

TRANSCRIPTS FOR DECEMBER 2018

The Lay of Saint Nicholas

The Wolves of Cernogratz

Hercules Epitapezios

Dunsany: Wind and Fog

Song of the Morrow

Cornwall : Notes on "The Cornish Bird"

Games from Folktales

An experiment in podcasting for the Ars Magica roleplaying game

PATREONS

XXX

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“A LAY OF ST NICHOLAS” FROM THE INGOLDSBY LEGENDS

“LORD ABBOT! Lord Abbot! I’d fain confess;
I am a-weary, and worn with woe;
Many a grief doth my heart oppress,
And haunt me whithersoever I go!”

On bended knee spake the beautiful Maid;
‘Now lithe and listen, Lord Abbot, to me!—
‘Now naye, Fair Daughter,’ the Lord Abbot said,
‘Now naye, in sooth it may hardly be;

‘There is Mess Michael, and holy Mess John,
Sage Penitauncers I ween be they!
And hard by doth dwell, in St. Catherine’s cell,
Ambrose, the anchorite old and grey!’

‘— Oh, I will have none of Ambrose or John,
Though sage Penitauncers I trow they be;
Shrive me may none save the Abbot alone.
Now listen, Lord Abbot, I speak to thee.

‘Nor think foul scorn, though mitre adorn
Thy brow, to listen to shrift of mine.
I am a Maiden royally born,
And I come of old Plantagenet’s line.

‘Though hither I stray in lowly array,
I am a Damsel of high degree;
And the Compte of Eu, and the Lord of Ponthieu,
They serve my father on bended knee!

‘Counts a many, and Dukes a few,
A suitoring came to my father’s Hall;
But the Duke of Lorraine, with his large domain,
He pleased my father beyond them all.

‘Dukes a many, and Counts a few,
I would have wedded right cheerfullie;
But the Duke of Lorraine was uncommonly plain,
And I vow’d that he ne’er should my bridegroom be!

‘So hither I fly, in lowly guise,
From their gilded domes and their princely halls;
Fain would I dwell in some holy cell,
Or within some Convent’s peaceful walls!’

— Then out and spake that proud Lord Abbot,
‘Now rest thee, Fair Daughter, withouten fear;
Nor Count nor Duke but shall meet the rebuke
Of Holy Church an he seek thee here:

‘Holy Church denieth all search
‘Midst her sanctified ewes and her saintly rams;
And the wolves doth mock who would scathe her flock,
Or, especially, worry her little pet lambs.

**A bonus episode to celebrate the
Feast of St Nicholas, on
December the Fifth. I’ve cut the
earlier part of the lay, because it
doesn’t serve storytelling. I’d
note that he’s the saint for
merchants, seafarers, and
thieves. The thieves sometimes
call themselves the “clerks of St
Nicholas”.**

**The creature described is statted
up in an earlier book, but I’ll not
spoil it for now.**

'Then lay, Fair Daughter, thy fears aside,
For here this day shalt thou dine with me!—
'Now naye, now naye,' the fair maiden cried;
'In sooth, Lord Abbot, that scarce may be!

'Friends would whisper, and foes would frown,
Sith thou art a Churchman of high degree,
And ill mote it match with thy fair renown
That a wandering damsle dine with thee!

'There is Simon the Deacon hath pulse in store,
With beans and lettuces fair to see;
His lenten fare now let me share,
I pray thee, Lord Abbot, in charitie!'

—'Though Simon the Deacon hath pulse in store,
To our patron Saint foul shame it were
Should wayworn guest, with toil oppress'd,
Meet in his abbey such churlish fare.

'There is Peter the Prior, and Francis the Friar,
And Roger the Monk shall our convives be;
Small scandal I ween shall then be seen;
They are a goodly companie!'

The Abbot hath donn'd his mitre and ring,
His rich dalmatic, and maniple fine;
And the choristers sing as the lay-brothers bring
To the board a magnificent turkey and chine.

The turkey and chine, they are done to a nicety;
Liver, and gizzard, and all are there:
Ne'er mote Lord Abbot pronounce Benedicite
Over more luscious or delicate fare.

But no pious stave he, no Pater or Ave
Pronounced, as he gazed on that maiden's face:
She ask'd him for stuffing, she ask'd him for gravy,
She ask'd him for gizzard;— but not for Grace!

Yet gaily the Lord Abbot smiled and press'd,
And the blood-red wine in the wine-cup fill'd;
And he help'd his guest to a bit of the breast,
And he sent the drumsticks down to be grill'd.

There was no lack of old Sherris sack,
Of Hippocras fine, or of Malmsey bright;
And aye, as he drained off his cup with a smack,
He grew less pious and more polite.

She pledged him once, and she pledged him twice,
And she drank as a Lady ought not to drink;
And he press'd her hand 'neath the table thrice,
And he wink'd as an Abbot ought not to wink.

And Peter the Prior, and Francis the Friar,
Sat each with a napkin under his chin;
But Roger the Monk got excessively drunk,
So they put him to bed, and they tuck'd him in!

The lay-brothers gazed on each other, amazed;
And Simon the Deacon, with grief and surprise,
As he peep'd through the key-hole could scarce fancy real
The scene he beheld, or believe his own eyes.

In his ear was ringing the Lord Abbot singing,—
He could not distinguish the words very plain,
But 'twas all about 'Cole,' and 'jolly old Soul,'
And 'Fiddlers,' and 'Punch,' and things quite as profane.

Even Porter Paul, at the sound of such revelling,
With fervour began himself to bless;
For he thought he must somehow have let the devil in,—
And perhaps was not very much out in his guess.

The Accusing Byers <1> 'flew up to Heaven's Chancery,'
Blushing like scarlet with shame and concern;
The Archangel took down his tale, and in answer he
Wept — (See the works of the late Mr. Sterne.)

Indeed, it is said, a less taking both were in
When, after a lapse of a great many years,
They book'd Uncle Toby five shillings for swearing,
And blotted the fine out at last with their tears!

But St. Nicholas' agony who may paint?
His senses at first were well-nigh gone;
The beatified Saint was ready to faint
When he saw in his Abbey such sad goings on!

For never, I ween, had such doings been seen
There before, from the time that most excellent Prince,
Earl Baldwin of Flanders, and other Commanders,
Had built and endow'd it some centuries since.

— But, hark!— 'tis a sound from the outermost gate!
A startling sound from a powerful blow.
Who knocks so late?— it is half after eight
By the clock,— and the clock's five minutes too slow.

Never, perhaps, had such loud double raps
Been heard in St. Nicholas' Abbey before;
All agreed 'it was shocking to keep people knocking,'
But none seem'd inclined to 'answer the door.'

Now a louder bang through the cloisters rang,
And the gate on its hinges wide open flew;
And all were aware of a Palmer there,
With his cockle, hat, staff, and his sandal shoe.

Many a furrow, and many a frown,
By toil and time on his brow were traced;
And his long loose gown was of ginger brown,
And his rosary dangled below his waist.

Now seldom, I ween, is such costume seen,
Except at a stage-play or masquerade;
But who doth not know it was rather the go
With Pilgrims and Saints in the second Crusade?

With noiseless stride did that Palmer glide
Across that oaken floor;
And he made them all jump, he gave such a thump
Against the Refectory door!

Wide open it flew, and plain to the view
The Lord Abbot they all mote see;
In his hand was a cup, and he lifted it up,
'Here's the Pope's good health with three!!'—

Rang in their ears three deafening cheers,
'Huzza! huzza! huzza!'—
And one of the party said, 'Go it, my hearty!'—
When out spake that Pilgrim grey —

'A boon, Lord Abbot! a boon! a boon!
Worn is my foot, and empty my scrip;
And nothing to speak of since yesterday noon
Of food, Lord Abbot, hath pass'd my lip.

'And I am come from a far countree,
And have visited many a holy shrine;
And long have I trod the sacred sod
Where the Saints do rest in Palestine!'—

'An thou art come from a far countree,
And if thou in Paynim lands hast been,
Now rede me aright the most wonderful sight,
Thou Palmer grey, that thine eyes have seen.

'A rede me aright the most wonderful sight,
Grey Palmer, that ever thine eyes did see,
And a manchette of bread, and a good warm bed,
And a cup o' the best shall thy guerdon be!'—

'Oh! I have been east, and I have been west,
And I have seen many a wonderful sight;
But never to me did it happen to see
A wonder like that which I see this night!

'To see a Lord Abbot, in rochet and stole,
With Prior and Friar,— a strange mar-velle!—
O'er a jolly full bowl, sitting cheek by jowl,
And hob-nobbing away with a Devil from Hell!'

He felt in his gown of ginger brown,
And he pull'd out a flask from beneath;
It was rather tough work to get out the cork,
But he drew it at last with his teeth.

O'er a pint and a quarter of holy water
He made the sacred sign;
And he dash'd the whole on the soi-disante daughter
Of old Plantagenet's line!

Oh! then did she reek, and squeak, and shriek,
With a wild unearthly scream;
And fizzled and hiss'd, and produced such a mist,
They were all half-choked by the steam.

Her dove-like eyes turn'd to coals of fire,
Her beautiful nose to a horrible snout,
Her hands to paws with nasty great claws,
And her bosom went in, and her tail came out.

On her chin there appear'd a long Nanny-goat's beard,
And her tusks and her teeth no man mote tell;
And her horns and her hoofs gave infallible proofs
'Twas a frightful Fiend from the nethermost Hell!

The Palmer threw down his ginger gown,
His hat and his cockle; and, plain to sight,
Stood St. Nicholas' self, and his shaven crown
Had a glow-worm halo of heavenly light.

The Fiend made a grasp, the Abbot to clasp;
But St. Nicholas lifted his holy toe,
And, just in the nick, let fly such a kick
On his elderly Namesake, he made him let go.

And out of the window he flew like a shot,
For the foot flew up with a terrible thwack,
And caught the foul demon about the spot
Where his tail joins on to the small of his back.

And he bounded away, like a foot-ball at play,
Till into the bottomless pit he fell slap,
Knocking Mammon the meagre o'er pursy Belphegor,
And Lucifer into Beelzebub's lap.

Oh! happy the slip from his Succubine grip,
That saved the Lord Abbot,— though, breathless with fright,
In escaping he tumbled, and fractured his hip,
And his left leg was shorter thenceforth than his right!

* * *

On the banks of the Rhine, as he's stopping to dine,
From a certain Inn-window the traveller is shown
Most picturesque ruins, the scene of these doings,
Some miles up the river, south-east of Cologne.

And, while 'sour-kraut' she sells you, the Landlady tells you
That there, in those walls, now all roofless and bare,
One Simon, a Deacon, from a lean grew a sleek one,
On filling a ci-devant Abbot's state chair.

How a ci-devant Abbot, all clothed in drab, but
Of texture the coarsest, hair shirt, and no shoes,
(His mitre and ring, and all that sort of thing
Laid aside,) in yon Cave lived a pious recluse;

How he rose with the sun, limping, 'dot and go one,'
To you rill of the mountain, in all sorts of weather,
Where a Prior and a Friar, who lived somewhat higher
Up the rock, used to come and eat cresses together;

How a thirsty old codger, the neighbours call'd Roger,
With them drank cold water in lieu of old wine!
What its quality wanted he made up in quantity,
Swigging as though he would empty the Rhine!

And how, as their bodily strength fail'd, the mental man
Gain'd tenfold vigour and force in all four;
And how, to the day of their death, the 'Old Gentleman'
Never attempted to kidnap them more.

And how, when at length, in the odour of sanctity,
All of them died without grief or complaint;
The Monks of St. Nicholas said 'twas ridiculous
Not to suppose every one was a Saint.

And how, in the Abbey, no one was so shabby
As not to say yearly four masses a head,
On the eve of that supper, and kick on the crupper
Which Satan received, for the souls of the dead!

How folks long held in reverence their reliques and memories,
How the ci-devant Abbot's obtain'd greater still,
When some cripples, on touching his fractured os femoris,
Threw down their crutches, and danced a quadrille.

And how Abbot Simon, (who turn'd out a prime one,)
These words, which grew into a proverb full soon,
O'er the late Abbot's grotto, stuck up as a motto,
'Who suppes with the Devylle sholde have a long spoone!!'"



"Are there any old legends attached to the castle?" asked Conrad of his sister. Conrad was a prosperous Hamburg merchant, but he was the one poetically-dispositioned member of an eminently practical family.

The Baroness Gruebel shrugged her plump shoulders.

"There are always legends hanging about these old places. They are not difficult to invent and they cost nothing. In this case there is a story that when any one dies in the castle all the dogs in the village and the wild beasts in forest howl the night long. It would not be pleasant to listen to, would it?"

"It would be weird and romantic," said the Hamburg merchant.

"Anyhow, it isn't true," said the Baroness complacently; "since we bought the place we have had proof that nothing of the sort happens. When the old mother-in-law died last springtime we all listened, but there was no howling. It is just a story that lends dignity to the place without costing anything."

"The story is not as you have told it," said Amalie, the grey old governess. Every one turned and looked at her in astonishment. She was wont to sit silent and prim and faded in her place at table, never speaking unless some one spoke to her, and there were few who troubled themselves to make conversation with her. To-day a sudden volubility had descended on her; she continued to talk, rapidly and nervously, looking straight in front of her and seeming to address no one in particular.

"It is not when any one dies in the castle that the howling is heard. It was when one of the Cernogratz family died here that the wolves came from far and near and howled at the edge of the forest just before the death hour. There were only a few couple of wolves that had their lairs in this part of the forest, but at such a time the keepers say there would be scores of them, gliding about in the shadows and howling in chorus, and the dogs of the castle and the village and all the farms round would bay and howl in fear and anger at the wolf chorus, and as the soul of the dying one left its body a tree would crash down in the park. That is what happened when a Cernogratz died in his family castle. But for a stranger dying here, of course no wolf would howl and no tree would fall. Oh, no."

There was a note of defiance, almost of contempt, in her voice as she said the last words. The well-fed, much-too-well dressed Baroness stared angrily at the dowdy old woman who had come forth from her usual and seemly position of effacement to speak so disrespectfully.

A banshee from the stories of Saki.

Saki was a dark humourist who passed away during the First World War.

THE WOLVES
OF CERNOGRATZ

"You seem to know quite a lot about the von Cernogratz legends, Fraulein Schmidt," she said sharply; "I did not know that family histories were among the subjects you are supposed to be proficient in."

The answer to her taunt was even more unexpected and astonishing than the conversational outbreak which had provoked it.

"I am a von Cernogratz myself," said the old woman, "that is why I know the family history."

"You a von Cernogratz? You!" came in an incredulous chorus.

"When we became very poor," she explained, "and I had to go out and give teaching lessons, I took another name; I thought it would be more in keeping. But my grandfather spent much of his time as a boy in this castle, and my father used to tell me many stories about it, and, of course, I knew all the family legends and stories. When one has nothing left to one but memories, one guards and dusts them with especial care. I little thought when I took service with you that I should one day come with you to the old home of my family. I could wish it had been anywhere else."

There was silence when she finished speaking, and then the Baroness turned the conversation to a less embarrassing topic than family histories. But afterwards, when the old governess had slipped away quietly to her duties, there arose a clamour of derision and disbelief.

"It was an impertinence," snapped out the Baron, his protruding eyes taking on a scandalised expression; "fancy the woman talking like that at our table. She almost told us we were nobodies, and I don't believe a word of it. She is just Schmidt and nothing more. She has been talking to some of the peasants about the old Cernogratz family, and raked up their history and their stories."

"She wants to make herself out of some consequence," said the Baroness; "she knows she will soon be past work and she wants to appeal to our sympathies. Her grandfather, indeed!"

The Baroness had the usual number of grandfathers, but she never, never boasted about them.

"I dare say her grandfather was a pantry boy or something of the sort in the castle," sniggered the Baron; "that part of the story may be true."

The merchant from Hamburg said nothing; he had seen tears in the old woman's eyes when she spoke of guarding her memories—or, being of an imaginative disposition, he thought he had.

"I shall give her notice to go as soon as the New Year festivities are over," said the Baroness; "till then I shall be too busy to manage without her."

But she had to manage without her all the same, for in the cold biting weather after Christmas, the old governess fell ill and kept to her room.

"It is most provoking," said the Baroness, as her guests sat round the fire on one of the last evenings of the dying year; "all the time that she has been with us I cannot remember that she was ever seriously ill, too ill to go about and do her work, I mean. And now, when I have the house full, and she could be useful in so many ways, she goes and breaks down. One is sorry for her, of course, she looks so withered and shrunken, but it is intensely annoying all the same."

"Most annoying," agreed the banker's wife, sympathetically; "it is the intense cold, I expect, it breaks the old people up. It has been unusually cold this year."

"The frost is the sharpest that has been known in December for many years," said the Baron.

"And, of course, she is quite old," said the Baroness; "I wish I had given her notice some weeks ago, then she would have left before this happened to her. Why, Wappi, what is the matter with you?"

The small, woolly lapdog had leapt suddenly down from its cushion and crept shivering under the sofa. At the same moment an outburst of angry barking came from the dogs in the castle-yard, and other dogs could be heard yapping and barking in the distance.

"What is disturbing the animals?" asked the Baron.

And then the humans, listening intently, heard the sound that had roused the dogs to their demonstrations of fear and rage; heard a long-drawn whining howl, rising and falling, seeming at one moment leagues away, at others sweeping across the snow until it appeared to come from the foot of the castle walls. All the starved, cold misery of a frozen world, all the relentless hunger-fury of the wild, blended with other forlorn and haunting melodies to which one could give no name, seemed concentrated in that wailing cry.

"Wolves!" cried the Baron.

Their music broke forth in one raging burst, seeming to come from everywhere.

"Hundreds of wolves," said the Hamburg merchant, who was a man of strong imagination.

Moved by some impulse which she could not have explained, the Baroness left her guests and made her way to the narrow, cheerless room where the old governess lay watching the hours of the dying year slip by. In spite of the biting cold of the winter night, the window stood open. With a scandalised exclamation on her lips, the Baroness rushed forward to close it.

"Leave it open," said the old woman in a voice that for all its weakness carried an air of command such as the Baroness had never heard before from her lips.

"But you will die of cold!" she expostulated.

"I am dying in any case," said the voice, "and I want to hear their music. They have come from far and wide to sing the death-music of my family. It is beautiful that they have come; I am the last von Cernogratz that will die in our old castle, and they have come to sing to me. Hark, how loud they are calling!"

The cry of the wolves rose on the still winter air and floated round the castle walls in long-drawn piercing wails; the old woman lay back on her couch with a look of long-delayed happiness on her face.

"Go away," she said to the Baroness; "I am not lonely any more. I am one of a great old family . . . "

"I think she is dying," said the Baroness when she had rejoined her guests; "I suppose we must send for a doctor. And that terrible howling! Not for much money would I have such death-music."

"That music is not to be bought for any amount of money," said Conrad.

"Hark! What is that other sound?" asked the Baron, as a noise of splitting and crashing was heard.

It was a tree falling in the park.

There was a moment of constrained silence, and then the banker's wife spoke.

"It is the intense cold that is splitting the trees. It is also the cold that has brought the wolves out in such numbers. It is many years since we have had such a cold winter."

The Baroness eagerly agreed that the cold was responsible for these things. It was the cold of the open window, too, which caused the heart failure that made the doctor's ministrations unnecessary for the old Fraulein. But the notice in the newspapers looked very well—

"On December 29th, at Schloss Cernogratz, Amalie von Cernogratz, for many years the valued friend of Baron and Baroness Gruebel."

I originally wrote this story up as two elementals, feuding for status, but I think they are likely faeries, as they are interested in the death of humans. Is the fog a sort of meteorological vampire? Can you set it on your enemies? Protect your own ships? Does the Old Winter have a court with which you can negotiate with? Does the fog remember where these wrecks are, so that it can be used as a guide to treasure, or to give rest to the spirits of those taken by the sea?

Thanks again to Sandra Cullum for reading this into the public domain through LibriVox.

"Way for us," said the North Wind as he came down the sea on an errand of old Winter.

And he saw before him the grey silent fog that lay along the tides.

"Way for us," said the North Wind, "O ineffectual fog, for I am Winter's leader in his age-old war with the ships. I overwhelm them suddenly in my strength, or drive upon them the huge seafaring bergs. I cross an ocean while you move a mile. There is mourning in inland places when I have met the ships. I drive them upon the rocks and feed the sea. Wherever I appear they bow to our lord the Winter."

And to his arrogant boasting nothing said the fog. Only he rose up slowly and trailed away from the sea and, crawling up long valleys, took refuge among the hills; and night came down and everything was still, and the fog began to mumble in the stillness.

And I heard him telling infamously to himself the tale of his horrible spoils. "A hundred and fifteen galleons of old Spain, a certain argosy that went from Tyre, eight fisher-fleets and ninety ships of the line, twelve warships under sail, with their carronades, three hundred and eighty-seven river-craft, forty-two merchantmen that carried spice, four quinquiremes, ten triremes, thirty yachts, twenty-one battleships of the modern time, nine thousand admirals...." he mumbled and chuckled on, till I suddenly arose and fled from his fearful contamination.

I've been listening to a book on the history of art forgery, and it mentions that there are several marble copies of a famous bronze statue, which seems likely to house a Spirit of Artifice or a minor Faerie god in Mythic Europe. An epitrapezios is a statue which, in Classical Greece, was meant to sit in the middle of the table during a feast. It acts as the presiding god, and is worshipped by the process of feasting. In exchange it offers various blessings.

The piece which I was interested in was read into the public domain by Jordan Watts. Thanks to Jordan and all of the LibriVox volunteers.

“...The story of this Hercules is told by Martial and Statius, who inform us that it measured a little less than a Roman foot, about nine inches.

Notwithstanding its modest dimensions the statuette was modelled with such grandeur and majestic sentiment as to cause Statius to comment, “parvusque videri, sentiriisque ingens” (small in appearance, but immense in effect). It represented Hercules in a smilingly serene attitude, seated on a rock, holding a club in his right hand and in the other a cup. It was in fact one of those statuettes which Romans called by the Greek word epitrapezios, and which were placed on dining-tables as the genius loci of the repast.

The history of this gem of Sulla's collection is uncommon, and its vicissitudes most remarkable. The statue was originally a gift made by Lysippus to Alexander the Great. This sovereign and conqueror was so attached to Lysippus' present that he carried the statue with him wherever he went. When dying he indulged in a touching adieu to the cherished statuette.

After Alexander, the little Hercules fell into the hands of another conqueror, Hannibal. It is not known how he came to be the possessor of Lysippus' work, but it may be explained by the fact that



HERCULES

EPITRAPEZIOS

Hannibal, being a collector of art and somewhat of a connoisseur and, above all, as Cornelius Nepos states, a great admirer of Greek art, was a keen-eyed hunter after rarities in art. However, be that as it may, Hannibal seems to have been possessed by the same fancy as Alexander, for he carried the little statue with him on all his peregrinations, and even took it to Bithynia, where, as history informs us, he destroyed himself by poison. At his death the Hercules passed, in all probability, into the hands of Prusias at whose court Hannibal died.

A century later the statue reappeared in Sulla's collection. Very likely it came into Sulla's possession as a present from King Nicomedes, who owed gratitude to Sulla for the restitution of the throne of Bithynia.

After Sulla's death it is difficult to locate this precious statue of his famous collection. Presumably it passed from one collector to another, and never left Rome. "Perhaps," says Statius, "it found its place in more than one Imperial collection." The statue reappears officially, however, under Domitian. At this time it is in the possession of the above-quoted Vindex, a Gaul living in Rome, a friend of Martial and Statius and one of the best art connoisseurs of his time.

At Vindex's death the statuette disappears again, and no mention of it has ever been made since by any writer. What may the fate have been of this chef-d'œuvre of Lysippus which passed from one collection to another for more than four centuries?" – from chapter 3 of *The Gentle Art of Faking* by Riccardo Nobili.



Plot hooks

If Frederick II discovers the existence of this statue, he'll have agents looking for it. He wants it for the civil war with the German princes, or for crusading. House Tremere is not fond of gods, but they don't want people using one like this. They'd like to gently file it away in a cave somewhere.

Vindex seems to have been a prince of collectors. The Hercules might not make you a conqueror, unless you want to be. It might just allow you to excel in your field. House Verditius magi are likely to know it exists, and want it, to allow them to defeat their rivals at the House competition.

The King of Duntrine had a daughter when he was old, and she was the fairest King's daughter between two seas; her hair was like spun gold, and her eyes like pools in a river; and the King gave her a castle upon the sea beach, with a terrace, and a court of the hewn stone, and four towers at the four corners. Here she dwelt and grew up, and had no care for the morrow, and no power upon the hour, after the manner of simple men.

It befell that she walked one day by the beach of the sea, when it was autumn, and the wind blew from the place of rains; and upon the one hand of her the sea beat, and upon the other the dead leaves ran. This was the loneliest beach between two seas, and strange things had been done there in the ancient ages. Now the King's daughter was aware of a crone that sat upon the beach. The sea foam ran to her feet, and the dead leaves swarmed about her back, and the rags blew about her face in the blowing of the wind.

"Now," said the King's daughter, and she named a holy name, "this is the most unhappy old crone between two seas."

"Daughter of a King," said the crone, "you dwell in a stone house, and your hair is like the gold: but what is your profit? Life is not long, nor lives strong; and you live after the way of simple men, and have no thought for the morrow and no power upon the hour."

"Thought for the morrow, that I have," said the King's daughter; "but power upon the hour, that have I not." And she mused with herself.

Then the crone smote her lean hands one within the other, and laughed like a sea-gull. "Home!" cried she. "O daughter of a King, home to your stone house; for the longing is come upon you now, nor can you live any more after the manner of simple men. Home, and toil and suffer, till the gift come that will make you bare, and till the man come that will bring you care."

The King's daughter made no more ado, but she turned about and went home to her house in silence. And when she was come into her chamber she called for her nurse.

"Nurse," said the King's daughter, "thought is come upon me for the morrow, so that I can live no more after the manner of simple men. Tell me what I must do that I may have power upon the hour."

Then the nurse moaned like a snow wind. "Alas!" said she, "that this thing should be; but the thought is gone into your marrow, nor is there any cure against the thought. Be it so, then, even as you will; though power is less than weakness, power shall you have; and though the thought is colder than winter, yet shall you think it to an end."

So the King's daughter sat in her vaulted chamber in the masoned house, and she thought upon the thought. Nine years she sat; and the sea beat upon the terrace, and the gulls cried about the turrets, and wind crooned in the chimneys of the house. Nine years she came not abroad, nor tasted the clean air, neither saw God's sky. Nine years she sat and looked neither to the right nor to the left, nor heard speech of any one, but thought upon the thought of the morrow. And her nurse fed her in silence, and she took of the food with her left hand, and ate it without grace.

Now when the nine years were out, it fell dusk in the autumn, and there came a sound in the wind like a sound of piping. At that the nurse lifted up her finger in the vaulted house.

"I hear a sound in the wind," said she, "that is like the sound of piping."

"It is but a little sound," said the King's daughter, "but yet is it sound enough for me."

THE SONG OF THE MORROW BY ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

So they went down in the dusk to the doors of the house, and along the beach of the sea. And the waves beat upon the one hand, and upon the other the dead leaves ran; and the clouds raced in the sky, and the gulls flew widdershins. And when they came to that part of the beach where strange things had been done in the ancient ages, lo, there was the crone, and she was dancing widdershins.

"What makes you dance widdershins, old crone?" said the King's daughter; "here upon the bleak beach, between the waves and the dead leaves?"

"I hear a sound in the wind that is like a sound of piping," quoth she. "And it is for that that I dance widdershins. For the gift comes that will make you bare, and the man comes that must bring you care. But for me the morrow is come that I have thought upon, and the hour of my power."

"How comes it, crone," said the King's daughter, "that you waver like a rag, and pale like a dead leaf before my eyes?"

"Because the morrow has come that I have thought upon, and the hour of my power," said the crone; and she fell on the beach, and, lo! she was but stalks of the sea tangle, and dust of the sea sand, and the sand lice hopped upon the place of her.

"This is the strangest thing that befell between two seas," said the King's daughter of Duntrine.

But the nurse broke out and moaned like an autumn gale. "I am weary of the wind," quoth she; and she bewailed her day.

The King's daughter was aware of a man upon the beach; he went hooded so that none might perceive his face, and a pipe was underneath his arm. The sound of his pipe was like singing wasps, and like the wind that sings in windlestraw; and it took hold upon men's ears like the crying of gulls.

"Are you the comer?" quoth the King's daughter of Duntrine.

"I am the corner," said he, "and these are the pipes that a man may hear, and I have power upon the hour, and this is the song of the morrow." And he piped the song of the morrow, and it was as long as years; and the nurse wept out aloud at the hearing of it.

"This is true," said the King's daughter, "that you pipe the song of the morrow; but that ye have power upon the hour, how may I know that? Show me a marvel here upon the beach, between the waves and the dead leaves."

And the man said, "Upon whom?"

"Here is my nurse," quoth the King's daughter. "She is weary of the wind. Show me a good marvel upon her."

And, lo! the nurse fell upon the beach as it were two handfuls of dead leaves, and the wind whirled them widdershins, and the sand lice hopped between.

"It is true," said the King's daughter of Duntrine, "you are the comer, and you have power upon the hour. Come with me to my stone house."

So they went by the sea margin, and the man piped the song of the morrow, and the leaves followed behind them as they went.

Then they sat down together; and the sea beat on the terrace, and the gulls cried about the towers, and the wind crooned in the chimneys of the house. Nine years they sat, and every year when it fell autumn, the man said, "This is the hour, and I have power in it"; and the daughter of the King said, "Nay, but pipe me the song of the morrow". And he piped it, and it was long like years.

Now when the nine years were gone, the King's daughter of Duntrine got her to her feet, like one that remembers; and she looked about her in the masoned house; and all her servants were gone; only the man that piped sat upon the terrace with the hand upon his face; and as he piped the leaves ran about the terrace and the sea beat along the wall. Then she cried to him with a great voice, "This is the hour, and let me see the power in it". And with that the wind blew off the hood from the man's face, and, lo! there was no man there, only the clothes and the hood and the pipes tumbled one upon another in a corner of the terrace, and the dead leaves ran over them.

And the King's daughter of Duntrine got her to that part of the beach where strange things had been done in the ancient ages; and there she sat her down. The sea foam ran to her feet, and the dead leaves swarmed about her back, and the veil blew about her face in the blowing of the wind. And when she lifted up her eyes, there was the daughter of a King come walking on the beach. Her hair was like the spun gold, and her eyes like pools in a river, and she had no thought for the morrow and no power upon the hour, after the manner of simple men.

CORNWALL: NOTES ON "THE CORNISH BIRD"

The night after I put the Cornwall gazetteer out as a finished draft, I received a "like" on the blog from a Cornish folklore and photography site, called The Cornish Bird. I'd like to recommend it, because its writer has walked to many of the places described in the gazetteer, and her photographs are great aids to visualising the landscape.

I've just re-read all of her blog entries, and made a few notes to be added to later iterations of the Cornwall Gazetteer.

In a few posts the author (whose name I've not picked up: I'm hopeless with names) mentions some things she's found on the shore. A jellyfish with a gigantic body might be statted up as a monster. A coconut might act as an Arcane Connection to the shore from which it travelled. A polished blob of sea glass might be the link to a lost magician's laboratory, or to 'Lyonesse, give the rarity of glass in the Twelfth Century.

The same post also mentions the wreck of the Brig Victoria, laden with wine, where locals swarmed the wreck to steal the cargo until the Riot Act was read to them. That's a story seed, perhaps with the grogs and villagers pushed on by a Merry Devil, or two in competition.

Hireth is the name she gives for the Cornish sense of place: the yearning for home. This could be a Personality Trait, and it could be couples with the odd Cornish power of sending your ghost to pass on a final message. Maybe you can only send it home? There may be a minimum score. It may also define covenant loyalty for the servants of the magi.

There's a hedge (a stone wall) made by a giant from Lerryn to Looe. I did read about it, but didn't include it because I couldn't see a story hook. The hook is this: the hedge marks the side of the oldest road in Cornwall. It was perhaps a Roman road, although it doesn't have their straight character, and it must have been faerie trod. That it ends so close to one of the suggested covenant sites (Looe) and the other is so close to Lostwithiel (and the old throne of the King of Cornwall at Restormel Castle) makes it useful for player characters who can travel the twilight roads. Lerryn is also a likely site for a Bjornaer covenant. It's the River from the Wind in the Willows. While I was in university, I read William Hornwood's sequels, and often thought that the main four could be magi, in an idyllic little regio.

The author notes that the Cornish word for a "sea giant", like a sea serpent, is "Morgwar". I'm sure this will come in handy as a monster name, or a species. I've been trying to work up the Irish Whale-Eater as a Bjornaer elder for a while, and this may give her a name. I'll write to her and ask if, in Cornish, the w is sounded as long o, like in Welsh.

It's noted that the hair of Cornish mermaids can be very long: eight or ten feet in one example. Vis source? Bit of colour? Enchantable in fabric crafts?

There are five Roman milestones in Cornwall. I've not mapped them, but that may be valuable, because some players suggest the Roman road network is vital to House Mercere's magic and work.

The mystery lady of Crantock is a piece of art that far postdates the game period, but a similar thing could be found in any mine or cave that had given rest to an inspired mortal.

Saint Keyne's well and chair have been mentioned on the blog, but the photographs may inspire detail in your stories.

Lanivet is the centre of Cornwall: it even has a carved cross to mark the spot. Why would you need to put a carved cross, and so a Dominion aura, on the centre of Cornwall?

Langarrow is described, but from the same sources I used, for the most part. That being said, one of the illustrations on the page is a book called Amorel of Lyonesse by Walter Besant. It doesn't seem relevant to the game, but in searching for its plot I did find this paper : "THE LOST LANDS OF LYONESSE: Telling stories of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly" by Marea Mitchell, which I've not yet gone through but requires a deeper look. I'd note it comes from a journal called Shima, which is about maritime cultures, which I've not heard of before. I must hunt that up too.

There's a note about how china clay is found abundantly in Cornwall. It's not used in the C12th, but it might be if the player characters discover its use. I'd like to flag that some people (well, the QI elves) suggested that fine Chinese porcelain slowed down the technological development of that country, indeed much of that continent. Europe, instead, went for glass, and through glass to spectacles and optics. The Chinese knew about glass, but liked porcelain more. The player characters have a chance to seriously alter the course of history if they make china clay porcelain popular, particularly because magi can probably make it easily enough once they discover it to be granite that has decayed. You could limit that by making it the ashes of dead earth elementals or something like that, I suppose.

The author mentions a pre-Roman burial in a mine: that's a plot hook. Ghosts, the restless dead and so on.

The discovery of Neptune is mentioned. In the real world this happened in 1846: but given that we have a bunch of missing astrologers, and Neptune is the lord of things that flow, might they have seen it earlier? Might they have, more frighteningly, caused it to be formed? On a related issue: I'd not heard of the Nebra Sky Disc before, and it seems to be made with Cornish gold. It seems a useful thing to add to the game, even if in the real world it was only discovered in 1999. I like that some of the added gold comes from the Carpathian Mountains, where various forms of spookiness occur.

The Montol Festival in Penzance is their midwinter festival, so it would be happening when the Aegis is raised. I'm not sure it goes back to period. In a later post on Venton Bebilbell, the well of the little people, the author notes the Montol and the well have a shared custom of using toys to represent spirits, in the later case with people baptising dolls.

The Randigal Rhymes contain a little glossary of Cornish words, which I might lift, to give grogs a touch of local speech, to differentiate them from outsiders. I also need to check the rhymes for useful folklore.

Figgy Dowdy, mentioned many times in the gazetteer, has a well named for her. Her name gets jostled about a bit, so Figgy can become her surname, and she's sometimes Maggy, or Margaret. Her surname is sometimes Daw. Now this means "Margery Daw" is one of her names, and the author links that to the nursery rhyme "See Saw Margery Daw / Johhny Shall have a new master" well, she says "Jacky" and the internet tells me I was raised with an odd variant. I'd note that a "jacky daw" is a bird, using the odd customer of adding human names to species (much as a maggie pie is a bird, or a robin redbreast.) That version is 18th century.

I'd also flag that Opie and Opie give an earlier version as

See-saw, Margery Daw,

Sold her bed and lay on the straw;

Sold her bed and lay upon hay

And pisky came and carried her away.

For wasn't she a dirty slut

To sell her bed and lie in the dirt?

"Slut" has no sexual connotation in the period: it means a dishevelled person, and tends to be used for servants. The author of the Cornish bird suggests she was an early saint or goddess.

The author has heaps of posts on fuggous. One of them has a Piksie Hall.

She also has photographs of the Hooting Cairn, where demons wrestle.

The blog version of this episode transcript is hyperlinked to the articles mentioned.