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The Shire Post

Vera Chapman

Martha Muench

Chris Jones

Ian Collins

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See next page for additional authors

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Mythcon 51: The Mythic, the Fantastic, and the Alien

Albuquerque, New Mexico • Postponed to: July 30 – August 2, 2021



Authors

Vera Chapman, Martha Muench, Chris Jones, Ian Collins, Roger Black, Nan Scott, Anthony Cermak, Kirk L. Thompson, Dave Greene, Annette Harper, Judy Mosinger, Anne Little Etkin, Tom Eaton, John Stephen Maddux, David Damrosch, Robert Karp, Dainis Bisenieks, Chris Jones, John Forrest, Owen Clayton, Susan Schwartz, Max Grober, Beth Myers, Mike Harper, Karl-Gustaf Lofvander, Jonathan Glixon, Drusilla McKinney, and Dave Boersema

The Shire Post

Chapman et al.: The shire with which I must strongly disagree, preferably where it will reach the eyes of either TI or Niekas readers. Of Swann's musical settings you categorically state, "The music, for the most part, does not capture the feeling of Middle-earth". Perhaps you felt that the implication that this was merely your opinion was present, but I suspect some younger members will accept this statement as authoritative fact and cheat themselves of a charming experience.

MRS. VERA CHAPMAN | 21 Harrington House | Stanhope St | London N. W. 1, England

I am gravely disturbed by the appearance in London of a magazine calling itself Gandalf's Garden, which is devoted to the protest of youth etc., but is permeated with drug-taking and the psychedelic cult. It advertises LoTR as the psychodelectable masterpiece - and uses much of the terminology of the books in a context of 'taking trips' etc. The very last thing the author would ever have in mind or approve of. I wonder if you, or he, have encountered this? I feel this misuse of the name and the book should be stopped.

I feel very strongly that these books are most emphatically wholesome and sane, and that it would be a tragedy to let them be smeared in any way with the psychedelic cult and the prevailing obsession with mental disorder and that thing which seems to me rather worse than the death-wish, the deliberate wish to be insane. Let us keep the Shire clean from all such!

MARTHA MUENCH | 261 South Batavia | Orange Calif 92668

Tolkien does get to you! Last Saturday I was in L. A. and happened to look up toward the Hollywood Hills. It was unmistakable; there on a "mountain throne" was Minas Tirith! The edifice was actually Griffith Park Observatory, but the architecture was close enough to pass for something Middle-earthish.

CHRIS JONES | Ny Ny 10027

Thanks for publishing my synopsis- it looks fine except that the last paragraph got slightly garbled somewhere along the line. The 68 Yule Moot was great, especially Sister Pauline's paper. Incidentally, Gimli's devotion to Galadriel was not courtly love! Courtly love was simply a form of glorified adultery, like Lancelot and Guinevere.

Will you publish information about how and when we can get the Harvard Lampoons parody?

IAN COLLINS | Stanhope House | Stanhope Place London W. 2, England

A copy of The Green Dragon No. 5 dated December 1968 reached me recently and I was interested to read your advice to non US Tolkien addicts on how best to obtain the Caedmon recording of Poems and Songs of Middle-earth. I think I should point out that, we as Caedmon's licensees in this country, have published this record. We have publicised it and it is selling very well but no doubt there are still some Tolkien enthusiasts who aren't aware of its existence, and a note in one of your Tolkien-orientated publications would bring it to their attention, and serve both our causes. The catalogue number is TC1231 and the price in the UK 43s. 9d. It is available only through record dealers, not direct from us.

ROGER BLACK | 617 Homm Street | Bethalto Illinois 62010

The 1969 World Book Encyclopedia Year Book's Dictionary supplement has the following two entries:

HIPPIE: any group of beatniks who practice communal living, believe in absolute freedom of expression, and profess a philosophy of love and fellowship: J. R. R. Tolkien's classic trilogy, The Lord of the Rings, [is] absolutely the favorite book of every hippie (Ramparts).

HOBBIT: any of an imaginary race of small people who love peace, pleasure, and beauty, described in J. R. R. Tolkien's trilogy, The Lord of the Rings (1954-56): Hobbits (are) three feet high with long hairy feet (New York Times).

NAN SCOTT | 2712 Century Dr | Lawrence Ks 66044

Thanks for the latest Green Dragon. But you make a statement

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There's no accounting for tastes" and "de gustibus" - but I like most of the songs very much; and as someone who has read Tolkien's books many, many times and studied music from the age of five, I feel my taste and opinions are as well-grounded in experience as yours, or Marion Zimmer Bradley's. And thus, I feel that your insistant "Not" should indeed be qualified. For some of us frequent travellers in Middle-earth, the melancholy charm of Swann's music is deeply appropriate to Tolkien's verses, at least in the title song, Treebeard's song, and "Upon the hearth the fire is red". (I would call Bolbo's "I sit beside the fire" banal and disappointing, to my taste.) I would qualify my approval though by adding that the song book and a piano are a prompter route to Middle-earth than Mr Elvin's singing of Swann's melodies on record. There's nothing really wrong with his performances; it's just that it's closer to the concert hall than the woods of Lorien or the wilds of Eriador. But for a number of songs themselves are evocative and moving. If I recall correctly, Professor Tolkien himself was full of enthusiasm about them when we talked with him in June of 1966. On the other hand, Marion Bradley's Irish folk-songs modelled settings at the conference left me cold, though I know alot of people liked them again, "de gustibus"

ANTHONY CERMAK | 14585 Aloha Ave | Saratoga Calif 95070

In the last Tolkien Journal you mentioned the book The Last Unicorn I have read this book and it is interesting but a better one still is Three Hearts And Three Lions by Paul Anderson. This book tells of a different time stream than our's were. King Arthur has lived and died and the road to Taery is just over the horizon.

It was published by Doubleday and there was a popular version too [Paul has also written Broken Sword, an exciting fantasy adventure, but long out of print -EM]



art by Fabian

KIRK L. THOMPSON | 425 Erie St. SE | Minneapolis Mn.
55414

Not too long ago I received my order for the back issues of the Journal and, after perusing them, I would like to make some comments on one of the articles, Jan Wojcik's 'Samwise--Half-wise?' in Vol. III, no. 2.

The major item which tends to overamplify Sam's importance, in my opinion, is the change in viewpoint between Book IV and Book VI of the Trilogy. Thru all of the Books to number IV, when in the company of Frodo, Tolkien allows us to read his thoughts and emotions, until, that is, the last chapter of IV, 'The Choices of Master Samwise', where, for obvious reasons, Frodo has no conscious thoughts, only "darkness and foul dreams." But throughout Book VI, we observe only Frodo's outward actions and expressed thoughts. The reason for this is because, as the Hobbits penetrated deeper into Mordor, the Ring gained greater and greater possession of Frodo: "I begin to see it in my mind all the time, like a great wheel of fire," and later, "I begin to see it even with my waking eyes, and all else fades," until finally, "I have come... But I do not choose now to do what I came to do... The Ring is mine!" To put it simply, to narrate a single obsession thru 50 pages make for a bored reader, particularly with so much outside action occurring. After the destruction of the Ring, Tolkien does not return to his previous viewpoint for two reasons; consistency and, because Frodo has been wounded with knife, sting, and tooth, and a long burden, his thoughts would be completely, or nearly so, beyond our ken. If an arsonist burn his house down, it is a rare person indeed who will not demand retribution. As for Samwise the Gardener, he tends growing things in the Earth, and, by extension, may be regarded as the Earth--Middle-earth--personified, and his desire to be free from Sauron's Evil. The change in gender (we are accustomed to regard Earth as female--the Great Earthmother) may be derived from North European legend. Note the changes in traditional gender in Frodo's song about the 'Merry Old Inn' when first in Bree. For name derivations I once ran into 'Gimli' in an unabridged dictionary and found therein a meaning appropriate to the traditional passing of the dwarf from this world: Gimli--the Nordic term for Heaven.

DAVE GREENE | 128 South 39th Street | Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19104.

If I didn't say so in my other letter, I think the latest TJ is the finest issue to come out so far--the contents were excellent without the intensity of some of the articles that appeared before (Mrs. Howe's glacial thing was well done but somewhat purposeless). The only fault I found with this issue was that it did not have as many pictures as some previous ones did. I hope that you can convince Tim Kirk to do more cover designs--his ones for III, 2 are some of the finest things TJ has published, despite the snide comments of Mr. Musselman in the latest Shire-Post.

I'm glad that you're interested in seeing a copy of the Oz Club magazine, *The Baum Bugle*. I really have much too unorganized a mind to ask my brother in Chicago, who handles the mailing, to mail you a sample of the autumn issue, which will be out in about a week, and you really need to see more than one issue to get an idea of the publication. So today I write Fred M. Meyer, the Club secretary, I'll send him a check for \$2.50 to cover a year's membership and subscription, as a gift from me. [It is an interesting magazine. Fred M. Meyer's address is: 620 First Ave So, Escanaba, MI 49829. ERM]

ANNETTE HARPER | Route 4, Box 392 | Columbia South Carolina 29209.

I respect D. Usselman's opinion stated in his letter to the Shire Post (Vol. III no 3) on illustration of characters and situations from LotR, etc, but I am afraid I must disagree. (uiss?) Usselman states "Tolkien was never overmeticulous in describing dress and architecture" and that is true to an extent: the Professor doesn't need to be meticulous in order to make his readers see his creations! Of course, each reader will see somewhat differently, and that's what makes the illustrations done by TSA (etc.) members so interesting... It's surprising just how similar and yet how different artists' conceptions are to the pictures we see in our own minds when we read LotR. I was pleased recently to see my own illustration of Galadriel https://dc.swosu.edu/tolkien_journal/vol3/iss4/8

adorning the recent Tolkien Conference circular... pleased and surprised, for I was able to see just how much my own conception of the Lady has changed in the last few months. If I were to draw her now, I'm afraid she would be less like, as Sam said, a "lass in spring" (or something closely akin) and more great and terrible or something. Anyway, at the time of the drawing, that's the way Tolkien's magic worked on me. That's the beauty of it all- it works on everyone differently. I don't see Elrond's House the way Tim Kirk sees it either, but then he probably doesn't see Galadriel the way I do. Besides, some of the loveliest drawings I've ever seen illustrate The Hobbit - and were drawn by J. R. R. Tolkien himself!

JUDY MOSINGER | 14 Sackston Woods St. Louis Mo 63141

In "The Adventures of Tom Bombadil" J. R. R. Tolkien has written a comment on every poem except one. This one is among the most interesting. It is "The Mewlips". Any comment [No. Possibly the poem results from what the Hobbits heard about Mirkwood. The Morlock Mts equal Misty Mts. -B Foster]

On an enlarged map of the Middle-earth made by Ballantine Books there is something strange. On the Western side of the Ered Luin Mountains, in Forlindon there are the Angerthian letters $\uparrow\uparrow$ and on the East of the Ered Luin Mountains in Harlindon are the letters $\uparrow\downarrow$. What do they mean? [Sheer stupidity on part of someone. No illusion to anything in the books--B Foster] Who drew the pictures on the paperback covers of the Ballantine Books of "The Hobbit", "The Lord of the Rings", and "The Tolkien Reader". Has he done any other drawings of Tolkien's stories? [TR cover by Pauline Baynes; others by Barbara Remington. P, B, has illustrated various Tolkien short stories. ERM]

ANNE LITTLE ETKIN | 6819 2nd St. | Riverdale Md.

I have some sympathy with the sour response of certain readers to the proliferation of Tolkien related material. In fact, when I first looked at a Tolkien Society publication, I had a swift vision of thousands of people feeding off the imagination of one man.

Happily, I went on to look, read and enjoy. For all this elaboration, compilation, derivation, computation and illustration is glorious play. Even though it may be more fun to do the elaborating, compiling etc. oneself than to see what others have done, there is the pleasure of sharing, and, now and then, something that adds to the joy of reading Tolkien.

Play or not, I hope that writers and illustrators will voluntarily accept a couple of rules:

1. In illustration, stay as close as possible to the description in the book.
2. In writing, please be sure you are in accord with the book, even if you have to re-read it several times.

TOM EATON | 154 Upper Byrdcliffe | Woodstock NY 12498.

Received the Tolkien Journal (vol. III, no. 3) today, and noted the question you posed about Bree, in the editorial. I believe the name 'Bree' occurred in Hal Clephant's great novel, *Mission of Gravity*, in the early '50s, as the name of the ship (actually a string of low rafts) of some explorer-traders of the planet Mesklin. The Mesklinites were (as I recall) small, worm-like beings, natives of a monstrously heavy world whose physical description Clephant went into in some detail. I do not recall the name of their captain (of the 'Bree') who was the real hero of the novel, but do remember the pains the author went to, to establish the logical possibility of such a planet's existence, and his detailed description of the physical environment on Mesklin. In this way Clephant reminds me somewhat of Tolkien (and to some degree, Heinlein) in the manner by which he constructs a plausible setting for the characters to move around in. You might do Clephant fans such as myself a service by passing on any information, in the next TJ, as to where Clephant has disappeared to. After his rather disappointing follow-up to *Mission*, *Cycle of Fire*, he seemed to drop out of sight. [I see him at almost every meeting of the New England SF Association that I attend, and he has had many stories in *Galaxy* and *If*. He has just completed a sequel to *Mission of Gravity*. ERM] I enjoy reading the TJ, and have only one beef: the artwork. Generally it is terrible, including the last issue. The alternate bookcovers for LotR paperbacks were, to be blunt, awful. It does a craftsman like Tolkien a shameful disservice to repre-2

ent his work with such hasty, ill-conceived artwork. Chapman et al.: The Shire Post
mean to hurt anyone's feelings, because I'm sure the artists do
the best they can, but I believe it would be better to publish a
smart-looking Journal with no art at all, than to continue in
the present vein.

Otherwise (to avoid ending on a completely negative note) the
TJ is rewarding reading. Keep it up!

JOHN STEPHEN MADDUX | Box 263 | University of Dallas |
Dallas Texas 75061.

TJ # 8 was the best I have read. Mrs. Howes' work of dating
is of invaluable worth. The earlier attempt recorded in your
journals were plainly wrong, both on extrinsic evidence (a char-
acter in Lewis's That Hideous Strength places the fall of Numen-
or before the ice ages) and on internal.

DAVID DAMROSCH | 119 East 74th St. | New York, NY
10021.

I saw a letter, in The Tolkien Journal (Astron, 1966), concerning
the relative ages of Tom Bombadil and Fangorn (Treebeard to
come). The answer is this: Celeborn-- and Gandalf--are wrong;
Tom Bombadil is eldest. My reference is Ballantine Books
paperback edition. On p. 89 The Two Towers, Treebeard says: "
but there are hollow dales in this land where the darkness has never
been lifted, and the trees are older than I am. This proves
Gandalf wrong (p. 209: For Treebeard is Fangorn. . . and when
you speak with him you will hear the speech of the Oldest of all
living things), and Celeborn is also incorrect.
As for Tom, he remembers the first raindrop and the first acorn",
"Fellowship of the Ring, p. 182; just above that: "Mark my words,
my friends: Tom was here before the river and the trees .
Tom was here before the trees; Fangorn not until somewhat later:
Old Tom Bombadil is Eldest.
Tom was also here before the seas were bent (vol. 1, p. 182).

JAN C SCOTT | 2712 Century Dr | Lawrence Kansas 66044.

will follow your suggestion about reading Lloyd Alexander as
soon as I can get hold of the books in proper sequence from the
library. Meanwhile, I'm looking into George MacDonald. So
far I rather like The Princess and the Goblin, but At the Back of
the North Wind nearly drove me up the wall. Little Diamond is
surely the most irritating literary creature I've ever encountered
since that revolting Reepi-Cheep in Narnia books. Better than
MacDonald I like E. Nesbit's books, which I discovered just last
winter, and The Wind in the Willows, which in some scenes has
a cozy flavour of the Shire and hobbit life about it.
That brings me to my main question on comment. Are any of
your other readers interested in Tolkien's world of nature and
landscapes? Most of the people who write to Niekas and TJ seem
to focus either on topics of language and linguistics or are most
interested in SF and/or fantasy. For me the biggest attraction
in re-reading the books (the narrative excitement was paramount
in my first reading) is Professor Tolkien's treatment of the
physical world and the relationship he establishes between his
characters and nature. Certainly the beautiful and powerful
language of the books helps to establish this, but apart from lang-
uage-for-its-own-sake (names, etc.) Professor Tolkien seems to
have observed and understood nature in a way quite uncommon to-
day. There are no "pretty" description passages for their own sake,
rather, his characters live closer to nature than we do, and trees,
birds, mountains, and weathers are a more palpable and important
part of their existence.

suppose all of us have wanted to enter into Tolkien's world more
fully, have wished we could be transported from the 20th century
into the 3rd age of Middle-earth. In what small way I could, I
have entered that world. Besides beginning to notice trees and
plants for the first time in my life, and besides emulating Sam
and adding a bit of green to the world by making my first gardens,
I have-along with two friends-began to go "hobbiting". I know
what Peter Beagle has gone in for this sort of thing. Has anyone
else?

Picture if you can bear to, three faculty wives between the ages
of 25 and 30 setting off on the road with back packs and bed rolls,
acon and mushrooms, walking through shadows to the edge of
light and making camp under the elvish stars. Our longest trek
was 24 miles (on the occasion there were only two of us and we
got scared in the woods-two damnfool little girls- and came back
the same night). On another occasion friends with a farm pro-
vided a bountiful hobbit breakfast after we'd slept in their or-
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art by Cynthia Goldstor

chard in 34-degree wester. On our most recent trip we were
surrounded at night-fall by fireflies and whip-poor-wills in a
most elvish moonlit glade in an oak woods. Two of us-Judy Quinn
and I-have even taken horseback lessons. It's easy to pretend that
the beasts are hobbit ponies, and it certainly increases one's
respect for the endurance of the nine to ride long distances! Per-
haps if Nellie, Judy, and I were to set out now, we just might make
it to Belknap by mid-October. (Probably the only way we could
afford to come. . . !)

My thanks to everyone who offered suggestions on the breeding
habits of orcs. [in Niekas-ERM]

ROBERT KARP | 1875 SW 35th Place | Gainesville Florida

In the tale of the years it says Samwise Gamgee, after Rose died,
went to Westmarch and then over the sea. Yet in the tale of
Aragorn and Arwen, Arwen says she could not go over the sea if
she wanted because no one would be left to take her, how then did
Sam go?

DAINIS BISENIEKS |

How come I never heard anyone mention that Smith of Wooton
Major is in the December issue of Redbook?

It doesn't seem either, that I've heard of an album titled "Down
to Middle-earth" by The Hobbits (Decca DL 74920) The cover
is (ptui) psychodelic, and the contents seem to have as little
to do with JRRK as H. P. Lovecraft has with HPL. Haven't lis-
tened to it, wouldn't waste my time-I just spotted this in a re-
cord store and took a quick look.

CHRIS JONES | Ny Ny 10027.

In answer to Bob Foster, the "swollen brooding thing" in the ant-
hill is the queen ant. Robert Heinlein's Starship Trooper describes
a highly unpleasant insect-like race which also has swollen

things" or rulers. Bob was also wondering whether Sauron was always incapable of good. No, indeed—as Gandalf said at the Council of Elrand (Bal, I-351), "Nothing is evil from the beginning. Even Sauron was not so. I've always felt that Sauron's fall, which presumably was brought about by Morgoth, was a great tragedy, for he was clearly brilliant and strong-willed. I find it hard to imagine him a servant of Morgoth or anyone else. He could have been truly the Great, and noble. So, of course, could Morgoth. This all has its parallel in Christian theology; Lucifer was one of the greatest of the angels before his fall.

Personally, I think Sauron probably was one of the Valar. He might have escaped destruction the same way the Balrog did. (Of course I don't know how that was.) As for his remaining alive in a weaker form, I don't see why this should be a problem. If Morgoth did not remain similarly alive (and maybe he did; Gandalf says in Bal III-190 that Sauron is "but a servant or emissary") it is probably because he was overthrown by more powerful forces than Sauron was—forces that could eliminate him completely.

I think I'll retract that suggestion that Morgoth survived in some form, and that Sauron was still his servant—it doesn't seem right on second thought. But what does Gandalf mean by his comment? Is he referring to a person behind Sauron, or to an abstract conception of evil which inevitably must exist in the world? The latter sounds very un-Tolkien.

Tolkien may not arouse much pity in Sam; but Sam does spare him on Mount Doom, and this was after Gollum had betrayed them to Shelob. I like Jan's article. We could use a "Sam-wise Loves and Gardens" button—and maybe an "Aragorn Rules", or even a "Shadowfox Runs". Whatever happened to Shadowfox, by the way? The last we see of him, he's carrying Gandalf to Tom Bombadill's home. Did Tom keep him, or did he go back to Rohan? It seems rather unlikely that he went with Gandalf oversea.

Mrs Howes article is stunning. Does she know that Tolkien says Stromboli is Mount Doom? [Dick Plotz reported this at the Dec. 1966 meeting] This volcano is on an island just north of Sicily. The correlation with Mrs Howes' maps is pretty close—I think Stromboli would come near Minas Morgul, which is good enough.

JOHN FORREST | 198 Larchmont Ave | Larchmont NY 10538.

[I think this is an answer to the Ballantine poster map]
If I read correctly, Henneth Annun was on the west side of

the north-south road, and certainly Frodo, Sam, and Gollum walked from there to the crossroad on the west side of the road, not on the east side as presently pictured on the map. [Quite true. Everything wrong with the map couldn't be corrected because technical printing problems—B Foster]

OWEN CLAYTON | 623 I-House | 2299 Piedmont Ave | Berkeley Ca 94721.

I ran across something interesting the other day while reading Malory (the edition from the Winchester MS): there is therein a tale called "Balin, or The Knight with Two Swords." Strange that the name of the would-be Lord of Moria should by happenstance pop up in the Arthurian legends, isn't it?

I also came by a clipping from Sept. 22 Los Angeles Times, noting that the L. A. Mythopoetic Society was holding Bilbo's Birthday Party, which was, evidently, quite an event, to get into the papers.

And, oh yes, in Gustav Davidson's A Dictionary of Angels--a very nice book to have, though expensive--there is listed an angel called Elberith (more commonly Balberith), who is said to be an ex-prince of the order of Cherubim and to be now the chief notary public in Hell. It makes me wonder how much angelological lore Tolkien knows.

SUSAN SHWARTZ | 237 Outlook Ave | Youngstown Ohio.

There is something I would like to throw open for comment. Recently I wrote William Ready, author of the Tolkien Relation, asking whether he thought that Denethor, Saruman, Sauron, Boromir, and even Frodo were punished for hubris in making, desiring, or otherwise messing with one Ring. Classicists at Mount Holyoke College all thought that there was some value to the idea, but to quote Mr. Ready's letter, "hubris is Levantine" and hence, he said, irrelevant. But I can't see throwing out the idea that fast, especially when I think it has some value. Whether anyone else does however, is a moot point. (I read Lin Carter's book on Tolkien; it's great, especially the part in which he traces the heroic tradition from Callimachus on. Hubris there on my part.)

MAX GROBER |

Although the translation of the word "Silmarillion" is dread-

fully obvious, Lin Carter seemed completely unaware of it when he discussed the new book in his Look Behind the Lord of the Rings. Your pardon if I ascribe his faults to the Society in general.

The root is, of course, silmaril, great jewel, the suffix is ion, as in Eldarion, Anarion, Tar-Aldarion, etc. where, (pardon the unprofessional terminology), it serves to convey the idea of the third person. Thus we have "he of the Silmaril" or "the idiot with the silmaril," strikingly parallel, I think, to "the Lord of the Rings."

DAINIS BIENIEKS |

Did you know there is a Green Dragon Inn near Shoscombe Old Place? Holmes and Watson stayed there.

BETH MYERS |

During the past year or so it has been one of my main past-times to make up slogans similar to "Gandalf for President", and "Hobbits of the World-Unite!"

The Red Eye should use Murine.

Gollum has a ring to it.

Aragorn has 99% less nicks and scratches with his blade (Anduril)

Smaug does business clash and carry.

The Mouth of Sauron should use Scope.

Shelob has green blood—is she vulcan?

Sam has flower power.

Pippin is an honest fool.

Firiel is a nut [see Tolkien Reader, poem 16]



art by Katherine MacFarlane

