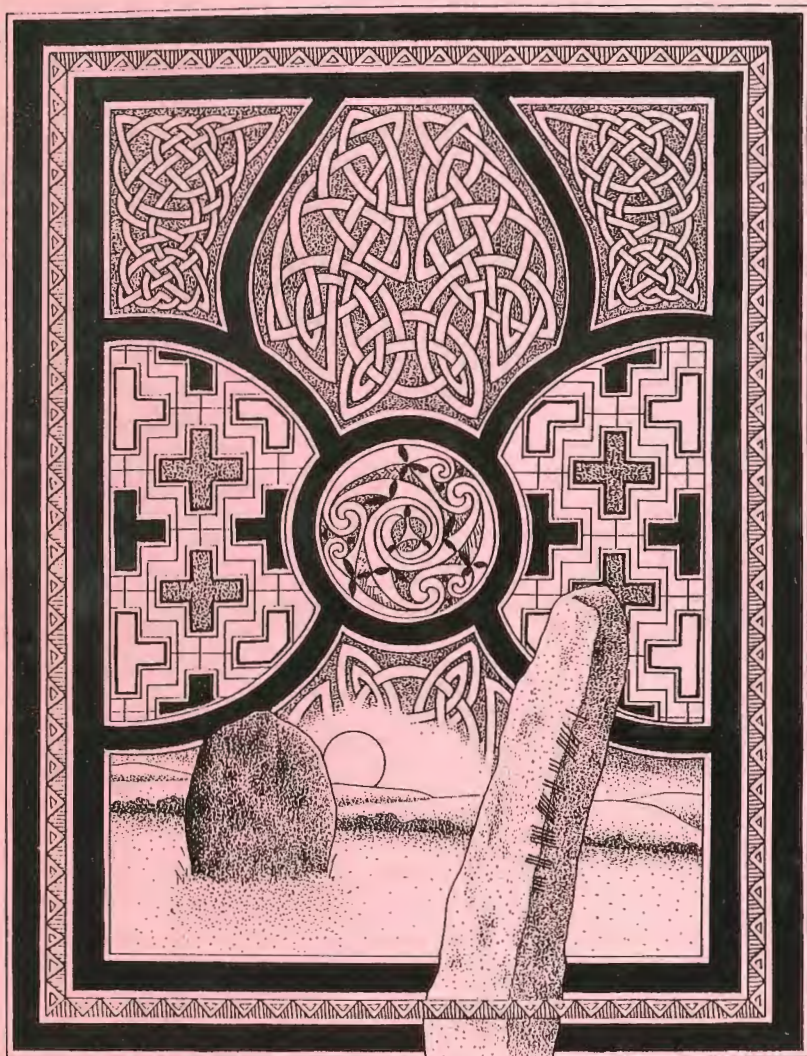


pendragon



No. xxiv/2

Spring 1994



EDITORIAL



Special thanks to members who have expressed their appreciation for the journal in their letters. Many more contributions are coming in and this means that themes can be planned ahead. All subscribers are cordially invited to contribute: articles, poetry, reviews, artwork, news or whatever you can dream up. Pluck up your courage and let's hear from YOU.

In particular I would like to thank Chris Lovegrove personally for all his support and for his contributions, literary and artistic. Any errors in typing etc. are my own: it's a big job, each magazine takes a fortnight of non-stop work, so errors are bound to creep in. Our plans for an AGM have been shifted to 8th October when we hope to meet in Cardiff on the Arthurian Day of the Cardiff Festival of Literature. News in our August edition.

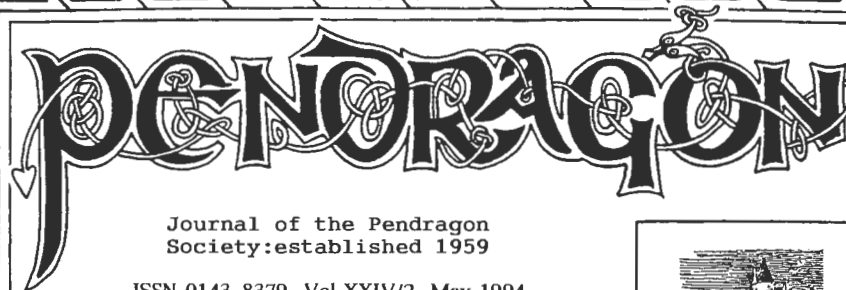
On page eleven a shock awaits one member - a pleasant one we hope - he is our first Prize Draw winner. In August we hope to be able to present several copies of Helen Hollick's novel, *The Kingmaking* to draw winners through the generosity of William Heinemann Ltd. her publishers. We are planning to carry reviews of the book and a feature on Helen.

New members have inquired about back numbers of the magazine but only a few copies of the last two remain in stock. Small runs of lithographed printings are too expensive to consider at the moment.

Subs are still maintained at £6, with the sustained increase of pages. If you enrol a new member you receive an extra magazine on your subscription; if you contribute to the magazine you get an extra copy of the edition in which it appears.

We wish to express our deepest sympathies to Beryl Mercer on the sad loss of her sister in January and hope that happy memories will fill the void.

The two symbols below are not just decorations. The triskele reminds us of our tripartite coverage of Arthurian studies: History and archaeology; Legend myth and folklore; Literature and the arts. The box will contain a cross when your subs are due for renewal. We ask you to help us by doing so in good time for us to cost our next print run. Thank you for your continuing support and best wishes to all members for a good summer wherever you spend it.

PENDRAGON

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Society: established 1959

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WESTWARD LANDS EDITION

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Opinions stated are those of the writer concerned.

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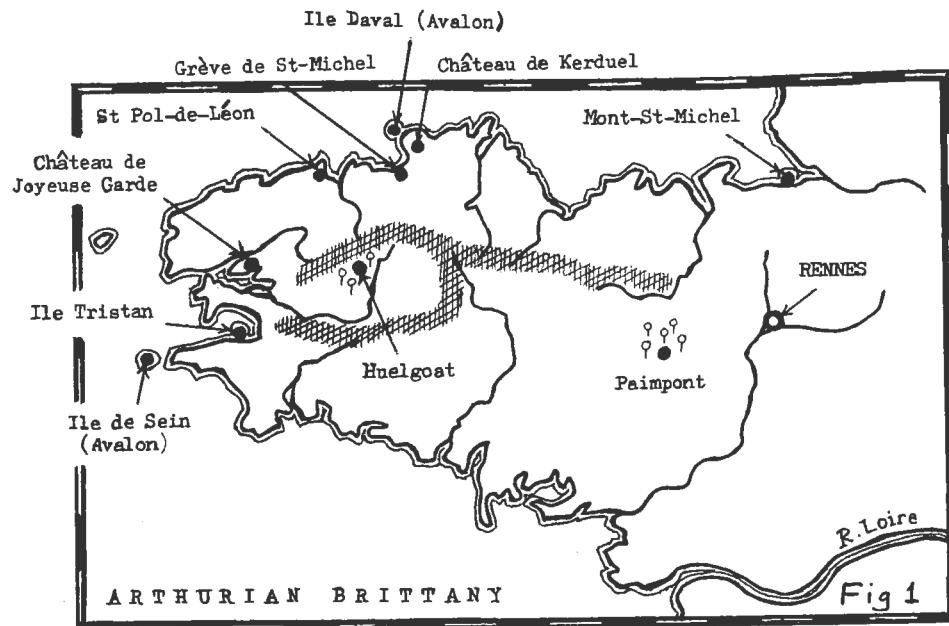
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A Fountain in Brocéliande

Chris Lovegrove



Disembarking from the ferry as the sun rises over Roscoff on a crisp spring morning. Driving through lakes of mist, fields of globe artichokes glistening with frost. The moving intensity of the figures of the calvary at Pleyben. The shock of the first distant view of Mont Saint-Michel. All this and more helps to reinforce the expectations that Brittany conjures up, not least in the domain of Arthurian legends. Does the reality measure up?

King Arthur's Brittany:

On the map, traditional Arthurian sites in Brittany are grouped in four great clusters (fig 1). Two might be accounted for by the great Dark Age migrations that gradually turned the Armorican peninsula into Britannia Minor, or lesser

Britain. Of these two the Northern cluster includes sites where Arthur fought a dragon (Grève de Saint-Michel), contenders for Avalon and Lyonesse (île and St Pol-de-Léon respectively) and the Chateau of Kerduel. A distant outlier of this group could be Mon Saint-Michel, where Arthur fought a giant. Meanwhile, the western cluster includes the île Tristan, the 11th century Chateau de Joyeuse-Garde and another Avalon contender, the île de Sein. These northern and western clusters are coastal. The remaining two, however, are firmly inland: the forests of Huelgoat and of Paimpont. Both areas are presumed remnants of a great primeval wood called Argoat (from the Breton goat meaning wood,

related to Welsh *coed*), though this apparently is now thought unlikely. The western part has shrunk to Huelgoat. Modern access to it is through large mossy granite boulders looking like something photographed by an electron microscope. Some of these boulders form the Grotte d'Artus, and a nearby Iron Age hillfort is named the Camp d'Artus. There is no extant story of Arthur here though plenty of other folk tales, evidenced by the fact that the Grotte d'Artus is also called the Grotte du Diable (the Devil's Cave).

Eastward is the forest of Paimpont, now identified as all that exists of Brocéliande, as Arthurian Romance calls the forest of Argoat. The sites here are linked firmly with Merlin and Lancelot (fig 2). Merlin was imprisoned in a megalith, Morgan le Fay inhabited the Val Sans Retour (the Valley of No Return) and Viviane, the Lady of the Lake, was born at the Château of Comper. At Comper too was brought up Lancelot, and he was wooed by Guinevere at the Pont du Secret (the Bridge of the Secret). Much of this has already been outlined in a previous article in *Pendragon* (XXII/2, 6ff).

The strictly historical value of all these Arthurian locations is of doubtful foundation (Morris, 249 *passim*). One Iron Age hillfort, a couple of medieval castles, two desolate islands and some assorted other sites with vague literary associations or folklore of indeterminate age is not so much to show in a landscape where the people were passionate defenders of the *rex futurus* (Fairburn, 76-7). A pilgrimage to identify places would certainly be "short and meagre of results" as one commentator has put it (Johnson, 112). This is not to say that early references to Arthur in continental Europe do not exist. The 12th century Breton *Legend of St Goznovius* (the "z" represents a "th" sound) mentions a certain Arturus. He is described as "king of the Britons" with many victories in parts of Britain and Gaul to his credit before he is called from

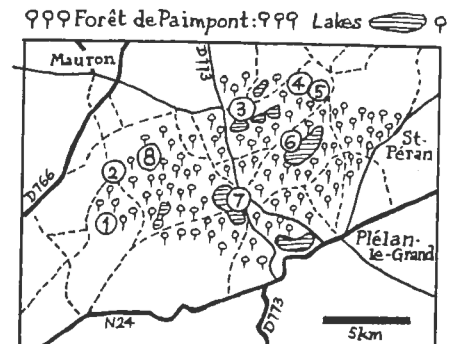


Fig 2: ① Val Sans Retour ② Folle Pensée ③ Château de Comper ④ Tombeau de Merlin ⑤ Fontaine de Jouvence ⑥ Brocéliande ⑦ Abbaye de Paimpont ⑧ Fontaine: Barenton

human activity (Chambers, 93f, 241ff). Geoffrey of Monmouth may have had access to similar Breton material when he brought this Arthur to Mont Saint-Michel and on to elsewhere in Gaul (Thorpe, 237ff).

After that we come to the Arthurian romances, and history proper goes out the window. Of Arthur's associates, several must rank in credibility with Morgan le Fay, who seems to be a compound of two fairy figures: Margot-la-Fée, a land-fairy, and Mary Morgan, a sea-fairy. Nevertheless, there is evidence that the stories of Tristan and his uncle Mark may have a basis in historical fact, and that the legends of a Bluebird figure called Cunomor are indeed King Mark under another name (Radford & Swanton, 31).

Before assessing the factual basis of Brittany's claim to Arthur, a closer look at one particular location is informative, if not entertaining.

Barenton fountain

The one Breton site I haven't discussed in detail is the Fontaine de Barenton. As befits the Arthurian locale par excellence it presents a complex tapestry of themes, tied in with its situation in the Forest of Paimpont (fig 2).

1. One tradition has it that the fairies of Barenton are supposed to be especially the

friends of children. There exists a curious old manuscript ... which describes how Butor de la Montagne, on the birth of his son, is desirous that he shall receive the fairies' blessing. The infant is therefore sent, under the care of a trusty knight, to the 'Bois Bersillant' and placed on the enchanted fountain. Before long the little people appear, endowing him with the choicest gifts they have it in their power to bestow. One of them, however, envious of the extreme brightness of his prospects, dooms him to disappointment in love... (Johnson, 105).

This tale seems to be a variation on the opening motif of the Sleeping Beauty legend, when the newborn child is cursed by a slighted fairy.

2. A second aspect of the fountain is its reputed ability to cure mental illness. One theory suggests that a hospital was established by the Druids at the nearby village of Folle Pensée. As this means, appropriately, Mad Thought, proof of a druidic connection is to be welcomed. Perhaps the 12th century Robert Wace of Jersey was responsible for the name. He declared

I went thither on purpose to see these marvels. I saw the forest and the land, and I sought for the marvels, but I found none. I went like a fool for my pains. (Quoted in Ward, 172.)

3. A third strand in this tangled web is taken up with the story of Merlin. Here is Anthony Smith-Master's description of the spring in about 1977:

There is a stone basin a few feet square. The water wells up from below the weeds, very clear, very cold, splashes over a stone lip and is soon lost in the undergrowth. You look down into the pool and your eyes meet treetops and blue sky. You feel drawn down, or is it up? (Pendragon XI/1, 2)

Beside the fountain is a rectangular stone slab about four feet long. This is the Perron de

Merlin, or Merlin's Threshold. Or so we are led to believe. This is not where Merlin was imprisoned by Viviane, however. Some accounts claim that Merlin's Tomb, where he was encapsulated alive, no longer exists. On the other hand, le Tombeau de Merlin is marked on modern maps on the northeast edge of the Paimpont forest between Comper and St Malon-sur-Mel, adjacent to the Fontaine de Jouvence, or the Fountain of Youth! Merlin's connection with Barenton nevertheless seems a straightforward transference from Scotland, of traditions of Merlin living by a spring "surrounded on all sides by hazels and dense thorns" (Tolstoy, 65).

4. An account of the Breton spring's powers in the early 20th century runs thus:

The fountain is now the resort of those in need... of rain... In cases of fierce drought all the inhabitants of the surrounding parishes go to it in procession, headed by priests and banners, ringing bells and chanting psalms. On arriving at the fountain the rector of the canton dips the foot of the cross in its water; and rain is sure to come before a week is ended.

This 1927 account seems to refer to a ritual conducted in 1925 (Johnson, 106).

5. A final aspect of the Fountain relates to these rain-making ceremonies. The marvels that Wace alluded to in the 12th century refer to stories that hunters repair (here) in sultry weather; and drawing water with their horns, they sprinkle the stone for the purposes of having rain, which is then wont to fall, they say, throughout the forest around; but why I know not.

But this story was elaborated in the same century in an Arthurian context, in tales told of a knight called Yvain by the French and Owain by the Welsh. It is now to the literary evidence we next turn.

Maps in the Forest

In Chrétien de Troyes' *Yvain* the hero travels from "Carduel en

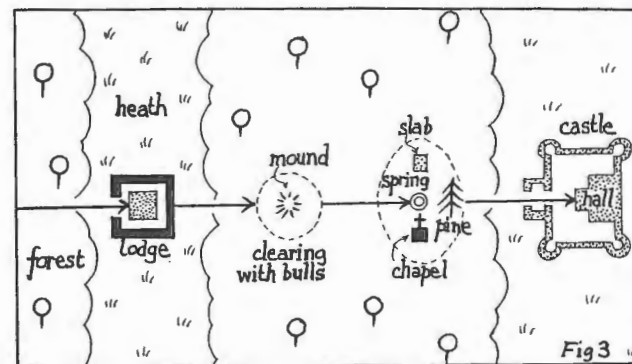


Fig 3

tells us that Yvain hopes to get to Broceliande in two days. Assuming then that Chrétien has Brittany in mind, it now takes Yvain a day to get through the dense forest and on to a heath. Half a Welsh league away is a moated lodge where Yvain receives an hospitable night's stay. Next day the journey leads to a clearing with wild animals and a mythical figure, a gigantic Woodward who is somewhat more than just a gamekeeper or forest ranger! This uncouth guide directs Yvain on to a fountain:

You will see the spring which bubbles, though its water is colder than marble. It is shaded by the most beautiful tree that Nature ever made, for its foliage is evergreen. And a basin of iron hangs from it by a chain long enough to reach the spring. And beside the spring you will find a slab of stone... (Ward, 171).

Now all this is, at first, reminiscent of Barenton, is it not? In particular we note that bubbles still rise to the surface of the modern spring and that the water is said to be a constant 50F (10C), certainly "colder than marble" on a sultry summer's day. But Smith-Masters described "meaningful Druidic trees planted around the clearing: hazel, willow, rowan, birch"; none of these are evergreen. And the slab of stone is later described as a hollow emerald with four rubies underneath, certainly a far cry from the modern Threshold. Nor is there a chapel on the other side of the spring as the Woodward goes on later to relate (fig 3). Poetic licence, or unreliable testimony. If we turn to another version of the story, the Welsh *Lady of the Fountain*, we find we are

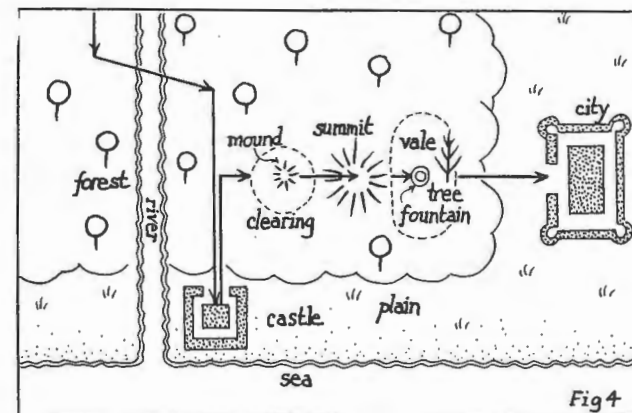


Fig 4

Gales. By Gales we are to understand not just modern Wales/Cymru but also Cumbria. Carlisle is then identified as Arthur's seat Carduel (Owen, 515). But two points need to be borne in mind: first, that there is a Kerduel Castle on the north coast of Brittany; secondly that Chrétien

a little wiser as to the geography (fig 4). The questing knight (Owein, in this case) must first travel the "bounds of the world and its wilderness" "to the fairest vale in the world." This forested vale has a river running through it with a path by its side. After crossing over the river and more journeying,



the hero emerges from a forest onto a plain, at the far end of which is a by-way on the right on to a clearing. There is the gigantic Woodward again who directs the traveller over a hill to a vale not unlike Yvain's clearing with a great evergreen tree, the fountain, and a marble slab beside it with a silver bowl attached by a silver chain to it (Jones & Jones).

This second itinerary, though superficially similar, is not much help either in deciding if Barenton is indeed meant. The "sea" by the castle might be a large lake, of which there are several in and around Paimpont. Or then again it might not: the description better fits a Scottish location, north of Hadrian's Wall. The "sea" is the Irish Sea, the forest Coit Celidon (the Caledonian Wood), the hill Hart Fell. And the fountain? Perhaps it is Merlin's Fountain of Galabes, identified as a chalybeate spring feeding the Spa Well Burn on Hart Fell. And perhaps we are to regard the strange Woodward as Merlin himself... (Tolstoy, 65).

The Black Knight

The vagueness of the topography described in *Yvain* and *The Lady of the Fountain* suggests that, in some romances at least, the Forest is meant as a symbol, not an objective reality (cf Jung & von Franz). These two romances mostly agree on the episode following arrival at the spring.

Yvain-Owein takes up a basinful of water from the spring and pours it

over the slab. There is then a terrific thunderclap. In the ensuing storm the hero is hard put to defend himself from either rain or hail. When he recovers after the passing of the storm he sees not one leaf left on the tree. A flight of songbirds arrives and completely covers all the branches of the tree; their heavenly chorus enchants the hero, but his attention is taken by the entrance of a Black Knight, aggrieved by the fact that all living creatures out of doors have been killed by the force of the storm. Only the hero is able to stand up to the onslaught of the Black Knight, mortally wounding him, chasing him back to his stronghold and ultimately taking on his duties.

This striking adventure takes the rain-making legend of Barenton one step further. The ritual of sprinkling or dashing water on the stone in this case is clearly not a ceremony designed for the good of the community, as was the Barenton processions in time of drought. Rather it is a challenge, with extreme consequences. One is reminded of the Children of Israel in the wilderness upbraiding Moses for the lack of water (*Numbers 20*); Moses strikes a rock to release a spring, rather than speaking to it, and thus forfeits his chance to lead the Israelites into the Promised Land.

In the fairy tales that the Arthurian romances ultimately spring from the identifying of a locale in a realistic landscape matters less than the transformation of the protagonist's psyche. In this country of the mind, all springs are magic fountains, all trees represent the mythic World Tree, all adversaries are unconscious projections of a shadow archetype (cf Wilson, 53ff).

Rex Quondam

If most of the Arthurian links with Brittany are incorporeal, are we to suppose that there is no historical basis for thinking Arthur and his companions ever came to the Armorican peninsula?

Taking our cue from the

aforementioned Legend of St Goeznovius, we may recall that Geoffrey Ashe made plausible efforts to identify a prototype of Arthur in Riothamus; the latter was indeed a king of the Britons who really did bring troops into the heart of Gaul, probably up the Loire valley, in the 5th century (Ashe, 86ff).

If Riothamus did visit elsewhere in Brittany, there is no evidence that he ever slew dragons or giants there - or anywhere else! However when Arthur fights the giant of Mont-Saint-Michel in the 12th century romances, the memory of another giant adversary, Ritho of Snowdon, is evoked; if Ashe's equation has any validity we must picture Arthur-Riothamus in Wales as a contradiction allowable in fables but clearly not reflecting strict history!

On the other hand there are also attempts to place Arthur firmly in the 6th century, with claims that he is identical with St Armel, a warrior saint from Wales who migrated to Armorica (Barber & Pykitt). He is commemorated at several sites throughout Brittany, including Ploërmel, just south of the forest of Paimpont. Traditionally, religious images of Armel show him trampling a dragon: one might argue that this is the origin of the folktale of Arthur's dragon at Grève de Saint-Michel mentioned above.

Is it coincidence that gives us two Dark Age figures (Arthur, and Armel or Arthmael) linked with "Brocéliande" and the vanquishing of a dragon? Or does Brittany still insist on guarding its mysteries?

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ARTHURIAN GARDENING

(Readers might like to know of plants that have been given Arthurian names. Why not dedicate an area of the garden to an Arthurian flowerbed? If you haven't got a garden then even a window box can remind you of the legends and and become a little bit of Logres to cherish.

Auricula: Astolat. Buddleia: Black Knight. Clematis: Fairy Queen. Dahlia: Glastonbury. Delphinium: Astolat; Black Knight; Galahad series (white); Guinevere series (shades of lavender pink); King Arthur series (shades of violet, purple); Camelaird; Lancelot series (lilac shades); Elaine (rose pink). Perceval series (white, black eye); Round Table (various colours as above); Merlin. Dracanea: Dragon plants. Erica: Lyonesse. Fuchsia: Camelot; Excalibur; Galahad; Lancelot; Mordred; Nimue; Guinevere. Galanthus: Merlin. Geraniums: Merlin; Maid Marion. Hedera: Guinevere; Dark Knight; Gold Knight. Hydrangea: Parzival. Narcissus: Camelot; Chivalry; Galahad; Lancelot; Merlin. Paeony: King Arthur. Pelargonium: Perceval. Primula: Astolat; Camelot; Guinevere. Rheum: Green Knight. Rhododendrom: Merlin; Sir Lancelot; Una. Rosa: (floribunda) King Arthur; Lancelot; (shrub) Blanchefleur. Sir Lancelot; The Knight; Una. Sempervivum: Bedivere; Excalibur; Merlin. Verbena: Blue Knight; White Knight; Green Mound. Viola: Una.

(There are many more plants with names like Silver Sword, Magician, Water Nymph, Welsh Dragon, Black Forest, Lake of Silver, Black Dragon, etc. If you would like a fuller 'Magical/Chivalric' list please send an SAE Fred-Stedman-Jones



WALL-BY-LICHFIELD DAVID PYKITT

Penkridge), leaving the county just beyond Weston-under-Lizard. The Watling Street was crossed near Wall by another important road, the Ryknild Street. This ran north from Metchley Fort and near the junction with the Watling Street took a new alignment to run north-east and cross the river Dove at Eggington in Derbyshire and proceed on to Derventio (Little Chester, near Derby). (1)

The Watling Street reveals itself as the Roman overlay of an ancient Celtic route marked by holy places, thus indicating a corridor of Druidic influences. This runs through the Trent-Severn passage to the Vale of Clwyd and thence across the Menai Straits to Anglesey. (2). The village of Wall takes its name from the upstanding remains of the wall of the Roman fortress and settlement of Letocetum. The name Letocetum is a Latinized version of the Celtic *Caer Llwyd Coed* for 'the camp of the grey wood'. (3) It was formerly an important Celtic religious site, a Druidic sacred grove set in dense woodland. (2) A number of carved stones with human horned heads have been found built into the walls of the Roman villa just below the Church of St. John. There is good reason to believe that here, or hereabouts, was a Celtic temple of the Cornovii, whose name means 'worshippers of the horned one'. The Cornovii were the Celtic tribe who occupied most of Staff-

-ordshire, Shropshire, Cheshire and Herefordshire at the time of the Roman invasion. It is thought that the Romans destroyed the shrine but re-used the stones which they turned upside down, as a small gesture to the Celtic horned god Cernunnos. (3) Cernunnos was probably the nearest the Celts got to a universal father figure and his cult was encouraged by the Druids in an attempt to establish a national god. (4)

So, somewhere within the boundaries of modern Lichfield was a British settlement called *Caer Llwyd Coed*, the camp in the grey wood, where birch trees predominated. (5) *Caer Llwyd Coed* is named by the ninth-century Welsh chronicler Nennius, in his 'Historia Brittonum', as one of the twenty-eight cities of the island of Britain. It is now called Wall-by-Lichfield. (6) The historian William of Malmesbury (1090-1143), in his 'De Antiquitate Glastoniensis Ecclesiae', calls Luitcoyt (ie *Llwyd Coed*) *Escebtiorne*, a word compounded from the Welsh 'escob' for bishop and 'teign' for lordship. (7) Apparently, there was an important Romano-British bishopric of Letocetum as early as the fourth or fifth century.

The 'Brut Tysilio' records that "King Arthur assembled a council of his chiefs and the result was an application to Riwal Mawr (the Great), king of Breton Domnonia, for auxiliaries. Riwal, in consequence of this application, came with an army of fifteen thousand men, to the great joy of Arthur. They then went to *Caer Llwyd Coed*, where the Angles were, and here a furious battle ensued, in which six thousand of the Angles perished". (8)

The Battle of *Caer Llwyd Coed* was fought in 510. Glast, a great grandson of Cunedda Wledig, was being besieged by an army of Middle

Angles. King Arthur and his allies came to Glast's assistance and routed the enemy in a battle which took place on the banks of the river Bassas, now known as Hammerwich Water, which runs south-west of Lichfield and has left traces of its former name in the three Staffordshire Basfords. (7) According to Nennius, Arthur's sixth battle was fought on the banks of a river called Bassas (6) There is archaeological evidence for a settlement of the Middle Angles in the Trent valley at Drakelow during the time of King Arthur. A sixth-century Frisian-Angle urn was found in 1962 during the excavations for Drakelow 'C' Power Station. It may well have been an army of Middle Angle settlers from Drakelow who fought against King Arthur and his allies at the Battle of *Caer Llwyd Coed* on the banks of the river Bassas in 510. Arthur's victory prevented them from consolidating their position.

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(Ed: Wall lies on the London-Holyhead road (A5), 2m S.S.W. of Lichfield and about 14m N. of Birmingham. Excavations have revealed the most complete Roman bathhouse ever found in Britain. There is a small museum at the site. Open all year. (0543) 480768.)

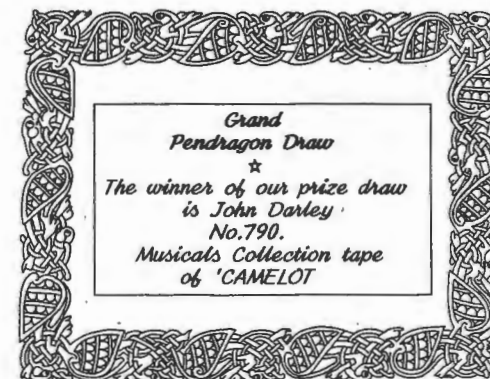


VISION

On Margam Hill we sat,
A couple looking out to sea,
Across the steelworks, built
on warrens
Where sea birds had lived in
peace for ever.

A couple in love,
Lost in themselves.
Then lying innocently on the bracken,
Eyes lifted to the blue sky,
He told me of the Romans
Who cut their way through Wales
Along the strip of land
That ran below the hill,
And suddenly
I heard the sound of hooves
Beating through the earth.
Over the hill a band of horsemen,
Seven or eight, rough, unkempt,
With swords and helmets,
Rode into sight.
Not the mighty Roman Army this,
But a warring band of Celts,
Their leader, swarthy, rough and
frightening,
Holding aloft a tattered banner,
Viewing the winding strand to
East and West.
I shut my eyes
And pressed myself into the bracken,
Holding my loved one close.
'What is it?' he asked gently,
Looking about him.
I told him what I had seen
And shivered in the warm summer sun.

Marilyn Stedman-Jones



Journey to Avalon: A Review Charles Evans-Günther

JOURNEY TO AVALON The Final Discovery of King Arthur
by Chris Barber and David Pykitt
Blorenge Press, 1993, ISBN 1-872730-04-3, paperback £9.99



Here is an attractive book, especially the cover, consisting of 224 pages, over 70 black and white illustrations (mostly photographs - some very striking), 6 maps, 9 pages of notes, 14 pages on sources, a 3 page chronology, 4 pages on alternative theories, a 4 page bibliography and an 8 page index.

The fine cover really makes you want to buy this publication, but, soon after beginning to read it I had a feeling of déjà vu. Despite criticism of "Rex Artorius Discovered" by Messrs. Blackett and Wilson by the authors of "Journey to Avalon" they follow almost the same track, though with far less mistakes. To review this book properly a greater amount of space would be necessary and, since we can not to 20 pages like *Studia Celtica* could give to a review of John Morris' "The Age of Arthur" back in 1976, I will have to try and do my best. The problem with this book is not where to start but where and when to stop. You could say that "Journey to Avalon" is a detective story but there may be no crime to solve!

Arthur, like the theories of Blackett and Wilson, is identified as Athrwys ap Meurig. However, Barber and Pykitt go one step further and transform both Arthur and Athrwys into 'Arthmael', a Cymro-Breton saint. Their Arthur is born at Boverton, South Glamorgan, in 482, fights various battles in different parts of Britain, invades Ireland where he fights Llŵch Wyddel (Geoffrey of Monmouth's Lucius Hibernus - Lancelot, according to the authors), returns to the mainland to fight in a civil war against Medraut, culminating in a battle at Porth Cadlan on the Llyn Peninsula, Gwynedd. However, Arthur survives the battle, though seriously wounded, is taken to Bardsey Island, where he is cured, and then goes to Brittany becoming 'Arthmael' - the soldier saint. Arthur - 'Arthmael' dies at St. Armel de Boscheux, Brittany, in 562. There is, of course, a lot more to the book than this but what there is of it is, in my opinion, badly researched and has more holes than a colander.

As mentioned above it would take a great amount of space to go through all the problems thrown up by this book but the main ones relate to the use - or would it be fair to say misuse - of sources. In general there is a lot of late 18th and early 19th century material being depended on as evidence. This is the period of antiquarianism - a period not of the best scholarship and some of the studies can not be considered acceptable in the light of more modern research. A lot of the sources mentioned from this period had come under the influence of Edward "Iolo Morganwg" Williams, of whom more later. Much of the "documentary evidence" put forward in this book has already been discussed in *PENDRAGON* Vol. XXII / 3 Summer 1992 and therefore does not need to be aired again in detail.

In "Journey to Avalon" considerable emphasis is placed on Maccsen Wledig - Clemens Magnus Maximus. In Chapter Two we are given a list of sons of whom Custennin - Constantine - is considered very important. They link this Custennin with Custennin Fendigaid (the Blessed) and a Custennin who was the father-in-law of Pepiau, the great grandfather of Onbrawst (wife of Meurig and mother of Athrwys). There is, of course, no proof that one Custennin is in fact the right Custennin - Constantine was a very popular name and is found not only in the West Country and the Welsh border counties but also in Scotland during the Dark Ages.

Clemens Magnus Maximus is well known to history and there is plenty of historical

evidence outside of the Mabinogion and genealogies. His career is well documented by chroniclers from the same period or shortly afterwards. It is believed he spent about two years in Britain during the Barbarian Conspiracy in 367-369 under Count Theodosius, then was in Africa in 373 and on the Danube until 379. By 383 he was in Britain successfully defeating the Picts and Scots. Following this he was proclaimed Emperor and the chronicles say he raised his infant son Flavius Victor to the position of Caesar. In 384 he had invaded France and three years later

Italy, but was defeated by Emperor Theodosius and executed in 388. The same year young Victor was hunted down and murdered. Victor is depicted on a coin struck at Lyons as a boy and he could not have been more than 10 years old when he was killed. Theodosius, the son of Count Theodosius and who had probably been a friend of Maximus, allowed the usurper's family, consisting of his brother Marcellinus, his wife and daughter (both unnamed) to go free. The wife may have been a Romano-Briton named Elen and the daughter could have been Severa, mentioned on Eliseg's Pillar, who married Vortigern.

What of the so called "sons of Maccsen Wledig"? It is extremely unlikely there were any except for Victor, if there had been any other sons Theodosius would have soon made sure they were found and eliminated. However, J.W. James postulates an interesting theory in "The Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies" (1969). In this he suggests that the "sons" were officials, military or otherwise, established by Magnus Maximus before he embarked on his invasion of France. There are a number of examples that seem to fit - one being Nimet who is called the son of Dimet son of Maccsen Wledig. The Dimet here could be Dyfed and it can be shown that a descendent of Nimet was recorded as Vortoporix Protector on a stone found in Dyfed. Another interesting possibility, but not recorded as a son of Maccsen, is Cunedda. "The History of the Britons" records that Cunedda came to Wales 146 years before the reign of Maelgwn and since we know from the Welsh Annals that he died in 547 that would give a date close to Magnus Maximus's time. Add 146 to 384 and you get 530 - 530 to 547 sounds just right for Maelgwn's reign. I would therefore suggest that the "sons of Maccsen Wledig" were, in the main, native "protectors" set up by Magnus Maximus.

Ceindrech, according to the authors and one pedigree, was the first wife of Maccsen Wledig and mother of Gwythyr (Victor). But what the authors have done here, and throughout the book, is to use what they want from the evidence and ignore other aspects of the same material. In this pedigree, Jesus College MS 20 No. 4, Ceindrech is called daughter of Rheiden ap Eledi ap Mordru ap Meirchawn ap Caswallawn. Then it adds "In the time of Caswallawn the Romans were pushed out of the Isle of Britain." Welsh tradition tells of Afarwy son of Lludd, nephew of Caswallawn ap Beli, who invited Julius Caesar, to Britain in a lost story (only Triads concerning it remain) which has Caswallawn pursuing Julius Caesar who had abducted his love Fflur. Caesar visited Britain in the 1st century BCE and that would place Ceindrech around 100 CE, at an average of 30 years per generation, rather than the 380s. Was Ceindrech really Maccsen's first wife or a piece of mythology? I tend to think the latter!

The authors also seem to misuse the genealogies introducing their own ideas. Take for instance De Situ Brecheiniac 10 which begins, according to Barber and Pykitt, with one Anhun Dunawd (Antonius Donatus), while in fact this family tree starts with "Annhun rex Grecorum" - "Antonius, King of Greece". Another pedigree is entitled "The Lineal Descent of Iestyn ap Gwrgan from Maccsen Wledig" which once again featuring Antonius Donatus son Maccsen Wledig but when compared to actual pedigrees a different picture emerges. The authors add to the genealogy Morgan Mwynfawr, Rhyhawd (Eil Morgan) and his son Morgan Morganwg. The first Morgan is the son of Athrwys ap Meurig but was never actually known as Mwynfawr and



both Rhyhawd and Morgan Morganwg do not belong here being adaption by Iolo Morganwg. Rhyhawd is mentioned in a number of Triads but only the Iolo Morganwg versions include him as son, or adopted son, of Morgan ap Athrwys. It is more than likely that Rhyhawd belongs to the Men of the North than the descendants of Athrwys.

This long dynasty can be extended to include Morgan ap Caradoc ap Iestyn of Glamorgan. He, together with a number of other South Walian aristocrats, took part in a meeting at Gloucester in 1175. This is recorded in some detail in the Brut Y Twysogion (Chronicles of the Prince) - Peniarth MS 20. Working backwards from this date (see opposite) shows the rough date of Athrwys. The addition of two extra characters, mentioned above, pushes Athrwys too far back but once the pedigree is correctly reassembled it shows that Athrwys belonged more to the late sixth and early seventh centuries rather than century earlier. It has been shown that the pedigree mentioned by Barber and Pykitt can be found as part of a manuscript in the Llanofer collection but according to the eminent scholar Griffith John Williams: "It is evident that Iolo obtained the names from this manuscript and other similar ones and that he fabricated the rest."

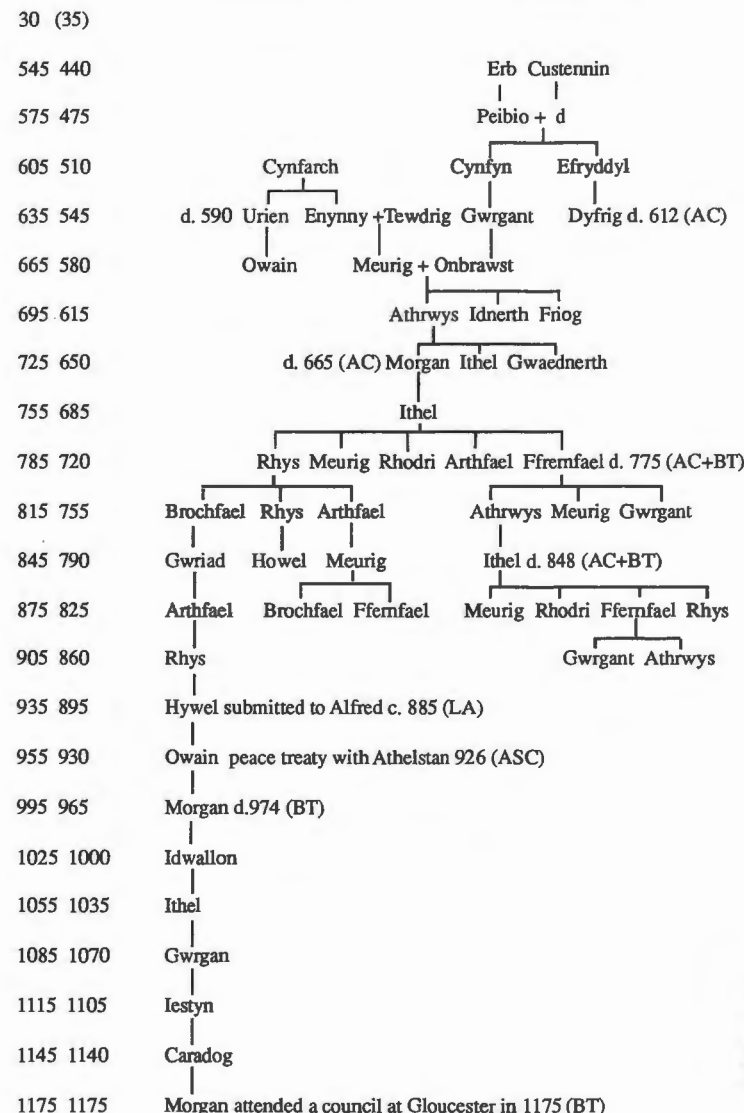
Moving on to the 'secret identity' of Arthur - Athrwys ap Meurig does not fit into the chronology of "Journey to Avalon". There are a good number of indications that Athrwys belong to the seventh century and that he was a sub-king to his father, Meurig, who survived him. Meurig is not followed directly by Athrwys but by Athrwys' son Morgan, who expanded his territories by murdering his own uncle and was excommunicated for doing so. Athrwys' grandfather is said to have fought against the Saxons near Tintern in 470 but there is no historical evidence for this. The first positive incursion into South Wales only came after 577. There is an entry in the "Anglo-Saxon Chronicles" which states: "584: In this Ceawlin and Cutha fought against the British at a place called Fethanleag, and Cutha was slain; and Ceawlin captured many villages and countless booty, and departed in anger to his own territories." This sounds like an admission of defeat! Could this be the battle fought near Tintern in which Tewdrig defeated the Saxons - West Saxons - and lost his life? If it is it fits in well with Athrwys being born in the late sixth century. Despite Messrs. Barber and Pykitt's dislike of evidence given by Dr. Wendy Davies, there is plenty to back up her research. She puts Athrwys around 605 to 655 while his father Meurig is dated from 585 to 665. Personally, I would put them a little earlier, certainly not as late as C.A. Raleigh Radford's 700 for Athrwys, and would suggest that Athrwys' son Morgan died in 665. It would seem there is plenty of evidence for Athrwys being both later than Arthmael and Arthur.

Athrwys ap Meurig is certainly not a fictional or mythological character. He is found in some early pedigrees (Harleian MS. 3859) and his name is recorded in 10 charters in "The Book of Llandaff". However, of these charters only three are concrete references while the rest are patronymics for Athrwys' son Morgan. One has him as witness to his father's charter, another is witnessed by him as king and the third is one of his charters but only witnessed by his father on his behalf. The latter also included a possible indication of date. It mentions that the land in the charter had been lost from the time of the Yellow Pestilence until the time of Athrwys. This Yellow Pestilence is the Welsh name for a plague that spread throughout Europe into Britain in the 540s - 550s and it is said that Maelgwn Gwynedd died of the plague in 547. There is, however, a problem with this charter in that the land is to be given to one Oudoceus (Euddogwy) and there is no positive agreement about this saint having actually existed or not. He was said to have been a bishop of Llandaff around 570. Nevertheless, Athrwys should be studied for what part he played in a genuine history of South East Wales rather than some secret identity.

Concerning Arthmael, he too does not fit in with what is recorded about Arthur. Though he may have lived around this same period there is literally no concrete evidence to link Arthmael with Arthur. What material we have on Arthur, in annals, stories and legends, says he died at Camlan. He does not come back to life or get cured of his wounds. There is literally no tradition of this happening! Despite what Barber and Pykitt say in this book Arthmael cannot be linked with Athrwys since the parents of Arthmael are unknown except for material collected by Iolo

Genealogy of the Kings of Gwent, Erging and Morganwg

[(Using 30 and 35 years per generation), plus references from the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (ASC), Annales Cambriae (AC), Brut y Tywysogion (BT) and The Life of Alfred (AL)]



Morganwg and that cannot be trusted. There seems to be nothing in the "Life of Arthmael" that connects him with what we know of Arthur. What is interesting is that this Arthmael is unknown in Wales and his "Life" is only written down after Henry VII popularised the Breton saint Armel. The Bretons did not revere Armel as Arthur since they, and possibly the Cornish, believed that Arthur was not dead and buried in a church in Brittany but awaiting their call for help. The Welsh, I believe, did not adopt this concept until after the writings of Geoffrey of Monmouth since their Annals state quite clearly that Arthur and Medraut fell (were killed) at the Battle of Camlan.

Parts of this book are not so controversial. The search for the battles credited to Arthur in "The History of the Britons" is a matter of interpretation and opinion. What the authors have done here is quite reasonable. The placing of Badon at Solisbury Hill, near Bath, is not new and the interpretation of Catbrain Hill, Somerset, for Agned Cath Breguoin is worth looking at. The latter would need to be checked out in place-name material on this area to which I have no access. However, one point that I must disagree with is the connection of Ermine with Ermel, a version of Armel - Arthmael. Ermine comes from the Old English "Earninga".

After the successes Arthur invades Ireland and fights Llwh Wyddel - a character from "Culhwch and Olwen" and said to be the prototype of Lancelot by R.S. Loomis. At this point Medraut rebels and Arthur is forced to return via the Lleyn Peninsula, a strange direction since the above mentioned story has Arthur disembarking from Ireland at St. David's Head in Dyfed. The authors claim Arthur and Medraut fought at Porth Cadlan - from Cad(gam)lan. Medraut is killed and though Arthur is badly wounded he is taken to the nearby Island of Bardsey for R & R. Cured Arthur is transformed into Arthmael and goes to Brittany.

The positioning of Camlan is difficult and though there a number of places of that name in Wales it could be anywhere in Britain. That Bardsey is the Isle of Avalon is guesswork and can not be proven. In fact there is no indication of an Isle of Avalon before Geoffrey of Monmouth. If any of the beliefs of the Celtic people survived the Romans and Christianity the indication would be that Arthur would be taken to the Otherworld. Its position can not be pin-pointed - it is beyond Ireland in the sea, it is beneath a lake, in a cave or on a plain. The Otherworld is here, there and everywhere. However, the Annals state that Arthur was killed and there is literally no tradition, in Greater Britain or Little Britain, of Arthur surviving the Battle of Camlan and becoming a saint.

There are numerous other points that could be discussed but I will finish here, except to show that there is a definite dependency by the authors of "Journey to Avalon" on the creative work of Iolo Morganwg. Evidence can be found in the additions to pedigrees, the adding of the epithets Mwynfawr to Morgan of Glamorgan and Freichfras to Caradog, stating that the Silures landed in South Wales in the 2nd century BCE, saying that South Walian warriors accompanying Macsen Wledig into France and the use of the name Choir of Theodosius, to mention but a few. Where Iolo is concerned he is best left alone and, in danger of becoming monotonous, can not be trusted. Much research has been done on Edward "Tolo Morganwg" Williams, mainly in Welsh and particularly by Griffith John Williams, showing that it not at all safe to use any of his, his son's or his followers' material.

I am sorry to have taken up so much space on this review but it needed to be done. As for "Journey to Avalon: The Final Discovery of King Arthur" it is not final, is not a discovery and King Arthur was probably never really a king. A journey to Otherworld is not a voyage into history but into a land where nothing seems what it is, where a day can be a century and a century a day and no one is who they really are. This "Journey to Avalon" is equally confused and confusing.

[Postscript: That there are many places throughout Britain connected with Arthur is not surprising but that work should be concentrated only on areas such as the West Country and Wales is! I would like to suggest that those members who live in areas that are not normally considered Arthurian should look into the history and folklore of their area. The more I think about the historical Arthur the more I am personally convinced that if we are ever to find the historical Arthur we should be looking at places where he is not normally considered.]

The Celtic Arthur Kurt Hunter-mann

This day-school was held at the Department of Adult Continuing Education, Leeds University on Saturday 12th March, 1994.

Programme

10.15 am	Coffee and registration	
10.30 am	Introduction	Dave Weldrake
10.40 am	The lost worlds of The Welsh Triads	Don Henson
11.35 am	Folklore elements in Culhwch and Olwen	Dave Weldrake
12.30 pm	Lunch	
1.30 pm	Dreams and Tales: The Welsh Romances and Dream of Rhonabwy	Charles Evans-Gunther
2.15 pm	The imagery of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight	Dave Weldrake
3.00 pm	Tea	
3.15 pm	The Plantagenet Arthur: The discovery of Arthur's Grave	Charles Evans-Gunther
4.00 pm	The Round Table Tournament	Barbara Wright
5.00 pm	Closing discussion	

Don Henson talked on the early Welsh sources that referred to Arthur. The first document to come under scrutiny was Nennius' 'British History'. In summary, the twelve battles of Arthur remain as contentious as ever, the Kentish genealogy indirectly suggests a date of c.500 for Badon, the Welsh Annals give dates for the battles of Badon and Camlann that cannot be relied on, and two 'Wonders of Britain' show how Arthur was already the stuff of legend by the 9th century.

Don moved onto the Triads. Written down only in the 12th century, it has to be assumed that they were different from their original forms; the later Triads tend to link Arthur to places and people, suggesting that the information is based more on myth than history. Don suggested that the Triads were written down not as a historical record, but as a mnemonic device, for the benefit of bards.

The next speaker was Dave Weldrake, on 'Culhwch and Olwen'. This was described as a quest story, wherein Culhwch enlists the help of Arthur to fulfil his quest of finding and marrying Olwen. The reference to Camlann in the story could be an early version of the event. Dave stressed the heroic aspect of the tale, involving a combination of human endeavour and miraculous feats. Charles Evans-Gunther then gave a talk on

Tales and Dreams. Parallels of the Tales ('Gereint son of Erbin', 'The Lady of the Fountain', 'Owain', and 'Peredur son of Efwarg') appear in the works of Chretien de Troyes, which meant that the Tales could have originated in Brittany or France, rather than Wales. Arthur appears on the periphery of the stories; at one point he is described as a great king with 3,000 warriors, but elsewhere he cannot muster sufficient horses for a hunt!

Charles turned to the 'Dream of Rhonabwy', a confused story that refers to Arthur being at Badon after the Battle of Camlann; was this a form of Welsh satire, aimed at the romance writers who had mistakenly credited Arthur with the success at Badon?

Dave Weldrake gave the next talk,



on 'Gawain and the Green Knight'. Although it survives as a fourteenth-century English text, it was suggested that the accuracy of the Welsh setting pointed to a Welsh origin for the tale. The importance of chivalric duty in the story shows that it was as much a guide for contemporary medieval society as it was a historical tale.

Charles Evans-Günther's second contribution dealt with Arthur's Glastonbury connection. The discovery of Arthur's grave by the monks at the Abbey in 1191 was considered to have been a hoax - but who was behind it, and what was the motive? Charles argued that the culprit was Henry II, who was anxious to quash speculation on the future return of King Arthur (possibly even in the form of his grandson, Prince Arthur). Henry II's high regard for the Arthur legends may have been due to the influence of the French courts, where writers such as Chrétien de Troyes developed the Arthurian romances. It was noted that the change of name from Myrddin to Merlin occurred because the original form of Myrddin was an obscene term in French! Finally, Barbara Wright gave a talk on the Round Table tournaments. Tournaments had become violent and disruptive, but in the early 13th century the Round Table tournaments were established in France; these new events used a chivalric code derived from the Arthurian tradition. Barbara Wright also discussed the role of the Mortimer family in perpetuating the Arthur legend. The Mortimers, Earls of March in the 14th century, had strong genealogical links with the Welsh royal line, through Llewelyn the Great and including such notable ancestors as Maelgwyn, Cunedda and Lear. Henry VII strengthened his grip on the English throne by linking himself to the Welsh royal family through his marriage links with the Mortimers. Overall, it was an entertaining day, with many interesting points and illuminating digressions. It might have been useful to have

heard more about how the legends that provide insights into the historical origins of the Arthurian tradition. However, the day-school succeeded in showing how Arthur had been adopted by successive peoples (not just Celts) for their own particular purposes, the principal reason for the persistence of the Arthurian legends.

KNIGHTS OF THE TABLE ROUND

"The stories of Arthur are the acts of Albion, applied to a prince of the fifth century..."
William Blake



At Caerleon near Newport, Gwent
Some horsemen strange were found
Riding down the motorway:
Knights of the Table Round.

Armoured knights on horses white
Rode to London town;
Down the M4 motorway:
Knights of the Table Round

Sir Lancelot, Sir Bedivere,
Sir Galahad, Sir Kay,
All the knights of Arthur's Court
Rode on the motorway.

The BBC, the ITV
Arrived to film the scene:
"Arthur rides to London Town;
What does the pageant mean?"

Soon questions from compassion born
Will bring the land to bloom,
When London shows Jerusalem
And Albion sheds his tomb.

Such changes, now long overdue,
Will not be less profound
Than hoofbeats on the motorway:
Knights of the Table Round.

Tom Byrne

Isle of Apples of Discord Chris Covegrove



Report on Glastonbury, a dayschool held on Saturday 29th January
by the Department of Continuing Education, University of Bristol.

This well-attended dayschool, chaired by Mick Aston of *TimeTeam* fame, was intended to review what is known about the archaeology and history of Glastonbury from prehistoric times to the Middle Ages (apparently for the first time in Bristol). Peter Leach, who was due to report on the medieval town, was indisposed, and this necessitated some re-juggling of the day's programme.

John Coles spoke first of *The Glastonbury Lake Village: new analyses and interpretations*. The discovery of this site a century ago was due entirely to the energies of Arthur (!) Bullied, inspired by the excavation of examples in central Europe. Dr Coles then outlined the progress made by subsequent researchers, including Tratman and the late David Clarke, pointing out their strengths and weaknesses, in particular he discredited the theories of Clarke because of his use of apparently non-existent evidence, and he noted a tendency to obfuscate (Coles would have preferred a user-friendly term such as "family" in place of "co-operative social unit"). His new interpretations favour an evolving, then declining Iron Age site dating between 150 BC to 50 AD, and his own (and colleagues') researches have located several other likely "lakeside" sites in the vicinity, identified by areas of imported sand and clay. One might argue that Coles contributes his own obfuscatory terminology (why cannot a "presentation table" be called a ritual slab?) but his undoubted authority, presented with quiet humour, made for an enlightening illustrated talk.

Philip Rahtz spoke next. It was not, of course, a coincidence that the paperback edition of his *Glastonbury* book had just been made available! This English Heritage/Batsford study was ably reviewed by Charles Evans-Günther in *Pendragon XXIV/1*, and so needs no introduction here. Much of the learned professor's talk was based on the same text and so I suspect I did not miss too much that was new on the Tor, Chalice Well and Beckery when I had to leave early (though I regret missing questions at the end). However, his first session on *The Abbey: history, myth & archaeology* was enough to get a flavour of the Rahtz technique of elucidation.

Unlike the digs on the Tor and the other sites mentioned above, which he directed, the only part of the Abbey site to receive his archaeological attention is the so-called St Joseph's Well, between 1991 and 1992. (Incidentally, the shaft of this may be Roman in origin). The rest of the site has suffered the sad fate of much disturbance, coupled with little or inadequate reporting, which in common with other scholars he has done his best to interpret.

So, we are given a summary of what archaeology and historical documents can tell us of the Abbey's prehistory (precious little), early charters (mostly forged), and the evidence for early Christianity (late British or early Saxon - eat your heart out,

Joseph! That possible Roman well, however, might be promising!) The late history of the site down to the Dissolution is rather more straightforward, though not always less problematical.

On one point only would I have taken issue with him, and that is the question of the alleged grave of Arthur. Now the good professor thinks that attitudes to the Glastonbury "myths" (his own choice of word, and what he appears to think it means is revealing) range, from those maintained by believers (ie the "lunatic fringe" beloved of less diplomatic scholars) to sceptics (eg the sensible professor). Arthur, it need hardly be said, is a myth. It is therefore obvious that agnostics (like me!) are not much better than those who suffer from "the attraction of the irrational".

Here is how Rahtz illustrated the irrational workings of the true sceptic. Prestige and money is what religious foundations require in general, do they not? Canterbury conveniently provided the model for Glastonbury's hoax, firstly on its exhumation of St Dunstan in 1070, from a great depth, with an inscribed lead tablet and a "pyramid" marker, secondly in its cult of Thomas a Becket after 1170 which brought in huge revenues, and thirdly in its success in re-constructing after its first fire of 1174. Added to the presumed political expediency of demonstrating Arthur's death, these facts allow Dr Antonia Gransden to conclude that Glastonbury "deliberately buried two skeletons complete with inscribed cross, and then staged the discovery". And Prof agrees with her.

I have to say that on the basis of these arguments most agnostics would have to disagree with the proposed explanation. Having the motive is not the same as committing the act, and a court of law could not allow a verdict of guilty. I do find it strange, moreover, that Rahtz, whilst considering Arthur a myth, is willing

to contemplate the Tor as a prehistoric three-dimensional maze without a similarly lengthy discussion of cultural context. But then, perhaps that is the kind of effect that Glastonbury has.



THE MAKING OF THE HARP

It was Marbhan the hermit that gave out news one time of the way the first harp was ever made, and this is the story that he told. There was a man and his wife, Cuil son of Midhuel the man was, and Conoclach was the name of the wife. And she took a hatred to her husband, and she was running from him through every wilderness and every wood, and he was following after her ever and always. One day now the woman came to the sea at Camas, and she was walking along the strand and she met with the bare bones of a whale, and she heard the sounds of the wind passing through the bones and the sinews, and with listening to those sounds she fell asleep. And her husband came there and saw her sleeping, and when he knew it was through those sounds that sleep had fallen upon her, he went on into a wood and he made a shape like the hard high breastbone of a crane, and he put strings into it of the sinews of the whale; and that was the first harp of all the harps of the world.

Lady Gregory



PENDRAGON ADVERTISEMENT RATES

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TAVAS yn grŷth EDDIE & TOOE

We are privileged to be allowed to print some more wisdom from the scripts of Brother Edgar, Chronicler of the Abbey of Sodbury, England.



Glastonbury Abbey, a leading contender in the Arthurian Neighbourhood Stakes, has another - barely less important - claim to fame. The 11th-century monk, Guthlac, though something of a financial wizard, had long performed the lowly duty of looking after the hen-houses and checking the eggs.

When visitors to the Abbey heard the choir intoning the haunting Gregorian Chant they were so impressed that they asked if they could purchase a recording of it. Ailnoth, Glastonbury's last Saxon Abbot, obliged and, realising that in the right hands this could be a useful source of finances for the Abbey, gave Guthlac the task of making recordings of the Chant and supplying them to the public. Thus Ailnoth created a Chant-seller of the Eggs-checker - a title still given to a money-grabbing official who knows all about fowl practices.

Interestingly, Abbot Thurstan, Ailnoth's Norman successor, tried to raise cash by the same means but failed miserably because, by imposing his native Dijon method of chanting on English monks, he caused a revolt. Plainsong became complain-song and a distressed Thurstan renamed the Dijon Chant 'Norman Lament' - a name suggestive of financial failure to this day.

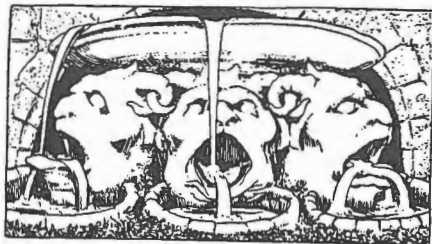
celebration of the Royal birth. On his way from the mines with a load of tin ore a carter was accosted by some men from the nearby parish of Tagel who had spotted his Dragon emblem. 'What es tha' got theer 'en, m'dear?

Thinking they were referring to his load, the carter replied: 'Dinas ore', whereupon the Tagel men confiscated the Dragon flag and the tin ore, and their parish - henceforth known as TIN-tagel - claimed Arthur for its own and ambivalently regarded the emblem as a picture of a dragon/dinosaur. From such simple mistakes does long-term error arise.

(No, Deirdre of Chipping Sodbury, the fossilized creature found recently on Wuthering Heights in Yorkshire was NOT a Bronte-saurus.)



LETTERS



PUBLISHER REQUIRED

♦ From Geoff Roberts, Nérac, France.
Thanks very much for *Pendragon XXIV/1*, full of interesting things as always. I'm glad my review of Cummins' book reached you in time, I shall be very interested to read what Nick Grant thinks about it in the next issue. I should be grateful for advice from other *Pendragon* readers about getting an unpublished Arthurian novel into print. When it was first written 'my' publisher received it enthusiastically but subsequently had a financial crisis and was prevented from going ahead - this at least suggests it is publishable material. My agent says "There are too many Arthurs..." a comment no *Pendragon* reader can possibly agree with, but my desultory efforts to find another publisher have so far failed: I'm obviously trying the wrong ones! I can honestly claim that *Swordsman of the Sun* is out of the usual run, being set in 500BC instead of the usual Dark Age period; it also attempts to integrate much more than usual of the mythical element into the story of a potentially real Celtic hero/leader. Suggestions, please!
Can anyone help an aspiring author prove his philistine agent wrong? As we go to press splendid news comes that Helen Hollick's novel *The Kingmaking* is to be published in late June. It took Helen nine years to show the publishers what she could do in the field of Arthurian fiction.

THE TRUE STORY

♦ From Geoff Bird, Bristol.
The book *King Arthur - The True Story* authored by Graham Phillips and Martin Keatman has engendered much controversy in the pages of *Pendragon* and elsewhere as one might expect. I have a nagging

suspicion that certain reviewers may have been influenced by their dislike of the controversial events in which the authors have previously been involved. In my opinion Uther Pendragon could not have been Duke of Cornwall since Cornwall did not exist then as such, being part of the Kingdom of Dumnonia. It would be eminently logical, however, if he had been Duke of the Cornovii, which would place the action fairly and squarely in the Midlands. Phillips and Keatman have identified a site of undoubted archaeological importance, which deserves to be properly and expertly investigated.

It would be a pity to ignore the possibility of Arthur's presence in that area in rejecting P & K's theory as to his true identity. That would be throwing the baby out with the bath water, surely. (See the footnote to Charles's review of 'Journey to Avalon' and his review of Margaret Gelling's book 'The West Midlands in the Early Middle Ages').
However, I don't think it helps P & K to be seen as Arthurian 'experts' when we have their current publication in the bookshops cheek by jowl with 'The True Story': 'The Shakespeare Conspiracy' (Century £15.99). I've heard of Renaissance men but to move from unravelling the secret of Arthur to "revealing compelling new evidence of Shakespeare's clandestine involvement in the Elizabethan secret service and the murky world of international espionage" is quite a journey. They also 'reveal' that Shakespeare was probably murdered at the instigation of Sir Walter Raleigh. Again, it's not the claim but their speculative approach to proving their assertions that rings bells. Quote: Prof. Stanley Wells, Shakespearean expert (Sunday Times): 'their argument is so tortuous, their scholarship so shaky, that a reader might be forgiven for suspecting that they are on a slippery slope... Some theorists are passionately committed to their cause, others - perhaps including Phillips and Keatman - seem to enjoy flying a kite.'

'ARTORIUS' & 'THE TRUTH'

♦ From Mike Bannister, Shipley, W.Yorks.

1. I still think Phillips and Keatman are nearest the truth so far, despite their corner cutting. Perhaps the true scholars among your readership could help refine the P & K rough order into something of real worth. What actually was found among the mounds at Baschurch? Should we look more carefully there?

Our true scholars have already expressed their doubts about this theory and I don't know of any Arthurian experts more likely to give the book a fair review than Chris Lovegrove and Charles Evans-Günther, long time editors of *Pendragon* and *Dragon*. Readers who feel they can offer further support to P & K's theory are cordially invited to let us have their well-argued articles and reviews.

The Berth, one mile N of Baschurch, 8 miles NW of Shrewsbury (OS 126: SJ 4292236) consists of a 3 acre enclosure with a 50' high mound, surrounded by a rampart. Causeways connect this enclosure to another enclosure and to a deep pond. Finds include a 6th century bronze cauldron and ceramic evidence that the site was occupied in the Iron Age and Roman periods. It is on private farmland. Arguments have been made for it being Pengwern, the legendary Hall of Cynddylan, overlord of the Cornovii.
2. On another topic altogether, I must mention 'Artorius' - a long poem by John Heath Stubbs, which I recommend to a wider public. Written back in 1972, it approaches the Truth of the Imagination in relation to our folk memory of Arthur. Is there any chance of *Pendragon* printing all or part of this magnificent work?

Geoff Bird brought our attention to this work in 1990. The 12 parts, corresponding to signs of the zodiac, are grouped in four sections - the seasons. The cycle recounts Arthur's life as a paradigm of all human lives. It evokes the Aeneid and is a rich blending of ancient literary traditions. It discusses the nature of leadership and examines the themes of telling 'history' and 'story.' Published by Enitharmon, London, 1973. I'll enquire about copyright with a view to printing an extract and/or commissioning an article on the poem.

THE KINGMAKING

♦ From Helen Hollick, Walthamstow, London

1. I assume Heinemann have been in touch about the publication date of *The Kingmaking*? I think copies for review, etc. are about to go out. I'm feeling a mix of excitement and nerves now that the date is fast approaching. I've waited so long for this (9 years) worked hard and shed a good many tears I can tell you! I'm supposed to be working on book two now... Arthur's nag, nag, nag at my shoulder all day long. I keep telling him that I do occasionally have letters to write, meals to cook, a daughter to take to school and I would, just if I ever

get a few spare moments, like to get some sleep...but he goes on and on about getting that battle scene finished or his latest argument won. It's interesting, but apparently he had exactly the same effect on Rosemary Sutcliffe.

It is my proud boast that I am the first person not involved in the production of Helen's book to have read *The Kingmaking*. When I tell you I read it, all 600 pages, in one day's sitting, you'll guess it is something special. Helen joins the ranks of Rosemary Sutcliffe, Mary Stewart and Marion Bradley with this splendid novel. The book will be released on 27th June and we shall be actively joining in with its promotion in every way we can. The courage, self discipline and sheer professionalism of Helen's determination to be a writer is wonderfully rewarded by Heinemann's publication of her novel. And... there are two more to come! Many congratulations, Helen.



AFALLACH

♦ From David Pykitt, Burton on Trent, Staffs.

I was very interested to read Charles's article entitled 'Arthur: The Clwyd Connection', in which he relates how the hill-fort of Moel y Gaer, North of Ruthin, was once known as Caerfallwch (Fortress of Afallach) and that the Welsh name for Avalon was Ynys Afallach. According to Triad 70, (Peniarth No.47) and relating to the 'Three Fair Womb-Burdens of the Island of Britain', Owain and his sister Morfudd were carried together in the womb of Modron, daughter of Afallach and wife of Urien of Gower (Gower), not Rheged. In certain texts of the 'Acheu'r Mamau', contained in Peniarth Manuscript No.75, Rhun appears as the son of Maelgwyn Hir (The Tall), King of Gwynedd, by his

concubine Gwalltwn, the daughter of Afallach. According to P.C. Bartram in 'Early Welsh Genealogical Tracts' (1966), the Afallach who was the father of Gwalltwn is the same man who appears in Triad 70 as the father of Modron, who is to be identified with Morgan Le Fay, the daughter of the king of Avalon.

Charles's findings help to confirm that Afallach was a prince who flourished in North Wales at the time of King Arthur and that Ynys Afallach was named after him. Many thanks for the Pendragon Magazine and the publicity on the back cover.

One member has castigated me for 'the Society's claim' to have found the final solution of Arthur's identity. It was necessary for me to point out to him that David Pykitt and Chris Barber were exercising their right to advertise their book as they wished and that we do not censor adverts other than on the basis of decency, libel, etc. We printed a fairly unsympathetic review of this book - which surely must have pointed to our not having been involved in its promotion directly. Who would be an editor?

REFLECTIONS

♦ From Chris Lovegrove, Bristol.

1. The current debacle over Britain's Tory stance on expanding the European Union sounds familiar, doesn't it? The EU flag of 12 gold stars on a blue field (already reminiscent of the original Old Glory of the nascent USA and, unfortunately, of the Eurovision logo) reminds me of the multi-layered symbolism of the Round Table, with Britain cast as the Mordred character. The blue field, overlain by three golden crowns, was of course used in medieval iconography for Arthur's shield, probably influenced by Anglo/Scandinavian antecedents. Let's hope there isn't a nasty Camlann-type incident.



2. Another article is festering in my head as a result of the mention of Owain Red Hand's sleeping warriors, yew trees and Llanelen in recent Pendragons, involving the Isle of Lewis Chessmen and tales of buried treasure. How about a "Sleeping King" theme for a future edition?

By a strange coincidence I have just received an article on 'H.G. Wells & the Sleeper King'. Please do write your version, Chris, and everyone else who has ideas about the fascinating and rich Sleeping Hero theme. (It is known as the Kyffhäuser motif in folktales, after Frederick Barbarossa of Germany). Other sleepers include: Charlemagne, Tannhäuser, Ogier the Dane, James IV of Scotland, and, in recent times, President Kennedy and Hitler.

3. I'm glad you used Paul Smith's chronology. The last two entries neatly answer Rahtz's accusation that the exhumation of Arthur could only have been a hoax.

See Chris's report of the Bristol University dayschool in this issue and Kurt Hunter-Mann's summary of Charles's talk at the Leeds dayschool. It's good to have experts who disagree writing for us!

4. Noting that Steven Banks is interested in Catharism, etc, he and other Pendragons may be interested to know that Dr Costen at Bristol runs regular study tours on this and related subjects.

Details of this course, supplied by Chris, appear in Talking Head.

5. David Bowers' references to Sir Tarquin's basin ritual, and Marcus Claridge's mention of Owain in connection with St Tybi's well in the Gwenlais valley are unconsciously echoed in "A Fountain in Brocéliande". The evergreen tree in Yvain could be a conifer, or even a yew as at Llandybie.

6. David Bowers' article reminded me of an old Sid Birchby contribution, "King Arthur's Manchester" which began dramatically, "Yesterday I saw Arthur's road uncovered, and stood in his footsteps..." (X/4, the very first Pendragon I edited, in 1977). This reported on the beginnings of a series of excavations by Barry Jones. I liked David's piece, not least because he is clearly a fan of "Have I Got News For You", and that suggests healthy scepticism.

Sid Birchby has been in touch and we look forward to printing one of his articles again soon. Our best wishes to you, Sid.

RABBITING ON

♦ From David Bowers, Swinton, Manchester.

I'm pleased you liked my article on King Arthur in Lancashire. Just one correction, Fred: or should I say, Eddie, "Expanding like rabbits" should have read, "expanding like radii from a centre". Laugh! I nearly choked.

Talking about Mr Tooke, he'll find his Arthurian Theme Park north of Wigan. He can leave the M6 at J27 and follow the signs to Camelot. It's near the hamlet of Robin Hood. Forsooth, sirrah, I jest not! The park's aimed at the under sevens and is rather smaller than Euro Disney. But there is jousting.

Meanwhile, back to the word processor, I'm producing articles like Merlin pulling RABBITS from a grail. Here's a couple to keep you busy.

Thanks for the articles, David, I shall read them carefully to see which animals lie hidden between their lines. I typed your last article in my sleep at 2.00 am on the last of ten days non-stop work to get the February issue out after Christmas & New Year. In my sleep I saw a vision of rabbits radiating outwards from the north, bearing the truth about Arthur to the world and I recorded this image for posterity. Don't blame Eddie of the twinkling pun, it was me, father, I cannot tell a lie. Or was it a case of computer virus? Sorry, anyway!

I once visited the Wigan 'Camelot' many years ago but my 7 year old son wasn't too impressed by the Cowboy Saloon I remember. Perhaps consultants from Las Vegas were brought in at the planning stage?

Sorry we didn't meet up at Leeds. Next time, David.

EXCALIBUR

♦ From Colin Thomas, Bristol

Thanks for the mention in Pendragon - I'm sorry I haven't time to write an article (we start shooting in ten days!) but enclose a handout about the series. Congratulations on Pendragon which I find very helpful and much enjoy the sense of humour.

Colin is the director of the tv series I mentioned last time. His company, Teliesin, is making a three part series for the BBC, with Professor Gwyn Williams as presenter. The programmes will look at the evidence for the fifth century King who fought against the pagan Saxon advance. It will also look at the colour and romance that has developed around Arthur's name, from Geoffrey of Monmouth to Marion Zimmer Bradley. The series will use animations of contemporary paintings, battle re-

enactments and aerial shots of the magnificent scenery associated with King Arthur. "Excalibur-The Search for Arthur" will set out to separate truth from fiction, but it will do so with flair, imagination and visual excitement."

Thank you for the information, Colin, can't wait to see your work. Watch Radio Times, everybody.

OUR CORNISH CORRESPONDENT

♦ From Beryl Mercer, Mount Hawke, Cornwall

In his article on 'Arthur: the Clwyd Connection', Charles says: "The earliest reference to Arthur goes back to the 'Gododdin' in which a band of warriors march south from Edinburgh to fight the English around Catterick". May I, in this context, recommend a fine book by John James, called 'Men went to Cattraeth', the story being told in the first person by the poet Aneirin. However, the author sets the time of this battle in Arthur's childhood, and the warrior hero is Owain, son of King Mark of Cornwall, brother to Tristan. A fine tale of high tragedy and heroism. I don't know if there really was an Owain, son of King Mark, or whether he had any connection with the Owain Llawgoch written about by Marcus Claridge.

An inexpensive version of the Gododdin from Llanerch Press is reviewed elsewhere in this journal.

2. Loved Eddie's piece - but I am still waiting for an answer to a question which I believe I posed in a far-distant issue of Pendragon; viz. what nationality is, or was, Beram Saklatvala? (The '-vala' ending has a vaguely Finnish flavour to it, as per the Kalavela.)

I am told on good authority, Beryl, that the man in question is of Sri Lankan (formerly Ceylon) origin and that his name reflects this. I was also told that Mr. Saklatvala is western educated. More I cannot say, except that he wrote the book: 'Arthur: Roman Britain's Last Champion' (David & Charles, 1967) the mention of which in our pages provoked your question long ago.

3. Radio 2 Arts programme, March 13th. 'Sheridan Morley considers the screen partnership and private lives of cinema's last screen royalty.' The first half was devoted to Burton, during which I was delighted to hear him sing 'How to handle a woman'. As I said in an earlier letter, a really grand Welsh voice.

If you want to hear Richard Burton singing



as Arthur you'll have to try to track down this recording: CBS (Embassy)S CBS 318445A Broadway Magic (Vol 2 - The Great Performers).

Burton created the role of Arthur in New York in December 1960, he was given the New York Drama Critics Award in 1961 for the best performance in a musical. The Kennedy administration coincided and was seen as the new Camelot. Burton revived the part in 1980-1 on an American tour.

How I wish Richard Burton had filmed or televised his King Arthur. It would be something to see Sir Anthony Hopkins play the role. A future edition will describe how Sir Henry Irving played King Arthur in Britain and the USA in 1895.

4. I have been watching the Time Team series on Sunday evenings, I liked the first, which was based on Athelney, because I have always been very interested in King Alfred, and wish that somebody would investigate him as deeply as Arthur has been. I have a small collection of books about Alfred and, if it is true that Arthur returns in the time of his country's need, I don't see why Alfred can't be one of Arthur's reincarnations. Do you know the name of Alfred's mother? or his wife? If you do you're in a minority!

Wife: Earswth; Mother: Osburga; Daughter (you should know this one, The Lady of Mercia), Elfleda/Ethelfleda. Are you sure you're in the right society, Beryl, the Saxons were the 'other side' weren't they? Sorry, I'm only kidding.

AN INVITATION

♦ From Tony Court, Princetown, Devon
We are at last getting a mysteries theme off

the ground and I hope to include a small meeting room for talks and slide shows, etc. I am writing to you to let you know that we have now taken on a shop at Tintagel. As yet it is empty. I think we will start with gifts but will develop our Arthurian attractions here in due course. I can offer you some space at Tintagel for whatever you may wish to put across; I am open to all suggestions and am keen to forge a link in some way. If any members want to get involved in some way I would be more than happy to talk to them or sell their items, etc., in fact, be a noticeboard.

Well, this is a most generous offer and one that doesn't come our way too often. We invite suggestions and offers from all our members. Do you have crafts, artwork, books to sell? Could you spare time to staff a Society Exhibition if we could put one together? Would you like to visit Tony and develop a personal or Society link? Would you like to run a story-telling hour for visitors' children at Tintagel, wearing costumes, perhaps? Now is your chance. We'll be glad to forward letters, put you in touch, Thanks again for the generous offer, Tony.

A READERS' COLUMN?

♦ From Morgana le Fay, South Harrow, Middlesex

I collect Arthurian books but sadly so many of the titles I am looking for are now out of print. How about setting up a new and used 'Books for Sale' column? I am enclosing a list of the titles that I have so far collected, as you will see they are the most famous ones that seem to be regularly reprinted. I do enjoy your book reviews and have bought several books because of hearing about them from you.

♦ John Ford, Watford, Herts

For over a year now I have been searching for Geoffrey Ashe's 'Discovery of Arthur'. It seems the book is out of print. (John goes on to describe how he has hunted through bookshops, everywhere, Then, he found one that ordered the book for him from AMERICA! John asks) Is there any place you know of that I could have obtained this or any future books?

As a book 'junkie' I have much sympathy for these subscribers. I have offered my future services to both, as I visit many second-hand bookshops in my travels. The particular title John was seeking I could have obtained for him immediately, at a reasonable price. No, there is no one

supplier of all those lovely Arthurian books that are out of print. We have offered to advertise member's searches FREE in this journal before and NO ONE has taken us up. We offer again: a Readers column can be set aside for the asking. It's up to you.

EUROPEAN HARMONY

♦ From Pamela Constantine, Upminster, Essex.

I totally agree with your editorial comment to Ramon Guinovart's letter: literature and the arts must be the most natural way of uniting European culture, and it is the creative expressors - and very often those of Celtic persuasion - who keep company with the national folk-soul and, through it, with the folk souls of other nations, so maintaining the web of unity which is at the very heart of the human race. Thus my idea for a widespread Renaissance. I shall certainly contact Ramon: you have whetted my appetite concerning Gwenva.

My apologies to Ramon for printing his address incorrectly in our last Exchange Journals column. It has been corrected in this issue. Please note that we have been asked not to write 'Gwenva' on the envelope when writing to him in Spain.

GREETINGS FROM ITALY

♦ From Paolo Bianconi, Italy

Firstly, let me thank you for your kind reply. I too got the influenza, I presume the Chinese as it's called here. The newsletter you have enclosed is very interesting for the artwork, the poetry and the incredible amount of useful addresses.

There are no memories about the Matter of Britain where I live, but I can easily understand the reason of the recollections in Sicily (for the Norman civilisation) and in Otranto (where the Crusaders used to sail to the Holy Land). In the cathedral of Otranto (Southern Italy) there's a mosaic made by a priest named Pantaleone in 1165. Rex Arturus is riding a strange animal, a kind of mix between a goat and a giant cat. I am not a scholar or a writer, simply a great lover of The Matter of Britain and the Celtic civilisation. My village is reputed to be founded by the Celts (or, better, a tribe of Gauls) so I'm proud to consider myself of Celtic roots. We lack legends, believing and music. I think because no one seems to be interested in these things any more. They only look at the future and comfortable items. I listen to folk music of the Celtic countries and I visited England, Scotland and Ireland.

We are glad you've joined us, Bianco, and thank you for your interesting letters. I think Bianco has expressed to us most eloquently the possibility of a meeting of peoples across national divides. We can unite in the appreciation of the arts and the creative aspects of European culture - as Pamela Constantine says. Pamela's words may seem mystical to some but Paolo's words meet hers at the centre: it is the LACK of culture that we feel as an ache and respond to in others who wish for better than the mediocre. In the film version of Willy Russell's 'Educating Rita' her mother sits in a crowded pub, full of smoke, noisy banal chatter and raucous singing: she says quietly, to herself, in despair: 'There must be better songs to sing'. It is this feeling of loss for what has been and what might again be that the Welsh call 'hiraeth'. It is a central theme of the legend of Arthur Pendragon and might become a powerful motivation for positive action again.

ARTHUR OF RHEGED

♦ From Nancy Slocum Branch Honolulu U.S.A.

Earlier this fall, I spent five weeks in the North, around Carlisle. It seems there is considerable local interest, pageants and all, in Norma Goodrich's theory that Arthur was Urien of Rheged. Now, to that point I had not taken the theory seriously - perhaps in ignorance, perhaps not. At least Arthuret church comes close to claiming a grave. What would strike me as interesting is a review article on the subject. If you did review it, would it be possible for me to purchase the relevant back issue?

♦ From Paul Usher, Bath, Avon

I'm currently enthralled by 'King Arthur' by Norma Lorre Goodrich. It's a totally new viewpoint to me. I find it very convincing. Is this book viewed to be convincing in general, could you give me some idea of the general consensus?

I have sent Norma and Paul copies of Charles' review of the book, which he first published in 'Dragon'. With Charles's permission I'll try to find space to print it in a future issue or, better still, run an updated version. I believe she changed ground after writing the book.



Stonehenge And Arthur

King Arthur's Place in Prehistory:

The Great Age of Stonehenge

W.A. Cummins

ISBN 0 7509 0186 1 (Hardback) £16.99

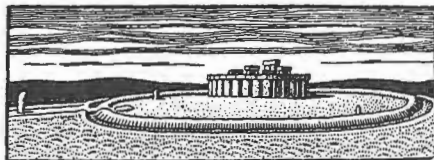
Alan Sutton Publishing Ltd 1992

However much the details of Arthur's career are disputed, most writers would agree that the historical Arthur lived in the 5th and/or 6th centuries A.D., and was a Christian British leader who opposed the Anglo-Saxons. W.A. Cummins suggests in this book that some of the medieval legends that accrued to Arthur in fact relate to events some 2,000 years earlier; in the period of Stonehenge 2000-1500BC.

The central plank in this argument is Geoffrey of Monmouth's account of Stonehenge. Geoffrey's well-known 'History of the Kings of Britain', which appeared c.1135, is a pot-pourri of embroidered fact, tradition and straight fiction. According to Geoffrey, the 5th century British king Aurelius Ambrosius wished to construct a memorial to the 460 British nobles treacherously murdered by the Saxons at a peace conference, and buried at the Cloister of Ambrius. He invaded Ireland to obtain a stone circle, the 'Giant's Ring' from Mount Killaraus. This was done, brought to Britain by sea, and reconstructed at Mount Ambrius by Merlin, Ambrosius' counsellor.



The dynasty remains associated with the monument; Ambrosius and his brother Uther are later buried there; Uther's son and successor was the famous Arthur, and Arthur's cousin and successor Constantine was also



buried at Stonehenge. The striking point about this story is that whilst Stonehenge dates not to the 5th century AD but to the 2nd millennium BC, the bluestones of the inner inner stone ring are not of local origin, but come from South Wales. These stones would therefore have arrived from the west (although from Wales rather than from Ireland), and would have been transported by sea. W.A. Cummins therefore argues that Geoffrey might have been preserving some genuine traditions relating to a much earlier period. This could be supported by some of the supporting details, including the well known place names Mount Killaraus, the cloister of Ambrius, the Giant's Ring, the naming of Merlin as architect, the massacre date of 1 May (a pagan festival), and some topographic details. It is also argued that such details are unnecessary to the main purpose of Geoffrey's history, and thus unlikely to have been made up.

This is not a new idea; others have also suggested that Geoffrey of Monmouth's story of Stonehenge may represent a prehistoric folk memory. John Darrah, in 'The Real Camelot', developed the idea in detail, although in the wider context of identifying traces of pre-Christian paganism in the Arthurian legends. However, as Darrah's book is not cited in the bibliography, perhaps Cummins developed his ideas independently.

The book is divided into three sections. 'The Historical Sources' discusses the early historical references to Arthur and points out that definite factual information about Arthur remains elusive. Geoffrey of Monmouth's account of Arthur is described, and his possible sources considered. Finally in this section, the works of certain Greek writers from the centuries before the birth of Christ are considered. These latter may supply information about prehistoric Britain if we could be sure that that accounts of a semi-legendary people known as the Hyperboreans referred to Britain. 'Testing the Historical Sources' is mainly devoted to the archaeology and geology of Stonehenge. 'The Great Age of Stonehenge' speculates about the function and purpose of Stonehenge, how it was constructed, and what lies behind the stories of Geoffrey of Monmouth. Some interesting

parallels are drawn from the construction of the Easter Island statues. Summarising his ideas, the author suggests that Stonehenge was constructed by a powerful Bronze Age culture ruled by a priest-kingship. The first of this dynasty was Ambrius, whose name was remembered in association with the circle; Arthur was a later and glorious ruler. Their people were sun-worshippers centered on the temple of Stonehenge, and had close religious and trade links with Greece. For a while these rulers and their religious system flourished, but the decadent dynasty eventually came to an end in massacre and overthrow.

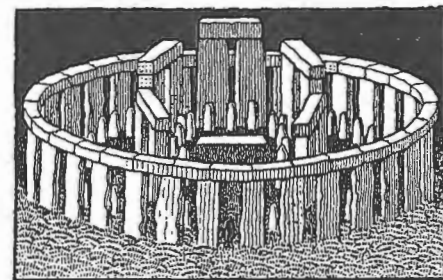
It is immediately evident how much of this account is pure speculation. Indeed, the main weakness of this theory is that it is almost completely unverifiable. We simply do not know enough about possible lost sources used by Geoffrey. There is no independent confirmation that traditions dating back ultimately to the prehistoric period were still circulating in the 12th century. If Geoffrey's Stonehenge really does include elements of folk-memory of some previous historical events, it is now impossible to say what these elements are, and how close a relation they bear to real historical events. Moreover, there is no doubt that Geoffrey of Monmouth invented a great deal, and there seems to be a good chance that he invented the Stonehenge story too. The story has a plausible position in Geoffrey's narrative scheme to glorify the kings of the Britons and their deeds. The apparently factual element (that the stones were brought from the west by sea) could just be coincidence. After all, most of the details are wrong; the far more visually impressive sarsens, which form the outer ring and inner horseshoe of Stonehenge, are local: the source of the non-local bluestones was Wales not Ireland; and construction took place in the Bronze Age, not the post-Roman period. Finally there may be a context for such an invention. Geoffrey's contemporary Henry of Huntingdon is the earliest writer (c.1130) to mention Stonehenge, stating that 'no one can conceive how such great stones have been raised aloft, or why they were built there'. Could Geoffrey have concocted a background to Stonehenge to clear up the mystery, to demonstrate his superiority as a historian to Henry? It is perhaps significant that Geoffrey, at the end of his history, pointedly warns Henry and another contemporary historian, William of Malmesbury not to write about the kings of the Britons, as they do not have the source he has, the very ancient book in the British language. Linking Arthur with Stonehenge (Chapter 14) is Cummins' hardest

task of all. Arthur is not connected with Stonehenge by Geoffrey of Monmouth; his predecessors and successors are buried there, but Arthur is taken to the isle of Avalon after being mortally wounded. The author's only suggestion here is that part of the description of Arthur's court at Caerleon is in fact a memory of pagan ceremony at Stonehenge. Moreover, it is certainly not sustainable to argue that Arthur had no early reputation as a military leader and should not be regarded as such (p.155).

This is an enjoyable and easy-to-read book, the basic scholarship is sound and reliable, and the arguments clear to follow. Whether they are convincing is quite another matter. I found the speculative sections of the book to have such uncertain foundations that much of the author's endeavour was nullified. If the Geoffrey of Monmouth story and the Dark Age connections are stripped away from Stonehenge, much of this book is valid as an imaginative, but factually-based interpretive account of Stonehenge and its use. Indeed, this is more a book about Stonehenge than Arthur, and a student of the former is more likely to find it of interest.

Nick Grant

(Ed.: See 'The Real Camelot- Paganism and the Arthurian Romances' by John Darrah, Thames & Hudson, 1981. The author examines the Arthurian 'entourage' in terms of native British paganism to show how they embody various aspects of primitive religion such as the cults of the sacred waters and of the severed head, ritual aspects of copulation, castration, cannibalism and, above all, the tradition of Frazer's priestly kings who reigned until they were supplanted by a stronger man. Darrah seeks to unearth a Bronze Age 'literature' to compare with that found in Homer. Also of relevance is 'Who Owns Stonehenge?', various contributors, Batsford, 1990. Just published as we go to press: 'Paganism in Arthurian Romance' John Darrah, Boydell, £25. I do not know if this is a new work or a reprint of the above.)



book Reviews



THE ANGLO-SAXON KINGDOMS: The Power Struggle from Hengist to Egberht

by Leonard Dutton

SPA 1993, ISBN 1-85421-197-8, hardback £20.00

This attractively designed publication consists of 290 pages, 11 black and white illustration, including photographs, 19 maps, 2 pages of genealogies, a 3 page bibliography and 10 pages of index.

Mr. Dutton competently tells the history of the growth of Anglo-Saxons kingdoms from Hengist in the second half of the 5th century till 839. He shows the ups and downs of the Anglo-Saxons, their inter-tribal rivalries and their wars, and unions, with the British. The story is accompanied with some excellent maps that are very well drawn and easy to understand. It is let down by the photographs which are few and far between and look as if they were put in as an afterthought.

There is little to comment about the overall coverage of this period - Mr. Dutton does a very good job with the available information. However he tends to depend more on chronicles rather than on any of the recent archaeological evidence that has come to light over the last 50 or so years. Apart from a few places where I, personally, would interpret the chronicles somewhat differently (but that is a matter of opinion) this is a good book. There is, however, little in it that is new to students of this period. I feel that Mr. Dutton became interested in the subject and felt he wanted to write a history by himself.

The earlier part of the book deals with the establishment of the Anglo-Saxons on the shores of Britain and the author has some interesting comments to make about Arthur. There is no searching for secrets here only the interpretation of the material available. He suggests that Arthur's early battles were against the Jutes and Saxons of the South-East of England and the later battles against the growing Hampshire Jutes or West Saxons. Intermingled with these are campaigns against the Picts in Scotland. Mr. Dutton believes that the early battles of Arthur took place actually in Essex at the Roman fort of *Othona*, near the River Blackwater. Similar theories about Arthur's battles being placed in the South-East came from W.G. Collingwood in 1929. However, Mr. Dutton doesn't try to cram them all into one area. The River Blackwater is meant to be *Dubglas* which is mentioned in the "History of the Britons" but there it is said to be in the region of *Linnus* which, according to Kenneth H. Jackson, was Lindsey in Lincolnshire.

Trying to work out the positioning of the famous 12 battles of Arthur is like walking into a minefield. So many of these battles cannot be identified with any certainty and it is a brave person tries to make any sense of this list.

The Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms by Leonard Dutton is well worth the read but I do not think it is such a must for the shelves. Borrow a copy from the library, that's what I did!

THE WEST MIDLANDS IN THE EARLY MIDDLE AGES

by Margaret Gelling

Leicester University Press 1992, ISBN 0 7185 1395 9, paperback £15.99



In the series "Studies in the Early History of Britain", this book consists of over 220 pages, 16 black and white photographs, 62 illustrations, maps and diagrams, 2 pages of notes, a 5 page bibliography and an 11 page index. The history discussed in this publication ranges from the end of the Roman period up till the Domesday survey.

Not only is this a book for people interested in the West Midlands but is relevant to the history of Wales and England in general. It covers that vital period when Anglo-Saxons faced Romano-

Britons after the initial settlements and shows that it wasn't all warfare. Dr. Gelling indicates that there may well have been a considerable period when Briton and Saxon lived, worked and fought together against other Anglo-Saxon enemies. This may have gone on for a much long period than previously accepted. She questions the belief that Wales had always been at war with England and with the help of Jenny Rowland's immense work on "Early Welsh Saga Poetry" brings to light another picture. Later Welsh poetry, it is now believed, was propagandist and because by the time of the composition of such sagas as "The Song of Heledd" Wales was at war with the Mercians, the enemies in these poems were Saxons. This is possibly inaccurate and though it is likely Heledd's family was destroyed by Angles from Northumbria, the Welsh were at that time allies with the Mercians under Penda.

However, Dr. Gelling's book is much more than a discussion on the friendship between Powys and Mercia. She looks at the end of the Roman period and what marks it left on the area from Cheshire to Herefordshire, the British of the West Midlands, Anglo-Saxon archaeology, the Church and State, the Eighth century and Offa's Dyke, the Danish Wars, the growth of towns and trade, the late Anglo-Saxon landscape and the Domesday survey. Therefore you can see there is a lot of material in this book. Nevertheless, the first hundred pages covers the period from the fifth to the seventh centuries - that most interesting period when Briton and Saxon came face to face and either fought or learned to live with each other.

You will find this an excellent book and it fits in well with other books in the series, including: Wendy Davies' "Wales in the Early Middle Ages", Pauline Stafford's "The East Midlands in the Early Middle Ages" and "The Origins of the Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms" edited by Steven Bassett. It is also nice to see that it is not just Dark Age novels that are written by women - the history of this period is well represented by female authors.

Charles Evans-Günther

("Early Welsh Saga Poetry" by Jenny Rowland, published in 1990 by D.S. Brewer, brings to an English speaking audience many pieces of poetry often neglected in English language material. Some are quoted but rarely presented in full with discussions. However, here is a publication that covers many poems relevant to the Dark Ages, including The Song of Llywarch Hen, the Urien Rheged Poems and "The Song of Heledd". Other material is also discussed which may be of interest. Unfortunately, there is one drawback with this book - it consists of nearly 700 pages and cost £85.

THE GRAIL

By Michael Clynes

ISBN 0 7472 0835 2 (hardback)

Headline Book Publishing, 1993 £15.99



First, a confession. I did not pay the full price for this, "the third journal of Sir Roger Shallot," handing over only one pound sterling for it at a local school fair. Whether this was a genuine bargain or not I shall reveal in due course.

Roger Shallot has already recounted details of his dissolute life in *The White Rose Murders* and *The Poisoned Chalice*. Not being a fan of Brother Cadfael and his ilk, I cannot say whether this latest offering measures up to the usual standards of the genre, but I can state with confidence that this certainly is not, in publishing parlance, a worthy successor to Umberto Eco's *The Name of the Rose*. I am glad to say that there are no Gadzooks, Odbodkins and the like, but Shallot's asides (providing original material for his friend Will Shakespeare) are very tedious and typical of the wit in this book.

Most of the scene is set in Somerset, at Glastonbury Abbey and at Templecombe Manor. Henry VIII is keen to get his hands on the Grail and on Excalibur, but murder and intrigue provide the inevitable obstacles. Michael Clynes' history doctorate was in Edward II and Isabella, and he is therefore no slouch on background details. However, he clearly hasn't read our own editor's researches on the Nanteos cup or he wouldn't have stated that "it was last seen in the 1920s in a bank vault".

Now, should you pay nearly £16 for 240-odd pages of historical whodunit? Or is one quid enough for this sort of light relief sought in an airport departure lounge? My recommendations are that Philip Rahtz's *Glastonbury* is a more gripping read (and costs less), and that you would do better to search out *The Grail Murders* in your local library if you anticipate your flight being delayed.

Chris Lovegrove

Book Views



No, look again, this is not a continuation of 'Book Reviews'. This column will keep you in touch with interesting publications which might not receive a full review in our pages or are awaiting a fuller review. Your contributions would be particularly welcome. It would be splendid if a specialist sub-editor were to emerge for this column, any offers? Anyway, just to kick off:

♥ PAMPHLETS:

There is a bewildering world of private publishing going on these days, thanks to word processors, etc. Some of these publications are semi-literate and some quite 'fascist' in their intolerance of views other than those of their writers. Others are gems, the gleanings and researches of interesting people with a bee in their individual bonnets. Here's a current sampling:

1. *A Companion to George Borrow on his Journeys in Wales in 1854*. Richard William Peachem, M.A., MSc, FSA. 26pp. £2, post free. If you love Borrow this indispensable little booklet provides notes and maps based on the original O.S. maps of the 1830's & 40's. You will literally be able to walk in Borrow's footsteps with this guide in your rucksack. From: 2 Felin Gyffin, Llandre, Bow St, Dyfed, SY24 5AQ.

2. *A Brief History of our Celtic Ancestry*, Bernard Armstrong. 20pp. £2.95, post free. The sort of survey of the 'Celt' that many of us could write as a summary of fairly extensive reading, but well provided with maps and illustrations. 9, Renouf Close, Lymington, Hants, SO41 8GL.

3. *The Little Book of Celtic Designs*, David James (of *Celtic Connections*). 36pp, £2.95 including post. Attractive gloss cover. Selection of David's artwork between 1985 and 1993. Preface by Courtney Davis. (Address: see exchange mags). Pleasing.

4. *Nigel Pennick: Celtic Art in the Northern Tradition*. 32pp. 1991. One of Nigel's *Ogyia* series. Introduce yourself to Nigel's booklets via this one. Fascinating, like all his researches. Write for list and prices: Nideck, 142 Pheasant Rise, Bar Hill, Cambridge, CB3 8SD.

5. *Traditional British Honey Drinks and*

A User Friendly Dictionary of Old English. Francis Beswick. Latest of Bob Trubshaw's publications from his Heart of Albion Press. Send large (A5) sae for catalogue of full range. Always beautifully produced, fascinating titles, including *Alby Stone's* Arthurian trilogy. (Address: see Exchange mags page: Mercian Mysteries).

♥ CATALOGUES

The larger publishers will be known to most people, but the list for Arthurian scholarship is:

1. Boydell & Brewer, P.O. Box 9, Woodbridge, Suffolk, IP12 3Df. Ask for Literature Catalogue. Academic books, they often cost a fortune - but are indispensable to the Arthurian scholar. Available through libraries

2. Batsford: *Archaeology & Local History List*: 4 Fitzhardinge St, London, W1H 0AH. The English Heritage Series plus more.

3. The King's England Press, 37 Crookes Lane, Carlton, Nr. Barnsley, S.Yorks. Place names, local history, genealogy, and an interesting section on Anglo-Saxon studies, archaeology and mythology.

4. Floris Books, 15 Harrison Gardens, Edinburgh, EH11 1SH. *Lives of the Saints* series and Celtic books such as: *Carmina Gadelica* (poems & prayers from the Gaelic tradition collected by Alexander Carmichael, and *Celtic Wonder Tales*. List in full colour.

5. Oxbow Books, Park End Place, Oxford, OX1 1HN. THE firm for archaeology, ancient & medieval history, especially for remainders and bargains. Lists: *Wordcraft* by member Stephen Pollington. Anglo-Saxon dictionary and thesaurus of core vocabulary, organised under 50 headings covering their life and culture. Fascinating. £9.95.

6, 7 & 8, Llanerch Press, Excalibur Books (see adverts below) and Capall Bann Publishing (on back cover). We shall be

reviewing *Angels & Goddesses* (Celtic Christianity & Paganism in Ancient Britain) in our next issue. The cover is by Simon Rouse who has another commission from this firm.

9. The Welsh Book Council: catalogue and distribute most books about Wales that are in print, in Welsh and English, including national history, local history, local customs and folklore. Welsh Books Council, Castell Brychan, Aberystwyth, Dyfed, SY23 2JB. An excellent checklist on the Principality.

10. Thames & Hudson, 30-34 Bloomsbury St. London, WC1 B3Q. Their Jan.- July catalogue has their full range of Celtic books listed and illustrated on page 75, very impressive.

♥ SOME TITLES:

1. *Exploring the World of the Celts*. Simon James (Thames & Hudson). £16.96. Glossy, beautifully produced.

2. *Sir Gawain & the Green Knight, Sources & Analogues*. Elisabeth Brewer (D.S. Brewer). Places the narrative motifs against parallels in literature of the time it was written: fascinating anthology.

3. *Over Nine Waves: A Book of Irish Legends*. Marie Heaney, (Faber) £14.99. Powerful re-tellings.

4. *King Arthur & his Knights of the Round Table*. Roger Lancelyn Green (Everyman, Children's Classics) £9.99. Handsome

reprint of this classic with Aubrey Beardsley's illustrations replacing Lotte Reiniger's papercuts of the Puffin edition.

5. The Illustrated Guide to Celtic Mythology. T.W. Rolleston. (BCA Studio). A beautiful coffee table book, includes the Arthurian saga.

6. The Gododdin. Aneirin, translated by Steve Short. (Llanerch Press). £6.50. This heroic epic poem was written in Old Welsh in Southern Scotland about a battle fought in Northern England; it is believed at Catterick in Yorkshire. It is a lament recording a terrible defeat of the Celts and is composed of a series of elegies for the fallen. Aneirin witnessed the death of his friends personally and, within the formality of the verse, this feeling is conveyed in personal recollections of the fallen heroes. It is comparable to Greek tragedy in its austerity and Steve Short, a poet himself, has brought great skill to the finding of accessible English forms to convey something of the complexity of the original language and its conventions. His Introduction explains clearly his aims in translating the poem and I found the translation moving and compulsive reading. No. XXVII, Isag, Gwyddno's son, appealed to me particularly as a South Walian: he was modest, kind and graceful. Another collector's item from this publisher's list.

Reviews of these or other books likely to be of interest to members are welcome.

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Symbolism of the Celtic Cross
by Derek Bryce; *The Black Book of Carmarthen* with translations of the Merlin Poems by Marion Pennar; *The Legendary XII Hides of Glastonbury* by Ray Gibbs; *The two Lives of Gildas* translated by Hugh Williams; etc. Complete List
Llanerch Publishers, Felinfach,
Lampeter, Dyfed, Wales, SA48 8PJ

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 MEDIA

Farewell my Lovely: Alby Stone pointed out to us in XXIII/3 that this is his favourite 'Arthurian' film. Both versions he mentioned have been shown on television since.

BBC1, 16th Nov 93. (US.1945, 95 mins.) Dick Powell as the droll and world weary Philip Marlowe in this classic film noir inspired by *Parzival*. The Radio times gave it their top five star rating - 'excellent'.

BBC1, 10th April 94. (US.1975, 90 mins.) A haunting evocation of the 1940's in a strange reddish world of corruption and an even wearier Robert Mitchum tracking down Velma Grayle and her jade necklace. This time the critics awarded the film 4 stars ('good', they don't seem to have a 'very good' classification). Did you spot the references back to Wolfram von Eschenbach's work? Thank you Alby, for making us aware that they were there.

Prince Valiant: BBC2. (US.1954, 105 mins.) This was something else but it also won 4 stars from the Radio Times. This film was 20th Century-Fox's answer to MGM's "Knights of the Round Table" of the year before. Prince Valiant (Robert Wagner) flees from Scandia to become Gawaine's squire and eventually a knight of the R.T. after defeating the evil Black Knight. James Mason, Janet Leigh and Debra Paget join in. Based on Hal Foster's newspaper comic strip (1937-). The strip has given rise to novels and Greg Stafford based the fantasy role-play game *Prince Valiant*, (1989) on this artist-writer's work. Popular culture indeed, but it's all part of Arthur's rich tapestry. Constantin films are the latest to be doing a remake of *Prince Valiant*.

Arthur in Hollywood:

Indeed, no fewer than six major movies about King Arthur are lined up to be made in Film City. It's part of a move back to big historic

epics which will also include William Tell, Ivanhoe and the Crusades. Sean Connery will star in *First Knight* for Columbia, to be made in England, while Mel Gibson has been approached to lead in *A Connecticut Yankee* (another!). Most interesting is the news that James Coburn has bought the rights to Marion Bradley's *Mists of Avalon*. Doug Curtis is reversing things by sending two Arthurian knights into modern times while *Forever King* will feature a reincarnated Arthur in the person of a ten year old boy from Chicago. Producer Laurence Mark says, "We're all yearning for Camelot, aren't we? John F. Kennedy was the closest we got".

Excalibur: The Search for Arthur: News of this three-part series appears in our Letters pages. 'Awen: the Arthurian Warband Newsletter' reports that the last part will include mention of the Warband and feature the 39 year old reborn King - Arthur Uther Pendragon, swordbearer of the Secular Order of Druids, titular head of the Loyal Arthurian Warband. He really is Arthur, he changed his name by deed poll in 1986. He will probably be filmed at Stonehenge where he has campaigned for three years against English Heritage's ban on summer solstice gatherings.

★ THEATRE

Arturius Rex, DOA: Brith Gof, "Wales' most experimental theatre", at St. Donats Arts Centre, Glam. March 7th. Director Mike Pearson linked Bosnian conflict to Celtic myth and used audience participation in an attempt to make people aware of the process of rivalry that leads to war. Fifteen of the audience were crammed inside a 10ft box with three soldiers, the victims of a modern war who had also experienced the defeat and deification of Arthur. The soldiers then gave the audience a history lesson, attempting to show the connection between adopting Arthur as a national hero and the devaluing of ideas

of nationalism. Chris Lovegrove sent me a cutting from The Guardian in which David Adams sums up his dissatisfaction with the piece... 'The points made are so glaringly obvious - that the mythologising of a warlord like Arthur leads to nationalism, fundamentalism, and the horrors of post-communist Europe. The few lines on the programme say everything and the performance becomes redundant. The ideas behind DOA are fine - but the product is boring.'

Gawain & the Green Knight: Opened Thurs, 7th April at Covent Garden, is proving a crowd puller. Harrison Birtwistle has revised one section of the score, the masque of the Turning of the Seasons which represented a year-long vigil and the bathing and arming of Gawain: the-year-and-a-day of the poem. Now the action is much simpler, a day and a night passes; the seasons during the day and the arming during the night. This cuts the 300 minute score by 20 minutes and shortens the part the critics found in most need of pruning. Alison Chitty's electronic magic steals the show, however, when the detached head rolls its eyes and its lips continue to sing the Green Knight's part while held aloft in Gawaine's grasp.

★ RADIO

Gawain: The whole opera was broadcast on Radio 3, 25th April (7.15 - 10.45pm). Presented by Piers Burton-Page and the director of the production, Di Trevis. A 15 minute discussion of the poem was held between the two acts by Graham Fawcett and guests, including A. S. Byatt. Royal Opera House Chorus & Orchestra, conductor Elgar Howarth.

The Green Hill: Saturday, April 2nd, Radio 4. Two plays by John Fletcher linked thematically. *The Druid* was based on 'The Life & Death of a Druid Prince', (Anne Ross & Don Robbins, Rider, 1989). In 1984 a well preserved human torso, cut in two, was found at Lindow Moss in Cheshire. Lindow Man became Lovernios, a druid, who had consented to his own ritual sacrifice in this reconstruction of the likely events. Having looked on his face at the Manchester University exhibition it was eerie to hear him speak. Even more disturbing was the second play, *The Detective*, broadcast on the 4th April, Easter Monday. In the year 2023 London is decaying and two detectives are drawn into the investigation of the collapse. The world of *The Druid* is reversed in the second play.

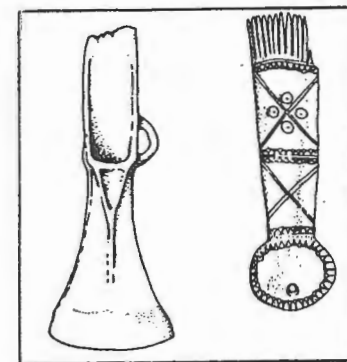
★ CAMELOT

I have come across four more Camelots. The first is a range of weather proof covers to put over your garden furniture; to be found at

garden centres everywhere. The second is the 'Musicals Collection' (No.7.), CD and Cassette available, with 12 page glossy pictorial magazine. The tape runs 38 minutes and it has all the main songs, sung by a 'revival cast' led by Richard Harris and Fiona Fullerton. Only £3.99, back numbers are available from the publishers. If you would prefer to see the show live, then the Truro Amateur Operatic Society are performing it at the splendid open-air Minack Theatre, near Land's End this summer. Performances from Monday, June 27th to Friday, July 1st at 8 p.m. and on Wednesday, June 29th and Friday, July 1st, matinees at 2 p.m. as well. Tickets: Adults £3, children £1.50 (Cheaper seats with restricted views are available). Early booking advisable: Tel. 0872 77676 for information. The fourth Camelot comes at the end of this article.

★ ARCHAEOLOGY

Timeteam: Channel 4, January-February. (XXIV/1) Apparently the series aroused strong anti-feelings in some: 'It gives a totally erroneous impression of appropriate research and excavation strategies' but it built its audiences over four programmes, from 1.6m to 2.3m., so it obviously succeeded, in tv terms at least. The series will be repeated this summer and a further four programmes will be shown in the Autumn.



Current Archaeology: The next edition of this fine journal will contain their special annual supplement of digs to visit. It is also an archaeological name and address and telephone numbers list of all archaeological organisations, amateur and professional, societies and units, curators and contractors. In case you've just joined us, the address is: 9 Nassington Road, London, NW3 2TX. Published 6 times a year, sub. £12. Great value.

DNA Plasticine: The current edition of the above journal has a short article on the



possibility of 'Jurassic Park' type re-creation of animals from DNA material. This 'pleasing fantasy' seems unlikely but it has been claimed that DNA is still extractable from amber after 120 million years! We reported last time that ladies have been inquiring about the possibility of reproducing with the Alpine Iceman. Perhaps if we can find a grave for Arthur scientists may be able to help him to make his reappearance one day. If they do let's hope he doesn't look too much like Boris Karloff.

The Man in the Ice: is the title of a book by Konrad Spindler (Weidenfeld, £19.99). Spindler is professor of prehistory at Innsbruck University and he was the first expert to examine the body from the glacier. The book is scientifically detailed but it is also a mesmerizing detective story. This neolithic man (now nicknamed Otzi) lay in his glacial tomb throughout the span of known civilisation. 320 pages, 32 pages of colour photos. You can obtain an exclusive paperback copy from The Softback Preview book club (you don't have to buy any set number of books from them) for only £9.99 (plus postage): P.O. Box 415, Uxbridge, Middlesex, UB11 1DZ.

Prime Sources: You may wish to consider the possibility of finding new archaeological sites in your own area or you may wish to look for evidence in other parts of England which you have no opportunity to visit. An invaluable source of information can be Aerial photographs. The National Monuments Record is a public archive of the Royal Commission on the historical Monuments of England. It has over 3 million images available, vertical and oblique, many in colour, covering every inch of England. Ancient settlements, crop marks, etc. can be seen from the air, often in previously overlooked areas. Further information: Customer Information Services, NMR Air Photographs,

Alexander House, 19 Fleming Way, Swindon, SN1 2NG. Tel: 0793 414600.

This Precious Earth: Solsbury Hill outside Bath has a spectacular Celtic fort which inevitable leads to its being threatened by road building schemes - in this case the A35 'corridor' road which will destroy it and its environs. It now threatens to become another Twyford. Similarly, the 10 mile, 6 lane Kidderminster/ Hagley/ Blakedown bypass, Susan Newland's 'poisoned lance', threatens Wychbury Hill and articles have appeared in most of our exchange zines on this threat. To quote one, 'the site is also reputed to be the site of King Arthur's battle of Mons Badonicus as well as his possible place of burial.' 'Reputed' is sometimes replaced by 'traditionally' and the game of Chinese whispers goes on. Well meant but vague and romantic assertions may be a double edged sword which the 'planners' can wield to cut through the protests against their desecrations and assist them to get away with their rape and pillage. An article in the latest *Northern Earth Mysteries* makes this case very powerfully concerning Wychbury. There are environmental arguments and proven historical associations enough to make a case for the preservation of these sites. I'm not arguing against the spiritual, mythic associations, the poetic love for our land which makes this Merlin's Isle, but these cut little ice with the materialists who drive with stop watches strapped to their carphones. I have asked Dr Calder, Chairman of the Wychbury Archaeological Society, a member of our Society himself, to outline a general case for an Arthurian presence in this area which we, with a sympathetic, if hard-headed approach to Arthurian claims, can evaluate realistically. **The British Archaeological Trust:** is known as RESCUE. The Trust is committed to the protection, conservation, recording and interpretation of archaeological evidence. It would serve us well to support its activities. Contact: 15a Bull Plain, Hertford, Herts, SG14 1DX.

English Heritage Sites: The most visited sites in 1992 were: Stonehenge, 649,442; Dover Castle, 273,398; Osborne House, 181,591; Clifford's Tower, 160,347; Tintagel Castle, 149,183; Battle Abbey, 143,879; Housesteads Roman Fort, 131,732. In keeping with Jocelyn Stevens' plan to make EH cost-effective by making the most of the revenue-producing sites and persuading the National Trust, local authorities and enthusiasts to take care of the rest, 17 sites were recently transferred to the care of the N.T. including Avebury, White Horse Hill & Wayland's Smithy.

★ OUT AND ABOUT

English Heritage, Events: This colourful booklet listing historical displays, re-enactments, music and drama at Heritage sites is now available. If you can't find one send to: English Heritage, Customer Services, 429 Oxford St, London, W1R 2HD.

Roman Tombstones, Chester: The Grosvenor Museum in the City Centre has created a colourful new gallery where you can wander through the Roman tombstones - over 200 of them, found buried beneath the city walls. Free. Open 10.30 - 5.00 Mon - Sat, 2-5 Sun. A volume in the Batsford/ English Heritage series was published in March: *Chester*, Peter Carrington (Pbk. £14.99) and it is indispensable to any serious visitor to this beautiful and historic city.

Wessex Weekend: Friday 15th - Sunday 17th July. Staying at the Red Lion Hotel, a coaching inn in the centre of Salisbury and guided by the Director of the Trust for Wessex Archaeology, the party will have Stonehenge to themselves and a weekend visiting Old Sarum, Avebury, West Kennet and Silbury Hill: Andante Travels, Grange Cottage, Winterbourne Dauntsey, Salisbury, SP4 6ER.

Magical Britain & Enchanted Ireland: Journeys to the Heart of Ancient Sacred Lands. Jamie George's Gothic Image tours for 1994. Ireland: May 7-20; Britain: July 2-15 and September 8-21. Joined by authors, storytellers and musicians, including Geoffrey Ashe, Moyra Caldecott, Paul Devereux, Julie Felix, Caitlin & John Matthews, John Michell, Bob Stewart. (The Britain tour passes through Chester.) Gothic Image also organise 7 and 10 day journeys in South - West Britain, mainly focused on Arthurian myth. Write for details: Gothic Image, 7 High St. Glastonbury, Somerset, BA6 9DP. Tel: 0458 831452

Cathar Castles Study Tour: 9th-21st September 1994. The area around Carcassonne is full of visible reminders of the most traumatic event in the history of this region - the Albigensian Crusade. This study tour will visit some of the major sites associated with the Crusade. Enquiries: Dr M.D.Costen, Dept. Continuing Education, Queen's Rd., Bristol B58 1HR. (The Department is moving to 6-10 Berkeley Sq. in May but early enquiries are essential.)

Cardiff Festival of Literature, 1994: This annual event is held in the Welsh capital in October each year by the Welsh Academy. This year there is to be an Arthurian Day. I'll hand over to Kevin Thomas, the Director:

"There will be an Arthurian Day as part of the Cardiff Literature Festival - on Saturday 8th October. Plans are at an early stage so no venue has been confirmed as yet. It is hoped

that the day will include the launch of a new book on Arthur, by Gwyn Alf Williams, as well as lectures, storytelling, an exhibition and a discussion event. Full details in August issue of *Pendragon*."

It would be good if we can arrange for Helen to be there at a book-signing venue. More news next time.

★ CELTIC ARTS & CRAFTS

It has been our practice to print details of the availability of Celtic crafts but this seems redundant since the appearance of David James's *Celtic Connections*. This journal aims to provide a forum for Celtic arts and crafts and it is bursting with adverts and addresses. Details on our Exchange page.

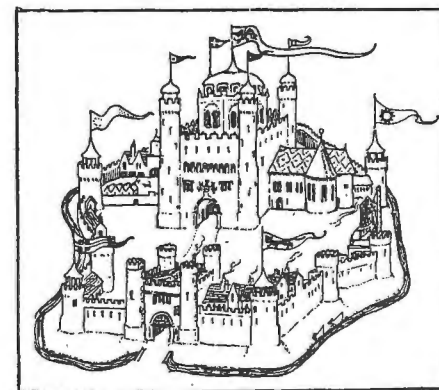
Once & Future Celt: Bethan has had to suspend her business activities in London for a while because of pressing family matters. She apologises for any inconvenience this may have caused our readers. We wish her well.

Trinity College Library Shop, Dublin:

Books, posters, postcards, prints, sets of slides (Book of Kells and of Durrow), etc. Great Irish art reproductions. Write: Trinity College Library Shop, College St, Dublin 2.

★ CAMELOT 3D JIGSAW

"Puzzle-Plex, the amazing 3-D Jigsaw of Camelot Castle. Enter a new dimension in jigsaw puzzles, a puzzle solving journey to the legendary times of Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table. You'll be amazed as your castle grows bigger and better, soaring skyward as you complete the stately towers, the cobblestone paths and intricately tiled courtyards. Over 600 pieces. Endless fun for the whole family. Only £32.00". How's that for a finish? Chris lovegrove found this gem in a newspaper, we don't know if it is still available. If you want to try: Telebrands, 118 West Street, Faversham, Kent, ME13 7JB. Tel: 0227 77155, 24 hours.



EXCHANGE JOURNALS

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

CELTIC CONNECTIONS - Editor David James, Tamarisk Farm, West Bexington, Dorchester, Dorset DT2 9DF. Quarterly journal dedicated to all aspects of Celtic culture, especially the arts and crafts. Sample copy £1.50, add 60p for overseas. Subscription £5.50 year. Cheques payable to 'David James'.

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