same thing found is then passed on within the tradition of the literature, but remains hidden of necessity because the Christians were in a real witch-hunting mood and no degree of open heresy was safe. So most of Sir Gawain and any other of the Arthurian legends remain obscure, but each true bard made quite sure that the real significance of the work, i.e. the secret teaching, was available somewhere within the lines he'd written.

Here also we can see the fundamental wrongness of our own culture and the reason it has never settled down to a period of peaceful co-existence such as was

frequently enjoyed by preliterate man. In an illiterate society final authority rests always with the living interpreters of the culture who if they cannot deliver some kind of benefit will quickly lose their authority. In the literate culture the power of a dead Marx or Christ or Aristotle is so vast and heavy that living mortals have difficulty challenging their authority, on the basis that such great figures were after all only humans and hence capable of being mistaken. But backed up by the serried ranks of acolytes and sycophants, who truly know that they have no power of their own and must draw on someone else, the dead masters rule us, and as time progresses and their original words become more and more distorted by translation and interpretation, they become more and more like tyrants. So the Inquisition. So Stalinisation. So opposition to Darwin. Heresy is a word which cannot exist in a preliterate culture.

Thus I hope you will take my point when I say I am not writing with any authority but my own, and that my answers are not supposed to be absolute. But I hope they will provoke your own thinking.



Divining

* Divining by Christopher Bird is published by Macdonald & Jane's (340pp £12.95). We are grateful to the publishers for providing a review copy.

With Divining Christopher Bird (who co-authored The Secret Life of Plants; one of the more significant publications of the last decade), has produced an exhaustively researched and richly illustrated state-of-the-art survey into modern techniques and applications of dowsing, together with a detailed history of the science and a number of interesting speculations on possible future developments.

Unfortunately, however, being an originally American publication, it suffers from the typical trans-Atlantic preoccupation with SIZE, with the result that it is Big, Heavy, and Expensive, which will tend to restrict its market to that of the Broadminded and Enquiring Well-to-do. A pity, for it has much to interest the serious-minded yet poverty-stricken researcher such as myself (reading it has done wonders for my biceps!).

As a coffee-table book, it is "cafe-au-livre" par excellence, and would grace the most sophisticated Habitat decor, as long as you don't mind getting brown rings all over it.

Let it not be said, however, that the petty grievances of the underprivileged have clouded my judgement of what is, in all truth, a valuable and not unsuccessful attempt to produce a popular encyclopaedia of dowsing. Mr Bird is an informative and entertaining writer who has obviously spent considerable time and effort investigating a field of study that has enormous potential for the future good of humanity, and whose implications are as far-reaching as those of nuclear physics, and he presents his experiences in a style that is a perfect model of good communication.

He starts with a detailed account of the work of three semi-professional American dowsers who have been busy making a lot of money for farmers, oil companies and similar concerns in the States, and this section is full of stories of the rapid conversion of hard-line unbelievers to bemused enthusiasts of this nebulous and apparently magical activity. Following this is a long chapter on the history of dowsing, from the earliest records to the present day.

Later in the book Mr Bird lightens the mood somewhat by describing how dowsing became (almost) accepted by the US military authorities in Viet-Nam, presenting stories of fully-armed, grim-faced Marines wandering around looking for secret tunnels and booby traps with nothing more than a pair of coat-hangers (and having considerable success I might add!). This prompts the thought that the British Army might do well to investigate similar techniques in Northern Ireland).

The next section deals with the use of dowsing in archaeology (a controversial subject in certain circles) with particular emphasis on European activities.

Then follows what I found to be the most interesting and stimulating part of the book, a chapter on dowsing in medicine, together with some results from modern research into why dowsing works, and an all-too-brief excursion into the field of "Earth magic" and telluric forces. It is this last section that receives my most serious criticism for there is almost no mention of British research into the subject - the work of T C Lethbridge, Guy Underwood and Tom Graves go un-noted by Mr Bird, though in all other respects this chapter is the most stimulating and exciting of the book.

Apart from this (forgivable) oversight I can find little fault with the author's treatment of the wide world of dowsing, but I cannot escape the feeling that, with a reduction of the text by by a half and the illustrations by two-thirds, a fascinating and valuable piece of research could have been made available to a much wider audience. It's an excellent work of reference, but hardly one to be bought on impulse - if you want it, get someone to give it to you for Christmas.

MARK ANGLISS



THE DRAGON versus the serpent

SNAKES, SERPENTS, DRAGONS AND KING ARTHUR (3)

David STRINGER

The Serpent Cult subverts the egoistic Dragon-power (subliminal knowledge) as intuition, emotion, the subconscious within one's own egoistic rationalism, softening its aspirations till this ego dissolves back into oneness with natural forces as symbolized by the original sensual serpent. This is a curious relationship! For the ego must draw on the id for so much of its energy (as the sun-warriors must marry the white-queens for power) and needs the intuitive's assistance in tapping the source (as the warriors need to be guided to the grail by the priestesses).

Thus, on the death of Uther Pendragon, the masculine, statist forces of the Power-cult must have a hero-leader to prevent themselves merging back into the "primitive" neolithic society around them; hence the crowning of Artos. In the end Artos himself almost gives in, declares a "truce" recognizing the power of the serpent-seeresses at the last battle of Camalann (the twisting beautiful one) till one of his more fanatical sun-power supporters kills a symbolic sacred snake and thus ensures Artos' ultimate demise in death overwhelmed by the serpent-cult's supporters. Artos is taken away to Hhevalon for his wounds to be healed, after relinquishing his ego-power.

This has the most fascinating of psychic implications as only those who are humbled or broken in spirit may receive the healing natural forces, be they attributed to serpent or dragon.



ARTHURIAN LEGEND

The Legend may not be, as such, the rule of one king, but a whole series bearing the title Artos (the Bear animal totem emblem of the Sungod) until the central pow-

The fate of the legendary followers is also interesting.

With some, the egoistic power-seekers succeed in killing each other off in conflict for that power, perhaps much to the relief of the native hunters and agriculturalists and white-priestesses. This parallel could be applied to a competitive society where those who vie with each other for knowledge, power and status ultimately cancel each other out; while the more down-to-earth and less lusty just co-operate to survive in an unseen fashion. The dragon (head) aspect of the serpent is useless by itself!

Others seek to maintain the shadow of the dismantled kingdom in a religious form (King Arthur and Stonehenge? Stonehenge and AVEbury?), seeking to tap the energy direct to the dragonhead subliminal power from the source, bypassing the sensual female serpent cult (hence the mythical connections between Druidism and King Arthur's sword). That is, they seek non-sexual ways of getting at the basic energy!

Yet others merge back into the intuitive neolithic cult, as Percival does in marrying White-flower of the Holy Grail when she is ready! It is known that past "civilisations" need not have been wiped out by tidal waves or volcanoes but simply have lost their "head" position and merged back into the surrounding, more simple cultures, to be forgotten except as folklore. That is, the Dragon's Head fire-energy remerges with the snake-serpent; conscious thought sinks back into its subconscious source; Mankind, having Will with Knowledge, seeks to rise above Nature only to yield to the pressures of Natural necessity.

er broke down, either in conflict with the white-queens, or due to rivalries within the tribal federation for leadership, or some other tribal invasion into Britain. This last might possibly be the Brigantine Celtic confederation under the sungoddess Brigit with its matriarchal succession of queens (the last known of which are the historic Boadicea of the Iceni and Cartamandua of the northern Brigantes who continuously rose up against the power of Imperial Rome). These Brigantes settled the East and North leaving it quite possible for there to be British tribes descended from the Logrians (Lugonians?) whose chieftains, in rallying against the Saxons, tried to encourage their followers by taking their mythical "Artos" title. It is not therefore impossible to have an Arthur fighting the Saxons, especially in the Somerset-Worcester areas which were definite parts of lost Logres. Thus Artos became equated with patriotism.

Apart from these historical connections (which have played a vital part in strengthening and retaining the Celtic aspect of the British heritage, for which the Legend must be thanked for winning the saga-loving Saxon and Viking heart to an appreciation of the culture they conquered) the whole saga on another level is best interpreted as if it were a dream, using the surrealistic techniques of dream-analysis, an ancestral dream of ancient Albion (the Island of the White Ones); though, like other myths, it can be taken on many other levels as well.

It is said that the present pattern of our psyches and development reflects that of our evolution as a species throughout its various social stages. It is not therefore farfetched to see similarities of patterning between the forces operative in historic legend and within our present selves. We all have the masculine and feminine within us (in Genesis, a qabalistic book, Quivah and Nequivah). That feminine and masculine both in turn divide into

twin aspects: the cruel and destructive, and the gentle, creative and life-giving. The Legend, in this light, sees fit to equate feminine with female and masculine with male (Genesis: Eesh and Esha) though this is not strictly true, although females are more feminine and males more masculine (perhaps indicating a stereotyping of roles in a warrior society in which the tale takes place).

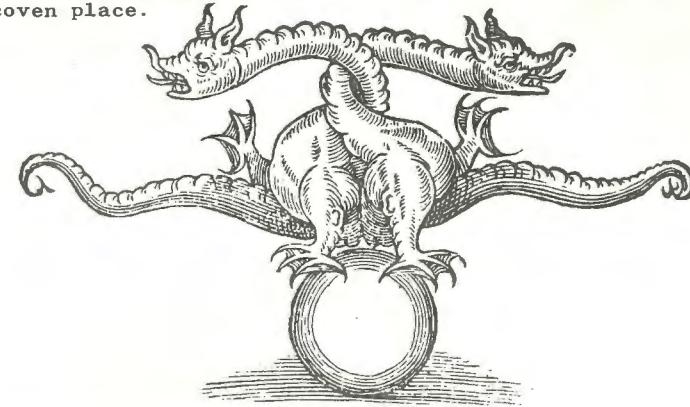
On this basis, the relationships within the Legend become more fascinating than when it actually took place or who was involved: The masculine and wilful ever seeks to rule and impose, and is very egoistic, suggested by Round Table warriors forcing others at swordpoint to be submissive or matching themselves against ferocious odds; more jackboot than chivalry! The feminine and intuitive does not have to seek to impose and rule because in fact it does rule by abiding by the supreme natural cyclical rules of creation and decay; thus the witch-like mysterious women of the tale allow the Round Table and Logres so much ego-satisfaction and secular power while being the supreme authority, when the damsels can bid any knight do whatsoever they wish while retaining the sacred power, the Grail, firmly in their grasp. Logres ends when Morganna wishes; when the cycle of the sunpower is finished.

CONCLUSION

It is suggested that the Round Table-versus-Priestesses conflict arises from the historic fact of invasion of Albion, land of pastoral, matrilineal Meaker Folk and their Goddess, by the golden Battle-Axe People and their Sun God; a pattern which happens progressively across southern Europe and starting with the Hittite conquest of the matriarchal cultures of Asia Minor and the Minoan Bull-People's invasion of matriarchal Crete; all invaders bore the double-sided battleaxe and an animal totem name indicative of virility (the Bull, Artos? Urthos, Bear).

In Asia Minor they won complete victory, but in Britain the result

was a stalemate. And so the battleaxe people had to come to terms with the white-priestesses, borrowing their zodiac and substituting a sunking in the key thirteenth coven place.



THE ROMANCE OF ARTHUR

* Miss C G Radford asked, in the last issue, if there were any Society members interested in the romance and chivalry of the Arthurian legend. Here are two replies:

From Reg Baggs, Windsor:

"Yes there is a like-mind to C G Radford of Kingston and I would be pleased for contact. Others must feel the same especially with insight."

From Mark Valentine, Northampton:

"Many thanks for sending me the latest Pendragon which I found very interesting, especially as the 'mysteries' theme allowed a broader spectrum of articles than usual. I mean where else would you find analyses of the roots of apartheid (excellent article) jostling with Templar knights, Assyrian amulets, standing stones, and a geophysical survey of Cadbury Hill -- and all with an Arthurian slant?! My only critical comment would be that I feel that Miss C G Radford got rather more space than her (in my view) mistaken opinions deserved. Extravagant Hollywood musicals really have nothing to do with anything Arthurian at all, as do not "thrones, swords and armour" or "the Chapel of Windsor". Conven-

tional "romantic" views of Arthur have held sway in literature and school traditions for too long, and I wouldn't like to see Pendragon perpetuating the Chretien/Tennyson fabrications too much."

ARTHUR MACHEN

* Mark Valentine also writes with a request for information:

"I am an ardent admirer of the work of the Celtic novelist Arthur Machen, who was a member of the Order of the Golden Dawn. I am particularly interested in his book The Hill of Dreams, which according to Lord Dunsany in his early introduction is at least partly autobiographical... Although he never wrote anything with a strictly Arthurian theme, Arthur Machen did make frequent references to Celtic mythology and folk belief, and is therefore at least partly appropriate to Pendragon."

Any other Machen-enthusiasts? C L



The three most common Anglo-Saxon pot stamps are 1. The circular cross/hot-cross-bun stamp. 2. The dot-in-circle stamp. 3. The rectangular grid stamp (according to Teresa Briscoe in CA 72).



SATOR
AREPO
TENET
OPERA
ROTAS

The Sator-Arepo square has been found in archaeological contexts from the 1st century AD. It has, among other things, been surmised to be a Christian visiting-card and a potters' craft-slogan. Michael Benkert suggests that the Chaldean Magi may have hidden a prophetic revelation of Christ's birth in the form of a cryptogram. In the first part he examined the historical background, and here continues with a re-appraisal of the text... (See Vol 12 No 2)

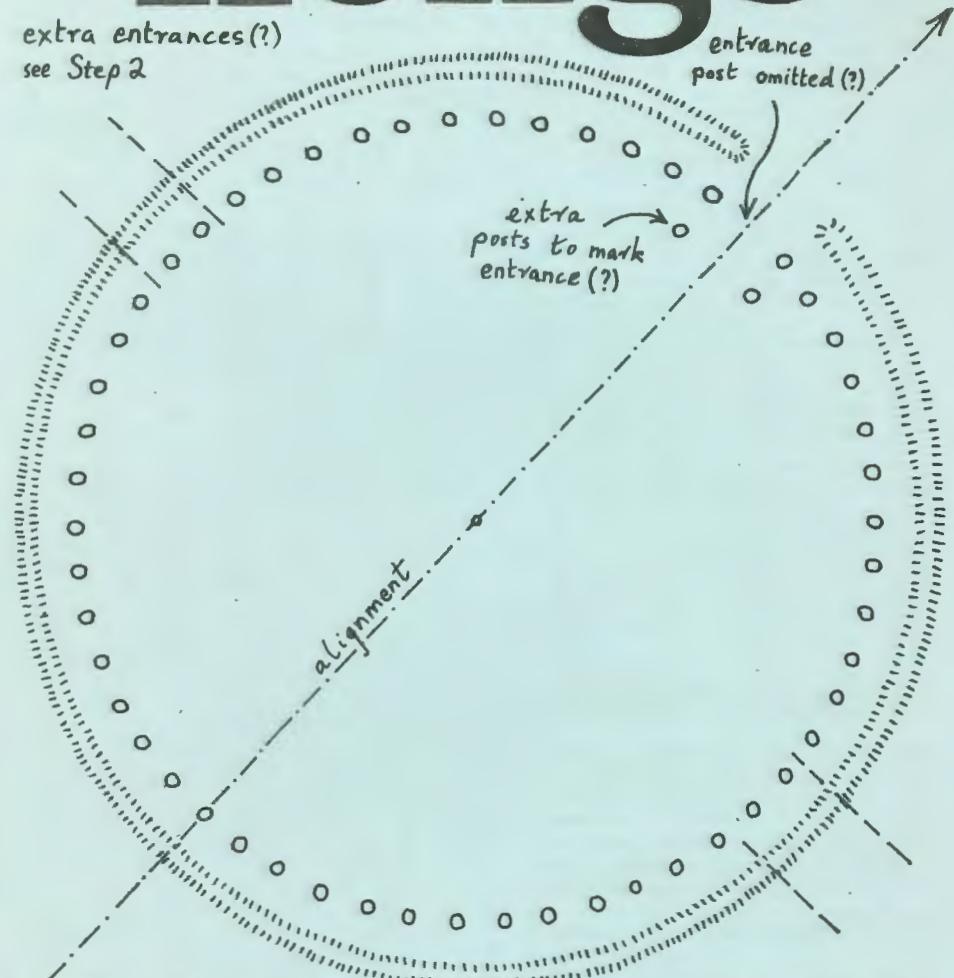
WORD	SOUND	SIGN	MEANING	SUGGESTED INTERPRETATION
S	SAN		a prop	Uphold
ATORA	ADARA ATORA ATURA		of Ea	the son of Ea
RE	RI		bright high a servant	a servant of the most high God
PO	PU BU		lotus bud a shoot	a spirit of divine birth
TE	TE		to grow become	becoming
N	NUN NU		king a sceptre lord	a royal lord
E	HE		a house temple	of his house
T	TAU TETH		the sun/ to beat	with all power
O	AIN		the eye of God	a divine messenger of God
PE	PE		shepherd's crook	a shepherd for
RA	ERI		luck sym- bol of the common man	the fortunate ones of mankind
RO	RUH RUM		a spear	a spear ending his mortal life
TAS	TUS TAS TOS		a lion heroic	becoming guardian of the underworld of the dead.

10 CONTINUED ON PAGE 15

CHRIS TURNER henge

extra entrances (?)

see Step 2



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10°11'	4	3.32	54°5'	20	16.57	27°2'	4	8.29	136°	20	41.43
13°7'	5	4.14	68°	25	20.72	34°	5	10.36	170°	25	51.79
16°4'	6	4.97	81°7'	30	24.86	40°10'	6	12.43	204°	30	62.15
19°	7	5.80	95°2'	35	29.00	47°7'	7	14.50	238°	35	72.51

PENDRAGON
11

INTRODUCTION.

This Henge design is a hybrid of several Megalithic structures and is intended to combine a number of circle building techniques in one project, together with plenty of activity for a team of Willing Helpers that can be safely delegated without (as so often happens) the Director doing it all himself because he/she is the only one who understands the complexity of the constructions.

All the principles are authentic and the concept is fairly ambitious. I have most carefully avoided the use of any materials which cannot be shown to have been available to the original Megalith builders and I have used no constructions which can be shown to have a Euclidean origin. I have also discounted the possibility of extraterrestrial assistance.

This will be a structure of henge type and may be either Class I (single entrance) or Class II (multiple entrance), wooden pole construction and with or without bank and ditch. The number of poles is 56 as in Avebury and Stonehenge Aubrey Holes, and the shape circular.

Materials required...

POSTS (for the finished Henge): 56
57, 58 or more if entrance marked
PEGS (about 18", sharpened to a
point): about 12

MARKERS (metal skewers pushed
through a bit of brightly col-
oured rag or something similar):

RODS (straight bits of wood about
6'): 3

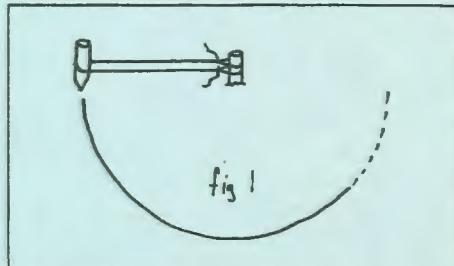
ROPES (one the diameter of the
circle with a loop in each end;
another about half as long again)

SCRAP (more bits of brightly col-
oured rag about 6" x 2")

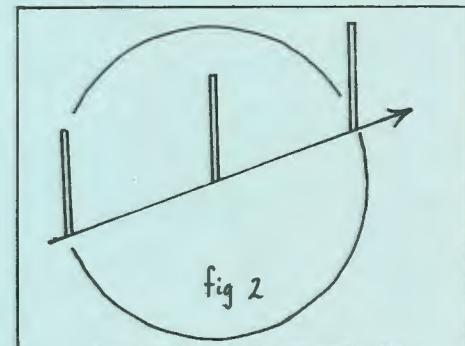
IMPLEMENT (for digging holes to
put posts in and - if required -
for constructing ditch/bank)

Find centre of circle and
EITHER scribe circle (as described
below) and strike alignment
OR strike alignment through centre
and scribe circle, projecting
alignment to meet edge of circle.

a. To scribe circle, take rope
(shorter one with loops), hook
both loops over centre peg,
stretch taut, put peg through fold
of rope and scribe circle into
turf with point:



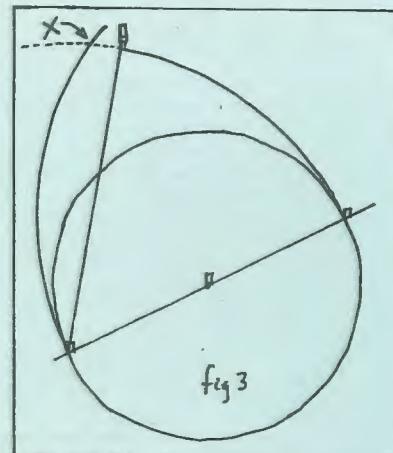
b. To strike alignment, have rod
held upright in centre, line up on
target with one rod in front
(foresight) and one behind (back-
sight). Within reason, the greater
the distance between rods, the
better. Mark alignment with pegs
on circle:



2

Take same rope, hook one loop
over alignment peg and scribe
diameter as shown. Repeat on
other peg to find Point X. (Not
used in this construction but

useful to know: line from Point X
to centre falls at right angles to
alignment line and if projected
cuts circle and circumference ex-
actly in four.) Put peg in Point
X:



a. Take same rope, fold carefully
into seven equal folds:

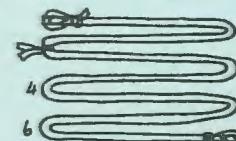
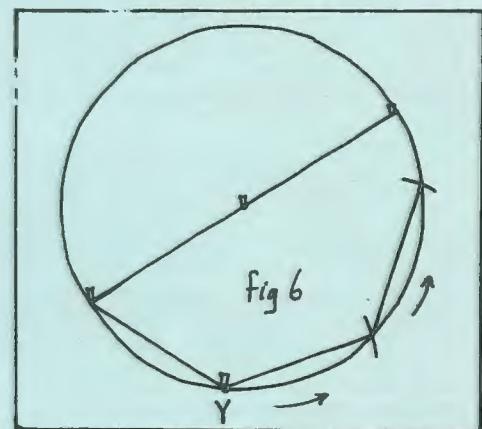
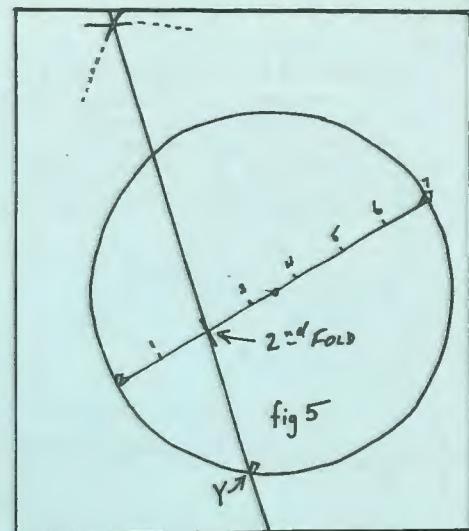


fig 4

Tie piece of scrap onto second
fold then stretch rope between
alignment pegs. If construction
accurate, each loop should hook
over a peg and rope should be in
contact with centre peg. Take
longer rope, loop one end and hook
over Point X and stretch taut so
straight rope passes over scrap on
shorter rope and continues to cut
circumference at Point Y. Peg
Point Y (fig 5).

b. Take shorter rope, remove scrap.
Hook one loop over alignment peg
nearest Point Y and measure dis-
tance between these two pegs. Mark
with scrap. Hook rope over Point Y
and mark same distance further
along circumference (fig 6). Con-
tinue until you come back to where
you started. You have divided

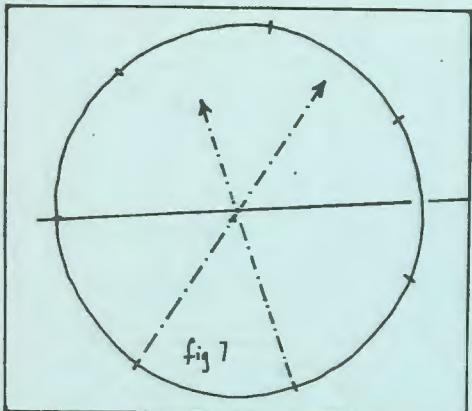


your circle into seven, nearly ex-
actly. The difference between ex-
actly and nearly exactly is the
distance between the scrap and the
alignment peg you started on when
you reach peg 6.

c. If this difference is enough to
worry about, measure it off on a
piece of rope along the line of
the circumference, fold rope into
seven as in fig 4 but mark every
fold. Move Point Y peg up the dis-
tance of one fold, the next up two
folds and so on. Your circle is
now divided exactly into seven.

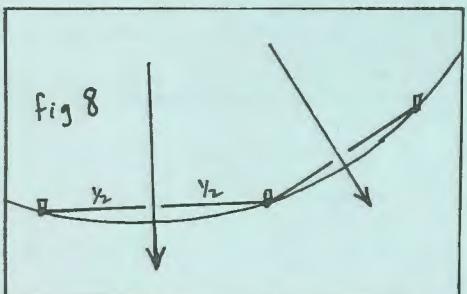
3

Take shorter rope. Hook over any one of the seven pegs. Pull taut over centre and mark opposite side of circle. Check accuracy with rods as in Step 1b. Repeat with other six pegs. Your circle is now divided exactly in 14. (Isn't this fun!)



4

Measure distance between two markers on rope. Fold rope in half and mark fold with scrap. Hook one end of other rope over centre peg and pull taut over scrap. Mark circumference. Repeat all round circle. Circle now divided into 28:

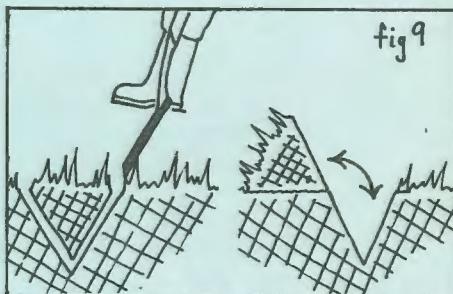


5

Repeat as for Step 4. Subdivision into 56 equal spaces now complete and poles may now be erected.

Ditch & Bank

This should be marked out before erection of poles. Hook one end of longer rope on centre peg and scribe position of ditch with peg in a loop in the rope at the right distance from the centre. Most henges with a ditch/bank have the ditch inside the bank. A good temporary arrangement is to cut into the turf about 9" on either side of the line at about 45° inwards, lift the wedge out and lie it on the outside edge of the hole. This can be neatly replaced with minimal damage to the sward or your good name with the owners.



The Megalithic Yard

Professor Thom's surveys suggest that many Megalithic circles were built to a common unit of measurement of 2.72 Imperial feet. This he calls, as I shall, the Megalithic Yard (MY). On larger circles, a longer unit seems to have been used of exactly 2½ MY, called a Megalithic Rod (MR). For those wishing to construct circles on these units the conversion tables given convert Megalithic Yards and Rods into Imperial to the nearest inch and into Metric to the nearest centimetre.

THE prophetic cryptogram (2) Michael Benkert

The letter N, with the phonetic sound NU or NUN, figures in the names of deities, typically in the reference to such by Lt Col C R Conder in his book The Hittites and their Language (Blackwood 1898) who quotes (Ch 5), "Heaven was the parent of all; but AN, the sky god of the Sumerians, 'Lord of all powers of heaven and earth, Lord of all lands... the first ancestor of the Gods,' as the Assyrians called him, dwelt alone."

The letter E, following N in TENET, has the meaning of a temple or a house as the sign itself (shown in the accompanying chart) is the simple groundplan of a house with a door aperture. But the term 'house' in Sumerian also meant a family and descendants, a tribe, and eventually a people. The temple thus became the house in which the 'house' as individuals worshipped. This usage appears in the expressions 'the House of Israel' and 'in my Father's House are many mansions'.

The last letter T or TAU in TENET is shown by the rod held by a fist and forearm. This means to beat or conquer, or wield power over opponents.

So, coming to the first two letters TE of the word, these make sense when taken together and not separately. The sign for TE in Hittite is a growing grass shoot, as shown, and means to render, bind, make, or as I would suggest, 'becoming'. In linear Babylonian the sign is a hexagon , which means the same but can be interpreted esoterically as the struggle between the forces of the heavens and the forces of the earth which combine to form . However, this last sense is implicit in the general context of the cryptogram; it seems that 'becoming' is the better meaning.

It looks to me that TENET expresses the dominantly central theme of the square, appearing in cruciform in its centre, and can be interpreted: 'Becoming the Royal Lord of His House with all power.'

The other words are greatly intriguing in their use of theological beliefs current in Babylon, Egypt, Sumeria and Chaldea, whose priests borrowed from each other but put their own definitions upon them, selecting only aspects of various theologies that suited their ideas and religious thinking. It seems therefore that the authors of the square most probably were the Chaldeans in that they used both Babylonian and Egyptian references.

In SATOR the letter S, the sign of a tree trunk, can mean prop or support. Added to A, 'water', the combination SA means 'proclaim'. However TOR (phonetically TUR or DAR) has the meaning of a God; DARA with the sign of a deer's head was one of the titles of the High God EA. The Son of EA was referred to as ADARA, and as the letter A on its own in the next line AREPO does not appear to make sense, then by adding it onto ATOR or ADAR we arrive at ADARA: the Son of EA. The first line can then be S ADARA: 'Uphold the Son of EA.'

The second line has the letters remaining REPO. RE with the sign of rays descending from on high means bright, high, a servant, but PO or PU has the sign of a water lily bud on a long stem with a root at the lower end. The lotus bud or water lily flower was regarded as specially significant in that it was the flower in which the Divine Spirit was born on the surface of the waters. "The Lotus is itself a form of the High God and is mythical in that there must have been a belief that the origin of life could be expressed in terms of a flower symbol ... 'I am the pure Lotus that rises in the glorious light, to be the peculiar delight of Rê.'" (Rundle Clark, p 239) So the interpretation of RE PO would seem to be: 'A Servant of the Most High God, a Spirit

of Divine birth.'

The line OPERA makes sense when expressed O PE RA. The letter O with the phonetic sound AIN means an eye, and this was the symbolic reference to a Divine Messenger of God. Rundle Clark refers to "the legend of the Eye of the High God which was sent out into the waters before the beginning of the World" (p 230). PE, whose sign is a shepherd's crook, and RA, whose sign is the luck symbol of the common man, have obvious meanings, so OPERA can have the suggested interpretation: 'A Divine Messenger of the High God, a shepherd for the fortunate ones of Mankind.'

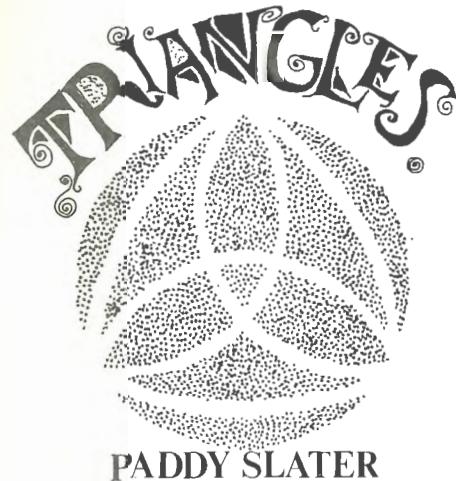
ROTAS offers the most logical meaning in the form RO TAS. The sign for RO is a spear head, signifying death, and for TAS the lion's head as used on official seals and also meaning heroic. But the lion was also the symbol of Divine guardianship; in Egyptian theology the lion as portrayed by the sphinx was given the mission of guarding the threshold or portals of the underworld where souls entered upon death. The sphinx's divinity was symbolised by the body of a lion and the face of a Pharaoh who was considered to be himself the incarnation of the god whose name he frequently bore. In the case of the Temple of Karnak, the sphinxes had the heads of rams so the priests of Amun, who had many of the attributes of Jehovah, drew upon the history of Abraham and Isaac for their symbolism. This was perhaps as a kind of petition to Amun once again to accept the sacrifice of a ram by way of pardon for those passing from this world to the next. So the meaning of RO TAS suggests: 'A spear ending his mortal life, he becomes the guardian of the underworld of the dead.'

Should it be the case that the square is of Chaldean authorship, then as there is good evidence that they were also well versed in mathematics and astronomy, in which latter discipline they were reputedly pre-eminent, it seems reasonable to ask why Stonehenge was built at about this time in the far-away British Isles, thickly wooded and sparsely populated as they are believed to have been, and playing no political part in the power conflicts of the middle East? Stonehenge is apparently a complex astronomical clock which the Chaldeans could have calculated out, but for whom and for what purpose did it tell and predict the time?

Mrs Maltwood worked out a fascinating theory to explain the location of Glastonbury Tor, which would conceivably have presented no problems to the Chaldeans, so is it possible that Stonehenge and the Tor were part of the same project?

References and notes

- Lt Col C R Conder The Hittites and their Language (Blackwood 1898)
R T Rundle Clark Myth and Symbol in Ancient Egypt (Thames & Hudson 1959, paperback 1978) A most readable book by the late Rundle Clark of Birmingham University, briefer and more concise than
Prof A H Sayce Religions of Ancient Egypt and Babylon
Rundle Clark gives a superbly wide coverage in depth of the legends and prints an illustration of the 'Papyrus of Ani' in the British Museum showing the soul rising from the primeval Lotus (p 177).
K E Maltwood A Guide to Glastonbury's Temple of the Stars (Watkins rev edn 1950)



INTRODUCTION

In the fifteenth century Sir Thomas Malory's Le Morte d'Arthur gave the trappings of the time in which it was written to a legend that dated back to pre-Dark Age Britain. At the close of her 1978 Arthurian novel The Pendragon (New York, Knopf 1978) Catherine Christian quotes a psychiatrist as having said "the story of King Arthur and his knights is a myth. Like all great myths, it has deep psychiatric significance. Its roots reach down into the collective unconscious, and extend back into prehistoric race memory." Christian amends this by adding "nothing comes from nothing, nothing ever could." It was the Celtic Bards who first kept the legend going, handing it down from generation to generation.

Fifteen centuries have passed but Arthur and the Matter of Britain have inspired romances both before and since Malory. In the Winter 1979 issue of the Journal of the Pendragon Society, Roger Davie Webster says "... there is a persistent sense that something remarkable happened in the Dark Ages. Perhaps the blend of Celtic ritual and Christianity allowed, just for a moment, the glimpse of an integrated mystical experience ... and perhaps some half buried race memory within us harks back to that place and that time ..." Perhaps this explains why the sto-

ry crops up, again and again. In recent years several novels have been based on the Arthurian legend. I shall attempt to contrast the love triangle in three of these with that of Malory's Morte.

MALORY

Sir Thomas Malory's love triangle consists of King Arthur, Queen Guenevere and Sir Lancelot. These are the classic prototypes, but various modern authors have studied the histories and legends and changes occur in their various versions. Malory was writing of courtly love. Charles Moorman, in his Book of Kyng Arthur (University of Kentucky Press, 1965) says that "his treatment ... is so consistent ... that one can hardly avoid the conclusion that ... he had taken pains to adapt ... this aspect (Guenevere and Lancelot) of the chivalric code to his own notions of the Arthurian characters ..."

According to J A W Bennett's Essays on Malory (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1963) much of the conflict is typical of the courtly love tradition, such as Lancelot's behavior. His surrender of Guenevere and subsequent retreat into exile is an example, as Malory wishes to regard him as "the best of all men". Bennett feels that Malory intended us to admire Lancelot in both of his roles as Guenevere's lover and Arthur's loyal knight. Two things, he further feels, remain at the end -- "the power of human affection and the remembrance of the past."

Moorman, on the other hand, says that Malory feared that the love story would prove to be "a single flaw in an otherwise perfect world." He mentions Lancelot's instability as being demonstrated. This theme appears again in one of the more recent novels. "Malory then adds to Lancelot's modest reply that he knows he 'was never none of the beste'." He also knew the dangers but was unable to help himself. This same theme, of the lovers being victims and unable to stop the chain of events, occurs time and again as the tale is retold.

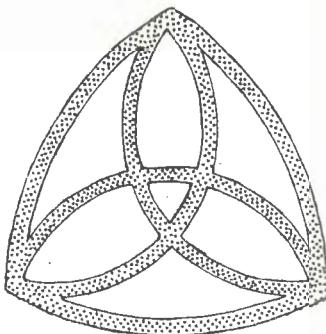
In her Arthurian Propaganda (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1971) Elizabeth T Pochada says "the evidence of the chronicles after Geoffrey... ought... to impress upon us the fact that Malory must have taken the Arthurian story seriously as the description of an actual society". She feels that Lancelot acts in a way that is highly idealized and claims that his threat to the King's private person "implies chaos for the entire realm".

Moorman says that Malory's new chivalry includes a concept of loyalty which encompasses not just Arthur's person but the whole state as well. Because it conflicts with this code the love affair cannot be kept secret. In Malory and in later versions Arthur is warned by Merlin that Guinevere will be unfaithful. He, too, is unable to change the pattern and weds her in all the stories despite the hint of trouble to come. In his Development of Arthurian Romance (New York, W W Norton & Company, 1963) Roger Sherman Loomis refers to the triangle by saying that Arthur realizes that to punish his guilty queen is to invite war.

According to Moorman the early chapters of the Morte introduce the reader to a barbaric land which Arthur will transform. In the later novels Arthur tries to prevent barbarism from overtaking Britain and attempts to light a lamp in the dark. The tides that he is trying to push back are the invasions of Saxons, Jutes and Angles that eventually turned Celtic Britain into England. It is in the Celtic portions of the Island that the Legends flourished, among the Scots, the Cornish, the Welsh and also the Celtic Bretons across the Channel.

Loomis comments on the Celtic influences on the legends, assigning Irish origins to Chretien de Troye's Knight of the Cart. He goes on to mention "the truly captivating charm of the Celtic tales and the incomplete satisfaction which they afford to the spirit... everything is infused with... the poetry of chance, irrationality

and dream..."



Those novelists who have written of Arthur in the past two decades have branched away from Malory and inserted a note of historical possibility into their plots. It has been somewhat agreed upon that Arthur was not of Malory's time, but rather of the sixth century AD. All three contain plots that have the ring of plausible truth about them. Even Merlin can be explained if one investigates the earlier pre-Christian religious beliefs of Britain. Although the details may vary, all three books contain stories that might actually have taken place.

KANE & JAKES

In Excalibur! (New York, Dell Publishing Co., 1980) Gil Kane and John Jakes have given us a lusty novel of the Dark Ages, worthy of its paperbacked cover's promise. All the violence and sex which one expects from this type of book are here, set in the days when Arthur was trying (as usual) to hold back the Saxon tide. Merlin is a Druid and Artorius, the Bear, resides at Cam.

There is an air of mysticism and yet it could all plausibly have happened. Everything is explained and all the familiar strands are interwoven, such as Guinevere and Lancelot. Another strong theme is that of Arthur's leadership and his frantic effort to stave off the inevitable. We are told "the enemy was the darkness in them all... the nothingness that bord-

ered on life, waiting to demolish... the darkness of his own soul". When he realized this, "Artorius suddenly felt infused with meaning... 'You'll not have me without a fight... that human kind could remember and take heart in throughout the centuries...'"

In the early days of their knowing each other Artorius speaks to Guinevere of Lancelot and says "I do not think of either of us being great men... we do what we must do... we aspire only to what we should be..." Arthur's sense of responsibility is the strongest part of his makeup. Of Britain he says "Yes. This is just an island. But our caring for it makes it something more..."

In Excalibur! Lancelot and Guinevere fall in love and begin their affair before her father decides to ally himself with Britain's leader through the royal marriage. Arthur is already aware of her infatuation for his handsome young soldier, of whom he says "He is my finest Captain... I would rather lose my sword Excalibur than Lancelot."

Guinevere feels the weight of her sin and says to Lancelot "We would destroy him and with him, this kingdom and... a candle in the night of the world..." Lancelot "worships the ideals he (Arthur) embodies". However, his worship of the King and his worship of Guinevere are two separate emotions. To her he says "Ah, Woman. Your beauty makes me weep..." and tells her "I wish I could not love". Arthur knows the truth and the royal marriage is never consummated. The traditional ending is here: the betrayal is once more the work of Arthur's son, Modred. Guinevere enters a nunnery but it is Lancelot and not Bedivere who throws the dying Arthur's sword into the sea.

CATHERINE CHRISTIAN

Bedivere first appeared in the early Welsh Arthurian poems. He has also been called Beduir, and it was he who cast the sword into the Lake in Malory's story. He is the narrator in Catherine Christian's well written and carefully

thought out The Pendragon (which was entitled The Sword and the Flame when it first appeared in Great Britain). Bedivere is the same age as Arthur. The future King was nursed by his mother and he has grown up adoring his leader. He becomes their most loyal of the Companions.

Arthur has the same great qualities of leadership as in the other novel and tells Bedivere that they are fighting for "a land where justice and truth and understanding replace violence and intrigue and tribal jealousy..." Busy with his duties he sends Lancelot to escort his future bride to Camelot. This is a mistake that helps to bring about Merlin's warning "that the marriage would be star-crossed from the first..." The faithful Bedivere watches them ride in together and, recognizing their beauty, tells us "I looked up at them both and my heart turned over... The harper in me recognized perfect beauty... (they were) two figures outside time.. . figures in a harper's dream."

As it is through Bedivere's eyes that we first see the lovers, it is also through his intuition that we learn of the Bard's power, that power that kept alive those early legends. We are told "the breath of the god... it comes seldom... and then like... the fire... from whose spark the flame is rekindled. The flame that does not die..."

The Pendragon recognizes the boredom of his barren queen and feels his neglect of her. His indulgence goes as far as to recognize openly that she is grieving for the wounded Lancelot. Lancelot confides to Bedivere his plan to return to his native Armorica (Brittany) and in parting implores Bedivere "be kind to her", bringing forth the comment "it was the only time he ever came near speaking openly of his love for the Queen." When Lancelot eventually returns, Bedivere's old worry is once more aroused. "Both of them were moths... but Arthur, not they, would be the one who would be

scathed."

Bedivere's worst fears for the King are realized when Guinevere flees to Armorica to join Lancelot. After being wounded, the strong war leader cries "Why did they leave me?" Their return, which is the occasion of the King's returning health, causes the observation "no questions... a deep, shining happiness that he needed to share".

Advancing middle age mellows the members of the court, and Arthur says dreamily that he has had three wives -- "the name of each was Guinevere". This is in the happier days before the same old treachery, the same flight of the queen to a nunnery, the same loyalty of Lancelot to his King. The first person narration adds a dimension of magic to the story, familiar though some elements are, and the Bard persuades his listener to Arthur's cause.

ROSEMARY SUTCLIFF

Rosemary Sutcliff's Sword at Sunset (Harmondsworth, Peacock 1965) is my favourite of all the Arthurian stories. So much so, in fact, that I reread it every two or three years and it never fails to bring a tear to my eye and pure enchantment to my heart.

This narrator is the aged Artos, Count of Britain at the end of his life when the Roman Legions have abandoned his Island. The role of the adulterous betrayer belongs to Bedwyr whom Artos introduces to his bride as "my sword brother and lieutenant". He has eagerly awaited bringing these two people together, unaware of any glimmer of the tragedy that will ensue. Bedwyr has already told him "If I were to desert you, I think it would be for something more than a woman" and his impression of their meeting is that of "matching two swordsmen playing for the feel of each other's blades, but whether the foils were blunted or sharp, I could not yet be sure."

No great love has caused Artos' marriage; it is an alliance of convenience to a clan chieftain's daughter named Guenhumara. The simple vows end "my love for her 20

contentment, my spear for the throat of the man who offers her harm. There is no more that I have to give..."

Guenhumara is younger than Artos and when she nurses Bedwyr the Harper through an illness the inevitable happens. Artos, who has grown to love his wife deeply, is long unaware of their infidelity. In fact he contentedly observes their companionship in one of the novel's homey scenes: "she would be working... and Bedwyr sitting... beside her and glancing up at her... and their two shadows flung... on the web of her weaving, so that it was almost as though she were weaving them into the pattern of the cloth... I liked to watch them so, for it seemed to me good that the two people I loved best in the world should be friends and that we should be a trinity..."

The sense of trinity is strongest in this novel of people who seem very real and whose weaknesses are very human failings. Later, Artos asks Guenhumara if Bedwyr should go yet. She replies "Yes I think he should," and although Artos is "aware that we had lost the fragile contentment" he cannot begin to know why.

The tragedy gradually unfolds and of the fateful moment of revelation, Artos says simply "I knew the thing that mattered most to me in the world was that I should not see what lay behind that door."

Sutcliff's novel is probably the furthest from Malory in tone and feel. There is a quiet homespun quality about the Dun of the Count of Britain that takes away all sense of the trappings of a Medieval court. Artos speaks poetically of "silence so intense that it pressed upon the ears..." and asks Bedwyr "Did love come on you so suddenly, then?" Bedwyr's reply is honesty itself: "I forgot that she belonged to you." Artos rationalizes to himself that "they had turned to each other, the two people I loved best in the world, and doing so, each had taken the other from me, and I was left... betrayed..."

The problem of years falls into place all too late as Artos asks "Did you ever love me at all, Guenhumara?" and she replies "yes... only we could never cross each other's thresholds." It is his hurt and his bewilderment that cause Artos to send the lovers from him. The faithful core of the Brotherhood never breaks entirely. The fight continues for the defence of Britain, despite the dreams that cause Artos to wake "with the wet feel of tears on my face..."

This novel has a semi-happy ending for Bedwyr eventually returns to die with the Brotherhood. Artos queries "Were you not happy together all these years?" and Bedwyr replies "Not very." The truthful irony of the matter is summed up neatly for us as Artos persists "But, Bedwyr, you loved her, and she you?" He said simply "Oh, yes, we loved each other, but you were always between us...!"

HARPER'S SONG

In all three versions Arthur is a man of integrity and humanity. Perhaps he is too preoccupied with his defence of Britain to be an ideal husband, perhaps a bit naive but always aware of his destiny and of his success in keeping the flame alive. "There will be more songs... though it is not we who shall sing them" says Artos to Bedwyr at the very end of Sword at Sunset. That, after all that is said and done, is what the Matter of Britain was really all about.

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Originally titled "Harper's Song: King Arthur from Le Morte to the present". We are grateful for a copy of Excalibur! which is mentioned in the text of Mrs Slater's article.



Letters...

IN BROCELIANDE FOREST

From Valerie R Duerden, Guernsey: "There aren't any Arthur freaks here, and I am getting along zero with my feeble attempts to trace up the Broceliande legends (so handicapped with 5th form French). I do promise to buy you a map of the area which has all the magic bits marked and is very tantalizing..."

If any of you are planning to go to Brittany you'd love the place we stayed. It's in the heart of the forest, overlooking miles of woods and lakes. It's on the site of a ruined abbey and is an old hunting lodge, called Manoir de Tertre. It's got tapestries of knights in forests, all fading and crumbling away (the tapestries not the knights) and a full length portrait of "Une Druide" who was a previous owner. There are four-poster beds and ancient polished floorboards, classical music is played in the hall which is a combined reception area, entrance hall and sitting room and bar.

The family are really nice but are totally uninterested in the history of the place. The food is delicious and it is very clean and

comfortable. We were there when the Michelin guide man was there trying to persuade them to put baths and lavatories in everywhere so we told him to please go away as we didn't want people with no higher requirement in their lives than a private toilet (really - people do have amazing priorities!) to swarm all over such a magnificent retreat. Together with La Famille we saw the Guide Michelin man well on his way. So if any true seeker after magic wishes to have an unforgettable holiday you can send them to Le Manoir de Terre..."



As the Duke of Windsor lay dying in May 1972 his private nurse Oonagh Shanley kept vigil for 72 hours before his death. Early one morning a "sickening thud and crash" from a bathroom "shattered the silence... Some night creature was hitting against the window." The Duchess's French maid said "Oh, it's the corbeaux, though I've never heard them in the night before... But then, they're Royal birds, aren't they?" The maid meant the huge, shiny black ravens Oonagh had often seen in the garden, and Oonagh recalled childhood lessons of the Danish war God's fatal ravens and the ravens in Macbeth prophesying a royal death. "Some things don't change... Even if I'd had no medical training, because of those ravens I'd still have known the end was near." (Woman 5.7.80 "A King's Story", p24.)

ETYMOLOGICAL NOTES

From Rick Plewes, Glastonbury:

"I found Nik Wright's article ('Of Ravens, Gods and Men' in Pendragon 13-1) very interesting and am moved to reply to it. The confusion of Bran and Arthur is very interesting... In Cornwall Bran became corrupted into St Perran (Perranporth), and it is St Perran who is credited there with the discovery of tin when he saw it running out of the stones in his fire place. Since obviously no Christian could have discovered tin we have here further evidence that the Bran-Arthur figure is the father of smelting.*

I would also like to draw attention to Robert Graves' observation that when Bran led the people across to Ireland it is in the form of a bridge made of alder, Bran's sacred wood.

In the Dream of Rhonabwy Arthur's men and Owein's ravens fight outside... The Arthur/raven connection, while present, is also distinctly strained, they being on opposite sides of the fray. By tortuous distortion it might be possible to squeeze Owein out of Bran etymologically; it would certainly help if anyone knows any early version of the name Owen which tends in that direction.

The Plough/Bear connection (in Chris Turner's 'Arthur & the Bear of Arcady' article) sparks off the following, namely that barley (which requires a plough before it can be sown) comes from the root bere and gives beer and bran. Bere (OE) also gives us barn and possibly bar (as in drinking). Since barley is older in this country than wheat and gives beer, whisky and bread, quite apart from feeding the pigs, it must have had much power to attract reverence and blessing...

Back to the plough and the bear (Arddwr is actually given as "a ploughman or husbandman in the earliest Welsh dictionary) the pun is repeated over the root bere/bear in Germanic roots. Bran

is connected to the Romance for flour, farina. What is evident is that the root of power is Indo-European and therefore older than either the invention of the plough or the discovery of cereals. Is Bran in fact the Father of Agriculture?

To confuse things more you have the Aldebaran mystery which incorporates the God and his sacred wood in the name of the eye of Taurus. Al Deb Aran meaning the follower in Arabic is usually given as the true root for the name of the star, but we must have had a name for that star before the Arabs arrived and they were comparative newcomers..."

*See Rick's own article, 'King Arthur in the Stone Age' in the same issue.

Examples continue to crop up of the ways the medieval Arthurian enthusiasts may have used preliterate traditions in their writings, this time from Current Archaeology (still worth a plug: £4 for six issues from CA, 9, Nassington Road, London NW3 2TX):



...THE MASSACRE OF MOUNT AMBRIUS

Hengist betrayed Vortigern (according to Geoffrey of Monmouth) at the Cloister of Ambrus on the 1st May by murdering about 460 counts and earls at a parley. According to a review by Leslie Grinsell in Current Archaeology No 72 the authors of a recent book have identified at least 420 round barrows around Stonehenge near Amesbury from air photographs (where a survey of 1957 had listed only 340). If another square mile had been included then the total would have been the same number of slain counts and earls, to whose memory Aurelius and Merlin built Stonehenge (Bonney & Smith, Stonehenge and its environs, Edinburgh Univ Press 1979 £3.50).



ROSETTES & OTHER SYMBOLS

From Michael Baigent, London NW3:

"Unlike some students of symbol-
ogy I've read I do not regard such symbolic details (as represented by Assyrian rosettes: see last issue) to be gratuitous. However I am as yet no closer to resolving such problems which confront me such as why, when all myths regarding Ishtar lay such great emphasis on the number 7, she should be represented by an 8 pointed star/rosette? Or why the pentagram and hexagram so often seem to be interchangeable - I know that in medieval Christian Cabalism a reason is supplied, but this does not clarify the reasons behind such a move some thousand or so years earlier. I am especially intrigued by the inverted pentagram being one of the signatures of the Mother Goddess - the Black Mother - and how in later medieval times this became equated with Satan; who is, in earlier times, regarded as feminine, in fact an aspect of the Great Mother; which shows up in the Kabbalah where Saturn is attributed to the feminine Binah. This is my current line of research and I hope to have some conclusions in the next few months/years..."

The book mentioned during our lecture "The Mystery of Rennes-le-Chateau" (9.12.79) is by myself, Richard Bardmont and Henry Lincoln. Jonathan Cape Ltd expect to publish it around Christmass or the New Year. Its working title will be The Holy Children... There seems to be much convergence of legends between the Merovingiens and the Arthurian cycles. We discuss this in our book."



From Adrian Watts, a personal interpretation of the present in terms of the past; a contribution which he entitles
THE ARTHURIAN AGE RETURNS

The grave at Glastonbury referred to Arthur as the once and future king, and in a sense he has returned already with the increasing interest that is being shown in his age: Rex Quondam. However, is there not another significance when we compare his historical age with the present day: Rex Futurus?

With the demise and fall of the Roman Empire Britain was threatened from without and yet still found time for internecine strife. Is there not an unfortunate comparison with the world today? Whilst our class system shakes down into a more equal society, there remain among us the Vorticerns of the 20th century: those who are willing to appease foreign powers or, worse still, serve them should they ever rule Britannia. Unlike the previous invasions of these islands there can be no racial absorption of an alien creed that represents a distinct karmic pattern that is neither Asian or European and can never hope to be part of either. There has been no effective military invasion of these islands since 1066 that lacked inside support and that was merely sea-borne; the next could be sea- and airborne. At worst the battle lines in Europe are drawn and they have a look about them that is not unlike Europe in AD 410. Then our overall defence was based on the mainland with too much reliance on the strengths and weaknesses of others. Should that Russian colossus ever break loose with or without its Warsaw Pact allies there remains the prospect of an occupied Europe dominated by a massive inertia so unlike the movement that followed the collapse of the Western Empire. Clearly the military, social, economic and political effects of such a move, with or without the use of nuclear weapons, would be catastrophic. When one considers further it is apparent that we

have been through a not dissimilar experience with our isolation after the fall of Rome. Looked at again NATO and the Common Market are not that far short of a reconstructed Empire of the West. The marauding barbarians that were our ancestors that roamed the seas have been replaced by an even worse phenomenon: the submarines of Admiral Gorchkov. These in numbers and quality make the U-boats look like a fleet of submersible rubber ducks. At worst, conquered; at least, temporarily cut off. Neither a very edifying prospect, and from the Russian view conquest is preferable and essential.

Whatever happens Britannia will pull through. The legendary Arthur and Alfred the Great have both pointed the way: in deepest Britain they fought and prepared to fight again. Alfred today would have been dubbed King-Liberator. And what of the invader? I suggest quite simply that the destiny he carries with him will be his downfall as much as anything we or anyone else might do. Oppression is only as strong as the weakest link in the chain of tyranny, and in seeking to extend that chain to its ultimate limit it will snap and rebound on its owner. If we are open-minded enough we will remember the prophecies of Edgar Cayce among others that Russia would eventually be taken by the Christ and that there would be a turning away from the old ways. I submit that there may be the ironic situation of those that come bearing the hammer and sickle will leave carrying the cross. Many that come as enemies may later settle here after that change; Alfred would have understood. The Arthurian legends of chivalry and forgiveness should also spur us to try to come to terms with the enigma wrapped in a riddle wrapped in a mystery, as Churchill so aptly put it. After all his excesses, even Saul of Tarsis repented and came over to the Christ. Perhaps there is hope for us all.

ADRIAN WATTS

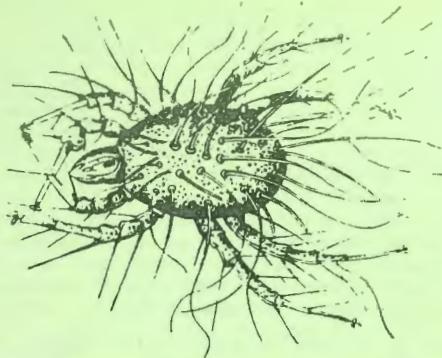
Recent publications continue to show that there is really very little new under the sun, and that research is very often only a recovering of lost knowledge. For example, "a verray, parfit gentil knyght" is the description we probably have in our minds of those Arthurian heroes who went in quest of the Grail. The phrase was itself used by Chaucer of the Knight in his Canterbury Tales but a recent book suggests it was used with great irony. Terry Jones (involved in the directing of "Monty Python & the Holy Grail" and "Life of Brian") subtitled his Chaucer's Knight (Weidenfeld & Nicolson 1980) "Portrait of a Medieval Mercenary". A fascinating picture emerges of the change in ethics from a feudal society to the professional, commercial society familiar to us 600 years on. Chaucer's satire is strangely relevant even now and Jones leaves no stone unturned to hammer home his point.

Knights fight dragons, don't they? A review in the second Green Book of Peter Dickinson's The Flight of Dragons mentions how one author uses scholasticism, biology and chemistry "to prove how dragons could have physically existed, breathed fire, and flown". I put me in mind of Vince Russett's "The Dragons of Quantock" in Picwinnard 8 where, of at least nine dragons mentioned, only one breathed fire: the dragon of Kingston St Mary. A recent book by Peter Haining suggested to me why this might be so.

A couple of miles north of Kingston, near the highest point on the Quantocks, stands Fyne Court in the village of Broomfield. The best known of the owners of Fyne Court was Andrew Crosse (1784-1855) whose epitaph in St Mary's Church reads "The Electrician... He was Humble Towards God and Kind to His Fellow Creatures". Other names were more colourful: the Wizard of the Quantocks, the Thunder & Lightning Man. What Crosse did was to convey atmospheric electricity along $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles of copper wires strung from trees to his laboratory. When the electricity was discharged from his batteries the reports could be "as loud as those of a cannon" and "the stream of fire... too vivid to look on for any length of time". Might not the memory of this early experimenter in electricity have added the description "fire-breathing" to the dragon legend closest to Broomfield?

Hesiod's Theogony told various legends of the Titan Prometheus who created man from clay, stole fire from Hephaestus' forge and stored it in a rod (a fire-drill?) and was bound to a rock and tortured for his pains. Millennia later Percy Bysshe Shelley (author of Prometheus Unbound) and Mary Godwin (later Mary Shelley) were present in 1814 at Andrew Crosse's only London lecture. Haining believes that Mary's impressions of the lecturer contributed significantly to her chief claim to literary fame, Frankenstein (or "The Modern Prometheus"): hence the title of Haining's book The Man Who Was Frankenstein (Muller 1979). And then, in an almost incredible episode of nature imitating art, Andrew Crosse appeared, like Victor Frankenstein, to create life itself -- in 1837, twenty years after Mary Shelley's book appeared. Crosse was trying to form artificial minerals by the action of electricity on fluids but during the course of repeated experiments produced six- and eight-legged "insects" of the genus acarus -- later confirmed in independent parallel experiments by no less a person than Faraday. Like Frankenstein, Crosse was vilified as a blasphemer and atheist which distressed him greatly, but the mystery has not really been satisfactorily explained. (If anyone wants to duplicate the experiment, full details are given in Haining's book!)

Seeing eight-legged creatures where none were expected must have been a shock for Crosse. I was intrigued to find one in outline while researching a preoccupation with interlacements from magic squares. Anglo-Saxon and Viking Age Sculpture (ed. James Lang, British Archaeological Report 49, 1978) contains an illustrated contribution from Gwenda Adcock entitled "The Theory of Interlace, and Interlace Types in Anglian Sculpture" (pp33-45). 25



Two interlaced Carrick Bends

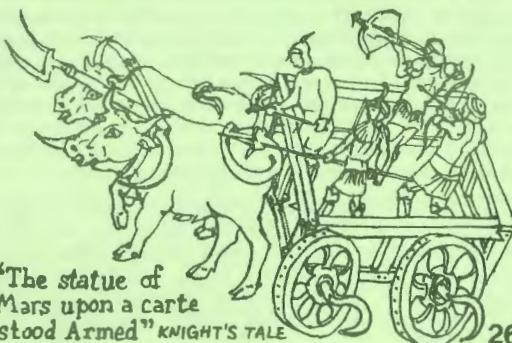


Left: One of the 8-legged Acarii Crossii

Her pattern lists, grouped into six, are based initially on four-stranded mirror-image patterns, so I tried out an interlace derived from the magic square of Jupiter (which has a grid of 4×4 squares) by joining up numbers 1-4, 5-8, 9-12, 13-16. The resulting shape, of pairs of symmetrical loops, belonged to Adcock's pattern F, and was closest to a combination of a closed-circuit pattern (her fig 2.10F) and the simple pattern Carrick Bend (her fig 2.9F).

Without laying too much stress on its supposed resemblance to an 8-legged creature, the main acarus/interlace co-incidence came while I was reading James Vogh's *Arachne Rising* (1977, nonsensically republished as *The Thirteenth Zodiac* by Granada 1979). Vogh proposes restoring a 13th sign, Arachne the Spider, to the 12-constellation zodiac, a sign he believes was censored in the early centuries of the Christian era. The sign is represented by the constellation of the Charioteer, Auriga (he-who-holds-the-reins) which is doubly related to the spider by the thread-like reins and by the eight legs of the horses. Many considerations lead him to his conclusions (though I'm unqualified to comment on the astrological aspects) and the book deserves consideration.

The chariot or cart leads one to recall Lancelot's title in Chretien de Troyes' *Knight of the Cart* (12th century). Lancelot is supposedly disgraced for travelling in a cart because they were reserved for felons on their way to punishment (see also Sid Birchby's "Guenevere and the May Queen" in Vol 12 No 2). A different solution could be suggested by an illustration in Chaucer's *Knight* (p191) which shows an Italian war-chariot or *carroccio* which foreign mercenaries used in Italian city-states in the 14th century. It would certainly be a disgrace for a "verray, parfit gentil knyght" to use a war-machine employed by professional killers. And, whatever they were, Arthur's knights, unlike their Saxon adversaries, were certainly not mercenaries. Which, conveniently, takes us back where we started.



"The statue of Mars upon a carte stood Armed" KNIGHT'S TALE

