

# PARMA ENDORION:

Essays On Middle-earth



The Hunting Party I  
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Electronic Book Edition  
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## **i. Copyright**

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## **ii. Introduction to the First Edition (1996)**

There are several web sites that offer fairly standard information about J.R.R. Tolkien's Middle-earth. The essays you'll find here are intended to provide some insight into the histories and cultures of Middle-earth. Each "page" is a chapter in the "Book of the Middle Lands". The essays are written for your reading enjoyment. They contain some speculative remarks intended to point the reader toward some possible conclusions. It is not my aim to "finish the creation" for Professor Tolkien.

In working on a larger project I've come across a great deal of material that I'd like to share with people. I decided to put it up on this web site rather than try and publish it in a traditional manner because I have little hope of seeing it published (by me, at least).

Also, I've decided to have a little fun with this material. So be sure to take it with a grain of salt.

### **Note on accuracy**

Christopher Tolkien has now published volume XII of THE HISTORY OF MIDDLE-EARTH. I've read it and am in the process of updating my essays based on information in that book. Wherever possible, to preserve Gwidon's sanity, I have tried to add new material rather than revise the old. But some of the essays are indeed changed and the Polish version of PARMA ENDORION may not match this one for some time.

There is indeed a historical analysis of the source materials for THE HOBBIT in preparation. I'm looking forward to reading it with high hopes.

### **Stern Warning**

I'm not here to do your homework for you. Anyone who's looking for a quick, cheap essay on Tolkien should keep in mind that I write in a style that won't be mistaken for a student's 500-word theme. If you are stupid and lazy enough to cheat, you'll probably get what you deserve when you try to hand in this stuff.

Enjoy.

### **iii. Introduction to the Second Edition (1998)**

Since I first created Parma Endorion: Essays On Middle-earth, the web site has received thousands of visits from interested Tolkien fans. It has "worn out" a few hit counters along the way and I've lost track of how many people have actually dropped in on the main page of the original site. That really no longer matters to me, to be honest. I've received so much email from well-wishers that I know Parma Endorion is a success, and that it serves a purpose in helping to explain a few of the mysteries of J.R.R. Tolkien's world.

Like THE LORD OF THE RINGS, Parma Endorion has grown in the telling. It was an ongoing project in late 1996 and early 1997, until I finished the last of the essays I had envisioned for it. And like LOTR the work has consistently received one complaint: it is too short.

I cannot promise to add any more essays to the collection. I have other projects, some related to Middle-earth and some not. My time is fleeting and my energies are sometimes depleted. But with this new edition I hope to take care of the one other complaint I have often received: Parma Endorion is too hard to read. To be honest, I intentionally made it difficult to copy, but that had the unfortunate effect of making it nearly illegible. So I've decided to stop playing with my readers and just present the book as a book, with simple black on white text. I hope this decision meets with general approval.

Many people have written to me asking for permission to copy the essays. I have reluctantly agreed to this process on numerous occasions. After all, I can hardly prevent people from doing so, and it's quite thoughtful of those who ask me to do so. So, if you do print out these pages, please remember that this is my work, Copyrighted, owned by me. Unlike the authors of a printed books, I get no compensation for my labors. This project has been a labor of love.

To the many students, teachers, and librarians who have written to me, I want to thank you for your interest in my researches. Students, please check with your instructors before using this or any other Web site as a source for your reports and term papers. I've found that a lot of educators are encouraging students to use the Web, but you really owe it to yourselves to make sure it's okay. It sounds trite, but if you cheat on a term paper, you're only cheating yourself.

For those of you who have asked, time and again: no, Parma Endorion is not my last word on Tolkien research. I hope to one day find a publisher for a very detailed book that explores the pseudo-histories and cultures of Tolkien's Middle-earth unlike any book previously published. The world J.R.R. Tolkien created is so rich and diverse it simply never ceases to amaze me. I have not finished the book but work on it progresses as I wend my way through life and debate. Admittedly if Xenite.org didn't contain so many Web sites I'd probably have finished the book by now, but I do intend to finish the task and hope to have it done by the end of 1998.

Finally, I should point out that I've added some new material and have corrected many typos. None of the graphics from the First Edition are being carried over to this new edition. One of my goals is to speed up the download time for each page. So the book metaphor is useful in that the pages are all considerably shorter.

As ever, I hope you enjoy Parma Endorion. If you send me email and don't hear back, please don't be offended. At this writing Xenite.org receives more than 1500 visitors a day and I sometimes get a lot of email.

## **iv. Introduction to the Third Edition (2001)**

How does one introduce a third edition? In early 1998, I revised Parma Endorion and I never expected to do so again, but I've since found many typographical errors in the essays, and some of the information is now outdated. I've also received many requests for new essays.

The past few years have brought me into contact with several Tolkien projects. I have written essays under contract for Toy Vault's Middle-earth Toys. Since August 1999, I have also written essays for Suite101.com's Tolkien and Middle-earth topic. Some of the earliest Suite101 essays were included in VISUALIZING MIDDLE-EARTH, a book I published in October 2000. I had intended to include some Suite101 essays in Parma Endorion, but time slipped away from me and that is no longer possible for this edition. I hope to publish a sequel to VISUALIZING MIDDLE-EARTH sometime in 2002. And, I don't mind saying, I've had the privilege of performing research for several media companies. At this writing (December 2001), I am participating in an extraordinary Tolkien research project with several other people. I don't believe these opportunities would have opened up for me had I not written Parma Endorion.

Since I first undertook writing these essays, the world of Tolkien fandom has been turned upside down by the Peter Jackson film adaptation of THE LORD OF THE RINGS. Another film project, "Ancanar", has been inspired by THE SILMARILLION. And there have been numerous Hobbit plays staged throughout the world. At the same time, I have found myself consulted by any number of companies on Tolkien and Middle-earth. The attention directed upon J.R.R. Tolkien and his fans over the past few years has been overwhelming. It has also been distracting. This third edition was originally supposed to be published in 2000. It was to be translated into several languages. Regrettably, I had to defer the whole project for over a year, and in the process lost several of the translation teams.

Had it not been for the interest expressed in the project by Matt Tinaglia, the third edition might still be waiting for me to get back to it. But once he set the wheels into motion, taking on responsibility for the whole project, from editing to designing the book, I realized that this edition required something special. And since we had decided to publish it as a downloadable eBook, I thought, why not include some fan artwork?

Two artists, Anke Eissmann and Rich Sullivan, responded to my inquiries. I had hoped to feature works by a few other artists whose talents I had come to appreciate, but I was unable to locate them. So, I hope you enjoy the selections I've made, and the updated essays as well. And a Spanish-language translation team, organized by Leandro of Elfenomeno, has worked steadfastly on two translations of the book. I'm still hopeful of seeing the Spanish edition completed.

Thank you for your support and interest through the years. We have corrected as many errors as possible, and some of the information has been updated, too. May all your Tolkien reading be enjoyable.



# Chapter 1: The Geography of Arda

## The Continents Of Arda

Since Tolkien's mythology involves a change in the form and nature of the world, it's difficult to describe Arda physically. For example, Numenor existed only during the Second Age. Even if one arbitrarily divided Arda's geographical history into two periods (pre-Change and post-Change), Numenor itself would force a division of geological as well as political periods. And should one not consider the changes to Arda after the destruction of Illuin and Ormal, the two Lamps of the Valar in Middle-earth? Yet Tolkien wrote very little about "historical" matters prior to the destruction of the Lamps, so it seems pointless to try to document the geography of Arda for that time period. His conception of the "primitive" Arda was quite rough and never fully developed. In fact, had Tolkien realized his intention to rewrite the entire mythology, all the various lands he originally envisioned might have been erased from the "record."

I've decided there were five "continents" in Arda at various times after the destruction of the two Lamps. In fact, Endor itself probably would be considered two continents, which we might refer to as Forendor and Harendor. But we know very little of what Harendor was like.

Aman was the western-most continent. It was changed in shape by the Valar on at least two occasions, and perhaps went through other changes when Arda was changed. These were the Undying Lands, also known as the Uttermost West and the Undying West. The Valar lived here with the Maiar and the Eldar.

Elenna was the island raised in the middle of Belegaer, the Great Sea, for the Edain of Beleriand. It was too small to be a continent yet geographically was not part of any other region of Middle-earth. The isle lay close to the Bay of Eldamar (in Aman) but I feel it deserves its own description.

To the east of Endor lay two land-masses. I have named them Hyarmentor and Romenor, although as far as I know Tolkien never used these names himself. Hyarmentor was originally called "The Dark Lands" in a map published in THE SHAPING OF MIDDLE-EARTH (volume IV of THE HISTORY OF MIDDLE-EARTH). Romenor was originally called "The Burnt Lands of the Sun" or just "The Lands of the Sun". Both land-masses were visited by the Numenoreans but apparently were never visited by either the Elves or the Dwarves. It is conceivable, however, that Cirdan's mariners might have sailed east early in the Second Age, preceding the Numenoreans, though Tolkien does not indicate such events ever occurred.

## **Aman (The Undying Lands)**

Of all the lands he described, Aman received the most attention with the least corresponding detail. We know what kinds of lands existed there but not exactly where they were located. The Eldar ranged through the lands, especially the western regions, and the accounts of Aman are drawn from their traditions.

The continent proper was divided by a mountain range, the Pelori, which ran from the south to the north in a sweeping arc which bulged toward the east. These mountains were raised by the Valar to be a defense against Melkor, but he never attempted to assault the West.

The four major regions of Aman were Valinor, Eldamar, Araman, and Avathar. Of Avathar we know nothing save only that for a time Ungoliant lived there, spinning webs of darkness. It may be that after her departure and the rising of the Sun the Valar cleansed the land for the Eldar, but Tolkien never indicated what became of the region.

### **Valinor**

Valinor was the home of the Valar and their people, the Maiar. The Valar and Maiar were Ainur, angelic beings who were not native to Middle-earth but who were charged with its shaping and governance. Several of the Valar established a "country" in Valinor, but they also built a city near the Pelori at about the middle latitude of the land. This was Valimar, where they established a Ring of Doom, Mahanaxar. This was a circle of thrones where the Valar would sit in debate or judgement.

Although it's difficult to place the regions of the individual Valar, Nienna's halls were said to be "west of West, upon the borders of the world." This region would have been upon the shores of Ekkaia, the Encircling Sea. Tolkien wrote that "the windows of her house look outward from the walls of the world", so it may be Nienna's region was actually beyond Ekkaia, in a mountainous land that originally was the westernmost region of the flat Arda (Arda before the Change of the World). Mandos, the dwelling of Namo (the Doomsman of the Valar), was said to be close to Nienna's land. He is not said to dwell outside Valinor, and he may have governed the western regions of the land, for his halls grew constantly, making room for more and more "spirits".

Oromë the hunter dwelt in the woodlands of Valinor, but Tolkien does not precisely place them. They were in the southern regions, ending somewhere near Hyarmentir.

Probably the dwelling of Tulkas and Nessa (Oromë's sister) was close by Oromë's forests because she loved to run through the woods, leading deer in her wake.

The region of Lorien probably lay close to Mandos. Irmo, Lord of Lorien, was Namo's brother. Their sister was Nienna, so Lorien may have lain in western Valinor as well. In the midst of Lorien was a great lake, Lorellin. The shores of the lake were forested and the land was filled with gardens and fountains.

The Halls of Manwë and Varda upon Taniquetil were the easternmost dwelling of the Valar in Aman. Many Maiar (and later some Vanyar) settled on the slopes of Taniquetil to be close to Manwë and Varda.

Valimar lay in a plain in the center of the land. Its eastern gate opened upon a green hill or mound, Ezellohar, where Yavanna planted the Two Trees, Telperion and Laurelin. Telperion was white. Laurelin was golden and it produced a golden dew that Varda collected into lakes throughout Valinor. Mahanaxar, the Ring of Doom, lay between the city and Ezellohar.

The Halls of Aulë were said to be in the very midst of Valinor, which implies the center region. Since he was associated with mining and the earth he must have raised hills or mountains there.

Perhaps Valinor was divided in the following way:

The southernmost region of Valinor appears to have been empty and only partially lit by the Two Trees. This was the region overlooked by Hyarmentir, the tallest mountain in the southern Pelori. Just north of that region lay the woods of Oromë, and to the west stood the gardens of Yavanna. Lorien must have extended northward from Yavanna's land.

North of Oromë's woods lay the plain of Valimar, and beyond that region lay the Halls of Aulë. Mandos was west of Valimar and Aulë's lands, while Taniquetil lay to the east of Valimar, and the mountain's southern slopes faced toward Tirion upon Tuna.

Note: Karen Wynn Fonstad offers a different placement of the regions of the Valar, but for reasons I won't go into here, I disagree with her interpretations of the texts.

## **Eldamar**

Eldamar was the home of the Eldar. It consisted of a valley in the middle region of the Pelori where the hill named Tuna rose up and the lands to the east of the Pelori which lay close to the Bay of Eldamar. The valley was the Calaciryra (Cleft of Light) which the Valar created when they brought the Eldar to Aman.

Within the Bay of Eldamar the Valar set the isle Tol Eressëa (the Lonely Isle). There were apparently forests and gardens in Eldamar since the Teleri were able to find wood to build their ships. At least one mountain rose up in the midst of the isle, and its western shore was the region where flowers first bloomed (and probably where the Teleri dwelt until they learned to build ships).

Tol Eressëa was originally used as a ferry by the Valar to bring the Elves to Aman. None of the Noldor and Vanyar stayed there, but the Teleri lived on the isle for a long time before they learned to build ships and spread to the shores of Eldamar. Some Teleri may have continued to live on the isle throughout the Years of the Trees.

After the First Age the Exiles and the Sindar who went to Aman settled in Tol Eressëa, where they may have built several cities (Tavrobel and Kortirion are mentioned in early stories

## Parma Endorion

describing Tol Eressëa). The city of Avallonë, built on the eastern shores of Tol Eressëa, was the chief haven of the Eldar of Middle-earth and it was from here that their ships sailed to Numenor.

The Noldor are said to have dwelt in Tirion and in the hills and mountains "within sound of the western sea," but they also spread northward through the western hills of the Pelori (within Valinor) because Fëanor built Formenos in the far northern mountains.

A road ran east from Tuna toward the sea, and apparently turned northward along the coast to Alqualondë. Another road ran west into Valinor toward Valimar.

Although the Noldor and Teleri remained for the most part in Eldamar or the nearby lands, the Vanyar migrated into Valinor. Tolkien wrote "they forsook the city of Tirion upon Tuna, and dwelt thereafter upon the mountains of Manwë, or about the plains and woods of Valinor."

Ingwë's house was in fact located on the western slopes of Taniquetil, overlooking the plain of Valimar and the city. Finwë, in order to visit with Ingwë, had to pass into Valinor and climb the mountain from the west, following only paths and no road.

Alqualondë was built in a natural harbor along the northern shore of the Bay of Eldamar. The Swan-ships of the Teleri sailed through a great stone arch to enter or exit the harbor. The city itself was built of stone but was adorned with pearls and in the Years of the Trees was lit by many lanterns. For some reason the city had walls when Fëanor attacked it. Perhaps the "walls" were built atop a natural ridge of stone surrounding all or part of the harbor (and of which the great arch would have been a part).

Eldamar appears to have extended far to the north of Alqualondë, but THE SILMARILLION does not indicate whether these lands were inhabited before the Noldor went into exile. After the Noldor took the ships of the Falmari they traveled north for some length of time (a period of years, measured in Years of the Sun) before they left Eldamar.

## **Araman**

North of Eldamar lay Araman (Outer Aman). Originally this area was not settled but the Noldor passed through it on their return to Middle-earth. When Melkor and Ungoliant passed through Araman the region consisted of "barren plains," and yet the Noldor were able to survive there for the equivalent of 15-20 Years of the Sun, perhaps by fishing. It may be that trees grew there after the rising of the sun, spreading north from the forests of Eldamar, or planted by the Eldar or Valar.

After the First Age the Teleri built a tower for Elwing in far northern Araman, so they may have spread up the coast lands.

THE SILMARILLION says the Noldor "came at length to the northern confines of the Guarded Realm, upon the borders of the empty waste of Araman which were mountainous and cold." The passage seems to imply that Araman stretched westward across Aman and that Valinor did not extend very far to the north of the Calacirya.

Near the Helcaraxë Araman became a cold and desolate land, afflicted by the cold fogs and ices escaping from the Grinding Ice in the north. It was only in this region that the Noldor actually began to suffer from the climate on their road into Exile. Fingolfin's host of Noldor actually wandered through this region for a long time before they finally passed north and crossed the Helcaraxë itself.

## **Avathar**

South of Eldamar lay Avathar where we have heard only Ungoliant ever dwelt. After her departure with Melkor there is no further mention of Avathar, but it may be that eventually the webs of darkness she had woven there were destroyed and the region was claimed by the Elves.

Avathar was a very narrow strip of coast land (compared to Araman) and Ungoliant's valley was far to the south of Eldamar, beyond Hyarmentir, which was the highest peak in the southern Pelori and about even with the southernmost settled regions of Valinor.

## **Elenna (Numenor)**

The island of Elenna, raised up by the Valar to be a home and refuge for those Edain who had survived the Wars of Beleriand, was more than 500 miles long and 300 wide, but it was shaped with five peninsulas. Karen Fonstad estimates the total land area to be about 167,000 square miles.

For the sake of comparison, Elenna was (by her estimates) about 3 times the size of Rohan, 3/5 the size of Arnor, twice the size of Cardolan, and nearly 8 times the size of the Shire.

Uniquely among all the land-masses of Arda, Elenna was home to a single nation of people, the Numenoreans. It was never politically divided or invaded. So the land is usually referred to as Numenor, a later name that eventually referred more to the civilization of the Dunedain than to the island itself.

The island rose up out of the seas like a huge plateau, and only a few regions actually possessed beaches or natural harbors. In some places the cliffs dropped 200 feet (about 61.5 meters) to the sea. The three named bays were Romenna (the eastern bay), Eldanna (the large western bay), and the Bay of Andunië (in the northwest). But the southern port of Nindamos (which lay along the only beach-type shore) seems to have been situated along a third bay or "sea".

The two major rivers of Elenna were the Siril and the Ninduinë, both of which rose near the Meneltarma. Siril flowed south and entered the sea to the west of Nindamos. Ninduinë flowed west into the Bay of Eldanna on the south side of Eldalondë, the fairest of the havens of Numenor. The only lake Tolkien mentioned was the Nisinen, formed by the Ninduinë just west of Eldalondë on the eastern border of the woodland called Nisimaldar.

Elenna was divided into six regions: Mittalmar, Orrostar, Forostar, Andustar, Hyarnustar, and Hyarrostar.

## **The Mittalmar (Inlands)**

The Mittalmar was the central region and the most densely populated. The Meneltarma, the central mountain of Elenna, was located in the heart of this region and the capitol city of Armenelos was built at the mountain's feet. The easternmost region of Mittalmar was called Arandor and it included Armenelos and Romenna. The only other region of Mittalmar to be named was Emerië, which lay to the southwest of Meneltarma.

Mittalmar was mostly a flat grassland with few trees. The region was used largely for pasturing herds and flocks. A majority of the people were drawn from the golden-haired Marachians of the First Age (the House of Hador, from Dor-lomin).

## **The Orrostar (Northeast lands)**

Orrostar was the northeastern region of Numenor. It was a cold region but the lands closest to Arandor in Mittalmar were farmed (the Edain raised grains there). There is no mention of any cities in the region.

The island Tol Uinen, which lay north of the haven of Romenna, may have been a part of Arandor, but by looking at Karen Fonstad's map one gets the impression it lay closer to the shores of Orrostar.

## **The Forostar (North lands)**

Forostar was the northern region of Numenor, and the Edain mined the hills and mountains of the region. Tar-Meneldur, the fifth King of Numenor, built a tower upon the mountain Sorontil near the North Cape so that he could watch the stars. The chief (and perhaps only) city of the region was Ondosto, which was probably associated with the stone quarries in the north.

## **The Andustar (West lands)**

Andustar was the western region of Numenor. It was settled mostly by the Bëorians of the First Age (the First House of the Edain, from Ladros in Dorthonion). The chief city of the west was Andunië, but Eldalondë also lay in this region.

The forested region of Nisimaldor was called "The Fragrant Trees" and was enriched by the Eldar with many gifts of trees brought from the West. There were apparently many Mallorns there as well.

Andustar had many farms, but its havens were the ones the Eldar sailed to most often, and it was in Andustar (near Andunië) that Tar-Minastir built his tower on the peak named Oromet so that he could gaze west and see Avallonë.

## **The Hyarnustar (Southwest lands)**

The Hyarnustar was probably not thickly settled, for its western lands were mountainous and possessed no cities. In the east the lands became gently rolling hills and the Edain established farms and vineyards there.

The southeastern shores of Hyarnustar were gentle enough that many fisherfolk could settle there.

## **The Hyarrostar (Southeast lands)**

Like the Hyarnustar this region was settled along the coast land by fisherfolk, and their chief haven of Nindamos lay on the east side of the river Siril, within the borders of Hyarrostar. But this land was also the most thickly forested region of Numenor, and Tar-Aldarion as Master of Forests established many tree plantations here for the production of timber.

It is probable that most of the people of Hyarrostar were descended from the Haladin of the First Age (the Second House of the Edain from Brethil).

## **Endor (The Middle Lands)**

Of course the continent known as Middle-earth was huge and fairly well-documented by Tolkien. Its many lands and regions are catalogued in various books by Tolkien commentators. The primary regions of Middle-earth included: Beleriand, Eriador, Rhovanion, Gondor, Near Harad, Far Harad, Mordor, and Rhun.

## **Beleriand (Land of the Valar)**

This was the most storied region of Middle-earth, and the home of Arda's most ancient civilization outside of Aman. The great forests of Beleriand, nestled about the rivers Sirion and Gelion, harbored the Sindar and Noldor, and later the Edain.

East Beleriand properly consisted of the lands between Gelion and the Ered Luin (Blue Mountains), and the regions between the Gelion and Sirion. After the First Age, only the lands east of Gelion survived the destruction of Beleriand, and they were much changed by the tumults caused by the War of Wrath.

West Beleriand lay beyond Sirion and included fewer forests but more highlands than East Beleriand. The chief rivers of the region were the Narog and the Nenning, both of which were rose from sources in the Ered Wethrin (Mountains of Shadow) in northwestern Beleriand.

The regions of Hithlum, Ard-galen, Dorthonion, and Lothlann might be said to compose North Beleriand, but are sometimes said to be separate from Beleriand. Dorthonion was separated from Ered Wethrin by the Sirion, and from Ered Luin by the Gelion.

Parma Endorion

Ard-galen, later named Anfauglith, was bordered by the Ered Wethrin on the west (beyond which lay Hithlum), Dorthonion on the south, Angband (the peaks of Thangorodrim) to the north, and Lothlann to the east.

Lothlann stretched north to the icy wastes that were a remnant of Melkor's first fortress, Utumno. Parts of the region survived as the shores of the Ice Bay of Forochel after the First Age.

### **Eriador (Land Between the Mountains)**

Eriador lay between two mountain ranges, the Ered Luin and the Hithaeglin (Peaks of Mist). The southern boundary of the region consisted of the Glanduin (border river) and Gwathlo (Greyflood) rivers.

Much of the region consisted of hills, some of which were called "downs", a type of hill which is formed by the erosion of soft sediments, according to Karen Fonstad. The downs were long ridges but were not (in the passages where Tolkien described them) simply exposed outcroppings of stone. They were usually grassy and grouped fairly close together. The chief rivers of Eriador were the Mitheithel (which formed the upper source of the Gwathlo with the Bruinen, the river that bordered Imladris) and the Baranduin (brown river, but called Brandywine by the hobbits).

The river Lhun, which flowed south near the Ered Luin to the Gulf of Lhun (after the First Age), was sometimes treated as a border for Eriador, which in the Third Age was almost synonymous with the Dunadan kingdom of Arnor.

Once thickly forested, Eriador was denuded of trees in the War of the Elves and Sauron in the middle of the Second Age, but by the end of the Third Age (about 4700 years later) the area had recovered in many places.

The Elves lived in Eriador for many long ages until the War of the Elves and Sauron. But in the First Age clans of Men began to settle in the region and the Nandor pulled back before them. It was in the Second Age that the land became split between Elves and Men about evenly, for the Baranduin marked a boundary between their lands.

The Dunedain settled in the lands between the Lhun and Baranduin, in the Hills of Evendim near Lake Nenuial (from which the Baranduin flowed), and in the North Downs and South Downs to the east of that area. They governed other Men who had migrated north during the Second Age.

There were three Elven realms which endured in Eriador: the Kingdom of Gil-galad, which lasted until the end of the Second Age; the realm of Eregion, which lasted from about SA 700 to 1700; and the refuge of Imladris, which was founded after the fall of Eregion in the War of the Elves and Sauron and lasted until well into the Fourth Age.



The Kingdom of Arnor was established by the Dunedain at the end of the Second Age, gathering under one crown all the lands which were not at that time Elvish. Many of these Dunedain were descended of the Bëorians of Andunië, for that was the region where most of the Faithful lived in Numenor before they were driven from their homeland.

When nearly a third of the Third Age was over, the Kingdom of Arnor was divided into three realms: Arthedain, Cardolan, and Rhudaur. In time Cardolan returned to the Crown of Arthedain but Rhudaur was conquered by the Witch-king of Angmar, who had established a kingdom in the far northern mountains.

The restored Kingdom of Arnor struggled to survive with aid from the Elves but before the year 2000 the kingdom was overrun and destroyed. With the fall of Angmar the next year (1975) the last great power in northern Middle-earth was brought to an end. Afterwards, the region languished, with only a handful of enclaves surviving until Aragorn II re-established Arnor as part of the Reunited Kingdom (in the Fourth Age).

### **Rhovanion (Wilderland)**

Rhovanion was the ancient name of the lands which lay east of the Hithaeglrir and west of the Carnen (Red River) and the inland Sea of Rhun. Later the name was taken by a kingdom of the Northmen which lasted from circa. Third Age 1200 - 1850.

The two great rivers of Rhovanion were the Celduin, which flowed south from Erebor (the Lonely Mountain) and was joined by Carnen and the Anduin (Great River), which flowed south from the Grey Mountains. Anduin lay between the Hithaeglrir and the mighty forest known as Greenwood the Great, Mirkwood, and finally Eryn Lasgalen (Wood of Green Leaves).

Although the Eldar passed through the region during the Great Journey, some of the Teleri turned south and followed Anduin to other lands. Later, a portion of these Teleri (the Nandor) migrated north along the river, settling in two groups. They were joined by some Avari and Eldar over the ages and became the Silvan Elves.

The Kingdom of Lorien was the most ancient Elvish kingdom to survive in Middle-earth after the fall of Gil-galad at the end of the Second Age. It lay in a small forest near the Hithaeglrir. The Silvan Elves of Greenwood the Great had gradually moved northward during the Second and Third Ages until they finally established the Kingdom of Northern Mirkwood, which in time became the last of the great Elven Realms (and yet did not rival the ancient Eldarin civilizations).

The Men of the Vales of Anduin, related to the Edain who settled in Elenya, spread throughout southern Greenwood and in the vales of the Anduin and Celduin. They established many tribes and kingdoms, but by the end of the Third Age there were only three major groups left: the Beornings, the Woodmen, and the Men of Dale (and Esgaroth).

Southern Mirkwood was also used as a base by Sauron, who established a fortress on the hill Amon Lanc, which had originally been a Silvan Elf city. From this base Sauron was able to menace Gondor, Lorien, and Northern Mirkwood.

## **Gondor (Land of Stone)**

Gondor was properly the name of a kingdom and not a region, but the heartlands of Gondor lay along the coasts of Middle-earth and along the southern course of the Anduin, surrounding the Ered Nimrais (White Mountains).

Gondor, too, included an Elvish land, but it also encompassed the homelands of many other peoples: Druedain in both Druwaith Iaur (in the west, near the cape of Andrast) and Druadan Forest (on the eastern side of the Ered Nimrais); Men of the Vales of Ered Nimrais (from whom came the Dunlendings and Men of Bree in Eriador); fisherfolk; and perhaps some Edainic peoples.

The Kingdom of Gondor was established at the same time as Arnor by Dunedain of Numenor. There were already many Dunedain and mixed peoples living in the region.

The Elvish port of Edhellond was eventually absorbed into Gondor though the manner of the absorption was not described by Tolkien. Edhellond was situated near the mouth of the river Morthond (Blackroot), which was Gondor's second largest river.

Gondor for a time extended its sway north to the border of Cardolan, east to the Sea of Rhun, and south into the lands of Harad. It even governed Mordor for many centuries, though the Dunedain claimed no ownership over Sauron's domain.

## **Near Harad (Near South)**

The Near Harad lay beyond the river Harnen, which marked the southernmost boundary of Gondor's "core kingdom". The lands have been described as desolate by several commentators but this interpretation of the white areas of Tolkien's maps is not consistent with the assertion that many peoples lived there.

Near Harad was in fact a region which contained several kingdoms or tribes, and probably had its share of rivers, plains, forests, and hills. The lands controlled by the City of the Corsairs in the Cape of Umbar, a Numenorean haven, probably were part of Near Harad.

## **Far Harad (Far South)**

The Far Harad was, like Near Harad, poorly described by Tolkien in his works. It lay beyond Umbar and apparently was quite hot.

We know from early maps that a chain of mountains existed in the western regions of Far Harad. These mountains were named the Grey Mountains (but were not connected to the Grey Mountains of northern Endor).

In the Second Age the Numenoreans established havens and fortresses in the lands that later were called Far Harad. They conquered many peoples along the coast lands and came into conflict with Sauron's allies who dwelt further inland. Some of these dominions apparently survived into the Third Age to become enemies of Gondor.

The eastern coasts of Far Harad were dominated by the Yellow Mountains, a feature which is only named in a couple of sources and about which we know nothing.

### **Mordor (Black Land)**

Mordor, like Gondor, was really a single land that was synonymous with the region called by the same name. It lay wholly within the arms of the Ered Lithui (Ash Mountains) and Ephel Duath (Fences of Shadow); both ranges appear to be part of the same extensive chain of mountains.

The region was open on the eastern side to lands in Rhun which were controlled by Sauron. Inside its boundaries Mordor was divided into three areas: Udun, Gorgoroth, and Nurn.

Udun was a huge valley in the northeastern corner of Mordor. The area was rocky and bowl-shaped but probably not completely inhospitable to plant and animal life.

Gorgoroth was divided into two areas. The northwest corner was virtually lifeless, dominated by Amon Amarth, the huge volcano Sauron used to forge the One Ring and to launch a sun-blocking cloud in his attack on Gondor at the end of the Third Age. The lands around the volcano were ashy and barren.

The rest of Gorgoroth was probably not much better off but perhaps supported some plant and animal life. It was a large plateau that extended across the northern third of Mordor, almost to the end of the Ered Lithui.

Nurn lay to the south of Gorgoroth. The western part of Nurn was called Lithlad (an indication of the extent to which Sauron had poisoned his own lands). The southern and eastern regions of Nurn were dominated by a small sea, Nurnen, and the rivers which fed it. The lands in this area were quite fertile and Sauron kept many slaves there to raise food for his armies.

### **Rhun (the East)**

Rhun was the birthplace of peoples in Middle-earth. Even the Elves had awoken there in their ancient land of Cuiviënen, which lay on the northeastern shore of the sea of Helcar, between the sea and the mountains. Cuiviënen was actually situated around a small bay or lake into which flowed a great waterfall fed by a river from the mountains.

The dominant feature of Rhun was the chain of mountains called the Orocarni (Red Mountains). These mountains stretched along the eastern coasts of Middle-earth from the north to the middle regions.

## Parma Endorion

After the War of Wrath even Rhun was affected by the changes inflicted upon Middle-earth and Helcar was drained so that only the Sea of Rhun survived its destruction. Cuiviënen itself was apparently destroyed, and it may be that the Orocarni suffered some damage similar to that which the Ered Luin experienced (they were broken by the Lhun).

Men awoke in Hildorien, a land which lay southeast of Cuiviënen and beyond the southern peaks of the Orocarni. There is mention of a small range of mountains on one map called the Mountains of the Wind which may have been the western border of Hildorien. Like Cuiviënen, Hildorien was eventually destroyed, but Men had started leaving it long before the end of the First Age.

The only other land in Rhun which was named by Tolkien was Khand, which lay just to the east of Mordor. The Variags of Khand were similar in culture to the Wainriders who had dwelt in the lands to the north and had traditionally passed between the Ered Lithui and Sea of Rhun in their invasions.

Other Easterlings dwelt farther north. These engaged in wars with the Northmen (and, presumably, the Dwarves) living between the Carnen Celduin rivers. Although Rhun was said to contain great plains from whence the Wainriders and other peoples emerged, the northern lands may have been well-forested.

## **Hyarmenor (The Dark Lands)**

Tolkien wrote virtually nothing about this continent. It lay to the east of Endor (Middle-earth) and mostly in the southern regions of Arda. Its northern tip created a narrows in the East Sea with the promontory of Hildorien. Although the continent was explored by the Numenoreans, Tolkien does not say whether they found Men, Elves, Dwarves, or other creatures dwelling there, but they do not appear to have established any havens or kingdoms in the eastern lands.

## **Romenor (The Eastern Lands)**

All that we know of this land-mass is that a mountain range known as the Walls of the Sun was raised up there, and the highest peak was called Kalormë. Like Hyarmenor, Romenor was explored but apparently never settled by the Numenoreans, and probably was not settled by any Men. When Arda was changed Romenor may have been destroyed or removed from the circles of the world.

## **Chapter 2: A Brief History of Arda**

### **The Ainur**

J.R.R. Tolkien's mythology about Arda (The Realm, Earth) begins with Ainulindalë (The Music Of The Ainur), a story which speaks of Iluvatar, God, and the Ainur (Holy Ones). The Ainur were the first children of Iluvatar's thought and they sang for him, at first singly and then together in small groups, gradually merging into a great chorus.

Melkor (He Who Arises In Might), greatest of the Ainur, began to sow dissension among them by raising a great discord in the Music. This occurred during the First Theme, and Iluvatar responded to the discord by raising a Second Theme, in which Manwë brother of Melkor sang the chief part.

But Melkor fought against the Second Theme, leading the rebellious Ainur in their own brash Music, clashing with the beauty of the Themes. To this Iluvatar responded with a Third Theme that the Ainur could not fathom, for they were not its source.

And Iluvatar caused the Ainur to cease their Music, and he showed them a vision which gave new meaning and symbology to their Music. Many of the Ainur were fascinated with the Vision of Iluvatar and some of the greatest Ainur desired to bring the Vision into being.

To this Iluvatar consented, and he created Ea (The World That Is). Then the greatest Ainur entered Ea, and these were known thereafter as the Valar (the Powers) who shaped the universe and the world. Chief among the Valar was Manwë, who was most closely aligned with the airs. Ulmo and Aulë worked with him, and they were most closely aligned with Water and the fabric of the Earth.

But Melkor also entered into Ea, and though he labored with the others for uncounted ages in bringing the universe to fruition, when in time the dwelling of the Children of Iluvatar (Elves and Men) was made, Melkor rebelled against the purpose he had undertaken and claimed Arda for his own.

Arda was only a small part of Ea, and Manwë summoned many Ainur to help him drive Melkor away from Arda. But Melkor only watched as Arda was shaped by the Valar Maiar, and he grew jealous of all they did. So he descended upon Arda again and strove with the Valar, corrupting some of the Maiar to his service. But Tulkas, hearing there was war in Ea, entered the universe and lent his great strength to Manwë's cause. And then Melkor fled again.

So in time the Valar and Maiar finished shaping Arda, and they brought forth living plants and creatures, and to give them light they created two Lamps, Illuin (in the north) and Ormal (in the south).

## Parma Endorion

In the midst of the land they made a great lake, and in the lake they set an isle, Almaren, where they could enjoy the mingling of the light of the Two Lamps.

But while the Valar rested from their labor Melkor returned to Arda, calling into Ea many of the Ainur who had sung with him in the Music, and these he led to the northernmost regions of Arda where they constructed the mighty fortress Utumno.

When Melkor felt he was ready he struck down the Two Lamps and destroyed much that the Valar had built through the ages. The Valar were dismayed but they could not overtake Melkor before he returned to Utumno. There he settled with many corrupted Ainur, of whom the greatest were Sauron, Gothmog Lord of Balrogs, Draugluin father of Were-wolves, Thuringwethil, and other beings of power. But not all whom he had corrupted followed Melkor faithfully. Of these, Ungoliant fled to the western regions of Arda.

There the Valar settled in a land they named Aman (Blessed), which they hallowed. They raised up a new chain of mountains, the Pelori, and fortified their land (Valinor) against Melkor. They were reluctant to engage in another war with him because they feared they might do harm to whatever place Iluvatar had chosen for the Children.

In Valinor the Valar created two new lights, Telperion the Silver and Laurelin the Golden, the Two Trees which gave light to much of Aman. But outside Valinor, in the shadows beneath the southern Pelori, Ungoliant spun her webs, creating a region within Avathar where no one dared venture.

In time the patience of the Valar was rewarded and they discovered the Quendi singing under the stars in the land of Cuiviënen, which lay far to the east in Endor amid the foothills of the Orocarni, the mountains of the eastern lands. But to their dismay the Valar learned that the Quendi had already been discovered by Melkor, and they resolved to put an end to his great realm in Middle-earth. So began the War of the Powers, and the world was changed in the mighty tumults which resulted. But Melkor was defeated and Utumno was destroyed, except for a small outpost in the west, Angband, and perhaps one or two other enclaves. Melkor was taken to Valinor where he was judged and placed in confinement in Mandos, from which halls even Melkor could not escape. There for long ages Melkor languished in prison until he was released on parole, and he discovered that the Quendi had been brought to Valinor where they flourished and created a civilization which astounded him.

So Melkor decided to seek revenge upon the Quendi for the humiliation of his imprisonment. To that end he strove to win their confidences, but the Vanyar and Teleri would not listen to him. Only the Noldor succumbed to Melkor's deceits, and in time their greatest princes, Fëanor and Fingolfin, were drawn into strife which when investigated by the Valar led to the discovery of Melkor's designs.

But he fled from Valinor and eluded pursuit. And in time he visited Avathar where he recruited Ungoliant to his service, and led her back to Valinor. There they slew the Two Trees and Finwë, King of the Noldor, stealing many treasures of Finwë's house and the Three Silmarils, in which alone the Light of the Two Trees still burned.

Then Melkor and Ungoliant fled to Middle-earth, where they quarreled over the Silmarils, and Melkor had to call upon the Balrogs to aid him against her. And Ungoliant fled away to dwell in the southern reaches of Dorthonion, there to breed with other creatures and bring forth the Great Spiders which troubled Middle-earth for many ages afterward.

Melkor settled in Angband, building it up and re-establishing his kingdom in Middle-earth. And he made war upon those Quendi who were living there. But soon the Noldor followed him to Middle-earth, and for many years they and their allies (the Sindar and Atani) fought against Melkor in a vain attempt to recover the Silmarils.

In time Melkor was victorious, but he grew too confident and he did not crush the small remnants of Elves and Men who escaped his wrath. From these came Eärendil, half-Elven mariner, who with the power of one Silmaril (which had been recovered by Beren and Luthien) sailed to Valinor and there won pardon for the Noldor and aid for the Sindar and Men.

Then the Valar sent forth a great army and they waged the War of Wrath against Melkor and his servants. The world was hurt again, and many lands were destroyed and other lands raised up. But Melkor was taken at last and thrust out from Arda into the darkness of Ea. Then because he was greatly weakened he could not return, though it was foretold that in time he would recover his strength and assail Arda at the End.

The Valar then rewarded the Atani for their great labors against Melkor, but in doing so they laid the seeds for yet a further change in the world. For they gave to the Atani long life within Arda, but it was not the fate of Men to live in Arda until the End, as it was the fate of the Quendi to do so.

The Atani were given the island of Elessar in which to dwell, and they named it Numenor, and became the Dunedain, Kings of Men. They for a time left the cares of Middle-earth behind them and lived in a peaceful and near-blessed land. But they eventually came to envy the longer lives and fate of the Quendi.

In Middle-earth Sauron and other creatures of Melkor eluded the Host of Valinor, and he established a new kingdom of darkness in the southern land of Mordor. Thinking the Valar would pay no heed to him, Sauron strove with the Quendi for mastery of Middle-earth, but the Dunedain returned in strength to Middle-earth and lent the Quendi their aid.

Then Sauron turned his attention to Numenor, and he perceived a shadow growing among them. Thus, in time, despite the persuasions of the Valar, the Dunedain of Numenor rebelled against their fate, and seduced by Sauron they assembled a great armada and assaulted Aman itself.

In response the Valar laid down their guardianship over Arda and Iluvatar gave them the strength to change the world forever. Numenor was cast down into the sea and Aman and its nearby islands were taken away from the circles of the world so that Men could not find them again.

Yet the Valar did not forsake Arda, and when Sauron arose again in the Third Age they sent emissaries to aid the peoples of Middle-earth in their struggles against the Enemy. The ventures

of the Istari were perhaps the last direct intervention of the Valar in the affairs of the Children of Iluvatar. But in the end one of five proved victorious, and he vanquished the last Balrog and aided the Free Peoples in overthrowing Sauron.

## **The Quendi (Speakers, or Elves)**

The first speaking people to awake in Middle-earth were the Quendi, the Elves, and they are called the Elder Children of Iluvatar (whereas Men are the Younger Children, and Dwarves are the Adopted Children). The Quendi were fated to dwell within Arda until the End, and their spirits cannot leave Ea. So they may, if their bodies perish, in time be re-embodied by the grace of Iluvatar and the Valar.

The Quendi were divided into three kindreds: Minyar (firsts), Tatyar (seconds), and the Nelyar (thirds). At the first sundering of the Quendi they were divided into two nations: Eldar and Avari. Of the Eldar there were in origin three kindreds. All of the Minyar eventually became the Vanyar, about half the Tatyar became the Noldor, and two-thirds of the Nelyar became the Lindar. The remaining Tatyar and Nelyar eventually became known as the Avari (Unwilling).

The Vanyar were the fewest in number and they were perhaps the wisest of the Quendi. They loved the woods and open lands, and most if not all had golden hair.

The Tatyar and Noldor were the craftsmen of the Quendi, makers of things and seekers of lore. They dwelt most in the hills and mountains, and were miners and smiths.

The Nelyar were the most gifted singers of the Quendi, and they loved water most. Those Nelyar who joined the Eldar called themselves Lindar (singers), but in time they acquired other names.

When Oromë the Vala discovered the Quendi in Cuiviënen, he learned that they had been troubled by a Dark Hunter, whom he perceived was Melkor or one of his servants. At Oromë's bidding the Valar held a great council where they chose to wage war upon Melkor and to summon the Quendi to live in Aman.

When the war was finished Oromë returned to the Quendi to deliver the summons of the Valar, but the Elves were afraid and refused to go. So Oromë chose three ambassadors from among their leaders to visit Aman and report to their peoples what they found there. These three were Ingwë (of the Minyar), Finwë (of the Tatyar), and Elwë (of the Nelyar). Of the three, only Ingwë found peace in Aman.

Ingwë persuaded all the Minyar to follow him to Aman, and they undertook the Great Journey, leading the way for others to follow. Finwë persuaded half the Tatyar to follow him to Aman, and they took the road after the Vanyar. Elwë, aided by his brother Olwë, persuaded more than half the Nelyar to undertake the Great Journey, but they were the most reluctant of the Quendi to leave their homeland, and so they became known to the other Eldar as the Teleri, the Last-comers.



The three groups of Quendi who undertook the Great Journey were ever after known as the Eldar, the people of the Stars, even though this name Oromë had originally given to all their race. Those who remained in Cuiviënen became known as the Avari, the Unwilling, for they refused the summons of the Valar.

The Teleri became divided on their long road. The first division arose when Lenwë, one of their chieftains, turned aside at the Anduin. He led away perhaps a third of the Teleri, and these became known as the Nandor. Again, in Beleriand, while waiting for passage to Aman, the Teleri were divided, for Elwë was lost to the enchantments of the Maia known as Melian in the forest of Nan Elmoth, and many of his friends and kinsmen searched for him.

When the time came for the Teleri to leave Middle-earth, those who continued to seek for Elwë were left behind, and they named themselves the Eglath, the Forsaken. But another group of Teleri stayed in Middle-earth as well. These were led by Cirdan, who for the sake of the friendship of Ossë, Maia of the Belegaer whose charge was the coast lands of Middle-earth, stayed to become the Falathrim, the People of the Coast.

Those Teleri who reached Aman, nearly half of the original group, were led by Olwë. There he became their king, but while the Vanyar and Noldor settled in Aman itself the Teleri lived a long time on Tol Eressëa, until Ossë was sent to them to teach how to build ships (as he taught the folk of Cirdan to build ships).

Ingwë and Finwë built the city of Tirion upon the hill of Tuna in the Calaciryra, the only valley in the Pelori. But in time Ingwë and his people abandoned the city and they settled in many places throughout Valinor.

Olwë and his people settled at last on the shores of Aman, and with the aid of Ingwë's people they built the city of Alqualondë, the Haven of Swans. For many ages the Eldar flourished in Aman, increasing in number and learning much lore from the Valar and Maiar.

But Finwë took two wives, a thing unheard of among the Eldar. Miriel, his first wife, died soon after giving birth to Fëanor, their son. And though Finwë was deeply grieved he wished to have more children, and in time he married Indis, sister of Ingwë. She bore him three daughters and two sons: Findis, Faniel, Irimë and Nolo-finwë and Araf-inwë. Nolo-finwë was afterwards known as Fingolfin, greatest of the kings of the Noldor in Middle-earth.

Now, Fëanor was jealous and proud, and he had little to do with the children of Indis. But he in time married Nerdanel, daughter of Mahtan, one of the greatest smiths of the Noldor, who had been taught much lore by Aulë the Vala himself. Fëanor was for long content to father his own children (Nerdanel bore him seven sons) and to study the lore of mining and smith craft.

In time Fëanor became the greatest of the Eldar in arts, and he fashioned the Silmarils, preserving in them forever the light of the Two Trees. This was his greatest accomplishment, but he is credited with other works: the reworking of the Tengwar, the alphabet of the Eldar; fashioning the Palantiri, the stones of far-seeing; and the invention of silima, a substance which cast its own light; and other things.

## Parma Endorion

But Fëanor became ensnared in the deceits of Melkor, and he came to think that Fingolfin sought to replace him in their father's affections. Fëanor drew his sword upon him in their father's tower before many witnesses. Then the Valar sent Fëanor into exile in a northern region of Valinor, and Finwë went with his son, and many other Noldor as well. They built the city of Formenos, but when Fëanor returned to Valimar to be reconciled with his brother at the command of the Valar, Finwë refused to go with him.

So Finwë was caught by Melkor, who slew the Two Trees while the Valar were distracted by the matter which lay between Fëanor, and Melkor slew Finwë and took the Silmarils, and the Noldorin guards could not withstand him, so that others died in Formenos that day as well.

When he learned what had befallen in his absence Fëanor defied the ban of the Valar against his return to Tirion, and he gathered there his people. Then he persuaded most of the Noldor to follow him into exile, though the Noldor were not wholly behind him in this matter, and many wished to have Fingolfin for their king instead of Fëanor.

The Valar at first refused to interfere in the Noldor's decision since they did not wish to force the wills of others to their own ways. But Fëanor they cast out of Aman because of the oath he and his sons had sworn to avenge Finwë's death and recover the Silmarils. Then Fëanor exerted his will over his people and he led them north to Alqualondë, where he hoped to persuade the Falmari (the Teleri of Aman) to join in his rebellion.

But Olwë refused to leave Aman, for his people were content under the protection and tutelage of the Valar, and they had not been ensnared in the deceits of Melkor. So Fëanor tried to steal the swan-ships of the Falmari, and he fought with them in their haven. And when Fingon came upon the battle he thought the Falmari had attacked the Noldor, so he led a great part of the Noldor into battle on Fëanor's behalf, and in Alqualondë the Noldor committed the first Kinslaying.

For the sake of the Kinslaying the Valar pronounced a curse upon the Noldor and a doom upon Fëanor and his House. They would fail in their war, and the House of Fëanor would lose their heritage, becoming known as The Dispossessed. When he heard this pronouncement, Arafinwë (known also as Finarfin) returned to Aman and earned the pardon of the Valar. There they made him King of the Noldor who had not gone into Exile.

Their stolen ships proved to be of little use to the Noldor, for many were destroyed in a great storm which arose when Uinen, Lady of the Sea, grieved for the slain Falmari. But Fëanor led a small part of his people across Belegaer to Beleriand, and he burned the ships in his madness. Fingolfin led the remaining Noldor north until they came to Helcaraxë, the Grinding Ice, and they crossed that terrible bridge, though many perished, to come at last to Middle-earth.

Though none of the Teleri went into Exile, a few of the Vanyar did, for they were spouses or children of Noldor. Elenwë, wife of Turgon, son of Fingolfin, was one of these. Yet she perished in the crossing of the Grinding Ice and she never saw the beauty of Gondolin, her husband's beloved city, which fell last of the Eldarin realms in Middle-earth.

In Middle-earth Fëanor soon perished from wounds gained in battle, and though seeing at last the fruitless nature of his war he laid it upon his sons to fulfill their terrible oath. Yet Maedhros the eldest was soon captured by Melkor's forces, and the Noldor withdrew into Hithlum, accomplishing nothing. When Fingolfin led the greater part of their people into Hithlum, the Noldor saw the sun rise for the first time (after it was created by the Valar from the last leaf of Laurelin).

In time, to heal the rift between the hosts of the Noldor, Fingon rescued Maedhros from the peaks of Thangorodrim where Melkor had bound the Noldorin king. But Maedhros ceded the kingship to Fingolfin, concluding the reconciliation of their people, and fulfilling the Prophecy which said he and his brethren would be the Dispossessed.

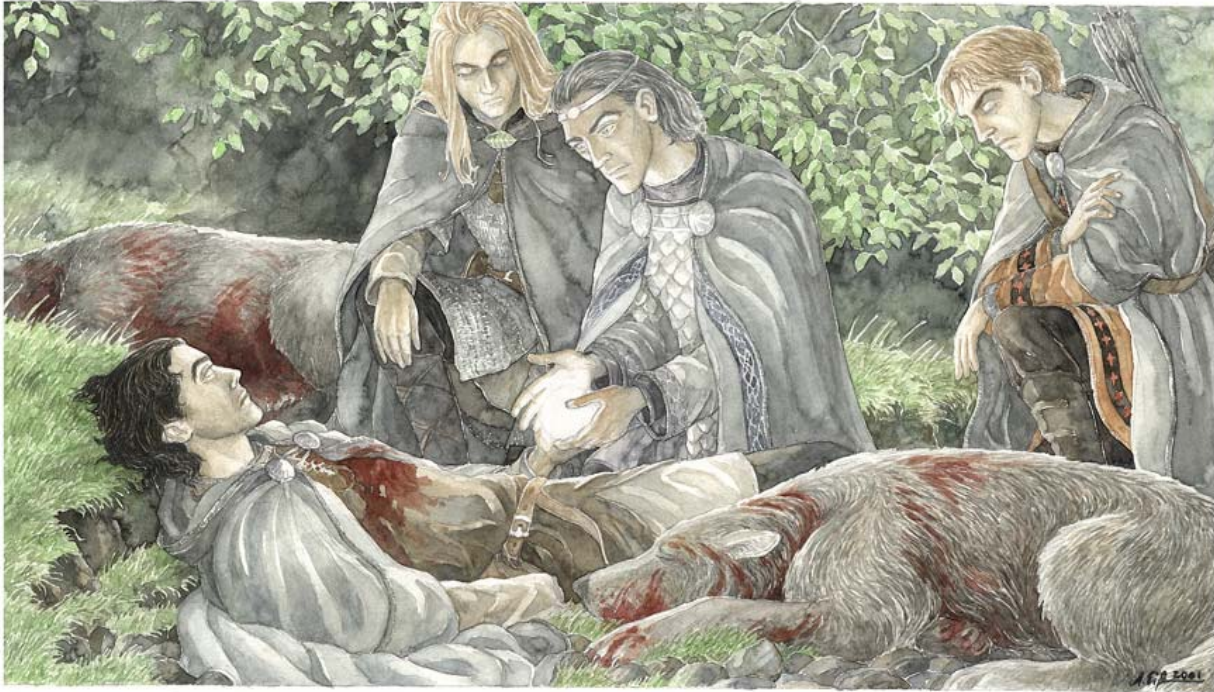
In the centuries which followed the Noldor established several kingdoms, and they befriended the Sindar, the Grey-Elves of Beleriand, who were Eglath, the Falathrim, and the Laegrim (Nandor who had fled to Beleriand when Melkor's creatures began to afflict Middle-earth). And they also had the aid of the Naugrim, the Dwarves. But though they fought valiantly and were aided by the Atani (the Edain), the Eldar failed utterly, and all their kingdoms save a few small refuges were destroyed one-by-one. Yet the greatest evils they inflicted upon themselves. For when Beren, an Adan of the First House, declared his love for Luthien, daughter of Elwë (Thingol) and Melian, Elwë commanded Beren to retrieve a Silmaril from Melkor's crown as the bride-price.



Beren Recovers a Silmaril  
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## Parma Endorion

Beren's quest led to the death of Finrod, eldest son of Finarfin and King of Nargothrond; and in time Beren himself was slain by the Wolf of Angband, but the Silmaril was recovered. Then Beren and Luthien, who had died in body and beseeched Namo for a reprieve, returned to life and they lived apart from Men and Elves. But she had chosen mortality and alone of all the Eldar had become joined to Men in fate for the sake of her love for Beren.



The Quest Fulfilled  
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But Elwë took up the Silmaril, and he charged the Dwarves with placing it in a necklace which had originally been fashioned by their people for Finrod. Yet their greed was inflamed by the Silmaril and they slew Elwë, fighting their way out of his kingdom of Doriath, though most perished. The Dwarves then sent an army to seek revenge against the Elves and Elwë's kingdom was destroyed.

Dior, son of Beren and Luthien, tried to restore the kingdom of Elwë, but after the deaths of Beren and Luthien the Silmaril was brought to him and he chose to wear it openly. Then the sons of Fëanor sent a demand for the Silmaril, but Dior refused to yield it to them, and they destroyed the remnant of Doriath.

But though Dior himself perished his daughter Elwing escaped, and the Sindar preserved the Silmaril with her. In time her people were joined by survivors of Gondolin, Turgon's realm, and among them was Æarendil, who married Elwing and began to seek for Valinor to ask forgiveness and aid for Elves and Men.

The land where Æarendil and Elwing lived was assailed by the sons of Fëanor again, and again though they destroyed an Elven realm they failed to recover the Silmaril, because Elwing escaped and with the aid of Ulmo the Vala joined Æarendil on his final sea-voyage. With the aid of the Silmaril they passed over Sea to Valinor and persuaded the Valar to launch the War of Wrath.

The Noldor of Aman and the Vanyar marched to war beside the Valar and Maiar, and their army was larger than any before that time or after. They defeated Melkor and briefly recovered the other two Silmarils, but Maedhros and his brother Maglor stole the jewels. Yet they had lost their heritage and neither could hold the Silmaril he had taken. Maedhros cast himself into a fiery chasm with his Silmaril and Maglor threw his into the sea.

This marked the end of the First Age of the Sun, and most of the surviving Noldor and Sindar of Beleriand returned to Aman to dwell in Tol Eressëa. But a few stayed in Middle-earth under Gil-galad, son of Fingon, who established a new kingdom in the last remnant of Beleriand.

The Eldar of Aman befriended the Dunedain of Numenor, and for many centuries they sailed east to visit the Men of the Sea. But when the Dunedain fell under the Shadow the Eldar visited their friends less and less and then usually in secrecy. But in time when Sauron came to Numenor the Eldar could not even visit the land in secret, but they gave a parting gift to Amandil, Lord of Andunië: the Palantiri, the stones of far-seeing.

In Middle-earth Gil-galad opposed Sauron, but the Eldar of Lindon were too weak to confront the servant of Melkor alone. They had to call upon the Dunedain to help them in the War of the Elves and Sauron. That war was fought because Sauron had failed to gain control over the Elves with the Rings of Power, which he had helped forge in Eregion, the easternmost Elven realm of Eriador.

Until Sauron was taken to Numenor, Gil-galad was never able to recover his power in Middle-earth, for many Elves had perished in the war, and others continued to flee Middle-earth, sailing over Sea.

Yet after the fall of Numenor Gil-galad befriended Elendil, son of Amandil and leader of the Dunedain-in-Exile. With Elendil Gil-galad formed the Last Alliance of Elves and Men, and together they overthrew Sauron, but their victory was not final for Isildur, the son of Elendil, refused to destroy the One Ring, into which Sauron had cast much of his power.

In the Third Age the Eldar declined in numbers and power. They produced no more great kings, though Cirdan still dwelt in Middle-earth. Some of the Eldar had settled among the Silvan Elves (Nandor and Avari who had merged in the Vale of Anduin) in the Second Age, and these proved to be the mightiest and most numerous Elves. But they were rustic and little resembled the ancient Eldar of Beleriand in splendor or power.

Throughout the Third Age the Eldar secretly used the Three Rings of Power they had preserved from Sauron to preserve portions of Middle-earth and delay the world-weariness which in time afflicted all Elves. But with Sauron's final overthrow the power of the Three failed and many Eldar set sail over Sea.

## **The Naugrim (Dwarves)**

The Naugrim, who called themselves Khazad, were known as the Dwarves among Men. They claimed to have been fashioned by Aulë the Smith before the Awakening of the Elves, but because Iluvatar did not wish to have any Incarnates awaken before the Elder Children, he accepted the Khazad as adopted Children yet commanded that they should sleep until after the Elves awoke.

There were in origin thirteen Dwarves: seven Fathers and six Spouses. Durin, eldest, had no spouse at first, and he lived alone for a long time while the other Dwarves established their houses. But eventually even he found a mate (from one of the other six houses) and he established a kingdom under the Hithaeglir known as Khazad-dum.

Although there were seven houses of Dwarves, it appears that an eighth group, the Noegyth Nibin, consisting of outcasts from the seven houses, settled in Beleriand. There they were hunted for a time by the Sindar, who eventually left them in peace when they learned that the Dwarves were not evil creatures.

The seven Dwarven peoples were called the Firebeards (of Gabilgathol), the Broadbeams (of Tumunzahar), the Longbeards (of Khazad-dum), the Ironfists, the Stiffbeards, the Blacklocks, and the Stonefoots. They awoke in four places: a mountain in Ered Luin (perhaps near where Gabilgathol was located, if not that place itself), Gundabad, and two other mountains in the distant east, each separated from the others by at least as much distance as separated Gundabad from the place of awakening in Ered Luin.

The Dwarves spread throughout Middle-earth, trading with the Avari, Nandor, and Sindar. They also engaged in some trade among themselves, but also fought occasional wars. Their knowledge of weapons and armor allowed the Dwarves to teach these skills to the Sindar of Beleriand, and at least two kindreds of Dwarves fought in the wars against Melkor.

During the Second Age many of the Dwarves gathered in Khazad-dum, making it a multi-kindred city. Durin's Line became the most powerful and renowned of the Dwarven Houses, and they allied themselves with the Eldar in the wars against Sauron. It is possible the easternmost Dwarves fell into evil and perhaps even served Sauron.

The Third Age saw the decline of the Dwarves, although Durin's Folk endured and flourished for two thirds of the age until they awoke a Balrog. The Balrog devastated their kingdom, forcing them to flee into exile. Although the Dwarves of Durin's Line established new homes elsewhere, they never again realized the greatness of their ancient civilization in Khazad-dum. Legend said that they would one day inhabit Khazad-dum again, but by that time (sometime in the Fourth Age) the Dwarven race had dwindled to a remnant of its former numbers.

## **The Atani (Men)**

There is no part of the history of Arda in which Men play a singular role until the final departure of the Eldar and decline of the Dwarves. Men fought in the wars of Beleriand on both sides, and they served Sauron even as the Edain aided the Eldar in the Second Age.

The wars and great kingdoms of the Third Age were the wars and realms of Men, not Elves or Dwarves. The great migrations of that age were all Mannish. Civilization in Middle-earth was all but destroyed by Sauron, yet what little survived the tumultuous age was preserved largely by the Dunedain and their allies.

The Fourth Age was called the Age of Men because its advent heralded the end of the Elder Days, the passing of the Eldar, and the onset of the domination of Men in the history of Middle-earth.

## **Chapter 3: The Elven Peoples of Arda**

### **The Avari**

An early (and apparently rejected) tradition concerning the Avari states that their leaders were Morwë and Nurwë. If the Noldor and Lindar who became Avari had leaders, Tolkien might have revived the names of Morwë and Nurwë.

The Avari lived near Cuiviënen for a long time, but eventually they had to leave that land because the War of Wrath changed Middle-earth. The inland sea of Helcar (which had been formed in the destruction of the Northern Lamp, Illuin) was drained, leaving only a small portion of itself which became the Sea of Rhun. The Nurnen may have been another corner of the ancient waters which survived the tumults of the War of Wrath.

Yet some of the Avari had left Cuiviënen even before the end of the First Age of the Sun. Tolkien writes that some Avari reached Beleriand before the Eldarin realms were destroyed. The Edain had also met and befriended Avari in the eastern lands before they entered Beleriand, according to the tale of Bëor and Finrod. Of course, there were also Nandor in the east, but their numbers may at that time have been few, since Denethor had gathered as many of his people as he could find when he led them to Beleriand.

The Avari mingled with the Nandor in the Vales of Anduin, Eriador, and Ossiriand, but only a very few settled in Doriath successfully. They don't seem to have gotten on well with the Noldor. Those of the Avari who were descended from the "second clan" thought their cousins of Aman were arrogant.

When Oropher and Amdir (Malgad) established their realms among the Silvan Elves in the Vales of Anduin early in the Second Age (before the year 1000, when Sauron started building the Barad-dur), they must have recognized the mixed heritage of the Elven folk they had chosen to rule (why else select a new name for them?).

The Avari taught the Edain the rudiments of language and music, both skills the Elves had developed before their great division. But they would have needed to develop or practice other skills, for they needed to defend themselves in the wild and to feed and clothe themselves as well.

As the Dwarves traded with the Nandor so they must also have traded with the Avari, and what wars or adventures they engaged in were not recorded by Tolkien.

Tolkien never mentioned any kingdoms or "countries" which were wholly established by the Avari, but one must always wonder what he imagined the land known as Dorwinion to be like. It is mentioned in "Lay of Leithian", and it seems unlikely it could have been anything other than an Elvish realm at that time.



## The Silvan Elves

The Silvan Elves are generally thought to be descended of a portion of the Nandor who remained in Greenwood the Great or by the river Anduin. But since some of the Avari eventually settled in Beleriand we must assume that others settled among the Nandor of the Vales of Anduin. And when the Elves could no longer live in Cuiviënen they must have turned their minds and hearts toward the west. Men were increasing in number in the eastern lands and there would have been little incentive for the Avari to stay close to tribes who were in Morgoth's service or led by Men who had been in his service.

The Silvan Elves originally lived very close together on both sides of the river, at about the same latitude as the forest of Lindorinand and southern Greenwood about Amon Lanc. They crossed the river by boats and rafts and probably hunted in the woods for game, fished the river, and perhaps traded with the Dwarves of Khazad-dum.

Like the Noldor and Sindar, the Silvan Elves were permitted to sail over Sea to Aman when they grew weary of Middle-earth. They appear to have been closely associated with the haven of Edhellond near the Bay of Belfalas, though by the Third Age communication between the northern Elves and Edhellond seems to have been diminished.

The great migration of the Silvan Elves of Lorien in the year 1981 reduced the population of Lorien though it did not affect the Elven realm in Northern Mirkwood. But it would seem that the great influx of Elves fleeing Middle-earth infused the folk of Edhellond with a desire to flee the mortal lands.

After the death of Amroth and the desertion of Edhellond some Silvan Elves still occasionally set sail over Sea. The poem "The White Ship" speaks of a group of Elves who sail down the Anduin; Legolas is said to have built a ship in Ithilien and sailed over Sea. And Mithrellas, the wife of Imrazôr the Numenorean in one version of the founding of the House of Dol Amroth, was a Silvan Elf who left her husband after bearing him two children. She was supposedly a handmaid of Nimrodel, and could not have left Middle-earth before Amroth did. Perhaps she joined a company of Elves who built a ship near Belfalas some years after Amroth's death.

In the Fourth Age the Silvan Elves of Lorien followed Celeborn across the Anduin to establish the realm of East Lorien. The "Tale of Aragorn And Arwen" implies that a few Elves remained in Lorien but not enough to maintain the ancient Elven realm.

Thranduil, King of Northern Mirkwood, permitted his son Legolas to lead some of their folk south to Ithilien. Gondor thus enjoyed a renewal of Elvish influence for at least a few centuries, as it is unlikely all of Legolas' people went with him over Sea.

The Silvan Elves were drawn into all the major wars of the Second and Third Ages. They gave assistance to the Elves of Eregion in the War of the Elves and Sauron, and they marched with Gil-galad in the War of the Last Alliance of Elves and Men. Elrond called upon the Elves of Lorien for aid on at least two and possibly three occasions in the wars against Angmar, and Thranduil fought in the Battle of Five Armies.

Sauron also launched attacks on Thranduil's realm and Lorien just prior to and during the War of the Ring. In the end, Thranduil and Celeborn were victorious against Sauron's armies and in a way the Silvan Elves flourished in the Fourth Age as they never had before, since they expanded to four regions of settlement from two and enjoyed a renewed friendship with Men: Thranduil was allied with the Men of Dale and Legolas was allied with the Men of Gondor.

## The Sindar

In *THE LORD OF THE RINGS* Tolkien gives the impression that the Sindar were all of one people, and yet we learn in *THE SILMARILLION* that there were two groups of Teleri who became Sindar and a third group who joined them. The Grey-elves had a very complex culture by the time the Noldor showed up.

Consider that the Eglath lived in Doriath and Dorthonion; the Falathrim lived in Brithombar, Eglarest, and Nevrast; the Laegrim (Green-Elves) lived in Ossiriand and Doriath; and there were Elves living in Hithlum who were Sindar, either related to the Eglath or the Falathrim, or perhaps both.

The Eglath of Doriath traded extensively with the Dwarves of Nogrod and Belegost, the Falathrim, and probably with the Laegrim. Menegroth was the greatest Elven city of the First Age (in Middle-earth) and unrivaled in beauty and complexity by any other city built in Middle-earth in that age or any others.

Under the tutelage of Melian the Maia and the Dwarves of Nogrod and Belegost the Sindar became master weavers, smiths, stone-masons, carpenters, and warriors. They were also consummate hunters and foresters, but though the Laegrim refused to cut trees the Eglath and Falathrim used wood extensively.

The Sindar produced the Cirth, the grey fabric which the Elves used to "blend" in with their surroundings, were great mariners, and generally achieved a civilization that was nearly as high and noble as the Elven civilization of Aman.

After the First Age of the Sun the Sindar led the great Elvish migrations into the east, and Tolkien recorded in one tradition that Eriador was largely settled by Sindar and Nandor early in the Second Age. There were also Sindar in Eregion, though most of the Elves who dwelt there were Noldor.

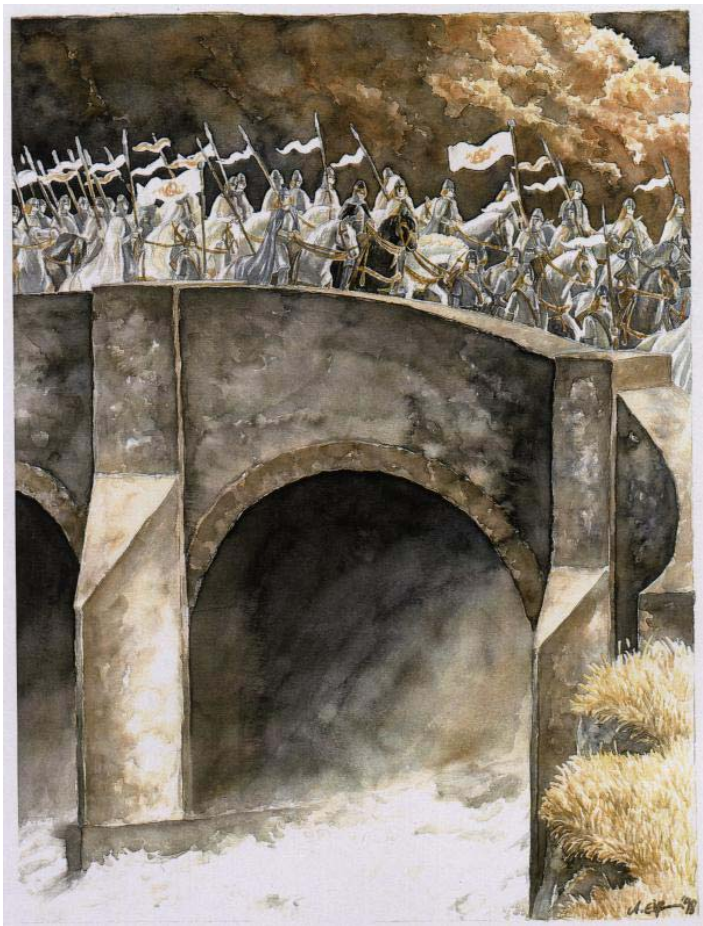
After the War of the Elves and Sauron the Sindar seem to have been absorbed into the Silvan Elves of Lorien and Greenwood, or they settled in Lindon. Unlike the Noldor their history as a separate, active people in Middle-earth ended with the war.

Most of the Sindar sailed over Sea at the end of the First Age. They settled on Tol Eressëa in the haven of Avallonë and are forgotten, but they seem not to have totally departed from the annals of Men. The Eldar of Tol Eressëa sailed to Numenor on many occasions, bringing gifts and lore with them, and they acted as the messengers of Manwë during the reigns of Tar-Ciryatan and Tar-Atanamir.

Yet more Sindar would have sailed to Tol Eressëa during and after the War of the Elves and Sauron, and probably many also left after the War of the Last Alliance. In the last years of the Third Age many Elves passed through the Shire on their ways to the havens. Undoubtedly many were Sindar of Eriador who were no longer content to live in Middle-earth.

## The Noldor

Most of the histories of the Elves deal with the Noldor and the great tragedies of their princely houses. Tolkien described the Noldor as the craftsmen of the Elves, and their achievements both in Aman and Middle-earth were unrivaled by other Elves. The Noldor produced the Tengwar, the Silmarils, the Palantiri, and the special lamps which the Eldar favored in Middle-earth. They glowed a soft silver or blue. In Middle-earth the Noldor created the Rings of Power, which may have surpassed all their other artifacts in power and worth, even the Silmarils, since the Rings were designed to help the Elves preserve and heal their folk in Middle-earth.



The Host of Nargothrond  
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The Noldor established four kingdoms in Beleriand: Hithlum, Nevrast (which later was abandoned for Gondolin), Nargothrond, and the March of Maedhros. Hithlum, Nargothrond, and the March played the greatest roles in the wars against Morgoth, but each was in turn destroyed by the enemy and its people were slain, enslaved, or dispersed.

The Noldor of Beleriand were driven to refuges in Ossiriand and the isle of Balar, and it may be this division was reproduced in the Second Age when many Noldor passed east from Lindon to settle in Eregion. Those Noldor who were most likely to remain with Gil-galad in Lindon would have been the folk who lived with him in Balar. Equally so, the Noldor most likely to desire a close alliance and friendship with the Dwarves of Khazad-dum would have been the Fëanorians who in Beleriand had been closely allied with the Dwarves of Ered Luin.

Gil-galad's realm in Lindon lasted throughout the Second Age. His chief (and perhaps only city) was the haven of Forlond. The Sindar of Harlindon probably lived in and around the haven of Harlond, which after their migration eastward may have become a Noldorin city.

## Parma Endorion

Tolkien did not record what the Noldor of Lindon achieved aside from their successful wars against Sauron. Gil-galad ruled much of Eriador as well as Lindon and he defended the lands between Ered Luin and Hithaeglir as much as he could.

Gil-galad built the three towers overlooking the sea which stood upon the Tower Hills beyond the Shire. These were the last expression of Noldorin craftsmanship in Tolkien's writings. All the other great havens and artifacts had long since been constructed when Gil-galad built the towers for Elendil.

Under Gil-galad the Noldor fielded their last great army in Middle-earth. Yet though Elrond said the Host of the Alliance was greater than any army except the Host of Valinor which had destroyed Thangorodrim at the end of the First Age, the Noldor of Lindon were only a single contingent in the Last Alliance's army. More than likely they were only equal to a fraction of the great numbers of warriors the Noldor had fielded in the First Age.

After Gil-galad's fall the Noldor continued to live in Lindon and Imladris, and some few may have still lived in Lorien, or perhaps settled there with Galadriel. The Noldor marched to war under Cirdan and Elrond but they could not raise as great an army as Gil-galad had, and as the centuries passed by many sailed over Sea, leaving behind diminished enclaves.

By the end of the Third Age neither Cirdan nor Elrond could field an army any longer, and even together they lacked the power to withstand Sauron for any length of time. In the Fourth Age a few Noldor remained at Imladris for a long time, and probably some more stayed in Mithlond and Lindon, but they faded from history and became nothing more than a memory.

The Noldor who stayed in Aman during the First Age continued to live in Tirion but their city must have seemed a mere shadow of its former self. Finarfin ruled them and he led their contingent in the Host of Valinor. Except for one event, we hear no more of them after the War of Wrath, but those Noldor who left Middle-earth settled in Avallonë or other places in Tol Eressëa and with the Sindar of that land they continued in friendship with the Dunedain of Numenor.

It is said in "Akallabeth" that Ar-Pharazôn led an army up to Tirion, and all the Elves (Noldor) fled away from the city. The Valar laid down their guardianship of the world and they appealed to Iluvatar, who gave to them the authority to change the world and punish the Numenoreans. Ar-Pharazon and his army were buried by a great landslide that must also have destroyed the ancient city of the Elves.

So, in all likelihood, the Noldor of Aman must have been forced to relocate inside Valinor, or later had to build a new city somewhere in Eldamar.

If the Palantiri were truly made by Fëanor as Tolkien suggests, they must have been left in Tirion (or other places in Aman) and only late in the Second Age gathered together in Avallonë. But this seems too much a contrivance to fit with the legend of the Master Stone which was set in Avallonë. It may be more likely that some great craftsman other than Fëanor made the Palantiri in Tol Eressëa and sent them to Amandil in Numenor as a gift to the Faithful.

Of all the Eldar of Aman, only Glorfindel is named as leaving that land in the Second Age. Tolkien decided that the Glorfindel of Imladris who aided Frodo was the same Glorfindel who gave his life defending the column of Exiles of Gondolin against a Balrog when that ancient city was destroyed. In the Second Age Glorfindel was released from Mandos and re-embodied. He at some time sailed to Middle-earth and perhaps remained there long into the Fourth Age (Tolkien does not say that Glorfindel sailed over Sea with Elrond).

## The Falmari

These were the Teleri who reached Aman, and they comprised fewer than 1/3 of the Lindar who set out on the Great Journey from Cuiviënen. They were probably the largest group of Teleri (if the Eglath and Falathrim are considered to be separate groups) but still were fewer in number than the Noldor of Aman.

The Teleri who reached Aman first lived for a long time on the isle of Tol Eressëa, unable to cross the sea or to commune with the other Eldar. When at last Ossë taught them how to build ships they sailed to Eldamar and established themselves on the shores. According to Fëanor, the Noldor helped the Teleri build Alqualondë, the Haven of the Swans, and it was from this time forward that the Teleri (renamed the Falmari, the Foam-riders) and Noldor became closely associated with one another.

Olwë, brother of Elwë, was the King of the Falmari. Of his family we know only that he had more than one son and at least one daughter, Ēarwen, who married Finarfin the youngest son of Finwë.

The Falmari had little to do with Valinor and the Vanyar. They did not usually attend the feasts held in Valimar or upon the slopes of Taniquetil. Instead they spent their time on the sea or by the shores.

The Swan-ships of the Falmari, stolen by the Noldor when that people went into Exile, were said by Olwë to be irreplaceable. The Teleri built new ships after the Noldor left Aman, but the nature of the ships is not really described. A single reference to oarless ships coming from Tol Eressëa in "Akallabeth" suggests the Teleri perfected the design of true sailing vessels, but whether the Falathrim of Beleriand did this, or the Falmari of Aman, or both independently Tolkien does not say.

Since the Falmari used bows to defend their ships against the Noldor it may be that they hunted in the woods of Eldamar. There must have been sufficient trees on both Tol Eressëa and in Eldamar to allow the Falmari to build their ships and bows.

Although they manned the ships that took the Host of Valinor to Beleriand, the Falmari did not participate in the War of Wrath. Nor is there any further mention of them in the records concerning Aman, Numenor, or Middle-earth. It is possible they continued to live along the coast of Aman, spreading slowly toward the north and south as the ages passed and their numbers increased.

The Falmari probably engaged in trade with the Eldar of Tol Eressëa but more than likely had little or nothing to do with the Dunedain of Numenor. There was no tradition of friendship between the Falmari and Men, although it may be that Elwing influenced them to express some friendship toward the Dunedain.

Although "Akallabeth" says only that Ar-Pharazôn set foot upon the shores of Aman and encamped about the hill of Tuna, it may be that an army of the Numenoreans moved on Alqualondë, at least to secure their flank against attack from that direction. A Numenorean fleet must also have blockaded the harbor of Alqualondë, as Tol Eressëa itself must have been guarded against attack from the rear.

Unlike Tirion Alqualondë probably survived the onslaught, but it may have been damaged in the changes the Valar wrought upon the world. Even so, it is unlikely the Falmari would have been denied the sea they loved so much. At the very least, whatever form Aman took after its sundering from Arda, there must have been seas for the Falmari to sail upon, and perhaps even new lands for them to explore.

## **The Vanyar**

We know so very little about the Vanyar. They helped to build Tirion upon Tuna in Eldamar but they left the most ancient of Elven cities long before the Two Trees were slain by Melkor and Ungoliant.

The special gifts of the Vanyar seem to be a superior knowledge of poetry and music, but they were also valiant warriors who served in the War of Wrath.

The Vanyar settled on the slopes of Taniquetil or in the woods and plains of Valinor. Although Tolkien says that the Vanyar were the most loved by Manwë of all the Eldar, it seems they must have enjoyed a close relationship with Oromë and perhaps also Yavanna.

The only great work of the Vanyar to be named was Elemmirë's tale "Aldudenië". This Lament may have been composed before the Noldor went into Exile, as THE SILMARILLION says it is known to all the Eldar.

A few of the Vanyar seem to have gone into Exile with the Noldor. Notably, Elenwë the wife of Turgon was a Vanyarin Elf who perished in the Helcaraxë. Glorfindel, the great Elven lord of Gondolin who slew a Balrog, may have been a Vanya or at least partly descended of the Vanyar.

The Vanyar would have been least affected by the invasion of the Numenoreans, although those who lived on the slopes of Taniquetil may have fled their homes to avoid being caught in the great landslide used to trap Ar-Pharazôn's army.

Ingwë was King of the Vanyar and he is said to have lived on Taniquetil at the feet of Manwë. In early legends his son Ingwiel is said to have led the army of the Vanyar in the War of Wrath. In war the Vanyar marched under white banners.

## **Chapter 4: The Men of Arda**

### **The Edainic Peoples**

Tolkien writes of the Edain that they "were three peoples of Men who, coming to the West of Middle-earth and the shores of the Great Sea, became allies of the Eldar against the Enemy."

In fact, most of the Edain never even saw the Sea, but that is beside the point. The Edain are in some places called the "Fathers of Men" and the "Elf-friends". There was a fourth kindred of the Edain, alluded to even in *THE LORD OF THE RINGS*, called the Druedain. But they were almost wholly alien to the other tribes and never intermarried with them.

The Edain had fled Hildorien centuries before they reached the Elven lands in Beleriand. They were among the first Men to rebel against Melkor and proved to be the most faithful of Elvish allies among Men.

In the eastern lands the Edain had been befriended by Avari and Nandor, of whom they borrowed some linguistic elements and learned to play crude instruments (harps and flutes, probably). It was the Elves who told the Edain of the "Light" which was in the West, and fleeing the Darkness of Melkor they set their feet upon the fateful path that brought them into the Wars of Beleriand.

The Edain had also dealt with the Dwarves in the lands east of Beleriand. Such intercourse as they had with the Dwarves appears to have been uneven and not always friendly.

### **The Edain of Beleriand**

The Edain entered Beleriand in three groups.

First came the Bëorians, a loose-knit confederation of clans who lived a nomadic life. Their chieftain was Balan, later named Bëor because of his devoted service to Finrod Felagund. The Bëorians were probably the most gentle and "Elf-like" Edain. They stopped in Ossiriand but the Laegrim (Green-Elves) asked Finrod to lead them away since they were hunters and lumberers. He settled the Bëorians in the region later named Estolad (Encampment) in the March of Maedhros.

Next came the Haladin. These people were also a loose-knit group of clans and apparently had few or no real leaders. They brought with them the Druedain, who were a few clans of Men drawn from the earliest inhabitants of the Ered Nimrais. The Haladin spoke a different language from the other Edain but had dealings with them and were apparently allies of some sort even before they entered Beleriand in the wake of Bëor's people. Because the Laegrim were unfriendly the Haladin passed north out of Ossiriand into Thargelion.

## Parma Endorion

The Marachians entered Beleriand last. They were the most numerous tribe of the Edain and the best organized. Their hereditary chieftain was Marach. He heard (apparently from Elves?) that Bëor's people had settled across the Gelion in Estolad and he decided to settle there.

From Estolad the Bëorians and Marachians migrated north and west to Dorthonion and the Vale of Sirion. The Haladin, some fifty or sixty years later, were nearly wiped out by Orcs. One of their clan leaders, Haldad, gathered all he could find of his people in a stockade where they held out until Caranthir rescued them. Haleth, Haldad's daughter, led her people to Estolad but soon after took them to the forest of Brethil, which lay on the western side of Doriath. Her nephew founded the line of the Wardens of Brethil.

From the year 311 to 455 of the First Age some Edain always lived in Estolad despite the migrations. These were Bëorians and Marachians. But late in the Fourth Century some of the Bëorians followed one of their Chieftains south to escape the wars in the north, and some of the Marachians returned to Eriador. It's quite probable that their chieftains were all descended from Bëor and Marach, but not from the great leaders of the Fifth Century: Barahir and Hador.

The Bëorians were driven from Dorthonion soon after the Dagor Bragollach, the Battle of Sudden Flame, which occurred in 455. At that time much of northern and eastern Beleriand was overrun and the Edain of Estolad fled back to Eriador. The Bëorians of Dorthonion fled to Hithlum (where the Marachians lived) or to Brethil, and they were absorbed into those peoples (although the male lines did not die out).

The Marachians were conquered by Melkor after the Nirnaeth Arnoediad, Unnumbered Tears, the great battle of 473 in which the Noldor were defeated and two of their greatest kingdoms, Hithlum and the March of Maedhros, were destroyed. All of the Edain fought under the leadership of Dor-lomin in that battle, and only a few of the men survived it.

Within 30 years the Haladin were ruined in Brethil, though they survived. Melkor released Hurin, who wandered through Beleriand in misery. His confrontation with the Warden of Brethil resulted in the end of the Line of Haldad and the dissolution of the confederation of the Haladin. Some of them followed Hurin away from Brethil and others tried to continue living as they had.

After the destruction of Doriath a few years later the Edain had no great Elven allies left. Nargothrond had been destroyed within 25 years after the Nirnaeth and Gondolin had never really been associated with the Edain (but it was destroyed soon after Doriath anyway).

Some of the Edain escaped from thralldom and settled in Arvernien, the last Elven realm to be established in Beleriand. This land was ruled by Ëarendil and Elwing, the Half elves in whose children the lines of the great lords of Beleriand survived. When the Fëanorians destroyed Arvernien the Edain seem to have been dispersed, or left in thralldom in places like Dor-lomin.

But when the Host of Valinor entered Beleriand the Edain still existed as distinct peoples and being freed from their slavery or gathered from their outlawry in the wilderness they joined the Army of the West and fought against Melkor. The War of Wrath lasted 45 years and the Edain must have sent two or three generations of men to war.



## **The Edain of Numenor**

Although the Haladin are never mentioned again after the episode with Hurin, they more than likely survived the Wars of Beleriand and sailed with the other Edain to Elenna. We can infer this because the few surviving Druedain were taken to Elenna.

Elenna was home to the Edain of Beleriand for the next 3000 years, and they created there a civilization which was unrivaled by any other group of Edain in the Second Age or the Third. They were called the Dunedain (to distinguish them from the Edain still living in Middle-earth), or the Numenoreans.

The Kings of Numenor were descended from Æarendil and Elwing through their son Elros, and they were apparently fair-haired (a trait they would have inherited from Æarendil's parents, Tuor and Idril Celebrindal, and through other Marachian ancestors). But the Line of Elros gave rise to several noble houses in Numenor, of which the most revered were the Lords of Andunië, who lived in the west and were the leaders of the Elf-friends. Most of the Elf-friends appear to have come from the Bëorians.

As the Numenoreans began to rebel against the will of the Valar the Elf-friends remained faithful to their ancient heritage and they were thus named The Faithful. Many of them settled in northern Middle-earth where they could live close to the Eldar of Lindon and Edhellond (although that was primarily a Nandorin port) and not be troubled by the King's Men.

The King's Men, the larger faction of the Numenoreans, conquered vast territories in Middle-earth, establishing havens for their fleets and great fortresses which after the Downfall of Numenor became the hearts of new countries that were allied with Sauron.

The last Numenoreans to leave their land were the Faithful who had stayed with Amandil, last Lord of Andunië, and his son Elendil. They sailed away in nine ships and established the realms of Arnor and Gondor in Middle-earth.

## **The Edain of Eriador**

Tolkien implies or states in a few places that not all of the Edain passed over the Ered Luin into Beleriand. This seems strange and inconsistent with what is written in THE SILMARILLION, but it does not conflict with the tradition of the three Edainic groups who left Beleriand before the end of the First Age. It could be that the fleeing Edain merely rejoined the eastern clans and were absorbed back into them.

The Edain of Eriador are a "historical" people only from the year 600 of the Second Age until the War of the Elves and Sauron. In 600 Vëantur the Numenorean sailed to Middle-earth and the Edain of Eriador asked Gil-galad to arrange a meeting between them and the Dunedain. Presumably, the two groups established a friendship which would have lasted for a thousand years.

## Parma Endorion

The Edain of Eriador lived between the North Downs and the Baranduin river. They may also have lived in or near Nenuial (Lake Evendim) but that area was originally an Elvish domain.

During the War of the Elves and Sauron all of Eriador was overrun by Mordor's forces. Sauron killed or drove off the Men living in those lands and he devastated the countryside, destroying the forests and presumably the homes and fields of the Edain. What happened to them afterward? Tolkien really does not say.

Some of the Men fled to Elrond, and perhaps some others took refuge beyond the river Lhun, where the Dunedain had reinforced Gil-galad's army. But when Tar-Minastir sent his great navy to Middle-earth to help Gil-galad, Eriador suffered more devastation and destruction. The region became a wasteland. Probably the surviving Edain were unable to live there any longer, and I think at least some may have crossed the Hithaeglin and entered the Vales of Anduin. But these, too, suffered grievously in the war, and it may be the Edain had no choice but to reconstruct their homes as best they could.

## The Edain of Rhovanion

These were the Northmen, who (according to Tolkien) were "for the most part descendants of those peoples from whom the Edain of old had come". Faramir told Frodo they were direct descendants of the Edain of Beleriand, although not from Hador himself.

The history of the Edain has now been made more clear with the publication of THE PEOPLES OF MIDDLE-EARTH. Tolkien wrote that the Edain migrated westward until they reached the great forest. Some passed south around the Greenwood until they reached Anduin, and passing north along the river settled in the Vales. Others passed north along the eastern fringes of the forest and then moved west between the Greenwood and Ered Mithrin.

The Edain left behind communities throughout Rhovanion and Eriador, and the fact that some of the Edain of Beleriand returned east during the War of the Jewels does not imply a significant number of the eastern Edainic peoples were closely related to the Edain of Numenor at all.

In the Second Age the Edain of Rhovanion formed an alliance with the Longbeards, the Dwarves of Durin's Folk, when Orcs began migrating east from the ruin of Beleriand. This alliance lasted until the War of the Orcs and Sauron, at which time Sauron sent one or more armies into the Edainic lands causing great slaughter. The Edain were nearly wiped out and many retreated to the mountain valleys and the deep woods, apparently mostly in the northern vales, where the Longbeards retained strongholds.

It would not be until Sauron was removed from Middle-earth that these Edainic peoples would be able to return to their old lands. They were the "Free Men of the North" who gradually migrated south along the eastern eaves of Greenwood at the end of the Second Age and in the early years of the Third Age. The Woodmen of southern Greenwood who attempted to aid Isildur when his company was attacked near the Gladden Fields were another remnant of the old Edainic peoples.

The eastern Edain seem to have been the most numerous groups. They settled in northern Greenwood, the lands around Erebor, and southward along the Celduin, probably spreading east in this time as far as the Carnen. According to Appendix A in THE LORD OF THE RINGS these Northmen had many princes by the time they came into contact with Gondor. The greater communities appear to have settled south of the Celduin, and the Kingdom of Rhovanion was the greatest of these lands.

The Kingdom of Rhovanion was the land where Vidugavia ruled, and his daughter Vidumavi married Valacar, the son of Minalcar, who established close ties with the Northmen. Rhovanion lay between Mirkwood (formerly Greenwood the Great) and Celduin, south of the area where the river touched the forest.

Another group of Northmen settled in the plains south of Rhovanion. These were colonists recruited by Gondor to be a buffer region against the Easterlings, but they were not faithful to Gondor and sometimes helped raid the western lands.

In time the Northmen of Rhovanion and the plains were destroyed, but a remnant of them fled to the Vales of Anduin and these became the Æothëod. Other Northmen survived in the lands between Celduin and Carnen and they were the Men of Dale, who apparently built a great kingdom between the two rivers which lasted until Smaug destroyed Erebor and the city of Dale.

The Æothëod migrated to the far northern dales where they lived for about 500 years. In that time they quarreled with the Dwarves but prospered until they became too numerous for their lands. They rode to Gondor's aid against the Balchoth and were rewarded with the region of Calenardhon that lay between Hithaeglir and Ered Nimrais, and in that land the Æothëod became known as the Rohirrim.

There were also groups of Northmen who migrated to Gondor on several occasions, and these became absorbed into the peoples of the Southern Kingdom so that by the end of the Third Age there was no apparent trace of their ancestry left in Gondor's common folk.

Tolkien mentioned the following groups of Northmen who were still identifiable at the end of the Third Age:

- The Rohirrim
- The Beornings
- The Woodmen of central western Mirkwood
- The Men of Dale and Esgaroth
- The Men living along Celduin, south of Esgaroth
- The Woodmen of northeastern Mirkwood

The latter two groups of Northmen may all or in part have been absorbed into the Kingdom of Dale. The fact that Dale's borders extended to the Carnen within 60 years of the kingdom's restoration in 2944 implies there must have been Northmen living along that river, which makes sense because there was a Dwarven community in Eryn Engrin (the Iron Hills).

## **The Gwathuirim**

This essay was originally titled "The Men of Ered Nimrais". Many questions have been answered with the publication of THE PEOPLES OF MIDDLE-EARTH. We now know, for instance, that these tribes were related to the Haladin of Beleriand, and therefore should have been given a place among the Edain of Eriador. But I have refrained from revising that essay so extensively because the Gwathuirim present an interesting study in their own right. Because of the significant information provided in PEOPLES OF MIDDLE-EARTH, portions of this essay have been quite extensively revised.

Tolkien does not enumerate the various "tribes" of the Gwathuirim for us, but we can still distinguish among them by region. The easternmost group were the Haladin. The northernmost group were the Men of Bree. The Men of Minhiriath appear to have been a somewhat different group but closely related to the Men of Bree. The Gwathuirim of Enedwaith retreated eastward and became the Dunlendings, but some of their clans appear to have migrated into Calenardhon and south along the Isen and Adorn. The Men of Dunharrow were another branch, and at least one group settled in the lands south of Ered Nimrais.

The Gwathuirim of the middle lands were the tribes who fought with the Numenoreans in the Second Age, and they appear not to have been fully conquered or absorbed into the Dunadan realms until the days of Tarannon Falastur, who may have subdued all of the Gwathuirim south of Gwathlo. But these clans were never fully conquered and in the days of the Stewards they regained their freedom and troubled both Gondor and Rohan.

## **The Dunlendings**

We meet the Dunlendings in THE TWO TOWERS when they attack Rohan under Saruman's command. There are two groups of them although most people seem to miss that distinction, The "lowland" group are pretty much shepherds, but the "highland" group are referred to as the "wild men of the hills". These are the Men with whom Gimli is reluctant to fight at the Battle of the Hornburg. He was not afraid of them, but probably knew them as a people who had been friendly to his family. He said they were too tall for him, and this was probably also true, but I suspect Gimli would have held his own in a battle with them.

There were other "Dunlendings" living along the Isen and Adorn rivers. These were clans who had intermarried with some of the western Rohirrim. According to UNFINISHED TALES some of the Dunlendings had inhabited Isengard for a time. What appears to have happened is that the Rohirrim drove a tribe related to the Dunlendings from the northern vales of the Ered Nimrais. These must have been men who never fully submitted to Gondor's rule, since Cirion was not concerned about giving their homeland away.

So then the mountain tribe was driven west and absorbed into the groups living in Dunland and beyond the Adorn. The Dunland tribes expanded east to Isengard in their efforts to drive out the Rohirrim, but the Adorn tribe(s) mingled with the Rohirrim, and it was through this mixed group that Freca's son Wulf (who had Dunlending blood) was able to recruit an army among the Dunlendings and seize control of Rohan in 2758 (the year the Long Winter began).

The Dunlendings never wielded any great power, but rather served as mercenaries in the wars against Rohan and Gondor. They must have been divided into clans and tribes that simply couldn't form a great kingdom. It is significant that some of Durin's folk settled in Dunland. They would not have done so if there hadn't been sufficient trade to support them.

### **The Men of Bree**

These were the northernmost group of Men to come from the Gwathuirim. They apparently were descended of a tribe who settled in Tyrn Gorthad (later known as the Barrow Downs), probably after the War of the Elves and Sauron. The Breelanders were absorbed into the Kingdom of Arnor and they prospered for a long time under the rule of the Dunedain.

The Bree-land itself, at the end of the Third Age, consisted of four villages: Bree, Archet, Coombe, and Staddle. There were probably other villages which had existed south of that area in more ancient times, but they would have been destroyed or abandoned in the Seventeenth Century when the Great Plague wiped out most of the people of Cardolan.

The Bree-landers were unique among their kindred for having formed a close relationship with hobbits. Hobbits had at one time lived in Dunland but they apparently did not find the region to be as safe and hospitable as the Bree-land was. The hobbits of Bree lived there for more than 1700 years in the Third Age.

### **The Men of Dunharrow**

One of the two traditions of the founding of Edhellond says that a group of Sindarin Elves settled along the Ringlo and the Men of that region, primitive fisherfolk, fled north to the Ered Nimrais. One of the traditions concerning the origins of the Druedain says they were driven from the Ered Nimrais by tall men from the east.

It seems evident that Tolkien envisioned the Gwathuirim as having split into multiple groups early in their history, much as the Marachians were divided into many groups. Thus, some of the Gwathuirim settled in Ered Nimrais and passed south to the coast lands. Whether the fisher-folk chased off by the Elves were thus intended to be Gwathuirim is not a question we can easily answer. The connection between the Men of Dunharrow and the Gwathuirim is undeniable, and therefore they came of a more ancient migratory people, sharing kinship with the Second House of the Edain, the Haladin of Brethil.

The story of the Dead Men of Dunharrow is pretty well documented by Tolkien. They were a tribe who lived in the Ered Nimrais and who apparently accepted the rule of Isildur and Anarion, or swore an alliance with them. But when Sauron attacked Gondor and Isildur called upon the Men of Dunharrow to fight against their former master, they refused. Isildur cursed them and they died out, becoming a horde of wraiths waiting for a time when they could fulfill their oath.

Their leader was known as "The King of the Mountains", and he may have ruled a very significant portion of the mountains. The demise of this tribe must therefore have broken up a

confederation of tribes, who would have threatened Gondor had Isildur's curse not so awed them they fled away into the valleys. Since the story says that the Men of Dunharrow had worshiped Sauron in the Dark Years, it is probable that they had contributed to his armies in some of the wars the Dunedain and Elves fought against Sauron's allies and servants.

## **The Men of Gondor**

Tolkien provides us with a catalog of some or all of the ethnic groups of Gondor in the scene where Peregrin watches reinforcements marching into Minas Tirith. The men who marched under Forlong, Lord of Lossarnach, were "shorter and somewhat swarthier than any men Pippin had yet seen in Gondor." Could these have been men descended from the clans of Gwathuirim?

The men of Ringlo Vale, the uplands of Morthond, and the Anfalas are not described. They could have been Dunedain, Northmen, mixed peoples, or descended of some other group. "A few grim hill-men" came from Lamedon, which lay between Ringlo Vale and the lands around Morthond. The men of Pinnath Gelin (the Green Hills) are said to be "gallant" and green-clad.

The groups most likely to be related to the Gwathuirim were probably those from Lossarnach, Ringlo Vale, and Lamedon. The Men of Lebennin (who did not send any reinforcements to Minas Tirith) probably were also of mixed heritage.

The lands beyond Belfalas had been conquered by Tarannon Falastur early in the Third Age. The southern clans of the Gwathuirim tribes thus would have long been absorbed into Gondor's culture by the end of the Third Age, and there probably were few if any groups left who were wholly of that blood.

## **The Swarthy Men**

Tolkien was not entirely clear about the relation of the various groups of Easterlings to one another. The "Swarthy Men" were essentially the tribes led by Bor and Ulfang, but there is mention of other tribes or clans who are related to them and who are brought west by Melkor during the Nirnaeth Arnoediad.

It would seem, then, that there were four groups:

- The Folk of Bor, who were destroyed
- The Folk of Ulfang
- The clans who reinforced Ulfang's people
- The clans who remained in Eriador

Ulfang's sons were killed in the battle but his people apparently survived and were sent to Hithlum along with the other Easterlings, who were presumably of close kin. Lorgan was their leader and he was probably not related to Ulfang, or may have only been distantly related.

These Easterlings stayed in Hithlum from about 473 to 543 (when the War of Wrath began). Their fate is not mentioned but they were probably crushed by the Host of Valinor, and the Edain

surely rose up in rebellion against them. That is not to say that some of Lorgan's people could not have escaped to the east, but they probably did not survive the War of Wrath.

The clans who remained in Eriador are described as being akin to the Folk of Bor and unconcerned with the Wars of Beleriand. They are supposedly the ancestors of the northernmost Men to live in Eriador. This would seem to mean they were the Forodwaith, from whom came the Lossoth, the Snowmen who aided Arvedui in the last year of his life.

### **The Folk of Bor**

The Folk of Bor settled in Lothlann sometime after the Dagor Bragollach. They had passed north around the Ered Luin because they were intimidated by the Nandor and Sindar who lived in the lands between Ered Luin and the river Lhun (or, perhaps, the Eryn Uial, Hills of Evendim).

Bor's people were farmers and friendly with the Dwarves. It may be that the Dwarves were instrumental in establishing an alliance between Bor and Maedhros. Bor's tribe was probably also the first tribe of Easterlings to enter Beleriand.

Tolkien does not say how Bor's people perished, but since their homes were in the path of the Easterlings whom Melkor brought up behind Maedhros' army, they probably were caught completely off guard and unable to flee to any refuge. And since most if not all of their Men were at the Nirnaeth Arnoediad, there was no chance Bor's people could have resisted the invasion from the east.

### **The Folk of Ulfang**

Ulfang's tribe settled in Thargelion after the Dagor Bragollach. Caranthir's Noldor had been driven from that land and Maedhros probably thought the Easterlings would be able to hold it, especially with the Folk of Bor acting as a buffer in the north.

Like Bor's tribe, Ulfang's people were friendly with the Dwarves but not with the Elves. It appears, however, that they were already in Melkor's service when they entered Beleriand. They probably were hunters and woodmen rather than farmers.

Although Ulfang's people are not said to have been wiped out, his sons all perished in the battle and presumably his direct heirs died out. Thus Ulfang's tribe must have been absorbed into Lorgan's tribe, and they ceased to be a distinct people afterwards.

### **Lorgan's Tribe**

These Easterlings would have been more powerful than Ulfang's people because they came late to the Nirnaeth Arnoediad, after the Noldor had fought with Ulfang's tribe. Probably Lorgan was responsible for the destruction of Bor's tribe since they stood in the way of his advance toward the battle.

## Parma Endorion

After the Nirnaeth Melkor gathered all the Easterlings together in Hithlum. We know only that they held that land as a subject kingdom under Melkor's rule. Lorgan himself lived until sometime after the year 500 and probably one of his grandsons was ruling Hithlum when the War of Wrath began.

There is no mention of Lorgan's people surviving the war, although some of the Easterlings are said to have fled back to their earlier lands when Melkor was defeated. But these were probably the newer tribes whom Melkor brought west to oppose the Host of Valinor. Lorgan's people must have been destroyed in the early years of the war, if for no other reason than that the Edain would have exacted revenge against their former masters.

## The Forodwaith

We hear nothing of these peoples save a couple of vague references. They apparently lived in northern Eriador and the wastelands to the east (beyond the Grey Mountains). It would have been from these tribes that the Lord of the Nazgul recruited the Men of Angmar, and perhaps some of them lived in the northern Vales of Anduin (where the Eöthëod are said to have driven away remnants of Angmar's people).

Possibly the hill-clans referred to in the story of Rhudaur were related to these tribes in some way, as the Lossoth were.

Tolkien indicated that the most ancient men of northern Eriador were descended from Swarthy Men related to the Folk of Bor. These early clans may have been the ancestors of the Forodwaith, and perhaps were not really part of the Kingdom of Arnor even in Elendil's day. The Forodwaith seem to have been a long-forgotten people by the end of the Third Age.

## The Easterlings

The Easterlings of the Third Age are not related to the Easterlings of the First Age. These Third Age peoples appear to have been nomadic tribes who tried to spread into the western lands much as the earlier peoples (the Edain, the Men of Ered Nimrais, the Swarthy Men) had in the First Age.

Since much of eastern Middle-earth had been dominated by Sauron during the Second Age, it is probable that his defeat and fall at the end of the Second Age resulted in a collapse of his dominion in more than just political terms. The eastern peoples may have fallen away from whatever cultural achievements he had given them, or that they had learned from the Numenoreans.

In the Third Age the Easterlings who fought against the Dunedain became increasingly sophisticated. The will of Sauron seems to be evident in their growing numbers and power.



## **The First Easterlings Of The Third Age**

These tribes came west late in the Fifth Century of the Third Age. They troubled Gondor (and presumably the Northmen) for about 60-70 years and then were defeated and driven away by Tarostar (Romendacil I).

Since Gondor at that time probably did not extend beyond Ithilien (although the fortresses in Mordor were still manned), these Easterlings may have lived near the Sea of Rhun and gradually spread west along the Ered Lithui. Therefore because Tarostar is said to have "driven them out", they may have invaded Ithilien on at least one occasion.

Although there is no mention of the Easterlings troubling Gondor for many centuries afterward, in THE PEOPLES OF MIDDLE-EARTH we are told that Easterlings began settling in southern Greenwood around the time that Sauron arose and established himself on Dol Guldur (in the Eleventh Century). These Easterlings seem to have fought wars with the Northmen living in the Vales of Anduin, and the presence of these hostile tribes along with the rise of Dol Guldur set the hobbit migrations into motion.

In the Thirteenth Century, about 700 years after Turambar defeated the first Easterlings, new tribes (or the old tribes reinvigorated) started attacking Gondor's borderlands. Minalcar, then the Regent under Narmacil I, defeated the Easterlings and destroyed all their towns and camps as far east as the Sea of Rhun (and in the lands just beyond the sea). It would seem from this account that the Easterlings were so devastated their lands became desolate. The power of Dol Guldur must have been diminished as well.

## **The Wainriders**

About 600 years after Minalcar destroyed the Easterlings who dwelt by the Sea of Rhun the Wainriders appeared on the scene. They may have come up from the southeastern lands beyond Mordor since they were related to the Variags of Khand. These tribes were more mobile than the previous groups of Easterlings and some of them fought in chariots.

The Wainriders conquered the Kingdom of Rhovanion and Gondor's eastern lands between Mirkwood and Mordor. For nearly 100 years from 1856 to 1944 the Wainriders controlled the lands between Celduin and Mirkwood and between Rhun and Anduin, a constant threat to Gondor and a buffer between Sauron's emissaries (who were restoring his control over Mordor) and the Dunedain.

The Wainriders were not destroyed by Gondor but they were so soundly defeated that they simply vanished from the histories of the Third Age. Probably they returned to the eastern lands and were punished by Sauron in some way, or simply were absorbed into other tribes which came from the same stock as they had.

## **The Balchoth**

The Balchoth were related to the Wainriders but appear not to have been direct descendants of the earlier group of Easterlings. They settled in southern Mirkwood and the former lands of Rhovanion, as well as in the lands between Mirkwood and Mordor. The Balchoth apparently found that the Northmen from beyond Celduin had started settling the southern lands again, but they drove them back across the river.

The Balchoth provided the strategic power that Sauron needed to secure his fortress of Dol Guldur while at the same time protecting his lines of communication with Mordor. Although defeated by Cirion and Eorl in 2510, the Balchoth were not destroyed and may have remained a cohesive people at least until the Long Winter, 2758-2759. Eorl had died fighting the Balchoth and there is no mention of their having been destroyed in any of the annals. Easterlings helped to attack Rohan when Wulf launched his rebellion against Helm in 2758.

Nonetheless, the Balchoth seem to have faded from history. It may be that as Dale grew strong in its alliance with Erebor the Balchoth were weakened and overcome by enemies from the north, and they would have had to withdraw either toward the east or to the forest around Dol Guldur.

## **Later Easterlings**

During the War of the Ring Sauron was served by at least three groups of Easterlings. The Variags of Khand fought for him at the Battle of Pelennor fields, and they seem to have been defeated soundly.

A new group of Easterlings, bearded men who fought with great axes, took Cair Andros and then blocked the road between Minas Tirith and Rohan. These Easterlings were apparently unlike the Wainriders and Balchoth, and were perhaps less mobile than the other peoples. Another group of these bearded Easterlings may have fought in the Battle of the Pelennor Fields as well.

There were many thousands of Easterlings who fought for Sauron at the Morannon. They may not all have been of one tribe or nation. But probably they represented most of the eastern peoples serving him in that time.

Another tribe or group of Easterlings living beyond Carnen invaded the Kingdom of Dale. They are not described but may have been a fairly ancient people, long in the service of Sauron. They were driven back across the river by the Men of Dale and the Dwarves but they were not destroyed. In the Fourth Age Aragorn fought at least one more war with Easterlings.

## **The Haradrim**

We know less of these many nations and tribes than we do about the Swarthy Men. Many of the Haradrim had been conquered by the Numenoreans in the Second Age, but those who lived farthest from the Sea had served Sauron for thousands of years by the time of the War of the Ring.

There were tribes who lived in plains and fought on horseback; tribes who raised elephants and apparently lived in jungles or light rain forests, or on their peripheries; and tribes that lived in the lands adjacent to Mordor and along the Harnen, the river which marked the southern boundary of Gondor.

The Corsairs lived in Umbar but there were other coastal havens south of that land. As many as three fleets of Haradrim at a time would attack Gondor, implying two or more sea-faring kingdoms lay beyond Umbar.

The Black Numenoreans lived in Umbar and other lands of the Harad. Most seem to have been absorbed into the peoples they ruled, but at least one enclave survived to the end of the Third Age because the Mouth of Sauron was said to be a Black Numenorean.

## **Chapter 5: Orcs and Other Foul Things**

### **Orcs**

Perhaps my favorite Tolkien joke is: How many Orcs does it take to change a light bulb? None. They'll all kill each other before they get the job done.

Orcs and hobbits are probably the two literary creatures for which J.R.R. Tolkien is best known. Everybody loves hobbits, and everyone hates Orcs. They were actually more vile and nasty in his earlier literature than they turned out to be in *THE HOBBIT* and *THE LORD OF THE RINGS*. One never hears of an Orc committing rape, but in "Lay of Leithian" that was one of their favorite tactics. Orcs were also fond of tying their prisoners to trees and torturing them to death. Tolkien's Orcs are a mixture of pitiful savagery and abandoned corruption. They represent the worst aspects of mankind's darker nature.

### **What did Orcs look like?**

Here is what I know about how Orcs looked:

Orcs and goblins are supposedly one and the same thing in Tolkien, but he describes them quite differently in *THE HOBBIT* (where they are goblins, mostly, with only one or two Orc references) and in *THE LORD OF THE RINGS* (where they are Orcs, mostly, with only one or two goblin references).

Here is what Tolkien says of "goblins" in *THE HOBBIT*:

...The goblins were very rough, and pinched unmercifully, and chuckled and laughed in their horrible stony voices....

...The goblins began to sing, or croak, keeping time with the flap of their flat feet on the stone, and shaking their prisoners as well.... now the goblins took out whips and whipped them with a swish, smack!, and set them running as fast as they could in front of them....

There in the shadows on a large flat stone sat a tremendous goblin with a huge head, and armed goblins were standing round him carrying the axes and the bent swords that they use. Now goblins are cruel, wicked, and bad-hearted.

These wicked and bad-hearted goblins were the sort to eat ponies, to light fires and dance around them, and to complain about the savagery of the weapons used against them. Cruel as they were, they were drawn as caricatures for the sake of providing a terrifying amusement in the story.

And except for the flat feet and the Great Goblin's huge head Tolkien never really provided a description of what the goblins looked like in *THE HOBBIT*. Some carried swords, and others carried spears. They wore helmets and used shields, too. Goblins were fond of fire and relied on torches in their caverns, so they don't seem to have been very good at seeing in the dark.

We meet the Orcs in THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING when the Company of the Ring is trapped in the Chamber of Mazarbul in the ancient Dwarf-city Khazad-dum (Moria). The scene is very dark and somber as the Company has just found the tomb of Balin and Gandalf has finished reading the Book of Mazarbul which ends with the ominous words: "The end comes...drums, drums in the deep. They are coming." These words send chills up many a reader's spine, for the hopeless situation of Balin's folk has been underscored by the bones lying around his tomb.



Balin's Tomb  
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And then the Orcs come again, beating their drums. These Orcs laugh in a hoarse manner, "like the fall of sliding stones into a pit." Gandalf looks out at the Orcs and tells his companions: "...some are large and evil: black Uruks of Mordor." Some people have taken this sentence to mean that not all Orcs were black-skinned.

The Orcs of Moria used bows and scimitars (no "bent swords" here). They also made use of horns and drums, and had rams and hammers ready for the onslaught on the Chamber of Mazarbul. They had long been preparing for war against Lorien, apparently.

The best description of a Moria Orc comes when one attacks Frodo in the chamber:

...a huge orc-chieftain, almost man-high, clad in black mail from head to foot, leaped into the chamber....His broad flat face was swart, his eyes were like coals, and his tongue was red; he wielded a great spear. With a thrust of his huge shield he turned Boromir's sword and bore him backwards, throwing him to the ground.



Orc  
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It required Sam's intervention to get the Orc away from Frodo, and Aragorn had to strike the Orc on the head from behind in order to kill him, the one apparent ignoble act on Aragorn's part.

When next we meet the Orcs we are standing with Aragorn, Gimli, and Legolas by Boromir's body. Twenty Orcs lay dead around the great warrior. Boromir's strength, courage, and prowess have by now been demonstrated, but these valiant attributes are for most readers overshadowed by his lust for the Ring and his abruptness. The Orc chieftain who could throw Boromir, Captain of Gondor, to the ground must have been a considerable warrior in his own right, a champion of the Orcs in war.

Aragorn looks at Boromir's fallen enemies and says of them:

Here lie many that are not folk of Mordor. Some are from the North, from the Misty Mountains, if I know anything of Orcs and their kinds. And here are others strange to me. Their gear is not after the manner of Orcs at all!

These were the Uruk-hai of Isengard, whom some readers feel are really half-Orcs, an "improved" breed of Orc warriors who were still mostly Orc-like in appearance (unlike the half-Orc spy who was aided by Bill Ferny in Bree -- he looked very human).

Gandalf described Aragorn to Frodo in "The Shadow Of The Past", the second chapter of THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING as "the greatest traveler and huntsman of this age of the world." It was a passing remark which Frodo forgot (he did not seem to recall it when he finally met Aragorn in Bree). But it was the kind of praise Gandalf seldom dished out.

Of himself Aragorn tells Eomer (on their first meeting): "...There are few among mortal Men who know more of Orcs [than Aragorn does]."

Aragorn's credentials in Orc-lore are thus acceptable. He knows something of their kindreds and ways and he is willing to state to a Marshal of the Mark that he knows more than anyone in Rohan about Orcs. So when Aragorn looks at Saruman's Orcs and does not recognize them, one must wonder what was so different about them that Aragorn should be intrigued.

There were four goblin-soldiers of greater stature, swart, slant-eyed with thick legs and large hands. They were armed with short broad-bladed swords, not with the curved scimitars usual with Orcs, and they had bows of yew, in length and shape like the bows of Men. Upon their shields they bore a strange device: a small white hand in the centre of a black field; on the front of their iron helms was set an S-rune, wrought of some white metal.

Pippin wakes up among the Orcs and one speaks to him, stooping over the bound hobbit, "bringing his yellow fangs close to [Pippin's] face." Are all Orcs fanged? Was this just one of the northern Orcs from the Misty Mountains?

The Orcs debate whether they should kill the hobbits. There is "no time to kill them properly," said one. "No time for play on this trip."

Another wants to know if the hobbits "give good sport".

Pippin finally gets a good look (and the readers with him) when Ugluk, the Orc-leader from Isengard, and Grishnakh, the Orc-leader from Mordor, start arguing over who should command the expedition.

...In the twilight he saw a large black Orc, probably Ugluk, standing facing Grishnakh, a short crook-legged creature, very broad and with long arms that hung almost to the ground. Round them were many smaller goblins. Pippin supposed that these were the ones from the North....

Again we have a passage that some readers feel implies that not all Orcs were black-skinned. Ugluk seems to be no larger than Grishnakh but they have different body shapes. Ugluk is almost man-like in appearance, whereas Grishnakh is almost ape-like.

One of the Orcs who carries Pippin has clawlike hands. In other passages the Orcs grab him with long arms, hard claws, and rending nails. One of the Orcs carrying Pippin has a "filthy jowl and hairy ear." We get one last look at Grishnakh when he steals away with Pippin and Merry at the edge of Fangorn Forest:

A long hairy arm took each of them by the neck and drew them close together. Dimly they were aware of Grishnakh's great head and hideous face between them....

Suddenly he seized them. The strength in his long arms and shoulders was terrifying....

The Mordor Orcs come in different breeds and sizes as well. Gorbag and Shagrat, the two Orc-captains who fight over Frodo's mithril shirt, are large, long-armed Uruks. Grishnakh must therefore also be an Uruk. Shagrat bares his fangs to Sam before running away, so probably all Orcs had fangs.

## Parma Endorion

When two hunting Orcs come close to Frodo and Sam during their journey through Mordor, we get another glimpse of what some Orcs look like:

...One was clad in ragged brown and was armed with a bow of horn; it was of a small breed, black-skinned, with wide and snuffling nostrils; evidently a tracker of some kind. The other was a big fighting-orc, like those of Shagrat's company, bearing the token of the Eye. He also had a bow at his back and carried a short broad-bladed spear....

It's hard enough to visualize the Orcs given that there were so many physical variations among them. Some were probably hairier than others. Some were taller than others. Some had longer arms. Some had larger noses. There were probably variations in skin color, although only black skinned Orcs are ever described.

Yet the Orcs for all their belligerence were not entirely without their redeeming qualities. Not that there could have been a Noble Orc, or a philosophy which recognized such a thing. Rather, the Orcs remained social creatures. They were tribal and clannish and they felt or at least expressed loyalty toward one another in various ways.

Thus the Orcs of the Misty Mountains traveled all the way to Rohan to get revenge against the Company of the Ring:

'Not our orders!' said one of the earlier voices. 'We have come all the way from the Mines to kill, and avenge our folk. I wish to kill, and then go back north.'

Grishnakh flees when Ugluk puts down rebellion among the Orcs of the Misty Mountains but he returns with forty or more Uruks of Mordor.

'I left a fool,' snarled Grishnakh. 'But there were some stout fellows with him that are too good to lose. I knew you'd lead them into a mess. I've come to help them.'

His reason for returning may be a lie, but it doesn't seem to be so.

Shagrat and Gorbag appear to be old friends when they are talking in the tunnel of Cirith Ungol:

'...But anyway, if it does go well, there should be a lot more room. What d'you say? -- if we get a chance, you and me'll slip off and set up somewhere on our own with a few trusty lads, somewhere where there's good loot nice and handy, and no big bosses.'

'Ah!' said Shagrat, 'Like old times.'

Of course, it's only a few hours later that Shagrat kills Gorbag, trampling him to death, so sentiments among Orcs don't run very deep. It's both sad and amusing to listen to two Orcs talking about setting up somewhere on their own "with a few trusty lads" so they can be mere brigands again, "like old times."

The Orcs of Isengard demonstrate another kind of sentiment and loyalty: a nationalistic pride. Ugluk and his soldiers are assault troops, elite warriors who are proud to be in Saruman's service and don't care who knows that. Presumably Mauhur and his lads, the Orcs who attacked Eomer's



men from Fangorn forest, were another such group of elite soldiers. Saruman trusted them to handle a special mission, and their fierce adherence to Ugluk in fulfilling that purpose shows they were well-motivated.

In 1958 J.R.R. Tolkien reviewed a preliminary script for a proposed film adaptation of *The Lord of the Rings*. Based on his acerbic response to the script, most fans are pleased that movie was never made. Tolkien wrote a letter to Forrest J. Ackerman in which he provided many corrections and complaints. The one point concerning Orcs has become fixed in Tolkien arcana.

In Letter 210, Tolkien wrote "19. Why does Z put beaks and feathers on Orcs!?" ("Z" stands for Morton Grady Zimmerman, the first person ever to have written a screenplay based on Tolkien's work.)

‘The Orcs,’ Tolkien continues a little further on, ‘are definitely stated to be corruptions of the 'human' forms seen in Elves and Men. They are (or were) squat, broad, flat nosed, sallow-skinned, with wide mouths and slant eyes: in fact degraded and repulsive versions of the (to Europeans) least lovely Mongol-types.’

Much has been made of this citation. Some people have gone so far as to call Tolkien a racist, alleging he was implying the Orcs were to be equated with Asian peoples. He is careful to say, however, that the Orcs were "degraded and repulsive versions" of those Mongol peoples who would be least attractive to European sensibilities. Some people have suggested Tolkien may have been referring to the Huns, who left an indelible mark in the western European psyche. Whether the Orcs are intended to be "degraded and repulsive versions" of Huns is a mystery we cannot resolve, but it is clear that Tolkien felt a Mongoloid base was necessary for Orcish appearance. Not because he equated Asians with evil, or thought them ugly. But because he needed a human model which, when distorted beyond realistic appearance, might appear monstrous and corrupted. In fact, many Asian cultures represent demons and evil gods in a similar fashion. I feel Tolkien's choice was inspired by a broad understanding of mythology, and not by racism.

We know too little of the other "evil" creatures in Tolkien's world to dwell long on any of them. The Orcs are better documented than all the other evil things combined. Trolls are given a lot of credibility as powerful and deadly foes, yet the episode in *THE HOBBIT* with Bert, William, and Tom is very disarming. They come across as a bunch of buffoons. One must wonder why the green-scaled cave troll in Moria was willing to stick its foot through the door in the Chamber of Mazarbul so that Frodo could stab it. Was it in any way as "silly" as Bert or Tom? Probably not.

There were a few other trolls in *THE LORD OF THE RINGS*. Two brought up huge slabs of stone to bridge the fiery chasm for the Orcs in Moria. Pippin appears to have killed a "hill-troll" in the Battle of the Morannon. Trolls were used to break down the gates of Minas Tirith.

The Barrow-wights have intrigued many people. What were they? They were sent by the Witch-king of Angmar to inhabit the barrows of Tyrn Gorthad, the western branch of the South Downs. These spirits apparently worshiped Sauron, who was a master of phantoms even in the First Age. Were they lesser Maiar, corrupted by Melkor, or perhaps other spirits who joined him in Ea?

## Parma Endorion

One also wonders if perhaps the wights weren't Elvish spirits, perhaps Avari or Silvan Elves, trapped by Sauron. Originally, Tolkien had envisioned many Ringwraiths, including Elvish wraiths, while he was writing the book. The Barrow-wights were at that time supposed to be related to the Nazgul in some way. But Tolkien narrowed his definition of Ringwraiths, restricting the number of the Great Rings of Power to just twenty. The wights could not themselves be Ringwraiths, and perhaps they were not Elvish spirits at all.

The Wargs of the Vales of Anduin have elicited much comment among Tolkien readers as well. These were intelligent, evil wolves. They sided willingly with the Orcs and could communicate with them. One might wonder if perhaps they were descendants of Draugluin and his brood of First Age "Were-wolves". Draugluin and many werewolves were slain by Huan when Luthien and the Hound of Valinor rescued Beren from Tol Sirion, where Sauron was stationed by Melkor after the Dagor Bragollach. Were all the were-wolves slain there?

Carcharoth was said to be one of Draugluin's descendants, and he lived in Angband, not Tol Sirion. So it seems plausible that other werewolves or wolves survived the First Age, and that these may have been the ancestors of the Wargs.

Tolkien mentions five dragons in his stories, naming four of them: Glaurung, Father of Dragons; Ancalagon the Black; Scatha the Worm; Smaug; and a cold-drake who killed Dain I and his son Fror of Durin's line. Of course there were other dragons, but we only know that they lived and fought in the War of Wrath or troubled the Dwarves on occasion.

In fact, the Dragons of the north "multiplied, and they made war on the Dwarves, and plundered their works." One might form the impression that there was some purpose moving the dragons, and it may be that during this time (Third Age 2035-2589) the Dwarven Rings of Power were consumed by the Dragons, or recovered by Sauron.

The Balrogs were Melkor's greatest servants after Sauron. They were spirits of fire, corrupted by Melkor early in his struggles with the other Valar. Tolkien decided there were no more than seven, and presumably Gothmog, Lord of Balrogs, was one of the seven. We know that Gothmog and one other Balrog were slain when Gondolin fell, so there must have been only five left to fight in the War of Wrath.

Of those five, one at least survived, for it fled to the Misty Mountains and hid there until it was awakened by the Dwarves in the Third Age. Then it assumed control of Khazad-dum. What became of the other four Balrogs? Did they "die" in the War of Wrath? Did a Balrog possess the strength of will to reform itself after its body had been destroyed? How weakened would such reformed creatures have been? Would they have been subservient to Sauron?

The Watcher in the Water, which lived in the lake that had been formed outside the West-gate of Moria, was another strange creature. Was it one of Melkor's ancient monsters that eluded Oromë's hunters, or was it perhaps some corrupted Maia in a hideous shape of its own devising?

The Watcher could not have been in the lake for very long, nor even could the lake have been there for very long. Aragorn had passed through Moria some years before the Company of the Ring did and he had not encountered either the lake or the Watcher.

One might also wonder what ever happened to Thuringwethil. She was Sauron's messenger in the First Age, and she most often took shape as a bat. Apparently she was one of Melkor's corrupted Maiar. Did she perish in the War of Wrath? Did she survive to become some terror in a later age?

And then there are the giant spiders. These things apparently lived in a lot of places, not just Mirkwood and Nan Dungortheb. Shelob was said to be the last child of Ungoliant, but was she necessarily the southernmost giant spider? Where did the giant spiders of Mirkwood come from, since they were not there during the Second Age? Sauron must have discovered a breeding ground for them in some distant land, perhaps in the far north or in the east.

## Chapter 6: A Little Bit Of Hobbit Lore

It is difficult to find many obscurities concerning hobbits. They have been studied, catalogued, and discussed incessantly ever since *THE HOBBIT* first appeared in print. Robert Foster's *THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO MIDDLE-EARTH* probably gives the most facts concerning hobbits of any reference work published to date. But here are a few tidbits I've gleaned from Tolkien's works.

### Where did Hobbits come from?

Tolkien gives us a concise history of the Hobbits in the Prologue to *THE LORD OF THE RINGS*, where he writes that their beginnings "lie far back in the Elder Days". He tells us the Hobbits themselves had all but forgotten their earliest legends by the end of the Third Age, and that they only recalled having left the Vales of Anduin when a Shadow fell on Greenwood the Great.

The Elder Days were sometimes applied to the First Age of the Sun and the ages preceding it because those were the periods when the Elves (the Elder Children of Iluvatar) were the dominant creatures in Middle-earth. But Tolkien also wrote that "Elder Days" properly applied to the first three Ages of the Sun. What then did he mean when he was speaking of the Hobbits' origins?

I think he had in mind a sort of dual meaning. In speaking of their origins, he meant that Hobbits had become a distinct group sometime in the First Age, but his references to their earliest legends were only to legends of the Third Age, because all previous legends had been forgotten.

In a very lengthy letter to Milton Waldman which Humphrey Carpenter suggests was written late in 1951, Tolkien says this about Hobbits:

In the middle of this [the Third] Age hobbits appear. Their origin is unknown (even to themselves) † for they escaped the notice of the great, or the civilised peoples with records, and kept none themselves, save oral traditions, until they had migrated from the borders of Mirkwood, fleeing from the Shadow, and wandered westward, coming into contact with the last remnants of the Kingdom of Arnor.

† The Hobbits are, of course, really meant to be a branch of the specifically human race (not Elves or Dwarves) -- hence the two kinds can dwell together (as at Bree), and are called just the Big Folk and Little Folk...

So Hobbits are human. They are Men. That means their ancestors awoke in Hildorien, and they participated in the Great Fall of Man, from which the Edain and a few other peoples fled early in the First Age. It would seem that the Hobbits themselves fled that darkness, but they may have taken a more northerly path and found themselves following part of the path of the Great Journey undertaken by the Eldar many ages previously.

It's interesting to look for parallels between the Hobbits and the Elves. The Hobbits, like the Elves, were divided into three kindreds: the Fallohides, Harfoots, and Stoors. The Fallohides, the more adventurous hobbits, were friendly with the Elves and could in some ways be equated with the Vanyar. Yet the most numerous Hobbits were the Harfoots, who abhorred water (whereas the Lindar/Teleri, the most numerous Elves, loved water). The Stoors were the water-loving Hobbits and they also got along better with the Dwarves than others, whereas the Harfoots got along better with Men. So there are really few parallels between Hobbits and Elves.

But can we infer something about the Hobbits' ancient roots from their "historical" associations? Perhaps. For instance, they probably at first entered Greenwood the Great from the southeast. The Fallohides could there have been the leaders of the migration, and would have encountered the Nandor and Avari who were becoming the Silvan Elves. The forest itself was not then evil so the Hobbits might have felt quite safe living there, and they probably had little to do with the Elves.

When Oropher of Doriath established his kingdom in southern Greenwood it might have been time for the Hobbits to move on, or perhaps they continued to dwell close by the Silvan Elves until Oropher started moving his people north. Then the Hobbits would have had to move as well. Perhaps by the middle of the Second Age the Stoors were living close to the Anduin.

The Harfoots might originally not have been intimidated by water, but they may have suffered some great disaster that left them shaken enough to pass on a fear of water to later generations. They would have had to cross Anduin by the ancient Dwarf-bridge that existed in the Second Age north of the Gladden River. This guess implies the Harfoots may have been the most northern branch of the Hobbits, which seems to coincide with what Tolkien says about their entry points into Eriador in the Third Age.

The time of the Hobbits' arrival in what came to be called Rhovanion is a mystery. However, THE PEOPLES OF MIDDLE-EARTH tells us something about the history and cultures of the region known as Rhovanion in the Third Age. Edainic peoples had lived there since the First Age, and they in many places developed a close relationship with the Dwarves of Durin's Folk. In time some of the Edain also came to develop a relationship with the Hobbits, living in joint communities or close by one another much as the Hobbits and Men of Bree did in the Third Age.

The most critical information to be gleaned from THE PEOPLES OF MIDDLE-EARTH is that Hobbits were not present among the Edainic communities prior to the War of the Elves and Sauron. The Edainic civilization was destroyed, and it would be many centuries before these peoples recovered. Hence, the Hobbits must have arrived sometime after the war. Perhaps the war itself stirred them up and caused the migration.

There are no ancient records from the Edain of the Second Age. Hence, the only mention of Hobbits among any northern people is what Theoden alludes to when he meets Merry and Pippin. His people, being descended of the Eöthëod, survivors of the ancient Kingdom of Rhovanion, remembered some of the lore their fathers had brought out of the north. Before settling in the distant north, the Eöthëod lived for over a hundred years near the Gladden River at a time when clans of Stoors still dwelt there. This is probably the source of Theoden's lore about the "Hole-builders".

Because the Host of the Last Alliance of Elves and Men marched south along the Anduin, one should expect Tolkien to have at least dropped in a casual mention of an encounter between the Hobbits and the Last Alliance if the Hobbits were living there. But there is no such reference. So it may be that placing the Hobbits in Greenwood the Great and the Vales of Anduin during the Second Age is incorrect.

If so, they would have had to enter Greenwood before Sauron settled on Amon Lanc, but how long could they have lived in the forest? Also, the ancient Dwarf bridge had become a ford by the time Gil-galad and Elendil led their armies through the Vales, so how would the Harfoots have crossed the river? Could they perhaps have suffered a disastrous crossing in the Third Age?

Thranduil's people were living in the Eryn Duir for the first 1000 years of the Third Age. The ancient Dwarf-road ran straight past their lands to some obscure point on the Celduin. Perhaps the Hobbits came up the Celduin from the Sea of Rhun, passed through Greenwood by the Old Forest Road (the Men-i-Naugrim), and managed to find a way across the river at the Old Ford. The Fallohides might thus have been the last group on the "march", and would have stayed in the forest.

Either way, the Fallohides appear to be the group who started the migration which brought the Hobbits over the Hithaeglir. Tolkien writes that Men were increasing in number and that a Shadow fell on the forest, so the Fallohides must have crossed the Anduin and settled among the Harfoots, who became concerned about the evil taking shape in Greenwood and crossed the mountains. It may be that memories of the War of the Last Alliance existed among the Hobbits, either drawn from ancient experience or from exchanging tales with Men and Elves in Rhovanion.

But what is certain is that the Stoors were the most southern branch of the Hobbits, and they probably had developed a trading relationship with the Dwarves of Khazad-dum before crossing the Redhorn Pass. The Harfoots and Fallohides may have been familiar to the Woodmen and the Elves of Thranduil's realm.

## **What happened To Smeagol's people?**

We can only speculate, but in UNFINISHED TALES Tolkien writes that the Stoors of the Gladden Fields may have fled north late in the Third Age. There is no mention of other Hobbits when Bilbo passes through the Vales of Anduin, but at the time Tolkien wrote THE HOBBIT he had not envisioned the Stoors of the Gladden Fields (and in fact may not have quite known what Gollum was).

Hobbits were not easy to kill. They would either fight back against their enemies or move away, so the Stoors may have just picked up and moved on. They were close to Lorien and Moria, and when Sauron began to settle Orcs in the mountains, the Stoors might have decided to find another home somewhere farther north. This would have happened in the Twenty-sixth Century, a few generations after Smeagol left his people.

We know that there were no longer Stoors living near the Gladden River by 2851, when Saruman started searching in the region for the One Ring. So, sometime between 2463 (when Smeagol killed his cousin Deagol) and 2851 the Stoors of the Gladden Fields either moved away or died out. It is possible they perished or fled in the Long Winter of 2758-9

## **How did Hobbits go to sea?**

Tolkien wrote that some of the more adventurous Hobbits of the Shire would occasionally take off, sometimes never to return. Where did they go and how did they get there? The Tookes were infamous for succumbing to this wanderlust, and one Isengar Took, youngest son of Gerontius the Old Took, was said to have gone to sea in his younger days.

Isengar lived from SR 1262 to 1360. In the Stewards' Reckoning that would be the years 2862 to 2960.

Could the Hobbits have visited Mithlond? Possibly. The Shire was actually overrun by the Kingdom of Angmar during the last war in Eriador in TA 1974. Many people of Arnor fled across the Lhun to take refuge in Lindon. The Hobbits are said to have fled into hiding. Perhaps some of them wandered into the Elvish lands. It would have been possible for a Hobbit to walk from the Shire to Harlond, the southern haven of Lindon. It seems remotely possible that Isengar took ship with some of Cirdan's mariners, either from Mithlond or from Harlond (if Harlond was still being used).

It may also be that ships from Gondor occasionally visited Lindon even in the late centuries of the Third Age. Isengar could, in theory, have gone aboard a Dunadan ship and seen the world, though he may never have set foot in Gondor itself (which supposedly never saw a Halfling before Peregrin Took showed up on the back of Shadowfax). Another possibility is that Isengar made his way to Tharbad. The city (probably no more than just a town by his day) still existed and had once been a port for the Dunedain of Arnor and Gondor. He could have taken a boat or ship from Tharbad and gone down to the coast lands, where fisher-folk lived (more-or-less Druedain). Isengar's sea voyage might have been nothing more than a boat-ride along the coast, a rather inglorious type of travel to us, but still a bit of an adventure to a Hobbit.

It is also possible that some of the northern Dunedain lived along and kept boats on the Lhun river. They might have taken a Hobbit to sea on occasion, but Tolkien never wrote about any sea-faring Dunedain of Arnor in the Third Age.

## **Chapter 7: Things You Might Not Have Known About The Northmen**

### **The Anglo-Saxon Myth**

In Appendix F to THE LORD OF THE RINGS Tolkien writes:

Having gone so far in my attempt to modernize and make familiar the language and names of Hobbits, I found myself involved in a further process. The Mannish languages that were related to the Westron should, it seemed to me, be turned into forms related to English. The language of Rohan I have accordingly made to resemble ancient English, since it was related both (more distantly) to the Common Speech, and (very closely) to the former tongue of the northern Hobbits, and was in comparison with the Westron archaic.

...a few personal names have also been modernized, as Shadowfax and Wormtongue[1].

[1]This linguistic procedure does not imply that the Rohirrim closely resembled the ancient English otherwise, in culture or art, in weapons or modes of warfare, except in a general way due to their circumstances: a simpler and more primitive people living in contact with a higher and more venerable culture, and occupying lands that had once been part of its domain.

Despite this admonition from the author himself, many people choose to believe that the Rohirrim were indeed modeled closely upon the Anglo-Saxons. I am unlikely to persuade the hardened heart that this view might be erroneous, but I present below some observations about the Anglo-Saxons and the Rohirrim.

### **Why did Tolkien use Old English to represent the language of Rohan?**

Perhaps the most commonly cited argument for ignoring the author's warning against identifying the Rohirrim with the Anglo-Saxons is the fact that he used Old English to represent their language.

Christopher Tolkien published some of his father's loose notes concerning the geography and background of Middle-earth in THE TREASON OF ISENGARD. Of languages, J.R.R. Tolkien wrote:

Language of Shire = modern English

Language of Dale = Norse (used by Dwarves of that region)

Language of Rohan = Old English

'Modern English' is lingua franca spoken by all people, (except a few secluded folk, like Lorien) - but little and ill by Orcs



In UNFINISHED TALES Christopher Tolkien writes:

"It is an interesting fact, not referred to I believe in any of my father's writings, that the names of the early kings and princes of the Northmen and the Éothëod are Gothic in form, not Old English (Anglo-Saxon) as in the case of Leod, Eorl, and the later Rohirrim.

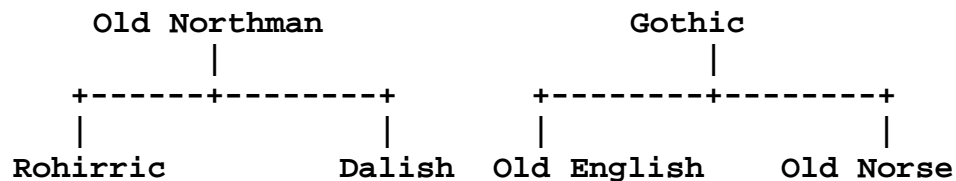
Vidugavia is Latinized in spelling, representing Gothic Widugauja ('wood-dweller'), a recorded Gothic name, and similarly Vidumavi Gothic Widumawi ('wood-maiden').

....Since, as is explained in Appendix F(II), the language of the Rohirrim was 'made to resemble ancient English', the names of the ancestors of the Rohirrim are cast into the forms of the earliest recorded Germanic language.

"Old English" actually consisted of various dialects of an older language that was spoken by many tribes in northern Europe. Partly because of their isolation in the British Isles, and partly because of a unique mixture of influences, the dialects of the Anglo-Saxons diverged from the "main tree", so to speak. This divergence was gradual from the 5th Century up until the 11th Century, when the Norman Conquest introduced French into the upper echelons of English society.

Concurrent with the divergence of Old English was the development of Old Norse, which began with a "phonetic shift" that occurred over a period of about two centuries, typically given as the Seventh and Eighth Centuries, so that by the time the Vikings (Danes) started settling in England in the Ninth Century, their language was changed enough to be "different" from Old English (and other German dialects on the Continent).

Tolkien used this concurrency of Old English and Old Norse to imply a concurrency between Rohirric and Dalish, with both deriving from the more ancient language which he chose to represent with Gothic:



This linguistic device works well for native English speakers because Old English still sounds enough like modern English in some respects that we can feel more comfortable with the language of Rohan than we do with the names of the Dwarves (and the Kings of Dale: Girion, Bard, Bain, Brand). The Dalish sounds "foreign", whereas the Rohirric sounds "archaic", and this effect underscores the distance between the Rohirrim and the Men of Dale.

In fact, because the hobbits of the Shire still had a few words in common with Rohan, the language of Dale needed to be more "distant" from their perspective. Thus modern English and Old English were excellent choices for representing the various relationships between all the languages.

Hence, Tolkien's use of Old English to represent the language of the Rohirrim does not in any way favor the refutation of his admonition not to identify the Rohirrim with any particular tribe or nation.

## **But what about "Beowulf?"**

### **Didn't Tolkien use material from the classic Anglo-Saxon poem?**

"Beowulf" had an unmistakable influence on Tolkien's work, and other Anglo-Saxon literature also influenced him. He was, after all, a philologist specializing in the study of Anglo-Saxon, though he was also quite knowledgeable in other languages.

But though "Beowulf" survived in an Anglo-Saxon manuscript, it is a common mistake for people to think that it somehow represents an Anglo-Saxon culture or world-view. The poem is thought to have been composed sometime in the 8th Century (700s) when the Angles and Saxons still had close ties with Continental Germans. It was very common for the skalds to travel from land-to-land, telling the same stories and poems to audiences in many regions of the north.

The story of "Beowulf" unfolds in Scandinavia and it concerns the Danes and Geats (a people of southern Sweden). There are in fact some historical names intermixed with the fictional characters. Many people have commented on the resemblance of Theoden's hall in Edoras to Heorot, the great hall of Hrothgar in "Beowulf". But Heorot was merely a typical northern hall. Such structures were built by the Scandinavians and Germans, and not just the Anglo-Saxons. There is nothing peculiar to the Anglo-Saxons in either Heorot or Theoden's hall.

Another popular element people point to is the similarity of Eowyn's cup-giving to the "Anglo-Saxon Cup Ceremony". But the Cup-giving was a custom among all the German and Scandinavian tribes, and even among many Celtic peoples. Highly ornamental drinking cups, horns, and cauldrons have been found throughout Europe. In fact, the Cup-giving was so well-known that one gruesome legend tells us that the King of the Lombards forced the daughter of the last King of the Gepids to marry him after the Lombards conquered the Gepids. He forced the princess to drink from a gilded cup made from her father's skull.

"Beowulf" was undoubtedly a classic tale that was heard in many ancient halls throughout the northern world. It would have been recognized in many lands and so represents a "northern European" culture, rather than an Anglo-Saxon one. Therefore any elements that Tolkien borrowed from Beowulf and other "Anglo-Saxon" poems like "Widsith" and "Deor" were pretty generic in cultural terms.

## **Okay, but were The Rohirrim unlike the Anglo-Saxons in any Significant way?**

Absolutely.

Tolkien went to great pains to detail the culture of Rohan. It would be impossible, had he intended to make them look like Anglo-Saxons, for us to find significant differences between the Rohirrim and the Anglo-Saxon people. But there are significant differences.

For one thing, the Saxons were a seafaring people. The Rohirrim never used ships of any sort. They undoubtedly had some knowledge of boats, but Tolkien's Northmen are not pirates in any phase of their history, whereas the Saxons first entered history as pirates, and they did not lose their seafaring abilities.

The Rohirrim also differed from the Anglo-Saxons in that they were not several tribes drawn together. When we speak of the Anglo-Saxons we really are referring to many groups of Saxons and Angles, as well as the Jutes and some Frisians. The Saxons were a West German people, related to the Franks, but the Angles and probably the Jutes came from Jutland -- they were essentially Danes.

In fact, the Danelaw, the region of England that was colonized by the Danish Vikings in the 9th and 10th Centuries, overlapped with almost all of the ancient lands of the Angles.

There are no tribal divisions among the Rohirrim. Nor was Rohan ever divided into many kingdoms. And the government of Rohan seems to be centered on a stronger monarchy than the Anglo-Saxons were ever able to establish. In fact, the nearest parallel in Rohan to the great English Earls would be the Lords of Westfold, of whom Erkenbrand was the one living at the time of the War of the Ring. Yet he was not only intensely loyal to Theoden, he apparently was much more under the King's authority than many of the English earls were.

Of course, the Rohirrim developed their entire culture around the use and breeding of horses. They raised other animals (Eomer makes reference to herds and flocks, so they seem also to have raised sheep and perhaps cattle). But the horse was the center of the Rohirric culture. There was no similar society among the Anglo-Saxons.

The Rohirrim lived in the mountains, too. The Anglo-Saxons were not a particularly mountainous folk. All of the Rohirric towns and villages were situated in the great valleys, and their refuges were hard to reach. The Anglo-Saxons lived in the lowlands and between the forests.

The armaments of the Riders of Rohan were also pretty generic. The best description Tolkien provides of these professional warriors is given in *THE TWO TOWERS*, when Aragorn, Gimli, and Legolas first see Eomer's eored (company) approaching them:



The Riders of Rohan  
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Now the cries of clear strong voices came ringing over the fields. Suddenly they swept up with a noise like thunder, and the foremost horseman swerved, passing by the foot of the hill, and leading the host back southward along the western skirts of the downs. After him they rode: a long line of mail-clad men, swift, shining, fell and fair to look upon.

Their horses were of great stature, strong and clean-limbed; their grey coats glistened, their long tails flowed in the wind, their manes were braided on their proud necks. The Men that rode them matched them well: tall and long-limbed; their hair, flaxen-pale, flowed under their light helmets, and streamed in long braids behind them; their faces were stern and keen. In their hands were tall spears of ash, painted shields were slung at their backs, long swords were at their belts, their burnished shirts of mail hung down upon their knees.

These are not Anglo-Saxon warriors. They resemble Goths in several ways, and also sound a bit like Vikings. But their armaments were not atypical for Riders of Rohan. The Rohirrim held a formal muster and Theoden expected some twelve thousand Riders to assemble (or, rather, said he could have assembled that many if there had not already been battles in Rohan by the time Hirgon, the Errand-rider of Denethor, arrived with the Red Arrow of summons).

As for the armaments of Anglo-Saxons, Malcom Todd, a Professor of Archaeology at the University of Exeter, wrote this in his book, EVERYDAY LIFE OF THE BARBARIANS:

The sword played a relatively minor role in Germanic warfare before the late Roman period, and even after that time it hardly ranked as the weapon of the common man. Centuries were to elapse before fine Frankish blades were to be highly prized by Viking soldiers....The one-edged slashing weapons of the pre-Roman Iron Age were gradually replaced by two-edged swords, but the introduction of this more versatile weapon was not accompanied by any significant increase in the number of sword-bearing warriors.

Further on he writes:

It is remarkable that despite fairly frequent contact with Roman frontier armies, and despite endemic intertribal disputes and private feuds, no great advances were made in armour and arms, with the exception of sword-blades, during the Imperial centuries. Even as late as the sixth century [500s], the war-gear of the Germans could be unfavourably commented upon.

And:

The Anglo-Saxons Closest of all the Teutonic peoples to the Franks in weapons and tactics were the Anglo-Saxon settlers in southern England. It has already been noted that, like the Franks and the rest, their use of cavalry was negligible. The offensive weapon of the rank and file was the spear, of which several types are documented, that with a long leaf- or lozenge-shaped head being the best known. These spear-heads commonly measure between 10 inches [about 250 mm] and 18 inches [about 450 mm] in length. The sax was frequently carried by the fifth- and sixth-century warrior, in Anglo-Saxon England as well as in Frankish Gaul, and was closely, almost mystically, associated with the Saxon name and race....Body-armour is ill-attested, except for the leading warriors. Helmets are even more rarely mentioned in Anglo-Saxon law than in Frankish, and only three specimens have been recorded -- all from princely graves. Leather caps may have protected lesser heads, but probably not many. The shield might be oval or rectangular....

Finally, concerning the use of bows (which Eomer's men used against the Orcs and which many of the Rohirrim at the Hornburg used), Todd writes:

The bow and arrow, exotic in Merovingian Gaul and Anglo-Saxon England, was more widely used by other Germans. The Alamanni used a simple D-shaped one-piece bow, and, very rarely, a bow composed of several different materials. Bone or horn was usually combined with wood in these composite bows.

In the late Roman period the long-bow put in an appearance in the north. From which part of Europe this weapon was introduced is unknown but it was not from either the Roman Empire or from the nomadic peoples. Probably this was something the Germans developed for themselves. The fact that about 40 long-bows and several bundles of arrows were present in the Nydam deposit suggests that small units of bowmen may have been used in the later fourth century specifically against armoured Roman troops. Some of the Nydam arrowheads are narrow and heavy, and thus well suited to piercing body-armour.

In UNFINISHED TALES Christopher Tolkien reveals too many details concerning the Riders and the Muster of Rohan to repeat here. It was not, however, a feudal army of either the French or the English design. The Army of Rohan was unlike any army fielded by the Anglo-Saxons, who used local levies called fyrds to reinforce the main (royal) forces. There were, to be sure, "local levies" in Rohan, but these were raised only in great need. The Muster of Rohan, divided into three smaller groups, was expected to defend the country.

## What About The Burial Mounds outside Edoras?

There was nothing particularly "Germanic" about the funeral mounds of the House of Eorl, let alone of an "Anglo-Saxon" nature. Although the Anglo-Saxons built similar mounds, so did the Scandinavians (many have been excavated at Uppsala in Sweden, and in Denmark), and so did other Germans, and so did the Celts. In fact, the wagon-burial of Theoden appears to be based on archaeological finds of Celtic wagon-burials from the First Millennium BC.

Many comparisons have been made between the Ship-Burial of Sutton Hoo and Theoden's burial. There are several problems with such a comparison. For one, Sutton Hoo was first excavated late in the 1930s just before World War II broke out. Although Tolkien wrote the passage describing Theoden's burial several years later, there is no mention in his letters or in *THE HISTORY OF MIDDLE-EARTH* of any connection between the two. The excavation was thorough but left many unanswered questions, and Tolkien does not seem to have been interested in those questions (long since answered by subsequent scholarship).

The lack of a ship in Theoden's mound doesn't seem to bother many people since, after all, many ship-burials were only symbolically linked with ships by shaping the mounds into ship contours. But Theoden's mound isn't so shaped. Although I have called it a "wagon-burial", Tolkien does not state specifically that Theoden's wain was interred in the mound with him. The mound was raised about a house of stone, which itself is not typical of ship-burials, but does resemble some wagon-burials (most of which were placed in wooden houses).

I should also note here that many people also overlook the significance of what Tolkien wrote in the note I cited above: "a simpler and more primitive people living in contact with a higher and more venerable culture, and occupying lands that had once been part of its domain." At what point in their history did the Anglo-Saxons fit this general description? The Fifth Century AD, when there was still a Roman Empire and the lands they were occupying in Britain were formerly part of that empire. There is certainly a great deal more contact between the Rohirrim and Gondor than there was between the Anglo-Saxons and Rome, but they were able to observe what survived of Roman culture through their neighbors the Celts and Franks. Some people argue that the Rohirrim are like the Anglo-Saxons of the late period, and there are greater similarities between these two peoples. But culturally the late Anglo-Saxons were no longer on the periphery of a great civilization, and Tolkien only reluctantly agreed to such a comparison when asked if the Rohirrim resembled the warriors in the Bayeux Tapestry (which depicts how William of Normandy conquered England):

I have no doubt that in the area envisaged by my story (which is large) the 'dress' of various peoples, Men and others, was much diversified in the Third Age, according to climate, and inherited custom. As was our world, even if we only consider Europe and the Mediterranean and the very near 'East' (or South), before the victory in our time of the least lovely style of dress (especially for males and 'neuters') which recorded history reveals -- a victory that is still going on, even among those who most hate the lands of its origin. The Rohirrim were not 'mediaeval', in our sense. The styles of the Bayeux Tapestry (made in England) fit them well enough, if one remembers that the kind of tennis-nets [the] soldiers seem to have on are only a clumsy conventional sign for chain-mail of small rings.

Mail was an ancient armorial tradition, having been developed in the southern Mediterranean region around the Third Century BC. Germanic warriors who served in the Roman Empire, including the Goths, wore such armor and the styles of the Rohirrim need not wait for the Eleventh Century AD to find precedence in history.

So, in conclusion, there was very little similarity between the Rohirrim and the historical Anglo-Saxons with which Tolkien was so familiar. The Rohirrim were idealized Northmen, a romantic people intended to convey the best traditions from myth, legend, and history of a northern people who were no better and no worse than other men.

NOTE: Tom Shippey, in *THE ROAD TO MIDDLE-EARTH*, argued that Tolkien really did base the Rohirrim on the Anglo-Saxons:

This led him, indeed, into yet further inconsistencies, or rather disingenuousnesses. Tolkien was obliged to pretend to be a 'translator'. He developed the pose with predictable rigour, feigning not only a text to translate but behind it a whole manuscript tradition, from Bilbo's diary to the Red Book of Westmarch to the Thain's Book of Minas Tirith to the copy of the scribe Findegil. As time went on he also felt obliged to stress the autonomy of Middle-earth -- the fact that he was only translating analogously, not writing down the names and places as they really had been, etc. Thus of the Riddermark and its relation to Old English he said eventually 'This linguistic procedure [i.e. translating Rohirric into Old English] does not imply that the Rohirrim closely resembled the ancient English otherwise, in culture or art, in weapons or modes of warfare, except in a general way due to their circumstances...' (III, 414).

But this claim is totally untrue. With one admitted exception, the Riders of Rohan resemble the Anglo-Saxons down to minute details. The fact is that the ancient languages came first. Tolkien did not draw them into a fiction he had already written because there they might be useful, though that is what he pretended. He wrote the fiction to present the languages, and he did that because he loved them and thought them intrinsically beautiful. Maps, names and languages came before plot. Elaborating them was in a sense Tolkien's way of building up enough steam to get rolling; but they had also in a sense provided the motive to want to. They were 'inspiration' and 'invention' at once, or perhaps more accurately, by turns.

Professor Shippey should know better. In fact, as I have shown above, there is no distinct reference to the Anglo-Saxons in Rohirric culture. That is, virtually nothing which is uniquely an Anglo-Saxon custom or trait is to be found in the Rohirrim. Numerous elements in Tolkien's depiction of the Rohirrim are far more easily identifiable with other peoples, including the Goths and Scandinavians (both of whose literature Tolkien studied extensively and knew intimately, a fact Professor Shippey does not concede in his elaborate argument):

Thus 'Rohan' is only the Gondorian word for the Riders' country' they themselves call it 'the Mark'. Now there is no English county called 'the Mark', but the Anglo-Saxon kingdom which included both Tolkiens' home-town Birmingham and his alma mater Oxford was 'Mercia' - a Latinism now adopted by historians mainly because the native term was never recorded. However the West Saxons called their neighbours the Mierce, clearly a derivation (by 'i-mutation') from Mearc; the 'Mercians' own pronunciation of that would certainly have been the 'Mark', and that was no doubt once the everyday term for central England. As for the 'white horse on the green field' which is the emblem of the Mark, you can see it cut into the chalk fifteen miles from

Tolkien's study, two miles from 'Wayland's Smithy' and just about on the borders of 'Merica' and Wessex, as if to mark the kingdom's end. All the Riders' names and language are Old English, as many have noted;\*but they were homely to Tolkien in an even deeper sense than that.

Professor Shippey should not rely upon such a flimsy argument. "Mark" comes from a very common ancient Germanic word which survived on the continent. "Mark" means "march", or borderland. The Mercians were a border folk, living between the other Angles and Saxons and the Welsh (the "foreigners", the remaining Celts who had been driven to the western regions of Britain by the invading Germans). Tolkien's use of the word "Mark" for the Rohirrim's own designation of their country is a clear extension of the ancient Germanic custom for using this term of a border region. The titles of nobility such as Margrave, Markgraf, and Marquess all retain the "mark-" element, referring to a March Count, a borderland count. A count was originally a military officer appointed by a king to defend a region of the country, and the title was derived from Roman tradition (as in the Count of the Saxon Shore, a military office charged with defending southern Britain against sea borne Saxon raids):

As has already been remarked, though, the Riders according to Tolkien did not resemble the 'ancient English...except in a general way due to their circumstances: a simpler and more primitive people living in contact with a higher and more venerable culture, and occupying lands that had once been part of its domain'. Tolkien was stretching the truth a long way in asserting that, to say the least! But there is one obvious difference between the people of Rohan and the 'ancient English', and that is horses. The Rohirrim call themselves the Eotheid (Old English eoh='horse'+peod='people'); this translates into Common Speech as 'the Riders'; Rohan itself is Sindarin for 'horse-country'. Prominent Riders call themselves after horses (Eomund, Eomer, Eowyn), and their most important title after 'King' is 'marshal', borrowed into English from French but going back to an unrecorded Germanic \*marho-skalkoz, 'horse-servant' (and cp. the name of the hobbits' Hengest). The Rohirrim are nothing if not cavalry. By contrast the Anglo-Saxons' reluctance to have anything militarily to do with horses is notorious. The Battle of Maldon begins, significantly enough, with the horses being sent to the rear. Hastings was lost, along with Anglo-Saxon independence, largely because the English heavy infantry could not (quite) hold off the combination of archers and mounted knights. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle entry for 1055 remarks sourly that at Hereford 'before a spear was thrown the English fled, because they had been made to fight on horseback'. How then can Anglo-Saxons and Rohirrim ever, culturally, be equated?

First of all, the Rohirrim did NOT call themselves "Eotheid". That was what their ancestors were called. In a linguistic analysis Professor Shippey's word is virtually untouchable, but the historical framework he provides for the Rohirrim is questionable. The Rohirrim called themselves the Eorlingas, the "sons of Eorl" (a common Saxon custom, which survived in both the Continent and England):



A part of the answer is that the Rohirrim are not to be equated with the Anglo-Saxons of history, but with those of poetry, or legend. The chapter 'The King of the Golden Hall' is straightforwardly calqued on Beowulf. When Legolas says of Meduseld, 'The light of it shines far over the land', he is translating line 311 of Beowulf, *lixe se leoma ofer landa fela*. 'Meduseld' is indeed a Beowulfian word (line 3065) for 'hall'. More importantly the poem and the chapter agree, down to minute detail, on the procedure for approaching kings. In Beowulf the hero is stopped first by a coastguard, then by a doorward, and only after two challenges is allowed to approach the Danish King; he and his men have to 'pile arms' outside as well. Tolkien follows this dignified, step-by-step ceremonial progress exactly.

Tolkien's "step-by-step" adherence to "Beowulf's" actions is also questionable. Professor Shippey skips over the fact that Beowulf and his men were first hailed by a lone sentinel watching the coastline of Denmark. Meduseld certainly owes something to Heorot, a Danish hall which is an idealized vision of all the halls of the northern world. Professor Shippey would have the reader believe only the Anglo-Saxons built such dwellings for their chiefs and kings, but in fact all the Germanic and Celtic peoples had such long-house style halls for their leaders. So there is nothing Anglo-Saxon about the fact of the hall. And the story of "Beowulf", though recorded in Anglo-Saxon, is not about Anglo-Saxons -- it's about Germanic warriors in a Germanic world. The Anglo-Saxons did not think of themselves as distinct from other Germanic peoples, not in that way. This is a purely modern contrivance, and one which has conveniently lent itself to the absurd arguments favoring the erroneous Anglo-Saxon identification of the Rohirrim.

And as for the "ceremony of piling arms", it was the custom throughout all the ancient world for strangers to give up their arms when entering the presence of a king or chieftain. "Beowulf" is hardly presenting anything unique in this respect. This argument improperly implies the custom was unique to the Anglo-Saxons:

Thus in 'The King of the Golden Hall' Gandalf, Aragorn, Legolas and Gimli are checked first by the guards at the gates of Edoras (= 'enclosure'), and then by the doorward of Meduseld, Hama. He too insists on the ceremony of piling arms, though Tolkien's character object more than Beowulf does, largely because he is a volunteer and in any case fights by choice bare-handed. There is a crisis over Gandalf's staff, indeed, and Hama broods, reflecting rightly that 'The staff in the hands of a wizard may be more than a prop for age'; he settles his doubts with the maxim 'Yet in doubt a man of worth will trust to his own wisdom. I believe you are friends and folk of honour, who have no evil purpose. You may go in.' In saying so he echoes the maxim of the coastguard of Beowulf (lines 287-92), 'a sharp shield-warrior must know how to tell good from bad in every case, from words as well as deeds. I hear [from your words] that this warband is friendly...I will guide you.'

On the other hand, one charged with the defense of a nation does not permit an armed warband to wander through the lands unwarded. Again, a very common practice is unreasonably equated to an extremely different situation in THE LORD OF THE RINGS. Beowulf and his men outnumbered the coast guardsman. He had no choice but to accompany them to Heorot. Gandalf and his companions were, on the other hand, not accosted as they entered the country of Rohan, but were admitted to the king's city and processed according to the needs of the king's defense. The scenarios are so blatantly different that this comparison is quite misleading:

The point is not, though, that Tolkien is once more writing a 'calqued' narrative, but that he is taking advantage of a modern expansive style to spell out things that would have been obvious to Anglo-Saxons -- in particular, the truths that freedom is not a prerogative of democracies, and that in free societies orders give way to discretion. Hama takes a risk with Gandalf; so does the coastguard with Beowulf. So does Eomer with Aragorn, letting him go free and lending him horses. He is under arrest when Aragorn re-appears, and Theoden notes Hama's dereliction of duty too. Still, the nice thing about the Riders, one might say, is that though 'a stern people, loyal to their lord', they wear duty and loyalty lightly. Hama and Eomer make their own decisions, and even the suspicious gate-ward wishes Gandalf luck. 'I was only obeying orders', we can see, would not be accepted as an excuse in the Riddermark. Nor would it in Beowulf. The wisdom of ancient epic is translated by Tolkien into a whole sequence of doubts, decisions, sayings, rituals.

Perhaps the wisdom of ancient epic was indeed being translated by Tolkien, but he relied upon more than one epic source, and his roots lie farther back than "Beowulf":

One could go further and say that the Riders spring from poetry not history in that the whole of their culture is based on song. Almost the first thing Gandalf and the others see, nearing Meduseld, are the mounds covered in simbelmyne either side of the way. Simbelmyne is a little white flower, but also means 'ever- mind', 'ever-memory', 'forget-me-not'. Like the barrows it stands for the preservation of the memory of ancient deeds and heroes in the expanse of years. The Riders are fascinated by memorial verse and oblivion, by deaths and by epitaphs. They show it in their list of kingly pedigrees, from Theoden back to Eorl the Young, in the suicidal urges of Eomer and Eowyn to do 'deeds of song', in the song that Aragorn sings to set the tone of the culture he is visiting: 'Where now the horse and the rider? Where is the horn that was blowing? Where is the helm and the hauberk, and the bright hair flowing?...'

Song is very important to the Rohirric culture, but it is not "based on song". If there is any culture in Middle-earth which is "based on song" it would be the culture of the Lindar, the early Nelyar, from whom came the Teleri. Rohan's culture is based upon an idealized vision of the Northman, the mounted Northman. It is the horse which is central to Rohan's culture, not music. Music was common to all the lands of Middle-earth. Hobbits, Elves, Dwarves, and Men all celebrated their deeds, gains, and losses with song. The working of power, the acts of "sub-creation" which Tolkien attributed to the Elves and Dwarves, and even to the Valar, were founded in their use of song. Song permeates Middle-earth and its environs and inhabitants, and is by no means a unique attribute of the Rohirrim.

Professor Shippey justifies this absurd exclusion of the full culture that Tolkien was representing in the Rohirrim by arguing that...

Tolkien may have known that the confusing Anglo-Saxon words for colour were once words for the colour of horses' coats, like *Hasufel*=`grey coat', suggesting an early society as observant of horses as modern African tribes of cows. Maybe the infantry-fixation of historical periods was the result of living on an island. Maybe the Anglo-Saxons before they migrated to England were different. What would have happened had they turned East, not West, to the German plains and the steppes beyond? In creating the *Riddermark* Tolkien thought of his own 'Mercia'. He also certainly remembered the great lost romance of 'Gothia', of the close kin of the English turning to disaster and oblivion on the plains of Russia. No doubt he knew the dim tradition that the word 'Goths' itself meant `Horse-folk'. This is what adds 'reconstruction' to 'calquing' and produces fantasy, a people and a culture that never were, but that press closer and closer to the edge of might-have-been.

Here is a great blunder which reveals how shallow a role Professor Shippey assigns to history in his analysis of the Rohirrim. The Anglo-Saxons had no choice but to move west. They were themselves on the western fringes of the Germanic world. To migrate east they would have had to push through far more powerful peoples. The Angles were merely one tribe among many living in Jutland. They were Danes among Danes, and retained much of their Danish tradition after settling in Britain. The Saxons were a confederation of tribes in western Germany, living between the Weser and the Elbe rivers. Beyond their German neighbors were Wends, Poles, and other peoples as wild and barbaric as they.

The Goths and other east German tribes migrated southward along the Vistula river centuries before the Angles and Saxons began their expansions. The west Germans could not have duplicated that migration, because new peoples had settled in the lands which formerly permitted a large *Volkwandering* that led to the emergence of Alaric in the annals of Rome. And the Goths, Vandals, and other eastern tribes were themselves pushed westward by the Huns in the fourth century. How, then, could the Angles and Saxons have moved eastward? For what reason? There was never any hope of their acquiring a steppe culture, and to suggest that they need only have turned east instead of west is quite naive.

In the end, Shippey has to concede that the Rohirrim are not historically akin to the Anglo-Saxons, but rather are only a poetic memory of them. But instead of referring to Anglo-Saxon poetry which might more easily be identified with the Anglo-Saxons (such as "the Wanderer"), he relies upon forging connections between "Beowulf", a mixture of Anglo-Saxon and Danish traditions which echo the larger traditions of the broad Germanic world, and suggests they were only a step away from being Goths, the people who most resemble the Rohirrim in culture. And yet even the Goths lack something of the profound unity and purpose of the Rohirrim. The Goths when they entered history were wanderers and refugees. It would be many centuries before they found something which they could call a homeland, and then only a few of them would enjoy that homeland, and then only for a few centuries. The Visigoths alone of the Gothic nation found anything like a true peace for their generations. They left behind them a swath of lost Gothic hopes and compromising colonies of Goths who had grown weary of the endless chase for the national dream.

## The Kingdom of Dale

This is one of the most enigmatic parts of Middle-earth, and I think that's a shame. Dale (and Lake-town) hold forth the promise of many interesting stories that Tolkien never found the time (or, perhaps, the desire) to tell his reading audience.

In *THE HOBBIT* Thorin Oakenshield says that Dale was founded in his grandfather's day, and yet in other writings Tolkien implies that Dale existed in the Nineteenth Century when the Wainriders destroyed the Kingdom of Rhovanion. We could contrive explanations for the apparent discrepancy, but all of our suppositions and guesses fail to provide the satisfaction that the author's pen would give.

Dale and Lake-town were the only towns Tolkien ever described in the region between the Celduin and Carnen rivers but he surely envisioned other towns, unnamed but important to the region. In *THE HOBBIT* he speaks of roads leading into the east from Mirkwood but not of their destinations.

The Men of Lake-town traded with their kin who lived along Celduin in the south. Some of these other Men apparently settled in Dale when Bard re-established the city in Third Age 2944. But Tolkien speaks of the Northmen living between Carnen and Celduin growing strong and driving out enemies during two periods: Thrór's reign in Erebor and the years after Bard restored Dale.

It is logical to look for a town close to the Eryn Engrin (Iron Hills) because there was an ancient dwarf-colony there, and the Carnen ran south from the hills, marking the easternmost boundary of Dale's kingdom. But how close to the hills would this town have been?

Another logical place for a town is in the wooded belt that lay east of Celduin in the region near the Mountains of Mirkwood. This was north of the place where the Old Forest Road ended at the shore of the Celduin. One should think there would be a town at the road's end, but in *THE HOBBIT* we are told that the road vanished as it ran east, so any ancient town there was probably long since destroyed or deserted in Tolkien's mind.

Another logical place for a town would be the confluence of the two rivers. Of course, we don't know how far southward Dale's authority extended. If there were Northmen living in that region, they may have had their own kings.

The map in *THE LORD OF THE RINGS* does not indicate so, but the map of Wilderland (Rhovanion) in *THE HOBBIT* implies that a line of hills or highlands marches east from Erebor to the Eryn Engrin. One should think the Dwarves of the Eryn Engrin followed some sort of ancient road to Erebor when they went to reinforce Erebor. Could there have been a town between Erebor and the Eryn Engrin?

The Men of the Long Lake are our only example of how the Northmen of the region lived. These were a river-folk, skilled in the making and use of large boats for war and trade. They had originally lived on the western shore of the lake, but that town was destroyed and they moved out into the lake itself until Smaug destroyed that town.

We catch a glimpse of a rich and powerful community in THE HOBBIT, for they raised horses and cattle and conducted trade with the Elves of Northern Mirkwood and the Men living to the south. The lake-town was built with timber, including the boles of huge trees that had to be drawn from Mirkwood, probably with the aid of the Elves.

Tolkien envisioned the rebuilt Lake-town coming under the crown of Dale, although he did not explain how that should be so. Yet all mention of this fact was dropped from THE LORD OF THE RINGS in favor of an ambiguous statement about Dale's kingdom extending far to the south and east.

An interesting statement that has always intrigued me is that Bard recruited men from the west. Where in the west? Did men come all the way from the Vales of Anduin to live in Dale? Were there woodmen living in Mirkwood in the northeastern eaves of the forest? We never hear of any communities of Men in that region, nor do we see indications of them on the maps, but in UNFINISHED TALES there is mention of Men migrating south along the eastern side of the forest early in the Third Age. Interestingly, THE PEOPLES OF MIDDLE-EARTH tells us that the Edain originally migrated northward along the eastern eaves of the forest:

The men with whom [the Longbeards] were thus associated were for the most part akin in race and language with the tall and mostly fair-haired people of the 'House of Hador', the most renowned and numerous of the Edain, who were allied with the Eldar in the War of the Jewels. These men, it seems, had come westward until faced by the Great Greenwood, and then had divided: some reaching the Anduin and passing thence northward up the Vales; some passing between the north-eaves of the Wood and the Ered Mithrin....

Since Thranduil's people didn't settle in northern Mirkwood until about the year 1050 in the Third Age, Tolkien may have decided there were still Men living in the northern woods at the end of the Third Age. Thus we can postulate the following groups of Men were living in the region around the middle of the 30th Century:

The Men of Lake-town (mixed with survivors of Dale)  
The Men of northern Mirkwood  
The Men of Carnen  
The Men of eastern Mirkwood

Probably there were several "tribes" living along the Celduin, but Tolkien provided us with no clues about where they lived.

## The Great King Bladorthin

Most commentators think Bladorthin, who died before the Dwarves of Erebor could deliver specially made spears to him for his armies, was an Elf because his name ends with "-thin". And yet there is no apparent etymology for the name. The only "Elvish" word containing "-blad" is the abandoned name "Bladorion".

We do know something about the history of the region of Erebor, however, and there is no mention of another Elvish kingdom nearby. Thranduil was the only Elven king to live near Erebor during the centuries prior to Smaug's arrival when Dwarves lived there. Nor are the Elves a particularly war-like people, especially if another Elven realm did exist -- for they would have been Silvan Elves or Avari, essentially "Wood-elves".

It is perhaps significant that "Blad" sounds like the Anglo-Saxon name "Blaed(a)" (renowned), and that "Bladorthin" was originally intended to be the name of the Wizard Gandalf (who in THE HOBBIT is presented as an old man).

The evidence seems to point toward Bladorthin's being a Man, not an Elf. If we make the assumption that he was a man, can we also place him in some historical period? Perhaps so. For the memories of Thorin and Balin are the source of the legend of Bladorthin, and they were discussing treasures which were historically associated with Thror's reign when Bladorthin was mentioned.

Therefore it may be that Bladorthin himself lived in Thror's time, and that perhaps he was a King of Dale. Thror ruled in Erebor from 2590 to 2770, and we know that Girion was slain by Smaug in 2770. It may be that as many as 5 or 6 kings preceded Girion (assuming Dale was established soon after Thror settled in Erebor).

We know that Girion gave his emerald necklace (with 500 jewels) to the Dwarves for the arming of his "eldest son". An eldest son implies Girion had at least one other and perhaps two or more sons in addition to the "eldest". At what age would a prince have been richly outfitted by his father? 14? 16? 18? Perhaps Girion was in his mid- to late 30s when the eldest son was armed. But how long before Smaug's arrival would that have been?

We can look at the problem from another direction. Girion's wife and "young child" escaped to Lake-town when Smaug destroyed Dale and Bard the Bowman was that child's descendant. Bard became King of Dale in 2944 and he died in 2977. It may be that he lived about as long as a King of Rohan, in which case we can guess that Bard's genealogy as similar in design to that of King Thengel of Rohan, who died in 2980. By estimating generations backwards, we can guess that Girion's father should have been alive in 2770 as an old man. So why would he not have been?

The Long Winter presents itself as a possible answer. Although Tolkien had not yet conceived of it when he wrote *THE HOBBIT*, had he fleshed out the genealogy of the Kings of Dale he might indeed have decided to end a reign in 2758-9, just as he ended the reign of Helm Hammerhand during that winter. Thus, if Girion's father died in the Long Winter, he would have come to the Throne of Dale at a young age.

Furthermore, his people would have suffered terribly in the winter just as the peoples of Rohan and Eriador suffered in it. If Girion's father had been preparing for war, the preparations would have been cut short by the deaths of the king and many of his warriors.

And that brings us back to Bladorthin. Would Tolkien have decided that Bladorthin was Girion's father? We'll never know. But so many pieces fall together to support the idea that it seems hard to imagine Tolkien would have reached any other conclusion.

## Chapter 8: What Does An Elf Do In Aman?

When you stop to think about it, what is there to do in Aman?

Before they went into Exile the Noldor quarried the hills and mountains of Valinor for stone with which to build their homes and towers. They must have paved a lot of roads throughout Aman just to help them move the stone around.

But what else did they do while they were building their civilization? They mined the mountains for ores and gems and hunted in the woods of Oromë (probably alongside the Vanyar).

It may also be that some of the Noldor went sailing with the Falmari on occasion (the Falmari dove for pearls, which they traded to the Noldor for gemstones and in payment for their help in building Alqualondë). But basically there must have been very little to do except sit around singing all day long, or feasting with the Valar and Maiar. To a Noldo, who had to be doing something constructive, life in the Blessed Realm may have been quite boring. Why else would Melkor's subtle suggestions that they could have had so much more in Middle-earth have struck a nerve with the Noldor?

After the Exiles returned to Tol Eressëa in the Second Age they don't seem to have remained content with sitting around and singing all day long. Quite possibly the Eldar who sailed to Numenor to teach the Dunedain included many Noldor who wanted to get back into the swing of things. Helping the Edain build a new nation might have been just the trick for them.

The Sindar probably were the Elves who took trees, plants, and animals to Numenor. They, too, may have gotten bored with the dull life of living in the Blessed Realm. What must the Valar have had to do to keep the Elves happy through all those thousands of years? There could have been quite a few horse races, hunting competitions, and probably an excruciatingly long tradition of poetry and singing contests. How many variations on "Lament for the Two Trees" could the Vanyar have composed?

Librarians may have been in great demand among the Elves. Once Rumil invented the Tengwar and Fëanor revised them, the Elves must have composed a storm of songs, stories, histories, etc. They must also have spent ages just analyzing all the linguistic knowledge the Noldor and Sindar brought from Middle-earth. After Aman was taken away from the circles of the world, the Elves must have felt pretty isolated. Sure, a ship or two would come sailing up to Tol Eressëa every now and then, bearing fresh news of events in the mortal lands, new additions for the genealogies (that probably only changed slightly every few hundred years), and the occasional new idiom from some half-known dialect in the more distant regions of Middle-earth.

And just where exactly did all the Elves who sailed to Aman settle down? How large did Avallonë become? Did anyone ever leave the city permanently? The Valar or Noldor of Tirion must have given the tree named Celeborn to the Elves of Beleriand as a symbol of restored communion. But were the Elves of Tol Eressëa allowed to move to the mainland?



Since there was supposedly a Palantir in Avallonë that was attuned to the "Elendil stone" which was kept on the Tower Hills near Mithlond, did the Elves set up some sort of message system whereby the folks in Middle-earth could exchange greetings and news with the folks back in Aman? Gildor Inglorion apparently spent a lot of time visiting this Palantir. Surely, with memories as good as they were among the Elves, he didn't need to refresh his vision of the West every couple of years?

And isn't it strange how we know what happened to Ar-Pharazôn after he attacked Valinor? How did that knowledge survive, unless Elendil (who wrote the "Akallabeth") got on the line with someone in Tol Eressëa and found out what happened?

One must wonder who the Elven lords of Tol Eressëa were. They visited Numenor for the wedding of Aldarion and Erendis. Was Finrod Felagund one of them? Yet he is said to "walk with Finarfin his father beneath the trees in Eldamar". Maybe he didn't have to settle in Tol Eressëa.

And did Finrod ever marry Amarië, the Vanyarin Elf who was not allowed to accompany him into exile? If so, perhaps there were a lot of weddings in Aman after the return of the Exiles. The Noldor did tend to intermarry with the other Elves a great deal.

One might do well to ask what the Elves do all day, now that they've left a legacy of great wars and dooms behind them in Middle-earth. They're unlikely to rebel against the Valar again, nor to be threatened by any evil creatures. Maybe they spread out into all the uninhabited regions of Aman, building cities, planting forests, digging new mines and quarries, and generally just having a grand old time building a new civilization that surpassed the ancient one in too many ways to count.

There must have been quite a few "tribes" in Aman by the time Numenor was destroyed: the Vanyar, the Noldor of Finarfin, the Falmari, the Noldor of Tol Eressëa, the Sindar of Tol Eressëa, and any Silvan Elves who were starting to show up.

Where did Legolas and Gimli finally settle? For that matter, was Galadriel forced to stay in Avallonë? What if she wanted to visit Finarfin in Eldamar (or Valinor, assuming Eldamar was too damaged for the Noldor of Tirion to return there after Ar-Pharazôn's little party)?

Where would Celeborn end up staying once he finally showed up? Would he have to settle for visiting relatives for the next couple of thousand years?

What about Elrond and Celebrian? And Elladan and Elrohir (assuming they chose to be of Elven kind)? Did they go north to visit Elwing and Eärendil? Was Elwing still living in that tower in the far north?

Does Eärendil ever bring out the Silmaril on high feast days? If Aman was not made into a new world with new continents to explore, maybe the Elves perfected space travel and inter-dimensional warping so they can occasionally check up on things back in the mortal lands. If so, we might finally have an explanation of what all those strange sightings of UFOs relate to....

## Chapter 9: What Does A Woodman Do All Day?

Few mysteries of Middle-earth have intrigued me more than the Woodmen of Mirkwood. We see a couple of "villages" on the Map of Wilderland in THE HOBBIT, and we hear that the Woodmen helped in the hunt for Gollum after he escaped from the Elves of Northern Mirkwood, but there really is very little else that Tolkien writes about them.

Who were these guys? Why were they living in Mirkwood? What did they do all day? The Woodmen, according to Tolkien, were related to the Beornings and other Northmen. There is mention of "woodmen" in THE HOBBIT. These men live on the west side of Anduin, north of the Gladden River. They are gradually spreading north through the 30th Century and some live close enough to the Hithaeglin (Misty Mountains) that they are threatened by the Orcs and Wargs, and the eagles occasionally hunt their sheep.

These woodmen of THE HOBBIT were undoubtedly some or all of the men who later accepted Beorn as their chieftain. That is not to say that they were all Beornings, but they appear to be the link between Beorn and the Woodmen of Mirkwood. Probably some of the Mirkwood Woodmen crossed the river after the War of the Dwarves and Orcs (TA 2793-99), when the Hithaeglin would have been thought safe by many people. They could have, by 2941, spread pretty far north, assuming each generation sent out new colonists.

In Mirkwood the Woodmen may have lived much as the Haladin of Brethil had lived. I infer this because Radagast the Brown lived at Rhosgobel, a fenced garth just within the western border of Mirkwood at about the same region as the Gladden Fields (close to Dol Guldur on Amon Lanc, of all places). "Rhosgobel" is translated as "Brown Hay", and "hay" is used to mean a great hedge, like the hedge the Hobbits of the Buckland raised as a barrier against the Old Forest and called the High Hay.

Although Rhosgobel is not described in detail, Beorn's house is, and it too was surrounded by a high hedge. When compared with the homes of the Haladin living to the south of Brethil in "Narn i Chin Hurin", Beorn's home sounds very similar. So the Woodmen of Mirkwood probably lived in stockaded villages and isolated homesteads that were defended by these hedges from wild beasts.

Orcs and giant spiders probably would not have been deterred by the hedges, so the Woodmen undoubtedly had to patrol their land. This means they would have lived much like the Haladin lived in Brethil. Probably some of them got tired of living that way, and that is why they may have crossed the river (but this is all speculation, since Tolkien never explained where the woodmen of THE HOBBIT came from, other than to say they had come "from the south").

The Woodmen of Mirkwood were friendly with the Elves. We know this from passages in THE LORD OF THE RINGS and "The Disaster Of The Gladden Fields" in UNFINISHED TALES. They may therefore have engaged in some trade with the Elves early in their history. But they were probably quite isolated from Thranduil's people late in the Third Age.

The life of a woodman thus would have been a hard one. They would have had a strong sense of family and kin, but may have been distrustful of strangers (as Beorn and the Haladin were). They probably hunted with bows (the eagles told Gandalf they feared the great yew bows of the woodmen). And they may have raised hunting dogs (Beorn had some dogs) as well as horses, cattle, and sheep (all of which Beorn had). It's unlikely the woodmen had animals as "enchanted" as Beorn's, able to serve food to guests. And probably the woodmen fished a little and raised a few crops.

The woodmen must also have gotten together on occasion, to celebrate births and weddings, or perhaps just seasonal feasts. House-raising may also have been common among them. It would have been important for a family to get its home built and fortified as quickly as possible. Such activities would have required iron tools, so the woodmen must also have welcomed traders from distant lands, or organized their own trading expeditions.

They may also have formed regular hunting or raiding parties which would have gone in search of evil creatures. It would have been better for them to do this than to wait at home for raids from the Orcs. In many ways, the Woodmen of Mirkwood and the Vales of Anduin must have lived a very dangerous and adventurous lifestyle, frontiersmen in Wilderland.

## Chapter 10: Planning The Middle-earth Wedding

Occasionally people inquire in the Tolkien news groups about wedding traditions in Middle-earth so they can add some enchantment to their own wedding plans by emulating the "traditions" in their favorite fictional world. That's a rather nice idea but it's difficult to find many details in Tolkien about weddings.

He mentions weddings. Aragorn married Arwen in Gondor. That was a royal wedding which must have seemed very much like Prince Charles' wedding to Lady Diana Spencer. The wedding of Beren and Luthien was also probably quite a sensation, but Tolkien writes virtually nothing about it.

In one early version of the story of Tuor and Idril they are married by Turgon in Gar Ainion, the Place of the Gods, and the entire city celebrates. But Tolkien abandoned the idea that the Valar were in any way "gods", and probably Gar Ainion ceased to be a part of Gondolin. In THE SILMARILLION the wedding of Tuor and Idril is still celebrated by a feast, but no other detail is mentioned.

A feast was also used to celebrate the joint wedding of the children of Hador and Halmir. So feasts seem to be a consistent part of the wedding tradition in Middle-earth, whereas we normally have a Rehearsal Dinner one or two days before the wedding and then just a Reception after the ceremony (see below).

The wedding of Aldarion and Erendis was held in western Numenor, and the Eldar came and gave them many gifts at the feast. Thus, it seems that (among the Dunedain at least) the feast and giving of gifts was like the Rehearsal and Reception combined. It was also customary for the father of the bride to lay her hand in the groom's hand. Thingol does this for Luthien and Beren and Elrond does this for Arwen and Aragorn, but this custom does not seem to be part of the ceremony itself. Rather, it's a public declaration of the father's consent to the union, a symbolic way of saying, "I give my daughter to this man." It was something equivalent to the publishing of bans, or to the wedding invitations which are sent out today. Anyone who saw the laying of the hand appears to have been invited to the ceremony (but this is only an inference).

Singing and dancing were important to the peoples of Middle-earth. It may be that songs or poems were recited at the weddings, at least of the princely houses, and that part of the feasting included dancing (much as dancing may be part of the Reception today). It thus seems that Tolkien envisioned Middle-earth weddings to be very much like they are handled in western culture today. The only special gesture seems to be the father's laying of the daughter's hand in the groom's hand PRIOR to the ceremony, and there was apparently no rehearsal dinner or quaint reception, but simply a feast after the ceremony where the couple sat at the table and received presents and guests.

Probably, styling a wedding after Middle-earth's weddings would raise a few eyebrows and invite unwarranted commentary from the more outspoken relatives of both families. But if two

people want to be wed as if they were in Middle-earth, it might be possible to come up with a reasonable compromise between today's traditions and Tolkien's.

Well, since I wrote the above, I've reread MORGOTH'S RING and have found a treasure trove of information on Eldarin marriage customs there. What follows here are citations from the essay "Of the Laws and Customs among The Eldar pertaining to marriage and other matters related thereto: Together with the statute of Finwë and Miriel and the debate of the Valar at its making". The details on marriages are only a small part of the essay.

The Eldar wedded for the most part in their youth and soon after their fiftieth year. They had few children, but these were very dear to them. Their families, or houses, were held together by love and a deep feeling for kinship in mind and body; and the children needed little governing or teaching. There were seldom more than four children in any house, and the number grew less as ages passed; but even in days of old, while the Eldar were still few and eager to increase their kind, Fëanor was renowned as the father of seven sons, and the histories record none that surpassed him.

The Eldar wedded once only in life, and for love or at the least by free will upon either part. Even when in after days, as the histories reveal, many of the Eldar in Middle-earth became corrupted, and their hearts darkened by the shadow that lies upon Arda, seldom is any tale told of deeds of lust among them.

Marriage, save for rare ill chances or strange fates, was the natural course of life for all the Eldar. It took place in this way. Those who would afterwards become wedded might choose one another early in youth, even as children (and indeed this happened often in days of peace); but unless they desired soon to be married and were of fitting age, the betrothal awaited the judgment of the parents of either party.

In due time the betrothal was announced at a meeting of the two houses concerned, and the betrothed gave silver rings one to another. According to the laws of the Eldar this betrothal was bound then to stand for one year at least, and it often stood for longer. During this time it could be revoked by a public return of the rings, the rings then being molten and not again used for a betrothal. Such was the law; but the right of revoking was seldom used, for the Eldar do not err lightly in such choice. They are not easily deceived by their own kind; and their spirits being masters of their bodies, they are seldom swayed by the desires of the body only, but are by nature continent and steadfast.

After the betrothal it was the part of the betrothed to appoint the time of their wedding, when at least one year had passed. Then at a feast, again shared by the two houses, the marriage was celebrated. At the end of the feast the betrothed stood forth, and the mother of the bride and the father of the bridegroom joined the hands of the pair and blessed them. For this blessing there was a solemn form, but no mortal has heard it; though the Eldar say that Varda was named in witness by the mother and Manwë by the father; and moreover that the name of Eru was spoken (as was seldom done at any other time). The betrothed then received back one from the other their silver rings (and treasured them); but they gave in exchange slender rings of gold, which were worn upon the index of the right hand.

## Parma Endorion

Also, among the Noldor, it was a custom that the bride's mother should give to the bridegroom a jewel upon a chain or collar; and the bridegroom's father should give a like gift to the bride. These gifts were sometimes given before the feast.

(Thus the gift of Galadriel to Aragorn, since she was in place of Arwen's mother, was in part a bridal gift and earnest of the wedding that was later accomplished.)

But these ceremonies were not rites necessary to marriage; they were only a gracious mode by which the love of the parents was manifested, and the union was recognized which would join not only the betrothed but their two houses together. It was the act of bodily union that achieved marriage, and after which the indissoluble bond was complete. In happy days and times of peace it was held ungracious and contemptuous of kin to forego the ceremonies, but it was at all times lawful for any of the Eldar, both being unwed, to marry thus free of consent one to another without ceremony or witness (save blessings exchanged and the naming of the Name); and the union so joined was alike indissoluble. In days of old, in times of trouble, in flight and exile and wandering, such marriages were often made.

It would seem there was therefore no such thing as pre-marital sex among Tolkien's elves. Once they joined their bodies, they were married.

## Rehearsals and Receptions

I was recently asked by someone (who is not native to America or to the English language) what I meant by "rehearsals and receptions". The reply I gave was:

That is an American custom, but I don't know how widespread it is.

A Rehearsal is where the bride and groom with select family members, bridesmaids, groom's men, et. al. show up at the church or chapel 1-4 days prior to the wedding ceremony. The minister (or whomever officiates) takes them through a practice wedding (although they probably don't recite all the prayers and stuff -- we didn't at my rehearsal).

Sometimes there is a "Rehearsal Dinner", usually paid for the by groom's family, immediately after the rehearsal.

The Reception is held after the wedding ceremony, sometimes in the same location, sometimes elsewhere. Usually, the bride and groom are having their pictures taken as the wedding guests join the reception. You might get a lot of food or just cake. Champagne is commonly served. Once the bride and groom show up, they speak to the guests (privately, if possible), and go through some "traditions": the groom takes a garter from the bride's leg and throws it to the unmarried men in the crowd; the bride throws her bouquet to the unmarried women; they cut the wedding cake and give each other a piece. More extravagant receptions include dinner and dancing.

# Chapter 11: The Wonders of Middle-earth

## Wonders of the First Age

### Menegroth

Probably the greatest city ever to exist in Middle-earth was the ancient Sindarin stronghold of Menegroth. THE SILMARILLION tells us that Thingol and his people originally lived in the open woods of Neldoreth and Region. It was not until the third age of Melkor's captivity in Valinor that Melian warned Thingol that Middle-earth would soon again be troubled by Melkor's evil.

Thingol had by this time welcomed the Dwarves of Nogrod and Belegost to his domain, and he was engaged in some trade with them. So he turned to the Dwarves of Belegost and asked them to help him build a great fortress. THE SILMARILLION says:

...They gave it willingly, for they were unwearied in those days and eager for new works...Therefore the Naugrim laboured long and gladly for Thingol, and devised for him mansions after the fashion of their own people, delved deep into the earth. Where the Esgalduin flowed down, and parted Neldoreth from Region, there rose in the midst of the forest a rocky hill, and the river ran at its feet. There they made the gates of the hall of Thingol, and they built a bridge of stone over the river, by which alone the gates could be entered. Beyond the gates wide passages ran down to high halls and chambers far below that were hewn into the living stone, so many and so great that that dwelling was named Menegroth, the Thousand Caves.

There is no mention of any city like this Over Sea in Aman. Tuna upon Tirion rose high, and Alqualondë was set in a natural harbor. Even Avallonë, built many centuries later, was nothing like Menegroth. The city was unique to Middle-earth's cultures and history, an inspiration for the later city of Nargothrond and the halls of Thranduil in northern Mirkwood, but neither of these habitations approached the majesty and beauty of Menegroth.

THE SILMARILLION lacks the words to adequately describe the vision Tolkien must have held of the city. He writes only:

...Elves and Dwarves together, each with their own skill, there wrought out the visions of Melian, images of the wonder and beauty of Valinor beyond the Sea. The pillars of Menegroth were hewn in the likeness of the beeches of Oromë, stock, bough, and leaf, and they were lit with lanterns of gold. The nightingales sang there as in the gardens of Lorien; and there were fountains of silver, and basins of marble, and floors of many-coloured stones. Carven figures of beasts and birds there ran upon the walls, or climbed upon the pillars, or peered among the branches entwined with many flowers. And as the years passed Melian and her maidens filled the halls with woven hangings wherein could be read the deeds of the Valar, and many things that had befallen in Arda since its beginning, and shadows of things that were yet to be. That was the fairest dwelling of any king that has ever been east of the Sea.

## Parma Endorion

But Menegroth was never wholly finished. In time Thingol built armories for his warriors, and after Morgoth had destroyed the realms of the Noldor Thingol set aside chambers for the Dwarves of Nogrod and Belegost when their strong companies visited the city.

Menegroth itself was not completely underground. The lands near the hill were apparently heavily used by the Elves. The great tree Hirilorn stood in a garden on the north side of the river. Thingol had a house built for Luthien in the branches of the tree, but he and Melian also had sat beneath the overhanging boughs. Turin came to them in this garden when he decided to leave Menegroth. When Saeros waylaid Turin, the man was on the northern road, seeking to return to the marches. No one heard their fight, but Turin chased Saeros back toward the river, and then many Elves did hear them (and came running to see what was amiss).



Luthien prepares her escape from Hirilorn  
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The greatest hall of Menegroth must have been Thingol's court, of which we see only glimpses in the stories. Beleg brought the Elf-maiden Nellas into Menegroth to testify on Turin's behalf in the death of Saeros, and "she was afraid, both for the great pillared hall and the roof of stone, and for the company of many eyes that watched her."

Beren, a generation before, had been brought into that same great hall by Luthien, and there confronted Thingol and Melian on their thrones. On both occasions the hall was filled with many of Doriath's mightiest lords and warriors. The King of the Sindar in all his power must have seemed stronger than any Noldorin king in Middle-earth.

But the time came at last when Menegroth was destroyed. The city was weakened in the feud between Thingol and the Dwarves of Nogrod, who slew him in the chambers he had set aside for them. The Dwarves fought their way out of the city but only two ever returned to Nogrod. And then a Dwarf-army marched on Doriath, and Menegroth was taken and sacked. Its treasuries were robbed and many of its people slain.



Dior, Thingol's grandson, attempted to restore Menegroth to something of its former glory, but the Sindar under Dior were much weaker (and fewer) than the Sindar under Thingol and Melian. Melian had fled to Valinor in the wake of Thingol's death, and her power no longer protected or enriched the kingdom. Many of the great lords and captains had been slain, including Beleg Cuthalion and Mablung.

It was thus possible for the sons of Fëanor to gather an army of Noldor and take the city in mid-winter, the last winter of Doriath's long existence. The Sindar who survived the battle fled south, abandoning their lands and taking with them a few memories of the greatest of cities. There was never another city like Menegroth in Middle-earth, and probably not in Aman either.

## **Gondolin**

After Menegroth the most famous city of Beleriand was Gondolin. Gondolin's fame, perhaps, arose only after its destruction, for while he lived Turgon did all that he could to protect the secret location of his beloved city. Only when Gondolin was destroyed could the Eldar begin to share its secrets, and the memories of Gondolin like those of Menegroth could do it little justice.

Some hints about Gondolin were preserved in other stories, as when Thorondor carried Luthien and Beren south from Angband, and Luthien "saw far below, as a white light starting from a green jewel, the radiance of Gondolin the fair where Turgon dwelt." Hurin and Huor saw the city but they did not reveal what they knew of it.

Tolkien's vision of Gondolin changed through the years, but in some ways it persisted as a vibrant dream. He never abandoned the idea that it was built on a great hill in the circular valley of Tumladen; that there were many high towers, great fountains, houses built all around, and fields of crops spreading across the valley to feed the city.

The Eldar (Noldor and Sindar) of Gondolin followed eleven great lords in the earliest story of Gondolin, though in *THE SILMARILLION* we find only two named: Ecthelion and Glorfindel. In "Of Tuor and his Coming to Gondolin" we meet Elemmakil, friend of Voronwë the mariner. Egalmoth was said to be one of the lords of Gondolin, and his name was included in the story of Tuor almost until the end (edited out by Christopher Tolkien for a technical reason).

The entrance to Gondolin lay through a dried river bed that flowed under the mountains at one time. There were seven gates constructed there by the Eldar: The Gate of Wood, The Gate of Stone, The Gate of Bronze, The Gate of Writen Iron, The Gate of Silver, The Gate of Gold, and The Gate of Steel. The first six gates were built when Gondolin itself was built, but Maeglin, Turgon's nephew, built the Gate of Steel after the Nirnaeth Arnoediad.

Turgon's people were skilled in many ways, and they adorned the gates and the city with images of the Two Trees of Valinor, Telperion and Laurelin, and of many flowers and creatures (including a graven image of Thorondor on the fourth gate). Gondolin must have been a shining, glittering jewel in many ways, adorned with gold, silver, pearl, marble, and even copper that was "by some device of smithcraft...ever bright and gleamed as fire in the rays of the red lamps

ranged like torches along the wall."

Although not permitted to leave except by special permission of the king, Gondolin's people ranged through the hills and valleys around the city in their work. Maeglin especially opened many mines and ranged through the mountains (and so was caught in the end by Melkor's servants).

Although the plain of Tumladen is described as flat, Gondolin itself seems to have had "mounds...of mallorns, birches, and evergreen trees." There was a high wall around the city, and the Eldar would gather on it at times to celebrate great festivals. It was during one such festival, the Gates of Summer, when Melkor's forces stormed the city.

Some of the towers of Gondolin were destroyed in the fighting, and many of the great houses and the trees were ruined by fire. The majority of the inhabitants were slaughtered as they tried to escape, or defending themselves. But many were captured and taken into captivity, while nearly a thousand escaped by Idril's secret path which led into the mountains.

Gondolin must nonetheless have been the strongest of the realms of the Noldor. Melkor sent many dragons and the Balrogs against Turgon, and despite the ease with which he surprised them, more of Turgon's people escaped than did of Fingolfin's, Finrod's, or perhaps even Maedhros' people.

## **Khazad-dum**

We never get to see Khazad-dum in its heyday. By the time Tolkien brings the reader to the great mansions of the ancient Dwarves, the halls are empty, except for Orcs. Gimli's deep voice must have echoed through the empty tunnels and chambers as he sang for his companions an old Dwarven folk-song:

The world was young, the mountains green,  
No stain yet on the Moon was seen,  
No words were laid on stream or stone,  
When Durin woke and walked alone.  
He named the nameless hills and dells;  
He drank from yet untasted wells;  
He stooped and looked in Mirrormere,  
And saw a crown of stars appear,  
As gems upon a silver thread,  
Above the shadow of his head.

How long ago was this episode? How old was Durin before he found a wife (as he plainly must have, since he originally walked alone)? How long was it before he found the Mirrormere and the entrance to the mighty caverns that he made his home?

We can infer a few points about ancient Dwarven history from what is told of their dealings with the Elves. For instance, we know that the Dwarves first entered Beleriand during the second age of Melkor's captivity in Valinor. According to THE WAR OF THE JEWELS, this was Year of

the Trees 1250, which was 200 years after the awakening of the Elves (a period equal in length to about 1900 Years of the Sun).

The Dwarven cities of Nogrod and Belegost, the two cities in the Ered Luin, were not founded by Dwarves of Durin's Line, but instead were the homes of other Dwarves. They were most likely the ancestral homes of the Firebeards and the Broadbeams, the two kindreds of the Dwarves who awoke in the northern Ered Luin.

Khazad-dum engaged in trade with Nogrod and Belegost. Tales of Khazad-dum reached Beleriand, though it is only briefly mentioned in THE SILMARILLION as being the greatest of Dwarven cities. The ancient Dwarf-road that passed through the forest of Greenwood (later Mirkwood) and through Eriador apparently carried traffic from Khazad-dum to other Dwarven cities in the east.

And yet Khazad-dum was far to the south of the High Pass where the ancient road crossed the mountains. This seems a little strange. One can only imagine the Dwarves had built a road north along the foot-hills of the Misty Mountains to reach the high pass. Or perhaps they followed the Silverlode down to Anduin and crossed the river by raft or boat. And wondering this, one cannot fail to ask whether Durin's folk were friendly with the Nandorin Elves who lived in the Vales of Anduin.

We know something of the life the Dwarves led in the First Age. They were, of course, miners and stone-masons of exquisite and almost unrivaled skill. They smelted metals such as gold, silver, iron, and probably copper and tin. They worked with crystal, unearthed gems of many types, and even learned to make instruments such as trumpets and harps.

The city itself conducted trade mostly with the east. There was no West-gate until around the year 750 of the Second Age. Dwarven merchants must also have trekked into the distant north. The road passing through the forest ran to the Celduin and probably crossed the river by a bridge just as it crossed Anduin by a bridge. From the crossing point on Celduin the road turned northeast and ran toward the Eryn Engrin, and from there ran eastwards to the other Dwarven realms of the Ironfists, Stiffbeards, Blacklocks, and Stonefoots.

THE PEOPLES OF MIDDLE-EARTH tells us that Dwarves did indeed live well to the east of Celduin, and that there was a city or gathering place for all the Dwarves at Mount Gundabad, where they held enclaves. The lands of Durin's folk were selected for this honor because he was the eldest of the Dwarves and Gundabad was the place where he awoke.

How numerous could Durin's folk have been in the First Age? We can only guess. But the time from the awakening of the Elves in Cuiviënen to the end of the First Age of the Sun was equivalent to approximately 4900 Years of the Sun. Yet there was no mention of the Elves encountering the Dwarves during the Great Journey. On the other hand, the Noegyth Nibin (the Petty-Dwarves) claimed to have settled in Beleriand before the Elves arrived.

The Dwarves must have awoken soon after the Elves did, but their numbers were few and increased only slowly. When they made contact with Durin some members of each tribe joined

him in Khazad-dum. As the years passed a few outcasts wandered west into Beleriand. The Vanyar and Noldor entered Beleriand in Year of the Trees 1115, about 622 Years of the Sun after the awakening of the Elves. The Teleri arrived in Year of the Trees 1128, or about 124 Years of the Sun after the Vanyar and Noldor.

The Noegyth Nibin could have entered Beleriand before the Vanyar and Noldor. But they could also have entered after them and before the Sindar. Nonetheless, it is clear there had to be Dwarves in Beleriand by Year of the Trees 1128, about 747 Years of the Sun after the awakening of the Elves. If the Dwarves awoke within 10 Years of the Trees after the Elves, they would have had the equivalent of a few centuries in Years of the Sun in which to find each other and to cast out the Noegyth Nibin.

Since Nogrod and Belegost were not founded until Year of the Trees 1250 (almost 2,000 Years of the Sun after the awakening of the Elves), it seems evident the Firebeards and Broadbeams must all have wandered east soon after they awoke. Perhaps all the Dwarves came together in Khazad-dum with Durin first, and there built the first Dwarven city. When their numbers became large enough, the six "younger" kings (descendants of the original fathers) could have led their peoples away from Khazad-dum to establish new ancestral homes for their peoples. This could explain why the Eldar encountered no Dwarves on their journey. The only Dwarves who would have left Khazad-dum by this time would have been the Noegyth Nibin.

So, what does this get us? Room to estimate a maximum probable population for Khazad-dum at the end of the First Age of the Sun (some 3900 Years of the Sun after Durin might have awoken). This would allow 45 - 48 generations for the Dwarves of Durin's Line to increase their numbers. By the time the Second Age started, there could have been upwards of 100,000 Dwarves living in Khazad-dum and more than 120,000 in most of each of the other Dwarven cities (not including Nogrod and Belegost, which had by then suffered grievous losses in the wars with Morgoth and the Elves).

Early in the Second Age Durin's folk were joined by most if not all of the Dwarves of Belegost, and many of the Dwarves of Nogrod. The population of Khazad-dum could have swelled to 500,000 or more by the end of the Second Age (but this estimate presupposes some changes in Dwarven birth rates -- signaling the onset of the decline of the Dwarven race).

Population estimates aside, we know that Khazad-dum grew slowly through the long centuries. The Dwarves added hall after hall and gradually extended their mines northward, especially after the discovery of Mithril sometime in the 7th or 8th centuries of the Second Age. The west-gate was built during this time, after the Noldor of Eregion established their great friendship with the Dwarves of Khazad-dum (who undoubtedly were influenced by tales of the friendship between the Noldor and the Dwarves of Nogrod and Belegost).

Tolkien wrote that Durin was reborn in his descendants six times. We know that Durin III was King of Khazad-dum when the Rings of Power were made, and he led an army against Sauron in the War of the Elves and Sauron. So it must have been Durin II who was king when Narvi and Celebrimbor built the west-gate. The king at the end of the Second Age may have been Durin IV. He marched with the Host of the Last Alliance of Elves and Men.

Khazad-dum continued to flourish in the Third Age even though the Eldar were in decline. The west-gate may have been re-opened to allow trade with Arnor and, later, the peoples of Dunland. When the realm of Angmar arose in the distant north and Amroth of Lorien sent armies over the mountains to help the Dunedain, it may be the Dwarves gave aid to the Elves, or even permitted Amroth's warriors to pass through Khazad-dum.

But in time the Dwarves awoke a Balrog with their tunneling. It must have tried to drive them away at first, for they spent a year fighting it. Two Dwarven kings of Durin's Line perished before the city was abandoned in Third Age 1981. How many battles did the Dwarves fight with the Balrog and, perhaps, other creatures they found in the subterranean depths? Durin VI was slain in 1980 and his son Nain I was killed the next year, the Year of Flight. The Dwarves were destroyed or driven off and their ancient mansions were left deserted but for the Balrog and other creatures which Gandalf described as "nameless things" which even Sauron didn't know, for "they are older than he."

The Balrog assumed control of Khazad-dum, but some 500 or 600 years later Sauron sent Orcs and Trolls to inhabit the city, possibly with the Balrog's consent. From that time forward Khazad-dum was a stronghold and haven for the Orcs and it was known only by its ancient Elvish name, Moria, "Black Pit". The Orcish army of Moria was destroyed at the Battle of Nanduhirion in 2799, but the Dwarves lacked the numbers after their 7-year war with the Orcs to retake the city (and probably could not have done so had their entire army attacked Moria in the first place).

The breeding Orcs were left behind and Moria's evil creatures recovered their numbers slowly, but they may not have ever again equaled the great numbers that the Dwarves encountered in 2799. Many of the Orcs of the Misty Mountains perished 142 years later at the Battle of Five Armies, and when Balin's colony was established in 2989 (a mere 47 years later) there were few Orcs left to guard the citadel. They must have retreated to deeper caverns until the Balrog drove them to attack the Dwarves, perhaps with reinforcements from other Orcish strongholds.

From 2994 to 3018 Khazad-dum was undisturbed until Gollum entered the fortress to escape Sauron's spies and the Elves of Mirkwood and Lorien. The Orcs either let him be or did not know he was there. But they were soon after roused by the Company of the Ring. The Balrog must have sensed the One Ring when it came into the eastern halls, if not sooner. The Orcs pursued the Company into Lorien but were destroyed or driven off, and Gandalf was able to defeat the Balrog in a single combat that lasted 11 days. In the course of the battle part of the mountain and Khazad-dum were destroyed.

Sometime in the Fourth Age (probably by the year 200) the Dwarves of Durin's Line returned to Khazad-dum, most likely to spend the last of their generations there. Durin VII was the last king to bear that name and perhaps the last of his proud and ancient Line. Or perhaps not. In THE PEOPLES OF MIDDLE-EARTH Christopher Tolkien points out that the life of Durin VII is poorly documented, but that he apparently had descendants.

## Wonders of the Second Age

### The Statues of Dunharrow

One of the most amazing passages in *THE LORD OF THE RINGS* occurs in the chapter titled "The Muster of Rohan". Tolkien introduces one of his numerous enigmas by allowing the reader to follow Merry's progress through Rohan toward the refuge of Dunharrow (OE *Dun-harug*, 'hill-sanctuary'). This scene contains one of the few glimpses we are provided of the Rohirrim in their homelands other than as Riders at war. But Tolkien uses the images to draw the reader's attention away from the Rohirrim toward this great mountain where Theoden has commanded Eowyn to assemble the Muster of Rohan:

The road now led eastward straight across the valley, which was at that point little more than half a mile in width. Flats and meads of rough grass, grey now in the falling night, lay all about, but in front on the far side of the dale Merry saw a frowning wall, a last outlier of the great roots of the Starkhorn, cloven by the river in ages past.

Merry's attention is briefly diverted to the army of Riders, but since he cannot see much in the gloom he is brought back to the road before him:

...While he was peering from side to side the king's party came up under the looming cliff on the eastern side of the valley; and there suddenly the path began to climb, and Merry looked up in amazement. He was on a road the like of which he had never seen before, a great work of men's hands in years beyond the reach of song. Upwards it wound, coiling like a snake, boring its way across the sheer slope of rock. Steep as a stair, it looped backwards and forwards as it climbed. Up it horses could walk, and wains could be slowly hauled; but no enemy could come that way, except out of the air, if it was defended from above. At each turn of the road there were great standing stones that had been carved in the likeness of men, huge and clumsy-limbed, squatting cross-legged with their stumpy arms folded on fat bellies. Some in the wearing of the years had lost all features save the dark holes of their eyes that still stared sadly at the passers-by. The Riders hardly glanced at them. The Pukel-men they called them, and heeded them little: no power or terror was left in them; but Merry gazed at them with wonder and a feeling almost of pity, as they loomed up mournfully in the dusk.

After a while he looked back and found that he had already climbed some hundreds of feet above the valley, but still far below he could dimly see a winding line of Riders crossing the ford and filing along the road towards the camp prepared for them. Only the king and his guard were going up into the Hold.

At last the king's company came to a sharp brink, and the climbing road passed into a cutting between walls of rock, and so went up a short slope and out on to a wide upland. The Firienfield men called it, a green mountain-field of grass and heath, high above the deep-delved courses of the Snowbourn, laid upon the lap of the great mountains behind: the Starkhorn southwards, and northwards the saw-toothed mass of Irensaga, between when there faced the riders, the grim black wall of the Dwimorberg, the Haunted Mountain rising out of steep slopes of somber pines. Dividing the upland into two there marched a double line of unshaped standing stones that dwindled into the dusk and vanished in the trees. Those who dared to follow that road came soon

to the black Dimholt under Dwimorberg, and the menace of the pillar of stone, and the yawning shadow of the forbidden door.

Such was the dark Dunharrow, the work of long-forgotten men. Their name was lost and no song or legend remembered it. For what purpose they had made this place, as a town or secret temple or a tomb of kings, none could say. Here they laboured in the Dark Years, before ever a ship came to the western shores, or Gondor of the Dunedain was built; and now they had vanished, and only the old Pukel-men were left, still sitting at the turnings of the road.

Merry stared at the lines of marching stones: they were worn and black; some were leaning, some were fallen, some cracked or broken; they looked like rows of old and hungry teeth. He wondered what they could be, and he hoped that the king was not going to follow them into the darkness beyond. Then he saw that there were clusters of tents and booths on either side of the stony way; but these were not set near the trees, and seemed rather to huddle away from them towards the brink of the cliff. The greater number were on the right, where the Firienfield was wider; and on the left there was a smaller camp, in the midst of which stood a tall pavilion....

We can follow the path Merry did not take by looking at Aragorn's passage through Dunharrow in "The Passing of The Grey Company":

The list was still grey as they rode, for the sun had not yet climbed over the black ridges of the Haunted Mountain before them. A dread fell on them, even as they passed between the lines of ancient stones and so came to the Dimholt. There under the gloom of black trees that not even Legolas could long endure they found a hollow place opening at the mountains' root, and right in their path stood a single mighty stone like a finger of doom.

'My blood runs chill,' said Gimli, but the others were silent, and his voice fell dead on the dank fir-needles at his feet. The horses would not pass the threatening stone, until the riders dismounted and led them about. And so they came at last deep into the glen; and there stood a sheer wall of rock, and in the wall the Dark Door gaped before them like the mouth of night. Signs and figures were carved above its wide arch too dim to read, and fear flowed from it like a grey vapour.

Dunharrow has been supposed by some to be a construction of the Druedain, who are described in UNFINISHED TALES, and by others to be a construction of the men who drove the Druedain from the White Mountains, the men who later inhabited Enedwaith and Minhiriath. These were the Gwathuirrim, ancestors of the Dunlendings, the Men of Bree, and many of Gondor's folk as well. But the truth more probably lies in the area of a succession of inhabitants and builders.

The Pukel-men were undoubtedly carved by early Druedain, perhaps even in the First Age of the Sun, although that seems unlikely. Since the statues are positioned on a carefully constructed road, it must be that they were intended to guard the way to a stronghold of the Druedain. Such protection would have been required only if there were enemies or potential enemies living to the north of Ered Nimrais. And yet Tolkien writes that Dunharrow was built "before ever a ship came to the western shores", a reference (probably) to the return of the Dunedain to Middle-earth, although it could also refer to the great fleet of Valinor.

We know that the Dunedain first returned to Middle-earth in the year 600 of the Second Age, and that by Aldarion's day there were Gwathuirrim akin to the Dunlending race living along the

shores of the Gwathlo (this would be the 9th Century, less than 300 years after Vëantur's arrival in Lindon). It is therefore possible that a single enclave of Druedain continued to survive in the Ered Nimrais after the Dunlending tribes drove other Druedain out of the mountains.

But the Druedain of Dunharrow could not have held out forever even in that great refuge. They must have perished (slain or starved to death), or fled at last to join their kin either in the west (Druwaith Iaur on the point of Andrast), the north (the marshes along the shores of Enedwaith), or the east (Druadan Forest in Anorien). There is evidence that Gwathuirrim dwelt in Dunharrow, and probably they were members of the tribe that later became known as the Dead. The standing stones Merry and Aragorn see, which are not carved, seem to represent a less-developed stone-craft. Yet we know from the stories about the early Druedain that they were always skilled with stone, so they probably did not make these menhir-like monuments. Instead, those were probably placed by the Gwathuirrim.

The writing above the Dark Door also implies that someone other than the Druedain had a hand in the making of Dunharrow. It may be that the Gwathuirrim tribe had the ability to write, and they carved something above the door. Or it may be that a Numenorean hand had something to do with the carvings that Aragorn and his companions could no longer read. The latter seems less likely than that the Gwathuirrim made the carvings, but Theoden seems to describe a man of Numenorean descent when he tells Merry the legend of the Dark Door:

...It is said that when the Eorlingas came out of the North in time of need, Brego and his son Baldor climbed the Stair of the Hold and so came before the Door. On the threshold sat an old man, aged and withered as stone. Indeed for stone they took him, for he moved not, and he said no word, until they sought to pass him by and enter. And then a voice came out of him, as it were out of the ground, and to their amaze it spoke in the western tongue: the way is shut.

So we are left with many questions and enigmas. The ancient legacy of Dunharrow was already buried in forgotten wars and peoples by the time the Rohirrim settled in the region. One can only wonder what powerful tragedies unfolded there, and what days of glory or delight the Druedain, Gwathuirrim, and perhaps others had experienced there in past ages.

## **Wonders of the Third Age**

### **The Argonath**

One of the most impressive and majestic passages in THE LORD OF THE RINGS occurs when the Company of the Ring passes down Anduin. They have been on the river several days and come at last to "stony vales amid high moors" (as Celeborn described the region). The approach passes by gradually climbing cliffs which creep down to the river's edge, almost as if to dip their feet in the water so as to share in its glorious adventure and urge it onward to its destiny. Tolkien writes:

The rain, however, did not last long. Slowly the sky above grew lighter, and then suddenly the clouds broke, and their draggled fringes trailed away northward up the River. The fogs and mists were gone. Before the travelers lay a wide ravine, with great rocky sides to which clung, upon



shelves and in narrow crevices, a few thrawn trees. The channel grew narrower and the River swifter. Now they were speeding along with little hope of stopping or turning, whatever they might meet ahead. Over them was a lane of pale-blue sky, around them the dark overshadowed River, and before them black, shutting out the sun, the hills of Eryn Muil, in which no opening could be seen.

Frodo peering forward saw in the distance two great rocks approaching: like great pinnacles or pillars of stone they seemed. Tall and sheer and ominous they stood upon either side of the stream. A narrow gap appeared between them, and the River swept the boats towards it.

So much passes by in these two paragraphs. The landscape has changed and become forbidding, almost threatening. The travelers are set upon a path of virtually no return. They have entered a region where a great power once set its hand upon the world, and the power of Gondor at one time had extended this far north. We are led with the travelers down this awesome path toward a goal which would intimidate any unwary observer, but which invites home Aragorn, the Heir of Isildur:

'Behold the Argonath, the Pillars of the Kings!' cried Aragorn. 'We shall pass them soon. Keep the boats in line, and as far apart as you can! Hold the middle of the stream!'

In a subtle way Tolkien seems to be revealing something to us of Aragorn's true majesty and authority. He is a Ranger and a warrior, but also is the son of kings coming to claim his own, to defend his kindred in the south against Sauron's armies. At the very boundary of Gondor's ancient realm Aragorn assumes an authority Boromir the son of the Ruling Steward never tries to express.

This is the actual moment of Aragorn's entry into Gondor as something more than an adventurer or traveler. He leaves no doubt as to whom he thinks he is, whereas Frodo and the hobbits are overawed and stunned by their first perception of the power and majesty of the Dunedain in Middle-earth:

As Frodo was borne towards them the great pillars rose like towers to meet him. Giants they seemed to him, vast grey figures silent but threatening. Then he saw that they were indeed shaped and fashioned: the craft and power of old had wrought upon them, and still they preserved through the suns and rains of forgotten years the mighty likenesses in which they had been hewn. Upon great pedestals founded in the deep waters stood two great kings of stone: still with blurred eyes and crannied brows they frowned upon the North. The left hand of each was raised palm outwards in a gesture of warning; in each right hand there was an axe; upon each head there was a crumbling helm and crown. Great power and majesty they still wore, the silent wardens of a long-vanished kingdom. Awe and fear fell upon Frodo, and he cowered down, shutting his eyes and not daring to look up as the boat drew near. Even Boromir bowed his head as the boats whirled by, frail and fleeing as little leaves, under the enduring shadow of the sentinels of Numenore. So they passed into the dark chasm of the Gates.

Sheer rose the dreadful cliffs to unguessed heights on either side. Far off was the dim sky. The black waters roared and echoed, and a wind screamed over them. Frodo crouching over his knees heard Sam in front muttering and groaning: 'What a place! What a horrible place! Just let me get out of this boat, and I'll never wet my toes in a puddle again, let alone a river!'

## Parma Endorion

Perhaps Sam is expressing the feelings of all the hobbits at this point, and giving the reader a moment to pause and consider what his own reaction should be. The splendor and terror of the Argonath is poorly conveyed by the written word, although Tolkien has something more to say of these great works of the ancient Gondorians in one of his letters, written in October, 1958, to Rhona Beare:

The Numenoreans of Gondor were proud, peculiar, and archaic, and I think are best pictured in (say) Egyptian terms. In many ways they resembled 'Egyptians' -- the love of, and power to construct, the gigantic and massive. And in their great interest in ancestry and tombs....I think the crown of Gondor (the S. Kingdom) was very tall, like that of Egypt, but with wings attached, not set straight back but at an angle.

The Egyptians did in fact create such huge, imposing statues. The statue of Rameses II at Karnak stands today and another sculpture, a massive bust of Rameses, was recovered from Abu Simpel. The immense size of these works, though he never saw them in person, seems to have made a great impression on Tolkien, who had access to much information about ancient Egypt at Oxford if he desired it.

Like the Egyptians the Numenoreans of Gondor built "other works marvellous and strong...in the days of their power, at the Argonath, and at Aglarond, and at Erech; and in the circle of Angrenost, which men called Isengard, they made the Pinnacle of Orthanc of unbreakable stone."

The Argonath were not originally created by Isildur and Anarion, but rather were constructed by Minalcar (regent 1240 - 1304) soon after his war against the Easterlings in 1248. Tolkien writes that Minalcar "fortified the west shore of Anduin as far as the inflow of the Limlight, and forbade any stranger to pass down the River beyond the Eryn Muil." This seems a bit harsh, but the "strangers" seem not to have been men of Edainic blood. Rather, we learn in THE PEOPLES OF MIDDLE-EARTH that other men had long settled in the vales of Anduin:

The vague tradition preserved by the Hobbits of the Shire was that they had dwelt once in lands by a Great River, but long ago had left them, and found their way through or round high mountains, when they no longer felt at ease in their homes because of the multiplication of the Big Folk and of a shadow of fear that had fallen on the Forest. This evidently reflects the troubles of Gondor in the earlier part of the Third Age. The increase in Men was not the normal increase of those with whom they had lived in friendship, but the steady increase of invaders from the East, further south held in check by Gondor, but in the North beyond the bounds of the Kingdom harassing the older 'Atanic' inhabitants, and even in places occupying the Forest and coming through it into the Anduin valley....

The first hobbits entered Eriador around 1050, and it was not for another 200 years that Gondor would deal with the Easterlings, driving them back into Rhun. The implication thus is that even Minalcar could not completely eradicate the Easterlings between Anduin and Rhunaer. It appears that some must have survived in southern Mirkwood near Dol Guldur, which was not powerful enough to threaten Gondor but nonetheless could harbor some strength of Easterlings who might travel down the River. The fortifications of the west-bank of Anduin thus make sense, although Tolkien had originally envisioned some troubles with the Northmen themselves still living in the Vales of Anduin.

But positioned south of the Anduin forts as they were, the Argonath could not have been intended to hold back travelers. Rather, they symbolized the great power any strangers from the north would be rousing to anger should they pass so far southward without an invitation or permission. While the west-bank forts were manned the opportunity to procure such permission was easily available.

Hence, it should be no wonder that when Aragorn himself passes between the Argonath he does not feel the fear and awe that the others exude. Although the power of ancient Gondor had passed its memory had not, and that power was a part of his heritage. The Argonath were thus a part of his heritage, and he passed them "proud and erect...his hood...cast back, and his dark hair...blowing in the wind, a light...in his eyes: a king returning from exile to his own land."

## **The Bridge of Osgiliath**

We know very little about this great bridge, but it seems to have been quite huge, a typical 'Numenorean' work of Gondor. When Isildur and Anarion established the Kingdom of Gondor they built three cities: Minas Anor, Minas Ithil, and Osgiliath. Osgiliath was the chief city of the realm, "and the Numenoreans built there a great bridge, upon which there were towers and houses of stone wonderful to behold, and tall ships came up out of the sea to the quays of the city."

These "towers and houses of stone" are not described by Tolkien, and he seldom names them. But a few references can be found in the texts. In UNFINISHED TALES Meneldil says farewell to Isildur and his sons at the East gate of the Bridge. One almost gets the impression that at this time the entire city of Osgiliath must be contained on the bridge, but perhaps not. Isildur and Anarion had their thrones "set side by side in the Great Hall of Osgiliath." The placement and structure of the hall are not given, but it may be a part of the House of the Kings (see below), and perhaps one of the chief structures of the Bridge.

The Tower of the Stone was destroyed in the Kin-strife, and so the master Palantir which required more than one man to move was lost in the swift, deep waters of Anduin. Gandalf referred to the Dome of Stars at Osgiliath, where the stone rested, and presumably this was that portion of the tower where the Palantir was kept, implying perhaps that the tower was quite large. When Isildur left Gondor UNFINISHED TALES says there were few horses available in Osgiliath, but there is no mention of whether stables existed on the Bridge itself. It would seem, though, that if great towers and houses stood there, then the inhabitants may also have quartered their animals there, such as they had with them.

In the days of Tarannon Falastur, his queen, Beruthiel, lived in the King's House in Osgiliath. The house is not stated to have been on the bridge, but it contained "gardens...filled with tormented sculptures beneath cypresses and yews." It would be interesting indeed if the Bridge of Osgiliath were so large that it could contain a palace with gardens large enough to hold trees.

The attack on Osgiliath from Minas Morgul in 2475 resulted in the final destruction of the great Bridge. The city had long since been only a shadow of itself. Many of its people died in the Great Plague of 1636, and King Tarondor had removed the seat of the Kings to Minas Anor in

the aftermath. The Stewards maintained garrisons in Osgiliath to hold the bridge, but after 2475 it became less necessary to defend the city than it was to defend the bridges and fords.

There can be no doubt that Osgiliath experienced a period of growth at least in the early centuries of Gondor's existence, and the city even if confined to the Bridge originally must have flowed out onto both shores of Anduin. The river was quite wide, perhaps a mile wide, at the city's location, and the Bridge would have contained many houses and towers. Its population should have numbered in the thousands, and perhaps fleets of ships sailed under it as far north as Cair Andros. Of all the works of the Numenoreans in Middle-earth, the Bridge of Osgiliath must have been the greatest.

## **The Twin Fortresses of Aglarond and Angrenost**

There has been much debate concerning the purpose and origins of these two fortresses. At best we know that they were built by men of Numenorean race and that they figured prominently in the wars of the later Third Age. There is little enough written about the fortresses. In "Of The Rings Of Power And The Third Age" Tolkien says:

...The chief city of [Gondor] was Osgiliath, through the midst of which the Great River flowed; and the Numenoreans built there a great bridge, upon which there were towers and houses of stone wonderful to behold, and tall ships came up out of the sea to the quays of the city. Other strong places they built also upon either hand: Minas Ithil, the Tower of the Rising Moon, eastward upon a shoulder of the Mountains of Shadow as a threat to Mordor; and to the westward Minas Anor, the Tower of the Setting Sun, at the feet of Mount Mindolluin, as a shield against the wild men of the dales. In Minas Ithil was the house of Isildur, and in Minas Anor the house of Anarion, but they shared the realm between them and their thrones were set side by side in the Great Hall of Osgiliath. These were the chief dwellings of the Numenoreans in Gondor, but other works marvellous and strong they built in the land in the days of their power, at the Argonath, and at Aglarond, and at Erech; and in the circle of Angrenost, which Men called Isengard, they made the Pinnacle of Orthanc of unbreakable stone.

"The days of their power" could mean quite a few things. The Numenoreans assembled their greatest armies, Elrond tells us, during the days of the Last Alliance of Elves and Men. And yet Gondor reached the peak of its power during the days of Atanatar Alcarin, who lived more than 1,000 years after the overthrow of Sauron by the Last Alliance. It's unlikely that Tolkien envisioned the "days of their power" extending past the Gondorians' retreat from Mordor in 1636. The Great Plague so devastated their realm that they were no longer able to maintain the watch upon Sauron's realm afterward. And yet, Gondor weakened itself during the Kin-strife, which occurred some 200 years previously.

We know that Tarannon Falastur extended Gondor's control westward along the coasts of Middle-earth. He must have conquered the Anfalas, probably Andrast, and perhaps even Enedwaith. Angrenost and Aglarond would have provided him with valuable bases in that time, but they could also have been built to help control the Gap of Calenardhon. So it's probable that the fortresses were not built any later than circa TA 913 (the end of Falastur's reign). After his day the Ship-kings were concerned with taking Umbar and other parts of the Harad, so it's unlikely they would have needed any fortresses in the northern lands. In fact, since Falastur was himself the first of the Ship-kings, we may guess that he conducted his conquests from the Sea rather than by land.

So then what strategic value would either Angrenost or Aglarond have held for the Numenoreans "in the days of their power?" From Gondor's founding until the overthrow of Sauron Mordor was indeed a threat to the western lands, but Appendix A in THE LORD OF THE RINGS says that Elendil and his sons believed "that Sauron also had perished" in the ruin of Numenor, so the threat they would have perceived was not one of Sauron's return, but rather of the presence of those of his servants who had survived his death in Numenor.

However, if Angrenost and Aglarond were intended to defend Calenardhon against Mordor they were poorly positioned to do so. An enemy army could cross the entire province before reaching the fortresses. Anduin would have been a better place to defend the region against attacks from the east, and in the Third Age the river was indeed fortified for just such a purpose. It's hardly likely that the Gondorians possessed a military lore superior to that of the Numenoreans.

Yet Calenardhon was a part of early Gondor. We know this from the survey of the realm Isildur is said to have made in The Tradition Of Isildur, given in the chapter "Cirion and Eorl" in UNFINISHED TALES:

It is said that when Isildur returned from the War of the Last Alliance he remained for a time in Gondor, ordering the realm and instructing Meneldil his nephew, before he himself departed to take up the kingship of Arnor. With Meneldil and a company of trusted friends he made a journey about the borders of all the lands to which Gondor laid claim; and as they were returning from the northern bound to Anorien they came to the high hill that was then called Eilenaer but was afterwards called Amon Anwar 'Hill of Awe'. That was near to the centre of the lands of Gondor....

Isildur must have been in Calenardhon if he returned to Anorien from the north. We also know that Sauron had at one time positioned an army in the lands east of Calenardhon, for he is said to have burned the Entwives out of those regions, creating the Brown Lands, in an effort to slow the advance of the Host of Gil-galad and Elendil. Could Anarion have built the fortresses at that time? It seems unlikely, as they still would have served no purpose and the construction would have required many men and much time, of which Anarion is said to have had too few to withstand Sauron in any event.

## Parma Endorion

It seems logical that the Gwathuirim of Enedwaith were the reason for the construction of these fortresses. These people were related to the Men of Dunharrow, the "wild men of the dales" in the lands to the south, and to other men who had accepted Elendil's rule in Arnor. For whatever reason Enedwaith was not incorporated into either Arnor or Gondor and its peoples, hostile to the Numenoreans for centuries, were probably enemies of both realms.

Thus, it would be logical for Isildur and Anarion to have built the fortresses during the first century their realm existed. The presence of a Numenorean force in Aglarond would have helped defend Calenardhon against the Men of Dunharrow (although it could only have represented a threat to them from the flank), and perhaps was one reason that Isildur was able to conclude a peace with them. When they broke their oath to march with Gondor in war, the fortress would have helped convince them not to attack the Numenoreans from the rear.

But what was so wondrous about these two fortresses? The fortifications themselves were not extensive. Angrenost had its circle but the great wall of Aglarond was built late in the Third Age by the Rohirrim. Orthanc was a wonder in its construction, being tall and so well built that even the earth-crumbling power of the Ents could not harm it. Isildur and Anarion (or their heirs) placed a Palantir in Orthanc, using the fortress to watch over the northern bounds of their realm.

Aglarond really only had the glittering caves to mark it as something special. But it is perhaps significant that Gondor (and Rohan) never mined the caves despite the obviously rich mineral deposits there. The natural beauty of the caverns may not have been a shrine, but nonetheless must have inspired a sense of awe akin to that which Gimli and Legolas expressed when they saw the caverns for the first time. The Numenoreans may indeed have appreciated the special beauty of the caverns and elected never to alter them for fear of destroying one of the great wonders of Middle-earth.

Taken together, Angrenost and Aglarond represented a vivid memory of the power of Numenor. Even at the end of the Third Age they provided visitors with a majestic and sensational view even though the great power which raised them had long since retreated south beyond the White Mountains.

## Chapter 12: A Chronology For Tolkien's Four Ages

The First Age dates were mostly taken from THE WAR OF THE JEWELS, the eleventh volume of THE HISTORY OF MIDDLE-EARTH. Many of these events are uncertain and for the last 100 years or so things get very tangled and complex. I have two years for each of several events (such as the destruction of Arvernien by the Fëanorians -- 534 and 538).

A much more complete chronology for the First Age can be found at [Parma Ambarnatsë](http://www.unet.univie.ac.at/~a9001168/WebBook/) (<http://www.unet.univie.ac.at/~a9001168/WebBook/>). The following chronology is retained from the original Parma Endorion for the sake of completeness. A few additions have been made for this edition.

The First Age lasted about 590 years. It is explicitly stated in at least one place that it lasted this long. The War of Wrath lasted from 545 to 587 and the Elves spent three years building ships in which to sail to Valinor. We know that Elros died in SA 442 at the age of 500, so he and Elrond (twins) were born in FA 532.

The following abbreviations are used:

FA -- First Age  
SA -- Second Age  
TA -- Third Age  
FO -- Fourth Age  
AYS -- Absolute Years of the Sun

Dating By Age	AYS	
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FA 11		Fingolfin enters Hithlum.
FA 77		Fingolfin becomes High King of the Noldor-in-Exile in Hithlum.
FA 20	20	Mereth Aderthad.
c.FA 51	51	About this time, Finrod establishes the Kingdom of Nargothrond.
FA 60	60	Dagor Aglareb.
FA 65	65	Finrod rebuilds Eglarest and Brithombar.
FA 104	104	Turgon settles in Gondolin.
FA 260	260	Glaurung first appears and is wounded by Fingon and his archers.
FA 310	310	Finrod meets Bëor and the First House of the Edain (the Bëorians). Bëor's people settle in Estolad.
FA 311	311	The Haladin enter Ossiriand but move north and settle in Dor Caranthir.

## Parma Endorion

Dating	By Age	AYS	
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FA	314	314	The Marachians enter Beleriand and settle in Estolad.
c.FA	315	315	Fingolfin sends messengers to welcome the Edain to Beleriand.
FA	365	365	Council of the Edain is held in Estolad. Many Marachians return to Eriador. Many Bëorians migrate south.
FA	375	375	The Haladin are nearly destroyed by Orcs. Haleth leads them to Estolad.
c.FA	380	380	About this time, the Haladin settle in the forest of Brethil.
FA	410	410	Finrod makes Boromir, great-grandson of Bëor, Lord of Ladros.
c.FA	420	420	Fingolfin makes Hador Lord of Dor-lomin and most of the Marachians settle there.
FA	455	455	Dagor Bragollach. Fingon becomes High King of the Noldor-in-Exile. Many Marachians and Bëorians flee Estolad and return to Eriador. Barahir becomes Lord of Ladros. Most of the Bëorians flee to Dor-Lomin.
c.FA	457	457	About this time the last of the Bëorians flee Ladros and Barahir becomes an outlaw.
c.FA	460	460	About this time the Swarthy Men first enter Beleriand. The Folk of Bor settle north of Himring and the Folk of Ulfang settle in Thargelion.
FA	473	473	Nirnaeth Arnoediad. Turgon becomes High King of the Noldor-in-Exile.
FA	474	474	Brithombar and Eglarest are taken. Cirdan and Ereinion settle on Balar.
FA	484	484	Turin flees Doriath.
FA	495	495	Battle of Tumhalad. Nargothrond is destroyed by Glaurung.
FA	499	499	Turin slays Glaurung and then himself.
FA	500	500	Morgoth frees Hurin. Hurin visits Brethil.
FA	504	504	Beren and Luthien pass away.
c.FA	506	506	Doriath destroyed by the Fëanorians.
FA	510	510	Gondolin is destroyed. Ereinion Gil-galad becomes High King of the Noldor-in-exile.
FA	532	532	Elrond and Elros are born in Arvernien.
c.FA	538	538	Arvernien destroyed by the Fëanorians. Elrond and Elros fostered by Maglor.



Dating	By Age	AYS	
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FA	545	545	The War of Wrath begins.
FA	587	587	Breaking of Thangorodrim. Elrond (and Elros?) present at the battle.
FA	590	590	Many Eldar leave Middle-earth.
SA	1	591	Cirdan establishes Mithlond. Gil-galad establishes Forlond. Celeborn establishes Harlond?
SA	32	622	Cirdan's mariners take the Edain to the isle of Elenna (Numenor).
SA	40	630	Latest probable date for founding of Edhellond.
SA	442	1032	Elros Tar-Minyatur dies in Numenor.
SA	500	1090	By this time, many Sindar and Noldor have migrated eastward and Oropher and Amdir have probably established their kingdoms among the Silvan Elves.
SA	600	1190	Vëantur the Numenorean sails to Middle-earth. Gil-galad arranges for him to meet with Edainic men from Eriador.
SA	700	1290	Many Noldor and some Sindar settle in Eregion.
SA	725	1315	Vëantur brings Aldarion to Middle-earth.
c.SA	750	1340	Ost-in-Edhil is founded.
c.SA	750-	1340-	
	790	1380	Sometime during these years, Aldarion builds the seasonal haven of Vinyalondë, which will more than a thousand years later be known as Lond Daer Ened.
SA	882	1472	Gil-galad writes to Tar-Meneldur to ask him for aid against the growing darkness.
c.SA	1000	1590	About this time, Sauron settles in Mordor and begins the building of the Barad-dur.
SA	1075	1665	Numenor abandons Tar-Aldarion's works in Middle-earth.
c.SA	1200	1790	About this time, Gil-galad refuses to let Annatar enter Lindon. He sends emissaries to other Elvish lands to warn the Elves against befriending Annatar. Annatar settles in Eregion. Numenor changes its policies in Middle-earth and the Numenoreans begin to colonize Middle-earth.
c.SA	1300	1890	For the next two hundred years or so, some Eldar leave Eregion.

## Parma Endorion

Dating	By Age	AYS	
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SA 1500	2090		Sauron leaves Eregion and returns to Mordor. The Gwaith-i-Mirdain begin to forge the Great Rings of Power.
SA 1590	2180		Celebrimbor forges Vilya, Narya, and Nenya.
SA 1600	2190		Sauron forges the One and the Elves learn his true identity. Numenor begins to send reinforcements and supplies to Lindon. The Gwathlo river is fortified.
SA 1695	2285		Sauron invades Eriador. Gil-galad sends Elrond to Eregion with an army.
SA 1697	2287		Sauron destroys Eregion. Elrond retreats north to found Imladris. The west-gate of Khazad-dum is closed.
c.SA 1698	2288		Sauron overruns Eriador and Rhovanion.
c.SA 1700	2290		A great Numenorean navy under the command of Ciryatur reaches Lindon and Sauron is thrown back from the Lhun.
SA 1701	2291		With Numenor's help, Gil-galad defeats Sauron and drives him from Eriador.
c.SA 1702	2292		Gil-galad holds the first White Council and names Elrond his Viceroy in Eriador.
c.SA 1800	2390		About this time, the Numenoreans begin to make conquests in Middle-earth. This may also be the time three Numenorean lords receive rings of power from Sauron.
c.SA 1869	2459		Tar-Ciryatan becomes King of Numenor and begins to oppress men in Middle-earth.
c.SA 2280	2870		Umbar is fortified by the Numenoreans.
c.SA 2350	2940		Pelargir is established.
c.SA 2540-	3130-		Calmacil conquers large areas in
2737	3327		Middle-earth.
c.SA 3145-	3735-		Pharazôn wages war against Sauron in Middle-earth.
SA 3262	3852		Sauron taken to Numenor. Gil-galad begins to extend his power eastward from Lindon.
SA 3320	3910		Downfall of Numenor. Elendil and his sons establish Arnor and Gondor.
SA 3429	4019		Sauron attacks Gondor. The Last Alliance of Elves and Men is formed by Gil-galad and Elendil.
SA 3434	4024		Battle of Dagorlad.
SA 3441	4031		Sauron battles Gil-galad and Elendil. End of the War. Mordor destroyed.

Dating	By Age	AYS	
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TA	1	4032	Cirdan becomes Lord of Mithlond and Lindon. Isildur becomes High King in Gondor. Amroth becomes King of Lothlorien. Thranduil becomes King of Northern Greenwood the Great.
TA	2	4033	Isildur slain by Orcs near Amon Lanc.
TA	3	4034	Ohtar reaches Imladris.
TA	10	4041	Valandil becomes High King in Arnor.
TA	109	4150	Elrond marries Celebrian.
TA	130	4171	Elladan and Elrohir are born.
TA	241	4282	Arwen is born.
TA	249	4290	Valandil dies.
TA	490	4521	The first Easterlings attack Gondor.
TA	652	4893	Valandur, High King in Arnor, dies in battle (the only High King after Isildur to die a violent death).
TA	830	5071	Tarannon Falastur begins to extend Gondor's power along the coast lands.
TA	863	5104	Arnor is divided into Arthedain, Cardolan, and Rhudaur. No more High Kings of the Dunedain are proclaimed. Amlaith, King of Arthedain, moves to Fornost Erain.
c.TA	1000	5031	A shadow falls on Greenwood and it becomes known thereafter as Mirkwood.
c.TA	1050	5081	About this time the Istari come to Middle-earth, landing at Mithlond. Thranduil may at this time move his people north away from Dol Guldur. The Harfoots begin to cross Hithaeglor.
c.TA	1150	5181	The Fallohides and Stoors migrate to Eriador. The Stoors settle in the Angle.
c.TA	1200	5231	Gondor reaches the height of its power.
c.TA	1300	5331	Angmar is founded. Orcs begin to appear in the Hithaeglor, attacking the Dwarves. Many Stoors flee to Dunland or Anduin.
TA	1356	5387	Rhudaur attacks Cardolan and Arthedain. Cirdan leads or sends an army to Arthedain.
TA	1409	5440	Angmar invades Arthedain. Cirdan and Elrond help end the invasion. Rhudaur ceases to exist. The last prince of Cardolan perishes. Arthedain absorbs what's left of Cardolan.

## Parma Endorion

Dating	By Age	AYS	
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TA 1600	5631		Marco and Blanco found the Shire.
TA 1636	5667		The Great Plague devastates Eriador and Gondor.
c.TA 1850	5881		Wainriders enslave the Northmen. Some escape to the Vales of Anduin and in time become the Eöthëod.
TA 1899	5930		Battle of the Camp.
TA 1974	6005		Angmar destroys Arthedain. Arvedui dies.
TA 1975	6006		Battle of Fornost Erain. End of Angmar.
TA 1977	6008		Frumgar leads the Eöthëod north.
TA 1980	6011		The Dwarves of Khazad-dum release the Balrog from its prison.
TA 1981	6012		The Dwarves abandon Khazad-dum and many Elves flee Lothlorien. Amroth dies and Nimrodel is lost. Edhellond is finally abandoned by the Elves.
c.TA 1985	6016		About this time, Celeborn and Galadriel take up the rule of Lorien. Mithrellas weds Imrazôr the Numenorean in Belfalas.
TA 1999	6030		The Dwarves of Durin's line settle in Erebor (under Thrain I).
TA 2060	6091		The Watchful Peace begins when Sauron withdraws from Dol Guldur to Rhun.
TA 2210	6241		The Dwarves abandon Erebor.
TA 2460	6491		Sauron returns to Dol Guldur and the Watchful Peace comes to an end.
TA 2463	6494		Galadriel forms the second White Council.
TA 2510	6541		Battle of Parth Celebrant. Eorl leads the Eöthëod south to Gondor's aid. Rohan is founded.
TA 2590	6621		Thrór re-establishes his people in Erebor. Grór settles in Eryn Engrin.
TA 2758	6789		The Long Winter begins. Rohan is invaded. Gondor is attacked.
TA 2770	6801		Smaug attacks Erebor and Dale. Thrór and his family escape. Many of Durin's Folk settle in Eryn Engrin. Girion of Dale's wife and young child escape to Esgaroth.
TA 2799	6830		Battle of Nanduhirion. Azog slain.
TA 2851	6882		The White Council meets. Saruman urges caution.
TA 2931	6962		Birth of Aragorn II.

Dating	By Age	AYS	
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TA	2941	6972	Thorin and Company return to Erebor. Battle of the Five Armies. Bolg slain. The White Council drives Sauron from Dol Guldur. Erebor is re-established by Dain.
TA	2944	6975	Bard re-establishes the kingdom of Dale.
TA	2951	6985	Elrond reveals Aragorn's true identity to him. Aragorn meets and falls in love with Arwen.
TA	3017	7048	Aragorn brings Gollum to Thranduil.
TA	3019	7050	The War of the Ring. Sauron overthrown. Aragorn establishes the Reunited Kingdom and marries Arwen. Celeborn establishes the Kingdom of East Lorien.
TA	3021	7052	Elrond, Galadriel, and Gandalf leave Middle-earth, taking Frodo and Bilbo with them.
c.FO	1	7053	About this time, Legolas and Gimli lead part of their peoples to Gondor?
FO	6	7058	Aragorn makes the Shire a Free Land.
FO	11	7063	Meriadoc becomes Master of Buckland.
FO	13	7065	Peregrin becomes Thain of the Shire.
FO	15	7067	Aragorn visits Annuminas.
FO	21	7073	Samwise, Rose, and Elanor visit Gondor.
FO	31	7083	Aragorn adds the Westmarch to the Shire.
FO	34	7087	Fastred of Greenholm becomes first Warden of the Westmarch.
FO	61	7113	Samwise sails over Sea.
FO	63	7115	Death of Eomer.
FO	120	7172	Death of Aragorn. Arwen returns to Lorien. Legolas and Gimli sail over Sea.
FO	121	7173	Death of Arwen in Lorien.
FO	172	7224	Last notations made in the Thain's Book by Findegil.
c.FO	220	7272	Death of Eldarion, son of Aragorn and Arwen.

## Chapter 13: Sources Used For Research

Following are the primary sources I use in my research. I do not by any means rely solely on one source for my research into historical or archaeological questions (although Malcolm Todd has a pretty good reputation for writing books that appeal to mass audiences).

Books such as those by Fonstad and Foster are really secondary sources and they contain mistakes, but they are good reference volumes nonetheless without which I would be hopelessly lost on some issues.

Carpenter, Humphrey

--ed., THE LETTERS OF J.R.R. TOLKIEN, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1981.  
ISBN 0-395-31555-7

Fonstad, Karen Wynn

--THE ATLAS OF MIDDLE-EARTH, Revised Edition, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1991.  
ISBN 0-395-53516-6

Foster, Robert

--THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO MIDDLE-EARTH, Ballantine, 1978. ISBN 0-345-27520-9

Hammond, Wayne G., and Christina Scull

--J.R.R. TOLKIEN: ARTIST & ILLUSTRATOR, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1995.  
ISBN 0-395-74816-X

Todd, Malcolm

--EVERYDAY LIFE OF THE BARBARIANS: GOTHs, FRANKs, AND VANDALS,  
Dorset Press, 1972. ISBN 0-88029-176-1

Tolkien, Christopher, ed., THE HISTORY OF MIDDLE-EARTH

--Vol. I, The Book Of Lost Tales, Part One, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1984.  
ISBN 0-395-35439-0

--Vol. II, The Book Of Lost Tales, Part Two, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1984.  
ISBN 0-395-36614-3

--Vol. III, The Lays Of Beleriand, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1985. ISBN 0-395-39429-5

--Vol. V, The Lost Road And Other Writings, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1987.  
ISBN 0-395-45519-7

--Vol. X, Morgoth's Ring, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1993. ISBN 0-395-68092-1

--Vol. XII, The Peoples of Middle-earth, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1996.  
ISBN 0-395-82760-4

--Vol. VI, The Return Of The Shadow, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1988.  
ISBN 0-395-49863-5

--Vol. IX, Sauron Defeated, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1992. ISBN 0-395-60649-7

- Vol. IV, *The Shaping Of Middle-earth*, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1986.  
ISBN 0-395-42501-8
- Vol. VII, *The Treason Of Isengard*, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1989.  
ISBN 0-395-51562-9
- Vol. XI, *The War Of The Jewels*, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1994. ISBN 0-395-71041-3
- Vol. VIII, *The War Of The Ring*, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1990. ISBN 0-395-56008-X

Tolkien, John Ronald Reuel

- THE ANNOTATED HOBBIT, Douglas Anderson, ed., Houghton Mifflin Company, 1988.
- THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING, 2nd ed., Houghton Mifflin Company, 1993.  
ISBN 0-395-48931-8
- THE RETURN OF THE KING, 2nd ed., Houghton Mifflin Company, 1993.  
ISBN 0-395-48930-X
- THE TOLKIEN READER, Ballantine Books, 1966.
- THE ROAD GOES EVER ON, with Donald Swan, Ballantine, 1967.
- THE SILMARILLION, Christopher Tolkien, ed., Houghton Mifflin Company, 1977.  
ISBN 0-395-25730-1
- THE TWO TOWERS, 2nd ed., Houghton Mifflin Company, 1993. ISBN 0-395-48933-4
- UNFINISHED TALES, Christopher Tolkien, ed., Houghton Mifflin Company, 1980.  
ISBN 0-395-29917-9

Shippey, T.A.

- THE ROAD TO MIDDLE-EARTH, Acacia Press, Inc., 1992. ISBN 0-261-10275-3

## **Appendix A: New Information**

### **Orcs**

Since I first published the revised Parma Endorion, I've been contacted by several people who have pointed out a great blunder for me concerning the appearance of Orcs. I unwittingly omitted what is perhaps the best-known and certainly most controversial description for Orcs J.R.R. Tolkien ever wrote. How could I possibly have done such a thing? Well, we all make mistakes. At the time when I first wrote the essays for Parma Endorion my knowledge of Tolkien's world was less than what it is today. I had not yet acquired a copy of Tolkien's letters, and so did not have access to a great deal of material. When I revised the essays in 1998, I was in a state of transition in my personal life and dealing with many conflicts. So I overlooked some important information. (It may also be that, for some reason now long-forgotten, I may have felt the passage too controversial for inclusion. Such a decision, if I made it, would have been incorrect.)

In 1958 J.R.R. Tolkien reviewed a preliminary script for a proposed film adaptation of The Lord of the Rings. Based on his acerbic response to the script, most fans are pleased that movie was never made. Tolkien wrote a letter to Forrest J. Ackerman in which he provided many corrections and complaints. The one point concerning Orcs has become fixed in Tolkien arcana and its exclusion from even the revised edition of Parma Endorion is inexcusable. On the other hand, once I'd posted the Web site, altering it was out of the question. I have finally decided to include the citation here in a new appendix, which causes the least disruption to the design of Parma Endorion.

In Letter 210, Tolkien wrote "19. Why does Z put beaks and feathers on Orcs!?" ("Z" stands for Morton Grady Zimmerman, the first person ever to have written a screenplay based on Tolkien's work.)

"The Orcs," Tolkien continues a little further on, "are definitely stated to be corruptions of the 'human' forms seen in Elves and Men. They are (or were) squat, broad, flat nosed, sallow-skinned, with wide mouths and slant eyes: in fact degraded and repulsive versions of the (to Europeans) least lovely Mongol-types."



Much has been made of this citation. Some people have gone so far as to call Tolkien a racist, alleging he was implying the Orcs were to be equated with Asian peoples. He is careful to say, however, that the Orcs were "degraded and repulsive versions" of those Mongol peoples who would be least attractive to European sensibilities. Some people have suggested Tolkien may have been referring to the Huns, who left an indelible mark in the western European psyche. Whether the Orcs are intended to be "degraded and repulsive versions" of Huns is a mystery we cannot resolve, but it is clear that Tolkien felt a Mongoloid base was necessary for Orcish appearance. Not because he equated Asians with evil, or thought them ugly. But because he needed a human model which, when distorted beyond realistic appearance, might appear monstrous and corrupted. In fact, many Asian cultures represent demons and evil gods in a similar fashion. I feel Tolkien's choice was inspired by a broad understanding of mythology, and not by racism.