

I. THE SOCIETY - Dick Plotz

The Tolkien Society of America has been successful beyond my greatest hopes. I had originally anticipated about thirty or forty members. I now have 156 names on my mailing list. Of these, close to 100 have written to me, and perhaps 70 did so in response to the original advertisement in the New Republic. I find Tolkien fans wherever I go. One member reports that a book store near Columbia displayed a notice for the Society. I like to find out about these things. Membership ranges throughout the United States, and there are members in Canada and England. The largest group is concentrated about New York, but there are also sizable concentrations in Chicago, Boston, and Los Angeles. As for occupational groups, by far the majority of members are students. Also represented are teachers, artists, writers, and scientists. The students are mostly interested in Anglo-Saxon literature, but there are many psychology and science majors as well. In short, the membership is highly diversified. The meeting on 11 September (18 Halimath) brought 25 members to my house to discuss LotR. Soon afterward, I received a six-page letter from Professor Tolkien himself. Tolkien's friend, poet W.H. Auden, is a member of the Society; he calls himself Gimli. Frankly, I would prefer that all this name-calling stop: I don't want to be called Frodo, and I'm sure most members agree on that count.

II. A SHORT - AND INCOMPLETE - BIBLIOGRAPHY OF ARTICLES OF INTEREST TO TOLKIEN FANS - Alexis Levitin

- Blissett, William. "The Despots of the Rings", The South Atlantic Quarterly, LVIII Summer, 1959, 448-456.
- Halle, Louis J. "History Through the Mind's Eye". Saturday Review, XXXIX (January 1956), 11-12.
- Irwin, W.R. "There and Back Again". Sewanee Review, LXIX (Fall, 1961), 566-578.
- Lewis, C.S. "Dethronement of Power". Time and Tide, XLIII (October 1955), 1373-1374.
- Parker, Douglas. "Hwaet We Holbytla". Hudson Review, IX (1956-57), 598-609.
- Reilly, B.J. "Tolkien and the Fairy Story". Thought, XXXVIII (Spring 1963).
- Spacks, Patricia. "Ethical Patterns in The Lord of the Rings". Critique, III (Spring-Fall 1959), 30-41.
- Straight, Michael. "The Fantastic World of Professor Tolkien". The New Republic, CXXXIV (January 1956) 24-26.
- Wilson, Edmund. "Oo, Those Awful Orcs!" Nation, CLXXXII (April 1956), 312-314.

III. THE ACE BOOKS CONTROVERSY - Dick Plotz

As most members probably know by now, Ace Books has published an unauthorized paperback edition of LotR. The only excuse for buying this edition is that one might own the hardcover edition and want the Ace for a collection. For those whose financial state is such as to make buying the hardcover edition impossible, an authorized paperback edition is being published by Ballantine Books. It appears that through an oversight of the American publisher, Houghton Mifflin, a copyright notice was omitted from several of the hardcover printings. As Prof. Tolkien explains it, "(The law) says in effect (that) if any property is left unguarded, by inadvertance or otherwise, a person who appropriates it cannot

be called a thief, even if he can be shown to have known to whom the property in justice belonged." It was on this law that Ace relied in publishing their pirated edition. Since the publication of the Ace edition, public opinion and comment have been so unfavorable to Ace that they have tried to save face by offering an "honorarium" to Tolkien. They did not, as is widely believed, offer Tolkien a royalty before they commenced publication of the trilogy. The advantages of the Ballantine paperbacks are many. Ballantine has included The Hobbit, while Ace has only LotR. The paper used in the Ballantine edition is of better quality than that used by Ace. Only small portions of the Middle-earth maps are included in the Ace editions; they are complete in the Ballantine. The Ace books were poorly edited: in at least one place an entire line of a poem is omitted. The Ace appendices are useless, for the page references contained therein refer only to the Houghton Mifflin edition. Extra features included in the Ballantine and no other edition include addenda to the prologue and appendices, a new foreword by the author, and the long-awaited index of names promised in the first edition of LotR. The price difference is small: The Ballantine edition retails for 95¢ per volume, including The Hobbit, and the Ace sells for 75¢ per volume. Prof. Tolkien says of the Ballantine edition, "This paperback edition, and no other, has been published with my consent and co-operation. Those who approve of courtesy (at least) to living authors will purchase it, and no other." (The facts in this article were largely contained in Prof. Tolkien's recent letter to me.)

IV. THE SILMARILLION - Dick Plotz

The publication of The Silmarillion, the next book about Middle-earth, was delayed by the Ace Books controversy (or, Trumping the Ace), for Prof. Tolkien found that he had to devote all his time to the revision of LotR which appears in the Ballantine edition. Now, however, it appears that the first part of The Silmarillion may appear some time next year. There is also a strong possibility for eventual publication of Akallabeth, the story of the Downfall of Númenor. (The material covered in these books is partially indicated in the appendices to LotR.)

V. THE RING-INSCRIPTION - Mark Mandel (Lhauhir)

"Ash nazg durbatulúk, ash nazg gimbatul,
ash nazg thrakatulúk agh burzum-ishi krimpatul.
One Ring to rule them all, One Ring to find them,
One Ring to bring them all and in the Darkness bind them."

These are the only words we know of the pure Black Speech, but Tolkien shows his genius by making these lines so regular that we can analyze from them a number of elements of the Black Speech grammar and vocabulary.

The first and most obvious point is that ash nazg means "one ring", and a moment's analysis reveals that nazg almost certainly means "ring". Nazgûl, "ringwraith(s)," is a derivation of this word. Then we see that -ul or -ûl carries the idea of the third person: Nazgûl is "those who are of the Ring" (or "he who is of the Ring"), durbatulúk means "to rule them all". gimbatul means "to find them". It then becomes clear that -uk means "all" and -at marks the purpose-infinitive. Once these suffixes are separated, we see that durb- is the root "rule", gimb- is "find", thrak- is "bring", and krimp- is "bind".

There remain now only two unanalyzed words: agh and burzum-ishi. Agh, a simple syllable, would appear to mean "and", a guess which is confirmed: burzum-ishi contains the same root burz that appears in the Mordor-orc's word Iugbûrz, the Dark Tower. -Um, then, may be a qualitative-noun suffix, and -ishi is a post-position of location, or (to borrow a term from Finnish grammar) an inessive suffix.

VI. THE JOURNAL - Dick Plotz

The attempt to finance the Journal by voluntary contributions has not worked well enough. Despite substantial contributions, more than half of which came from Steve Patt of Baltimore, the Journal has continued to run at a deficit. I have therefore decided, out of necessity, to charge a nominal fee for the Journal (but not for membership, which continues to be free). Starting with the next issue, a subscription to the Journal will cost 50¢ per year. For this low price the subscriber receives four issues of the Journal and notices of all meetings. In addition, all members, whether or not they subscribe to the Journal, will receive an annual notice of one general meeting. The Journal will appear in Afteryule, Astron, Afterlithe and Winterfilth.

VII. TOLKIEN NOTES FROM ALL OVER

WOR Radio broadcasts advertisements for Brandywine Mushrooms.

Dick Tedhams, who is working on a doctoral thesis on Tolkien at the University of Oklahoma, is a real Tolkien fan. Not only did he name his dog Samwise (a common phenomenon by now) but he named his firstborn daughter Arwen Elanor.

"An up-to-date bibliography of fanzines" is envisioned by Harold Palmer Piser, 41-08 Parsons Blvd., Flushing, N.Y. 11355. The Tolkien Journal, although not strictly a fanzine, will be included. Harold would also like to have a precise definition of "fanzine".

Bob Plotz, brother of Thain Richard, thinks he is Thorin Oakenshield. He is ten years old (almost) and just about dwarf-height.

Bob Foster is in the middle of the monumental task of producing another complete Tolkien index. This one will be cross-referenced, for a change. Bob has over 1200 items on index cards.

A Boston group contemplates publicizing the Ballantine-Tolkien cause by advertising in major publications. All who are interested -- and all should be -- should write to Friends of J.R.R. Tolkien, 80 Wendell Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Esquire Magazine lists J.R.R. Tolkien as one of the hundred best people in the world. We're inclined to agree.

Prof. Tolkien would like an explanation of the cover of the Ballantine Hobbit. "Can any member of the T.S.A. tell me," he writes, "what a lion and emus are doing in the vignette, or what is the thing with pink bulbs in the foreground? The publishers won't say and merely sob because I don't approve."

VIII. ARTICLES FOR FUTURE ISSUES - Dick Plotz

We need articles on all subjects of interest to Tolkien fans. Send articles, songs, theses, poems, artwork, etc. to me. You need not confine your work to Tolkien proper. Articles on other authors who might appeal to Tolkien fans are also welcome. Exx: C.S. Lewis, George MacDonald, L. Frank Baum. We also need items for Tolkien Notes From All Over. We want a rousing Afteryule issue.

ADDRESS ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO:

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159 Marlborough Road
Brooklyn, New York 11226

or call (212) 282-4545

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