

On the Dodge Collection of Tolkien Books & Ephemera

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My entry for the 2012 Applestein-Sweren Prize is my collection of books and ephemera related to J.R.R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* fantasy series. A focus on Tolkien's work is the primary unifying theme of the collection, which includes a number of Tolkien's books and writings, commentary and scholarship on his work, and interpretive artwork from a number of sources. While a *Lord of the Rings* collection existing in 2012 must in some ways acknowledge the three films directed by Peter Jackson, this collection intentionally does not include the films themselves or promotional or supplemental materials from the films, except as represented in two items: a handmade scrapbook collecting media related to the release of the final film and a printed screenplay. When I began my collection, its primary purpose was to allow me to develop and deepen my knowledge of Middle-earth and its fantasy reality, so works about Tolkien himself are rare as well. Most of the writings in my collection, including the scholarly commentary, take Middle-earth on its own terms. My primary intention when creating this collection was to allow for complex and complete internal experiences of Tolkien's fantasy world.

My collection started with a gift from my father and in the beginning grew largely through gifts. Because of my deep enthusiasm for *The Lord of the Rings* that bordered on obsession throughout my adolescence, everyone who knew me understood that a gift related to Tolkien was guaranteed to satisfy. For a number of years, every gift-giving holiday brought another wave of books to add to my collection. Often, the books came

directly from a long wishlist I kept and made available online. I also received things like clothing, jewelry, DVDs, posters, and other related ephemera. In a way, the very existence of my collection speaks to the intensity of my love for Tolkien's work, because it became such a defining feature of my conversations and personality for a while that people simply began to associate me with *Lord of the Rings*. Classmates and family members brought me every *Lord of the Rings* item they found and immediately sought one out if they needed a gift for me. My collection began when I was very young and did not have the resources to create it myself, so it was only through the generosity of adults who knew me that I was able to start building such a comprehensive library.

The economist Paul Kruger includes *The Lord of the Rings* in his two-item list of books that can change a bookish fourteen-year-old's life, and it is definitely true that *The Lord of the Rings* changed my life as a bookish young teen. When I first read Tolkien's famous Trilogy, the last *Lord of the Rings* film had yet to be released, *Harry Potter* dominated as the number one fantasy series for young adults, and I was thirteen years old, with more imagination than friends. My father, who had loved the books as a young man, decided that I was old enough for Tolkien and gave me a rather unwieldy paperback edition that contained the entire *Lord of the Rings* Trilogy. At the time, I was struggling with social isolation and bullying at school, a growing alienation from my family and the faith I was raised in, and the type of existential frustrations common in young people whose perceptiveness has outpaced their emotional maturity. I immediately fell in love with Middle-earth and its characters and became a deeply enthusiastic Tolkien fan. I related best to Frodo, someone who was at once too small and too large to fit into the world around him.

My imagination and loneliness combined meant that I spent a good number of my early teenaged years in Middle-earth, either reading and re-reading my Tolkien books or deep in a daydream-like fugue that transported me from an empty cafeteria table to Bag End, from a boring class to the epic Battle of Helm's Deep. I wore a replica of the One Ring on a chain around my neck, and my beloved green Hobbit dress still hangs in my closet. My school notebooks from that time are full of notes in Elvish runes and drawings of Tolkien's characters. I even developed a preference for green and yellow clothing, since Tolkien's notes indicate that those colors are most frequently worn by Hobbits. Though my extreme retreat into the fantasy world of Middle-earth did little to help me gain favor with my peers and at times wore my family's patience thin, it became a creative and emotional outlet for me in place of other more self-destructive ways of coping with a difficult adolescence. My appreciation for Tolkien's work has matured, but I will never forget the way, just as Sam carried Frodo out of the darkness and Frodo led Middle-earth into a new Age, Tolkien's world and characters rescued me when I needed a fantasy to believe in.

Now that I am older and able to read Tolkien in a larger context of literary scholarship rather than purely as a retreat into fantasy, my collection is slowly maturing along with me, growing to include more works of criticism to accompany Tolkien's fiction. I look forward to building my collection further to reflect my changing tastes as well as the still-changing tides of Tolkien scholarship. No matter what books I add, however, my Tolkien collection will always center on the Trilogy and Tolkien's other artwork and narratives that comprise the vast world of Middle-earth. My library will always be a portal into Middle-earth, waiting ready for me whenever I want to return.

Annotated Bibliography

Carus, Marianne, ed. *Muse Magazine*. Vol.7, No.9. November/December 2003. [IMG 1]

Muse Magazine is a magazine of science, history, literature, and art published by The Smithsonian for an audience of young people. The 2003 November/December edition was almost entirely devoted to articles about Tolkien and his body of work. It includes a parody of the Elvish languages, an article about the special effects used in the films, letters from young fans of the books, and an article about the history of dragons. What makes this magazine unique among other items in my collection is that it is intended for young readers, which provides a good example of how Tolkien's work appealed to audiences of all backgrounds and keeps my collection tied to its roots as one begun by an imaginative and enthusiastic child. Though my Tolkien collection and my appreciation for the books have both matured, I first fell in love with *The Lord of the Rings* when I was in middle school. This *Muse* captures many of the reasons that Tolkien's fantasy is so captivating, even for young readers, despite its complexity and often very dark themes.

Day, David. *Characters from Tolkien: A Bestiary*. London: Chancellor Press, 2001. [IMG 2 – representative item]

Though a first glance may seem to indicate that David Day's *Bestiary* is intended to serve as a reference book for a reader wanting more information about a character in one of Tolkien's books, its detailed illustrations and long narrative entries make it a pleasure to read in its own right. While the *Bestiary* was originally added to my collection as another reference book, it also serves another purpose that has become more important after the release of the four *Lord of the Rings* films: offering a visual alternative to the now ubiquitous images of Peter Jackson's films. David Day includes illustrations from eleven different artists, some of which would be almost unrecognizable to a viewer only familiar with the films. The presence of Day's illustrated *Bestiary* in my collection continues to remind me that there are as many Middle-earths as there are readers of Tolkien and to reawaken my own imagination every time I return.

Day, David. *Tolkien A-Z*. 2nd ed. 1993. London: Chancellor Press, 1996. [IMG 3]

David Day's encyclopedia of creatures, places, plants, and events from Middle-earth is less exhaustive than J.E.A. Tyler's *Complete Tolkien Companion*, but the entries that are catalogued are more comprehensive and often include illustrations from a variety of sources. This was a later addition to my collection, purchased at a used bookstore by a close friend, who included a personalized inscription.

Dodge, Lily, ed. "Lord of the Rings Scrapbook." Compiled 2003-2004. [IMG 4 & IMG 5]

I compiled this scrapbook in 2003 and 2004, when the films and their cast were constantly in the news. It includes newspaper and magazine clippings from a variety of sources, as well as other ephemera. Some pages feature *Lord of the Rings* valentines, others are full of drawings of the characters, and others include cartoons parodying the films. Most pages also include handwritten commentary from me. This scrapbook provides not only a record of the media coverage of the films and books during the

release of the final film, but also a record of my evolving appreciation for Tolkien's work and its legacy. Unfortunately, I was very young when I created the scrapbook and so very little information about the clippings (such as dates or sources) is preserved.

Fonstad, Karen Wynn. *The Atlas of Middle-earth*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1991. [IMG 6]

Fonstad's comprehensive atlas is full of a variety of two-toned maps depicting cities, natural structures, battles, migration patterns, and buildings from Middle-earth. It also includes other information about the world, including language trees, population statistics, and notes on vegetation, climate, and landforms. Perhaps my favorite feature of the atlas is the "Pathway Table." It chronicles the entire journey undertaken by Frodo and the Fellowship, beginning at Bag End on September 21, 3018 and ending at Mount Doom on March 25, 3019. The table includes dates (which I used to fill out my *Lord of the Rings* – see entry NUMBER), distances traveled, campsites, mileage, and miles per hour for each leg of the Fellowship's journey. The complaint that I hear most often about Tolkien's work is that his long descriptive passages detailing Middle-earth's topography can be discouragingly dense. However, a reader equipped with Fonstad's atlas will never become disoriented in their journey through Middle-earth.

Garth, John. *Tolkien and the Great War: The Threshold of Middle-earth*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2003. [IMG 7]

This is the only book currently in my collection that focuses on Tolkien's life rather than his work. Part biography, part critical analysis, it examines Tolkien's experiences in WWI and how those experiences may have influenced his own work. What resonates most with me about Garth's portrayal of Tolkien as a young soldier is his in-depth discussion of the friendships Tolkien made and lost during that time. It does much to remind readers that as real as the cast of characters in *The Lord of the Rings* may seem in their own right, their origins are firmly rooted our world.

The Harvard Lampoon. *Bored of the Rings*. 1969. New York: Penguin Books, 1993. [IMG 8]

When I fell in love with *Lord of the Rings* after receiving the books as a gift from my father, he then gave me the classic Harvard Lampoon parody, *Bored of the Rings*. Slightly vulgar and incredibly funny, it closely parodies the style and plotlines of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*. Though some of the humor is basic or crude enough to stand on its own, most of the wit and subtleties can only be appreciated by readers who are familiar with Tolkien's work and style, making it a strong addition to a Tolkien library that provides the context it needs to be properly understood.

Lobdell, Jared, ed. *A Tolkien Compass*. 2nd ed. Chicago: Open Court Publishing Company, 2003. [IMG 9]

A Tolkien Compass is a collection of critical essays focused on Tolkien's writings. The topics range from a Freudian analysis of Bilbo's psychological journey to a discussion of

the Scouring of the Shire as a commentary on fascism. These essays provide a more analytical and academic perspective on Tolkien's fantasy and allow for more depth of interpretation as a reader moves through the books in my collection. As a student of literary criticism, I find this an especially helpful guide.

Noel, Ruth S. *The Languages of Tolkien's Middle-earth*. 1974. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1980. [IMG 10 – representative item]

Ruth S. Noel's small but comprehensive book covers all fourteen of the languages Tolkien created for Middle-earth. It includes translations of quotations from the books, dictionaries of all the known terms in the various languages, grammar and punctuation rules, language trees, and alphabets and runes. This was one of the earliest additions to my collection and I studied it closely, developing my own ability to read and write fluently in Tolkien's runes and Elvish script. It serves as an important reference to help me translate passages from Tolkien's books and illustrations in my collection.

"The Ring of Power." Legal tender coin struck by the Royal Mint and issued on behalf of the Reserve Bank of New Zealand. 2003. [IMG 11]

The \$1 commemorative coin from New Zealand was struck in honor of the release of the *Lord of the Rings* films, which were filmed largely in New Zealand. This "Ring of Power" version features an image of the One Ring as well as the Ring's inscription and measures 38.61mm in diameter. It is held in a fold-out display case with stills and quotations from the movie printed on both sides. A close friend brought it back for me after a trip to New Zealand. Though it is not a book, I consider it one of the jewels of my collection because it is so unusual and has a personal significance.

Smith, David E. (Turgon). *The Tolkien Fan's Medieval Reader*. Cold Spring Harbor: Cold Spring Press, 2004. [IMG 12]

The Tolkien Fan's Medieval Reader is a large collection of medieval writings that inspired Tolkien's writings. Tolkien, as most fans know, was a professor at Oxford, where he specialized in Old English, Middle English, and Old Norse. The *Medieval Reader* includes texts Tolkien would have taught, studied, or otherwise been familiar with, as well as short commentaries introducing each section. These classics are enjoyable in their own right, but they also provide an important context for Tolkien's work in the 1900s, allowing a reader to recognize the literary ancestors of Middle-earth and gain insight into the artistic legacy that Tolkien inherited and then contributed to. Another thing that makes *The Tolkien Fan's Medieval Reader* an interesting addition to my collection is its author, who published the book under his online handle, Turgon. Turgon (or David Smith) is a frequent contributor to TheOneRing.net, a major website for discussion of Tolkien's work, a well known Tolkien scholar. The fact that this book was born out of an online community of Tolkien fans and scholars allowed me, a younger reader of Tolkien, to realize that my appreciation for Tolkien's work placed me into dialogue and fellowship with an international community of readers and scholars.

Tolkien, J.R.R. *Bilbo's Last Song*. New York: Alfred A Knopf, 1992. [IMG 13 – representative item]

This small hardback book contains a short rhyming poem written by Tolkien about Bilbo's final journey West. It serves as a sort of epilogue to *The Lord of the Rings*, tying up the story of the Hobbits and the Ring with a poignant but sweet finality. Each page spread features one four-line stanza and illustrations by Pauline Baynes depicting Bilbo as he prepares to leave Middle-earth and reflects on his earlier adventures. However, perhaps even more interesting than the poem and its rich illustrations are the endnotes. Written by Baynes, these endnotes explain how she chose the illustrations for each page, then quote the passages from Tolkien's books that each illustration attempted to capture. This allows a reader to transition between a scene in *The Hobbit* and a page in *Bilbo's Last Song*, envisioning the scene itself as well as the way it will impact Bilbo after he returns to the Shire. This visual and textual dialogue between Tolkien's texts and between author and artist greatly enriches a reader's experience of Tolkien's work and makes *Bilbo's Last Song* an important addition to any Tolkien library.

Tolkien, J.R.R. *The End of the Third Age*. Ed. Christopher Tolkien. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1992. [IMG 14]

The End of the Third Age is one in a nine-part series written by Tolkien and intended to serve as a history of Middle-earth. It was edited by Christopher Tolkien after his father's death and is heavily annotated with Christopher's notes and commentary. *The End of the Third Age* chronicles the events at the very end of *Return of the King* and continues after the Trilogy ends, including an epilogue in which Sam discusses his journey with his children. What makes this book fascinating to read alongside the Trilogy is its shift in style – while the Trilogy is written in literary prose, *The End of the Third Age* reads more like a nonfiction historical account. Also, because it re-tells the same events that readers witnessed in the Trilogy, but from a slightly different perspective, it offers readers a unique opportunity to draw their own conclusions, enter into a complete and dynamic fictional reality, and recognize the infinite power that writers of history have to refract and revise it.

Tolkien, J.R.R. *The Hobbit*. 1965. New York: Ballantine Books, 1982. [IMG 15]

The Hobbit, the prequel to *The Lord of the Rings* and the first book Tolkien wrote about Middle-earth and the adventures to be had there, serves as one of the foundational items in my collection. I acquired and read it after the Trilogy, but I return to it more frequently to re-read if I feel that I have been away from Middle-earth for too long.

Tolkien, J.R.R. *The Lord of the Rings*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1994. [IMG 16 – representative item]

This complete set of the three *Lord of the Rings* books bound together in one volume is the book that began my collection. It was given to me in 2003 by my father, who first read and fell in love with the books as a young man recovering from surgery in the 1970s. I fell in love with Tolkien's work after reading these books and was inspired to begin reading and collecting more of Tolkien's books. This edition was printed after the films

were released and features a still from one of them as the cover illustration. Though I did my best to keep the book in good condition, it has been damaged over the course of several readings and is full of paper flags marking my favorite passages.

Tolkien, J.R.R. *The Silmarillion*. Ed. Christopher Tolkien. 2nd ed. New York: Ballantine Books, 2001. [IMG 17]

Along with *The Hobbit* and the Trilogy, this small silver edition of *The Silmarillion* forms the backbone of my collection. *The Silmarillion* includes the creation myth of Middle-earth and a history of its early Ages, leading up to the events that set Frodo's journey in motion in *The Lord of the Rings*. Though less popular and far more difficult to read than *The Hobbit*, *The Silmarillion* is an invaluable resource for any reader wishing to truly understand the depth and complexity of Middle-earth as depicted in the Trilogy. (For example, the racial tensions between Elves and Dwarves that appear in the Trilogy have their origins in the mythologies of *The Silmarillion*, and thus any reader unfamiliar with *The Silmarillion* will be unable to truly appreciate the nuances and significance of the friendship that forms between Legolas and Gimli as they travel together with the Fellowship.) It is almost impossible to truly appreciate Tolkien's work when read without the context provided by *The Silmarillion*, making it a book without which no Tolkien library or collection is complete.

Tolkien, J.R.R. *The Tolkien Reader*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1966. [IMG 18]

This short volume includes a variety of Tolkien's shorter works, including essays, epic poems, and short stories. My favorite work in *The Tolkien Reader* is "The Adventures of Tom Bombadil," a poem in praise of Tom Bombadil, a minor character in *The Fellowship of the Ring* whose story is every bit as entertaining and adventurous as Frodo's. However, many pieces in *The Tolkien Reader* do not take place in Middle-earth. Works like this are rare in my collection, which is primarily focused on Middle-earth and its characters and events. These unusual works allow for a comparison between Tolkien's Middle-earth writings and the style he used for other types of writing.

"TOLKIEN 2005: The Lord of the Rings 50th Anniversary Calendar." New York: Harper Entertainment, 2004. [IMG 19]

This 2005 calendar features illustrations by Tolkien depicting a variety of places in Middle-earth, as well as a short biography of Tolkien and an introduction to his illustrations. The centerfold also includes facsimiles of leaves from the Book of Mazarbul, a Dwarfish book the Fellowship finds in Moria. Each month's illustration is accompanied by a paragraph-long caption written by Wayne G. Hammond and Christina Schull, authors of *J.R.R. Tolkien: Artist & Illustrator*, where these images first appeared. The calendar pages include the dates of Tolkien's birth and death and the dates of his major publications. When I used the calendar in 2005, I also added important dates from Middle-earth, including the birthdays of the characters and events along their journey, such as the date of Frodo's departure ("Leave Bag End") and his victory at Mount Doom ("Ring Destroyed!")

Tyler, J.E.A. *The Complete Tolkien Companion*. 3rd ed. New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 1976. [IMG 20 – representative item]

This encyclopedia of Tolkien's worlds was one of the first books in my collection, and was constantly at my side as I read and re-read the Trilogy and *The Silmarillion*. It includes alphabetized (though not illustrated) entries for thousands of places, weapons, plants, creatures, terms and characters mentioned across Tolkien's body of work. Much attention is devoted to the various rulers and dynasties, as well as timelines and specific events in the history of Middle-earth. It is a wonderful reference for new readers of Tolkien, or those attempting to keep track of the incredibly rich and complex world as they read through his more obscure works, and has guided me through reading most of the books in my collection.

Walsh, Fran, Philippa Boyens and Peter Jackson. *The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King*. Screenplay. Final Revision October 2003. [IMG 21]

This is a printed version of the screenplay for the final film in the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy, *The Return of the King*. Peter Jackson's film adaptations of Tolkien's trilogy are known for their close adherence to the books, but their visual spectacle distracts from one's ability to compare the writing in the books and in the films. This printed screenplay allows for a closer comparison between Tolkien's prose and the dialogue and descriptions Peter Jackson worked with as a director. The screenplay was given to me as a gift by my aunt and uncle, who purchased it in New York City from a book vendor specializing in printed screenplays. The vendor alleges that some wear on the edges and penciled marginalia indicate that it was used by a technician on the set of the film, but there is no way to verify this unlikely claim.

Annotated Wish List

Carpenter, Humphrey. *J.R.R. Tolkien: A Biography*. 1977. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1987.

As mentioned in my annotated bibliography, few of the books in my Tolkien collection actually focus on Tolkien himself, and I feel that this is a weakness of my collection. I considered giving this spot on my wish list to a variety of other books about Tolkien, including a collection of his letters and critical works examining his personal beliefs and background, but I feel that this authorized biography of Tolkien provides the most useful and comprehensive resource for information about Tolkien as a man and an author.

Flieger, Verlyn. *Splintered Light: Logos and Language in Tolkien's World*. Kent: Kent State University Press, 2002.

When looking for books of criticism or commentary focusing on Tolkien's work, I find myself more drawn to books with a specific focus, rather than collections of essays on various topics. It is for this reason that I chose Flieger's book specifically about the philosophical implications of Tolkien's linguistic and symbolic work over more popular books like *Lord of the Rings and Philosophy* or *The World of the Rings: Language, Religion and Adventure in Tolkien*. Flieger's in-depth look at a particular topic that also greatly interests me makes it an appealing addition to my personal collection.

Kerry, Paul E. *The Ring and the Cross: Christianity and The Lord of the Rings*. Lanham: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2011.

I have always been fascinated with the religious underpinnings of Tolkien's work, especially since the author himself was circumspect about the spiritual influences on his writing and other thinkers' attempts at an interpretation are often wildly contradictory and speculative. There are a large number of books written about the theology of Middle-earth, but many skew heavily to one side. *The Ring and the Cross*, however, is noted for being a more even-handed collection of varied viewpoints in dialogue.

Tolkien, J.R.R. *The Complete History Of Middle-earth* [Boxed Set]. Christopher Tolkien, Ed. London: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002.

I already have a paperback of one of the volumes in this 12-volume set, but this three-part hardcover boxed set will go a long way toward helping me complete my collection's section of Tolkien's own writings on Middle-earth. These books, edited by Christopher Tolkien, compile Tolkien's entire history of Middle-earth, before and after the Trilogy's events. They would make an excellent resource while reading the Trilogy as well as engaging literature in their own right.

Tolkien, J.R.R. *The Lord of the Rings*. Illus. Alan Lee. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2002.

It may seem redundant to add another copy of *The Lord of the Rings* to my collection, but I would very much like to own a hardback version of the Trilogy that is bound in three separate books to aid in comfortable reading and help prevent damage. My beloved

original copy is worn out from frequent reading and travel, and should soon be retired as an item in my collection with personal significance rather than my primary reading source for the Trilogy. These editions also contain color illustrations from Alan Lee, the artist who inspired Peter Jackson's visual interpretations in the films, making them a handsome as well as useful addition to my collection.