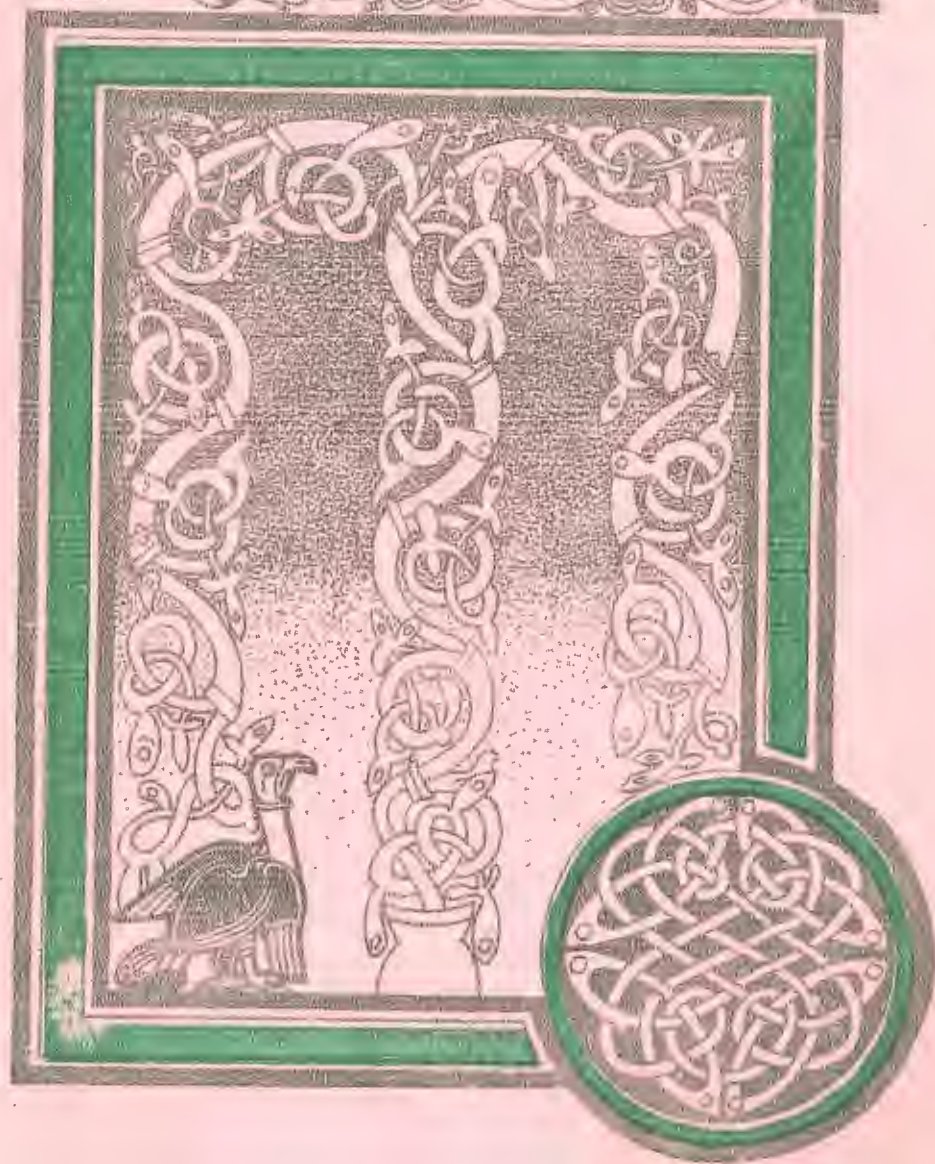




# PENDRALON





# Pendragon

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Pendragon investigates Arthurian history, archaeology  
and the mystery and mythology of the Matter of Britain.  
All opinions stated are those of the writers concerned.  
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Main theme for this issue - Cadbury.

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# Editrial



Using Merlin's formula in T.H.White's book 'The Once and Future King', a 12-foot diameter Round Table would have seated all those present at the 1991 Pendragon A.G.M. - which is a round-about way of saying that it wasn't all that well attended. And this despite membership having grown considerably during the past year. Several members who had intended to turn up were unable to do so due to illness or prior commitments and sent their apologies. Two or three new faces were seen, however, and it was nice to meet their owners for the first time.

As the meeting this year was held in Bristol, home for many years of the Society, several 'veteran' members were there and the meeting was enthusiastic and productive. The Committee Members present were all unanimously re-elected (In any case, there weren't enough members on the spot to kick us out!) and one or two others were voted in. A highlight of the meeting was a proposal by Fred Stedman-Jones in his Chairman's address that was unanimously approved. This consisted in the formation of Sub-committees, subordinate to the main Committee and responsible for handling different aspects of our Society's organisation and activities. There will be four such Sub-committees each under a co-ordinator:

PUBLICITY and EXHIBITIONS: Simon Rouse of 43 Water Lane,  
Oakington, Cambridge CB4 5AL.

MEMBERSHIP, FINANCE and JOURNAL: Anne and Eddie Tooke of  
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Bristol BS3 4TW.

The object is to encourage all members of the Society to liaise with one (or more) of the co-ordinators in any areas of activity where they feel they can make a positive contribution. It is stressed that the whole of the structure is FLEXIBLE. The Sub-committees are not autonomous and mutually exclusive: the overall interests of the Society are of paramount importance. No 'cliques' will be established. The Sub-committees will cooperate with each other and integrate their activities.

So, if you want to become a more active member and feel you might have a useful contribution to make - however small - to the Society's activities, write to the appropriate co-ordinator(s).

Remember YOU ARE the Society and that

CHANGE OF CONSTITUTION.  
A small amendment was considered necessary to correct an ambiguity. Paragraph C(1) now reads: 'The management of the Society shall be vested in a Committee to be elected at an Annual General Meeting by and out of the members.' (See 1990 Constitution in PENDRAGON No.21/1, p35.)

The meeting was rounded off by an interesting talk from Chris Lovegrove and Kate Pollard about the Pendragon Llanellen dig which is currently being written up by Chris. Some small artefacts were shown.

The theme for the next issue(s) will be 'Arthur in Europe'. Let's have plenty of contributions!



ARTHUR NEEDS  
YOU!

F5-J(After the WW1 recruiting poster)



# Sodbury memories of the dig

## CHRIS TURNER



Try as I might I cannot recall any but the haziest and most inconsequential details of the three(?) summers I spent week-ending up on The Hill. I seem to have wiped the mental tape all but clean along with most of the last 25 years! It is rather frightening. I don't really know why this has happened. Whatever, the few main points remaining in my accessible memory are these;

My first Pendragon Event was The Beacon. I'm not sure when this was. Either Autumn 1965 or '66 maybe. I remember being sufficiently unimpressed with the Pendragon Banner to rush back and design the ones that Mary made up. I do remember looking the wrong way when Terry set off the answering flare from Glastonbury, but I was happy to take everybody else's word for it.

On to the Real Thing. I wasn't involved with the Naughty Hole or the Discovery of the 'A' (a gilt bronze letter unearthed by Jess Foster). I came in on the first Observer-sponsored dig. I remember drawing the maps we had dye-lined and stuck up in the Red Lion to very limited appreciation from the clientele. I also got involved in the 4-up large postcard and re-drafting the Certificate issued to latter-day knights who had slogged it up to the top. Both Mary and I were (I think) on the Committee at this time and contributed in some measure towards the Marquee stall, Celtic Jewellery, and general jollity at the meetings at Garden Flat despite sterling efforts from the Orthodox Fringe to keep things po-faced and proper. The detailed mechanics of this escape me however. I know we sold about £500 worth of tacky brooches which sounds a lot better than it was as the profit margin wasn't that high and by the time we'd taken running expenses to and from Cadbury out of it, there wasn't a lot left.

Memories On Top are very sketchy. I remember causing consternation by suggesting that much-needed finance could be raised by selling off unwanted bits of pot. That was the nearest I think I ever came to being burnt at the stake for heresy. By George, I must have been naive! I had noticed that large quantities of pot and scores of slingstones were being regularly dumped down the Rampart behind the Finds-hut. Somewhere in the loft must be a box still full of Iron Age Grot and Size Four Pebbles that followed me home. It just seemed logical at the time to offer these to the punters at a tanner a time. The idea was firmly put to bed when they dug a deep pit with a bright yellow JCB on the (unsurveyed?) North Intravallate Plateau (flat bit inside the top rampart .... I can still flannel with the best of 'em). This was originally intended for the sweet wrappers and pop bottles that those awful gawping public-type visitors kept on putting in the waste bins, but was swiftly pressed into service by Admin to take the regular bucket-loads of supernumerary finds as well.

Many little cameos are almost certainly libellous and are probably only fit to be repeated late at night in select company over a glass of Chateau Lafitte. Among these can be numbered an episode involving a Deeply Respected Author of Universal Renown, a seance and a wasp-sting on the tongue, and a conversation I overheard in the Finds-hut between an aspiring archaeologist and the Important Person in charge of Finds that day. It ran something like this:

AA (wistfully) 'These pieces so nearly fit!'

IP (with the confidence of his position) 'Just grind them down a bit.'

All the other memories seem to meld into a kaleidoscope of unrelated fragments. A lot of them seem to involve walking unsteadily along pitch black country roads en route from pub to sleeping-bag. I know one night we galloped round collecting baked-bean tins, scraps of sacking and a quantity of TVO (now known as diesel fuel). We (I don't know how many, maybe a dozen or more) cobbled this lot together into very effective flaming torches and processed up a very spooky midnight Cadbury. The sight of the canopy of leaves lit from beneath by flickering orange is one image that comes readily to mind even after all this time.

One event of major significance, particularly in the areas of myth and folklore, went totally unreported as far as I know. This is the proof that Cadbury is, indeed, a hollow hill. At the time that the Powers That Be were developing peptic ulcers over the 'Rectilinear and Curvilinear Features' that looked like nothing so much as a game of noughts-and-crosses played against flying saucers, I was head-down in one of the dozens of Iron Age storage pits that littered the top. Certain females of a delicate and nervous disposition started to display stress symptoms over field mice which showed a disconcerting tendency to appear in the bottom of the pits as though from nowhere. Even worse, by the time the ladies had left the pit (usually in a single, squealing bound), the offending rodent had disappeared as mysteriously as it had arrived. At last, by dint of having several pits continually monitored by cooler heads, we worked out that there were really only two or three mice who were merrily commuting between the excavations through natural cracks and fissures in the bedrock. The fully excavated pits often went down about five feet, if my memory serves, and mice were seen to come and go at that level. How far down and how extensive the network runs is anybody's guess, but the claim that Cadbury Castle is hollow certainly seems to have some validity. If you're a mouse anyway.

### DID DRAGONS ONCE LIVE?

'The last of the classic English dragons,' F.W.Holiday tells us in his book 'The Dragon and the Disc', 'was the Dragon of Henham which was killed in 1668 and was the subject of a contemporary pamphlet.' Despite a copy of this pamphlet being held by the British Museum, the Museum authorities irrationally refuse even to look at the evidence for the creature's existence. The question with which we dragonophiles are often challenged is: 'If there WERE such creatures, why do we never find their skeletons?' This was answered comprehensively by Peter Dickinson in 'The Flight of Dragons' (Book Club Associates, 1979). Amongst other things, he explains just why dragon bones disappear.

His theory receives support from a centuries-old PVC label, scorched by dragon's breath, which has recently come to light in a cellar in Chipping Sodbury. On it, in the ancient Croxley script, is inscribed a simple yet poignant verse:

'A fire-breathing dragon.  
My lair scarce was raid-able  
By horse or by wagon  
Through marshes unwaide-able.  
Though errant knights brag on  
Of deeds accolade-able  
(Like putting a gag on  
My fire-breath unfade-able).

Their churlish fears nag on  
Of jaws unevade-able;  
Of blood by the flagon;  
Of scales quite unblade-able.  
Yes, LEGENDS may lag on,  
But I won't be spade-able:  
That's why I've this tag on -  
I'm bio-degradable.'

(Eddie Tooke)





# Arviragus, Lord of Cadbury

- David Pykitt

In times of national crises the Britons elected a leader whom they called Arthwyr (the Bear Exalted) after the Celtic Bear deity.

The Gaelic-Pictish name which Arviragus represents, appears to be Arc-wyr-auc, Arwyr-auc, 'the Bear-folk Chief'. The Gaelic 'c' would become 't' in Pictish, both aspirated, giving in Welsh Arth-wyr, the Bear Exalted.(1)

The existence of the British king Arviragus is proved by the Roman satirist Juvenal, who makes one of his characters ask a pale nervous-looking man - 'What is the matter with you? Have you seen the chariot-driven British king Arviragus? A mighty omen this you have received of some great and noble triumph. Some captive king you'll take, or Arviragus will be hurled from his British chariot. For the monster is a foreign one. Do you see the sharp fins bristling on his back like spears?'

The Kentish Chronicles inform us that, upon the landing of Roman re-inforcements at Portus Lemanis (Lympe) under Vespasian and Titus, the British King Arviragus, the son of Cunobelinus, abandoned Dover. It is interesting to note at this point that there is a King Arthur's Tower at Dover Castle.(2) Arviragus eventually took refuge in South Cadbury Castle in Somerset. When Vespasian landed at Totnes and took Exeter, it was Arviragus who led the British resistance against him.(1)

Hector Boece, in his 'History and Chronicles of Scotland', informs us that Vespasian, who was laying siege to South Cadbury, captured a royal crown and a magnificent sword, which he used for the rest of his life. It is recorded elsewhere that the Emperor Claudius received the submission of Arviragus at Cadbury Castle. The Romans began to introduce law officers and erected a stone temple at Cadbury with two statues in it. One was for victory and the other was of the Emperor Claudius.(1)

Arviragus made common cause with the invaders by marrying Claudius's daughter, Gennissa, and he emerged as a client ruler, holding sway from his hill-fortress at South Cadbury. He held out defiantly in an enclave comprising the hill-fortress and the stretches of marshes, lakes and islands which then lay between South Cadbury and the Bristol Channel.(3)

Arviragus figures in the famous legend of the foundation of Glastonbury by St. Joseph of Arimathea. In A.D. 63 he is said to have been reigning in Britain and to have granted twelve hides of land, the site of the future monastery, to the wandering St. Joseph and his companions. The British king was holding central Somerset and was therefore in a position to give the wanderers a haven. South Cadbury was under full British control long after the Romans overran this part of the country and this is where Arviragus maintained his shadowy independence in the hills and marshes of Somerset at just about the right time when St. Joseph is said to have arrived. St. Joseph may have been known as a metal trader to

Continued p.10

# VICTORIAN Cadbury

Part 2

By Edward Strachey. Atlantic Monthly, Jan. 1894.

Not only did the well put us in touch with 'the clouded forms of long past history' but we also thought of those whom poets have made much clearer.

'Feigned of old or fabled since,  
Of faery damsels met in forest wide  
By Knights of Logres or of Lyones,  
Lancelot or Pelleas or Pellenore.'

For, at Camelot, Arthur and his knights still ride at the full moon and water their horses at this well. The hill of ramparts and ditches rose in the imagination to something much more than a stockaded camp of a savage tribe, and, like Leland before us, we felt that we were at the local habitation of those airy nothings, those fancies of poets' brains, King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table, whose deeds had played as important a part as had Troy the ancient, and influenced the modern world as greatly.

Whether it was from such thoughts as these or not I cannot say, but the water of the Wishing Well seemed a draught inspiring beyond all other water. But we had other things to see yet, and above all to prove if the hills were hollow; for the legends of the country assert that a noise made at King Arthur's Well is heard at the Wishing Well; so the ladies stayed at the latter, while I started in search of King Arthur's well, the other spring on the hill. This I found at no great distance, close to the cottage, and on the left side of the eastern road up the hill. This was a stone with a round hole in it about two feet across, the well below being a circular place about four feet deep, full of filthy, and all but stagnant water, and quite powerless to excite the imagination. At the appointed time I made much noise by hitting boards and sticks on the mouth of the well; but on going back to the Wishing Well found that my noises had not been heard. Considering that we had drunk deep of the clear spring, I was relieved to think it did not communicate with the poisonous waters of King Arthur's Well.

We now set out to see more of the southern side, and, walking along by the cottage, found ourselves on the top of the first rampart. On the southeastern slope the walls of earth stand out in bald grandeur, for there are no trees, and here we could appreciate the enormous strength of the ramparts rising tier above tier over our heads. I have seen other camps of this kind, but never anything like this; the steepness of the sides and the regularity of the slopes make it a striking spectacle. As we got farther round on the south side, trees began again, though more scattered; and as we climbed up gradually, startling countless rabbits, and at one place a badger, the views became of great beauty, till, reaching the top of the southern side, near the west gate, we looked down on the village of Sutton Montis. Nothing could have been more lovely. A little brook with willows skirted the fortress, after leaving the downs opposite whence it rose; across this brook lay a vast orchard, the orderly rows of its great trees clearly seen from our height; beyond this came the 'pleasant villages and farms adjoined,' - one especially glowing roof of almost crimson tiles took the eye; beyond this, again, the church, and then the vast sweep of view towards Dorsetshire.

From here we went through the western gate of the top of the camp, and descended the hill by the road at that end, leaving Camelot by the west, having come there by the east. We then went a

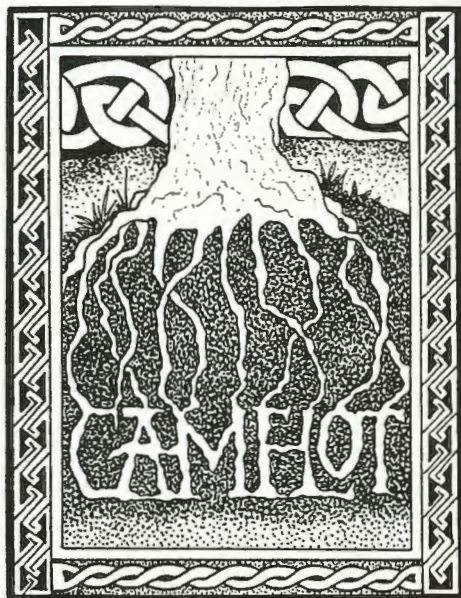


pleasant way across the grounds, orchards and fields, till a path near the river took us back into Sparkford, where the interval till our train was due was filled by many cups of tea in a pleasant old inn. The train took us home in a golden evening, and we were left with visions of romance and of the monumental handiwork of a vanished people, all seen through a halo of midsummer sunlight.'

SQUIRE. Very good geography, physical, military and archaeological; not without a touch, too, of purple patch, and some of a very fine purple.

FOSTER. If it had been full moon or the eve of St. John, I think I should have begged the ladies to stay with me, or to leave me there, that I, too, might hear and see Arthur and his knights come riding down King Arthur's Lane, as, according to local tradition, they have never left off doing since the days of Leland, whose account I have just been reading, who tells of the silver horseshoe that one of them had cast in such a ride.

SQUIRE. I have often fancied that if I had the poet's gift of looking into and seeing the imaginary past, while the senses of the present are laid asleep, the vision would come to me on the grassy mound called Arthur's Castle, at the top of the hill of Camelot. Even now that vision rises before me with successive magic scenes, 'apart from place, withholding time,' but always in that golden prime of Arthur and his knights. I seem to see the town of Camelot, while within the hall is the Round Table, its seats filling with knights come to the feast of Pentecost, though Arthur will not take his place till he hears from Sir Kay, the Seneschal, that an adventure is at hand, since some unknown lady or knight can be seen riding down the road.



Scene after scene rises before me of things done, and words spoken, and quests undertaken, in that hall; and not least that when the Holy Grail, covered with white samite, passed through, offering every knight for once to partake of that mysterious food, and awaking in him the resolve to achieve that quest. And then,

'I see no longer, I myself am there,' among the crowd of ladies and knights who gathered to see the barge which floated down the river with the dead but beautiful Elaine, the Lady of Shalot, and hear Sir Launcelot tell her sad tale.

The river may be seen by the bodily eye, and in the light of summer day; and so may Glastonbury and Avalon, no longer, indeed, an island on the one hand, and the site at least of the nunnery of Almesbury on the other. But now the vision rises before me of the twofold story of Malory and Tennyson, of that parting, solemn to awfulness, of Arthur and Guenever, when he rode out through the

mist, without looking back, to the battle which he knew was to be his last; of the battle, and of the coming of that barge with the weeping ladies who bore away the dying king to Avalon. Then, again, those last laments of Launcelot over Arthur and Guenever, and of Ector over Launcelot himself. These actions are very real to me; and yet, as I speak, I know, like Prospero, that they are melting into air, into thin air.

FOSTER. My sympathies are all with you, squire, but yet forgive me if I ask, as I heard your little grandson ask the other day when you were telling him a story, 'Is it true? Tell me something real.' And I should be glad to think that the fabric of your vision is not altogether baseless.

SQUIRE. Yes, and no. And first, yes. Camelot itself, call it castle, or fortress, or camp, as you will, stands there with its smaller outlying forts in the forefront of my answer. It stands in the very place where you would draw the line at which the onward progress of the English towards the southwest was stopped for one hundred years after they had won the battle of Deorham in 577, and taken the cities of Sarum and Bath. Is it not clear, so far as reasonable inference can supply the lack of direct historical record, that it was this Camelot which stayed their advance, - a fortress formed and held by Freedom's hands? And if Arthur was a king of Britain or of the British during part of that hundred years, it is not unreasonable to believe that it was at Camelot that he held his camp, if not his court.

FOSTER. But was there an Arthur at all? Milton, with all his admiration for Arthur and his knights as heroes of romance, did not believe in his historical existence; so you will hardly expect me to satisfy my doubts by the historical arguments by which Caxton tells us that many noble and divers gentlemen satisfied his doubts, nor even by the evidence which they called in of Gawain's skull, Cradock's mantle, and Launcelot's sword.

SQUIRE. Though you took his word for it that Camelot was Winchester. But I can give you better authority than that of Caxton, or Milton, or anyone else. Here (opening a drawer, and taking out a letter) is the last letter which I received from my old friend Edward Freeman. He writes:-

Guest taught me to believe in Arthur, and there is a notice of him which, if not history, is at best very early legend, in the Life of Gildas. It proves a good bit, anyhow, then R----- seemed to disbelieve in him, and now he seems to have taken to him again. I tell R----- that I live much too near to Avalon, which is Glastonbury, to give him up altogether, and that I can't part with him to them of Strathclyde.'

But it is a very slight and dim existence at best. You just now compared the story of Arthur to that of Agamemnon; and I might add that Camelot is to Malory's Morte Darthur what Dr. Schliemann's Troy is to the Iliad.

FOSTER. Your answer to my question was to be 'no' as well as 'yes'.

SQUIRE. But I cannot say 'no' after all. Those knights and ladies do live to me, as I trust that they will live to many an English-speaking boy and girl yet unborn. But I will answer your question in the best Dryasdust fashion that I can. I do not attempt to follow up the old legends to those pre-Christian and even prehistoric sources of which some learned writers believe that they can get occasional glimpses. I am content to believe that in the ages in which war was more to men than peace, and



imagination more than cool reason, the legends somehow grew up. The British bards termed the actual losses of their countrymen glorious gain and triumphs of poetry; and when they were driven back into Cornwall and Wales and Scotland, they found everywhere new Camelots and Round Tables at Tintagel, Caerleon, and Carlisle, and across the sea in Brittany.

Mr. Symonds tells us that in the Middle Ages the legends of Arthur were greater favorites with the educated classes in Italy than the earlier ones of Charlemagne, which were left to the common people. And it is a curious fact that Gervase of Tilbury, writing early in the thirteenth century, gives a story of the discovery in the woods of Mount Etna, in Sicily, of King Arthur, there biding his time in solemn seclusion, which exactly corresponds with the like story which has been told of the Somersetshire Camelot by a peasant girl to a lady now living. The minstrel, or troubadour, wandered far; and he carried everywhere with him not only the name, but the local habitation of his hero.



Cont.

King Arviragus before his mission. Arviragus himself remained unconverted but he is said to have been kind to the missionaries. (3)

South Cadbury was destroyed after A.D.70 as part of a Roman police action. Evidence of the Roman massacre was found in the shape of some thirty dismembered bodies of men, women and children, possibly pulled to pieces by wild animals after slaughter, found strewn under the burnt remains of the south-west gateway. It would appear that the British king Arviragus perished in this massacre and that the body buried in a hollowed-out oak log at Glastonbury is more likely to be that of a first-century Arviragus than a sixth-century Arthur.

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Archaeologist Professor Charles Thomas (who has crossed swords many times with Prof. Norma Goodrich of America over her 'location' of the graves etc. of legendary Arthurian characters), himself refuses to believe in King Arthur or the Lost Land of Lyonesse. Says Western Morning News reporter, Michael Charleston, 'His debunking of the two loveliest legends ever to come out of his native country can scarcely have endeared him to the Cornish tourist industry or west-country romantics.' Says the Prof.: 'Arthur is irrelevant down here.'

As organiser of the Tintagel dig (towards the cost of which Mobil, their imaginations stirred by the legends, contributed £50,000), Thomas regards Arthur - if indeed he existed - as the leader of a band of warriors in North Britain.

[Dammit, sir! The traitorous dog should be horse-whipped!]

## book Reviews

'THE QUEST FOR THE OMPHALOS' by Bob Trubshaw with John Walbridge. (Heart of Albion Press, 1991. Card covers, 28 pages, 17 illustrations. £1.75 incl. p.& p.)

The concept of a sacred, central source of spiritual energy is common to most cultures. Thus, for example, the Mappa Mundi in Hereford Cathedral, as a Christian altar piece, predictably has Jerusalem as its omphalos or navel - its fountain-head of occult power. Man's ego requires a pre-eminent position for his family, his tribe, his country or his religion.

This booklet is a reprint of a series of articles that originally appeared in Mercian Mysteries and explores the claims of a dozen or so sites to be the mystical centre of England - claims based on local place-names, artefacts, archives and legends. The authors tactfully maintain a good degree of impartiality - though Arbury Hill in Northamptonshire, farthest from the sea in all directions, seems to have a stronger claim than most. Incidentally there must be sound etymological reasons why John Walbridge does not associate 'Arbury' with 'arbor' (trees or axis) as I would be brash enough (and ignorant enough!) to do, especially as he discusses Yggdrasil, the World Tree/Omphalos in connection with the site.

The Quest for the Omphalos has an extensive (36-item) reference section, including articles by PENDRAGON's Fred Steadman-Jones. If I find grounds for criticism it must be because I noticed some twenty typographical errors without even trying. A booklet of this standard deserves rather better proof-reading.

Bob Trubshaw's closing paragraphs delighted me with their reference to a personal quest: 'This makes every altar, tent or house a possible place of break-through to the Otherworlds ... as a personal yet concrete mystical experience ... May your search be successful and the experience enlighten you.'

If you seek enlightenment you could do worse than start by reading this latest offering from Heart of Albion Press, 2 Cross Hill Close, Wymeswold, Loughborough LE12 6UJ.

Eddie Tooke.

[Yes Deirdre, the Mappa Mundi does indeed show Jerusalem as the Omphalos of the Christian world, but your rival claim for Chipping Sodbury based on your equally ancient Mappa Tuesdi, Wensdi and Thursdi is unconvincing. Drawing them with a ballpoint pen on fanfold computer paper was not a very good idea.

Postscript: In an accompanying note, Bob apologises for not mentioning Chipping Sodbury. He didn't really expect to get away with it, did he?]



'THE SEVENTH SWORD' by Andrew Collins (Century, £14.99. 484pp.Hb)

Pity the poor reviewer!

NEXT time I'll choose a simpler publication - like the Punjabi translation of Goethe's play, *Gotz von Berlichingen* (that, by a singular coincidence, was finished in 1772 - the very year in which Andrew Collins' 'Swords of Meonia' were cast by Jacobite supporters of Charlie Stuart. Not a lot of people know this intriguing fact. Or even want to.)

The tone of any review must inevitably reflect - albeit slightly - the predisposition of the reviewer, and to sum up *The Seventh Sword* objectively poses quite a problem. In my materialistic past I would unhesitatingly have rejected this 'very real account of very real events' as utter poppycock, for the *Seventh Sword* is a tale of 'psychic questing' - a search for seven swords, lost for centuries, with magical powers to affect mankind's destiny.

The methods employed to locate the swords include the use of clairvoyance, automatic writing, meditation and meaningful dreams. Six of the swords have been discovered in various parts of Britain, some in lonely or romantic places but two - wait for it - at a car boot sale in the car park of a pub in Coventry! Two of the swords have Arthurian connections, one being discovered at Tintagel. Acquiring the swords was not always easy, and in their quest Andrew Collins and his team encountered some pretty nasty opposition - sometimes physical but frequently from the Astral Plane. In fact on one occasion they had a horrific psychic battle with Saraph, 'the basilisk, the dragon and the winged serpent' of the Post Coch standing stone near Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant in Wales. The account of their struggle with this astral creature, 'thousands of yards long' with a head 'the size of a saloon car' (rather small for such a gigantic creature, one would have thought) reads like an extract from Dennis Wheatley's 'The Devil Rides Out'.

All of which could give the impression that the book, though betraying considerable scholarship, was written tongue-in-cheek.

Nevertheless, the whole account cannot casually be dismissed as fiction - at least by anyone who - like myself - has had experience of good clairvoyants and has even had lost objects located by them in circumstances which preclude any form of cheating. In fact I once located a mislaid book myself by psychic means. The difference is that such events are, for me, sporadic, whereas the search for the Seven Swords of Meonia ('Put aside the Holy Grail, the hunt for the Seventh sword will be the greatest treasure hunt of all time!') has involved consistent psychic results from a whole group of people extending over a period of several years. That the entire quest was not pure invention by Andrew Collins and his collaborators is suggested by the fact that the book has references to actual discussions with named personages, who would almost certainly be highly offended if they had been misrepresented or misreported.

The *Seventh Sword* has not yet been found. When it IS found 'a very special event' may take place which 'will quietly turn a key to usher in the coming new age'.

But come closer: there's more. An appendix is devoted to practical instructions on how you too can develop your psychic abilities and participate in the search for the last of the Meonia Swords. The difficulty, as I see it, may lie in persuading people to get involved in a project which may bring them up against 'The Bane' and 'The Wheel' - sinister forces encountered by Collins and Co. throughout their search. Personally, if I had been confronted by the astral dragon of Post Coch, I wouldn't have hung around to judge the relative size of its head and body: I'd have been over the River Severn and back in Gloucestershire before my shadow had time to catch up.

So there I must leave the matter. An arbitrary judgement on my part about the factualness or otherwise of Andrew Collins' book would leave *PENDRAGON* readers less edified than Eddie-fied. So I will merely say that I found the book very interesting indeed and that I have tried to review it fairly. If you read *The Seventh Sword* yourself you might form your own more erudite opinion about it. Then again you might not.

(As an aside, I do hope Andrew Collins and his partners manage to find the *Sword* and save humanity before they all succumb to lung cancer. Group members light up so many cigarettes in the course of the narrative that it's a wonder the baddies could see to attack them through the smog ...)

Eddie Tooke.

('THE SEVENTH SWORD' is available at £14.99, post free, from Andrew Collins, ABC Books, PO Box 189, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex SS9 1NF.)

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OLD STONES OF GLOUCESTERSHIRE - a survey of megaliths and mark stones past and present' by Danny Sullivan (Reardon & Son, 1991. Card covers. 38 pages of text + 20 photographs).

'The following guide', says the author's note, 'is designed for the curious, the megalith hunter, walker and antiquary alike. It does not profess to be exhaustive.'

This well-produced and illustrated booklet adequately achieves its modest purpose and so compensates for omissions (where Gloucestershire is concerned) in the Ordnance Survey and other guides to prehistoric sites. All the sites listed are map-referenced for ease of location and a resume of their known history and legends is given, together with sensible speculative material to fill knowledge-gaps.

The introduction discusses sacred sites in general and their probable use by our ancestors before a decline in psychic sensitivity caused their purpose to be forgotten. Nothing new here but it does serve to remind us of that incorporeal factor which alone may enable us to make sense of the megaliths.

Old Stones of Gloucestershire is an intelligently researched and compiled booklet and is obtainable from G.E.M., PO Box 258, Cheltenham, GL53 0HR at £2.80 incl. p.& p.

Eddie Tooke.

(More reviews on p.15)

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The part of Merlin in the BBC six-part serial which started on Sunday November 17th was obviously pre-ordained to fit George Winter - or vice versa. According to an article by Derek Robins in *Western Morning News*, (sent in by Beryl Mercer), George 'admitted that he has a lot of empathy for Merlin'. Said the actor: 'Being Welsh, like Merlin, I read a lot about the Arthurian legends when I was at school. I really do think there is something magical out there but I don't know what it is ... My mother was a great believer in the supernatural. She's dead now but before I became an actor she had her fortune told by a gipsy who told her she had three sons and one of them would 'walk the boards'. This was before I'd even thought about going to drama school. It was uncanny.'

(The serial is based on *The Crystal Cave* and *The Hollow Hills* from the great Merlin trilogy by Mary Stewart. If you missed it, let's hope it will be repeated. Much of the dialogue is verbatim and the photography is attractive.



# The Wild Hunt

by Beryl Mercer

Some 30 or 40 years ago, an American folk-type song by Stan Jones became popular: 'Ghost Riders in the Sky' was a modern, transatlantic version of an ancient legend known in many parts of Britain and Europe - the legend of the Wild Hunt.

A terrifying band of spectral riders and hounds led by some divine, demonic or ghostly leader, the Wild Hunt could be heard on dark and stormy nights of midwinter. Twelfth Night Eve is one of the dates claimed for this apparition, and even in comparatively recent times, all prudent farmers and country-dwellers would carefully lock up their livestock, horses and domestic pets on that night. For one of the many names given to the leader of the Hunt was Cerne (Herne, Cernunnos), who had the head and great spreading antlers of a stag, and was equated by many authorities with the Greek god of the animals - Pan. From this latter name we derive our word 'panic', and it was widely believed that any animal who witnessed the passing of the Wild Hunt would run mad and destroy itself.

And not only animals; many are the blood-curdling tales of what happened to those unfortunates who did not have time to take cover before the Wild Hunt swept overhead, or to those rash enough (or perhaps drunk enough?) to look deliberately at the Riders, or even to address their leader. Christina Hole, well-known authority on folklore, writes in 'Man, Myth and Magic':

'It was commonly believed that to see the Wild Hunt as it swept by was dangerous. Men fled to their homes when they heard it approaching, and took care not to look out of their windows. One version of the legend says that any person who could not find shelter in time was liable to be seized, carried away over long distances, and finally abandoned in some unknown region far from his home. He could save himself only by falling face downwards on the ground so that he could see nothing, and holding fast to any available plant or tuft of grass until the dark company had passed.'

Regarding the many-named identity of the leader of the Hunt, Miss Hole writes:

'Odin, or Woden, his Germanic counterpart, is generally thought to have been the original leader of the Wild Hunt. Later on, when Christianity had dimmed the memory of the ancient deities, his place was often filled by the Devil ...' (who was it who said: 'the gods of the old religion become the devils of the new ...'?)

The most common description of the hounds is that they are white, with red ears and eyes. However, the spectral huntsman who is sometimes encountered on Dartmoor rides without followers but with a pack of jet-black hounds, and the fringes of this weirdly-persistent legend have also attached themselves to an anonymous being who drives a sinister black coach in which the souls of dying sinners are conveyed to the nether regions.

However, there are lighter, happier versions. In the Middle Ages the leader was often neither god nor devil but some human hero such as Theodoric the Great, Charlemagne - even Good King Wenceslas of Bohemia! Coming nearer home, in Shropshire it was Wild Edric, the 'resistance' hero who defied William the Conqueror for nearly three years, who was said to appear before a war, leading a band of followers towards the enemy country.

And of course, King Arthur is an obvious candidate, and indeed he is said to ride out with his knight-companions from South Cadbury ('Camelot'). They were believed to go hunting on wild winter nights down an ancient trackway running towards Glastonbury - a trackway still known as King Arthur's Causeway.

So: if you should be out after dark on Midwinter Eve, or Twelfth Night Eve - don't take your dog with you, and make sure the cat

is safely indoors. And if you should hear, overhead, the wild sounds of hounds baying and hunting horns winding ... well, as always, you have a choice. You can either bolt for cover, or fling yourself face down on the cold, unwelcoming ground ... or you can try convincing yourself that it's only a skein of 'night-flying' wild geese passing on their way to warmer waters ... It couldn't possibly be Cerne, or Odin, or the Devil - or even King Arthur ...

Could it ?

Post Scriptum:

An excellent, evocative description of the Wild Hunt is featured in 'The Dark is Rising', by Susan Cooper (Chatto & Windus, 1973). The most recent issue of PENDRAGON supplies a serendipitous explanation of a name used in the book; Alby Stone writes:

'According to the 'Gesta Danorum' of Saxo Grammaticus, Odin had a double, a mischief-maker named Mitothyn, who took Odin's place and thereby managed to create havoc.'

I had not heard of this particular 'dark twin' before - but it appears that Ms Cooper may have done, since she has given the name 'Mr. Mitothin' to the earthly semblance of the Black Rider, leader of the forces of the Dark.

It may interest some - particularly Alby Stone - that Ms Cooper provides Arthur with a son ... called BRAN. And an intriguing factor in the story is that Bran - 'the raven boy' - is an albino ...

## BOOK REVIEWS



'Holy Wells'. Cuming Walters; 40pp. £1.95 + 25p p.& p. Animals of the Church, in Wood, Stone and Bronze. T. Tindall Wildridge; 33pp. £1.50 + 25p p.& p. Both from Heart of Albion Press, 2 Cross Hill Close, Wymeswold, Loughborough, LE12 6UJ.

Nos. 3 & 4 of Bob Trubshaw's 'Hark Back' series; each is a reprint chapter from 'The Church Treasury', published in 1898.

The gentlemen authors of these books were, recognisably, scholars in a C19th sense: divines and students of literae humaniores. To them our ancestors were 'savages' liable to 'the crude fancies of paganism' and victims of the 'gross superstition of heathendom'. One senses that, in their eyes, the naiads and fauns of Arcadia did not share the darkness of their Northern counterparts. The taking over of pagan wells by Christian saints was necessary to elevate the universal water-worship of the Celts to respectability. To see the wells through their Victorian eyes is fascinating. There are numerous examples of wishing and healing wells, of prophetic and cursing wells, rag wells, pin wells, and much more; together with a variety of associated customs and folk-lore. An Arthurian reference relates to The Doom Well of St. Madron where King Arthur underwent the ordeal of plunging his right hand in the saint's spring. Arthur, 'the man of pure heart', came out unscathed, but the traitorous Mordred's hand was scalded by the furiously bubbling water. Marvellous!

The second booklet is a catalogue of animal iconography to be found in our churches. There is an extended discussion of the dragon ('ever evil') and a picture gallery of lion door knockers ('emblem of resurrection'). The opening discussion on animal symbolism includes a provocative view of the fear of animals as the 'Dark Devourer'. This reminded me of the fascinating quotations in Bruce Chatwin's 'The Songlines'.

Good luck to Bob Trubshaw's venture: I hope he will recover many more such gems from the dusty corners of our antiquarian libraries.







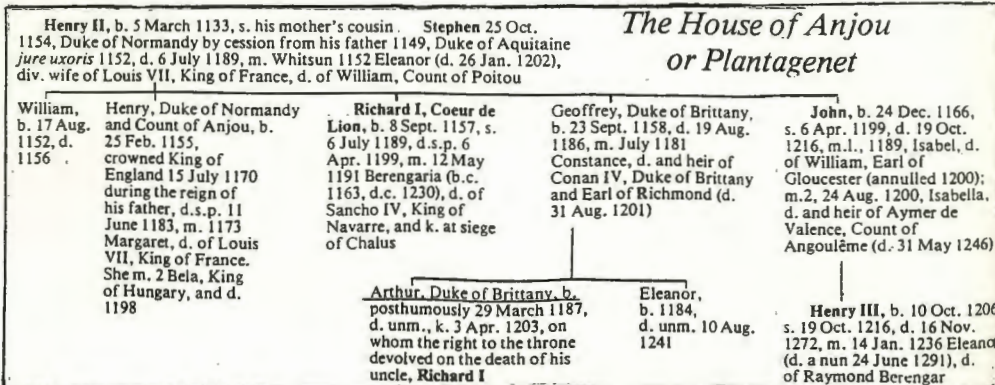
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We Pendragons know that Arthur is Rex quondam Rex futurus and that he will return in his own person one day. In the meantime why is it that a second Arthur, born in the line of succession to our royal dynasties, has never sat on the British throne? Might there have been a King Arthur II? I invite you to share a quest with me in search of an answer to this intriguing question, and along the way enjoy some byways of history and Arthurian literature.

Let us go first to the majestic cathedral at Worcester with its great tower looking down into the waters of the River Severn. There are three clues within its walls to help us find our path. Here, before the high altar, lies King John, England's most notorious king, stiff in his marble robes. This is the oldest royal effigy in England. The first of the Angevin kings not to be buried in France, he lies here at his own request. But what has the evil John to do with Arthur? His family tree will help explain.

By conquest and marriage Henry II established the vast Plantagenet empire, stretching from Scotland to the Pyrenees, which he passed on to his sons Richard and John. Of his five sons William, Henry and Geoffrey died during his lifetime. This left Prince Arthur, Duke of Brittany, as the declared heir of his uncle Richard the Lionheart: but Uncle John had other ideas. In those days the right of conquest was recognised - as long as the challenger had some claim to royal blood: swords talked. Who had the better right to succeed - a younger brother or the son of an elder brother? England and Normandy chose John (the Archbishop of Canterbury obligingly proposed that the crown of England is an elective one): Anjou, the spiritual and geographical centre of the



Angevin lands; chose Arthur. Constance of Brittany raised support for her son's claims and Philip of France and Leopold of Austria joined Arthur, for their own ends.

The conflict began around Angers, the capital of Anjou. With uncharacteristic efficiency John travelled nearly a hundred miles in two days and trapped Arthur and his staff while they were enjoying a pigeon breakfast. Arthur was captured and murdered in 1103, presumably on John's order. His 'dispiteous torture and mysterious death' has chilled Shakespeare's audiences since 1597. In 'King John' the saintly boy melts the heart of Hubert de Burgh, the knight sent to put out his eyes. Unable to sleep because of a feverish headache, Hubert is nursed by Arthur through the night with loving care. The prince holds a wetted handkerchief to his hot brow and soothes him with gentle sympathy. Hubert tells John that Arthur is dead and Arthur tries to escape over the castle roof, only to fall to his death. His mother Constance tells us:

For since the birth of Cain, the first male child,  
To him that did but yesterday suspire,  
There was not such a gracious creature born.

... never, never

Must I behold my pretty Arthur more.

The poor creature goes mad with grief and dies. Her sorrow is beautifully expressed in the short speech that begins:

Grief fills the room up of my absent child,  
Lies in his bed, walks up and down with me.

(Act 3, scene 4)

In fact, Arthur, only 16, had already led an army to besiege his grandmother, Eleanor of Aquitaine. Undoubtedly this Plantagenet sprig would have made a redoubtable King Arthur, and would have ruled an empire almost as large as that of his legendary namesake. In two years John Lackland had lost most of his continental lands - never again did he seem to be where the action was!

It was no accident that Arthur, Duke of Brittany, was given his name. His grandfather was Conan IV, Duke of Brittany and Earl of Richmond. The prince would have been well aware of the exploits of his namesake, for the Bretons awaited the return of Arthur as the Jews awaited the Messiah. They were, of course, 'Britons', Celts who had left their native lands because of the Saxon invasions. During the C5th and C6th British aristocrats and their households began to settle in Armorica, which became known as 'Petit Bretagne'. With them they took their language and their folk-tales, legends and myths. Visiting France today you soon become aware that the Bretons are a distinct people. They are proud of their linguistic and cultural ties with Cornwall and Wales and mutual activities are gaining ground - in folk-festivals, eisteddfodau, etc. I remember that, as a boy growing up in South Wales, I watched itinerant bicycle-wheeling onion-men from Brittany conversing excitedly with the old Welsh-speakers.

As exiles these people clung to the memories of their glorious past for six centuries, for in the C12th a French writer warned against telling the Bretons that King Arthur was dead and would not return ... 'hardly will you escape unscathed without being whelmed by the curses or crushed by the stones of your hearers.' More than any other people, it seems, the Bretons preserved





the old stories of Arthur, as a precious guarded flame to light their 'Breton Hope' of greatness renewed.

No literature in the Breton tongue has survived from the C12th, but Giraldus Cambrensis attributed the story of Morganis who took Arthur to Avalon to the 'Fabulosi Britones et eorum cantores.' Peter of Blois, a travelled civil servant of the C12th, wrote that their sad tales of Arthur, Gawain and Tristan moved their audiences to tears.

The 'conteurs' who wandered through Europe relating heroic tales were mainly Bretons. They spread the 'Matter of Britain' from Scotland to Italy, wherever French was understood, and made Arthur and his war band the focal centre of their stories of a medieval king and his court. The bilingual Bretons were in an ideal position to communicate with their cousins the Cornish and Welsh, then to transmit Celtic traditions and stories into French - adapted and modernised to suit new audiences.

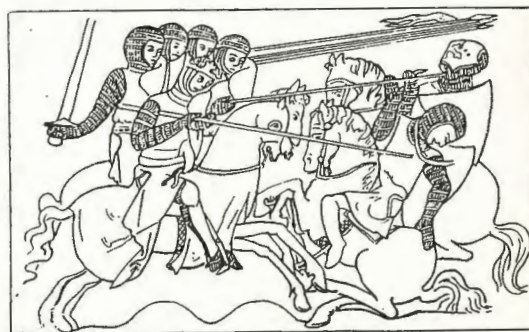
The dispersion of the original Celtic stories is impossible to unravel today. The legend of Drust (Tristan) seems to have emigrated to Brittany from Ireland via Wales and Cornwall and returned there via France and England. The Welsh contribution is a problem of dating the earliest manuscripts. 'Culhwch and Olwen', which has Arthur presiding over a fantastic world of magic and enchantment, may be the earliest Arthurian tale in any language - a glimpse of lost treasures.

French romance writers of the C12th named the Breton lais as the origin of their stories. The Anglo-Norman writer, Marie de France - who may have been Henry II's sister - acknowledged this source material for her own 'Lais', written between 1155 and 1189. Arthur is mentioned in only one of these but the legendary sources are obvious.

The two streams seem to have come together after 1066, when a sizeable contingent of Bretons helped to win the crown of England for William the Conqueror at Hastings. The minstrels who rode with them would have met up with their Welsh counterparts in the settlement of land that followed. The title and extensive lands of the Earl of Richmond were awarded to Alain le Rouge and held by the Counts and Dukes of Normandy afterwards - Prince Arthur's grandfather included. Ironically, the Norman lords enjoyed the stories of a hero who had fought against the English like themselves.

One of these Breton knights or minstrels may have been the ancestor of the cleric Geoffrey of Monmouth, born in the Welsh marches. He was probably of Welsh/Breton descent, and his father's name was Arthur. If his 'ancient book' in the British language ever existed it is very likely that it came from Brittany. The 'Historia Regum Britanniae' (c.1138) was a best-seller and remained immensely popular for 400 years. Almost all the main ideas that are associated with Arthur appear in the 'Historia' and it became the basis for other medieval versions. It was rapidly translated into French and English from the original Latin.

Geoffrey's Arthur is a



10. ANGEVIN KNIGHTS IN BATTLE, FROM OLD MS.

proud medieval feudal king, a warrior and empire builder, but a faithful son of the church. In 1155, a Jerseyman living in Normandy, Robert Wace, wrote an enlarged version in sophisticated French verse: the 'Roman de Brut'. This gives an even more vivid impression of the splendid brilliance and elegance of Arthur's court. In another work he addressed himself to rich folk 'who possess revenues and silver; for, after all, it is for them that books are made.'

He presented his poem to Eleanor of Aquitaine, Henry II's wife. Henry founded the Angevin empire which Wace reflects and idealises. Geoffrey Ashe has written, '... he made them heirs of a greater sovereignty, spiritually if not lineally. In 1187 the name Arthur was given to Henry's grandson who would have ascended the British throne, but his uncle John prevented it.'

The links with Brittany continue: the first great romance writer, Chretien de Troyes places Arthur's court in Brittany and Wolfram von Eschenbach places him at Nantes, a Breton city. By now the old Celtic tales are being transformed by the ideals of chivalry and the conventions of amour courtois - where love becomes a game with complicated rules.

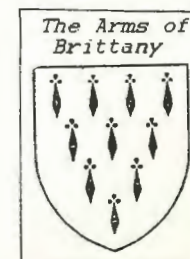
Following the byways, as I promised, let us take ship again to England and journey back to Worcestershire where our search began. Here, at Arley Regis on the River Severn, somewhere around 1200, an English priest named Layamon wrote his 'Brut'. It is the first presentation of Arthur in the English language and the earliest evidence of the native English adopting him as a hero and part of their own history. For Layamon the British Arthur is the greatest king who ruled the land and he writes enthusiastically of his destruction of the 'Saxish men'. He seems to be looking back at the Britons and Saxons as all English: perhaps the Norman Conquest was still in his mind. It is a sympathetic portrait of a people forced to defend their homeland against invaders. We should remember that he was a cleric, however, and his Arthur is a Christian opposing pagans. Another theory is that he may have been trying to present a moral to his people by implying that the Norman Conquest was a judgement from heaven on the English. By the middle of the C15th few could have read the language of the 'Brut': the story of King Arthur was not widely known to the English reading public. Then, in 1469, Sir Thomas Malory finished 'The Whole Book of King Arthur and his Noble Knights of the Round Table'. It was published by William Caxton in 1485. Caxton's comment is interesting ... 'that Arthur is more spoken of beyond the sea than ... in England'. The book was immediately popular; five editions were sold before 1600.

1485 was the year when another Earl of Richmond sailed from Brittany to fulfil the 'British Hope' and reclaim Arthur's throne. See you at Worcester cathedral in March.

(F. Stedman-Jones.)



4. GREAT SEAL OF HENRY II





# LETTERS

Thanks very much for sending the Pendragon stuff for the literature festival. You'll be glad to know that the PENDRAGONS went, once again. A couple of people seemed really interested. I hope they will get in touch with you.

Meanwhile I have discovered the true location of Camelot! Forget Cadbury &c; it's really between Wigan and Preston, just off the M6 (see cutting). (Kevin O'Beirne, Sunderland.)

[Kevin, who runs a bright little journal, WEARWOLF (Tyne & Wear: get it?), enclosed a news cutting with details of Camelot Adventure Theme Park where, for £7.45, you have 'unlimited use of over 100 rides and attractions'. Well-signposted and accessible from the M6, Junction 27 (northbound) or Junction 28 (southbound) Camelot provides 'a magical day out for all the family'. Ed.]

I note the comments made by Charles Evans-Günther in his letter, and I am attaching a copy of my reply which you may include in the next issue of the Pendragon magazine.

*King Arthur of the Silures - The Documentary Evidence.*

The territory of the Roman Republic of the Silures, which was displaced by a monarchy early in the fifth century, included without doubt large parts of Gwent and Herefordshire, and extended east into the Forest of Dean, Gloucestershire, and west into Glamorgan.

After the Roman period the name Silures is not found, for the independent kingdom of Gwent took its name from their capital Venta Silurum, later Caerwent, and an official monument marks the spot. Venta Silurum (Caerwent) may be

regarded as the civil counterpart of the military fortress Isca Silurum (Caerleon upon Usk).

Thomas Malory, in 'Le Morte d'Arthur' (1485), identifies Camelot with Winchester. It would seem rather doubtful, however, that King Arthur would have kept his court at Winchester in view of the fact that during his time Venta Belgarum (Winchester) was a canton of the Gewissei, his enemies. However, Caerwent, in Gwent, the ruins of which are still visible, may in later times have been confounded with Caer Wynt, now Winchester. We have now the plausible hypothesis:

Venta Belgarum = Caer Wynt = Winchester;

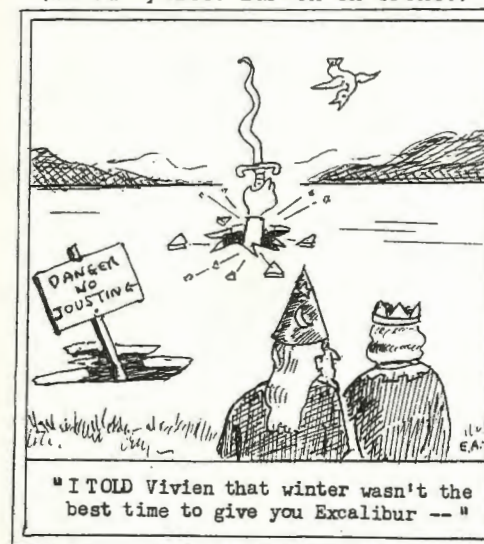
Venta Silurum = Caerwent = Camelot.

In 'Monasticon Anglicanum', 111, 190, from the ancient register of the Cathedral Church of Llandaff, is the only instance in which occurs, apparently in that register, the name of Arthur, so spelled, as the king of Gwent, son of Mouric, king of Morgannwg, and father of Morcant. Otherwise, he is uniformly called Athruis, who was a contemporary of Comergwynus, a bishop of the see of Llandaff. Further investigation reveals that Comergwynus is identical with Athruis' brother Comereg, Bishop of Erging, to whom he granted Llan Cinmarc h, now Chepstow.

The 'Vita Cadoci', compiled between 1073 and 1086 by Lifris or Lifricus, who was the son of Bishop Herewald of Llandaff and master of St. Cadoc of Llancafarn, preceded Geoffrey of Monmouth's 'Historia Regum Britanniae' (c.1136) by two generations. It shows Arthur to have been ruling in south-east Wales and as among the more prominent kings of his time. It also mentions a grant of land known as Cadox-juxta-Neath to St. Cadoc by a certain king Arthmael. According to the genealogy contained in the Book of Llandaff, the king reigning over Morgannwg and Gwent at this

time was Athrwys ap Meurig ap Tewdrig. It therefore follows that Athrwys and Arthmael are one and the same person.

The Rev. John Whitaker, the foremost historian in Lancashire, in his 'History of Manchester' (1775), names Arthur as king of Gwent with his court at Caerwent. The historians who positively identify Arthur with Athrwys ap Meurig ap Tewdrig, king of Morgannwg and Gwent, are Owen Pughe in 'The Cambrian Biography' (1803); John H. Parry in 'The Cambrian Plutarch' (1834); and Owen 'Morien' Morgan in 'A History of Wales' (1911). Other writers who refer to the identification but do not necessarily agree with it are Joseph Ritson in 'The Life of King Arthur from Ancient Historians and Authentic Documents' (1825), and Rice Rees in 'An Essay on the Welsh Saints' (1836). John Duncombe, in his 'Collections towards the History and Antiquities of the County of Hereford' (1804), refers to Arthur as the king of the Silures, and so does Ebenezer Cobham Brewer in his 'Dictionary of Phrase and Fable' (1870). (David Pykitt, Burton-on-Trent.)



May I offer Beryl some assistance in her tracking down of Llacheu ap Arthur?

The Welsh Triads (4 & 91) tell us he was the illegitimate son of Lysanor. The C13th 'Black Book of Carmarthen' (Verses on the Graves) records the burial places of Welsh heroes including Llacheu. In a battle against the Saxons - commanded by Arthur - his general was Geraint ap Erbin, Prince of Devon and one of 'the three fleet owners' of the Triads. The poem says his harbour was at Longborth (= 'ship harbour') and this could well have been Exmouth.

In later romances, Llacheu is identified with Loholt who was slain by the envious Kay. In the 'Perlesvaus' his mother is Guinevere and she dies of grief after her son's head is sent to her in a wooden box.

In the 'Spoils of Annwfn' Llacheu sails with Arthur to the Otherworld in the ship Prydwen in search of a magic cauldron. He is listed as a son and a counsellor of Arthur in 'The Dream of Rhonabwy' (not 'Culhwch and Olwen'). It is Gwydre, another son, who is slain by the boar Twrch Trwyth in 'Olwen'.

There is no mention of the killing of Llacheu by Arthur in any source that I know; that story concerns Anir (Amr) whose grave was one of two marvels associated with Arthur by Nennius.

There is, of course, no canon of Arthurian stories: this is why Malory's version has become so influential.

(F. Stedman-Jones, Cheshire.)

I really enjoyed my day in Bristol on Sept. 29th; it was great to meet you all, and to put 'faces to names' at last. A pity that only a dozen or so could make it - though perhaps Kate's house would have been hard put to accommodate more! (And many thanks, Kate, for your hospitality and the overnight loan of your sofa ...)

Charles Evans-Günther's version of Arthur seems to tally fairly closely with my own, i.e.



unchivalrized, unChristianized, and uncrowned! However, I suspect that on the matter of Merlin's existence, we 'part company' - right, Charles? (Incidentally, my husband says he much enjoyed the copy of DRAGON you sent me last month, and is considering writing to you about it.) What IS your attitude to Merlin and his relationship with Arthur in the legends? And Eddie: how about a series on 'What MERLIN means to me'?

I'm a bit puzzled by Alby Stone's reference (PENDRAGON 21/4, p.25) to Yggdrasil being characterised as Odin's horse; surely the latter is the eight-legged Sleipnir? Alby also says that Valholl is at the foot of Yggdrasil; according to Mackenzie and Guerber, it is in Asgard, the city of the gods which is above Yggdrasil. At the foot of the tree are the Plains of Hela, Nidhug the serpent, and the four giant white harts which bite the Tree's buds and leaves. (Once again it looks as if Alby and I have been reading different books...)

Another point which I'm still waiting for Alby to mention is the possible confusion between 'pecheur', meaning 'sinner', and 'pecheur', meaning 'fisherman'.

Talking Fred: ta for them few kind words about Scorpios ... although some years ago I was told by an astrologer friend that I have 'risen out of the plane of the Scorpion, into the sphere of the Eagle ...' which sounds very impressive - but I'm still trying to find out what it MEANS!

I note (p.29) that Fred refers to Ronald Miller's book, 'Will the Real King Arthur Please Stand Up' (which I THINK I read when it first appeared, but for some reason didn't buy a copy). One book which I did buy, in (I think) 1972, and which I don't think I've ever seen mentioned in PENDRAGON, is 'Arthur: Roman Britain's Last Champion' (Publ. David & Charles). I have always been curious about the nation-

ality of the author - Beram Saklatvala - does anybody know?) Browsing through this, I found on p.69:

'The leader of the group that met together was called Guorthigirnus by Nennius, and Gurthrigernus by Gildas. A Roman would have called him Vorthigernus or Vurthrigernus, and he is known to history as Vortigern. Nennius traces back his descent through many generations of kings. Therefore he was a member of one of the native princely houses which had resumed kingship when Roman rule ended.'

So the argument re name v. title is perpetuated here ...

Finally, back to Charles: I have just 'waded' through 'Culhwch and Olwen' (including the never-ending list of jaw-breaking names invoked by Culwyth in Arthur's hall!) - and not a mention of Llacheu can I find. Our 'Magainogion' is the translation by Gwyn and Thomas Jones (J.M. Dent, Everyman's Library, 1949, reprinted 1966). Perhaps you have someone else's version? - Charlotte Guest's maybe? Whatever, I'd be glad of a pointer as to exactly where I can find Llacheu's name in this legend.

(Beryl Mercer. Truro.)

[See F.S-J's letter above. Ed.]

(From Mary Long of Springfield, Illinois, via Beryl Mercer)  
I must admit that I was brought up short by my eye falling on mention of a RoseMARY LONGworth, also of Illinois! [PENDRAGON 21/3, editorial].

Whenever I see Cadbury mentioned, I think of the chocolate family and wonder if they originally came from there. (King Arthur's Choccy Bars?)

Re the Arthurian 'flowering' in the 50s to 70s: perhaps one could theorise that the original interest was revived in an austere post-war world - you know - what the pop psychologists would call the hunger for glamour and excitement, heroes and chivalry. I can see, too, that the 'psychedelic' art

of the later period might have connected with the sinuous art interpreting Arthurian lore - say, the pre-Raphaelites, and, later, Beardsley and Art Nouveau. Or maybe it was just its time?!

Mention of Bran. I didn't re-read Alby Stone's piece' [Mary is the member who originally supplied us with a copy of Alby's article in 'Folklore', since when he has written on the same theme especially for PENDRAGON. Ed.] but wasn't there a 'Bran, son of Arthur' in Susan Cooper's 'The Dark Is Rising' series? If so, perhaps a letter to Ms Cooper as to why she named him thus might produce an interesting reply.

As a new boy (well, boy-ish), I hesitate to make any suggestions: I've not seen enough journals or got to know the membership in any real sense. At the risk of repeating suggestions you may have received with tedious and soul-destroying regularity over the years, here are a few things I toyed with in my own time as a magazine editor (may the gods prevent it ever happening again!) and that one usually finds interesting or amusing when they appear in various other journals or mags.:

1. A 'notes and queries' column. Often amusing to Guardian readers (I'm told).
2. A regular members' profile

#### HAWKER and the GRAIL

'The conscious water saw its God and blushed -'  
It is difficult to imagine a more economical yet evocative description of the water/wine conversion at Cana. Yet the writer was a poet of local rather than national acclaim.

Robert Stephen Hawker, C19th vicar of Morwenstow, was a poet of no mean ability. In 1864 - 6 years before Tennyson tackled the same theme - he wrote a poem called 'The Quest of the Sangreal', which caused his biographer S. Baring-Gould to comment: 'If the two poems be regarded without previous knowledge of the name of their composers, I am not sure that some judges would not prefer the masterpiece of the Cornish poet ...'

Unfortunately, Hawker's poem is all too short: the Quest barely gets started. One would like many more lines such as these:



... evil days came on,  
And evil men: the garbage of their sin  
Tainted this land, and all things holy fled.  
The Sangreal was not. On a summer eve  
The silence of the sky brake up in sound;  
The tree of Joseph glowed with ruddy light;  
A harmless fire curved like a molten vase  
Around the bush - and all was gone.'

(E.A.T.)

feature - interviews or autobiogs (too tacky?). The 'What Arthur Means to Me' series probably covers that anyway...

3. An 'occasional papers' series - it used to work reasonably well for things like the Institute for Geomantic Research and kindred groups. It might be expensive to run, and might require a certain degree of editorial ruthlessness, but it could equally become self-financing and otherwise rewarding.

4. A Pendragon Library? Fraught with danger!

5. A list of members (Data Protection Act and members willing) - might stimulate communication, and could be mailed out with the Journal twice annually.

Well, that's it, for what it's worth ... you've probably heard it all before ...

(Alby Stone. London.)

[Thanks for the useful suggestions. Alby: we'll look into them. Fred, incidentally, is already working on an 'occasional paper' scheme. Ed.]

No, Deirdre of Chipping Sodbury, you CAN'T run an Agony Aunt column. No, nor a Pendragon Agony Aunt one. You've got the wrong idea as usual. Agony Aunts CURE agony; they don't CAUSE it. And yes; that's right. H2S04 on the gift-wrapped bottle you received from 'A Well-wisher' IS the chemical formula for Vodka. Happy Christmas!



# The Fisher King and Odin:

## ~ Norse Tradition and the Grail Legends ~

### : ALBY STONE :

Part Four - conclusion:-

A truly exhaustive comparison would require a book in itself; but it has, hopefully, been shown that there are numerous points of resemblance between Odin and the Fisher King; and that the myth of Odin fills many gaps left if that of Brán is superimposed upon the legend of the Fisher King. A direct transmission, perhaps of a now-lost myth that was still in circulation at the time of the appearance of the grail romances, cannot - and should not - be ruled out entirely; but the circumstances outlined here are not promising. There are problems for the present analysis, in that Odin has usually been equated with the Celtic divinity Lugos (Lugh). This equation has been based on the shared polyvalent nature of the two, and it may be that the continuing reappraisal of Celtic deities may change this - there are, after all, several Celtic gods who have one or two things in common with the Odin we know, and Lugos/Lugh himself has aspects that conflict directly with those of Odin. But we should note that the Irish myths depict Lugh as killing his grandfather Balor (compare Odin's nicknames *Bileyg*, 'one-whose-eye-deceives-him', and *Báleyg*, 'flame-eyed-one') by hurling a spear through his single eye. Again, Ireland has long been thought to have retained the most archaic and conservative version of Celtic mythology, but Beli (Bilé) has become a remote and vague ancestral deity, and Brán seems to have reappeared there at about the same time as he did in the Welsh tradition. In Ireland, Lugh is probably the most important god in the mythology that has come down to us, and it seems likely that he, too, has acquired some characteristics of an older figure. However, these are comparatively minor problems. They do not seriously affect this analysis as a whole. Another problem is presented by the apparent transplantation of the Grail Castle adventure into fourteenth-century Icelanic tale *Thorstein Mansion-Night*; but virtually all of this can be found, in fragmented form, in much earlier Norse sources. Interestingly, the magical vessel in this tale is a drinking-horn named *Grimr* - a common name for Odin - with a speaking human head at its tip.

The greatest difficulty faced by the present argument is that of the rough contemporaneity of the written texts in which the three traditions - Norse, Celtic, and Arthurian - are enshrined. Arthurian material was rendered into Old Norse, and has even been found in Faroese ballad form: a factor which could be used as a basis for arguing that Arthurian material influenced the composition of texts containing the northern mythology - there is even one episode, in *Völsunga Saga*, that depicts Odin presiding in Merlin-like manner over an act that directly parallels the famous 'sword-in-the-stone' test. There is also the near-certainty that the Welsh romance *Peredur* is itself a rendering of Chrétien's *Perceval*, Celtic myth returning to its source, and re-adapting itself

accordingly. This last does not have any bearing on this discussion; and the rest is not too much of a problem, as we shall see - but they raise doubts, nonetheless.

If Odin did intrude upon 'native' insular Celtic tradition, bring about the resurgence of Brán, and thus manage to inveigle himself into the grail legend in the guise of the Fisher King, when and where did this occur? One likely place, if indeed the process can be pinned to one locality, would have been the northwest of what is now England, perhaps even southwestern Scotland. That is where the Britons came into direct contact with a strong presence from continental Germany; first of all from 43 AD onward, in the shape of German legions of the Roman army, who were based along Hadrian's Wall in ever-increasing numbers, bringing with them their religion, known from inscriptions in that region, and intermarrying with the native Celts, as deduced from the incidence of Germanic names recorded among British families; secondly, there were the English, migrants from northwestern Germany who later dominated the area. From the early Middle Ages (eighth century) on, Scandinavian elements, Vikings, arrived, raiding and settling on the west coast of Britain, and in Ireland. This occurred during the period immediately preceding the earliest probable date for the accretion of parts of the *Mabinogion* as oral composition, the eighth century. It is generally believed that the bulk of the *Mabinogion* is only traceable to the tenth century; and the extant manuscripts are from the twelfth century at the earliest. There are, of course, older 'native' texts, notably the *Gododdin*, which was probably composed, orally, in the mid-seventh century; but none have been definitively dated, as oral or written text, any further back than that. The Vikings also gained a foothold in Wales, particularly in and around Dyfed. Sandwiched between these two arenas, and with English pressure from the east, lies the area in which most of the *Mabinogion* action occurs. The exact place in which the Four Branches took shape is still a matter for debate, but this region seems as good a choice as any, given the topography of the tales. It is easy to see how the grim god of the Germanic warriors would have impressed the Celtic population, and so gained a place in their lore. It should also be remembered that much of the contact was peaceful and commercial, rather than hostile, and so congenial to cultural and religious exchange. And, as H.R. Ellis Davidson has shown, in these matters Celts and Germans were not so far apart.

What of the Old Norse sources in which much of Odin's mythology is enshrined? Snorri's *Edda* dates from the early thirteenth century; but the bulk of his material was drawn from the poems of the *Elder Edda*, the earliest known manuscript of which has been dated to the late thirteenth century - but Snorri's text demonstrates that there must have been at least one written text prior to his own work. Linguistic analysis has shown that the most likely date for their appearance in their extant form is the early ninth century; but variant material in Saxo's *Gesta Danorum* (thirteenth century) suggests derivation from older mutual sources, as do German versions of some material dating from the sixth century; and English versions from the early eighth century. Comparative mythology and archaeological verification push the dates of both Celtic and Germanic material, or at least the bare bones of it, back further still; but we have seen where this leaves Brán.





In short, the evidence of literary dating is inconclusive; the mythological analysis, however, is more persuasive, and is supported by archaeology and historiography, to some extent. The subject is still open to argument, but, whatever the truth of the matter, the exchange of Celtic and Germanic mythic material was most certainly not a one-way passage. John Carey, in a recent article, has shown that the myth of Odin's eye seems to have found its way into popular Irish religious folklore; perhaps more of Odin found a foster-home in Welsh lore, and ensured him a place in the Arthurian tradition.

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# STABLE-TACK EDDIE TOOK

A Tale for Pendragonettes

'Nonsense!' Joe Blundell's voice held amused tolerance. 'Asses and oxen are NOT gifted with the power of speech on Christmas Eve. It's an old Saxon superstition.'

'Celtic,' murmured his wife mildly.

'All right then - Celtic.'

Jeannie and John looked crestfallen: 'But Daddy: we heard them last Christmas and I bet they do it again tonight!'

'What you heard was probably the sound of wind in the eaves. Your imaginations did the rest.'

'But we DID hear them, Daddy!' protested John. 'I KNOW it was them. Neddy hee-hawed before he started to talk.'

'So did Nina!' chimed in Jennie: 'I could TELL it was her.'

'Nonsense!' scoffed her father.

Mrs. Blundell saw the usual signs of an impending argument - doomed to end in tears - and hastened to cool the situation.

'Does it really matter, Joe? They're only seven, you know. It can't do any harm, can it?'

Joe Blundell sighed in resignation and pushed back his plate. He looked at his watch. 'Well I can't waste time arguing now. I must get down to Fenshaw's. The tractor's mended and I've got a two-mile walk to collect it.' He put on his coat and a couple of scarves and opened the door. 'Looks like we're in for some more snow too.'

The barn housing the children's donkeys adjoined the cottage. As he passed it, a sudden thought made him chuckle to himself. 'That's it! That'll settle the matter once and for all.'

The night sky was black; full of snow except for one patch where a solitary star shone through. The clock struck nine. A pattering of feet down the stairs heralded the arrival of the twins, wide-eyed and bubbling over.

'Why are you out of bed?' asked Joan Blundell, not too sternly.

'We've just heard them. Mummy! We heard Neddy and Nina talking to each other!'

Their father sighed. 'Right. That's it! It's time to prove to you that you imagined it. Get your coats and shoes.'

With his wondering family in tow he led the way to the barn. flung open the door and switched on the light. 'There!'

His wife and the two children crowded into the doorway. There stood the donkeys - scarves knotted round their muzzles.

'NOW tell me how you can have heard them speak!'

'Oh, Joe!' exclaimed his wife reproachfully. 'Was that really necessary? Did you have to shatter their illusions like this?'

'Well - it's the only way to deal with silly superstitions, isn't it?'

Nevertheless, Joe Blundell felt slightly guilty as he went over to the donkeys and untied the scarves. The donkeys snorted, hee-hawed a couple of times, then -

'Ahh. That's better!', said Nina, shaking her head.

'You're telling me!' said Neddy gruffly, twitching his ears: 'What a way to treat a couple of not-so-dumb animals!'

The barn floor was too solid for Joe Blundell to fall through, but it did seem to him to wobble a bit. 'But - but -' He swallowed.

'Granted you can talk; I can't deny that. But how could the children have heard you speaking when you were gagged like that? There's no such thing as magic. At least I - I ...' His voice trailed off.

Neddy gave a snort of contempt. 'There is: but it wasn't.'

'Then what? How ...?'

'It's perfectly simple. Show them, Nina!'

Nina walked over to the manger and nuzzled some hay out of the way. A small oblong black box was revealed. A cassette recorder.

'Hee-haw!' she said. 'What John and Jennie heard was a recording we made LAST Christmas Eve ...'



# TALKING

'The Head of Bran was taken by his seven companions to Harlech, where they lived in happy enchantment for seven years, and the birds of Rhiannon sang to them across the water. Then they journeyed on to Gwailes and the Head of Bran continued to converse pleasantly with them for 80 years at The Assembly of the Wondrous Head.'

## Head



The Winter Solstice has come - Alban Arthuan, the Light of Arthur. Now darkness triumphs and yet gives way to light. The Great Mother gives birth to the Prince of Peace, the Divine Child of Promise who will conquer the darkness and banish the powers of evil.

### THE MEDIA:

'Brenin Arthur a'r Blewin Hir': No my typewriter has not developed a fault! A scan of pantomimes and children's theatre around the country this Christmas has revealed one Arthurian show at Aberystwyth. The title is translated as 'Merlin & King Arthur'. If you speak Welsh or would like to hear it spoken ring Aberystwyth Arts Centre for details on 0970-623232.

'Tales of King Arthur': this play by John Chambers was given eight performances by the Manchester Youth Theatre at the Forum, Wythenshawe as part of the city's International Festival of Arts and Television this autumn. It was directed by Noreen Kershaw of 'Brookside' fame and described itself as 'a show for everybody: magic, comedy, love as the young Arthur tries to cope with finding himself king.' The festival programme asked, 'Who will be the stars of the future in this year's productions? Come along and see!' On Granada TV's 'Theatre in the North West' the critic was careful not to deflate young hopefuls too much, but his comment was revealing. 'The cast were led into doing it at face value, it was a bit hackneyed.' I have found productions of Arthurian plays disappointing over the years, I confess: 'face value' they do tend to be rather pompously heroic and stilted, that is why the Hammersmith 'Morte d'Arthur' last year interested me. I think TV and film are able to encompass the size, scope and magic of the legends more successfully. This is certainly proving to be so in:

'Merlin of the Crystal Cave': BBC 1's serial in six parts started on 17th November and is a version of Mary Stewart's books 'The Crystal Cave' and 'The Hollow Hills', a dramatisation of the boy Merlin's adventures in a Britain torn apart by civil wars. The scale of the production is impressive: 1500 extras in the battle scenes and twelve stuntmen. The series was shot in Snowdonia, North Wales, on nine locations; a polystyrene Stonehenge, a Roman fortress and a C5th sailing ship were among the specially constructed sets. At the time of my writing this, three episodes have been shown and it gets steadily more gripping. I hope readers abroad will be able to see it eventually.

'Camelot': Did you know (I didn't) that the film 'Camelot' was shot at the time of the Cadbury excavations and that a map, which appears briefly in one scene, shows Camelot as being in Somerset? What is interesting about this is the location was chosen as a direct result of an inquiry by the film makers to the Camelot Research Committee. I am grateful to Mr. Geoffrey Ashe for this information: it appears in his book 'The Discovery of King Arthur'.

'The Fisher King': Terry Gilliam features Robin Williams as a weird and crazy figure, a sort of 'King o the bums'. His speech tends to wander off into Arthurian doubletalk and he is haunted by a fearsome Red Knight, barely



glimpsed but full of symbolic power. This wise fool, once an academic, is tormented by the memory of the day his wife was senselessly murdered. His escape is to believe that he, too, is a knight charged with finding the Holy Grail: which is in a billionaire's castellated mansion on the Upper East Side of New York. Barry Norman described the film as sentimental and unbelievable - with a script 'as full of holes as a hobo's socks'. He also judged it to be funny, imaginative and touching. The film is overlong, at 137 mins., and the surrealistic imagery virtually limited to the Red Knight and the wonderful dance in Grand Central Station. Jeff Bridges is excellent as a man torn by guilt and conflict. I'm sure it will be a box-office hit.

'Down to Earth': This half-hour archaeological magazine on Channel 4 television on Tuesday evenings (8.30-9.00 p.m.) is not to be missed. Topics have included: the Alpine glacier bronze-age man; the Tintagel excavations; prehistoric burial rites along the Dorset cursus; the Cerne Abbas Giant; Pictish brochs; Anglo-Saxon sites, the Dark Ages as a Golden Age for the peoples of the Northern seas. The Gundestrup cauldron, 'the greatest monument to Celtic religion', is now thought to be the work of five 'virtuoso' silversmiths, members of the itinerant, marginal peoples of Europe and Asia Minor. Traditionally, the cauldron depicts the horned god Cernunnos and the god Taranis, but the iconography was compared in the programme with Indian deities. This may well challenge the traditional views of Iron Age society in Europe. A fortnightly newsheet is available from: Down to Earth, P.O. Box 400, London, W3 6XJ. Nos.1,2,3 are available at £1 each. They supplement the programme material with extra information and reading lists. Excellent.

### Computer Software:

We do our best to keep up-to-date, so I am including this information for computer buffs:

'Lancelot': is a 3-part adventure, packed with puzzles and over 60,000 words of text. It claims to 'recreate the time of wizards and knights of the Round Table in a quest for the Holy Grail'. Europress software, 11 - adult, available in tape (text only) and disc (with graphics) for Amstrad, Spectrum, Commodore, PC.

'Arthur - a Multi Media Pack': This pack is designed for educational use, it includes disc, project sheets, audio tape of Arthurian stories, 20 slides and commentary tape, information book for teacher. It is 'a class project in history and myth with follow-up cross-curricular potential. Arthur, the Round Table, Merlin & Lancelot come alive in your classroom', 8 - 13, colour/sound. For information of both packages: Rickitt Educational Media, Mailing Dept. Ilton, Ilminster, Somerset, TA19 9HS.

### OUT & ABOUT:

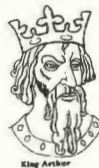
You may be thinking about jaunts and holidays in 1992 already, many people do over the Christmas season, so here is some information about newly opened or particularly recommended visitors centres, exhibitions, etc.

'The Wars of the Roses': Major and Mrs. Holt's Battlefield Tours, now in their 16th year, travel to the sites of famous battles all over the world. Their latest brochure includes a three-day tour, 11th-13th Sept. 1992, staying at Leicester. There are talks, visits to Stoke Field and Bosworth, also to other Midland sites linked to the Wars of the Roses. Highlights are: The Bowmen of Bosworth and the Plantagenet Society's unique enactment of the Battle of Bosworth, 1485.

Write for information: Major & Mrs. Holt's Battlefield Tours Ltd., 15 Market St., Sandwich, Kent CT13 9DA. (0304-612248). Or if you would like to organise your own visit to Bosworth: Resident Warden, Bosworth Battlefield Visitor Centre, Sutton Cheney, Market Bosworth, Leicestershire, CV13 0AD. (0455-290429). Tours, leaflets, etc.

'Feats of the Longbowmen': This is another of Major Holt's tours, visiting Crecy, Agincourt, Calais, with guided visits, archery demonstrations, Olivier's 'Henry V', and talks.

Coracles: These shallow, basket-like boats have been used in the U.K. since pre-Roman times. The art of coracle-making and paddling is still alive, you can even have a go at paddling in a Welsh river. The National Coracle Centre at Cenarth Falls, Newcastle Emlyn, Dyfed, SA38 9JL (0239-710209) will be re-opening next spring. There you can see coracles from Wales, Ireland, India, Iraq and Vietnam in a C17th working flour mill. It opened on Good Friday and has already





attracted over 12,000 visitors. At the Bewdley Museum, The Shambles, Load Street, Bewdley, Worcs. DY12 2AE (0299-403573) there is a course in coracle-making and a regatta every year. Another contact is The Coracle Society, Welsh Folk Museum, St. Fagans, Cardiff CF5 6XB (0222-569441). The Society aims to preserve, research and expand the use of the coracle.

**The Jubilee Maze:** This maze was built to celebrate the Jubilee of H.M. Queen Elizabeth II in 1977 and opened in 1981. It has 12 routes to the temple of Diana in the centre. You can rest on seats along the path and listen to the laughter. At night it is illuminated: 200 metres from the beautiful River Wye, and Ross-on-Wye has a fine second-hand bookshop! Open: Good Friday - end of October. Ross-on-Wye, Herefordshire HR9 6BY. (0600-890360). While we're on mazes, Past Times Catalogue for Christmas has a 'Maze Game' (item 1354) £12.95. An intriguing and original game played on a board which depicts an 18th garden maze. 2-4 players-board, playing pieces, dice and rules. Past Times, Wootton Business Park, Abingdon, Oxon. OX13 6LG. (0865-326111).

#### Wrekin Trust:

Readers will be sorry to learn that Wrekin Trust at West Malvern, Worcs., which has organised so many workshops and courses over the past twenty years, has decided to suspend its activities for the foreseeable future. They will continue to provide mail-order books and cassettes.

**'Excalibur Celtic Festival, 92':** Member Ken Rees and Howard Middleton Jones have alerted us to the above festival which is to take place at Swansea between Aug.26th and Sept.6th next year. Mr.Middleton Jones founded the EXCALIBUR triathlon in 1988 and this is being extended into a two-week festival of sporting challenges and traditional Celtic music and crafts. Mr.Jones tells us that competitors have competed from all over the world, and writes: 'the theme of the triathlon was based on the Arthurian legend of the sword in the stone, hence the title of 'The Sword in the Stone Challenge' for the triathlon. This idea will be kept within the theme of the festival. The theme also emphasises Celtic heritage and seeks to capture the Hiraeth, the magic of Wales, and in particular the Gower area.

**'Rescue'** - The British Archaeological Trust: this is a registered charity dedicated to ensuring that the past is preserved for the future, especially ancient and historic remains. One of its aims is particularly important, in my view: to provide technical assistance and advice to local people and groups. Membership gives you 'Rescue News' (articles, information and illustrations.) details of excavations and new finds, lists of excavations open to the public, reduced rates on Rescue publications, access to lectures, conferences, activity days, tours to important sites, the satisfaction of helping to save YOUR heritage. Information: Rescue, The British Archaeological Trust, 15a The Bull Plain, Hertford, Herts, SG14 1DX. (Tel:0992-553377). Mon. Wed.morn. Fri.)

#### 'The White Cliffs Experience', Dover:

Based in the centre of Dover, this complex opened in May, 1991. It incorporates a unique 'historium' with a new complimentary museum of three floors, and cost £15 million. The designer was John Sunderland who was responsible for the Jorvik Centre at York, so you can expect something special. Ferocious Celtic warriors greet visitors to a fine panorama of Caesar's Invasion of Walmer Beach in 55 B.C. Caesar himself provides a personal narration of his glorious landing, on video, but this is soon undercut by less heroic accounts by some of the legionnaires who took part in the fighting. The Celtic culture and Druidic religion are explained in text, visuals and lifesize tableaux, and Roman life in Britain is illustrated through a series of accurate models. A street scene from Dover (Dubris) in A.D.140 concerns the hopes and views of soldiers, noblewomen, a merchant and a Celtic Queen, who tell their stories at the touch of a button. History is presented in a suitably questioning 'make-your-own-mind-up' tone, for this is a day-out for families AND an educational resource, geared to the National curriculum. There is an educational handbook for teachers and worksheets are available for visiting parties. The Experience has had 100,000 visitors in its first 3 months. Details: The White Cliffs Experience, Market Square, Dover, Kent. CY16 1PB. (0304-214566).

**Caradoc:** While we are talking about Celts and invading Romans, may I throw in my pennyworth on this? Charles Kightley Ph.D. has written: 'Caradoc, his name or nickname means something like 'the beloved one''. Another authority links the name Ceredig (meaning 'amiable') with Caradoc. Caradoc (originally Caratacos') latinized by the Roman historian Tacitus to 'Caractacus'. I have read several theories concerning the whereabouts of



his last battle but not about the meaning of his name or title. Museum of the Iron Age, Andover:

I visited this little gem in September. The Iron Age hillfort of Danebury Ring is 6 miles south-west of Andover. Over half of the 13-acre interior has been examined, with thousands of finds. This display is small enough to be digested in an hour and tries to convey what life was like for our 'prehistoric ancestors who farmed, fought, worshipped and died in Wessex, 70 generations ago'. Attractive guide-books are available, with text by Barry Cunliffe, who led the digs. Information: Andover Museum, Church Close, Andover, Hants. They told me that the Butser Iron Age farm should be open again in the spring '92.

#### EXCHANGE MAZAGINES:

**The Wild Places, No.3.** Editor Kevin McClure pays Pendragon a compliment in this issue: '[it proceeds] 'with its own pleasing quest into the 'Matter of Britain'... [and] avoids the sort of Pagan neo-fascism into which E.M. researchers sometimes fall ... the pleasure its readers derive from their researches comes over clearly'. This is generous from an editor of Kevin's experience and competence.

**Dragon, Vol.3.No.11:** An excellent feature is the section of book-reviews. Charles Evans-Günther has close contacts with the Clwyd library service (he tells me that the Arthurian library formerly at Llangollen, ECTARC, is now back at Mold). Two interesting articles featured are: 'Game-playing in Gawain and the Green Knight', and 'The Isle of Avalon'. The second reports the purchase of St.Tudwal's Island East by Carla Lane (of 'Liver Birds' and 'Bread' fame). Her sons are convinced that the island is the burial-site of King Arthur. It seems that Professor Norma Goodrich's theories may have been hijacked to substantiate this claim. I told you that you should subscribe to 'Dragon', didn't I?

**Meyn Mamvro:** Ancient stones and sacred sites in Cornwall: No.15.Summer '91. This edition is largely devoted to looking at the Arthurian links with Cornwall. 'we attempt to get behind the popularisation of the legend to a deeper understanding of the reality of the Arthurian mythos'. A feature of this magazine is its attractive artwork, and this thematic edition is of great interest to our own studies. Articles include: Tristan and Iseult in Cornwall, Arthurian Sites in Cornwall, Arthur at the Land's End, The Battle at Vellan-Druchar and book details. Contact: 51 Carn Bosavern, St.Just, Penzance, Cornwall. TR19 7QX, they may do you a photocopy; normally all copies of this mag. are sold on publication.

#### Crop Circles:

I watched 'The Strange Case of Crop Circles' on Channel 4, 27th October. Equinox, in their 'Science and Technology' series, examined the 'evidence'. Scientists and para-scientists were introduced and we heard of electrical whirlwinds, extra terrestrials and actually watched some self-confessed hoaxers using a lawn mower to create a not very impressive circle, with the farmer's active consent. Exchange Magazine 'News-Locum' No.9.Harvest 91, edited by member Beryl Mercer, contains a number of extracts from letters on this subject which seem to sum up the approaches heard on the TV programme. The writers range from PUZZLEMENT, 'It wasn't there the day before! CYNICISM, 'I would give the person who did it 6 out of 10, for effort!'; BELIEF IN NATURAL CAUSES, 'Mr.H. believes the circles may have been formed by a freak weather pattern or magnetic forces': ESOTERIC, 'The patterns are a message from a higher intelligence which may relate to the alignment of the planets in 1999'; PRAGMATISM, 'Many south-west farmers believe that the phenomena are more likely to be associated with happy travellers than extra terrestrial ones'. Apparently new circles are appearing on the Canadian prairie; must be hoaxers with combine harvesters.

**Llacheu:** Since writing my letter on this subject I had another look at Nicholas Gold's book 'The Queen and the Cauldron'. On pages 139, 140 he writes: 'Llacheu (Loholt in French) is the best documented [son]'. Triad four says that he is well-endowed (or possibly heir apparent). Triad 91 says that he is fearless). The Black Book of Carmarthen says that he made slaughter with Fair Cei before the pang from blue spears on the heights of Ystafinion. Dr.Gold comments, 'This would seem to be associated with the French story that Cai was responsible for Llacheu's death'. We are pleased to welcome Nicholas Gold to our membership and hope he will write for us.





#### WINCHESTER: GREEN MAN DAY, 19th October:

I attended this one-day course at King Alfred's College: it was led by William Anderson, author, and Clive Hicks, illustrator of the book I mentioned in XXI/3. In the morning there were illustrated lectures by each of them. Anderson reviewed the GM from prehistory and explored the themes of birth, death and renewal; of the GM as the witness of creation, the watcher and transmitter of life - he concerns what is creative and energetic in each age. Clive Hicks, an architect, spoke on the architecture of the romanesque and gothic cathedrals and explained the Christian significance of the appearance of the GM in various contexts in their iconography.

In the afternoon we visited Winchester Cathedral to look for the GM and returned to base to consider his links with Arthurian themes. In 'Gawain & the Green Knight' he intrudes as the fecund powers of nature to break up the devitalised temporal court. Severed heads (including Bran's) and healing cauldrons were considered as prototypes of the life-enhancing Grail.

But it was William Anderson's spontaneous account of his experiences at Eleusis in Greece that, for me, touched the deepest chords of the day. He described the desecration of the goddess's holy place, which has been made a wasteland by the petrochemical industry. It was a nightmare realisation of the myth of Demeter, of her withdrawing the earth's fertility because of the raping of her daughter Persephone the Maiden. Anderson's optimism as he discovered that spring flowers still grew in that wasteland touched me: in his words 'there is something there, inviolate still, which cannot be raped'.

Anderson sees the Green Man as an archetype which is re-emerging into the world consciousness through a kind of psychic photosynthesis. Today he is the child of Gaia who offers us a new freedom: 'he offers us the green of life which we must turn to gold'.

On this holiday I also explored the New Forest and I was reminded of Anderson's vision by the story of Peter de Roches, Bishop of Winchester. In 1216, hunting in the forest, he met King Arthur; recognising him he asked if he were saved. 'Certainly', replied King Arthur. 'I am hoping in the great mercy of God'. Then the Bishop asked for a sign so that he might convince the incredulous that he had really seen and spoken with Arthur. The king granted him the power of closing his right hand and having a butterfly flutter out when he opened it.

#### THE CELTS IN WALES: CARDIFF:

I eventually managed to get to this exhibition, on its last weekend. It was confined to one gallery and, to be honest, was not as attractively presented as some of the permanent exhibitions. There was no guide to the exhibits, as such, and the audio-visual presentation (of the various Celtic languages) was defective: I am told it had been for much of the duration of the exhibition. I also discovered that a 'comprehensive programme of lunchtime talks 'for all ages' had been published, covering dates from May 9th to Sept. 26th. As I had been in touch with the Museum and 'Celtica' long before the exhibition opened I felt rather peeved that I had not received this information. A few titles, at random, that would have interested me were: 'The Celtic Blacksmith', 'The Celtic World of the Supernatural', 'Prehistoric Welsh Princes'. Perhaps the Museum will publish an anthology of this material. I'll write and suggest it.

#### LINDOW MAN, Manchester Museum:

This, on the other hand, was excellently conceived. A high-quality 15 minute AVA presentation, then a simulation of the Moss with votive deposits and Celtic heads. Finally, Lindow Man himself in a simple case. The reconstruction of his head, using modern forensic techniques, was haunting: the earliest face that we have of an inhabitant of these islands, a man of character and breeding conjured forth from his leather-like remains by C20th skills. If you would like to read something about Lindow Man which is not so 'imaginative' as 'A Druid Prince' try, Don Brothwell's 'The Bog Man & the Archaeology of People', British Museum publications, 1986.

**PUBLICATIONS AND ARCHIVES:** At the AGM I proposed the setting up of Sub-committees to assist in widening the activities of the Society. My own particular interest is the production of 'Pendragon Imprints' in the form of booklets. Examples would be: an index to 'Pendragon'; thematic compilations of past



material from the journals: a Society history. We could also undertake to publish members' researches. To further these activities I am exploring desk-top facilities, so that a reasonable standard of presentation could be achieved. I would be glad to hear from members who are interested in these ideas, including illustration and artwork.

**BOOKS:** Since 1900 well over 130 Arthurian books have been published for children. I am only listing a few recent ones, for those who are still privileged to have young people to buy for.

'The Tale of Sir Gawain' Neil Philip, Cambridge, 1987. Illustrated by Charles Keeping. The dying Sir Gawain tells the story of Arthur to a page. Original and moving, 'among the best Arthurian tellings of our time' (Naomi Lewis, 'Observer') ISBN 0-09-965350-8. £1.99 pbk.

'Sir Gawain & the Green Knight' Selina Hastings, Walker paperbacks. Illustrated by Juan Wijngaard. 'A handsome introduction, beautifully written story, illustrations like miniatures from an illuminated manuscript'. 1985. £3.99.

'Sir Gawain & the Loathly Lady' same author and illustrator. Winner of the Kate Greenaway Medal. £3.99. Both available from: Walker Books, PO Box 11, Falmouth, Cornwall TR10 9EN. Postage 50p first book, 10p each additional book.

'The Troy Game' Jean Morris, Beaver Books (Arrow) £2.50. ISBN: 0-09-962080-4. Brannock and Eileen are sent on a mysterious errand to save their land from raiders - in search of a place to which there is no path. All they have to guide them is an old brooch - engraved with the ancient pattern of the troy. Celtic Mythology' David Bellingham, Apple Press. ISBN: 1-85076-224-4. This is one for Mum and Dad. A delightful book, with stories of the heroes, lovers, magic and monsters of the Celtic world. There are sections on the religion, arts, archaeology of the Celts. Over 130 colour illustrations, including artefacts and paintings of the C19th Celtic revival. £9.95.


#### INTERESTING ODDS:

At the AGM Beryl Mercer gave a talk on her unique Phoenix Rune Cards. She believes them to be the only illuminated rune pack. £7.50, unboxed, £8.50 for a boxed set, including p&p. Cheques to Beryl, not Phoenix Runes please. 'Amber', Short Cross Road, Mount Hawke, Truro, Cornwall, TR4 8EA.

Stained 'Glass' Windows: You may have seen these self-adhesive transparencies around, they are stuck onto windows to provide a stained glass effect. There are several Arthurian ones, available from: Chris Locke Graphics, 6 The Old Yard Mill, Sherborne, Dorset, DT9.

Pyrography: I came across the work of Sue Mason at a craft fair. She has a very strong interest in history and mythology and her designs are charming, light and subtly coloured. She had lovely bowls with the Green Man's face inside, Herne, etc. You can contact her at: 3 York Street, Altrincham, Cheshire, WA15 9QH. (061-941-4616). She accepts commissions. Also greeting cards and other illustrations with similar designs.






his is the eleventh edition of Pendragon to appear under the editorship of Eddie Tooke.

I would like to express a personal appreciation of his devotion to the task of ensuring that the Society lives on through the regular appearance of its journal. In this he is ably assisted by his wife, Anne, whose typing speed is legendary.

Thank you both.

A Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year to all our members.





# hear Ye

Mary Bonney of Windsor, a frequent contributor to our letters pages, has been seriously ill with a stroke. I understand she is now on the mend and have written to her. I'm sure she'd find letters from other members encouraging, so if you care to write a few lines I'll send them on to her.

Member Ken Rees of Swansea has written a book, 'The Spirit of Gower' which will be available shortly at £2.25 in book shops in Swansea and at the Oriel Gallery in Cardiff. The book, Ken tells me, is a 'personal view of the history of Gower'.

Jungian-type synchronicity enthusiasts might be interested in a recent example of this phenomenon. Having received Fred's 'King Arthur Needs You.' picture (see editorial) which is based on Kitchener's World War 1 recruiting poster 'Your Country Needs You!', I watched the Channel 4 quiz programme 'Fifteen to One' that same evening. One of the questions was about that very poster! But don't go away; I haven't finished. A day or so later, looking up an item in Jung's 'Man and his Symbols', the book opened at p121, with a pic. of the W.W.1 poster! A Sign, no less!

Still with synchronicity, Fred's review of 'Holy Wells' yields an example of a strange aptness between people's names and their personal interests. 'Holy Wells' is by Cuming Walters (coming waters). Which reminded me: in his book 'Learning, Remembering and Knowing', Patrick Meredith mentions two famous neurologists - Russell BRAIN and Henry HEAD.

Aged members of Pendragon like myself might recall the name of the pre-war actor who played the title role of the Demon Barber of Fleet Street. It was Tod Slaughter.

And of course we've all heard of 'The Force 8 Saga' by John Gales-worthy ...

## NEW YEAR'S HONOURS LIST.

We are happy to inform members that Deirdre of Chipping Sodbury is in line for an O.B.E.

[Ed. note: Sorry that's a misprint. It should read 'HORRORS List'. The O.B.E., of course, stands for 'Out of Body Experience.' Arrangements are being made to ensure that this is permanent.]

Now an appeal. You will have noted, in most issues of PENDRAGON, Arthurian items from Western Morning News, sent in by Beryl Mercer. If you come across a news item or bit of information in your area that you think might interest PENDRAGON readers, don't keep it to yourself: let us KNOW about it, however trivial it may seem. A classic example of the ultimate importance of trivialities concerns William Penn, founder of Pennsylvania. He was exiled from Britain in 1661 because of his Quaker affiliations. To sustain him on his arduous voyage his mother's sisters made him a batch of pies.

Unfortunately, before they could give them to him, rats got into their larder and ate the lot. This merited only the briefest of mentions in the parish magazine, but centuries later the item came to the notice of Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan who were inspired to write their famous opera: 'The Pie-rats of Penn's Aunts.'

Merry Christmas everyone and a Happy New Year!

## Exchange Journals

CAERDROIA - Editors Jeff and Deb Seward, 53 Thundersley Grove, Benfleet, Essex SS7 3EB. Mazes and labyrinths. Yearly. Write for details with SAE, or phone 0268 751915.

DRAGON - Editor Charles Evans-Gunther, Dragon, c/o 9 Earls Lea, Flint, Clwyd CH6 5BT, North Wales. Arthurian and Dark Age matters. Four issues for £4.50.

FOLKLORE FRONTIERS - Editor Paul Screeton, 5 Egton Drive, Seaton Carew, Hartlepool, Cleveland TS25 2AT. Contemporary legends, urban belief tales. Four issues for £4.00.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE EARTH MYSTERIES - Editor Danny Sullivan, GEM Magazine, 49 Moored Road, Leckhampton, Cheltenham, Glos, GL53 0ET. Three issues for £5.00.

MERCIAN MYSTERIES - Editors Bob Trubshaw and Paul Nix, 12 Cromer Road, St. Ann's, Nottingham NG3 3LF. Four issues for £6.00. Single copies £1.75.

MEYN MAMVRO (Stones of our Motherland) - Editor Cheryl Straffon, 51 Carn Bosavern, St. Just, Penzance, Cornwall TR19 7QK. Earth energies, ancient stones, sacred sites, paganism, ley paths, Cornish prehistory, legends and folklore. Four issues £5.00; single copies £1.50.

NEWS LOCUM - Editor Beryl Mercer, Amber, Short Cross Road, Mount Hawke, Truro, Cornwall TR4 8EA. News and views of the paranormal. 4 issues £5.00. Cheques to Beryl Mercer (or equivalent in first and second class stamps).

NORTHERN EARTH MYSTERIES - Editor Rob Wilson, 40b Welby Place, Meersbrook Park, Sheffield S8 9DB. Three issues for £2.95.

THE BRISTOL TEMPLAR - Editor Julian Lea-Jones, 33 Springfield Grove, Henleaze, Bristol BS6 7XE. Local history. Membership with monthly meetings and 4 journals p.a. £8.00.

QUONDAM ET FUTURUS - Quarterly for Arthurian Studies. Mildred Leake Day, editor, 2212 Pinehurst Drive, Gardendale AL 35071. Overseas subscriptions \$20.00, by first class airmail. An 'Independent newsletter' sharing Arthurian news from several Societies, Academies and Universities in America. Academic and literary emphasis. Board of directors includes Valerie Lagorio, Univ. of Iowa.

THE WILD PLACES - Editor Kevin McClure, 42 Victoria Road, Mount Charles, St. Austell, Cornwall PL25 4QD. New Age research, myths, UFOs, Wicca etc. Four issues £6.00; single issue £1.75

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